

**Nuclear diplomacy with the DPRK:  
Try, try again**

Frank von Hippel  
Coalition for Peace Action Congressional-Candidate Briefings  
Friends Meeting House, Philadelphia, 6 August 2018  
Doylestown, PA, 7 August 2018

**A series of failed efforts to stop a growing program**

- 1991, Bush Sr.** saw plutonium program, got DPRK to join Nonproliferation Treaty but DPRK blocked verification of how much plutonium it had separated before 1991.
- 1994, Clinton**, in exchange for DPRK ending its plutonium program, agreed South Korea would provide 2 power reactors and delayed verification of DPRK's pre-1991 plutonium separation till the reactors were half built.
- 2000, Clinton** almost achieved agreement to freeze DPRK missile program.
- 2003, Bush Jr.** confronted DPRK over clandestine program to enrich uranium, canceled Clinton Administration agreement.
- 2011, Obama** got freeze but agreement comes apart over DPRK satellite launch. Thereafter, DPRK went all out to complete program.
- 2018, Trump** got vague agreement on denuclearization but DPRK wants a step-by-step, "action-for-action" process.

## What does the DPRK want?

### Regime survival in the post-Cold-War world.

- Threat that U.S. will attack the way we attacked Iraq and Libya. Sees rehearsals in annual US-South Korea “Foal Eagle” exercises.
- No longer protected by Soviet Union.
- Vulnerable to economic lifelines being squeezed by China.
- Seeks economic development similar to China and Vietnam
- Seeks at least a non-adversarial relationship with U.S. and ideally, protection from China like South Korea and Japan have.

### Realities U.S. has to face:

1. There is no acceptable military solution.  
We have to negotiate our way out of this.



DPRK Army is massed along the border.

Seoul with half of South Korea's population is just south of the border.

DPRK now has nuclear weapons that can reach U.S. bases and allies in the region.

Missile defenses cannot be relied upon.

**Realities U.S. has to face:**

**2. Denuclearization will be a step-by-step process and take years/decades**

**First steps:**

***Freeze as much as possible:***

- Nuclear tests (done)
- Missile flight tests (done)
- Plutonium production (done between 1991 and 2003)
- Uranium enrichment
- Missile production

***In exchange for cooperation with South Korea:***

- Reopen Kaesong production zone, other joint industrialization.
- Joint energy projects (grid, Siberian gas, photovoltaics, wind)

***Wind down of military confrontation:***

- Suspend non-defensive dimensions of Foal-Eagle joint military exercises (done)
- DPRK should withdraw artillery in range of Seoul

**Realities U.S. has to face:**

**3. Trust is hard to build.**

**Reciprocity is necessary at every stage**

Bush and Trump Administrations promised rewards at the end of the line – after ***complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement***

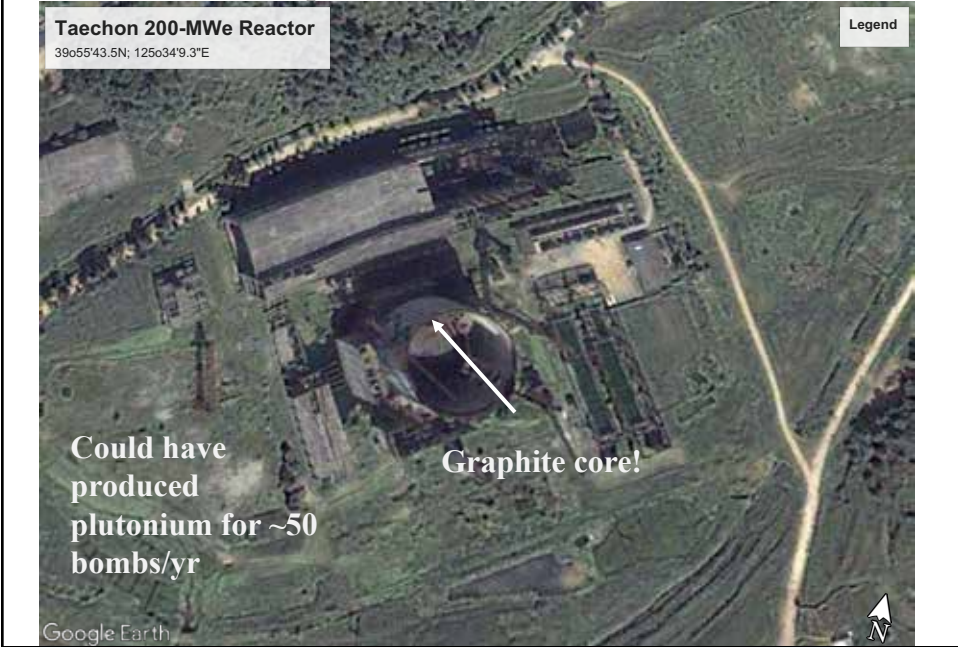
DPRK did not and will not buy that.

It sees how that worked out for Iraq and Libya.

U.S. sees DPRK trickery: lie about pre-1991 plutonium separation, secret enrichment program, “peaceful” satellite launch program.

DPRK sees lack of U.S. sustained commitment to previous deals: Bush Administration cancellation of promised power reactors promised in exchange for shutdown of DPRK plutonium program. Lack of Bush Administration follow-through on Clinton Administration deal on freeze of DPRK missile program.

**Past agreements were not all talk: DPRK permanently abandoned two half-built plutonium-production reactors in 1994**



**South Korea half built two replacement reactors before Bush Jr. Administration pulled plug in 2003**

