

Warlord Armitage Makes Asia Problems for Bush

by Kathy Wolfe and Joe Brewda

Officials and the public in Korea, Japan, and China are in an uproar, as intended, over President George Bush's Jan. 29 statement that North Korea is a ringleader in the "axis of evil," selling terrorists weapons of mass destruction (WMD) to threaten the United States. "Our economic future depends on North-South relations," South Korean President Kim Dae-jung told the Cabinet the next day. "It is important to maintain a peaceful atmosphere in North-South relations," since South Korea is re-orienting its exports toward China and the rest of Asia, as part of the New Silk Road strategy.

Since then, President Kim has taken the highest diplomatic road, stressing Seoul's alliance with Washington ahead of Bush's tour of Korea, Japan, and China on Feb. 17-22—but his first stunned reaction was revealing.

Many Seoul commentators, including many hostile to Pyongyang, have been more blunt, calling the speech an insult to all Koreans. President Bush "should not show Caesar's arrogance of power during his trip to East Asia, especially not after that speech," the *Korea Times* editorialized on Feb. 3. "One speech in the U.S. Congress is good enough to appease the American ego. President Bush should be humble, as a civilized man, during his visit to Seoul, Tokyo and Beijing. . . . Arrogance of power, and the imperial presidency, are deplorable."

Chinese reaction naturally was similar. "No small number of people suspect that by labeling Iran, Iraq and North Korea as an 'axis of evil,' the United States seeks to prepare public opinion for possible strikes against those countries under the banner of anti-terrorism," the official Xinhua news agency said on Feb. 3. "Using the word 'axis' makes one think of fascist Germany, Italy and Japan . . . and their atrocities." The Chinese Foreign Ministry said, "The Chinese side does not advocate using such language in international relations."

Even the docile Japanese reacted strongly. "I wonder how the United States can be using such words at this time, just weeks before" Bush's trip, a high Foreign Ministry official told Kyodo News on Feb. 5. The United States must be careful in taking such a "high-handed" approach, which could cause problems for Japan's security, he said. He added that South Korea also "appears to be embarrassed by the situation," another protest at what is seen by most Asians as a national insult.

Threat of Force

Ignoring all this, a State Department official nearly threatened military action against North Korea on Feb. 5. While the United States wants to use dialogue to limit Pyongyang's sales of missile parts to the Middle East, he told Seoul's hard-line daily *Chosun Ilbo*, "We are studying other methods, including force."

But what, exactly, have the North Koreans suddenly done to provoke this, and why, as the Japanese official asked, has this furor been started now, right before President Bush's Asia trip, his first foreign trip since Sept. 11? Will the U.S. administration ignore Asian reaction and turn up the heat, with the world watching? What is the real diplomatic aim of this trip?

U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld told ABC News' Sunday talk show, "This Week," on Feb. 3, that the United States now has "solid proof" that North Korea, Iran, and Iraq are "developing chemical, nuclear, biological or radiological weapons," and have extensive relations with terrorists. The news is, he said, that we "now know" from investigations in Afghanistan that the terrorists are actively trying to get such weapons from the three supposedly evil nations. "It's that nexus between weapons of mass destruction and terrorist networks that the President was citing as being different for today, and something that we have to think very carefully about what we do."

Turning from military matters to politics, Rumsfeld then insulted South Korean President Kim. On a question from ABC's Sam Donaldson about Kim's policy, the Defense Secretary was almost contemptuous: "The South Korean government does have a so-called 'Sunshine Policy' where they've been making a good deal of effort over a period of years now to try to get the vicious, repressive, dictatorial government of North Korea to behave rationally, and come into the world," Rumsfeld lectured. "But they won't. They're starving their people. They're engaged in their weapons of mass destruction development, and ballistic missile development. And they're selling weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles around the globe to anyone who wants to buy them."

President Bush could instead go to East Asia as the peacemaker, as *EIR* suggested last week, to help Kim Dae-jung drive in the last spike completing the "Iron Silk Road" railway between South and North Korea. As we reported, that project, in early January, had been put on fast track for completion by May. In fact, the *Korea Times* picked up the *EIR* proposal in an editorial entitled "Is Bush Giving Up Hope of Being Peacemaker?" "If Bush intends to destroy Pyongyang as the next target of his anti-terrorism war," the paper wrote, he's passing up the chance to do what Nixon did in China: "He might be passing a great opportunity to receive what Richard Nixon said was the greatest honor history can bestow—the title of a peacemaker."

In fact, just as the attack of Sept. 11 was an attempted coup against President Bush, the threatening shape of Bush's



Richard Armitage, a long-time geopolitician-“thug” in the Defense and State Departments, who helped Zbigniew Brzezinski create the Afghansi militias and the Taliban, is now publicly pushing through a drastic shift in U.S. policy toward East Asia.

important Asia tour is also not in the President’s interests, and he’s not the cause of the mess. Neither is anything North Korea sold last week. The same clash of civilizations geopoliticians determined to have a war in the Mideast—Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, Samuel Huntington, Zbigniew Brzezinski, et al.—are determined to halt all rapprochement between the two Koreas, Japan, and China, and to turn East Asia into a “zone of tension.”

Dictating ‘America’s National Interests’

The Sunshine Policy itself is one real target they wish to destroy. The reason, as with the Mideast, is the same: Prevent the nations of the Eurasian land-mass from creating new large-scale development projects which can lead them to economic independence. President Kim Dae-jung himself is under attack, diplomatic sources told *EIR*, after U.S. Ambassador to Seoul Thomas Hubbard insulted Kim in a public speech on Jan. 31, which Rumsfeld then repeated on ABC. “The State Department wants to force President Kim to resign, if possible, before Bush arrives in Seoul Feb. 19,” the source said. “Their plan is to threaten a war with North Korea, and say that Kim Dae-jung can’t rule.”

The East Asia specialist running this clash of civilizations scenario, with North Korea as the excuse, is Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, former Assistant Secretary of De-

fense for East Asia and Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (1981-89). Armitage, with Brzezinski, is one of the creators of the Taliban, and is widely reported to have introduced the use of heroin as a “tool of war” in Afghanistan in the late 1970s, after using it earlier during his long tour in Indochina.

In fact, 20 months ago, in July 2000, Armitage helped draft a policy paper which advocated using force against North Korea as a major priority of U.S. foreign policy, “including a willingness to interdict North Korean missile exports on the high seas.” Was this what the State Department had in mind on Feb. 5, when it told the *Chosun Ilbo* that “we are studying other methods, including force”? Could this be why Armitage went out of his way recently to praise Japan for sinking a suspected North Korean ship? Do we face a “Korean missiles crisis”?

The “Commission on America’s National Interests” was set up in July 2000, by think-tanks such as the Nixon Center, the RAND Corp., and the Hauser Foundation. It released a report to the new President coming in in January 2001, identifying what it called “the major U.S. national interests.” The Commission included Armitage, Condoleezza Rice, and Brent Scowcroft, National Security Adviser under the elder George Bush, whom Rice once described as amongst her mentors. It identified only five vital U.S. national interests, of which the *first* was exactly the topic of President Bush’s Jan. 29 State of the Union speech: “To prevent, deter, and reduce the threat of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons attacks on the United States or its military forces abroad.”¹

Interestingly, the fourth vital national interest was “To ensure the viability and stability of major global systems (trade, financial markets, supplies of energy, and the environment),” which is to say, the bankrupt International Monetary Fund-run world monetary system. Kim’s New Silk Road idea, the Eurasian Land-Bridge concept as a whole, is a threat to people who think this way.

It was Armitage who launched the attack last year on the Sunshine Policy, on Jan. 29, 2001, when he told leaders of Kim’s party that the term should be dropped, since North Korea would “abuse” it (see *EIR*, March 9, 2001). It was Armitage who advised President Bush to rip up the Clinton peace approach to Pyongyang.

The week before Bush’s State of the Union, Armitage brought South Korean opposition leader Lee Hoi-chang to Washington, where he was fêted by Vice President Dick Cheney, Armitage, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Henry Kissinger, the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), and the Heritage Foundation—every Republican think-tank in town. Lee, who was treated like the real President of Korea, was clearly

1. B. Raman, “Richard Armitage: His Past, Present And Future,” South Asia Analysis Group Paper no. 204, Jan. 3, 2001. (The writer is Additional Secretary (ret.), Cabinet Secretariat, Government of India, and Director of the Institute For Topical Studies, Chennai.)

briefed on the “evil axis” speech in advance, and hit the ground running, calling for North Korea to let in all the UN nuclear inspectors, “or else.” “People in Seoul are asking whether the U.S. is trying to get rid of President Kim,” one diplomat said.

Destabilize the Region

None of this is in the interests of the American people, or the population of Asia, or President Bush. The Armitage plan is to destabilize the entire region, not just Korea. Its second major plank is to reverse Japan’s rapprochement with Korea and China—they have begun holding joint heads of state summits as the “Plus 3” group—by turning Japan into the Pentagon’s “unsinkable aircraft carrier” in Asia. Already on Sept. 14, Armitage told Japan’s U.S. Ambassador Shunji Yanai that he wanted to “see the flag of the Rising Sun flying in the Indian Ocean,” demanding Japan send its navy abroad for the first time since 1945. “There are no 50% or 60% measures,” he said. “It is whether the government and the people of Japan are with us or not. . . . If you are involved in this, you cannot cherry-pick one thing you might do. You have to participate across the board, because this is a global disease.”

That deployment, and similar Armitage operations in Japan, have significantly soured the country’s relations with Korea and China since last Fall.

Clips of the very large, even thuggish Mr. Armitage were more recently featured on Japanese TV, when Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi fired his Foreign Minister Makiko Tanaka on Jan. 29, “under State Department pressure ahead of the visit” of the Bush cabinet, an irate Tokyo Foreign Ministry source said. Armitage has been demanding Tanaka’s ouster ever since she refused to see him after her appointment last May. Tanaka had been promoting the “Plus 3” alliance, and was trying to shift the balance inside the ministry away from the powerful “State Department wing,” toward the “China wing” and “Russia wing,” the bureaus most friendly to the Eurasian Land-Bridge policy.

The *Far East Economic Review* on Jan. 24 noted that the State Department plans to redouble pressure on Japan to “play the key security role in Asia envisaged in the report authored by Republican Richard Armitage.” The “Armitage Report,” as it became known, published by the Pentagon’s National Defense University in November 2000, called for ditching Clinton’s pro-China policy, in favor of a more “pro-Japan” policy under which Tokyo re-arms as an American military surrogate.

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Philippines: 1,2,3. . . Many Military Exercises

by Michael Billington

On January 31, the “Balikatan-02-1,” or “Shoulder-to-Shoulder,” joint United States-Philippines military exercises officially began in and around the largely Muslim southern island of Mindanao. There have been months of political protests against the “exercises,” in which hundreds of U.S. Special Forces and combat troops will deploy on the front lines, together with the Philippines Army, in search-and-destroy missions against the terrorist Abu Sayyaf group.

One day after the opening festivities, on Feb. 1, an American military aircraft was fired upon during a supposedly unrelated “exercise” taking place in the northernmost island of Luzon. The suspected culprits were the Communist Party’s military arm, the New People’s Army (NPA), which is active in the area. The NPA, like the Abu Sayyaf, is on the official U.S. list of terrorist organizations. The NPA also warned the government a few weeks ago, in regard to the U.S.-Philippine operations against the Abu Sayyaf, that they would fight if U.S. forces came into areas they considered to be part of their territory.

A curious aspect of the shooting incident is that the general population, and at least some among the political leadership, were not even aware of the existence of this second exercise, involving 400 U.S. Special Forces personnel, despite the intense debate over the constitutionality of the operation in the South. An American hiker had been killed in the region the day before. Although the NPA denied responsibility for this act, they were initially suspected. Since the U.S. aircraft was engaged in a low-flying, counter-terror operation, it raises the question as to whether it may also have been engaged in a live-combat “exercise,” as in the South.

Are there more “exercises” in process? With many political leaders and journalists in both the United States and the Philippines recalling the “slippery slope” that led to full-scale war in the nearby jungles of Vietnam in the 1960s, and in the context of the manic flight-forward by the Clash of Civilizations faction in the U.S. government, the actual intentions of the United States and Anglo-American assets within the Philippines are suspect.

Response to the State of the Union

Those who consider the Balikatan exercise to be a flimsy cover for illegal U.S. involvement in combat operations on Philippines soil—including even President Gloria Macapa-