

**REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE****FORM APPROVED - - - OMB NO. 0704-0188**

PUBLIC REPORTING BURDEN FOR THIS COLLECTION OF INFORMATION IS ESTIMATED TO AVERAGE 1 HOUR PER RESPONSE, INCLUDING THE TIME FOR REVIEWING INSTRUCTIONS, SEARCHING EXISTING DATA SOURCES, GATHERING AND MAINTAINING THE DATA NEEDED, AND COMPLETING AND REVIEWING THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION. SEND COMMENTS REGARDING THIS BURDEN ESTIMATE OR ANY OTHER ASPECT OF THIS COLLECTION OF INFORMATION, INCLUDING SUGGESTIONS FOR REDUCING THIS BURDEN, TO WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS SERVICES, DIRECTORATE FOR INFORMATION OPERATIONS AND REPORTS, 1215 JEFFERSON DAVIS HIGHWAY, SUITE 1204, ARLINGTON, VA 22202-4302, AND TO THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET, PAPERWORK REDUCTION PROJECT (0704-0188) WASHINGTON, DC 20503

1. AGENCY USE ONLY (LEAVE BLANK)		2. REPORT DATE 29-03-2012	3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED <i>STUDENT RESEARCH PAPER</i>	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE  THE NEW NORTH KOREAN PROBLEM: HISTORY AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE AGE OF KIM JONG UN		5. FUNDING NUMBERS  <i>N/A</i>		
6. AUTHOR(S)  Major William S Chairsell III				
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)  <i>USMC COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE 2076 SOUTH STREET, MCCDC, QUANTICO, VA 22134-5068</i>		8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER  <i>NONE</i>		
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)  <i>SAME AS #7.</i>		10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER:  <i>NONE</i>		
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES  <i>NONE</i>				
12A. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT  <i>NO RESTRICTIONS</i>		12B. DISTRIBUTION CODE  <i>N/A</i>		
ABSTRACT (MAXIMUM 200 WORDS) The world community, with South Korea, China, and the United States in the lead, must take a more proactive approach in dealing with the collapse of North Korea. The death of Kim Jong Il and the succession of his young, inexperienced son Kim Jong Un, has left North Korea in a potentially dangerous situation that brings it perilously closer to an internal collapse. Little is known about the internal workings of the North Korean economy based on the secrecy of the Kim regime yet analysts speculate that millions in the nation are starving. Based on complete media control and minimal exposure to the outside world, the citizens of North Korea may view any external involvement as an invasion. Additionally, North Korea has continued to develop its nuclear weapons program and missile technology. In the event of collapse, the possibility of this deadly technology falling into terrorist hands is a potential outcome that the civilized world cannot risk. Based on these threats and others, it is imperative that the three main stakeholders in the region take significant diplomatic and military approaches to prepare for the collapse.				
14. SUBJECT TERMS (KEY WORDS ON WHICH TO PERFORM SEARCH) North Korea, Kim Jong Un, Humanitarian Crisis, Nuclear Proliferation, South Korean Policy, Media Control		15. NUMBER OF PAGES: 34		
		16. PRICE CODE: N/A		
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT  <i>UNCLASSIFIED</i>	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE:  <i>UNCLASSIFIED</i>	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT  <i>UNCLASSIFIED</i>	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	

United States Marine Corps  
Command and Staff College  
Marine Corps University  
2076 South Street  
Marine Corps Combat Development Command  
Quantico, Virginia 22134-5068

MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

---

---

**TITLE:**  
**THE NEW NORTH KOREAN PROBLEM:**  
**History and responsibilities in the age of Kim Jong Un.**

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

**AUTHOR:**  
**Maj William S Chairsell III**

AY 11-12

---

---

Mentor and Oral Defense Committee Member: ERIC SHIBUYA, PhD  
Approved: [Signature]  
Date: 29 MARCH 2012

Oral Defense Committee Member: [Signature]  
Approved: [Signature]  
Date: 29 March 2012

## ***Preface***

The purpose of this paper is to inform the reader about the history, background, and current conditions within North Korea. As the United States and world community have already passed 60 years of non-productive relations with North Korea, the situation on the peninsula has become so desperate that we can no longer afford inaction. With the recent death of it's previous leader, Kim Jong Il, and the immediate rise of his untested son, opportunities are now available that have never been before.

My interest in this paper was generated from numerous readings as well as experience in joint exercises with the South Korean military. In March of 2011, I visited the DMZ and was able to see first hand the vast differences in economy between nations arbitrarily split by the world powers. We can no longer accept the status quo when it comes to the suffering of the North Korean people or the provocations of a rogue regime.

## DISCLAIMER

THE OPINIONS AND CONCLUSIONS EXPRESSED HEREIN ARE THOSE OF THE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT AUTHOR AND DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT THE VIEWS OF EITHER THE MARINE CORPS COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE OR ANY OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCY. REFERENCES TO THIS STUDY SHOULD INCLUDE THE FOREGOING STATEMENT.

QUOTATION FROM, ABSTRACTION FROM, OR REPRODUCTION OF ALL OR ANY PART OF THIS DOCUMENT IS PERMITTED PROVIDED PROPER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT IS MADE.

*Table of Contents*

Preface.....ii

Disclaimer.....iii

Table of Contents.....iv

Report Documentation Page.....v

Executive Summary.....vi

Introduction.....1

Background.....4

Nuclear Weapons.....7

Humanitarian Crisis.....10

Information Control.....12

Engagement.....13

Military Response.....16

China’s Role.....17

South Korea’s Role.....18

The United States Role.....20

Conclusion.....21

Figure 1.....23

Figure 2.....24

Figure 3.....25

Notes.....26

Bibliography.....28

## **Executive Summary**

**Title:** The New North Korean Problem: History and Responsibilities in the Age of Kim Jong Un.

**Author:** Major William S Chairsell III, United States Marine Corps Reserve

**Thesis:** South Korea, China, and the United States must further develop plans and strategic partnerships in order to effectively mitigate the suffering of the North Korean people and prevent weapons proliferation in the event of a North Korean collapse.

**Discussion:** Decades of neglect and political maneuvering by the North Korean regime and the world community have left the North Korean people destitute. With the recent death of their leader, the world community is now faced with the increasing possibility of the collapse of North Korea. In addition to the humanitarian crisis that this event would create, the threat to the world community based on proliferation of nuclear weapons and missile technology is significant. South Korea, China, and the United States all have a major interest in preventing the collapse of North Korea albeit for different reasons. A firm yet fair approach with the new leader must be enacted immediately by the three major nations most directly impacted by North Korea's potential threats.

**Conclusion:** The world community must take an immediate and proactive approach with the new regime emphasizing unconditional economic aid in exchange abandonment of the nuclear program and a commitment to basic human rights.

## Introduction

On 19 December 2011, 28-year-old Kim Jong Un, *The Great Successor*, assumed the helm of one of the most dangerous countries in the world. As the leader of the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK or North Korea), Kim now commands nuclear weapons, a million-member army, and a propaganda machine that has brainwashed generations of North Koreans. Under his father, Kim Jong Il, and grandfather, Kim Il Sung, millions of North Koreans starved, families were imprisoned based on the slightest hint of disloyalty, and almost all contact with the outside world was prohibited. Differences in politics, ideology, and distrust of motives have caused the world community to stand by and, as a result, millions more are at risk. In addition to the threat to the people of North Korea, the continued proliferation of nuclear weapons and missile technology to terrorist organizations and other oppressive regimes presents a potential threat to nations around the world. The United States, in concert with China and South Korea, must take a more proactive approach in dealing with the coming North Korean collapse. While Japan and Russia both have a vested interest in the stability of this region, their involvement should be minimal based on historic events and past transgressions.

In order to consider the threats and potential solutions, it is necessary to understand the history of the region and the relationships between the nations involved. Politics played a major role in the immediate aftermath of World War II just as it does today. While the leadership and motivations of South Korea, China, and the United States have changed drastically in the last half-century, their positions towards North Korea have remained generally the same. China supported North Korea during the Korean War and continues to be its largest trading partner and political ally.<sup>1</sup> Despite the mutual animosity and constant threat of war between the two nations, South Korea was the largest provider of food aid to North Korea from 2005 to 2008 (See Fig 1). The United States, in its strategic partnership with South Korea, has always viewed North Korea as a threat but only recently have these threats been possible to American interests outside South Korea. The inter-connected economies of these states all play a major role in the politics of the region.

A collapse of the North Korean Government would affect all parties significantly. In the event of a power struggle, China and South Korea would be faced with potentially millions of refugees. The United States would need to focus on preventing Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and other deadly military technology from being obtained by terrorist groups or rogue



entities. Key to any intervention in North Korea is convincing the people that they are not being invaded or taken over by any foreign interests. This particular issue will prove to be the most challenging. Also, while South Korea and the United States have incorporated training for a collapse into their joint military exercises, China has not been involved in either the planning or execution of these plans.<sup>2</sup> It is well known by experts that China has begun contingency planning, but it does not advertise them for fear of provoking the DPRK regime or possibly instigating the collapse.<sup>3</sup>

Engagement as a policy has failed on multiple levels. The North Korean people have suffered drastically based on economic sanctions. The Kim regime has surrounded itself with loyal party members while continuing to promulgate its greatness to the population. South Korean businesses have lost millions in failed attempts at economic partnerships due to the behavior of the political elites.<sup>4</sup> On the international level, all attempts to curb the Kim regime from the pursuit of nuclear weapons and missile technology have failed. While the succession of Kim Jong Un may provide new opportunities for engagement, the need to prepare for collapse should be given higher priority.

## Background

Following World War II, the Korean peninsula was split based on geographic size. The US and Soviet Union agreed upon the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel as the arbitrary line separating what would be a communist influenced society and a capitalist one. Families were separated, fences were established, and minimal thought was given to the future impact on the Korean people. Neither side of Korea was happy with the split. However, following 30 years of tyranny at the hands of the Japanese, they were powerless to do anything about it. Additionally, both Koreas needed to rely on their powerful benefactors based on the devastation to the country from war and Japanese use of natural resources. At the time, both Koreas wanted re-unification, yet the respective leaders had different visions on what a unified Korea should look like.

Since the end of the Korean War, North Koreans have been lied to by their leaders. Just as in George Orwell's *1984*, the truth is whatever the party tells you is the truth. North Koreans still believe that South Korea invaded North Korea and the North won the war.<sup>5</sup> The total reliance that North Korea had on Stalin's Soviet Union and Mao's China has been slowly forgotten by the people. Despite his numerous failings in his responsibilities to the people he led, Kim Il Sung was a political genius. When millions of children were orphaned after

the Korean War, the state taught them to look to Kim Il Sung as their father.<sup>6</sup> Any facts that were contrary to the teachings of Kim Il Sung were summarily left out of the state run schools. For example, according to textbooks, Kim Il Sung and his guerillas defeated the Japanese single handedly and liberated the Korean peninsula.<sup>7</sup> The American involvement in defeating the Japanese and ultimately liberating Korea is completely unknown. With no outside influence, these teachings have resulted in many of the problems we have today. Americans are demonized in the state run media and South Korea is pitied more than despised for being manipulated by it's American masters (See Figure 2).

While North Korea's current problems of a failing economy and starvation are primarily the results of the Kim regime, the United States and world community bears some responsibility for the situation. The Japanese occupation of Korea from 1905-1945 was a brutal occupation that attempted to erase Korean culture completely.<sup>8</sup> The Koreans were taught that the US abandoned Korea in exchange for Japan's recognition of the US presence in the Philippines.<sup>9</sup> Whatever the motives of the US and Japan in the early 1900s, the Korean people suffered deeply and many young revolutionaries formed their opinions of the world based on these events. Kim Il Sung, born in 1912, would be the most prominent and skilled of these individuals.

The arbitrary split in 1945 left the vast majority of the agricultural resources of the Korean peninsula in the South. The North initially benefitted by a preponderance of natural resources and a border with China along the Yalu River. In the immediate aftermath of the Korean War, North Korea's economy grew dramatically faster than the South.<sup>10</sup> At the end of the Korean War, both sides had a gross national product per capita at about \$55. By 1960, the South was at \$60 yet the North had reached \$208.<sup>11</sup> The proximity of trading partners and support from other communist nations provided Kim with the necessary resources to industrialize North Korea. Kim consolidated power and was able to play China and the Soviet Union off each other in order to achieve his goals.<sup>12</sup> While Kim Il Sung proved to be good at recognizing and exploiting external political actors, Kim Jong Il was able to master it for his own personal benefit.

Kim Jong Il was first introduced publicly as the future leader in 1980.<sup>13</sup> While his father had established credibility by fighting the Japanese and leading the country during the Korean War, Kim Jong Il did not have the opportunity to do so and was thus given various titles within the government and political bureaucracy to improve his status and perception amongst the people of North Korea.<sup>14</sup> Despite almost 20 years of grooming, there was some apprehension among the world community over whether the North Korean government and military would support

him.<sup>15</sup> Kim Jong Il recognized that his power base resided in the military more so than the government and as he grew in power strengthened his position significantly by purging those political members of suspected loyalty.

After decades of mutual distrust and military build up along the Demilitarized Zone, South Korea's president, Kim Young Sam and Kim Il Sung decided to meet discuss the issues affecting the two countries.<sup>16</sup> Kim Il Sung's death in 1994 and North Korea's three year mourning period derailed the meeting. Additionally, the South Korean president's refusal to send a delegation to mourn Kim Il Sung in Pyongyang infuriated Kim Jong Il and dashed any hopes of reconciliation at that time.<sup>17</sup> There was however, one point of contention that the US would not allow to go unresolved. This point is still at the crux of our current relationship with North Korea- the nuclear issue. Based on the potential devastation that could be caused by just one weapon being procured by a terrorist entity, the need to secure nuclear sites following a collapse must be a military focus for the US, China, and South Korea.<sup>18</sup>

### **Nuclear Weapons**

North Korea's interest in nuclear technology for power generation goes back to the Korean War. The Soviets assisted the North with creating a research facility in 1952.<sup>19</sup> While Soviet,

Chinese, and US technology is prevalent throughout the peninsula, all major powers gave their support with the understanding that it would be for peaceful purposes.<sup>20</sup> It is believed that North Korea first began developing nuclear weapons in earnest in the early 1990s.<sup>21</sup> The perceived need for nuclear weapons was predicated by multiple factors. Primarily, with the fall of the Soviet Union, the North Korea's vast stores of military equipment were becoming obsolete. The ability to maintain and repair tanks, aircraft, and weapons systems was becoming more difficult. In direct contrast to this was the modernization and continued improvement of the South Korean military by the US. The superiority of the American military forces was broadcast for the world during the 1991 Gulf War. Saddam Hussein's equipment was very similar to that of North Korea.<sup>22</sup> Kim Jong Il led the North's quest for a nuclear weapon and told his troops, "We can win if we fight a war with South Korea, but only after nuclear war."<sup>23</sup>

The time period of the early 1990s is the most crucial in understanding how the world community needs to respond today. It was the development of a nuclear weapon as a bargaining chip and the issue of the succession of Kim Il Sung that refocused the world's attention on North Korea. While it is well known that North Korea has developed and tested nuclear weapons, the issue now is the missile technology to deploy these weapons and the

proliferation of these weapons to rogue entities. There is evidence of North Korean technology being exported to Syria, Iran, and Hezbollah.<sup>24</sup> In the early 1990s, North Korea would threaten a nuclear weapon test anytime it perceived a threat to its national interest.<sup>25</sup> In the late 2000s, the threat has been testing their long- range missiles. It is the combination of these two technologies that has caused the greatest concern for the United States separate from our partnership with South Korea.

Since being labeled part of the "axis of evil" with Iran and Iraq by US President George W. Bush in 2002, North Korea has accepted its status and used it to its advantage.<sup>26</sup> Following the victory during the initial invasion of Iraq, many countries sided with the US and her allies and provided vital information regarding exactly how advanced the North Korean nuclear and missile technology had come. Pakistan in particular admitted how involved it was in the international nuclear arms market developed by its scientist A.Q. Khan.<sup>27</sup> When Libya agreed to disclose its weapons capabilities in order to ease US sanctions, several North Korean manufactured missiles were found in its inventory.<sup>28</sup>

The most recent threat to the US was recognized on April 5, 2009, when North Korea test fired its Taepo Dong II missile.<sup>29</sup> This event was significant due to the fact that if all three

stages of this missile had fired correctly, it could range the west coast of the US (See Figure 3). Fortunately, the missile failed. Of significant note was the report that North Korea notified the world community of its intent to fire the missile (which they claimed was a space satellite) prior to doing it.<sup>30</sup> North Korea had never done this before. After the statement from the United Nations Security Resolution the test fire, North Korea immediately resumed the nuclear testing and operations at its facilities that it had previously suspended.<sup>31</sup> Since the world community appears reluctant to address the potential nuclear threats posed by a collapse in North Korea, it is imperative that China, South Korea, and the US take the lead.

### **The Humanitarian Crisis**

While the US, South Korea, Japan, and other allies have been the subject of North Korea's threats for a half-century, no one has suffered more greatly than the North Korean people. In the decades following the Korean War, food was not plentiful, but there was enough to survive.<sup>32</sup> Throughout the 1990s however, a period of failed agricultural policies, drought, and a focus on military spending created the worst famine since the war. From 1995 to 1999, an estimated 1 million people, or 5% of the population died of malnutrition or illness associated with it.<sup>33</sup>



According to Mike Kim, the top concern for all North Korean people is food. Based on extensive interviews with defectors and refugees, he described a culture where two bowls of corn gruel a day was the norm.<sup>34</sup> The political elite were the only ones who could afford rice and any type of meat.

North Korea began to make public appeals to the world community for food aid in the mid 1990s. In 1995, it was estimated that the World Food Program (WFP) was feeding over 6 million North Koreans. Additional aid was provided by the Chinese, South Korean, and US governments and non governmental organizations (NGOs). Unlike most aid recipients, the North Korean government placed strict rules upon the aid providers and would not allow them any means to monitor the distribution. This supported the perception that the North Korean government was using the food aid for the military and wealthy elites as opposed to the rural population that desperately needed it.<sup>35</sup> In 2005, the WFP and various NGOs were told to leave the country. This was based on the North Korean statement that unmonitored food aid from China and South Korea was sufficient enough to sustain the population.<sup>36</sup> The real reasons for their dismissal were probably more sinister. The Kim regime's attempts to shield the extent of the hunger crisis in North Korea only reemphasize the importance of planning for significant humanitarian aid to the people of North Korea following the collapse.

## Information Control

Victor D. Cha and Nicholas D. Anderson recently attempted to compare similarities between the Arab Spring and the situation in North Korea.<sup>37</sup> While some similarities do exist, the common North Korean's access to information is drastically inferior. Although the regime has allowed some internet activity and cell phone use, it is all strictly monitored and the penalties for abuse are severe. Although many NGOs attempted to float pamphlets attached to balloons describing the situation in the Arab states to the North Koreans, it is doubtful that there was any impact.<sup>38</sup> Given the strict censorship in the country, anyone in possession of this material would be subject to severe consequences. The key motivation behind the uprising in the Arab states was for a political change and proper representation of the people. Most North Koreans are so focused on food and subsistence that a political revolt is not likely even if the opportunity presented itself. The only way to impact the people is to change the leadership.

North Korea, specifically, the Kim Regime, is able to maintain its power of its people by fear. Political ideology sessions, or *hakesup*, are conducted multiple times throughout the day in North Korea in order to remind people of the

greatness of their leaders.<sup>39</sup> In order to monitor the population at large for possible dissent, the government utilizes spies among the people. While estimates vary depending on the sources, approximately 1 in 5 North Koreans are government informants.<sup>40</sup> There is no doubt though that this number increases significantly during times of increased hardships or specific events. Based on the fear of being punished for disloyalty, a robust and targeted Information Operations campaign at the first stages of a collapse must inform people that they no longer should fear their neighbors or the regime.

### **Engagement**

While the potential threats to the US have only recently gotten worse, South Korea has been in a difficult position in regards to dealing with its northern neighbor since its creation. Various political factions within South Korea have made attempts to either strengthen or weaken the cooperation and communication between the two countries for the last 60 years. On June 13, 2000, South Korean President Kim Dae-Jung met with Kim Jong Il in Pyongyang. This day long meeting was the closest the two countries had ever been to progressing towards unification. At the end of the conference, a joint statement was issued by the two leaders that laid out the framework for the proposed future reunification of the two countries.<sup>41</sup> Unfortunately, none of these has come close to fruition.

Geun-hye Park, a member of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea, describes a key component in the engagement of North Korea being the rebuilding of trust.<sup>42</sup> Her position lends merit based on her own personal experiences with North Korea. In 1974, her mother, South Korea's First Lady, was assassinated by a North Korean agent.<sup>43</sup> In an October 2011 article in *The Economist*, she describes the multiple avenues that all parties with a vested interest in the Korean peninsula need to strive for. One of the main focuses of her argument is the need to separate military issues from economic and humanitarian ones. The suffering of the North Korean people should not be tied to the political and military issues by its government. A key example of this occurred in March 2010.

On 26 March 2010, a South Korean warship, the *Cheonan* sank off the coast of South Korea near the Northern Limit Line, a disputed boundary between North and South Korea.<sup>44</sup> Forty-Six sailors were killed in the sinking. An investigation conducted by South Korea determined that a North Korean torpedo had caused the blast that sunk the ship. As a result of the incident, South Korea immediately cut off all economic ties with the North and enhanced its security.<sup>45</sup> One of the key issues surrounding this event was South Korea's refusal to invite other nations, particularly, China and Russia, to participate in the investigation.<sup>46</sup> The South Korea and US led investigation results

were immediately distrusted by the North. While the United Nations Security Council condemned the attacks in an official statement, it did not state that it was conducted by North Korea.<sup>47</sup>

The death of Kim Jong Il presents the world with an opportunity for engagement with the North Korean government never before offered. While there is much information available regarding the threat North Korea poses to its neighbor and the world community, little is known about Kim Jong Un, its newly appointed leader. He is estimated to be between 27 and 28. While reports of his potential succession were available in 2009, nothing was ever confirmed. He began to make his first official appearances with his father in June of 2010.<sup>48</sup> Kim Jong Un is the youngest of Kim Jong Il's three male children. The oldest, Kim Jong Nam was once favored to be the successor, however, his loyalty to his father and the regime became suspect when he attempted to enter Tokyo to go to Tokyo Disney on a fake passport.<sup>49</sup> He has lived in Macau since that incident.

In a series of interviews with Japanese reporter Yogi Gomi, Kim Jong Nam related his concerns about the future of North Korea and the individuals surrounding his brother.<sup>50</sup> In emails to Gomi as recent the first week of January 2012, Kim Jong Nam states, "Jong Un will just be a figurehead, and the existing group of people who wield power will likely take over my

father's work." <sup>51</sup> He further states that he believes only rigid economic reforms and transparency in government will prevent North Korea's collapse. There is obviously some animosity between the brothers.

### **Military Response to the Collapse**

Given the size of North Korea, the complexity of its military centric culture, and the ideological indoctrination against foreign intervention, the response to a collapse would be a significant undertaking by the world community. The type of collapse will be the most important factor in deciding what response the world community provides. Potentially the most dangerous scenario is one where the country collapses during a time of war.<sup>52</sup> The nature and fog of war combined with the loss of the totalitarian government would create mass confusion and the ability to isolate and neutralize die-hard regime elements and WMD would be extremely difficult. Additionally, the humanitarian crisis would be exacerbated by the initial pull of limited resources by the military. In this scenario, hundreds of thousands of military troops would be required just to stabilize the country after hostilities have ended.

In the best-case scenario, internal factions vie for power and key leaders, including Kim Jong Un, are either killed or forced to flee the country. With no clear governmental power,

the United Nations or regional powers would need to intervene and establish security and stability as soon as possible with a phased approach. Some experts estimate that the peak number of troops involved would be about 180,000.<sup>53</sup> While a number of governments and organizations would likely take part in the stabilization and humanitarian relief efforts, three main contingents would have to be at the forefront of a successful intervention; China, South Korea, and the United States.

### **China's Role**

Based on the long standing ties between Beijing and Pyongyang, China would be most likely to know of the indications and warnings of a possible collapse. China is North Korea's sole military ally and likely has a keen understanding of its organization and composition.<sup>54</sup> China is also in a unique position, economically, based on the fact that many Chinese companies have rights to resources in North Korea.<sup>55</sup> China's concerns would most likely be similar to that of the US and South Korea in focusing on WMD proliferation and border control, respectively. However, during the stabilization and humanitarian aid mission, China would also be highly concerned about large numbers of foreign troops operating close to its border. In the event of collapse, strong military and diplomatic ties must be

established and maintained by Chinese government and military officials assigned to coordinate security and humanitarian support with their US and South Korean counterparts. China must also quickly align with the US and international community to prevent proliferation of WMD and missile technology.

### **South Korea's Role**

For decades, South Korea's military has trained and equipped for the defense of their country in the event of another North Korean invasion. Only since the late 1990s has the focus on planning shifted in earnest to the possibility of a collapse rather than an attack. Once again, the nature of the collapse will determine the type of response by South Korea. If the collapse should occur during an attack by North Korea, South Korea would obviously focus on the defense of its people and its border first. Once the major threats are eliminated, the transition to stabilization, security, and humanitarian aid would have to occur.

The largest issue facing South Korea and the world community following a collapse would be providing security for the North Korean people. In order to do so, the South Korean military in concert with Chinese forces should immediately focus on the seizure of military bases and weapons stores. Rogue elements that resist these efforts must be isolated and



eliminated if necessary. The confused populace may attempt to seize weapons either for personal security or financial gain. This must be discouraged and rules regarding weapons turnover and storage must be distributed throughout the country. Additionally, border security must be reinforced to prevent the possible proliferation of weapons out of the country.

Another major issue facing South Korea will be the reintegration of the North. South Korea has invested significant time and money analyzing this scenario particularly against the German model.<sup>56</sup> While many similarities are present, the lack of any real data on the economy of the North makes actual comparison challenging. While it is known that unregulated local markets have become crucial to the survival of the people, their complexity and ability to interact with other markets is unknown.<sup>57</sup> South Korea would have to invest significant resources into retraining the North's vast military forces into industrial or agricultural positions.

South Korea must also embark on a vast information operations campaign in order to dispel the lies that have been perpetrated by the Kim regime. While it is not necessary to re-educate the entire population, the people must be made aware that the hardships that they have endured over the past 50 years were not the fault of the South Korea or the United States. This will more easily facilitate the acceptance of aid and assistance

in rebuilding. In addition, the South must institute a public relations campaign with its own people in order to reduce possible resentment of the influx of North Koreans.

### **The United States Role**

Based on the propaganda on the evils of the United States that the Kim Regime has distributed to the population for generations, the United States must fulfill a background role in the initial stages. United States Naval forces should play a key role in maritime border security and provide humanitarian aid to those attempting to flee by sea. The vast logistical infrastructure that the United States has developed in supporting the last two wars should be reoriented to provide humanitarian and combat service support to the South Korean and Chinese forces. Specialized military forces such as Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) units should aid in the training of South Korean and Chinese units who may be securing sensitive sites to prevent proliferation and retrieve intelligence on past proliferation. In extreme circumstances where the Chinese or South Koreans are unwilling or unable to do so, the United States should execute this task.

The United States must fully support South Korea in coordinating global support through organizations such as the United Nations to support the rebuilding and integration of

North Korea. Political engagements with Beijing should occur at the highest levels to encourage their support and assuage their fears of a US hegemony in the Pacific. Additionally, Russia and Japan should be included so that their regional interests are considered.

### **Conclusion**

In the weeks since Kim Jong Il's death, official reports from North Korea have stated that Kim Jong Un will carry on all of his father's policies. Korea experts have speculated that Kim Jong Il left a detailed script for Jong Un and his advisors to follow. The idea being promoted to the outside world and the North Korean people is that the regime is still very much in charge and there will be no change in dealings with foreign countries.<sup>58</sup>

Experts have been predicting the collapse of North Korea since the death of Kim Il Sung.<sup>59</sup> Even the South Korean agency established solely for the purpose of studying re-unification, the Research Institute for National Reunification, concluded in 1996 that based on the Kim regimes continual inability or refusal to respond to the economic and food crisis, the regime would reach the collapse threshold between 2001 and 2008.<sup>60</sup> The ability of the Kim regime to hold on to power has been

unprecedented. While the reign of Kim Jong Un could quite possibly continue for another 50 years, the need for international preparation for a sudden collapse must continue to be coordinated, both militarily and politically at all levels.

In late February 2012, senior US officials met with senior North Korean officials in Beijing to discuss the resumption of the Six Party Talks regarding North Korea's nuclear weapons.<sup>61</sup> The results are cautiously optimistic. North Korea agreed to suspend its enrichment of uranium at its primary plant at Yongbyun and also established a moratorium on weapons testing.<sup>62</sup> While the world community should welcome this event as a possible new opportunity, it must remain skeptical until verification is complete. The suffering of the North Korean people and constant threat of war to the South Koreans has gone on for far too long. It is time for the world community to take a firm yet fair hand with the young leader before the situation becomes worse.

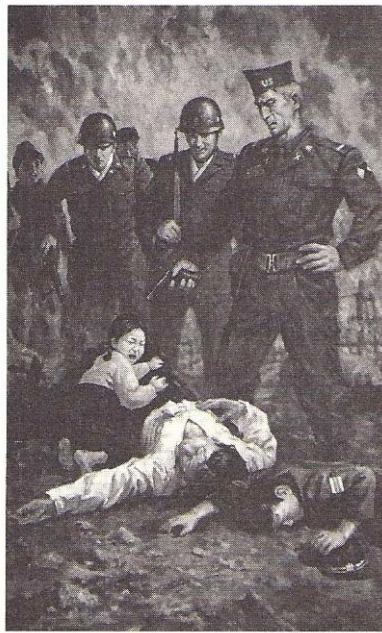
Figure 1.

<b>Bilateral Food Assistance to DPRK (2006-2010)</b>			
<b>Marketing Year</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Commodity</b>	<b>Quantity (MT )</b>
2005/06	Republic of Korea	Rice	403,500
	India	Rice	2,000
	China	Soya Bean	33,695
	<b>Total, all countries</b>		<b>439,195</b>
2006/07	Republic of Korea	Rice	400,000
	China	Soya Bean	23,610
	<b>Total, all countries</b>		<b>423,610</b>
2007/08	Republic of Korea	Rice	115,650
	China	Soya Bean	17,450
	<b>Total, all countries</b>		<b>133,100</b>
2008/09	Myanmar	Rice	8,500
	Canada	Soya Bean	200
	China	Soya Bean	22,336
	<b>Total, all countries</b>		<b>31,036</b>
2009/10	China	Rice	690
	Myanmar	Rice	1,500
	Vietnam	Rice	3,000
	Canada	Soya Bean	260
	China	Soya Bean	21,082
	China	Wheat Flour	100
	Russia	Wheat Flour	9,982
	<b>Total, all countries</b>		<b>36,614</b>

Source: Government of DPRK

Source: World Food Program/Food and Agricultural Organization/UNICEF, Rapid Food Assessment Mission to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. 24 Mar 2011.  
<http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/ena/wfp233442.pdf>

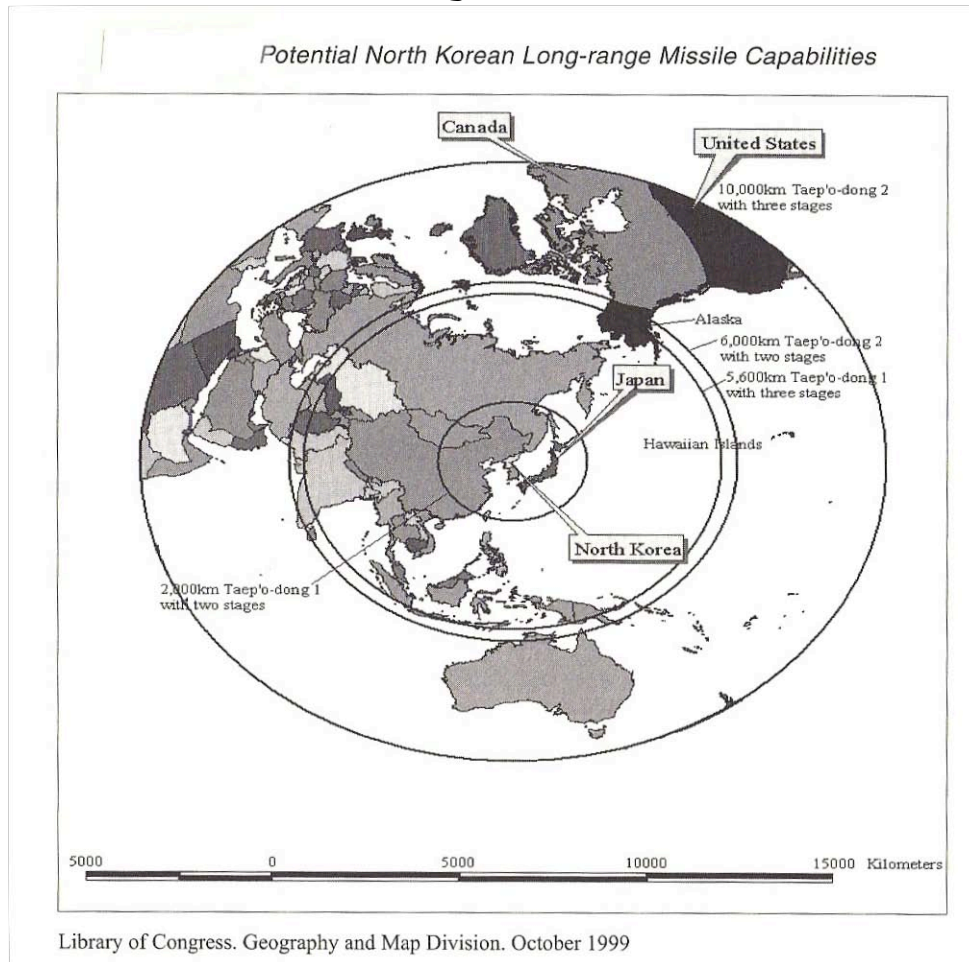
Figure 2.



*An anti-American painting in a North Korean museum near Pyongyang. The caption reads, "Harrison's gang forcibly commits a brutal massacre of the people at Lake Lotus 'Bong Jun.'" (Voice of the Martyrs)*

Source: Mike Kim, *Escaping North Korea: Defiance and Hope in the World's Most Repressive Country* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2008), 46.

Figure 3.



Source: Bruce Bechtol, *Defiant Failed State: The North Korean Threat to International Security* (Washington D.C.: Potomac Books, 2010), 32.

## Notes

- 
- <sup>1</sup> Christopher Bluth, *Crisis on the Korean Peninsula* (Washington D.C.: Potomac Books, 2011), 46.
- <sup>2</sup> Bruce W Bennett and Jennifer Lind, "The Collapse of North Korea: Military Missions and Requirements." *International Security*, Vol.36, No.2, 2011, 86.
- <sup>3</sup> Bennett and Lind, 86.
- <sup>4</sup> Bluth 73.
- <sup>5</sup> Bradley K. Martin, *Under the Loving Care of the Fatherly Leader: North Korea and the Kim Dynasty* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books: St. Martin's Griffin, 2004), 4.
- <sup>6</sup> Martin 4.
- <sup>7</sup> Martin 7.
- <sup>8</sup> Jasper Becker. *Rogue Regime, Kim Jong Il and the Looming Threat of North Korea* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 47.
- <sup>9</sup> Becker 48.
- <sup>10</sup> Martin 104.
- <sup>11</sup> Martin 104.
- <sup>12</sup> Tim Beal, *Crisis in Korea: America, China, and the Risk of War* (London: Plutopress, 2011), 11.
- <sup>13</sup> Hassig and Oh 23.
- <sup>14</sup> Hassig and Oh 25.
- <sup>15</sup> Hassig and Oh 26.
- <sup>16</sup> Martin 510.
- <sup>17</sup> Martin 510.
- <sup>18</sup>
- <sup>19</sup> Becker 179.
- <sup>20</sup> Becker 179-180.
- <sup>21</sup> Martin 369.
- <sup>22</sup> Martin 439.
- <sup>23</sup> Becker 180.
- <sup>24</sup> Bruce Bechtol, *Defiant Failed State: The North Korean Threat to International Security* (Washington D.C.: Potomac Books, 2010), 50-64.
- <sup>25</sup> Becker 182.
- <sup>26</sup> Becker xi.
- <sup>27</sup> Bluth 147.
- <sup>28</sup> Bechtol 59.
- <sup>29</sup> Bechtol 36.
- <sup>30</sup> Bechtol 35-36.
- <sup>31</sup> Bechtol 37.
- <sup>32</sup> Ralph Hassig and Kongdan Oh, *The Hidden People of North Korea: Everyday Life in the Hermit Kingdom* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009), 116.



- 
- <sup>33</sup> Hassig and Oh 116.
- <sup>34</sup> Mike Kim, *Escaping North Korea: Defiance and Hope in the World's Most Repressive Country* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2008), 46.
- <sup>35</sup> Hassig and Oh 120.
- <sup>36</sup> Hassig and Oh 121.
- <sup>37</sup> Victor D. Cha and Nicholas D. Anderson, "A North Korean Spring?," *The Washington Quarterly*, Winter, 2012.
- <sup>38</sup> Cha and Anderson, 10.
- <sup>39</sup> Kim 16.
- <sup>40</sup> Kim 34.
- <sup>41</sup> Bluth 88.
- <sup>42</sup> Geun-Hye Park, "A New Kind of Korea: Building Trust Between Seoul and Pyongyang," *Foreign Affairs* 90, no.5 (September-October 2011), 13
- <sup>43</sup> Park 13.
- <sup>44</sup> Bluth 105.
- <sup>45</sup> Bluth 105.
- <sup>46</sup> Beal 103.
- <sup>47</sup> Bluth 105.
- <sup>48</sup> Bluth 75.
- <sup>49</sup> Bluth 74.
- <sup>50</sup> Mari Yamaguchi, "Book Author: Kim Jong Il's Eldest Son Wants Reform," *Seattle Post Intelligencer*, January 20, 2012, <http://www.seattlepi.com/news/article/Book-author-Kim-Jong-Il-s-eldest-son-wants-reform-2643752.php>
- <sup>51</sup> Yamaguchi.
- <sup>52</sup> Bennett and Lind, 88.
- <sup>53</sup> Bennett and Lind, 94.
- <sup>54</sup> Bennett and Lind, 114.
- <sup>55</sup> Bennett and Lind, 114.
- <sup>56</sup> Marcus Noland, *Korea After Kim Jong Il*, Washington D.C.: Institute for International Economics, 2004), 67.
- <sup>57</sup> Hassig and Oh, 131.
- <sup>58</sup> "Succession in North Korea," *The Economist*, December 31, 2011, 15-17.
- <sup>59</sup> Noland, 12.
- <sup>60</sup> Noland, 13.
- <sup>61</sup> Bill Powell, "Meet Kim Jong Un," *Time*, February 2, 2012, 30.
- <sup>62</sup> "A Horse Worth the Price," *The Economist*, March 3, 2012, 16.

---

## Bibliography

- "A Horse Worth the Price." *The Economist*, (March 3, 2012): 16.
- Beal, Tim. *Crisis in Korea: America, China, and the Risk of War*. London: Plutopress, 2011.
- Bechtol Jr., Bruce E. *Defiant Failed State: The North Korean Threat to International Security*. Washington D.C.: Potomac Books, 2010.
- Bechtol Jr., Bruce E. *Red Rogue: The Persistent Challenge of North Korea*. Washington D.C.: Potomac Books, 2007.
- Becker, Jasper. *Rogue Regime: Kim Jong Il and the Looming Threat of North Korea*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Bluth, Christopher. *Crisis on the Korean Peninsula*. Washington D.C.: Potomac Books, 2011.
- Brady, James. *The Scariest Place in the World: A Marine Returns to North Korea*. New York: Thomas Dunne Books; St. Martin's Griffin, 2005.
- Hassig, Ralph, and Kongdan Oh. *The Hidden People of North Korea: Everyday Life in the Hermit Kingdom*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009.
- Kim, Mike. *Escaping North Korea: Defiance and Hope in the World's Most Repressive Country*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2008.
- Martin, Bradley K. *Under the Loving Care of the Fatherly Leader: North Korea and the Kim Dynasty*. New York: Thomas Dunne Books; St. Martin's Griffin, 2004.
- Park, Geun Hye. "A New Kind of Korea: Building Trust Between Seoul and Pyongyang." *Foreign Affairs* 90, no.5(September-October 2011): 13-18.
- Powell, Bill. Meet Kim Jong Un." *Time*, (February 2, 2012): 30.
- "Succession in North Korea." *The Economist*, (December 31):15-17.

---

World Food Program/Food and Agricultural Organization/UNICEF.  
*Rapid Food Assessment Mission to the Democratic People's  
Republic of Korea.* 24 Mar 2011.  
<http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/ena/wfp233442.pdf>

Yamaguchi, Mari. "Book Author: Kim Jong Il's Eldest Son  
Wants Reforms." *Seattle Post Intelligencer*, January 20,  
2012. <http://www.seattlepi.com/news/article/Book-author-Kim-Jong-Il-s-eldest-son-wants-reform-2643752.php>