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I. United States

1. Light-Water Reactor Project

Reuters ("S.KOREA DENIES CHANGE IN N.KOREA NUCLEAR PROJECT," Seoul, 5/7/01) reported that the ROK government on Monday denied local media reports that the US wants to replace light-water nuclear reactors in the DPRK with steam-powered plants to allay concerns over possible nuclear weapons proliferation. The JoongAng Ilbo newspaper, quoting "a high- ranking government official," reported on Monday that US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage would negotiate the issue with the ROK and Japan on a visit this week. Armitage is scheduled to arrive in the ROK on May 10 from Japan. The paper also quoted the official as saying that the US believes it was possible to produce weapons-grade plutonium from light-water reactors and that it would be dangerous to build them. The ROK Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade said in a statement, "It is not true that the U.S. made a decision to replace the reactor project with steam-powered generators and delivered the decision to our government."

2. US Arms Sales to Taiwan

The Los Angeles Times (Tyler Marshall, "CRITICS IN TAIWAN QUESTION SCOPE, COST OF U.S. AID," Taipei, 5/6/01) reported that lawmakers and defense specialists in Taiwan are questioning the need and price of the arms sales that the US has agreed to sell Taiwan. M.K. Li, the former deputy commander-in-chief of Taiwan's navy, who is now a member of parliament for the opposition Nationalist Party, said, "As a navy man, I think it's good, but as a legislator, I think we must consider it carefully and buy only what we really need." Li was particularly skeptical about four Kidd-class destroyers included in the US package, contending they add little to existing capabilities and offer no defense against missile attacks. At a news briefing, opposition legislator Lee Ching-hua also questioned the value of the destroyers. He said, "Why should Taiwan spend around \$800 million [each] to purchase secondhand vessels from the United States?" Some international military specialists argue that Taiwan's small navy risks being overstretched if it tries to absorb too many major items at the same time. Damon Bristow, an Asia military specialist at the Royal United Services Institute in London, said, "There are a lot of questions raised here. I'm unsure they've got the resources to do all this without weakening the rest of their defense capabilities." Li said that, despite his reservations, he would wait for an evaluation from Taiwan's Ministry of Defense before making a final decision on whether to support it. However, some analysts suggested that fallout from Taiwan's economic problems could embolden the critics. Taiwan's parliament is scheduled to debate the package next month, but not how to pay for it until September. Andrew Yang, who heads the Chinese Council of Advanced Policy Studies, said, "It's a big problem for us. We've got this statement of political support, but at the same time, we're immediately faced with the choice of whether to accept it. In this climate, if the public believes the offer will mean needless defense spending, it's going to be very tough to get through." He added that if the government came under intense pressure, it might try to defer some items in the package. Yang warned, "This is more than military equipment, it's a symbol of goodwill from the new American administration, and to turn any of it down would certainly bring a backlash." Meanwhile, Parris Chiang, chairman of the parliament's foreign affairs committee and a member of Chen's Democratic Progressive Party, said, "Payment is not an issue. If necessary, we'll submit a supplementary budget request." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 7, 2001.]

3. US-PRC Official Exchanges

The Washington Post (Mike Allen, " U.S. WIDENS LOOK AT CHINA CONTACTS," 5/5/01) reported that US President George W. Bush administration officials said on May 4 that the US government's review of its contacts with the PRC extends beyond the military to the US State Department and other civilian agencies. Officials said that the propriety of possible interactions between the governments, whether an embassy party or a research expedition or a trade mission, is being evaluated as situations come up. An official said, "There's no deadline, there's not going to be a report." On May 3, when Bush was asked about "military-to-military exchanges with the Chinese," he said, "We're going to review all opportunities to interface with the Chinese. And if it enhances our relationship, it might make sense. If it's a useless exercise and it doesn't make the relationship any better, then we won't do that." Administration officials said on May 4 that Bush's comments apply across the government and that such a review has been underway for two or three weeks. Kenneth Lieberthal, Asia director at the National Security Council under President Bill Clinton, said that Bush is "taking a wide- ranging series of initiatives that very likely will make this a far more difficult relationship. This administration gives every sign of taking a very skeptical approach to Chinese motives and actions. U.S.-China engagement is important for addressing serious problems that both of us confront, such as terrorism, proliferation, transnational crime, international economics and trade issues. Such engagement helps make the Chinese aware not only of our views but of international norms in dealing with these issues, and so these contacts are over time really quite important." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news

service for May 7, 2001.]

The Wall Street Journal published an editorial ("TALKING TO CHINA'S ARMY," 5/7/01) which said that now that the US President George W. Bush Administration has raised the issue of military-t-military contacts with the PRC, it might be a good time to think about what the US goals are for such exchanges. It wrote, "The perception that the US is a declining power while China has the advantage of rising strength is one that might be countered by well-planned visits. Such a program would be part of the larger policy of deterring possible Chinese aggression in Asia." The editorial added that the US needs to examine the problem that the PRC may be seeking to understand the US military better in order to figure out how to counter it. It noted that the PRC is studying the use of asymmetric warfare and that information about US systems is the key to this strategy. It continued, "one of the hardest goals to assess in such exchanges is the effect that they might have on military doctrine. Talking to their opposite numbers might convince some Chinese officers that the US does not exercise hegemonic power over its Asian allies and is not seeking to contain China, but rather is maintaining a balance of power in the region that is conducive to peace and China's own economic development." The editorial argued, "At no time, and especially not at a time of strained relations, should the lines of communication between the two militaries be cut altogether. The U.S. needs to understand the current thinking within the Chinese officer corps, which plays a political role in the government. And the contacts built up through face-to-face meetings can prove valuable in a flashpoint situation, when top commanders can call upon their understanding of the other side to prevent an escalation." It concluded that the PRC should learn that "while the US is still willing to pursue engagement, many factions within the government want to be very hard-nosed about the costs and benefits. The PRC leaders are facing a more hostile environment in Washington than they have seen in decades, largely as a result of their own actions, and nobody should try to sugarcoat that fact." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 7, 2001.]

4. US Reconnaissance Flights off PRC

The Associate Press (Robert Burns, "U.S. FLIGHTS OFF CHINA RESUME," Washington, 5/7/01) and Reuters ("U.S. RESUMES SURVEILLANCE FLIGHTS OFF CHINA," Washington, 5/7/01) reported that a US defense official said that a US Air Force plane on Monday flew the first US reconnaissance flight off the PRC coast since the April 1 collision between a Navy spy plane and a PRC fighter jet. The official said the RC-135 reconnaissance plane, flying from Kadena Air Base on the Japanese island of Okinawa, flew a routine track along the northern portion of the PRC coastline. White House spokesman Ari Fleischer declined to comment on Monday's flight. The defense official said the RC-135 mission was not escorted by US fighter jets. An official at PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs declined to immediately comment.

5. PRC-Japan Relations

Agence France Presse ("JAPAN AND CHINA ADMIT TIES HAVE BEEN HURT," Tokyo, 5/7/01) reported that in a telephone call by Japanese Foreign Minister Makiko Tanaka to her PRC counterpart Tang Jiaxuan on Monday, the two officials acknowledged that bilateral ties had been hurt by a row over Japanese history textbooks and the visit to Japan of former Taiwan leader Lee Teng-hui. Tanaka was quoted as saying, "My heart aches as the textbook issue had a negative impact on Japan-China relations. There is no difference in Japan's recognition of history as it is based on [Former Prime Minister] Murayama's statement as well as the joint statements." Tanaka reassured Tang that there was no difference in Japan's stance on the principle of one China and that Japan did not support the independence of Taiwan. An official at Japan's Foreign Ministry quoted Tang as

saying, "It is regrettable that Japan-China relations took a step backwards because of the textbook issue and Lee Teng-hui's visit to Japan," adding that the basic PRC policy towards Japan's wartime aggression had not changed. Tang stated, "Since Japan's new cabinet has been launched I would also like the Japanese side to make efforts to get bilateral relations back on the normal track. The underlining issue of the textbook is whether or not Japan acknowledges its colonial past and makes a sincere response." However, Tang indicated that the change of administration in Japan was a chance start anew. The official characterized the exchange as "positive" since the ministers had confirmed the two countries' ties and looked forward to progress. They agreed to have their first bilateral meeting in Beijing during ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting) in late May.

6. US Missile Defense

The South China Morning Post (Jake Lloyd-Smith, "MISSILE PLAN THREATENS REGION, SAY EXPERTS," Singapore, 5/7/01) reported that in a weekend survey of 31 experts in Asia conducted by the Straits Times, leading government and defense analysts said that US President George W. Bush's plan for a missile defense would spark a global surge in military spending. The poll, which covered government officials and academics from the PRC, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Taiwan, the Philippines, and India, found that fewer than 20 percent of respondents believed Bush's argument about the need to counter "rogue states." Dr Kusnanto Anggoro of Indonesia's Centre for Strategic and International Studies, said, "It will trigger an enormous arms race, especially between the US and countries like China and Russia." Anggoro added, "Another consequence is that Europe will feel left out because the National Missile Defense System is deployed only in the US. In the past, Europe was part of the US extended deterrence system." Michael Cheng, a Taiwanese political analyst, said, "The so-called threats from countries like North Korea and Iraq are merely an excuse ... the ultimate target of such a plan is China." Dr. Dewi Fortuna Anwar, a researcher at Indonesia's non-governmental Habibie Center, said, "This will potentially raise tension instead of creating global and regional security. It will return the suspicions of the Cold War.... (Many Asian countries) generally respond to this plan negatively." The Straits Times poll found that 68 per cent of respondents agreed that the missile plan would have a negative impact on geopolitical stability across Asia. The same percentage said that they believed that the plan would endanger world peace by stoking an arms race. Chin Kin Wah, a political science professor at the National University of Singapore, said, "It will have a negative impact if China sees itself as the object or target of that plan and responds by increasing the range and quantity of its own missiles to undermine the effectiveness of the defensive shield." Professor Qian Wenrong, of the PRC's Xinhua World Affairs Research Center, said, "The target of the US is China. It wants to reduce the effectiveness of China's small nuclear arsenal to zero." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for May 7, 2001.]

The US Department of State's Office of International Information Programs, ("RUMSFELD, RICE SAY U.S. WILL COOPERATE WITH OTHERS ON MISSILE DEFENSE," Washington, 5/6/01) reported that US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice said that the US will consult with Russia, the PRC, and its allies in planning its missile defense system. Rumsfeld, speaking May 6 on the CBS television program Face the Nation, said, "Russia, is not an enemy.... It's time to move into the 21st century, it's time to look at numbers of nuclear weapons and reduce them." National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, appearing on ABC's This Week program, said that US missile defense plans still are at an early stage, with no one ready yet to suggest "an architecture" for the system. She said, "That's why this is a perfect time for consultations with our friends and allies and with the Russians and with the Chinese about how we move forward." Rice said, "The president has wanted to make very clear that this is not a program to give the United States advantage. This is really a reshaping of the nuclear environment. The world has changed. It's

time to think differently about nuclear weapons, and we want to have that discussion with all of the world -- all peace-loving countries that might benefit." She added that Bush "believes that it's entirely possible to think about this as a cooperative move with the Russians, who after all are the other signatories to the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty. The president has made very clear that the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty cannot stand in the way of what we need to do, but we did not say on Tuesday that we were walking out of the treaty. Rather, he said that he'd like to move forward in a cooperative way toward a new world. That's what these discussions are about. I was, by the way, very impressed, and indeed heartened, by Vladimir Putin's words welcoming a constructive dialogue with the United States."

II. Republic of Korea

1. Light-Water Reactor Project

Joongang Ilbo (Lee Chul-hee, "U.S. PUSHES FOR THERMAL PLANTS," Seoul, 05/07/01) reported that the Bush administration has internally decided to replace the two light-water reactors now under construction with thermal power plants despite the ROK's continued efforts to persuade it against that course, a high ranking Korean government official said Sunday. The Bush administration is said to have instructed Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage to negotiate this issue with the ROK and Japan during his visit to the two countries this week. The official said, "We will discuss this in detail during the deliberations on North Korean policy to be held on Wednesday and Thursday between South Korea and the United States." He added, "The United States, which perceives the North as 'untrustworthy,' believes it would be possible to produce weapons-grade plutonium from the light-water reactors and has concluded that it would be a danger to construct them." According to a diplomatic source, the new DPRK policy will be based on verification and monitoring of DPRK's actions.

2. ROK View of DPRK Missile Policy

The Korea Herald (Shin Yong-bae, "KIM PRAISES N.K.'S DECISION ON MISSILE TEST MORATORIUM," Seoul, 05/07/01) reported that ROK President Kim Dae-jung said Sunday that the DPRK's decision to maintain its moratorium on missile tests will help ease tension between the DPRK and the US. "We achieved much more than we anticipated. It will have a positive effect on the resumption of dialogue between the two sides," Kim said in a joint news conference with Swedish Prime Minister Goran Persson at Chong Wae Dae. "It is necessary that developments in inter-Korean relations should proceed in parallel with the improvement in ties between the North and the United States," said President Kim, after summit talks with Persson.

3. DPRK-US Talks

Chosun Ilbo (Ju Yong-jun, "NK VICE FOREIGN MINISTER HEADED FOR US," Seoul, 05/04/01) reported that DPRK Vice Foreign Minister Kim Kye-gwan is likely to visit Washington in June to discuss the resumption of missile negotiations with the US, following an invitation from a US think tank. His visit is attracting much attention because the US President George W. Bush administration has not taken any other moves to contact the DPRK other than through the New York UN channel. Sources from Washington said that if Kim visits the US, that will indirectly prove the DPRK's intention to engage in dialogue as Kim is expected to suggest the resumption of missile negotiations. Furthermore, the source added that since Kim would be visiting upon an invitation made by a private

institution, he would not officially contact the US government. However, his visit will still be significant since he would be the highest-ranking DPRK official to visit the US since the Bush administration took office.

4. DPRK Leader's Son

Chosun Ilbo ("NK LEADER'S SON EXPELLED TO CHINA," Seoul, 05/04/01) reported that the eldest son of DPRK leader Kim Jong-il was expelled to the PRC Friday morning after he was caught trying to enter Japan on a fake passport. The man who identified himself as Kim Jong Nam and his travelling entourage were deported from the country to Beijing without any formal recognition of his identity, avoiding a diplomatic scandal. Kim Jong Nam was accompanied by two women and a 4-year-old boy, all believed to be his family members. Police took Kim into custody at Narita Airport east of Tokyo after he arrived on Tuesday aboard a Japan Airlines flight from Singapore. He was found to be carrying a fake passport from the Dominican Republic in the name of Pang Xiong.

5. DPRK View of US Missile Defense

Joongang Ilbo ("N.K. MEDIA'S COMMENTS ON U.S.'S REPEAL OF ABM," Seoul, 05/07/01) reported that the DPRK's state media reacted to US President George W. Bush's decision to replace the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM). The Pyongyang Broadcasting Company cited the exact words of President Bush regarding the ABM Treaty, but did not mention his official recognition of the need for Missile Defense. "This is the very proof of U.S. warmongers' desire to heat up the arms race, bring in the fiery clouds of nuclear war and induce new wind of Cold War," the broadcast stated.

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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