

Comment on “How China enables North Korea’s mischief”

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Gordon Chang's article, : How China enables North Korea's mischief NY Daily News 4-3-2013, seems to be a hasty conclusion without following causality principles. In foreign affairs, though intrigue and secretive, as the author acknowledged that he (the author used we) don't understand the motive or intention (to stop a war or to prepare for a war) on China's military action following North Korea's missile launch and US's deployment of Naval missile interceptor, any analysis must carefully follow causality principles as much as possible.

The author's conclusion expressed in the title does not seem to have supporting evidence rather it seems to be a personal speculation. China voted for the sanction and publicly expressed displeasure of North Korea's threatening actions and statements. Whether we know for sure China violated UN resolution to provide KN-08 or not, we need to analyze the sequence of events that happened before drawing a conclusion. Secretary Chuck Hagel cited the N-08 as a reason for US administration's decision to deploy 14 additional missile interceptors in Alaska, was that based on an assumption and a military's proposal or a continuation of a pre-set policy placing focus in Asia Pacific? What events led to North Korea's recent actions apparently unilaterally? Who provoked it or is Kim just an irrational young leader? Answers to the above question would lead to very different conclusions. Ted Parsons said the sale of launchers for the KN-08 would require Chinese government approval but no one said it happened on a precise date, even if it did we still need to trace its causes in view of the fact 'pivot' to Asia had led to a series of unexpected or uncontrolled events in Asia, most notably the Japan's theatrical action in purchasing Diaoyu (Senkaku) Islands provoking China ignoring US Advice not to do so.

Asian countries interpret the US-Japan mutual defense treaty quite differently not only between Japan and the rest of Asia but also between Japan and US. Witnessing the fact that Japan can and do act differently now against US's advice in conducting her foreign affairs and Shinzo Abe's desire to expand Japan's military strength and to restore her pre-WW II glory, it would lead to many speculations and concerns among Asian leaders whether US's Asia Pacific strategy would be as peace-intended as we pronounce it. Wouldn't the same security concern US have regarding other countries' offensive military capability apply to Asian countries as well?

If we were just playing a war game, we could simply make any assumption, hyper any event to justify action so the game get exciting, and escalation of power often leads to more violence and destruction. However, we are in a real world; wars kill lives. Shouldn't we place more caution and exercise more diligence in causality analysis before jump to conclusion and hype the tension?! I would certainly hope so!