

DEBAT

Marcus NOLAND

Thank you. Now I would like to turn to the question-and-answer period. What I would like to do is group three questions together and then give the panel the opportunity to respond. When you ask your question, please identify yourself, and if the questions are directed at a particular individual, please let us know that as well.

Douglas PAAL

I am Doug Paal from the Carnegie Endowment in Washington. I want to thank the organisers for arranging the conference version of the farewell symphony of Haydn, where one-by-one the performers leave before the piece is over.

I want to first pay tribute to Governor Narayanan's insight and wisdom on the big picture of security in China. In the great tradition of Indian diplomats like Shyam Saran and Shivshankar Menon and now Vijay Gokhale in Beijing, that is a very important statement.

I want to ask two, somewhat related, questions. Throughout the discussion of North Korea, no one has mentioned containment or deterrence. Some have talked about comprehensive, verifiable, irreversible, destruction of the nuclear capabilities, but that seems to be very far away, and people do not want to intrude with violence, so we may be living with containment and deterrence a long time. Can we do that for 35 years or whatever the life expectancy of Kim Jong-un is likely to be?

Secondly, and a little bit more provocatively, if you go to the White House and ask people in the current administration about the erratic statements of President Trump and his sabre-rattling characterisations in 140 characters, they will say, have you noticed that he has intimidated China into taking more steps to constrain the flow of assistance to North Korea? Have you noticed that since he made his threats there have been no more ICBM tests, or nuclear tests? Maybe his methods have a way of working. How do you respond to that?

Renaud Girard

I am Renaud Girard, foreign affairs columnist of *Le Figaro*, a French daily. The main danger in Asia is two rising powers; China and America. The current situation in the peninsula will not change, China obviously does not want the reunification of Korea, and in South Korea I do not think the youth want a reunification with North Korea, maybe the elderly, but not the youth. Japan does not say anything about that path, I do not think that Japan wants the reunification of Korea, so I do not think that there will be any change. You have a dictator who does not want to end like Gadhafi and Saddam Hussein, and will try to protect himself. areas to these two big powers, China and America, I would like to know what is exactly the role is that China assigns to the US in the Pacific? What sort of American presence is China ready to accept in the Pacific, in Asia?

Marcus NOLAND

That is a question from a man who asks questions for a living. Are there any other questions before I turn to the panel? Okay, who would like to go first?

Jusuf WANANDI

I will answer Doug's question first. And I will leave the question of containment or deterrence to the experts of the Korean Peninsula. But let me answer the question regarding the efforts of the President's statements. He said about his successes himself, but who believes him, being always capricious and changing his views? You must not take it

that Kim Jong Un is a dummy. I do think otherwise, that he has tricked President Trump into a diatribe on the issue of proliferation in North Korea and looking better because of that.

In the meantime the status-quo stays, and President's Trumps standing internationally has declined, not only because of his ways in handling the North Korean issue of proliferation, but also of other issues, such as trade, climate change, the recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. On the proliferation issue, it will be wise if he could consult both South Korean and Japan more closely.

Second is the question of Mr. Girard. As someone observing the East Asian situation and China's role in the region, I would like to argue that China does think that the East Asian region is big enough for the two big powers to co-exist together and to cooperate. There are some things that they don't want the U.S. to do, such as spying along their shores. They proposed new rules for the relationship between two big powers some years ago, but was not taken up by the U.S.

In the long terms, since the 17th Communist Party Congress asserted that they care ready to lead the world, although it should be in the long term, there is the possibility for a more assertive foreign policy in the future, especially in East Asia. But in the short and medium term they know their limitations in competing against the U.S.

They also are aware that they also cooperate with each other on many things, including economically and other global issues. So, in the near and even in the medium term they know they are not ready to take over world leadership, but tensions, such as on North Korean policies could happen in the future.

Qingguo can add some more thought on this issue.

JIA Qingguo

The first question is whether deterrence and containment strategy can be used. I think it can be from the American perspective. The US can actually erect a missile defence system in the middle of the Pacific and shield itself, at least the US continent, from a North Korean nuclear attack. However, even from an American perspective, it can pose a serious problem. First, what about the Pacific part of the US? It cannot be protected by some kind of missile defence arrangement, and what about the US allies? American allies, Japan and South Korea, particularly, are not going to be happy with that because they do not have a viable deterrent capability to do that, and China is not happy because China is next to South Korea and no missile defence arrangement can protect China. There is also a more serious problem, that is, if that happens, the international non-proliferation regime is going to be down the drain, which is a problem and a big challenge for all of us.

Is Trump's policy to make China push North Korea, working? To some extent it is. However, I think it works because China's position is moving in that direction. I think the discourse on North Korea in China's policy circle has moved over time from how much we should help North Korea, to whether we should help North Korea, to how much we should push North Korea to give up nuclear weapons nowadays. Given this context, it is not a surprise that China is more responsive to Trump's pressures.

Finally, what is the role of the US in this region for China? What is its ideal role? I do not know, but I think the fact that China is on the rise poses a serious problem for China as well, as it is very difficult to define its interest and to know what it really wants. China is both a developing country and a developed country at the same time. It is a rich country and a poor country at the same time. It is a strong country and a weak country at the same time. It is an ordinary country and a superpower at the same time. As a result, China's interests are often in conflict, so it is very difficult for China to figure out what it wants at this time of transition. That, to some extent, affects our view of what the proper role of the US should be in this part of the world. Sometimes we want the US to stay and to play a larger role, especially when it comes to making sure that Japan does not become remilitarised, and to maintain the security order in the region, but sometimes we find the US presence a nuisance. The US military tries to stop China from doing this and doing that and issues threats against China. China also finds itself excluded from these military alliances, so it is the other party, not one of us. I think this alienates China. It will take some time for China to develop a clearer view as to what kind of role is proper for the US to play in the region.

YIM Sung-Joon

I think we are like poor soldiers standing at the front facing difficult questions, nevertheless I liked that Doug Paal made a question out of his disappointment in dealing with North Korea. We put our hands together on this issue when we were in Washington, and Doug has been very disappointed, tired of North Korea's brinkmanship, so I am glad he raised this question and put up his wisdom to deal with North Korea by either means of containment and deterrence.

I spent most of my diplomatic career struggling with this issue, and I retired without seeing the resolution of this issue, but this issue is always on my mind. When I dealt with North Korea, I thought we could bargain and even buy North Korea's nuclear programme with cash, but I was mistaking and I no longer think that we can deal with North Korean nuclear programme by providing economic assistance or cash. If we try to resolve this issue in a short period of time, we will tend to make similar mistakes, so I think we have to have enough time in order to deal with this issue. Containment and the strengthening of sanctions by the UN and the international community is the right track. They feel pains. The past sanctions or UN statement did not work so North Korea thought very lightly of any actions taken by the UN at that time, but now it is different. This issue was among the countries concerned in the region, now it has become a global security issue, so I am glad that we take up this issue in this World Policy Conference. It will take time, and I think containment and extended military deterrence provided by the US will take effect.

About China's role toward North Korea, Professor Jia explained that the attitude is different from the past. The Chinese previously thought about how to help North Korea to overcome these difficulties, but now they think about whether they should do that or not. I have a different opinion. As you know, we introduced the THAAD system to defend the US military stationed in Korea, and we thought it was necessary to defend ourselves as well as the US forces. But because of that China punished South Korea and they severed all normal and regular relations for about a year. During that time, Korean business underwent a lot of loss, even Lotte Business Group closed down their retail sector operating in China, and Hyundai car sales were cut by half, so the amount of Korean business losses amounted maybe to billions of dollars. I am glad that recently we, China and Korea, made an agreement to finish this awkward and damaging situation, so we will return to normal, good relations.

Why did China punish South Korea instead of North Korea when we took self-defence measures? That is my question mark.

M. K. NARAYANAN

I just wanted to explain a point, because everybody talks of North Korea, but I thought because China in Asia is a bigger issue than North Korea, and I think it has implications for the world at large.

I think that, from the rest of Asia, the view is that China is a rising power today, and China is not masking its ambitions. The other transformation is that the United States is seen as a status-quo power, I do not want to use the word, receding power, and it has implications across the region. Take India, for instance, we have no basic conflict, but there is what I call a civilisation conflict between these two nations. We have now developed much closer relations with Japan, and I think one reason is the rise of China. It is not that we anticipate that China is going to attack, but the impression now is that the United States is completely gone, so all nations are adjusting their priorities. I think the rise of China is the most dominant aspect of politics, at least as far as Asia is concerned. I am not saying China is going out of its way to prove it, but it is a fact, and therefore the United States have pressed for a quadrilateral between the United States, Japan, Australia and India. India now is shifting stance to some extent, it has softened its approach towards this. It is all a part of it. The rise of China and, I don't know whether to use the word, the weakness of the United States, is having a very major impact on the ways nations are adjusting their priorities and their situations. I think how this plays out is what is going to be the future for the next five years and between the 19th and 20th Party Congress, and President Xi certainly gives the impression that he is not merely in command of China but he wishes to be in command of a much greater area. I think we have to be careful, and I am taking it, not merely looking at the North Korean angle, I am looking at the entire point, whether it is Southeast Asia, East Asia, etc., and China has now moved, it is now a major factor in West Asia also, China and Russia become major factors in the West Asian situations. All this makes China a rising power, I do not necessarily say it is a wrong thing, but it is a factor, and it has an impact on almost all nations, certainly on a country like India.



Marcus NOLAND

Thank you very much. I think that wraps up this panel. Thank you to our participants, I look forward to the young leaders' panel coming up next.