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## Don't Just Do Something, Stand There



It seems that the Obama administration is trying to ratchet down the rhetoric regarding North Korea. National Security Advisor General Jones, [speaking](#) at the Atlantic Council, downplayed the North's nuclear antics, saying the missile launches and nuclear detonation "are not an imminent threat."

Secretary Gates followed this up today [by noting](#) that we're not experiencing a "crisis."

This seems perfectly sensible. As [Cato's Doug Bandow](#) and [Harvard's Steven Walt](#) have both argued, there is nothing fundamentally new here except the slow, steady march of technology. Of course, we're all *shocked, shocked!* that North Korea flouts international law, but that too shall pass.

More broadly, we're operating in an environment where we have very little information. Even the experts on North Korea don't know exactly what's going on inside the country. Presumably our intelligence services are only moderately more clued in. In such an environment, acting rashly - by, say, dumping the Six Party talks or trying to coerce China to take a harder line - doesn't seem wise.

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