

# **Trip Report**

DPRK, PRC, ROK

June 25-July 4, 2005

Jim Walsh, Managing the Atom Project  
Science Technology and Public Policy Program  
Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs  
John F. Kennedy School of Government  
Harvard University

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## 2. Executive Summary<sup>1</sup>

### 2A. When, Who, What, Where

This report describes meetings and events that took place in the DPRK (Pyongyang), the PRC (Beijing), and the ROK (Seoul) from June 25<sup>th</sup> through July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2005.<sup>2</sup> The report focuses on my meetings in the DPRK, including discussions with...

Kim Gae Gwan, Vice Foreign Minister (5.5 hrs)

Kim Myung Gil, Deputy Dir. General of the American Depart. (3.3 hrs)

Kim Yong-dae, Vice Chair of Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly (1 hr.)

Gen. Ri Chan Bok, Korean People's Army, Rep. to the Panmunjum (1 hr.)

Ri Hak Gwon, Vice Chair, Korea Comm. for the Promotion of Intl. Trade (1 hr.)

My Foreign Ministry guides were Mr. Hyon and Mr. Hwang. (For a full list of the meetings, see Appendix A. List of Meetings.)

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<sup>1</sup> Many individuals contributed to helping make this trip and the subsequent report a reality. I am deeply indebted to Fred Carrier, Amb. Donald Gregg, John Lewis, John Park, Anne Wu, Sarah Stanlick, Baya Harrison, and Aseem Vyas. I also enjoyed the support of many people at the Belfer Center for International Science and Technology. I would also like to thank the many Korean, American, and Chinese government officials who helped make this trip a success.

<sup>2</sup> Statements in this report are intended to be accurate descriptions of the ideas and points of view expressed by my hosts. Presentation of these statements does not imply my personal endorsement or rejection. This document is intended to help the reader gain a clearer sense of the DPRK's positions as they were described to me during this trip.

All of the meetings focused on a small number of issues: Kim Jong Il's meeting with the South Korean Unification Minister, the nuclear issue, the 6 Party Talks (6PT), US-DPRK relations, and DPRK-PRC relations.

## 2B. Overall Assessment

The trip went extremely well. I was received very warmly, and it was apparent that the DPRK was intent on treating me with great respect and care. According to my ROK colleagues, the treatment I received as a first time visitor was unusual.<sup>3</sup> In retrospect, it is clear that my visit was part of a broader strategy in preparation for re-entry into the 6PT.

More generally, I found many of their comments surprising (see "Section 4. Surprises").

In their prepared remarks and to some extent in less formal discussions, DPRK officials emphasized seven themes:

1. The DPRK has made a brave strategic decision to abandon 100 years of hostility and to establish a new and friendly relationship with the US in this new century. Armistice is not sufficient; normalized relations are the core objective. With an improved political relationship, all things are possible.

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<sup>3</sup> One indicator was a press release by the (North) Korean Central News Agency.

2. The DPRK is willing to abandon its nuclear weapons (NW) if the US ends its hostile policy and removes the US *nuclear* threat. It was Kim Il Sung's dying wish that the peninsula be denuclearized. The DPRK seeks *complete* denuclearization of the peninsula (and the region), which would include verification commitments by both the US and the ROK -- and perhaps even Japan.
3. The US is sending confusing signals and is not serious about real negotiations. The DPRK is prepared to engage in real bargaining.
4. Following an agreement, the DPRK is prepared to re-enter the NPT and submit to IAEA inspections but wants a light water reactor (LWR).
5. The DPRK is unified as a country. It is not Eastern Europe, regime change will not work, and it will not be coerced into a humiliating capitulation.
6. The DPRK wants international trade and commerce and hopes to build the indigenous business sector.
7. The DPRK considers the 2000 Joint Declaration with the ROK to still "be effective" and the basis of reunification based on confederation.

### **3. Background and Context**

#### 3A. History

My trip to the DPRK was sudden but not wholly unexpected. Managing the Atom (MTA) has been engaged in dialogues with DPRK officials for the last two years. In December of 2003, MTA hosted Amb. Han from the New York Mission for a day-long, closed door meeting on the nuclear issue. That meeting, which was co-sponsored by the Korea Society and Harvard's Korea Institute was attended by Congressional staffers, former US policy officials, and area scholars.

Following that meeting, I proposed to Amb. Han that Pyongyang send a delegation for additional discussions on the nuclear issue. In October of 2004, a four member delegation headed by Kim Myung Gil came to Harvard. That meeting was again co-sponsored by the Korea Society and Harvard's Korea Institute as well as by Stanford University and Mercy Corps, but the US attendees were primarily from the US Senate -- staffers (equal parts Republican and Democrat) and Sen. Jack Reed. An INR official also attended as an observer.

After that meeting, I proposed that I reciprocate with a delegation visit to the DPRK. At the end of May, I received an email inviting me to visit the DPRK at the end of June.

### 3B. Previous visitors

My trip came in the context of several apparently related events. Earlier in the month, John Lewis of Stanford University was asked to visit. The week before my trip, Prof. Maurizio Martellini was also invited to Pyongyang. In the middle of the month, General Kim met Minister Chung (and the ROK offer was described), and during my trip Li Gun was in New York.

Obviously, the most important development was the announcement following my return that the DPRK would re-enter the 6PT.

## 4. Surprises

As a first time visitor to the DPRK, I came with certain expectations, both with respect to the DPRK's policy positions and its behavior. The following list highlights the main surprises of my trip.

### 4A. Policy Issues

#### *Kim Il Sung "Dying Wish" Reference*

The "Kim Il Sung dying wish" reference was presented in a very quiet and deliberate way, and the invocation of the father as legitimizing and giving priority to denuclearization struck me as different and possibly significant.

*Language Regarding “Brave Strategic Decision”*

Similarly, DPRK talking points emphasizing the “strategic decision” to seek friendship with the U.S. may (or may not) be an attempt to address the issue raised publicly by American officials as to whether the DPRK had made a “strategic decision” to abandon its nuclear weapons.

*CVID*

A senior DPRK official said that CVID would be “quite necessary,” and, in particular, that it should be applied to ROK nuclear activities (citing past ROK nuclear experiments) and the U.S. I interrupted to ask for clarification: “Did you say that CVID is desirable?” He replied “yes” and reaffirmed the need for strong peninsula-wide verification.

The real meaning here may be that the DPRK is seeking to equalize the dialogue, to shift it away from judge and judged to equal commitments by all sides. The US commitments requiring verification include a) the absence of tactical NW in the ROK, b) the absence of visits by ships or other platforms that might be equipped with NW, and c) the absence of “nuclear war exercises.”



### *NPT-IAEA*

In the prepared remarks by senior DPRK officials, the point was made that the DPRK would rejoin the NPT and submit to IAEA inspection *following* a deal on the nuclear issue. The clear implication of the commitment to IAEA inspection is that the DPRK wants a LWR.

### *Nationalism: Issues of Unity and Face*

DPRK officials went out of their way to stress that they were unified and would not capitulate to pressure. In interviews with Westerners in the DPRK, the point was made that people are patriotic and unified in support of the concept of a North Korea (i.e., nationalism).

More generally, I was struck by the degree to which issues of respect and face came up in meetings. Prior to the trip, I assumed that the North Korean nuclear crisis was driven primarily by interests (security, economic benefits, recognition, etc.), as distinct from the nuclear programs in Iran, India, and France, which seem driven more by issues of national pride. Following my visit, I have not concluded that DPRK pride is more important than interests, but I now wonder whether issues of national pride may play some role in DPRK positions and reactions.

### *Desire to Learn English and Enter Business*

I was told by a Westerner that English is one of the most popular classes at Kim Il Sung University and that among her English students, a majority hoped to go into business. My visit to Tongil Market in Pyongyang was also striking. My guides and the manager of the market, who also escorted us, claimed that the mostly women who have seats at the market bring their

own goods, and set their own prices, which are then subject to haggling. I was not able to independently verify this, but there was strong circumstantial evidence supporting that conclusion.

Indeed, some Westerners I spoke with believe that the China model best captures the dynamics in the DPRK and that North Korea is where China was a couple of decades ago. As one observer put it, the once “hostile class” (business owners) is no longer vilified but instead welcomed.

#### 4B. Process and Attributes

##### *Admitted Problems and Failures*

I was surprised at the extent to which DPRK officials admitted their problems and failures, including an unsuccessful agriculture project, the food shortages, the slow pace of economic growth, the need to attract foreign trade and investment, and an indirect acknowledgement that the PRC had better adjusted to the challenges of the post-Cold War environment. I take this as a positive rather than a negative development. Mature societies acknowledge their problems and are therefore in a better position to address them.

### *Openness to My Requests*

My Foreign Ministry guides were very supportive and more receptive to my questions and requests than I had expected. I never encountered the “confrontational North Korean” for which the DPRK has a reputation.

## **5. Issues Related to the Six Party Talks**

### 5A. Are They Serious?

This, of course, is the central question repeatedly raised by US officials in Congressional hearings and other fora. Unfortunately, there are good reasons for answering either “yes” or “no.”

The evidence of serious commitment comes from several sources. First, the invocation of Kim Il Sung and his dying wish is particularly striking. It would be more powerful evidence if Kim Jong Il’s remarks had been broadcast for domestic consumption by the DPRK media.<sup>4</sup> A similar statement, seemingly intended to respond directly to US statements, suggested that Kim Jong Il had made a “brave strategic decision” to fundamentally change relations between the DPRK and the US -- that in this new century, the two countries should be friends.

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<sup>4</sup> Western observers on the ground caution, however, that the DPRK uses media in a very different way than most countries. Rather than mass media, it often relies on the party for communications with the people. It would be interesting to see if any of these party communications referred to the Kim Jong Il-Chung meeting.

Other evidence might be the political significance of the economic reforms. As one observer noted, the economic reforms are less important for their economic impact, which has been limited, than their political meaning, e.g., legitimizing the political process of change in favor of economic liberalization. According to the “yes they are serious camp,” the North Koreans are not blind. They see China and can tell the difference between where the PRC is headed and where they are headed. Moreover, this general desire to transition is accentuated by the current economic and agricultural problems now confronting the DPRK. They want a new relationship with the US, because they need that to accomplish the transition to a post-Cold war economic order. They do not, however, want to kneel (or appear to kneel) in submission to accomplish that goal.

The evidence that the DPRK is not serious is almost as plausible. The DPRK position in favor of peninsula-wide CVID and even regional measures (i.e., including Japan) can be interpreted not only as an attempt to equalize the negotiating landscape but also as a tactic to force the US to say no and thus be responsible for preventing progress. The US, for example, will not want to confirm or deny the presence of nuclear weapons on ships visiting ROK ports, and the DPRK may know that. In addition, DPRK officials stress that the negotiations will take time, perhaps an indication that they are playing for aid and time. Another indicator would be the DPRK’s rejection of the South Korean proposal from a year ago. This proposal would have provided desperately needed fuel oil from the non-DPRK parties with the exception of the US. The DPRK rejection of the proposal because of the seemingly minor issue that the US was not participating as a provider raised questions as to whether the DPRK was serious. Skeptics might

also cite the continued categorical denial by DPRK officials of *any* HEU-related activities or the until recent refusal of North Korea to re-enter the 6PT over the seemingly small issue of needing (another) positive statement about DPRK sovereignty.

DPRK seriousness is necessarily tied to its perception of how serious the US is about negotiating. If the US is not serious, there are strong reasons for the DPRK to not negotiate seriously -- reasons of face, of internal politics, and of national interest. As US officials say, a government should not negotiate with itself, but that is what the DPRK would be doing if the US had no real intention of serious bargaining.

There is a widespread view among those I have spoken with in the US, the PRC, the DPRK, and the ROK that it is at least *unclear whether the US is serious*. As with the DPRK, there is strong evidence for both sides of the argument, but the “US is serious” view requires a greater leap of faith than the “US is not serious” view, given the perceived personal positions of the President and Vice President.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> This issue is not unrelated to the problem of credible commitments. Every serious book written on nuclear bargaining since Schelling emphasizes that a government must be able to make credible threats *and* credible promises. At least to some observers, the US government appears to have accomplished the first but not the second. The problem is that even if an adversary takes seriously the threats, it has no reason to alter behavior unless it can believe that by doing so, its situation will change, i.e., that other parties will follow through on their commitments and not renege, move the goalposts, re-write the rules, etc. Clearly, the US government is attempting to establish that credibility, but it starts out with a perceived deficit. The DPRK’s weakness may also be a factor. Its economic weakness may motivate change, but the DPRK’s perceived strategic weakness may make it cautious.

## 5B. Negotiation Process

### *Format*

As indicated above, a senior DPRK official spoke directly to the issue of the format of negotiations by saying that if the US wanted the six party format, that was “fine” as long as it permitted direct discussions of issues. Lower level officials repeatedly made the point that some topics were not suitable for discussion in front of America’s “junior allies.” The more general point was clearly made that there were issues of face and appropriateness. Why should Japan or Russia participate in discussions of DPRK security, they asked. That is for North Koreans to decide, they said, not for others (not even the ROK, whom they say they do not see as a military threat).

### *Duration*

I was told by senior DPRK officials that the process of negotiation would take a long time.

I made the point that one-off talks held once a year would accomplish nothing. What is required is sustained and multi-level (e.g., in working groups and related groupings) negotiations. They agreed.

### *Past Negotiations*

DPRK officials were not shy at expressing their displeasure with Amb. Kelly and argued that US positions taken at past negotiations demonstrated a lack of seriousness. They repeated the complaint that Kelly's raising of the HEU issue was particularly insulting. They also said that Kelly presented a proposal and then announced he could not discuss it or answer questions about it. Again they claimed that this showed a lack of seriousness. They also asserted that Amb. Kelly started piling on issues including human rights, missiles, conventional weapons, and the like, and that this too was evidence of not wanting to negotiate seriously the nuclear issue.

As for the US proposal made at the last round of the 6PT, I suggested that this was seen as a serious proposal by the US government. They responded that it was one sided, containing a long and detailed list of DPRK obligations together with a short and vague list of US obligations. They also maintained that the other parties in the talks thought more highly of the DPRK proposal than they did of the US proposal.

### 5C. Substantive Issues

*Which comes first: a better political relationship or policy actions?*

One of the most repeated themes in DPRK statements is the notion that if the US and the DPRK improve their political relationship, then the nuclear issue can be easily resolved as friends. The

US position, by contrast, is that once the nuclear issue is resolved, the US and the DPRK can have improved relations.

My response was to suggest that both views have merit and that history provided examples of both approaches having worked. I also said that these views were not mutually exclusive and that an approach based on progress in phases was sensitive to both strategies. They agreed.

### *Nuclear Issues*

As previously discussed, a senior DPRK official endorsed peninsula-wide denuclearization but with a new emphasis on ROK and US verification obligations. “DPRK dismantlement of our NW alone is not enough. ...CVID is quite necessary.” He also strongly hinted that the DPRK seeks a “Northeast Asia regional solution” to the problem of nuclear insecurity, i.e., new verification obligations assumed by Japan.

Perhaps this is what is meant by the recently discussed notion that the DPRK was attempting to shift the terms of debate, i.e., arms control versus nonproliferation. There was no explicit discussion of this issue verbally, nor was there mention of a conceptual shift in their prepared talking points. There was also no discussion of an arms control conference. When asked if NE Asia denuclearization applied to China, I was told that it did not apply to either the PRC or Russia.

As noted before, senior DPRK officials spoke from prepared notes when suggesting that after an agreement, the DPRK would re-enter the NPT and submit to IAEA inspection. Implicit in this



position, and expressed explicitly elsewhere, is the proposition that the DPRK will receive a light water reactor (built by KEDO). I observed that the US would likely oppose any residual nuclear program in the DPRK. Their response was to say that they were entitled to a LWR because of the commitments made under the Agreed Framework. More specifically, they claim that they did not pursue electrical generation projects because of expectations that a LWR would be built.

On the related issue of the Agreed Framework, I was told that the agreement is dead. It was also asserted that the US changed the rules in midstream with the announcement by the Bush administration that any civilian nuclear facility had to be inspected before it came online. According to one official, the confidential annex to the Agreed Framework stipulated that inspection of the LWR would begin when fuel was introduced, and that the US was raising these and other issues in order to kill the agreement.

As regards HEU, officials continued to insist that the DPRK had absolutely no HEU program. I responded that suspicions dated back to the Clinton administration and that while I had no clearance, the people I had spoken with who had seen the intelligence seemed strongly convinced. One official responded that the Clinton administration had alleged illegal activity in the famous tunnel incident and had been wrong. As for HEU and the Khan network, I was told that Khan had visited only once and that was about missiles.

*Security and Security Assurances*

On the issue of security assurances, a senior DPRK official maintained that the DPRK had originally wanted a peace treaty but that it had been sensitive and flexible and had accepted a less formal assurance. Another general theme was that the security issues had to be resolved between the US and the DPRK.

I asked whether a more likely route to war on the peninsula was not deliberate attack but war via crisis escalation, miscalculation, or accident. I was surprised to hear back from the DPRK officials that they agreed with that view. One official, for example, suggested that US military flights over DPRK air space represented one possible scenario. It was also pointed out that Kim Jong Il had opened the door to mil-to-mil contacts between the DPRK military and the ROK military in his June meeting with the ROK Unification Minister.

On missiles, A senior DPRK official contended that missile sales are a matter of sovereignty and that the DPRK has the right to develop, test, produce, and sell missiles. He also argued that it stuck to the missile moratorium even when relations between the US and the DPRK were bad. A condition for the moratorium was the continuation of talks with the US, and when that did not happen, the moratorium was suspended. He also said that the DPRK and the US could negotiate a new moratorium and that once a political arrangement had been worked out, it would be easy to negotiate, given the “good experience” of past missile negotiations.

With regard to the issue of conventional weapons, there was little discussion other than the DPRK view that raising the issue of conventional weapons was a tactic to obstruct progress on the nuclear issue and that the DPRK was not going to leave itself defenseless.

## **6. US-DPRK Bilateral relations**

### 6A. Hostile Policy

No conversation with a North Korean official would be complete without a reference to hostile US policy.

In their remarks, senior DPRK officials offered a long recitation of the history of hostile US policy, beginning with the pre-colonial period and concluding with the familiar litany including axis of evil, outpost of tyranny, the Vice President's interview, nuclear pre-emption planning aimed at the DPRK, the development [sic] of new tactical nuclear weapons for use in pre-emption, PSI, attempts to disrupt the DPRK's relations with other countries, economic sanctions, the terrorism list, etc.

Two new elements did appear on the list, however. A senior DPRK official suggested that the President's second inaugural speech focusing on democracy and regime change was aimed at the DPRK and signaled hostile intent. In addition, one official suggested that the US-directed replacement of the KEDO director signaled negative intent.

#### 6B. Regime Change

If “hostile policy” is DPRK theme number one, then “the US seeks regime change” is number two. Every DPRK official emphasized that the DPRK was unified and thus not subject to regime change: “The DPRK is not Eastern Europe.”

#### 6C. Mistrust and Misunderstanding

All DPRK officials stressed the view that the biggest obstacles to progress were mistrust and misunderstanding.

#### 6D. Human Rights

There was no discussion of human rights, other than a brief exchange with two officials, in which I observed that the issue was taking on increasing political salience and that Congressional action has made it a more prominent agenda item.

When mentioned at all, DPRK officials contended that the issue of human rights was a part of the US policy of regime change and was a wholly separate issue from the nuclear issue. In addition, they maintained that attempts to add human rights to the agenda were evidence that the US was not serious about resolving the nuclear issue.

## **7. Nuclear Transfers and Terrorism, Nuclear Testing, ROK Nuclear Program, Nuclear Doctrine**

### 7A. Transfers to Terrorists

One of the more memorable exchanges occurred at my dinner meeting with a senior DPRK official and related to the issue of nuclear transfers to terrorists or other parties. In the MTA Oct. '04 meeting, the visiting delegation made a point of saying that the DPRK would never transfer material or technology to terrorists or other groups.

A senior DPRK official quoted verbatim the statement made in October and went on to say that the DPRK's nuclear assets were intended solely for deterrence, not to attack the US mainland and that if there is no attacker, there will be no defender. He repeated again that the DPRK would never proliferate and never transfer. He then said that the US should think about why the DPRK has kept this promise in the past.

### 7B. Nuclear Testing

A senior DPRK official said the issue of testing was "relative to other conditions." If the DPRK were to announce that it was testing, that would hurt the process of normalization, and if it did not test following the announcement, it would lose face. If, on the other hand, it announced that it would not test, it would be unable to test even if the conditions became hostile.

### 7C. ROK Nuclear Experiments

As previously suggested, the issue came up with a senior DPRK official, who said CVID was quite necessary for the entire peninsula. It also came up with another official, who asserted that the ROK and the IAEA were playing a game, that the ROK and Japan could produce nuclear weapons, that the ROK nuclear experiments meant they had the technical ability to produce fissile material, and that the ROK case represented a double standard vis-à-vis the DPRK.

### 7D. Nuclear Doctrine

In answer to a question I posed, an official said that the DPRK had not yet developed any doctrine for its NW.

## **8. Role of China**

I asked several officials how they would characterize the relationship between China and the DPRK. I prefaced my question by saying that some people, particularly in the US, believe that China has a very close relationship with the DPRK could be doing more to exercise its leverage or influence. On the other end of the spectrum was a view that PRC-DPRK relations were not as strong as they once were, given China's economic changes, new relations with the ROK, etc.

Their answers emphasized the long history of relations and the common cultural and ideological bonds between the two countries. DPRK officials recounted the common struggle against Japan and DPRK support for the Chinese revolution. Having initially emphasized the strong ties between the two states, DPRK officials did go on to suggest that "on the nuclear issue, China has

its own interests” and that this is why the DPRK sometimes accepts PRC help and sometimes does not. North Koreans I spoke to see the DPRK as jammed between big powers and often the victim of big powers and find part of the rationale for Juche in this geopolitical situation. “Even small animals defend themselves,” said one. These officials express fear that China and the US will collude to settle on a deal conducive to their interests and to the detriment of the DPRK. One official went so far as to suggest that the US was using the nuclear crisis for leverage with the PRC, e.g., for bargaining over Taiwan. I responded that it seemed to be quite the opposite, namely that China is the one who gains influence as the go-between and that the last subject the US wants to discuss is Taiwan, which the U.S. likely prefers that it be left in the icebox.

I also took the opportunity to inquire about the cause of the PRC oil cut-off, viewed by some in the U.S. as an attempt to pressure the DPRK, to which they responded accordingly. I was told that the cause was technical, not political, that the oil is very thick, and that once there was a breach, it backed-up and stressed a large segment of the pipeline. This official attributed the cut-off story to a rumor started by the Japanese to create tensions in the PRC-DPRK relationship.

## **9. Economy**

### **9A. Trade and economic reform**

My meeting with DPRK trade officials had several themes. The DPRK clearly wants to increase trade and believes that US sanctions (in particular, those that increase the difficulty of getting

stainless steel for use in the mining industry) and a prohibition on using dollars are inhibiting further economic and trade growth. Officials listed various exports, mainly minerals, and said that the DPRK was trying to build exports, especially to other developing countries. The key import, not surprisingly, is energy and energy related technology.

I was told that everything was going well with the special economic zones, even the one in the north.

These and other officials suggested that trade and foreign direct investment were not incompatible with Juche. Juche, as now formulated, means “master of your destiny.” One could be the master of one’s destiny and still trade with other countries.

I was told that business training programs were useful, but that what was really needed was education materials – course books in english on marketing, accounting, and the like.

As for my assessment of the Tongil Market, see “Section 4. Surprises.”

#### 9B. Agriculture

Clearly, energy and agriculture are the key problems for the economy. I was told that “the leadership” had asked all people to go out and work on farms. That list of people included senior secondary students, university students, and government officials. (One Western observer lamented this policy because the DPRK was sending people out who did not know how to farm



and were simply putting in their time, ripping up mountainsides, producing no agricultural benefit, and instead, increasing the risk of mudslides.)

This year's agricultural problems were attributed to cold weather and a lack of electricity (needed for irrigation pumps). It was said that the DPRK was a month behind in the season.

#### 9C. Economy: misc.

I asked one official about the notion that the DPRK economy had started picking up a couple of years ago but then took an unexpected turn for the worse this year. He claimed not to be aware of that and responded that the economy had been getting better but that the issue was the rate of improvement – it was not growing fast enough.

### **10. Other Observations and Anecdotes**

#### 10A. Their Treatment of Me

Overall, my hosts treated me with great care. They allowed me to take photos whenever I wanted, with two exceptions: military vehicles/sites and Tongil market. They repeatedly asked if I was finding the trip useful and whether I wanted anything. This was overtly treated as the first trip in what would be a series of visits.

I asked my guides how they perceived me and they told me that they thought I was direct, sincere, and polite. (I asked them how I differed from previous visitors, and they said about the same, but that while I had good questions, Sig Harrison was the toughest questioner.)

The format of most sessions began with some introductory pleasantries, then I would ask a question, then they would go into their set remarks, and then we would proceed in a Q and A format from there.

#### 10B. Translation

I continue to have experiences that suggest that translation is an issue.

#### 10C. Internet and Computers

The DPRK does not allow access to the internet, but it apparently has an intranet that allows people to visit government and university websites, play games, and the like. I heard laments from parents in the DPRK and in the PRC that teens and young adults were spending too much time on the net playing games.

At the Children's Palace, the government shows off a room full of kids working at computers, all of them using Microsoft.

#### 10D. Kim Jong Il and Kim Il Sung Pins

I asked about the significance of the famous lapel pins, saying that a travel guidebook I had<sup>6</sup> said that the size and style of the pin denote rank or social status. One official laughed at this and said that everyone had several different pins each and that it was more a matter of style than status.

#### 10E. Pyongyang

As many observers have noted, Pyongyang is a big, seemingly modern and very empty place. There are very few cars and even on the ride outside of Pyongyang, we encountered very, very few cars. One official estimated that 2 million people lived in the city and its suburbs.

#### 10F. Friendliness of North Koreans

Americans are a rarity in the DPRK and are naturally the subject of stares and side glances. In general, despite North Korea's reputation for dislike of foreigners, I experienced a surprising degree of friendliness by "average" citizens (particularly those who spoke English). In addition, the DPRK officials (indicated by their lapel pins) I encountered in elevators and at the hotel were generally friendly.

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<sup>6</sup> There are two Western travel guides to the DPRK: Lonely Planet and Bradt.

## **Appendix A. List of Meetings**

Kim Gae Gwan, Vice Foreign Minister

Kim Myung Gil, Deputy Dir. General of the American Depart.

Kim Yong-dae, Vice Chair of Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly

Gen. Ri Chan Bok, Korean People's Army, Rep. to the Panmunjum

Ri Hak Gwon, Vice Chair, Korea Comm. for the Promotion of Intl. Trade

Ri Hak Gwon, Vice Chairman, Korea Committee for the Promotion of International Trade

Li Yong Suk, Regional Director, Committee for the Promotion of International Trade, DPR  
Korea( KOMT)

Mr. Hwang, Researcher, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Hyon, Researcher, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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