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CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY REVIEW

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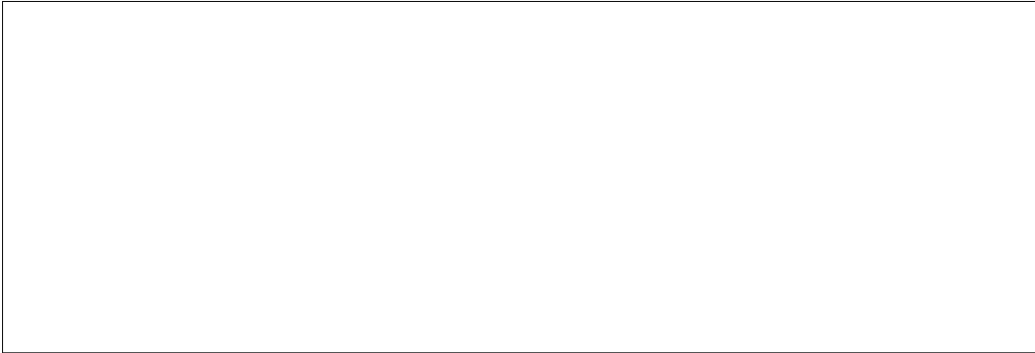
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CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY REVIEW



SOUTH KOREA

Maj. Gen. Pak Chong-hui, the architect of last month's military coup in South Korea, appears to be moving cautiously to consolidate his control of the ruling junta. He reportedly will become chairman of the seven-man Standing Committee that is likely to emerge as the focal point of power in the unwieldy 32-member Supreme Council for National Reconstruction (SCNR). Pak's intelligence chief, Lt. Col. Kim Chong-pil, has seized government dossiers containing information compromising potential opponents, including SCNR chairman Lt. Gen. Chang To-yong.

On 6 May the Supreme Council announced that Chang had resigned as army chief of staff, defense minister, and martial law commander but would continue as chairman of the Supreme Council and chief of cabinet. The latter posts have little real power. According to a well-placed source, Chang was downgraded because of his initial hesitation to support the coup, the belief that the United States regarded him as a figurehead, and the conviction among insurgent leaders that he was attempting to build up his personal power by appointing his supporters to important posts.

The regime also announced on 6 May that retired Lt. Gen. Sin Ung-kyun, former vice-minister of defense and onetime ambassador to Turkey, and Lt. Gen. Kim Chong-o, would succeed Chang

as defense minister and army chief of staff respectively. Both are regarded as generally competent. Prior approval was obtained from the UN commander for Kim's appointment.

The Supreme Council on 6 June promulgated the law of Emergency Measures of National Reconstruction, which "legalizes" its usurpation of power and in effect suspends these provisions of the present constitution dealing with civil rights and the ousted National Assembly. The regime reportedly is considering the eventual adoption of a new constitution providing for a strong executive patterned on that of the French Fifth Republic.

At the same time, spokesmen for the regime have vigorously denounced public speculation on the timing of a return to civilian government. The managing editor and one reporter of Tonga Ilbo, South Korea's largest and most respected newspaper, were summarily arrested on 4 June for headlining President Yun Po-sun's "hopes for an early transfer of power" and implying that the President believed a return to civilian authority was desirable prior to the opening of the 16th UN General Assembly in September. The incident indicates the regime's hypersensitivity to the timing of such action and provides further evidence that the junta's limited relaxation of martial law and censorship is largely window dressing. []