

## **Nuclear Weapons Deployment and Diplomatic Bargaining Leverage: The Case of the January 2018 Hawaiian Ballistic Missile Attack False Alarm**

<sup>1</sup>Benedict E. DeDominicis

<sup>1</sup>*Prof., Department of International Studies, Catholic University of Korea*  
*bendedominicis@gmail.com*

### ***Abstract***

*North Korea's development and deployment of nuclear weapons increases Pyongyang's diplomatic bargaining leverage. It is a strategic response to counteract the great expansion in US leverage with the collapse of the USSR. Post-Cold War American influence and hegemony is justified partly by claiming victory in successfully containing an allegedly imperialist Soviet Union. The US created and led formal and informal international institutions as part of its decades-long containment grand strategy against the USSR. The US now exploits these institutions to expedite US unilateral global preeminence. Third World regimes perceived as remnants of the Cold War era that resist accommodating to American demands are stereotyped as rogue states. Rogue regimes are criminal offenders who should be brought to justice, i.e. regime change is required. The initiation of summit diplomacy between US President Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un occurred following the January 2018 Hawaiian ballistic missile false alarm. This event and its political consequences illustrate the efficacy of nuclear weapons as bargaining leverage for so-called rogue actors. North Korea is highly unlikely to surrender those weapons that were the instigation for the subsequent summit diplomacy that occurred. A broader, critical trend-focused strategic analysis is necessary to adopt a longer-term view of the ongoing Korean nuclear crisis. The aim would be to conceptualize long-term policies that increase the probability that nuclear weapons capability becomes a largely irrelevant issue in interaction between Pyongyang, Seoul, Beijing and Washington.*

**Keywords:** *Bargaining Leverage, Grand Strategy, Nuclear Weapons, American Hegemony*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

“I think that it's genuinely a call to recognise - and this has been somewhat missing in the media coverage of the issues - that the risks of nuclear war are particularly high now, and the risks of the use of nuclear weapons, for some of the factors I pointed out, are higher now than at any time since World War II” [sic] (Renata Dwan, Director, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, May 21, 2019) [1]. This paper contextually critiques North Korea's political strategic focus on nuclear weapons under leader Kim Jong-un. It highlights their impact on North Korea's international diplomatic bargaining leverage. It hypothesizes that the deployment of nuclear weapons for diplomatic bargaining leverage is significantly an international political systemic artefact of the Cold War and the global American hegemony it engendered. It validates the claim of

---

Manuscript received: February 17, 2023 / revised: March 1, 2023 / accepted: March 13, 2023

Corresponding Author: [bendedominicis@gmail.com](mailto:bendedominicis@gmail.com)

Tel: +82-2-2164-4393

Prof., Department of International Studies, Catholic University of Korea

Copyright©2023 by The International Promotion Agency of Culture Technology. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0>)

the institutionalization of the rational rogue enemy model in post-Cold War crisis international negotiation as a foundation for the utility of nuclear weapons as diplomatic bargaining leverage. It analyzes the implications for grand strategy in East Asia as a consequence.

The role of nuclear weapons as bargaining leverage in international diplomacy lies in the danger of accidental war. Perceived threat of accidental war is one of the diplomatic bargaining levers highlighted by Cottam and Gallucci (1978) [2]. In international political crisis conditions of heightened alert involving thousands of personnel in a range of large, complex security-focused organizations, missteps happen. Recently, a vivid illustration of these dangers and the diplomatic leverage that derives from them occurred on January 13, 2018, 8:07 AM. Hawaiian residents mistakenly received an emergency alert via cellphone text messages as well as radio and television screen announcements of an incoming ballistic missile attack. At 8:10 AM, the commander of the Hawaiian national guard received confirmation from the US Pacific Command that no missile launch against Hawaii had occurred. Action was taken to prevent further distribution of the erroneous warning at 8:13 AM. Official messages rescinding the erroneous emergency alert were not sent out until 8:20 AM. Hawaiian officials finally sent out a second emergency alert message at 8:45 AM rescinding the erroneous 8:07 message [29].

The US Pacific Command and the US national security monitoring system evidently took no active measures during the false alarm beyond responding to urgent inquiries. In sum, no activation of mobilization and response plans apparently occurred within the US national defense system in response to the Hawaiian civil defense false alarm. The incident occurred after US President Trump's public warning on August 8, 2017 that the US would respond with "fire and fury" to an unspecified North Korean nuclear threat to the US [28].

This incident serves as a clear illustration of the role of nuclear weapons in developing national bargaining leverage in international diplomacy. States engaged in adversarial relations due to at least one party perceiving intense threat from the other develop nuclear weapons to counter the other's diplomatic bargaining advantages. The adversarial relationship is key; Japan and Germany, for example, could literally overnight construct and deploy nuclear weapons if their governments determined it necessary to do so. France, UK and Israel have long had delivery-capable nuclear weapons. The politically prevailing view in the US polity collectively, of course, does not view this capability as a source of danger to the US. The prevailing view within the US establishment is that French, British and Israeli polity foreign policy motivations are benign. In sum, they are not a perceived source of intense challenge to primary strategic American foreign policy aims.

## **2. THEORY**

### **2.1 Diplomatic Bargaining Leverage and International Political Strategy**

Cottam and Gallucci (1978) [2] provide a comprehensive framework checklist for disaggregating and analyzing bargaining leverage in dyadic diplomatic bargaining interaction (illustrated below) [2,9].

In diplomatic bargaining, various levers operate simultaneously and affect, negatively and positively, each other's effectiveness: a 'leverage system' [2,48-49]. 'Smart power' as a concept in international relations discourse is successful international diplomacy that coordinates bargaining leverage application effectively with predictable consequences and more effective planning over the short, medium and long term. Smart power "involves the strategic use of diplomacy, persuasion, capacity building, and the projection of power and influence in ways that are cost-effective and have political and social legitimacy" [3,13]. Generating predictable consequences that lowers the danger of loss of control over the political dynamics of a crisis is a more challenging task without a clearer understanding of the political context. This context includes unsatisfied, intense albeit latent pan-Korean nationalist public attitudes and state national security concerns.

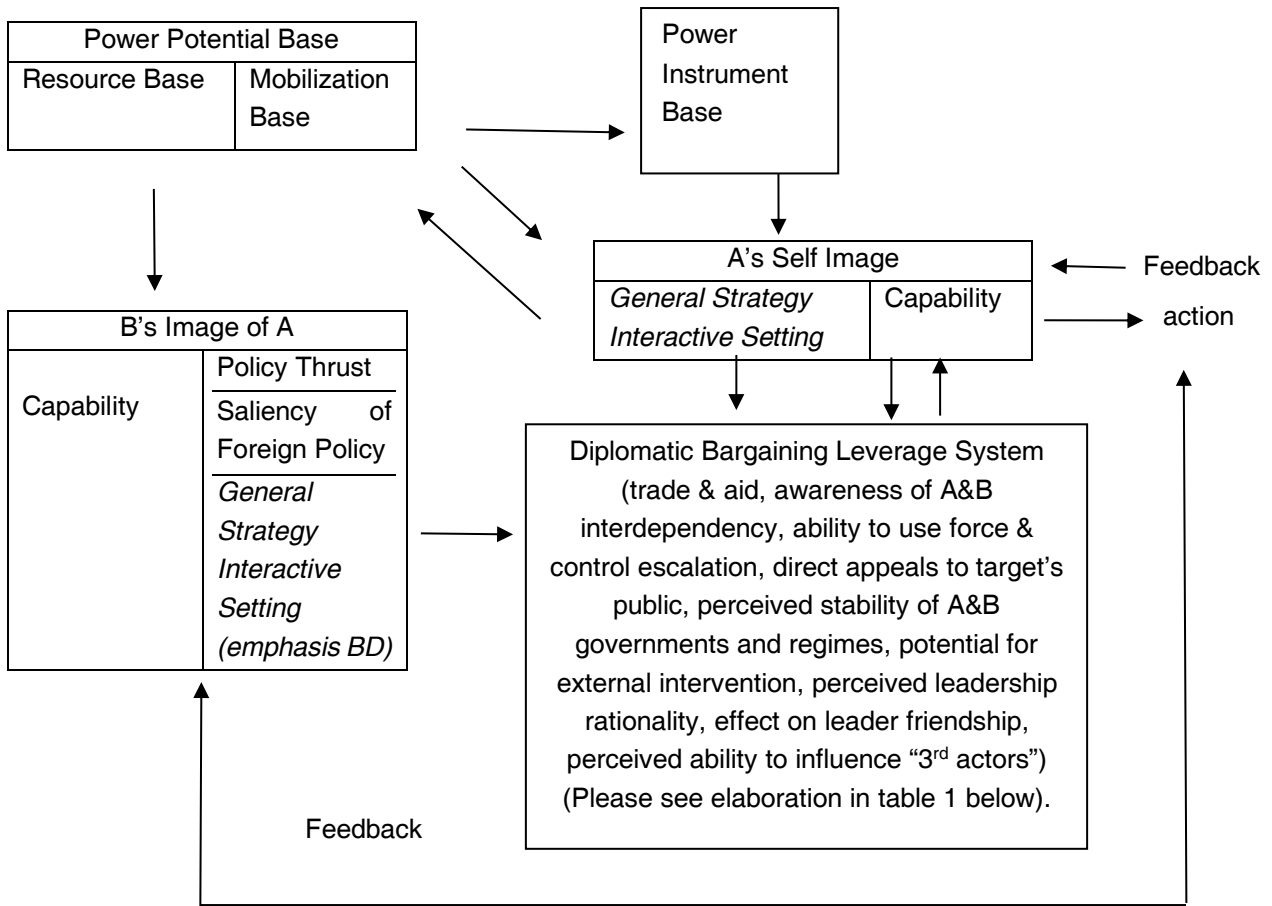


Figure 1. Schematic Representation of Actor Power and Foreign Policy Influence

Table 1. An all-inclusive list of diplomatic bargaining levers dynamically utilized by representative negotiators vis-à-vis each other in dyadic international negotiations in bargaining with each other over a particular issue or crisis [2,48-49]

BARGAINING BASE	
"Passive" (tacit bargaining) levers	"Active" levers
1. Perceived public attitudes	1. Perceived ability to give or withhold aid.
2. Perceived possible great power involvement.	2. Perceived ability to influence the actions of a third country.
3. Awareness of interdependence.	3. Perceived ability to use force.
4. Perceived long-term power alterations.	4. Perceived trade opportunities.
5. Perceived economic/and/or political stability.	5. Perceived ability to deal with domestic political dissatisfaction.
6. Perceived irrationality of leaders.	6. Perceived transnational appeal of ideology.
7. Perceived adverse effect on friendship.	7. Perceived willingness to alter relationship type.
8. <i>Perceived likelihood of accidental war</i> (italics emphasis BD).	

The broader context includes post-Cold War American and Chinese security and economic vested interests and national communal and ideological attachments [4,131-33,241-45]. Trend analysis illustrates the dynamic nature of the context. (Please see “Trends in the Evolving General Strategic Setting” section below.)

The January 2018 false alarm of a ballistic missile attack in Hawaii starkly illustrated the change in Pyongyang’s bargaining leverage. These escalating tensions pushed South Korean president Moon Jae-in to intervene to deescalate. The South Korean government appealed to US President Trump’s focus on his public opinion status domestically relative to his political competitors. The South Korean authorities conveyed to Trump an invitation to meet with North Korean president Kim Jong-un. Trump accepted it, leading to the June 12, 2018 Singapore summit. Trump’s acceptance of the summit deescalated the conflict, after Trump escalated the crisis himself with his “fire and fury” and other public comments. Trump’s agreement to the Singapore summit boosted for a period of time his domestic and global prestige as an alleged peacemaker.

The international norm environment in which the Hawaiian January 2018 incident occurred reflects the legacy of the Cold War in dominating conceptualizations of security. The reliance of the North Korean regime upon nuclear weaponry as a crisis-based bargaining leverage reflects American global post-Cold War hegemonic assertiveness.

The Cold War generated incentivized conceptualization of challenges to security in terms of military security as their ultimate foundation. It reflects the institutionalization within the US foreign policy establishment of the enemy stereotype of the Soviet Union. This enemy stereotype came to be the basis for the military-based containment strategy.

The evil empire, i.e. enemy, stereotype is summarized below:

**Table 2. The Enemy Stereotype [4,96-98,108]**

<b>Motivation of Target:</b>	A simple, single-minded, and aggressive motivation.
<b>Decisional Locus of Target:</b>	A monolithic decisional structure.
<b>Decisional Style of Target:</b>	Characterized by a high degree of rationality, sufficient to plan and orchestrate elaborate conspiracies.
<b>Capability of Target:</b>	A capability advantage that derives from one’s own lack of resolve, which is rooted in a naïve projection of one’s own goodness onto the enemy. However, if the true nature of the enemy is understood and the requisite will and determination to oppose it is mustered, the highly rational enemy will understand. It will comprehend that it has lost, at least temporarily, its capability advantage and will wait for a return to the previous naiveté.
<b>Those Compatriots Who Disagree with the Above Portrayal of the Target:</b>	Those citizens who fail to understand this picture of the enemy are either outright traitors or naïve dupes of traitors.

It emerged out of the Second World War image of Hitlerian Germany as a militantly aggressive, radically imperialist Great Power actor. The immediate postwar USSR came to be viewed in effect as a Russian version of Nazi Germany. The US prevailing view functionally saw it as genetically aiming to destroy the “European world order,” even leading it allegedly to collaborate with Hitlerian Germany before the latter’s invasion of it [32,103]. A more globally appealing ideology in the form of socialism, in conjunction with the advent of nuclear weaponry permitted Moscow to build upon its conquest of eastern Europe to pose a grave perceived threat to American national security [7]. The intensely coercive nature of the radical Soviet regime which it

then imposed on its conquered neighbors supported the formation of a stereotypical image of the USSR in Washington. US President Reagan in 1983 succinctly described this stereotype of the USSR as the “empire of evil,” responsible for most of the world’s dangers [5].

The two basic determinants in the strategic analysis and decision making of political actors are estimations of the motivation and relative capabilities of the other relevant actors. Of course, state leaders may make the mistake of inaccurately or incorrectly estimating both the motivations and the capabilities of other actors. The best-known case of a failed strategy: the strategy of so-called appeasement in dealing with Nazi Germany. The basis of a foreign policy strategy (including containment) is one's perception of the target's intentions/motivations and the target's capabilities. Appeasement catastrophically assumed that Hitlerian Germany's belligerence was primarily due to perceived threat, while in reality it stemmed from perceived opportunity. Appeasement confirmed the mistaken prevailing perception in Berlin. This definition of the situation inferred that the supposed political degeneracy of Europe and the world presented a marvelous opportunity to a Great Power with sufficient will and determination to seize it. The postwar US ruling authorities swore not to make this mistake with the USSR, (mis)perceived as similarly motivated in expanding Communism in Europe, Asia and the world. The continuing US institutionalized commitment to its containment strategy intensified regional conflicts in Southeast Asia and globally through enforcement of the immediate postwar American unipolar moment. “Containment, as outlined by Kennan, and in part implemented by Acheson, Eisenhower, Kissinger and others, was less a response to protracted conflict than a contributor to it” [33,31].

Advocates for greater South Korean strategic balancing in a changing international environment note the turbulence in the contemporary international political system. “[A] a critical analysis of South Korean middle power diplomacy could prepare the country to discern changes within the existing international system and a possible systemic transformation. This may make IR students better prepared for uncertainty, difference, and pluralism in global politics while producing scholarship that is more responsible and responsive” [34,20]. In this spirit, this paper proposes that grand strategies risk losing escalation control amidst interstate conflicts can emerge because of misperception of trends in state target intentions, in conjunction with misperception of relative capabilities. The greater the intensity of the external challenge which an initiator government perceives increases collectively its vulnerability to display policymaking worldview assumptions that tend towards stereotypes. These simplified worldview image tendencies are particularly prone to emerge within nation state politics, e.g., the US, China and Russia [4]. The more intense the perceived challenge, then the greater tendency towards stereotype worldview dysfunctionality. To rephrase, the greater the tendency will be to typecast the perceived intentions and capabilities of the target as analytical assumptions in foreign policy decision making. The authorities of the mobilized initiator nation state will tend collectively to underemphasize the role of domestic public opinion in the target as a political constraining factor on the target’s policy behavior. Foreign policies towards third states will tend to reflect their instrumentalization stereotyping by the initiator state in terms of the perceived intense challenge from the great power target state.

## **2.2 Foreign Policy Motivation, Perception and Strategy**

The theme of this analysis is to critique the desired future implicit in a grand strategy in terms of trends regarding the critical targets of the strategy for achieving the desired future. Grand strategies with foundations in worldview definitions of the international political environment tending towards stereotypes are more likely to result in loss of situational control over political conflicts. To rephrase, initiator state grand strategies relatively lacking in the appreciation of the political complexity in the policy making process of a target are likely to fail.

**Table 3. An Inclusive Typology of Foreign Policy Motivations of a State [6,31-53]**

<b>ECONOMIC</b>	<b>COMMUNAL</b>	<b>MESSIANIC</b>	<b>GOVERNMENTAL</b>	<b>DEFENSE</b>
<b>Loot</b>	<b>National</b>	<b>Ideology</b>	<b>Bureaucratic vested interests (BVI)</b>	
	independence		foreign policy & defense bureaucracies	
	unity-irredentism		non-defense bureaucracies	
	dignity		military vested interests (MVI)	
	grandeur			
<b>Demographic</b>	<b>Participant excitement</b>	<b>Cultural</b>	<b>Personal power -- internal</b>	
<b>Economic Vested Interests (EVI)</b>	<b>Frontier dynamics</b>	<b>Religious</b>	<b>Survival of the regime</b>	
defense				
trade domestic investments				
foreign economic vested interests				
			<b>Personal power -- external</b>	

The general issue areas to consider in both the formulation and the evaluation of a strategy are the following:

**Table 4. Component Consideration Elements of International Strategy**

1)	Desired future of the strategy regarding the target
2)	Target's motivation
3)	Target's capability
4)	Manipulation of change in the target's: capability; capability self-image; perceived challenge (threat or opportunity); attitude; elite; values
5)	Assessment of one's own capability (including alliances)
6)	Capability upgrading (including alliances)
7)	Tactical plans (for serving 4 & 6)

In sum, these are the relevant trends: 1) target's capability; 2) target's capability self-image; 3) target's perceived challenge (if opportunity, then need to reverse it); 4) attitudinal change of target (if aggressive expansion, then reverse it); 5) elite change in target; 6) value change in target, i.e. politically prevailing foreign policy motivation political constituency carriers within the target.

In the enemy stereotype, this existential threat's extreme rationality derives from its assumed monolithic nature, i.e. politics does not exist within such a political system. It of course is grossly flawed; highly coercive regimes still manifest political interest group competition even while violence and terror are employed for authority maintenance within the polity. This stereotype is a fantasy, and like a caricature, it provides necessary emotional stimulation for action to meet the perceived threat. In sum, at the height of the Cold War, the USSR was more akin to J.R.R. Tolkien's image of Mordor. Sauron/Stalin sits in Baradur/Kremlin issuing orders to carry out his globally-orchestrated conspiratorial campaign of subterfuge and conquest employing his millions

of minions. Politics does not exist in the target state stereotyped in the enemy Weberian ideal-typical image category; only the will of Sauron/Stalin exists.

Nuclear weapons constitute a critical differentiating factor; even the empire of evil can be incinerated almost instantly in a global conflagration. The ineluctably aggressive nature of the Soviet regime therefore necessitated that its expansionary drive be manifest through a greater reliance upon covert, conspiratorial subterfuge. According to this Cold Warrior ideal-type picture, the foundation of the long so-called Cold War was nuclear deterrence. The evil empire does not value individual human life, not to mention the panoply of other human rights. What it did value and understand is force, and the military might of the Soviet Union was the keystone of that totalitarian control capability. Successful nuclear deterrence of the Soviet Union required it to compete economically and socially with the West, a contest it eventually lost. While not sufficient, the long-term military capability supremacy of the West was still therefore the most critical factor in the West's victory in the Cold War. Multilateral institutions such as NATO and the national military establishments that composed them were the cutting edge of ultimately victorious US benign global hegemony [30]. This hegemony saved the world from Soviet imperialist totalitarianism. In the post-Cold War world, these prevailing assumptions of the nature of the Cold War implied that these containment instrument tools should not only be preserved but expanded. The US would bring peace to the southeastern Europe and the Middle East, reenacting the formula that Washington assumed led to relative peace in most of Europe and East Asia. The US would meet new threats to this peace, including political Islam, by adapting and applying these Containment-era tools. Rogue states tendentiously perceived as detritus left in the wreckage in the collapse of Soviet regional hegemony would be targeted for regime change.

These ultimately hard-power based assumptions regarding the foundations of American global supremacy are reflected, for example, in today's Washington debates over so-called kinetic responses to violent extremism [7]. Awareness of the societal sources of so-called violent militancy tends to be limited to discussions of state failure, i.e. the failure to maintain order [8]. Order is the foundation for economic prosperity, and with economic prosperity would come greater political stability. Stability has itself become the holy grail in this ultimately Cold War-based worldview that the USSR fomented societal turmoil in the proclaimed facade of revolutionary social justice. Thereby, the USSR would exploit this turmoil through its agents and clients to expand what was in effect a de facto Russian neo-colonial empire under the mask of world socialism. Stability, including the immutability of frequently arbitrary post-colonial state territorial boundaries drawn by imperial powers in heretofore politically passive societies, must be maintained. If they do change, then this change occurred in spite of domestic and international resistance to national self-determination or irredentism. The intensity of this international resistance has varied, depending upon the foreign policy aims of the external, intervening actor. The reunification of Vietnam showed the intensity of nationalism with the emergence of mass political awareness among the recently passive and parochial mass population. However, Saddam Hussein's failed attempt to become in effect the Otto von Bismarck of the eastern Arabs showed that military technological superiority can still prevail in the right geographic conditions.

The Trump administration's demand for complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization should have been only a starting point for negotiations with North Korea. The Trump administration would have had to compromise if these negotiations were to have the capability for success. South Korea's role was critical but underemphasized. The Trump administration informally acquiesced to South Korea's initiatives for greater economic cooperation with the North. The subsequent high-profile summit meetings slowed but did not stop North Korea's nuclear and missile programs. "Basically, Trump asked Kim to surrender all his weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and ICBMs in return for a verbal promise of a bright economic future [...]" [31,570].

Restarting the Kaesong joint industrial complex and resuming tourism to Diamond mountain resort complex may be most politically feasible. They would not be new initiatives, but rather framed as resuming established agreements that had been paused. The South Korea's initiatives to reconnect transport links were more politically challenging but more feasible than formally removing UN Security Council sanctions. Seoul is a target for Pyongyang's strategy for funding the reform of the North Korean economy through investment.

The point to highlight, however, is that North Korea's overwhelming reliance on the threat of accidental war in the nuclear era as a bargaining leverage is ultimately a product of American hegemony. This hegemony was forged during the Cold War on the basis of the enemy stereotype of the USSR and its perceived global minions. The US self-perceived victory in the Cold War has reinforced collective normative support for those policies and institutions created to implement containment of the enemy. The foundations of this victorious containment strategy lie in military deterrence of the enemy in the post-1945 nuclear setting. To rephrase, ultimate military force capability is assumed to be the foundational coin of the global diplomatic regime institutionalized during the Cold War by the US. The "shock and awe" tactical military approach to Baathist Iraq is another manifestation of the evolution of this global security regime in the post-Cold War era [9]. Pyongyang has a valid point that nuclear weapons are the ultimate source of its national security in this setting.

At a 2019 conference at the Wilson Center in Washington commemorating the January 2018 Hawaiian ballistic missile launch false alarm crisis, Robert S. Littwak stated,

"Trump meeting with Kim, which was a huge PR win for him back home, also kind of in a way made North Korea kind of a more ordinary state. Kim Jong Un meeting with Trump, he was sort of able to shed the rogue kind of rubric and perception of North Korea. Trump characteristically, kind of overshot, saying they fell in love and this type of excessive rhetoric, but the optic of North Korea as a rogue state I think has been changed through the summitry."

"If you view that the state is undeterrable and apocalyptic, that feeds into a preventive war scenario. Likewise, with North Korea, the notion that it's a crazy state. General McMaster, national security advisor, he said that North Korea is undeterrable. Now, if North Korea is undeterrable then the option for preventive war to prevent them from acquiring capabilities to strike us really gets pushed along. I think that's why I argue that the summits changed the psychology of the crisis that way"[10].

Littwak credits Trump in effect with disrupting at least in the short term the rogue stereotype of North Korea.

The "ally" stereotype is derivative towards a third state of a perceived intense challenge, i.e., threat or opportunity, emanating from another targeted state. Trump utilized the symbolic "rally around the flag" authority available to him as the occupant of the White House, an institutionalized, living symbol of American nationalism utilizing populist reactionism [35,8]. The political effects of the June 2018 Singapore summit meeting did not counteract the large political vested interests in the Cold War national security establishment focused against North Korea. The absence of any agreement at the February 2019 Hanoi summit meeting appears to confirm this inference. A test will be whether or not the US ultimately comes to accept the legitimacy of the North Korean regime, i.e., shift away from the rogue stereotype in relation to the DPRK. Integration into the global production change would be a valid indicator of this integration as advanced by the Moon Jae-in administration in Seoul. Obtaining "international legitimacy" for the regime is the ultimate objective of the North Korean leadership [11,94]. Acquiring recognition as a nuclear weapons state, comparable to India, Pakistan and Israel would facilitate achievement of this objective. Consequently, expecting that North Korea



is going to engage in complete, verified and irreversible denuclearization is highly unlikely short of a revolutionary regime change. The paradox resides in the obvious fact that the United States is negotiating with North Korea because of its nuclear weapons. Yet, the US seeks to remove the North Korean power capability that is incentivizing the US to negotiate with and thereby de facto legitimate the regime.

**Table 5. Image Attributes of a Perceived Source of Comparative Challenge (i.e. Threat or Opportunity) to Perceived Status of the Nation [4,98]**

<b>Image/ Stereotype</b>	<b>Capability (as perceived)</b>	<b>Culture (as perceived)</b>	<b>Intentions (as perceived)</b>	<b>Decision Makers (as perceived)</b>	<b>Threat/Opportunity (as perceived)</b>
<b>“Enemy”</b>	Equal	Equal	Harmful	Small elite	Threat
<b>“Barbarian”</b>	Superior	Inferior	Harmful	Small elite	Threat
<b>“Imperial”</b> (stereotype of targeted imperial power by the colonial/client) [emphasis BD]	Superior	Superior	Harmful	A few groups	Threat
<b>“Colonial/ Client”</b> (stereotype of targeted colonial subject by the imperial power)	Inferior	Inferior	Benign	Small elite	Opportunity
<b>“Degenerate”</b>	Superior or equal	Weak-willed	Harmful	Confused, differentiated	Opportunity
<b>“Rogue”</b>	<i>Inferior</i>	<i>Inferior</i>	<i>Harmful</i>	<i>Small elite</i>	<i>Threat</i> (italics BD)
<b>“Ally”</b> [the individual social relationship analogue is “friend” (BD)]	Equal	Equal	Good	Many groups	Threat [jointly shared towards a third actor by two “allies”; i.e. the enemy of my enemy is my “friend” (BD)]

At least one South Korean government military security expert has suggested that the North Korean regime authorities’ objectives may include in effect undermining the rogue stereotype of the DPRK. Hence, the DPRK authorities aims to establish a cooperative relationship with the US while lessening its dependence and vulnerability to Beijing [12]. The challenge of the PRC to American regional and global policy aims, i.e. American grand strategy, is much greater than the challenge from North Korea. North Korea’s shift from rogue to ally as part of a US containment strategy towards China is problematic. Japan went from rogue enemy to ally following US conquest and regime change followed by the intensification of the Cold War. The resistance of the US leadership to move in this direction was illustrated by the inability of the US to develop any empathy capacity towards Saddam Hussein’s Iraq. During the Reagan and G.H.W. Bush administrations, the US de facto allied with Saddam after he launched a war with Iran that Iran appeared poised to win. The 1990 disregard of the US leadership regarding Saddam’s grievances towards Kuwait was striking considering the depth of US aid and assistance to Iraq during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq War [13]. The likelihood that the US could conceivably be more open to an accommodation of North Korea’s policy objectives is greater. North Korea has not invaded and annexed a neighboring state. Its ally, China, is a rising superpower, unlike a declining, disintegrating USSR, the Cold War ally of Baathist Iraq. The existence of South Korea, however, as a preferred option for controlling the entire Korean peninsula under a US client regime always exists as a possibility. Its attraction

in Washington will perennially remain in contrast to a regime against which the US fought a war to a stalemate.

The extent of the disruption of the institutionalization of the rogue stereotype of North Korea through Trump's shock diplomacy is not likely to be long lasting without support. Relatively intimate personal relations between European Great Power leaders leading up to August 1914 did not prevent the outbreak of war [14,259]. The systemic obstacles to regime reform in North Korea require a long-term strategy to support the Kim leadership that is seeking to carry out reform while maintaining authority. The insistence of the US government on complete nuclear disarmament before economic aid and investment may be encouraged is a position akin to surrender and overthrow. It is a surrender demand in the nuclear era; devastating economic sanctions that punish the population in degrees comparable to direct military attack in the pre-nuclear era. In the nuclear era, direct military conflict is to be avoided, but the potential if not for genocide, then at least for power potential base erasure, is still existent through mass privation. It reflects in part the intensity of national grandeur in American foreign policy motivation within this nuclear setting [15]. It is the essence of American-led globalization as the celebration or nationalistic universalization of American hegemony.

In response to increasing American nationalist attitudinal predisposition tendencies towards unilateralism, South Korea, therefore, may need to prepare to reassess its relationship with the US. If so, then it also needs to reassess its relationship with China, Japan and Russia. The likelihood of it doing so may be low. It has become a stronger imperative to avoid a reescalation of the Korean conflict largely as a derivative of re-intensification of great power conflict. Within this international systemic context, pan-Korean nationalist reunification sentiment, albeit currently latent, remains a diplomatic bargaining lever exploitable both by Seoul and Pyongyang.

### **2.3 Stereotypes and Strategy**

As noted above, a stereotype is an oversimplified perceptual image of the target. The occurrence of stereotyping is law like in its occurrence under certain conditions. Firstly, both individuals and governments simplify their perception of reality in order to facilitate processing of sensory inputs from the environment. Secondly, these simplifications show regular patterns under specific circumstances, i.e. stereotypes.

The three factors which determine the extent and kind of stereotype to characterize the prevailing image are 1) perceived capability distance; 2) perceived cultural distance; 3) level of intensity of perceived challenge (specifically, 3a) intensity of prevailing perception of threat or 3b) prevailing perception of opportunity). Stereotypes are always personalized. Each image/stereotype has policy behavior trend patterns that associate with it.

A so-called conflict spiral is an international conflict which intensifies due to mutual misperception of threat. It is the consequence of a wrong estimation of the intentions/motivations of a belligerent actor in international relations as being expansionist when it is really defensive. A policy emerges of assertive defense in the form of *containment*, demonstrating the will, determination and resolve to fight and sacrifice to resist the so-called aggression of the stereotyped enemy. The foreign policy motivation for the belligerence of the latter is mistakenly inferred to be ultimately national grandeur. The target's fear then increases, and it becomes even more belligerent, and open warfare becomes a possibility. A containment policy towards a defensively motivated actors risks causing a foreign policy disaster, i.e. a spiral conflict. Such a negative feedback loop process arguably contributed to the outbreak of the First World War [16,80].

During the Cold War, the US polity (the political elite factions and their respective constituencies), shared an overwhelming consensus in perceiving an intense threat from the USSR. This study claims that an important issue whether or not this prevailing American perception of Soviet foreign policy motivation was accurate. If it was inaccurate, and the USSR was belligerent because it perceived a dangerous threat, from the

US, then the Cold War was arguably a spiral conflict. The belief that the US-led containment saved the world from Soviet totalitarianism is a critical factor in the conceptualization and legitimation of US foreign policy towards Korea and elsewhere.

**Table 6. Images and Policy Predispositions [16,100]**

<b>Image/Stereotype of perceived challenger</b>	<b>General Policy Predispositions towards perceived challenger</b>	<b>Policy Predispositions towards perceived challenger in intense conflicts</b>
<b>“Enemy”</b>	Wary suspicion, containment	Hostility, defense
<b>“Barbarian”</b>	Fear, form alliances	Preemptive strikes, precipitate alliance intervention (potential for genocide)
<b>“Imperial”</b> (stereotype of the imperial actor by the colonized)	When domination is stable: fear, avoid conflict, submit	When conflict is unstable: anger, shame, struggle for liberation
<b>“Colonial/Client”</b> (stereotype of targeted colonial subject by the imperial actor)	Paternalistic policy guidance and direction	Most commonly nonviolent repression
<b>“Degenerate”</b>	Contempt, mobilize for competition	Disgust, offensive aggression
<b>“Rogue”</b>	Derogate, isolate	Hostility, violent repression (potential for genocide)

The question then emerges as to how the analyst determines if a state acts belligerently because it is defensively motivated or is belligerent because it really is an imperialist actor. As stated above, the politically prevailing view within a militantly imperialist polity is one of opportunity. Other great power targets are perceived as lacking the political will and determination to resist the motivated, determined and organized radical international actor as it so self-perceives. State actors that perceive a surrounding international political environment characterized by degeneracy bluntly assert their will to remake the international order. The issues to address, then, to determine an actors’ ultimate polity source of foreign policy motivation depend upon answers to the following 3 questions: 1) its priority for peaceful resolution of conflict; 2) its satisfaction with level of influence exercised in the world; 3) its satisfaction with the actor system.

These three questions relate to determining attitudes, i.e. behavioral response patterns to perceived challenges from the international environment. The first question relates to a behavioral response pattern of behalf of a militantly imperialist, radical international actor. Such an actor displays a preference for the threat and use of force as the primary diplomatic bargaining leverage instrument. It is an indicator of a perceived marvelous political opportunity in the external political environment that must and will be exploited with the requisite will and determination. The state leadership, of course, provides this will and determination.

The second question relates to the prevailing view within the polity as to whether or not it fails to exercise an appropriate level of influence in world affairs. If this perceived degree of influence is seen as being radically in disjuncture with its power potential base, then this actor will act to boost its influence. Key here is the role of what Hans J. Morgenthau identified as national morale [17]. In the case of Hitlerian Germany, the prevailing view of the German polity was one in which Germany’s overwhelming relative power superiority in regard to the rest of Europe laid here.

The third question relates to the prevailing view within the polity as to whether its current and prospective client actors can and should be placed in positions of authority. Reconstituting state actors so that these clients control the sovereign instruments of state authority may then follow. Intervening to dismember existing states to reconstitute new ones, with clients now placed in authority within their respective regional contexts, characterizes this pattern behavior.

Again, the historical case of Hitlerian Germany provides recent case examples of such behavior. This militantly imperialist, radical great power reconstituted the actor system within Europe under its domination. States were dismembered, territory annexed, state boundaries redrawn, and local clients placed in ruling positions throughout Europe.

This analysis is not arguing that the American polity's stimulus response patterns to the international political environment resemble those of Nazi Germany. Hitlerian Germany was arguably the closest in reality to approaching this Weberian ideal-type actor. Indications of some US movement in this direction are evident. The US has allied with the Kosovar Albanians, and it has allied with the Kurds in upper Mesopotamia. Both aspiring national people actors have national sovereignty aspirations, which would require redrawing state boundaries. Their achievement of their national self-determination goals incentivizes their cooperation with the US in the latter's foreign policy regional objectives. Serving as a surrogate to contain pan-Arabism and pan-Islamism is part of this function by the Kurds. Albanian nationalism stands in opposition to Serbian nationalism, which is traditionally a perceived client of Moscow, i.e. a great power adversary of the US. The Trump administration was publicly committed to recognizing Israel's annexation of territory it captured in the 1967 war west of the Jordan river [18]. The US has rather targeted areas previously as having been within the Soviet sphere of influence as now subject to American acquisition to its own area of domination. Making the argument that the US views Russia and China as degenerate is doubtful. What it is more plausible is that the US has seen Russian power capabilities as weak and China as an emerging threat to American institutionalized global influence. In response, the US collectively has seen derivative opportunities to expand its influence in response to the decline of Russia and the rise of China. Russia, in turn, eventually would undergo regime transformation and be integrated and assimilated into the North Atlantic-focused hegemonic community, like postwar Germany. Russia's thousands of nuclear warheads command attention, while its GDP is approximately equal to that of South Korea. In this view, Russian regime transformation is arguably a matter of time.

The US has recognized South Sudan in opposition to the political Islamist authorities ruling in Khartoum. Earlier, the US allied with Eritrean nationalism fighting for decades a regime allied with Moscow in Addis Ababa. The future of Somalia may serve as a test case; Somaliland is seeking international recognition for its unilateral declaration of sovereignty. The US may seek to counter the al-Shabab Islamist movement by recognizing Somaliland.

The US Trump administration arguably also perceived a more intense challenge from the European Union [19]. This actor is under intensifying political pressure from the US. The US supported the development of the EU during the Cold War in part to facilitate containment of the USSR. The US later supported the development of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy with its security components in order to facilitate the coordination of European resources under NATO [20]. NATO would then provide the framework for deploying European resources out of the European theater, e.g. Afghanistan and Libya.

This analysis addresses the belligerence intensity issue via the extent and intensity of public support regarding the threatening state's predisposition to act through its foreign policy process. The image intensity (stereotype) which characterizes the prevailing view of the public will appear in terms of willingness to sacrifice to meet the external challenge. This stereotypical prevailing will also be dependent on capability self-

image. This analysis implies that the foreign policy decision maker needs to build in tests into foreign policy to determine the accuracy of their comprehension of the intentions of the target.

Stereotyping is law-like in its regularity and as an oversimplification of both intention and capability, it is a pathological tendency in making foreign policy and international political strategy more broadly. Once stereotypes of the external world constitute the prevailing view in a democratic political system, changing them becomes politically very difficult. Demagogues who manipulate simplistic symbolic representations of the international environment will tend to have a domestic political competitive advantage. Nationalistic communities and nation states are more prone to stereotype because of the greater relative ease with which a consensus on a stereotypical view of other actors/targets in the external environment occurs. Nationalism associates with stereotyping [4,99-121].

In contrast, an observer having a complex, i.e. non-stereotypical, image of a target, will see the following key elements regarding its policy making process: a) motivation of target: complex mix of motivations, reconciling them is difficult; b) decisional locus of target: has a large number of functional organizations with coordination and some policy leadership from above; c) decisional style of target: incremental and decision makers will be aware at best only partially of major systemic policy patterns; d) capability of target: seeing a full range of capability factors which implicitly parallels Hans J. Morgenthau's list of national power components; e) those compatriots who disagree with the above portrayal of the target: disagreements are inevitable, but individuals advancing a near-stereotypical view of the target will be suspected of demagoguery.

**Table 7. Perception of Political Complexity in Foreign Policy Making Process of Target Polity [36,77]**

Motivation of Target	Describes rather than judges the motivation as evil of good. Sees a number of component interests (motivations) and coming up with a policy that satisfies all of them is very politically difficult
Decisional Locus of Target	The leadership provides some coordination for a large number of competing, functional organizations.
Decisional Style of Target	Incremental, with decision makers immersed in details
Capability of Target	Sees capability in terms of a full range of objective factors, implicitly paralleling Hans J. Morgenthau's list.
Those compatriots who disagree with the above portrayal of the target.	Disagreements are inevitable, but those who advance a stereotypical view are demagogues seeking political power.

Derivative stereotypes of weaker powers emerge in this world political context of intense Great Power conflict. For example, South Korea became an important ally of the US during Cold War. The initiator should be aware of the intentions of the other actors and know as well that their intentions derive largely from their understanding of the initiator's intentions. A strategist decides upon their own intentions, but the strategist will attempt to shape the other actors' perception/understanding of the strategist's intentions. The analyst strives to determine what the actual foreign policy motivations of a polity are. It requires seeing beyond the "nationalistic universalism" propagated internationally and domestic symbol set manipulation that aims to mobilize, influence and control domestic and foreign actors [21, 819]. The leadership's hubris-laden, publicly stated motivations for a country's foreign policy are never in actuality what they really are.

By examining the proclivity or propensity to rely on threat and use of deadly force, the intensity of authority dissatisfaction with the level of international influence exercised, and the intensity of willingness to reconstitute international actors, the predisposition towards international militant revisionism is evident. The most intensity militancy associates with national grandeur as a primary foreign policy motivation, as the case of Hitlerian Germany illustrated.

US analysts may or may not see the US’ perceptual, attitudinal and value trends as moving in this militant direction. Other international actors are more prone to see as such, e.g. Moscow, Beijing and Pyongyang. A containment strategy is necessary to address such a challenge. Containing the US in the era of economic globalization and nuclear weaponry will likely display components that rely more heavily on threat of accidental war as a bargaining leverage, i.e. so-called brinkmanship. Both Moscow and Pyongyang are engaging in such behavior. Teheran is being pushed to move in this direction as well.

Containment of the US in globalizing, nuclear era also requires creating regional economic blocs, with climate change development imperatives generating additional incentives to create such blocs. It requires balkanization of the internet, including development of cryptocurrencies. It requires development of alternative energy sources, and the development of space-based economic, technological and military resources.

A political paradox emerges; nationalistic appeals are useful for a leader to mobilize community power capabilities but they associate with stereotyping. The leader’s decisional latitude in terms of the range of foreign policy options available to the state leader, is usually narrow, except when the initiator polity collectively perceives an intense external challenge (threat or opportunity). Nationalistic communities demonstrate greater decisional latitude for the decision-making elite, in terms of political ability to mobilize a greater proportion of the community’s resources, to adopt policies to meet the perceived intense threat/opportunity.

Making nationalistic values more salient by these normative active appeals raises the likelihood of misperception through stereotyping due to the emotions which arise along with nationalistic mobilization of the public to address an external challenge (threat or opportunity). These emotions include hate, fear, rage, disgust, contempt, joy, envy, and others.

### 3. APPLICATION

#### 3.1 The East Asian General Strategy Interactive Setting

The South Korean desired future relates to its motivational system, which today is

**Table 8. Foreign Policy Motivational System: ROK (2018)**

50%	A)	Defense (against North Korea)
30%	B)	Economic vested interests - domestic, trade Bureaucratic vested interests -- defense/foreign policy Military vested interests
20%	C)	National reunification National dignity Ideological messianism

The prevailing view in Seoul in 2018 regarding North Korean and PRC foreign policy motivation is inferred to be the following:

**Table 9. Foreign Policy Motivational System: DPRK (2018)**

50%	A)	Personal Power - Internal Survival of the regime Security Bureaucracy Vested Interests
30%	B)	Defense
20%	C)	National prestige National reunification

**Table 10. Foreign Policy Motivational System: PRC (2018)**

50%	A)	Survival of the regime Personal Power - Internal Security Bureaucracy Vested Interests
30%	B)	Economic vested interests - domestic, trade Bureaucratic vested interests - defense/foreign policy Military vested interests
20%	C)	National prestige National unity National grandeur Defense

This analysis infers Chinese grand strategy to be the following:

**Table 11. China Strategy: Chinese Dream (2018)**

Desired Future: Make China into a top global power equal to the US	
1.	Contain the US
1.	1. Establish sovereignty over the South China Sea
2.	2. Relegate Japan to secondary power position
1.	1. Regain sovereignty over Senkaku islands
3.	3. Strengthen military cooperation with Russia
1.	1. Increase military expenditures
4.	4. Strengthen ties with Asia and Southeast Asian states
1.	1. Make formal and informal alliances with Chinese frontline states.
5.	5. Promote China-centered international trade regimes
1.	1. Promote FTAs
2.	2. Promote AIIB
3.	3. Promote Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership
2.	2. Reform the Chinese economy.
1.	1. Continued integration of Chinese economy with world trade regimes, including IMF, WTO.
2.	2. Secure access to international commodities
3.	3. Assert Chinese sovereignty over South China Sea.
3.	3. Increase China's global political leadership role.
1.	1. Play a leading role in UN peacekeeping missions.
4.	4. Satisfy the other foreign policy-related demands of the Chinese people.
1.	1. Reunify Taiwan with Beijing.
2.	2. Promote globalization

This analysis infers the US system of foreign policy motivation to be the following:

**Table 12. Foreign Policy Motivational System: USA (2018)**

50%	A)	Defense
30%	B)	MVI EVI: The military industrial complex BVI (large numbers of people are getting promotions and vested their career interests in is the expansion of US influence in the Greater Middle East)
20%	C)	Grandeur: (more important than prestige or credibility)

### 3.2 Evaluation of South Korean Strategy

It is focused on the People’s Republic of China as its target. The North Korean regime is assumed to be heavily dependent on Chinese material support. The desired future is to reunify Korea under the Seoul regime’s control. The high-level strategic aim to achieve this desired future includes promotes desirable change trends in the governing elite in the People’s Republic of China. Comparatively greater authority in the foreign policy making process should go to those segments who orient the focus of their foreign policy towards economy-focused globalization. The strategy aims to least slow, if not reverse, the acquisition of greater authority by those segments which favor expanding Chinese military-focused influence abroad.

**Table 13. South Korea Strategy: “Soft Power” (2018)**

Desired future: Achieve reunification of the Korean nation under the Seoul regime	
High level strategic aims:	
1.	Maintain the alliance with the United States. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintain &amp; develop US basing commitments in South Korea                 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. e.g. Jeju island naval facilities</li> <li>2. THAAD deployment</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Deepen cooperation and interdependence.                 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ROK-USA FTA (free trade agreement)</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
2.	Promote ROK influence in international cooperation regimes. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote the six-party (ROK, DPRK, PRC, US, Japan, Russia) framework to contain North Korean nuclear and ballistic missile development &amp; proliferation.                 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Impose sanctions on North Korea when necessary</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Promote ROK leadership in international organizations                 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote ROK leadership in international, environmentally sustainable, development.                     <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote cooperation on mitigating manmade global climate change and its effects</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Highlight gross, systematic human rights abuses in North Korea.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Promote ROK cooperation with other international actors.                 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. e.g. ROK - EU FTA (free trade agreement)                     <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. e.g. ROK - EU Strategic partnership</li> </ol> </li> </ol> </li> </ol>
3.	Increase ROK influence over the People’s Republic of China <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote and intensify China-ROK economic interdependence                 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote integration of the Peoples’ Republic of China into globalization trends.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Serve as a model for China’s own development path.</li> </ol>
4.	Satisfy the other foreign policy related demands of the South Korean people. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote domestic prosperity through international trade</li> <li>2. Increase interfamily reunions between North and South Korea</li> </ol>



Ideally, albeit highly unlikely, the Chinese leadership would move more in a direction analogous to postwar Japan and Germany of becoming an East Asian and global so-called civilian superpower, continuing to focus on Chinese economic development. China's inevitable international influence expansion would focus on economic leverage and soft power models. As a lesser power, South Korea's ability to affect trends is comparatively low, but nevertheless, the South Korean polity exists and therefore exerts influence, albeit without the potential for decisive impact. Nevertheless, the globalization of China would ideally correlate with the increasing marginalization of North Korea's supporters in China in the military and government.

Ideally, supporting North Korea in opposition to the US will be seen as increasingly detrimental in terms of economic and political actual and prospective costs to China. Yet, South Korea's role in affecting the internal political correlations of forces in China in turn coalescing around the tension between China and the US and its allies over East Asian territorial sea borders is marginal. South Korea's role in promoting international collaboration addressing global climate change is a case study of the growth and evolution of global political regimes from a realist theoretical perspective. Political potentialities for addressing the global climate change issue cannot be addressed separately from the interests and capacities of the existing state actors that compose the international community. Strategies for addressing global policy issues must be set in the context of the state interests and capacities, as represented and manipulated by their respective governments, that constitute the international community itself. The ability to address global climate change effectively is inseparable, therefore, from a discussion of where global climate change issues fit within the broader context of state interests and capacities.

### **3.3 Capability Assessment for Achieving the Desired Future of South Korea's Strategy**

The prevailing view in South Korea is that China is at a critical stage in its evolution. South Korea is a lesser power in East Asia, and its ability to affect critical political trends in China is more limited. Mild containment is necessary to politically weaken domestically the Chinese military-industrial complex and to promote domestic policy reform in China favoring Chinese global leadership in Western-centered forums. The answer, then, is to promote globalization, which is US-centered.

The source of Chinese behavior is to rectify its national humiliation since the early nineteenth century by other great powers, while maintaining the domestic hegemony of the Communist Party, so it is the focus of major strategic concern. A strengthened South Korean resource base is necessary for producing the necessary power instruments to influence Beijing's own development efforts. The ROK would favor the integration of China into US-founded international economic regimes such as the World Trade Organization. Success in its integration would lead to South Korea's ability to promote Chinese political change through its Chinese business partners.

South Korean primary reliance on its US ally is assumed to be necessary, for good or ill. Only the US has the military capabilities to engage in so-called strategic engagement with China. To rephrase, the US has the capability to engage in selective military containment and to provide markets for South Korean and Chinese exports. Should the US oppose Chinese efforts to promote greater regional and global international interdependency, then the South Korean government has demonstrated a willingness to diverge from the US path. E.g. South Korea adopted a carbon cap-and-trade program, the second international political actor to do so after the EU, thereby encouraging the Chinese to do so as well. South Korea also supported China's initiative to create an Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, along with the UK and Germany, despite US objections.

One of the defining characteristics of the post-Cold War/post 9/11 international system is increasing push-back by Russia and China against US influence expansion. This expansion is perceived as extending into the

formers' perceived natural spheres of influence, largely defined during the Cold War. The loss of the Baltic states, for example, to NATO and the EU is likely the limit of Moscow's tolerance. The de facto alliance of Vietnam with the US has alarmed the Chinese.

The importance of nuclear weapons is a critical differentiating feature of the post-1945 era from the past. Public application of deadly military force states is no longer a possible means to reduce an adversary's power capabilities. Undermining this adversary's power and influence in the international system, for whatever ultimate strategic goals must be pursued indirectly in terms of tactical components. Nuclear weapons exist, and they cannot be wished away. South Korea de facto advocates a policy strategy which aims to reduce the Chinese economic lifeline of support for the Cold War relic, North Korea. The United States would continue to fulfill the role of helping status quo Asian states contain aggressive tendencies emerging in developing China. South Korea must in turn to do what it can to alleviate a conflict spiral intensifying between Beijing and Washington. Mediating the Korean nuclear crisis is, among its other facets, one vehicle by which to attempt to do so.

## **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 Trends in the Evolving General Strategic Setting**

#### **Critical Trends: Perception**

The first trend is an *emerging perception of opportunity by Chinese leaders*. At the end of George W. Bush administration, the Chinese leaders seemed to act as if they saw opportunity in Asian littoral regions as the US was preoccupied with its incursions into the Greater Middle East, while American forces were momentarily preoccupied. The postwar American military had been sufficiently strong to maintain a predominance in East Asia.

The fact that the Chinese did see an opportunity to expand their influence was unquestionable, but the key question was, what was the centrality of this perception of opportunity in motivating Chinese behavior. Different observers came to different conclusions. For some, the conclusion was that the Chinese saw an American encirclement. Following the collapse of the USSR, the US advanced further and deeper into the Middle East. Chinese expansion into the East and South China Seas is perceived as a derivative opportunity to establish a buffer zone. It would be a buffer zone against the inevitable next onslaught from the US, allowing for defensive depth. Therefore, perception of opportunity was derivative of a central perception of threat.

The second trend is *persisting perception of threat by Chinese leaders*. Defensive motivations and interests can result in policies which are highly belligerent: an important question is whether or not the Chinese leadership really believe in the existence of a US-led encirclement thrust. Arguably, Chinese behavior in East Asia serves a defensive purpose: to create a buffer to cushion against impending aggression. It is a common response from a polity which sees itself in grave jeopardy. Arguably, then Chinese foreign policy is essentially status quo. If so, then Chinese have a fear-based world view, and so a détente strategy is necessary to set into motion the political trends within China that will lead to the atrophy of the emerging diabolical enemy image of the US as the prevailing image which is the basis of the fear-based world view. In this view, the US and its allies are the threat, seeing the PRC as in fact the target of a US-led conspiracy. Containing the US is what is necessary. The Moon Jae-in administration in Seoul has attempted to use South Korea's bargaining leverage to promote a détente strategy between Washington, Beijing, Seoul and Pyongyang.

A conflict escalatory danger is never really seeing defensive concerns as having serious relevance for the source of Chinese behavior. Some analysts and decision makers see a much more complex mix of Chinese foreign policy motivation. Others do not seriously consider that the PRC sees a threat from US-led

globalization as being part of it. They tend not to see the old Cold War Soviet-American conflict in spiral terms, but rather as a case of successful containment that should be applied to Beijing today as well. E.g. “China wants to be the dominant economic and military power of the world, spreading its authoritarian vision for society and its corrupt practices worldwide,” Mr. [US Secretary of State] Pompeo said at a news conference on Monday at The Hague with Stef Blok, the Dutch foreign minister. “We talked today about these shared concerns and as well as the concerns about technology -- infrastructure and technology and the 5G infrastructure network” [22,A6].

South Korean strategy in effect aims to alleviate this emerging conflict spiral in part by focusing on global challenges such as manmade climate change and the concerted global effort necessary to control it. An intensification in US-PRC conflict will translate into greater PRC evaluation of the importance of maintaining the DPRK regime.

A third perceptual trend is a strongly developing perception of threat from the PRC among Americans. From the point of view of the DPRK, this trend is a positive one, and from the ROK’s point of view, it is negative. Donald Trump understood that this trend helped make possible his presidential aspirations, including the attainment of his goal of 2020 re-election.

Should the conflict with the PRC intensify, then advocates of PRC containment will focus on generating the power instrumental base necessary for containment. They will need to mobilize the American people to make the economic and other sacrifices necessary. The American people will have to recognize the Chinese threat. These costs include trade disruption costs and consequences. It will be the cost of displaying the will and determination necessary in order to roll back the Chinese in the South China Sea and the Korean peninsula should the US-PRC conflict intensify.

If the US-PRC conflict intensifies, then the prevailing view in the American polity of the PRC will shift in the direction of the enemy image. American elites expressing a more complex view will risk experiencing political marginalization as they themselves acquire the label of being soft-headed. The inherited persistence of the Cold War view of the USSR as an expansionist power which the US supposedly successfully contained now risks becoming a primary contributor to escalating conflict with China as the US expands its hegemony as a consequence of transference. Cold War-era US vested interests are more prone to diagnose emerging challenges around the world in terms of the strategy of containment.

A fourth critical perceptual trend is a developing trend among publics in the so-called developing world to see the US, Russia and the PRC as imperialistic. It is particularly pronounced in the Muslim world. This trend had a close relationship with 3 other vital trends in the third world: 1) a growth in the percentage of the publics in these societies to participate in the making of policy for the polity; 2) increasing public nationalistic attitudes; 3) increasing support for collaboration with poles of economic resources (US, China, Japan, Russia, EU) in the globalizing world economy in the midst of intensifying conflict between the US and the PRC. The DPRK has sought economic opportunities in Africa and elsewhere in response. “China, Mr. [2018 US Secretary of State] Tillerson said, uses “opaque contracts, predatory loan practices, and corrupt deals that mire nations in debt and undercut their sovereignty, denying them the long-term, self-sustaining growth.” He also promised to push countries in the region to do more to isolate North Korea as part of the administration's pressure campaign on Pyongyang” [23,A7].

### **Critical Trends: Attitudes**

The first critical trend in politically-relevant attitudes is an increasing predisposition of Chinese policy to expand Chinese influence in areas beyond its littoral region. One could interpret this trend as being the consequence of a fear-based Chinese world view. Once the Chinese had established a defensive buffer, they

would expend resources only to maintain this status quo. It also, however, fit with the picture of Chinese motivations and attitudes which advocate containment of China. In the Cold Warrior worldview, the highly rational diabolical enemy must be made to understand that it must defer from further useless and costly attempts at expansion until the US lets down its guard.

A second critical attitudinal trend is *an increasing predisposition to challenge allies of the United States in the third world especially within the Chinese littoral*. This trend became especially strong after the US “surge” into Iraq. This trend could conform with the explanation that the PRC perceived an increasing intensity of threat from the US. This trend could also conform with the explanation that the PRC perceives US weakness and disorientation. This trend in Soviet policy attitude found expression in the term, “China’s rise.”

A third critical attitudinal trend is that *Asians generally were increasingly willing to accept the sacrificial burdens of an expanded effort against the PRC*. The Americans have wished to explore containment options against Chinese advance positions as a consequence of their conclusion that strategic engagement is failing. The Americans view the Chinese presence outside their own borders as beachheads serving the Chinese intention of further expansion. The western Europeans, however, see less of a threat from the Chinese.

A fourth critical attitudinal trend is *a strong trend among third world regimes toward alignment with the US*. It was a consequence of the success of the US Cold War policy of interference in many parts of the third world in favor of conservative traditional governing elites. These traditional elites gave up exploiting political opportunities for increasing their popularity through adopting nationalistic positions in return for external Western aid in consolidating their traditional regimes, which they needed to maintain the regime. They did not favor radical change at home, so they did not promote nationalistic policies because they would demand radical domestic change. The earlier Cold War trend, i.e. an increasing disposition among politicized third world publics to adopt inclinations towards non-alignment in response to a growing view that the US, Russia and the PRC were all imperialistic, did not result in a change in the attitudes of most third world regimes.

A fifth critical attitudinal trend is *a strongly developing sense of inefficacy among some third world nationalistic publics which had hoped to see their governments follow independent policies*. This sense of inefficacy was similar to that which came to prevail among eastern European public attitudes during the Cold War. Third world publics saw the obstacles to real independence coming from US and its allies, whose policy maintained these regimes firmly in power. Therefore, they saw little alternative to adapting to the authority of these regimes. Therefore, they accommodated to these regimes which were allies of US presidential administrations.

A sixth critical attitudinal trend is *a strongly developing sense of efficacy among other third world nationalistic publics which destabilize US and Russian client regimes*. Soviet withdrawal from eastern Europe led to rapid revolutionary change in the region and the collapse of the Soviet Communist regime. Uprisings in the Greater Middle East against Russian and American client regimes have created additional threats and opportunities for regional, aspiring nationalist actors seeking Great Power patronage from the US, Russia and China. Its destabilizing potential generates potentials for Great power conflict in their competitive responses to local solicitations for support. Pan-regional actors appealing to pan-Islamic and pan-Kurdish sympathies pose threats to the regional and internal security interests of Russia, China, the US, India, and Europe. It is a significant incentive for collaboration among the Great Powers to suppress these movements.

### **Critical Trends: Value Alteration**

The first critical trend in value alteration is *a trend in Chinese state system values in the direction of challenge to the status quo in terms of: a) actor system, b) relative influence exercised, c) willingness to resort to violence*. It took shape in the 1990s, and American foreign policy decision makers saw it [24]. Chinese

policy shifted in the direction of challenging acceptance of the status quo in east Asia. The Chinese have expanded their willingness to resort to threat of use of military force to its Pacific littoral. Some American analysts saw it as a strategic Chinese adjustment to the American invasions in the Middle East.

A second critical value alteration trend is *a growing willingness within the PRC to challenge expansion of US influence and the corresponding reduction in Chinese influence*. Corresponding US policy moved from engagement towards "roll back." The US encouraged east Asian states to resist Chinese claims. The US encouraged human rights activity on the mainland. The US participated in operations aiming to overturn neutral or pro-Soviet regimes in the third world littoral of the old USSR to shift to the US pole.

The Chinese policy response reflected the Chinese incremental shift towards expansionist values. The PRC responded to an expanded US presence in third world littoral regions such as the Greater Middle East which, according to traditional realist theory, would naturally be outside the US sphere of influence. The PRC defined their policy of "China's rise" broadly enough to include incorporation of some change in the world status quo to the disadvantage of the PRC, e.g. in the Indo-Pacific region.

A third critical value alteration trend is *Western European "state system values" also demonstrated an acceptance of the post-World War II status quo. I.e. European powers were relegated to second-rank states along with a clear preference for non-violent resolution of conflict*.

A fourth critical value alteration trend is *an acceleration in the existing trend in US state system values towards an imperialist policy that began in the 1950s*. Advocates emerged at this time for radical change in the status quo through "roll back" of the "iron" and "bamboo" curtains and "liberation" of perceived Soviet client regimes as rogue states remaining from the wreckage of the Cold War. John Foster Dulles reflected this trend in thinking among the American political class. It intensified with the collapse of the USSR and impelled further with the 9/11/01 terrorist attacks on the US. US President George W. Bush succinctly summarized the new American worldview in labelling these rogue actors as an "axis of evil" [25,para.27].

*A fifth critical value alteration trend consists of East European and Middle Eastern state value systems reasserted the goal of national self-determination*. The perceptual parallel was the strong trend of regaining control of their political destiny. The refusal of the Soviet Union to support the Communist regimes in 1989 demonstrated to these publics that the Great Powers would no longer oppose national self-determination. The US and its allies and the Russians instead engaged in competitive interference to support national self-determination within these existing state boundaries for their respective instrumental purposes.

Many third world peoples shared a similar perception. They viewed US policy as less successful in establishing and maintaining regimes which lacked nationalist legitimacy. American acquiescence to "Arab Spring" revolts following the long inconclusive US invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan encouraged nationalistic third world peoples to regain sovereign control.

### **Critical Trends: Elite Alteration**

The first critical trend in elite alteration *is a trend has been underway in the PRC towards governing elites who focused more on international matters and placed consequently more value on expanding Chinese influence*. It was a product of successful development policies. The political class in the US did generally see a more belligerent Chinese policy in the early 2000s, but disagreement existed regarding the significance of this trend. Some saw an increasingly expansionist PRC whose increase in belligerence was a tactical response to increasing capabilities. The prevailing view included complexity to accommodate the factors that lead to leadership change in any modern polity. This complex image became the basis of American strategy towards the PRC until 2016.

A second critical trend in elite alteration is *a strong trend within western European polities toward the emergence and dominance of leaders who accepted the necessity of the Cold War strategy of containment of the USSR and now post-Cold War Russia*. Yet, the west European prevailing view of Russia still remained less stereotypical than the prevailing view in Washington. It allowed the west Europeans to see and pursue strategic options with regard towards Cold War and post-Cold War eastern Europe (in eastern Europe prevailing views, policy attitudes and system values/motivations) which the Americans could not see.

A third critical trend in elite alteration is *a trend in the composition of the American foreign policy leadership was moving in the direction of actors viewing the Cold War Soviet Union and post-Cold War Russia in enemy terms*. The American foreign policy elite became more outward looking and had less concern with social and economic developments within the US. This trend was the opposite of the trend in the composition of the Cold War Soviet and early post-Cold War Russian foreign policy elite, which was becoming more inward looking.

A fourth critical trend in elite alteration is *a post-Cold War trend towards the emergence within post-Soviet polities of post-Soviet bloc of leaders who were willing to assert a claim for significant policy independence from Russian influence* (e.g. Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan). Post-Cold War Russian acceptance of this trend varied, however. Tolerance was greatest regarding the Baltic states. Post-Cold War Russia has been more active in intervening in other former Soviet republics to create so-called frozen conflicts that inhibit integration with Euro-Atlantic structures. Examples include Russian intervention, directly and by proxy, in Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine. Moscow will seek to increase its bargaining leverage over the US regarding these cases by attempting to increase its influence in the Korean peninsula. Moscow will therefore likely increase its cooperation with Pyongyang.

A fifth critical trend in elite alteration is *a trend towards increasing political control by conservative governing elites in the third world who recognized their dependence on US support, and therefore made little effort to explore a policy direction which the US government would oppose* [26]. This trend reflects the development in values and attitudes described earlier, demonstrating again the mirror image developments in eastern Europe and in the third world. This trend accelerated with the collapse of the Soviet Union. The US opposed the strong historical trend in the third world towards governing elites who ruled through populist appeals to nationalism and sectarianism in areas where its Cold War containment strategy focused strong attention. It lessened during the Obama administration, but it has reasserted itself by 2016 especially via Iran.

### **Critical Trends: Mass Involvement**

The first critical trend in mass political participation is *a trend in a growing ability of American leaders to mobilize public support for the strategy of global expansion of US influence*. This trend was the consequence of another trend during the early and mid-Cold war era: to view the USSR in accordance with the diabolical enemy stereotype. Its supposed success and application to post 9/11 “axis of evil” states resulted in this perceptual trend among the US public adding greatly to the decisional latitude of US political leaders. This greater decisional latitude added to the ability of US leaders to translate US power capability into a dominating US influence in world affairs.

A second critical trend in mass political participation is *a trend among western European publics of perceiving a threat from Russia*. It was sufficiently strong to assure the post-Cold War strength of NATO. This trend lacked the strength and intensity of the US trend.

A third critical trend in mass political participation is *a trend in the ability of Putin and the Russian leadership to generate a populist appeal for mobilizing the public to make the great sacrifices necessary to deal with another great external challenge*. Stalin had appealed strongly to Russian nationalism to meet the German attack in World War II. This policy served its purpose. Success came at a heavy price. Over the

previous generation, the Soviet leadership made efforts to develop a strong Soviet identity and to diminish individual ethnic group identities. The war time expedient of appealing to the Russian ethnic group reversed what small progress these efforts had made in the direction of developing a Soviet patriotism. Stalin reverted to denouncing ethnic chauvinism after World War II. Stalin's reversal removed his ability to establish a genuine populist appeal. The collapse of the Communist regime and the rise of Russian populism has reversed the Soviet-era trend.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

### **5.1 General Strategy Evaluation**

South Korean strategy is derivative of the context created by the state of relations between the US and China. South Korea attempts to play a role to alleviate trends contributing to an emerging spiral conflict between the US and China. It does through promotion of globalization while encouraging the development of global institutions to address global problems neo-functionally. These problems include global climate change, within the context of the global capitalist chain of production development model. As a perceived global leader in this regard, South Korea increases its bargaining leverage in bilateral diplomacy. This increase in bargaining leverage applies not only to North Korea, but to all actors. In sum, Korean reunification has always been, like Korea's division, critically dependent on the structure and functioning of the international political system. Korea's leadership in global climate change initiatives and policy modeling can be usefully understood as an adaptation to this changing international context to achieve its non-changing strategic objectives: reunification of the Korean national under the Seoul regime.

North Korea's strategic focus has been on increasing its diplomatic bargaining leverage in the form of threat of accidental war by developing and deploying nuclear weapons. The January 2018 Hawaiian ballistic false alarm and subsequent diplomatic developments highlighted their efficacy. The Russian government also is increasingly relying on boosting this diplomatic bargaining lever to influence US foreign policy. E.g. Moscow has increased the rate at which it challenges US territorial air defenses [27]. This focus is comprehensible in the post-Cold War global political environment dominated by US expansionism. The Cold War by its nature established the focus on nuclear weaponry as a primary tool of international grand strategy. The post-Cold War US establishment will not take seriously lesser states it has stereotyped as rogues as negotiating powers unless those states acquire nuclear weapons. The other great powers respond to US behavior, so lesser power rogue states must utilize this leverage in their interaction with non-US great powers in terms of nuclear weaponry capability as well. Short of revolutionary political change in North Korea, North Korea is not going to engage in complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization. A peace strategy for the Korean peninsula therefore requires a long-term strategy focused on trend modification serving ultimately to undercut spiraling mutual suspicion and insecurity in East Asia. A regionally-led East Asian integration strategy, incorporating ASEAN, would be an appropriate strategic framework to consider.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

The author would like to thank two anonymous peer reviewers as well as the journal editors for their thoughtful critiques and comments. The author would also like to thank the Virtual Open Research Laboratory program in the Russian, East European, and Eurasian Center at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign for digital access to library resources. Any errors and omissions are solely the responsibility of the author.

## REFERENCES

- [1] "Nuclear War Risk Highest Since WWII, UN Arms Research Chief Warns." *Al-Jazeera*, May 23, 2019. para. 3. Accessed February 28, 2023. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/05/nuclear-war-risk-highest-wwii-arms-research-chief-warns-190522010914869.html>.
- [2] R.W. Cottam and G. Gallucci, *The Rehabilitation of Power in International Relations*. Pittsburgh: University Center for International Relations, University of Pittsburgh, 1978.
- [3] C.A. Crocker, F.O. Hampson and P.R. Aall, "Leashing the Dogs of War," In *Leashing the Dogs of War*. edited by C.A. Crocker, F.O. Hampson and P. Hall, pp. 3-16. United States of Institute of Peace. 2007.
- [4] M.L. Cottam and R.W. Cottam, *Nationalism and Politics: The Political Behavior of Nation States*, Lynne Rienner, 2001.
- [5] R.W. Reagan, "President Ronald Reagan—'Evil Empire' Speech." March 8, 1983, Miller Center of Public Affairs, University of Virginia. Accessed February 28, 2023. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=do0x-Egc6oA&t=1s>.
- [6] R.W. Cottam, *Foreign Policy Motivation: A General Theory and a Case Study*. University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977.
- [7] D. Brunstetter and M. Braun. "From Jus Ad Bellum to Jus Ad Vim: Recalibrating Our Understanding of the Moral use of Force," *Ethics and International Affairs*, Vol. 27, No. 1, pp. 87-106, 2013.
- [8] E. Nbar and E. Shamir, "What after Counter-Insurgency? Raiding in Zones of Turmoil," *International Affairs*, Vol. 92, No. 6, November 2016, pp. 1427-1441. DOI:10.1111/1468-2346.12751.
- [9] P. Deer, "Mapping Contemporary American War Culture," *College Literature*, Vol. 43, No. 1, pp. 48-90, 51, 2016.
- [10] R.S. Littwak, "Lessons from the Hawaii Nuclear Missile Scare." Wilson Center, April 15, 2019, para. 10-11. Accessed February 28, 2023. <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/event/lessons-the-hawaii-nuclear-missile-scare>.
- [11] A. Mansourov, "The Hermit Mouse Roars: North Korea," *Asian Affairs, an American Review*, Vol. 30, No. 2, 2003, pp. 88-95. DOI:10.1080/00927670309601518.
- [12] Informal dinner discussion with South Korean foreign affairs officials and security experts on May 18, 2018 at Rosso Bianco restaurant, Seoul, South Korea.
- [13] J.E. Wilz, "The Making of Mr. Bush's War: A Failure to Learn from History?" *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 3, pp. 1-21, 1995. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27551466>
- [14] P.H. Elovitz and D.R. Beisel, "A Conversation on Europe's Suicidal Embrace With Hitler," *The Journal of Psychohistory*, Vol. 34, No. 3, pp. 255-268, 2007. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/203960722?pq-origsite=gscholar&fromopenview=true>.
- [15] B.E. DeDominicis. "Back to the Future: Post-Cold War US National Security Strategy and American Hegemony under the Trump Administration," *Global Studies Journal*, Vol. 11, No. 3. pp. 1-25. 2018. DOI:10.18848/1835-4432/CGP/v11i03/1-25.
- [16] B.F. Braumoeller, "Systemic Politics and the Origins of Great Power Conflict," *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 102, No. 1, pp. 77-93, 2008. DOI:10.1017/S0003055408080088.
- [17] H.J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, McGraw-Hill, 2005.
- [18] Y. Talmazan, "U.S. Ambassador David Friedman Reportedly Says Israel Has the Right to Annex Parts of the West Bank," *NBCNews*, June 9, 2019. Accessed June 9, 2019. <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/u-s-ambassador-david-friedman-says-israel-has-right-annex-n1015436>.
- [19] S. Erlanger, "Europe Vows to Invest in Defense, but U.S. Wants More," *New York Times*, June 7, 2019,



p. A10.

- [20] P. Demetriou, "NATO & CSDP: Can the EU Afford to Go Solo?" *Cogent Social Sciences*, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 1-16, 2016. DOI:10.1080/23311886.2016.1208376.
- [21] F. Rösch, "Realism as Social Criticism: The Thinking Partnership of Hannah Arendt and Hans Morgenthau," *International Politics*, Vol. 50, No. 6, pp. 815-829, 2013. DOI:10.1057/ip.2013.32.
- [22] E. Wong and C. Edmondson, "White House Proposes Arms Deal for Taiwan," *New York Times*, June 7, 2019, p. A6.
- [23] H. Gardiner and D. Searcey, "Tillerson Pledges New Aid to Africa," *New York Times*, March 7, 2018, p. A7.
- [24] C. Buckley and C. Horton, "Unification is 'Great Trend of History,' Xi Warns Taiwan," *New York Times*, January 2, 2019, p. A8.
- [25] G.W. Bush, "Bush State of the Union address," *CNN*, January 29, 2002. Accessed February 28, 2023. <http://edition.cnn.com/2002/ALLPOLITICS/01/29/bush.speech.txt/>.
- [26] M. Laforgia and W. Bogdanich, "Deal might Put Bombs' Secrets in Saudi Hands," *New York Times*, June 8, 2019, p. A1.
- [27] "Russian Fighter Jets and Bombs Intercepted off Alaska for the Second Day in a Row," *CBS News*. May 22, 2019. Accessed February 28, 2023. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/russian-fighter-jets-and-bombers-intercepted-off-alaska-for-second-day-2019-05-22/>.
- [28] M. Keneally, "From 'Fire and Fury' to 'Rocket Man,' the Various Barbs Traded Between Trump and Kim Jong Un: They've Had Some Tense Words in the Past," *ABC News*, June 12, 2018. Accessed February 28, 2023. <https://abcnews.go.com/International/fire-fury-rocket-man-barbs-traded-trump-kim/story?id=53634996>.
- [29] USA Today Network, "Hawaii False Missile Alert: How it Happened, Timeline of Events," *Chicago Sun Times*, January 16, 2018. Accessed February 28, 2023. <https://chicago.suntimes.com/2018/1/15/18390941/hawaii-false-missile-alert-how-it-happened-timeline-of-events>.
- [30] C. Fettweis, "The Beliefs of the Blob," *Orbis*, Vol. 67, No. 1, pp. 27-44, 2023. DOI:10.1016/j.orbis.2022.12.006.
- [31] T. Cha, "Whither North Korea? Competing Historical Analogies and the Lessons of the Soviet Case," *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* Vol. 32, No. 4, pp. 561-582, 2020. DOI:10.22883/kjda.2020.32.4.004.
- [32] M. Laruelle, "Accusing Russia of Fascism: Polemics Around Russia's Belonging to Europe," *Russia in Global Affairs*, Vol. 18, No. 4, pp. 100-123. 2020. DOI: 10.31278/1810-6374-2020-18-4-100-123.
- [33] C. Johnson, "A Different Cold War? European Settlement of 1963 and Afterward," *Journal of Economic and Social Thought*, Vol. 9, No. 1, pp. 1-37. 2022. <http://kspjournals.org/index.php/JEST/article/view/2302>.
- [34] Cho, Y.C. and W.A. Callahan, "Understanding South Korean Middle Power Diplomacy Discourses through the Concept of Sadae (Serving the Great)," *Issues and Studies*, Vol. 58, No. 4, pp. 1-26, 2022. DOI:10.1142/S1013251122500060.
- [35] A.C. Bradford, "Latinx Veterans, Outsider Patriotism and the Motives Behind Minoritized Military Service," *Journal of Veterans Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 3, pp.4-22, 2021. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21061/jvs.v7i3.272>.
- [36] "The Vietnam War and American Nationalism: The Institutionalization of Stereotypes in the Postwar US Foreign Policy Making Process," *The International Journal of Interdisciplinary Civic and Political Studies*, Vol. 16, No 1, pp. 65-88, 2021. DOI:10.18848/2327-0071/CGP/v16i01/65-88.