



CIGS Mr. Paul Goldstein

The North Korean Strategic Dilemma

(Summary of Speech)

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From the past 30 years, we are facing an entirely different geopolitical process which is unfolding dramatically in today's world. I think we are living in historic times.

My partners and I launched Pacific Tech Bridge, a global research enterprise, to better understand the broad scope of geopolitical challenges as well as to have an in-depth understanding of culture and history.

The lack of understanding and clarity of China, United States, and Japan about North Korea could lead to faulty decision-making processes and inaccurate perceptions of each other. Today, I will try to provide my best thoughts and insights into the nature of the issues that we are facing in today's environment, which can help you make better decisions about your company, your ministry, and your own personal affairs.

At Pacific Tech Bridge, we believe that China and Russia are in a comprehensive strategic partnership. We also feel the Russian Empire and the Chinese Civilization state will eclipse the US in the future based on a clear strategy to integrate their strengths and exploit the weaknesses in the American-led alliance system globally. The US, Japan, and Europe need to start addressing the strategic implications of the Sino-Russian partnership.

Strategic Context of the North Korean Crisis

In the past, the US has mishandled North Korea and China. However, we are engaged in a partnership with Japan that I am hoping leads to a Special Relationship, which will be very different than the United Kingdom historically and culturally. The post-World War II era built a system for Japan that enabled Japan and its economy to surpass many other developing nations. With the election of Trump, bilateral agreement is chosen over multilateral arrangement.

With regards to North Korea, the first fact is that Kim Jong-un is a Stalinist dictator with Korean characteristics. He is a threat to regional stability and well-being of Northeast Asia. Testing of ICBM missiles and conducting nuclear tests over the past period validates it. North Korea is the catalyst for change in the geopolitical environment that Japan, United States, China, South Korea, ASEAN countries, and Europe are operating in. The United States has been building a strategic agreement between Japan and the ROK in order to meet the challenges posed by North Korea and China.

China has embarked on their New Era policy. Xi Jinping, the "Core Thought Leader" is

committed to moving China into the center stage of history and transform China into an equal power to the United States and potentially surpassing it. Ironically, North Korea has been challenging the governance of Xi Jinping and the Communist Party of China trying to affect Beijing's decision-making process.

There is a big debate with people around the world about whether Kim Jong-un is an irrational leader, trying to build the nuclear weapons and missile technology program to keep his regime intact, trying to force the United States to accept North Korea as a nuclear weapon state. To some, it's a very rational approach from the state actor who believes that the United States is an inferior power and is an imperialist, which is not the fact.

The first indicator of his irrationality of Kim Jong-un or as President Trump calls him the 'Rocket Man' was the assassination of his half-brother, which reveals his sociopathic personality. Other indicators are the nuclear weapons program, missile launchings, particularly over Japan, which were enabled through the export of the rocket engine technology called modified SS-18 ICBM from a factor in Ukraine. The significant conventional capability of North Korea and its potential targeting of South Korea is also one of the indicators.

North Korea is a revisionist state who has never supported international law and rejects a rules-based international order. I believe President Bush calling North Korea, Iran, and Iraq rogue states was a strategic error by the United States from a national security standpoint.

Ironically, of all the countries in the world, only Japan has come up with an approach of building a regional alliance system called the 'Diamond Security' to promote peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific, which is a larger geopolitical framework than Asia-Pacific. 'Diamond Security' is comprised of Japan, United States, India, and hopefully, Australia.

Abe's election produced a new political mandate which will allow significant changes in the Japanese constitution. If it happens, I think it will be a benefit to Japan in the long run. If it doesn't happen, the United States will make adjustments.

The 'pacifist' culture of Japan predates the post World War II period. Going back to the Tokugawa shogunate era, Buddhism and internal peace was the cultural matrix of Japan until the Meiji Restoration. Out of the Meiji, a form of State-sponsored Shinto

nationalism emerged which put Japan on a different path than the Tokugawa shogunate had in mind.

The United States is now planning to conduct a war with North Korea to address the nuclear weapons and missile technology issue. I would differ with anybody who thinks we are provocative. We have never wanted to carry out a war plan and provoke North Korea into making bad judgments and launch a missile hitting one of the US mainland. The question is why did China consistently utilize North Korea as a geopolitical buffer state during the Cold War? Why are China and Russia unsure about the United States' intentions? Currently, China seems anxious about the United States and wants somebody like Henry Kissinger and his traditional role to be revitalized so that he could help manage the US-China relationship, which is not going to happen. We are no longer in the Kissingerian era. We are no longer ignoring Japan in our strategic planning. Japan is the most important American ally in the world today, in effect equal to NATO in importance.

The China Challenge and Russian Threat

China: China will not be the dominant power, both economically and militarily, that will surpass the United States. That's a bold statement given the size of the Chinese economy, size of China, and the market it represents. Instead of having a trader's mentality to do business in China just because it's a giant market, Japanese companies need to contribute in Japan becoming a nation that understands national security in an era of nationalism. Japan is xenophobic, seeing emerging Europe and the 'American First' policy which has many components to it. The China dream is a China-First policy. Japan, organically, is nationalistic because of the very nature of your geography, history, and culture.

Since China's rise, its concern has been the hostility between North Korea and the US, which could change the entire geopolitical balance. In Beijing, they talk about 'the change in the balance of power,' but they don't mean the traditional geopolitical understanding of balance of power; they are using the Western language of 'balance of power,' which is the classic Soviet understanding of "correlation of forces." This is a Marxist outlook with Chinese characteristics. However, Japan is a Liberal Democracy with Japanese characteristics.

South Korea: When President Moon first came to Washington, he proposed to President Trump an economic program to integrate North Korea. As opposed to Kim Dae-jung's 'Sunshine Policy,' this president had the 'Moonshine Policy,' which was the

idea that you could break the economic dependency of North Korea and China. Trump did not reject it, but we think it's not going to work.

Russia: The US State Department right now is trying to engage the Russians in trying to find a diplomatic solution to the North Korean issue. However, Russia is completely breaking the sanctions by selling North Korea gasoline. On the other hand, the constant conversations between Xi Jinping and Putin emphasizes that China has chosen to work with Russia. Hence, to face this challenge, the US and Japan and American allies need something called enhanced cooperation and extended deterrence. We need a robust missile defense system in South Korea, potentially here in Japan. We need tri-lateral agreements, intelligence exchanges, and military cooperation. The Japanese Air Force, the South Korean Air Force, and the American Air Force have been conducting joint maneuvers. We've been proud to be part of that arrangement. Japan has an opportunity now to build a larger market share in the defense-related industries and expand its economic capabilities and technological excellence.

In effect, we are geopolitically challenging China, but we would prefer to cooperate with them. We're not conducting a containment of China, which is the belief among many top Chinese think-tanks. Culturally, countries like China, Japan, India, and SE Asia seem to believe that the U.S. has a secret plan to contain China, and the CIA has secretly plotted a plan to destabilize North Korea. They also believe what they term 'revolution,' the idea that all the changes that occurred in Europe after the collapse of the Soviet Union were really a secret CIA plot. These beliefs are absolutely untrue. We are not fighting another Cold War with China; we truly want a cooperative arrangement with China. The U.S. top officials want diplomatic solutions and not a war.

However, we cannot tolerate North Korea as a nuclear weapon state, because then the non-proliferation treaty will become void and the control of the international system will be lost. The timing of the three missile tests by Kim Jong-un suggests that politically he was targeting the Chinese communist leadership and specifically Xi Jinping, and the Chinese are angry at this, but whether their anger translates into policy of cooperation with Japan, South Korea, and the United States to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula, which is their stated policy, is another question.

The key issue is the Sino-Russian partnership. Russians want China to lose the control over the areas that the Chinese need economic development. Russia believes they can supply the security for China's OBOR (One Belt, One Road) strategy. China pursues a political global strategy that positions China in a strategically advantaged position. The

history of North Korea is much closer to the Soviet Union and Russia than to China.

The conclusion is we need to build an enhanced security cooperation that leads to building a comprehensive special relationship in which Japanese businesses see their interests not only as market share, but as national security.