

North, South Korea Seek Peace, While Obama Threatens War

by Mike Billington

Jan. 2—South Korea’s Prime Minister Chung Hong-won, in a New Year’s message on Jan. 1, welcomed North Korean leader Kim Jong-un’s New Year’s call for a summit with the South. South Korea, Chung said, “will make proactive efforts to resolve the inter-Korean confrontational mood and to open the door for inter-Korean dialogue and co-prosperity. This year, we must establish an everlasting peace on the Korean Peninsula and take one step forward toward unification.”

Thus far, there has been no mention by Seoul of the North’s nuclear weapons program, and no preconditions demanded for the new peace effort on the Korean Peninsula—both of which would be unacceptable to Pyongyang.

This dramatic development, potentially bringing to a close the last vestiges of the Cold War in Asia, and thereby unleashing massive regional development pro-

grams which have long been on the books, but held back by the continuing crisis on the Korean Peninsula, is being met with ridicule and attempted sabotage in the West. Skeptics have pointed out that there have been such offers in the past, but nothing has come of them.

A South Korean source told *EIR* that the window of opportunity for significant progress will only be open between now and Feb. 23, when the annual U.S.-South Korea military exercises, Key Resolve, which are viewed in the North as a direct threat, and which Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un denounced in his New Year’s message, are scheduled to take place.

Enhanced Potential

But the situation this time is significantly changed. Over the past year, South Korea has been deeply en-



A state-of-the-art port in the North Korean city of Rajin (part of the Rason Development Zone), shown under construction here, was inaugurated on July 18, 2014, in a ceremony attended by officials from Russia, North Korea, and South Korea.



gaged with the North, in collaboration with Russia, and to a lesser extent with China, in large-scale cooperative development projects. A new port city has been developed at Rason in northeast North Korea, with both Russia and China building new port facilities there, while Russia has reconstructed a rail line connecting Vladivostok to Rason. These developments are part of a more comprehensive plan for the development of the entire Tumen River region.

In December, the first shipment of Russian coal was delivered by rail to Rason, where South Korean ships owned by Hyundai Merchant Marine loaded the coal for delivery to South Korean steel giant POSCO. South Korea's state rail company KORAIL is also involved in the process—in fact, the three South Korean firms have formed a consortium which plans to purchase about half of Russia's 70% share in their joint venture with North Korea, called the Rason ConTrans.

None of this economic cooperation has included preconditions regarding the North's nuclear program or human rights issues. Rather, it is based on giving the North a real stake in long-term cooperative development, as the only possible basis for peace.

Also, top North Korean officials have visited Europe and Russia over recent months, and attended the Asian Games in Incheon, South Korea in October, where they held meetings with the South's chief of national security, the unification minister, and the first deputy director at the National Intelligence Service. The North Korean delegation proposed at that time that high-level talks be established.

Obama Prefers War

The U.S. has responded to this peace offensive with a vengeance. Obama's UN Ambassador Samantha Power was the driving force behind a report issued by the United Nations calling for North Korea and its leader Kim to be taken to the International Court of Justice for crimes against humanity. She described North Korea as "a living nightmare." The Chairman of the panel issuing the report, retired Australian judge Michael Kirby, compared North Korea to Nazi Germany.

South Korea, Russia, China, and North Korea were unfazed by this attempted sabotage of the development projects that were underway, and have proceeded with their "peace through development" approach.

Now, the calls for a summit and cooperation in both

North and South Korea's New Year's messages have further infuriated Obama. On Jan. 2, Obama issued yet another executive decree, imposing new sanctions on three organizations and ten individuals connected to North Korean intelligence and defense—not surprisingly, including those with defense relations with Russia, China, Iran, and Syria.

The White House release said the move was a response to Pyongyang's "attack that aimed to create destructive financial effects on a US company and to threaten artists and other individuals with the goal of restricting their right to free expression," supposedly for hacking into Sony—a hack attack which numerous U.S. cyber experts have stated was almost certainly *not* done by North Korea.

As in the case of Obama's sanctions against Russia, which inflict great damage on Europe as well as on Russia, it is clear that these new sanctions are aimed at South Korea, Russia, and China as much or more so than at North Korea per se—an attempt to stop the peace offensive on the Korean Peninsula being carried out by the South in collaboration with the BRICS nations.

Kim's New Year's message said in part: "Depending on the mood and circumstances to be created, there is no reason not to hold the highest-level talks." He also blasted Obama, calling on Washington to make a "bold shift" in its policy toward North Korea, adding: "The US and its followers are holding on to a nasty 'human rights' racket, as their schemes to destroy our self-defensive nuclear deterrent and stifle our republic by force become unrealizable." He said nuclear weapons were the guardian of his country and the DPRK would retaliate against "any provocations."

South Korean President Park Geun-hye called on her compatriot, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, to help in facilitating talks, and improving relations between North and South, which he has agreed to do.

Obama's Role in Sony's Film

Sony's film "The Interview," which portrays the assassination of North Korea's current head of state, has been defended by Obama and the press as a matter of "free speech," but the reality is quite different. Obama not only personally intervened to demand that the movie be released as scheduled, but e-mails leaked by the group that hacked into Sony's computers demonstrate beyond doubt that the Obama Administration was

involved from the beginning, insisting that the film both ridicule Kim and portray his assassination, precisely because they intend to carry out “regime change” against North Korea, with assassination of its leader the preferred method.

Sony hired a RAND Corporation Korea expert, Bruce Bennett, to advise on the making of the film—ostensibly a comedy—which portrays two American journalists hired by the CIA to assassinate Kim under the cover of an interview with him. Bennett, in an e-mail to Sony CEO Michael Lynton, said that he had entertained some doubts about the ending, in which Kim’s helicopter is hit by a missile, his hair catches on fire, and his head explodes—all in slow motion. But, Bennett wrote, “I also thought a bunch more about the ending. I have to admit that the only resolution I can see to the North Korean nuclear and other threats is for the North Korean regime to eventually go away. . . . I have been clear that the assassination of Kim Jong-un is the most likely path to a collapse of the North Korean government. . . . So from a personal perspective, I would personally prefer to leave the ending alone.”

So much for Obama’s claims that the film is “just a satire.”

But there is more: Lynton responded to the RAND operative: “Bruce—Spoke to someone very senior in State (confidentially). He agreed with everything you have been saying. EVERYTHING. I will fill you in when we speak.”

That “very senior” State Department official is likely Danny Russel, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs, whom the State Department has admitted held meetings with Sony CEO Lynton to discuss “Asian affairs.” Robert King, Obama’s Special Envoy for North Korean Human Rights, was also consulted on the film—and there may have been others from the CIA.

More Obama Crimes

These actions constitute clear evidence of criminal acts by Obama and his team under U.S. law.

Executive Order 12333, signed by Ronald Reagan in 1981, and still in force, reads: “No person employed by or acting on behalf of the United States Government shall engage in, or conspire to engage in, assassination.” Earlier, EO 11905, signed by Gerald Ford, banned political assassinations, and EO 12036, signed by

Jimmy Carter, banned indirect involvement in assassinations. Obama cannot avoid guilt through his promotion of this film, and direct or indirect participation in its production.

Even talking about assassinating the President of the United States, let alone making a film portraying it, is a felony crime in this country, and several people have been convicted of precisely that crime. U.S. Code Title 18, Section 871 says that knowingly and willfully mailing or otherwise making “any threat to take the life of, to kidnap, or to inflict bodily harm upon the President of the United States” is a felony. In 2010, for instance, Johnny Logan Spencer, Jr. was sentenced in Louisville, Ky., to 33 months in prison for posting a poem entitled “The Sniper,” about President Obama’s assassination. And yet Obama talks about defending “free speech” through a film ridiculing and assassinating the head of a foreign state—by name.

Even before Obama’s imposition of new sanctions against North Korea Jan. 2, he had already committed an act of war against the North, by having its Internet system taken down over several periods on Dec. 21 and 22. The Administration essentially admitted its responsibility. Marie Harf, the State Department spokesperson (and former CIA spokesperson), asked about the matter on Dec. 22, told the press: “As the President said, we are considering a range of options in response [to Pyongyang’s alleged hacking of Sony—ed.]. We aren’t going to discuss publicly operational details about the possible response options or comment on those kind of reports in any way except to say that as we implement our responses, some will be seen, some may not be seen. So I can’t confirm those reports, but in general, that’s what the President has spoken to.”

Americans must not imagine that these actions are tit-for-tat games with a bizarre leader in a reclusive nation—they are aimed directly at the BRICS nations, in this case China and Russia, and at South Korea, which has refused to sign on to Obama’s mad military encirclement of China and Russia. The result of letting these crimes go unpunished is war. Obama must be held accountable under the law, and America must join in the peace and development paradigm being implemented under the BRICS leadership.

mobeir@aol.com