

China applauds Bush disarmament initiative

BEIJING (AP) — China on Sunday praised a proposal by President Bush that Washington and Moscow negotiate the elimination of all their land-based ballistic missiles equipped with multiple nuclear warheads.

The Foreign Ministry issued China's first response to the initiative, which Bush announced Friday.

The United States and the Soviet Union "have a special responsibility for nuclear disarmament" because they have the largest nuclear arsenals, it said.

They should "take the lead in halting the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons and substantially cutting the nuclear weapons of all types in their possession," said the statement, carried by the

official Xinhua News Agency.

The statement made no reference to China's own nuclear arsenal, the smallest of the five known nuclear powers.

Bush proposed that the United States and Soviet Union reduce their nuclear weapons below the levels required by the recently signed Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty.

The American proposal comes at a time of political turmoil in the Soviet Union and uncertainty over the status of Soviet strategic weapons, which Moscow says are purely defensive.

The Foreign Ministry statement said China has "al-

ways stood for nuclear disarmament, advocating complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons."

However, China has contributed to the nuclear weapons programs of Iraq, Pakistan and India. It also has sold ballistic missiles to Syria, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

Beijing announced last month that it planned to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, but has not yet done so.

Its arms sales have been a growing irritant in Sino-U.S. relations, which are at their lowest point since relations were established in 1979.

Foreigners attacked by rightists

BERLIN (AP) — Hundreds of protesters marching to show support for foreigners clashed with police Sunday during a weekend in which extreme rightists attacked refugee shelters in more than a dozen German towns.

Meanwhile, state Interior Minister Rudolf Krause, responsible for security in the new eastern state of Saxony, resigned late Sunday.

The state has been one of the hardest hit by rightist attacks on foreigners over the past weeks and Krause had been accused in media reports of not doing enough to halt the violence.

However, Krause was also facing allegations that he once worked for the former East German secret police. An Interior Ministry spokesman, speaking on condition of anonymity, confirmed Krause's resignation but declined to provide further details.

President Richard von Weizsaecker said he would visit a home for asylum-seekers this week to show his concern for the rising violence aimed at foreigners in both the prosperous west and the economically depressed east.

For nearly two weeks, extreme rightists have been attacking shelters for asylum-seekers across the country. Most of the violence has involved the throwing of stones and firebombs at the shelters, but some foreigners also have been beaten.

Politicians from all parties have denounced the violence, which has begun to appear in western Germany. The attacks began in former East Germany, where rightists say foreigners are taking scarce jobs when the transition to a market economy has left many eastern Germans out of work.

Police said more than a dozen refugee centers across the country were attacked Saturday and Sunday.

More than 3,000 people, most of them young leftists, clashed with police Sunday after demonstrating against rightist attacks in Hoyerswerda, an eastern German town that has been the center of the worst violence.

Police said that about 60 cars were damaged by demonstrators throwing stones and fireworks, and that at least 19 people were arrested. Police used a water cannon to drench the protesters after they refused to disperse.

Demonstrators carried banners saying "Stop Neo-Nazis" and "Down with Racism and Nazi Terror."

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