THE NORTH KOREA ADVISORY GROUP

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 4, 1999

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, in August of this year, Speaker J. DENNIS HASTERT asked me to chair a group of nine members, including Representatives FLOYD SPENCE, PORTER GOSS, CHRIS COX, TILLIE FOWLER, SONNY CALLAHAN, DOUG BEREUTER, CURT WELDON, and JOE KNOLLENBERG to examine the threat that North Korea poses to the United States. We issued our report today. This is the summary of that report:

I. Do the North Korean weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programs pose a greater threat to U.S. security than five years ago?

North Korea's WMD programs pose a major threat to the United States and its allies. This threat has advanced considerably over the past five years, particularly with the enhancement of North Korea's missile capabilities. There is significant evidence that undeclared nuclear weapons development activity continues, including efforts to acquire uranium enrichment technologies and recent nuclear-related high explosive tests. This means that the United States cannot discount the possibility that North Korea could produce additional nuclear weapons outside of the constraints imposed by the 1994 Agreed Framework.

In the last five years, North Korea's missile capabilities have improved dramatically. North Korea has produced, deployed and exported missiles to Iran and Pakistan, launched a three-stage missile (Taepo Dong 1), and continues to develop a larger and more powerful missile (Taepo Dong 2). Unlike five years ago, North Korea can now strike the United States with a missile that could deliver high explosive, chemical, biological, or possibly nuclear weapons. Currently, the United States is unable to defend against this threat.

The progress that North Korea has made over the past five years in improving its missile capabilities, its record as a major proliferator of ballistic missiles and missile technology, combined with its development activities on nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, ranks North Korea with Russia and China as one of the greatest missile proliferation threats in the world.

II. Do North Korean conventional forces pose a greater threat to peace on the Korean peninsula than five years ago?

North Korea is less capable of successfully invading and occupying South Korea today than it was five years ago, due to issues of readiness, sustainability, and modernization. It has, however, built an advantage in long-range artillery, short-range ballistic missiles, and special operations forces. This development, along with its chemical and biological weapons capability and forward-deployed forces, gives North Korea the ability to inflict significant casualties on U.S. and South Korean forces and civilians in the earliest stages of any conflict.

III. Does North Korea pose a greater threat to international stability than five years ago?

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) is a greater threat to international stability primarily in Asia and secondarily in the Middle East. North Korea is arguably the largest proliferator of missiles and enabling technology in the world, with its primary markets being South Asia and the Middle East. Its proliferation activities pose an increasing threat to American and allied interests globally. Pyongyang continues to harbor terrorists, produce and traffic in narcotics, counterfeit U.S. currency, and infiltrate agents into South Korea and Japan.

IV. Does U.S. assistance sustain the North Korean government?

The United States has replaced the Soviet Union as a primary benefactor of North Korea. The United States now feeds more than one-third of all North Koreans, and the U.S.-supported KEDO program supplies almost half of its HFO needs. This aid frees other resources for North Korea to divert to its WMD and conventional military programs.

U.S. aid to North Korea has grown from zero to more than $270 million annually, totaling $645 million over the last five years. Based on current trends, that total will likely exceed $1 billion next year. During that same time, North Korea developed missiles capable of striking the United States and became a major drug trafficking and currency counterfeiting nation.

Despite assurances from the administration, U.S. food and fuel assistance is not adequately monitored. At least $11 million in HFO assistance has been diverted. In contravention of stated U.S. policy, food has been distributed in places where monitors are denied access. One U.S. aid worker in North Korea recently called the monitoring are denied access. One U.S. aid worker in North Korea recently called the monitoring system a ''scam.'' More than 90% of food aid distribution sites in North Korea have never been visited by a food aid monitor. The North Koreans have never divulged a complete list of where aid is distributed.

North Korea has the longest sustained U.N. food emergency program in history. There are no significant efforts to support or compel agricultural and economic reforms needed for North Korea to feed itself. North Korea will likely continue to refuse to reform, instead relying on brinkmanship to exact further aid from the United States and other members of the international community.

V. Do the policies of the North Korean government undermine the political and/or economic rights of its people more so than five years ago?

The condition of the North Korean people, both physically and politically, is worse than at any time in the history of their government. U.N. nutritional studies and other research have shown that at least one million North Koreans have starved to death since 1994, while many others face starvation. North Korea's medical system has collapsed with its economy, transforming common diseases into death sentences for many. North Korean hospitals largely function as hospices.

North Korea has the worst human rights record of any government in the world. The DPRK formally categorizes its citizens into 51 classes. Seven million citizens, one-third of the population, are regarded as members of the ''hostile'' class. North Korea has established prisons for hungry children, and is the only place on earth where a hungry child wandering away from home is imprisoned. North Korea is also unique in being the only country that has attempted to withdraw from a key human rights treaty.

The regime of Kim Jong Il depends on maintaining high levels of fear to oppress its people. The perpetual state of crisis that the regime generates with the international community ensures internal discipline and demands absolute support for the regime. This policy requires the regime to keep the North Korean people isolated and ill-informed on developments in the outside world.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with my colleagues on the International Relations Committee as well as the members of the Intelligence and Armed Services Committees as we take follow-up actions on this important issue.

COUNCIL ON HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

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Thursday, November 4, 1999

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit for the RECORD the attached articles, ''One Commission To Be Proud of'' and ''The Effect of the U.S. Embargo on Cuban Health Care in Cuba'', in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Mr. Speaker, ever since its creation in the wake of the 1959 Cuban Revolution, the Inter-American System for the Protection of Human Rights has played an extraordinary role in promoting justice on the continent. The Commission and the Court have consistently furthered this country's authentic national interests by helping oppressed populations defend themselves against dictatorships and by working for the establishment of democratic norms.

However, this institution finds itself at a critical juncture and needs political support. Human rights crimes are sill being perpetrated throughout the hemisphere, yet the chronic under-funding of these OAS bodies threatens their effectiveness. Furthermore, Peru's recent withdrawal from the jurisdiction of the Court deserves maximum condemnation and should not be allowed to set a precedent for those governments hoping to escape accountability. The United States should lead by example and finally ratify the Inter-American Convention on Human Rights and accept the jurisdiction of the Court.

The following research memorandum was authored by Eric Angles, a Research Fellow with the Washington-based Council on Hemispheric Affairs (COHA). This timely and trenchant article gives credit to the Inter-American System for its accomplishments, and emphasizes how pivotal U.S. backing is to its success.

ONE COMMISSION TO BE PROUD OF

(By Eric Angles, Research Fellow, council on Hemispheric Affairs)

Pinochet and Milosevic indicted for their crimes; a ''just war'' waged in the Balkans at heavy political, diplomatic and military risk; the human rights debate has clearly shifted gears. Gone is the era when egregious patterns of abuses remained concealed behind sacrosanct national borders, or neatly rhetoricized away by Cold War realpolitik. At last public indignation is being heeded. This is a very positive sign, with much credit being owed to intrepid journalists and relentless human rights promoters, those good men and women in gray.