

North Korea and Iran: So what does the West want?

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Region: [Asia](#)

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

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Some while back (*[Inl passim](#)*) I used to write regularly on the London *Independent's* allegedly progressive take on events but after awhile I just got sick and tired of reading the damn thing. However, I've had a change of heart and decided to pick up the cudgel again. Why?

Well last night, I was watching Channel 4 News' coverage of the return of the two US journalists to the US from North Korea and the carefully orchestrated 'low key' PR event, managed no doubt by Obama's Twittering, Myspaced, Facebookie posse. But how can *anything* be low-key when exposed to the News Corporation's gaze?

The entire thing looked like the final night of the Big Brother house replete with copious tears, and profuse thanks to BC etc. Hey look, don't get me wrong, I'm glad that they've returned safely (but really, what were the odds of two of the Empire's finest doing twelve years hard labour?)

That said, the entire thing is a gigantic charade that takes place in an alternative universe which is where the *Independent* comes in because it's 'news'papers like the *Independent* that actually build the scenery and fill in the characters for this alternate universe that we're all supposed to live in.

Under the head of 'First North Korea. Now Iran?' and penned by Anne Penketh who hails from something called the British American Security Information Council, or **BASIC** for short (check out the [funders](#)). The short response is, what is it that Iran is expected to do after Clinton's diplomatic 'coup' with North Korea? We forget that the US can go and speak to North Korea any time they choose to and resolve all manner of issues—if they cared to that is. Clearly it's part of a larger PR drive to give US imperialism a kinda, friendlier face.

But enough of that for now, I'd like to focus on how Penketh sets up Kim Jong-Il for us, the unsuspecting public. Now Penketh didn't invent the character she presented to us, she merely fiddled with the details. She has to, after all the illusion has to be maintained that it's a true representation of the 'adversary', North Korea personified in the assumed "unpredictable" nature of Kim Jong-Il.

And this from Penketh's first para, so the scene is set. After a lot of blather about getting to know "first hand" Kim Jong-Il's "mental and medical condition" that led up to Clinton "eyeball[ing]" the "wizened and frail" North Korean leader, and here it's Penketh speaking who asks, "What does North Korea want?"

There follows a bunch of possible things that North Korea might want, surmises Penketh but

as usual, the final alleged reason fills in a bit more about what kind of world North Korea lives in, when she asks, “What is going on in the mind of the leader of the world’s most secretive state?”

What indeed? I’d have thought the man was desperate to normalize relations with the West, but every time he strikes a deal with the US, the US reneges on it and it’s back to square one.

You can guess what this is all leading up to can’t you? In Penketh’s words, “Governments around the world are preparing for the next major opportunity to turn the screws on Iran”.

So what does Iran want? Apparently nothing, it’s all about what the West wants. I need only point out that in terms of killing and other mass barbarisms, it’s the West that should have the screws turned real tight, not Iran.

Penketh tells us that the “matter is urgent” that Iran not go down the road of making nuclear weapons (hence the threat of the screws) as according to Penketh, the UN nuclear watchdog says Iran “already have enough low-enriched uranium to switch to a military programme and produce a small bomb if they decided to **break out** of UN safeguards and follow North Korea down that road.” (my emph. Ed)

Penketh has no quote for this assertion about switching to a military programme (and she makes it sound like simply throwing a switch and making a bomb! How ludicrous). So I looked up low-enriched uranium and came up with the following:

“The problem is that term “90% fissionable uranium” which Ynet uses is simply another way of saying weapons-grade [highly enriched uranium](#) (HEU) — and Iran has never made HEU; In fact, rather than making HEU, Iran has [offered](#) to place legal limits on its enrichment program, subject to IAEA verification, to ensure that it would only make **low-enriched uranium** (LEU) which **cannot** be used to make bombs. So not only has Iran not made HEU, it has shown no interest in making HEU too, despite what Ynet asserts.” (my emph. Ed) — [‘Low-enriched v. Highly enriched Uranium: not very confusing!’](#), Iran Affairs, 10 July, 2008

To set this entire thing in its real context, in other words in *our* world, the real one, later in the piece Penketh, no doubt reluctantly, mentions, and that’s all she does, Israel.

‘The British government last month issued a “Roadmap to 2010” in which it called for Israel to join the NPT [Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty], something Israel has refused to do.’” — ‘First North Korea. Now Iran?’, the Independent, 6 August, 2009

Oh, is that it? No screws for Israel then, So the only country in that part of the world which actually **HAS** nuclear weapons gets off with a sentence, never mind a full para. And no peering into Benjamin Netanyahu’s mind to see if he’s bit barmy?

You can see my problem can’t you? On the one side, Penketh writes half a page about North Korea and Iran, a country which has no nuclear weapons and pledged not to build any (it is a fully signed up member of the NPT which Israel is not) and on the other, Israel, armed to the

teeth with a reported 200-plus nuclear weapons, gets twenty-five words and they don't amount to much of anything, not even a footnote.

Not to be outdone, the *Independent's* editorial continued in the same vein about Kim Jong-Il, telling us that 'it can be safely assumed, that [he] does not do public cordiality.'

And just in case we don't get it, the editorial goes on, 'But nor could Mr Clinton be seen looking cheerful with a leader [Kim Jong-Il] who is at loggerheads not just with the US but **much of the rest of the world.**' (my emph. Ed.)

It ends with a resounding call to action by the *Independent*, and it's surely what remains of the Empire speaking here,

'If it is recognition that North Korea craves, Mr Clinton will surely have left its leader in no doubt what he must do next.' — Editorial, the *Independent*, 6 August, 2009

Sounds like the *Independent* wants North Korea to roll over and take it up the yazoo. Nearly sixty years ago the West, led by the US, pulverized North Korea killing literally millions and is still technically at war with North Korea and it has nuclear weapons based in South Korea and on its fleets of aircraft carriers and submarines that surround the unfortunate country. So why in hell should North Korea surrender its sovereign right to defend itself given its history?

But because North Korea is presented to us *not as a country* but as an unpredictable (inscrutable?) person in the form of Kim Jong-Il, mere details, agreements, history and all that junk can be dispensed with. Instead, in line with the racially-inspired ideology that powers much of the thinking in the West, he has to be dealt with as someone unstable and well, crazy, who might, in a fit of pique, decide to fire one at the United States. Well he might you know, he is after all impenetrable to the Western gaze, who knows what's going on behind that wizened face?

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