

South Korea Knew of Possible YP Do attack

The Chosun Ilbo is reporting (http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2010/12/02/2010120200566.html) that South Korean Intelligence had information that the North Koreans were going to bombard YP Do.

“Members of the National Assembly Intelligence Committee quoted NIS Director Won Sei-hoon as saying the agency knew from wiretapping that the North Korean regime ordered the military to prepare to attack the five islands in the West Sea. He said the NIS submitted the intelligence report to President Lee Myung-bak.

Committee members said since the North is constantly making such threats, the government apparently failed to take it seriously.



In this satellite photo released by the U.S. private intelligence agency Stratfor, rice paddies and fields in North Korea bear traces of South Korean artillery shells. /Courtesy of www.stratfor.com

Asked what the military and the government did, Won said it was difficult to intercept further North Korean military communication before and on the day of attack because the North used landlines rather than wireless communication to carry out operations. Any damage the North suffered in the South's counterstrike is difficult to assess for the same reason, he added.”

Please read the entire article for more important information.

Analysis. Fourteen rounds over into soft rice paddies does not do much damage. Bad shooting. That can be fixed with more practice which is scheduled for next week pretty much around the entire country.

As usual with the North the big question is why? Problems with the succession are probably first on the list. It appears that dragging Kim 3 around the country introducing him to all of the people who will hopefully support his rule when daddy is gone is not working well. I presume that these experienced officials are not impressed with this unprepared “kid” who is third in line as sons go. Without knowing how much time Kim 2 has it is difficult to tell if Kim 3 can win acceptance.

Second on the list is the economic situation in North Korea. This is something we all make educated guesses at (mostly Scientific Wild Ass Guesses AKA SWAGs) because the US does not release its LANDSAT infra red photos that tell you pretty well what the crop is like. Again this year, North Korea, along with Manchuria, got hit with a major typhoon. A good part of the 2010 planting is now resting on the bottom of the Yellow Sea. This has been the case for the last several years. North Korea is running out of places to clear to find topsoil.

Considering the amount of emphasis the PRC has put a Six Party meeting, I believe that the PRC has begun to recognize that they will be the sole support of North Korea. South Korea, Japan and the United States will hold meetings in Washington, D. C. next week at the Secretary of State level to adopt a common position. The one they have now of simply ignoring bad behavior is working pretty well. There is a behavior modification technique that says that good behavior is reinforced. Bad behavior is ignored unless it is so bad it is dangerous and then it is severely punished. This appears to be the technique that is being applied in the case of North Korea.

It also appears to be working. North Korea sinks the Cheonan. That is really dangerous behavior that must be punished. Unfortunately, the PRC decided not to allow its "errant child" to be properly punished through a Security Council Resolution with any real bite to it. So the United States has undertaken a series of unilateral sanctions that appear to be putting Kim in a box.

Now Kim shells YP Do. Again, very dangerous behavior. Artillery fire is returned without, evidently, doing a whole lot of significant damage. Yet again the PRC protects him, refuses to condemn him, and instead tries to get South Korea, Japan and the US to a conference to validate his bad behavior. The PRC doesn't want to get stuck with the entire bill for Kim's support.

Sorry Chicoms. This is your reward for supporting the Kim family country a lot longer than you should have simply because you don't want to handle several million starving North Korean refugees. Now it actually looks like both the PRC and Kim must do the "agonizing reappraisal" of their situation. How bad is Kim doing? What he wants the most is the resumption of the Mt. Kumgang tours. He needs the money. He might be running out of Bordeaux.

Which brings us to the truly dangerous part. We have had some recent history with megalomaniacs and the end result has not been good. They tend to take the country down with them in flames when they go. If North Korea implodes then it is a refugee problem of immense proportions. For North Korea to implode, I believe somebody would have to remove the Kims from power along with their supporting military and party leaders. Given the police state nature of North Korea, that option has little chance of success. If the Kims were removed from power, there might be sufficient infighting among the remaining power brokers that an implosion would occur.

That brings us to what I believe is the most likely outcome which is war on the Korea Peninsula. I believe this will be a very calculated move by the North Koreans and they will telegraph it with various other actions such as landing saboteurs, messing with the South Koreans in the Kaesong Industrial area which the south should evacuate as quickly and discreetly as possible, generating incidents along the DMZ above the usual level, naval incidents in the Yellow Sea and especially around the islands from YP Do to PY Do.

It might turn out to be a very "interesting" Christmas Week this year.