

The Insanity of America's First Strike Nuclear Threats

by Finian Cunningham via ned - Strategic Culture Foundation *Wednesday, Aug 16 2017, 9:14pm*
international / prose / post

The threats from US President Donald Trump and the Pentagon to destroy the North Korean people – said with such casual cold heartedness – shows that the American ruling class has no compunction about committing the supreme crime of genocide against innocent civilians.

Those threats to North Korea, coming in the same week that the world marked the 72nd anniversary of the Americans dropping two atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 killing over 200,000 people, are deeply connected. An understanding of the connection is essential to achieving a peaceful resolution of the current crisis and the avoidance of a catastrophic war.

Speaking from his New Jersey private golf club, Trump glibly said the power that the US would unleash against North Korea would be like something the world has never seen before. This bravado utterance of carrying out such devastation demonstrates the genocidal mentality that underpins America's ruling elite. Trump's words were repeated by his Pentagon chief James 'mad dog' Mattis who warned the North Korean people of imminent destruction.

To make any kind of equivalence between the Communist North Korean state and the US rulers is absurd. The vast disproportionate nuclear arsenals is one issue for a start. So too is the difference in geographical posture: American forces based in South Korea are on North Korea's border, not the other way around.

Also the rhetoric: Kim Jong-un may use rhetoric about turning the US into ashes, but the North Korean policy is always in the context of maintaining self-defense and in response to what it sees as American aggression. Washington's rhetoric on the other hand is one of offensive aggression – and has been for decades. Keeping all options on the table, is code for retaining the self-ordained right to launch a pre-emptive military strike, including the use of nuclear weapons.

Not only is the genocidal mentality of American rulers consistent with the horrific crime against Japan 72 years ago, so too are the geopolitics. The real reason why Washington dropped the atomic bombs on August 6 and 9, 1945, was to prevent the anticipated capture of Japan and the Korean Peninsula by the advancing Soviet Union. The Americans were already thinking ahead of the postwar global carve-up and were adamant to prevent Communism winning the territorial spoils from the defeat of Nazi and Japanese fascism.

As Martin Hart-Landsberg recounts in his superb book on Korean history, the purpose of the American first strike with nuclear weapons on Japan was to cast a shadow of terror on the region and thereby to halt the advance of Soviet forces in the Pacific, in particular from the total liberation of all of Korea in alliance with the Korean Communist resistance guerrillas who had been fighting to overthrow Japanese colonial occupation.

From the nuclear genocide in Japan, arose the inevitable division of Korea into a Communist North and a pro-Western South, reconstituted from Korean quislings who had consorted with Japanese

imperial occupation (1910-45). Although progressive democratic politics have gained strength and governing power in South Korea over the past two decades, the South Korean state was marked for its first four decades after the war as being authoritarian, fascistic and a legacy of Japanese colonialist politics – and, of course, pro-American.

During the Korean War (1950-53), the American military backing the South contemplated the use of nuclear weapons against the Communist North and its Chinese ally. Nuclear-capable American bombers would fly over the northern territory in a deliberate act of terror. The people were compelled to live in caves because the Americans had destroyed every city with conventional weapons killing up to two million civilians in the process.

When American forces today fly nuclear-capable B-1 bombers over the Korean Peninsula – as they did again this week just as Trump was issuing his fire and fury diatribe – the people of North Korea have every reason to fear Armageddon from the skies. They have been subjected to it within living memory, and ever since the end of the Korean War they have had to live under the American shadow of genocide.

The Americans refused to sign a peace treaty at the end of the Korean War in 1953. Technically, therefore, the US is still at war in the peninsula. The perennial presence of American military forces in South Korea and the multiple war maneuvers conducted every year is a stark reminder to the North that hostilities could resume at any time.

Let's put this into proper perspective, as opposed to being hoodwinked by Western media bias and distortion. North Korea is a reclusive state largely because it has been living under an unlawful siege from American forces for 64 years. A lot of what the Western public know about North Korea is from caricatures leveled by American propaganda aimed at demonizing the enemy. But from what we can tell from fragments of information, the people are largely content with their political system. So why don't we just let them live in peace? After all, North Korea has not attacked any of its neighbors, nor does it interfere in the region. All it wants is to have the right to exist peacefully, and not under the continual threat of nuclear annihilation by the United States. Hence, it devotes much of its national resources to its nuclear arms program.

Lawrence Wilkerson, who served in the US State Department during the G W Bush presidency, candidly admits that negotiations with North Korea were never honored by Washington. Wilkerson worked with the North Koreans on an earlier nuclear accord during the 2000s, in which Pyongyang committed to scrap its nuclear weapons program in exchange for Western aid to develop civilian atomic energy. But, he says, the Bush administration reneged on its side of the bargain, referring to North Korea as «an axis of evil». Reasonably, Pyongyang then resorted to building up its defenses with nuclear weapons.

When President Trump this week disparaged the failures of previous Clinton, Bush and Obama administrations in dealing with North Korea, he was either mendacious or ignorant – probably the latter. The «failure» of US policy in Korea is that it has deliberately never allowed diplomacy to succeed.

That's because American geopolitics is fundamentally all about maintaining hegemonic ambitions of dominance, not just in Asia-Pacific but in every other region of the world. It is an essential part of how US capitalism functions. That dominance is underpinned by American military aggression – and in particular the self-ordained right to wage war on anyone who dares to defy the American global order, including the pre-emptive use of nuclear weapons on civilians.

Former British foreign minister Malcolm Rifkind in an [article](#) this week for Russia's Valdai discussion forum, asserted that: "There is no simple solution available to resolve this [Korean] crisis." Why intelligent Russians would feel obliged to listen to the likes of Rifkind is a curious question.

In any case, Rifkind is plain wrong. There may appear to be no simple solution in the mindset of people like Rifkind who are imbued with pro-US imperialist propaganda and who unquestioningly view North Korea as «the problem». (Just as these same kind of people regard Iran, Russia, Venezuela, Syria, Cuba and so on as problems.)

But in actual fact there is a straightforward and accurate solution to the never-ending conflict in Korea.

That is, for the US to withdraw its military and its relentless threats of aggression towards North Korea. The US needs to sit down with North Korea and the other nations of the region, including China and Russia, and discuss as equals the requirements for peaceful coexistence. For a start, the US should be compelled to sign a decades-overdue peace treaty with North Korea and to openly state that it repudiates the use of violence for its political objectives.

A solution is at hand. It simply requires the US to start abiding by international law and to renounce its genocidal prerogative to destroy other people.

The stronger powers in the region, Russia and China, must insist on this basic requirement. They must state clearly that all-party talks should be convened immediately and that all sides must commit to peaceful settlement. No exceptions, no excuses.

What is ultimately problematic - and the world will see this - is that the United States as we know it under its ruling system will not and cannot abide by this simple solution. Because it is inherently a warmongering rogue regime which exceptionally arrogates the 'right' to cast the shadow of annihilation on the rest of the world.

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