

US Presence in South Korea Drives Instability

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US and European interests continue to portray the government and nation of North Korea as a perpetual security threat to both Asia and the world. Allegations regarding [the nation's nuclear weapon and ballistic missile programs](#) are continuously used as justification for not only a continuous US military presence on the Korean Peninsula, but as justification for a wider continued presence across all of Asia-Pacific.

In reality, what is portrayed as an irrational and provocative posture by the North Korean government, is in fact driven by a very overt, and genuinely provocative posture by the United States and its allies within the South Korean government.

During this year's Foal Eagle joint US-South Korean military exercises, US-European and South Korean media sources intentionally made mention of preparations for a "decapitation" strike on North Korea. Such an operation would be intended to quickly eliminate North Korean military and civilian leadership to utterly paralyze the state and any possible response to what would most certainly be the subsequent invasion, occupation and subjugation of North Korea.

The Business Insider in an article titled, "[SEAL Team 6 is reportedly training for a decapitation strike against North Korea's Kim regime](#)," would report:

The annual Foal Eagle military drills between the US and South Korea will include some heavy hitters this year — the Navy SEAL team that took out Osama bin Laden, Army Special Forces, and F-35s — South Korea's Joon Gang Daily reports.

South Korean news outlets report that the SEALs, who will join the exercise for the first time, will simulate a "decapitation attack," or a strike to remove North Korea's leadership.

To introduce an element of plausible deniability to South Korean reports, the article would continue by stating:

Pentagon spokesman **Cmdr. Gary Ross** later told Business Insider that the US military "does not train for decapitation missions" of any kind.

Yet this is a categorically false statement. Throughout the entirety of the Cold War, US policymakers, military planners and operational preparations focused almost solely on

devising methods of “decapitating” the Soviet Union’s political and military leadership.



In more recent years, policy papers and the wars inspired by them have lead to documented instances of attempted “decapitation” operations, including the 2011 US-NATO assault on Libya in which the government of **Muammar Qaddafi** was targeted by airstrikes aimed at crippling the Libyan state and assassinating both members of the Qaddafi family as well as members of the then ruling government.

Similar operations were aimed at Iraq earlier during the 2003 invasion and occupation by US-led forces.

Regarding North Korea more specifically, entire policy papers have been produced by prominent US policy think tanks including the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) devising plans to decimate North Korea’s military and civilian leadership, invade and occupy the nation and confound North Korea’s capacity to resist what would inevitably be its integration with its southern neighbor.

A 2009 report titled, “[Preparing for Sudden Change in North Korea](#),” lays out policy recommendations regarding regime change in North Korea. It states in its description:

The authors consider the challenges that these scenarios would pose—ranging from securing Pyongyang’s nuclear arsenal to providing humanitarian assistance—and analyze the interests of the United States and others. They then provide recommendations for U.S. policy. In particular, they urge Washington to bolster its contingency planning and capabilities in cooperation with South Korea, Japan, and others, and to build a dialogue with China that could address each side’s concerns.

Preparations for these documented plans which include provisions for invasion, occupation and the eventual integration of North Korea with South Korea have been ongoing for years with the most recent Foal Eagle exercises being merely their latest, and most blatant manifestation.

The aforementioned Business Insider article would also report:

Yet a decapitation force would fit with a March 1 Wall Street Journal report that the White House is considering military action against the Kim regime.

The SEALs boarded the USS Carl Vinson aircraft carrier and should arrive in South Korea on Wednesday, Joon Gang Daily reports.

South Korea has also made efforts toward a decapitation force, and international calls for action have increased in intensity after North Korea’s latest missile test, which simulated a saturation attack to defeat US and allied missile defenses.

While US-European and South Korean media platforms continue claiming such preparations are being made in reaction to North Korean military programs, careful analysis of North Korea and South Korea’s respective economic and military power reveal immense disparity and North Korea’s military capabilities as solely defensive with any first strike against its

neighbors almost certainly leading to retaliation and the nation's destruction.

North Korea's nuclear arsenal and its expanding ballistic missile capabilities serve then only to raise the costs of any first strike carried out against it by US and South Korean forces. Claims that preparations by US and South Korean forces to carry out these first strikes are in response to North Korean provocations mirror similar political deceit that surrounded and clouded debate and analysis regarding US aggression in North Africa and the Middle East over the past two decades.



Ultimately, regardless of what political leaders in Washington or Seoul claim, the historical track record of the United States and its allies speaks for itself. Its annual military exercises and its adversarial approach to negotiations and relations with North Korea serve only to further drive tensions on both the peninsula and across the wider Asia-Pacific region.

For the United States, the perpetuation of instability helps justify its otherwise unjustifiable presence in a region literally an ocean away from its own borders. And while Washington cites "North Korean" weapons as a pretext for its continued presence in South Korea, its decades-spanning policy of encircling and attempting to contain neighboring China serves as its actual purpose for remaining involved in Korea's affairs.

Provocative policies coupled with equally provocative military preparations including these most recent exercises openly aimed at North Korea's leadership, guarantee continued instability and thus continued justification for a US presence in the region.

Washington's careful cultivation of tensions on the peninsula serve as just one of many intentionally engineered and perpetuated conflicts across the region. Knowing well that nations targeted by US subversion and provocations will make preparations to defend against them, and possessing the media platforms to portray these preparations as "provocations" in and of themselves, the US has persuaded entire swaths of both its own population and those in regions inflicted by instability it itself drives, that Washington alone possesses the ability to contain such instability with its continued, extraterritorial presence.

In reality, the true solution for establishing peace and prosperity in these inflicted regions is for the US to simply withdraw.

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