

Britain, United Nations itching for nuclear crisis in Korea

by Kathy Wolfe

The demands coming from much of the U.S. press that Clinton “go to the brink” on North Korea are just a cover for a contrived nuclear crisis scenario being run out of the U.N. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the British Foreign and Defense Ministries, an *EIR* investigation has revealed.

Why the panic over North Korea? It was not Pentagon hawks or South Korean militarists, but the British Defense Ministry which originally “determined” that North Korea was building nuclear weapons expressly in order to invade South Korea, a London defense official told *EIR* recently. “Our message is that North Korean dictator Kim Il Sung, who is 82, has vowed to invade South Korea before he dies,” he asserted. “And it’s probable; they will take Seoul within hours. Kim has built nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, so that when he invades, the United States will be deterred from using nuclear weapons to defend the South.”

The leading British defense journal *Jane’s Intelligence Review* published a special report on March 22 announcing that North Korea has begun to produce enough fuel for 10 nuclear warheads per year and is set to invade the South in a “surprise attack.”

“Now there will have to be sanctions against the North,” a source at *Jane’s* told *EIR*. “We may well see a Cuban missile crisis-style military blockade. Remember 1961, sitting on the edge of your chair, waiting for war? Every ship approaching North Korea will have to be stopped; we’ll be on the brink!”

Under this “Dr. Strangelove” logic, the Anglophile U.S. press, led by the *Washington Times* and *Washington Post* columnist Lally Weymouth, are pressuring President Clinton to “use force” to disarm Pyongyang, as Weymouth wrote on April 12.

Every time North Korea, South Korea, and the United States calm down and negotiate, “the U.N.’s IAEA makes some hostile announcement or provokes the North, and the crisis escalates again,” as one South Korean church official pointed out to *EIR* on April 21.

Yet they all admit that nothing short of the unthinkable—incinerating 20 million North Koreans—could force Kim Il Sung to give up the bomb.

A Korean ‘Camp David’

Is nuclear war in Asia really inevitable? Certainly not. Not only has North Korea no plan for invasion, say South Korean patriots in the best position to know, but the real issue is that South and North Korea during the last year have made substantial progress in peaceful reunification talks. Under a program drafted in 1991 by highly industrialized South Korea, reunification would be effected through the South helping to economically develop the depressed North. “South Koreans do not view North Korea as Germans viewed East Germany, as a foreign-occupied client state,” one South Korean official told *EIR*. “We want to work with them.”

In fact, President Clinton and his closest advisers are cooperating behind the scenes to bring a peace settlement to the Korean peninsula, Korean sources say, modeled on Clinton’s role in the Mideast accords.

And that is what London seeks to stop at all costs, just as former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher attempted to block the reunification of Germany. In London’s view, a modern, unified Korean economy, with Japan, could develop all of Asia if left to itself.

More broadly, the same “neo-conservative” Anglophile U.S. media which are attacking President Clinton in “White-watergate,” led by the *Washington Times*, Weymouth, and A.M. Rosenthal of the *New York Times*, are shouting most loudly for President Clinton to “drop the bomb” on Pyongyang. London means the Korea crisis to be one more policy disaster to help destroy the U.S. presidency and turn chunks of the world over to U.N. police control.

“It’s time for a new day in Korea, just as in the Middle East,” a Korean Christian leader told *EIR* on April 21. President Clinton is trying to take U.S. Korea policy off autopilot from the Bush administration’s policy of “bomb first and talk later,” he said.

“I’ve spoken with President Clinton several times, and he is totally different from the Bush hawks and the American media on the issue. Just as Clinton brought together the PLO [Palestine Liberation Organization] and Israel on the White House lawn, Clinton may be edging toward a Camp David conference with North and South Korea. Clinton wants it; he has firm moral convictions for Korean reunification, as do

the whole Korean people. Clinton's new Korea negotiator, Assistant Secretary of State Robert Galucci, is also much more reasonable than past negotiators."

Clinton administration Defense Secretary William Perry, while playing to the hawks in public talk, did take action on April 20 to cool off the crisis in Seoul. Perry and his South Korean counterpart Rhee Byoung-tae met and announced to the press that they were suspending the controversial "Team Spirit" war games against North Korea, provided the North reopens its nuclear sites to U.N. inspection.

"The door remains open to dialogue with North Korea to resolve the nuclear question. I have never believed during this roller-coaster period that we are in danger of an imminent military confrontation with North Korea," Perry told reporters.

"This tense situation is not a military crisis, but rather a political crisis," South Korea Deputy Defense Minister Chung Jung-ho told reporters, adding that "the military situation is much more stable than it appears from the outside."

Will Clinton split with the IAEA?

The British-run IAEA has played the role of on-the-ground wrecker in all these peace discussions, a Washington Korean affairs analyst told *EIR* on April 20. "The U.S. press won't tell you this, but the problem in March when the Korean nuclear talks broke down was *not* that North Korea kicked out the poor IAEA," he said. "The problem is that when they got there, the IAEA demanded 'special inspections.' IAEA 'special inspections' are police inspections, under which U.N. officials go anywhere, anytime, unannounced. Not only can they go anywhere in your military facilities without warning, but they can walk into the President's home, for example.

"Such a thing has never before been demanded of any country except Iraq, which surrendered in war. By treating North Korea like Iraq, as though they had no rights, the IAEA makes negotiation impossible."

"Clinton in fact is close to a split with the IAEA; his position is totally different from that of the IAEA," the South Korean church leader said.

On April 21, a source close to the Clinton administration told *EIR* that "privately, the United States is telling the IAEA to back off from this total demand for blanket inspections. The IAEA must make clear and in writing beforehand where and when they'll inspect, so North Korea can agree and all is clear."

"This administration is in principle committed to the South Korean plan for peaceful reunification; the South does not want chaos and a sudden collapse of North Korea, but a gradual diplomatic process, and we agree," the Clinton man said.

The source reported a battle inside the administration between Clinton appointees and Bush holdovers over whether Cable News Network and other U.S. journalists should go to North Korea to interview North Korean dictator Kim Il

Sung. The fact that they did so April 15, and that Kim told them that he would like to visit the United States, was a "breakthrough," the official said.

"Meanwhile, we have to be publicly insisting on U.N. inspections before we can move diplomatically, because we're in a situation where we really have to worry about U.S. public opinion," he concluded, in reference to the Whitewater barrage against the President and First Lady. "It would be wildly unpopular if the U.S. made diplomatic concessions without demanding that North Korea has to move first on the nuclear issue. Hopefully we can restart the talks with the North in New York soon and work out some arrangement."

Korea needs nuclear energy

Chinese Premier Li Peng told then Japanese Premier Morihiro Hosokawa in Beijing on March 20 that "it is also important to give the North Koreans what they want." The idea that "what they want" is a suicidal military adventure to invade the South is absurd, analysts in Seoul, Tokyo, and Washington say. Rather, a group of westernizers in North Korea have proposed a diplomatic and economic development plan which Kim Il Sung himself endorsed in his April 15 U.S. press interview.

Carnegie Foundation analyst Selig Harrison, the first U.S. journalist to visit North Korea in 1972, described this in a speech April 20 to the 1994 Ecumenical Conference on Peace and Reunification of Korea at Washington's American University. Under North Korea's three-point "package solution," he said, Pyongyang would allow full IAEA inspections in exchange for: 1) U.S. and other nations' diplomatic recognition; 2) a U.S. pledge not to use nuclear weapons in Korea, which the United States constantly reiterates it reserves the right to do; and 3) a major financial package to swap all the North's dirty 1950s Soviet-style graphite nuclear reactors and plutonium reprocessors, for modern light water nuclear reactors. North Korea has no domestic energy supply, and like Japan and South Korea, it wants energy independence. Once they have new reactors, there will be no plutonium issue, and the IAEA will be welcome anywhere, any time, the North says.

Harrison pointed out that the United States has just offered Ukraine \$5 billion for a much less sweeping nuclear agreement, and another large sum to Kazakhstan. The North Korean swap would run \$2-3 billion.

A Clinton appointee told *EIR* that the administration is quietly working with Japan on the whole package. Asked "Why not do it and solve the crisis?" he responded, "We can't do it—but the Japanese *can*. They've amassed quite a kitty in World War II reparations they owe North Korea, and they'd love to build all those light water reactors. My friends in Greenpeace and the anti-nuclear lobby will howl and say 'Let them eat coal,' but we all know North Korea can't run an economy on coal. It will depend on negotiating the whole package."