Policy Forum 99-07G: US-DPRK Will End Up in Shotgun Marriage

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.

Recommended Citation

"Policy Forum 99-07G: US-DPRK Will End Up in Shotgun Marriage", NAPSNet Policy Forum, October 22, 1999, https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-policy-forum/nautilus-institute-policy--orum-online-us-dprk-will-end-up-in-shotgun-marriage/

Nautilus Institute Policy Forum Online: US-DPRK Will End Up in Shotgun Marriage

Nautilus Institute Policy Forum Online: US-DPRK Will End Up in Shotgun Marriage

PFO 99-07G: October 22, 1999

US-DPRK Will End Up in Shotgun Marriage

By Kim Myong Chol, Center for Korean-American Peace

Copyright (c) 1999 Nautilus of America/The Nautilus Institute

CONTENTS

I. Introduction

II. Essay by Kim Myong Chol

- 1. Introduction
  2. Difference between 1994 and 1999

3. Diplomatic Nod Is American Obligation under Geneva Accord
4. DPRK Is De-facto ICBM Power; Nonnegotiable Missile Program
5. Dismantling the Cold War Structure in Korea

III. Nautilus Invites Your Responses

Go to essay by Victor Cha

September 17, 1999

Go to essay by Nicholas Eberstadt

September 21, 1999

Go to essay by Jon Wolfstahl

September 23, 1999

Go to essay by John Feffer & Karin Lee

October 19, 1999

Go to essay by Hwal-Woong Lee

November 9, 1999

Go to essay by Cheong Wooksik

December 15, 1999

Go to essay by Choi Won-Ki

December 23, 1999

I. Introduction

This is the fifth in a series of articles on the recent developments in US-DPRK relations. This essay was contributed by Kim Myong Chol, Executive Director, the Center for Korean-American Peace, Tokyo, and the former editor of People's Korea.

Kim argues that for the US to truly improve relations with the DPRK, it should abandon its long-standing support for the ROK. He maintains that the only alternatives to full normalization of relations with the DPRK are war or a nuclear arms race.

II. Essay by Kim Myong Chol

"USA Will End Up in Shot-Gun Marriage with DPRK" By Kim Myong Chol Executive Director, the Center for Korean-American Peace, Tokyo

1. Introduction

Most Americans deny that they are in love with the North Korean regime of Kim Jong Il. However, sooner or later Uncle Sam will find himself left with no other option than to accept a shot-gun marriage with the North Korean girl and eventually desert his long-standing South Korean mistress. Once married, the American man will be totally fascinated by the feudalisticly loyal, sexy North Korean wife. No additional extramarital relationships will be tolerated.

No shotgun marriage would mean that North Korea would emerge as a major nuclear power with an intercontinental missile strike capability, or the North Koreans fighting a nuclear duel with the Americans, with their ICBMs crossing paths above the Pacific. A thermonuclear conflagration would envelop metropolitan America as well as South Korea and Japan. North Korea will never perish alone.

The successive South Korean mistresses have been poor bedfellows for the Americans, far below American dignity and character. Syngman Rhee met a miserable death in Hawaii, after being toppled in a student uprising. Park Chung Hee was shot to death by his intelligence chief while dining with women at a secret retreat. Chon Du Hwan was once a death-row inmate. Roh Tae Woo was sentenced to life imprisonment. Kim Yong Sam was deeply implicated in a financial scandal.

It has taken the American gentleman more than 55 years to consider seeking the hand of the North Korean girl, who he has realized is glamorous, tough and consistent enough to be given legal wedlock

Only after more than a half century of unwarranted, undisguised armed hostility toward a small Far Eastern country, the American Government seems to have learned the hard way that they have no other option than to ease off on the DPRK and eventually normalize relations with her. This represents a near 180 degree about-face in American policy toward the DPRK, a virtual renunciation of the cold war policy toward what the Americans have thus far termed "a rogue state".

In a report coming at the end of an eight-month review of North Korean policy, an American presidential panel led by former Defense Secretary William Perry acknowledged that his team's recommendations are based on a realistic view of the DPRK and hardheaded assessment of military realities. The policy review report, made public on October 12, stresses that there is no undermining or reforming or ignoring her without risking an armageddon whose destructiveness "would be unparalleled in U.S. experience since the Korean War."

President Clinton, acting on the recommendations of the Perry team, announced his decision on September 17 to ease some sanctions against North Korea in a long overdue realistic policy change to the Korean Peninsula. Far from a cold-turkey lifting, the September 17 easing covers only those sanctions imposed on the DPRK under the Trading with the Enemy Act, Defense Production Act, and the Department of Commerce's Export Administration Regulations.

The DPRK Government on September 24 responded to the initial American move as a quid pro quo by announcing a temporary moratorium on long-range missile tests while North Korean-American talks are under way. The North Koreans interpret the American action as a sign of the U.S. Government beginning to have no illusion about its ability to bring down their regime and belatedly getting realistic.

However, unfortunately, the Perry recommendations stop short of offering to cut the Gordian knot in the obvious absence of proper insight into the Korean question. North Korea has yet to be removed from the unilateral American list of countries that sponsor terrorism. Full diplomatic relations have

yet to be established between the two former enemies. The Korean War armistice has yet to be replaced by a peace treaty that would end the state of belligerency between the two countries.

2. Difference between 1994 and 1999

There is a fundamental difference between 1994 and 1999 in the American assessment of North Korea.

In 1994 a realistic view of North Korean military capacity convinced the reluctant Clinton Administration into evading dangerous military confrontation with the DPRK and signing the Geneva Agreed Framework. The nuclear accord calls for providing Pyongyang with two light-water nuclear reactors on a turn-key basis by 2003, lifting sanctions imposed on North Korea, and upgrading bilateral relations between the two enemies to full ambassadorial relations.

However, with all their sobering understanding of the destructive capability of the North Korean war machine, the Americans had a poorly advised assessment of the extent of the cohesiveness of North Korean political, economic and social institutions. They deluded themselves into believing that "Five years from now, North Korea is not going to be there," as a senior Defense Department official was quoted as saying by the Washington Post on December 15, 1995.

This accounts for the lack of enthusiasm on the part of the Americans for fulfilling their part of the Geneva accord on the totally unfounded assumption that the North Korean regime would disappear in five years. They made no serious bid to obtain funding for heavy oil supply and left little work done on reactor construction. All they did was just mark time, waiting for Pyongyang to collapse and be taken over by the South Koreans.

As things turned out, however, the American expectations proved nothing but a wishful fantasy. American exasperation took the form of the allegations about the suspected underground nuclear facility at Kumchangri, which in turn played into the hands of Kim Jong Il, the Canny Fox. The much-vaunted Defense Intelligence Agency and other American intelligence organizations were made to look foolish, as an American on-the-spot inspection of the Kumchangri site produced nothing to support the allegation.

Five years after the 1994 Geneva agreement was concluded, 1999 found the Americans left with no other alternative than to be reconcile with North Korea, the last thing they wanted to do. The last five years have witnessed that successive years of unprecedented natural disasters and complete economic shambles, which could have easily dislodged any other government in the East or the West, have had little impact on Pyongyang, let alone doing anything to loosen its grip on power.

Kim Il Sung was a Korean Moses as he rose to legendary reputation through 15 years of arduous armed resistance against the Japanese military. Having ruled Pyongyang since 1945, he passed away in 1994, leaving his successor Kim Jong Il with a ruined economy and the Herculean task of negotiating with the Americans. Russian, Chinese and East European aid was no longer available. This did not daunt Kim Jong Il, who placed total trust in the traditional moral and cultural integrity of his highly motivated North Korean population and the unquestioned allegiance of the Workers' Party of Korea and the highly disciplined Korean People's Army.

Kim Jong Il, often called North Korea's David, did not flinch from standing up to the military muscle of the world's super-Goliath, the United States. Kim Jong Il had already built up a lethal war machine capable of wreaking unprecedented havoc on the American mainland at a minute's notice. Kim Jong Il is sure of the huge capability of his military. It would take the Korean People's Army as few as

several minutes to wipe out off the world map the whole of South Korea and the entire Japanese archipelago.

Significantly absent from the Perry report is a mention of the real threat of any new war in Korea instantly expanding into nuclear war, with 12 operating nuclear reactors in the ROK, 51 reactors in Japan and 102 in the United States singled out as prime targets. However, the Perry report noted that a new war would be fought on the world's most densely populated and industrialized areas, unlike the Gulf War and the Yugoslavia war.

Resumption of hostilities in Korea would spell an abrupt end to the present unprecedented economic prosperity the Americans are enjoying. It would leave South Korea and Japan smoking in Stone-Age ruins. Forward military bases, AEGIS ships, nuclear-powered aircraft carriers, submarines and cruise missiles would be of little operational value in safeguarding the American mainland from nuclear holocaust. Moreover, dozens, hundreds of Chernobyls will inevitably break out in South Korea, Japan and the United States.

In a rare show of political realism, the Perry panel decided that the Americans had no option but to deal with the Kim Jong Il government as it is, not as they might wish it to be. The Perry report urged the Clinton Administration to come to terms with North Korea's political, economic and social resilience and rejected the proposed policy of undermining or reforming the DPRK as taking too long and having no guarantee of success.

Perry said that such a policy would raise the risk of a destructive war on the Korean peninsula and would give the Pyongyang regime time to proceed with its missile and nuclear weapons programs. He took notice of the futility of any attempt to ignore and seal off Pyongyang.

Least noticed about North Korea are two things: the historical, traditional and cultural resilience that run in the blood of the Korean people, and Kim Jong Il's indisputable leadership quality as the sole legitimate champion of traditional Korean values.

Han, Sui, Tang, Mongolian, and Ching Chinese troops invaded Korea, but were all routed by the militia and the regulars as a result of fierce resistance. When the central government fell, the Korean people took arms and rose up in volunteer resistance across the country and held the initiative in repelling the foreign invaders. Thus came the time-honored tradition of people fighting shoulder to shoulder with the standing army.

Unlike prewar Japan, almost all the North Koreans have the shared historical experience of suffering at the hands of foreigners, and most disastrously at the hands of the Japanese and the Americans. Their cultural and racial instinct as Koreans drive them to band together in armed resistance behind their supreme leader, Kim Jong Il.

The North Korean population finds another Korean Moses in Kim Jong Il as he heroically faces the Americans and calls them to arms. They are so highly motivated as to sign up to become martyrs in the sacred war of resistance to the Americans and the Japanese.

They identify themselves with Kim Jong Il in the Korean psyche, which justifies subjecting every national resource to building up a nationwide defense capped by ICBMs tipped with super-warheads. They are firmly determined to safeguard Kim Jong Il as their national leader and prevent North Korea from being reduced to a second South Korea. They would rather die wolves than become fat dogs for the Americans or the Japanese.

3. Diplomatic Nod Is American Obligation under Geneva Accord

In the eyes of the North Koreans, there is something unacceptable about the Perry recommendations: The United States would seek complete and verifiable assurances that the DPRK does not have a nuclear weapons program and the complete and verifiable cessation of testing, production, deployment and export of long-range missiles before giving diplomatic recognition to Pyongyang.

The trouble is two-fold: One is total silence on the American obligations under the 1994 Agreed Framework, and the other is an unwarranted demand that the North Koreans not only stop exporting missiles but also completely renounce their missiles. In other words, the American offer of diplomatic recognition is subject to complete and verifiable cessation of missile and nuclear programs.

The Geneva agreement provides for American supply of two light-water reactors to the DPRK by 2003, ending trade embargoes on Pyongyang, and diplomatic recognition of the North Korean regime, not subject to any additional requirement or condition. The Perry recommendations totally disregard this provision. Five years have already elapsed since the 1994 agreement was hammered out. It is apparently mission impossible to have the KEDO project completed by the target year.

All the North Koreans have to do is keep their nuclear activities frozen and carefully watch how the Americans will try to fulfill their obligations. No extra effort is required of North Korea, while the Americans work round the clock in a crash program to complete the reactor project. The Clinton Administration will have difficulty appeasing the Republican-dominated Congress and driving the Japanese and South Koreans to speed up construction work. Obviously time is running out.

Two scenarios would warrant a North Korean decision to jettison the Geneva agreement and resume their frozen nuclear program. One is another round of American failure to supply heavy oil to North Korea on schedule, and the other is an American failure to meet the deadline of 2003. Pyongyang will never allow the Americans to delay KEDO work beyond the target year.

How to respond to the North Korean position is entirely an American affair, none of North Korea's business. The Americans have only three options: the first is to offer sufficient political and economic compensation whose dollar value is a joke to the GDP of the US; the second is to let the DPRK emerge as a major military power with nuclear-tipped ICBMs, which will in turn prompt a nuclear arms race in East Asia with Japan and South Korea going nuclear despite American protests; and the third is going to war against North Korea.

Any offer of American compensation for Pyongyang's consent for the Americans to get an additional time beyond 2003 to complete the light-water reactor project should be sexy enough. It should include immediate diplomatic recognition, signing a peace treaty, an across-the-board lifting of sanctions, and removal of the DPRK from the list of terrorist countries.

Needless to say, the Americans are free to decide to go to war against the North Koreans. The Americans should be fully prepared to risk leaving key population and industrial centers on American soil exposed to immediate massive destruction in a storm of North Korean ICBMs. The 37,000 GIs in South Korea are would be among the first heavy casualties.

The North Koreans are far better geared for a nuclear shootout. Less than thirty minutes are enough to evacuate most of the population into underground shelters from surface facilities. The nationwide

hardened underground housing, industrial, and military installations are designed to continue operating for months, or even years.

The American authorities will have to confess that there is no physical means of evacuating tens of millions of people safely from Washington, New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego in time before incoming North Korean ICBMs strike. In fact, there is no sufficient nationwide underground shelter in place. A proposed national missile defense will stand helpless.

Negotiable are only the nuclear activities specified in the 1994 Agreed Framework and its annexes. Under the accord, Pyongyang would agree to dismantle the graphite-moderated reactors and the related facilities. No expanded interpretation of the accord will be permitted to justify on-the-spot inspections of any other places in North Korea.

4. DPRK Is De-facto ICBM Power; Nonnegotiable Missile Program

The Americans have not come up with any strong case to support their demand for North Korea's renunciation of missile programs. Frankly speaking, their demand has come too late since the DPRK has already become a virtual ICBM power with a small fleet of ICBMs already in operational service, each locked on a specified target on American soil.

The DPRK has an inalienable sovereign right to self defense to develop, test, produce, deploy and improve on ICBMS and other long-range missiles, while the Americans have more than 6,000 long-range nuclear weapons deployed around the world. The DPRK sees no good reason to give up its long-range missile arsenal.

Some may argue that Pyongyang should emulate Berlin and Tokyo in not having a long-range missile force. The North Koreans feel intense loathing for following the example of the two aggressor countries. The following five considerations strongly argue against Pyongyang aping the German or Japanese behavior.

Firstly, Germany and Japan started two world wars and lost them in a catastrophic fashion, whereas Korea was liberated from Japanese colonial rule. Secondly, the two countries are under the nuclear umbrella of the United States, with a significant American military presence on their soil, whereas North Korea has no foreign-made nuclear umbrella. No foreign troops are garrisoned on North Korean soil.

Thirdly, historically speaking, Germany and Japan are aggressor countries. In the case of Japan, no countries have ever attacked Japan except the 13th century Mongolian attempts to invade Japan.

Korea does not remember invading the United States, Japan or any other foreign country, but remembers having been incessantly invaded by foreign countries. The most recent examples are Japanese invasions and American division of Korea with a puppet regime installed in Seoul.

Fourthly, the DPRK finds herself locked still in a most explosive state of war with the Americans, the world's surviving superpower. Pyongyang is a tiny island surrounded by vast oceans infested with hostile powers led by the Americans. Not a single day passes but the Americans conduct nuclear war games in and around South Korea, either with the South Koreans or the Japanese.

Fifthly, the DPRK has no military base in the vicinity of the U.S. Mainland, whereas the Americans have a huge network of military bases encompassing South Korea, Japan, Guam, and Hawaii, with

most of the elite American combat forces arrayed against the DPRK.

In the North Korean perception, the Americans remain the most serious security threat to the DPRK. This perception vindicates Kim Jong Il's decision to spend every single earned dollar on building up an awesome self-defense against the Americans and the Japanese.

What motivates the North Koreans in their national defense buildup is to acquire a long arm that can reach over all those American military bases in the Pacific to knock out major population and economic centers on the United States mainland. What the North Koreans can expect to do is remind the Americans that they are all ready to die martyrs in a nuclear exchange with the Americans.

Though no full-range tests were conducted of North Korean ICBMs, results of earlier tests tell the North Korean military leaders that once fired, they would fly over the Pacific and accurately zero in on the preset targets, such as Washington, New York, Chicago and other major population centers. On May 29, 1993, two North Korean ICBMs blasted into outer space over Japan before landing on the high waters off Hawaii and Guam. On August 31, 1998, a North Korean rocket successfully put a small satellite into orbit around the earth, though its battery-powered radio transmitter was only in service for the first nine days. Clinton should have been broad-minded enough to wire congratulations to Kim Jong Il on the successful launch of a satellite into orbit.

Kim Jong Il has no plan for the time being to testfire ICBMs as relations between the DPRK and the USA are moving in the right direction and while the two countries are engaged in negotiations. But in a next round of nuclear or missile crisis, he would most likely authorize the Korean People's Army to follow the example of its American counterpart. The American military forces routinely conduct highly provocative war games in air space and waters near Korea.

The North Koreans reserve the right to do the same thing in air space and waters adjacent to the American mainland. Should another nuclear standoff flare up with the Americans flexing their nuclear muscle, Kim Jong Il would be forced to give the Korean People's Army the green light to a series of ICBM flight tests. North Korean ICBMs would be quietly testfired into the high seas off San Francisco on the Pacific Coast and off New York on the Atlantic Coast

Kim Jong Il's leadership has catapulted the tiny Far Eastern country to the most coveted status of the globe's fourth ICBM power after the USA, Russia, and China. He is duly confident that his military can withstand any American nuclear first strike and can readily respond with a punitive nuclear reprisal. The DPRK is a short time away from fabricating small A-H bombs and neutron bombs. At short notice the North Korean scientists and engineers can fabricate operational multiple nuclear warheads to be delivered by ICBMs on American targets.

As a matter of common knowledge, the DPRK has an ambitious plan to advance into the space satellite launch business, which is currently dominated by a European consortium Arianspace, with American giants reduced to also-ran status. The North Koreans are sure that with further improvements, their rockets will develop into powerful vehicles to launch foreign space satellites into orbit at a cut-rate price. This is why the North Koreans released video footage showing the successful launch of a satellite last year.

The North Koreans are currently planning to launch a solar-powered geostationary satellite into orbit at 35,800 km above the earth's equator. When all preparations are completed for the next launch, depending on the situation--provided diplomatic relations are established between Pyongyang and Washington--the North Koreans may consider inviting an American team of space satellite and rocket experts to observe their launch station and an actual blastoff as a part of the

sales promotion blitz. American TV and mass media may be allowed to broadcast the scene live.

The utmost the North Koreans can offer to negotiate concerning their missiles is to suspend missile exports for financial compensation and consider joining the missile technology control regime. A possible American buyout of missile exports may be in direct and indirect forms. Indirect compensation may include generous World Bank financing or economic aid without political strings attached to renovate the North Korean economic structure and retool the North Korean plants or technical assistance to help produce competitive export products.

5. Dismantling the Cold War Structure in Korea

The Perry report observes that complete cessation of Pyongyang's nuclear and long-range missile programs would lead to "creating the conditions for a more durable and lasting peace in the long run and ending the Cold War in East Asia." Its logic is like putting the cart before the horse.

Who and what caused the Cold War on the Korean Peninsula? Did the North Koreans? Are the North Korean missile and nuclear programs responsible for the Cold War in Korea? The answer is categorical "no."

Discussion of dismantling the Cold War structure should involve investigation and identification of cause and effect. Otherwise it would go nowhere. Once the cause and effect are identified, removing or neutralizing the cause should receive primary attention before the effect is localized, reduced and ended. Unless the carcinogen is removed or totally neutralized, a tumor or cancer is bound to recur. The modern gene therapy may work.

For the moment, Kim Jong Il prefers a traditional herb medicine or alternative medicine approach to a Western surgical operation. Surgery has no sure guarantee of success. Even if successful, cutting open the human body may likely leave an indelible scar and cause unknown adverse effects.

As a matter of fact, there is no denying that the Americans are the principal authors of the Cold War structure in that part of East Asia. In short, the cause is the American military intervention in internal affairs of Korea, and the effect is the Cold War structure: Korea's artificial territorial division into two parts, the Korean war, the establishment of a puppet regime in Seoul and the continuing explosive state of war. Pyongyang's long-range missile program can be called a derivative of the effect in one sense.

To be blunt, the American role in Korea and the resulting division have been the most destabilizing factors to peace and security in Korea. They are responsible for the most inflammable military situation in the Far Eastern country, with two million heavily-armed troops confronting each other within shooting distance.

If this analysis is factually and objectively true, the first step to end the Cold War in Korea requires ending or at least neutralizing the American involvement in Korea including military presence. This should involve two tracks. The first track is for the United States to upgrade relations with the DPRK to full ambassadorial relations, conclude a peace treaty, lift all sanctions, including removal of the DPRK from the list of terrorist countries, suspend all provocative war games near Korea, and agree to denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula with the American nuclear umbrella withdrawn from South Korea.

The second track is for the Americans to see to it that its Cold War syndromes are ended and their traces removed. They should pave the way for the puppet regime in Seoul to be dismantled with all

its anti-Korean laws abrogated, including the National Security Law. The Americans should encourage a democratic coalition national unity government to take over in Seoul to democratize South Korea and release and rehabilitate political detainees. It would enter into a two-system confederal reunification with North Korea to end the division of the Korean Peninsula.

The Americans came to occupy South Korea as enemies of the Korean people. They engineered the division of Korea along the 38th Parallel. Instead they ought to have divided Japan into Russian and American zones, with Tokyo divided into Northern and Southern districts and Hokkaido becoming a Russian colony. A puppet regime ought to have been created in Osaka or Kyoto.

Those Korean traitors who served in Japan's Kwantung Army as officers and the Japanese Government General in Seoul as local officials were brought together by the American occupation army to staff a client regime. They were the Korean-version of Nazi collaborators who deserved to be brought before a court of national justice and duly punished.

In this sense the Republic of Korea was an American-created Korean version of Manchukuo, which the Americans denounced as a puppet of Japan. Manchukuo disappeared by itself without putting up any resistance when its parent lost the last world war. The creation and existence of the ROK will go down on the history of the Korean people as a worse disgrace.

Being a typical offspring of the Cold War, the ROK has the following common denominators with defunct Manchukuo:

First, the same status as puppets of foreign invaders. Manchukuo was a client of Japan, while the ROK is patronized by the United States.

Second, the same roots in the Kwantung Army and the Japanese Imperial Army. Most of the two puppet regimes were officers of the Japanese military.

Third, the Japanese ruler had three titles: the Kwantung Army Commander, Secretary of the Manchurian Department, and Japanese Ambassador to Manchukuo. The American ruler in Seoul wore three helmets: the commander of the American forces in Korea, Commander of the UN Command in Korea, and Commander of the U.S.-ROK Combined Forces Command.

It is now the time that the ROK prepared itself to leave the stage of history as its architect and parent, the USA, is taking a series of steps to move toward eventual normalization with the DPRK to end the Cold War. The ROK totally lacks in any Korean national credentials and legitimacy, which the DPRK alone enjoys as it was founded by anti-Japanese armed partisans. No number of elections, general and local, would give the ROK a mantle of legitimacy, unless its government takes dramatic steps to break with its anti-Korean history.

A truly independent country should have firm operational control over its armed forces. By this yardstick the ROK can never be called sovereign and independent because the American commander retains wartime command over the South Korean forces. Whether the Americans are aware or not, diplomatic recognition of the DPRK by the Americans will deprive the ROK of its fundamental raison d'etre because the American-installed ROK government has outgrown its original mission. The Seoul regime was created for the purposes of whitewashing the American authorship of the division of Korea and serving American interests previously by functioning as a forward bulwark against Russia and China and currently by working as shock troops to topple the DPRK

Besides the vital American support, three pillars have underpinned the Seoul regime: its legal instrument, the all-powerful National Security Law; its enforcement machine, the National

Intelligence Agency (first called the Korean Central Intelligence Agency and later renamed the National Agency for Security Planning); and the military. Their primary shared premise is inveterate hostility to DPRK, anti communism, crackdown on democracy and human rights, and total opposition to reunification.

The National Security Law is intended to sustain the ROK regime, as it is a South Korean version of the most hated prewar Japanese Law on Maintenance of Public Order. The law prohibits any contact between North and South Korea and any democratic dissident movement calling for better human rights and reunification and an offender faces a maximum death penalty.

Its enforcement is carried by the National Intelligence Agency. Its predecessor was the Korean Central Intelligence Agency, which although named after the American CIA, which was the South Korean edition of the prewar Japanese secret police. It was later renamed the National Agency for Security Planning.

The army is mobilized for clamping a bloody crackdown on democratic dissidents and student activists as they take to streets urging democracy, human rights and reunification. The army is guilty of the most anti-national, anti-Korean act of suppressing the May 1980 Kwangju Uprising, killing thousands and wounding tens of thousands. The army is charged with putting down the uprisings in Masan and Cheju before the Korean War.

In ending the Cold War in Korea, the Americans should exercise their clout in a proper and positive way to have these three pillars dismantled. Otherwise, the Cold War can never be called ended on the Korean Peninsula. American action could be described as retroactive self-correcting.

To look back, had the American forces not landed on South Korea in the wake of Japan's defeat in the Second World War, Korea would not have been divided into two. Whichever started the Korean War, had the American forces not been fully involved, the Korean People's Army might have emancipated the whole of South Korea and achieved territorial reunification with minimum bloodshed. Most of the millions of deaths occurred after the Inchon landing of American forces.

It is high time the Americans put a long-awaited end to their interventionist role in Korea and end the Cold War in that Far Eastern region in the true sense of the term.

III. 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.

Produced by The Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development
Northeast Asia Peace and Security Project (napsnet-reply@nautilus.org)
Return to top
back to top

View this online at: https://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-policy-forum/nautilus-institute-policy--orum-online-us-dprk-will-end-up-in-shotgun-marriage/

Nautilus Institute

608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email: nautilus@nautilus.org