

Paper Presented on North Korea's Proliferation Propensity

Recommended Citation

"Paper Presented on North Korea's Proliferation Propensity", Supporting Documents, August 27, 1999, <https://nautilus.org/supporting-documents/paper-presented-on-north-koreas-proliferation-propensity/>

The following summary conclusions are drawn from the paper which will be published in the Non Proliferation Review of the Monterey Institute for International Studies.

"After nearly a decade of continuous confrontation and very limited cooperation with the DPRK, it seems prudent to make some preliminary conclusions grounded in empirical observations of the DPRK along the following lines:

1. American power to influence DPRK decision-making is limited.
2. The DPRK is likely to endure. Those who predicted the catastrophic collapse of the DPRK have been proven wrong. Policy should be based on the probability that the DPRK will be resilient in the face of continuing stress.
3. The DPRK will continue to be a thorn in the American body politic, and a spoiler in the regional security architecture.
4. If ignored, the DPRK will thrust itself back onto the policy front burner by outrageous actions. If engaged, the DPRK will behave in a business-like fashion-provided the dignity of its leadership is observed.
5. If forced to lose face in intra-Korean politics, then the DPRK could take actions that are suicidal. American bilateral cooperation with the DPRK in close consultation with the ROK maximizes the chances of avoiding this disastrous outcome.
6. Cooperative engagement is cheap relative to alternative means of influencing the DPRK's decisions. NGO cooperation is unique in that it offers insight into DPRK intentions that cannot be obtained by alternative means, especially in the short timelines in which NGOs can deliver results.
7. The shift to cooperative engagement requires not only that non-military policy tools be employed to change the motivations of the leaders in proliferating states like the DPRK, but that the military prepare to be engaged cooperatively with the proliferant to support this new policy. For the military-and intelligence agencies-this shift in the task from "simple" deterrence to complicated cooperation means that counterforce options themselves may have to be reviewed and revamped to accord with cooperative goals-at the very least, these tools should not subvert the cooperative agenda. Thus, exercises to increase readiness may have to be postponed, reduced in scale, "virtualized," or create opportunities for observation by the adversary. At best, the military-military contacts in many dimensions can support cooperative engagement, as has begun in the case of the MIA Joint Recovery Teams in the DPRK.
8. The shift to a multi-dimensional strategy of political, economic, cultural, and military cooperative engagement of

proliferating states imposes a new challenge on American decision-makers to use all sources of information-governmental and non-governmental-to inform the new strategy. It also demands a new level of coordination and tradeoffs between the various tools of coercive diplomacy revolving around disincentives of various kinds versus cooperative engagement that rests on shared benefits. At the informational level, this shift requires new mechanisms to ensure that the US agencies still committed to the "old agenda" of military deterrence have access to the rapidly expanding galaxy of new information and policy opportunities emerging from the agents implementing cooperative engagement. To the extent that the new agents are multilateral and official (such as KEDO), this coordination and information sharing may not be so difficult-although the task should not be under-estimated. But to the extent that the new players are either truly international such as the UN specialized agencies, or bilateral (such as food aid NGOs) or multilateral (such as the IFRC), the "old agencies" run the risk of not even being aware of a new constellation of knowledge from the "dark side of the moon." It will take a great deal of explicit effort to connect these two worlds, and to ensure that US policy options are not grossly biased toward militarized standard-operating-procedures and rules-of-thumb inherited from the Cold War past.

In a globalizing world, a crucial role remains for military force to underpin strategies of cooperative engagement. If designed and implemented correctly, however, the burden on the military should shrink proportionately to the success of cooperative engagement in the changing the cost-benefit calculus of the proliferating state such as the DPRK. By definition, risk equals probability of hazard times hazard.

If it works, successful cooperative engagement reduces the probability that a state such as the DPRK would ever find it in its own interests to attack the ROK or to fear attack by the ROK and its allies on the DPRK. By eroding the motivations for aggression (and/or the necessity of worst-case defense), cooperative engagement shifts the risk-benefit calculus of the DPRK leadership in directions that reduce its proliferation propensity, and the need to be deterred by American military means-whether the latter are conventional or "special" weapons of mass, disabling effect."

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