

United States: Democrats Attack Trump - From the Right on Korea, Russia

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Democratic Party politicians and media outlets that reflect their positions have attacked Trump with arguments to the right of him on certain issues.

One is U.S. policy on North Korea. Trump has been taken to task for meeting with Kim Jong-un, initiating discussions with the Democratic People's Republic over its possession of nuclear weapons and missiles to deliver them. The charge is that even meeting with Kim was wrong because it allegedly legitimizes and "prettifies" him.

The Democrats are opposed to Trump's cancelling - at least temporarily — of the aggressive "war games" the U.S. stages with the South Korean army.

The North's stated goals are for Washington to end the state of war with Pyongyang that has persisted since the cease fire and stalemate of 1953 ended the hot war launched by the U.S. in 1950; a peace treaty and establishment of diplomatic relations; and an end to the economic sanctions against it.

Trump's demands are for the complete and verifiable nuclear disarmament of the North, including its missiles, while expanding the U.S. nuclear arsenal and missiles.

These goals can only be reached by piecemeal, step by step reciprocal actions to deescalate by both sides. A brief history of the conflict illustrates why.

Almost all Americans are unaware that the U.S. invaded Korea in 1945, and has militarily occupied the South ever since. Korea was a colony of Japan before the latter's defeat in WWII. The U.S., as the victors, wanted to dominate Korea and invaded. But the Soviet army occupied the north, limiting the U.S. occupation to the south, resulting in the division of the peninsula that has remained since.

In the north, the DPR, a Stalinist regime, was established, under former anti-Japanese guerrilla fighter Kim Il-sung, and the Soviet army withdrew. The south was under U.S. direct military rule until 1948, when the U.S. set up the Republic of Korea through fake elections that established the first of a long line of puppet dictatorships, a few with a democratic façade, most not. Bourgeois democracy was set up in 1987.

The North and South each claimed to be the government of the whole peninsula, and civil war broke out between the two in 1950. The U.S., seeing an opportunity, massively augmented its occupying troops in an invasion of the North and rapidly moved toward China, which then sent a massive army to counter the U.S., pushing American troops back, finally settling on the original dividing line between the two Koreas.

For three years, the war continued, with little change in the positions of the two sides - a stalemate.

Massive U.S. bombing, with little anti-aircraft fire, flattened the North until the U.S. under the Republican Eisenhower initiated talks that led to the ceasefire.

An article that appeared in 2015 on the *Vox online* media stated: "The bombing was long, leisurely and merciless, even by the assessment of America's own leaders. 'Over a period of three years or so, we killed off - what - 20 percent of the population,' Air force Gen. Curtis LeMay, head of the Strategic Air Command during the Korean War, told the Office of Air Force History in 1984."

The U.S. stationed atomic weapons for many years in South Korea, aimed at the North and China. The War Games in the South included mock nuclear attack on the North, and rehearsal of future commando raids to overthrow its government.

Everyone in North Korea knows this history. No wonder that its leadership is deeply suspicious of U.S. intentions, and will not surrender its nuclear arms unilaterally first, with vague promises that the U.S. will finally make peace after.

That's why the reduction of tensions must be step by step, with reciprocal actions on the ground by both sides.

Trump can blow up this process by demanding a complete surrender by the North first. As of now, the discussions are proceeding.

The Democrats are opposed to all this. They do not want end the Korean War. They do not want a peaceful resolution. They want the hostile situation that existed before the Trump-Kim meeting to be reasserted. Right now they are to the right of Trump concerning Korea, and well to the right of the South Korean government and people who have overwhelmingly welcomed the possibility of peace.

The Democrats are also to the right of Trump concerning Russia. Some have even called "treason!" because of the Trump-Putin meeting. Every day the Democratic media like CNN and MSNBC whip up a frenzy against Russia. A Democratic spokesman on National Public Radio slipped and said "the Soviets" when he meant Russia. Others have conflated the two by referring to Russia as the main enemy of the United States from 1917 to today. They are playing on Cold War fears to advance their anti-Russian aggressive stance.

One fact that indicates that Russia today is not the Soviet Union, is that Ukraine was part of the USSR. Today Russia and the regime in Kiev are at each other's throats.

After the overthrow of the Soviet Union by the Soviet bureaucracy, capitalism has been restored in all its former Republics. But the process was brutal. There wasn't anywhere enough capital to buy up the nationalized property because capitalist accumulation did not exist in the USSR. The process of privatization was carried out in criminal fashion, through all sorts of schemes where the more connected from the former regime, as well as underworld figures who did accumulate some capital in the black market, in competition with each other, seized ownership of the economy in what has been called "gangster capitalism."

The result in both Ukraine and Russia (and elsewhere) has been the emergence of what the West call "oligarchs" - in reality the richest capitalists on top just like in the West.

One theme the Democrats harp on is Russia's takeover of Crimea from Ukraine. Here too, as in the case with Korea, some brief history is in order.

Russia under Czarina Catherine the Great captured Crimea from the Turkey-dominated Ottoman Empire some 250 years ago in the Russian-Turkey war. It was Russified after, to the detriment of the

Muslim Crimean Tatars who remained.

In the 1854-56 Crimean War, British, French and Ottoman troops fought against Czarist Russia for control of the peninsula. The Russian forces won.

In the formation of the Soviet Union in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution, the USSR's leadership under Lenin carried out the Bolsheviks' policy self-determination of the nations of the former Czarist Empire. A few chose independence. Most chose to join the USSR, but with self-determination of various types (separate republics, autonomous regions, etc.) One of those nations was Ukraine, which became a separate Soviet Socialist Republic. Crimea became part of the Russian SSR, because its population was largely Russian.

Without going into the history of the Stalinist period, which saw severe repression of the Crimean Tatars, Crimea remained part of the Russian SSR until 1954. Largely for economic technical reasons, the Soviet government under Nikita Khrushchev (who was himself Ukrainian) transferred Crimea to Ukraine. This was no big deal since Ukraine was part of the USSR, and the Soviet Navy remained in control of the large Sevastopol naval base on the Black Sea. The rest of the world hardly noticed,

Following the overthrow of the USSR, Ukraine became independent. It made a deal with Russia, whereby Russia would remain in control of the Sevastopol port. This situation lasted until the Maiden (Square) protests in Kiev in November 2013 resulted in the overthrow of the elected president Victor Yanukovich in 2014. By this time Ukraine was not only dominated by "oligarchs" in the economy, it was increasingly authoritarian, like Russia. Socially, the two are alike.

The resulting government in Kiev in western Ukraine was led by an oligarch, the "Chocolate King" Petro Poroshenko. Ukraine had become divided, between largely Ukrainian speakers in the western part, and largely Russian speakers in the east, where Yanukovich had his electoral support. The new Kiev government took step to downgrade the Russian language and other actions the Russian speakers feared, and there was a revolt in the east to form independent states that started a war between Kiev, supported by NATO, and the east supported by Russia.

Without going more into the history since, Kiev threatened to join NATO. If that were to occur, Russia would not only lose its naval base at Sevastopol, Russia's only Black Sea port, it would fall into NATO's hands. Russia was already under great pressure from the U.S.-led post Cold War expansion of NATO eastward up to its borders. Putin decided to retake Crimea to prevent NATO from capturing Sevastopol. This has been welcomed by the majority Russian speakers of Crimea, although opposed by the Tatars.

So the situation is much more complex than the simplistic view that Russia invaded Ukraine common in the West, and which the Democrats are thundering about.

To say that Russia today is the U.S.'s greatest enemy, as the Democrats do, ignores the anti-Russia aggression of NATO. It also ignores the fact that Russia is hardly an economic threat to the U.S. Its major export is natural gas and oil - raw materials, not cars and machine tools from Germany, for one example.

Finally, the Democrats are singing high praises to the witch hunting political police of the FBI, the worldwide subversive CIA, and the NSA, which among other spy activities, conducts surveillance of all U.S. citizens as Snowden revealed. No need to discuss the histories of these nefarious outfits.

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