

# PEACE WITH KOREA? JULY 25 2003 (continued from front)

Below is some astute analysis from *Foreign Policy in Focus*, a publication of the Institute for Policy Studies and the Interhemispheric Resource Center, an article called "Fearful Symmetry: Washington and Pyongyang." It was written by John Feffer, editor of *Power Trip: U.S. Unilateralism and Global Strategy after September 11*, and author of *North Korea, South Korea: U.S. Policy at a Time of Crisis*.

Even during the darkest days, Reagan and Gorbachev displayed a personal rapport. In contrast, George W. Bush has called Kim Jong Il a "pygmy" and a "spoiled child" and has confessed to journalist Bob Woodward that he wants to topple the regime in Pyongyang regardless of the consequences.

In East Asia, the cold war is not over, and the conflict between Pyongyang and Washington, with its dance of dependency and reciprocity, threatens to spiral out of control in ways that Afghanistan and Iraq (so far) have not. War on the Korean Peninsula would be catastrophic enough. But by encouraging Japan toward a military renaissance and pressuring South Korea to back a policy of isolating North Korea, the Bush administration is pushing all of East Asia to the brink.

Whatever doubts remained in Pyongyang about U.S. intentions were dispelled by the war in Iraq, which led North Korean leaders to draw three conclusions. A nonaggression agreement with the U.S. was pointless. No inspections regime would ever be good enough for Washington. And only a nuclear weapon would deter a U.S. intervention.

The military option remains on the Pentagon's table, but Washington is also testing the possibility of toppling the regime in Pyongyang by spending it into the ground.

This economic strategy has several components. The Bush administration has cut back on food aid, arguing that monitoring should be improved and no doubt hoping that fewer high-calorie biscuits will incite children, pregnant and nursing mothers, and the elderly to rebel against the regime.

The hard-liners in the administration—John Bolton in the State Department, Paul Wolfowitz in the Pentagon—are also not interested in the give-and-take of negotiations. This "just say no" faction has repeatedly rebuffed various North Korean offers, not bothering to pursue the negotiable items beneath the bluff and bluster in an effort to achieve a diplomatic solution to the escalating crisis.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and with support from Washington, Japan is shrugging off the constraints of its peace Constitution. It is aggressively pursuing missile defense, has launched its first military satellites, [and] has promised to provide backup to any U.S. military action in the region.

See the full article at: <http://www.fpif.org/papers/symmetry2003.html>

## A CALL FOR PEACE

It is time to call for the negotiations between the North and South for reunification and/or an end to the conflict, to get back on track. These talks were well on their way until 2001. The U.S. is one of the main perpetrators of the conflict at this point, with President George Bush refusing to even dialogue with the North. The U.S. continues to have a heavy military presence in the South (including, it is widely known, a nuclear presence) and continues to run provocative war games.

## CONTACT INFORMATION AND WEBSITES

For more information or to get involved contact Peace and Justice Works Iraq Affinity Group at 503-236-3065 (<http://www.rdrop.com/~pjwt>), Portland Peaceful Response Coalition at 503-471-1535 (<http://www.pprc-news.org>) or Northwest Veterans for Peace ([nwvp@teleport.com](mailto:nwvp@teleport.com)).

Some other helpful links:

Alliance of Scholars Concerned About Korea  
<http://www.asck.org/>

Nautilus Institute  
<http://www.nautilus.org/napsnet/>

American Friends Service Committee, Asia Desk  
<http://www.afsc.org/asia/default.htm>

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Contact us about emergency and regular meetings!  
Regular meetings usually 2nd Tuesdays, 6 PM; next one is August 12.

Friends Committee on National Legislation  
<http://www.fcnl.org/issues/int/nkoreaindx.htm>  
Task Force on U.S. Korea Policy/Center for International Policy  
<http://ciponline.org/asia/index.htm>  
The White House  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov>

# PEACE WITH KOREA AFTER 50 YEARS?

July 25, 2003

*Will the anniversary of the armistice bring new U.S. policies?*

Sunday marks the 50th anniversary of the Armistice that formally halted the shooting in the conflict we know as the Korean War on July 27, 1953. In addition to the historic anniversary, North Korea is one of the countries mentioned in the "Axis of Evil" and is on the President's short list of possible targets in the "War on Terrorism."

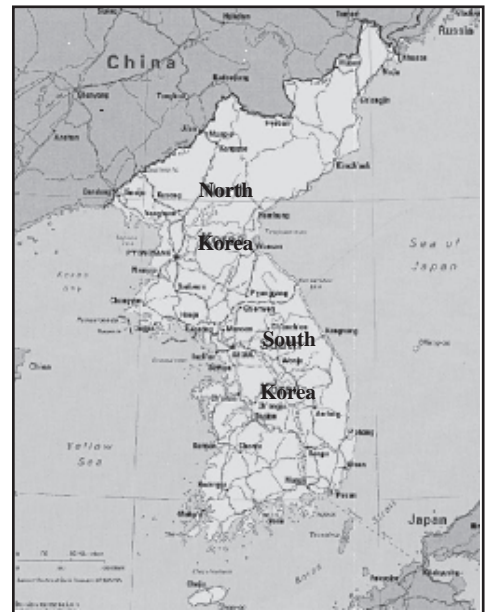
The armistice, in fact, is not the same thing as a peace treaty and in theory the Korean war has never really ended. "After 50 years under a truce, there's still no peace in Korea," says Bill Bires, a military veteran of the Korean conflict, and a member of Northwest Veterans for Peace. Bires referenced July's *National Geographic*, which reports that 900,000 soldiers and 3 million civilians were killed in the three-year conflict, many more than were killed in the extended U.S. military action in Vietnam.

Martin Hart-Landsberg, a national expert on Korea, who teaches economics at Portland's Lewis and Clark College has written books and articles on both North and South Korea. He notes that the division of Korea traces its roots back to the end of World War II, when the U.S. government demanded that Soviet forces fighting Japanese troops in Korea halt their offensive at the 38th parallel and allow U.S. forces to take control over political developments in the south.

The U.S. has nearly 40,000 troops stationed in and around South Korea, some of which were relocated in June 2003 away from the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) between the North and South. While on its surface this seemed like a way to de-escalate tensions, some observers fear this was a way to protect U.S. troops from being attacked if they launched a massive air war on the North.

Former U.S. defense secretary William Perry called on the Bush administration to open direct talks with North Korea, warning that they will be developing multiple nuclear weapons if such diplomatic efforts are not taken (AFP 7/22—[http://www.prolog.net/webnews/wed/co/Qus-nkorea-nuclear.Rrat\\_DIM.html](http://www.prolog.net/webnews/wed/co/Qus-nkorea-nuclear.Rrat_DIM.html)). A recent shooting skirmish in the DMZ was the first in about 2 years, and three-way talks regarding North Korea's nuclear program among the U.S., China and N Korea are being set up for later this year (for more info see <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A2444-2003Jul16.html>).

In 1994, the U.S. entered into an agreement with North Korea to swap fuel and diplomatic normalization for a halt to Korea's nuclear program. Further steps were underway in 2000 to make economic aid available if Korea would end its missile programs. Since many of the promises by the U.S. have not been kept and the U.S. has in fact been openly hostile toward North Korea, diplomacy has broken down.



(over)

President Bush made the following comments in his January 2002 State of the Union Address. The Peace and Justice Works Iraq Affinity Group, which has sought a peaceful policy with Iraq since 1992, helped organize the mass rallies against the war in 2002-2003, and now seeks an end to the U.S. occupation of Iraq, sees an imminent need for people who care for world peace to take note of this situation in Korea.

President Bush: "Our second goal is to prevent regimes that sponsor terror from threatening America or our friends and allies with weapons of mass destruction. Some of these regimes have been pretty quiet since September 11, but we know their true nature.

"North Korea is a regime arming with missiles and weapons of mass destruction, while starving its citizens.

"Iran aggressively pursues these weapons and exports terror, while an unelected few repress the Iranian people's hope for freedom.

"Iraq continues to flaunt its hostility toward America and to support terror. The Iraqi regime has plotted to develop anthrax and nerve gas and nuclear weapons\* for over a decade. This is a regime that has already used poison gas to murder thousands of its own citizens, leaving the bodies of mothers huddled over their dead children. This is a regime that agreed to international inspections then kicked out the inspectors.\* This is a regime that has something to hide from the civilized world.

"States like these, and their terrorist allies, constitute an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world. By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger. They could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred. They could attack our allies or attempt to blackmail the United States. In any of these cases, the price of indifference would be catastrophic."

\*--The claim about nuclear weapons has proved to be dubious in recent weeks with the revelation that intelligence was falsified. The inspectors left Iraq in 1998 voluntarily when President Clinton indicated he was about to bomb Baghdad in "Operation Desert Fox." All of these claims, especially the implication that Iran, Iraq and Korea are allies, need to be seen in this context.