

**DETERRENCE OR PEACE?
THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION AND NORTH KOREA**

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Dr. C. Kenneth Quinones

Introduction

President George W. Bush and North Korean strongman Kim Jong Il are locked in a potentially deadly tango. Weapons of mass destruction, particularly North Korea's nuclear ambitions, is the apparent cause. But their dueling has much more fundamental ramifications. Bush seems determined to confront Kim with the ultimate dilemma: either disarm or face the consequences. Within the upper echelons of the Bush Administration there is a consensus on these goals, but not on strategy. Bush at the same time is struggling to rally support from the United States' traditional allies, South Korea and Japan, and friends, China, in Northeast Asia. These nations share his determination to keep the Korean Peninsula free of nuclear weapons, but they are concerned that his strategy could cause a second Korean War. Meanwhile, Kim Jong Il has demonstrated little inclination to accommodate Bush's demands. This test of wills could eventually result in: war and the destruction of the Kim Jong Il regime, a diplomatic resolution that permits the regime to survive, Kim Jong Il capitulates or his regime collapses.

For half a century, the Korean Peninsula has posed a foreign policy dilemma for every American president. Their options have been obvious, and remained constant: limited war, armed deterrence, a negotiated peace, or some combination. The 1950-53 Korean War, despite the deaths of millions of Koreans and tens of thousands of Americans, achieved little in terms of furthering Korea's reunification and setting the stage for a durable peace. Today, as before the war, the two halves of Korea remain hostile rivals, and a durable peace remains elusive. Two million soldiers, thousands of artillery pieces and tanks, hundreds of ballistic missiles and jet fighters, not to mention naval forces, preserve a fragile truce through deterrence, the mutual fear of war.

Continuity, more than change, tends to characterize U.S. foreign policy. This is particularly true regarding the Korean Peninsula. Since the Reagan Administration's "Modest Initiative" of 1988, the U.S. and DPRK have attempted to normalize their relations, but without altering the underlying configuration of their Cold War postures toward each other - armed deterrence. This persistent duality of deterrence and diplomacy in their respective policies appears largely responsible for their inability to resolve differences and to normalize relations. Understanding the underlying reasons for this continuity will better enable us to comprehend the motivating forces within the incumbent Bush Administration regarding North Korea policy, and thus attempt a projection of this Administration's future policy.

At first glance, the Bush Administration's confrontation with Kim Jong Il appears to have altered some of these past patterns. Actually, however, there is more continuity than change in Bush's approach to the Kim Jong Il regime. The regime's persistent pursuit of a nuclear capability and possession of ballistic missiles has altered the potency of U.S. deterrence. Washington's policy makers and military planners are adjusting traditional patterns of diplomacy and deterrence accordingly. On the policy side, they have reversed the past decade's trend toward diplomatic engagement in favor of a return to confrontation and isolation of North Korea. Military planners

at the same time appear to be shifting away from a limited force retaliatory strike toward a pre-emptive, decisive blow designed to quickly destroy North Korea's war making capability.

In short, Pyongyang's determined drive to match the United States' deterrence capability in Northeast Asia and Washington's reaction to this effort is heightening the risk of war in Northeast Asia.

Bush's North Korea Policy - An Over View

The incumbent Bush Administration has attempted to distance itself from its Democratic predecessor the Clinton Administration regarding policy toward North Korea. President Bush made this clear from the start of his Administration when he declared a comprehensive review of his North Korea policy. But in reality, it simply is not possible for any president to totally escape his predecessors' legacy. Certain patterns persist despite a president's personal inclinations and political priorities.

National interests and domestic political concerns drive U.S. policy. The Bush Administration, like the Clinton Administration before it, sought to place domestic issues before

foreign concerns. By and large, this was true during the Bush Administration's first eighteen months in office. During this period, despite its rhetoric, Bush's Korea policy tracked closely with that of his two predecessors, the former Presidents Bush, his father, and Clinton. But then the tragedy of September 11, 2001 occurred, compelling the Bush Administration to abruptly shift its focus to foreign affairs. Initially, between September 2001 and January 2002, Bush concentrated on the "war against terrorism." Then he made his "axis of evil" State of the Union speech to the U.S. Congress. Again, rather abruptly, he shifted his focus from Afghanistan, Al Qaeda and the war on terrorism to Iraq and North Korea.

His foreign policy advisers on East Asian affairs to appear to have been caught off guard. An intense debate ensued within the Administration. Generally speaking, regional experts contested attempts by the globally oriented, weapons of mass destruction experts to forge a radically new approach to North Korea. Advocates of a "deterrence and diplomacy" approach to North Korea, let's call them traditionalists, collided with "globalists" who promoted a relatively new, highly assertive and essentially unilateralist approach. While this debate intensified in 2002, President Bush concentrated on dealing with Iraq. Seoul and Pyongyang, however, grew increasingly concerned by the debate and its potential ramifications.

Pyongyang's October 2002 admission that it had launched a clandestine, Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) program appears to have strengthened the hand of the "globalists." Subsequent developments suggests the debate persists, but at a much reduced level of intensity. Bush appears to have accepted the fundamental precepts of his "globalist" advisers. At the same time, however, he is allowing his "traditionalists" to remain in the forefront of his approach to North

Korea and has authorized their pursuit of a “diplomatic, peaceful” resolution of the nuclear crisis with North Korea, but without engaging in negotiations or making any concessions.

Seoul, Tokyo, Beijing and Moscow doubt this dualistic approach can achieve a peaceful outcome. The crisis continues to intensify as Bush refuses to engage Kim Jong Il diplomatically, and Kim Jong Il counters with provocative step. Despite Bush’s emphasis on achieving a “diplomatic, peaceful” outcome, the risk of a second Korean Wars continues to escalate.

“Traditionalist” Ascendancy - June 2001 to September 2002

Geo-political realities and U.S. allies’ concerns have a secondary influence on Washington’s foreign policy formulation. But President Bush’s preoccupation with domestic issues early in his tenure allowed the Northeast Asia regional experts in the Department of State the upper hand in forging the Administration’s early approach to North Korea. Initially, this approach tracked closely with geo-political realities in Northeast Asia, Seoul and Tokyo’s concerns. They also mirrored the general policy priorities and methods of the previous two administrations. Consequently, their approach can be labeled “traditionalist.”

Several other factors reinforced this early tendency toward tradition. At the beginning of his Administration, President Bush was intent upon convincing his conservative Republican supporters that he could be tougher than President Clinton regarding North Korea. This was reflected in Bush’s often blunt and sometimes condescending mantra regarding North Korean leader Kim Jong Il and conditions in his domain. At the same time, however, America’s traditional allies in Seoul took issue with Bush’s rhetoric. Also, Seoul’s President Kim Dae-jung wrestled with his American counterpart to retain the leadership for dealing with North Korea. This dueling became evident early in the Bush Administration when the South Korean president visited Washington in March 2001, only to return home rather humbled by Bush’s less than diplomatic handling of the visit. To compensate for his initial clumsy handling of summit diplomacy, Bush turned to his “traditionalists” at the State Department. This afforded them the upper hand, at least temporarily, in the continuing bureaucratic quarreling over North Korea policy.

The current Administration’s early 2001 review of North Korea policy produced a set of priorities little different from those of his predecessors. Now, as before, these priorities remain to convince Pyongyang to:¹

- halt its development, production and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (nuclear, chemical and biological, and ballistic missiles),
- comply with the Agreed Framework,
- join the international community’s efforts to halt international terrorism and satisfy Japan’s concerns regarding North Korea’s alleged kidnaping of Japanese citizens,

- accommodate the international humanitarian aid community's need for access within North Korea and accountability for food aid distribution,
- reduce the threat its conventional military forces pose to South Korea,
- demonstrate greater concern for the welfare and human rights of the North Korean people.

The shift in priorities involves two issues: the recovery of remains of American soldiers who died in North Korea during the Korean War and compliance with international norms regarding humanitarian assistance. The previous Bush and Clinton Administrations each placed equally high priority on the recovery of U.S. military personnel remains. The current Bush Administration thus far has paid much less attention to this issue. As for humanitarian assistance, the present Bush Administration has made more audible than the previous Administration the U.S. government's insistence that North Korea accommodate international norms regarding the monitoring and accountability of humanitarian aid distribution.

Equally evident is the Bush Administration's continuing reliance on essentially the same tactics as the Clinton Administration to attain its goals:

- maintain deterrence through a strong, forward deployed military presence in Northeast Asia,
- nurture trilateral diplomatic collaboration and coordination with Seoul and Tokyo,
- support South Korea's engagement policy toward North Korea, and support the International Atomic Energy Agency's monitoring of North Korea's nuclear facilities,
- urge China to temper Pyongyang's occasional unruly impulses, project to the North Korean people a benign image of the United States through food aid,
- pursue negotiated resolutions of outstanding bilateral issues, and
- offer inducements for North Korea's compliance with U.S. goals.

Even both Administrations' inducements remain largely unchanged: the promise of peace rather than military confrontation, gradually escalating the rank of diplomats engaged in dialogue and negotiation with Pyongyang, exchanges of official visits, the phasing out of U.S. economic sanctions, the gradual normalization of diplomatic relations beginning with the opening of liaison offices, and economic assistance to rebuild North Korea's agricultural sector, among other things.

Nevertheless, there are some significant distinctions. The terrorists attacks of September 11, 2001, and continuing crisis in the Middle East abruptly and dramatically realigned the Administration's foreign policy priorities. The Korean Peninsula subsequently dropped as a foreign policy priority from close to the top of the list, where it stood in the spring of 2001, toward the middle, where it now stands. Secondly, the Bush Administration moved early to assert United States leadership over North Korea policy. Conservative Republicans, who have long distrusted South Korea's incumbent President Kim Dae Jung, succeeded in the

Administration's early weeks to convince President Bush to assert U.S. leadership regarding Korea policy when he met his South Korean counterpart President Kim Dae Jung in March 2001. Yet at the same time, his global foreign policy strategy emphasizes armed resolution of disputes with the "axis of evil" nations that include North Korea. The gap between his rhetoric and intentions may please his domestic political supporters, but it continues to confuse, and is a source of considerable concern, among the key players in the international diplomatic effort to resolve the Korean Peninsula's complex problems. This gap has also complicated and slowed the resumption of U.S.-DPRK dialogue and negotiation.

Shared Legacy, Shared Concerns:

In 1988, then South Korean President No Dae-woo and U.S. President Reagan initiated a process designed to defuse North Korean hostility toward Seoul prior to the 1988 Seoul Olympiad because of Pyongyang's exclusion from the international event. Their first step was the so-called "modest initiative" of October 31, 1988. They offered the inducements of opening of a new channel for diplomatic dialogue between Washington and Pyongyang, the so-called "Beijing Channel," limited educational exchanges and trade between United States and North Korea, and the promise of eventual normalization of relations.

The normalization of US-DPRK relations has always, and remains today, tied to North Korea's international behavior. Former President Bush continued and refined this linkage. A consistent criteria for improved US-DPRK relations remains North Korea's willingness to engage South Korea in substantive dialogue. Then North Korean leader Kim Il Sung eventually responded to the "modest initiative" with a year long series of talks in 1991 that produced a package of joint reconciliation understandings, generally known as the "Basic Agreements of 1991." They included an understanding on reconciliation, non-aggression and social exchange and economic cooperation, plus the North-South Declaration for the De-nuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. President Bush rewarded North Korea with a joint US-South Korea announcement that they would cancel in 1992 their annual, huge military exercise "Team Spirit." The American president also authorized the first ever "high level" talks between ranking State Department officials and their North Korean counterparts.²

The ground rules for future U.S. negotiations with North Korea regarding normalization were outlined and clarified at this meeting which convened for a single day in New York in January 1992, the start of the former Bush Administration's final year in office. The discussion was limited to an exchange of views and their clarification. No effort was made to negotiate outstanding bilateral issues. Washington tabled a package of steps and corresponding inducements that called on Pyongyang to:

- end its nuclear weapons development program and allow International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspections of its nuclear facilities,
- end the export of ballistic missiles, particularly to the Middle East,
- publicly renounce and end all support for international terrorism,

- eliminate its arsenal of chemical and biological weapons, and halt their development,
- engage South Korea in dialogue to resolve outstanding issues,
- facilitate and cooperate in the location and recovery of the remains of all U.S. military personnel left in North Korea during the Korean War,
- demonstrate respect for the human rights of the North Korean people.

In exchange, the U.S. would grant North Korea:

- a series of high level political talks to resolve outstanding issues,
- reduce U.S. ground forces on the Korean Peninsula,
- phase out U.S. economic sanctions once North Korea had renounced publicly international terrorism and ended its export of ballistic missiles, and
- phase in normal diplomatic and commercial relations in tandem with North Korea's progress toward fulfilling other items on the U.S. wish list.

Continuity in the Clinton Administration

President Clinton (1993-94) continued his predecessor's process. The Clinton Administration (1993-2001), like the younger Bush Administration, initially focused on domestic policy. Because of the newly nominated Secretary of State Warren Christopher and National Security Adviser Tony Lake's delayed confirmation, then Acting Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger essentially continued the former Administration's foreign policy.³ Regarding the Korean Peninsula, Eagleburger on the Clinton Administration's third day authorized the worldwide distribution of an unclassified Department of State cable that set forth U.S. policy and priorities regarding North Korea. This facilitated continuity of the former Bush Administration's Korea policy. Similarly, the Clinton Administration retained the services of the former Administration's Department of State Assistant Secretary for Political-Military Affairs Robert Gallucci, who eventually became the chief U.S. negotiator in the 1993-94 US-DPRK nuclear negotiations. Again continuity of policy on the weapons of mass destruction was ensured. Likewise, the Department of Defense maintained deterrence and the forward deployment of 37,000 U.S. military personnel on the Korean Peninsula as the cornerstones for U.S. policy on the Korean Peninsula. Deterrence remained primary over diplomacy, at least regarding the two Koreas.

North Korea's actions in August 1992, however, undermined the international community's confidence that North Korea could be induced into foregoing its conventional coercive diplomacy and instead embracing internationally acceptable norms of behavior. The immediate cause of concern was the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) discovery of numerous discrepancies between the amount of plutonium Pyongyang claimed it had produced, and the findings of IAEA inspectors. During the fall and winter of 1992-93, Pyongyang adamantly rejected numerous overtures to resolve the issue through diplomacy. On March 12, 1993, Pyongyang stunned the world with its declaration of intent to withdraw from the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).⁴

North Korea's announcement had multiple profound consequences. Foremost, it escalated the problem of its previous plutonium production from a regional dispute to a globalize crisis that threatened the credibility of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime as set forth in NPT. It shattered Seoul's confidence that North Korea could be trusted to fulfill the commitments made in the 1991 "Basic Agreements." The world community came to doubt the effectiveness of trying to induce North Korea to behave according to international norms. Champions of armed deterrence, particularly in Washington and Seoul, called for a return to Cold War reliance on containment, that is the diplomatic and economic isolation of North Korea. A growing chorus urged an end to offering Pyongyang inducements for good conduct, while a small but increasingly audible group advocated the use of military force. The Clinton Administration persisted in pursuing the policy track first outlined in the Reagan Administration's "Modest Initiative" and clarified at the January 1992 Bush Administration's high level meeting in New York.

Then Secretary of Defense William Perry succinctly summarized the Clinton Administration's policy in a May, 1994 speech. At the time, North Korea's removal of its spent nuclear fuel from its reactor for possible extraction of weapons grade plutonium posed the possibility of war on the Korean Peninsula. Perry said, in part:⁵

There are basically three ways that the United States and its allies can deal with the threat posed by North Korea's nuclear program. First, and quite obvious, we could do nothing. Second, we could apply military pressure. Third, we could pursue a strategy to persuade North Korea that it is in their best interest to give up their nuclear weapons program. The first option truly is untenable. ... At the other end of the spectrum would be the application of military pressure. But even limited application of military pressure entails the risk of a large scale war. Although we will not rule out any option for all time, this course should only be considered when all other possibilities have been exhausted. That leads us, then, to President Clinton's strategy which is diplomacy combined with military preparedness. ... The overall goal is a non-nuclear Korean Peninsula, and a strong international non-proliferation regime.

Persistent effort at a negotiated settlement yielded the US-DPRK Agreed Framework of October 1994. The essence of the Reagan Administration's "Modest Initiative" and the former Bush Administration's game plan for phased normalization were incorporated into this accord. The scope of inducements was expanded to compensate North Korea's agreement to "freeze" construction of two nuclear reactors it then had under construction, and to ensure continuous IAEA inspections of its nuclear facilities. Eventually, North Korea's old nuclear facilities are to be dismantled and its 8,000 spent nuclear fuel rods removed to a third country prior to the completion of two Light Water Reactors. The Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO), an international consortium headed by representatives from the United States, ROK and Japan, with financial support from U.S. allies in East Asia and the European

Union, would build the new, light water reactors. Additionally, KEDO, with U.S. funds, would supply annually North Korea with 500,000 metric tons of heavy fuel oil to generate an amount of electricity equivalent to that North Korea's two "frozen" nuclear power plants would have generated.

But numerous other inducements the Clinton Administration utilized in its dealings with North Korea resemble those the former Bush Administration offered Kim Il Sung prior to 1993. For example, the exchange of high level visits between Washington and Pyongyang in the fall of 2000, when North Korean General Cho Myong-nok called on the President in the White House and Secretary of State Albright chatted with Kim Jong Il in Pyongyang's massive May Day Stadium, was consistent with the former Bush Administration's convening of the first high level bilateral diplomatic meeting in New York on January 1992, and promise of more to come so long as North Korea fulfilled Washington's expectations and desires..

The former Bush Administration's *quid pro quo* strategy of linking demands to inducements, as incorporated into the Agreed Framework, has achieved significant, albeit slow progress toward fulfillment of the U.S. goals outlined in January 1992, and the US-North Korea nuclear negotiations of 1993-94. The Agreed Framework has accomplished some of its priority objectives. Of particular significance is the preservation of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime's global credibility and peace in Northeast Asia. Cautiously and hesitantly, Kim Il Sung's heir has permitted substantive progress in other areas.⁶ North Korea's nuclear construction program has remained frozen since November 1994. IAEA monitoring of North Korea's nuclear activities has been continuous ever since. Beginning in 1995, Pyongyang has repeatedly renounced international terrorism, and in the fall of 2001, it signed two more international conventions designed to thwart terrorism. After considerable hesitation, in September 1999, North Korea unilaterally declared a moratorium on the testing on long range ballistic missiles. There has been unprecedented progress in North-South Korea dialogue and engagement.

Since the torrential rains of August 1995, North Korea has engaged and opened itself to the international community as never before. United Nations agencies and numerous private, non-governmental humanitarian relief organizations have established continuing programs inside North Korea. KEDO's presence has grown to several hundred foreign workers living inside North Korea. In July 1996, the first team of US military personnel to visit North Korea since the fall of 1950 arrived in Pyongyang to begin the recovery of the remains of US military Korean War dead. This US Army continues and has gradually increased in terms of length of stays and number of American soldiers involved. Also, since 1999, thousands of South Koreans visit North Korea each year to tour the Diamond Mountain resort area, to promote relief work in the areas of agriculture, medicine and related fields, as well as to invest in joint commercial ventures with North Korean partners. Yet to be achieved, however, is the normalization of US-DPRK, not to mention North-South relations. The Cold War's legacy of armed deterrence, mutual mistrust and frequent confrontation continues to plague the Korean Peninsula.⁷

Sunshine Diplomacy

Viewed against this back drop, South Korean President Kim Dae Jung's so-called "sunshine diplomacy" closely parallels the former Bush and Clinton Administrations' reliance on an approach to North Korea that aims at a balance between deterrence, on the one hand, and diplomatic, commercial and humanitarian engagement. President Kim's policy also shares his American counterparts' reliance on diplomatic and economic inducements to gain North Korea's cooperation. Foremost among these inducements has been the very significant South Korea investment of food aid, fertilizer, farm equipment, and business investment in North Korea.

Legacies and Realities

Korea's division, the Korean War of 1950-53, a half century of armed deterrence, Reagan's "Modest Initiative," Bush's double track "deterrence and diplomacy" approach, the Clinton Administration's Agreed Framework and South Korean President Kim Dae Jung's "sunshine diplomacy" comprise the legacy incumbent President Bush must face when formulating his North Korea policy. The architect of the "deterrence and diplomacy" approach to North Korea was not former Defense Secretary William Perry, as some might believe because of the former secretary's review of Korea policy and recommendations to President Clinton. On the contrary, this group of policies traces its political ancestry back to none other than incumbent President Bush's conservative Republican predecessors and current supporters. They include: President Reagan, Secretaries of State George Shultz and James Baker, Bush's presidential campaign manager, and National Security Advisor General Brent Scowcroft, U.S. Army retired. In short, the younger President Bush, like his North Korean counterpart Kim Jong-il, must contend with both his father's legacy as well as advisers when striving to formulate his own policy toward the Korean Peninsula. For either leader, breaking with the past presents formidable political choices.

But the younger Bush has a considerable advantage over Kim Jong-il. He does not have to rely on his father's legacy for legitimacy. Kim Jong Il's sole claim to power is the fact that he is his father's son. In America's democratic political system, the President's authority evolves from the people's political will as expressed in the election of their leaders. Bush's election empowers him with far more flexibility, compared to his North Korean opposite, to formulate foreign policy. Kim must move with extreme caution to avoid exciting the concerns of the most powerful element in North Korea - the "old guard" military and Korean Workers' Party leaders who once surrounded Kim Il Sung. As the guardians of Kim Il Sung's legacy, this "old guard" appears intent on guiding the younger Kim toward perpetuating his father's policies. After all, these policies preserve their position and prosperity within the regime. Free of such constraints, any substantial initiative to change the current status quo in US-DPRK relations would seem more likely to come from the United States.

The Context for Younger Bush's Policy:

Each morning, after any U.S. president has listened to the local Washington news and glanced at the front pages of several national newspapers, he receives his daily intelligence briefing. For Bush, it takes less than thirty minutes to glance over National Security Adviser Dr. Rice's five or so page gist of the CIA's colorful, thoroughly illustrated and usually unnecessarily highly classified daily briefing, and the Defense Intelligence Agency's "dog and pony" show of satellite pictures and impressive and colorful charts. Two other intelligence reports, the National Security Agency (NSA) report and State Department's Morning Summary rely primarily on succinct prose, and spare the visual aids to convey their assessments. All the world is a stage, Shakespeare reportedly said. Viewed from the White House, domestic politics is always at center stage. The rest of the world must wait in the wings. This is an unchanging reality, irrespective of whether Democrats or Republicans dominate the White House and Congress.⁸

The "inter-agency process" propels the making and implementation of foreign policy. The six principles on the Bush foreign policy team are: Vice President, National Security Adviser, Secretary of State (SecState), Secretary of Defense (SecDef), Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). These "principles" share influence, but not equally, nor necessarily as outlined in the U.S. Constitution and laws. The president's personal preferences combine with individual personality and bureaucratic politics to determine each agency's influence on presidential decisions. In the Bush Administration, Vice President Cheney and Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, not the National Security Adviser or Secretary of State, play the leading roles in foreign policy decisions. CIA Director Tenet and the JCS chairman have at least equal, if not greater influence that Colin Powell and Condolissa Rice.(10)

Presidential Administrations differ, however, regarding priorities and methods for achieving their goals. After one year in office, President Bush finally has a foreign policy after arriving in Washington without one. Instead, he brought a parochial world view rooted in Christian fundamentalism and Texas political populism. This is not unlike his predecessor Bill Clinton, who also was a state governor uninitiated in international politics. Yet accompanying Bush was an accomplished team of Cold War warriors, all of whom had worked for his father:

Vice President, and former Defense Secretary, Dick Cheney,
Secretary of Defense, current and former, Donald Rumsfeld,
Secretary of State, and former Chief of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Colin
Powell,

Deputy Secretary of Defense, and former Defense Assistance Secretary for
Security Policy and State Department Assistant Secretary for East Asian
and Pacific Affairs, Paul Wolfowitz, who served both Presidents Reagan
and Bush,

Deputy Secretary of State, and former Defense Assistant Secretary for East Asia

and the Pacific, Armitage,
Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs, and former National
Security Council official, Jim Kelley,
National Security Adviser, and former foreign policy adviser to President Reagan
and, Condellisa Rice,
National Security Adviser for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, and former Defense
Department officer in the Reagan and Bush Administrations, Torkel
Patterson.

Their shared Cold War experience and conservative political philosophy forged a common world view. The United States was, and must remain the “leader of the free world,” champion of democracy and promoter of individual prosperity because it embodies humankind’s best aspirations. Peace is preferred, but armed deterrence remains essential to preserve “Pax Americana.” The “evil empire,” i.e. the Soviet Union, has collapsed and its communist ideology is discredited. Armed deterrence, supplemented by diplomacy, was the cornerstone of U.S. policy during the Cold War and is credited with defeating communism. But now a new enemy lurks beyond U.S. borders - nations which proliferate the weapons of mass destruction (referred to as WMD and consisting of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons) and ballistic missiles to deliver them, as well as those nations which promote international terrorism. (11)

To address these new threats, Bush’s foreign policy team has refined the concept of global deterrence. Their purpose is to make America’s defenses so formidable that no nation would dare challenge U.S. might. Diplomacy is necessary, but only to deal with one’s allies and friends, not one’s enemies. U.S. global concerns take precedent over regional conflicts and tensions. In other words, the United States assumes responsibility for protecting itself. Its allies must deal with their own regional disputes. This enhanced concept of deterrence is embodied in the Bush Administration’s proposed National Missile Defense (NMD), a global network of sophisticated, long range ballistic missile detection and destruction facilities to be built in the United States.(12) For the United States, the benefits would be multiple. Fortress America, the dream of strategic defense planners before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, would be restored. NMD, it is promised, will secure the United States from nations possessing WMD, not to mention former but still potential enemies like Russia and China.

The basic outline of the U.S. deterrence posture would be preserved. The strategic triad of nuclear tipped ballistic missiles, long range bombers and nuclear submarines would be preserved along with a dozen aircraft carrier battle groups. In Europe, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) would be expanded to include the former Soviet Union and its former allies. In Northeast Asia, the separate bilateral treaties with Japan and the Republic of Korea would remain essentially unchanged, except each would be encouraged to more fully complement the U.S. strategic nuclear and NMD umbrellas with conventional forces, as detailed in the US-Japan Expanded Defense Guidelines..

NMD requires the discarding of the US-Soviet Union Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, but two global treaties designed to limit the spread of weapons of mass destruction would be retained:

the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). Paradoxically, the United States would continue to distance itself from international treaties that outlaw chemical and biological weapons, and land mines. The NPT strives to limit the possession of nuclear weapons to a small select number of nations: the United States, Russia, United Kingdom, and France. Efforts by Israel, South Africa, and North Korea have been blunted. Iraq's efforts continues to be a source of keen concern. Despite the MTCR, China, North Korea and the Ukraine have exported their ballistic missile technology and hardware to several nations in the Middle East, including Iran, Iraq, Pakistan and Libya. Meanwhile, India and Pakistan continue their nuclear weapons and ballistic missile development programs.

America's defenses would become "leaner" and "meaner," yet remain all powerful but at a lower cost. Reducing the need to maintain large numbers of ground forces abroad would allow politicians to claim they were "bringing the boys home," a popular refrain of American politicians when seeking public support. War would become politically less controversial since American casualties could be kept to a minimum while maximum destruction rained down on the enemy in the form of high technology "smart" bombs and pilotless cruise missiles and drones. Then too, reliance on support from allies would become less essential, reducing America's need to respond sensitively to their *quid pro quo* requests for compensation in exchange for assisting the United States.

Absent from the NMD equation, however, was a convincing, overarching theme and an enemy with a human face. Initially, the plan attracted more criticism than acceptance. Moscow and Beijing set aside their differences to complain. Seoul and Pyongyang separately but in unison reacted negatively, as did members of NATO and Japan. The grand scheme had excited a chorus of protest, from both friend and foe.

The September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. may have provided the missing pieces. President Bush, an adroit politician, took the opportunity to articulate Americans' fears and to launch a plan to ensure their safety. He seized on the "isms" of nationalism and terrorism, linked them to Christian morality and declared global war on terrorism. As his father had done with Panama's dictator President Noriega and Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, the younger Bush demonized America's enemy in the person of Osama bin Laden. As if following a screen play from an American cowboy western movie, Bush dispatched his posse - the U.S. military - to "get those evil people." Americans roared their approval. Bush then called on the world to either side with good, the United States, or be identified with the "evil terrorists." A multitude of nations, both allies and former enemies, signed up to assist in the war on terrorism. The Taliban and al Qaeda crumpled beneath the sheer massiveness of the U.S. ariel assault. The war on terrorism, however, has been inconclusive. The "evil men," are still "out there" both within the United States and in the world beyond, according to the Administration's spokesmen.

President Bush broadened his definition of the enemy in his January 2002 State of the Union speech. With the Congress and American people looking and listening, President Bush put a face on the enemy - the Axis of Evil - Iraq, Iran and North Korea - nations he described as the new threat to the United States because of their possession and/or development of the weapons of mass destruction. Bush's choice of words reflects his state of mind more than global reality. He was focused on rallying the support of the American people and Congress for his foreign policy of war on terrorism and global deterrence in the form of NMD. The world, however, was listening, and his foreign critics outnumbered all others. Whether Bush achieved his goal of building domestic support for his foreign policy remains to be seen. Whether his rhetoric has damaged or promoted his quest for global support of the war on terrorism, and NMD, also remains to be seen. Meanwhile, regional disputes intensify. In the Middle East, Israel and the Palestine State are engaged in virtual warfare, and the situations continue to simmer in the Balkans, Kashmiri and on the Korean Peninsula. (13)

The Korean Peninsula in Bush's Foreign Policy

Within this domestic political and global strategic context, President Bush at the beginning of his Administration placed domestic policy ahead of foreign policy. A board review of U.S. foreign policy world wide, including North Korea, followed during the spring of 2001. Nevertheless, domestic political considerations, more than international reality, compelled him to reassure his conservative Republican supporters that he would not continue his predecessor's "appeasement" policy, nor condone "immoral" international conduct. President Bush's mantra regarding North Korea became audible before the policy review had been completed. The mantra accents the negative despotic and immoral aspects of North Korea's political system, showers its leader with pejorative adjectives, and relegates the nation to the "axis of evil." He and his ranking officials repeatedly call for "verification" through inspections and "conditionality," the linking of food aid to North Korea's compliance with requirements of the international humanitarian community.(14)

In the midst of the policy review, South Korean President Kim Dae-jung visited Washington, D.C. in March, 2001. The timing could not have been worse. Kim's apparent insistence on the visit was ill considered given Bush's preoccupation with domestic issues, specifically the appointment of officials and the income tax cut. The premature visit suggests Kim tried to set Bush's foreign policy agenda by placing the Korean Peninsula close to the top. Bush and his advisers reacted assertively and negatively. The sum result was public friction between the allies over their respective policies toward North Korea.

The visit caused more harm than good. Press statements following subsequent U.S.-ROK-Japan Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group (TCOG) meetings about North Korea policy sought to repair the damage, but the damage had been done. Kim Dae Jung returned home essentially empty handed and embarrassed, his already sagging public support further eroded. Pyongyang could not help but notice that Bush and Kim had clashed. As always, Pyongyang prefers to deal with a politically strong counterpart, a leader who can fulfill domestically unpopular

commitments. Kim Jong Il appears to have concluded that there was little to gain from dealing with Kim Dae Jung. The real deal maker appeared to be in the White House, not Seoul's Blue House. Subsequently, progress toward fulfillment of the terms of the June 2000 Pyongyang Summit between the two Korean leaders, already uncertain, ceased altogether. Kim Jong Il's much anticipated return visit to Seoul has yet to materialize, despite the relatively large economic inducements Seoul has already shipped to the North. Additionally, in Washington, the visit and its aftermath may have strengthened the hand of those foreign policy advisers who advocated discontinuation of economic inducements as the best way to prod North Korea toward measuring up to its international commitments. (15)

President Bush formally and publicly announced his Administration's policy toward North Korea on June 6, 2001. Not surprisingly, Bush's Korea policy contains more continuity than change. Preservation of stability in Northeast Asia through armed deterrence remains the foremost priority. Deterrence in the Korean context means:

- maintenance of the US nuclear umbrella over the Korean Peninsula in conjunction the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons;
- continuation of the US-ROK Mutual Defense Treaty which provides for the forward deployment of US ground, air and naval forces on and around the peninsula;
- anchoring US military reinforcements and logistical support in Japan.
- engagement of the DPRK in negotiations regarding weapons of mass destruction, particularly ballistic missiles, and conventional force reduction.

The announcement's timing indicated a subtle but significant policy shift. Its release the day before South Korea's foreign minister arrived in Washington, D.C. for consultations with his U.S. counterpart suggested that the Bush Administration had decided its policy toward the Korean Peninsula without ministerial consultations that could have taken place the very next day. The message was clear both to Seoul and Pyongyang - the Bush Administration had reclaimed from Kim Dae-jung leadership of policy toward North Korea. Earlier, Kim had established his leadership after assuming South Korea's presidency in February 1998 by rallying the support of Moscow, Beijing, Tokyo and eventually Washington, D.C. for his "sunshine diplomacy," his successful bid to convene a summit with his North Korean counterpart and winning of the Nobel Peace Prize. But his policies had faltered in the face of North Korea intransigence during U.S. Secretary of State Albright's visit to Pyongyang in the fall of 2000. The message to the Korean leaders was consistent with Bush's concept of America as the world's number one power and the concept of global deterrence based on NMD. In short, the United States would not, in principal, follow its allies' lead anywhere, including the Korean Peninsula.

The Continuing Agenda

The basic agenda for US-North Korea negotiations remains largely unchanged, except for the addition of conventional force reduction, something the Clinton Administration had already pursued at the inconclusive "Four Party Talks" of 1997-98 and "General Level" talks of 1998.

North Korea's weapons of mass destruction programs (nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles) still top the list, followed by terrorism, conventional force reduction, North-South dialogue, concern for the welfare of the North Korean people and respect for their human rights, and the recovery of US Korean War casualties' remains.

1. Nuclear Weapons: Whether North Korea will comply fully with the terms of the Agreed Framework should be determined during the Bush Administration's latter two years of tenure. The Administration's strategy appears one of a high profile public campaign to highlight North Korea's obligations under the Agreed Framework while hinting that non-compliance would expose North Korea to the risk of international condemnation, the discontinuation of the KEDO reactor construction project and, ultimately, possibly even U.S. military action. (17)

Progress on the Agreed Framework's implementation has been uneven. North Korea's spent nuclear fuel has been placed in long term, safe storage. If reprocessed, this fuel would yield sufficient weapons grade plutonium to fabricate several nuclear weapons. Yet to be resolved, however, is precisely when and where this spent fuel will be shipped out of North Korea to a third country for final disposal. IAEA inspections of North Korea's Nyongbyon Nuclear Research Center continue and construction of two graphite-moderated nuclear reactors remains frozen while KEDO continues building two light water nuclear reactors at Kumpo, North Korea.

Most crucial of all is North Korea's intentions regarding its commitment to cooperate fully with the IAEA's effort to determine just how much plutonium Pyongyang produced prior to 1992 and how much, if any, it is concealing any from the international community. IAEA-DPRK negotiations on this issue continue, but progress has been slow and uncertain. Under the Agreed Framework, North Korea must satisfy the IAEA's concerns prior to KEDO supplying key components for the nuclear reactors it is building for North Korea. The IAEA now claims it needs three to four years to complete its analysis of data and other evidence yet to be acquired from North Korea before it can determine whether Pyongyang has complied with the Agreed Framework's stipulations.

Additionally, North Korea persists in its demands for substantial compensation in exchange for its cooperation with the IAEA. It wants South Korea or KEDO to provide it electricity and/or to cover the cost of upgrading its dilapidated electric power grid. These negotiations are at an impasse, and prospects for achieving a negotiated resolution remain uncertain. North Korea, however, has much more to gain than not by cooperating with the IAEA. Ignoring the terms of the Agreed Framework and the IAEA's requirements would set the stage for a severe crisis which could even escalate to war. Surely, North Korea's civilian leadership recognizes the small, economically feeble nation would lose in a conflict with the United States and South Korea. North Korea's military leadership, however, might believe such a conflict could improve North Korea's negotiating position vis a vis Washington. Either way, the Korean people would suffer horrendously.

2. Ballistic Missiles: The Bush Administration's goal, like its predecessor, is the discontinuation of North Korea's development, production, export and domestic deployment of ballistic missiles. Thus far, the Administration has been unable to restart the missile talks previously initiated but that stalled during the Clinton Administration. One reason is the continuing debate within the Administration regarding whether and what kind of inducements might be offered North Korea for ending its ballistic missile program. Pyongyang has long sought considerable financial benefit such as an end to additional economic sanctions, access to the U.S. market, and a large sum of cash or foreign aid.

Despite the continuing impasse, North Korea maintains its unilateral moratorium on the testing of ballistic missiles, which it began in September 1999. At the end of the Clinton Administration, there was hope that a negotiated agreement on missiles was near at hand, but these were dashed at bilateral talks in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in November 2000. The United States was prepared to ease economic sanctions in exchange for North Korea's halting of its export of ballistic missiles and related technology, their development and domestic deployment. Pyongyang was willing to do so, but only regarding selected shorter, not longer range missiles. Prospects for eventual resolution appear relatively good since North Korea's missile exports have declined significantly over the past decade because of the low quality and inaccuracy of its shorter range Scud and Nodong missiles, and the failure of the longer range Taepodong missile tested in September 1998. (18)

3. Terrorism: Unlike missiles, there has been substantive progress on terrorism. North Korea has repeatedly renounced the use and support for international terrorism, and has become a party to several international conventions opposed to terrorism. The Bush administration remains unsatisfied. It wants North Korea to sign all UN anti-terrorism conventions, and to cooperate fully with Japan regarding North Korea agents' alleged kidnaping of several Japanese citizens several years ago. Further complicating resolution of this issue is the Bush Administration's linking of North Korea's Middle East missile exports to terrorism. The Administration has quietly explained to Pyongyang that its possible use of ballistic missiles against its neighbors as well as export of them to unstable regions of the world "terrorizes" the inhabitants of those areas.

Until both Washington and Tokyo are satisfied with Pyongyang's efforts regarding terrorism, the two allies will continue to block Pyongyang's entry into the World Bank and Asian Development Bank, something Seoul does not support. Prospects for a thawing of Tokyo-Pyongyang relations will remain bleak pending progress toward resolution of the abduction issue, something which does not now appear possible in the near term. The Bush Administration, despite Seoul's reservations, can be counted on to continue its support for Japan's on this issue. (19)

4. Conventional Force Reduction: Long a contentious issue, substantive progress has yet to be achieved despite numerous proposals and concerted effort by all the concerned parties. For years, the issue was relegated to unproductive meetings of the Military Armistice Commission (MAC), which has long policed the Korean War Armistice. In 1989, Pyongyang proposed

simultaneous conventional force reduction, but in exchange for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from the Korean Peninsula. The first Bush Administration intended to initiate by 1992 the reduction of U.S. military forces deployed in Northeast Asia, but not their withdrawal. Growing suspicions about North Korea's nuclear intentions halted this reduction program. (20)

The US-DPRK Agreed Framework negotiations did not touch upon conventional forces. Shortly after the accord's October 1994 signing, while negotiating resolution of the December 1994 US Army helicopter intrusion into North Korea, the U.S. side promised to initiate general level talks to address issues of mutual concern, including the reduction of conventional forces. General level talks did not commence until the spring of 1998, but then proved inconclusive.

Earlier, North Korea in the spring of 1996 had initiated a campaign to replace the MAC with a "new peace mechanism." The proposal met immediate opposition from Seoul and Washington because of Pyongyang's insistence that it negotiate a separate peace treaty only with the United States. In April, 1996, President Clinton and his ROK counterpart Kim Yong-sam jointly proposed Four Party peace talks between the two allies, plus North Korea and China. Conventional force reduction, confidence building measures and the new peace mechanism issues eventually were placed on the agenda, but only after two years of intense diplomatic effort. The endeavor ultimately proved unproductive.

The two Korean leaders reportedly discussed conventional force reduction during their June 2000 summit, but there has been no substantive progress. As before, Washington and Seoul continue their joint efforts to win Pyongyang's cooperation in the implementation of confidence building measures designed to reduce the likelihood of armed clashes along the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) that separates the two Koreas.

The Bush Administration is certain to persist in U.S.-ROK opposition to North Korea's repeated and frequent calls for a "new peace mechanism" to replace the Korean War Armistice and phased withdrawal of all U.S. military forces from the Korean Peninsula. Significant progress on this issue is not likely without both sides agreeing to a substantial, simultaneous reduction of their ground forces on the Korean Peninsula, something hard to envision given the two sides' discomfort with one another regarding other issues, such as weapons of mass destruction.

5. South-North Dialogue: The Bush Administration will most likely continue its public expressions of support for ROK President Kim Dae-jung's "sunshine diplomacy" toward North Korea, while at the same time insist privately on retaining leadership of over all policy and strategy toward North Korea.

After impressive progress between 1998 and 2000, inter-Korean relations are once again stalled. Looking back, Pyongyang appears to have benefitted more than Seoul. When Kim Dae-jung launched "sunshine" diplomacy in 1998, the majority of South Koreans supported him, as did the governments of Russia, China, Japan, most of Europe, Canada and the United States. Subsequently, Pyongyang received billions of dollars in hard currency, material goods and

investment between 1998 and 2002. The joint venture centered on tourism to North Korea's Diamond Mountains (Kumgang-san), and earned Pyongyang \$1.2 million monthly plus \$100 per visitor (more than \$48 million for the monthly charge plus \$41 million for the per person surcharge or \$89 million in U.S. dollars, but South Korea is \$24 million behind in payments). Since 1995, South Korea has also supplied the North 1.3 million metric tons of grain and other food worth about \$130 million. Additionally, Seoul has supplied Pyongyang with some 300,000 metric tons of chemical fertilizer and approximately \$100 million in medicine, agricultural development assistance, livestock, seed and other agricultural inputs. Since 1998, major South Korean firms, such as the electronic multinational Samsung, have made substantial investments in North Korea. President Kim Dae-jung also released from jail long imprisoned pro-North Korean so-called "prisoners of conscience."

Additionally, since 1994, the international community has showered aid upon North Korea. KEDO began in December 1994 with its annual supply of 500,000 metric tons of heavy fuel oil (at least 3,500,000 metric tons since the program began) to generate electricity, as provided for in the Agreed Framework. The estimated US \$4 billion construction of two light water reactors began in 1996. The United States, Japan, the European Union, Canada and Australia, both their governments and humanitarian aid organizations, have complemented South Korea's and the United Nations' humanitarian and developmental aid to North Korea with almost 5,000,000 metric tons of food since 1995. North Korea simultaneously expanded its ties to the international community, winning diplomatic recognition from many European nations, Australia and Canada after a half century of diplomatic and commercial estrangement from most of them.

North Korea's response to South Korea's and the international community's generosity has been generally disappointing. Other than allowing IAEA inspections, engaging in high level dialogue and allowing an increased flow of South Koreans into North Korea, Pyongyang has yet to make any substantial and enduring alteration of its still generally hostile posture toward South Korea, the United States and Japan.

The Bush Administration, with the support of South Korea and Japan, is certain to continue its predecessor's two track approach of providing limited humanitarian aid while denying North Korea access to the U.S. domestic market, investment and loans from international financial institutions, at least until Pyongyang takes concrete steps to address the three allies concerns. (21)

At the same time, the Bush Administration will continue its linkage of humanitarian aid to increasing the international humanitarian community's access to North Korea and facilitating greater transparency and accountability for humanitarian aid distributions. In this regard, the Bush Administration has shifted from reliance on the Clinton Administration's quiet diplomacy in this regard, to an increasingly audible effort to embarrass Pyongyang into compliance with international requirements.

Future prospects for North-South dialogue will remain unclear pending South Korea's election of a new president in December 2002. Over the long term, both Koreas have far more to lost than

gain from confrontation. Since 1996, they have managed to resolved several serious military confrontation through dialogue, an impressive track record when compared to there much more violent relationship prior to 1987 when North Korea blew up a South Korean civilian airliner, killing all its passengers. Prospects for continuing dialogue would be significantly enhanced if the new South Korean president chooses to continue the current president's policy of economic cooperation.

7. Recovery of US Korean War Casualty Remains: Unlike other areas since the Bush Administration assumed office, significant progress in this area has continued, despite the recent lapse early in 2002. The change of Administrations did not disrupt the joint U.S. Army-Korean People's Army recovery of Korean War U.S. military personnel's remains until February 2002. After Bush assumed office, several of these missions were successfully conducted in the summer of 2001. But a test of wills at the February 2002 round of preparatory talks promptly produced an impasse. Conducted since the first mission in July 1996, these annual talks establish the amount of compensation the U.S. will provide North Korea to pay the recovery operations' expenses, both for the U.S. Army teams and their North Korean counterparts. At the February 2002 talks, North Korea opened with the highly political demand. that the U.S. side apologize for President Bush's previous negative remarks about his North Korean counterpart, and linking of the DPRK to the "axis of evil." The U.S. side promptly rejected these demands, and then reportedly presented the North Korean Army representatives a "take it or leave it" compensation package. Predictably, the North Koreans rejected the offer. When the talks finally resumed in June, both sides quickly settled on an arrangement virtually identical to the one tabled earlier, except because of the lose of time, the U.S. would have to reduce the number of missions, and the North Koreans would receive a proportionately smaller amount of compensation. In short, both sides' hard line negotiating tactics had cost each side equally. (22)

Washington has long viewed this program as essentially an apolitical and humanitarian one. Former President George Bush placed the recovery of American Missing in Action high on the priority list of issues to be resolved prior to the normalization of US-DPRK relations. President Clinton retained the priority status and negotiations during the first half of 1996 set the stage for the first joint operation in July 1996. The Bush Administration, at the urging of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and United Nations Command in Seoul, has de-emphasized the program's significance, claiming it exposes U.S. soldiers to unnecessary danger by sending them into North Korea.

The North Korea program closely parallels the similar effort initiated in Vietnam a decade earlier. As with Vietnam, compensation is paid to the North Korea army, but according to a detailed list of criteria. In 2002, the program will cost the U.S. about than \$3 million to conduct six operations at two major Korean War battlefields in North Korea.

The Bush Administration will most likely continue the program. Veterans groups strongly support it. The operations also have a confidence building benefit in that soldiers of both still hostile armies live and work together. Additionally, the missions facilitate extensive U.S. military access to North Korea.

6. Human Rights: The Bush Administration has made more audible than its predecessors its keen displeasure with the human rights situation in North Korea. President Bush and his ranking officials' mantra about North Korea highlight the Administration's concerns. But as any visitor to North Korea immediately senses, improvement in the human rights situation remains a vague, distant hope, little else. Kim Jong Il's regime persists in the despotic patterns of its founder, Kim Il Sung. Simply stated, the concept of human rights is antithetical to the regime's concept of state. The majority of the population remains on the verge of starvation, denied access to all information about the outside world, burdened with back breaking manual labor and prevented from traveling freely, even within their own nation. (23)

Rhetoric alone cannot improve the situation. Nor will increasing the severity of the condemnation necessarily produce the desired results. The Reagan and Bush Administrations earlier learned public condemnation of South Korea's authoritarian government in the 1970s, particularly during the Carter Administration, did not advance the cause of human rights and democratization advocates in South Korea. Quiet diplomacy, not shrill public rhetoric, did achieve concrete results after 1985. Sadly, the human rights situation in North Korea is not likely to improve significantly until the incumbent regime collapses or fades into history.

More recently, North Korean refugees living in China have captured wide spread attention. But as Department of State Assistant Secretary for Population, Refugees and Migration Arthur E. Dewey told the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration at its June 21, 2002 hearing, the Administration is "concerned" about the forced repatriation of North Koreans from China back to their homeland. Nevertheless, he continued, "... U.S. diplomatic personnel are not authorized to grant asylum to asylum seekers entering a U.S. (Diplomatic) compound." Instead, U.S. policy requires referral to the U.N. High Commissioner for refugees. He concluded with the inconsequential statement that, "The Department (of State, i.e. the Bush Administration) is also currently in the midst of a policy review on North Koreans in China."

Frustrated Expectations

The Korean Peninsula's problems have long frustrated everyone involved with this small sliver of land. Except for some unforeseen, radical alteration of the current political situation on the Peninsula, the Bush Administration is no more likely, or capable of achieving North-South reconciliation or US-DPRK normalization than its predecessors. At the same time, however, not attempting to foster a durable peace on the Peninsula could open the way for calamity. Realistically speaking, reconciliation and reunification of the two Koreas will remain an elusive goal until either the Kim Jong Il regime disappears or the United States decides to alter fundamentally its current military posture on the Korean Peninsula.

Obviously, neither President Bush nor Kim Jong Il are ready to take such unprecedented steps, leaving the only realistic alternative which is continuity of past policies. Armed deterrence will persist as the underlying framework for North-South and US-DPRK relations. Compliance with the Agreed Framework, including construction of the light water reactors and continuation of the

IAEA inspections, will temper tensions in the region. So too will the relatively recently established preference of all concerned parties, including Beijing and Moscow, for North-South and US-DPRK negotiations. This dialogue enhances opportunities to resolve differences via diplomacy rather than the clash of arms. Actually, without saying as much, the two Koreas through their dialogue since 1999 have begun putting into practices several of the key features of 1991 Basic Agreements. Similarly, the 1994 US-DPRK Agreed Framework has given Washington and Pyongyang, despite all the criticism of this accord, ample reason to engage in diplomatic dialogue to resolve their differences, rather than to clash verbally at Military Armistice Commission Meetings..

But a potential crisis is in the making. Beginning in the fall of 2002, a number of crucial developments will coincide. South Korea's champion of engagement with North Korea will be a lame duck. The people of South Korea will elect a new president in December. Whether he or she will remain commitment to dialogue and economic cooperation will not become clear until after the new administration in Seoul assumes power in February 2003. Mean while, the IAEA has announced it is growing increasingly impatient with North Korea regarding its inability to initiate the complex and lengthy process of verifying Pyongyang's previous plutonium production. The Bush Administration has likewise indicated that it too is running out of patience with North Korea, regarding this among other issues. Already the Administration has informed the U.S. Congress it will discontinue funding for selected KEDO activities next year if the IAEA-DPRK impasse persists. Then too, Pyongyang's unilateral moratorium on the testing of longer range ballistic missiles will end in 2003.

Although the Bush Administration has claimed leadership of policy toward North Korea, it has not played a leading role in getting US-DPRK dialogue and negotiations restarted. Instead, squabbling over how to proceed continues to hamper Department of State efforts in this regard. At the same time, recent diplomatic overtures from Pyongyang could help break the diplomatic log jam. At the end of July, Pyongyang's Foreign Ministry stated it was ready to engage Seoul, Tokyo and Washington in dialogue. Seoul promptly responded positively, and working level talks in early August set the stage for another round of ministerial level North-South talks on economic cooperation. Washington's response was less prompt but generally positive. But whether renewed Washington-Pyongyang dialogue will achieve more than accomplished during the past year and a half of talks about resuming talks remains to be seen. Representatives from Tokyo and Pyongyang chatted briefly at the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) at the end of July, but there is little reason to believe that substantive discussions can resume in the near future.

The hesitancy on all sides may be a consequence of frustrated expectations in Washington, Seoul, Pyongyang and Tokyo. Previously, achieving a negotiated settlement with Pyongyang was primarily an exercise in patient searching for its "bottom line," that is what kind and amount of compensation would gain its cooperation. Unfortunately, the virtual flood of South Korean "inducements" into North Korea in recent years and North Korean's marginal response has aroused frustrated expectations on all sides.

Advocates of “engagement” in Washington, D.C. and “sunshine diplomacy” in Seoul, together with their supporters in Tokyo, now share, after several years of trying to induce Pyongyang to embrace international norms of good conduct, the frustration and disappointment of those who criticized the inducement effort. Seven years ago hope prevailed that a carefully orchestrated program of demands and inducements, i.e. matching “carrots and sticks” could transform North Korea into an acceptable member of the international community. As we have seen, former President Bush, together with many ranking officials now in the present Bush Administration, were the original architects of this approach to North Korea. The Clinton Administration continued and expanded the effort.

Now, many responsible for initiating the “carrot and stick” strategy point to the track record of the past five years as evidence that neither “engagement” or “sunshine diplomacy” have transformed North Korea. As in Washington, many ranking officials in Seoul are displeased this the lack of progress. More important is the possibility that Seoul’s most ardent critics of “sunshine diplomacy” and its American variation will find themselves in high government office following South Korea’s presidential election at the end of this year. In Tokyo, the Japanese public’s frustration with North Korea is so keen that its prime minister prefers not to mention the subject. The sum results could be a turning away from diplomacy, negotiation and reliance on inducements to resolve outstanding issues with North Korea. Instead, the political and public moods in Washington, Seoul and Tokyo, by next year, could favor a much more assertive stance vis a vis North Korea, unless Pyongyang promptly and decisively fulfills its commitments to the IAEA, the Agreed Framework, and the 1991 North-South Basic Agreements..

The leadership in Pyongyang, however, is equally frustrated. Kim Jong Il appears to have painted himself into a corner. On the one hand, his willingness to open his domain to IAEA inspections, food monitors from the United Nations and European Union, public denouncing of terrorism and meeting with South Korea’s president have gained him a great deal of much needed material benefit. At the same time, however, he has had to slowly enmesh North Korea in a web of restraining international obligations such as halting his nuclear weapons program, suspending the testing of ballistic missiles, cooperating with international organizations and revealing his regime’s weaknesses to the outside world. Some of these concessions have won North Korea diplomatic recognition, but securing the future of his regime, both in terms of national defense and economic gain, remain elusive.

The more Kim Jong Il has had to surrender in terms of his domain’s former isolation, the more he demands of those seeking to engage his regime in diplomatic and commercial engagement. Kim Jong Il obviously has yet to learn that he must give just as much as he demands of others. Despots do not learn such lessons quickly.

On the other hand, so long as the United States projects a hostile and demeaning posture toward North Korea, Kim Jong Il must respond in kind to preserve his domestic political support, particularly among his “old guard” generals and the Korea Workers Party (KWP) leadership. At the same time, his primary negotiating card remains North Korea’s potential to wreck havoc on

peace in Northeast Asia. Expecting North Korea to negotiate its disarmament as a prerequisite to the normalization of diplomatic and commercial relations with the United States could prove an excessive expectation.

Restarting the Dialogue

Negotiations between Pyongyang, Seoul, Washington and Tokyo are not likely to resume until all the concern parties have addressed their frustrated expectations. The “carrot and stick,” engagement or “sunshine diplomacy” approach is not intrinsically wrong. At its conception, the approach envisioned presenting North Korea’s leaders with a stark dilemma - either it could accept international norms of behavior and share in the benefits of joining the international community of nations, or it could persist in its pattern of coercive diplomacy and isolation. The 1994 Agreed Framework achieved a balance between reducing North Korea’s coercive behavior, i.e. disregard for its commitments under the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, in exchange for economic inducements, plus the promise of more so long as it continued to reform its conduct along internationally accepted norms. The Agreed Framework’s general pattern of success suggests the “carrot and stick” approach is not intrinsically flawed.

Rather, flawed implementation of “engagement” and “sunshine diplomacy” are more likely responsible for Pyongyang’s subsequent inflated expectations of achieving gain without concessions. The U.S. government’s provision of huge amounts of food aid in exchange for North Korea’s participation in the “Four Party Talks” briefings and meetings of 1997-99 probably initiated the spiral of rising expectations in Pyongyang. After all, all Pyongyang had to do to receive large amounts of food aid was to send a delegation to talks. It did not have to commitment to facilitating progress toward resolution of substantive issues.

The Kim Dae-jung Administration encouraged a similar inflation of expectations in Pyongyang beginning with the Diamond Mountain talks in the fall of 1998. Obviously anxious to prove his strategy would work, Kim began to throw money and other benefits in Pyongyang’s direction without any specific *quid pro quo*. Naturally Kim Jong Il, head of an impoverished, virtually starving nation, accepted whatever his South Korean counterpart offered. Again, the only “concession” ultimately insisted upon by South Korea was participation in the internationally acclaimed but essentially non-substantive June 2000 Inter-Korean Summit. For Kim Jong Il, he won concrete economic gains in exchange for concessions that were essentially ceremonial and of no enduring benefit to South Korea.

The Bush Administration’s policy toward North Korea appears designed to lower Pyongyang’s expectations and to ensure substantive progress toward resolution of outstanding bilateral issues. Until Kim Jong Il accepts the new game plan, i.e. no concrete inducements will be forthcoming until North Korea makes substantive concessions, prospects for the resumption of talks, and progress on the outstanding agenda will remain unlikely.

Before Pyongyang is likely to concede to Bush's effort to restore the former ground rules of the "carrot and stick" approach, Kim Jong Il must be convinced that he cannot continue to win significant inducements from either South Korea or the European Union. Domestic politics in South Korea appears destined to achieve this by year's end. Kim Dae-jung lacks the political support needed to send more aid to North Korea without Kim Jong Il first responding concretely and substantively to South Korea's previous ample inducements. But since Kim Dae Jung is now a lame duck president, Kim Jong Il is surely hesitant to make an enduring agreement with him about anything because of the uncertainty that South Korea's new president would follow through on any inducements associated with the deal. Prospects for progress in North-South dialogue over the forthcoming year would appear to be marginal at best, at least until the new South Korean Administration has settled into office. Ultimately, however, this should enhance the likelihood that Kim Jong Il will eventually accept Bush's terms for resuming US-DPRK negotiations.

Kim Jong Il probably hopes the governments of Europe and members of the European Union will supply North Korea the diplomatic support and material aid Kim Jong Il so desperately needs to feed his people and to rejuvenate his economy. The leading nations in Europe, Britain, Germany and France in particular, are unlikely to give North Korea what it wants without something in return. Kim Jong Il is not likely to accept Bush's revitalized "carrot and stick" ground rules until he has encountered an unwavering international consensus not to do business with Pyongyang until it resumes foregoing its coercive patterns of conduct. This is exactly what it took to convince Kim Jong Il's father it was better to deal with the United States than to be excluded from the international community.

The Bush Administration also would do well to reconsider its inducements. Trying to entice Kim Jong Il by stroking his ego with high level visits and diplomatic recognition are feeble inducements at best, particularly in light of Bush's preference for pinning negative labels on Kim Jong Il and his regime.. The president of South Korea, U.S. Secretary of State, members of Congress and former U.S. President Carter have visited North Korea. Nor will withholding diplomatic recognition have much impact. Numerous European and Southeast Asian nations, including Australia and the Philippines, have normalized relations with Pyongyang. So has Canada. Economic sanctions have similarly lost their effectiveness. Only the United States maintains extensive economic sanctions on North Korea. North-South Korea trade is flourishing. Pyongyang continues significant trade with China, and is beginning to develop its trade with Europe, particularly in precious metals (gold, zinc and magnesite). Nevertheless, a full basket of enticing "carrots" remains available to the United States. The regime in Pyongyang cannot survive without new sources of energy, i.e. the light water nuclear reactors, loans and grants from the World and Asian Development Banks, investment in its domestic light industrial and agricultural sectors, access to foreign markets and membership in international trading organizations like the World Trade Organization, etc.

Inducements alone, however, will not transform North Korea along the lines desired by the international community, particularly the governments in Seoul, Washington, Tokyo, Beijing and

Moscow. The use of inducements must be coordinated internationally. Each inducement should match in value the concession sought. Finally, any package deal offered must be backed with a convincing commitment to fulfill the terms of the agreement. But first, Pyongyang must once again recognize that its strategy of coercive diplomacy to achieve maximum gains for minimal concessions cannot succeed. The Bush Administration's policy toward North Korea, if pursued consistently and in close coordination with its allies, particularly South Korea and Japan, will eventually achieve the shared goal of transforming North Korea. Progress could be quickened if the U.S. President presented his case with less emphasis on Christian morality and more on North Korea measuring up to the standards of internationally acceptable conduct. Discontinuing the name calling would also help calm the atmosphere and allow greater concentration on substantive issues.

Despite intensive effort by State Department Special Envoy for Negotiations with the DPRK and US Representative to KEDO ambassador Charles L. Pritchard, US-DPRK negotiations have yet to resume as of the end of July 2002. Recent exchanges between Pyongyang and Washington continue the discussions about resuming bilateral dialogue, something that has been ongoing since the beginning of the Bush Administration eighteen months ago. The longer the two parties chit chat about engaging in negotiations, the less time they will have to resolve issues short of a crisis.

END NOTES

1 For Reagan, Bush and Clinton Administrations' Korea policy see: For the "Modest Initiative" see: "U.S. Review of Relations with the DPRK," *Department of State Bulletin* (January 1989) 17. Regarding former President Bush's North Korea policy see: "New Initiatives to Reduce US Nuclear Forces - Address to the Nation, September 27, 1991," *US Department of State Dispatch* (September 30, 1991) 715; "The US and Korea: Entering a new World - Address before the Korean National Assembly, Seoul, January 6, 1992," *US Department of State Dispatch* (January 13, 1992) 23. Also on Bush Administration's Korea policy see: Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Richard Solomon, "Pursuing US Objectives in Asia and the Pacific, Statement before the Senate Foreign Relations committee, Washington, DC, march 31, 1992," *US Department of State Dispatch* (April 6, 1992) 272, and Under Secretary for International Security Affairs Reginald Bartholomew, "Curbing Destabilizing Arms Transfers, statement before the subcommittee on foreign Operations of the House Appropriations committee, Washington, DC, April 8, 1992, *US Department of State Dispatch* (April 13, 1992) 300-305. Secretary of Defense William J. Perry, "Speech to the National Press Club, " May 3, 1994; Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Stanley Roth, "U.S. Policy toward Asia: Where We've Been, Where We Need to Go - remarks to the Asia Society," January 11, 2001; Secretary of State Colin Powell, "Confirmation Hearing - Remarks to the Senate foreign Relations Committee," January 17, 2001; Special Envoy for negotiations with the DPRK and U.S. representative to KEDO Charles Pritchard, "Testimony Before the Subcommittee on East Asia and the Pacific, House Committee on International Relations," July 26, 2001; Secretary of State Colin Powell, "Remarks at the Asia Society Annual Dinner, new York City, June 10, 2002." Unless otherwise stated, texts of the above cited speeches are available on the Department of States internet web site www.state.gov.

2 Don Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas*. Reading, MA: Addison Wesley, 1998. Pp. 265-267. The author on numerous occasions discussed the particulars of this meeting, the preparations for it and its aftermath, with both the American and North Korean participants.

3 The author drafted and coordinated clearance of this cable while serving as the Department of State's North Korea Affairs officer.

4 For the events leading up to the Korean Peninsula nuclear crisis see: Mitchell Reiss, *Bridled Ambition*. Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1995; David Albright and Kevin O'Neill, editors, *Solving the North Korean nuclear Puzzle*. Washington, DC: ISIS Press, 2000; C. Kenneth Quinones *North Korea's Nuclear threat - Office the Record Memories*. Tokyo and Seoul, 2000. (In Japanese and Korean only.), and Leon Sigal, *Disarming Strangers*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998.

5 Secretary of Defense William Perry speech to the National Press Club, Tuesday May 3, 1994. Unclassified Department of State cable.

6 U.S. General Accounting Office, *Nuclear Non-proliferation – Implementation of the U.S./North Korean Agreed Framework on Nuclear Issues. Report to the Chairman, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, U.S. Senate.* Washington, D.C.: General Accounting Office, 1997. Ralph Cossa, *Monitoring the Agreed Framework: A Third Anniversary “Report Card.”* Honolulu: Pacific Forum CSIS, 1997.

7 Regarding North Korea’s unilateral suspension of long-range missile testing see: U.S. North Korea Policy Coordinator and Special Advisor to the President and Secretary of State Dr. William Perry, “Testimony Before the Senate Foreign Relations committee, subcommittee on east Asian and Pacific Affairs, Washington, DC, October 12, 1999. page 5.

⁸ This description of the President’s daily briefing is based on author’s personal experience and “off the record” discussions with officials in the Bush Administration.

10 Bob Woodward, “Ten Days in September - Inside the War Cabinet,” *Washington Post* (January 31, 2002).

11. Steven Mufson, “The Way Bush Sees the World,” *Washington Post* ((February 17, 2002) page B1.

12. John Newhouse, “The Missile Defense Debate,” *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2001) 97-109; Evan S. Medeiros, rapporteur, *Ballistic Missile Defense and Northeast Asian Security: Views From Washington, Beijing and Tokyo.* Monterey, CA: Stanley Foundation and Monterey Institute of International studies: 2001; and Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, *Asia Pacific Space and Missile Security Issues - Report from the conference of the Asia-Pacific Center, February 15-17, 2000.* Honolulu: Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, 2000.

13. David Sanger, “bush Aides Say tough tone Put foes on Notice,” *New York Times* (January 31, 2002); Elizabeth Olson, “Bush Warns of arms Threat, citing North Korea and Iraq,” *Ibid.* (January 25, 2002).

14. Officials at the National Security Council and Department of State speaking off the record at the Brookings Institute in the fall of 2001, Woodrow Wilson Center and InterAction in the spring 2002.

15. “Joint Press Statement by the U.S., the Republic of Korea, and Japan - Honolulu, Hawaii, May 26, 2001. *U.S. Department of State Web Site* www.state.gov/p/eap/rls/rm.

16. George W. Bush, “*Statement by the President on North Korea Policy,*” June 6, 200; Michael Gordon, “*U.S. Toughens terms for North Korea Talks,*” *New York Times* (July 2, 2001).

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17. See footnote one listing of speeches by Bush Administration officials. Regarding forthcoming issues regarding North Korea's commitments under the Agreed Framework see: Michael May, General Editor, *Verifying the Agreed Framework*. Livermore, CA: Center for Global Security Research, 2001; Henry D. Sokolski, "Planning for a Peaceful Korea: A Report of the Korea Competitive Strategies Working Group," in Henry Sokolski, Editor, *Planning for a Peaceful Korea*. Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2001; and Anthony Cordesman, "the Global Nuclear Balance - A Quantitative and Arms Control Analysis," Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2002.
18. U.S. Institute of Peace, "The North Korea Challenge," *Peace Watch* Volume V, No. 2 (February 1999); Central Intelligence Agency, "Estimate of North Korea Missile Force Trends," available via the Nautilus NAPSNET Web Site (January 2002); and Department of Defense, "North Korea Section," in *Proliferation and Response*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2002.
19. Off the record presentation by Bush Administration National Security Council official at the Brookings Institute, November 2001, and off the record discussions with Department of State, Defense officials and Congressional staff.
20. Brookings Institute Off the Record Roundtable, "The Korean Peninsula and Conventional Forces, June 2001.
21. U.S., ROK and Japan, "Joint Press Statement - Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group (TCOG) Meeting, Seoul, January 25, 2002," Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs James A. Kelly, "statement Before the House International Relations Committee, Subcommittee on East Asia and the Pacific, February 14, 2002." (See www.state.gov/p/eap.) Also see: President George Bush, "remarks by President Bush and President Kim Dae-jung in Press Conference, Blue House, Seoul, ROK, February 20, 2002;" "Remarks at Dorasan Train Station, Dorasan, ROK, February 20, 2002," "Remarks to the Troops - Osan Air Base, ROK, February 21, 2002;" and Assistant Secretary Kelly, "The President in Asia - Remarks before the Asia Society, April 4, 2002."
22. Press releases of the Department of Defense Office for Prisoners of War and Missing in Action (DPMO), and off the record discussions with Bush Administration officials..
23. Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy Lorne Craner, Human rights and Labor, "Remarks to the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, Washington, DC - April 17, 2002; and Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees and Migration Arthur E. Dewey, "U.S. Extremely concerned About North Korean Refugees in China - Remarks to the Senate Judiciary subcommittee in Immigration - June 21, 2002." (See www.NAPSNet@nautilus.org). For the Bush Administration's policy regarding humanitarian aid see: US Agency for International Development (US AID) Administrator Andrew Natsios, "Statement Before the Senate Foreign

Relations Committee - April 25, 2001,” “U.S. Initiatives on Famine and Nutrition, Remarks at the World Food Summit, Rome - June 11, 2002;” and “Statement by Andrew Natsios, US AID Administrator Regarding Food Aid for North Korea - June 7, 2002.” (see: www.usaid.gov/press)

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