Nautilus Institute Policy Forum Online: Comments on PFO 01-02: US Policy Toward Asia Under the Bush Administration

The NAPSNet Policy Forum provides expert analysis of contemporary peace and security issues in Northeast Asia. As always, we invite your responses to this report and hope you will take the opportunity to participate in discussion of the analysis.

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PFO 01-02H: March 20, 2001

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I. Introduction

The following are shorter comments made in response to essays covered in a series on the future of US relations with Northeast Asian countries under the administration of incoming US President George W. Bush. The first is by Michael Aaron Geline, a student at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The second comment is by Robyn Lim, Professor of International Politics at Nanzan University in Nagoya, Japan.

II. Comments by Michael Aaron Geline

Dear Authors:

Your Nautilus Institute report "Modernizing the US-DPRK Agreed Framework: The Energy Imperative" is an impressive outline of ways to overcome the deal's insufficiencies. To be sure, energy consumers in the United States could improve their own lot based on your emphasis of end-use efficiency.

However, I cannot help but question the likelyhood of Kim Jong Il's regime ever allowing such extensive western contact with his people as the modernization would require. US companies generating power from small-scale plants at the local level in North Korea (as priority #5 suggests) seems like it'd be particularly disagreable in the ruling party's view.

Also, one of the key objections to substituting the nuclear plants with coal plants is the DPRK's inability to transport the coal, but wouldn't it be necessary to repair the rail system anyway if the US, ROK, and Japan were to refurbish the existing coal plants as suggested?

Sincerely,
Michael Geline

III. Comments by Robyn Lim

Professor Foster-Carter, normally an astute observer of things Korean, has unfortunately confused 'international law' with the 1972 Anti Ballistic Missile Treaty. The Soviets never for a moment believed in the so-called MAD (Mutually Assured Destruction) theory so beloved by McNamara and his whizz-kids. But they did grasp the chance to hobble US technology. And they systematically violated the ABM treaty, including by their anti-satellite weapons programs and the huge radar at Krasnoyask - as Gorbachev subsequently admitted.

Kim Dae Jung allowed himself to be suckered by Putin, who unfortunately seems a lot smarter than Kim. The whole process also shows the folly of the Nobel commitee awarding the peace prize to politicians who are still in the game. Kim, driven by his need for a 'legacy' a la Clinton, is becoming putty in the hands of the regime in the North, who haven't given an inch.

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IV. Nautilus Invites Your Responses

The Northeast Asia Peace and Security Network invites your responses to this essay. Please send responses to: napsnet-reply@nautilus.org . Responses will be considered for redistribution to the network only if they include the author's name, affiliation, and explicit consent.

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Northeast Asia Peace and Security Project (napsnet-reply@nautilus.org)
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