

A Democratic Alternative is Needed for Foreign Policies **-Comments on Mr. Bush's recent East Asia trip-**

When Mr. Bush finished his Japan trip leaving for South Korea, I received calls from British Broadcasting Company and Voice of America asking for my comments. I could only briefly provide the BBC audience in about ten minutes the following points over the wireless: 1) Mr. Bush will not find an audience in Tokyo, Seoul and Beijing to his "axis of evil" rhetoric, which is not a diplomatic term at all. 2) The U.S. has suggested, advised, pushed and pressed Japan's economic "reform" for more than one decade with little result, and Mr. Bush's visit cannot change this situation.

Indeed, Mr. Bush did not use this bloodily term during his total six-day trip. I don't know whether Bush knows that one South Korean Congressman from President Kim's ruling party did describe Mr. Bush as "demon of evil." However, Mr. Jiang Zemin did warn Mr. Bush publicly that while Iraq is far from China, China cannot afford to allow North Korea being subjugated by foreign forces. It is not an exaggeration to say that the Korean Peninsula problem is the second important issue for PRC's state security. Otherwise Mao Zedong would not postpone Taiwan's liberation to fight the U.S. troops in Korea half century ago. If Mr. Bush did learn from Tokyo's concern or reluctance, Seoul's anger and Beijing's warning regarding his North Korea attitude and would develop a policy toward North Korea (see, a policy like Clinton's at his final administrative months), his trip to Asia could be a success, a matter for congratulation.

An analyst from Taiwan observed: "Each time a new administration occupies the White House, we have to go through this same old tiresome dog and pony show. Each time China bends over backwards to achieve compromise. Each time the U.S. reverses its initially bellicose and unreasonable stance, realizing eventually it has no choice but to cease its immature temper tantrum, act like an adult, and engage China constructively." How long should we have to wait for Mr. Bush and his aids with "fundamentalist crusader mindset" (such as Dick Cheney and Richard Armitage) to finish their "learning curve"?

Japan gained full "mentsu" (face) from Bush's trip, this time. Although there is no need for Mr. Bush to stay three days in Tokyo, the U.S. learned lessons from the Japanese resentment about Clinton's nine-day China trip without a stop at Tokyo. The longer Mr. Bush stayed in Tokyo, the more mistakes he would make to Japan, though. I am not indicating Bush's "misspelling" of deflation as devaluation. Let's see how he addressed to the Japanese Congress: "My trip to Asia begins here in Japan for an important reason. It begins here because for a century and a half now, America and Japan have formed one of the great and enduring alliances of modern times. From that alliance has come an era of peace in the Pacific."

As pointed out by Rick Elinski, "there has not been a century and half of mutual cooperation between the US and Japan...I also find disturbing the statement that the trip begins in Japan because of a "great and enduring alliance", implying that it began a century and a half ago when it was, in fact, as late as 1849 the US was unable to procure any agreements from Japan. Unless I am mistaken, the first treaties with Japan were very limited and created under a show of force... Also, when Bush states that it has created an 'era of peace' also implies the last century and a half when this can assuredly not be reasoned... And it is disputable that 'common interests, common respect and common values' existent at all into the 1930's. If they had, the war against Japan would not have taken place (unless it can be said that our common interest of domination and imperialism created the conflict)." Here I only need to add one simple fact: the dark U.S.-Japan alliance has from the beginning divided China and Korea for more than half century.

Koizumi's other gain is to utilize the chance of Bush's visit to Meiji shrine (while he himself "had to" stay outside of the shrine hall for a quarter of hour) to remind the Japanese public that it is strange to separate Shinto (Japan's actual state religion) from state power. It needs close watch how much (or, how less) the Japanese democracy is still functioning.

No need to say, Mr. Bush's trip's primary mission is toward China even though he declined Beijing's invitation to him as a "state visit." It is too obvious from ordinary Chinese eyes that the "our man" (I cannot remember whether this is used in a New York Times article or else, to indicate Mr. Jiang Zemin) and actually the whole leadership in Zhongnanhai are "qin mei" (pro-U.S.), and they raised up Mr. Bush's trip to Nixon's historical ice-breaking visit 30 years ago. However, since there is only one superpower in today's world, as taught by the solo-superpower's State Secretary, "the Roman Empire did not need diplomacy" (Albright). In Japan, Mr. Bush requested Tokyo to be allied with the U.S. when the U.S. "honors" its Taiwan Acts to "defend" the former Japanese colony. He repeated so to Mr. Jiang Zemin and students at Tsinghua.

As a student majoring in Nuclear Physics at Tsinghua in the early 1980s, I observed the deterioration of China's foreign policy, which was originally derived from the greatest revolution in our human being history, and how the ruling circle sells out the whole revolutionary result. For our Chinese people, Bush's trip is another good lesson how a democratic alternative is needed for PRC's foreign policy. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs under Tang Jiaxuan did not ask Mr. Bush the simple question: "How could you request China to cooperate with your anti-terrorism war, and not to sell simple weapons to independent sovereign states, at the meantime you are selling the most sophisticated weapons to a Chinese province to prevent China's unification?" Tang Jiaxuan dared not ask such a question on behalf on China; Jiang Zemin is afraid of the Chinese people raising this question. They simply deleted Mr. Bush's "defending Taiwan" remarks for the Chinese public.

I would also like to suggest Mr. Jiang stop speaking English, to suggest Mr. Tang stop speaking Japanese in any official situations. Instead, they should pay more attention to their professional translators' native translation and speak in their native Chinese, so they could have more time to think of the content of their speaking. For example, when Mr. Jiang wanted to show the world his English vocabulary of religion, he had to pause and change back to Chinese after listing only one word "Catholic" in English. When Mr. Tang spoke the Japanese word "genmei" to mean "clearly explain to" the Japanese government, some Japanese media falsely interpreted this word to mean "harshly order" (of the same pronunciation) the Japanese government. Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, and Deng Xiaoping never spoke foreign words in any public situations.

Mr. Bush was right when he said that democracy would make China more prosperous, more stable: "Those who fear freedom sometimes argue it could lead to chaos, but it does not, because freedom means more than every man for himself." This is true for the Chinese people but not so clear to the government under Mr. Jiang. It also holds true for Japan and the U.S. and I hope Koizumi and Bush understand it better than Jiang Zemin: for Japan, rather than expanding the military power far beyond its own territory, Japan can improve its decade-long stagnant economy simply by reducing its military budget; for the U.S., only democratization of American foreign policy, rather than an imperialist hegemony of the world (a concept being abandoned by PRC foreign policy now) benefiting only the few, can provide Americans a true security. From only democracy, not any kind of military alliance, will come an era of peace in the Pacific.

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Comparative Policy Review, February 2002

Some feedbacks from readers:

[1]

You have many excellent comments made on Bush's trip to East Asia as well as some comments on China being soft toward USA.

While I agree with what you are saying, I must remind you that a little tolerance (by Zhongnanhai) will go a long way in the long run. China needs the vast American market today to keep up its economic development which is really the backbone of its national strength. This growth can only be achieved if we keep the US/China relation under control.

Many of you already pointed out that each new Washington administration will make a (sometimes drastic) detour on its China policy. But eventually they will end up back to the same track.

Therefore it pays to keep a low profile and wait for the tide to turnaround.

[2]

This is the first time in a half year for me to sit down and read a political article. It is excellent. You really have your own opinion, and that is the right one which many people are thinking but can't or don't have a chance to express themselves. Especially I like the sentence: "the dark U.S.-Japan alliance has from the beginning divided China and Korea for more than half century."

[3]

I can't help but to praise the excellent commentary that you put forward!
Keep up the good work and we need this type of voice!