

**Inter-Korean Relations:  
A North Korean Perspective**

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## Introduction

Despite the continued hostility and competition for legitimacy between the two Koreas, inter-Korean relations have slowly but steadily increased and diversified in recent years. From a North Korean perspective, this expanding interaction with Seoul embodies a fundamental contradiction in Pyongyang's world-view: the DPRK's long-standing "theological" belief in the superiority of the North Korean system and ultimate unification on North Korean terms on the one hand, and on the other a practical understanding that not only is the DPRK extremely disadvantaged economically—and in some ways even militarily – vis-à-vis the South, but that sustained and expanding contacts could pose a grave danger to the stability and viability of the North Korean political system. Yet Pyongyang seems willing to take that risk in order to rescue what remains of its economy and prevent even further decline and deterioration. Despite the inevitable talk of unification, inter-Korean relations are less important for Pyongyang as an end in themselves than as a means for economic revitalization, which is in turn an important part of Kim Jong Il's own legitimation. As long as inter-Korean relations offer these benefits without appearing to threaten the security and stability of the DPRK regime, Pyongyang will likely continue dealing with Seoul in a contained and limited fashion.

The crisis that emerged between the United States and the DPRK (North Korea) over North Korea's nuclear program in October 2002, quickly overshadowed some remarkable developments in inter-Korean relations and the first major signs of economic opening in North Korea in decades. In the first nine months of 2002 alone, North Korea agreed to cabinet-level talks with the South, the re-establishment of road and rail links between the two Koreas, and de-mining areas of the demilitarized zone around these links; sent the first-ever delegation of North Korean athletes to South Korea, for the Asian Games in Pusan; hosted Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi in Pyongyang, where Kim Jong Il made the stunning admission that North Korea had abducted Japanese citizens in the 1970s and 1980s; and launched a series of economic changes that seemed to move North Korea definitively in the direction of market-oriented reform.<sup>1</sup>

Yet despite the "October Surprise" of North Korea's apparent admission to a secret highly-enriched uranium (HEU) program in violation of international agreements, the subsequent collapse of the 1994 Agreed Framework which had frozen the DPRK's plutonium program for eight years, and the escalating crisis with the US, North-South contacts continued and grew. Inter-Korean talks took place as scheduled in late January 2003, land routes on the east and west coasts were reopened, South Korean tour buses made the first overland tours to Mt. Kumgang in North Korea in over 50 years, the South Korean conglomerate Hyundai continued work on an industrial plant in Kaesong, and the two Koreas held a sixth round of family reunions. With the election of South Korean President Roh Moo Hyun in December 2002, the DPRK found its most cooperative South Korean government ever. While both outgoing president Kim Dae Jung and president-elect Roh condemned North Korea's moves toward nuclear weapons production, they also made it clear that – unlike the United States – South Korea would condone neither the use of force nor economic isolation and sanctions to compel Pyongyang's compliance. Rather, Roh emphasized even more strongly than his predecessor that inter-Korean economic cooperation would continue and that dialogue and economic inducements were the best means to bring about positive change in North Korea's behavior.

Seoul's gamble is that the US and DPRK would resolve the nuclear issue peacefully, while growing inter-Korean contacts would draw Pyongyang out and help establish a more stable and cooperative environment on the Korean peninsula. North Korea, for its part, demonstrated through

its actions of the previous year that it was prepared to take important steps – small steps perhaps, but unprecedented and risky moves by North Korean standards – toward reform and cooperation. More than ever, the DPRK leadership seemed to understand that its interests were best served by working together with South; indeed, the US-DPRK confrontation and anti-US sentiment in the South seemed to be pushing the two Koreas together as never before. Of course, a military clash between the US and North Korea or a new war on the Korean peninsula could change the equation entirely, and possibly lead to a disappearance of the DPRK. But few in South Korea, particularly in the government, seemed to take this as a real possibility. Assuming that the nuclear stand-off will not lead to a catastrophic war and that the DPRK will remain in existence for some time to come – the assumptions which underlay current South Korean (not to mention North Korean) behavior – then Pyongyang will continue to move toward incremental change domestically and greater interaction with South Korea externally. Increasingly, both Pyongyang and Seoul have treated each other as legitimate states rather than hostile non-state entities, and this mutual recognition is an important and necessary step toward any peaceful form of unification.

### **Pyongyang's Policy toward Seoul to 2000**

Despite considerable evolution in North Korea's Southern policy since the two states were founded in 1948, there are certain underlying principles which – in theory at least – have remained consistent. It is debatable how much these general principles really drive policy. They can rather be considered ideological boundaries within which a reasonably flexible policy can be constructed, sets of beliefs rather than concrete policy formulae; we might consider them part of the “theology” of the DPRK.<sup>2</sup> These principles may be summarized as follows.

- Principle 1: The DPRK is the true representative of the Korean people, and the regime in the South is a grave threat to the very existence of the DPRK, backed by a ceaselessly hostile United States. Therefore the DPRK must have a **strong defense** at all costs against American and South Korean hostility. This defense is not just military, but also ideological: the people of North Korea must be protected from any ideological infection of South Korean or Western capitalism, which would only confuse the people and undermine unity and morale. Related to this is
- Principle 2: The people, as opposed to the government, of South Korea would warmly welcome unity with their Northern brethren and would be much more sympathetic toward the DPRK and its leadership were they not restrained and indoctrinated by their government and US propaganda. Therefore, the DPRK government should pursue **united front tactics** with sympathetic elements in South Korea (and abroad) whenever possible, dividing the people from their unrepresentative government.
- Finally, Principle 3: Ultimately the North's position will win because it is morally correct and will gain the support of the people of North and South. Therefore, at times **dealing directly with ROK leadership** has been considered a feasible tactic for unification. It is possible to negotiate with the ROK and even establish a “Confederation” bringing the two systems together under a single state, provided outside powers (meaning primarily the US) do not interfere and the systems are left as they are for the time being. This is because, if left to themselves, Koreans North and South will eventually see the superiority of the North Korean system and voluntarily choose to be governed by it.<sup>3</sup>

Unification remains the stated goal of the North Korean regime and there is no reason to doubt that the population as a whole feels a strong emotional commitment to unification in the abstract. On the other hand, knowledge of real conditions in the South is virtually non-existent for the populace at large and even for most of the DPRK leadership. But without altering these fundamental, “theological” principles of unification outlined above, North Korean policy toward the South has changed considerably over time. Increasingly, both Pyongyang and Seoul have treated each other as legitimate states rather than as hostile non-state entities.

*Waiting for the Revolution, 1948-1972*

Seoul-Pyongyang relations have evolved through three successive stages: the first two culminated in inter-Korean agreements in 1972 (the July 4<sup>th</sup> Communique) and 1991 (the Basic Agreement on Reconciliation, Non-Aggression, Exchanges and Cooperation), each of which raised great expectations of reconciliation and reunification on the Korean peninsula but were soon overtaken by renewed distrust and mutual hostility. The third stage has seen the emergence of the DPRK from a decade of internal and external crises – including the collapse of Pyongyang’s communist allies, the death of Kim Il Sung, the 1993-4 nuclear standoff with the US, and the famine of the mid-1990s – and culminated in the June 2000 Summit and resulting June 15<sup>th</sup> Declaration. While few concrete results of the 2000 Summit have emerged to date, Pyongyang seems to have moved closer than ever to a policy of peaceful co-existence toward the South.

In theory, North Korea has never given up on the idea that South Korea would one day undergo a socialist revolution and join the North under a single revolutionary government. This idea was first expressed in 1946 with the concept of North Korea as a “democratic base” (*minju kiji*):

In a country undergoing revolution, one area succeeds in revolution before another, establishing a revolutionary regime and accomplishing democratic reforms, and is a base for carrying out the revolutionary process through the whole country. The northern half of the Republic is such a base for anti-imperialist, anti-feudal democratic revolution in the whole country.<sup>4</sup>

While waiting for revolution to erupt “in the whole country,” the revolutionary regime should unite with sympathetic elements in the non-revolutionary part of the country. This is the origin of Pyongyang’s United Front policy, and North Korea still attempts to cultivate support of anti-government critics in South Korea. But since the democratization of the late 1980s, there has been little sign of sympathy for the DPRK among the shrinking group of South Korean radicals. It seems unlikely that the Pyongyang leadership puts much hope in a pro-DPRK cadre in South Korea, at least in the short run.

Initially, this United Front strategy was combined with a pro-active military strategy, and in June 1950 North Korea decided to invade the South, a decision that was bold but by no means irrational under the circumstances. Indeed, the war would have quickly ended in the North’s favor had it not been for the US-led coalition’s defense of the ROK. North Korean Foreign Minister Pak Hon-yong’s prediction that a huge pro-Pyongyang uprising would erupt in the South in support of the Korean People’s Army turned out to be wrong, and Pak paid with his life for his failure of prognostication, executed for treason in 1955. Nevertheless, the fact that the Rhee regime was saved by the US and UN forces during the Korean War could be used to support the notion that the ROK was an artificial entity propped up by the Americans, and that a combination of North Korean fortitude and subtle subversion would undermine and ultimately destroy the Southern regime. This might be called North Korea’s “Vietnam strategy,” except that in contrast to the National Liberation

Front in South Vietnam, there was no viable pro-Northern guerilla movement in South Korea after the Korean War. Pyongyang's approach seems to have been that since the ROK would collapse of its own contradictions sooner rather than later, the North should bide its time and be prepared to move in and reunify the country when the opportunity presented itself. But a June 25-style invasion was never again attempted, for two reasons: the clear US commitment to the defense of South Korea, and the unwillingness of the USSR and China to support such a venture.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, when the "Student Revolution" of April 1960 arose and led to the removal of Syngman Rhee, the DPRK leadership hoped for a collapse of the Southern system that would lead to unification on North Korean terms. In order to achieve this end, the DPRK softened its rhetoric toward the interim Chang Myon government, which the North Koreans perceived as weak. Although this was couched in terms of "peaceful co-existence," the DPRK leadership seems to have felt that the South would soon come under communist control, and stepped up training of southern-born cadres for that end.<sup>6</sup> But after the military coup and the emergence of the Pak Chung Hee government in 1961, this window of opportunity for unification on North Korean terms appeared to have closed.

Nevertheless, Pyongyang did not give up on a potential military solution to the problem of Korean division. In the 1960s, the DPRK focused on preparing for a military confrontation with the Americans and their "Fascist" lackeys that would end in a decisive North Korean victory. Beginning in 1962 North Korea embarked on a renewed program of military build-up under the slogan *chonmin mujanghwa* (arming the entire people), diverting precious economic resources into the military at precisely the moment when East bloc assistance for post-war reconstruction was discontinued.<sup>7</sup> This turned out to be a turning point for the DPRK economy; after an impressive period of post-war development in the 1950s and early 1960s, North Korea would never regain its economic advantage over the South, and the North's GNP growth would slow down, erode, and by the 1990s go into reverse.

In the area of inter-Korean relations, both Koreas at this time practiced their version of West Germany's Hallstein Doctrine or China's policy toward the Republic of China on Taiwan: refusal to recognize the rival state's existence or to maintain diplomatic ties with any foreign country that recognized it. Both Koreas were entrenched in their respective Cold War blocs, which reinforced the North-South Korean confrontation and inhibited North-South contact. This external environment changed dramatically in the early 1970s, when the Nixon administration made secret, and then public, overtures toward normalization with the People's Republic of China, North Korea's closest supporter. To pre-empt abandonment by their respective patrons, the two Koreas took matters into their own hands and began direct negotiations with each other, first through their respective Red Cross committees and then through a series of meetings between North and South Korean intelligence officers.<sup>8</sup> Just under a year after Henry Kissinger's secret visit to Beijing on July 9, 1971, Seoul and Pyongyang issued a Joint Communiqué on July 4, 1972, outlining their principles for peaceful unification.

#### *Slouching toward Co-Existence, 1972-1992*

By the 1970s the DPRK had put aside, or at least moderated, its Southern Revolution strategy.<sup>9</sup> This does not mean that North Korea had given up altogether on the notion that the South Korean regime might collapse. Attempts to destabilize the ROK government through direct action reached a peak in 1968, with the infiltration of North Korean commandoes onto the grounds of the South Korean Presidential compound, or Blue House. The commandoes came within a few hundred yards of their target, President Park Chung Hee, before they were apprehended by ROK security forces.

This was followed by the North Korean capture of the American intelligence ship the *USS Pueblo*, whose crew was held captive for a year and was released following an American apology (swiftly rescinded) for spying on the DPRK.

Thereafter, direct action gave way to terrorist tactics by North Korean agents. In 1974 an ethnic Korean from Japan attempted to assassinate Park Chung Hee but failed, shooting and killing Park's wife instead. In October 1983, North Korean agents set off a bomb that killed a dozen members of ROK President Chun Doo Hwan's cabinet in Rangoon, Burma, although they missed killing Chun himself. While deplorable, the DPRK's assassination tactics were not the same as the kind of terrorism practiced by the Irish Republican Army in Britain or Islamic terrorist groups in the Middle East. The DPRK did not engage in random violence toward civilians, attempting to terrorize the population at large, but rather targeted political leaders for assassination.<sup>10</sup> This is consistent with the North Korean belief that the people and government in South Korea can be separated, and that eliminating unpopular South Korean leaders will create a favorable image of North Korea among the oppressed South Korean civilian population. One major exception to this tactic was the bombing of a Korean Airlines passenger plane in November 1987, which was apparently intended to create climate of fear that would disrupt the 1988 Seoul Olympics. This turned out to be unsuccessful, and since 1987 there have not been any further DPRK-backed terrorist attacks on ROK citizens, as far as is publicly known. Indeed, Kim Jong Il's surprising admission in September 2002 to North Korea's kidnapping of Japanese citizens, explicitly denounced such terror tactics as a "regrettable" relic of the past and promised that North Korea "will prevent such things from happening in the future."<sup>11</sup>

The latter half of the 1970s was probably the last point at which the DPRK held any serious hope of a military solution that would unify Korea in the North's favor. The North Vietnamese conquest of the South in April 1975 might have suggested that Korean unification would follow suit, an idea reinforced by US presidential candidate Jimmy Carter's campaign promise later that year to pull American troops out of Korea, signaling a reduced American military commitment to the ROK.<sup>12</sup> The confusion in South Korea following the assassination of Park Chung Hee in October 1979 seemed, like the aftermath of the April 19<sup>th</sup> Uprising almost twenty years earlier, to be another window of opportunity for the North to take charge of Korean unification. But the Carter administration reversed itself on the troop withdrawal, and Park's assassination (by his own chief of intelligence) was followed within two months by another military coup under General Chun Doo Hwan.<sup>13</sup> If there had been any chance that chaos in the ROK would invite a North Korean intervention at that critical moment, the establishment of Chun's iron-fisted rule and Reagan's unqualified commitment to the ROK's defense soon closed that window of opportunity. Thereafter, even the conventional military balance shifted away from the North, the economic gap grew increasingly in the South's favor, and the DPRK and ROK experienced a "diplomatic reversal" with more and more countries recognizing the South at the expense of the North.<sup>14</sup>

The new movement in inter-Korean relations inaugurated by the July 4 Communiqué of 1972, a breakthrough moment that raised tremendous expectations in both the North and the South, ground to a halt in a little over a year. After a half-dozen meetings of the newly-created South-North Coordinating Committee, the two sides reached an impasse and the North cut off talks in mid-1973.<sup>15</sup> North-South Red Cross dialogue was revived in the mid-1980s and there was a brief flurry of cultural exchanges and visits of separated families in 1985, but this too quickly fizzled out. The next breakthrough in official inter-Korean relations would not come until the beginning of the 1990s, by which time the international environment had changed drastically, to the North's disadvantage.

The main DPRK proposal for the form of unification, to which it has returned consistently for more than two decades, is a “Confederation” of the two existing political systems on the Korean peninsula. Although Pyongyang did not outline in detail its proposed “Confederal Republic of Koryo” until 1980, North Korea first suggested such a confederation in August 1960 during the turbulent Chang Myon government in South Korea.<sup>16</sup> Seoul’s initial response was, to say the least, not very enthusiastic. Over time, however, the North has shown more flexibility in its Confederation proposal, a willingness to see confederation not as the end-goal of unification but a transitory institution and giving more rights to the two “regional governments.” By 1991, in fact, North Korean officials including Kim Il Sung were suggesting that there was plenty of room for negotiation with the South on the form of confederation and that both sides within a confederated Korean system could have considerable autonomy even in its foreign relations, under the general rubric of military and diplomatic unity.<sup>17</sup> The “Confederal Republic” was in fact not dissimilar to the “Korean National Community” proposed as a unification strategy by ROK President Roh Tae Woo in the late 1980s.<sup>18</sup>

As the 1990s dawned, high-level North-South talks began again. After a setback caused by DPRK protests over the ROK-US “Team Spirit” joint military exercises, the fifth in this series of high-level talks in December 1991 resulted in an agreement on reconciliation, nonaggression, and exchanges and cooperation.<sup>19</sup> The “Basic Agreement” was the most important declaration of North-South cooperation and co-existence since the 1972 Joint Communiqué, and was far more detailed than the 1972 agreement had been. It was followed in February 1992 by a joint “Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.” Once again, hopes were high for a major change in North-South relations and for a new momentum toward reconciliation and eventual unification. But once again such hopes would be unfulfilled. Regional and global circumstances had shifted dramatically, to the detriment of the DPRK’s position. The collapse of every communist state in Eastern Europe between 1989 and 1991, including the USSR itself, came as a deep shock to North Korea and deprived Pyongyang of most of its important trade partners, political supporters and allies. Even before the communist collapse, East European countries had begun to normalize relations with the ROK; by 1992, Russia and even North Korea’s allegedly staunch ally China had established diplomatic relations with Seoul. It would take almost a decade for a reciprocal movement of Western countries normalizing ties with Pyongyang. Economically, South Korea had long since leapt almost unimaginably beyond the level of the DPRK. Far from the Basic Agreement ushering in a new age of equality between the two Koreas, the times seemed to call into question the very ability of the DPRK to survive as a socialist state. And then, the collapse of the DPRK economy and the nuclear standoff with the United States made it appear that North Korea’s days were indeed numbered. Movement in inter-Korean relations, much less unification in the North’s favor, was a moot point.

#### *The Politics of Survival, 1992-2000*

At the beginning of the 1990s, the North Korean economy, which had encountered mounting problems since the 1960s, tipped over from difficulty to disaster. Indeed, the entirety of the 1990s was a decade of disaster for the DPRK, beginning with the collapse of every communist state in Eastern Europe, proceeding to a crisis over international inspections of DPRK nuclear energy facilities that nearly led to war with the US in June 1994, the death of Kim Il Sung in July, and finally a series of natural calamities that pushed the North Korean food situation -- never abundant to begin with -- into full-scale famine.<sup>20</sup> North Korea spent most of the decade simply trying to

cope with this megacrisis, and its leadership seemed unsure of where to take the country. Meanwhile, many in the outside world expected an inevitable collapse of the DPRK.

The threat to the DPRK's very existence in the 1990s was greater than at any time since the Korean War. North Korea's response was to batten down the hatches and proclaim its continued adherence to "socialism."<sup>21</sup> Pyongyang for the most part played a waiting game, maintaining the system while hoping for the "correlation of forces" to become more favorable toward the DPRK. As Paul Bracken has explained, the North Korean nuclear program was a way for the DPRK to "buy time for the regime to adapt to new international circumstances."<sup>22</sup> It is perhaps more accurate to say that the DPRK leadership wanted the world to go away until it changed more to Pyongyang's liking, but I would agree with Bracken's point that the DPRK nuclear program was a defensive, even desperate attempt at ensuring state survival in an environment suddenly much more hostile. In this case the gamble almost backfired, as the US and North Korea came to the brink of war in June 1994, averted at the eleventh hour by the visit of former US President Carter to Pyongyang and discussions with Kim Il Sung that led, finally, to the US-DPRK Agreed Framework of October 1994.

By the late 1990s the domestic situation, though hardly rosy, had improved. After a three-year "mourning period" following the death of his father, Kim Jong Il emerged as General Secretary of the KWP in 1997, and the following year was re-appointed Chairman of the National Defense Committee, his main post and clearly the most powerful position in the DPRK. The younger Kim, presumably after a power struggle that can only be guessed at by outsiders, had consolidated his authority. The old-guard Manchuria guerilla fighters who dominated the centers of power under Kim Il Sung were disappearing from the scene through death or retirement; Kim Jong Il's generation was increasingly taking charge. By 1998 the "Arduous March" through hunger and distress was declared over, and the new slogans of the DPRK were *Kangsong Taeguk* ("Rich and Powerful Great Country," or simply "Powerful Nation") and *Songun chongch'i* (Military-first Politics).<sup>23</sup> By the end of the decade, economic decline had been arrested, at least temporarily; according to ROK Bank of Korea estimates, the DPRK economy grew 6.2% in 1999, its first increase in a decade, followed by a more modest 1.3% growth in 2000, 3.7% in 2001, and 1.2% in 2002.<sup>24</sup>

## **A New North Korea?**

The new millennium began with the third major symbolic breakthrough in inter-Korean relations, the Kim Jong Il-Kim Dae Jung summit in Pyongyang in June 2000. This was preceded by a flurry of diplomatic activities toward western countries, beginning with the normalization of ties with Italy in January 2000. Within two years, Pyongyang had established diplomatic relations with all but two of the European Union member states, the EU itself, Canada, Australia, the Philippines, Brazil, and New Zealand; in July 2000, with Seoul's encouragement, North Korea joined the Asean Regional Forum (ARF) for East Asian security dialogue. Unlike in the past, these new and re-invigorated external relations were encouraged, rather than inhibited, by South Korea.<sup>25</sup> North Korea also attempted to mend fences with Russia, and Kim Jong Il visited both China and Russia in 2001, his first official visits abroad as North Korean leader. It appeared that the DPRK was suddenly emerging from its years of inward-looking crisis management and confusion and re-joining the world.

Whether North Korea was also changing internally is a matter of some dispute, but there have been some indications of change, if not anything officially and publicly called "reform," in



both the rhetoric and the observable reality of DPRK life. Since the early 1990s, there have been signs of liberalization and the growth of local markets in the North Korean economy, what one American observer calls “reform by stealth.”<sup>26</sup> In January 2001 the *Nodong Sinmun* announced a policy of “New Thinking” (*Saeroun kwanjom*) which called for scrapping outmoded habits and mentalities and putting all efforts into the technological reconstruction of North Korea, with a special emphasis on information technology.<sup>27</sup> The 60<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration of Kim Jong Il in February 2002 and the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Kim Il Sung’s birth in April were further occasions for the DPRK media to exhort the people to work harder and focus on the development of science and technology. In order to accomplish these goals, the famously isolated DPRK has demonstrated a new willingness to learn from the outside world: in 2001, North Korea sent nearly 500 government officials and students abroad to study technical subjects, economics and business, almost triple the number Pyongyang sent in 2000.<sup>28</sup>

A year after “New Thinking” was officially launched in January 2001, the 2002 New Year’s Joint Editorial published in the Korean Workers’ Party newspaper *Nodong Sinmun*, the Korean People’s Army daily *Choson Inmingun*, and the Kim Il Sung Socialist Youth League publication *Ch’ongnyonwi* celebrated the “successes” of the previous year and renewed the call for “radical change” in the economy.<sup>29</sup> The editorial outlined four “viewpoints” for what it called “Kim Il Sung’s nation”: 1) the Leadership (i.e., the spiritual leadership of the departed Great Leader), 2) the Juche idea, 3) the military, and 4) the socialist system. The last point was the most fully elaborated one and implied further reforms to take place in the North Korean economy. The editorial claimed that “priority will be given to goods supply to the popular masses and to the solution of the problems arising in improving people’s daily life.” Again without breathing the word “reform,” the editorial stated that

The changing situation and our revolution have an urgent need to improve and perfect economic management on revolutionary lines. To ensure the highest profitability while adhering to socialist principles – this is the main orientation to be adhered to in completing the socialist economic management, which our Party has set.

In March 2002, the DPRK Supreme People’s Assembly approved a state budget for fiscal year 2002 which emphasized technical innovation and economic modernization.<sup>30</sup> Finally, the second half of 2002 saw the boldest steps yet toward real reform in the DPRK. At the beginning of July 2002 the North Korea began to institute some of the most far-reaching economic changes since the regime was founded in 1948. The food distribution system on which much of the population had depended (at least until the famine of the 1990s) was reduced and modified; the price of rice was raised to near-market levels, and wages have been correspondingly increased as much as thirty-fold; the official exchange rate for the North Korean Won was reduced from 2.2 to the dollar to nearly 200 won, approaching the black market rate; the taxation system, abolished in 1974, has reportedly been revived.<sup>31</sup>

The results of this economic restructuring a year later were mixed. On the one hand, anecdotal reports of runaway inflation and popular discontent have filtered into the Western media. On the other hand, the DPRK government has not retracted these reforms and seems committed to them.<sup>32</sup> The New Year joint editorial of 2003, for example, was much more militant than that of the previous year, reflecting the growing conflict with the United States. The editorial emphasized North Korea’s “Military-Based Policy” (*Songun kichi*) and the need for a strong defense against the

imperialists.<sup>33</sup> Yet it also stressed the need for “new change in economic and cultural construction,” and repeated the earlier slogan of “ensuring the greatest profitability while firmly adhering to socialist principles.” It may be that the question of economic reform versus “adhering to socialist principles” reflected a difference between the civilian leadership and the military, but by trying to have it both ways, the Pyongyang leadership appeared to see North Korea’s *Perestroika* as irreversible, despite the increased security threat.

Apparently, the centerpiece of Pyongyang’s economic “New Thinking” was to be a new special economic zone (SEZ) in the northwestern city of Sinuiju, across the Yalu River from China. Announced in September 2002, the Sinuiju SEZ was to have its own legal and economic system, and even issue its own passports, distinct from the rest of the DPRK. The man chosen to run the SEZ was a Chinese native of Dutch citizenship, Yang Bin, allegedly the second-richest man in China.<sup>34</sup> Unfortunately for North Korea’s reform efforts, this attempt to build “Hong Kong North” had not even begun when it experienced a major setback: Yang Bin was arrested in the northeast Chinese city of Shenyang and subsequently deported, ostensibly on charges of corruption, but perhaps as a means for the Chinese authorities to show their displeasure at North Korea taking such an initiative without consulting China.

Even if North Korea’s economic experiments were allowed to go forward unimpeded, it is questionable whether the DPRK could make its economy both “revolutionary” and “profitable” – a pairing which seems to suggest limited market-oriented reform while maintaining the rule of the Workers’ Party and the Kim Jong Il leadership. But clearly the DPRK leadership, and presumably Kim Jong Il personally, have staked a great deal on improving North Korea’s economy through such reforms. Even if it may not say so directly, Pyongyang cannot achieve this goal without improved relations with Seoul and Washington. Yet in the area of inter-Korean relations, much less US-DPRK relations, the promise of the June 2000 summit remained largely unfulfilled three years later. As of mid-2003, Kim Jong Il had still not made his reciprocal visit to South Korea promised at the time of the summit, which caused no small embarrassment and opposition criticism for Kim Dae Jung.<sup>35</sup> The reconstruction of the Seoul-Sinuiju railway connecting South Korea through North Korea to the border with China, a central goal of Kim Dae Jung’s North Korea policy, had made little progress. The South Korean tours to the Kungang Mountains in eastern North Korea, sponsored by the Hyundai conglomerate, turned out to be a major money-losing venture. But, above all, the improvement of ties with the US which Pyongyang had pursued in close connection to its policy toward the South, and which had built considerable momentum in the Clinton administration, ground almost to a halt with the beginning of the Bush presidency in 2001 and the new US administration’s more conservative approach to engagement. Then came the Axis of Evil speech.

The DPRK responded harshly to George W. Bush’s condemnation of North Korea as part of the “Axis of Evil” along with Iran and Iraq in the president’s State of the Union address in January 2002. A Foreign Ministry spokesman called the Bush speech “little short of declaring war against the DPRK” and accused the US administration of “political immaturity and moral leprosy.”<sup>36</sup> In contrast to the condemnation of terrorism and de facto sympathy for the US right after September 11<sup>th</sup>,<sup>37</sup> the DPRK spokesman suggested the US had only itself to blame: “Herein lie answers to questions as to why the modern terrorism is focused on the U.S. alone and why it has become serious while Bush is in office.”<sup>38</sup>

North-South relations, having already lost a great deal of momentum since the summer of 2000, were dampened considerably by the Bush administration’s statements. It took a visit to Pyongyang by Kim Dae Jung’s special envoy Lim Dong Won in early April

to get inter-Korean dialogue restarted. On April 28, Pyongyang agreed to resume reunion meetings of separated family members and to move forward with high-level contacts and economic cooperation. Even a naval skirmish between the two Koreas in the Yellow Sea (or West Sea, as the North Koreans call it) on June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2002, did not fundamentally deter North-South talks.<sup>39</sup> On August 11-14 the first ministerial-level North-South meetings in nearly a year took place in Seoul. At the same time, the two sides marked the 57<sup>th</sup> anniversary of liberation from Japanese colonial rule on August 15<sup>th</sup> with an unprecedented joint celebration, including the visit of more than 100 North Korean delegates to Seoul.<sup>40</sup>

Washington-Pyongyang relations also showed signs of thaw in late July and early August 2002, when Secretary of State Colin Powell met briefly with North Korea's foreign minister at an Asean meeting in Brunei, and the Bush Administration sent Jack Pritchard as its first official envoy to the DPRK. Pritchard, who had met with Pyongyang's ambassador to the UN several weeks earlier in New York, went to North Korea in early August for the ceremony marking the start of construction on the first light-water nuclear reactor to be built by the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO), the US-South Korean-Japanese consortium formed under the auspices of the 1994 Agreed Framework.<sup>41</sup> And on the DPRK-Japan side, Prime Minister Koizumi's unprecedented summit meeting with Kim Jong Il in Pyongyang in September, where Kim made his extraordinary admission that North Korea had abducted over a dozen Japanese citizens in the 1970s and 1980s, seemed at first to open up a new era in Japan-North Korea relations and start the two countries on the road to normalization.<sup>42</sup> It turned out, however, that the Japanese media and public response to these revelations would illicit such feelings of hostility toward North Korea that normal relations appeared to be farther away than ever in subsequent months. Then came the "October Surprise."

The belated and tentative moves toward re-starting US-DPRK dialogue in late summer and early fall 2002 were dramatically derailed by the "Kelly revelations" of October. On October 16<sup>th</sup>, the US State Department announced that, some 11 days earlier, Assistant Secretary of State James A. Kelly had confronted his counterparts in Pyongyang with evidence that North Korea had "a program to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons, in violation of the Agreed Framework and other agreements."<sup>43</sup> According to US accounts (North Korea publicly neither confirmed nor denied the accusation), the DPRK officials acknowledged the existence of this program and declared the Agreed Framework "nullified." But North Korea insisted that the US was to blame for the failure of the Agreed Framework, and offered to enter a new set of talks to resolve the crisis. The US repeatedly refused to negotiate with North Korea before Pyongyang ceased all of its nuclear-related activities, and in November Washington suspended deliveries of fuel oil to North Korea required under the Agreed Framework. This was followed by a rapidly escalating set of moves on the part of North Korea toward re-starting its plutonium program, frozen by the 1994 Agreement: Pyongyang announced its intention to re-open its nuclear power plant at Yongbyon, expelled International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors at the end of December 2002, announced its withdrawal from the Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) in January 2003, and began to remove spent nuclear fuel rods from storage in February – the latter an act which had brought the US and North Korea to the brink of war in 1994.

While the crisis in US-DPRK relations deepened in 2003, North-South relations continued to move forward. Indeed, a distinctive aspect of the 2002-3 crisis was the common ground Pyongyang could find with the Seoul government in criticizing the

American approach to Korea. This was the reverse of the 1993-4 crisis, in which the ROK government of Kim Young Sam deeply feared US-DPRK “collusion” at the expense of South Korea’s national interest. This is not to say that Seoul-Pyongyang relations became cordial or that Seoul suddenly broke its ties with Washington; Seoul decried North Korea’s development of nuclear weapons, for example, and Pyongyang attacked the Roh Moo Hyun government for agreeing to send South Korean troops to Iraq.<sup>44</sup> Roh visited Washington in May, and he and President Bush tried to put a unified face on their policy toward North Korea; Pyongyang condemned the Roh-Bush joint statement as “a perfidious act which runs counter to the basic spirit of the June 15 North-South Declaration.”<sup>45</sup> But various agreements and meetings between the ROK and DPRK went ahead despite the new nuclear crisis, including a seven-point agreement on inter-Korean economic relations, signed by the representatives of North and South Korea in Pyongyang in late May. The two sides agreed on the establishment of a special Industrial Zone in the North Korean city of Kaesong, reconnection of east and west coast railway lines, and other joint projects. The agreement was presented positively and in detail in the DPRK media, although it was uncertain whether much could come of it until the conflict between Pyongyang and Washington was resolved.<sup>46</sup>

Pyongyang’s South Korea policy has always been closely linked to its policy toward the United States. Originally, this was because Pyongyang refused to recognize the legitimacy of the ROK and saw it as a “puppet” of Washington. Since the beginning of inter-Korean contacts in the early 1970s this attitude has softened, but whether or not North Korean policy-makers still view South Korea as a “client state” of the US, they clearly see Washington as having significant influence over Seoul, a fact few would dispute. Thus, an important motive behind Pyongyang’s policy toward Washington is North Korea’s attempt to influence Seoul indirectly.<sup>47</sup>

Over the last decade or so Pyongyang has also sought improved ties with the US for the direct political, security, and economic benefits they may bring to North Korea. Perhaps the most important motive is economic. Pyongyang seeks to get off the US State Department’s list of countries that sponsor terrorism not only to normalize relations with the US, but also in order to qualify for loans and support from the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the International Monetary Fund and other international financial institutions that are critical for rebuilding North Korea’s shattered economy.<sup>48</sup> In order to achieve this, Pyongyang must walk a fine line between rhetorically condemning the US as an enemy and impediment to Korean peace and unification, and making gestures of rapprochement and accommodation – for example, by sending Vice-Marshall Jo Myong Rok to meet with President Clinton in Washington in 2001. These two priorities – achieving the (especially economic) benefits of improved relations with the US while maintaining its defense against the perceived hostility of the US – are obviously acutely difficult for North Korea to reconcile, and Pyongyang has not always handled relations with Washington very adroitly, to say the least. Washington, for its part, has long insisted that improved in US-North Korea relations be contingent on positive development in inter-Korean relations.

This Seoul-Washington-Pyongyang triangle is thus an inescapable reality behind North Korea’s bilateral relations with South Korea and the United States. Even if one of these relationships is going well, a crisis or stumbling block in either US-North Korean relations or North-South relations will impede the other. Seoul and Washington’s policies toward Pyongyang had shown considerable convergence in the second Clinton administration, but had begun to diverge markedly under George W. Bush. After the October 2002 crisis, the rift between Seoul and Washington grew critical. In a way, this fulfilled one of Pyongyang’s longstanding dreams: driving

a wedge between Washington and Seoul, winning the sympathy of the South Korean people and government against a hostile United States. But for Pyongyang today, the problem with alienating the US is twofold: first, North Korea still perceives the US as the greatest threat to the existence of the DPRK, and therefore needs assurances of its security against the US, as Pyongyang has repeatedly stated after the October 2002 revelations; and second, all the goodwill and even cash from South Korea will not make up for the continued US-led economic embargo and the need for Western investment to rescue North Korea's moribund economy. Thus, North Korean officials have repeatedly stressed that what the DPRK wants from Washington is a "non-aggression treaty" with the US, American recognition of North Korea's sovereignty, and American support for North Korea's economic reform and development.<sup>49</sup> Continued improvement in relations with South Korea, while an important goal of current North Korean policy, is meaningless without a normalization of relations with the United States.

### **The Future of Two Koreas**

More than a decade after the end of the Cold War and the unification of Germany, Korea remains the last country still divided as a result of the post-World War II Allied settlement. The two Koreas have not even reached the degree of mutual communication and contact achieved by the two Germanies in the early 1970s, much less anything approaching unification. There is a certain irony that East and West Germany had such considerable contact while agreeing to postpone talk of unification to the indefinite future, whereas North and South Korea speak constantly of unification yet have very little contact.<sup>50</sup> It may be in fact that Seoul and Pyongyang are quietly and gradually moving toward a (pre-1989) German-style approach: de facto acceptance of each other as legitimate states and a policy of peaceful co-existence. The last East German ambassador to Pyongyang, Dr. Hans Maretzki, has suggested that the two Koreas simply recognize the status quo, and accept each other as sovereign states with all the corresponding legal and diplomatic procedures this entails. In this way, Maretzki argues, rather than attempt to reconcile two systems that are ultimately irreconcilable, Pyongyang and Seoul could move forward in their bilateral relationship without threatening each other's existence as sovereign entities.<sup>51</sup> The problem of course is that this solution, as sensible as it may appear to outsiders, directly contradicts the long-standing principle officially upheld by both sides, that Korea is in reality one nation and that division can never be accepted as a permanent or indefinite condition. Of more direct concern for Pyongyang, the North Koreans know exactly how inter-German relations ended – with the collapse of East Germany and unification on West German terms – and want to avoid the fate of East Germany at all costs. This is the dilemma of inter-Korean relations for the DPRK: contact and improved relations with Seoul could bring substantial economic, political and security benefits but could also threaten the North Korean regime's very existence.

For some time now, the number-one priority of the North Korean regime has been its own survival. In the face of what the DPRK perceived (and still perceives) as an extremely hostile security environment, especially after the collapse of communist states in the late 1980s and early 1990s, this has meant above all a strong military posture, including an enormous standing army and the potential threat of nuclear weapons. Since both domestic economic development and foreign relations are secondary to regime survival, the former two have suffered when DPRK regime survival was seriously threatened in the 1990s. In this sense, North Korea's military and security policy has been described by one Western observer as "essentially defensive and realist," not aggressive or irrational.<sup>52</sup> As far as the DPRK leadership is concerned, the Korean War proved that

the US has both the capability and intention to destroy North Korea; South Korea, from Pyongyang's perspective, has had the same intention and in recent decades also the capability. Logically, then, two factors will soften North Korea's position toward Seoul: deterrence of South Korea's (and America's) destructive capacity toward the DPRK, if necessary by playing the nuclear card; and/or a perceived change of intention. Arguably, it is only a combination of these two – a greater sense of security through deterrence, and a change of perceived destructive intention toward the DPRK – that allowed North Korea to respond positively to Kim Dae Jung's "Sunshine Policy" at the turn of the millennium. This also explains North Korea's dealings with the US in the late 1990s, after the October 1994 agreement established a framework for US-DPRK contact within which the US would deal with the DPRK as a legitimate state entity. North Korea wants more from the US, including the lifting of economic sanctions, diplomatic normalization, and a promise of "no first use" of nuclear weapons against the North.

From Pyongyang's perspective, a guarantee of survival from the US would give a considerable boost to North Korea's ability to improve relations with Seoul. Such a guarantee, apparently almost within reach at the end of the Clinton administration, receded from Pyongyang's grasp after the more hawkish Bush administration appeared on the scene. Seoul's ability to engage North Korea are limited so long as Washington-Pyongyang relations are stalled. Even in the best of circumstances, North Korea remains cautious and defensive in its dealings with both Seoul and Washington. The crisis between the US and DPRK that began in the late fall of 2002 could push North Korea farther into a corner, and set back or even reverse the processes of internal reform in the DPRK and relaxation of North-South tensions. In the worst-case scenario, the conflict between the US and North Korea could precipitate a war that would eliminate the DPRK altogether, as well as sow destruction and instability in South Korea, Japan and China. By the middle of 2003, the Bush Administration was preparing for such a contingency.<sup>53</sup>

The logic of DPRK foreign policy may appear idiosyncratic to outside observers, but it is generally consistent. Policy toward South Korea has shown an overall continuity in its fundamental principles while evolving tactically since the early 1970s. Pyongyang and Seoul have gradually shifted from uncompromising competitive legitimacy toward peaceful co-existence. Both sides seem to agree that, in the near term, inter-Korean relations are moving toward rapprochement rather than reunification. Perhaps its basic principle of ultimate unification has not changed, but North Korea's unification theology has clearly become less fundamentalist and more liberal as time has gone by. For all Pyongyang's talk of imminent unification, its actions and those of Seoul reflect rather a recognition of the status quo and the need for mutual trust and co-operation.

Emerging from a long decade of profound internal crisis, effecting economic change while maintaining political stability will be an enormous challenge for the Pyongyang regime. Recent signs of reform within the DPRK may finally allow North Korea to overcome this crisis, or they may signal the beginning of the endgame for divided Korea. The North Korean leadership has taken a great gamble in moving forward with economic reform and expanding contacts with the outside world, and with South Korean in particular. Should the ROK government take North Korea fully in its embrace, saving the North Korean economy and blocking a devastating conflict between the DPRK and the United States, North Korea will become little more than an economic dependency of the South.<sup>54</sup> Even the possession of nuclear weapons, should North Korea choose that path, will at best only postpone the inevitable.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> James T. Laney and Jason T. Shaplen, "How to Deal with North Korea," *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 2003), p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> For North Korean ideology as theology, see Han S. Park, *North Korea: The Politics of Unconventional Wisdom* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2002).

<sup>3</sup> For an elaboration of this view, which claims to represent official DPRK thinking on the matter, see Kim Myong-ch'ol, *Kim Chông-il ûi T'ongil chôllak* [Kim Jong Il's Unification Strategy], trans. Yun Yông-mu (Seoul: Sallimt'o, 2000). This book, originally written in Japanese by an ethnic Korean resident of Japan, had the rare distinction in Kim Dae Jung's South Korea of being banned, and its Korean-American publisher jailed, for violating the National Security Law.

<sup>4</sup> Cited in Kim Sun-gyu, "North Korea's Initial Unification Policy: The Democratic Base Line," in Kyongnam University Institute of Far Eastern Affairs, *Puk Han ch'eje ui surip kwajong* [The Process of Constructing the North Korean System] (Seoul: Kyungnam University Press, 1991), p. 220.

<sup>5</sup> The US was equally unwilling to support Syngman Rhee in attacking the North, a contingency which American military planners were taking seriously until the very end of the Rhee regime.

<sup>6</sup> Balasz Solantai, "'You Have No Political Line of Your Own:' Kim Il Sung and the Soviets, 1953-1964," paper presented at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, DC, May 28, 2002, pp. 27-28.

<sup>7</sup> Karoly Fendler, "Economic Assistance and Loans from Socialist Countries to North Korea in the Postwar Years 1953-1963," *Asien* no. 42 (January 1992), pp. 39-51; Ruediger Frank, *Die DDR und Nordkorea: Der Wiederaufbau der Stadt Hamhung von 1954-1962* (Aachen: Shaker, 1996).

<sup>8</sup> In fact, some of the Red Cross delegates were intelligence officers, and began the process of dialogue under cover of the Red Cross meetings. Don Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas: A Contemporary History* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1997), pp. 14-15.

<sup>9</sup> Yi Chong-sok, *Hyôndaie Puk Hanui ihae* [Understanding Contemporary North Korea] (Seoul: Yoksa pip'yongsa, 2000), p. 381.

<sup>10</sup> David Kang, "North Korea's Military and Security Strategy," in Samuel S. Kim, ed. *North Korean Foreign Relations in the Post-Cold War Era* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 177-179.

<sup>11</sup> Howard W. French, "North Koreans Sign Agreement with Japanese," *New York Times* September 18, 2002, p. A16.

<sup>12</sup> Nicholas Eberstadt, "North Korea's Unification Policy, 1948-1996," in Kim, ed. *North Korean Foreign Relations*, p. 242; Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas*, p. 84.

<sup>13</sup> For an evaluation of the US role – or lack thereof – in this process by Carter's ambassador to the ROK, see William H. Gleysteen, *Massive Entanglement, Marginal Influence: Carter and Korea in Crisis* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1999).

<sup>14</sup> Barry K. Gills, *Korea versus Korea: A Case of Contested Legitimacy* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 190.

<sup>15</sup> Chuck Downs, "Discerning North Korea's Intentions," in Nicholas Eberstadt and Richard J. Ellings, ed. *Korea's Future and the Great Powers* (Seattle: The National Bureau of Asian

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Research, 2001), p. 96.

<sup>16</sup> Yi Chong-sôk, *Hyondae Puk Hanui ihae*, p. 382.

<sup>17</sup> Harrison, *Korean Endgame*, p. 76.

<sup>18</sup> B.C. Koh, "A Comparison of Unification Policies," in Young Whan Kihl, ed. *Korea and the World: Beyond the Cold War* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), p. 156.

<sup>19</sup> "The Politics of Inter-Korean Relations: Coexistence or Reunification," in Kihl, ed. *Korea and the World*, p. 135.

<sup>20</sup> The DPRK never acknowledged the existence of a famine, referring instead to a (temporary) "food shortage" caused by natural disasters. Most outside observers believe that North Korea did undergo a famine between approximately 1995 and 1998; Andrew Natsios, vice-president of the humanitarian agency World Vision during this period, argues that hundreds of thousands if not millions of North Koreans died as a result of a famine exacerbated by natural disasters, but rooted in economic mismanagement. See Andrew Natsios, *The Great North Korean Famine: Famine, Politics, and Foreign Policy* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2001).

<sup>21</sup> Charles K. Armstrong, "A Socialism of Our Style: North Korean Ideology in a Post-Communist Era," in Samuel S. Kim, ed. *North Korean Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

<sup>22</sup> Paul Bracken, "The North Korean Nuclear Program as a Problem of State Survival," in Andrew Mack, ed. *Asian Flashpoint: Security and the Korean Peninsula* (New York: Allen & Unwin, 1993), p. 86.

<sup>23</sup> These two "guiding principles" have been elaborated at length in, respectively, *Sahoejuui kangsong taeguk konsol sasang* [The Ideology of Constructing a Powerful Socialist Nation] (Pyongyang: Sahoe Kwahak Ch'ulp'ansa, 2000) and *Kim Chong-il Changgunui songun chongch'i* [General Kim Jong Il's Military-First Politics] (Pyongyang: Pyongyang Ch'ulp'ansa, 2000).

<sup>24</sup> Bank of Korea, *GDP of North Korea in 2002* (Seoul: Bank of Korea, 2003). Admittedly the Bank of Korea figures must be viewed with some skepticism, but it is evident that by the end of the 1990s North Korea's downward spiral had at least been arrested.

<sup>25</sup> Samuel S. Kim, "North Korea in 2000," *Asian Survey* vol. 41, no. 1 (January/ February 2001), p. 20.

<sup>26</sup> Harrison, *Korean Endgame*, p. 25.

<sup>27</sup> *Nodong Sinmun* January 9, 2002, p. 1; Yinhay Ahn, "North Korea in 2001," *Asian Survey* vol. 42, no. 1 (January/February 2002), p. 47.

<sup>28</sup> Nam Kwang-sik, "One Year of a 'New Way of Thinking,'" *Vantage Point* vol. 24, no. 2 (February 2002), p. 10.

<sup>29</sup> *Nodong Sinmun*, January 1, 2002, p. 1; *People's Korea*, January 12, 2002, p. 2. These editorials can be considered the DPRK's national "New Year's Resolution," announcing official priorities for the year, and have replaced Kim Il Sung's annual New Year address since the Great Leader's death in 1994.

<sup>30</sup> "SPA Approves New State Budget Featuring Technical Innovation and Modernization of Economy," *People's Korea*, March 30, 2002, p. 1.

<sup>31</sup> "North Korea Undergoing Economic Reform," *Choson Ilbo* (July 26, 2002); "Stitch by stitch to a different world," *The Economist*, July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2002, pp. 24 – 26.

<sup>32</sup> Western economists have only just begun to look into the impact of the July 2002



changes on North Korean economy and society. See Ruediger Frank, "A Socialist Market Economy in North Korea? Systemic Restrictions and a Quantitative Analysis," paper presented at Columbia University, March 13<sup>th</sup> 2003, and Marcus Noland, "Famine and Reform in North Korea," unpublished manuscript, July 2003.

<sup>33</sup> "Let us Fully Demonstrate the Dignity and Power of the Republic under the Great Banner of Military-Based Policy," *Nodong Sinmun*, January 1, 2003, p. 1; *People's Korea*, January 11, 2003, p. 2.

<sup>34</sup> Howard W. French, "North Korea to Let Capitalism Loose in Investment Zone," *The New York Times* September 25, 2002, p. A3.

<sup>35</sup> "A Ray or Two of Light in the Gloom," *The Economist* (August 17<sup>th</sup> 2002), pp. 33 – 34.

<sup>36</sup> "DPRK Denounces Bush's Charges: Statement of FM Spokesman on Bush's State of the Union Address," *People's Korea*, February 9, 2002, p. 1. The response is also available online as "Spokesman for DPRK Foreign Ministry Slams Bush's Accusations," Korean Central News Agency, January 31, 2002. <http://www.kcna.co.jp/calendar/january>.

<sup>37</sup> A DPRK foreign ministry spokesman stated on September 12<sup>th</sup> that "The very regretful and tragic incident reminds us once again of the gravity of terrorism. As a UN member the DPRK is opposed to all forms of terrorism and whatever support to it and this stance will remain unchanged." Korean Central News Agency, "DPRK stance towards terrorist attacks on U.S.," <http://www.kcna.co.jp/calendar/september> 2001.

<sup>38</sup> "Spokesman for DPRK Foreign Ministry Slams Bush's Accusations," Korean Central News Agency, January 31, 2002. <http://www.kcna.co.jp/calendar/january>.

<sup>39</sup> In a most unusual gesture, Pyongyang responded shortly after the West Sea clash with a statement of "regret for the unfortunate incident," and urged that the two sides resume high-level talks "in order to put on the right track the North-South dialogue for reconciliation, unity and cooperation based on the spirit of the June 15, 2000 joint declaration." "North is Ready for Resumed Ministerial Talks," *People's Korea* July 27, 2002, p. 1.

<sup>40</sup> "Inter-Korean Festival Kicks Off in Seoul," *Korea Times*, August 14, 2002, p. 1.

<sup>41</sup> "Work Starts on North Korea's U.S.-Backed Nuclear Plant," *The New York Times*, August 8, 2002, p. A14.

<sup>42</sup> Howard W. French, "North Koreans Sign Agreement with Japanese," *The New York Times*, September 18, 2002, p. A1.

<sup>43</sup> US State Department Press Statement, "North Korean Nuclear Program," October 16, 2002. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2002/14423pf/htm>.

<sup>44</sup> "Pyongyang Hits Seoul's Decision to Dispatch Troops to Iraq," *People's Korea*, April 22, 2003, p. 1.

<sup>45</sup> "North, South Conclude 7-Point Agreement in Inter-Korean Economic Talks," *People's Korea*, May 31, 2003, p. 1.

<sup>46</sup> "Fifth Meeting of North-South Committee for Promotion of Economic Cooperation Concludes," *Choson t'ongsin* (Korea Central News Agency), May 24, 2003. <http://www.kcna.co.jp/index-k.htm>.

<sup>47</sup> The route to influence could also work the other way around. Selig Harrison argues that the main motivation for Kim Jong Il agreeing to a North-South summit in 2000 was to push Washington toward moving ahead with US-DPRK normalization. Harrison, *Korea Endgame*, p. 88.

<sup>48</sup> James Miles, "Waiting Out North Korea," *Survival* vol. 44, no. 2 (summer 2002), p. 42.

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<sup>49</sup> Korean Central News Agency, “Conclusion of Non-Aggression Treaty between DPRK and US Called For,” October 25, 2002. <http://www.kcna.co.jp>.

<sup>50</sup> I am indebted to Dr. Hans Maretzki, former East German ambassador to Pyongyang, for this insight. Author’s interview with Ambassador Maretzki, Potsdam, Germany, July 29<sup>th</sup> 2002.

<sup>51</sup> Hans Maretzki, “Korean Dilemma: Normalisation or Unification and Nothing,” Northeast Asia Peace and Security Network Special Report, Nautilus Institute. [http://www./pub/ftp/napsnet/special\\_reports/maretzki\\_unification.txt](http://www./pub/ftp/napsnet/special_reports/maretzki_unification.txt).

<sup>52</sup> Kang, “North Korea’s Military and Security Strategy,” p. 182.

<sup>53</sup> Bruce B. Auster and Kevin Whitelaw, “Upping the Ante for Kim Jong Il: Pentagon Plan 5030, a New Blueprint for Facing Down North Korea,” *US News and World Report*, July 21, 2003. <http://www.usnews.com/usnews/issue/030721/usnews/21korea.htm#top>.

<sup>54</sup> For an analysis suggesting that North Korea may become a “protectorate” of South Korea, see Alexandre Mansourov, “North Korea Goes Nuclear, Washington Readies for War, South Korea Holds Key,” Nautilus Institute Policy Forum Online. [http://www.nautilus.org/fora/security/0223A\\_Mansourov.html](http://www.nautilus.org/fora/security/0223A_Mansourov.html).