Cato Institute Foreign Policy Briefing No. 24: North Korea and the Risks of Coercive Nonproliferation

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Executive Summary

North Korea's abrupt withdrawal from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) understandably alarms the United States, but proposals by some U.S. policy experts to launch preemptive military strikes are reckless. That step could easily trigger a major war on the Korean peninsula, engulfing the 36,000 U.S. troops stationed there and causing the deaths of tens of thousands of Koreans. Similar proposals for coercive nonproliferation when the Soviet Union and China joined the global nuclear-weapons club were wisely rejected.

Instead of resorting to high-risk military options, Washington should work with Beijing, Tokyo, and Seoul to draw North Korea into the web of international diplomatic and economic relations and persuade Pyongyang to honor its commitments to the NPT. The current crisis also underscores the urgent need to withdraw all U.S. military personnel from South Korea. There are no U.S. security interests at stake in Korea that are important enough to risk making American soldiers nuclear hostages.

Introduction

After rejecting demands from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to allow inspection of two suspected nuclear facilities, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) is preparing to withdraw from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). As a result, fears of a North Korean nuclear bomb, which had receded as Pyongyang allowed a half dozen IAEA inspections over the past year, have now risen to a fever pitch. Although the Clinton administration has so far reacted with circumspection, demands for a military response are growing. There is no easy solution to the threat of a nuclear DPRK, but precipitous U.S. action could spark a new war that would endanger, not only the 36,000 American service personnel presently stationed on the Korean peninsula, but millions of South Koreans as well.

Bloody History

The Korean peninsula, like Europe, was divided between the United States and the USSR after World War II. Plans for reunification collapsed amidst worsening Cold War tensions, and the two competing Korean states were soon at war. That inconclusive conflict was followed by a bitter mini- cold war that lasted nearly four decades. By the end of the 1980s, however, the North found itself increasingly isolated internationally and falling ever further behind the Republic of Korea (ROK) economically. The violent collapse of monarchical communism in Ceausescu's Romania and West Germany's absorption of communist East Germany proved particularly unsettling for the retrograde Stalinist regime in Pyongyang. With the cutoff of subsidized trade by China and Russia, even officials of the DPRK could no longer deny their nation's economic distress. By December 1991 officials of the two Koreas had held several meetings,

South Korean businessmen were heading north to invest, and the two governments had approved a nonaggression pact and agreed to allow mutual inspections for nuclear weapons. The Korean political winter, it seemed, was over.

But extensive saber rattling occurred in the North during the recent joint U.S.-ROK Team Spirit military exercises, and the Central Intelligence Agency warns that the North may have enough plutonium to develop one or two nuclear weapons. The ROK has suspended economic activities in the DPRK, Japan and the United States have backed away from discussions about improving relations with Pyongyang, and some Western analysts are seriously calling for war--immediately.

Bitter Competition

Since their creation, the two Koreas have competed bitterly in the economic, military, and political arenas. The DPRK's economic edge disappeared during the 1960s as Pyongyang's rigid command economy stagnated and the South's generally capitalist economy began to soar. Seoul outmaneuvered its rival in the political and diplomatic realms as well during the following decade. By the 1980s the game between the two states was essentially over: the South was twice as populous, dramatically more prosperous, a serious player in international economic and technological markets, and one of the globe's leading trading nations. Only on the military front did Pyongyang retain a lead, largely reflecting the fact that America's security guarantee, then backed by a 43,000-man tripwire, made additional defense spending by the ROK unnecessary. As early as the 1980s there was little justification for maintaining the so-called mutual defense treaty. South Korea was capable of overtaking the North's military capabilities with only modest increases in defense expenditures--had Seoul chosen to do so.[1]

Today the gap between the two nations is even wider. The South's gross national product is estimated to be 12 times that of its northern rival. Thus, North Korea would have to devote nearly its entire national production to match an expenditure by Seoul of little more than 8 percent of its GNP. (Seoul currently devotes approximately 5 percent of GNP to the military.) Pyongyang lacks the hard currency necessary to buy spare parts for its plentiful tanks and other weapons, which probably contributes to the large number of broken-down military trucks visitors see throughout the capital city and its environs. The readiness and training of the DPRK forces is questionable: the regime gives its pilots little time in the air, for instance. The North's domestic transportation infrastructure is primitive and in disrepair, many military personnel spend their time performing public-works tasks, and the DPRK has apparently never conducted a combined arms exercise. Although a sudden onslaught by the North's million-man military might succeed in capturing or destroying Seoul, which lies just 30 miles south of the demilitarized zone (DMZ), even many South Korean analysts now discount the likelihood of a northern invasion.

The North's Nuclear Option

Given Pyongyang's mounting economic and diplomatic failures, and the looming prospect of the South's reaching parity in conventional military capability, North Korea's only potential trump card is the development of a nuclear weapon. Pyongyang apparently has had a program under way for some time. Since the DPRK began its efforts when the United States still maintained tactical nuclear weapons in the South--which were withdrawn only in late 1991--it is possible that Pyongyang wanted the bomb primarily as a defensive weapon, although the goal of nuclear blackmail of neighboring countries cannot be ruled out. As the North's allies, the former USSR and more recently China, have effectively defected, recognizing Seoul over the DPRK's objections, dictator Kim Il Sung and his son Kim Jong Il, the elder Kim's anointed successor, have probably come to believe even more strongly that an atomic bomb is a, and perhaps the only, means of ensuring the regime's survival, whether against a military attack by the South or more general political pressure. Explained defector Ko Young Hwan in 1991, a nuclear weapon was viewed by officials in the North "as the last means they can resort to to protect their system."[2]

That perception is quite plausible. After all, only the threat of a North Korean bomb has caused such powers as Japan and the United States to treat the DPRK seriously. The mere whisper of a project, however limited, has allowed the North to manipulate not only its antagonists but also its allies, including China, that do not want Pyongyang to possess a bomb. The well-publicized, almost hysterical fear of Pyongyang's nuclear efforts has probably encouraged the regime to push ahead.

North Korea's nuclear-weapons program appears to be centered at Yongbyon, 60 miles north of Pyongyang. At that

site are a 30-megawatt reactor and a reprocessing facility; the North also is constructing a 200-megawatt reactor that could produce an estimated 100 pounds of plutonium a year once it is operational. More worrisome is the possibility that the DPRK also has underground nuclear facilities, as alleged by defector Ko Young Hwan.

However, while South Korean defense officials and American newspaper columnists were calling for a preemptive military strike in the summer and fall of 1991, Pyongyang finalized an inspection agreement under the NPT, which it had signed in 1985. The North seemed prepared to go even further in December 1991, signing a bilateral agreement with the ROK that provided for more extensive examinations in both North and South. Hope for a real dÇtente between the two bitter enemies blossomed.

Even though the two Koreas subsequently deadlocked over inspection procedures, progress was made on other fronts: in particular, the IAEA made its first visit to the North in early 1992 and subsequently conducted six examinations of North Korean nuclear facilities. The agency's conclusions were encouraging if not definitive: the DPRK had produced some plutonium, but it did not seem to have an effective ongoing nuclear program. Although the IAEA was skeptical of some of Pyongyang's explanations of the purpose of its apparent reprocessing facility, the North took IAEA investigators to sites not on the formal inspection list and offered to allow the agency to make special visits on demand. As a result, last November Ronald Lehman, head of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, reversed his earlier pessimistic assessment of the North's nuclear efforts when he stated that international efforts had "stopped" the DPRK's program. While the future nevertheless remained uncertain, in 2 years Pyongyang had moved further toward normal participation in international affairs than it had in the previous 40. Equally important, economic pressure for reform continued to mount with China's announcement that it was ending its barter trade with the North.

On the IAEA's latest visit to North Korea in January 1993, however, the DPRK refused access to two possible nuclear-waste depositories. North Korea tied its refusal to the ongoing Team Spirit military exercises in the South, which have since ceased. When the IAEA made an unprecedented demand for a special inspection of the two sites, Pyongyang announced that it was withdrawing from the NPT and abrogated the inspection agreement. As the IAEA's March 31 deadline for opening the two sites approached, Secretary of State Warren Christopher told a House appropriations subcommittee, "There will be enforcement action taken within the U.N. Security Council."[3] He focused on economic sanctions, though there was no guarantee that such measures would have much effect on the DPRK's already isolated economy. And UN action requires the acquiescence of China, long the North's closest ally, which says that it will not endorse coercive measures against Pyongyang. "We support patient consultations to reach an appropriate solution," explained Chinese foreign minister Qian Qichen. "If the matter goes before the Security Council, that will only complicate things."[4]

More ominous, discussions of military remedies are being heard again in the United States. Argues columnist Paul Greenberg, "America and its allies should be readying an Israel-style strike against North Korean facilities now."[5] Frank Gaffney of the Center for Security Policy takes a similar position. He contends that "the choice--as with Iraq two-and-a-half years ago--is not between possibly going to war with North Korea and not going to war. Rather, it is a question of risking going to war now, when U.S. military capabilities are relatively strong and North Korean nuclear forces are minimal (or not yet completed), rather than later when such advantageous conditions will almost surely not exist."[6] House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee chairman John Murtha (D-Pa.) has called for destroying the North Korean facilities even though, he admits, "There is no question we would have to be prepared to go to war."[7]

Assessing North Korean Intentions

What makes the present situation so difficult is that we know neither the North's capabilities nor its intentions. Naturally, Pyongyang's official explanation is that it was forced into its present course by the United States and that the DPRK is merely defending its "socialist system."[8]

In private conversations, DPRK diplomats with the United Nations in New York argue that the facilities at issue are conventional military, not nuclear, and are therefore exempt from the inspection regime, and that in making its demands the IAEA is yielding to pressure from Washington. Would America have opened its bases under similar circumstances? they ask. Their government, they say, remains committed to three-way talks with the United States and the ROK about nuclear inspections on the peninsula and is willing to return to the NPT if such talks get under way.

North Korean diplomats also say they are ready to discuss the two sites with the IAEA if it acts independently, not under U.S. pressure, though they do not guarantee that Pyongyang will ultimately allow inspections of those facilities.[9] The North puts particular emphasis on ending joint U.S.-ROK military exercises, an issue that clearly agitated Northern officials whom I met in Pyongyang in August 1992.

What is really going on? CIA director R. James Woolsey argues that "an obvious reason for the standoff is that North Korea has something significant to hide."[10] But, while certainly plausible, that is not the only possible interpretation. There are at least four possible causes of Pyongyang's present course. The first and most threatening is the Woolsey thesis, that the North has a nuclear-develop-ment program under way and is, and always has been, committed to building a bomb. According to that scenario, Kim Il Sung thought he could gain the diplomatic benefits of accepting IAEA inspections while shielding his nuclear efforts from the agency's scrutiny. When the inspectors got too close, he withdrew from the NPT.

There are other possibilities, however, which presumably explain why China is predicting that the North will eventually rejoin the NPT.[11] For instance, the DPRK may have had a nuclear program under way but decided two years ago to drop it in exchange for expected benefits: diplomatic recognition by Japan and the United States, aid from the ROK and Japan, and investment from and trade with Seoul and the United States. In a move perhaps triggered by the 1993 Team Spirit exercises, however, more hard-line elements may have demanded a change in policy, contending that all the DPRK had received for its genuinely more conciliatory course were ever-escalating demands and that therefore Pyongyang should "just say no." That scenario differs significantly from the first in that it suggests that the North may yet be convinced to eschew a nuclear capability.

Possibility number three is that a frustrated North is playing the "nuclear card," irrespective of the actual state of its program, in an attempt to wring more concessions from the United States, the ROK, and Japan. Since those nations have shown that nothing else gets their attention, the DPRK may believe that it has to revive the nuclear threat from time to time.

Finally, the fourth scenario is that North Korea's new intransigence reflects an effort by heir apparent Kim Jong Il to shore up his rather thin military credentials by proving that he will protect the defense establishment's, and his nation's, interests. If he gains foreign concessions as a result, he could then return to the NPT from a strengthened political position.

Unfortunately, it is impossible to know which of those scenarios is accurate. The ultrasecretive nature of Kim's totalitarian political system makes any evaluation purely speculative. The critical point, however, is that only the first scenario represents a serious problem to which there is no diplomatic solution. The situations presented by the other three scenarios are at least theoretically solvable by negotiation, however much today's enthusiasts of the "start bombing" school may hate that course.

Groping toward a Peaceful Solution

Although a matter of great concern, the North's withdrawal from the NPT poses no immediate crisis. There is no credible evidence that the DPRK currently possesses a bomb; many U.S. officials acknowledge that the North, assuming that it is committed to building a bomb, still may lack enough plutonium to produce even one weapon, let alone several. In the longer term, the possibility that Pyongyang might use nuclear arms to blackmail the ROK and other East Asian neighbors is worrisome. Nevertheless, a small arsenal would be more useful as a guarantee of the survival of the North Korean state and as political leverage than as offensive weapons against the ROK and other states in the region. The most important impact of a North Korean bomb ultimately might be to drive both the ROK and Japan to obtain their own nuclear arsenals.

That is an unpleasant prospect, certainly, but not one that warrants war now, especially without any serious attempt to resolve the issue before beginning bombing. Proposals to strike militarily are foolhardy. An attack would be unlikely to eliminate the North's nuclear program; the two sites from which the DPRK has barred inspectors are suspected waste sites, not production facilities. If the latter exist, and we apparently do not know that they do, they are probably buried deep underground somewhere, and we have no way of destroying them unless we are willing to use nuclear weapons. A meaningless strike at unimportant installations might actually encourage the regime to persevere with its presumed

program, since U.S. or ROK strikes would strengthen the argument of those who believe that only an atomic bomb can guarantee the security of the North, which lacks a serious air defense.

Not only are the odds long against Washington and Seoul's successfully taking out unknown facilities at unknown locations. Equally dubious is the assumption of some that Pyongyang, long considered one of the most bizarre and unpredictable regimes on earth, would quietly acquiesce to such a devastating, and very public, international humiliation. At a minimum, the North would probably restart a terror campaign that once blew commercial airliners out of the sky and massacred South Korean politicians visiting other nations. This time, however, Americans, too, would almost certainly become targets.

Far worse is the possible ignition of what remains perhaps the world's most dangerous flashpoint: 1.5 million soldiers, almost as many as once manned the 4,600-mile China-USSR border, currently sit astride the 155-mile DMZ and within a short drive of Seoul, the ROK's capital, with a population of 12 million people. A new war in Korea would be ruinous to all concerned. Even the hawkish Richard Fisher of the Heritage Foundation acknowledges, "War against North Korea would devastate the Korean peninsula and must be avoided at every reasonable cost."[12]

Of course, any rational calculation by the North's leadership would cause Pyongyang to restrain itself, since it would ultimately lose any general conflict.[13] In fact, that realization has helped to keep the peace for 40 years. Air strikes by the United States, or a commando operation by the South, however, would be an act of war that Pyongyang could not easily ignore. (Iraq had less opportunity and less capability to retaliate against Israel for its demolition of the Osirik reactor and would have risked a far more devastating counterblow by its nuclear-armed adversary.) Even small-scale reprisals by the DPRK could lead to counterattacks by Seoul and soon escalate out of control. Or "Great Leader" Kim Il Sung might adopt Frank Gaffney's analysis as his own: if the United States and the ROK appear dedicated to the destruction of his regime, then it might be better to have war now rather than later, when his nation will be weaker and the South stronger. A few weeks or months into such a conflict, American soldiers would probably occupy Pyongyang, but Seoul, too, might lie in ruins, and tens of thousands of Koreans--and hundreds or thousands of Americans--would probably have died.

Circumspection Needed

A different course is called for. First, the United States should avoid taking precipitous action; if there is a crisis involving American security interests, it will occur in the future, not today. Thus, we should be circumspect. We should particularly look for evidence that will help us to decide why the North acted as it did--essentially to decide whether it is irrevocably committed to the acquisition of nuclear weapons or might be willing to trade away that capability. As long as we believe the latter may be the case and that negotiations could be fruitful, we need to pursue the diplomatic option.

That strategy should start with a U.S. commitment to establish diplomatic ties with and end the economic embargo against Pyongyang if the DPRK remains within the NPT and fulfills its obligations to the IAEA. That overture would provide the North with an immediate, positive reason to remain in the NPT. Is that a "concession," something some hard-line Western analysts do not want to give to North Korea? Of course, but it is a minimal one that would offer some small benefits to the United States as well--access to DPRK mineral exports, for instance, as well as a larger window into the secretive "hermit kingdom." It is certainly better to offer some cheap carrots to Pyongyang than to risk driving two nations of more than 60 million people into war.

More significant, the diplomatic option should include a commitment to three-way talks to implement the two Koreas' independent inspection agreement signed in late 1991. South Korean and American officials argue that such talks would allow the DPRK to divide the allies, but Pyongyang has little leverage with which to promote a split. Another complaint is that engaging in the talks would be yielding to Northern extortion, but negotiations are a very cheap price to pay for the possibility of finding a way to both avoid war and denuclearize the peninsula. As the nation that first introduced nuclear weapons to the peninsula, the United States should voluntarily join discussions about a nuclear-inspection regime that would satisfy both the North and the South.

The ultimate objective of such talks should be a willingness on all sides to allow investigation of any suspected

facility. But the initial inspections could be more modest: Washington should offer to open several American bases in the South where it once deployed nuclear weapons in return for IAEA access to the two disputed facilities and South Korean inspection of the Yongbyon complex. In time, additional bases and facilities could be opened to view.

The United States should also offer to help jump-start talks between South and North through the Joint Military Committee in order to promote inspections of conventional facilities. As part of that process, the ROK and America should announce cancellation of future joint military exercises and a phased withdrawal of the 36,000 U.S. soldiers stationed in the South. In addition, Seoul should invite the North to respond by demobilizing some of its forces and pulling others back from their advanced, threatening positions in the DMZ. A refusal by Pyongyang to respond positively would provide evidence of its aggressive intentions and should cause the South to engage in a serious military buildup. With its enormous economic, political, and technological edge, the ROK cannot seriously maintain that it is unable to build the forces needed to defend itself.

What should happen to the U.S. military presence if the North refuses to choose peace? Under no circumstances should Washington leave U.S. troops on the peninsula, especially if the North acquires a bomb.[14] America's original security commitment grew out of guilt at having left Seoul militarily unprepared for the DPRK onslaught in 1950. Moreover, during the Cold War South Korea was viewed as an important surrogate in the strategy of containment. The world has changed, however. Not only has the USSR disappeared, but the ROK now vastly outstrips its rival. American troops remain in the South out of habit, not need.

Americans as Nuclear Hostages

It is bad enough that today 36,000 young Americans continue to act as a living tripwire between the DMZ and Seoul in the event of a conventional war. To leave them as nuclear hostages if the North acquires an atomic bomb would be unforgivable. Nowhere else on earth would so many Americans be at such great risk. The possibility that the DPRK may become a nuclear power should increase, not decrease, incentives for a prompt U.S. military withdrawal from Korea.

For similar reasons, the United States should not maintain, let alone strengthen, nuclear guarantees to South Korea and Japan. America's past conventional interventions on behalf of tangential interests, in Vietnam, for instance, proved costly, but the risks that could accompany a nuclear contest between small American allies and their antagonists is far worse. Already Washington finds itself dangerously entangled in the affairs of India and Pakistan, which have repeatedly fought each other and now possess nuclear capabilities.[15] There are even disturbing reports, albeit discounted by some U.S. officials, that those two states approached the nuclear brink in 1990 over Kashmir.[16] There is no reason for the United States to risk nuclear exposure in East Asia as well.

If the North forges ahead with its nuclear program, the United States should inform Pyongyang that Washington will no longer block Seoul from developing nuclear weapons; indeed, if necessary, the United States will provide the South with a small nuclear inventory, sufficient to cancel the DPRK's advantage, as well as whatever anti-missile technology we possess. The North would then find itself further behind its southern rival. North Korea's position would also further deteriorate if Japan acquired nuclear weapons in a spreading regional arms race. In contrast, if Pyongyang fulfilled its obligations to the IAEA, foreign investment, recognition, and trade would be forthcoming.

The thought of further expanding the world's nuclear club may seem unsettling--especially because Japan, too, might ultimately seek a limited arsenal, given the tensions between that nation and both Koreas. But for a variety of reasons, an increasing number of nations are likely to acquire atomic weapons in the years ahead, despite the NPT. In fact, to the extent that the treaty works, it bears a disturbing resemblance to gun control: the law-abiding submit and the criminals arm themselves. As a result, more analysts are proposing coercive nonproliferation, particularly through the use of military force. But the problems with such a strategy are manifold: the difficulty of destroying the most important sites, the danger posed to nearby states as well as to local civilian populations by radioactive leaks, the risk of terrorist retaliation, and the significant political difficulties of mounting Osirik-type operations. In the case of North Korea, full-scale war is also a serious possibility.[17]

Consequently, it would be better to begin discussing how the United States can best adjust to a world in which nuclear weapons do proliferate. That does not mean there is no value in attempting to slow some programs and stop other

states from acquiring nuclear weapons. But a mixture of strategies, including development of anti-missile technologies, expansion of anti-aircraft capabilities, maintenane of a sufficient U.S. nuclear deterrent, and a judicious acceptance of the acquisition of independent deterrent forces by friendly states, needs to replace today's all-or-nothing approach, under which we either prevent a state from acquiring weapons or simply extend America's nuclear umbrella. Observes the Cato Institute's Ted Galen Carpenter, "Without the threat posed by a would-be hegemon, it is difficult to imagine what interest could be important enough for the United States to risk the consequences of a nuclear war to defend Turkey from a nuclear-armed Iran or to defend South Korea from a nuclearized North Korea."[18]

Conclusion

With the demise of the USSR, Pyongyang is left as perhaps the most potentially threatening (and the most unstable) actor on the world stage. The possibility of North Korea's acquiring nuclear weapons rightly unsettles not only its neighbors but also the United States. Nevertheless, there is no imminent crisis, and there certainly is no justification for turning the possibility of future conflict into the far greater likelihood of war today.

In fact, this is not the first time hawkish analysts have argued that Washington must use military action to prevent a brutal, totalitarian regime from acquiring a nuclear capability. Observe Robert Tucker and David Hendrickson: "It should be remembered that the same temptation arose when first the Soviet Union and then China developed nuclear weapons. It was said in the early 1950s about the Soviet Union, just as it was later said in the early to mid-1960s about China, that it would be impossible to enter into a deterrent relationship with either regime." Had American policymakers acted on such panicky impulses, they note, "the 'long peace' associated with the cold war would have been considerably shorter than it was."[19]

Tucker and Henderson's point should apply to North Korea today. It would have been an enormous tragedy had the United States launched a major war against a Soviet Union that was destined to collapse a few decades later or against a China that is now far along the path of economic reform. Patience is similarly called for in dealing with the problem of North Korea. In all likelihood, the Pyongyang dictatorship is headed for the ash heap of history alongside the USSR and other Marxist systems. The worst thing Washington could do would be to take precipitous measures that might cause a desperate, paranoid regime to start a general war in the belief that it had nothing to lose and might as well take its enemies down with it.

Thus, instead of adopting a coercive nonproliferation strategy, the United States and the ROK need to pursue diplomatic options in an attempt to divert the North from a nuclear course. The Korean peninsula's cold war has been thawing, which suggests at least the possibility of removing the nuclear bottleneck and making further progress. How ever if the North is firmly committed to acquiring an atomic bomb, the best way to expose that intent is to make an attractive offer that would be difficult to refuse. If it then becomes indisputable that Pyongyang will join the global nuclear-weapons club, the best response would be for the South to develop a strong conventional deterrent backed by a small nuclear arsenal. In any case, the U.S. troops should come home--they are not necessary to defend the ROK, and America has no interest at stake in the region that warrants using them as hostages in a nuclear game of chicken.

That is not an ideal option, of course, but there is none. There are, however, plenty of bad ones for dealing with the DPRK's withdrawal from the NPT. Thus, we should choose a second-best strategy. That is the right course to take despite the temptation to adopt the more vigorous--but ultimately counterproductive and dangerous--response of coercive nonproliferation.

Notes

[1] See, for example, Doug Bandow, "Unfreezing Korea," National Interest 25 (Fall 1991): 51-58; Doug Bandow, "Leaving Korea," Foreign Policy 77 (Winter 1989-90): 77-93; and Doug Bandow, "Korea: The Case for Disengagement," Cato Institute Policy Analysis no. 96, December 8, 1987.

[2] Quoted in Paul Shin, "Defector Says N. Korea Building Atom Bomb," Washington Post, September 14, 1991, p. A20.

[3] Quoted in Warren Strobel, "North Korea Risks Sanctions, Christopher Warns," Washington Times, March 26,

1993, p. A7.

[4] Quoted in Nicholas Kristof, "China Opposes U.N. over North Korea," New York Times, March 24, 1993, p. A6.

[5] Paul Greenberg, "Unhappy Precedent," Washington Times, March 19, 1993, p. F3. See also William Rusher, "Genuine Threat to Peace," Washington Times, March 19, 1993, p. F3. Ken Adelman simply says that the DPRK "must be punished-- fast and hard." Ken Adelman, "Bearding the Spoiler," Washington Times, March 17, 1993, p. G1.

[6] "What to Do about North Korea's Nuclear Threat: Execute the 'Osirik' Remedy," Decision Brief no. 93- D 20, Center for Security Policy, Washington, March 19, 1993, p. 3.

[7] Quoted in ibid.

[8] Democratic People's Republic of Korea, "Statement of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea," no. 7, March 12, 1993.

[9] DPRK diplomats have made similar representations to William J. Taylor of the Center for Strategic and International Studies. William Taylor, "Cool Off Korean Tensions," New York Times, March 27, 1993, p. 21.

[10] Quoted in Douglas Jehl, "U.S. Outlines Concern over North Korean A-Arms," New York Times, February 25, 1993, p. A7. The Washington Post goes even further, declaring that "the only explanation that makes sense . . . is that the latest inspections demanded by the International Atomic Energy Agency would have uncovered evidence of the bomb the North Koreans deny they're working on." "Nuclear Cheat," March 25, 1993, p. A24. The Wall Street Journal expressed a similar opinion. "The only possible conclusion is the obvious one: North Korea wants to have nukes," it said in "North Korea's Bomb Threat," March 17, 1993, p. A14.

[11] "North Korea Seen Rejoining Nuclear Treaty after Talks," Washington Times, March 23, 1993, p. A7.

[12] Richard Fisher, "North Korea's Nuclear Threat: A Test for Bill Clinton," Heritage Foundation Backgrounder Update no. 190, March 23, 1993, p. 3.

[13] For that reason Chicago Tribune columnist Stephen Chapman argued that North Korea would do nothing if Washington took his 1991 advice to bomb Yongbyon. Stephen Chapman, "A Nuclear North Korea: The Danger We Can't Ignore," Creators Syndicate, November 14, 1991. Now he thinks the military option is no longer feasible.

[14] Some observers want to use the nuclear controversy as an excuse for increasing America's troop presence. Frank Gaffney, for one, would halt the departure of the nearly 14,000 soldiers flown in as part of the recent Team Spirit exercises and augment American forces "with airborne, naval and air force elements sufficient to contend with near-term contingencies." Center for Security Policy, p. 2. Similar views have been expressed by others. See, for example, David Kay, "Don't Wait for a Change of Heart in North Korea," Wall Street Journal, March 18, 1993, p. A12.

[15] For a detailed analysis of the risks of America's alliance with Pakistan, see Ted Galen Carpenter, A Search for Enemies: America's Alliances after the Cold War (Washington: Cato Institute, 1992), pp. 113-25.

[16] See, for example, "Report: Kashmir Nuke War Was Near," Washington Times, March 22, 1993, p. A5; and Douglas Jehl, "Assertion India and Pakistan Faced Nuclear War Is Doubted," New York Times, March 23, 1993, p. A3.

[17] Ted Galen Carpenter, "A New Proliferation Policy," National Interest 28 (Summer 1992): 67-68.

[18] Ibid., pp. 70-71.

[19] Robert W. Tucker and David C. Hendrickson, The Imperial Temptation: The New World Order and America's Purpose (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1992), p. 113.