

Brinksmanship Returns

President Trump has shrewdly made clear to North Korean Dictator Kim Jung Un that the United States will obliterate the Hermit Kingdom if Kim Jung Un arms one or more serviceable ballistic missiles with the threat of firing same at the United States or its allies. In this way, President Trump has revived a very effective strategy employed during the Cold War called brinksmanship. Pioneered by President Dwight D. Eisenhower's Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, the strategy involves positioning maximum deliverable nuclear force against an enemy for rapid deployment along with articulation of an unwavering commitment to use that force if circumstances warrant it. The unpredictability of a precise moment of action combined with an ever-escalating nuclear capability and readiness forces the opponent to put up or shut up, or, in this case, to avoid an ultimate use of a nuclear weapon or be wiped off the face of the earth.

This strategy, termed "mutually assured destruction" at the height of the Cold War, worked well to contain the nuclear ambitions of the former Soviet Union, as it continues to do so today, keeping Russia and China from launching a first strike. President Kennedy used this strategy to advantage in the Cuban Missile Crisis against Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev. By escalating the threat of an American first strike if Russian warheads were not removed from Cuba, President Kennedy compelled Khrushchev to face the reality of Russian nuclear inferiority and remove the warheads.

Kim Jung Un depends on the perception that he is unstable to extort economic support and intimidate his neighbors to strategic advantage. In our interaction with his regime, we must presume him ultimately rational while preparing for him to take ultimately irrational actions. In short, we must move rapidly to enhance our anti-ballistic missile, cyber warfare, and electromagnetic pulse warring capabilities, directing them

specifically at Un with the capability of implementing them in a moment's notice. We need to increase deployment of nuclear weapons in the region along with strategic forces sufficient to ensure an immediate and overwhelming response at every level to any real nuclear provocation from North Korea. This will put us on a hair trigger footing and on maximum readiness. Taking these measures combined with unwavering insistence that we will use the force if North Korea arms one or more warheads and threatens its or their use against the United States or its allies helps give Kim Jung Un a clear view of where he and his Hermit Kingdom are headed if a weaponized missile is ready for launch against the United States.

The threat we convey, and must implement if challenged, must be for a first strike against North Korea wherein we will deploy rapidly such overwhelming force that it will ensure within minutes the complete annihilation of North Korea. That commitment must be real, backed by the full deployment of all weapons systems necessary and capable to bring about the objective. Our troops must be kept at the highest state of readiness, and we must ensure continuous escalation of the threat so that Un is constantly rendered powerless to effect any change in the ultimate outcome.

This environment of instability is to the disadvantage of North Korea, far more than to our own. There is no question that in a contest we would prevail but would we prevail without losing one or more American cities or bases. We must ensure that immediately serviceable nuclear weapons and anti-ballistic weapons are in the region and dedicated to North Korea such that a first strike can be effected within seconds. We must also invest new resources in the rapid development of a fully effective nuclear shield, at last fulfilling Ronald Reagan's dream for an umbrella capable of shielding the United States from such an attack.

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