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North Korea will never give up its nuclear weapons and its right to maintain them. After all, if the three states that have not signed the [Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty](#) – India, Pakistan, and Israel – can have them, why not North Korea? The excuses for India and Pakistan are primarily each other; for Israel, its size and its geographical isolation. For North Korea, the reason is a rather different one. Rather, it is reasons. Let me count (some of) them: North Korea (1950-53), Iran (1953), Guatemala (1954), Vietnam (1954), Brazil (1964), the Dominican Republic (1965), Chile (1973), Iraq (2003), Libya (2012) and so on and so forth.

This is a partial list of countries in which the U.S. has attempted, often but not always with success, what is politely called "regime change." The interventions have ranged from the frank overthrow of a freely elected government (Iran, 1953), to direct military invasion of a supposedly "threatening" military dictatorship which, however, presented no threat to the United States other than what was put out in the government propaganda of the time (Iraq, 2003).

It happens that it was the U.S. that created the two Koreas. As World War II was coming to a close, the Soviet Union was poised to invade Japan and its then colonial possession, Korea, on August 8, 1945. One motivation for the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima (August 6) and Nagasaki (August 9) was to foreclose the possibility that the Red Army would establish a foothold on Japanese territory (the first landings were to be on the northernmost Japanese island of Hokkaido) and would quickly take over the whole of the Korean Peninsula.

With the forestalling of the Soviet invasion, U.S. personnel quickly were moved to Korea. Before they arrived in September, in Washington a young U.S. colonel, one Dean Rusk, looked at a map and decided that a line dividing Korea in two, one a "Soviet" zone, and the other a "U.S." zone, would a) be a good idea and b) would be (arbitrarily) drawn at the 38th parallel. (With this sort of action, Dean Rusk, an army colonel at the time, was obviously preparing for his much bigger role in preparing and perpetuating the War on Viet Nam.) Although the first North Korean leader, Kim il Sung, and his parents, had been leading anti-Japanese guerilla forces since the Japanese conquest of Manchuria in 1932, and was widely respected (revered by some) throughout Korea, the U.S. set-up a pro-U.S. government under the former exile, the pro-U.S. Syngman Rhee. Using many Korean former collaborators with the Japanese, they spent much of their time rooting out, and in many cases killing, supporters of Kim il-Sung residing in the South.

North Korea has previously negotiated with the United States and at one time was an adherent to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. It pulled out in 2003 because, bottom line, despite what was being said in Washington at the time, it simply [did not trust President George W. Bush](#) . (And, after "Iraq," why would any potential adversary?) Regardless of what did or did not happen between

[North Korea and the United states during the Obama Administration](#)
, the former clearly now does not trust the U.S.

It is very important to note that there has never been a peace treaty, either between North and South Korea nor between the North and the United States, following the conclusion of the armistice that ended the fighting in 1953. The North has been asking for such a treaty for many years, as have many elements in South Korea. Under neither Democratic nor Republican Presidents has the U.S. ever shown any inclination to negotiate one. And so, as far as the North Koreans are concerned, the number one objective for the U.S. has been the overthrow of their government, with the likely "unification" (and man, would that be a bloody affair) under South Korean rule. That of course would put a close diplomatic, commercial and military ally of the U.S. on both the Chinese and Russian borders.

Nevertheless, the possibilities of a deal are there.

1. A peace treaty could be negotiated. (In early 2016, [North Korea did say](#) that in return for a peace treaty, it would end nuclear testing. And that had to have been an opening negotiating position.)
2. Relations between North Korea and South Korea and the United States could be normalized.
3. All sanctions could be lifted.
4. North Korea could re-join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, agree to a freeze on its ballistic missile development program and subject itself to regular International Atomic Energy Agency inspections (like Iran), including its military facilities (unlike Iran).

There are give-ups on both sides here, but such a resolution would be very beneficial to the North as well as to Russia and China. There has been much talk about the impending collapse of the NK government – for years. It has not happened. But true peace would give it the opportunity to [massively develop the nation economically](#) . There is much talk about how poor and backward North Korea is. Nevertheless, it has been able to create what must be a fairly large group of scientists and engineers, for its nuclear programs, peaceful and military. A

settlement would allow the [turning of those human resources](#) towards productive pursuits, for all.

Would the U.S. agree to such a proposal? Not a chance, especially under Trump. Since North Korea would, and could, never agree to de-nuclearization, such a deal would be an almost impossible sell politically for any U.S. President, especially Trump. But more than that, the U.S. needs the "North Korean threat" to justify all sorts of things, military and commercial, starting with the [maintenance of Permanent](#)