

Kim May Emerge As North Korea's Deng Xiaoping

by Conrad Black



President Trump's idiosyncratic methods conceal the strength of his effort to reverse the disintegration of America as a Great Power and a just force in the world. Beneath or with his almost avuncular comments on Kim Jong-un being "a nice guy," the president has gained Mr. Kim's formal acquiescence to his definition of denuclearization in exchange for contemporaneous wind-down of sanctions and of the close presence of overwhelming military force.

As a bonus, Mr. Kim can be the new Deng Xiao-ping and lead North Korea to prosperity while preserving the Kimist dictatorship. The sanctions will remain until the nuclear military program has been dismantled, and if there is a resumption of progress toward deployable nuclear ICBMs, the United States will exercise its military option.

The U.S. Navy in the augmented Seventh Fleet offshore has the

cruise missiles necessary to decalibrate the artillery focused on the immense city of Seoul, South Korea, just across the 17th parallel, and the Fleet's nearly 300 aircraft in the carriers Nimitz, Theodore Roosevelt, and Ronald Reagan certainly possess the power to dispose of the few authentic nuclear sites Kim possesses.

The achievement is in securing Kim's acquiescence to the agreed objective, and, whatever waffling and chicanery may yet occur, implicitly to the penalties that will be imposed if the nuclear program is resumed.

Senator Ed Markey, a Massachusetts Democrat who announced as the president enplaned for Singapore that the United States military and civilians in South Korea would all be hostages in the face of conflict, that the United States would suffer greater casualties than in the Korean War, and that "there is no military option," laid naked the bankruptcy and ignorance of the bipartisan bad policy that brought matters to this extremity.

If there wasn't a military option this meeting would not have happened. The hypocrisy of the Democrats, elected and in the press, is picturesque. First it was "two madmen," Mr. Trump's threats were a menace to the world, the on-and-off meeting would give Mr. Kim "a giggle-fit" (House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi), Mr. Trump would give too much away and be foxed by the 34-year old demented hermit.

How dare Mr. Trump legitimize this Hitlerian murderer? How could he make placatory noises to Mr. Kim or speak cordially about him? Mr. Trump gave up nothing, denuclearization has been pledged, and though not described in writing, it was verbally clear what it means, and maximum force, economic and military, remains in place. And Mr. Kim cannot be uninterested in the possibilities for the end of Pyongyang's isolationism and impoverishment.

Mr. Markey's stance is of a piece with the fatuities about trade wars as Mr. Trump dismantles the country's \$865 billion trade deficit. The American public will support a rebuff to the international trade pickpockets, though Mr. Trump should not have singled out Canada, which is a fair-trade country.

It is assumed by Mr. Trump's critics implicitly that the United States has the moral duty to be scammed out of \$865 billion a year in foreign trade because it stabilizes world relations and finances and helps developing countries. But it doesn't. It just enriches the ungrateful world and casts the United States in the role Richard Nixon warned against: that of "a pitiful, helpless giant."

The political and psychological battle lines are going up across the full public-policy range. Donald Trump is not xenophobic, and he supports immigration, including Mexican immigration, but the Democrats have been pushed to the edge of the political cliff opposing an enforceable border, supporting practically unlimited entry to undocumented foreigners and their right to vote once in the United States, capped by the denial of the right of census-takers required by the Constitution to compute the size of state delegations in the House of Representatives and the Electoral College, even to ask about citizenship, and in support of sanctuary cities in which the law of the country is willfully violated and defied by local officials.

The political and press Democrats are almost all aboard on open borders and sanctuary cities, and electorally, that ship will sink.

However unconventional the president's methods and boosterish and challenging his vocabulary and syntax at times, his North Korean policy is the first that has been successful by any American president since Dwight D. Eisenhower let it be known through the Indian government 65 years ago that the United States would resort to nuclear weapons if China did not

negotiate seriously.

In this as in other matters, Donald Trump is reversing the American trend to pretend that it is not the world's most powerful country and that it would be good for the American national character to be more submissive. That experiment, by George W. Bush's blundering militarism and Barack Obama's feckless pacifism, weakened the West and created a vacuum sure to be occupied by the enemies of Western civilization.

The fact that the Europeans are too obtusely pompous, purposeless, and deracinated to recognize that does not make it less true. Every president since Eisenhower warned of increasing American dependence on foreign oil; Mr. Trump is the first to do something about it.

President Obama pledged to make drastic reductions in carbon use, for no plausible reason, at immense expense and economic inconvenience to Americans, and to contribute heavily to largely corrupt and incompetent regimes of underdeveloped countries as a penalty for American economic success as measured in economic consumption. Mr. Trump has ended that (the insane Paris climate accord).

What Mr. Trump objects to and the Democrats are supporting is not immigration-conscientious personal and family decisions to go to another country and get on in that country by its rules and mores, but the swarming invasion of unnumbered masses of occupiers, like the prelude to the final demographic submergence of the Western Roman Empire.

It is slowly emerging that Mr. Trump is not a misogynist or xenophobe or racist at all. He is a practical person who saw the gap that had opened between, on one hand, the American foreign-relations community seduced by effete European charlatans and internationalist flim-flammers and subdued by the complicated but aggressively righteous guilt of the Obama clique and, on the other, the impatient public who are aware

of America's faults but love their country. Mr. Trump saw that the gap could be exploited.

Eventually, serious historians will recognize that the country was fortunate that this schism was addressed by an authentic patriot and not a mere demagogue. This has been the American pattern; it was fortunate that the slavery crisis was managed by Lincoln and not by vindictive sectionalists, and that it was led out of the Great Depression and through the Second World War by Roosevelt the altruistic patrician internationalist, and not a nativist isolationist demagogue like Huey Long.

The president must continue to scorch out and pulverize declinism. It is shaming when grossly overpaid professional athletes refuse to stand for the national anthem because their concern at unpleasant incidents eclipses their gratitude to the nation that made them rich and free. It is obscene when supposed comedian Bill Maher calls for a recession to throw millions of people out of work, to undermine Mr. Trump's popularity, and when talented actors like Robert De Niro shout obscenities (in absentia, fortunately) at the president, any president of the United States.

These are all signs of the country starting to fragment from the mighty core of American patriotism and break into the sordid squabbling of atomized interest groups. The Democrats are on an unheeding march to the political slaughterhouse. That is where they belong, but they cannot take the country with them.

Note: I cannot fail to express my deep admiration for Charles Krauthammer and intense sadness at his premature approaching demise. He is a man of great intelligence and integrity, and a delightful companion in all circumstances where I knew him. I can't add anything to the eloquent comments and tributes of Rupert Murdoch and others but am compelled to add a word of agreement. Charles has been in all respects an inspiration,

and will always remain one. Hail and farewell.

First published in