

They stepped back from the brink just before the deadline, having exploited the intervening uncertainty to press for the discontinuation of the US-ROK Team Spirit Military Exercises which they have always deemed are highly provocative. For all that the Pyongyang is a secretive even bizarre regime, their vision of the world is not without foundation. Throughout the prolonged US-DPRK negotiations, Pyongyang has seen US demands couched in specifics while US promises of aid or military reductions are couched in generalities.³⁴

Continued North Korean adherence to the NPT raised the matter of continued IAEA inspections. However, in the North Korean case the IAEA, no doubt motivated by its unhappy experiences in Iraq, pushed for challenge inspections of facilities outside the designated list of installations provided by Pyongyang. Of particular interest were two waste disposal facilities that the North Koreans had attempted to camouflage. The North Koreans refused to entertain IAEA demands. This refusal, which persisted in various forms throughout the autumn of 1993 and into early 1994, raised the whole question of options. How, in short, should the United States and the IAEA respond?³⁵

One option was to stage a pre-emptive attack on the Yongbyon facilities and destroy them as the Israelis had done in the early 80's at Osirak in Iraq. Advocates of this approach argued that smart weapons were capable of pin-point accuracy. Opponents countered by pointing out that there was no way conventional weapons could destroy storage facilities in mountain caves and that even if they were destroyed there was no way of knowing whether all the elements of the North Korean nuclear weapons programme had been located in the targeted sites.³⁶

Another option appeared to be United Nations sanctions. If Pyongyang failed to comply