

Pentagon, GOP push Korean missile crisis, as Clinton asks for calm

by Our Special Correspondent

The same Anglo-Israeli-aligned right-wing networks in the Pentagon and U.S. Congress who are pressing for a new Cold War with China, are determined to provoke an international crisis if North Korea conducts a missile test soon, despite the Clinton administration's appeals for calm.

House International Relations Committee Chairman Benjamin Gilman (R-N.Y.) and Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Jesse Helms (R-N.C.), abetted by a network of "leakers" inside the Pentagon and elsewhere in the intelligence community, are acting to exacerbate U.S.-China relations, already terribly strained by the U.S. bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade; the Cox Report, accusing China of stealing missile secrets from U.S. weapons labs; and other "Yellow Peril" publicity stunts.

Beyond the steady stream of "classified" leaks from the Defense Intelligence Agency and the CIA to the *Washington Times* and to the Gilman and Helms circles in Congress, elements inside the Clinton administration itself are playing into the climate of confrontation around the upcoming North Korean missile test.

Cohen in Seoul

During a recent tour of Japan and South Korea, U.S. Defense Secretary William Cohen contributed to the crisis atmosphere by issuing a series of statements that, not surprisingly, provoked an immediate reaction from the North Korean government. De facto, some of Cohen's remarks contradicted recent policy statements from the President's circles, and even from the U.S. State Department.

In Seoul on July 29, at a joint news conference with Secretary Cohen, South Korean Defense Minister Cho Sung-tae announced that "Secretary Cohen and I agreed to mobilize all available means" if North Korea goes ahead with a Taepodong 2 missile launch, which Pyongyang seems likely to do between Aug. 15 and Sept. 9. Asked whether and what kind of military measures he was considering in the event of a launch, Cohen refused to rule out a military action by the United States. He said that there would be "a number of negative consequences" which "it would not be appropriate for me to spell out in advance. . . . There would certainly be diplomatic and economic consequences, and beyond that, we would have to reserve our judgment . . . of what might be an

appropriate response." He added: "No one can predict the consequences of what might happen in the event of a missile launch."

Cohen's statement "was precisely aimed at finding a pretext to ignite a war," the Pyongyang Korean Central News Agency quoted a North Korean Foreign Ministry spokesman as saying on Aug. 4, an unusual citation of any American official by name. "Whether we test-fire a satellite or a missile is a legitimate, independent right to be exercised by a sovereign state."

Some in the Pentagon argue that even if North Korea only tries to orbit a satellite, as they did on Aug. 31, 1998, it shows that Pyongyang has the booster thrust to launch an ICBM to hit the U.S. mainland, and must be stopped.

The Congressional GOP kooks are also targetting South Korea and China as well, as an interview with Gilman's office made clear on Aug. 3. South Korean President Kim Dae-jung is defying the International Monetary Fund (IMF) by bailing out Daewoo Co. and other South Korean firms, instead of selling them to foreigners, and insisting on his "Sunshine" policy of détente with the North, a Gilman aide said on Aug. 3. "So, increasingly, no one is listening to Kim on Capitol Hill."

Kim, Clinton seek peace

South Korea's President Kim Dae-jung is directly asking for China's help to cool the crisis, a variety of sources report. President Kim told Cohen on July 29 in Seoul that the best thing to do is to "enlist support from China, North Korea's closest ally, and [from] Russia," to convince Pyongyang not to launch a missile, Seoul's *Chosun Daily* reported on July 29.

North Korean leader "Kim Jong-il may go to China before the launch date and the Chinese may actually be able to head the launch off," one source said on Aug. 3.

The Clinton administration's approach has been to ask for calm. President Clinton's personal friend Prof. James Laney, who was U.S. Ambassador to South Korea during 1993-97, told a Washington press conference sponsored by the New York Council on Foreign Relations on July 27, that a North Korean missile test should not be seen as an "apocalyptic event." He added that it is important to stand by President Clinton's 1994 Agreed Framework peace agreement with

Pyongyang, in any case, because “that stands as the major bulwark against the return to the kind of possible military confrontation that we were heading toward in 1994.”

“If the North Koreans test, we shouldn’t cut off our nose to spite our face,” State Department spokesman James Rubin said on Aug. 2, adding that the administration intends to continue with the Clinton 1994 Framework Accord with Pyongyang whether or not they launch. “The agreed framework is a very important instrument that benefits the security of the United States and the countries in the region,” Rubin said. “And we would intend and want to see that program and agreement continued, even if we have problems and serious concerns about the missiles.” Rubin said that the 1994 Framework Accord has played a “critical role” in preventing North Korea from developing nuclear capability, and hence it is in U.S. national interest.

Pentagon provokes Japan

Some elements inside the Pentagon seem intent on inciting public hysteria in Japan, in particular, through provocative leaks to the Tokyo media. Tokyo’s *Sankei News* on Aug. 2 ran an article citing photographic information, “clearly confirmed by U.S. intelligence satellite reconnaissance,” about the details of North Korea fuelling up its missile for launch.

“North Korea is improving and expanding facilities at its ballistic missile launch base on the east coast, . . . constructing facilities for storing and injecting liquid fuel and oxidizing agents inside the compound of the launch base,” *Sankei* reported. North Korea is also “building a pipeline linking the launch pad to the two facilities under construction. . . . The construction of the two facilities and the pipeline was clearly confirmed by U.S. intelligence satellite reconnaissance,” the newspaper quoted U.S. and Japanese defense sources as saying.

Meanwhile, Japan’s Defense Agency has been given “U.S. military data” to prepare an estimate of damage if Tokyo were struck by a North Korean missile, Japan’s *Mainichi* newspaper reported on Aug. 1. After North Korea’s August 1998 test, the Defense Agency formed an “Emergency Response Committee” to study the threat of a North Korean attack on Japan, the newspaper said. “Using U.S. military data, the committee forecast that a missile carrying a biological warhead could kill or sicken up to 120,000 people if it struck central Tokyo.”

Thatcherites: Break Korea

As for the right-wing Republicans in the U.S. House and Senate, they, too would like to break Korea, South and North alike, to ensure that Korea is never unified as a “second Japan,” which they see as a threat to their geopolitical notions of “American” Asian interests.

Asked about the relationship between the North Korea missile crisis and the Daewoo Corp. crisis, in which South Korea’s Kim Dae-jung government has been refusing to bail

out foreign banks or sell companies to foreigners, an aide to Gilman said that he wants to break both South Korea’s economy, and Kim’s policy of détente with the North, for good. “Kim Dae-jung is still calling for his ‘Sunshine’ policy toward the North,” he said, and President Kim “has been using the big *chaebol* [conglomerates]—like Hyundai and Daewoo [which carry on large-scale trade with the North]—as intermediaries for his Sunshine policy, and so he’s been protecting and babying the big *chaebol*, just like he’s babying North Korea.”

Asked if he agreed with recent *New York Times* charges that President Kim is undermining the IMF reform by protecting the *chaebol* from foreign takeovers, Gilman’s aide said, “Yes, and the point is: Kim’s bailout of Daewoo shows that the IMF reforms are stalled, and the missile launch shows his North Korea policy is a failure. So, increasingly, no one is listening to Kim on the Hill. . . .”

“The South Koreans don’t understand that this is no longer about the safety of Seoul and the 37,000 Americans there. North Korea is about to show it can hit the U.S. with the next missile launch—so this is about the safety and security of 3.5 million Americans in Seattle.”

If North Korea does launch and the Clinton administration tries to maintain relations, the Gilman crowd plans to go over the President’s head to rip up the 1994 accord with Pyongyang. After any launch, “We will move to get tough with the administration and force them to turn the aid ships around right away,” Gilman’s aide said, referring to the famine relief for the North. “Congressman Gilman will mark up his H.R. 1835, the ‘North Korea Threat Reduction Act,’ ” which cancels most of the existing 1994 Framework peace accord with North Korea, “and move it to the House and Senate” for a vote, he stated.

The bill’s “official title is ‘A Bill to Impose Conditions on Assistance for North Korea,’ and it does,” the aide said, including:

- Codification of sanctions: “We took the language straight from the Helms-Burton Act on Cuba, and we’ve written it into law, that the administration can’t lift current trade sanctions on North Korea without obtaining a new act of Congress. The big carrot Clinton has had on the table is, the lifting of sanctions against North Korea, which the administration can do right now of their own accord.”

- Conditions on food aid: “We are demanding ‘no-notice’ challenge inspections and food aid monitors to go wherever the food is with Korean speaking monitors,” which North Korea will never accept, thus cutting off food aid to the country.

- Restrictions on delivery of fuel.
- A freeze on nuclear components.

“All these could be enacted into law by October, but we can also pass immediate amendments to get the administration to turn the aid ships around right away,” Gilman’s assistant said.