

North May Invade Islands Next Year

Yahoo! News is carrying a story on North Korean soldiers expressing their joy at being able to fire on YP Do last month. However, the most important paragraph in the story has nothing to do with the past and everything to do with the future. (http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/as_koreas_clash).

The state-run Institute for National Security Strategy in Seoul said in a report issued Sunday that the North may even directly invade Yeonpyeong and other Yellow Sea border islands next year, Yonhap news agency reported. Yonhap said the assessment linked the North's belligerence to leader Kim's moves to transfer power to his youngest son, but the report didn't elaborate.

Please read the entire article for more information.

Analysis. If people keep talking like this, we may get some self fulfilling prophesies. The North Koreans are very good at making messes where they are least expected. They could probably stage an invasion of YP Do, PY Do or any of the other three islands south of the Northern Limit Line. YP Do is probably the least likely to be invaded as it has been recently reinforced. The other islands?

When I was in Korea back in the “Dark Ages”, a standard exercise scenario was the North Korean invasion of either YP Do or PY Do. There is no doubt that both sides have long had plans to cover the invasion of any of the islands and plans to throw the invaders out. The only problem is that this can easily become a feed the fight situation that gets real expensive in a hurry.

As the downward spiral begins, when does the North up the ante by threatening to shell Seoul unless it gets the islands? When does the South pull Kim's “Punk card”? Right now I don't believe it would take much initiative to get this whole mess started. The North Koreans are doing a lot of chest beating about how they defeated the South after the South shelled their sacred ocean. The South, in return, is doing a lot of live fire exercises very near the DMZ. According to the article, more exercises are planned this week.

According to an earlier article in Chosun Ilbo, South Korea is at DEFCON 2 WATCHCON 2. That was stated as a reduction from DEFCON 1 during the live fire exercises in central South Korea near the DMZ. South Korea is still prepared for war on very short notice.