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Washington Times

July 7, 2006

Pg. 1

## **Bush Urges N. Korea Restraint**

*Asks Russia, China to support sanctions*

By Joseph Curl, The Washington Times

President Bush yesterday urged the nations of the U.N. Security Council to send a unified message to North Korea in response to its missile launches and telephoned the leaders of Russia and China in an attempt to persuade them to drop initial opposition to sanctions.

The president said he does not know the intent of dictator Kim Jong-il, but warned the world's most powerful countries that "we've got to plan for the worst and hope for the best."

"We're dealing with a person who was asked not to fire a rocket by the Chinese, the South Koreans, the United States, the Japanese and the Russians, and he fired seven of them," the president told reporters during a press conference with Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

As condemnations poured in from nations around the world over North Korea's missile launches on the Fourth of July, the communist regime reacted indignantly, asserting a right to develop and test weapons -- and vowing unspecified retaliation against anyone who stands in the way.

"Our military will continue with missile launch drills in the future as part of efforts to strengthen self-defense deterrent," said a statement by North Korea's foreign minister, carried in state-run media. "If anyone intends to dispute or add pressure about this, we will have to take stronger physical actions in other forms."

The foreign minister didn't specify what action would be taken.

Mr. Bush, seeking to consolidate opposition to the missile launches, said the United States must carefully weigh the dangers posed by North Korea.

"We take this seriously ... and we all should take threats seriously," the president said. "That's one of the lessons of September the 11th, is that what takes place in other parts of the world can come home to hurt the American people. See, a failed government in Afghanistan enabled plotters and planners to train them and come and kill 3,000 of our citizens."

After the missile tests, China and Russia voiced opposition to imposing sanctions. The two Security Council members, both of whom have veto power, preferred a statement criticizing Pyongyang, but not sanctions. The council yesterday held a second day of emergency talks on what action to take against North Korea.

"I was on the phone this morning with [President] Hu Jintao and President [Vladimir] Putin," Mr. Bush said. "My message was that we want to solve this problem diplomatically, and the best way to solve the problem diplomatically is for all of us to be working in concert, and to send one message, and that is -- to Kim Jong-il -- that we expect you to adhere to international norms, and we expect you to keep your word."

Mr. Hu told Mr. Bush he opposed "anything that would threaten peace and stability" on the Korean Peninsula, White House press secretary Tony Snow said.

In a separate phone call Mr. Putin told Mr. Bush that the North Korean situation would now be on the agenda for a Group of Eight summit he is hosting next week in St. Petersburg, Mr. Snow said.

"The two of them also talked about working together as part of the six parties and within the context of the G-8 and also the U.N. Security Council to develop a unified approach and message on the issue," Mr. Snow said.

All seven of the missiles test-fired this week fell harmlessly into the East Sea/Japan Sea, including a Taepodong-2 missile, which was supposed to be capable of reaching U.S. soil but broke up less than a minute after takeoff, according to U.S. officials.

In yesterday's statement, North Korea claimed success, made no mention of the apparent Taepodong failure and disputed Mr. Bush and other leaders who have said North Korea had agreed not to test-fire missiles.

"The successful missile launches were part of our military's regular military drills to strengthen self-defense," the statement read. "As a sovereign country, this is our legal right, and we are not bound by any international law or bilateral or multilateral agreements."

At the United Nations, differences persisted over a Japanese-backed draft resolution to sanction North Korea. U.S. Ambassador John R. Bolton said the measure had "broad and deep support," but Russia's deputy U.N. ambassador said Moscow would not back sanctions, as the resolution calls for.

Instead, Russia wants the council to pass a nonbinding presidential statement with the goal of getting North Korea back into six-party talks on its nuclear program.

While agreeing that North Korea's missile tests were a provocative act, Mr. Harper said Canada was not ready to reopen discussions about joining the U.S. missile shield. The shield involves basing missiles capable of taking out incoming missiles launched by terrorists or rogue states -- although the system isn't designed to foil a mass attack by a major power.

Opponents of the missile defense program -- including former Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin -- contend it won't work and risks starting a new international arms race. Mr. Bush said he did not broach the issue with Mr. Harper, whose Conservatives defeated Mr. Martin's Liberal Party in January.

Mr. Snow said the United States and its allies were insistent that they would not allow the missile tests to force them into making concessions to North Korea beyond what already has been offered during the stalled negotiations involving the United States, China, Russia, Japan and South Korea.

"If they think there's going to be a reward for this kind of activity, they're wrong. That's a miscalculation," the White House spokesman told reporters. "There's absolutely no daylight between the negotiating partners on that."

*This article is based in part on wire service reports.*

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Los Angeles Times

July 7, 2006

Pg. 1

## **With Few N. Korea Facts, A Rumor Got Launched**

*A warhead found in Alaska? The report's longevity illustrates the uncertainty and fear.*

By Barbara Demick, Times Staff Writer

SEOUL — The shocking rumor surfaced a few years back: A warhead from a North Korean ballistic missile had been found in the Alaskan tundra.

It made a few headlines before the U.S. Missile Defense Agency dismissed the story as a complete fabrication. Nevertheless, the report still bounces around the Internet, a favorite of conservative blog sites. Its staying power illustrates the extent of the confusion about the North Korean weapons program.

The series of missile tests North Korea conducted this week is unlikely to ease the confusion, and might even add to it.

Even among the experts, there is no consensus on how much Americans need to worry about North Korea.

In one camp, alarmists say it is only a matter of time before the continental United States is within reach of North Korean missiles, perhaps even armed with nuclear warheads. Others scoff at the notion that the dysfunctional communist country — which admittedly can barely manufacture a working bicycle — could pose a credible military threat to the United States.

"Elvis found at South Pole," one skeptic wrote dismissively on the Seoul-based Korea Times' website, where the reported find was announced in a March 2003 article headlined "NK Missile Warhead Found in Alaska."

The skeptics point to the embarrassing failure of the long-range Taepodong 2 missile in this week's tests. The first booster stage of the Taepodong exploded 42 seconds after takeoff.

In addition, at least two of the North Korean missiles veered off course and landed in Russian territorial waters near the far eastern town of Nakhodka. The mistake infuriated one of Pyongyang's last friends.

North Korea "has completely discredited itself in the eyes of the world public," Ivan Safranchuk, director of the Moscow bureau of the Washington-based Center for Defense Information, told a Russian radio station.

Then again, the North Koreans showed that for all their shortcomings in guidance systems and technology, they have guts.

Joseph S. Bermudez Jr., a leading American expert on the North Korean military, says the failure of the Taepodong should not cause anyone to breathe much easier.

"The fact that they launched so many missiles at once shows that they have the nerves and, at least in their short-range and medium-range missiles, operational readiness and capability," Bermudez said.

As for the failure of the Taepodong, he noted, "We used to see the Soviets have numerous failures of their ballistic-missile program, but nobody said their program was less of a threat."

The North Koreans have been trying to develop a multistage missile capable of reaching the United States since at least the early 1990s.

The longest actual flight of a North Korean missile was in 1998, when the earlier version of the Taepodong traveled 800 miles — just enough to get it over the main island of Japan and into the Pacific. The missile had a third stage, which was meant to launch a small satellite, but the effort failed.

Debris was strewn thousands of miles from the launch site, leading to speculation that the range was longer than it actually was.

"People mishmash all these numbers together and get confused," Bermudez said.

The missile tested this week is a souped-up version of the 1998 missile. Like the Taepodong 1, it is a three-stage rocket, but it used four engines in its first stage, a setup that was supposed to give it additional thrust. Experts believe that something in the design of the multiple engines might have led to the failure.

Wildly skewed estimates of the missile's range have appeared recently in the media, with some experts suggesting a range of as much as 6,000 miles — which would mean the projectile could reach Los Angeles.

The technical dispute predictably tends to be colored by political views.

Analysts in South Korea often put the range at no more than 2,400 miles, which, as far as U.S. interests are concerned, means the missile could reach Guam or possibly the sparsely inhabited western tip of Alaska's Aleutian Islands.

"I think many of us in South Korea believe that the Bush administration had a tendency to exaggerate the military significance of this missile for its own purposes, largely to propel spending for missile defense," said Lee Chol-ki, a North Korea specialist at Seoul's Dongguk University.

Intelligence analysts will pore over technical data gathered this week by infrared sensors to estimate the weight, thrust and trajectory of the Taepodong 2. But it is not easy to extrapolate hard facts from a test that failed. And this launch — like that in 1998 — was technically intended to put a satellite into orbit and not to achieve the missile's maximum range, making it more difficult to determine whether under other circumstances it could have reached the United States.

And as David Albright, a former U.N. arms inspector, put it: "With a missile, it is one of those things where you really won't know how far it can go until they launch it."

Compounding the mystery, North Korea has long been considered a black hole as far as intelligence is concerned. Donald Gregg, a former CIA station chief in Seoul who now heads the New York-based Korea Society, has called North Korea the "longest-running intelligence failure" in the history of U.S. espionage.

Gary Samore, a former National Security Council aide and a nonproliferation expert, says that apart from satellites and other technical surveillance measures, there is little intelligence about North Korea's weapons program.

"It is one of our weakest areas in terms of intelligence," Samore said. "North Korea is a very closed country."

Although the experts disagree on the range of North Korea's missiles, most believe that Pyongyang does not have viable nuclear warheads. The reclusive nation is believed to have the fissile material for the weapons, but it is not believed to have the technology to mount a warhead on a missile.

"Maybe they can reach the United States with a missile. It would have huge propaganda value for the North Koreans and satisfy an emotional need," Bermudez said. "But I doubt they could do it with a real warhead."

As for a missile reaching Alaska?

The story about the warhead being found in Alaska first emerged in a report published by the South Korean National Assembly.

Kim Hak-won, an assemblyman who was the lead author of the report, said he had heard about the purported Alaskan discovery from Taro Nakayama, a former Japanese foreign minister.

Contacted recently, both men said they stood by the story. Nakayama said in an e-mail that he had heard about it from a State Department official he met during a trip to Washington a few months after North Korea's 1998 missile launch.

Kim said the Alaskan report showed that "clearly we have underestimated North Korea's missile capabilities."

Rick Lehner, a spokesman for the U.S. Missile Defense Agency, said the story had been investigated and discounted.

"I don't know how close it came to Alaska," he said, "but it was very far away."

*Hisako Ueno of The Times' Tokyo Bureau contributed to this report.*

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-alaska7jul07.1.4437289.story?coll=la-headlines-world>

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Washington Post

July 7, 2006

Pg. 10

## After Missiles, Calls Go Out

### ***Bush Tries to Rally Other Nations to Condemn North Korean Launches***

By Michael Abramowitz and Colum Lynch, Washington Post Staff Writers

President Bush pressed the leaders of China and Russia yesterday to join the United States in sending a tough message to North Korea for this week's missile launches, and said the world needs to speak with "one voice" to force the communist nation to adhere to international rules.

But a U.S. drive for tough sanctions against North Korea encountered immediate obstacles. In his first comments about the controversy, Russian President Vladimir Putin said concern about the missile tests should not trigger an emotional response that would "drown out common sense."

North Korea also offered its first official statement since it sent seven missiles aloft on Tuesday. It threatened to "take stronger physical actions of other forms, should any other country dare take issue with the exercises" and vowed to continue the exercises at will.

Both statements highlighted a vexing diplomatic challenge for Bush so close to his annual summit with the leaders of the other industrialized powers. The Group of Eight meeting, to be held next week in Russia, was already promising to be consumed by proliferation issues. The nations will discuss a diplomatic initiative by the United

States and European nations to persuade Iran to suspend uranium enrichment, a key step toward developing nuclear weapons.

Now North Korea has muscled its way into a more prominent place on the U.S. agenda with its latest provocations, including an unsuccessful launch of its long-range Taepodong-2 missile. Japanese authorities maintained their military on high alert yesterday, and South Korean media reported that North Korea appears to have prepared three to five more short- and medium-range missiles for test-firing.

The Bush administration was trying to calm passions yesterday while working behind the scenes to enlist China and Russia's help for tough action at the United Nations against North Korea. Bush called Putin and Chinese President Hu Jintao and told them, in his words, that "we want to solve this problem diplomatically." On Wednesday, he spoke with South Korean President Roh Moo Hyun and Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi.

Speaking at a news conference after meeting with Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Bush said the United States is supporting a Japanese resolution for new sanctions against North Korea but cautioned that it could take time to reach an agreement. "We're working with our partners to make sure we work with one voice," Bush said. "Diplomacy takes a while, particularly when you are dealing with a variety of partners."

Bush acknowledged uncertainty about North Korea's enigmatic leader, Kim Jong Il. "We do know there's a lot of concentration camps. We do know the people are starving," he said. "But what we don't know is his intentions. And so I think we've got to plan for the worst and hope for the best."

At the United Nations, the Security Council remained deadlocked as U.S., European and Japanese diplomats could not persuade China and Russia to support sanctions against Pyongyang for conducting its missile tests. The council agreed to resume negotiations this morning.

China and Russia are resisting U.S. pressure to take a tough approach to North Korea because of concern that it could fuel instability and jeopardize efforts to restart six-nation talks aimed at getting Pyongyang to abandon its nuclear weapons program. Neither country, however, has threatened to use its veto power to block U.N. sanctions. The United States, Japan and their European allies support the passage of a legally binding resolution that would condemn North Korea and would bar all states from transferring to the Stalinist government money, material or technology that could be used to develop ballistic missiles or to pursue nuclear weapons.

China and Russia favor a less confrontational approach, proposing the passage of a mild, nonbinding Security Council statement urging North Korean restraint. Chinese and Russian officials argue that a 1998 crisis -- which was triggered by the unannounced launch of a North Korean satellite that U.S. officials mistook for a missile -- was resolved with a Security Council statement urging Pyongyang to notify key states when it planned a launch. The situation has also been complicated because of worsening relations between the United States and Russia, and Putin does not appear to be of a mind to be too accommodating to the Bush administration right now, foreign policy experts believe.

Senior U.S., Japanese, French and British diplomats met privately yesterday afternoon to decide whether to accommodate China and Russia or to call their bluff and schedule a vote on the resolution. Those talks were inconclusive, officials said.

John R. Bolton, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, said that 13 of the 15 council members were in favor of the resolution condemning North Korea and requiring that states impede its effort to support its ballistic missile program.

"The support remains really overwhelming to make a very strong statement of condemnation of the North Korean missile launches and, I think, to take strong, effective measures in response," Bolton said. "So, obviously, there is still a lot of negotiation to go. This is the United Nations."

Michael Green, who until recently served as the senior Asia expert on the National Security Council, said he believes China could be persuaded to sign on to a tough U.N. resolution, in part because North Korea ignored Chinese and U.S. warnings not to launch any missiles.

"It's important to look at the quiet diplomatic work the administration did as North Korea prepared to launch these missiles," Green said. "The administration is now well-positioned to go back to these countries and say, 'North Korea defied you, and we should have a common position.'"

But Dan Blumenthal of the American Enterprise Institute said he doubts China would support the United States on tough sanctions in the absence of a more aggressive U.S. campaign to pressure Beijing. "I don't think they are too unhappy with the status quo," said Blumenthal, who formerly worked on Asia issues at the Pentagon. "The Chinese probably condemned North Korea the least. . . . I just don't see any evidence that the Chinese are in line with the United States and Japan on this issue."

*Lynch reported from the United Nations. Correspondent Anthony Faiola in Tokyo contributed to this report.*

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/07/06/AR2006070600208.html>

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New York Times  
July 7, 2006

## North Korea Rejects Protests On Missile Firings

By Norimitsu Onishi

SEOUL, South Korea, July 6 — North Korea declared Thursday that it would continue to test-fire missiles and vowed to use force if other nations tried to stop it, even as it acknowledged for the first time that it had launched seven missiles the day before.

Responding to international condemnation with characteristic defiance and vagueness, North Korea said the launchings of the seven missiles, including one long-range Taepodong 2, had been "routine military exercises" intended to raise the nation's "capacity for self-defense."

In a statement attributed to its Foreign Ministry and released by its official press agency, the North stated that it would continue with its missile launchings and that it "will have no option but to take stronger physical actions of other forms, should any other country dare take issue with the exercises and put pressure upon it."

The warning was issued as the United States and countries in this region remained divided over a Japanese-backed proposal for a United Nations Security Council resolution threatening sanctions if the North did not dismantle its nuclear program.

President Bush called the leaders of China and Russia on Thursday seeking a unified response against the test firings. But the two countries, both permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, said they opposed punitive sanctions.

"We think the Security Council should make a necessary response, but the response should be helpful to maintain peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and should help diplomatic efforts," Jiang Yu, the spokeswoman for the Chinese Foreign Ministry, said at a news conference in Beijing.

When asked whether China, North Korea's biggest trading partner and aid donor, was considering cutting aid as a result of the tests, Ms. Jiang said, "At present we are not taking this aspect into consideration."

In Moscow, President Vladimir V. Putin said he was disappointed by the test firings but added that the North Koreans were right in their assertion that they had the legal right to perform such tests.

North Korea said that the launchings were the country's "exercise of its legitimate right as a sovereign state" and that it was no longer bound by past moratoriums on missile tests because the United States and Japan had broken previous agreements.

In its statement, the North described Wednesday's missile launchings as successful, an assertion disputed by experts who tracked the Taepodong 2.

North Korea's continued defiance appeared to be intended to press the United States into direct talks, analysts and politicians said. For months it has been demanding that the United States lift a crackdown on North Korean businesses and banks that do business with the country.

It has also pushed for bilateral talks, twice inviting Christopher R. Hill, the assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs and the main American negotiator with North Korea, to Pyongyang, its capital.

Washington has refused, saying only that it will participate in the now stalled six-nation talks over the nuclear program. The six nations are the United States, North Korea, China, Japan, South Korea and Russia.

"These actions by North Korea are an act of defiance meant to remind the U.S. that to ignore it comes at a price," said Peter Beck, the Northeast Asia project director at the International Crisis Group in Seoul.

"The tests may also have been intended to rally the North Korean people, to justify the hardships that they are undergoing," Mr. Beck said, adding that one of the biggest anti-American rallies in years was held in Pyongyang last week.

At a parliamentary hearing here, South Korea's defense minister, Yoon Kwang Ung, predicted that North Korea might fire additional missiles. He said he was basing his assessment on "the traffic of equipment and personnel in and out of launch sites." Military talks between the Koreas are scheduled for later this month.

South Korean news organizations reported Wednesday that North Korea had three or four more mediumrange missiles sitting on launching pads. North Korea is believed to have about 200 medium-range and 600 short-range missiles.

The missile launchings have drawn contrasting responses from South Korea and Japan, America's two allies in the region.

Caught between its alliance with the United States and its policy of engaging the North, South Korea condemned the tests but is unlikely to impose more than a few limited penalties, experts here said.

In the long term, few expect South Korea, which is the North's second-largest trading partner and aid donor, after China, to significantly alter its policy of engagement. What China and South Korea fear almost as much as military



confrontation, experts say, is the sudden collapse of the North Korean government and a subsequent flood of millions of refugees.

At a parliamentary hearing, Lee Jong Seok, the South's minister of unification, said that cabinet-level meetings between the North and South would go ahead as scheduled next week and that Seoul would proceed with economic joint ventures with North Korea.

By contrast, Japan has taken its toughest stance yet against North Korea. Fukushima Nukaga, the head of Japan's Defense Agency, told a parliamentary committee in Tokyo on Thursday that Japan would step up efforts to establish a missile defense shield with the United States.

"We would like to cooperate with the United States and put our joint missile interception into shape as quickly as possible," he said.

In Washington on Thursday, American military officials disclosed more details about the flight of the Taepodong 2, saying it was longer than the 42 seconds initially reported.

Counting the rocket's boost phase and a period during which the missile was tumbling out of control into the Sea of Japan, the missile was in the air for closer to two minutes, they said. The period during which the missile was stable as it flew was 42 seconds, the officials said.

All of the military officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were discussing classified information.

"If the missile had kept going, it would have had to go over Japan," said one military official, who said he had seen projections of the trajectory that showed it headed over central or northern Japan.

"The missile was headed east," the other official said, adding that tracking the missile's possible trajectory was especially difficult in this case because the flight was relatively short.

The officials said they did not know whether the North had planned for the missile, which is believed to have a range of 3,500 miles or more, to fly into Japanese airspace. It may not have been loaded with enough fuel to go that far, or North Korea may have intended to abort the flight, but the missile fell into the sea before its first stage burned out.

The officials said it did not appear that the missile was being launched into space, which would have taken it on a more vertical trajectory.

One official confirmed that the missile had been tracked by Aegis sensors on Navy ships patrolling the Sea of Japan, the first time that a foreign ballistic missile had been tracked by the sensors.

Within seconds of the detection of the launching, as well as those of the shorter-range rockets, Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld and other senior officials were informed, using a special communication procedure called a missile alert conference, another senior Pentagon official said.

*David S. Cloud contributed reporting from Washington for this article.*

[http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/07/world/asia/07korea.html?\\_r=1&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/07/world/asia/07korea.html?_r=1&oref=slogin)

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Christian Science Monitor

July 7, 2006

## **For US Military, Few Options To Defang North Korea**

***Any US action risks nuclear reprisals against American troops and allies in the region - and a renewed Korean conflict.***

By Mark Sappenfield, Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

WASHINGTON--As was surely intended, North Korea's July 4 test launch of a long-range missile that, by some estimates, could reach American shores, fastened attention on the most overlooked member of President Bush's "axis of evil."

Yet the clearest message to the United States came from the six other missiles fired that day, not from the now-infamous Taepodong-2. Its apparent failure suggests that the threat to the American homeland remains remote. But the flexing of North Korea's midrange missile muscle confirms that it is probably able to deliver nuclear weapons to Japan or South Korea - or to US forces stationed there.

The result is that the US finds itself in a stalemate militarily, relying on a missile-defense shield that is at best unproven. Any military action - such as a precision strike against a launchpad - risks not only nuclear reprisals against American troops and their allies in the region, but also a resumption of the Korean War on the peninsula.

"North Korea has the capability to inflict significant harm on immediately neighboring states," says Jonathan Pollack, an East Asia expert at the Naval War College in Newport, R.I. "That's what constrains any thought being given to any preemptive kind of force."

In truth, the July 4 missile test hasn't yet told experts much that they didn't already know. They expected that North Korea was making progress on its mid- and short-range missiles; the launches appeared to support that. At the same

time, experts remain skeptical about the capabilities of the Taepodong-2. It was only the second time that North Korea had launched a long-range missile. The other was in 1998, and both were failures.

"I'm going to want to see eight to 12 flights before I say that's an existing capability," says John Pike, a defense analyst at GlobalSecurity.org.

Moreover, others caution that the Taepodong-2 itself - its actual capabilities or range - remains mostly a mystery. Nor does the US know why it failed. "All this is supposition," says Mr. Pollack. "Until we see some additional clarification, it behooves us to wait."

Few other options are available at this point. The secrecy that shrouds North Korea not only makes it difficult to locate key targets such as nuclear facilities or other missile sites, but it also makes it difficult to gauge North Korea's response to an attack.

Former Defense Secretary William Perry suggested in a recent Washington Post opinion article that the US destroy any North Korean long-range missile before it launched. This would be possible because long-range missiles take a long time to fuel, making them relatively easy to spot. The danger, however, is how a beleaguered regime desperate to survive might respond.

"How will North Korea perceive an attack on any given day?" asks Anthony Cordesman, an analyst at the Center for Strategic and International Studies here. "The options tend to be ones of provoking general war."

For Japan and South Korea - both strong US allies and home base to thousands of American troops - this makes the military option a nonstarter. South Korea knows that its northern neighbor keeps artillery batteries trained on Seoul and has massive ground forces at its disposal. Japan knows that North Korea launched a missile over Japanese territory in 1998.

While the North Korean army is sizable, many experts suggest that the threat presented by these forces, which have not been used since the 1950s, is not the main concern. "As long as the war was conventional, I don't think North Korea would do much better than Iraq did," says Pike.

Rather, experts worry what North Korea would do with its nuclear material if it were attacked. Some say the regime could make sure that its material fell into the hands of other American foes, like Iran or Syria. Others suggest it might be put on top of a rocket heading for Tokyo or Okinawa.

Even before this week's launches, Japan had agreed to work more closely with the US on missile defense. Now, Japan says it will allow Patriot missiles - which are defensive missiles designed to destroy incoming enemy missiles - at US bases in Japan.

On the regional level, missile-defense tests have had some success. Interceptors fired from US Navy ships have worked well, but they are relatively slow, making it hard for them to destroy missiles not launched directly at their ship.

The Patriot missile, first used in the Gulf War, has had more mixed results. The military claims that Patriots destroyed "a number" of Iraqi missiles at the beginning of the current war. But critics counter that many also missed, and at least one shot down a British fighter jet.

As for defense of US territory against long-range missiles, missile defense is still struggling. In the two most recent tests, in late 2004 and early 2005, the missile failed even to launch.

"We've been trying for 45 years" to build a reliable missile-defense shield, says Philip Coyle, who oversaw missile testing for the Pentagon as director of operational test and evaluation from 1994 to 2001. "Unfortunately, it's still not something we can rely on."

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2006/0707/p04s01-usmi.html>

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International Herald Tribune

July 7, 2006

## **U.S. Envoy In Beijing To Discuss N. Korea Crisis**

By Associated Press

BEIJING--The chief U.S. negotiator on North Korea met China's foreign minister Friday to discuss Pyongyang's missile tests, amid stepped up efforts by the world powers to curb the North's provocative behavior.

The meeting between the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill and Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing came hours after their presidents spoke by phone and North Korea vowed to fire off more missiles.

Hill met earlier Friday with his Chinese counterpart, Wu Dawei, Beijing's chief envoy to the nuclear talks. Hill planned to head to Seoul later as part of a regional diplomatic push.

As Hill was making his way to China Thursday, President George W. Bush of the United States called President Hu Jintao of China and other world leaders, urging a coordinated response to North Korea, which test-fired seven



missiles Wednesday. Hu, whose country is North Korea's staunchest ally, urged calm and restraint to alleviate tensions in the region.

China, which provides oil and other economic assistance to North Korea, is seen as key to getting Pyongyang to stop its missile tests and resume long-stalled negotiations over its nuclear weapons programs. The U.S. has urged Beijing to exert maximum leverage on North Korea, though so far Chinese efforts have been largely limited to diplomatic appeals.

Hill and Li, the foreign minister, shared a light moment after the American envoy said he had to borrow a suit for their meeting because his luggage was lost on his flight from Los Angeles.

"Lost in Pyongyang?" the foreign minister asked.

"I don't think so," Hill replied. "They may have assumed I was going to Pyongyang."

No details of their talks were immediately released.

China's foreign ministry announced Thursday that it would send Wu, a vice foreign minister, to Pyongyang next week but called for negotiations, not threats, in dealing with North Korea.

Hu, in speaking with Bush, said China wanted to see an early resumption of the nuclear talks.

Those negotiations - which involve the United States, China, Russia, Japan and North and South Korea - broke down last November, with Pyongyang having yet to abandon nuclear fuel enrichment programs that could be used to make weapons.

With tensions rising following this week's missile tests, China's insistence on negotiating without threats of punishment, however, appeared to make a coordinated approach to North Korea difficult. Japan and the United States in particular reacted angrily to Pyongyang's actions and sought a toughly worded condemnation in the U.N. Security Council.

After a second day of meetings in New York on Thursday, China, along with Russia, refused to back the Japanese-sponsored resolution, preferring instead a milder statement that left out any mention of sanctions.

"It is necessary for the Security Council to make a response but the response should be helpful to the long-term objective of maintaining peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula," Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu said in Beijing Thursday in defending China's position.

While calling for a diplomatic solution, Jiang also stressed that "China and North Korea are friendly neighbors."

Wu, the vice foreign minister, will travel to Pyongyang as part of a high-level delegation to celebrate the 45th anniversary of a friendship treaty between the two countries.

<http://www.iht.com/articles/2006/07/07/news/web.0707diplo.php>

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Chicago Tribune

July 6, 2006

## **Boeing To Feel Heat On Missiles**

*U.S. defense system faces new scrutiny*

By Ameet Sachdev, Tribune staff reporter

North Korea's testing of numerous missiles this week renews debate about the fledgling U.S. missile-defense program and whether the backbone of the system being developed by Boeing Co. can defend the country against an attack.

Already feeling the heat after a series of testing failures, Chicago-based Boeing now faces increased scrutiny of two flight tests of a missile interceptor scheduled for this year. Another misfire could cost the company millions of dollars and harm its reputation.

"This is a very big deal for them," said Philip Coyle, senior adviser to the Center for Defense Information and a former director of the Pentagon's weapons testing and evaluation department.

"They will say they've done simulated things on computers, and that's fine. But the military wants to see the proof in the pudding."

Boeing has been working on its missile-defense program, known as a ground-based midcourse defense system, since 1998. The project was envisioned by President Ronald Reagan, who hoped to render nuclear weapons obsolete. Since 1985, the Department of Defense has spent nearly \$90 billion to turn Reagan's ambitious plan into reality, according to the U.S. Government Accountability Office.

A Boeing spokesman could not say Wednesday how much of that the company has collected.

About half of the investment has come since President Bush took office in 2001. Bush has pushed for the creation of a layered system capable of shooting down all types of enemy missiles from land, sea or air, Coyle said.

Some say the undertaking is the most complex project the Pentagon has attempted.

After a successful test in 2002, Bush ordered Boeing's ground system be deployed because of a perceived threat from North Korea and the Middle East.

But 2002 was the last time the system was tested successfully. It failed tests in 2004 and 2005. Overall, five of its nine tests have been successful, according to the Pentagon's Missile Defense Agency, which oversees construction of the nation's missile shield.

There are 11 interceptors in Alaska and at Vandenberg Air Force Base in central California that are linked to satellites and to radar aboard naval ships that can detect missile launches. The radar grid is not fully operational. In the next six years, the Missile Defense Agency plans to invest about \$58 billion to build out the system, according to the Government Accountability Office. The agency wants 50 missile sites by 2011, including 10 in Europe. Pentagon officials confirmed Wednesday that the interceptors, despite still being tested, were operational during the Korean missile launches. But critics question how well the interceptors might work.

"We have a system that doesn't really work, even though they say there's some initial capability," said Nick Schwellenbach, an investigator at the Project on Government Oversight in Washington.

Coyle added: "Boeing would claim that it has some kind of incremental capability. The MDA likes to say it's better than zero. But, unfortunately, the systems being deployed in Alaska and California have no demonstrated capability to defend the U.S. under realistic operational conditions."

Representatives from Boeing and the Missile Defense Agency wouldn't discuss details but suggest the system is functional.

Rick Lehner, spokesman for the Missile Defense Agency, said, "We've always retained the capability to defend against a limited ballistic missile attack on the U.S."

When asked if the system could shoot down a missile targeting the United States, Boeing's Scott Fancher said: "I can't comment on the specifics of the requirements we've implemented. Our customer has expressed the ability of the system to do its job. We believe we are effective against requirements we have been given."

Fancher took over in October as vice president and program director of the ground-based system after two embarrassing tests in which the rocket boosters designed to propel the interceptor into space failed to leave their silos.

In one test in February 2005, two of the three arms that hold the interceptor in place did not retract because a part had corroded.

The Pentagon held Boeing, the program's lead contractor, accountable for the two failed tests, docking \$107 million from the company's award fees and suspending further flight tests for 18 months.

The missile agency now says it is pleased with Boeing's recent performance and has scheduled a flight test for late this summer and another one at the end of the year.

"I believe we are now back on track," Air Force Lt. Gen. Henry Obering, head of the Missile Defense Agency, said in congressional testimony in March, "but I will pause again if necessary."

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/business/chi-0607060067jul06.1.1373658.story>

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New York Times

July 8, 2006

## **Bush Says U.S. May Have Been Able To Intercept North Korean Missile**

By David E. Sanger

CHICAGO, July 7 — President Bush said Friday that he believed the nation's nascent missile defense system would have had a "reasonable chance" of shooting down a long-range missile launched by North Korea had it come close to the United States, and he said he was determined to use the United Nations to set "some red lines" for future behavior by the North Koreans.

Mr. Bush said the launching of a prototype long-range missile that tumbled into the Sea of Japan showed why missile defenses were needed, but he acknowledged that the abilities of the unproven missile defense system based in Alaska and California were "modest," and he said it was "hard for me to give you a probability of success."

"I think we had a reasonable chance of shooting it down; at least that's what the military commander has told me," he said at a news conference in Chicago.

Although defensive sensors and missiles, while not fully tested, are theoretically available for use in an emergency, Pentagon officials have said there was little reason to think they would have been used this week, as the North Korean test missile was not thought to carry a live warhead.

In an hourlong news conference here that was part of a new White House strategy to bolster Mr. Bush's sagging popularity around the country, the president sounded mildly frustrated that diplomacy to disarm North Korea and halt Iran's nuclear program was so "slow and cumbersome." But he sidestepped questions about conditions under which he might be tempted to use military force, saying he was determined to find diplomatic solutions.

And, in a sharp contrast to the kind of less cautious statements he made about Iraq before the invasion in 2003, which were based on sometimes contradictory intelligence reports, he cast doubt on North Korea's claim that it possesses what it calls a "nuclear deterrent."

Mr. Bush challenged a reporter who, in posing a question, asserted that the North Korean leader Kim Jong Il had increased the size of his nuclear arsenal during Mr. Bush's presidency. "I don't think we know that," the president shot back. But, in what may have been a sign of his wariness about intelligence assessments of opaque nations, he pointedly declined to say what assessment he believed was correct.

"Maybe you know but you're not telling," one reporter said. Mr. Bush said, "That's an option," and then, to laughter, added, "Or maybe I don't know and don't want to tell you I don't know."

A new national intelligence estimate of North Korea's capabilities was completed earlier this year, but the administration has declined to publish a declassified version of it. According to officials who are familiar with its contents, it concludes that North Korea probably produced enough fuel for six or more nuclear weapons, from a supply of 8,000 spent reactor fuel rods that the country boasts it reprocessed after throwing inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency out of the country three years ago.

"What we don't know is whether they turned those into weapons," said one senior intelligence official in a recent interview who asked not to be named because he was discussing intelligence issues. "You can assume it, but it is just an assumption."

Mr. Bush's discussion of "red lines" — a term drawn from the cold war limits over steps the United States and Soviet Union agreed not to take for fear they could spiral into outright war — was important because until now his aides have said such limits do not work in North Korea's case. Three years ago, one of Mr. Bush's senior aides said it would be useless to tell North Korea that turning its spent fuel into plutonium was a "red line" because the United States had no effective way to enforce the threat. The North Koreans went ahead anyway, lines or no lines.

It was the ambitious North Korean program to extend the reach of its missiles — along with its work on producing nuclear warheads — that many proponents of the missile defense plan cited to justify the Pentagon's huge expenditures on the new defensive system, which is costing about \$9 billion a year and is still in the early stages of a long and complex development process.

After deciding to field a first batch of interceptors without fully testing them, in what commanders have called a "thin line" of defense against a small-scale attack, the Pentagon interrupted its testing for more than a year after a series of failures. The testing of missiles and radars has now resumed, with an important set of test shots expected to begin as early as this summer. If they succeed, officials have told Congress, there will be better ground for confidence that the system would be able to intercept a missile launched from North Korea or from Iran.

As things stand now, though, there is considerable uncertainty over both sides of the technology race: How long it will take North Korea to produce a missile capable of posing a serious risk to the United States, and how long it will take to build a reliable defensive system?

Though North Korea and the struggle over responding to the missile tests dominated the news conference, Mr. Bush denied that the United States was trimming back on its search for Osama bin Laden by disbanding a unit within the Central Intelligence Agency that focused on that hunt.

"We got a lot of assets looking for Osama bin Laden," Mr. Bush said. "So whatever you want to read in that story, it's just not true, period." He added later: "In my judgment, it's just a matter of time, unless we stop looking. And we're not going to stop looking so long as I'm the president, not only for Osama bin Laden, but anybody else who plots and plans attacks against the United States of America."

He repeated his conviction that the United States would prevail in Iraq, but also seemed intent on dampening speculation about significant reductions of forces in coming months. "An artificial timetable of withdrawal and early withdrawal before this finishes sends the message to the enemy: 'We were right about America,'" Mr. Bush said, repeating his argument that Al Qaeda seeks to turn Iraq into a haven for training.

But when the subject turned back to North Korea, Mr. Bush by turns argued that Mr. Kim was untrustworthy — he cited the country's violation of a 1994 accord with the Clinton administration — and that the only path was to negotiate with him. But he rejected conducting one-on-one negotiations, insisting that he needed China and other neighbors at the table so that Mr. Kim did not make the United States to appear the blockade to an agreement.

"One thing I'm not going to let us do is get caught in the trap of sitting at the table alone with the North Koreans," Mr. Bush insisted, rejecting the criticism by Democrats who say such talks would be the only way to break the logjam.

"If you want to solve a problem diplomatically, you need partners to do so," Mr. Bush said, adding later that his worry about "handling this issue bilaterally is that you run out of options very quickly."

But in citing anew the need to team up with China and South Korea, Mr. Bush was skipping past the warnings of members of his own administration that neither country would agree to sanctions. Both are worried about a North Korean collapse, and both have continued supplying North Korea with food, energy and investment — even while Japan and the United States try to turn off the spigot.

Mr. Bush has been careful never to criticize either country publicly. But he seemed to do so obliquely when he said, with some frustration in his voice: "The problem with diplomacy, it takes a while to get something done. If you're acting alone, you can move quickly. When you're rallying world opinion and trying to, you know, come up with the right language at the United Nations to send a clear signal, it takes a while."

[http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/08/world/asia/08prexy.html?\\_r=1&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/08/world/asia/08prexy.html?_r=1&oref=slogin)

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Washington Post

July 8, 2006

Pg. 1

## **U.S. And Russia To Enter Civilian Nuclear Pact**

*Bush Reverses Long-Standing Policy, Allows Agreement That May Provide Leverage on Iran*

By Peter Baker, Washington Post Staff Writer

President Bush has decided to permit extensive U.S. civilian nuclear cooperation with Russia for the first time, administration officials said yesterday, reversing decades of bipartisan policy in a move that would be worth billions of dollars to Moscow but could provoke an uproar in Congress.

Bush resisted such a move for years, insisting that Russia first stop building a nuclear power station for Iran near the Persian Gulf. But U.S. officials have shifted their view of Russia's collaboration with Iran and concluded that President Vladimir Putin has become a more constructive partner in trying to pressure Tehran to give up any aspirations for nuclear weapons.

The president plans to announce his decision at a meeting with Putin in St. Petersburg next Saturday before the annual summit of leaders from the Group of Eight major industrialized nations, officials said. The statement to be released by the two presidents would agree to start negotiations for the formal agreement required under U.S. law before the United States can engage in civilian nuclear cooperation.

In the administration's view, both sides would benefit. A nuclear cooperation agreement would clear the way for Russia to import and store thousands of tons of spent nuclear fuel from U.S.-supplied reactors around the world, a lucrative business so far blocked by Washington. It could be used as an incentive to win more Russian cooperation on Iran. And it would be critical to Bush's plan to spread civilian nuclear energy to power-hungry countries because Russia would provide a place to send the used radioactive material.

At the same time, it could draw significant opposition from across the ideological spectrum, according to analysts who follow the issue. Critics wary of Putin's authoritarian course view it as rewarding Russia even though Moscow refuses to support sanctions against Iran. Others fearful of Russia's record of handling nuclear material see it as a reckless move that endangers the environment.

"You will have all the anti-Russian right against it, you will have all the anti-nuclear left against it, and you will have the Russian democracy center concerned about it too," said Matthew Bunn, a nuclear specialist at Harvard's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs.

Since Russia is already a nuclear state, such an agreement, once drafted, presumably would conform to the Atomic Energy Act and therefore would not require congressional approval. Congress could reject it only with majority votes by both houses within 90 legislative days.

Administration officials confirmed the president's decision yesterday only after it was first learned from outside nuclear experts privy to the situation. The officials insisted on anonymity because they were not authorized to disclose the agreement before the summit.

The prospect, however, has been hinted at during public speeches in recent days. "We certainly will be talking about nuclear energy," Assistant Energy Secretary Karen A. Harbert told a Carnegie Endowment for International Peace event Thursday. "We need alternatives to hydrocarbons."

Some specialists said Bush's decision marks a milestone in U.S.-Russian relations, despite tension over Moscow's retreat from democracy and pressure on neighbors. "It signals that there's a sea change in the attitude toward Russia, that they're someone we can try to work with on Iran," said Rose Gottemoeller, a former Energy Department official in the Clinton administration who now directs the Carnegie Moscow Center. "It bespeaks a certain level of confidence in the Russians by this administration that hasn't been there before."

But others said the deal seems one-sided. "Just what exactly are we getting? That's the real mystery," said Henry D. Sokolski, executive director of the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center. Until now, he noted, the United States has insisted on specific actions by Russia to prevent Iran from developing bombs. "We're not getting any of that. We're getting an opportunity to give them money."

Environmentalists have denounced Russia's plans to transform itself into the world's nuclear dump. The country has a history of nuclear accidents and contamination. Its transportation network is antiquated and inadequate for moving vast quantities of radioactive material, critics say. And the country, they add, has not fully secured the nuclear facilities it already has against theft or accidents.

The United States has civilian nuclear cooperation agreements with the European atomic energy agency, along with China, Japan, Taiwan and 20 other countries. Bush recently sealed an agreement with India, which does require congressional approval because of that nation's unsanctioned weapons program.

Russia has sought such an agreement with the United States since the 1990s, when it began thinking about using its vast land mass to store much of the world's spent nuclear fuel. Estimating that it could make as much as \$20 billion, Russia enacted a law in 2001 permitting the import, temporary storage and reprocessing of foreign nuclear fuel, despite 90 percent opposition in public opinion polls.

But the plan went nowhere. The United States controls spent fuel from nuclear material it provides, even in foreign countries, and Bunn estimates that as much as 95 percent of the potential world market for Russia was under U.S. jurisdiction. Without a cooperation agreement, none of the material could be sent to Russia, even though allies such as South Korea and Taiwan are eager to ship spent fuel there.

Like President Bill Clinton before him, Bush refused to consider it as long as Russia was helping Iran with its nuclear program. In the summer of 2002, according to Bunn, Bush sent Putin a letter saying an agreement could be reached only if "the central problem of assistance to Iran's missile, nuclear and advanced conventional weapons programs" was solved.

The concern over the nuclear reactor under construction at Bushehr, however, has faded. Russia agreed to provide all fuel to the facility and take it back once used, meaning it could not be turned into material for nuclear bombs. U.S. officials who once suspected that Russian scientists were secretly behind Iran's weapons program learned that critical assistance to Tehran came from Pakistani scientist A.Q. Khan.

The 2002 disclosure that Iran had secret nuclear sites separate from Bushehr shocked both the U.S. and Russian governments and seemed to harden Putin's stance toward Iran. He eventually agreed to refer the issue to the U.N. Security Council and signed on to a package of incentives and penalties recently sent to Tehran. At the same time, he has consistently opposed economic sanctions, military action or even tougher diplomatic language by the council, much to the frustration of U.S. officials.

Opening negotiations for a formal nuclear cooperation agreement could be used as a lever to move Putin further. Talks will inevitably take months, and the review in Congress will extend the process. If during that time Putin resists stronger measures against Iran, analysts said, the deal could unravel or critics on Capitol Hill could try to muster enough opposition to block it. If Putin proves cooperative on Iran, they said, it could ease the way toward final approval.

"This was one of the few areas where there was big money involved that you could hold over the Russians," said George Perkovich, an arms-control specialist and vice president of the Carnegie Endowment. "It's a handy stick, a handy thing to hold over the Russians."

Bush has an interest in taking the agreement all the way as well. His new Global Nuclear Energy Partnership envisions promoting civilian nuclear power around the world and eventually finding a way to reprocess spent fuel without the danger of leaving behind material that could be used for bombs. Until such technology is developed, Bush needs someplace to store the spent fuel from overseas, and Russia is the only volunteer.

"The Russians could make a lot of money importing foreign spent fuel, some of our allies would desperately like to be able to send their fuel to Russia, and maybe we could use the leverage to get other things done," such as "getting the Russians to be more forward-leaning on Iran," Bunn said.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/07/07/AR2006070701588.html>

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Los Angeles Times

July 8, 2006

## **N. Korea Says It Wants Its Money Back, Then It'll Talk**

By Barbara Demick, Times Staff Writer

SEOUL — North Korea will return to talks on its nuclear program if the United States releases \$24 million in frozen funds held in a bank in Macao, a senior diplomat said in an interview published today.

In the most explicit statement of its demands since a barrage of missile tests Wednesday, North Korea's deputy ambassador to the United Nations, Han Song Ryol, said his country was looking for a "minimal gesture to restore trust."

Han also said that an invitation to Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill to visit the North Korean capital, Pyongyang, was still open and that such a visit would be "advantageous for us to correctly understand the U.S. position and to precisely express our own position."

The interview with the New York-based diplomat was published in Hankyoreh, a left-wing South Korean newspaper frequently sympathetic to Pyongyang.

The money has been a bone of contention between the United States and North Korea since September, when the Treasury Department accused Banco Delta Asia in the tiny Chinese enclave of Macao of laundering proceeds of counterfeiting and other illicit activities on behalf of North Korea.

The Bush administration is likely to reject the North's demands. It has consistently said Pyongyang should make its position known within the context of multilateral talks and not set preconditions.

But a U.S. official intimated that it was possible some of the \$24 million would eventually be released if it was determined it was not linked to illicit activity. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Treasury investigators were painstakingly going through handwritten records trying to determine the origins of the money.  
<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-norkor8jul08.1.1600885.story>

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New York Times

July 8, 2006

## **China Fights Sanctions To Punish North Korea**

By Warren Hoge and Norimitsu Onishi

UNITED NATIONS, July 7 — Japan introduced a Security Council resolution on Friday calling for sanctions against North Korea for its missile test-firings, but China opposed the move, saying such action could disrupt diplomatic efforts under way in the region.

As the diplomacy unfolded, Christopher R. Hill, the top American negotiator with North Korea, was in Seoul, South Korea, trying to rally support in that region for a tough, unified response to the North's testing of seven missiles on Wednesday.

Mr. Hill, the assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, met with Chinese officials, including Li Zhaoxing, the foreign minister, in Beijing before arriving in Seoul on Friday evening.

China agreed that resuming the six-nation talks over North Korea's nuclear program was a priority, Mr. Hill said.

But it did not appear that he had made progress in persuading the Chinese to endorse sanctions.

At the United Nations, Kenzo Oshima, the Japanese ambassador, said he hoped for a vote as early as Saturday, but Jean-Marc de la Sablière, the ambassador of France, which is president of the Council, said that a date would be announced Monday.

Britain, France and the United States are sponsors of the measure.

The decision to put the resolution to a vote followed meetings Thursday and Friday involving Japan and the five permanent members of the Council — Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States — that failed to establish common ground. China and Russia said they preferred the less forceful measure of a presidential statement, which is nonbinding and does not threaten punishment.

Entering the American mission for the gathering Friday morning, Wang Guangya, the Chinese ambassador, said, "A resolution might have negative reactions in the region." He added, "The Security Council's message should be responsible, taking into account the possible consequences."

Diplomats said Mr. Wang made the point forcefully in the closed consultations, and he told reporters afterward, "If this resolution is put to vote, there will be no unity in the Security Council."

Asked whether he might exercise China's veto, he said, "All possibilities are open."

The resolution condemns the missile firings, orders Pyongyang to cease missile development and recommit to a moratorium on launchings and urges member states to prevent missiles and missile-related items from reaching North Korea. It also calls on countries to keep the North from selling or transferring any such materiel.

Drawn up under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, the resolution "strongly urges" North Korea to rejoin the six-party talks on its nuclear program.

Vitaly I. Churkin, the Russian ambassador, which also favors a presidential statement instead of a resolution, remained silent during the consultations, according to diplomats. Emerging from the Council chamber, he brushed aside reporters' requests for comment.



John R. Bolton, the United States ambassador, signaled a willingness to continue negotiating the text of the resolution. "We're certainly prepared for further conversations as other diplomatic efforts in the region continue," he said.

But he added: "We want a resolution. It should be Chapter VII, and I think that's clear. The level of provocation engaged in by these North Korean missile launches warrants that, and we're going to proceed."

Mr. Hill is expected to meet South Korean officials over the weekend before flying to Tokyo and Moscow, but he gave an indication on Friday of the message he is expected to convey. "We shouldn't have business as usual with a country that's been firing off missiles like this in this rather reckless way," he said.

South Korea said Friday that it would go ahead with four-day, high-level ministerial talks with North Korea next week in Pusan, South Korea. But South Korea said that it would delay shipments of food and fertilizer to the North and that it had turned down an offer, made by North Korea several days before the launchings, to hold military talks. North Korea fired the missiles, including the new long-range Taepodong 2, despite warnings not to by its friends in China and South Korea.

*Warren Hoge reported from the United Nations for this article and Norimitsu Onishi from Seoul, South Korea.*

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/08/world/asia/08nations.html>

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Washington Post

July 8, 2006

Pg. 2

## **Bush Rejects Solo Talks With North Korea**

*President Wants to Wait for Allies to Unite Over Nuclear Arms Program, Testing*

By Michael A. Fletcher, Washington Post Staff Writer

CHICAGO, July 7 -- President Bush on Friday defended his response to the budding crisis spawned by North Korea's missile tests, saying he will not "get caught in the trap of sitting alone with North Korea at the table."

Bush said he will patiently wait for the other countries taking part in the six-party talks to speak with a single voice, urging North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons program and refrain from further long-range missile tests -- a process that he acknowledged will take time.

"The problem with diplomacy, it takes a while to get something done," Bush said. "If you're acting alone, you can move quickly. When you're rallying world opinion and trying to come up with the right language at the United Nations to send a clear signal, it takes a while."

The United States is working with China, Russia, Japan and South Korea to urge North Korea to abandon its nuclear program. The White House has encouraged tough economic sanctions since Tuesday's launch of seven missiles, including one with the capacity to reach Alaska. But China and Russia have resisted sanctions, even as Pyongyang has threatened to move ahead with more tests.

Bush's comments came during an unusual news conference here at the Museum of Science and Industry. With the exception of his foreign trips, Bush almost always holds news conferences at the White House. But Friday's event involved local reporters as well as the national news media who travel with him.

"I'm sure you're wondering why I would have a press conference in Chicago," Bush said. "It's a fabulous city; plus, I like to see what it's like to have a major press conference outside of Washington. It might do me some good. The truth of the matter is, it might do the White House press corps some good as well."

As campaigns heat up for November's midterm elections and with the president's popularity hovering below 40 percent in most public opinion polls, White House officials said Bush's appearance is his first in a series planned in coming months.

"You're going to see some times where the president goes out, spends a bit of time in a place, talks with the leaders, drills into the issues, listens to what they have to say, builds trips generally around one topic," said White House spokesman Tony Snow.

Typically when Bush travels domestically, he delivers a speech and quickly moves on. But Bush began his visit here Thursday evening with a dinner with Mayor Richard M. Daley (D) and local business leaders. Before his news conference Friday morning, he had breakfast with other local executives.

After his news conference, Bush attended a \$1.2 million fundraiser for gubernatorial challenger Judy Baar Topinka, the three-term state treasurer who is the only Republican to hold statewide office in Illinois. He then traveled to nearby Aurora to tout his efforts to bolster high-tech research and education at Cabot Microelectronics, which makes substances that help in the manufacture of sophisticated semiconductors.

Despite widespread public discontent with GOP congressional leaders, Bush predicted that Republicans will keep control of the House and Senate, allowing them to continue setting the nation's legislative agenda for the next two years.

"You win elections by believing something," Bush said, when asked whether his poor poll numbers are hurting GOP candidates. "You win elections by having a plan to protect the American people from terrorist attack. You win elections by having a philosophy that has actually produced results -- economic growth, for example -- or kind of changing the school systems for the better, or providing prescription drug coverage for elders."

Bush ducked questions about a possible U.S. military response to North Korea, and he emphasized that he will continue pursuing diplomatic solutions, even if they prove "slow and cumbersome."

Asked whether he believes the U.S. missile defense system could have intercepted a missile aimed at this country, Bush said: "Yes, I think we had a reasonable chance of shooting it down. At least that's what the military commanders told me."

Some experts speculate that North Korea is stoking a crisis in hopes of drawing the United States into direct negotiations.

"It's an interesting question: Is he trying to force us to do something by defying the world? If he wants a way forward, it's clear," Bush said of North Korean President Kim Jong Il. "If he wants to have good relations with the world, he's got to verifiably get rid of his weapons programs."

[In Seoul early Saturday, U.S. envoy Christopher Hill rejected North Korea's demand that Washington lift financial measures against the government as a condition for returning to the six-party talks.

"This is not a time for so-called gestures of that kind," Hill said when asked by reporters for reaction to the North Korean demand.]

The White House also is working to forge a diplomatic consensus against Iran, which is pursuing its own nuclear program. Bush said next week's meeting of the Group of Eight leaders in St. Petersburg, Russia, will be an opportunity to send a clear message as Iran considers an incentive package aimed at curtailing its nuclear program.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/07/07/AR2006070700560.html>

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London Sunday Telegraph

July 9, 2006

## **Russia Secretly Offered North Korea Nuclear Technology**

By a Special Correspondent in Pyongyang and Michael Hirst

Russia is facing criticism after secretly offering to sell North Korea technology that could help the rogue state to protect its nuclear stockpiles and safeguard weapons secrets from international scrutiny.

Russian officials touted the equipment at an IT exhibition in Pyongyang a fortnight ago - just days before the Communist state caused international alarm by launching a salvo of short and long-range missiles into the Sea of Japan.

In what appear to have been unguarded comments, Aleksei Grigoriev, the deputy director of Russia's Federal Information Technologies Agency, told a reporter that North Korea planned to buy equipment for the safe storage and transportation of nuclear materials, developed by a Russian government-controlled defence company.

The company, Atlas, also received interest from the North Koreans in their security systems and encryption technology - which were kept from display at the exhibition for security reasons.

In remarks made to the Russian Itar-Tass news agency - hastily retracted after publication - Mr Grigoriev said that the main aim of the June 28 exhibition was "establishing contacts with the Korean side and discussing future co-operation". Last week Russia, along with China, opposed a draft UN Security Council resolution, proposed by Japan and backed by America, that would bar missile-related financial and technology transactions with North Korea because of the missile tests.

As tensions over the missile tests mounted, the US government yesterday deployed its USS Mustin, equipped with so-called Aegis missile-tracking technology that is geared towards tracking and shooting down enemy missiles, to Yokosuka, home port to the US Navy's 7th Fleet.

On Friday, George W Bush called for the issue of the missile tests to be put before the Security Council. He said he wanted to make clear to Kim Jong Il, the North Korean leader, "with more than one voice" that the rest of the world condemned Wednesday's launches.

Sources close to the proposed sale of the equipment - which would have civil and military uses - said that it was evidence of Russia's secret support for its Soviet-era ally, which was once a bulwark against Chinese influence in the Far East. It was reported that the North Korean military interest in the exhibition stemmed from the dual purpose of many of the products and technologies on display.

After the show, which led to plans for further meetings between the Russian and North Korean delegations, Mr Grigoriev said Pyongyang's primary interest in buying the equipment was to combat the "threat posed by international terrorism". However, the Russian embassy in Pyongyang immediately denied the report, claiming that it was "disinformation". Mr Grigoriev subsequently denied ever having spoken to the journalist concerned. Disclosures of a possible deal are at odds with official Russian policy towards North Korea's nuclear programme. On June 22, North Korea's ambassador to Russia, Park Yi Joon, was summoned to the foreign ministry in Moscow and informed that -Russia "strongly objects to any actions that can negatively influence regional stability and worsen nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula".

There was also some anger domestically at Russia's opposition to the UN sanctions resolution. Although the Russian foreign ministry expressed anger that Moscow had not been notified of the launches, it went no further than issuing an anodyne statement expressing concern that the tests endangered Pacific Ocean shipping and "violated the commonly accepted world practice of giving a warning".

Western experts were not surprised that the two countries might be discussing sensitive military deals.

Nicholas Eberstadt, a North Korea expert at the American Enterprise Institute, a think tank in Washington, said that Russian policy towards North Korea had long been influenced by the desire to restore its Cold War-era influence.

"Russia often seems more ambitious to restore that influence than to play a positive role in international affairs," he said. "We've got no reason to doubt that Moscow is playing a double game with North Korea. It's not entirely surprising considering Vladimir Putin himself came up with the harebrained suggestion some years ago that Moscow, as a protector and provider for the North Korean regime, launch a North Korean satellite."

Mr Eberstadt suggested that any controversial business deals would be politically costly for the Kremlin. "If Moscow wishes to be on the record as the sole defender and apologist for the world's remaining revisionist and nuclear-proliferating regimes, then it would be interesting to see how its European friends would react."

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2006/07/09/wkorea09.xml>

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London Sunday Times

July 9, 2006

## **West Mounts 'Secret War' To Keep Nuclear North Korea In Check**

By Michael Sheridan, Far East Correspondent

A programme of covert action against nuclear and missile traffic to North Korea and Iran is to be intensified after last week's missile tests by the North Korean regime.

Intelligence agencies, navies and air forces from at least 13 nations are quietly co-operating in a "secret war" against Pyongyang and Tehran.

It has so far involved interceptions of North Korean ships at sea, US agents prowling the waterfronts in Taiwan, multinational naval and air surveillance missions out of Singapore, investigators poring over the books of dubious banks in the former Portuguese colony of Macau and a fleet of planes and ships eavesdropping on the "hermit kingdom" in the waters north of Japan.

Few details filter out from western officials about the programme, which has operated since 2003, or about the American financial sanctions that accompany it.

But together they have tightened a noose around Kim Jong-il's bankrupt, hungry nation.

"Diplomacy alone has not worked, military action is not on the table and so you'll see a persistent increase in this kind of pressure," said a senior western official.

In a telling example of the programme's success, two Bush administration officials indicated last year that it had blocked North Korea from obtaining equipment used to make missile propellant.

The Americans also persuaded China to stop the sale of chemicals for North Korea's nuclear weapons scientists.

And a shipload of "precursor chemicals" for weapons was seized in Taiwan before it could reach a North Korean port.

According to John Bolton, the US ambassador to the United Nations and the man who originally devised the programme, it has made a serious dent in North Korea's revenues from ballistic missile sales.

But the success of Bolton's brainchild, the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), whose stated aim is to stop the traffic in weapons of mass destruction, might also push North Korea into extreme reactions.

Britain is a core member of the initiative, which was announced by President George W Bush in Krakow, Poland, on May 31, 2003. British officials have since joined meetings of "operational experts" in Australia, Europe and the US, while the Royal Navy has contributed ships to PSI exercises. The participants include Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Italy, Spain and Singapore, among others.

There has been almost no public debate in the countries committed to military involvement. A report for the US Congress said it had “no international secretariat, no offices in federal agencies established to support it, no database or reports of successes and failures and no established funding”.

To Bolton and senior British officials, those vague qualities make it politically attractive.

In the past 10 months, since the collapse of six-nation talks in Beijing on North Korea’s nuclear weapons, the US and its allies have also tightened the screws on Kim’s clandestine fundraising, which generated some \$500m a year for the regime.

Robert Joseph, the US undersecretary for arms control, has disclosed that 11 North Korean “entities” — trading companies or banks — plus six from Iran and one from Syria were singled out for action under an executive order numbered 13382 and signed by Bush.

For the first time, the US Secret Service and the FBI released details of North Korean involvement in forging \$100 notes and in selling counterfeit Viagra, cigarettes and amphetamines in collaboration with Chinese gangsters.

The investigators homed in on a North Korean trading company and two banks in Macau. The firm, which had offices next to a casino and a “sauna”, was run by North Koreans with diplomatic passports, who promptly vanished.

The two banks, Seng Heng bank and Banco Delta Asia, denied any wrongdoing. But the Macau authorities stepped in after a run on Banco Delta Asia and froze some \$20m in North Korean accounts.

Last week the North Koreans demanded the money as a precondition for talks but the Americans brushed off their protest.

Kim told Hu Jintao, the Chinese president in January that his government was being strangled, diplomats in the Chinese capital said. “He has warned the Chinese leaders his regime could collapse and he knows that is the last thing we want,” said a Chinese source close to the foreign ministry.

The risk being assessed between Washington and Tokyo this weekend is how far Kim can be pushed against the wall before he undertakes something more lethal than last week’s display of force.

The “Dear Leader” has turned North Korea into a military-dominated state to preserve his own inherited role at the apex of a Stalinist personality cult. Although he appears erratic, and North Korea’s rhetoric is extreme, most diplomats who have met him think Kim is highly calculating.

“He is a very tough Korean nationalist and he knows exactly how to play the power game — very hard,” said Professor Shi Yinhong, an expert in Beijing.

But the costly failure of Kim’s intercontinental missile, the Taepodong 2, after just 42 seconds of flight last Wednesday, was a blow to his prestige and to the force of his deterrent. Six other short and medium-range missiles splashed into the Sea of Japan without making any serious military point.

The United States and its allies are now preoccupied by what Kim might do with the trump card in his arsenal — his stockpile of plutonium for nuclear bombs.

“The real danger is that the North Koreans could sell their plutonium to another rogue state — read Iran — or to terrorists,” said a western diplomat who has served in Pyongyang. American officials fear Iran is negotiating to buy plutonium from North Korea in a move that would confound the international effort to stop Tehran’s nuclear weapons programme.

The prospect of such a sale is “the next big thing”, said a western diplomat involved with the issue. The White House commissioned an intelligence study on the risk last December but drew no firm conclusions.

Plutonium was the element used in the atomic bomb that destroyed Nagasaki in 1945. It would give Iran a rapid route to the bomb as an alternative to the conspicuous process of enriching uranium which is the focus of international concern.

American nuclear scientists estimate North Korea is “highly likely” to have about 43kg and perhaps as much as 53kg of the material. Between 7kg and 9kg are needed for a weapon.

Siegfried Hecker, former head of the US Los Alamos nuclear weapons laboratory, has warned that North Korea’s plutonium would fit into a few suitcases and would be impossible to detect if it were sold.

For the first time since the crisis over its nuclear ambitions began in 1994, North Korea has made enough plutonium to sell a quantity to its ally while keeping sufficient for its own use.

North Korea is known to have sold 1.7 tons of uranium to Libya. It has sold ballistic missiles to Iran since the 1980s. American officials have said Iran is already exchanging missile test data for nuclear technology from Pyongyang.

The exchanges probably involve flight monitoring for Scud-type rockets and techniques of uranium centrifuge operation.

Relations deepened between the two surviving regimes in Bush’s “axis of evil” after the fall of Saddam Hussein.

Under President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Iran’s military and scientific links with North Korea have grown rapidly.

Last November western intelligence sources told the German magazine Der Spiegel that a high-ranking Iranian official had travelled to Pyongyang to offer oil and natural gas in exchange for more co-operation on nuclear technology and ballistic missiles. Iran’s foreign ministry denied the report but diplomats in Beijing and Pyongyang

believe it was accurate. At the same time evidence emerged through Iranian dissidents in exile that North Korean experts were helping Iran build nuclear-capable missiles in a vast tunnel complex under the Khojir and Bar Jamali mountains near Tehran.

So while one nation, North Korea, boasts of its nuclear weapons and the other, Iran, denies wanting them at all, the world is on edge. If the stakes are high in the nuclear terror game, they are equally high for the balance of power in Asia and thus for global prosperity.

North Korea's aggressive behaviour and a record of kidnapping Japanese citizens have created new willpower among politicians in Tokyo to strengthen their military forces. To China, Japan's wartime adversary, that signals a worrying change in the strategic equation. Nationalism in both countries is on the rise. Relations between the two are at their worst for decades.

One scenario is that Japan abandons its pacifist doctrine and becomes a nuclear weapons power. "The Japanese people are very angry and very worried and, right now, they will accept any government plan for the military," said Tetsuo Maeda, professor of defence studies at Tokyo International University.

The mood favours the ascent of Shinzo Abe, Japan's hawkish chief cabinet secretary, the man most likely to take over from Junichiro Koizumi, the prime minister, who steps down in September. "He will be far more hardline on Pyongyang and I'm firmly of the opinion that he intends to make Japan into a nuclear power," Maeda said.

The government is already committed to installing defensive Pac-3 Patriot missiles in co-operation with the Americans. But radical opinion in Japan has been fortified by Kim's adventures.

"The vast majority of Japanese agree that we need to be able to carry out first strikes," said Yoichi Shimada, a professor of international relations at Fukui Prefectural University.

"I spoke to Mr Abe earlier this week and he shares my opinion that for Japan, the most important step would be for Japan to have an offensive missile capability."

Such talk causes severe concern to Washington, which has sheltered Japan under the umbrella of its nuclear arsenal since forging a security alliance after the second world war.

Divisions within the Bush administration — which even sympathisers concede have paralysed its nuclear diplomacy towards the North — also served to undermine Japanese confidence in America, as have the well-documented failings of American intelligence.

Dan Goure of the Lexington Institute, a think tank with ties to the Pentagon, says: "There's no human intelligence in North Korea. Zero. Zippo. It's like looking at your neighbour's house with a pair of binoculars — and they've got their blinds shut."

Last week Bush was working the phones to the leaders of China and Russia. But British officials think it unlikely that either will support a Japanese proposal for UN sanctions on the North Koreans.

That leaves the Bush administration with the same unpalatable choices that existed a week, a month or a year ago.

The military option, to all practical purposes, does not exist. "An attack is highly unlikely to destroy any existing North Korean nuclear weapons capability," wrote Phillip Saunders of the Center for Nonproliferation Studies, in a paper analysing its risks.

"The biggest problem with military options is preventing North Korean retaliation," Saunders said. He believes half a million artillery shells an hour would be rained on Seoul in the first day of any conflict from North Korean artillery hidden in caves. The North Koreans could fire 200 mobile rocket launchers and launch up to 600 Scud missiles. American and South Korean casualties, excluding civilians, are projected at between 300,000 and 500,000 in the first 90 days of war.

Like former president Bill Clinton's team, the Bush administration has therefore realised that a diplomatic answer is the only one available.

But years of inattention, division and mixed messages robbed the US of diplomatic influence. One observer tells of watching the US envoy Christopher Hill sit mutely in an important negotiation because policy arguments in Washington had tied his hands.

Yesterday Hill compromised by offering the North Koreans a private meeting if they came back to nuclear talks hosted by China. But American faith in China's powers of persuasion may have been misplaced.

"China is the source of the problem, not the source of the solution," argued Edward Timperlake, a defence official in the Reagan administration and author of *Showdown*, a new book on the prospect of war with China.

Kim ignored Chinese demands to call off the missile tests and some American officials now think Beijing is simply playing off its client against its superpower rival.

The clearest statement of all came from the "Democratic People's Republic of Korea" (DPRK) itself. The state news agency said America had used "threats and blackmail" to destroy an agreement to end the dispute. "But for the DPRK's tremendous deterrent for self-defence, the US would have attacked the DPRK more than once as it had listed it as part of an 'axis of evil'."

The lesson of Iraq, the North Koreans said, was now known to everyone.

Additional reporting: Sarah Baxter, Washington; Julian Ryall, Tokyo  
<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2089-2261782.html>

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Miami Herald

July 9, 2006

## North Korea Has History Of Brinkmanship

*North Korea's recent series of missile tests continued its use of coercive diplomacy.*

By Calvin Woodward, Associated Press

WASHINGTON - North Korea is well practiced in getting some of what it wants through provocation. Bullying through a bullhorn has worked time and again for a small nation with an outsized military force and an even bigger capacity for bluster and threat.

It's called coercive diplomacy. North Korean-style, it has involved antagonizing everyone on and over the horizon, foes and allies alike, and then pulling back. Sometimes just in the nick of time.

While few would call the North Korean leadership predictable, certain things are expected of it. That's the case now, in the storm of condemnation and diplomatic maneuvering set off by North Korea's in-your-face missile tests.

"When diplomacy is stalled, North Korea escalates tension to break the deadlock," Wonhyuk Lim, a Brookings Institution fellow for Northeast Asian studies, said in an analysis for the think tank.

In sum, as twisted as the North Koreans' logic may be, it is based on their negotiating experience with the Americans. North Korea's brinkmanship is the evil twin of America's halfhearted engagement."

The risk is that North Korea's attention-grabbing actions may bring bombs in reprisal instead of diplomacy, as almost happened with the Clinton administration.

In 2003, North Korea pulled out of a nuclear arms treaty, vowing to bring "defeat and ruin" on the United States, warning of World War III and declaring, "Let us see who will win and who will be defeated in the fire-to-fire standoff."

This was followed by the first substantive talks between the two nations since President Bush came to office.

As a propaganda gambit, the missile tests that North Korea put on during America's Independence Day were hardly a smashing success. On a day when the space shuttle arced into the heavens on a mission of science and international cooperation, North Korea's star long-range missile is said to have failed like a bum firecracker on its mission of defiance and military advancement.

A half-dozen tests of shorter range missiles were conducted to uncertain effect, but with no known failures. The results, in short, spoke to North Korea's apparent ability to wreak havoc in its region and its inability any time soon to reach the U.S. mainland with a nuclear missile.

Yet North Korea has massive combat forces on the border with South Korea, long-range artillery capable of reaching Japan and destroying up to 40 percent of the South Korean economy and huge stocks of chemical weapons as well as a rising nuclear weapons capability.

An impoverished country of some 23 million people, it fields the world's fifth largest army, behind China, the United States, Russia and India.

It is considered no match in any protracted fight with South Korea's lethal modern forces, America's unmatched power or a devastating combination of both.

Still, any conflict could bring horrific consequences to both sides and risk pitting China against the United States.

Like many students of the region, Anthony Cordesman of the Center for Strategic and International Studies protests the tendency to regard Kim Jong Il as a reckless poseur without a purpose.

"North Korea may or may not face a few hard weeks or months of reprisal, but it has reminded everyone of just how serious a threat North Korea can be, how limited most military options are and how serious the risks of any major war would be," Cordesman said.

That pattern of edging toward confrontation, then edging back, has persisted, always accompanied by tough words. More are being heard now.

"Catastrophic effects will arise," North Korean envoy Song Il Ho warned last week after Japan took steps to punish North Korea for firing the missiles.

"We're certainly not going to overreact . . . to these wild statements," Undersecretary of State R. Nicholas Burns said. "We've seen them before."

<http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/news/world/14997912.htm>

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Los Angeles Times

July 9, 2006

## U.S.-Russia Nuclear Cooperation Possible

*Moscow would have to pressure Iran. Bush and Putin will talk outside the G-8 summit.*

By Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Bush will pursue a nuclear cooperation agreement when he meets with Russian President Vladimir V. Putin next week during a summit of industrialized nations in St. Petersburg, Russia, the White House said Saturday.

But the U.S. will only make such a deal if Russia helps pressure Iran to abandon any nuclear weapons ambitions, said National Security Council spokesman Frederick L. Jones.

"We have made clear to the Russians that for an agreement on peaceful nuclear cooperation to go forward, we will need Russia's active cooperation in blocking Iran's attempt to obtain nuclear weapons," Jones said.

The two presidents will announce the start of negotiations when they meet outside the Group of 8 summit, scheduled for July 15 to 17, the White House confirmed.

Nuclear cooperation between the two countries has stalled for more than a decade because of Washington's objections to Russia's nuclear cooperation with Iran, including construction of an atomic power plant in Bushehr, Iran.

The Bush administration's willingness to reverse course and pursue a nuclear cooperation agreement reflects the U.S. view that Moscow is now a partner, rather than a hindrance, in the effort to persuade Tehran to drop nuclear weapons ambitions.

The White House sees an agreement with Russia as a win-win situation — despite concerns that Putin is backtracking on democratic advances and that Russian nuclear material might not be secure, and despite the fact that Moscow has so far opposed imposing sanctions on Iran if it refuses to abandon suspected nuclear weapons plans.

"Such an agreement would benefit both the United States and Russia, and indeed the world, by enabling advances in and greater use of nuclear energy," Jones said.

The two leaders, who have promoted nuclear energy as a clean alternative, have made proposals on providing nuclear power to developing countries while building in safeguards for nonproliferation of weapons.

Bush wants the use of nuclear power increased, especially in developing countries, to reduce the global demand for oil. Russia, meanwhile, sees a lucrative market in helping countries to establish such nuclear technology.

Early this year, Bush introduced his Global Nuclear Energy Partnership, which would provide fuel to countries for power generation only.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/printedition/asection/la-na-nukes9jul09.1.1512306.story>

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Washington Times

July 10, 2006

Pg. 1

## U.S. Warns Iran To Halt Nukes Or Face 'Action'

By Eric Pfeiffer, The Washington Times

U.S. officials yesterday accused Iran of stalling negotiations and said the deadline has arrived for the country to halt nuclear production or face sanctions in the United Nations.

"We offered them two paths, negotiations or Security Council action," Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns told "Fox News Sunday" discussing the incentives offered to Iran if it gives up its nuclear ambitions. "The Iranians can choose, but the time to choose has come."

Five weeks ago, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said Iran had weeks, not months, to respond to the offer made by an international coalition including the United States, the European Union, China and Russia. Iranian officials so far have rejected public pressure to accept or reject the offer.

Though details of the offer have not been officially released, it is said to include economic incentives and the likely lifting of some sanctions against Iran.

"The Iranians need to understand that if they can't answer this question clearly, there is another path available to us, and that is to work in the Security Council to increase pressure and action against the Iranian government," Mr. Burns said.

Iran has a scheduled meeting with European leaders tomorrow. On Wednesday, Miss Rice will meet her counterparts in the European Union, China and Russia during the Group of Eight summit in St. Petersburg to discuss the North Korean issue.

"I think by then we'll have a fairly good idea of whether or not the Iranians are serious," Mr. Burns said. "Whether they're going to try to filibuster and delay things for months. We won't accept that. We have another option available to us, and we'll travel down that road if we have to."

In advance of the G-8 summit, Iran's foreign minister, Manouchehr Mottaki, said any talks without his country's consent would threaten future negotiations.

"Any [G-8] summit decision on Iran -- if premature and incomplete -- could harm the current positive trend of negotiations," Mr. Mottaki said. "The G-8 summit won't be comprehensive without Iran's participation and opinion."

Mr. Mottaki also repeated his country's earlier stated position that it would not respond to the offer until Aug. 22.

European Union representatives have been pushing for at least a partial compromise before tomorrow's meeting.

"They need to respond to the ambiguities we have identified," Mr. Mottaki told Agence France-Presse.

European Union foreign policy chief Javier Solana and Iranian nuclear envoy Ali Larijanai met in Brussels last week, but reportedly were unable to reach an agreement.

A Western diplomat told Reuters yesterday that Iran has banned a chief U.N. nuclear inspector from its country who was part of a team looking into the Iranian nuclear program. Belgian inspector Chris Charlier said Iran has not allowed him back into the country since April because of Iranian complaints about his work. The International Atomic Energy Agency has been investigating Iran's nuclear program since 2003.

"It is very probable that Tehran is doing things in the nuclear field that to this day we have no clue about," Mr. Charlier told Reuters.

During his appearance on NBC's "Meet the Press," Mr. Burns denied that the war in Iraq has hampered the administration's ability to work with other nations on a solution to the nuclear standoffs with Iran and North Korea.

"There is no argument in the real world today about what these two countries, Iran and North Korea, are trying to do," Mr. Burns said.

"The Iranians have miscalculated. They thought that they could divide the United States from both our European allies and from Russia and China. But we've been able to craft a major and united coalition of all those countries," Mr. Burns said.

"So I don't agree at all that we're somehow limited in what we can do and limited in our effectiveness because of the disagreements we had over WMD in Iraq."

<http://www.washtimes.com/national/20060710-123908-1896r.htm>

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Washington Times

July 10, 2006

Pg. 1

## **Republican Lawmakers Cite Shells As WMD Proof**

By Rowan Scarborough, The Washington Times

Congressional Republicans are at odds with Democrats -- and the Bush administration -- over the significance of 500 munitions found in Iraq since 2003 and recently disclosed by the Pentagon.

The rocket and artillery shells hold deadly sarin and mustard gas, a small part of the vast weapons of mass destruction (WMD) arsenal that Saddam Hussein built in the 1980s.

Republican lawmakers say the 500-plus shells, with more likely to be found in the coming months, are evidence that Saddam was still concealing WMDs in 2003 in violation of United Nations resolutions to disarm after Iraq's failed invasion of Kuwait.

The resolution "didn't say pre-'91 chemical weapons," said Rep. Curt Weldon, Pennsylvania Republican. "It didn't say post-'91 chemical weapons. It said chemical weapons. Saddam Hussein violated this resolution and others like it. ... In part because of such violations, we voted to authorize the use of military force in Iraq."

Democrats dismiss the findings. They say the munitions were found in small clusters and are 1980s vintage. In other words, Iraq produced them before the 1990 invasion of Kuwait and thus they are irrelevant to the CIA's flawed 2002 National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), on which President Bush largely based his decision to go to war to keep Iraq's WMDs from terrorists, they say.

To the consternation of congressional Republicans, including Rep. Peter Hoekstra of Michigan, the House Intelligence Committee chairman, the Democrats are getting support from the administration.

When the office of Director of National Intelligence John D. Negroponte conducted a phone-in briefing for reporters last month, the presenters downplayed the munitions finding, just like the Democrats.

"The priority of the ISG [Iraq Survey Group, which headed the hunt for WMDs] was to look for post-Desert Storm [1991] munitions, newer stuff," an anonymous briefer told reporters. "It was not looking for older stuff. And so this doesn't really bear on the issue."

That dismissive remark generally dovetailed with press reporting. But it irked Mr. Hoekstra, who had held a press conference to announce that the administration had declassified a report on the 500 shells. Mr. Hoekstra wrote an unusually blunt June 29 letter to Mr. Negroponte, accusing his staff of misstating the ISG's mission statement. The ISG was not limited to poking around for post-1991 weapons, he said. He also accused Mr. Negroponte of ignoring requests for information from a Republican senator.

"I am very disappointed by the inaccurate, incomplete, and occasionally misleading comments made by the briefers," he wrote.

Negroponte spokesman Carl Kropf said of the letter, "We'll respond in some fashion to be determined."

Republicans say that with the passage of time, as new information surfaces, the CIA's much-maligned NIE does not look quite as bad. To be sure, inspectors have not found the tons of chemical weapons stockpiles it had predicted, or an active nuclear weapons program, or continued manufacturing of WMDs.

But the NIE contained other components. For example, it said hundreds of chemical weapons munitions remained unaccounted for, after U.N. inspectors destroyed thousands. The NIE did not specify the shells had to be post-1991, so the discovery of more than 500 munitions since 2004 would tend to validate that finding.

What's more, the ISG did find that Saddam planned to resume WMD production quickly once U.N. sanctions were lifted. He had already corrupted the U.N.'s oil-for-food transactions by bribing foreign government officials and suppliers of prohibited weapons.

That ISG finding has been buttressed by newly declassified transcripts of taped conversations between Saddam and his top aides. The palace talk: WMD production would be resumed once the West lost interest in containing Baghdad.

Republicans received a bit more support from the administration in a subsequent House Armed Services Committee hearing last week.

"We do assess that the chemical munitions that have been found are hazardous, and potentially they could be lethal," Lt. Gen. Michael D. Maples, director of the Pentagon's Defense Intelligence Agency, testified. "The chemicals that are contained in the munitions that are referred to in this report are capable of creating mass casualties."

The committee also heard from David Kay, who initially led the search for WMDs before turning the job over to Charles Duelfer. He generally downplayed the discovery. "I don't think any of us should be surprised that we are still finding chemical munitions produced before 1991 in Iraq," he said. He added that his main task was to try to find WMD that the CIA said were produced after U.N. inspectors left in 1998. He found none.

The DNI briefers stressed to reporters that the new report on munitions is not a dissent from the final March 2005 report of Mr. Duelfer.

But there does seem to be a difference in how the two assess the danger to U.S. troops.

"The ISG believes that any remaining chemical munitions in Iraq do not pose a militarily significant threat to coalition forces because the agent and munitions are degraded and there are not enough extant to cause mass casualties," Mr. Duelfer wrote.

Col. John Chiu, commander of the National Ground Intelligence Center, which is conducting the WMD search in Iraq, told the Armed Services committee that, "The munitions that we're finding, the agents within those munitions are still toxic, and if exposed to enough of a degree, would prove to be lethal. ... They do constitute weapons of mass destruction."

<http://www.washtimes.com/national/20060710-123909-1428r.htm>

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New York Times

July 10, 2006

## **U.S. Wants North Korea To Return To Talks**

By Norimitsu Onishi

SEOUL, South Korea, July 9 — The top American negotiator with North Korea said Sunday that his first priority was to get that country back to the negotiating table, signaling that the United States was seeking a diplomatic solution instead of punitive economic sanctions against it for launching seven missiles last week.

The negotiator, Christopher R. Hill, the assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, said his talks with South Korean officials here over the weekend focused on kick-starting the six-nation talks over the North's nuclear program. The talks have been deadlocked since last September.

"My mission here is not to get sanctions," Mr. Hill told reporters before meeting South Korean officials on Sunday morning. "My mission here is to make sure we can all speak with one voice to deal with this provocative action by the North Koreans."

In an interview earlier Sunday, he repeated a rejection of North Korea's demands for bilateral talks with the United States. He said he was ready to meet with North Korean officials on the sidelines of six-nation talks, as he had done previously.

"I don't know how many more million times they want to hear from us that the six-party talks are how we plan to proceed with this problem," he said.

The United States has tried to rally support for a United Nations Security Council resolution drafted by Japan that would impose sanctions on North Korea for its missile launchings. But China and Russia, two veto-wielding permanent members of the Security Council, said they preferred a less forceful, nonbinding statement with no threat of punishment.

South Korea, which is not a member of the Security Council, has also strongly indicated that it opposes the Security Council resolution. The resolution will probably be put to a vote early this week.

Mr. Hill said he had not emphasized the issue of United Nations sanctions with Chinese officials in Beijing, his first stop on a whirlwind tour of China, South Korea, Japan and Russia, the countries involved in the six-nation talks along with the United States and North Korea.

"The U.N. discussions are on a different track and involve different people, and they're kind of ongoing, so I did not try to inject myself in the U.N. issue," he said.

Over the weekend, Mr. Hill also restated the United States' position that it would not lift a crackdown on banks dealing with the North Korea and its businesses, a precondition North Korea has set for returning to the talks.

Other than the United States, only Japan, among the other countries in the six-nation talks, has forcefully come out in favor of a Security Council resolution leading to sanctions.

In television appearances in Japan on Sunday morning, Foreign Minister Taro Aso said his government would not compromise on the draft resolution and was pressing for a vote on Monday.

"To compromise because of one country that has veto power, even though most other countries support us, sends the wrong message," Mr. Aso said, singling out China. "We can't alter our stance."

Under Secretary of State R. Nicholas Burns said Sunday on the NBC News program "Meet the Press" that the United States probably had sufficient support in the Security Council to impose sanctions on North Korea, but he again urged China to apply pressure on its neighbor.

"We think we've got the votes to pass that," he said, referring to the resolution drafted by Japan.

Mr. Burns said on CNN's "Late Edition" that "I don't think we've heard the last word" from either China and Russia on the resolution, and that intensive diplomacy was continuing.

Senator John McCain, Republican of Arizona, said on the CBS News program "Face the Nation" that if China wavered in its support for the American stance, there should be "consequences in our relationship."

But Senator Christopher J. Dodd of Connecticut, a senior Democratic member of the Foreign Relations Committee, disagreed. "China's not our enemy on this," he said, also on "Face the Nation." "They don't want an arms race in that part of the world any more than we do." He said bilateral talks with North Korea might be necessary.

Senator Richard G. Lugar, Republican of Indiana, the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, warned Sunday that if North Korea sold nuclear materials to terrorist groups, an American military attack on North Korea would probably be "heavily considered." He said on the ABC News program "This Week" that if Japan felt sufficiently threatened, it might pursue its own nuclear arsenal, which he said would be "very dangerous."

In South Korea, Mr. Hill, after meeting with Song Min Soon, the security adviser to President Roh Moo Hyun, told reporters that he had doubts about the effectiveness of sanctions in solving the problem.

Choo Kyu Ho, the spokesman for the South Korean Foreign Ministry, said the South Korean government "won't go fully in hand with Japan, which is leading this movement," and added, "In the end, we expect China to veto it."

He said South Korea would make the missile tests the focus of ministerial talks next week between the Koreans in South Korea.

Despite drawing worldwide condemnation for firing seven missiles, including the new long-range Taepodong 2, North Korea vowed Sunday to respond "to an all-out war with an all-out war."

North Korea's leader, Kim Jong Il, said that "even a small concession wouldn't be made to the sworn enemy U.S. imperialistic aggressors," the Korean Central Broadcasting Station, said in a report monitored here by Yonhap, a South Korean news agency.

*Brian Knowlton contributed reporting from Washington for this article.*

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/10/world/asia/10koreanonshi.html>

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## US Looks To China To Influence N. Korea

*A Chinese delegation is visiting Pyongyang Monday to discuss the crisis set off by Kim's missile launches.*

By Robert Marquand, Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

BEIJING--A message from President Bush to North Korean leader Kim Jong Il will be delivered Monday in Pyongyang - via two Chinese officials. Beijing now meets quarterly with Mr. Kim, the most contact the unpredictable North has with any outside party.

Whether Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei and Vice Premier Hui Liangyu will surprise Kim Jong Il and exert real pressure is unclear.

With an international diplomatic effort under way a week after North Korea tested seven missiles, China has proposed informal six-party talks as a way to move the process along.

That is less than the US hoped for from China. But since China insists that it will veto any UN sanctions against the North, the US will accept such talks, according to envoy Christopher Hill.

All told, Beijing would appear key to shaping how the world deals with the defiant Kim. Yet from the moment Kim launched his missiles, China has denied it has clout; it politely insists that the US has the central role.

Since 2003, China has embarked on a historic effort to prop up and aid North Korea - a state it had the frostiest relations with for more a decade. Now, \$2 billion in aid gives Beijing unprecedented access - something China is reluctant to squander, to "mix aid and diplomacy," as a Chinese scholar here puts it.

"China's influence on North Korea is more than it is willing to admit, but far less than outsiders tend to believe," says a recent report by the Seoul branch of the International Crisis Group.

To outsiders, it appears that a rising China - running a lifeline of energy and food to its poor comrade - ought to have clout in Korea, as it holds more carrots and sticks than anyone. It seems axiomatic that Beijing can simply apply ancient Chinese wisdom and modern Chinese might to stop Kim's nuclear ambition. Both states are communist, wear green and red uniforms, fought the US together, and share borders and history. China is the only country with easy access, as well as trade and tourism, to the North.

"China does have leverage, but it is afraid it may overplay its hand," says Joseph Cheng, head of the political science department at City University in Hong Kong.

Since Kim Jong Il's July 4 missile shots, voices from Sandy Berger, President Clinton's security adviser, to John Bolton, US ambassador to the UN, have argued that "China is the key" to dealing with North Korean belligerence. It has become nearly a mantra in Washington. Twelve months ago, it was an article of faith in senior White House circles, misplaced or not, that China would deliver a deal with Kim to dismantle his nuclear program. Yet this did not happen.

Instead, with the US preoccupied in Iraq, China embarked on a quiet policy of self-interest: to strengthen North Korea. That policy helps to maintain the North as a "buffer state" between China and South Korea.

China does not want the North to collapse, and for US troops to fill the vacuum and appear on its northeast border. China has hosted Kim, and moved relations away from a bad patch in the 1990s, during the North's epic famine, when China asked for cash payments for food instead of barter.

In the past two years, Chinese officials have told Kim that he can reform his state along socialist lines just as China did. China has indicated it will help with economic aid, while he retains complete political control. To now castigate Kim could wreck that formula, sources say.

In the larger sense, Kim's launch of missiles, most of which could hit long-time nemesis Japan or US bases in East Asia, puts China in the position of choosing between its North Korean comrade and an evolving consensus in the international community. So far, China has tried to please both sides.

"I'm concerned that China isn't recognizing how serious this issue is," says Zhang Liangui, head of foreign studies at the Central Party School in Beijing, in a rare dissent. "China is taking a rigid position. Yet we have long said that if China wants to be viewed as a responsible superpower, it must not be isolated in the international community."

Adding to Beijing's problems is an unresolved ideological struggle in China - where "neo-orthodox" hard-liners who maintain contact with North Korea want China to support its revolutionary posture. There is also genuine puzzlement in Beijing over how to deal with Kim, whose founder-father, Kim Il Sung, reputedly warned him many times that China would attempt to take over his regime one day.

"I hear often that China is the key, which involves a set of policy steps Beijing can take that will bring about the outcome the allies want," says Russell Leigh Moses of People's University. "But I have yet to see anyone show how if China does X, Pyongyang will do Y."

The White House seems to have abandoned its 2003 optimism that China will harness Kim. China may agree that a nuclear peninsula and a regime that test-fires rockets is not desirable. But it isn't clear on how to force Kim to open his highly controlled state and allow international inspectors to flood in, witness his system of gulags, and bring in potentially subversive material - all to dismantle a nuclear program he's cherished for decades. The White House seems to understand this.

Scott Snyder of Stanford University argues the US is using the same strategy that it used with China in closing down Kim's accounts in Macau. China was forced to choose between the international regulatory authority, or North Korean money-laundering behavior.

Sunday, Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns argued on FOX News Sunday that "It's time for China to exert its influence that it does have on North Korea." Also on Sunday programs, US and Japanese officials claimed they might have the votes to support a Japan-backed resolution for sanctions against the North.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2006/0710/p06s02-woap.html>

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San Diego Union-Tribune  
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## Missile Menace

### *Weighing the real threat from North Korea*

By Anthony H. Cordesman

If one asks whether North Korea's missile tests were political posturing or serious military efforts, the answer is easy. It is both. North Korea clearly chose the Fourth of July as a date it knew would irritate and provoke the United States and "show the world" it could not be intimidated by American demands to halt its tests. It benefited from the irony of a U.S. space launch on the same day, and the very different kind of fireworks that Americans use to celebrate their independence.

North Korea also knew that it was sending an even more direct signal to its neighbors: Japan and South Korea. It was showing that it could ignore their main military ally, and efforts at regional persuasion from both those states and China. It simultaneously put pressure on the United States for direct negotiations on North Korean terms and on the region to find compromises that suited North Korea.

It is easy to dismiss such actions on the grounds they are "irrational" or will "backfire." It is far from clear that this is the case. Even testing a large number of missiles at once makes good sense from a North Korean perspective. It gets everything done at once, rather than staggering out the political cost over weeks or months. It prevents pre-emption of future tests. It tends to bury the fact that a major series of short/medium range tests took place under the impact of the longer-range test, and the success of the shorter-range missile tests guarded against the possible failure of the test of the larger, long-range missile.

Were these actions "stupid" or "reckless?" Not really. North Korea may or may not face a few hard weeks or months in reprisal, but it has reminded everyone of just how serious a threat North Korea can be, how limited most military options are, and how serious the risks of any major war would be. Kim Jong Il will never be a poster boy, but this is the type of political posturing that can easily succeed over the long run, and which may or may not have even short- or mid-term consequences that will impact on North Korea's ruling elite.

### **The military and strategic impact**

North Korea's tests do, however, need to be taken seriously at a military level, though not necessarily in the way that most American media did immediately after the tests, or in the way called for by the Bush administration. It is far from clear that North Korea is any closer to a real-world capability to attack the United States than it was before this series of tests, or that the large missile it tested was ever intended to be any form of intercontinental ballistic missile. Before leaping out into the void of speculation, it is important to note that at this writing, the United States has not announced anything about the nature of the missile tests, or any technical details of the longer-range missile whose first stage blew up less than a minute after launch. It has not confirmed that it has satellite, telemetry or other data to indicate that the missile was anything larger than the extended range intermediate-range ballistic missiles that have come to be called the Taepodong-2.

There is disagreement over even the number of missiles tested. The United States initially reported three – two Scuds and a "Tapeo Dong 2." It now seems to say at least six: the long-range missile that exploded, two shorter-range North Korean adaptations of the Scud (not exact copies of the Russian system) and three longer-range North Korean medium-range ballistic missiles called "No Dongs." South Korean sources have reported up to 10 launches. No one has as yet said anything about exact range, probable warhead, accuracy, reliability, launch method, set-up and reaction time, or anything else of technical value in describing military capability.

### **The probably reality behind the Taepodong-2**

In the real world, it is only possible to talk about missile performance once a system is actually deployed and tested, its warhead is known, and enough firings have taken place to confirm actual operational capability. Computer models can help, but they have proved to be wrong again, and again, and again. Speculating about guidance platforms, warhead type of weight, the size of the booster, and other technical factors is guesswork – not fact.



Rushing to print maps with worst-case maximum ranges – rather than showing the uncertainty involved – is irresponsible journalism. This is particularly true when some analyst outside the intelligence community rounds up to a scare figure, and it suddenly is taken as fact. Reality is littered with the wrong guesses of retired “experts,” intelligence officers, and military officers who grabbed 15 seconds of fame without a single hard fact.

One must hope that the U.S. government will, in time, provide declassified hard intelligence. It may not have gotten any telemetry, and it would be silly to state it can break any coded data. But the booster size is something North Korea knows the United States can probably get with great accuracy through imagery, and reporting on the missile's structure and possible performance characteristic based on its size and shape before it blew up in broad terms would not give away any intelligence sources or means.

At this point, however, it seems very doubtful that North Korea is close to a real world capability to attack the United States. It has had two possible tests of a large booster for such a missile: One in 1998 and one on the Fourth of July. Both failed dismally.

There is no officially announced intelligence data indicating North Korea has advanced long-range guidance platforms, or warhead design. It may well have part of a Chinese design for a relatively light implosion fission nuclear weapon that could be carried on a missile, but no official source has indicated that it has anything like the design detail to actually build such a warhead without testing on a level that intelligence would probably detect. Even in a worst case, such a warhead would probably approach 700-1,000 kilograms and be a comparatively low-yield fission – not boosted or thermonuclear weapon.

There has been some very good technical reporting and speculation on the possible nature of the No Dong and Taepodong missiles from Global Security and the Federation of American Scientists, and some limited reporting from U.S. defense sources. It is vital to understand that such speculation describes missiles that are undergoing constant modifications and often parallel developments of different missiles and configurations. What might have been true at one time may not be true now, and the best speculation in the world is still ultimately guesswork.

The data available, however, strongly indicate that North Korea is still focusing on getting missiles that can attack targets anywhere the North Koreans need to hit in Asia (with the possible exception of Guam) and not the United States. The limited technical data currently available on the No Dong series do not indicate that it can hit any meaningful target in the United States with a nuclear weapon or any other meaningful payload.

There are all kinds of guesses about the boosters for what is being called the Taepodong – a missile that simply does not exist as a finished configuration. All of the ones displayed to date present complex size problems and are smaller than the Russian or Chinese boosters that became intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM) at similar stages of missile development. It would probably take a larger diameter booster than North Korea ever displayed before July 4 to play such a role, and real questions exist about stacking or clustering such boosters to get predictable and reliable results at the ranges involved.

There is absolutely no meaningful agreement about what the more limited range of such missiles would be. The Washington Post, for instance, quotes a possible range of 2,175 to 2,672 miles. Other sources quote maximum ranges of 3,500, 4,000 and 5,000 kilometers. All are sheer guesswork, and all ignore the fact that missiles do not have maximum ranges; they have range-payloads. If you do not know (or at least state your assumption about) the weight of the warhead or payload, your guesses are undefined and irresponsible.

Accordingly, until better data are available, the main risk seems to be that North Korea is beginning early testing of a missile that could throw the equivalent of a rock at Alaska. Even in the worst case, it would be able to launch a small fission nuclear weapon with great inaccuracy and unreliability at Alaska, and just possibly Hawaii or the upper northwest corner of the United States. Given its history of testing to date, North Korea is probably about five years away from even this operational capability, though shorter times are possible.

This is not in the “so what?” category. It would be suicidally stupid to launch such a missile at low-value targets in Alaska or area targets in a small part of the United States. U.S. retaliation at a devastating level would be both justified and nearly certain. North Korea would effectively cease to exist as an organized state. For a dictatorship whose only real ideology is the survival of the leader, this does not seem a credible option.

This does not mean that North Korea is not working on ICBMs, does not have larger boosters in development, will not get much more advanced nuclear weapons in development, or cannot conceal a great deal. It does mean that the United States has good reason to try to halt North Korean efforts and no reason to overreact or panic, particularly since applying worst case wild guesses to two conspicuous design failures is ridiculous.

#### **Dealing with dangerous near and mid-term realities**

That said, the reality is totally different when North Korea's efforts are seen from a different military perspective. The same development efforts that throw a rock at Alaska can throw a large nuclear warhead at every ally we have in Northeast Asia. Japan and South Korea are not only close allies, they are critical trading partners. A war in this part of the world would inevitably threaten Chinese involvement in some form, and possibly block trade with much

of China for an extended period even if China did not become involved. Our troops and our bases in most of Asia would be at hazard as well.

Americans need to stop thinking parochially and selfishly and start thinking strategically. North Korea does not have to be able to hit the United States with meaningful nuclear threats to do much to deter or damage American interests. North Korea also does not develop its medium-range and intermediate-range ballistic missiles in a vacuum. It is a close partner with Iran and has sold missiles to Syria. There is no way as yet to know what the latest round of tests means for technology transfer to other states – if any – but it could affect two major sources of trouble in the Middle East, and there are some indications of North Korean technology transfer to Pakistan.

Add the fact that North Korea has massive combat-ready conventional forces on the border with South Korea, long-range artillery that can strike at some 30 to 40 percent of South Korea's economy, massive stocks of chemical weapons, and large numbers of short-range missiles and rockets that may have chemical warheads, and the regional threat rises substantially higher.

The continental United States may well have at least half a decade to wait and see. Our Asian allies don't, our Middle East allies don't, and our military forces and economic interests don't. The systems we call Scuds and No Dongs may well be extremely dangerous now, and they almost certainly will be in a year or so.

*Cordesman holds the Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C.*

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