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I. United States

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1. DPRK Satellite Launch

US Defense Department spokesman Kenneth Bacon ("PENTAGON REGULAR BRIEFING, SEPTEMBER 17, 1998," USIA Transcript, 09/17/98) said that US analysts have not determined exactly what happened to the satellite that was launched by the DPRK on August 31. Bacon stated, "First of all, as I understand it the only way we have to trace the debris of this missile is through radar tapes, and there is considerable disagreement within our own intelligence community as to how to interpret these tapes. We are continuing, our analysts are continuing, to meet to try to reach a consensus position on this and other questions stemming from that August 31st missile launch." He added, "I don't think whether it went X or X plus 1,000 kilometers is really relevant. What's relevant here is what I stressed last Tuesday and what the State Department has stressed as well, is that that three stage missile with a solid fuel third stage was an advance that shows they have greater capability to fire payloads over longer distances." Bacon said that the dispersion of the debris is not necessarily an indication of the reach of the missile, noting that the reach would be dependent on the amount of fuel it carries, the weight of the missile, and the weight of the payload.

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2. DPRK-Japan Relations

Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREA WARNS JAPAN THAT ROCKET LAUNCH SANCTIONS WILL BRING REPERCUSSIONS," Tokyo, 09/18/98) reported that the DPRK's official Korea Central News Agency (KCNA) on Friday warned Japan against reacting too harshly to its August 31 rocket launch. KCNA stated, "If the Japanese authorities misjudge the situation and continue acting rashly, they will entirely be held responsible for the ensuing catastrophic consequences." It added, "We have so far lived and will live in the future, too, without normalizing the relations with Japan. We do not beg for the normalization of the DPRK-Japan relations, leaving our pride and independence hurt. We will live our own way." KCNA also quoted an editorial of the Rodong Sinmun newspaper as saying that Japan, "groundlessly claiming that the launch of an artificial satellite is that of a missile, are engaging themselves in a frantic anti-DPRK campaign. We cannot allow it at all." The editorial added, "We are entitled to make Japan pay dearly for its past crimes. We are determined to do so with any conceivable means. The Japanese reactionaries are afraid of that determination, to the extreme."

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3. Implementation of Agreed Framework

Reuters (Adam Entous, "U.S. HOUSE APPROVES $16.2 BLN TO FUND AID PROGRAMS," Washington, 09/17/98) reported that the US House of Representatives on Thursday voted to cut off US funding to the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization. The decision came in a vote of 255-to-161 approving a US$16.2 billion foreign aid package.

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4. DPRK Economy

The Associated Press ("NORTH KOREA SAYS NO TO REFORM," Seoul, 09/18/98) reported that the DPRK's ruling Workers' Party reaffirmed Friday that juche will continue to be the backbone of the country's economic policy. An article in the party's newspaper, Rodong Sinmun, argued, "It is a foolish daydream to try to revive the economy by introducing foreign capital, not relying on one's own strength." Rodong Sinmun described the article as the policy of Kim Jong-il. The article warned that capitalistic economic reforms would only cause catastrophic results, as shown in some former Soviet-bloc countries. It stated, "We will ... set ourselves against all the attempts to induce us to join

an 'integrated' world. We have nothing to 'reform' and 'open.'" The article admitted that the DPRK was facing serious economic difficulties, but said that under Kim Jong-il, the country will revitalize its economy "one sector after another as ants gnaw a piece of bone."

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5. ROK Political Prisoners

The Los Angeles Times (Valerie Reitman, "PRISONERS WON'T SHED CONVICTIONS," Seoul, 09/18/98) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung's administration devised a questionnaire which political prisoners were required to fill out in order to receive amnesty. The questionnaire asked three questions: "What are you in prison for? How will you support yourself? How will you obey the law and the constitution if freed?" Amnesty International Secretary-General Pierre Sane said that Kim's "government's failure to stop abuse of the National Security Law, to release political prisoners and engage in meaningful dialogue with local human rights organizations, is fast eroding confidence and trust in this reform program." James Feinerman, chairman of Asian legal studies at Georgetown University Law Center, stated, "It's not surprising in light of what other nations have done, including Korea, but it's a little shocking to hear they are still doing that under Kim. You punish someone when, and if, they violate the law, but you don't make it a condition of their release that you promise not to violate the law." However, Poet Park No-he, who served eight years of a life sentence for organizing a Socialist workers league, said that he signed the questionnaire because he did not want to detract from the greater good of Kim's reform efforts. You Jong-keun, economic advisor to the president, argued, "Kim Dae-jung has long struggled for human rights, but he also must deal with political reality." Park Joo Son, Kim's chief legal advisor, stated, "How can you free somebody who doesn't promise he will keep the law?" Justice Ministry chief prosecutor Moon Sung Woo added, "South Korea and North Korea embrace completely different ideologies. If a member of society cooperates with North Korea and not South Korea, how can we not prosecute him?" However, Kim Hye-jung, whose husband, Min Kyong-woo, is serving a 3 1/2-year sentence for breaching the National Security Law, argued, "We consider North Koreans our brethren, our fellow citizens. We are not for the North and not for the South. We are for Korea. It's not treason-- it's patriotism."

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6. PRC-Taiwan Economic Relations

Dow Jones Newswires (Y.H. Sun, "TAIWAN GOVT MULLS ALLOWING FIN SECTOR TO INVEST IN CHINA," Taipei, 09/18/98) reported that Taiwan Vice Economic Affairs Minister Lin Yi-fu said Friday that the government will consider allowing financial institutions and insurance companies to invest in the PRC. Lin added that it is the right direction for Taiwan and the PRC to divide labor, with Taiwan making high-end products while the PRC produces low-end goods, and Taiwan designing products while the PRC becomes more of a manufacturing base. He also said that the government is concerned about the difficulties Taiwanese companies face in the PRC. Over 20,000 Taiwan companies have invested in the PRC since the Taiwan government started to relax control on exchanges between the two sides in the late 1980s, and many companies have called for setting up Taiwanese bank branches in the PRC to assist them with loans or foreign exchange.

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7. Alleged US Technology Transfers to PRC

The New York Times (Eric Schmitt, "CONGRESS MOVES TO REVERSE CLINTON'S SATELLITE-EXPORT PROCEDURE," Washington, 09/18/98, A1) reported that US House of Representatives and

Senate negotiators agreed Thursday to shift the control over exporting US satellites back to the State Department from the Commerce Department. William Reinsch, the undersecretary of commerce for export administration, said that his boss, Commerce Secretary William M. Daley, would again urge President Bill Clinton to veto the bill. However, White House spokesman David Leavy stated, "We've made no decision whether to recommend whether the president veto the bill."

The Associated Press (Tom Raum, "PENTAGON DENIES AIDING CHINA ICBMS," Washington. 09/17/98) reported that Franklin Miller, principal US deputy assistant secretary of defense, told the Senate Commerce Committee Thursday that the PRC is unlikely to have enhanced its intercontinental ballistic missile program, even marginally, from US technology transfers. Miller stated, "I do not believe that there has been any improvement to Chinese ICBM capability." Committee Chairman John McCain, R-Ariz., challenged Miller's assertion, citing testimony by other experts and an Air Force intelligence analysis.

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8. Russian Nuclear Safety

The Washington Post (David Hoffman, "RUSSIA'S NUCLEAR FORCE SINKS WITH THE RUBLE ECONOMIC CRISIS ERODES STRATEGIC ARSENAL," Moscow, 09/18/98, A01) reported that Russia's economic crisis threatens to erode its strategic nuclear weapons complex. The article said that recent public disclosures suggest that thousands of workers in the atomic arsenal are not being paid for months at a time and that there have been major setbacks in Russia's plans to modernize its weapons systems. It added that Russian President Boris Yeltsin recently signed a top-secret strategic weapons review that envisions continued shrinkage of Russia's strategic arsenal into the next century. A recent US Congressional Budget Office said that Russia's satellites, designed to spot missile launches, provide coverage of US missile sites for only 17 hours day, and perhaps "significantly less." The report added that a second group of satellites in geostationary orbits "cannot detect ballistic missiles launched from large areas of the Earth's oceans." Sergei Rogov, director of Russia's Institute for the Study of the USA and Canada, stated, "There is very little resistance in Russia today to arms control.... It's not the question of controlling the arms, it's the question of the collapse of the remnants of the Soviet military machine because of budget reasons. In this sense, there is a consensus in Russia we need something like 1,000 nuclear weapons." William M. Arkin, an independent consultant, said that the prospects for Russian plans to shift about half its nuclear warheads to its submarine force are doubtful.

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9. South Asian Nuclear Tests

The United States Information Agency (Rick Marshall, "REPORT URGES INDIA, PAKISTAN TO CAP NUCLEAR CAPABILITY," Washington, 09/17/98) reported that the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) and the Brookings Institution issued a special report Thursday on the consequences of India and Pakistan's nuclear tests. The co-chairs of the report were Richard Haass of Brookings and Morton Halperin of the CFR. The report called for both India and Pakistan "to adopt policies that will help stabilize the situation in South Asia by capping their nuclear capabilities at their current levels." It also urged the US Congress "to provide broad waiver authority to the President so that sanctions and incentives can be used to support, rather than thwart, U.S. diplomacy." It said that while Kashmir remains the most dangerous point of contention between India and Pakistan, "the dispute is not ripe for final resolution. It is not even ripe for mediation by the United States or anyone else." The report added, "US foreign policy should not sacrifice its many interests in South Asia in order to promote unrealistic aims in the nuclear realm. In particular, a complete 'rollback' to

a non-nuclear South Asia is simply not a realistic near- or even medium-term policy option for the United States."

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10. Clinton Trip to South Asia

The Associated Press (George Gedda, "CLINTON WEIGHS INDIA, PAKISTAN TRIP," Washington, 09/18/98) reported that US officials said that President Bill Clinton's decision on whether to travel to India and Pakistan in November will hinge on the tone and substance of the speeches the prime ministers of the two countries make next week to the UN General Assembly. Regarding ongoing US talks with both countries, National Security Advisor Sandy Berger said, "I think there has been some movement, but I think so far it's been insufficient." Officials said that Clinton plans to meet with Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in New York. No meeting with Vajpayee is planned because he will not be in New York when Clinton is there.

II. Japan

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1. Implementation of Agreed Framework

The Nikkei Shimbun ("US AND ROK URGE JAPAN TO SIGN COST-SHARING FOR LIGHT-WATER REACTOR PROJECT," 09/18/98) reported that both the US and the ROK began to urge the Japanese government to separate the issue of the DPRK's alleged missile test from the light-water reactor project of the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) and sign a cost- sharing agreement for the project.

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2. Japanese-ROK Relations

The Yomiuri Shimbun ("PRIME MINISTER MEETS WITH ROK LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION PARTY (LDFP) PRESIDENT," 09/18/98) reported that Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi and ROK LDFP President Pak Te-chun met in Tokyo on September 17 and agreed that, with regard to the issue of the DPRK's alleged missile test, it is necessary to strengthen cooperation among the US, Japan and the ROK. Pak stated, "We understand Japan's tough stance on the DPRK," but also stated, "The north wind alone cannot make (the DPRK) take off its coat," stressing that the ROK will continue its "sunshine policy" toward the DPRK. As for the issue of suffrage for Korean residents in Japan in local elections, Pak asked Obuchi to do his best to solve the issue. Obuchi responded, "I understand the issue, but it is still being debated in Japan. It is necessary to further discuss it."

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3. Japanese-Russian Relations

The Yomiuri Shimbun (Tetsuya Harada, "RUSSIA WILL RESPOND TO ISSUE OF DELIMITATION OF NORTHERN TERRITORY WHEN OBUCHI VISITS RUSSIA," Moscow, 09/17/98) reported that former Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto and Russian President Boris Yeltsin met in Moscow on September 17 and pledged to resume their efforts to realize the January, 1997 Krasnoyarsk Agreement to conclude a peace treaty between Japan and Russia by 2000. After their meeting,

Hashimoto told reporters that Yeltsin also promised to respond to Hashimoto's proposal of delimitation of the Northern Territories at the time of Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi's visit to Russia, slated for November. Hashimoto also said that he told Yeltsin that the Obuchi Administration will continue the three principles of Japan's policy toward Russia--confiden-e-building, mutual benefits, and a long-term perspective. He added that Yeltsin agreed to build confidence with Obuchi on a personal basis. As for the Russian economy, Yeltsin stated, "We will survive the critical situation sooner or later," while Hashimoto said, "We are sure that Russia will develop independently, but we will continue to support it."

III. Opinion

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1. US Sanctions on DPRK

[Ed. Note: The following analysis of US sanctions policy on the DPRK was written by the American Friends Service Committee's Karin Lee and John Feffer. It appeared in The Progressive Response, Vol. 2, No. 30, 09/18/98. The Progressive Response is a publication of Foreign Policy In Focus, a joint project of the Interhemispheric Resource Center and the Institute for Policy Studies. For more information send email to irc1@zianet.com with "Progressive Response" in the subject line.]

*** Sanctions Against North Korea: Seriously Dated *** by Karin Lee and John Feffer, American Friends Service Committee

The United States is missing a golden opportunity to end the cold war. But the cold war ended nearly a decade ago you say? Not on the Korean peninsula, it didn't.

North and South Korea remain squared off on the most militarized patch of land in the world. Once a strong country, North Korea is now facing a large-scale food crisis compounded by a general economic collapse. It has tried to put the best face on a bad situation--by testing missiles, dispatching submarine missions, and threatening to restart its nuclear weapons program. The North Korean government believes that only by remaining a credible threat will it be taken seriously by its neighbors and by the United States.

The United States and its allies are missing the chance to engage North Korea positively now instead of paying the high economic and military costs of confronting a more desperate North Korea in the future. The 1994 Agreed Framework, in which North Korea agreed to suspend its nuclear weapons program in exchange for heavy fuel oil and two light-water nuclear power plants, is currently in jeopardy. North Korean leaders have clearly indicated that the 1994 agreement was just the first step in a process of improving relations with the United States. The U.S. government, however, has not taken any further steps.

Since 1994 the United States has fallen behind in its promised oil shipments. It has continued to tout North Korea as a major threat to U.S. security and one of the key reasons to maintain a military budget at unsustainable cold war levels. It has stepped up military exercises with South Korea and beefed up its military alliance with Japan. It is no surprise that North Korea responded with military actions of its own.

In 1995 the U.S. lifted sanctions against North Korea in a very few specific areas such as telecommunications and credit cards. Comprehensive economic sanctions imposed nearly fifty years ago remain in place and have confined the flow of aid, business, and cultural exchange between the

United States and North Korea to the barest of trickles.

In June 1998, new South Korean leader Kim Dae Jung made the unprecedented statement that his country would no longer stand in the way of lifting these sanctions. The Clinton administration has yet to respond to this historic gesture despite recent moves by Congress to question the overall effectiveness of sanctions.

Some U.S. politicians expect North Korea to collapse any day now. While the current economic crisis is very severe, the regime itself shows few signs of deterioration. Moreover, were North Korea to collapse, the consequences would be devastating for the region -- a massive outflow of refugees, an enormous economic burden on cash-strapped South Korea, and a destabilizing power vacuum in the very heart of Northeast Asia.

The easing of U.S. sanctions will boost North Korea's efforts to modernize its economy and increase trade and communication. This would strengthen the position of those in the country who are inclined to engage with the outside world.

For many years the U.S. government argued that its position was constrained by South Korean policies. That has changed. Sanctions are anachronistic and counter-productive. It's time for the cold war to come to an end.

IV. Announcement

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1. DPRK Famine Prayer Vigil

The Institute for Strategic Reconciliation is sponsoring a Prayer Vigil for the hungry children and elderly of the DPRK on Sunday evening, September 20, at 7:30 p.m., at the Global Mission Church, 13421 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, MD. The evening prayer vigil will include a photo exhibit of the DPRK food crisis and a display of reports of famine assessment by the US Congressional mission to the DPRK, the UN World Food Program/Food and Agriculture Organization assessments of the DPRK's food supply and need, and other reports by international NGOs working in the DPRK. RSVPs are required for this program as seating is limited. Please contact the Institute for Strategic Reconciliation by e-mail or by phone at 301-570-3948 no later than Saturday, September 19th.

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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