

**Smile Diplomacy –  
U.S. Secretary of State Rice Visits East Asia  
By  
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For  
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Condoleezza Rice, the new US Secretary of State, completed her world tour by visiting East Asia March 17 – 21, 2005. This was a public relations tour designed to introduce her as America's chief diplomat. President Bush also dispatched her to affirm his intention to continue pursuing the basic strategy and goals of his first term's foreign policy. She also carried a long list of regional issues to address with her counterparts in Pakistan, Japan, South Korea and China.

As a public relations junket, her trip was successful, but she did not make any significant progress concerning specific global and regional issues, particularly regarding the Six Party Talks and North Korea. Rice re-affirmed the United States' alliances with Pakistan, Japan and the Republic of Korea. She also expressed President Bush's appreciation for their collaboration in the global war on terrorism and efforts to politically transform Iraq and Afghanistan.

Beyond this "smile diplomacy," Secretary Rice's had a more concrete agenda. At every stop, she reiterated the essence of President Bush's global foreign policy priorities:

- promote democracy and human rights around the world,
- wage global war on terrorism,
- halt the spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and
- preserve US military and economic supremacy around the world.

Neither she nor President Bush had any intention to discuss these priorities with its allies. Faced with the largest government budget deficit in the history of the United States, President Bush had a choice. He could either reduce expenses by cutting back his foreign policy program, or ask his allies for more assistance. He sent Secretary Rice to tell US allies in East Asia, particularly Japan, that the United States needs their help.

In other words, the Bush Administration is trying to rebuild the global collective security system that the United States relied upon during the Cold War in its fight communism. Terrorism and weapons of mass destruction have now replaced the old enemies of communism and the Soviet Union.

President Bush vacillated in his first term between unilateralism and multilateralism. To fight the global war on terrorism, he asked Secretary of State Colin Powell to forge a global multilateral alliance. But Bush undermined this collective security arrangement with his unilateral assault on the "axis of evil," particularly Iraq. Unanticipated

difficulties in subduing Iraq and North Korea have forced President Bush to revert back to multilateralism.

At the same time, the soaring US government budget deficit has compelled Bush to ask for more help from key allies. First he visited Europe. The British told him they would continue, but could not increase their support. Next Bush sought to repair relations with the “old Europe,” France and Germany. Both pardoned his administration’s arrogance, but remained reluctant to significantly increase their money, military and material support for President Bush’s ambitious program to combat terrorism and weapons of mass destruction while building democracy and spreading prosperity everywhere.

Bush then turned to Japan. At Sophia University, Secretary Rice declared that the United States is a “Pacific nation” and emphasized that Japan “has now become a key partner in the global war on terror ...” Rice then proposed a “Strategic Development Alliance” between the United States and Japan to promote global democracy and economic prosperity. Looking behind her diplomatic language, we realize that the Bush Administration expects Japan to contribute more to promote Washington’s global priorities. Also, Washington wants Japan to “buy U.S. beef.” In return, the United States will support Japan’s bid for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. Nevertheless, President Bush intends to continue deciding unilaterally all global priorities.

As for the Six Party Talks, Secretary Rice repeatedly urged China to do more to win North Korea’s compliance with Washington’s demand for “complete, verifiable, irreversible dismantlement” of all its nuclear programs. In other words, while Japan increases its financial and military support for President Bush’s global priorities, Washington expects China to resolve the nuclear issue in Northeast Asia by increasing its pressure on North Korea.

May be President Bush and Secretary Rice expect too much from their allies in return for their “smile diplomacy.” President Bush should review and possibly trim his ambitious program to transform the world into the image of the United States. He all needs to demonstrate greater concrete appreciation for his allies’ contributions before pressing them to do more.

Finally, President Bush needs to repair his global strategy for blocking the spread of weapons of mass destruction. That strategy is in disarray. He recently rewarded Pakistan’s proliferation of nuclear technology by permitting Pakistan’s military dictator to purchase advanced US fighters. At the same time, he blames North Korea for some of Pakistan’s misdeeds and demands that North Korea unilaterally disarm. President Bush first told Iran to give up its nuclear programs without receiving any economic concessions, but now, because of pressure from the European Union, Bush says he will reward Iran economically if it shuts down its nuclear programs.

Possibly Secretary Rice’s most challenging task will convincing President Bush that he must improve his strategies for dealing with both his allies and enemies. Simply shifting

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from his previous tough talk to smile diplomacy is insufficient to successfully promote the security and prosperity of the United States and its allies.