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Another Wake-Up Call from North Korea

Thirty years ago, on March 23, 1983, Ronald Reagan made a television address calling on the United States to build an anti-missile defense. His rationale was compelling: Isn't it better to save American lives than to kill millions of the enemy?

Our enemy then was the fearsome Soviet missile force. Reagan's steadfast determination to build a U.S. anti-missile defense was why he won the Cold War at Reykjavik (as we now know from revealed Soviet documents) without firing a shot (as Margaret Thatcher famously said).

The propaganda against U.S. anti-missile defense started immediately after Reagan's 1983 speech with Ted Kennedy ridiculing it as Star Wars, and continues to this day. The building of an anti-missile system always posed the number-one non-negotiable issue between the United States and our enemies and, incomprehensively, between conservatives and the Left.

We now face other enemies. But the Left is still dug in behind its opposition to saving American lives by an anti-missile system.

Barack Obama became President spouting the typical leftwing anti-defense policy and dreaming of the fantasy of a nuclear-free world. He seems to think diplomatic talks, combined with his personal charm, can replace peace through strength, but it can't.

One of President Obama's first acts was to effectively cancel the final phase of a Europe-based missile defense system because it was vehemently opposed by Russia. He started unilaterally reducing our nuclear deterrent in the hope our enemies would follow suit, which, of course, they didn't.

Obama chose Chuck Hagel as Secretary of Defense because he supported zero-nuclear foolishness. Hagel was on the Board of Directors of the Ploughshares Fund, which gave millions of dollars to spread zero-nuke nonsense and lift sanctions on Iran.

Obama used his State of the Union speech this year to breathe new life into his effort to reduce nuclear weapons around the world. He wants to cut our nuclear forces by about a third, but Communist North Korea is not responsive to these overtures.

North Korea's new boss, Kim Jong Un, is the 30-year-old grandson of the Communist tyrant who started the Korean War in 1950. Kim has now put our 28,000 U.S. troops at risk by declaring that the 1953 Armistice suspending the Korean War is null and void, so North and South Korea are in a "state of war."

U.S. defense experts believe that North Korean missiles can reach Hawaii and Alaska, but not yet the continental United States. North Korea has conducted a long-range missile test, a nuclear test, and demonstrated a mobile launcher, all of which indicate that North Korea's technology is advancing faster than the U.S. had predicted.

Obama has now reversed his April 2009 decision to close our missile field in Alaska. The Pentagon says it will spend $1 billion to expand our West Coast missile-defense system by installing 14 additional ground-based missile interceptors at Fort Greely, Alaska (as originally planned by the Bush Administration). The Pentagon says it is also looking for a third U.S. site to protect our East Coast.

Sending U.S. B-2 stealth bombers from Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri to drop dummy munitions on a South Korean island during a military drill with South Korea was another signal that Obama may have pivoted. That was clearly a message to Kim to be careful how he proceeds with his military provocations.

The B-2 bombers cost $135,000 per hour to fly, so two round trips to South Korea cost about $5.4 million. Since this show of force was primarily to defend South Korea, we should take Donald Trump's suggestion and send the bill to South Korea, which they can pay with the money they are making out of the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement.

We were promised that the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement, supported by Obama and passed by Congress in October 2011, would create U.S. jobs by promoting U.S. exports to South Korea. That pie-in-the-sky promise was always a lie; the Agreement promoted only imports, particularly cheap Korean cars coming into the U.S. without paying any U.S. tariff or tax.

But that is not the worst of the free-trade trick played on Americans. South Korean products are especially cheap because South Korea hires 44,000 North Korean workers, paid 25 cents an hour, at the Kaesong Industrial Complex located just north of the North-South boundary.

The workers’ wages at this sweatshop are paid directly to the North Korean government, which skims off up to 45 percent. North Korea’s Kaesong profits are estimated to provide 36 percent of North Korea’s national income, so the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement has forced Americans to finance North Korea’s nuclear program to threaten us.

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