

South Korea: Target for Cheney 'Regime Change'?

by Kathy Wolfe

U.S. Vice President Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld are forcing South Korea to send troops to Iraq, provoking student riots, and turning President Roh Moo-hyun's youth base against him, in what may be a deliberate attempt to paralyze the South Korean government. Making South Korea ungovernable, these neo-cons think, would fully isolate North Korea.

Rumsfeld on Oct. 7 postponed his scheduled Oct. 24-26 Seoul trip to the annual Republic of Korea-U.S. Security Summit until an unspecified date, citing his and President Bush's busy schedules. In fact, "Rumsfeld sees no point visiting, until our government agrees to send troops to Iraq," a Seoul diplomat told *EIR*. "He's trying to twist our arm a little harder."

Meanwhile, President Roh shocked the public in two TV press conferences Oct. 10 and 11, announcing that he will resign if he does not win a national referendum which he has called for Dec. 15. Roh, just inaugurated in February, said he was sickened by corruption charges against a top aide, and that the opposition-run National Assembly had forced him to fire his Home Minister and his Chief Auditor. "The President's authority has been so seriously undercut, that the administration of the state has been thrown into chaos," he said. There is no provision for a referendum in the Constitution, the National Assembly opposes it, and Seoul is in an uproar.

But Roh and all Korean leaders are making a fatal mistake, to treat this as a domestic crisis. This crisis wasn't caused by corruption, or anything done by any Korean. *It can never be resolved domestically.*

Foreign pressure by the Cheney neo-cons is to blame. It has put Roh in a pot of boiling water. Nothing he does inside the pot, stops it from cooking him.

The fundamental problem is Korea's economic crisis, due to International Monetary Fund (IMF) austerity "reforms" and the U.S. economic crash. Koreans are enraged by the effects of this, and the troop issue lights a match to gasoline. The corruption scandals are run by Cheney's friends at Washington's American Enterprise Institute and their assets in the Assembly and prosecutor's office.

Even Washington's charges about Pyongyang's uranium program, which have brought Korea to the edge of war, were hyped up deliberately to create a crisis, a study by the U.S. Naval War College shows.



South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun: It's time for him to jump out of the pot of boiling water into which Dick Cheney's neo-cons have plunged him.

What President Roh Must Do

It's time to jump out of the pot, and kick it over. First, to ensure Korean living standards and create a basis in the real world for public support, President Roh needs an economic policy campaign for a "global New Deal." Mere domestic programs won't work, as long as Korea depends on the United States for exports. Korea requires a giant new market, and that means a top-down campaign for the Iron Silk Road and Eurasian Land-Bridge "from Tokyo to Pusan to Paris."

Forget the IMF's plan to make Seoul a "financial hub," which turns Korea over to the same global speculators who used Enron to ruin California. Instead, note that the huge area from Pusan to Paris requires physical reconstruction, to create a million new jobs in Korean heavy industry.

Roh can point out that the troop demand is an unacceptable destabilization, promoted by a few ideologues (like Cheney and Rumsfeld). The President was elected by a youth movement, which will be driven into the streets by this demand. South Korea loves America, but that's no reason it must commit harakiri for Cheney.

One can call for a U.S. Congressional investigation into the whole pattern of intelligence fraud and black operations, from fraud about the uranium Iraq never bought, to the hyped charges about North Korea's uranium program. Are the same extremists now running operations to destabilize American's ally South Korea?

It was Cheney who brought about today's crisis by writing the instructions used by State Department official James Kelly in October 2002, to confront Pyongyang on its alleged illegal nuclear bomb, a diplomat told *EIR*.

In the Summer 2003 U.S. *Naval War College Review*, top Asia hand Dr. Jonathan Pollack charged the Bush Administration with re-writing "decades-old" CIA estimates on North Korea's plutonium program; exaggerating claims about North Korea's uranium program; and generally "ex-

plotting intelligence for political purposes,” to deliberately create a crisis with Pyongyang, when there was no real crisis.¹

Dr. Pollack, asking why anyone would do this, finally answered: to disrupt North Korea’s moves to normalize ties with neighbors such as South Korea and Japan. Expanding to cooperate with China and Russia, this could create something the neo-cons found upsetting. “The D.P.R.K. had opened the door to a new relationship with America’s most important Asian ally (Japan) and, prospectively, a major aid donor to the North. There was a real possibility that U.S. options on the peninsula would be driven increasingly by policy agendas of others,” Pollack wrote. (See *EIR* Aug. 8 for details.)

Blackmail From Washington

In recent weeks, Cheney and Rumsfeld, through personal phone calls to Roh, press statements, and speeches by their allies such as Undersecretary of State John Bolton, have harshly stepped up demands for 5-10,000 South Korean troops to be deployed to Iraq. They demand an entire division of hardened Korean Marines, not light infantry, and a South Korean major general to prominently command them in a larger multinational force. Leaders around the world, even Japan’s compliant Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, have turned down this request for political suicide.

How could any Korean leader refuse a demand for troops from the Sole Superpower, when Washington has repeatedly refused to forgo the “military option” with regard to North Korea? Clearly the implication is: “You send troops, or we promise nothing, with regard to war on your tiny peninsula.”

How can Roh refuse their demand, when Cheney and Rumsfeld have repeatedly threatened to pull the 37,000 U.S. troops out of South Korea suddenly—which everyone sees as removing Americans from harm’s way, in event of a U.S. strike against the North?

How can Roh dare to anger Washington, when the U.S. has so botched relations with Pyongyang, that fighting could break out any moment, just miles from Seoul?

Worse: Cheney and Rumsfeld must certainly be aware, that their demand, once met, will cause the R.O.K. itself to blow sky high. Do they not know that President Roh was elected by the “younger 30%,” and has little support among the “older 30%,” who are terrified of North Korea? Do they not know that the other 40% of Koreans in the middle will not be happy about their sons dying in the deserts of Iraq? Have they no idea, that they are stripping Roh of his core political base, then turning a majority of Koreans against him?

The neo-cons’ Trotskyite theories of “creative destruc-

tion” have led them to foment “regime change” all around the world. Has South Korea become their target *du jour*?

Why would they want to make South Korea ungovernable? First, it would seriously isolate North Korea, which they believe would further their plans for “regime change” in Pyongyang. Second, sending South Korea up in flames just now, creates an “Asian Arc of Crisis.”

New Six-Power Initiatives

The neo-con objective can’t be to get “rid of Mr. Roh”; there is no one to replace him, and they know it. More likely, their objective is to paralyze South Korea, Japan, and China, to prevent any coalition of Eurasian nations.

President Roh needs to overturn this chessboard, too, with new initiatives for the Six-Power talks on North Korea with Japan, the United States, China, and Russia. The talks have stalled on Washington’s refusal to rule out a military attack on the D.P.R.K.

First, if Seoul brings the “Global New Deal” of the Eurasian Land-Bridge right into the talks as a main agenda item, China, Russia, and Japan will jump at the chance. This project for modern high-speed rail, power, water, and a “total approach” to general industrialization projects, has North Korea on the route, so negotiators should propose to use it to bring the D.P.R.K. into the community of nations, and thus create a peaceful solution.

If allowed to proceed, the Eurasian Land-Bridge would create an economic boom and vastly improved relations among all the powers which lie from Tokyo to Pusan to Paris.

Second, end the Korean War. The State Department U.S. Institute for Peace (USIP), Russia, and South Korean Foreign Minister Yoon Young-kwan, have all proposed to finally sign a treaty to end the 1950-53 conflict. Failure to do so is the real cause of all the problems in the region, USIP wrote in a ground-breaking May 2003 report (see www.USIP.org).

On Oct. 11, Secretary of State Colin Powell made a very good offer, for a multilateral security guarantee for North Korea, jointly with the other six powers. Perhaps someone in Washington woke up, when even Japan, where North Korea is widely denounced, decided to join Russia, China, and South Korea, in urging such a U.S. guarantee. “After all, Pyongyang has said all along, that it would end its nuclear program, only if the United States ended its policy of hostility toward North Korea,” a Tokyo Foreign Ministry official told the conservative *Yomiuri News* on Sept. 29. “The Bush Administration would be better advised to draw up a document listing conditions for a non-aggression agreement, with proposed assistance measures,” than to continue hostility, he said.

It’s a shock for polite Japan to correctly imply, that the United States is the “deal breaker,” threatening everyone else with war. But, perhaps too, Powell is attempting to contain yet a new dangerous crisis from the neo-cons: “regime change” in South Korea.

1. Jonathan Pollack, “The United States, North Korea, and the End of the Agreed Framework,” *Naval War College Review*, Summer 2003, www.nwc.navy.mil/press/Review/2003/Summer/art1-su3.htm.