

**TAMING THE NEXT SET OF STRATEGIC WEAPONS THREATS**  
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**CHAPTER 1**  
**ALTERNATIVE PROLIFERATION**  
**AND ALLIANCE FUTURES IN EAST ASIA**  
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The gravest danger our Nation faces lies at the crossroads of radicalism and technology. Our enemies have openly declared that they are seeking weapons of mass destruction, and evidence indicates that they are doing so with determination. The United States will not allow these efforts to succeed. ... History will judge harshly those who saw this coming danger but failed to act. In the new world we have entered, the only path to peace and security is the path of action.  
President George Bush<sup>1</sup>

A central pillar of U.S. national security strategy is to control the spread of nuclear weapons. In pursuit of that objective, bilateral alliances emerge more important and pertinent than ever. If the United States and its East Asian allies can strengthen their existing bilateral relationships, and if the United States and China can come to a clearer bilateral understanding, nuclear proliferation in East Asia can be curtailed. The consequence of abandoning such alternatives could potentially be devastating.

I believe that if the United States shies away from existing treaties and alliances due to anti-American sentiments or for fear of appearing anachronistic, then doomsday exhortations will go past paranoia and become reality.<sup>2</sup> Anywhere from 12 to 20 nuclear powers will emerge in the next 2 decades. Terrorists and nonstate actors will exploit this worldwide proliferation as a succession of East Asian states go nuclear—North Korea, followed by South Korea, then Japan, then Taiwan.<sup>3</sup> An alarmed China would not sit idly by while being encircled by an island chain of democratic nuclear powers. In the absence of a strong U.S. presence and influence in East Asia, buttressed by its existing treaties and alliances, East Asia in 2025 looks bleak.

But I believe that if the United States strengthens, renews, and revamps its existing bilateral treaty alliances with Japan and South Korea, the nuclear temptation in East Asia could be dampened. That is, if the United States maintains its nuclear deterrence umbrella over Japan and South Korea, North Korea's nuclear breakout will not lead governments in Tokyo and Seoul to seek an indigenous nuclear option. Concurrent with the strengthening of existing treaties and alliances in East Asia, the United States will also need to reach a new

bilateral understanding with China over the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

### **What We Want.**

One can envision some ideal scenarios for East Asia in 2025. One can project an economically vibrant China with its nuclear capability remaining at about the current level of 35 weapons without multiple independent reentry vehicle (MIRV) capability, a unified Korea shorn of nuclear capability, a rejuvenated Japan without nuclear weapons, and a perfunctory U.S. military presence in Guam. Trade and investment issues would largely overshadow security concerns or worries about a heavy U.S. footprint in East Asia.

One can hope that by 2025, China will have abolished the *laogai*, the Chinese prison camps akin to the Soviet *gulag*, and that Japan will have thoroughly deromanticized the sentiment and philosophical rationale behind the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperty Sphere, a political, psychological, and intellectual tool wielded to great effect by Japanese militarists to justify colonial rule over Korea, Taiwan, and Manchuria.

One can hope that the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing will encourage reformist factions within the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). If economic growth were to continue at today's pace and if the Chinese government were to relax control over loans and property, there is a possibility that the CCP could evolve into a dominant party with various factions akin to Japan's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). Chinese Vice Minister of Commerce Ma Xiuhong recently predicted that China will quadruple "its GDP of the year 2000 by 2020."<sup>4</sup>

One can hope that such a development can serve as an impetus for the emergence of a semi-democratic China by 2025. No one expects U.S.-style democracy to emerge from the devolution of the CCP, but one holds out hope for a China with limited free elections and some freedom of the press. Democratic centralism could evolve along the lines envisioned by Eduard Bernstein rather than Peng Zhen and the Eight Immortals. Such expectations are not pie-in-the-sky speculations. After all, no one could have imagined in 1978 that Deng Xiaoping's China would permit Hooters restaurants to operate 26 years later in 2004, even if it is Shanghai.

China can continue to serve as a market for thriving and mature economies. Trade between India and China more than doubled between 2001 and 2003.<sup>5</sup> South Korean, Taiwanese, and Japanese investments in China are large and growing. Such a China would have no reason to fear Japan, a unified Korea or the presence of U.S.

forces in East Asia.

One can hope that North Korea does not exist by 2025. One may hope that North Korea implodes from within (due to some critical external pressures) and that a benign military dictatorship assumes power after the fall of Kim Jong Il. If China blocks its 800-km border with North Korea and the United States and South Korea maintain the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), the fear of millions of refugees pouring into Seoul or northern China would dissipate. China fears North Korean refugees due to the potential ramifications for its own regime security arising from the social and economic instability the refugees might bring.

One can imagine that new investments from South Korea, Japan, China, Australia, the European Union (EU), and the United States could pour into this “refugee-contained” North Korea teeming with a large pool of literate, skilled, and cheap North Koreans eager for work and real wages. Nongovernmental organizations and programs (i.e., the United Nations [UN] and the World Food Program) would continue to dispense humanitarian and food aid. Given its cultural and linguistical ties, South Korea could take the lead in these initiatives by promising 200 tons of rice every year, a pittance for the country.

As for reunification, one holds out the hope that the new leadership would elect to unify peacefully with a prosperous South Korea into a single democratic Korea, tied firmly to the United States, if not militarily then economically.<sup>6</sup> There are two schools of thought on Korean unification. The first school emphasizes that Koreans are one people of a singular culture. In this view, economic difficulties of unification are secondary to physical unification. The second school holds that South Korea will absorb North Korea. In this view, North Korea’s nuclear weapons will merely fall into the lap of a unified Korea, and the resultant large pool of labor would be used to compete with an emerging China. Both of these schools of thought are anchored on the optimistic assumption that South Korea would take the lead—with its democracy, free markets, wealth, and freedom.

One can hope that Japan faces up to its colonial and imperial past, apologizes unequivocally once and for all to Koreans, Chinese, Taiwanese and Filipinos, and suppresses its expansionist nationalism. One hopes that there shall be no nostalgia for the Kwantung Army mentality among military leaders, no reversion to the hesitation and weakness of the Fumimaro Kono government, and no repeat of any whiff of a Marco Polo Bridge incident in July 1937 to justify the

advancement of any irrendentist or revanchistic goals. One hopes Japan will emerge as a “normal” country, amending its pacifist Constitution without alarming its neighbors.<sup>7</sup>

This “new” Japan would continue to welcome U.S. forces without striving for nuclear capability. Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda made an impassioned argument against Japan going nuclear: “Currently, Japan need not, and should not, have a nuclear deterrent. Japan having such arms would be a threat to other countries, and it would be tragic if that led to (further) nuclear proliferation.”<sup>8</sup> For the time being, Fukuda’s argument still holds sway in the LDP establishment and the general public. With a rejuvenated economy, Japan would be able to spread its capital and wealth throughout a unified Korea, China, and the world markets. That would be some East Asia.

### **What We Do Not Want.**

But what about alternative futures we do not want to see in 2025? It is easier to be a pessimist because one has selective recourse to the data of history. One remains anxious as to whether the lure of past glory and regional predominance tugs at the heart of Chinese or Japanese leaders. In their long histories, China has rarely been democratic; Japan has rarely been pacifistic; Korea has rarely been unhindered by great power conflicts. The withdrawal of U.S. forces that would accompany the abrogation of our treaty and alliance commitments in East Asia would likely harbinger a future reeking with the unpleasantness and chauvinism of East Asia’s past.

Rather than serving as a rally point for reform and genuine opening of the society, the 2008 Beijing Olympic games could be used as a bugle for Chinese nationalism. If the United States and China fail to reach a clear understanding about nuclear proliferation, the withdrawal of U.S. forces from South Korea and Japan will only embolden a confident and assertive China. Chinese nationalists will want to throw their weight around East Asia. In this environment, I believe that as soon as China achieves domestic stability, it will try to penetrate culturally into neighboring countries. The Chin, Sui, Tang, and Qing dynasties were not exceptions. As soon as it feels that it has achieved its original target for economic reforms, and buttressed by its confident nationalistic impulses, China is likely to claim, at a minimum, its regional power hegemony in East Asia.<sup>9</sup>

The next generation of Chinese nationalist leaders suffers little in confidence, panache, or assertiveness. On May 7, 1999, during Operation ALLIED FORCE, U.S. forces mistakenly struck the Chinese

Embassy in Belgrade. The young Chinese vice president condemned the bombing and “allowed” anti-U.S. demonstrations. He argued that these demonstrations “fully reflect the Chinese people’s great fury at the atrocity of the embassy attacks by NATO [the North Atlantic Treaty Organization] and the Chinese people’s strong patriotism.”<sup>10</sup> The voice belonged to none other than Hu Jintao.

The October 15, 2004, launching of *Shenzhou V* to space is a source of great national pride in China. Lieutenant Colonel Yang Liwei is a hero.<sup>11</sup> One suspects that China will forge ahead aggressively with its space program as well as attempt to acquire MIRV capability by 2025. Even as it faces rising unemployment, the Chinese military has announced its intention to modernize the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) for the 21st century. A China insecure about the “three Ts”—Taiwan, Tibet, and Tiananmen—will mean a more threatening, paranoid China.<sup>12</sup>

Japan has begun to “talk” about the possession of nuclear weapons. That in itself may signal a portentous change. One fears that if the United States is lukewarm in sharing high-tech conventional capabilities or back-pedals on promises to share missile defense technology, Japanese nationalists will clamor for an independent nuclear capability.<sup>13</sup> Kenzo Yoneda has been especially vocal in challenging the nuclear “taboo,” arguing that the United States may not automatically and unconditionally come to wield its sword in defense of Japan.<sup>14</sup>

Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba pushes aggressively for missile defense cooperation with the United States, and young politicians petition for a new security system for the new century.<sup>15</sup> Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Shinzo Abe has stated that Japan needs to rethink its fundamental values as a nation.<sup>16</sup>

The apotheosis of Japanese conservative nationalism, Tokyo Governor Shintaro Ishihara, has insulted China by ridiculing its recent space flight: “The Chinese are ignorant, so they’re overjoyed. That (spaceship) was an outdated one. If Japan wanted to do it, we could do it in 1 year.” In the same week, Ishihara insulted his other Asian neighbor. Resuscitating the “arrogance” of Japanese imperialism, Ishihara said Koreans chose Japanese annexation of their country in 1910. Ishihara added salt to the Korean wound: “. . . the annexation was the fault of their ancestors, and even though Japan’s rule was in the form of colonialism, it was advanced and humanitarian.”<sup>17</sup> No one has yet heard strong condemnation of these remarks from prominent Japanese politicians and academics.

Other ominous signs of Japanese nationalism are the rapid

growth of youth nationalist societies, some of which have inserted themselves in the island disputes between Japan and China on the South China Sea, especially over the Senkaku Islands (Diaoyu Tai). Due to the North Korean threat, the general mood in Japan is one of a terrified atmosphere, a feeling of powerlessness. Reports of “North Korean guided missiles threaten Japan” are plastered everywhere. There is a feeling of chaos, that civilian leaders are not up to the challenges of the times—with uncomfortable echoes of a leaderless, drifting Japan of the Taisho period of the 1920s and 1930s. Japanese nationalists are and will continue to gain political and social ground in Japan.

One fears that the North Korean problem will exacerbate. North Korea may not collapse. Though some 8-10 percent of its 22 million population have starved to death or have fled, there are little overt signs that the regime will collapse any time soon, though the strength of its stability may be overemphasized. Many Western observers assessed that North Korea would not last beyond 5 years during the 1993-94 nuclear negotiations, and key policy decisions were made on that “mistaken” assumption. Credible reports of North Korean diversion of food and humanitarian aid to its military are coming in.<sup>18</sup>

By 2025, North Korea may have proven its nuclear capability to the world. A North Korean nuclear breakout is worrisome for the effect it would have on states *outside* of East Asia. Arguing that, “the only possible way for nations who want to survive proudly and live independently is to be strong and grow muscles of their own,” Iran has declared, “We must believe that the proper and effective way is that which has been opted by North Korea.”<sup>19</sup> Iran lacks neither money nor ambition, and it is only a matter of time before it acquires nuclear capability.

The normal standards of economic and moral constraints are inapplicable to North Korea. Though North Korea spends some \$5.2 billion on its military, some 11 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP), it has ostensibly been able to advance its nuclear program. North Korea is considered to possess materials to make one or two nuclear weapons. Some estimate that it could produce five or six nuclear weapons in a relatively short time.<sup>20</sup> As worrisome as its nuclear weapons program, North Korea’s advancement in ballistic missiles may be even more disturbing.<sup>21</sup>

There is a good chance that by 2025, North Korea may have succeeded in developing ballistic missiles (Taepo Dong II) with tighter circular error probabilities (CEPs) that could hit targets all across the United States. The Kim Jong Il regime may still be in power by 2025, having struck a deal with the United States to remain in power

in return for inspections of some of its facilities. There could be a second succession in North Korea (see below).

The situation in South Korea could develop for the worse. If the United States tries to eliminate the remnants of the North Korean nuclear program via strike operations, young Korean nationalists will increase their anti-American rhetoric and demand the withdrawal of U.S. forces from South Korea. The “386” generation (those who are in their 30s, attended university in the 1980s, born in the 1960s) have been a political force since the Chun Doo Whan administration, but with the election of President Roh Moo Hyun in December 2002, they have entered the corridors of power.<sup>22</sup> The 386ers in the current administration are less inclined to rely on the United States, with some questioning the very rationale for the U.S. defense commitment. Some have espoused looking at things from a North Korean point of view.<sup>23</sup> Some from the *jusapa*, the National Liberation faction, are flat-out pro-North Korea.<sup>24</sup> The “spirit of 6.15” and the rhetoric of *han minjok* (a single unitary race) are distilled in a powerful call for the cultural and racial unity of “fellow brothers” in a unified Korea. They have unwittingly inherited the nationalistic argument from the over-confident South Korean conservatives of the 1980s who boasted that North Korean nuclear weapons should not be worrisome because “it will be ours one day” (after unification).

To be sure, there are more “conservative” 386ers.<sup>25</sup> But even many younger members of the opposition party, the Grand National Party (GNP), hold a skeptical view of the United States. Even as Choe Byung-Ryul called for a strengthening of U.S.-ROK alliance upon his election as party leader, Choe has surrounded himself and has at times accommodated the demands of the *Mirae Yondae*, a young reformist faction of 386ers.<sup>26</sup> It is uncertain at this juncture whether the new GNP chief, Park Geun Hae, has consolidated support of these “conservative” 386ers within the GNP. Despite the nominal political differences, the next generations of Koreans glamorize an autonomous republic, independent of the United States, a foreign policy utopia fueled by President Roh Moo Hyun.<sup>27</sup> Many members of this generation consider the United States to be “most threatening to the ROK (Republic of Korea)” after North Korea.<sup>28</sup> Regardless of their political inclinations, the nationalistic 386ers, as a political and social class, will be the dominant political force in South Korea for the next 20-30 years.

In 10-20 years time, South Korea may be “sandwiched between China, increasingly known as the ‘factory of the world,’ and Japan, with its cutting-edge technology.”<sup>29</sup> Things could get worse. Soon after it gains a security guarantee, North Korea could demand the withdrawal of all foreign (i.e., U.S.) forces from the Korean peninsula.

Buoyed by pro-North Korean sympathizers in South Korea, North Korea would echo the Roh Moo Hyun government's repeal of South Korea's National Security Law, on the books since 1958.

As for reunification possibilities, prospects may not be that rosy. South Korea may not be able to take the lead, let alone absorb North Korea. There could emerge a unified but weak Korea. South Korea has barely recovered from the 1997 financial crisis that required International Monetary Fund (IMF) intervention. South Korea has 7 million unemployed. According to South Korean conservatives, nearly 10 percent of South Koreans are believers or sympathizers of North Korea—that is about 4 million people. In North Korea, one can reasonably surmise that some 3-4 million (those formerly in the Korean Worker's Party and the Korean People's Army) may extol the good old days of North Korean communism. Some 15 million North Koreans will likely be unemployed if the Kim regime is removed. North Koreans may at first welcome unification, but economic difficulties may lead them to reflexive nostalgia for socialism. A generation that has starved and a people who have been taught to think and behave for over 50 years will not become active participatory citizens overnight. Anyone can do the math. The democratic center, rooted in free elections and the market economy, may not hold. West Germany was a strong economic power in 1989; East Germany was the best-run country in Eastern Europe. And, still, a unified Germany underwent a very unstable period of time during which many Germans themselves and outsiders thought that the financial burden of unification could not be met.

### **How to Get What We Want: Alliances and Treaties.**

Given our optimistic and pessimistic projections for the next 20 years or so, how does the United States go about seeking what we want? In other words, what is likely to develop in East Asia by 2025, and how does the United States mold, shape, and adjust to those anticipated developments? I argue that the strengthening of our bilateral alliance with South Korea and Japan and the forging of a new understanding with China on nuclear proliferation are the keys to shaping the East Asian future we want to confront in 2025.

At first glance, the East Asian structure seems an ill fit to tempering nuclear proliferation. Observers are quick to point out the absence of a NATO-type structure for East Asia. There are no East Asian equivalents of a Monroe Doctrine, the Rio Pact, the Organization of American States (OAS); no West European Union (WEU) political counterpart. At best, there is the now defunct South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO).

But on closer examination, the United States is “blessed” not to have a NATO-type organization in East Asia.<sup>30</sup> Critics who pinned the mistakes and shortcomings of U.S. policy in East Asia on this absence of multilateral organizational structure miss the mark. U.S. Forces Korea’s (USFK) commander General Leon Laporte has more flexibility and leeway than General Lauris Norstad had at the height of Supreme Allied Command Europe’s (SACEUR) prestige and responsibility. Multilateral alliances can fall victim to factionalism and disagreements over “who’s turn” it is in rotation assignments and responsibilities. Bilateral alliances and treaties, on the other hand, give the United States flexibility in offering positive inducements and holding out negative consequences. If the collective sum of a multilateral alliance is its strength, then the one-on-one nature of bilateral alliances gives the United States more direct leverage over its ally and lowers the probability of misunderstanding and collusion against it. Bilateral alliances can be leveraged to pressure third parties with whom its allies have relations. Examples are not hard to find.

Despite Tokyo’s insistence that the abduction issue is their top priority in negotiations with North Korea, Japan has agreed that a written security guarantee of North Korea takes precedence. Japan will “not insist on including the abduction issue” in the second round of the 6-nation talks over North Korea’s nuclear program.<sup>31</sup>

Ostensibly, the United States also pressured Japan to not sign a \$2 billion contract for Iran’s oil. Shoichi Nakagawa, the new minister of economy, trade, and industry stated that Japan would treat the bilateral agreement for Iran’s Azadegan oil field “in its totality,” indicating that the “contract could not be separated from suspicions over Iran’s nuclear programme.”<sup>32</sup>

Anti-American sentiments reached its apex during South Korea’s December 2002 Presidential election. Though hardly at its nadir today, anti-American sentiments are on the wane, due in large part to the U.S. decision to pull back frontline troops beyond the Han River, south of Seoul, as well as a well-timed announcement for possible draw down of some of its 37,000 troops stationed in South Korea.<sup>33</sup> The calibration of the deployment of U.S. forces will have a palpable effect on how South Korea defines its national security and decides on its defense policies. The U.S.-ROK alliance emerges as ever important in the resolution of the North Korean nuclear problem, as any potential strike operations against selective North Korean facilities would require Seoul’s approval of the use of its airspace.

The United States can also dangle to Japan and South Korea the

prospect of joining the 10 rotating UN Security Council memberships for their cooperation in keeping East Asia nuclear free. Algeria, the Philippines, Romania, Brazil, and Benin are to begin their term on January 1, 2004. The 2-year rotation for the other 5-member group begins on January 1, 2005.<sup>34</sup>

On a final note, Japan and South Korea are free, democratic, liberal, capitalistic, and open societies, and have been our allies for over 50 years. Yet the United States still does not know Japan and South Korea all *that* well. If we have shortcomings in our understandings of our East Asian allies, how do we even approach minimal understanding of our East Asian adversaries? As one observer noted: “When we confront an opponent with nuclear weapons, we misread cues, signals, threats, and responses, most of all when the opponent stands outside of Western culture. They will misread us in turn.”<sup>35</sup> Thus, the strengthening of existing bilateral alliances gains more importance for our efforts to curb nuclear proliferation in East Asia.

## **Treaties.**

The two pillars of post-World War II treaties—the San Francisco Peace Treaty (September 8, 1951) and the Korean Armistice Agreement (July 27, 1953)—appear outdated. Some have even called for the end of the U.S.-ROK alliance.<sup>36</sup> But those calling for the end of such alliances never posit what would replace them.

The abolition of these two treaties would be recognition of the restoration of Japan and South Korea to “normal” status. New treaties or agreements that would replace the San Francisco Peace Treaty and the Korean Armistice Agreement would have to consider how Japan and South Korea would defend themselves in their new role as normal nations, nations responsible for their own defenses and which would no longer be divided.

But it seems difficult to imagine a scenario where this would occur absent the unification of Korea. Thus, the crux of the matter is what will develop on the Korean peninsula by the year 2025. The fallout of Korean unification will affect developments in Japan and China. An important factor will be how the United States confronts and manages such developments.

If Korea is unified peacefully and emerges as a single, democratic, capitalistic nation, then the armistice agreement will become moot. And if such a benign development were to occur, then the San Francisco treaty would become irrelevant. But both treaties are “holding” treaties that are buttressed by specific defense commitments

in the U.S.-Japan and U.S.-ROK mutual defense treaties, the two most important alliances in East Asia.<sup>37</sup> The strengthening of these treaties and bilateral alliances is critical. Such buttressing sends a clear message that the United States keeps its word and adheres to its commitments. At the same time, the nature of the bilateral alliances with Japan and Korea allows the United States to be flexible.

Any revision of the mutual defense treaties will require a revision of America's nuclear umbrella over and defense commitment to South Korea and Japan. The clause allowing the deployment of U.S. forces "in and around" Japan and Korea will need to be expunged. A peace treaty in Korea will need to replace the armistice agreement, and a new treaty or agreement would need to follow the San Francisco treaty.

In light of our deep concern about proliferation, we should not be so hasty in revising or replacing these two key alliance treaties. In short, if the United States continues to provide a nuclear umbrella for the defense of Japan and South Korea, then the two nations will have a difficult justification for going nuclear.

Some have argued that a nuclear North Korea would be a sufficient threat to make Japan go nuclear, to provoke South Korea to revisit suspension of its nuclear programs in the mid-1970s, or to force China to accelerate weaponization of its nuclear materials.<sup>38</sup>

But despite these views, and despite the rhetoric of some politicians and officials in the United States and East Asia, I believe that Japan would *not* go nuclear even if North Korea declared itself a nuclear power or was proven to have nuclear weapons.

The underlying assumption of such a conjecture is that the status quo on the Korean peninsula will hold, that the Kim Jong Il regime will continue to persevere.<sup>39</sup> In 2025 Kim Jong Il will be 83 years old. There is already circumstantial evidence that a second succession is in the works. The glorification of Kim Jong Il's third wife, Koh Young Hee, has already begun. Their two sons, Jong-Chul and Jong-Un, are likely successors. A fantasy? In 1980, the same year that the glorification of his mother, Kim Jung-Sook, began in earnest, Kim Jong Il was officially anointed the successor.<sup>40</sup>

Kim Jong Chul works in the Operation and Guidance Department, the very same launching pad for his father's accession in 1973 when he assumed control of the same department. Kim Jong Il's first son, Jong-Nam, reportedly works in the State Security Department (SSD) but his careless attempt to enter Japan on a fake Dominican passport might have ruined his chance to succeed his father. Chang Seung-

Taek, Kim Jong Il's brother-in-law, is under house arrest, similar to the isolation, marginalization, and containment of Kim Young-Ju (Kim Il Sung's brother) and Kim Pyong-Il (Kim Jong-Il's half-brother) in the early 1970s.

But I posit that the Japanese and South Korean nuclear calculus may change if Korean unification is achieved under the following circumstances: If Korea is unified via South Korean absorption of the North and if U.S. forces remain in a unified Korea, then the presence of U.S. forces may dampen the temptations of a united Korea to restart a nuclear weapons program.<sup>41</sup> However, if Korea is unified with the South inheriting the remnants of the North's nuclear program and a Seoul-centered, unified Korea is unwilling to abandon or freeze the program and begins to engage in irredentist rhetoric, it is highly unlikely that Japan will remain quiet.

Some have argued that Japan does not oppose a unified Korea. Others have said that Japan's real concern is China.<sup>42</sup> They may be peripherally right. But China already has nuclear weapons and missiles capable of reaching Japan. South Korea does not. The August 1998 *Taepo Dong* launch already had underscored Pyongyang's ability to hit all of Japan. Yet, Japan did not go nuclear. If the U.S.-Japan alliance stays intact and if a unified Korea does not abrogate the U.S.-ROK security treaty, then the Japanese nuclear temptation may be alleviated.

However, if a unified Korea acquires nuclear capability (as well as having nearly 1.8 million Koreans in arms—1.1 million North Korean and 680,000 South Korean soldiers) and decides that the United States is no longer needed for its security, then the nuclear temptation will metastasize into a critical need for Japan. If Japan confronts what it considers (still) an upstart, uppity, unitary Korea getting its hands on nuclear weapons and unconstrained by a U.S. alliance, then Japan will seek nuclear weapons capability—and seek them rapidly. Japan will never accept a Korea outpacing it, let alone one that can threaten it with nuclear diplomacy. Thus, a unified Korea with nuclear weapons, unfettered by an alliance with Washington, rather than a nuclear North Korea is the triggering point for Japan going nuclear.

China will likely continue its modernization of existing nuclear capability by seeking MIRV capability. China is also likely to pursue at full speed its space program.<sup>43</sup> But even this projected development depends on U.S. actions. If Korea is unified and retains nuclear capability, if the United States remains tied to such a unified Korea with troops stationed close to the Chinese border, and if Japan goes

nuclear, China will become threatened. Already, China has taken precautionary steps to ensure against any undesirable American encroachment of influence over the Korean peninsula by deploying Chinese troops along the North Korean border. At the very least, Chinese leaders would prefer to have a pro-China government, compliant to its regional desiderata in a post-Kim Jong Il North Korea.

However, if nominal U.S. forces remain in Korea far from the Chinese borders, with the bulk stationed in Guam, then a delicate balance could be reached. There is no need for China to fear a unified Korea tied militarily to the United States if no U.S. troops are on its northeastern border. In this scenario, the United States will not have completely withdrawn from East Asia per se. U.S. forces will not be near Chinese territory yet not too far away to deter possible outbreak of hostile movement by China against Korea or Japan. U.S. presence in Guam will also serve as a “psychological buffer” for potential conflict between Japan and a unified Korea—even if both possess nuclear capabilities. A mobile U.S. missile defense capability and technology, along with Guam’s location, will allow it to accomplish a balance of power in East Asia without withdrawal of its presence from the region.

Thus, we need to reach a very clear understanding with the Chinese about nuclear nonproliferation. As in 1994, we can pressure China to “not oppose” economic sanctions against North Korea. In the event China continues to supply North Korea with sensitive materials that could be used for its nuclear program, the United States can make clear to China that selective tariff measures could be contemplated if such activities were not halted. To be sure, such “trade wars” would hurt the U.S. economy. But it would cripple China’s. The last thing Chinese leaders want at this stage is a slowdown of the *pace* of its economic growth. To be sure, Chinese leaders worry about the possibility of North Korean nuclear materials falling into the hands of pro-independence groups in Xinjiang (East Turkmenistan) to advance their separatist goals. But that problem is viewed as one among many on its periphery. The continued acceleration of its economy is central to the Chinese leaders’ political epistemology. Chinese leaders view the 2008 Olympics, the 2010 Shanghai Expo, and the 2014 World Cup as the catalyst by which the Chinese economy can advance to its next huge take-off. An administration official nailed it on the head: “It is the possibility of a huge economic impact that we hope gets the attention of Chinese decisionmakers to do more on preventing WMD [weapons of mass destruction] proliferation.”<sup>44</sup> We have broad, mature relations with China. And Chinese leaders strive for stability on its frontiers and borders so as

to continue its economic development. We need to expand on that relationship and intersection of national interests to make it clear what we are prepared to overlook and what we will not tolerate.

### **What to Do—New Approaches.**

The United States cannot remain wedded to 20th century solutions to 21st century problems. We need to question, rethink, and produce bold, sweeping approaches to the prospect of curtailing nuclear proliferation in East Asia.

The Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) and the UN International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) need to be strengthened.<sup>45</sup> IAEA inspections have been able to neither affirm innocence nor prove guilt in a manner that is effective in the international policy context and opinion. The set-up as it is incorporates the possibility of failure because it permits capability acquisition. I think that national will matters as much as technical ability in the pursuit of nuclear weapons. But if one were to focus specifically on technical means, I would take mild issue with those who emphasize the primacy of nuclear weapons design (important as it is). There are problems with this emphasis, not the least of which is that the IAEA mandate does not cover nuclear weapons design because nuclear weapons design is very difficult to monitor and verify. Instead, I posit that the engineering of nuclear fissile material is the critical node, the most important bellwether of the problem. Thus, we may explore the possibility of modifying the IAEA mandate to include a beefed up inspection regime, exploring the gamut of the nuclear fuel cycle. At this point, the Additional Protocols are voluntary. We may have to make Special Inspections mandatory and the norm.<sup>46</sup>

Related to this, we can think of ways to expand IAEA personnel to include those who can be permanently deployed overseas to undertake monitoring. We can also propose that the various national laboratories keep ready a team of scientists and country experts deployable on a 48-hour notice.

The UN Charter may need to be modified to include nonproliferation as a central tenet of its mission. The current 2-year rotation of the elected 10 members of the UN Security Council could be shortened to a year, giving more countries a voice and a responsibility on nuclear proliferation matters.

We should also think of expanding the 5-member permanent Security Council. If this is resisted, we should think of creating an Asian Security Council with the United States, China, Japan,

South Korea, Russia, and Australia as members to discuss, plan, coordinate, and implement collective security measures to curb WMD proliferation. The Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) is a good first step toward tackling the proliferation problem. We may want to formalize PSI into a treaty, as well as persuading South Korea and China to join.

We can put forth a 21st century version of a nuclear nonproliferation Lend-Lease. American and international personnel could be leased as managers or supervisors overseeing the indigenous nuclear reactors in return for opening credit pipelines to the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, and the IMF. After all, the professed objective of such a reactor is to generate electricity.

Missile defense also can serve to *strengthen* our bilateral alliances. The U.S. nuclear deterrence/umbrella should remain but is not very useful in the absence of a full-scale war akin to the Korean War. If so, how is one to respond to threats short of total war but still deemed serious? How does one go about defending and fighting back without going truly nuclear—that is, going to nuclear war?

In the 1950s, this dilemma was one of credibility. The massive retaliation policy rested precariously on the belief that the United States would be prepared and willing to sacrifice New York for Paris or London in a nuclear exchange with the Soviets. Today, the dilemma is one of nuclear temptation as a default. In the absence of an independent nuclear capability, and in the face of a nuclear North Korea, South Korea or Japan may feel the acute need to respond to nuclear threats by North Korea without going nuclear itself. A diplomatic and military panacea may be the sharing of some missile defense technologies and platforms. The continuation of a U.S. nuclear umbrella and the establishment of a missile defense system are not mutually exclusive. Both can be had—without the attending “arms race” that some portend. In East Asia, both are needed.

At a force deployment level, the United States can reconfigure its command structure in Korea as well as update its arsenal. Currently, the arsenal inventory of U.S. missile forces in Korea is comprised mostly of MK-84s leftover from Vietnam. Putting Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) kits on them would neatly make smart these dumb bombs, making virtue out of necessity.

Currently, the commander in Korea wears three hats. The 4-star general who commands Korea is Commander in Chief, UN Command (CINCUNC), Commander, Combined Forces Command (CFC), and Commander, USFK. The army component of USFK is the

commander of the Eighth U.S. Army.

To be sure, such command structure reflects the historically international nature of the situation on the Korean peninsula, but it also reflects the complex bilateral relationship with South Korea. Given recent political developments in South Korea, as well as our rethinking of our own “footprint” in East Asia and the reconfiguration of our overall worldwide deployment, we may want to explore the possibility of consolidating the command structure in Korea and Japan with a North East Asian command based in Guam. We can explore the idea of returning to a subregional commander within Pacific Command (PACOM) such as a Commander in Chief, North East Asia (CINCNEA), similar to a Commander in Chief, Far East (CINCFE) that we had in the 1940s and 1950s.

An important step is to redefine the “language” of proliferation, its symbols and syntax. We need a defining doctrine in the tradition of the Monroe Doctrine and NSC-68 to confront this problem. Every doctrine has its key words and grammar. The new doctrine’s vocabulary should be “prevention.” Its new grammar should be new targeting guidelines. The White House’s new Office of Global Communications should propagate U.S. values on nuclear proliferation. After all, our values on nuclear proliferation are just as important as the rule of law, freedom of speech, private property, religious tolerance, and equal justice.

Operation IRAQI FREEDOM may be a threshold in military operations. Deterrence, containment, and preemption have to a certain degree been part of U.S. policy. But going after leadership targets in the very beginning of war is a big shift in thinking. It has rendered ineffective the thrust of effects-based operations, to wit, that punishing the ruled will pressure the ruler to sue for peace. As President Bush said: “With new tactics and precision weapons, we can achieve military objectives without directing violence against civilians. No device of man removes the tragedy from war; yet it is a great moral advance when the guilty have far more to fear from war than the innocent.”<sup>47</sup> Nothing symbolizes more eloquently and delivers a more powerful message than this new targeting philosophy.

If one were to deduce the logical corollary of this shift in thinking, one can propose that the United States expand on the recent National Strategy on WMD: “The United States will continue to make clear that it reserves the right to respond with overwhelming force—including resort to all of our options—to the use of WMD against the United States, our forces abroad, and friends and allies.”<sup>48</sup> This clause can be expanded to include those regimes that give materials

to terrorists that could be used to make WMD. The implicit threat of nuclear annihilation for giving sensitive nuclear materials to terrorists should be contemplated as the ultimate deterrent option. North Korea must be made to understand clearly that the pain and cost of selling sensitive nuclear materials to terrorists are that it must then live under a serious and credible nuclear threat.

Lastly, as important as changes in organizational structure, deployments, and language may be, they pale in comparison to the role of individual personalities. The insouciance of sophisticated theories of international relations has yet to successfully traduce the age-old importance of individuals. Personalities matter a great deal even as predicting the rise of key players in China, Japan, and the two Koreas is extremely difficult. One may be unduly optimistic in expecting the emergence of an East Asian trio of Metternich, Castlereagh, and Talleyrand, and an East Asian Congress equivalent of that of 1815 Vienna. But the difficulty of prediction and the disappointment of high expectations should not preclude the United States from seeking to identify and investigate key players, and their intellectual and social backgrounds.

For example, a North Korea without Kim Jong Il, but one still with nuclear weapons and a sub-par human rights record, is certainly far from ideal. One cannot state with certainty that a North Korean military figure or one of Kim's sons or relatives will not be as cruel and totalitarian as Kim Jong Il. But I posit that it is still preferable to one with Kim at the helm. The stability of the status quo, as advocated by "realists" is misguided. The status quo itself is inherently unstable. Realistic solutions posed by the realists have produced little in the way of stability or realism. Regime change in North Korea will be destabilizing. But the uncertainty of a future without Kim Jong Il should not hamper our intellectual exploration and policy execution of a North Korea state in the absence of a Kim regime.

Some 20 years elapsed between the signing of the Versailles Treaty and the Munich agreement. We cannot emulate that historical pattern. It is conceivable and desirable that 20 years after the North Korean withdrawal from the NPT, a new nonproliferation set-up, based on a strengthening of our existing bilateral alliances and the establishing of a new understanding with China, will guide the United States and East Asian nations in the second decade of the 21st century. Disraeli said, "Man is not a creature of circumstances. Circumstances are the creatures of men." The year 2025 in East Asia need not be an *Annus Horribilis*. The United States must and will shape our circumstances as it fits our needs.

## CHAPTER 1 - ENDNOTES

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