Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Members of the

Subcommittee. I want to thank you for the honor of appearing before

you today to discuss the urgent and serious problem of North

Korea’s nuclear program, and yet I am sorry to say that the security

of America is increasingly threatened by the continuing nuclear

crisis in North Korea and that America is not prepared to

deal with the full implications of that threat.

The failure of American efforts, stemming from both Democratic

and Republican Administrations, has allowed North Korea to consolidate

its nuclear capabilities and has increased the risk that nuclear

weapons will be used against the United States, its allies, and

its interests worldwide.

It would be irresponsible, however, to assume that the worst case

about Pyongyang’s nuclear capabilities is the most likely case. The

United States cannot be certain that North Korea has any nuclear

weapons or that it can even produce nuclear weapons, and our policies

should be based on facts, not assumptions.

But in the end, regardless of North Korea’s actual nuclear capabilities,

United States policy must fully test whether North Korea

is willing to verifiably trade its nuclear capabilities away for some

as yet undetermined set of incentives or disincentives.

This has never been done. Diplomatic efforts, as many knowledgeable

analysts and officials have predicted and, as some of the

Members here have said, may well fail. But the sincere public attempt

to pursue this path by the United States is an absolute prerequisite

if we are to gain the support we need from states in the

region and around the world to deal with the consequences of a

‘‘no’’ answer from the North.

We should never forget that within South Korea and even China,

leaders must manage their own internal political processes and, especially

in South Korea, demonstrating our bona fide effort to pursue

a diplomatic solution is a critical step to gaining support for

stronger measures, should they become necessary.

My testimony today will touch on two main themes. The first, as

I was asked to do, was to assess what we know and do not know

about North Korea’s nuclear capabilities.

Much has been said in public about the nature of the North Korean

nuclear threat, but a close examination suggests our information

is not quite as conclusive as some would believe.

The second theme is in many ways more important and has already

been raised here today, as it touches not on the narrow issue

of North Korea’s nuclear status, but to the larger role of the United

States in East Asia.

On almost all counts, in my opinion, the assumptions that guide

Administration policy in the region today appear questionable and

could put American interests in long-term jeopardy.

In assessing the nuclear capabilities of North Korea, policymakers

and analysts are bombarded with a lot of soft information

and speculation and very few facts.

Thus, I find it useful to divide information into categories of

what we know for sure and what we don’t know for sure. And the

bottom line, looking at this information, is that North Korea may,

as they themselves now claim, possess enough nuclear material to

produce nuclear weapons.

Those responsible for our national security cannot assume otherwise.

Yet despite our best efforts to uncover the truth, very little

is known with certainty about North Korea’s nuclear capabilities.

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld finally got it right on February

10 when he said, ‘‘I don’t want to confirm that North Korea

has nuclear weapons, because I just can’t do that.’’

We can also not totally dismiss the possibility that North Korea

is undertaking the greatest nuclear bluff in history. United States

intelligence cannot confirm that North Korea possesses enough material

for even one nuclear weapon, despite the language used in

the intelligence assessments. I would be surprised if this were the

case, but it cannot be ruled out. Moreover, as North Korea has a

major incentive to exaggerate its capabilities, we have to take all

of their statements with a serious grain of salt.

The bottom line is that North Korea’s nuclear capabilities remain

in doubt. We know they have produced some plutonium, but we

don’t know how much. We know where they produced their nuclear

materials, but we don’t know where they are stored. We know they

have tried to buy equipment for uranium enrichment, but we don’t

know if they have built any uranium production facilities.

We know they have received help from Pakistan, but we don’t

know if that help is ongoing or if they can perfect the uranium enrichment

process on their own. We know they have ballistic missiles,

but we don’t know if they can produce a nuclear warhead

small or reliable enough to be placed on a missile.

In sum, we know the plot, but we don’t know the outcome or

even the full list of characters.

Mr. Chairman, the title of the hearing captures the key question

for all of us: Is there a way forward? And we all want the same

thing: A Korean Peninsula free of nuclear weapons.

Yet regardless of North Korea’s current or projected nuclear capabilities,

what is needed is a concrete set of recommendations for

how the United States and its partners in the region can best bring

about an end to North Korea’s nuclear capabilities and in this,

there are no easy answers and no silver bullets.

The Bush Administration is now apparently prepared to actively

test the willingness of North Korea to negotiate away its nuclear

program, even though they suspect North Korea will balk at the

opportunity.

In this, they should be supported. The question is whether the

effort comes too late and I do not believe it does. We can still succeed,

but it will require the U.S. and its partners to work more

closely together, as Dr. Sutter just said, and to be more flexible in

their positions.

North Korea’s February 10 declaration that it has nuclear weapons

also contains the clear statement quoted by our Chairman

today that it was prepared to continue negotiations with the

United States to achieve a non-nuclear peninsula.

For U.S. policy to work, we must demonstrate, in the clearest

possible way, that the U.S. is serious about pursuing a diplomatic

solution.

If North Korea refuses to accept the Six-Party format, United

States officials should announce that they will meet anytime, anywhere

with a North Korean official empowered to make real

progress.

The Bush Administration is right to keep other players involved,

but it is wrong to reject any deviation from the Six-Party formula.

China, South Korea, and Japan would all support bilateral talks

and have stated their support for bilateral efforts, as long as we

maintain open channels to all three countries.

A final deal can easily be signed or endorsed in a larger multilateral

process. North Korea could either accept this serious proposal

with serious Chinese and South Korean encouragement, or North

Korea could well, as I suspect they will, refuse, and the question

of North Korea’s willingness to negotiate will finally be resolved.

We should be prepared for either response, but today, in my opinion,

we are prepared for neither.

If North Korea says yes, the United States should work to make

fast progress. Washington should be prepared to engage in continuous

negotiations—not what Dr. Pritchard, our former Ambassador

to North Korea or Ambassador to talks, has called hit and run negotiations

or drive-by negotiations—and we should do these at a

high level, and the talks should include the offer of both near-term

and long-term economic and security incentives directly and

through our allies.

These should include, as the President has said, security guarantees

to North Korea, but this Administration must demonstrate

that United States officials are serious when they say they have no

higher priority than preventing the spread of nuclear weapons.

Avoiding bad precedents, not rewarding bad behavior, and never

paying blackmail, as important as those efforts are, should be secondary

to preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and to protecting

this country.

Bad precedents cannot destroy cities or kill millions. Nuclear

weapons can.

As part of our efforts, North Korea must be made to understand

that any final agreement must include a complete accounting and

elimination of any uranium enrichment equipment and materials

they possess or have acquired.

But this can be accomplished in a way that does not require a

public admission of guilt by North Korea. Such a process is similar

to what most United States out of court settlements with polluters

or corporate criminals, who are punished without publicly accepting

blame. This model should be considered as a way out of the

current standoff.

But, as I believe is likely, North Korea may well refuse any serious

and concerted United States offer to resolve the standoff

through negotiations. Here again, I believe we are not prepared for

this answer.

How will the United States engage in coercive measures if we are

not supported by one of our closest allies in the region, South

Korea?

Seoul would likely resist any United States attempt to increase

troop levels in the South, to deploy additional missile defense, antiartillery

radar, or other equipment needed to reinforce deterrents

on the peninsula in the face of a nuclear adversary.

How can we prevent North Korea from trying to export some of

its nuclear capabilities? While an important tool, the proliferation

security initiative is not a panacea. We cannot block every grapefruit-

sized shipment out of that country.

A broad legal basis for action can only be established if necessary

through the U.N. Security Council, a forum in which, I am sorry

to add, North Korea’s withdrawal from the Nonproliferation Treaty

and violations has never been brought up by the United States.

None of these steps would be possible, however, unless we demonstrate

that all of the other options have been exhausted.

Despite the number of years that North Korea’s nuclear program

has been a concern and the amount of time that United States officials

and experts have invested on the issue, I am worried that

America fundamentally seems to be misjudging some of the broader

dynamics and key players in the region and I will touch only briefly

on South Korea and China.

Within the small community of experts who work on U.S.-ROK

alliance, there are two main perceptions. The first, found mostly

among current government officials and more senior experts who

engage with the traditional power centers in Seoul, is that South

Korea and the United States have identical security interests. This

in turn leads these experts to believe that in the worst case, the

United States and South Korea will be able to stand together in

confronting North Korea’s pursuit of nuclear weapons and that,

should worse come to worse, Seoul will endorse a series of coercive

steps, including even those that increase the risk of conflict with

the North.

The second perception, which I hold, is found mainly among analysts

and experts who engage with the so-called ‘‘386 Generation’’

of political leaders and experts in South Korea, who are in their

30s, graduated from university in the 1980s, and were born in the

1960s.

This block forms the core of the Uri-dong party of President Roh

Moo-hyun. Many experts in close contact with 386ers are concerned

about the overall view of the United States and of the growing

frustration with this stratum of South Korean society.

This emerging generation of Korea feels they owe less to the

United States than do their parents and increasingly view the

North Koreans as their brethren, not their enemy.

Moreover, it is not clear to many 386ers that the United States

truly has the best security and political interests of South Korea

as a primary driver.

Members of this new generation are less likely to risk conflict

with the North on ideological grounds, and on a basic level, I think

it is understandable that people in the South, at least some of

them, want to preserve stability and pursue engagement with their

countrymen to the North and to avoid those policies often enunciated

by the United States that might put those two goals at risk.

Thus, to an increasing degree, in my opinion, United States policy

toward North Korea is based on the flawed assumption that the

U.S.-ROK alliance will prove solid enough for the United States to

pursue a credible policy of coercion and, if necessary, offensive military

action against North Korea.

On the contrary, I believe that moves by the United States to

tighten pressure on the North, absent over provocation by

Pyongyang, will result in an unraveling of the U.S.-ROK alliance.

To prevent this disaster, we must understand and be sensitive to

the political dynamics that the Uri-dong and President Roh must

deal with to ensure that our alliance can withstand the threat

posed to both of us by North Korea.

The Bush Administration also appears to believe that United

States and Chinese interests in North Korea are identical, namely

keeping North Korea from acquiring nuclear weapons.

President Bush’s commitment to the Six-Party diplomatic process

has been publicly justified on the need to keep China integrally engaged.

United States officials have stated their belief, as many

have here today, that only China has the leverage required to force

North Korea to abandon its nuclear ambitions, yet this only captures

part of China’s perspective.

On a recent visit to Beijing, a Chinese colleague reminded me

that China has two goals in Korea. The first is to keep the peninsula

non-nuclear and the second is to preserve stability and prevent

a collapse of the regime in Pyongyang.

He asked: ‘‘Why China, now that the first goal appears lost,

should throw away the second?’’ Thus, at least in some parts of the

Chinese community, there is a real disconnect between Chinese

and American goals.

The concern that stems from this disconnect is, over the long

run, convinced the Chinese possess the leverage needed to bring

North Korea to heel, United States officials will increasingly wonder

why China has chosen not to use that leverage.

Convinced that their strategy is right, some American officials

may increasingly view China as a scapegoat for the failure of

American policy. This in turn can reignite some longstanding concerns

about China and its role within the region, held by some of

the more conservative personalities within the Administration.

Mr. Chairman, it may be too late to keep North Korea from acquiring

nuclear weapons and we may, despite any and all efforts,

be unable to roll back whatever capabilities they currently possess.

History may well look back at our failed efforts with North Korea

as a turning point, when the nuclear dam bursts and nuclear weapons

became widespread and commonplace in the arsenals of scores

of countries.

If such a future were to pass, despite our best efforts, it would

be horrific and hard to live with, but knowing we have not done

our best and have not pursued all avenues available to us makes

such a future even harder to face.

This is true not just because of the implications for North Korea,

but because it will lay bare the fallacy that the top priority of this

and past Administrations—to prevent the spread of weapons of

mass destruction—has not, in fact, been true.

All recent Presidents have used the words to demonstrate that

they understand the unique threat posed by these weapons. Finding

out that we have not meant what we have said will reduce the

credibility of the United States worldwide at the very time that its

conventional capabilities are increasingly challenged by emerging

nuclear arsenals in various states.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Wolfsthal follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. JON WOLFSTHAL, DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR NONPROLIFERATION,

CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE

NO GOOD CHOICES—THE IMPLICATIONS OF A NUCLEAR NORTH KOREA

I want to thank the Chairman and members of the subcommittees for the honor

of appearing before you today to discuss the urgent and serious issue of nuclear

weapons on the Korean peninsula. It is a great privilege to provide any insight or

information I can to Congress, the heart of our great American democracy. And yet

I am sorry to say that the security of America is increasingly threatened by the

long-standing and continuing nuclear crisis in North Korea and that America is not

prepared to deal with the full implications of that threat. The failure of American

efforts—stemming from both democratic and republican administrations—has allowed

North Korea to consolidate its nuclear capabilities and has increased the risk

that nuclear weapons will be used against the United States, its allies and its interests

worldwide. As a result, nuclear weapons could become the currency of power

in East Asia and elsewhere, to the detriment of American interests.

That being said, it would be irresponsible to assume that the worst case about

Pyongyang’s nuclear capabilities is the most likely case. The United States cannot

be certain that North Korea *has* nuclear weapons or even that it can *produce* nuclear

weapons. Our policies should be based on facts, not assumptions. But, in the

end, US policy must fully test the proposition that North Korea would be willing

to verifiably trade all of its nuclear capabilities away for some as yet undetermined

set of incentives/disincentives, regardless of North Korea’s actual nuclear capabilities.

This has never been done. I repeat, the US has no conclusive way of knowing

if North Korea would be willing to eliminate its nuclear capabilities as part of a diplomatic

settlement. We have pieces of information and partial evidence that can

help us predict, but no conclusive answers. Diplomatic efforts, as many knowledgeable

analysts have predicted, may well fail and I am personally skeptical that North

Korea will trade away its nuclear program, in current circumstances. But the sincere

and public attempt to pursue this path by the United States is an absolute prerequisite

if we are to gain the support we need from states in the region and around

the world to deal with the consequences of a ‘‘no’’ from the North. In addition, a

true diplomatic attempt is also a first step to taking those measures needed to protect

ourselves and our allies, to reinforce deterrence on the peninsula, to prevent

North Korea’s capabilities from spreading to others, and to prevent North Korea’s

proliferation from becoming a ‘‘how-to guide’’ for others such as Iran. It appears, at

least from press reports, that the administration is trying to move too quickly to

the next step in the process—coercive steps against the North—without laying the

adequate ground work by truly exhausting diplomatic avenues. We must never forget

that within South Korea and even China, the leaders must manage their own

internal political processes and especially in South Korea, demonstrating our bone

fide efforts to pursue a diplomatic solution is a critical step to gaining support for

stronger measures that may become necessary.

My testimony today will touch on two main themes. The first is to assess what

we know and do not know about North Korea’s nuclear capabilities. Much has been

said in public about the nature of the North Korean nuclear threat, but closer examination

suggests our information is not quite as conclusive as some would believe.

While currently holding no clearances, I worked at the Department of Energy during

the 1990s, served as the US Government on-site monitor at North Korea’s nuclear

facilities in 1995 and 1996, and tracked North Korea closely for 15 years—

experiences which give me at least a basic capability to assess what we do and do

not know. The second theme is in many ways more important as it touches not on

the narrow issue of North Korea’s nuclear status, but to the larger role of the US

in East Asia. Current US policy toward the North is based on a set of assumptions

about how our partners in the region see us and our objectives, and where their key

interests lie. On almost all counts, the assumptions of the current administration

in the region are appear questionable and put American interests in long-term jeopardy.

NATURE OF THE THREAT

In assessing the nuclear capabilities of North Korea, policy makers and analysts

are bombarded with a lot of soft information and speculation, but very few facts.

I have previously referred to North Korea as an intelligence black hole. Thus, I find

it useful to divide information into categories of what we ‘‘know’’, what is ‘‘reasonable’’

to believe, and what we cannot know for sure.

The bottom line is that North Korea may, as they themselves now claim, possess

enough nuclear material to produce nuclear weapons. It is reasonable to assume

that given the capabilities of North Korea’s facilities and the amount of time they

have spent on nuclear pursuits that they have enough technical skill and material

to produce at least a basic nuclear device. Those responsible for our national security

cannot assume otherwise. Yet despite our best efforts to uncover the truth, very

little is known with certainty about North Korea’s nuclear capabilities. Secretary of

Defense Donald Rumsfeld got it right when he said on February 10th that ‘‘I don’t

want to confirm that [North Korea has nuclear weapons] because I just can’t do

that.’’

However, we cannot totally dismiss the possibility that North Korea is undertaking

the greatest nuclear bluff in history. US Intelligence cannot confirm that

North Korea possesses enough nuclear material for even one nuclear bomb. I would

be surprised if this was the case, but it cannot be ruled out. Moreover, as North

Korea has a major incentive to exaggerate its capabilities, we have to take all of

their statements with a grain of salt.

PLUTONIUM PRODUCTION AND STOCKS

*What we ‘‘know’’*

North Korea has produced and separated an unknown amount of plutonium.

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors were allowed to take samples

of North Korea’s declared plutonium inventory of 62 grams in the early 1990s,

and the agency believes that more than that amount was produced prior to 1992.

North Korea now claims it possesses at least 25–30 kilograms of plutonium—enough

for several weapons—extracted from 8000 spent fuel rods removed from its 5MW

reactor in 1994 and previously frozen under IAEA inspection until 2003.

*What is ‘‘reasonable’’ to believe?*

US intelligence stated repeatedly throughout the 1990s that it believed North

Korea had enough plutonium to produce 1 or maybe 2 nuclear weapons. Since 2002,

North Korea may have been able to process the plutonium from 8000 spent fuel rods

and could now have enough plutonium to produce perhaps 10 nuclear weapons, depending

on how much plutonium was in the fuel and how much material North

Korea requires for each device. This, however, is a worst-case scenario based on

what is known about the technical capabilities of North Korea’s nuclear facilities

and cannot be publicly confirmed. Any official responsible for the the security of the

United States must plan for the possibility that North Korea does possess a nuclear

device, and perhaps several such devices.

*What we don’t know*

It is not publicly known with any certainty if North Korea possesses a nuclear

weapon or if it has actually produced enough plutonium to build a weapon. Not

enough conclusive evidence has been collected to discount the possibility that North

Korea’s nuclear program is anything but a Trojan horse. If North Korea does possess

nuclear weapons or large stocks of plutonium, the location of these assets is

unknown.

*Conclusion*

National security officials must assume that North Korea has a basic nuclear

weapon arsenal, but should be open to the possibility that it has none at all. North

Korea has been very effective at hiding information about its nuclear activities from

both the United States and the IAEA, keeping alive the possibility that its capabilities

are less advanced than it would like others to believe.

HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM PRODUCTION CAPABILITIES

In the summer of 2002, US intelligence concluded that North Korea was actively

pursuing the production of uranium for use in nuclear weapons. Unclassified materials

sent to Congress stated that the intelligence community had ‘‘recently learned

that the North is constructing a plant that could produce enough weapons-grade

uranium for two or more nuclear weapons per year when fully operational—which

could be as soon as mid-decade.’’

*What we ‘‘know’’*

It is known that North Korea transacted business with the nuclear black market

operation run by A.Q. Khan out of Pakistan and that it sought to import large

amounts of specialized uranium enrichment equipment (known as centrifuges).

North Korean officials reportedly acknowledged pursuing a uranium program during

bilateral meetings with US officials in Pyongyang in October 2002, but have publicly

denied it ever since. North Korea has large deposits of uranium ore, but would need

to perfect a number of highly sophisticated and demanding operations to produce

weapon-usable uranium. US intelligence has not publicly identified any uranium enrichment

facilities in North Korea.

*What is ‘‘Reasonable’’ to believe?*

It is reasonable to believe that North Korea has a uranium enrichment program.

North Korea has sold missiles to Pakistan and A.Q. Khan is alleged to have taken

almost a dozen trips to North Korea in the 1990s. However, there is great skepticism

in the technical community whether North Korea can perfect the uranium

enrichment process (highly demanding for a technically backward but industrious

state) and North Korea may still be many years away from being able to produce

weapons uranium, if such an effort is actually underway.

*What we don’t know*

We don’t know if North Korea is really building a uranium capability, and if so,

where it is. It is possible that North Korea received specialized equipment for uranium

as part of the A.Q. Khan network, but then transshipped them to another recipient

such as Iran or Libya. We also don’t have any public confirmation about

whether North Korea continues to receive outside technical assistance in its pursuit

of a uranium enrichment capability.

WEAPONS PRODUCTION

*What we know*

Very little is known about weapon production activities in North Korea. North

Korea has a highly developed conventional weapons and high explosives production

capability and is a leading exporter of basic military equipment (rifles, mortars,

landmines, etc). This experience with explosives and manufacturing would be helpful

in producing a first generation nuclear weapon.

*What is ‘‘reasonable’’ to believe?*

It is reasonable to assume that North Korea has the ability to produce a basic

nuclear device, along the lines of those produced by the United States in the 1940s.

It is also possible that North Korea gained access to more advanced nuclear designs

through the A.Q. Khan network, which provided weapon designs to Libya and possibly

Iran. US intelligence believes that North Korea is capable of producing a small

enough nuclear device to put on a short and possibly a medium range ballistic missile

(in range of Japan),but the extent of North Korea’s ability to miniaturize a nuclear

device for a long-range missile is in doubt. A recent South Korean intelligence

assessment stated that delivery by aircraft was more likely and technically feasible

than delivery by missile. The US has yet to publicly authenticate its most recent

assessment that North Korea might be able to deliver a nuclear sized payload by

ballistic missile to the United States via the Taepo-Dong 2 missile.

*What we don’t know*

It is unknown if North Korea has produced actual nuclear weapons and, if so, how

many. It is also not known if North Korea can produce small enough nuclear devices

to place them on missiles for delivery or if the warheads are reliable enough to work

if delivered by missile system.

The bottom line is that North Korea’s nuclear capabilities remain in question and

public statements by US officials, or by North Korean officials, should be consumed

with a healthy dose of skepticism. A prime example is the recent press reporting

that North Korea may have shipped uranium hexafluoride (UF6) to Libya. Such a

transaction may have taken place. There is not enough publicly available information,

however, to conclude that such a transfer actually took place or indeed that

North Korea is even able to produce the material in question. However, the reports

that this determination was made on the basis of technical work done at the US

laboratories and is not the result of an intelligence community wide assessment

raises red flags in the minds of many concerned about the lessons learned from the

run up to the war with Iraq. To be sure, North Korea may have the ability to

produce UF6 and could have exported this material to Libya, with clear and serious

implications for their willingness to engage in other, more dangerous transfers. But

the certainty with which people speak about the case does not appear supported by

what is known publicly and the public’s faith in information the intelligence community

uses to increase its certainty has, at the very least, been shaken.

A brief discussion of this issue was posted to the Carnegie Endowment’s Webpage

*www.proliferationnews.org* in early February. It states:

*‘‘Not So Fast*

US officials recently briefed Chinese and South Korean officials on information

they maintain proves North Korea shipped uranium hexafluoride to Libya. The material

is a precursor for nuclear weapons production. The new claims are based on

two pieces of evidence uncovered by US laboratory experts, most likely at Oak Ridge

National Laboratory where Libya’s nuclear equipment is being studied. The first is

that the isotopic composition of the uranium may reveal a North Korean source. The

second is that the uranium hexafluoride (UF6) containers from Libya revealed

traces of plutonium identical to those previously found in North Korea. An examination

of publicly available information, however, suggests the evidence is far from

conclusive.

*1. Uranium composition*

Uranium is made up of several different isotopes, including Uranium-235 (used

in nuclear weapons at high levels of enrichment), Uranium-238, and Uranium-234,

which is very rare. Reports indicate that US experts compared the U-234 percentages

in the Libyan material against known samples of uranium from around the

world. As the US does not have samples of uranium from North Korea, the experts

concluded that the sample must have come from North Korea by process of elimination.

This raises the possibility, however, that the Libyan material comes from another

uranium mine for which the US has no sample or record, or that the uranium ore

was exported from North Korea, converted to UF6 in another country, and then

shipped to Libya. Pakistan has large-scale UF6 conversion capabilities and was at

the heart of the A.Q. Khan supply network. Recent press reports indicate that several

canisters of UF6 are believed to be missing from the A.Q. Khan laboratories

in Pakistan, a charge Pakistani officials have denied. In addition, technical experts

have confirmed that U-234 content can vary greatly even within the same mine or

even within the same sample of ore, raising the possibility that the uranium sample

does come from a known source.

*2. Plutonium Traces*

According to media sources, the UF6 shipping containers moved from Libya to the

United States revealed samples of plutonium that match those previously taken in

North Korea. This suggests some link between North Korea and Libya (possibly

through an intermediary country such as Pakistan) but could be the result of crosscontamination

between the canisters and other equipment. UF6 containers are routinely

packaged for transport in larger over packs and shipping crates, many of

which can be used for a variety of functions. Although the circumstantial link cannot

be ruled out, the plutonium samples would not in themselves provide a conclusive

link that the uranium contained in them was produced or, indeed, was ever in

North Korea. One possible alternative explanation is that the canisters were sent

from somewhere else to North Korea and then transshipped to Libya.

Pyongyang is known with certainty to have a plutonium production capability and

may possess enough separated plutonium to produce a small arsenal of nuclear

weapons. North Korea’s Foreign Ministry claimed on February 10 that the government

has already produced nuclear weapons. Less information is known about their

alleged uranium enrichment program. US government officials have yet to publicly

identify any uranium enrichment sites in North Korea, and it is not known with

certainty that North Korea can produce uranium hexafluoride. It is possible that

North Korea can produce limited amounts of UF6, and the evidence of North Korea’s

previous attempts to purchase uranium enrichment technology through the

A.Q. Khan supply network seems credible. However, the link between Libya and

North Korea appears tenuous, based on what is publicly known.

If the information is not fully supported by the US intelligence community and

is not as conclusive as US officials appear to be asserting to Chinese and other officials,

it risks further damaging US credibility with key countries in the Far East.

China has been openly skeptical of the US claims that North Korea has an enrichment

program. Should these links between North Korea and Libya prove false, it

may be hard to reestablish China’s confidence in US diplomatic and intelligence efforts.’’

IS THERE A PATH FORWARD?

The title of this hearing captures the key question for all of us. We all want the

same thing—a Korean peninsula free of nuclear weapons. Yet regardless of North

Korea’s current or projected nuclear capabilities, what is needed is a concrete set

of recommendations for how the United States and its partners in the region can

best bring about the end to North Korea’s nuclear capabilities. In this, there are

no easy answers and no silver bullets. The suggestions I will make today are also

contained in a forthcoming policy document authored with my colleagues at the Carnegie

Endowment for International Peace named *Universal Compliance: A Strategy*

*for Nuclear Security*. This report is the result of an intensive, international 18-

month effort to develop a new effective nonproliferation policy that can gain broad

international support. The main conclusions from this report on North Korea inform

my testimony and, and this brief section is attached as an appendix to my formal

statement.

Before I continue, however, a word about the past. The past cannot be undone

and, as they say, there is plenty of blame to go around. Yet for all of the criticism

levied at the Clinton administration and the 1994 Agreed Framework—one thing is

clear to me. President Clinton, despite the unpopularity of the move within Congress

and even within the security community, was willing to make tough decisions

and do what was necessary to freeze North Korea’s nuclear program and protect the

United States from the inherent threat posed by the acquisition of nuclear weapons

by North Korea. He put the national interest above his political interests or personal

ideology. Within his time in office, he was successful. Whatever plutonium

North Korea has today was acquired either before he was elected or since the Bush

administration took office.

Moreover, the past four years are littered with missed opportunities for the Bush

administration to take the same leadership and make the hard decisions—either for

real engagement or real coercion—to reverse North Korea’s nuclear program. For

the first few years, internal disputes and ideological positions prevented the US

from adopting any consistent policy and officials deliberately downplayed the nature

of the developments in North Korea. We are now living with the consequences. We

cannot make up for this lost time, but neither can we ignore the implications of our

past and current policies for how our future efforts will be judged in the region.

The Bush administration is now apparently prepared to actively test the willingness

of North Korea to negotiate away its nuclear program, even though they expect

North Korea to balk at the opportunity. I believe the administration is now prepared

to offer Pyongyang a concrete set of long-term incentives in exchange for the

total and monitored elimination of its nuclear capabilities, providing more specifics

to flesh out the proposal tables last June at the 3rd round of the 6 party talks. In

this, they should be supported. The question is whether this effort comes too late.

I do not believe it does. We still have an opportunity to succeed, but it will require

the US and its partners to work more closely together and to be more flexible in

their positions. North Korea’s February 10th declaration that it has nuclear weapons

also contained a clear statement that it was prepared to engage in negotiations

with the United States to achieve a non-nuclear Korean peninsula. The Foreign

Ministry stated that ‘‘[T]he DPRK’s principled stand to solve the issue through dialogue

and negotiations and its ultimate goal to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula

remain unchanged.’’ It is possible that the statement was designed simply to raise

the price North Korea could charge China for Pyongyang’s attendance at the six

party talks. Now is the time to find out.

For any US policy to work, we must demonstrate in the clearest possible way that

the US is serious about pursuing a diplomatic solution. If North Korea refuses to

accept the six party format, the US should be prepared to announce that it would

meet anytime, anywhere with North Korean officials empowered to make real

progress on the nuclear issue. The Bush administration is right to keep other key

players involved, but is wrong to reject any deviation from the 6 party formula.

China, South Korea and Japan would all support such a move as long as we maintained

open channels to all three countries. Any final agreement, on the slim chance

that one can be reached, could be completed in a multilateral format and endorsed

by the six parties or even the UN Security Council. North Korea could accept the

serious proposal, with Chinese and South Korean encouragement, and if so the US

will have the opportunity to lay out a detailed, reasonable proposal to the North.

However, North Korea could well refuse and the question of North Korea’s willingness

to negotiate will be resolved. We should be prepared for either response. Today,

we are prepared for neither.

If North Korea says yes to negotiations and the outlines of an agreement, the

United States should work to make fast progress. Washington should be prepared

to engage in continuous negotiations at a high level and to include both near-term

and longer term economic and security incentives to the North directly, and through

our allies. These should include, as the President has said, security guarantees to

North Korea. But this administration must demonstrate that US officials are serious

when they say that they have no higher priority than preventing the spread of

nuclear weapons. Avoiding bad precedents, not rewarding bad behavior, and never

paying blackmail—as unpleasant as they are—should be secondary principles to

preventing nuclear proliferation and protecting the country. Bad precedents cannot

destroy a city or kill millions. Nuclear weapons can.

There is much work to be done to negotiate a verifiable agreement. Once the basic

parameters are set, the US should be prepared to endorse certain temporary incentives

for North Korea to adopt a full freeze on their nuclear program and, as they

have offered to do, place all of the plutonium recovered from spent fuel in the past

few years back under inspection. Thus, we would freeze the clock and stop losing

ground while negotiations proceed. North Korea must be made to understand that

any final agreement must include a complete accounting and elimination of any uranium

enrichment equipment and materials they may possess or have acquired, but

that this can be accomplished in a way that does not require a public admission

of guilt by North Korea. Such a process is similar to most US out-of-court settlements

with polluters and corporate criminals who are punished without publicly accepting

blame. This model should be seen as a way to escape the standoff over uranium

enrichment in which the US and North Korea find themselves.

Despite several years of effort the US is still not sure how it would move to implement

a comprehensive agreement with North Korea. While much work has been

done on verification, little preparation has been made for how to secure and dismantle

North Korea’s capabilities. Exactly how North Korea’s facilities would be dismantled,

by whom and under what kind of monitoring remains to be worked out.

It is also not clear what role China, South Korea and Japan might play in Cooperative

Threat Reduction-style efforts in North Korea such as reactor dismantling,

spent fuel and nuclear waste removal and disposal, etc. Much more work on these

critical issues, including learning the lessons from Russia, Iraq and Libya, needs to

be done and I am pleased to note that some useful work is being carried out as part

of a joint project between the Carnegie Endowment and the Center for Strategic and

International Studies.

But, as I believe is likely, North Korea may refuse a serious and concerted US

offer to resolve the standoff through negotiations. Here again, the US is not prepared

for this answer. How will the US engage in coercive measures if they are not

supported by one of our closest allies in the region—South Korea? Today, most

South Koreans blame the US for the crisis and most would resist any US attempt

to increase troop levels in the South or to deploy additional missile defenses, antiartillery

radar, and other equipment needed to reinforce stability and deterrence in

the face of a nuclear North Korea. How can we prevent North Korea from trying

to export some of its nuclear capabilities? How would we react if the North resumed

testing of ballistic missiles or conducted a nuclear weapons test? While an important

tool, the Proliferation Security Initiative is not a panacea. A broad, legal basis for

action can only be established through the UN Security Council, a forum in which

North Korea’s withdrawal from the NPT has never been brought up by the United

States. Yet none of these steps will be possible unless we demonstrate that other

options have been exhausted.

BROADER ISSUES

The state of North Korea’s nuclear capabilities is an important issue for American

security and for the security of US friends and allies in East Asia and beyond. Yet,

despite the number of years the North’s nuclear program has been a concern and

the amount of time US officials and experts have invested on the issue, America

appears to be fundamentally misjudging the dynamics in key regional states. Managing

nuclear diplomacy toward North Korea has always been a complicated dance

with multiple partners. There has rarely been a moment when all of the major actors

are on the same page, or have pursued a common approach toward the North.

THE US–ROK ALLIANCE

Within the small community of experts who work on the US–ROK alliance, there

are two main perceptions. The first, found mostly among current government officials

and more senior experts who engage with the traditional power centers in

Seoul, is that the relationship between the US and South Korea is stable and that

South Korea and the United States have identical security interests. This in turn

leads these experts to believe that in the worst case, the United States and South

Korea will be able to stand together in confronting North Korea’s pursuit of nuclear

weapons and that, should worse come to worse, that Seoul will endorse a series of

coercive steps, including those that increase the risk of conflict with the North.

The second perception is found among analysts and experts who engage with the

386 generation of political leaders and experts in South Korea (those currently in

their 30s, graduated university in the 80s and born in the 60s) who now form the

core of the Uri-Dong party of President Roh Moo-hyun. These experts, who closely

track public attitudes among the younger generation in South Korea, are concerned

about the overall view of the United States and of the growing frustration within

this stratum of society. The emerging generation in Korea feels they owe less to the

United States than their parents do, and increasingly view North Koreans as their

brethren, not their enemy. Moreover, it is not clear to many 386ers that the US has

the best security and political interests of South Korea at heart. The treatment of

former President Kim Dae Jung by Washington in 2001, the redeployment of US

troops from Korea to Iraq, and the blunt manner in which large-scale troop reductions

were handled last year reinforce this perception.

Moreover, members of this new generation are less likely to risk conflict with the

North on ideological grounds. On a basic level, I think it is understandable that people

in the South was to preserve stability and to pursue engagement with their

countrymen to the North, and to avoid those policies—often put forward by the

United States—that might put those two goals at risk. This is sometimes thought

of as anti-Americanism, a perception I do not share. In fact, the sentiments sometimes

expressed as ‘‘anti-American’’ are just as often expressions of frustration with

the slow pace of economic reform, a resistance to adopt traditional Korean cultural

obligations, and a natural desire to peace, stability and prosperity. There are clearly

anti-American elements in South Korea, but the reality is more complicated that it

seems.

Thus, to an increasing degree, US policy toward North Korea is based on the

flawed assumption that the US–ROK alliance will prove solid enough for the United

States to pursue a credible policy of coercion and, if necessary, offensive military actions

against North Korea. Based on my admittedly limited experience with South

Korean politics, I believe that moves by the United States to tighten pressure on

the North—absent overt provocation by the Pyongyang—will result in an unraveling

of the US–ROK alliance. As a consequence, some in South Korea may also begin

to reassess their nuclear options. The only way this can be avoided is if the US can

demonstrate that it has truly exhausted diplomatic efforts with North Korea, including

the possibility of multilateral and bilateral talks, and the offering of explicit incentives

to the North to abandon its nuclear efforts. We must understand and be

sensitive to the political dynamics that the Uri-dong and President Roh must deal

with to ensure that our alliance can withstand the threat posed by North Korea.

US-CHINA

The Bush administration appears to believe that US and Chinese interests in

North Korea are identical—namely keeping North Korea from acquiring nuclear

weapons. President Bush’s commitment to the 6-party diplomatic process has been

publicly justified on the need to keep China engaged, and to use their perceived leverage

over North Korea. US officials has stated their belief that China alone has

the leverage required to force North Korea to abandon its nuclear ambitions. Yet,

this only captures part of the picture from China’s perspective. As a Chinese colleague

recently reminded me, China has two main goals in Korea. The first goal is

to keep the peninsula non-nuclear, and the second goal is to preserve stability and

prevent a collapse of the regime in Pyongyang. He asked why China—now that the

first goal appears lost—should throw away the second. Thus, at least in some parts

of the Chinese leadership, there is a real disconnect between Chinese and US goals.

The concern that stems from this disconnect is that over the long run, convinced

that China possesses the leverage needed to bring North Korea to heel, US officials

will wonder why China has chosen not to use its leverage. Convinced their strategy

is right, some American officials may increasingly view China as a scapegoat for the

failure of US policy. This, in turn, can reignite some longstanding concerns about

China and its role in the region among some of the more conservative personalities

within the administration.

Chinese officials have played a positive role in orchestrating the 6-party talks and

in ensuring North Korea’s past participation in those talks, yet China continues to

see its role as a mediator between the United States and North Korea, whereas

Washington wants to ensure that China is a protagonist supporting US goals and

applying its leverage on North Korea to abandon its nuclear activities. For its part,

however, China has not conditioned its efforts with North Korea on the continuation

of the 6 party talks, and in fact China has consistently counseled the US to engage

directly with North Korea. President Bush and his administration deserve credit for

the positive trends in the US–PRC relationship and more should be done to reinforce

these developments. But we must have better communication, listen more effectively,

and keep the DPRK from driving a wedge between our two countries.

US-JAPAN

Here, too, the Bush administration deserves great credit for the strong condition

of the US-Japanese alliance. Almost all of my Japanese colleagues have expressed

their belief that the alliance is stronger today than at any time in recent memory.

Moreover, due to the unpleasant kidnapping issue with North Korea, Japanese public

sentiment has turned strongly against engagement with North Korea and is now

more closely in turn with American policy. The central question is whether this

emotional political issue will sustain anti-North Korean sentiment over the longterm,

or if the risk of conflict in the region increases, whether Japanese concerns

about instability and the military and economic consequences of military action will

force the Japanese public to modify its position vis a vis the United States and

North Korea.

CONCLUSIONS

It may be too late to keep North Korea from acquiring nuclear weapons and we

may, despite any and all efforts, be unable to roll back whatever nuclear capabilities

North Korea has acquired. History may well look back at our failed efforts with

North Korea as the turning point when the nuclear dam burst and nuclear weapons

became widespread and commonplace in the arsenals of scores of countries. If such

a future were to come to pass despite our best efforts, it would be horrific and hard

to live with. But knowing that we have not done our best and pursued all avenues

available to us makes such a future even harder to face. This is true not just because

of the implications for North Korea, but because it will lay bare the fallacy

that the top priority of the administration is to prevent the spread and use of these

weapons. All recent presidents have used the words to demonstrate that they understand

the unique threat posed by these weapons. Finding out that we have not

meant what we have said will reduce the credibility of the United States worldwide

at the very time that its conventional capabilities are increasingly challenged by

emerging nuclear arsenals in various states.

Most immediately, we must be concerned that Iran is taking its cues from the

North Korea playbook. I am increasingly concerned that Iran has now learned that

its efforts to acquire nuclear weapons can be successful is pursued not in leaps and

bounds, but step by small step. Here again, I believe out efforts do not reflect the

seriousness of the issue or take advantage of the opportunities that are available.

But in North Korea, this has and continues clearly to be the case.

Thank you.

APPENDIX

Excerpt from *Universal Compliance: A Strategy for Nuclear Security*, Carnegie Endowment

for International Peace, February 2005

DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF KOREA (DPRK) AND NORTHEAST

North Korea (formally, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, or DPRK) has

an active nuclear weapons program and likely possesses enough nuclear material

for up to nine nuclear weapons. U.S. troops, allies in the region, and strategic interests

are directly threatened by North Korea’s growing nuclear capability, pursued

in violation of Pyongyang’s commitments under the Non-Proliferation Treaty and

other agreements. Acceptance of a North Korean nuclear weapons capability is inconsistent

with vital U.S. national security interests. Given North Korea’s economic

strains, it is conceivable that Pyongyang might sell nuclear materials or weapons

to other states or terrorist groups, taking a regional threat to the global level. In

such a scenario, U.S. policy makers could face the truly appalling choice between

acquiescing in North Korea’s transfer of its weapons technology or fighting a fullfledged

war on the Korean peninsula.

Even if North Korea does not make nuclear exports, its nuclear status is untenable.

A failure to resolve the North Korean nuclear threat would undermine the

cause of nuclear nonproliferation and make it far more likely that South Korea and

Japan would reconsider their own nuclear status.

The United States and its partners in dialogue with North Korea must move more

aggressively to determine whether and under what conditions North Korea is willing

to relinquish its nuclear capabilities. Finding Pyongyang’s bottom line will allow

the United States and its allies either to negotiate a verifiable end to North Korea’s

nuclear program or to build a consensus on responding to the threat posed by North

Korea’s suspected nuclear weapons. The status quo is rapidly becoming a permanent

crisis that threatens to undermine U.S. influence in the region and weaken the regional

commitment to nonproliferation.

The creation of a six-party negotiating mechanism was a positive development,

but it has not yet produced tangible results. While the talks have enabled the

United States to more closely engage China on the issue of North Korea’s nuclear

future, it remains unclear how far Beijing can or is willing to go in pressuring North

Korea to abandon its program. China may not have an interest in a nuclear North

Korea on its border, but it is also averse to regime collapse or a war between the

United States and North Korea that could result in U.S. troops being placed on the

Chinese border. All in all, China may find the status quo tolerable, and the United

States cannot assume that China will be able or willing to deliver North Korea’s

consent or compliance with a denuclearization agreement. Moreover, some in China

may prefer keeping the North Korean nuclear issue—a threat to U.S. interests—

alive as a counterweight to U.S. interests in Taiwan, an overriding Chinese concern.

A new U.S. policy designed to achieve positive results in East Asia must follow

a new course. First, it is essential that the United States and its allies develop an

international consensus through the UN Security Council that North Korea’s actions

are a threat to international peace and security and that North Korea’s attempt to

withdraw from an agreement it has violated is unacceptable. Once this is done, it

may prove more feasible for the United States to test the will of North Korea to

fully, verifiably, and irreversibly dismantle all its nuclear weapon capabilities in exchange

for a fundamentally different relationship with the United States, including

diplomatic relations and peaceful reconstruction assistance. This will involve real

negotiations with North Korea, although these could take place in the broad context

of the six-party talks.

Regardless of the forum, the United States should pursue rapid and ongoing negotiations

with North Korea led by a presidentially appointed envoy. This person must

be fully committed to the negotiations, prepared and empowered to make serious

progress, and meet with North Korean counterparts of sufficient rank to make

progress. However, for any talks—bilateral or six-party—to succeed, the United

States must also work steadily to enhance its alliances with South Korea and Japan

so as to broaden support for U.S. security objectives in the region, including the absence

of nuclear weapons.

At the same time, the United States must prepare itself and its closest allies for

the possibility that North Korea will not abandon its nuclear capabilities. Preparations

can best be made by reinforcing diplomatic and military capabilities in the region

to enhance deterrence and stability on the Korean peninsula and reduce incentives

for other countries to follow North Korea’s nuclear lead. A key part of avoiding

a crisis during this period, however, is for to the United States to lay down clear

‘‘red lines’’ and make clear at a minimum that any attempt by North Korea to export

nuclear materials or weapons will be considered a threat to international peace

and security.

The regional security consequences of an ongoing North Korean nuclear weapon

capability are dire. So too are the implications of allowing North Korea’s violations

of the international treaty regime to go unpunished. By violating and then attempting

to withdraw from the NPT, North Korea has undermined the fundamental

premise of the regime—that the international community is prepared to hold countries

to their commitments. In keeping with the UN Security Council’s presidential

statement of January 1992, which declared the proliferation of nuclear weapons a

threat to international peace and security, Security Council members have a responsibility

to respond to North Korea’s actions. Yet even now, the Security Council has

yet to respond to North Korea’s violations and withdrawal as reported to the council

by the IAEA. If a negotiated settlement cannot be reached after a determined goodfaith

effort, then the United States must work with its allies to obtain a Security

Council resolution that North Korea’s violations are a threat to international peace

and security and that its withdrawal from the NPT was invalid. The United States

must then prepare for the consequences, including the possibility of sanctions, an

embargo, and even military conflict.

*Summary of Policy Recommendations*

Determine whether and under what conditions North Korea is willing to relinquish

its nuclear capabilities.

Develop an international consensus through the UN Security Council that

North Korea’s actions are a threat to international peace and security and

that North Korea’s attempt to withdraw from an agreement it has violated

is unacceptable.

Fully test the will of North Korea to verifiably implement the irreversible dismantlement

of all nuclear weapon capabilities in exchange for a fundamentally

different relationship with the United States and other countries, including

diplomatic relations and reconstruction assistance.

Further enhance U.S. alliances with South Korea and Japan to broaden support

for U.S. security objectives in the region, including the absence of nuclear

weapons.

End the state of permanent crisis by pursuing rapid and ongoing negotiations

with North Korea led by a presidentially appointed envoy. This person must

be fully authorized to negotiate, prepared and empowered to make serious

progress, and in a position to meet with North Korean counterparts of sufficient

rank to conduct substantive negotiations.

Prepare for the possibility that North Korea is unwilling to abandon its nuclear

capabilities by reinforcing the diplomatic and military capabilities in the

region with a view to enhancing deterrence and stability on the Korean peninsula

and reducing incentives for other countries to follow North Korea’s

nuclear lead.

Make clear that any attempt by North Korea to export weapon-usable nuclear

materials or weapons will be considered a threat to international peace and

security as defined by the UN Charter.

I believe it does.

Sorry. Yes, sir. I believe it does. Although I

have never met Ambassador Hill, everyone I have spoken with has

the highest admiration for him and I believe that the stars have

aligned within this Administration, both from the President and

Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice, to empower Ambassador Hill to

truly test the diplomatic efforts. And as long as it is publicly recognized

that he has the Secretary of State’s and the President’s authorization

to pursue that, I think it is very consistent with what

we have been suggesting.

Congressman, I just have a brief word because

I know Ralph was up early and we want to keep him awake.

I wouldn’t use the word trust, although I think that is an element,

but I think the word that comes to mind most is tone, and

I think that is in large part what the North Koreans have said and

what I think we need to keep in mind.

I think as Nick just said, North Koreans are convinced that we

want to kill them and I think there are a lot of people inside the

Administration, outside of the Administration, who would be very

happy, myself included, to see North Korea go away.

However, they know that and they are going to act accordingly,

just as we would in their shoes. However, as we work through

these problems, there is no reason that we have to adopt a tone

that makes that clear and in the end, I think the Administration

also says things that sometimes people don’t hear.

Director for Policy Planning, Mitchell Reiss, last year at the Heritage

Institute gave a talk in which he said bluntly, ‘‘If we can

solve the nuclear question, we are prepared to live with the North

Korean regime as it exists. We don’t like it. We want to work to

change their human rights behavior, all the rest.’’

Unfortunately, that wasn’t really picked up and it became overwhelmed

by other statements. My hope is that the Administration,

my belief is that they now really have taken this to heart.

The second issue, very briefly, on the link between Iraq and

North Korea, I agree with you entirely, sir. I don’t think the nuclear

program in North Korea started because of George Bush. It

clearly goes on. We have had it for decades. It started in the 1960s.

However, I think we have a lot of evidence to suggest that the

nuclear program has accelerated both in North Korea and Iran

with the drumbeat to the war in Iraq.

Again, I think when you try, it is always dangerous to put yourself

in North Korean shoes because they don’t always fit, but I

think it is understandable from their security perspective that they

feel insecure.

They look at what happened to East Germany. They have lost

their client state in the Soviet Union and they have said pretty

openly, ‘‘We want you to be our new client state.’’ We are not ready

to buy in yet, because they have pretty high demands, but I think

it is at least something we need to consider strategically.

I wonder, Mr. Chairman, whether Ralph Cossa

is on the line.

Congressman, thank you. I am happy to, although

I will admit that while we cover all of the scary nonproliferation

issues at the Carnegie Endowment, I do some work on

Iran.

I have actually been to North Korea and my main focus has been

there, but I think there are some parallels that are important for

us as we try and get the policy toward Iran correct as well.

I think the main lesson that Iran—well there are two main lessons

that Iran is pulling. One is they look at the difference between

Iraq and North Korea and they say, ‘‘Well why did the United

States go to war with one and not the other?’’ I think they pulled

the answer that North Korea may have nuclear weapons and a conventional

ability to deter the United States through the artillery

that was mentioned earlier and that that suggests that they need

as large a military deterrent as they can achieve.

That doesn’t mean I think that is all Iran is interested in with

a nuclear capability. I think they have much grander designs,

which suggests why it is so important that we prevent them from

acquiring a nuclear capability.

But I think the other important lesson is that they have watched

very closely our policy on North Korea. They have seen that when

push came to shove, we did not go to the U.N. Security Council.

When we talked about it, we could not get unanimity among the

permanent members, which is unlikely to happen in the case of

Iran as well, and they recognized that if they tried to make a large

leap in capability, they are more likely to get caught and to be punished

than if they try and—as we always talk about with North

Korea—slice the salami very thin and their attention span is probably

a lot longer than ours.

Their political cycle is longer than ours and I think what North

Korea has done is waited for the opportunity, an Administration,

a focus on another part of the world, to push ahead with their nuclear

capability, and I think that Iran is likely to do the same,

whether we are focused on Syria, whether they are hoping we turn

to focus on North Korea so that they can then move in, in the vacuum.

That is my assessment of where their program is likely to

head.

As the negotiations between the Europeans and Iran continue,

most of the people I have spoken with expect that will play out

sometime this summer, when the Iranian elections are completed

and the negotiations have played out and then they will push and

see how far they can go.

If they get pushed back, they will retreat. If they feel no resistance,

they will push ahead a little more, because that is how North

Korea has been able to succeed.

Congressman Burton, I have a slightly different

view and I will preface it by saying, I agree with your characterization,

and many of the words that have been used about the nature

of the North Korean regime, one that we don’t want, one that we

don’t want to support, but I think we have to recognize fundamentally

they have something we want.

They have succeeded in developing something that threatens us

and just as we engaged in arms control, successful arms control

with the former Soviet Union in the darkest days of the Cold War,

in a way that benefitted our security, it also happened to benefit

the Soviet security as well. I think we need to be as realistic as

that.

If I can devise for you a plan that would eliminate the North Korean

regime at the same time that I could get rid of their nuclear

capability, without destroying Seoul, I would give it to you. There

isn’t one and we have to choose.

In the end, my belief is that North Koreans will balk at any set

of incentives, but as I said in my testimony, we can’t do the other

hard things that the Administration is, I think, rightfully beginning

to think about.

How do we think about successfully truly blockading North

Korea? How do we really squeeze their economy? How do we convince

the Chinese in the end that there is a way to get rid of nuclear

weapons in North Korea?

Until we prove to our closest allies and our colleagues that we

have tried everything else, we are not going to get those things,

and so we have a long list of recommendations that we are releasing

as part of a new nonproliferation strategy called universal compliance—

which we will be pummelling your office with soon—which

talks about the Presidentially-appointed envoy, demonstrating we

are serious, but also looking at ways to reinforce stability and deterrence

on the peninsula.

What do we have to deploy? What sort of military capability do

we have to increase? We have obligations in Iraq. We need to be

able to demonstrate to North Korea that we are able to handle a

military contingency on the Korean Peninsula. I think there are

questions about that and so we need to do all of those things at

the same time.