

US Political Establishment Confused over North Korea

News:

While pressing ahead with his spontaneous decision to meet North Korean leader Kim Jong Un; US President Donald Trump has already begun lowering expectations. According to *Reuters*:

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Saturday his planned meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un could fizzle without an agreement or it could result in "the greatest deal for the world" to ease nuclear tensions between the two countries.

"I may leave fast" if progress does not seem possible, Trump said at a campaign rally for Republican congressional candidate Rick Saccone in western Pennsylvania. Trump said he believes North Korea wants to make peace and that, "I think it's time."

A time and place to meet has not yet been set, although the meeting is supposed to happen by the end of May.

"Who knows what's going to happen?" said Trump, who added that if the meeting takes place, "I may leave fast or we may sit down and make the greatest deal for the world."

Trump made the shocking decision on Thursday to meet with Kim after the North Korean leader's invitation was relayed by a South Korean delegation who visited the White House. The move abruptly reversed decades of U.S. policy aimed at preventing North Korea from developing nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles.

Comment:

Donald Trump's spontaneity highlights the striking dysfunction of the American political system and the personal weakness of the US President within this system. But it also shows the paralysis of the American political establishment over the Korean question at this time. Only a day earlier, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson had been explaining to the media why it is not possible for direct talks with North Korea to take place at this time. It is highly unusual for the leader of any government, much less the world's superpower, to make a strategic decision of this magnitude almost in an instant, without prior consultation. And clearly not trusting his own administration, Trump even had the South Korean delegation themselves make the initial announcement about the US-North Korea meeting from the lawns of the White House, and he personally entered the White House briefing room to prepare them for the forthcoming news.

Donald Trump is in fact struggling to regain the initiative over North Korea after events have run ahead of him, due in particular to the efforts of South Korean President Moon Jae-In. The American political establishment has become particularly vexed over the question of North Korea, not because the Americans want to solve the crisis but because they want its prolongation. The Korean conflict, which predates the closed chapter of Vietnam, has provided the Americans with a powerful ongoing

excuse, since the end of World War II, for heavy American military presence in the western Pacific Ocean of China's doorstep. Furthermore, it has helped provide justification for suffocating American 'alliances' with Japan and others in the region. But Trump's risky and amateurish mismanagement of the conflict has only been counterproductive for US interests by focussing the minds and efforts of America's opponents on bringing speedy resolution to the crisis.

At fault is the entire concept of international security in the present age. The relative strengths of the major powers will forever be in flux. But the only path that the present world order provides to acknowledge this is through building up military strength and engaging in arms races. It is this that has brought increasing numbers of nations to acquire weapons of mass destruction. In previous ages, with flexible borders, great powers were able to exchange territories to acknowledge changes in political and economic strength. The focus was on ability in governance, with weak governments ceding territories to states with more capable governments. But the post-Westphalian nation state model, in making borders rigid, has resulted in a brittle and highly unstable international security framework. Strong governments must prove themselves through military muscle and weak governments must be physically invaded and crushed or, at the least, subversively controlled by the hidden hand of one or other major power.

Islam is opposed to the Westphalian model. The expanding Khilafah (Caliphate) State of the past was able to rapidly acquire new territories not simply on the basis of military force but because of its superior method of governance and the political, economic and social stability that took hold under its rule. Arms races were almost unheard of, and technology was used for the good of mankind and not for the purposes of producing weapons of mass destruction. The Ulema of the past did not even like the use of cannon because of their widespread harm to human life, so Muslim military commanders would be restricted to employing them to break high fortress walls in order to send in skilled combatants for hand-to-hand fighting using swords.

The ills in the world today cannot be cured by following the political ideals of the West. Indeed these ideals are the very cause of the world's present sicknesses. Muslims must throw off the false gods of the West and champion the only true political ideology, the Deen of Islam, revealed by our Creator to our Master Mohammad (saw), valid for all times including this present 'modern' age. The world will only be fully cured of its ills when Muslims complete their duty to re-establish the Islamic Khilafah (Caliphate) State on the method of the Prophet (saw) that will implement Islam and carry its light to the entire world.

And Allah (swt) says in the noble Qur'an: ﴿وَقُلْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ الْبَاطِلُ إِنَّ الْبَاطِلَ كَانَ زَهُوقًا﴾

“And say: The truth has come and the falsehood has vanished; surely falsehood is a vanishing (thing).” [Qur'an 17:81]

**Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by
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