

North Korea Halts Peace Talks On Cheney Wild Provocations

by Kathy Wolfe

North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Choe Su Hon told the UN General Assembly Sept. 27, that the D.P.R.K. is “unable to participate” further in the Six Party Talks on nuclear weapons, because the Cheney-Bush Administration is not negotiating in good faith, but instead acting to overthrow his government. “The danger of war is snowballing, due to the U.S. extreme moves to isolate the D.P.R.K. and threats of preemptive strikes against it,” Choe said.

Choe’s announcement came as the *New York Times* claimed Sept. 26 that “the CIA is circulating warnings that North Korea may conduct its first nuclear test, before the U.S. Presidential election.” The Pentagon and Japan Defense Agency also mobilized a fleet off North Korea Sept. 21, to watch for what they claim is an imminent test of a long-range ballistic missile.

Although such reports may be overblown, there is no doubt: Dick Cheney’s wild-eyed “regime change” doctrine has in fact made the world a far more dangerous place. It will grow more dangerous if Cheney and Bush are re-elected on Nov. 2. Yet, while some Democrats try to make hay with this as a failure of Bush’s diplomacy, the collapse of the Korea talks in fact looks more likely to help Cheney and Bush in the election, by painting North Korea as part of the growing threat of “terr’ism,” designed to panic Americans into voting for Bush. This is why Cheney has been kicking Pyongyang in the shins over and over, to deliberately provoke this crisis.

Democratic Party leader Lyndon LaRouche, who is strongly supporting John Kerry, had last year offered to travel to Pyongyang to resolve what was then a building crisis, and under appropriate circumstances, could renew that offer. LaRouche proposes the only plan which can work: a higher-level “New Deal” for the economic development of all Korea, China, Russia, and Eurasia—the New Silk Road/Eurasian

Land-Bridge infrastructure project.

South and North Korea need to step back from Cheney’s trap. A missile or nuclear test now by the North, after the South’s recent announcement of nuclear experiments, is just what Cheney needs to elect Bush. In a June 5 statement, the two Koreas announced a wiser plan to run the first train since 1945 across the DMZ from south to north, to open the Iron Silk Road. But lately they have lapsed into complaining like onlookers, as South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun has done, and as Choe said on Sept. 27, that “the U.S. is dead set against it,” so the rails can’t be rebuilt. This victim mentality only gives the neo-cons room to provoke a crisis. Better to “run the trains now.”

As evidence that Washington’s only policy is regime change, D.P.R.K. Vice Minister Choe cited the recent “North Korea Human Rights Act” passed in Congress, which “fixed it as a law to provide financial and material support for overthrowing our regime, and to force third countries [i.e., Japan—ed.] to do so.” He protested George Bush’s recent brickbats about Kim Jong-il, which “slander and debase the dialogue partner,” and other efforts to “overthrow our system.” Taken with the recent public boast by the South Korean military that they produced small amounts of nuclear bomb fuel in 1982 and 2000, Choe said, “the basis of negotiations . . . has been completely destroyed.”

Choe’s remarks were consistent with a December 2003 policy paper by D.P.R.K. Ambassador Li Gun, who made clear that North Korea will never unilaterally disarm. Li noted that Washington, simply by repeating the demand that Pyongyang do so, was at the talks with “an ulterior motive”—to deliberately blow up the negotiations, and overthrow the D.P.R.K. by slapping on sanctions.

After strong pressure from South Korea, China, Russia,

and Japan, the U.S. team was forced to introduce a new written proposal for a settlement, by this June's talks in Beijing. Cheney's assets, such as Undersecretary of State John Bolton, however, were quick to announce in public speeches, that the "Libya Model" of unilateral disarmament was still Washington's real demand. This led Pyongyang to reject the June draft as a sham.

In an unprecedented UN press conference after his Sept. 27 speech, D.P.R.K. Vice Minister Choe announced that Pyongyang has already weaponized the plutonium from the 8,000 fuel rods which the UN had frozen under President Bill Clinton's 1994 U.S.-D.P.R.K. Framework Accord. After Cheney broke the 1994 Accord in November 2002, by cutting off oil shipments to North Korea in the face of Winter, the D.P.R.K. ejected UN inspectors and unfroze the fuel.

Pentagon and Japan Defense Agency sources in Tokyo meanwhile announced on Sept. 21 that they have satellite evidence that North Korea is preparing to launch a Rodong missile, with a range covering most of Japan; they said D.P.R.K. military vehicles, soldiers, and engineers were converging on missile bases. Japan dispatched an Aegis-equipped Navy destroyer and other vessels to the Sea of Japan for early warning. The Rodong bases are surrounded by silos holding Taepodong-II missiles with a longer range of 3,500 to 6,000 km, which the Pentagon claims can threaten U.S. bases in Guam, Hawaii, and the U.S. West Coast.

Rumor versus Negotiation

On Sept. 23, Japanese Premier Junichiro Koizumi, however, said that the D.P.R.K. will probably only conduct engine tests on the ground, without launch. A missile launch would violate the 2002 Pyongyang Declaration between North Korea and Japan, causing a breakdown crisis in their bilateral relation, which has been a major pillar in preventing Cheney from bombing North Korea. It would also weaken Russia and China in supporting the North.

Vice Minister Choe at the UN dismissed such reports as "only guessing and rumor," said Choe. "The nuclear issue is the product of the deep-rooted hostile policy toward the D.P.R.K. pursued by the U.S. The D.P.R.K. is left with no other option but to possess a nuclear deterrent in the face of the situation in which the U.S. . . . has been attempting to eliminate the D.P.R.K. by force while designating it as part of an 'axis of evil' and a target of pre-emptive nuclear strikes."

Choe told the UN that the Six-Power talks could only restart, if two new conditions were met: "If the six-party talks are to be resumed, the basis for the talks demolished by the United States should be properly set up, and the truth of the secret nuclear experiments in South Korea clarified completely." That is, first Washington should drop its "ulterior motive" and give up "regime change," which all five other powers in the talks reject as dangerous and chaotic. Washington should return to the original premise for the Six-Power

talks, a proposal by Russia and South Korea that North Korea turn over its nuclear weapons, if the other five powers, including the United States would grant it a security guarantee—a bargain broken before the fact by Cheney's regime change doctrine.

The D.P.R.K. is also now refusing to attend talks until South Korea gives the UN a complete report on what Choe called its "clandestine nuclear project," which Choe said could not have occurred without U.S. sponsorship. While, in fact, South Korea is perfectly capable of having an independent program, it is likely that someone from Cheney's or Defense Secretary Don Rumsfeld's neck of the woods had a hand in the untimely announcement about Seoul's ostensibly defunct nuclear weapons experiments.

Ultimate Target: China

In late October, the U.S. Navy, Japanese Coast Guard, and others conducted naval exercises off North Korea, under Cheney's "Proliferation Security Initiative," to practice seizing illicit cargoes at sea. Last year they seized a North Korean ship in the Indian Ocean; this is closer to home. "Pyongyang's military will say, 'I told you so, they plan to attack us,'" predicted former Clinton aide Kenneth Quinones on Sept. 18.

China, and Russia, are however the ultimate target, as LaRouche and *EIR* have reported for ten years, to which strategic aim, North Korea is attacked as a surrogate. The plan

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was laid out in the Japan's *Asahi News* on Sept. 28, headlined "U.S. Force Transformation: Frustration with Japan Mounts." The Bush Administration is pushing Japan to become a base for U.S. deployments into the entire "arc of instability" from Africa and the Balkans, to Southwest Asia, Southeast Asia, and China, reported *Asahi's* Yoichi Funabashi, after a recent Washington trip. Cheney and Rumsfeld's new program of "Force Transformation" sees Japan as host for U.S. Armed Forces bases controlled entirely by the U.S. command on Guam, violating Japan's no-war constitution, and exceeding the bounds of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. "As Undersecretary of Defense Douglas Feith told Congress, 'combat commanders no longer own forces in their theaters,' " writes Funabashi.

"In the long view, the transformation targets Asia, expected to be directly affected by the rise of China as a central player. All [the Pentagon] needs in Japan, is an advance base that the Air Force in Guam can use in emergencies. The thinking strongly reflects the awareness that China is a potential military threat. . . .

"In 2001, the RAND Corp. published a report titled 'The United States and Asia: Toward a New U.S. Strategy and Force Posture.' The report, commissioned by the U.S. Air Force, stressed the need for the military to establish a 'Southwest shift' to deal with possible Chinese military action against Taiwan in the short term, and China's regional dominance in the long term—and recommended that Guam 'should be built up as a major hub for power projection throughout Asia.' The Air Force has begun preparations to meet this. The integration of Air Force command in Guam is also to place it outside the range of North Korea's and China's tactical missiles."

So far, however, the Japanese have refused to discuss it, Funabashi says, but the pressure is enormous. Funabashi detailed the situation: "Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage is unhappy. He expressed to the Japanese his concern that Japan-U.S. relations are going in the direction of a 'train wreck.' . . .

"In late August, Shin Ebihara, head of the Foreign Ministry's North American Affairs Bureau, and Kazuki Iihara, director general of the Defense Agency's Defense Policy Bureau, visited Washington to discuss the transformation. During their meeting with U.S. Deputy Defense Undersecretary for Asia Richard Lawless, [Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul] Wolfowitz made an appearance. He repeatedly spoke about the security challenges posed by China in relation to the transformation, and asked how Japan viewed it. But the Japanese refused to give a direct answer, and said only that their government planned to send an official letter of protest . . . over the recent [U.S.] helicopter accident in Okinawa. Wolfowitz slowly got up and left."

In short: Diplomacy in East Asia is ready to blow sky high, if foolish Americans re-elect Cheney and Bush.

Afghan Election: Opium And Warlords Abound

By Ramtanu Maitra

On Sept. 29, at the U.S. House International Relations Committee hearing on the upcoming Oct. 9 presidential election in Afghanistan, Democrats and Republicans broke out into bitter partisan bickering. U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage's assuring voice saying "the election is going pretty damn good" did not soothe the raw nerves of the lawmakers.

Election: A Farce?

Thousands of miles away in Afghanistan, the situation is much tenser. The personal bickering between the major Presidential candidates, threats from the warlords that are strengthening day-by-day because of the input of narcotics trafficking money, and violence assured by the anti-Kabul and anti-U.S. Taliban militia, have created a surreal situation. It is evident that the "pretty damn good" election will be held, but what good it will do to establish the rule of law in Afghanistan is anyone's guess.

Security concerns have prompted most of the 18 candidates to urge that the election be postponed. U.S. forces in Afghanistan vowed on Sept. 29 to bolster security before the landmark election, as Taliban guerrillas bent on disrupting the vote launched a new wave of attacks. How this effort to improve the dangerous security situation can provide, in just ten days, what 17,000 U.S. troops and some 8,000 International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) under the NATO leadership, could not assure in almost three years is, again, anyone's guess. What is real is that the Afghan Interim President Hamid Karzai, a Pushtun and a handmaiden of Washington, has not dared to go outside of Kabul to campaign. The risks are too great. His one foray to campaign outside of Kabul was met with rocket attacks.

What is worrying all of them is the threat of violence issued by the Taliban-types. These militants have made sure that those were not empty promises. Since the end of summer, violence in Afghanistan has grown multifold, as it has increased in Iraq as well. But the Bush Administration, with the American Presidential election around the corner, would not like to admit the existence of the Taliban muscle. Admitting the fact that Taliban, or other anti-Kabul, anti-U.S. forces are alive and well, may sound like an admission of failure, the Bush Administration worries. That is why when