How to deal with Nuclear North Korea? Hawk vs. Dove Engagement

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Major Goals for Today

• Issues Knowledge
  • Historical Background of North Korea Nuclear Crisis (major chronology)
  • Nature of NK’s Nuclear Program

• Strategies
  • Containment
  • Hawk Engagement (Victor Cha)
  • Dove (or Full-blown) Engagement (David Kang)

• Development of Your Perspectives
## Table of Contents

- **Historical Background**
  - Major chronology of NK nuclear crisis
  - Short Film (Nuclear Nightmare: Understanding NK, Discovery Channel): 15 minutes

- **Strategies**
  - Introduction of useful concepts
    - Containment
    - Hawk engagement
    - Dove engagement
    - Preemption
    - Preventive action
  - Hawk Engagement versus Dove Engagement
    - Main points of each argument
    - Reasons for each argument

- **Q & A**
Major Chronology of NK’s Nuclear Crisis (1)

- 1993: NK announces that NK will withdraw from Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty
  - NK pledges to freeze and eventually dismantle nuclear weapons program
  - US offers the building of two power-producing reactors
  - South Korea and Japan would provide oil to NK.
- July 2000: NK threatens to restart nuclear program due to delays in building nuclear power plants
- 2001: US President Bush’s axis of evil speech and condemnation of NK
- Oct 2002: NK tells US that it has a second covert nuclear weapons program
- Nov 2002: US, South Korea, and Japan halt oil supplies to NK promised in 1994 deal
Major Chronology (2)

- April 2003 April ~ Nov 2006: Five rounds of Six Party Talks
- Jan 2006: NK says it won’t return to the Talks unless US lifts financial restrictions imposed for its alleged currency counterfeiting
- Oct 9 2006: NK says it has conducted its first-ever nuclear test
- Feb 2007: Sixth round of Six Party Talks opens. In a last minute deal, NK agrees to close its main nuclear reactor in exchange for fuel aids
- Dec 2008: NK says it will slow down dismantlement process due to delays in fuel aids from US
- May 2009: NK argues that it has successfully carried out its second, underground nuclear test
- Dec 2011: Kim Jong-il died
- April 2012: NK launches a rocket-mounted satellite but fails. Observers argue that it is a long-range missile test of the sort.
Nature of NK Nuclear Crisis

- North Korea: Regime security
  - Economic difficulty
  - US alleged aggression and threat (BoP turned against it)
- South Korea: Non-proliferation, avoidance of hostage
- US: Non-proliferation, fear of transferring nuclear technology to terrorists
- China: Ambivalence: Non-proliferation, but NK’s survival as a buffer state
- Recurrence and Repetition
  - Chicken or Egg?
  - US nonaggression or NK nuclear Dismantlement?
Nuclear Nightmare: Understanding NK

- Discovery Channel 2003
- Link:
How to deal with Nuclear NK? 

**Strategies**

- Containment
- Hawk Engagement (Victor Cha)
  - Preemption
  - Preventive action
- Dove (Full-blown) Engagement (David Kang)
**Concepts (1)**

- **Containment**
  - Isolation policy
  - Key features: no communication, coercion, threats, and intimidation

- **Hawk Engagement**
  - Containment plus Engagement or Conditional Engagement
  - If you do x (dismantling of nuclear program), I will do y (withdrawal of economic sanction or signing of nonaggression pact)
  - Maintaining necessary deterrent measures is precondition for this.

- **Dove (Full-blown) Engagement**
  - Unilateral Engagement
  - Give NK what it want first, then see what NK does (i.e., sunshine policy)
  - Maintaining superior military and economic capabilities is precondition for this.
Concepts (2)

- **Preemption**
  - It occurs when a state perceives aggression by another as *imminent* and acts first to forestall the impending attack

- **Preventive action**
  - It occurs when a state is motivated to attack first, or otherwise suffer increasing inferiority in capabilities vis-à-vis the opponent over time

- **Similarity and Difference**
  - Both preemption and preventive action (striking first) occurs out of fear and anticipation, not anchored in what is happening to a state
  - Difference b/w them is time horizon (imminent or over time)

- **Possible Options for inferior NK toward superior SK**
Which Strategy is the Best?
Hawk vs. Dove (Full-blown)

- Exclusion of Containment Policy
  - Containment is likely to reinforce NK’s “double-or-nothing” logic by increasing NK’s fear of being wiped out in international relations ....can lead to NK’s suicidal attack
  - Containment policy only exacerbates NK’s security fears (Kang)
- Engagements, how to do it?
- Hawk vs. Dove
Hawk Engagement (1)
Victor Cha

Why?
- Possibilities of NK’s preemptive and/or preventive strike
- Three mitigating factors:
  - liberal democracy
  - Concern with reputational cost of being branded as an aggressor
  - Defensive, rather than offensive military doctrines
- All three factors are missing in NK
- Therefore, considerable chance of NK’s preemptive/preventive strike
- How to prevent NK’s strike-first policy?
- Hawk Engagement!
Hawk Engagement (2)

- Hawk Engagement is the only realistic option
  - Conditional engagement; if you do x, I will do y
  - Underlying assumption: We can’t believe NK
  - Deceptive and Veiled NK (Several skirmish examples)
    - 1995 violation of the armistice by intruding the Joint Security Area
    - 1998 ballistic missile testing over the sea of Japan
    - 2012 Yeonpyong-do Bombing

- Dove Engagement
  - Too dangerous in the sense that US may end up giving everything to NK while failing to dismantle NK nuclear program
Dove Engagement (1)
David Kang

Why?
- No reason to be afraid of full-blown engagement with NK
- Defensive and deterrent nature
  - NK’s nuclear weapons, ballistic missile programs, and massive conventional military deployments are aimed at deterrence and defense (tools for defensive survival)
- NK is economically and militarily weak, thus non-threatening
  - 30% of South Korea’s military capability
- NK is rational enough not to engage in the suicidal preemptive/preventive attack
- NK is rational enough not to provoke US by exporting nuclear technology to terrorists
- NK itself has shown some genuine reform efforts to change its society and system (introduction of price mechanism in the 1990s)
Dove Engagement (2)

- Full-blown engagement is the only realistic option
  - NK’s survival concern (deterrence, defense)
  - NK’s rationality and reform efforts
  - In the longer term, Fb E is the strategy of “having the enemy destroy itself by its hand.”
  - Liberal values and market mechanism will prevail in the end
- Hawk Engagement
  - may just end up prolonging the nuclear crisis without fundamentally solving the issue
  - Hawk engagement cannot diminish suspicion and mistrust toward each other
Which one of these is better?

- Underlying assumptions about NK
- Hawk
  - NK is weak but strong enough to strike first
  - NK may turn irrational
  - NK cannot be trusted
- Dove
  - NK is weak, thus not threatening
  - NK is rational not to harm itself
  - NK can be trusted, given favorable conditions
Next South Korean Policy?

  - Sunshine policy (Dove engagement)
  - Failed to prevent nuclear NK, but stability
- **Lee Myung Bak (2008 – 2013)**
  - Vision 2030 (Hawk engagement)
  - Failed to prevent nuclear NK and instability
- **? (2013 - )**
  - Back to Sunshine?
  - Some combinations of dove and hawk?
Q & A

- Thank you for your kind attention!

- Welcome your comments, questions, and suggestions