

## **‘Economic War with China Is Everything,’ North Korea a ‘Sideshow’: White House Chief Strategist**

Calling tensions with North Korea a "sideshow," the White House Chief Strategist said that China and the U.S. are in an "economic war," and that China is winning.

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*The United States is currently engaged in an “economic war” with China to maintain its position as the world’s top hegemon, and appears to be losing it, White House Strategist and former editor of the right-wing publication Breitbart News, Steve Bannon said in an unexpected interview published Wednesday.*

“We’re at economic war with China. It’s in all their literature. They’re not shy about saying what they’re doing. One of us is going to be a hegemon in 25 or 30 years and its gonna be them if we go down this path,” Bannon said to author and professor Robert Kuttner.

“The economic war with China is everything. And we have have to be maniacally focused on that. If we continue to lose it, we’re five years away, I think, ten years at the most, of hitting an inflection point from which we’ll never be able to recover,” he continued.

Bannon indicated that the current tensions and threats surrounding the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), also known as North Korea, are just a “sideshow” for the battle for global hegemony with China. He said he is pressuring within the Trump administration to use the tensions in Korea as a way to impose economic pressure on China.

“We’re going to run the tables on these guys [China]. We’ve come to the conclusion that they’re in an economic war and they’re crushing us,” he said.



Although Trump has repeatedly engaged in belligerent rhetoric toward the DPRK, saying that the U.S.'s arsenal is "locked and loaded" and that the North Korean people will face "fire and fury," Bannon directly rejected the potential for a military confrontation on the peninsula.

"There's no military solution [to the DPRK's nuclear threats], forget it. Until somebody solves the part of the equation that shows me that ten million people in Seoul don't die in the first 30 minutes from conventional weapons, I don't know what you're talking about, there's no military solution here, they got us," Bannon said.

The DPRK has continued its program to develop ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons in spite of pressure and threats demanding that they halt the efforts. They claim that the weapons act as a deterrent to a potential U.S. invasion or regime change attempt.

Bannon went on to explain how he was acting withing the Trump administration to push anti-China economic policies, such as the recently announced Section 301 complaint from the 1974 Trade Act targeting China's alleged "unfair" trade practices. His struggle is within the administration also, where he said he fights "every day" against the "apparatus" to pressure those within the administration to follow his line and sideline those who don't.

China has been pushing for a "double freeze" plan, which would involve the U.S. halting its military exercises on the Korean Peninsula, which is a key demand of the DPRK, in exchange for Pyongyang stopping its missile tests. On Tuesday, U.S. Department of State spokesperson Heather Nauert scoffed at the idea that such a deal would take place. Bannon however, indicated he might consider such a deal, but that such prospects were remote.

Trump is currently embroiled in criticism domestically and internationally for placing the blame for violence on “both sides” of the recent neo-Nazi and white-nationalist rally that took place in Charlottesville, Virginia, that resulted in a death and numerous injuries when a white-nationalist drove a car into a group of counter-protesters.

Bannon however, dismissed white nationalists as “a collection of clowns.”

“Ethno-nationalism – it’s losers. It’s a fringe element. I think the media plays it up too much,” he said.

While he rejected “ethno-nationalism” in the interview, he made clear that he was embracing economic nationalism, as embodied in his anti-China crusades. “If the left is focused on race and identity, and we go with economic nationalism, we can crush the Democrats,” he said. “I want them to talk about racism every day.”

As a former editor of the far-right wing publication Breitbart News, Bannon is considered to be a major figure within the U.S. far-right, and a major ideological force within the Trump administration as the White House Chief Strategist.

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