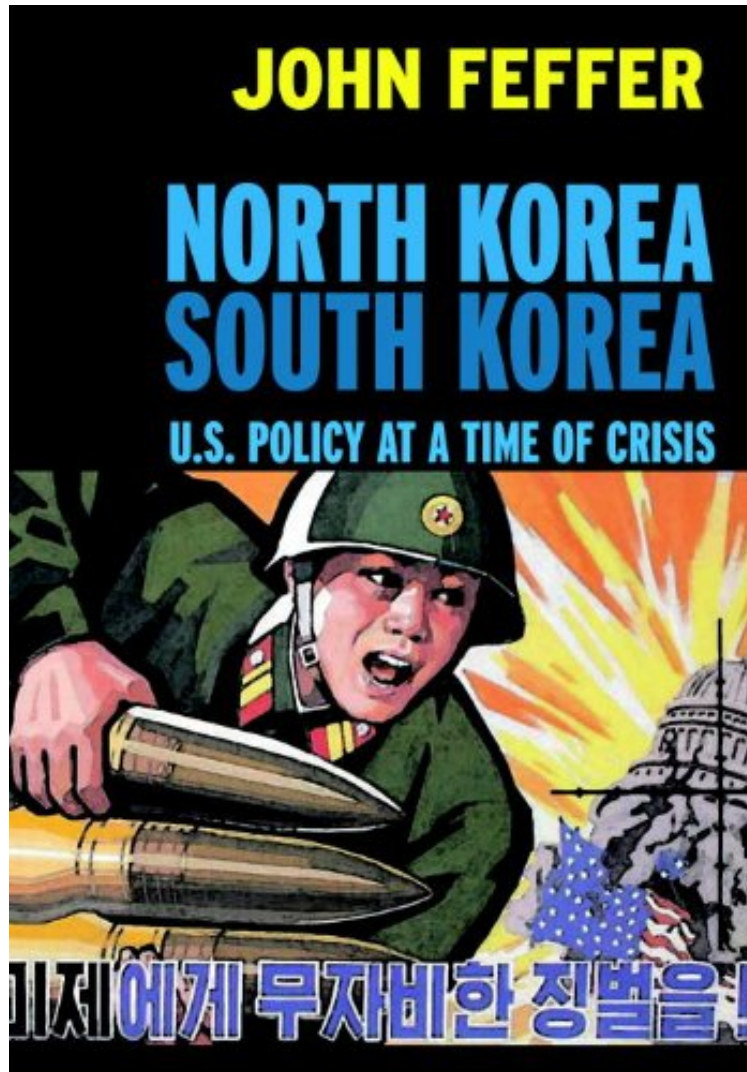


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North Korea/South Korea: U.S. Policy at a Time of Crisis (Open Media Books)

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John Feffer : North Korea/South Korea: U.S. Policy at a Time of Crisis (Open Media Books) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised North Korea/South Korea: U.S. Policy at a Time of Crisis (Open Media Books):

5 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Very Biased View of the SituationBy Neil WilsonWhile the book has some interesting facts, it is very biased. The author, John Feffer, seems to be very pro-North Korea and anti-American. Which then brings into doubt the validity of the few "interesting facts" that he provides...The USA is not 100% fault free in it's dealings with North Korea, but the scope of this work is OBVIOUSLY one-sided.Also, not all

of the authors facts are correct, as when he says that the UN does not recognize the North Korean refugees entering China to be "political refugees"...page 163 "...not considered refugees by the United Nations..."But there are many articles that state the TRUE position of the United Nations, one is listed below:Asia Times, "The tortuous North Korean refugee triangle" dated 22 Sept 2004 says..."Beijing is concerned that any actions it takes to assist the fleeing North Koreans, such as establishing refugee camps or providing formal UN designation as "political refugees", would provoke a torrent of additional refugees, offend its North Korean ally, and perhaps undermine the stability of the Pyongyang regime."He even accuses the USA for being the cause of North Korea's illegal activities such as drug trafficking, counterfeiting and trafficking in women.You will love this book if...1) You hate G.W. Bush2) You think North Korea is a country only trying to do good and get along with others, but the USA is "keeping them down"The book is good if you want to see "other people's view points" and hear "their side" of the story, but if you want JUST facts without someone's biased opinions, try a different book.4 of 8 people found the following review helpful.

Outstanding; clear and concise discussionBy Chris GAAfter WWII, Feffer writes, the Americans installed Syngman Rhee in the South and the Russians installed Kim Il Sung in the North. The Rhee regime had little popular support. In 1948 on the island of Cheju, in suppressing a rebellion, the regime killed about 60,000. Overall the U.S. backed regime killed about 100,000 oppositionists in its first five years.. South Korea started many border clashes with the North beginning in the Summer of 1949 causing huge casualtiesKim Il Sung, in the famous early 1950 meeting that gets anti-communist ideologues all excited, was granted permission to invade the South after he convinced Stalin that he would get the operation over with quickly and thus hopefully discourage the Americans from intervening militarily. The Americans were eventually able to push the North Koreans back. . Macarthur's deliberately provocative march northward up the peninsula towards the Yalu river, Korea's border with China, brought the Chinese army into the conflict. The Americans engaged in extensive bombing and napalming of civilians. They wiped off the map about three quarters of North Korea. In June 1953, they started bombing dams and water reservoirs in North Korea, which effects included the mass flooding of rice and other agricultural fields. Thus by inducing starvation the Americans induced the North to agree to a truce. Some Nazis got hanged for implementing such a policy during WWII. The North Koreans committed their share of atrocities.U.S. planners were embarrassed as the North's economy regularly outstripped the South's into the mid-70's. General Park Chung Hee seized power in the South in 1961. He set up a state planning economic regime. It was based on tight state discipline of labor and consumption austerity with workers treated pretty badly. Unrest spread and in 1980, the military under the new dictator General Chun perpetrated a bloody massacre in the city of Kwangju. A revitalized labor movement eventually forced democratic change on the U.S. backed military. By the late 80's South Korea was one of the top economies in the world; in 1960 it had been at the level of Sub-Saharan Africa. Its principles violated all the prescriptions of the free market-as did the rest of the Asian tigers and has the U.S. with its military-industrial complex fueling its hi tech economy. . In any case, South Korea was pressured to remove controls on capital flows and this led to the Asian financial crises of the late 90's. Western companies swarmed in to buy up the fire sale of bankrupt indigenous companies. This incident of course, makes North Korea pause about extending its free market reforms) as does the extreme poverty and social chaos existing in China's Free Market revolution.In the 70's North Korea borrowed from foreign creditors and fell heavily into debt. Agricultural plots for private sale were allowed in the 80's. The latter led to clearing of land and deforestation, which contributed mightily to the floods contributing to the future famine in the mid-90's.The communist block disappeared as a source of trade and subsidies. One of the key pillars of the 1994 agreement with the U.S. was to move towards the lifting of U.S. sanctions on the country. The Clinton administration made and broke promises regarding the sanctions issue and helping the North become a member of International financial institutions. Meanwhile, it greatly increased the amount of arms flowing to U.S. allies in the region. Aid in constructing the light water reactors was scant. The Clinton administration promised North Korea the lifting of all sanctions if it would freeze its missile program; when North Korea agreed to this, it then further demanded its missile production be completely eliminated. In 1998, it announced that its North Korean plans included a possible first strike on it and revived missile defense research..The only "admission" of NK might have been that they merely have the capability produce nuclear stuff. In the meeting with James Kelly, they made huge concessions on many issues. The North Koreans paint an exaggerated picture of their military capabilities to deter the neoconservative militarists in the Bush administration. and American elites want to exaggerate it to justify subsidies and sales for American arms manufacturers. The author writes that American planners also want to keep the Korean peninsula divided and the conflict alive; they are fearful that Korea would be part of a potentially powerful economic and political block in NE Asia including Russia and China.. The North has not the technology to make its missiles go far and be accurate. It has not the ability to miniaturize its warheads that it might use, assuming the not confirmed notion that it has preserved enough plutonium for a nuclear bomb from its pre-1994 operations. There is no evidence its missiles have heat shields to protect them from burning up on re-entry into the atmosphere. In other words it has not the capability to deliver biological and chemical weapons, which it may not have enough of to be any remote threat. Its nuclear related facilities are about 50 years old and unable to obtain any repair. The neoconservatives raised a bugaboo about two possible nuclear processing facilities in the late 90's and North Korea allowed them to be inspected but nothing was found. North Korea's army is badly malnourished and

under clothed. It seems to have been put to heavy use in rebuilding the country's crumbling infrastructure instead of military training. The author quotes an account of a naval skirmish between North and South in 1999 where the North Koreans were so backward they had to operate the vessel's weapons exposed on deck while the South Koreans were all tucked inside their vessel with all the latest radar and computers. In North Korea's entire government budget is several billion dollars less than South Korea's military budget. North Korea has a vicious dictatorship, the author writes but the Americans have made things much worse. The Bush administration has greatly cut back on food aid in the country which significantly reduced, though far from eliminated the malnutrition problem in the country. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Interesting read, but obviously opinionated. By Customer Feffer gives an historical account of Korea and tries to show how much the US played a part in its history. It goes up through the dissolution of the agreed framework and attempts to explain Bush Sr., Clinton and Bush Jr's administration policies. Feffer does a reasonable job but constantly offers very opinionated views against the Bush administration that aren't very well thought out. I found the book interesting and informative and enjoyed reading it but my mind wouldn't allow me to believe everything he said because of the obvious agenda to discredit the current administration. The author does show that the North Korea's leader Kim Jong Il's isn't completely crazy and that there may be a small amount of logic to his leadership. Understanding DPRK's history gave me a more understanding view of their desperate situation of trying to survive in a world that has completely changed since the beginning of their State.

The Korean peninsula, divided for more than fifty years, is stuck in a time warp. Millions of troops face one another along the Demilitarized Zone separating communist North Korea and capitalist South Korea. In the early 1990s and again in 2002-2003, the United States and its allies have gone to the brink of war with North Korea. Misinterpretations and misunderstandings are fueling the crisis. "There is no country of comparable significance concerning which so many people are ignorant," American anthropologist Cornelius Osgood said of Korea some time ago. This ignorance may soon have fatal consequences. North Korea, South Korea is a short, accessible book about the history and political complexities of the Korean peninsula, one that explores practical alternatives to the current US policy: alternatives that build on the remarkable and historic path of reconciliation that North and South embarked on in the 1990s and that point the way to eventual reunification.

About the Author JOHN FEFFER'S books include *Beyond Detente: Soviet Foreign Policy and U.S. Options*, *Shock Waves: Eastern Europe After the Revolutions*, *Living in Hope: Communities Respond to Globalization*, and *Power Trip: U.S. Unilateralism and Global Strategy after September 11*. From 1998 to 2001, Feffer lived in Tokyo and traveled throughout East Asia, making more than twenty trips to South Korea and three trips to North Korea. He lives in the Washington, D.C., area.