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China and the US, the odd couple

(A personal viewpoint not necessarily reflecting the views of the membership)

Last month, President Obama sent his highest level trade mission yet to China led by Secretary of Commerce, Gary Locke (former Governor of the State of Washington). This cabinet (ministerial) level mission included 54 senior executives and CEO's from 24 leading American companies currently focusing on clean energy.

The mission's "official" goals were as follows:

"To demonstrate the U.S. commitment to assisting American clean energy companies to sell new energy-efficient technologies in China and help China achieve its goals to reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions. The mission helps U.S. business initiate or expand exports to China."

That's "government-speak" for "Let's sell our stuff." And.....these guys each paid US\$10,000

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plus for the privilege of accompanying Secretary Locke to China, and later to Indonesia.

Following on their heels came Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, Chairman of the U.S. Federal Reserve Ben Bernanke and a platoon of other high ranking cabinet level officials.

Why all this effort?

Mainly because Obama has promised to double U.S. exports in the next five years in support of adding two million more jobs.

China therefore is in the driver's seat. It's a "buyers market". The PRC is in a position to successfully advocate serious loosening of current restrictions on desired technologies from the U.S.

The sweeping away of many export controls on non-military technologies from America will greatly accelerate China's industrial and scientific development, especially in the green power area. It would also expand U.S. exports to China and give Obama the new jobs the voters are waiting for. It's win-win!

But there is no free lunch here. Along with working toward the reduction of export restric-

tions of technologies to China in partnership with their American Corporate allies that have a vested interest in removing these restrictions, China has an important responsibility. It is the solving of the IPR problem.

While free-traders in America lobby for the removal of controls on technology-related exports to China, the central and provincial governments

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of China must really get serious about stamping out illegal counterfeiting of "anything". It's a one-two double barreled process--remove U.S. export controls and stop IPR violations in China, time for China to get serious about it.

The IPPF is a non-profit industry support organization mandated by its members to work toward best practices in the Power Generation industry.