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## Double Whammy from the DPRK

| [More](#)<sup>[1]</sup>

|  
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Naturally, North Korea has everyone's attention after following up revelations of a nice, new uranium-enrichment facility by shelling an island belonging to their southern neighbors. The news story right now is that the United States, its allies and regional experts are "[puzzled](#)<sup>[3]</sup>," "[pondering](#)<sup>[4]</sup>," and "weighing their options" (translation: trying to figure out what in the world is going on). However, President Obama [has decided to send](#)<sup>[5]</sup> an aircraft carrier to the region as a show of strength, [not only](#)<sup>[6]</sup> to Pyongyang but [to Beijing](#)<sup>[7]</sup> as well. The *Washington Post* reports that the attack [appears to have been](#)<sup>[8]</sup> "just as scripted as the nuclear revelations" and North Korean heir-apparent Kim Jong-un visited DPRK troops in the region from where the assault originated over the weekend "apparently as a kind of pep rally." In addition, another nuclear test might "be in the offing."

And what would a crisis on the Korean Peninsula be [without a little help](#)<sup>[9]</sup> from former President Jimmy Carter? After a brief history lesson of the past fifteen-plus years (beginning with Carter's visit to Pyongyang in 1994 during that nuclear crisis, up through his latest rescue mission to free a hostage American last July), the president emeritus says in the *Post* that the North Koreans really want to denuclearize and are willing to put the uranium program on the table (which, Carter notes, was not up for negotiation in 1994—of course, no one knew about it then, either). In the absence of direct talks with Washington, he says, Pyongyang is just doing what it feels is necessary to defend the DPRK from an American attack.

But former-National Security Council officials Michael Green and William Tobey [don't think North Korea wants](#)<sup>[10]</sup> to give its nuclear program up at all. They write in the *Wall Street Journal* that Pyongyang, in fact, "seeks acknowledgement as a nuclear state" and the latest artillery barrage "makes it double clear" that it "intends to leverage" the uranium program for "maximum concessions." Doing what Carter suggests, then, would only "validate" North Korea's "weapons status and leave the door open for repeated escalation" even "as U.S. credibility and deterrence steadily eroded." Green and Tobey give the Obama administration credit for downplaying the recent island attack but urge more "containment, interdiction and pressure." (For more on the Korean crisis, you'll find the editors at the *Post*<sup>[11]</sup>, the *Journal*<sup>[12]</sup> and the *New York Times*<sup>[13]</sup> disagreeing about how to deal with China's role in the debacle, and don't forget to check out analysis by Douglas Paal and Doug Bandow at *TNI* online [here](#)<sup>[14]</sup> and [here](#)<sup>[15]</sup>.)

Meanwhile, the Obama administration continues to bring out <sup>[16]</sup> the big guns in its push to ratify the New START arms-control agreement with Moscow. Vice President Joseph Biden has an op-ed in the *Journal* which links the treaty to the recent NATO summit in Lisbon, Portugal, where the administration "proved that missile defense and arms control can proceed hand-in-hand" by adopting "territorial missile defense as a new mission" (although he doesn't say what the Russians think about that). Failure to ratify the pact would "jeopardize" recent "progress" toward a "more cooperative relationship with Russia," he says.

More by

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