

*United States House of Representatives
Committee on Foreign Affairs*

The Honorable James R. Lilley
Testimony
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- Robert Kaplan on Herodotus
 - o Herodotus illustrates how self-interest is calculated within a disfiguring whirlwind, and how deeply humans believe for the sake of survival.
- “Do not snatch defeat from the jaws of victory” – Anonymous
- I am not addressing breakthroughs, turning points, or starting a blame game
- I try to discuss history, trends, cross currents, and possible outcomes. What are the players up to?

I. NORTH KOREA

a. Trying to:

- i. Survive, remain in power, keep an iron grip on people. Kim Jong-il is a control freak.
- ii. Help win an election by the ruling party in South Korea this year. Possible Kim Jong-il trip to Seoul.
- iii. Exploit what they perceive as widespread anti-Americanism – play nationalist theme in South Korea. They are attempting to exploit US/ROK differences
- iv. Get former President Clinton to North Korea after U.S. 2008 elections – try to get back light water reactors, food and oil as in 1990s.
- v. Make enough short term concessions to keep food, energy, money coming in, principally from South Korea and China.
- vi. Split 5 power cohesion – point finger at U.S. as cause of tension.

- b. Trend of policy in North Korea has evolved from massive invasion of 1950 through terrorist threats and actions to current strategy.
 - i. 1968: assassinate attempt on ROK President Park, seizure of USS Pueblo
 - ii. 1970s: infiltration tunnels under DMZ
 - iii. 1983: kill members of ROK cabinet in Rangoon
 - iv. 1987: blow up South Korean Airliner, get caught
 - v. 1990s: Submarine infiltrations
 - vi. Now, tactical change taking place: focus on WMD.
 - 1. Threat of proliferation a more effective means to survive, but still single-minded, cunning and ruthless, more bravado.
 - 2. Ostensible economic reforms of 2002
 - 3. Has led to Gaesong Industrial Zone plus proposed link-up of transportation systems north and south.
 - 4. Incheon Airport near North/South border DMZ – most modern hub.
 - 5. Increasing Chinese trade relations outside NK central planning
 - 6. Growing consumer goods availability for elite class

II. OTHER POWERS

- a. Fragile but aggressive NK has negative consequences for neighbors
 - i. Millions of refugees from collapsing state
 - ii. A unified Korea under Seoul allied to U.S.
 - iii. North Korean warlords seizure of WMD
- b. China has long and intimate history with Korea
 - i. 600-900 AD: Chinese Tang Dynasty aids Shilla in South to overthrow Koguryo in North (a contemporary argument)
 - ii. China involvement in Imjin defeat of Japan in late 16th century AD
 - iii. Role of China in suppressing Tonghak rebels in late 19th century

- iv. China involvement and rescue of North Korea in 1950s
- v. China abortive support for Sinuiju Trade Zone in 20th century
- vi. Chinese authoritative and diverging comments on North Korea
 - 1. *Shen Dingli* (Fudan University): North Korea is strategically significant for China, in that it reduces the military pressure China faces from US in the contingency of Taiwan independence. It serves as a strategic buffer zone in NE Asia.
 - 2. *Zhu Feng* (CSIS, Peking University): NK is now considered far less of a vital strategic buffer zone than it was in the past. If Sanctions cannot move NK, China will use a variety of means to accomplish this goal, including coercive diplomacy and perhaps ultimately regime transformation.

III. Processes:

- a. 6 Party Talks are a nightmare for NK, increasing cooperation among 5 other powers, especially after the NK nuclear and missile tests
 - i. UN resolutions passed with Chinese and Russian support – never done before.
 - ii. Japanese and US crackdowns
 - iii. China moves troops to border, inspects vehicles, shuts down some NK bank accounts
 - iv. South Korea suspends fertilizer and food shipments
 - v. Revenue from Macao Bank suspended, which hits NK elites. We try to stop narcotics and counterfeiting by NK
 - vi. ASEAN just appealed to NK to stop nuclear problem.
 - vii. Vietnam acts against NK bank accounts
- b. Above actions lead to loss of face and sustenance – HEU, Macao bank restrictions

- c. NK resorts to standard practice of signing agreement, then adding conditions and blaming the other side for breakdown
- d. NK also seeks fellow travelers, united front support. They're trying to win converts – perhaps a new generation of Korean-oriented Edgar Snows emerges
- e. BUT: accumulation of experiences and attitudes indicate that NK extreme sudden violence curtailed and that economic reform is eating into their system

IV. POSSIBLE OUTCOMES:

- a. First, the US must never get on the wrong side of the unification question. There is a basic trade off among the 5 powers:
 - i. Counterproliferation – joint measures such as PSI in return for U.S. toleration of extended timetable for economic influence and seduction
 - ii. Purpose is to transform policies if not system of NK while recognizing that they will fight relentlessly to get the goods but keep contamination out and stage spectacles to grab attention
- b. Finally: John 8:32. “And you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.” NK version: Keep the truth out and you can survive unfree.