

Military Provocation, Playing the North Korea Card

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For decades, North Korea's wanted normalized relations with Washington. It's been repeatedly rebuffed. Promises made were broken. America needs enemies.

North Korea's straight from central casting. On April 2, Washington Post editors headlined "Answer North Korea with financial sanctions," saying:

Kim Jong Un "managed to concoct a fresh provocative announcement aimed at Washington." He declared both Koreas "were back to a 'state of war.' "

"Could this untested, 30-year-old dictator be preparing to start a war with the United States or South Korea? The worrying reality is that it is virtually impossible for outsiders to know for sure."

Most likely he's "rally(ing) support behind the regime and to pressure the United States and its allies into opening negotiations."

"As previous US administrations have learned the hard way, answering provocations with diplomacy will not lead to concessions by North Korea – only to another round of provocations."

Hit 'em again harder, urge Post editors. Pile new sanctions on current ones. Escalate tensions higher. Play the blame game. Denounce Pyongyang for Washington's bellicosity and provocations. Point fingers the wrong way.

Wall Street Journal editors headlined "Calling Kim's Bluff," saying:

He's "manufacturing a crisis to secure high-level talks with the US, as his father and grandfather did."

"The wonder is that the North's bluster-for-cash strategy still gets taken seriously."

"The Obama Administration has so far avoided the Bush-Clinton negotiations trap, and we hope that continues. While an accident or miscalculation could restart the Korean War, there are also reasons to think the North's acting up is all a bluff."

Washington "efforts pressure Kim into better behavior will come to nothing if it caves now and grants formal talks. (It's) no time to go wobbly."

Journal editors omitted demands for more sanctions. Otherwise, they marched in lockstep with Post ones. Blame North Korea for Washington's imperial aims.

Hold it responsible for acting in response to justifiable fears. Increase America's regional presence. Prioritize gunboat diplomacy. Intensify saber rattling. Escalate tensions. Avoid dialogue. Show Pyongyang Washington won't be bullied. It's standard media scoundrel policy.

North Korea poses no threat. It wants normalized relations. America needs enemies. Pyongyang's used for that purpose.

"It's North Korea, Again," headlined The New York Times.

"Recent weeks of saber-rattling and military escalation have affirmed a harsh truth: North Korea – which is much closer to putting a nuclear warhead on a missile than Iran and has threatened to strike the United States and its allies – is the more urgent challenge. The major powers still haven't figured out how to solve it."

"The Obama administration was prudent to bolster its forces in the region."

"....Washington has an obligation (to) defend the homeland (and) reassure South Korea and Japan that America's defense commitments remain firm."

As usual, Times editors twisted truth. North Korea threatens no one. It wants peace, not war. It wants its sovereign rights respected. It wants US provocations to stop.

It opposes Obama's Asia pivot. It does so for good reason. America's greater military presence threatens its security. It compromises regional peace.

Gunboat diplomacy escalates tensions. It's done for that purpose. It causes instability. It creates problems. It doesn't solve them.

North Korea's justifiably concerned. America's military presence is menacing. Its exercises are provocative. Key Resolve began in February. It's now completed. Eagle Fold runs through April 30.

Overall, around 13,000 US forces and 200,000 South Korean ones are involved. So are nuclear capable B-2 stealth bombers, F-22 stealth fighters, and B-52s. San Diego-based USS Decatur was heading home. It was re-missioned. It's on alert in western Pacific waters.

Pentagon spokesman George Little said a second guided missile destroyer, the USS John McCain, was deployed. It arrived at a "pre-determined location." It's positioned off the Korean peninsula.

Both ships are prepared "to perform a missile defense operations as assigned by our combatant commander. (They're) poised to respond to any missile threats to our allies or our territory."

Missile defense systems will be installed in Guam. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said it's to defend it from a "real and clear danger" from North Korea. Others were installed in Alaska and America's west coast.

Pyongyang raised concerns. It said "North-South relations will be entering a state of war and all issues raised between the North and the South will be handled accordingly."

“The long-standing situation of the Korean Peninsula being neither at peace nor at war is finally over.”

If Washington and/or Seoul attack, conflict “will not be limited to a local war. (It will) develop into an all-out war, a nuclear war.”

It bears repeating. North Korea wants peace, not war. Conflict assures losers, not winners. Heated rhetoric hopes to get America’s attention.

It bears full responsibility for rising tensions. According to Russian former chief of staff General Yuri Baluyevsky, Washington and NATO may preemptively attack Russia and China.

Nuclear weapons may be used. NATO’s missile shield intends to protect against retaliatory strikes.

“They expect that their opponents will respond with up to 100 missiles, not with 1,500 or 2,000. They are dreaming of being able to intercept the whole bulk of a hundred missiles and make themselves invulnerable after their first strike,” he added.

Little wonder North Korea expresses concerns. Normalized relations could have been restored decades ago. Instead, Pyongyang’s used as Washington’s regional punching bag.

At issue is justifying Obama’s Asia pivot. It involves advancing America’s military footprint. It targets China and Russia.

North Korea’s a convenient pretext. If it didn’t exist, it’d be invented. Claiming it threatens South Korea and Japan doesn’t wash. Washington’s the sole regional menace. It’s greater presence bodes ill.

Last June, then Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said around 60% of US naval forces will be based in the Pacific by 2020.

Strengthening America’s presence is part of its new imperial strategy. Challenging China is prioritized. At issue is isolating Beijing regionally and undermining its influence. It’s a recipe for heightened tensions and potential confrontation.

Comparable Chinese or Russian presence in US waters would be pretext for war. So would their bases in neighboring regional countries.

America believes global territories and waters are its own. It works because other nations don’t object. Japan and South Korea go along. They accept what they should reject.

Last May, Obama met with then Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda in Washington. Strengthening strategic ties and boosting military activities were discussed.

A joint statement pledged to “further enhance our bilateral security and defense cooperation.” A commitment was affirmed to “US strategic rebalancing to the Asia Pacific.”

Plans are to establish “a more geographically distributed and operationally resilient force posture in the region.”

Washington has been “rebalancing” in East Asia for years. Strategy calls for strengthening military, economic, and political ties with Japan, South Korea, India, Australia, New Zealand,

Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Myanmar, Singapore and Vietnam.

China and Russia are targeted. Doing so risks potential confrontation. Beating up on North Korea increases the possibility. Conflict isn't likely now. Ahead, anything is possible.

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