Security Requirements in Northeast Asia



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I. INTRODUCTION by peter hayes

In 1982, John on-fat Wong wrote a dissertation at the University of Wisconsin that posited that every state in Northeast Asia had gone nuclear. He examines four geopolitical scenarios (1990) for Northeast Asia: general détente, limited bilateral détente, new cold war, and general cold war.

The inevitable lack of a secure retaliatory capacity on the part of small states suggests that a generalized nuclear veto-system based on universal proliferation in Northeast Asia would be prone to pre-emptive strike in the search by some states for damage limitation.

Wong points out that the relationship between two small nuclear armed states—as would be the case, for example, if both Koreas became nuclear-armed—would be one of mutual vulnerability as neither would have a secure nuclear retaliatory force, and both would have relatively concentrated

and easily targeted industry and populations. Writes Wong: "*Given the vulnerability of the small power and its nuclear forces, enemy destruction is more "probable" than "assured." This condition of pre-emptive instability suggests that among the small powers, "mutual vulnerability" or "mutual probable destruction" is a much more appropriate description of their strategic relationship than "mutual assured destruction."*

II. SPECIAL REPORT BY john on-fat wong

Please click here to download the full dissertation. (Warning: 19.9MB PDF file.)

III. REFERENCES

Note: This text is a image-PDF file of the original dissertation and is 20MB. If you want a summary of this dissertation, please read "Mutual Probable Destruction": Nuclear Next-Use in a Nuclear-Armed East Asia?" by Peter Hayes, NAPSNet Policy Forum, May 14, 2014, posted at the same time as this Special Report.

IV. NAUTILUS INVITES YOUR RESPONSES

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