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6. US Navy Head to Visit PRC

Associated Press ("NAVY CHIEF TO VISIT CHINA FOR MILITARY TALKS," Washington 10/3/97) reported that Admiral Jay L. Johnson, the chief of US naval operations, left Thursday for a five-day visit to the PRC, where he will meet with top PRC military leaders and observe naval training at sea. Johnson plans to meet with General Chi Haotian, minister of defense; General Fu Quanyou, the chief of the general staff; and top People's Liberation Army naval commanders.

7. US Sales of Nuclear Material to the PRC

The Associated Press (Martin Crutsinger, "US MAY SELL CHINA NUKE TECHNOLOGY," Washington, 10/3/97) quoted US Commerce Secretary William Daley as saying that the possible sale of US nuclear power technology is on the agenda for upcoming meetings with PRC officials. "Our companies are at the cutting edge of technology in nuclear energy," he said. "We fully understand the need to check the proliferation of (nuclear) material, but at the same time, we would like to be in a position of advocating on behalf of U.S. businesses." Daley will be the third top administration

official to visit the PRC in preparation for the visit of PRC President Jiang Zemin to Washington later this month. Daley said the administration has made no final decision on the sale of nuclear technology to the PRC. But congressional sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said there was a growing likelihood that Clinton will make a favorable announcement during Jiang's visit. Daley said one of the issues he would raise in his meetings was what further assurances the PRC government might be willing to provide that it is implementing proper safeguards against nuclear proliferation. [Ed. Note: See also Los Angeles Times, Jim Mann, "U.S. LIKELY TO OK NUCLEAR POWER DEALS WITH CHINA TRADE," Washington, 10/3/97]

The New York Times carried an editorial ("TOO SOON TO SELL REACTORS TO CHINA," 10/3/97) arguing that "Despite recent promises to exercise restraint, China remains the only nuclear-weapons state selling material and technology to countries that close some of their nuclear installations to international inspectors." Therefore the Times said that "President Clinton should resist the pleas of diplomats eager to improve relations with Beijing and of exporters . . . looking to tap the \$2 billion Chinese nuclear market" and "should keep current restrictions in place until China shows responsibility on its own nuclear exports." The Times argued that the PRC's desire to expand its nuclear power program provides the US with leverage to induce the PRC to tighten its export restraints. "That leverage can be deftly used by promising an early lifting of the American export restrictions once tighter Chinese controls are established and verifiably in place," the editorial said.

8. US Plans Laser Test on Satellite

The New York Times (William J. Broad, "LASER TO BE TEST FIRED AT WORKING U.S. SATELLITE," Washington, 10/3/97) reported that the US Defense Department said Thursday that Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen has approved firing the nation's most powerful military laser at a US\$60 million Air Force satellite to test the laser's destructive power. The test is expected to take place in New Mexico in the next few days, weather permitting. Military officials say it will be the first time that a laser beam has been fired through space to test its potential for destruction. The officials said the experiment's aim was to learn the extent to which enemy lasers on the ground could blind or destroy US satellites in orbit, in hope that the knowledge thus gained can then be used to reduce their vulnerability. Lieutenant Col. Bob Potter of the Air Force, a Pentagon spokesman, said, "There's absolutely no intention to use the laser for offensive purposes. . . . The purpose of this experiment is to collect data that will help improve computer models used for planning the protection of U.S. satellites." However, Senator Tom Harkin said, "This laser test is both unnecessary and provocative," arguing that the demonstration of advances in anti-satellite capabilities "would seriously harm our nation's international arms-control interests and could well encourage such developments by other countries." [See also "US Plans Laser Test on Satellite" in the US Section of the September 1 Daily Report]

II. Republic of Korea

1. Funding for DPRK Reactors

ROK Deputy Prime Minister Kwon O-kie told the ROK National Assembly Wednesday that the ROK will not bear alone the estimated US\$5 billion burden of building nuclear reactors in the DPRK. In an inspection of the Ministry of National Unification, lawmakers on the National Assembly's Reunification and Foreign Affairs Committee took issue with the ongoing reactor construction by the US-led Korea Energy Development Organization (KEDO). Opposition party lawmakers argued that the US should share the burden, pointing to the fact that the provision of nuclear reactors is in exchange for the freezing of DPRK nuclear arsenal developments. (Korea Herald, Nam In-soo, "KOREA THREATENS TO ABANDON REACTOR PROJECT," 10/02/97)

2. ROK President Warns against DPRK "Crisis"

President Kim Young-sam, in a speech at a ceremony marking the 49th Armed Forces Day on Wednesday, called the current DPRK situation a "crisis" and warned against possible armed provocation by the DPRK. Kim said that the serious DPRK food shortage and continuing defections by DPRK citizens show that the contradictions in the DPRK regime are extreme. "There is no way of knowing when and what kind of provocation the DPRK will perpetrate in order to escape from such a crisis," the President said. (Korea Herald, "KIM BLASTS NORTH KOREA FOR CONTINUED MILITARY BUILDUP," 10/02/97) [Ed. note: See also "ROK PRESIDENT CALLS FOR STRONG DEFENSE" in the US Section of the October 2 Daily Report]

3. No Amnesty for Ex-Presidents

ROK President Kim Young-sam is not considering granting amnesty to former senior officials and politicians who have been convicted since the inauguration of his government in early 1993, a top Chong Wa Dae official said yesterday. The official made the comments in response to news reports speculating that President Kim, who is expected to pardon 23 businessmen on National Foundation Day (Friday), may grant another amnesty to convicted former government officials and politicians, including the former Presidents Chun Doo Hwan and Roh Tae-woo. Lee Hoi-chang, presidential candidate of the New Korea Party (NKP), had suggested last month that President Kim pardon Chun and Roh at an early date, a move aimed at wooing votes from supporters of the two former Presidents. However, President Kim, while offering veiled agreement on the need to free the ex-Presidents, rejected the suggestion, saying that the time still is not right. (Korea Herald, "CHONG WA DAE DENIES SPECULATION ON SWEEPING AMNESTIES," 10/02/97)

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We invite you to reply to today's report, and we welcome commentary or papers for distribution to the network.

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