

## U. S. and Japan Back South Korean Military Reprisals

The Chosun Ilbo is reporting ( [http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html\\_dir/2010/12/08/2010120800285.html](http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2010/12/08/2010120800285.html) ) that the United States and Japan will support South Korean reprisals for any new attacks by North Korea.

“The U.S. and Japan do not oppose South Korea's pledge to respond strongly to any further provocations by North Korea, a senior government official said Tuesday.

"Everything isn't over yet. There is the possibility of the North launching additional provocations," the official told reporters on the customary condition of anonymity after Foreign Minister Kim Sung-hwan, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Japanese Foreign Minister Seiji Maehara met in Washington on Monday.

"There can be no difference of opinions between them over the fact that the North should pay the price if it launches additional provocations. The U.S. and Japan say they fully respect South Korea's military response to the North's attack," he said. "We can't accept arguments that we should sit idly if the North kills civilians or attacks with submarines. We have the right to fight back." “

They also dismissed a call by the People's Republic of China for new talks under the Six Party format.

Please read the entire article for more important information.

**Analysis.** Whatever the Rules of Engagement (ROE) are about proportionate response to North Korean attacks just went up in smoke. This could easily develop into a “feed the fight” situation where neither side will back off.

This is also a not so gentle reminder to the PRC that Kim is basically their problem to control. Japan, South Korea and the United States will not submit to blackmail by North Korea. If the PRC insists on shielding North Korea from reasonable punishments for its anti-social activities, then the PRC may pay the full price of feeding the regime. That response will not sit well in the Great Hall of the People. Tough.

Unfortunately we are at the point where North Korea is running out of “altitude, airspeed and ideas”. And they are shorter than usual, I believe, of things like rice, wheat, potatoes, beans, etc. The last two years of no under the table shipments of food, fertilizer and fuel has likely used up their reserves. We might also check to make sure they are not eating their seed.

Right now about all we can do is be on alert for the next provocation. I suspect by this time everybody has reviewed their tasking under the war plans and is working to get their War Reserve Spares Kits filled along with the ammo bunkers. This Christmas' stocking fillers may well be coal and switches.