invoking the right of parley: The Case For Diplomacy

By Nicholas Robison

***Resolved: Deployment of anti-missile systems is in South Korea’s best interest.***

The CON team in this case attempts to disprove the resolution by arguing that anti-missile systems are harming diplomatic efforts, which increases the chances of war—thus helping to cause that which these systems are supposed to ameliorate.

The framework, therefore, will be Diplomacy. By presenting diplomacy as your standard, you can shortcut all of the technical military argumentation. After all, if other countries don’t want to attack you, then it doesn’t matter whether you’d beat them. The impacts of preventing war are wide-ranging, but value of life is the most obvious and easiest to sell to a judge.

Practical military argumentation in the first speech is also worthwhile as a way to hedge our bets in case the judge doesn’t buy that diplomacy is a sufficient way to resolve the crisis. That’s where contention three comes in. If the PRO team goes first and runs a suitable framework, it is probably better to re-package the argument as an off-case contention attacking the PRO framework.

Note that, in Contention 2, the radar unit is a part of the anti-missile system.

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The Right of Parley: The Case for Diplomacy

Resolved: Deployment of anti-missile systems is in South Korea’s best interest. We negate.

Framework: Diplomacy

Link: Negotiations can stop wars before they begin

Impact: Lives saved. [Can be implied.]

Contention 1: North Korea Desperate to Avoid Conflict

Consequences Recognized

Michael Malice 2017. (Author of Dear Reader: The Unauthorized Autobiography of Kim Jong Il) Fox Business, 29 June 2017. “North Korea is desperate to avoid military conflict: Author Michael Malice” <http://www.foxbusiness.com/politics/2017/06/29/north-korea-is-desperate-to-avoid-military-conflict-author-michael-malice.html>

Despite what a lot of people have been saying, they [North Korea] are desperate to avoid military conflict….if you go there and you read their literature, they know full well that they’re not capable of surviving an attack, that it would be devastating for North Korea.

Malice *has* visited the country and has read their literature.

Evil, but Not Suicidal

Michael Malice 2017. (Author of Dear Reader: The Unauthorized Autobiography of Kim Jong Il) The Observer, 18 December 2014. “Michael Malice on the Magical World of North Korea” <http://observer.com/2014/12/michael-malice-on-the-magical-world-of-north-korea/>

Yes, they are crazy. But they are not “crazy” in the sense of a mentally-ill street person babbling nonsense on a corner. They are crazy in the sense, say, of someone who is under the delusion that he is Abraham Lincoln. His insanity is easy to understand, and the implications quite predictable. Though it’s not rational, neither is it random.

Overestimation is Dangerous

Joby Warrick, Ellen Nakashima and Anna Fifield 2017. (Journalists for the Washington Post. Warrick won a Pulitzer Prize in 2016 for Nonfiction and, along with two colleagues, was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Public Service) Washington Post, 8 August 2016. “North Korea now making missile-ready nuclear weapons, U.S. analysts say” <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/north-korea-now-making-missile-ready-nuclear-weapons-us-analysts-say/2017/08/08/e14b882a-7b6b-11e7-9d08-b79f191668ed_story.html?utm_term=.75a7c4cb5962>

Although few discount North Korea’s progress, some prominent U.S. experts warned against the danger of overestimating the threat. Siegfried Hecker, director emeritus of the Los Alamos National Laboratory and the last known U.S. official to inspect North Korea’s nuclear facilities, has calculated the size of North Korea’s arsenal at no more than 20 to 25 bombs. He warned of potential risks that can come from making Kim into a bigger menace than he actually is. “Overselling is particularly dangerous,” said Hecker, who visited North Korea seven times between 2004 and 2010, and met with key leaders of the country’s weapons programs. “Some like to depict Kim as being crazy — a madman — and that makes the public believe that the guy is undeterrable. He’s not crazy and he’s not suicidal. And he’s not even unpredictable.”

Impact: War with North Korea can easily be avoided without starting an arms race.

Contention 2: Chinese Relations Harmed

Security Trilemma

Dr Rod Lyon 2016. (Dr Rod Lyon is a fellow at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute. He holda a in political philosophy from the University of Auckland.) The Strategist, 23 February 2016. “THAAD, South Korea and China” <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/thaad-south-korea-and-china/>

Second, let’s turn to the U.S.–China issue. China worries primarily about the system’s surveillance capabilities. It’s not concerned that a THAAD missile battery in South Korea could intercept a Chinese strategic missile bound for continental America—that’s not a realistic scenario. Rather, it’s concerned that THAAD’s radar might be able to offer early tracking data to other parts of the U.S. ballistic missile defense system—in particular to the Ground Based Interceptors responsible for defending the U.S. homeland—thus degrading China’s ability to target the United States.

Its anxiety is a classic case of a security trilemma, where actions taken by one country in response to the actions of another—here the deployment of enhanced U.S. BMD capabilities to offset North Korea’s growing missile capabilities—complicate relations with a third player.

DA: Chinese Sanctions

Ankit Panda 2017. (Editor at the Council on Foreign Relations and The Diplomat. His work has been presented to numerous government bodies, including the U.S. State department, the European Union, and the United Kingdom's Foreign and Commonwealth Office.) The Diplomat, 8 August 2017. “China Hits Back at South Korea's THAAD Deployment Following North Korea's Latest ICBM Test.” <http://thediplomat.com/2017/08/china-hits-back-at-south-koreas-thaad-deployment-following-north-koreas-latest-icbm-test/>

China has long been vocal about its opposition to the deployment of THAAD in South Korea, basing its opposition around the powerful X-band AN/TPY-2 radar associated with the battery. Beginning last year, China began unofficially sanctioning South Korean entities on its soil in response to the deployment decision; this included additional scrutiny of operations by South Korea’s Lotte conglomerate, which swapped land with the South Korean government for the system’s deployment.

Beijing’s opposition to THAAD has little to do with the interceptor batteries themselves. Chinese strategists fear that the AN/TPY-2 radar would be able to degrade China’s nuclear second strike capability against the United States by allowing U.S. early warning systems to better discriminate between real and decoy warheads.

Impact 1: Economic damage

Impact 2: China alienated.

Installation of THAAD units hurts South Korea’s ability to negotiate with China, increasing the chances of an armed conflict with North Korea.

Trade Warfare

Joshua Berlinger and Juliet Perry 2017. (Reporters for CNN.) CNN, 27 April 2017. “China tried to hack group linked to controversial missile defense system, US cybersecurity firm says.” <http://www.cnn.com/2017/04/27/asia/china-south-korea-thaad-hack/index.html>

South Koreans have accused China of enacting 'unofficial' sanctions in response to the THAAD deployment. Lotte, the company that owns the land where THAAD has been deployed, has seen 87 of its 99 stores in China closed and work on its theme park in the country suspended.

Those developments fueled concerns the disagreement could spiral into a trade war.

China Clamping Down

Jethro Mullen 2017. (Reporter for CNN.) CNN Money, 3 March 2017. “China's 'unofficial' sanctions rattle South Korea.” <http://money.cnn.com/2017/03/03/news/economy/china-south-korea-thaad-tourism-trade-sanctions/>

South Korea's Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism said it had learned that Chinese authorities summoned representatives of travel agencies in Beijing on Thursday and instructed them to stop selling South Korean tours from March 15.

"The instruction was unofficial but China has a tendency not to give official orders for sanctions," said Wang Gi-young, a director at the ministry….

The stakes are high. Of the 17 million people who visited South Korea last year, eight million were Chinese, according to data from the Korea Tourism Organization.

China is also South Korea's biggest trading partner, accounting for about a quarter of its exports.

"Korea is a lot more dependent on China than the other way around," said Krystal Tan of Capital Economics. "China is a much larger economy."

Impact: Critical relations unravelling.

Contention 3: Anti-Missile Systems Ineffective

THAAD doesn’t work

Emanuel Pastreich 2016. (Emanuel Pastreich is the Director of the Asia Institute and an associate professor at the College of International Studies, Kyung Hee University. He holds a Ph.D. in East Asian studies from Harvard University.) The Kyunghyang Shinmun, 17 July 2016. “The Unbearable Sadness of THAAD.” <http://english.khan.co.kr/khan_art_view.html?artid=201607171721017&code=790000>

To start with, THAAD is an outdated technology whose ability to stop missiles is doubtful. To the degree that THAAD might work, it does so for missiles flying at high altitudes. North Korea does not need to send missiles at high altitudes to attack South Korea, if such an unlikely scenario unfolded.

After all, if North Korea wanted to kill tens of thousands or more South Korean civilians, it does not need to use any missiles at all, but rather can use its substantial artillery units for which Seoul is fully within range. THAAD is entirely useless against artillery.

THAAD has Drawbacks

Ankit Panda 2017. (Editor at the Council on Foreign Relations and The Diplomat. His work has been presented to numerous government bodies, including the U.S. State department, the European Union, and the United Kingdom's Foreign and Commonwealth Office.) The Diplomat, 8 August 2017. “China Hits Back at South Korea's THAAD Deployment Following North Korea's Latest ICBM Test.” <http://thediplomat.com/2017/08/china-hits-back-at-south-koreas-thaad-deployment-following-north-koreas-latest-icbm-test/>

Despite the South Korean government’s decision to temporarily deploy additional THAAD batteries after North Korea’s July 28 ICBM launch, THAAD has only been proven to be capable against short-, medium-, and intermediate-range ballistic missile systems. It is not designed to intercept intercontinental-range ballistic missiles and would not be able to intercept a North Korean Hwasong-14 ICBM, the missile tested on July 4 and July 28, 2017.

Missiles aren’t Even the Main Threat

George Friedman 2017. (George Friedman is Founder and Chairman of Geopolitical Futures and former Chairman of Stratfor, a global intelligence company. Friedman is an internationally recognized geopolitical forecaster and New York Times best selling author.) Business Insider, 17 August 2017. “GEORGE FRIEDMAN: North Korea is far from being irrational — it actually has a plan.” <http://www.businessinsider.com/north-korea-is-rational-2017-8>

The South Koreans actually fear the North’s artillery more than they fear a nuclear strike. North Korea faces the risk that the fallout of a nuclear strike might reach their soil and devastate them as well. But the North’s artillery could wreak havoc.

The artillery emplacements are both well-defended by anti-air missiles and widely spread, so that it would take many airstrikes or a bloody invasion from the South to destroy them—a process that would take days at least.

South Korea Foots the Bill

Jeff Daniels 2017. (Jeff Daniels is a coordinating producer for CNBC) CNBC, 13 July 2017. “South Korea's THAAD missile shield could be 'overwhelmed' by swarm-like attack from North.” <https://www.cnbc.com/2017/07/13/south-koreas-thaad-missile-shield-could-be-overwhelmed-by-pyongyang.html>

The U.S.-provided THAAD system costs just over $1 billion for each battery, and President Donald Trump told Reuters in April that Seoul should pay for it. That idea didn't go over well with the South Koreans, some of whom were already feeling economic anxiety from Chinese retaliation over the THAAD.

CON-AT: The Case for Diplomacy

A/T: North Korea is a threat to South Korea

Nuclear Deterrence Brings Peace

Jonathan Tepperman 2009. (Jonathan Tepperman is a Managing Editor of Foreign Affairs. He is Vice Chairman of the Halifax International Security Forum and a Fellow of the New York Institute of Humanities.) Newsweek, 28 August 2009. “HOW NUCLEAR WEAPONS CAN KEEP YOU SAFE.” <http://www.newsweek.com/how-nuclear-weapons-can-keep-you-safe-78907>

The argument that nuclear weapons can be agents of peace as well as destruction rests on two deceptively simple observations. First, nuclear weapons have not been used since 1945. Second, there's never been a nuclear, or even a nonnuclear, war between two states that possess them. Just stop for a second and think about that: it's hard to overstate how remarkable it is, especially given the singular viciousness of the 20th century. As Kenneth Waltz, the leading "nuclear optimist" and a professor emeritus of political science at UC Berkeley puts it, "We now have 64 years of experience since Hiroshima. It's striking and against all historical precedent that for that substantial period, there has not been any war among nuclear states."

To understand why—and why the next 64 years are likely to play out the same way—you need to start by recognizing that all states are rational on some basic level. Their leaders may be stupid, petty, venal, even evil, but they tend to do things only when they're pretty sure they can get away with them. Take war: a country will start a fight only when it's almost certain it can get what it wants at an acceptable price. Not even Hitler or Saddam waged wars they didn't think they could win. The problem historically has been that leaders often make the wrong gamble and underestimate the other side—and millions of innocents pay the price.

Nuclear weapons change all that by making the costs of war obvious, inevitable, and unacceptable. Suddenly, when both sides have the ability to turn the other to ashes with the push of a button—and everybody knows it—the basic math shifts. Even the craziest tin-pot dictator is forced to accept that war with a nuclear state is unwinnable and thus not worth the effort. As Waltz puts it, "Why fight if you can't win and might lose everything?"

Link: US backs South Korea.

Impact: North Korea wouldn’t risk war with US by nuking South Korea.

A/T: Diplomacy is Unrealistic/Unreliable

Trump Won’t Go Rogue

Associated Press 2017. (The Associated Press is an American multinational nonprofit news agency.) LA Times, 16 August 2017. “South Korea looks to jump-start diplomacy in North Korea standoff.” <http://www.latimes.com/world/la-fg-korea-diplomacy-20170816-story.html>

Moon said Washington and Seoul are closely communicating over the North Korean nuclear problem and share the view that strong sanctions and pressure are needed against Pyongyang to stop its provocations and force it into negotiations to give up its nuclear program. Moon said he thinks Trump's belligerent words are intended to show a strong resolve for pressuring the North and don't necessarily display the willingness for military strikes.

"The United States and President Trump have already promised to sufficiently consult with South Korea and get our approval for whatever option they will take against North Korea. It's a firm agreement between South Korea and the United States," Moon said

Russia and China Ready to Negotiate

Associated Press 2017. (The Associated Press is an American multinational nonprofit news agency.) LA Times, 16 August 2017. “South Korea looks to jump-start diplomacy in North Korea standoff.” <http://www.latimes.com/world/la-fg-korea-diplomacy-20170816-story.html>

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said in a phone conversation with his Russian counterpart, Sergei Lavrov, this week that the two countries should work together to contain tensions and permit no one to "stir up an incident on their doorstep," according to a statement posted on the Chinese Foreign Ministry's website.

"The most important task at hand is for the U.S. and North Korea to 'hit the brakes' on their mutual needling of each other with words and actions, to lower the temperature of the tense situation and prevent the emergence of an 'August crisis,' " Wang was quoted as saying in the Tuesday conversation.

"A resolution of the North Korea nuclear issue by military force is completely unacceptable and the peninsula's nuclear issue must be peacefully resolved by political and diplomatic methods," Lavrov was quoted as saying.

War is Not Imminent

Peter Baker and Gardiner Harris 2017. (Baker is the Chief White House Correspondent for the New York Times. Harris covers internal diplomacy for the NYT.) New York Times, 9 August 2017. “Deep Divisions Emerge in Trump Administration as North Korea Threatens War.” <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/09/us/politics/north-korea-nuclear-threat-rex-tillerson.html?ribbon-ad-idx=4&rref=politics>

“I think Americans should sleep well at night, have no concerns about this particular rhetoric of the last few days,” Mr. Tillerson said as his plane stopped to refuel in Guam, the very island that North Korea threatened to target. He added; “Nothing I have seen and nothing I know of would indicate that the situation has dramatically changed in the last 24 hours.”

North Korea shows restraint

Connor Finnegan 2017. (Connor Finnegan is a reporter for ABC News.) ABC News, 22 August 2017. “Tillerson praises North Korea for 'restraint,' hopes for 'pathway' to dialogue.” <http://abcnews.go.com/International/tillerson-praises-north-korea-restraint-hopes-pathway-dialogue/story?id=49363821>

Just weeks after North Korea launched an intercontinental ballistic missile, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson is offering praise for Kim Jong-un for holding his fire since then, noting that it could be the "beginning" of a pathway to peace talks. The overture to the outlaw regime came on the same day that the U.S. slapped Chinese and Russian individuals and companies with third-party sanctions for doing business with North Korea. "I'm pleased to see that the regime in Pyongyang has certainly demonstrated some level of restraint that we've not seen in the past. We hope that this is the beginning of this signal we’ve been looking for," Tillerson said. The nation’s top diplomat seemed to be trying to encourage North Korea to stay on the path, later noting that "We need to see more on their part." In particular, Tillerson seemed to credit the unanimous adoption of a UN Security Council resolution on August 5 that target North Korea's revenue sources -- coal, iron and iron ore, lead and lead ore, seafood, and the country's guest worker program. Since then, they haven't engaged in "missile launches or provocative acts," he said. "They are ready to restrain their level of tensions, they are ready to restrain their provocative acts, and then perhaps we are seeing our pathway to sometime in the early future having some dialogue," he added.

A/T: Protection from Nuclear War

MAD Undermined

Ankit Panda 2017. (Editor at the Council on Foreign Relations and The Diplomat. His work has been presented to numerous government bodies, including the U.S. State department, the European Union, and the United Kingdom's Foreign and Commonwealth Office.) The Diplomat, 8 August 2017. “China Hits Back at South Korea's THAAD Deployment Following North Korea's Latest ICBM Test.” <http://thediplomat.com/2017/08/china-hits-back-at-south-koreas-thaad-deployment-following-north-koreas-latest-icbm-test/>

China has long been vocal about its opposition to the deployment of THAAD in South Korea, basing its opposition around the powerful X-band AN/TPY-2 radar associated with the battery. Beginning last year, China began unofficially sanctioning South Korean entities on its soil in response to the deployment decision; this included additional scrutiny of operations by South Korea’s Lotte conglomerate, which swapped land with the South Korean government for the system’s deployment.

Beijing’s opposition to THAAD has little to do with the interceptor batteries themselves. Chinese strategists fear that the AN/TPY-2 radar would be able to degrade China’s nuclear second strike capability against the United States by allowing U.S. early warning systems to better discriminate between real and decoy warheads.

Undermining MAD Destabilizes the Region

Amitai Etzioni 2017. (Amitai Etzioni is a professor of international relations at The George Washington University. He holds a PhD in Sociology from the University of California, Berkeley. He is the author of The China Options.) 14 August 2017. “THAAD: Best A Bargaining Chip.” <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/thaad-best-a-bargaining-chip_us_5991b2abe4b0ed1f464c0c97>

There are differences of opinions among experts how effective these systems are. Jeffrey Lewis, an arms control analyst at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey, notes that THAAD can defend against short- and medium-range missiles, but would not against ICBM. Anyhow, so far South Korea allowed only the positioning of one battery that has a limited effect. However, even if these anti-missile batteries are much less valuable than advocates claim, we need to pay more mind to the high costs they exact. They are very destabilizing — because there is reason to hold that THAAD surveillance could be marshaled in the tracking, identification, and destruction of not just North Korean but also Chinese missiles.

Those quick to exclaim “Great, two for the price of one” should recall that nuclear powers hold each other at bay; that mutually assured destruction seems to be a major reason the big powers have avoided war since 1945. To remind: The logic of nuclear deterrence presumes that if either China or the U.S. launches a nuclear attack, they must expect to be paid back in kind, to be devastated, and therefore any major strike is virtually suicidal. However, if one nuclear power can prevent a retaliatory strike (by an anti-missile defense system, for instance), the other nation must fear the possibility of a devastating attack without the ability to respond. As a result, the mutual destruction is no longer assured, and the deterrence effect breaks down. Further, such concerns may well lead the newly vulnerable nation to put its nuclear forces on a hair trigger alert, ready to strike preemptively at any sign of preparation of an attack by the other. In short, if THAAD batteries are effective, they are highly destabilizing.

Impact: Double bind.

Either these missile defense systems don’t work or they bring the world to the brink of World War III.

A/T: Stabilizes the Region

Regional tensions escalate

Azriel Bermant and Igor Sutyagin 2017. (Azriel Bermant, a research fellow at the Institute for National Security Studies, specializes in US Arms Control Policy, US Policy in the Middle East, NATO missile defense policy, and nuclear weapons proliferation. Dr Bermant was awarded his PhD from University College London. Igor Sutyagin is a Research Fellow at the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies in London.) Foreign Affairs, 21 August 2017. “Moving Forward With THAAD.” <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/south-korea/2017-08-21/moving-forward-thaad>

Yet in contrast to U.S.-led missile defense projects in Eastern Europe and the Middle East, THAAD is not particularly welcome in South Korea. The country’s president, Moon Jae-in, has sent mixed signals about the deployment and many of his people are actively opposed to it. In fact, South Koreans have protested en masse against THAAD, with many concerned that it will further destabilize the region. China is angry, claiming that the missile defense radar system peers into its territory and poses a military threat. It has even initiated economic sanctions against South Korea in response. Russia has likewise voiced strong objections, just as it has done over NATO’s missile defense system in Europe. Rather than making the region more secure, it appears that THAAD could lead to a further escalation in tensions…. But such programs might have been the lowest-hanging fruit. Although the Israelis have taken pride in the missile defense cooperation with the United States, as have the Poles, East Asia is more complicated. Some see missile defense deployments in South Korea as an unnecessary provocation of China. Moon, for example, seeks better relations with both North Korea and China, and as the scholar Katharine Moon pointed out in Foreign Affairs, his election campaign included promises to open a dialogue with Pyongyang and repair relations with Beijing.

A/T: Nuclear Strikes are the Main Threat

Non-nuclear weapons pose the main threat

Ian Bremmer 2017. (Bremmer is a foreign affairs columnist and editor-at-large at TIME. He is the president of Eurasia Group, a political-risk consultancy, and a Global Research Professor at New York University He is the author of Superpower: Three Choices for America’s Role in the World. He holds a PhD in Political Science from Stanford University.) Time.com, 21 August 2017. “5 Reasons Things in North Korea Could Still Go Badly Wrong.” <http://time.com/4905594/north-korea-kim-jong-un-risk-report/>

Pyongyang already poses an existential threat to South Korea. North Korea has anywhere between 2,500 and 5,000 tons of chemical weapons at its disposal already, and a barrage of artillery (as many as 21,000 pieces) continuously pointed at Seoul; some analysts estimate that amount of firepower could decimate Seoul (population: 10 million) in as little as two hours.

Link: These are weapons that THAAD does not deter.

(See also, “THAAD doesn’t work” under Contention 3)

Impact: South Korea puts scarce resources and diplomatic capital into a weapons system that fails to protect its citizens from the backbone of North Korea’s arsenal.

A/T: North Korea’s Restraint Ended with Recent Tests

North Korea Fired into the sea—Harming no one

Kim Tong-Hyung 2017. (Writer for the Associated Press) Time.com, 26 August 2017. “North Korea Fires Short-Range Missiles in Latest Test.” http://time.com/4916969/north-korea-fires-short-range-missiles/

North Korea fired several rockets into the sea Saturday in the continuation of its rapid nuclear and missile expansion, prompting South Korea to press ahead with military drills involving U.S. troops that have angered Pyongyang.

Impact: No harm.

Even though the act may be seen as provocative, this is still the measured act of a calculating opponent, who can be reasoned with. North Korea didn’t kill anyone with these rocket tests.

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