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North Korea : On the edge of the Abyss, and the Bomb is to Blame

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With its latest missile test, with a presumed range of 13000 km and so capable of threatening New York or Washington, North Korea seems to have entered the "Court of the Great" for good. This is the "Court of the Big Bad Wolves" where France has long pranced. Kim Jung Un, a perfect exponent of the French strategy known as "deterrence by the weak to the strong", is teasing the world and cheerfully defying the USA's nuclear omnipotence. And Donald Trump, despite his hundreds of missiles and thousands of atom bombs, aricraft-carriers, stealth bombers, lethal satellites and marines, is proving incapable of making the Pyongyang dictator see reason... if we suppose that he himself has an ounce of reason to share.

Now we are perhaps on the brink of a new Korean War. Already the struggle against proliferation has provoked the "Gulf War". Atomic folly is once again leading us to the edge of the abyss which it claims it can deter us from jumping into, on the grounds that a nuclear war would be catastrophic. This is like the time of the Cuba Missile Crisis of October 1962. 55 years later humankind has learnt nothing. We are at the same low point - or lower, because Kim Jun Un is not Krushchev, and Donald Trump is not Kennedy. The two opposing leaders are as unpredictable as one another, and as un-humanist. The more rational of the two is not necessarily who you think, and nothing reassures us that wisdom will prevail in the end, as it did in those terrifying « Thirteen Days ».

The heads of the other nuclear-armed states, including France, are no better with regard to reason. For is it logical to defend republican values, including fraternity, by threatening to commit crimes against humanity? To link a nation's "vital interests" with the use of weapons that are suicidal against an enemy that also has them? To claim to guarantee one's security with these weapons while forbidding others from obtaining them? To encourage their proliferation while claiming to be combatting it? To want to make savings, while wasting billion on death-devices that cannot be used against other nuclear-armed states, that cannot deter terrorists, and that would be fearsome in the hands of terrorists if they got them?

To call yourselves democrats while entrusting to a single man the power do destroy millions of others? Without charge, trial, judgement or appeal? To reject the death penalty for individuals while accepting mass massacres? To declare yourselves humanists while proclaiming your resolve to be the worst of murderes? That makes far too many incoherences, far too many infamies!

The North Korean crisis proves only one thing: there is a desperate urgency for the heads of the 9 nuclear states to get all around a table, including the leaders of France and North Korea, to negotiate the complete elimination of their criminal arsenals.

Let us recall again that when the UN voted in 2016 to open negotiations to advance multilateral disarmament (negotiations which have now created a Ban Treaty adopted by 122 non-nuclear states but no nuclear-armed ones) there were abstentions by China, India and Pakistan, and North Korea even voted in favour! If only that had been taken seriously? There is still time to take it seriously, before it is definitively too late. So meet around the table, gentlemen, and negotiate nuclear disarmament, complete, universal and strictly controlled.

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