

Stop Playing Football With Korea Powderkeg, Says Russia

by Kathy Wolfe

The Six Power Talks on Korea adjourned in stalemate on Feb. 28, under Vice President Dick Cheney's continuing direction to the American delegation to make unilateral demands that North Korea simply give up all nuclear programs, including peaceful nuclear power, or else. "By insisting only on the complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantling [CVID] of the D.P.R.K.'s [North Korea's] nuclear program, we have assured that CVID is now more on the table than ever," a senior U.S. official said, calling that a success. Yet the basis for the talks, was Pyongyang's original proposal to disarm in exchange for a simultaneous security guarantee, a plan introduced by Russia and South Korea and supported by China and Japan. By dismissing it, in fact, Washington created deliberate failure. "We don't negotiate with evil; we defeat evil," as Cheney told a Korea policy meeting on Dec. 12.

Back in Moscow, Russian negotiator Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Losyukov warned on Feb. 29 against playing political football with the danger of a nuclear war in Korea. Washington's hard line "is unlikely to be solved before the U.S. election, as there are political factors," he told South Korean radio, referring to Cheney's use of "get tough on Pyongyang" rhetoric to woo right-wing votes. "If this goes on, mistrust will grow on the Korean peninsula. Nuclear tensions could be aggravated, and the U.S. could raise the possibility of military intervention."

There was no deal because "Cheney et. al. don't want a deal," a former top U.S. official confirmed to *EIR*. "Therefore the U.S. team is not capable of getting a deal and selling it politically, at least not until after November. As a result, North Korea is also merely election-watching, so both sides are stalling. The situation is, in fact, dangerous."

"The repeated mantra of the U.S. team's continuing to chant Complete Verifiable Irreversible Disarmament . . . is

like trying to drive down a high-speed freeway while staring in one's rear-view mirror," as California analyst Peter Hayes wrote recently. "It's a recipe for catastrophic collision. Why are U.S. diplomats engaging in faux-diplomacy, knowing they cannot succeed in forcing the D.P.R.K. to capitulate? . . . Hard-liners, especially VP Cheney, have intervened to block flexible negotiating."

Eurasia's Next Options

"The Bush Administration is not interested in a settlement," North Korea expert Selig Harrison told AFP Feb. 23. "They view the negotiations as a way of showing that a settlement is not possible, and that coercive measures are necessary." As North Korean Ambassador Li Gun said in an extraordinary statement on Feb. 6, unless Washington stops the mantra-chanting, it will be clear they have "an ulterior goal."

The Six Power Talks were proposed almost a year ago in Seoul on April 10, 2003, when Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov called for Russia, China, South Korea, the United States, and Japan to sign a multilateral non-aggression pact with North Korea. "Russia is willing to take part in a 'cross guarantee' of the North Korean regime between the U.S., China, Russia," and the rest, he said. "North Korea will resist U.S. efforts to resolve the nuclear crisis at the United Nations, as the UN's authority is seriously undermined by the war in Iraq."

But while Cheney and his neo-cons have refused to give up their "pre-emptive nuclear first strike" policy, the world has changed dramatically around them. Their excuse for invading Iraq is exposed as a fraud; the Iraq occupation is a failure worse than Vietnam; and the dollar is collapsing as the global financial system unravels. Now Cheney's Korea policy is exposed as "designed to fail." What has really been demon-

strated, is that Cheney and his first-strike policy are both failures.

This is no time for Eurasians in Korea, Russia, Japan, or China, to sit and wait for November. They have the sovereign power to immediately strengthen trade, economic development, infrastructure projects, and monetary cooperation among the Koreans, Japan, China, Russia, India, and Europe, to form a “Eurasian Community of Principle” as Lyndon LaRouche detailed in a Sept. 23, 2003 Moscow speech. Only such an extended coalition would have the clout to assert its rights, but acting together, they can create a deterrent big enough to prevent a war in the region, until the LaRouche movement has given Cheney and his doctrine the boot at home.

If Eurasian nations adopt the “economy first” policy for the Korean Peninsula, and put full resources into running the trains of the Eurasian Land-Bridge “from Busan to Pyongyang” and on to Paris, there is nothing the neo-cons can do to stop it.

Tunnel Vision

Seoul’s ruling Uri Party chairman Chung Dong-young showed the visionary new approach needed, on Feb. 27, when he again proposed construction of an undersea tunnel between South Korea and Japan to boost bilateral trade, a project which has been long promoted by *EIR* as integral to the Eurasian Land-Bridge (often referred to in Korea as the “Iron Silk Road”). “An undersea tunnel would provide a viable formula for the two neighboring countries’ bright future in the upcoming era where Northeast Asia is increasingly powerful in the world economy,” Chung said during a two-day trip to Tokyo. He said the tunnel should connect Busan (Pusan), South Korea’s second largest city, with the city of Fukuoka in Japan. “If the 15-kilometer-long tunnel is built, Japanese railroads could be linked to European cities through the Trans-Korean Railway, the Trans-Siberian Railway and the Trans-Chinese Railway,” Chung said.

This is the first mention of the Korea-Japan tunnel project since President Roh Moo-hyun raised it in his Feb. 25, 2003 meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. In fact, it’s the first serious mention of large-scale “New Deal” infrastructure construction programs for the region since President Roh’s historic Feb. 25, 2003 inauguration speech, which focussed on the full vision of the Eurasian Land-Bridge.

Fascinating as well, a “young Turk” group in Seoul’s opposition Grand National Party (GNP) on March 1 adopted a platform of new policy alternatives on North Korea, calling for doubling North Korean per-capita income through the expansion of economic support from the South. Their “New Vision for GNP” would mark a sharp departure from the party’s past made-in-Washington approach. In a press conference at GNP headquarters, Reps. Nam Kyung-phil, Won Hee-ryong, and eight other young lawmakers proposed that the government transfer corporate taxes collected from local

companies to their northern counterpart in cash, when doing business in the North, among other ideas. They represent a recent internal rebellion, demanding a new party leadership which will act more in the interests of Korean national sovereignty.

Unfortunately, however the opposite brand of “tunnel vision” has been in control of the region for most of the last year. Most Eurasian nations have been too narrowly focussed on domestic affairs to notice the collapse of Cheney’s global Roman Empire and the enormous strategic weakness of the Bush Administration, as the global dollar-based monetary system comes down.

Economic Crisis Looms

Among Roh’s advisors, for example, a small Jacobin “Korea first” group has argued heatedly against the Iron Silk Road policy, calling it a “scam” which would divert Korean investments into China, Russia, and Europe. “We should use all our money to help the poor in South Korea, to help North Korea,” one of them told *EIR*. “We should forget all these foreigners and only help Koreans.”

This extreme tunnel vision is rejected by most of Roh’s party, but even those who support the Silk Road have been afraid to strongly promote an international alliance, fearful that the Korean public is too selfishly focussed on its own domestic “my money” issues to care about the future and the alliances it makes necessary.

This is suicide, since only a broad coalition with China, Japan, Russia, India, and Europe, can help South Korea escape the drift toward war which Cheney’s failures have set into motion.

This narrow “my money” focus inside each nation has allowed various schemes to pit Japan, Korea, and China all against each other, in a way which has almost frozen the Eurasian Land-Bridge effort in the past year. Among the worst offenders has been Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi, whose repeated hostile acts toward South Korea and China have earned him constant, vociferous attacks by their heads of state.

Meanwhile, Eurasia could be engulfed in the global financial crisis which is now causing genocide in Argentina, Haiti, and elsewhere—which selfish East Asians are ignoring. South Korea, for example, is entirely dependent on huge domestic credit card borrowings, imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) during 1998-2000, and this debt is about to pop.

“Korea is heading toward a very precarious position. Even a small shock from abroad can seriously destabilize the situation,” one Seoul economist told *EIR*. This would cause the foreign hot money brought in by the IMF, which is all that is holding up the Seoul stock market, to run away home. “We are already divided into two different classes of people: rich and poor, globalized and localized. If no drastic restructuring of the financial system is done soon, there may be no way to salvage the Korean economy.”