

Cheney Wants War, Plays North Korea Card

by Mike Billington

“The Bush Administration did everything that it could to push North Korea to conduct this minor nuclear test—they *wanted* it. There is no one to blame but the U.S. All the North Koreans wanted was food.” This was the analysis of Lyndon LaRouche immediately following the Oct. 8 (Oct. 9 U.S. time) partially successful test of a plutonium nuclear device by North Korea. As is obvious to those Asia experts who are not lying for the Bush Administration, the Cheney-linked forces within the Administration have successfully driven North Korea to go nuclear, both to facilitate a confrontation with China, and to manufacture further fraudulent justifications for a war against Iran, which is already operational. With the global financial bubble crashing down upon them, Vice President Cheney’s backers among the Anglo-Dutch financial cartels, now governing most of Europe and the United States, are angling for world war—and the North Korean nuclear test serves their purposes.

As a former U.S. Ambassador to Korea told *EIR*, “I can’t say with certainty that the Bush Administration *wanted* the North to test, but I can say definitively that they are very pleased that it happened.”

Physicist Jorge Hirsch from the University of California at San Diego, who has led a campaign of physicists (and others) to oppose the Nuclear Posture Review of December 2001 (which allows for U.S. nuclear forces to be used preemptively, even against non-nuclear nations, under numerous conditions of perceived threat), issued a warning on Oct. 16 that “the nuclearization of North Korea only helps the plan to nuke Iran, which is why the Administration did everything it could to encourage it.”

Target: China, and World War

The UN Security Council passed a resolution on Oct. 14 to impose sanctions on North Korea, including prohibitions on imports and exports of nuclear related technology, and a ban on sales of certain types of arms. Although pressure from China, Russia, and South Korea ultimately eliminated the call for military enforcement provisions, as originally proposed by U.S. Ambassador to the UN John Bolton, the resolution nonetheless remains ambiguous in regard to Bolton’s demand that ships traveling to and from North Korea should be stopped for inspection on the high seas. The Chinese in particular objected to this, but signed the ambiguous resolution nonetheless. Chinese Ambassador to

the UN Wang Guangya, stated that the interdiction of ships on the high seas was a “violation of international law,” and, after the vote, explained the Chinese view as: “Inspections yes, but inspections are different from interception and interdiction.”

These were fighting words to John Bolton, who, when asked about Wang’s statement, said that China has a “heavy responsibility here. China voted in favor of that provision. This means that China itself now has an obligation to make sure that it complies with the resolution.” Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice is visiting Japan, China, South Korea, and Russia beginning Oct. 18, with the intention of demanding that China and South Korea enforce the resolution as interpreted by Washington.

Rice is also pressuring South Korean President Roh Moo-Hyun to pull back from the “Sunshine Policy” launched by former President Kim Dae-Jung, which engages North Korea in step-by-step cooperative measures aimed at peaceful coexistence and eventual reunification. Following Rice’s visit, Roh announced that his nation would not submit to the Washington war plan, insisting that the cooperative development in the North Korean city of Kaesong, and the joint vacation projects at scenic Mount Kumgang in the North, will proceed. Former President Kim Dae-Jung was more direct. “Under the Sunshine Policy,” he asked, “was North Korea engaged in nuclear development? With the U.S. refusing to even talk, while bullying North Korea, isn’t nuclear development the only option left to insure its survival?”

The intention behind the Bush Administration policy was made clear by a *Washington Post* op-ed on Oct. 16 by Dick Cheney’s former personal National Security Advisor for Asia, Aaron Friedberg. Friedberg is a rabid China basher, who had argued in a *Commentary* article in 2000, “Struggle for Mastery of Asia,” that America needed a “sudden, severe crisis to galvanize American domestic opinion” against China, and to “overwhelm the objections of business groups and others with a strong vested interest in continued commercial contacts, and lead to the imposition of near-total restrictions on imports, exports, and capital technology flows.”

Friedman’s recent op-ed in the *Post* proposes precisely such a “sudden, severe crisis” to galvanize war against China—namely, a war against North Korea! Called “An Offer Kim Can’t Refuse,” Friedberg says of North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il: “The only way to move him is by confronting him with a stark choice—turn over existing nuclear weapons, dismantle production facilities and submit to rigorous international inspections, or face a steadily rising risk of overthrow and untimely death.”

It must be noted that the Iran Freedom Support Act passed by the U.S. Congress and signed by President Bush on Oct. 6, is also a declaration of hostile intent against Russia, by threatening severe sanctions against any country which provides arms to Iran, or supports Iran’s nuclear program. The North Korea sanctions are similarly targeting China.

How Cheney Forced the Nuclear Test

When the Bush/Cheney Administration took office in 2001, Secretary of State Colin Powell declared immediately that he would continue with the Clinton Administration’s highly successful policy of engagement with North Korea. In 1994, the Clinton Administration had negotiated a complete shut down of the plutonium producing nuclear facility in North Korea. However, Powell’s policy was slapped down publicly by the Cheney forces in the Administration—the first of many such confrontations—and the Bush policy of confrontation ensued.

The recurring argument heard today, that North Korea cheated on that agreement by acquiring experimental uranium enrichment equipment from Pakistan, ignores the fact that the far more advanced and more lethal plutonium program, which North Korea had shut down under the 1994 agreement, remained closed and under full IAEA control until the Bush Administration abrogated the agreement. It also ignores the refusal of the United States to carry through on its side of the bargain, to move toward normal relations—a pledge which was undermined by the 1994 takeover of the Congress by the “Conservative Revolution” under the leadership of the likes of Newt Gingrich and John McCain, who openly declared their preference for pre-emptive war on North Korea. Under Bush and Cheney, even the parts of the deal the U.S. had lived up to under Clinton—providing oil and helping in the construction of a nuclear energy facility—were scrapped.

The confrontation succeeded in driving North Korea out of the IAEA, reopening its plutonium reactor, and the eventual manufacture of plutonium nuclear devices—probably 8-10 bombs by most estimates. Bush refused to talk with North Korea, and fired the U.S. special envoy to North Korea, Jack Pritchard, for the crime of talking to his diplomatic counterparts. Nonetheless, with a significant push from China, the Bush Administration agreed to hold six-party talks with South and North Korea, Japan, China, and Russia. Each step forward under the six-party structure, however, was met by a move by Cheney to undermine the process.

Recently retired State Department official David Straub, who headed the Korea Desk at the State Department from 2004-06, told a Washington audience this month that he had accompanied President Bush to a press conference with then-South Korean President Kim Dae-Jung, where the President had responded to a question about U.S. threats to invade North Korea by swearing that the U.S. had absolutely no intentions to attack the North. Straub took the President at his word and began including that pledge in his reports and articles, but, he said, they repeatedly came back to his desk “from an office which shall go unnamed,” with the President’s pledge for “no attack” crossed out, and “all options remain on the table” written in.

This sabotage, whether understood by the dissociated President or not, reached its fulfillment after an apparently historic breakthrough agreement at the six-party talks in Sep-

tember 2005 in Beijing. With a major role played by the Chinese, the North agreed to close down its nuclear weapons program under IAEA auspices, while the United States would provide certain assistance and assure respect for North Korean sovereignty.

Four days later, Cheney, who had tried to scuttle the deal in the first place, moved to have the Treasury Department impose unilateral sanctions on North Korea's banking connections with the Western nations, through a bank in Macau which served North Korean business interests, and through heavy pressure on other banks to shut off all contact with Pyongyang. The results were immediate and devastating to North Korea's struggling economy, and a total breach of the September agreement. The Bush Administration had the gall to claim that the sanctions were unrelated and coincidental to the historic agreement reached four days earlier. That ended the six-party talks—as clearly intended by Cheney.

Selig Harrison, head of the Center for International Policy in Washington and one of the best informed American experts on Korea, visited Pyongyang the week before the nuclear test. He reported that in a discussion with North Korea's head negotiator at the six-party talks, Kim Gye Gwan, Kim referred to the September 2005 agreement: "At the very time when we were engaged in such a long dialogue last year, your side was planning for sanctions. Cheney did this to prevent further dialogue that would lead to peaceful coexistence. So many of your leaders, even the President, have talked about regime change, we have concluded that your Administration is dysfunctional." There are few remaining in the United States who would disagree with that conclusion.

Harrison reported another conversation in which Kim told him that the United States must learn to coexist with a North Korea which has nuclear weapons. "That doesn't sound like you are really committed to denuclearization," Harrison responded. Kim replied: "You misunderstand me. We are definitely prepared to carry out the Sept. 19 agreement, step-by-step, but we won't completely and finally dismantle our nuclear weapons program until our relations with the United States are fully normalized, That will take some time, and until we reach the final target, we should find a way to co-exist."

The underlying problem for those, unlike the Cheney war party, who wish to find a true solution to the crisis, is that the existing international framework for dealing with nuclear development, the 1970 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), is both outmoded, and has been effectively discarded by the Anglo-Americans. The Bush Administration has ignored the assurances within the NPT that all participating nations shall be guaranteed access to the full-cycle nuclear process for peaceful nuclear energy development. Worse, the U.S. is preparing to go to war on Iran to deny them their right to that process.

Daryl Kimball, the head of the Arms Control Association in Washington, told an audience there this month that, "If the

causes which motivate nations to believe they need nuclear weapons are not addressed, then the NPT alone will not stop proliferation." He added that the NPT had to be at least "upgraded," especially in light of the Iraq war experience.

Lyndon LaRouche has made a similar point at several recent events in Washington and Berlin, insisting that the current state of "hateful diplomacy" will only lead to the war desired by Cheney. Only with a return to the "Peace of Westphalia" approach, said LaRouche—with each nation assuming as its *own* interests the interests of the other—can the current rush toward world war be avoided. Developing nations must be offered a higher motivation for not wasting resources on weapons development, including assurances of security, and access to scientific and technological progress, and raw materials.

Russian Alternatives

China is engaged in diplomatic efforts to circumvent the U.S. war drive, while Russia has taken dramatic steps to put an actual solution in place, right under the noses of the war party. Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Alekseyev, who has played a major role in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (comprised of Russia, China, and the Central Asian Republics) visited Pyongyang and reported that North Korea wanted to "find a way to restart the six-party talks." With Alekseyev in the North, Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov visited the South, with a large team of Russian industrial, space, and transportation officials.

While certainly the nuclear crisis was on the agenda, Fradkov focused on great projects, engaging both North and South Korea in creating a future. These included the building of a pipeline through the North to pump 10 billion cubic meters of Russian natural gas per year to both North and South Korea by 2012, and a contract for Russian Railways to construct the missing rail link between North Korea and Russia, thus completing the Trans-Korean Railroad, as well as the Pusan to Rotterdam rail line envisioned in the Great Eurasian Land-Bridge Project. It is this approach which points toward a Peace of Westphalia-based solution to the current global crisis. Were the United States to adopt new leadership, to restore America to its historic mission—the commitment to a new renaissance rather than world war and depression—it would find welcome allies where now it sees only hatred and fear.

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