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I. United States

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1. DPRK's Alleged Satellite Launch

The United States Space Command issued a News Release (Peterson AFB, Colorado, 09/08/98) which said that the US Space Command has not been able to confirm DPRK assertions that it launched a small satellite on August 31, 1998. The news release stated, "The US Space Command has not observed any object orbiting the Earth that correlates to the orbital data the North Koreans

have provided in their public statements. Additionally, we have not observed any new object orbiting the Earth in any orbital path that could correlate to the North Korean claims. Lastly, no US radio receiver has been able to detect radio transmissions at 27 megahertz corresponding to the North Korean claims. Efforts by US Space Command personnel to locate the alleged North Korean satellite are continuing."

The Associated Press (Paul Shin, "NKOREA'S LAUNCH CLAIM NOT VERIFIED," Seoul, 09/06/98) reported that ROK presidential spokesman Park Jie-won said Sunday that the government still could not verify the claim that the DPRK had launched a satellite into Earth's orbit. Park stated, "We're closely cooperating and exchanging information with the United States and Japan to determine the truth of the North Korean claim." An anonymous ROK Telecommunications Ministry official said, "All 11 monitoring stations throughout the country could not detect any signals" being transmitted by the alleged satellite.

The Washington Post (Dana Priest, "N. KOREA MAY HAVE LAUNCHED SATELLITE," 09/05/98, A21), Reuters ("U.S. CAN'T RULE OUT N.KOREA LAUNCHED SATELLITE," Washington, 09/04/98), the New York Times ("A NORTH KOREAN SATELLITE? U.S. IS SEARCHING," Washington, 09/06/98, 6) and the Associated Press (Sang-Hun Choe, "NKOREA MISSILE CAPABILITY CONDEMNED," Seoul, 09/05/98) reported that an unnamed US intelligence official said Friday that the US is checking the claim by the DPRK that it launched a satellite into orbit. The official stated, "We have seen that report and we are still evaluating the data connected with the launch and we cannot at this point rule out that an object was placed in orbit." He added, "There was a Taepodong launched. The notion is whether or not from that missile launch something was placed in orbit." Another unnamed senior US official said that intelligence analysts noticed that the missile had a flight path that was "a bit odd." He stated, "There appears that something separated from the second stage and it appears to have some thrust behind it." He added, "If there were a device and it was very small, it wouldn't be easily detectable." In Moscow, the ITAR-Tass news agency reported Saturday that the Russian Service for the Monitoring of Space Objects said it had confirmed that the DPRK launched a satellite. On Friday, ITAR-Tass quoted Russian Space Agency deputy director General Yuri Milov as saying that the launch suggested a "very high level of rocket technologies."

The Associated Press ("NKOREA SAID ABLE TO ORBIT SATELLITE," Seoul, 09/07/98) reported that Chung Gap-yul, a DPRK scientist who defected in 1996, said in an interview published Monday that the DPRK is capable of putting a satellite into orbit. Chung said that the DPRK's rocket and satellite development began in the mid-1970s with the help of Soviet technology. He stated, "The satellite launch this time is only a showing of that capability." Chung said he had worked for several years at a secret military base where DPRK engineers were trying to acquire missile technology by analyzing missiles bought from the former Soviet Union. He added, "At that time, some missile technology developed by North Korean scientists, including propulsion technology, was superior to that of the Soviet Union." He also said that he believes the DPRK shares nuclear, missile, and satellite technology with Russia.

The Associated Press ("N. KOREA BOASTS SCIENTIFIC PROWESS IN ROCKET LAUNCH - REPORT," Seoul, 09/08/98) reported that the DPRK boasted Tuesday about the "might of science and technology" that allowed it to launch a multistage rocket. The Rodong Sinmun said that the launch "demonstrates the might of science and technology of Juche (self-reliance) and proves the high level of the technology of development and manufacture of the carrier rocket."

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2. Alleged DPRK Missile Test Preparations

The Associated Press ("NKOREA SAID ABLE TO ORBIT SATELLITE," Seoul, 09/07/98) reported that, in Moscow, the ITAR-Tass news agency reported Monday that the DPRK will test a ballistic missile on Wednesday. The Russian Foreign Ministry, however, said it had no information about the test.

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3. DPRK Missile Threat

The Associated Press (Sang-Hun Choe, "NKOREA MISSILE CAPABILITY CONDEMNED," Seoul, 09/05/98) reported that ROK Foreign Ministry spokesman Lee Ho-jin said Saturday that the DPRK's recent rocket launch represents a threat whether it was a ballistic missile or a satellite. Lee stated, "Whether it's a satellite or a missile, it shows North Korea has acquired an ability to deliver a missile. This is a serious security threat to the region."

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4. Japanese Response to DPRK Launch

The Associated Press ("JAPAN WANTS FUNDS TO N. KOREA CUT," Tokyo, 09/08/98) reported that an official from Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party said Tuesday that the party is studying ways to stop remissions of funds from ethnic Koreans living in Japan to the DPRK. Also on Tuesday, Japanese Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura said that Japan would not lift sanctions imposed on the DPRK even if the firing did launch a satellite into orbit. Komura stated, "The fact that a booster flew over Japan remains unchanged and there was no warning beforehand." He added, "North Korea's possession of long-range missiles itself poses a threat to Japan."

The Associated Press ("S KOREAN MIN: JAPAN SHOULDN'T QUIT N KOREAN NUCLEAR PROJECT," Seoul, 09/08/98) reported that ROK Unification Minister Kang In-duk on Tuesday expressed concern about Japan's refusal to endorse its financial commitment to the light-water reactor project. Kang stated, "Without the implementation of the nuclear reactor project, it would be difficult to solve the North Korean nuclear problem." Kang also said that recent changes in the DPRK's political structure show that it will continue to rely on its military and develop weapons of mass destruction. He said that his government was concerned about the DPRK's recent firing of a missile but "not very surprised."

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5. DPRK Political Changes

The Associated Press (Sang-Hun Choe, "NKOREA CHOOSES KIM AS MILITARY HEAD," Seoul, 09/05/98), the Chicago Tribune ("NORTH KOREA ELEVATES LEADER TO HEAD OF STATE," Tokyo, 09/05/98), and the New York Times (Nicholas D. Kristof, "NORTH KOREANS OFFICIALLY INHERIT ANOTHER 'GREAT LEADER'," Tokyo, 09/06/98, 6) reported that the DPRK on Saturday elevated Kim Jong-il to the position of head of state. The DPRK's official Korean Central News Agency said in a statement that Kim was named chairman of the National Defense Commission, "the highest post in the state." Kim Doo-hwan, a chief analyst at Naewoe Press, a news agency run by the ROK intelligence agency, stated, "This marks the North's growing emphasis on the military. We see a shift into what we might call a military state." Don Oberdorfer, author of "The Two Koreas," stated that Kim Jong-il "seems unwilling or unable to grasp the nettle of making major changes, and he's increasingly associated more with the military than anybody else." He speculated that Kim did not take the president's title because he does not like to meet people. However Han S. Park, a political scientist at the University of Georgia, said that Kim is "less ideological than his father, and he

represents a different generation."

The New York Times (Nicholas D. Kristof, "DEATH FAILS TO END RULE OF KIM IL-SUNG," Tokyo, 09/07/98, A6) reported that the DPRK announced Sunday that it had revised its constitution to make the late Kim Il-sung the country's "eternal President." While Kim Jong-il will function as head of state in his position as chairman of the National Defense Commission, the tasks of receiving ambassadors and representing the state for diplomatic purposes will be taken over by the president of the presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly. Foreign Minister Kim Yong-nam was named to head that post. Han S. Park at the University of Georgia stated, "Kim Jong Il needs his father, needs to wear his father's jacket." He speculated, however, that in time Kim Jong-il may emerge to rule more openly on his own.

Agence France-Presse ("NORTH KOREAN RULER NAMES ARMED FORCES MINISTER," Seoul, 08/07/98) and the Associated Press ("KIM JONG IL NAMES NEW DEFENSE MINISTER," Seoul, 09/08/98) reported that the DPRK's Korean Central News Agency said Tuesday that Kim Jong-il named Vice Marshal Kim Il-chol minister of the People's Armed Forces. The post had been vacant since the death of Choe Kwang in February 1997. ROK officials believe Kim Il-chol is the first naval officer to be defense minister in the DPRK. They also said that Kim Il-chol is not related to Kim Jong-il. Hong Song-nam, a former engineer, was nominated as prime minister to head the DPRK cabinet.

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6. DPRK Tourism Project

The Associated Press ("S. KOREA OKS TOURISM PROJECT," Seoul, 09/07/98) reported that the ROK on Monday approved plans by the Hyundai Group to offer sightseeing tours of Mt. Kumgang in the DPRK. Hyundai spokesman Kim Jong-su said, "All except some minor details have been set, and the first ship will be able to depart as scheduled." Hyundai hopes to start sending up to 2,000 tourists a week beginning September 25. Hyundai officials said that visitors may hike Mt. Kumgang, but travel outside the mountain will be banned. They will return to their ships at the end of each day. The DPRK has approved Hyundai's plan to spend US\$95.8 million to improve a port near the mountain and build restaurants and other facilities. ROK officials estimate that the DPRK can earn up to US\$100 million a year in hard currency from the tours. Hyundai will charge each tourist about US\$1,000 for the five-day trip, including US\$300 to be paid to the DPRK for visa processing and using DPRK facilities. Lee Kang-jin, a spokesman for the ROK Unification Ministry, said that people applying for the tours will be screened by the ROK intelligence agency. Lee stated, "We believe that applicants will be given approval unless they are pending trial or something like that."

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7. Taiwanese Military Exercises

The Associated Press ("DEFENSE MINISTRY: TAIWAN WAR GAMES TO BE BIGGEST IN YEARS," Taipei, 09/08/98) reported that Taiwan's Defense Ministry said Tuesday that Taiwan will mobilize ground troops, ships, helicopters, and armor on October 12 for its largest military exercises in years. The ministry said that the live firing exercises would demonstrate the military's progress in upgrading armaments and tactics. Tu Lung-sheng, chief of the ministry's Department of Joint Operations, stated, "This is a good time to display to the people of our country the coming together of training with new armaments." Tu acknowledged the closeness of the war games' timing to the visit by Koo Chen-fu, chairman of Taiwan's Straits Exchange Foundation, to the PRC on October 12-18, but he denied that Taiwan intended to convey a message of defiance to the PRC.

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8. PRC-US Relations

The Associated Press ("CHINA FOREIGN MINISTER TO MEET ALBRIGHT IN WASHINGTON," Beijing, 09/08/98) reported that PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao said Tuesday that Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan will travel to Washington September 27-29 to hold talks with US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and other US officials. Zhu said that the visit would build on the "wide-ranging unanimity" that PRC President Jiang Zemin and US President Bill Clinton reached during their summit.

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9. PRC Military Reform

The Los Angeles Times carried an analytical article (Henry Chu, "CHINA ARMY REFORMS MAY BE A LONG MARCH," Shanghai, 09/08/98) which said that the number and variety of businesses owned by the PRC's People's Liberation Army (PLA) makes carrying out PRC President Jiang Zemin's directive for the PLA to halt its commercial activity difficult. Jonathan Pollack, a China expert at the Rand Corporation, stated, "Given the scale of these activities, it's going to be exceedingly difficult to curtail this activity on a comprehensive basis. Jiang's ... zero- tolerance rhetoric sounds great. But ample caution is warranted." He added, "It will be very interesting to see if Jiang goes after various high-ranking officers, some of whom are directly implicated in graft and embezzlement charges. This would sell well and demonstrate to the public as a whole that the leadership is prepared to do more than the equivalent of shutting down bootleggers in the Prohibition era." John Frankenstein, a professor at the Copenhagen Business School in Denmark, stated, "I think we will see the army move out of direct involvement with these enterprises and turn the running of the commercially successful ones over to demobilized soldiers and PLA dependents." Ellis Joffe, a professor of Chinese studies at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, wrote recently, "If it unfolds smoothly, and this is not at all certain, several years will be needed to dislodge the military entrenched in commercial enterprises. Even then, changes may be limited."

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10. US-India Nuclear Talks

The Washington Post (Thomas W. Lippman, "U.S.-INDIA NUCLEAR TALKS SHOW SIGNS OF MOVEMENT," 09/06/98, A25) reported that Jaswant Singh, India's chief negotiator on nuclear weapons issues, published an essay in the latest issue of Foreign Affairs magazine defending India's nuclear weapons policy. In the essay, Singh challenges the legitimacy of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and terms the Comprehensive Test Ban treaty a tool for perpetuating the power of the "nuclear hegemons." However, Singh also writes that "India has also indicated a willingness to move toward a de jure formalization of this declaration." US officials said that ongoing talks between Singh and US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Strobe Talbott are aimed at getting India to commit to the test ban treaty soon so preparations can begin for a planned trip to the region by US President Bill Clinton in mid-November. An unnamed US State Department official said that the US and other major Western powers are trying to persuade India and Pakistan to "move closer to the international nonproliferation mainstream." He said that means refraining from mounting nuclear warheads on missiles that could deliver them, signing the comprehensive test ban treaty, participating in negotiations toward a proposed Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty, and abiding by "international norms regarding export of sensitive technologies, with the focus on missiles." However, Anthony Cordesman, a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies,

argued, "The arms control progress that's going on is largely self-delusion on the part of the arms controllers. Barring real conflict resolution, arms control is a fraud."

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11. India-Pakistan Relations

The Associated Press ("INDIAN, PAKISTANI PM'S TO MEET," New Delhi, 09/07/98) reported that Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and his Pakistani counterpart, Nawaz Sharif, will meet on September 23 in New York, where both are scheduled to address the UN General Assembly. The United News of India quoted Vajpayee's spokesman, Brajesh Mishra, as saying Sunday that the initiative for the meeting came from Pakistan.

II. Republic of Korea

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1. DPRK's Alleged Satellite Launch

Japanese chief cabinet secretary Hiromu Nonaka said Monday that, if it was a satellite which was launched by DPRK August 31, and not a missile as originally thought, even that will not be tolerated by Japan. Commenting on the DPRK's claim that the launch was of a satellite, the secretary said that it does not matter whether the rocket carried a satellite or a warhead in terms of the military threat posed to Japan, since the DPRK's strike capability is the same in either case. Sources in the Japanese government said Nonaka's remarks indicate that it is likely that Japan is planning strong measures to deal with the DPRK's action. Nonaka also reiterated that his government's position remains the same, and that it does not accept the DPRK's insistence that the rocket carried a satellite. (Chosun Ilbo, "NK SATELLITE STILL A THREAT: Japan," 09/08/98)

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2. ROK Missile Technology

The ROK's missile technology lags far behind the DPRK, it was reported Monday. Currently, the ROK's surface to surface armory consists of 12 180km-range "Hyunmoo" missiles with a 300kg warhead, developed at the end of the 1980s, and the 140km-range, "ATACMS" with a 560kg warhead, 110 of which are being introduced from the US. Though the accuracy of both is better than the DPRK missiles, the recently-tested "Taepodong-1" has a 1,500km range and can carry a 740kg warhead, while "Taepodong-2" with a range of up to 6,000km and a 1,000kg warhead is reportedly under development. (Chosun Ilbo, "SOUTH'S MISSILE TECHNOLOGY LAGS NK," 09/08/98)

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3. DPRK Political Changes

The DPRK Supreme Peoples' Assembly, in a surprise revision of its constitution, did not elect a president of the country in its recent session. Instead, Kim Jong-il was re-appointed as the chairman of the Central Military Committee, where he will remain as de-facto leader, the DPRK's Central News Agency reported on Saturday. In a speech recommending Kim Jong-il as the chairman of the committee, Kim Yong-nam, the DPRK foreign affairs minister, said that the committee's chairmanship is the country's highest position, overseeing the political, economic, and military affairs of the country, and safeguarding state socialism and the fate of the people. DPRK affairs

analysts believe that this description of the position suggests that Kim Jong-il is in full control of all government decision-making, except in foreign affairs. The Assembly was reported to have passed a revision in its constitution, inserting the phrase, "will uphold Kim Il-sung as our permanent president." Thus, the Assembly seems to have fossilized the position of the presidency for the future and, in its place, has established a standing committee of the Assembly and a representative ruling government organ. Concerned ROK government officials in Seoul analyzed the DPRK move as an outward display to the world of its loyalty to its former leader, but said that it is also intended to hide his son, Kim Jong-il's, personal reluctance to meet with foreign visitors. (Chosun Ilbo, "KIM JONG-IL ASSUMES CHAIR OF CENTRAL MILITARY COMMITTEE," 09/08/98)

III. Russian Federation

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1. RF-ROK Relations

Segodnya's Georgiy Boulichyov ("FROM KOREA WITH LOVE," Moscow, 08/13/98 p.3) wrote about RF-ROK relations. He believes that from the RF-ROK spy controversy crisis of this July two exits are possible: either "a mutual build-up of grudges and mistrust" or "a deep re-evaluation of strategies and priorities by the two sides." The mistrust has been accumulated for a long time and "Koreans' fundamental error lay in a simplified approach to Russia after the USSR collapsed.... Seoul saw the rapprochement with Moscow almost as a victory in the decisive battle for Korean unification on its conditions." However, he added, "Seoul's attempts to dictate to Russia how it should deal with Pyongyang (up to 'directives on what the contents of a new international treaty with Pyongyang should be) caused only irritation in Moscow.... However, it was the South Koreans who developed a grudge in a belief that their hopes were betrayed.... The dwindling of Russia's defense and economic power made the Korean nouveau riches think that Russia may not be taken into consideration anymore.... Under Kim Young-sam in Seoul, a perception came into being that Russia was a 'weak link' among the four great powers concerned with Korean affairs." The author then cited examples of the ROK being tough on Russia in terms of financial and trade relations and on the issue of the RF Embassy building in Seoul. He concluded, "Nobody asks to see Russia in a rosy light. The question is, however, what can be done to up-grade relations."

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2. DPRK Missile Test

Nezavisimaya gazeta's Aleksandr Reutov ("PYONGYANG HAS WARNED ABOUT THE TESTS," Moscow, 09/02/98, p.2) reported on Japanese and US reaction to the DPRK's testing of a "Taepodong-1" missile and noted that a few weeks ago DPRK representatives in New York probed their US counterparts for a possible US reaction. Despite a highly negative US response, DPRK leaders obviously decided to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the country that way. "In Moscow, they also knew about the North Korean plans from Pyongyang itself. But, in the Russian military's opinion, the missile was launched not according to the schedule and did not travel along the planned corridor, and that prevented the Strategic Purpose Missile Troops systems from detecting it." Izvestia's Yuriy Savenkov ("NORTH KOREA PUTS EVERYTHING AT STAKE," Moscow, 09/04/98, p.3) said that US reaction to the DPRK missile tests rendered the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO) history, and pointed out that "some experts believe that Pyongyang even now can produce one or two bombs." There are fears that DPRK might sell them to some terrorist organization in order to earn hard currency. Recently, the DPRK's official news agency said that the DPRK sells its missiles abroad precisely for that end and "if Washington wants to stop those deals, it

should compensate Pyongyang's export losses (US\$500 million a year were mentioned) and stop its economic embargo as well." Izvestia's author supposed that by its missile tests the DPRK wished both to strengthen its stance at the talks with the US and to demonstrate its "goods" to the international arms market. Izvestia's Ivan Denisov ("PYONGYANG PREPARES A MISSILE LAUNCH," 09/04/98, Moscow, p.3) quoted Japanese officials as saying that the DPRK was preparing a second missile test. Izvestia's Viktor Litovkin ("WE ARE VIGILANT NOW," 09/04/98, Moscow, p.3) reported that the RF Strategic Purpose Missile Troops Headquarters told the newspaper that the DPRK would not catch the RF missile attack warning system unaware anymore. Yet the Headquarters officials told Izvestia's author that they would be able "to follow" a DPRK missile only in case it goes in the direction of RF territory. If it went to some other side, "we will not detect it. That is the way our warning system is constructed. However, it is planned that the space forces should detect a missile's flight and fall."

Segodnya's Aleksandr Chudodeyev ("DPRK MEETS ITS HALF-A-CENTURY JUBILEE WITH MISSILE FIREWORKS," 09/04/98, Moscow, p.3) reported on US and Japanese reaction to the DPRK's missile tests already made and those allegedly under preparation. A representative of the RF Pacific Fleet admitted that no special arrangements have been made because "the present situation and the launching of the North Korean missile do not present a threat to Russia's security." Nevertheless, Segodnya's author stressed, during the launching of DPRK missiles with 450-500 kilometer range from Hwadogan test site, which is 40-50 kilometers from the DPRK-RF border, all major cities, naval, and air force bases in the RF seaside area could be vulnerable. In the DPRK itself the situation is calm, with the media stressing that DPRK leader Kim Jong-il has turned the people and the army into "the strongest in the world."

Segodnya's Aleksandr Chudodeyev ("THE SONG ABOUT 'THE GREAT LEADER' COMES FROM OUTER SPACE," 09/05/98, Moscow, p.3) reported that Mr. Hong Yi- chong, Third Secretary of the DPRK Embassy in Moscow, told the newspaper on Saturday that "nomination of the Great Leader Comrade Kim Jong-il to the position of DPRK Head of State" is planned at a session of the DPRK parliament to be held Saturday. In this connection, Segodnya's author reported that DPRK Foreign Ministry on Friday rejected "lowly slander" by the US and Japan about missile weapon tests and stated that actually the DPRK started outer space explorations of its own by launching an artificial satellite into an orbit around the Earth. The satellite allegedly broadcasts DPRK revolutionary songs.

Nezavisimaya gazeta's Dmitriy Atlasov and Dmitriy Yuryev ("NORTH KOREA EXPLORES OUTER SPACE," 09/05/98, Moscow, p. 2) reported that the DPRK on Friday stated that on September 1 it launched its first artificial satellite into the Earth's orbit using a three-stage rocket. In military terms, that means that the DPRK possesses ICBMs capable of delivering warheads to any continent. That "automatically brings North Korea to the ranks of great powers having nuclear weapons, putting it above Japan, India and Pakistan." The author speculated that "the leading Western countries' reaction might be most unexpected. Attempts to forcefully neutralize the potential rival, the way Israel did in the early 1980s, when it destroyed by air bombing a nuclear research center in Iraq, are especially dangerous. Recalling the recent US "Tomahawk" attacks against targets in Sudan and Afghanistan, the author pointed out that "militarily North Korea is not an Afghanistan and its response might be such that it would cause a headache to not only the president who would command a use of force against facilities in its territory."

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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