

World Focus – September 10, 2017  
Blase's Commentary on North Korea

Friends, we've had many comments regarding the racist violence that has gone on. According to David Swanson, the answer to racist violence is not anti-racist violence or pacifism. The idea that those are the only two choices is ridiculous. I would mention that this is a classic example of bifurcation, which is an error in logic. There aren't two choices. Bifurcation is generally wrong. There are a hundred choices. Charlottesville and US resistance to racism would be far stronger with disciplined non-violence. The behavior of a few anti-racists allows the corporate media to depict the KKK as victims. There is nothing the alt-right crowd wants more than some act of violence against them that would permit pundits to start trumpeting the need for liberals to be more tolerant of racists, and to proclaim that the real problem is those reckless radicals who want to tear down statues etc. We need non-violent activism, a thousand times more of it. We need to initiate the next march in Charlottesville ourselves. But of course in the meantime we have had similar problems in places like Santa Monica, and I suppose you heard about the presence of white supremacists, KKK and neo-Nazis disruptions in Southern California. We'd like to cite one such experience which we went through first hand in Santa Monica toward one well-organized group called the Committee for Racial Justice. The Committee was meeting in Virginia Park on Sunday, August 6th this year to discuss the racial divides that are escalating locally and across the country. Theresa and I were there with many civic-minded people, many of whom have been meeting together frequently. We were greeted by a mob clearly provoking violence with their foul and insulting rants. But there was more.

The attackers were pushing in the doors to our meeting room violently. Many in the meeting raced to the doors to try to keep them away non-violently. Yes, the Santa Monica police were there, more passively perhaps than many of us have seen in the peace movement; we've been subjected to far more aggressive police activities than were observable when our meeting was attacked - and for decades we've experienced outbursts of that aggression. Our group will continue to meet, speak out and work for racial justice as if our lives depended on it - because they do. We will keep you posted on our efforts that have a civil discourse without injury to anyone.

And then we have the wonderful words of the Reverend Janet McKeithen, the pastor of church in Ocean Park. She stated:

“At last night's community workshop, about 50 white supremacists and neo-Nazis tried to shut us down. We kept most of them out. Some of our folks were outside with them bearing witness or being kept out unwillingly due to the way they were blocked by dangerous individuals. Those of us inside voted to continue the workshop. We will continue to fight for freedom. It is our duty to win. No turning back.

My heart is full of appreciation for those of you who work for justice in your own ways each and every day. There's a lot of work to do. We will not give up. Our love and courage is stronger than any hate-filled, immature and violent group could ever be. It is our duty to fight for freedom, and that is what we intend to keep doing.”

That's a wonderful statement. Following up on this, we will continue to have meetings. When the country is being divided along so many different lines, it is time for us to come together to celebrate, promote and uphold solidarity in Santa Monica.

Well, what are the principles of non-violence? Here are some coming from Dr. King and his work. You might find it in his first book, *Stride Toward Freedom*. The six principles include:

**1. PRINCIPLE ONE: Nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people.**

It is active nonviolent resistance to evil.

It is aggressive spiritually, mentally and emotionally.

**2. PRINCIPLE TWO: Nonviolence seeks to win friendship and understanding.**

The end result of nonviolence is redemption and reconciliation.

The purpose of nonviolence is the creation of the Beloved Community.

**3. PRINCIPLE THREE: Nonviolence seeks to defeat injustice not people.**

Nonviolence recognizes that evildoers are also victims and are not evil people.

The nonviolent resister seeks to defeat evil not people.

4. **PRINCIPLE FOUR: Nonviolence holds that suffering can educate and transform.**

Nonviolence accepts suffering without retaliation.

Unearned suffering is redemptive and has tremendous educational and transforming possibilities.

5. **PRINCIPLE FIVE: Nonviolence chooses love instead of hate.**

Nonviolence resists violence of the spirit as well as the body.

Nonviolent love is spontaneous, unmotivated, unselfish and creative.

6. **PRINCIPLE SIX: Nonviolence believes that the universe is on the side of justice.**

The nonviolent resister has deep faith that justice will eventually win.

Nonviolence believes that God is a God of justice.

Wonderful thoughts coming from great people who are all around us - lovers of non-violence, peacemakers.

We have international horror taking place before our eyes. We have experts, and specialists - but they are generally not in government. Sometimes they are at the lower levels, for example state department employees with doctorates in their areas of expertise. I know I spoke with one a while ago riding in a cab in Washington DC. "Yes," he said, "we have some expertise, but all decisions are made above the level of expertise." Isn't that a tragic statement? In other words, genuine experts are simply ignored by politicians. It's a crime. They know what is taking place, they are the experts - but the politicians go ahead with what they call "US interests," which are usually the interests of Wall Street and the military industrial complex. Not the interests of more than 300 million citizens who want peace badly. But the interests of warmongers and war profiteers come first.

Speaking of experts, we have a program coming from Professor Michael Choshudowsky, who has outlined the proposal for a lasting peace in Korea, a bilateral North / South peace treaty. This is extremely important, because this kind of diplomacy is both possible and doable.

“The president of South Korea Moon Jae-in is currently in Vladivostok for the East Asian Economic Summit (EEF), chaired by Russia’s president Vladimir Putin. September 6-7.

A high level North Korean delegation has also been sent to Vladivostok.

President Moon Jae-in was slated to meet Vladimir Putin shortly after his arrival on September 5 (local time).

The holding of the Moon-Putin talks had been requested by Moscow following a prior meeting at the Blue House in Seoul between president Moon Jae-un and Nikolai Patrushev, Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation (SCRF).

The Republic of Korea's presidential office confirmed that Patrushev also held talks with his counterpart Chung Eui-yong, director of the Blue House (Cheongwadae) National Security Office for President Moon Jae-in.

*While the Moon-Putin Vladivostok talks have been officially confirmed, in all likelihood, the two delegations (North and South Korea) will also meet behind closed doors, with president Vladimir Putin potentially playing a historic role in promoting a bilateral DPRK-ROK understanding, with a view to averting a US led war.*

It is important to note that president Putin had previously warned the Trump administration that "continuing hostility between the US and North Korea was close to deteriorating into a "large-scale conflict" and said the only way to de-escalate tensions was through talks". (Daily Express, September 5, 2017)

Also of significance, Japan's Prime Minister Abe and President Putin will also be meeting in Vladivostok on September 6, on the sidelines of the Eastern Economic Forum.

*Moreover, two of the three signatories of the 1953 Armistice agreement (namely the DPRK and China) will be present at these meetings.*

*The US is not a member of the EEF. Several important US business interests will nonetheless be present. Has an observer mission been sent by Washington?*

What should be envisaged is the eventual signing of a bilateral Entente between the DPRK and the ROK, with a view to establishing Peace on the Korean Peninsula. In other words, the "state

of war” between the US and the DPRK (which prevails under the armistice agreement) should in a sense be “side-tracked” and annulled by the signing of a comprehensive bilateral North-South peace agreement, coupled with cooperation, trade and interchange.

In this regard, what underlies the 1953 Armistice Agreement is that one of the warring parties, namely the US has consistently threatened to wage war on the DPRK for the last 64 years. The US has on countless occasions violated the Armistice Agreement. It has remained on a war footing. Casually ignored by the Western media and the international community, the US has actively deployed nuclear weapons targeted at North Korea for more than half a century in violation of article 13b) of the Armistice agreement. More recently it has deployed the so-called THAAD missiles, which are also directed against China and Russia.

The US is still at war with North Korea. The armistice agreement signed in July 1953 –which legally constitutes a “temporary ceasefire” between the warring parties (US, North Korea and China’s Volunteer Army)– must be rescinded through the signing of a long-lasting peace agreement.

The US has not only violated the armistice agreement, it has consistently refused to enter into peace negotiations with Pyongyang, with a view to maintaining its military presence in South Korea as well as shunting a process of normalization and cooperation between the ROK and the DPRK.

The fundamental question to be addressed is the following: How can the 1953 Armistice agreement be replaced by a Long-lasting Peace Agreement given Washington’s persistent refusal to enter into negotiations?

If one of the signatories of the Armistice refuses to sign a Peace Agreement, what should be contemplated is the formulation of a comprehensive Bilateral North-South Peace Agreement, which would de facto lead to rescinding the 1953 armistice.

This proposed far-reaching agreement between Seoul and Pyongyang would assert peace on the Korean peninsula –failing the signing of a peace agreement between the signatories of the 1953 Armistice agreement.

The legal formulation of this bilateral entente is crucial. The bilateral arrangement would in effect bypass Washington's refusal. It would establish the basis of peace on the Korean peninsula, without foreign intervention, namely without Washington dictating its conditions. It would require the concurrent withdrawal of US troops from the ROK and the repeal of the OPCON agreement.

**Sunshine 2.0. and the Candlelight Movement.** The Demilitarization of the Korean Peninsula Supported by the Candle Light movement, Moon Jae-in's presidency potentially constitutes a watershed, a political as well as geopolitical landmark.

President Moon Jae-in had worked closely with president Roh Moo-hyun (who pursued the Sunshine Policy). Moon was his chef de cabinet.

President Moon has confirmed his unbending commitment in favor of dialogue and cooperation with Pyongyang, under what is being dubbed Sunshine 2.0 Policy, while also maintaining the ROK's relationship with the US.

President Moon's commitment to cooperation with North Korea coupled with demilitarization, will require redefining the ROK-US relationship in military affairs. This is the crucial issue.

Moreover, there are signs of internal disagreement (and conflict) within the ROK government with South Korea's Defence Minister, Song Young-moo, openly blaming president Moon of leaning in "a direction that strengthens the military standoff, rather than ... dialogue."

In the present context, Washington controls the ROK Ministry of Defense and has de facto control over ROK foreign policy as well as North South Korea relations. Under the OPCON ("Operational Control") agreement, the Pentagon controls the command structure of the ROK armed forces.

Ultimately this is what has to be addressed with a view to establishing a lasting peace on the Korean peninsula and the broader East Asian region.

### **The Repeal of “Operational Control” (OPCON) and the ROK-US Combined Forces Command (CFC)**

In 2014, the government of President Park Geun-hye postponed the repeal of the OPCON (Operations Command) agreement “until the mid-2020s”. What this signified is that “in the event of conflict” all ROK forces are under the command of a US General appointed by the Pentagon, rather than under that of the ROK President and Commander in Chief.

It goes without saying that national sovereignty cannot reasonably be achieved without the annulment of the OPCON agreement as well as the ROK – US Combined Forces Command (CFC) structure.

As we recall, in 1978 a binational Republic of Korea – United States Combined Forces Command (CFC), was created under the presidency of General Park (military dictator and father of impeached president Park Guen-hye). In substance, this was a change in labels in relation to the so-called UN Command.

“Ever since the Korean War, the allies have agreed that the American four-star would be in “Operational Control” (OPCON) of both ROK and US military forces in wartime .... Before 1978, this was accomplished through the United Nations Command. Since then it has been the CFC [US Combined Forces Command (CFC) structure]. (Brookings Institute)

Moreover, the Command of the US General under the renegotiated OPCON (2014) remains fully operational inasmuch as the 1953 Armistice (which legally constitutes a temporary ceasefire) is not replaced by a peace treaty.

It should be understood that a US led war as formulated by Defense Secretary Mad Dog James Mattis against North Korea would engulf the entire Korean nation.

Given the geography of the Korean peninsula, the use of nuclear weapons against North Korea would inevitably also engulf South Korea. This fact is known and understood by US military planners.

**The US sponsored state of war de facto is directed against both North and South Korea.** It is characterized by persistent military threats (including the use of nuclear weapons) against the DPRK. It also threatens the ROK which has been under US military occupation since September 1945.

Currently there are 28,500 US troops in South Korea. Yet under the US-ROK OPCON (joint defense agreement) discussed earlier, all ROK forces are under US command.

What has to be emphasized in relation to Sunshine 2.0 Policy is that the US and the ROK cannot be “Allies” inasmuch as the US threatens to wage war on North Korea as well as South Korea. The “real alliance” is that which unifies and reunites North and South Korea through dialogue against foreign intrusion and aggression.

**The US is in a state of war against the entire Korean Nation.**

And what this requires is the holding of bilateral talks between the ROK and the DPRK with a view to signing an agreement which nullifies the Armistice and sets the term of a bilateral “Peace Treaty”.

In turn this agreement would set the stage for the exclusion of US military presence and the withdrawal of the 28,500 US forces.

Moreover, pursuant to bilateral Peace negotiations, the ROK-US OPCON agreement which places ROK forces under US command should be rescinded. All ROK troops would thereafter be brought under national ROK command.”

Now this comes from one of the experts in the field. I think it's a brilliant idea. I would only hope that we would have the brilliance to abide by this rather than creating what could be the end of the planet.

There will be so much trash and poison and radiation in the air that this conflict, or the one between India and Pakistan, could destroy all life on earth. Friends, we want to think about this.

We're talking about the absolute necessity of peace in Korea. We're talking about the need to talk with experts, not amateurs or politicians. We need to listen to adult scholars, adult thinkers - people who have dedicated their lives to understanding their area of expertise. We just read the words of an excellent professor from Canada. We have another professor I'd like you to know about. He's right here in the US, and his name is Bruce Cummings. His books are awesome. One, *The Korean War: A History*. Another: *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History*. And a third: *North Korea: Another Country*. And a fourth: "*Inside North Korea*." His research and teaching focus? Modern Korean History; Twentieth Century International History; US / East Asian Relations. East Asian Political Economy. American Foreign Relations. His *Origins of the Korean War* won the John King Fairbanks Book Award of the American Historical Association. The second volume won the Quincy Wright Book Award of the International Studies Association. He is the editor of the modern volume of the Cambridge History of Korea, and is a frequent contributor to the London Review of Books, the Nation, Current History, and the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists and Le monde diplomatique.

He has an amazing background. So what are his thoughts on this upcoming disaster created by people who really are not at the high school level in the study of Korea? I don't know whether our president could identify Korea on a map. We heard one recognized expert on what might be done, and now we're going to hear another. We have to learn something about this history of this situation. Professor Bruce Cummings states:

"The media claim that North Korea is trying to obtain and use weapons of mass destruction. Yet the United States, which opposes this strategy, has used or threatened to use such weapons in northeast Asia since the 1940s, when it did drop atomic bombs on Japan.

THE forgotten war -- the Korean war of 1950-53 -- might better be called the unknown war. What was indelible about it was the extraordinary destructiveness of the United States' air campaigns against North Korea, from the widespread and continuous use of firebombing (mainly with napalm), to threats to use nuclear and chemical weapons, and the destruction of huge North Korean dams in the final stages of the war. Yet this episode is mostly unknown even

to historians, let alone to the average citizen, and it has never been mentioned during the past decade of media analysis of the North Korean nuclear problem.

Korea is also assumed to have been a limited war, but its prosecution bore a strong resemblance to the air war against Imperial Japan in the second world war, and was often directed by the same US military leaders. The atomic attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki have been examined from many different perspectives, yet the incendiary air attacks against Japanese and Korean cities have received much less attention. The US post-Korean war air power and nuclear strategy in northeast Asia are even less well understood; yet these have dramatically shaped North Korean choices and remain a key factor in its national security strategy.

Napalm was invented at the end of the second world war. It became a major issue during the Vietnam war, brought to prominence by horrific photos of injured civilians. Yet far more napalm was dropped on Korea and with much more devastating effect, since the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) had many more populous cities and urban industrial installations than North Vietnam. In 2003 I participated in a conference with US veterans of the Korean war. During a discussion about napalm, a survivor who lost an eye in the Changjin (in Japanese, Chosin) Reservoir battle said it was indeed a nasty weapon -- but "it fell on the right people." (Ah yes, the "right people" -- a friendly-fire drop on a dozen US soldiers.) He continued: "Men all around me were burned. They lay rolling in the snow. Men I knew, marched and fought with begged me to shoot them . . . It was terrible. Where the napalm had burned the skin to a crisp, it would be peeled back from the face, arms, legs . . . like fried potato chips." (2)

Soon after that incident, George Barrett of the New York Times had found "a macabre tribute to the totality of modern war" in a village near Anyang, in South Korea: "The inhabitants throughout the village and in the fields were caught and killed and kept the exact postures they held when the napalm struck -- a man about to get on his bicycle, 50 boys and girls playing in an orphanage, a housewife strangely unmarked, holding in her hand a page torn from a Sears-Roebuck catalogue crayoned at Mail Order No 3,811,294 for a \$2.98 'bewitching bed jacket -- coral'." US Secretary of State Dean Acheson wanted censorship authorities notified about this kind of "sensationalised reporting," so it could be stopped.

One of the first orders to burn towns and villages that I found in the archives was in the far southeast of Korea, during heavy fighting along the Pusan Perimeter in August 1950, when US soldiers were bedevilled by thousands of guerrillas in rear areas. On 6 August a US officer requested "to have the following towns obliterated" by the air force: Chongsong, Chinbo and Kusu-dong. B-29 strategic bombers were also called in for tactical bombing. On 16 August five groups of B-29s hit a rectangular area near the front, with many towns and villages, creating an ocean of fire with hundreds of tons of napalm. Another call went out on the 20 August. On 26 August I found in this same source the single entry: "fired 11 villages." Pilots were told to bomb targets that they could see to avoid hitting civilians, but they frequently bombed major population centres by radar, or dumped huge amounts of napalm on secondary targets when the primary one was unavailable.

In a major strike on the industrial city of Hungnam on 31 July 1950, 500 tons of ordnance was delivered through clouds by radar; the flames rose 200-300 feet into the air. The air force dropped 625 tons of bombs over North Korea on 12 August, a tonnage that would have required a fleet of 250 B-17s in the second world war. By late August B-29 formations were dropping 800 tons a day on the North. (5) Much of it was pure napalm. From June to late October 1950, B-29s unloaded 866,914 gallons of napalm.

Air force sources delighted in this relatively new weapon, joking about communist protests and misleading the press about their "precision bombing." They also liked to point out that civilians were warned of the approaching bombers by leaflet, although all pilots knew that these were ineffective. This was a mere prelude to the obliteration of most North Korean towns and cities after China entered the war."

Friends, I have a very personal thought here. I received my honorable discharge from the US Marine Corps Reserves in February 1950. Just a few months later, in June, this horrible war began. In June. People I had trained with went into that war and never came back. I feel it was completely unnecessary, an illegal war.

"The Chinese entry caused an immediate escalation of the air campaign. From November 1950, General Douglas MacArthur ordered that a wasteland be created between the fighting front and

the Chinese border, destroying from the air every "installation, factory, city, and village" over thousands of square miles of North Korean territory. As a well-informed British attaché to MacArthur's headquarters observed, except for Najin near the Soviet border and the Yalu dams (both spared so as not to provoke Moscow or Beijing), MacArthur's orders were "to destroy every means of communication and every installation, and factories and cities and villages. This destruction is to start at the Manchurian border and to progress south." On 8 November 1950, 79 B-29s dropped 550 tons of incendiaries on Sinuiju, "removing [it] from off the map." A week later Hoeryong was napalmed "to burn out the place." By 25 November "a large part of [the] North West area between Yalu River and south to enemy lines is more or less burning"; soon the area would be a "wilderness of scorched earth."

This happened before the major Sino-Korean offensive that cleared northern Korea of United Nations forces. When that began, the US air force hit Pyongyang with 700 500-pound bombs on 14-15 December; napalm dropped from Mustang fighters, with 175 tons of delayed-fuse demolition bombs, which landed with a thud and then blew up when people were trying to retrieve the dead from the napalm fires.

At the beginning of January General Matthew Ridgway again ordered the air force to hit the capital, Pyongyang, "with the goal of burning the city to the ground with incendiary bombs" (this happened in two strikes on 3 and 5 January). As the Americans retreated below the 38th parallel, the scorched-earth policy of torching continued, burning Uijongbu, Wonju and other small cities in the South as the enemy drew near.

The air force also tried to destroy the North Korean leadership. During the war on Iraq in 2003 the world learned about the MOAB, "Mother of All Bombs," weighing 21,500 pounds with an explosive force of 18,000 pounds of TNT. Newsweek put this bomb on its cover, under the headline "Why America Scares the World." In the desperate winter of 1950-51 Kim Il Sung and his closest allies were back where they started in the 1930s, holed up in deep bunkers in Kanggye, near the Manchurian border. After failing to find them for three months after the Inch'on landing (an intelligence failure that led to carpet-bombing the old Sino-Korean tributary route running north from Pyongyang to the border, on the assumption that they would flee to China), B-29s dropped Tarzan bombs on Kanggye. These were enormous 12,000-pound bombs

never deployed before -- but firecrackers compared to the ultimate weapons, atomic bombs.

On 9 July 1950 -- just two weeks into the war, it is worth remembering -- MacArthur sent Ridgway a hot message that prompted the joint chiefs of staff (JCS) "to consider whether or not A-bombs should be made available to MacArthur." The chief of operations, General Charles Bolte, was asked to talk to MacArthur about using atomic bombs "in direct support [of] ground combat." Bolte thought 10-20 such bombs could be spared for Korea without unduly jeopardising US global war capabilities.

Boite received from MacArthur an early suggestion for the tactical use of atomic weapons and an indication of MacArthur's extraordinary ambitions for the war, which included occupying the North and handling potential Chinese -- or Soviet -- intervention: "I would cut them off in North Korea . . . I visualise a cul-de-sac...

At a famous news conference on 30 November President Harry Truman threatened use of the atomic bomb, saying the US might use any weapon in its arsenal. The threat was not the faux pas many assumed it to be, but was based on contingency planning to use the bomb. On that same day, Air Force General George Stratemeyer sent an order to General Hoyt Vandenberg that the Strategic Air Command should be put on warning, "to be prepared to dispatch without delay medium bomb groups to the Far East . . . this augmentation should include atomic capabilities."

General Curtis LeMay remembered correctly that the JCS had earlier concluded that atomic weapons would probably not be useful in Korea, except as part of "an overall atomic campaign against Red China." But, if these orders were now being changed because of the entry of Chinese forces into the war, LeMay wanted the job; he told Stratemeyer that only his headquarters had the experience, technical training, and "intimate knowledge" of delivery methods. The man who had directed the firebombing of Tokyo in 1945 was again ready to proceed to the Far East to direct the attacks. Washington was not worried that the Russians would respond with atomic weapons because the US possessed at least 450 bombs and the Soviets only 25.

On 9 December MacArthur said that he wanted commander's discretion to use atomic weapons in the Korean theatre. On 24 December he submitted "a list of retardation targets" for which he required 26 atomic bombs. He also wanted four to drop on the "invasion forces" and four more for "critical concentrations of enemy air power."

In interviews published posthumously, MacArthur said he had a plan that would have won the war in 10 days: "I would have dropped 30 or so atomic bombs . . . strung across the neck of Manchuria." Then he would have introduced half a million Chinese Nationalist troops at the Yalu and then "spread behind us -- from the Sea of Japan to the Yellow Sea -- a belt of radioactive cobalt . . . it has an active life of between 60 and 120 years. For at least 60 years there could have been no land invasion of Korea from the North." He was certain that the Russians would have done nothing about this extreme strategy: "My plan was a cinch."

Friends, we must recognize this for what it is: madness. We must dedicate ourselves to bringing peace to this suffering world. Thank you for joining us today on World Focus.

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