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I. United States

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1. DPRK Purge

The Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA PURGES TOP OFFICIALS," Seoul, 11/06/98) reported that the ROK Agency for National Security Planning (ANSP) said Friday that the DPRK has purged two top spy agents and an official in charge of attracting foreign investment. ANSP said that DPRK National Security Agency first deputy director Kim Young-ryong was banished early this year after

criticizing the DPRK's isolationist economic policy during private talks with friends. It added that Kwon Hee-gyong, head of a ruling Workers' Party organ in charge of spying on the ROK, also was purged late last year for corruption. Kim Jong-u, chairman of the DPRK Committee for External Economic Cooperation, was removed from his post on suspicion he received bribes from foreign investors wanting to do businesses in the DPRK. In a report to the ROK National Assembly, the agency said, "Their purge is considered part of North Korean leader Kim Jong-il's effort to tighten grip on his regime as the country tries to gradually open up to outside capital."

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2. US Congressman's DPRK Visit

The Associated Press ("U.S. LAWMAKER ARRIVES IN N.KOREA," Seoul, 11/09/98) reported that the DPRK's Central News Agency said Monday that Representative Tony P. Hall, D-Ohio, arrived in the DPRK on Sunday to look into the food shortage situation. It was Hall's fourth visit to the DPRK since 1996 and his first this year. On his way home, Hall will stop in Seoul to brief ROK officials and speak to reporters.

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3. ROK Economy

Dow Jones Newswires (Mark Yost, "KOREAN TRADE OFFICIAL SEES ECONOMY CONTRACTING 6-7% IN 1998," Williamsburg, 11/09/98) reported that U.S. Park, chairman of the Korean-Southeast US Economic Committee, said that he expects the ROK economy to contract 6-7 percent in 1998. He added that unemployment could rise as high as 10 percent and consumer consumption fall by 28 percent during the year. Park added, however, that he sees ROK Gross Domestic Product growing by 1 percent in 1999.

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4. ROK Labor Unrest

The Associated Press ("S. KOREA WORKERS DEMAND REFORMS," Seoul, 11/08/98) reported that approximately 30,000 workers, farmers, and students marched in Seoul Sunday to demand speedy reforms to overcome the ROK economic crisis. Protesters said in a statement, "It's one year since the economic crisis began but the situation has not improved much." They added, "The lives of workers are becoming more and more impoverished while company heads and government officials who are responsible for the crisis have not been properly punished."

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5. US Energy Secretary's Taiwan Visit

The Associated Press (Christopher Bodeen, "U.S. ENERGY SECRETARY IN TAIWAN," Taipei, 11/09/98) reported that US Energy Secretary Bill Richardson arrived in Taiwan Monday for trade talks. Richardson said in an arrival statement, "I'm looking forward to opportunities to reaffirm and strengthen the longstanding friendship between Americans and the people of Taiwan." Richardson was scheduled to meet Taiwanese officials before addressing an annual joint US-Taiwan business conference Tuesday. He is also expected to meet with Taiwan President Lee Teng- hui before leaving Wednesday.

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6. Spratly Islands Dispute

The Associated Press ("CHINESE BUILDING ON DISPUTED REEF," Manila, 11/09/98) reported that Philippine Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado said Monday that more than 100 Chinese workers are building large concrete barracks and possibly a pier on the disputed Mischief Reef in the South China Sea. Mercado called the Chinese buildup a "creeping invasion" of Philippine territorial waters and said that the Philippines is considering filing a complaint at the UN. Philippine President Joseph Estrada also plans to take up the issue with PRC President Jiang Zemin on the sidelines of a meeting of Asia-Pacific leaders later this month in Malaysia.

Reuters (Ruben Alabastro, "COMPUTER GLITCH REPORTEDLY BEHIND CHINA-PHILIPPINES DISPUTE," Manila, 11/09/98) reported that Philippine Foreign undersecretary Lauro Baja said on Monday that the PRC foreign ministry notified the Philippine embassy in Beijing on October 14 about repair work on the PRC facilities on the Spratly Islands. Due to a computer glitch, however, the embassy's advisory to the Philippines, sent the following day, did not reach Manila until October 27. Baja said the Philippines could have reacted more quickly to the Chinese intention on the reef if it had received the notice from its embassy earlier.

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7. Japanese-Russian Summit

The Associated Press (Joseph Coleman, "JAPANESE, RUSSIAN LEADERS TO MEET," Tokyo, 11/09/98) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi will head to Moscow on Wednesday for a summit with President Boris Yeltsin. Kiyokazu Koshida, secretary-general of the Asia-Pacific Research Center, an independent think tank in Tokyo, stated, "Japan has long considered Russia an enemy because of the U.S.-Japan alliance. So it's important to sign a peace treaty." During Obuchi's visit, Yeltsin's government is expected to give its response to a Japanese proposal offered when the Russian president came to Japan last April. A survey by Russia's Vox Populi polling service and Japan's Asahi newspaper released in late October reported that half of the Kuril islands residents questioned said they would move to mainland Russia if Japan took over the islands.

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8. Russian Military Exercises

The Washington Times carried an analytical article (Martin Sieff, "RUSSIAN EXERCISE MEANT TO DISPLAY AIR POWER," 11/19/98) which said that recent Russian air force exercises reflect the increased importance that the government is giving to strategic nuclear forces. The article said that Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov's goal "appears to be to use military might to preserve Russia's superpower standing in spite of its calamitous economic problems." From October 6-8, Russia tested launching cruise missiles from aircraft and activating its space command and anti-ballistic defense systems. US military analysts said that the exercise was the largest of its kind by Russia since the Cold War. First Deputy Prime Minister Yuri Maslyukov said in an October 21 interview with the Moscow newspaper Komsomolskaya Pravda, "The fact that Russia is not yet treated as unceremoniously as, for example, Yugoslavia, is largely due to the fact that we have strategic nuclear weapons."

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9. US South Asian Sanctions

The Washington Post (Thomas W. Lippman, "U.S. LIFTS SANCTIONS ON INDIA, PAKISTAN,

11/07/98, A14) reported that US administration officials said Friday that President Bill Clinton has decided to lift most of the economic sanctions imposed on India and Pakistan after their nuclear weapons tests last May. Clinton notified the prime ministers of both countries by letter Friday that he was exercising authority granted by Congress last month to waive the sanctions. The officials cited steps taken by both countries toward accommodation with the international arms control system, including voluntary moratoriums on further tests. Clinton's action leaves in place bans on military equipment sales to both countries, restrictions on the export of US-made "dual use" items that could have military applications, and US objections to development-project lending to India by the World Bank and other international lending institutions.

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10. US-Indian Nuclear Talks

The Associated Press ("INDIA, US DISCUSS NUCLEAR CONTROL," New Delhi, 11/09/98) reported that teams from India and the US on Monday began talks on controlling nuclear technology in South Asia. Officials said that the two-days of talks will deal with export controls on nuclear technology. The US delegation is scheduled to travel to Pakistan on Tuesday.

II. Republic of Korea

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1. Mt. Kumgang Tour

JoongAng Ilbo ("DPRK TOUR SET TO LAUNCH," Seoul, 11/08/98) reported that the Hyundai Dream Tour will start their initial DPRK Mt. Kumgang tour program on November 18. The company chose the first tour group of 978 members, including 100 foreign and domestic reporters, by computer lottery, and requested advance payment for the tour. Chung Ju-yung, honorary chairman of Hyundai group, will be the most prominent tour member, but at 83 he will not be the oldest member. That honor goes to Shim Jae-lin, who is 97 years old. Both gentlemen will be among people their own age, as over half of the visitors will be over 60 years old. Chung will also have a similar background to many of his fellow tourists, of whom the majority are from the DPRK but came to the ROK after Korean liberation or just before the Korean War (1950-1953). Among the group, 28.4 percent were in their 60s and 23.2 percentages in their 70s. The youngest member is 19 year-old Lee Seung-hun, who is going with his grandparents. However, due to the many delays and the onset of the cold weather, the tour numbers are below expectations so far

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2. Remains of US Soldiers from Korean War

JoongAng Ilbo ("DPRK TO CONTINUE EXHUMING BODIES OF US MIAS," Seoul, 11/09/98) reported that the DPRK announced on November 9 that, as of November 6, it had finished its fifth round of exhuming bodies of the US soldiers reported missing during the Korean War. The DPRK state-run Korea Central News Agency (KCNA) reported, "On November 6 we delivered nine bodies of U.S. servicemen which were exhumed in the 5th joint exhumation work with the U.S. We will continue this joint exhuming work, but it really depends on the U.S. side whether it will be successful or not." KCNA continued, "We have delivered 22 bodies in total to the U.S. through the joint exhumation works this year. We mobilized many personnel and equipment for this project and introduced ways to exhume more bodies." Meanwhile, the U.S. and the DPRK will meet in New York next month to

discuss next year's exhumation plan.

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3. First Casino in DPRK

JoongAng Ilbo ("FIRST-EVER CASINO IN DPRK," Seoul, 11/09/98) reported that a casino will spring up in the "world's most unlikely country." Early next year, a gambling place will start operations in the DPRK's Rajin-Sonbong Economic Trade Zone. Moreover, a helicopter commuting service from the PRC's Hoonchoon city will fly to the casino. Hong Kong's world famous hotel-casino enterprise "Emperor Group" on November 9 is purported to be building a 9-story hotel with 100 rooms and a casino facility. The project is expected to pour 50 million dollars into the area. Emperor Group is based in Hong Kong and operates many casino-hotels in Southeast Asia, Macao, and the US. A source from the group said, "It is true we are proceeding with the construction without delay but I cannot speak about the details until the work is over." The location is 40 minutes outside of the Rajin downtown area, near the seaside.

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4. ROK's Missile Development

Korea Times ("ROK SEEKS LONGER-RANGE MISSILE," Seoul, 11/09/98) reported that the ROK is expected to deliver an "unmistakable" message that it will press ahead with the development of a missile with a striking range of up to 300 km during a forthcoming visit by a senior US government arms controller. ROK missiles currently have a US- imposed limit of 180 km. "Our message will contain our refusal to accept U.S. demands that the development of an extended range missile be made transparent from a research stage and that not only missiles but also civilian-made scientific rockets be controlled," a government official said on condition of anonymity Sunday. The message will be delivered to John Holum, US Undersecretary of State for arms control and international security affairs, who will participate in an ROK-US nonproliferation meeting and pay a visit to Defense Minister Chun Yong-taek during his November 13-14 Seoul visit. Asked whether the ROK's message is tantamount to an "ultimatum," the official said, "Considering the close alliance between the ROK and U.S., it will stop short of that but nonetheless the message will be delivered loud and clear." The ROK's renewed will to develop an extended range missile is attributed to the DPRK's August 31 firing of a rocket, pieces of which landed in waters off Alaska after overflying the northern tip of the Japanese islands.

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5. ROK-PRC Fisheries Pact

Chosun Ilbo ("ROK, PRC TO INK FISHERIES PACT," Seoul, 11/09/98) reported that the ROK and the PRC completed negotiations for a fisheries agreement Monday. A high-ranking ROK government official reported that the two governments will sign the fisheries upon President Kim Dae-jung's state visit to the PRC on November 11. The fisheries agreement has remained unsettled for almost six years. With the establishment of an ROK-PRC fisheries agreement, all three Northeast Asian countries--the ROK, Japan and the PRC--have now managed to create bilateral fisheries pacts, thus paving the way for orderly fishing activities in waters around the Korean peninsula.

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6. Controversy about Professor Choi

Korea Herald ("KIM DAE-JUNG ADVISER RAISES INTELLECTUAL IRE FOR VIEWS ON ORIGINS OF KOREAN WAR," Seoul, 11/09/98) reported that an ideological dispute between a daily newspaper and a professor who is a private adviser to President Kim Dae-jung is spreading to the ROK's intellectual community. Because of the sensitivity surrounding ideological contention in this country, President Kim and other leading politicians have refrained from speaking about the issue. Most mainstream newspapers also stay away from the controversy, which was touched off by attacks on Professor Choi Jang-jip by a monthly magazine published by the Chosun Ilbo company. Choi, a Korea University professor and member of the President's brain trust, heads the Presidential Commission on Policy Planning. Some media whose editorial policy differs from that of the conservative Chosun have begun a counterattack, drawing an increasing number of civic and social groups and intellectuals into the ideological polemic. The controversy began last month when the "Wolgan Chosun," a monthly magazine published by the Chosun Ilbo newspaper, raised questions about Choi's views on the Korean War. The Wolgan Chosun article, listing some quotations from Choi's works, claimed that his ideological stance was suspect. The Chosun article said that Choi described DPRK leader Kim Il-sung's decision to launch a full-scale war against the ROK in 1950 as a "historic decision." Choi and his supporters argue that Chosun intentionally took several quotations from his books out of context to gain ammunition for attacks on its ideological opponents. Choi, 55, studied politics and international affairs at Korea University and earned a Ph.D. at the University of Chicago in 1983. Choi, who describes himself as a "reform-minded liberal," openly supported President Kim during his unsuccessful presidential bid in 1992.

The NAPSNet Daily Report aims to serve as a forum for dialogue and exchange among peace and security specialists. Conventions for readers and a list of acronyms and abbreviations are available to all recipients. For descriptions of the world wide web sites used to gather information for this report, or for more information on web sites with related information, see the collection of other NAPSNet resources.
We invite you to reply to today's report, and we welcome commentary or papers for distribution to the network.

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