

North Korea Review Archive

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Note To Readers

Dear China Brief Readers,

The Jamestown Foundation is proud to present The North Korea Review, a special supplement to China Brief. Focusing on the escalating crisis on the Korean Peninsula, the Review takes an insider's view of challenges facing this week's multilateral talks in Beijing and explores the highly secretive regime in Pyongyang through the eyes of a high-level North Korean defector. The Review also takes a hard look at North Korean drug trafficking and Kim Jong Il's relations with Russia. We hope you enjoy this special issue!

A New Twenty Years Crisis?

By Nicholas Eberstadt and Joseph P. Ferguson

E. H. Carr's powerful little book *The Twenty Years' Crisis* presciently argued that the events ineluctably leading Europe to war in 1939 were not sudden and new, but rather two decades in the making. Though written in another time and of another place, *The Twenty Years' Crisis* could be offered as briefing material today for those policymakers and students of international affairs struggling to make sense of the rapid escalation of the crisis revolving around the nuclear weapons program of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). The latest round of six-party talks on the North Korean nuclear weapons program has just been convened in Beijing. With one of the most difficult aspects of getting the North Korean side to negotiate being actually getting them to arrive at a meeting, there is little optimism that this latest round of talks will be successful. And although Pyongyang has signaled a desire to make a deal, offering to freeze its nuclear activity in return for energy assistance, it continues to reject the Bush administration's demands for the unilateral dismantling of its program. The North Korean nuclear crisis, of course, is not exactly breaking news. If, like Professor Carr, we wish to date the duration of the crisis according to its true defining events, we would be obliged to look back many years: in this case, to Pyongyang's November 1992 refusal to cooperate further with the inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), or to the DPRK's initial March 1993 announcement of its intention to withdraw from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) that gave IAEA inspectors authority to pursue their inquiry. The particulars of the current nuclear crisis differ in some respects from those a decade earlier, but it is essentially the very same crisis, shaped by the very same fundamentals. Just like Carr's *Twenty Years' Crisis*, this Korean crisis may continue to fester for years to come, but eventually, just as in interwar Europe, the perpetuation of an inherently unstable balance will no longer be feasible. For most of the actors embroiled in the drama, the preferred outcome to the crisis would clearly be a comprehensive resolution through peaceful, diplomatic negotiations. But, as in that earlier drama in Europe, the most desirable outcome may also be the least likely. Three alternative outcomes from the current impasse suggest themselves. The first would be a peaceful, negotiated settlement - a diplomatic agreement whereby the North gave up its nuclear weapons

program. The second would be to ignore the DPRK's extortion diplomacy and simply accept the advent of a nuclear-armed North Korea, coping with all the attendant dangers as they arise. A third outcome would be to see through a strategy of regime change in the DPRK. The peaceful, negotiated settlement is clearly the preferable outcome for most of the governments caught up in the North Korean nuclear crisis. Certainly it would be the least troubling and most immediately advantageous scenario for all of Pyongyang's potential negotiating partners. Unfortunately, the prospect of a negotiated agreement to dismantle Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program permanently and completely is extraordinarily remote. One may appreciate the odds against such an outcome when one considers the many obstacles against it. One must begin with the problem of North Korean intentions. Over the past dozen years Western diplomacy has devoted no small effort to probing these. The Republic of Korea's (ROK) Tae Woo probed for two years, eventually securing a Joint North-South Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in 1992. When that agreement collapsed, the Clinton administration engaged Pyongyang with a year and a half of diplomacy that culminated in the 1994 Agreed Framework. After 1998, in the wake of the first episode that threatened to topple the Agreed Framework, the Clinton administration developed what became known as the "Perry Process." And of course President Kim Dae Jung probed North Korean nuclear intentions from 1998 to early 2003 with his now-discredited "sunshine policy." Reviewing this record, one might suggest we actually have a fairly clear idea of North Korea's nuclear intentions. From what we can see, those intentions are not conducive to a voluntary denuclearization of the DPRK. Another problem concerns the international precedent that would be established by a negotiated solution to the North Korean nuclear crisis. Thus far, North Korea has violated non-proliferation strictures more explicitly and provocatively than any other contemporary state - yet it has suffered no penalties for its behavior (apart from the cutoff of free KEDO oil supplies). The international community has already purchased an end to the North Korean nuclear program, through the now-moribund Agreed Framework. If it were to once again provide resources to shut down the North Korean nuclear project in a new settlement, the signal to would-be proliferators could only be destabilizing. Apart from all the other obstacles to a diplomatic settlement of the current nuclear crisis, there is also the problem of the practical details that would attend any such negotiation with North Korea. With the exception of the July 1953 armistice ending the Korean conflict - which has been upheld only through continuing U.S. force of arms - it is hard to point to an agreement Pyongyang has abided over its 55 years of state power. North Korea has regularly and repeatedly flaunted the protocols surrounding the use of diplomatic pouches, using these to transport narcotics and other illegal material to countries in which North Korean officials enjoy diplomatic immunity. The North Korean government has sponsored state terrorism in countries with which it enjoys diplomatic relations. It has violated the territorial waters of governments who have granted it diplomatic recognition through state-sponsored shipments of drugs and military contraband. Not least of all, the DPRK has violated the rules of the IAEA (removing cameras, seals, and technicians from nuclear facilities), and has openly stated that it will no longer abide by the 1994 Agreed Framework, the NPT, or the Joint North-South Declaration. The second possible outcome of the current crisis ultimately involves living with a nuclear North Korea. The United States has lived with, and outlasted, dangerous nuclear states in the past, but the costs and risks posed by a nuclear North Korea would be fearsome. The example of a North Korean nuclear breakout would inescapably encourage proliferation in other regions - and a nuclear North Korea could abet that proliferation through export of armaments, technology, or expertise. More than any other modern state, Pyongyang makes its living from international military extortion; nuclear weaponry would dramatically improve the returns of that policy. With

a hostile nuclear North Korea at its geographic center, the economies of the Northeast Asian region could not help but suffer: the confidence dip and attendant business downturn that the ROK suffered in early 2003 would presumably represent only a foretaste of what might lie in store for South Korea, Japan, and even China. And a nuclear-armed North Korea would necessarily and inescapably undermine the credibility of the U.S.-ROK alliance and the U.S.-Japan alliance: the very security architecture upon which postwar Northeast Asia's economic and political successes have been built. The third possible outcome would be for the international community (or the United States) to aim for, and to achieve, regime change in the North. It is more difficult to generalize about this outcome, for it can be envisioned with a great many possible variations, some of them quite divergent. One can be assured that the path to regime change would be fraught with danger, and that the result, under even the most optimistic variants, would involve tremendous disruption and uncertainty - at least in the short run. There is a real possibility that the push for regime change in North Korea could result in war, in which case the likelihood of Seoul's escaping unscathed - no matter how overwhelming the ultimate victory for the U.S.-ROK alliance - would seem quite small. Whatever their other differences, the governments of neighboring China, Russia, South Korea, and Japan are today united in their aversion to a policy of regime change. Within the senior reaches of the Bush administration, the notion of regime change in North Korea has been discussed - but apparently only toyed with. Occasional flirtations notwithstanding, U.S. policy has never actually embraced the argument that regime change is either desired or necessary in North Korea. A less drastic form of "regime change" might see Pyongyang give up its nuclear program, become a "normal" nation, and undergo serious economic and social reform under pressure from the international community, led by the five nations surrounding North Korea. But there has been almost no indication that the North Korean leadership would even remotely consider such an outcome. In summation, there is no coalescence around a strategy for North Korea, either in the United States or among its partners in Northeast Asia. The situation is tilting by the day in an incalculable direction. Like the interwar years in Europe (1919-39) there is an unstable equilibrium and we are faced with an inherently dangerous situation. The fear is that we may already be teetering on the edge of a dark precipice whose abyss is too horrible to contemplate. Mr. Joseph Ferguson is the director of Northeast Asia Studies at The National Bureau of Asian Research in Seattle, Washington. Nicholas Eberstadt holds the Henry Wendt Chair in Political Economy at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, DC. Joseph Ferguson is Director of Northeast Asia Studies at The National Bureau of Asian Research.

America's Diplomatic Struggle over Korean Nuclear Disarmament

The Jamestown Foundation presents an interview with Il-Kwawg Sohn, a former high-level North Korean official. Mr. Sohn discusses the current multilateral negotiations and the diplomatic strategies of the main participants.

Q: What do you think are some of the demands North Korea (NK) will be making of the United States during this round of six-party talks? A: First, North Korea will continue to demand the security and guarantee of their regime and at the same time try to elicit more economic aid from the US. More importantly, NK will certainly try to tie the cessation of nuclear activities with the withdrawal of US troops from the Korean peninsula, a non-aggression pact with the US, a normalization of diplomatic relations, and ultimately the elimination of US influence on the Korean Peninsula. Interestingly, it is the South Korean (SK) government that brings up the issue of regime guarantee for the North. NK, with Chinese and Russian assistance, plans to include the South in a non-aggression pact. I also think the resumption of oil and food aid from the US will be on NK's list of demands during the second six-party conference. Q: Does the North Korean leadership resent having to discuss these issues with the US through multilateral talks? Does it view the six-party format as inimical to its interests? A: NK has always maintained that the US is the aggressor, and that therefore they should negotiate their security issues with the US alone. NK's ultimate goal is to unify the Korean peninsula: first by removing US troops from the Korean peninsula, and second by absorbing the South using force. The NK leadership has stated that all other parties in attendance, especially Japan and South Korea, should not interfere with US-NK negotiations. I believe that the US will benefit from its strong alliance with Japan and SK. However, the US will not reap many of these benefits at this stage, with SK supporting Kim Jong-il. Q: What tactical recommendations do you have for the US in these negotiations? A: The US should not bend on the issue of the complete elimination of NK's nuclear program. The US must find the weakest points in NK's strategy of gradual elimination of their nuclear programs, and be prepared to counter it step by step. It must insist on complete verification and free access to the nuclear facilities anywhere and anytime, as well as develop a strategy for dealing with NK's inevitable resistance towards inspections. Also, the US must do its best to gain the support of the other parties at the conference. Q: What should be the US government's first priority in dealing with Kim Jong-il's regime and North Korea? A: The US should raise the issues of human rights, illegal drug trafficking, and refugees in China - not just the nuclear issue - in order to press NK. Talk about the people in NK, not about the regime: human rights, freedom, and democracy. Any attempt by the US to solve the nuclear issue by force, will inevitably be perceived by the conference participants, and the international community more generally, as an act of US aggression. If, however, the US raises the issue of human rights, etc., at the conference, it will deflect this potential criticism; notwithstanding the fact that human rights violations in NK are horrendous, the worst in the world in both magnitude and viciousness. Q: One of the weaknesses of the US position in the upcoming talks is that the South is no longer as supportive of the US negotiating strategy as it was previously. Do you think that this is true, and in your opinion does South Korea present more of a help or a hindrance to the US negotiating position? A: It is true: South Korea will be on the side of North Korea at the talks. SK will ask the US to be more flexible toward the North, for instance, by asking the US to provide economic aid and security guarantees if NK promises to discontinue its nuclear program. Q: What do you perceive as the strengths and weakness of the United States negotiating position in the upcoming talks? A: Strengths: The US has Japan's complete support

both on nuclear disarmament and with regard to human rights abuses (especially given the issue of Japanese abductees). And for its part, the US must insist that human rights issues be a part of the agenda. Weaknesses: South Korea will be a problem: playing the part of the middleman, but ultimately supporting the North. The US should have separate talks with SK and make it clear that it will accept nothing short of complete forthrightness from the South. Q: Should the United States even engage Kim Jong-il in negotiations and peace efforts, or should their primary efforts be aimed at undermining and contain Kim's regime? A: The US must use the time before President Bush's re-election to build the case against North Korea. President Bush, once the election is over, must then side with those in the administration who favor a hard-line stance against NK. Kim Jong-il will push the US as hard and long as he can to gain his end: unification of the peninsula under his rule. The US must never forget this when negotiating with the North. There is no other way but to eliminate Kim Jong-il for the security of Korea, and also for the security of the US. Q: Do you think that the North's position has been strengthened vis-à-vis the United States due to the emergence of anti-Americanism and pro-North sympathies in South Korea? A: It is absolutely the case that the South Korean government has strengthened the NK regime with their appeasement policy, whereas the US position has been weakened drastically due to the anti-American movement in the South and the relocation of the US troops. US troops along the DMZ was a major issue for Kim Jong-il, and Roh Moo-hyun's government worked very hard on the relocation, despite the unease of ordinary South Koreans over the shift. I believe that the South Korean government no longer represents its people. This is not a long-term appeasement policy; it is a policy of blatant anti-Americanism. Q: Do you think that China can play a constructive role in bringing about regime change in North Korea, or will Beijing use its alliance with North Korea to continue to support Kim's dictatorship? A: China does not think much its alliance with NK. Its role will be largely dependent on how the US approaches this issue. One of the possible outcomes of a regime change could be the instillation of a Chinese-backed puppet regime following Kim Jong-il's elimination. High-ranking NK officials are demanding real reforms and wanting to open up the country to the outside world. We have to remember, though, that China does not want South Korea or the US at their border, nor does it want trouble with ethnic minorities along that border. However, if the US stands firm on nuclear disarmament and human rights, China will not risk its relationship with America - it has too much to lose now. Q: How would you describe Kim's relationship with the North Korean military? Does he consider the military to be reliable or not? A: While it is true that Kim Jong-il is totally dependent on the military, it is also true that Kim Jong-il's most loyal officers control the military's upper echelons. As a result, he has absolute control over the people and the army through the military and party elites. Q: What is the biggest internal threat/challenge to Kim Jong-il? A: The economic disaster brought on by Kim Jong-il's policies has lost him whatever legitimacy he may have had in the eyes of the people. Furthermore, NK's economic collapse has precipitated a mass exodus to China. More than 1,000 people die in NK everyday from starvation. They do not care whether they get arrested at the border or not - they continue to cross. China beefed up the border patrols with 160,000 troops, but to no avail; North Koreans still cross by the thousands. It is estimated that between 100,000 and 400,000 North Koreans now live in the northeastern part of China. When they get money, they go back home to feed their family, and then return to China for more. Nor are the upper classes happy with Kim Jong-il. Since the death of Kim Il-Sung, respect and trust within both the party and military elite for Kim Jong-il has consistently diminished. However, despite all this, it is still not possible to remove Kim Jong-il from within. The people of NK live in constant fear. Everybody informs on each other, and nobody can predict what would happen if Kim Jong-il were to die tomorrow. His

grip on the military and the people is absolute. The only approach can be the support of the defector organizations in SK, and consistent international pressure regarding the drug trafficking and human rights among other issues. Q: How likely is Kim to institute economic reforms in an effort to boost the economy when it is likely that these reforms will result in increased freedoms for North Korean society? A: Kim Jong-il will never open up, because it would be the end of his regime. His policies and gestures toward the US and SK are exactly that: gestures. Internally, NK is preparing for a confrontation with the international community. Reform would allow the people of NK a glimpse of the outside world. NK is a living hell on earth. Once they have seen the other side, they will never be able to go back - there would be a revolution. Kim will never open up his country to the outside world.

North Korea and Narcotics Trafficking: A View from the Inside

By Kim Young Il

The details about North Korean involvement in international narcotics trafficking have been reported in greater frequency in the West in the last decade as North Korea struggles to delay its looming internal collapse. As insider knowledge of these developments is rare, it is the purpose of this essay to shed greater light on the motivations of the North Korean government in their state-sponsored drug smuggling activities. Before defecting to South Korea in the late 1990s, I worked in the North Korean National Security Agency from 1983 until 1998. In this position, I learned of and witnessed first-hand the drug trafficking activities of the North Korean regime. The production and trafficking of illegal drugs by the North Korean regime has been much publicized for some time now. The April 2003 seizure by Australian authorities of the North Korean ship Pongsu containing 50 kilograms of heroin is indisputable proof that the North Korean regime has been busy exporting illegal drugs as a means of generating state revenue. North Korea began its secret program of illicit drug production in the late 1970's in the mountainous Hamkyung and Yangkang provinces. Successful production in these regions enabled the North Korean regime to begin producing and selling drugs in earnest in the late 1980's. In a sign of the strategic importance of the narcotics program, North Korean leader Kim Il-Sung toured Hamkyung-Bukdo Province in the late 1980's and designated the area around the town of Yonsah in Hamkyung Province to be developed into an opium farm. Ironically, this region also was used by the Japanese Colonial government as site for growing opium. Desperately short of hard currency, Kim Il-Sung pursued a similar policy in order to boost his cash-starved budget. The local provincial party committee developed a secret, experimental opium farm in Yonsah Town that was tightly guarded by North Korean security forces. Opium production began on collective farms located in towns like Yonsah, Hweryung, Moosan, and Onsung in Hamkyung-Bukdo Province. All opium produced at these farms was sent to the government to be processed into heroin. The government referred to these opium poppies as "broad bellflowers" in order to hide the operation from the general public, but this was an open secret. North Korea's manufacturing production collapsed in the early 1990's due to a lack of raw materials, resulting in a sharp decline in exports. In an attempt to fill this gap, the government exported mushrooms, medicinal herbs, and fish to China, Japan, and South Korea. However, the regime quickly decided that the best ways to bring in large sums of foreign currency were to sell drugs to other countries and smuggle in used Japanese cars. All of these activities came under the direct control and supervision of the central government. In late 1997, the central government ordered all the local collective farms to begin cultivating 10 chungbo (Korean land unit equal to approximately 25 acres) of land for the production of poppies. However, the Chinese government learned of the directive and dispatched reporters and police to take pictures of the farms located near the Chinese border in an effort to prevent cultivation. The opium produced on these farms is sent to pharmaceutical plants in the Nanam area of Chungjin City in Hamkyung-Bukdo Province. There the opium is processed and refined into heroin under the supervision of several drug experts who were brought from Thailand to assist the North Korean government in its drug production program. Unfortunately, these are not the only drug production facilities in North Korea. There are unconfirmed reports that another opium processing plant operates near the capital city of Pyongyang. These plants are highly secret and are guarded and patrolled by armed guards from the National Security and Intelligence Bureau. No outsiders are allowed in these facilities. North Korea produces about one ton of heroin and methamphetamine (called hiroppon

in Korea) per month. Heroin is usually packaged in a box containing 330 grams (11.6 ounces) of the drug and marked with a Thai label. Methamphetamine is packaged in a box containing one kilogram and typically has no label. The principal export market for North Korean narcotics is Eurasia. Ironically, one of the largest markets for North Korean narcotics exports is China. North Korean narcotics are sold along the Chinese border for up to \$10,000 per kilogram. Drug smuggling by sea, however, brings a higher price because of the greater risk involved. These drugs are sold for as much as \$15,000 per kilogram. North Korea sells these drugs through the Chinese border to China, Hong Kong, Macao, and Russia. The regime also deals with international drug dealers on the Yellow Sea and the Eastern Sea, whose primary market for the drugs is Japan. Increasingly, the North Korean regime has used its diplomats as the core of its international drug smuggling operation. Their diplomatic cover is a perfect means to smuggle narcotics and other illicit drugs. In November 1996, a North Korean diplomat stationed in Russia was caught by the Russian border police with 20 kilograms of illegal drugs. He later committed suicide after being sentenced to prison. On one occasion, I personally caught a drug dealer who possessed forty-seven kilograms of illegal drugs, and sent the drugs to the authorities. I believe that the authorities merely sold the drugs through another dealer. In December 2001, the South Korean government discovered one of the largest caches of drugs in its history when authorities found a major shipment of illegal drugs at the port of Pusan. Although they did not identify their origins, it is almost certain that these drugs were smuggled into the port from North Korea. Increasingly, the North Korean government has begun to deal directly with organized crime in an effort to bolster its foreign revenue. Organized crime groups in Russia and Japan have been the principal targets for this cooperation. Indeed, as the drug market expands, Pyongyang has begun dealing with international drug dealers such as the notorious Japanese Yakuza, as well as the Russian Mafia. The list of incidents of drug production and smuggling by the North Korean regime is extensive. In July 1995, an agent of the National Security and Intelligence Bureau of North Korea was caught by the Chinese police when he tried to smuggle 500 kilograms of heroin into the country. In November 1996, a North Korean lumberjack working in Russia was caught at Hassan Station in Russia with 22 kilograms of opium. In May 1997, a North Korean businessman was arrested in Dandong City, China, when he tried to sell 900 kilograms of methamphetamine. In July 1997, a North Korean lumberjack was caught in Havarovsk, Russia trying to sell 5 kilograms of opium. In January 1998, Russian police caught two North Korean diplomats stationed in Mexico when they tried to smuggle 35 kilograms of cocaine through the Russian Federation. In July 1998, two North Korean diplomats stationed in Syria were arrested when they tried to smuggle 500,000 capsules of psychotomimetics (stimulants) into that country. The long-term outlook for North Korean involvement in international narcotics trafficking is not promising. The North Korean regime is becoming increasingly involved in the production and sales of illegal drugs in order to earn greater amounts of foreign currency which otherwise would not be available to Kim Jong Il's government.

Through Russia With Kim Jong Il

Konstantin Preobrazhensky

*Kremlin insider General Konstantin Pulikovsky provides an in-depth look at North Korean dictator Kim Jong Il through his book *The Oriental Express: Through Russia with Kim Jong Il* (Moscow 2002). General Pulikovsky recounts conversations with Kim about the prospects for Korean reunification, relations with the United States and Kim's meeting with former Secretary of State Madeline Albright, North Korea's relationship with Russia, and an assassination attempt that occurred during the 2001 trip to Moscow. General Pulikovsky's book offers a rare glimpse of the reclusive North Korean leader and insight into the workings of his regime. Mr. Preobrazhensky's translation and analysis of the book makes accessible an important text that has never before been available in the West.*

Konstantin Pulikovsky, a Plenipotentiary Representative of President Putin in the Far Eastern federal district and formerly a commander of Russian Troops in Chechnya, accompanied Kim Jong Il during his three-week train journey through Russia in the summer of 2001. From that trip emerged Pulikovsky's *The Oriental Express: Through Russia with Kim Jong Il*.

The book presents numerous interesting details about Kim's personality and vividly portrays the state of relations between North Korea and Russia, which are characterized by the predominance of Kim Jong Il. Though the author avoids giving the underlying pretext for the visit, he provides Kim's own explanation for the trip to Russia:

“My goal was to observe the Far East, Siberia, Moscow and Saint-Petersburg after more than 40 years of absence. I wondered why the USSR, especially during the Khrushchev's period, and also new Russia in her early years, turned away from our country. If in the Soviet period such a position could be explained by the non-participation of the DPRK in COMECON (The Council for Economic Mutual Aid, joined by almost all countries of the Communist block), after the dissolution of the Soviet Union such an attitude of Russia towards our country became completely incomprehensible.

I was greatly upset by it and asked the Chinese why the Russians treat us in such a way. The Chinese advised me to wait, saying that times change and the Russians will turn their face toward us. And finally the time has come! Putin became President of Russia. I was extremely pleased with the change of Russia's approach in relations with our country. I was simply charmed by the Russian President during his visit to Pyongyang! While we were negotiating, the Russian Duma (Parliament) was discussing the ratification of the Treaty of Friendship, Good Neighborhood and Cooperation between us. Putin joked that if the Duma refuses to ratify the Treaty, he will call there and order them to ratify it immediately!” Putin's authoritarianism seemed to impress Kim, easing the way toward further cooperation. During his stay in Moscow, he and Putin discussed problems of military cooperation, unification of the Trans-Siberian and the Trans-Korean railroads, and Russian utilization of the North Korean port of Rajin. Since that summertime meeting, all of these projects seem to be underway to one degree or another. Kim's reaction to President George W. Bush, on the other hand, is far less effusive: “Under Clinton our relations were developing well. We came close to the conclusion of an agreement with Seoul about opening traffic on the railroad between the North and South. But after Bush came to power, he proposed an absolutely

unacceptable requirement to put the question of conventional weapons on the agenda of the bilateral negotiations. The Americans' concern about missiles and nuclear weapons can be understood somehow, but their promotion of the "problem" of the conventional weapons into the primary position of negotiations is illogical. If Americans continue their hard line, we will have to give a super-hard response!" In the same breath Kim cautiously added: "It is important for the new Washington administration to inherit from its predecessors not only power, but also politics. We are ready to resume the dialogue on the same level, as it was with Madeleine Albright." Kim Jong Il is much more pleasantly disposed toward Bill Clinton's former Secretary of State. He vividly recalled their initial meeting: "At first Mrs. Albright interrogated me as if we were in court. I answered all the questions, while she was controlling me in order to determine if I use notes prepared beforehand or speak extemporaneously. I expressed myself in a simple and improvised manner. She seemed to like my character." In the course of recollecting these memories for Mr. Pulikovsky, Kim's assistant excitedly interjected: "The officers of the American State Department confessed that Mrs. Albright was charmed with our Warlord. She kept squeezing his hand during the entire reception. She put a new brooch on her dress before the reception. It had a form of two hearts, a large and a small one. Though before that her brooch had a very official image: the American flag." The author notes that Kim, "...never said directly that he is in favor of the immediate reunification of both Koreas," and added that, "...one should seriously think about what it may lead to." Pulikovsky's own remarks on the reunification problem are harshly anti-American, reflecting the mood of today's Russian political elite: "The great goal of Russian diplomacy was the destruction of the biased approach, according to which the states of our planet should be divided by the criteria of the US State Department. This approach required to consider the joint opinion of the "G7" - or the USA, Canada, the Great Britain, Germany, France, Italy and Japan, - as that of the whole "World Community", while another "G7": North Korea, Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Libya and Sudan should be despised as "outcasts". Russian diplomacy calls upon all the other countries to get rid of the stereotypes of the past. This factor surely brings hope into the salvation of the problem of unification of the two states of the Korean Peninsula." The author reveals that the carriage in which Kim traveled through Russia had initially been presented to his father, Kim Il Sung, by "Generalissimo I.V.Stalin." This means of address is very revealing, as the Great Kremlin Dictator hasn't been referred to in such respectful terms in the Russian media since the collapse of the Communist regime in 1991. General K. Pulikovsky does not conceal his admiration for Stalin - a tendency that has become extremely fashionable in Russia's highest echelons today. It not surprising, then, that the author admires Kim Jong Il, the leader of the last Stalinist state. From the very beginning the author presents a positive image of the North Korean dictator. "Finally the door of the staff carriage opened and he appeared in the doorway. He waved his hand to all those who met him and stepped onto the platform. I held out my hand to Kim Jong Il and greeted him upon his arrival in Russia. He responded with a strong handshake. I noticed that he had large hands and thought that he was a physically strong man." Later the author describes him as a well-informed leader with a good sense of humor, computer skills and a strong aura. General Pulikovsky remarked at the degree of respect shown to the Korean despot: "Kim was very unaffected while mixing with his ordinary surroundings, which can't be said about persons in his attendance. Entering Kim's room, they bent down respectfully in a low bow and kept standing until they received a subtle, barely visible signal from the Warlord allowing them to stand once more. They never referred to him in anything other than the third person. For example, instead of the phrase 'As you have ordered,' they used the following: 'As our Dear Leader' or 'As our Warlord' has ordered. The only people afforded free conduct with Kim Jong Il were his guards."

Kim's guards evoked quite a different response from General Polikovsky than did their esteemed boss. Numbering around twenty-five, the author described them as, "too active." At one point they grabbed the General's own press secretary after he had approached Kim too quickly for their comfort. They even tried to search the Russian security guards who had been personally provided by Putin. In order to determine where they were hiding pistols, the Koreans attempted to embrace them jokingly or to slap them on the back or belly. Polikovsky himself suffered such a check during the course of his tour. Given the sensitivity of the guest in question, the Russian guards had to put their Korean colleagues in their place in a very delicate manner. Despite the presence of so many guards from both camps, there were some acts of sabotage carried out in the course of Kim's journey. Somebody evidently attempted to derail the train by putting a concrete pillar on the rails, and some of the train's windows were smashed. While the Russian press insisted that somebody had shot at the train, the author remarked with a grin that it was simply a case of urchins throwing stones at a passing train. The only obvious problem with that theory is that the "urchins" could hardly break the reinforced glass of Kim's train with stones. The author displayed no discomfort upon learning from his guest that people in North Korea might be executed without a court sentence or suffer corporal punishment simply by order of the leadership. He wrote the following as if it were something very natural, "In my country," said Kim Jong Il, "I ordered both dealers and users of drugs to be shot. We have enough people! I also ordered that the Chinese facilitating the spread of drugs to be beaten with sticks." He then added rigidly, "If you catch Korean drug addicts, please, shoot them to death! I allow you to do it." The General clearly admires the militaristic character of the North Korean regime, noting, "I was notified in advance about the fact that Kim Jong Il hates to be addressed as 'Mister.' In fact, we began to call him 'The Great Warlord' and 'Beloved Leader' even in conversations amongst ourselves." Interestingly, no one seemed to note the lack of an opportunity in which Kim's greatness as a warlord had ever revealed itself. In keeping with his military prowess, Kim confirms that his favorite pastime is to mix with military officers. This clearly scored points with the author, who adds, "Being a professional military, I was pleased by Kim's high evaluation of the military service." General Pulikovsky continues with his sympathetic view of the North Korean dictator: "It is a great mistake to consider Kim a militarist. His country is like the USSR of the 1950s. At that time we also considered all those who dared to criticize our leadership to be our enemies. North Korea is strengthening its defense because it has strained relations with certain states. But the militarization of economy is also the most effective way of managing the state. It provides a chance of modest feeding of great number of people." Kim comprehends that some other ways of transformations should be sought. One should change economic guidelines in the country, where almost all the people march in military order and fulfill orders of the Beloved Leader. But he also understands that it is impossible to change the society of emphasized militarism at one stroke. General Polikovsky concludes that he was lucky to have accompanied someone whom he refers to as the most enigmatic leader in the world. Although his viewpoint is biased toward Kim Jong Il, General Pulikovsky provides a glimpse into the life of the North Korean dictator.