

The U.S. Nuclear Posture in Korea

Presentation by

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Overview

- **Deployments During the Cold War**
- **The 1991 Withdrawal**
- **Maintaining the nuclear umbrella**
- **After the 2001 NPR**
- **Conclusions**

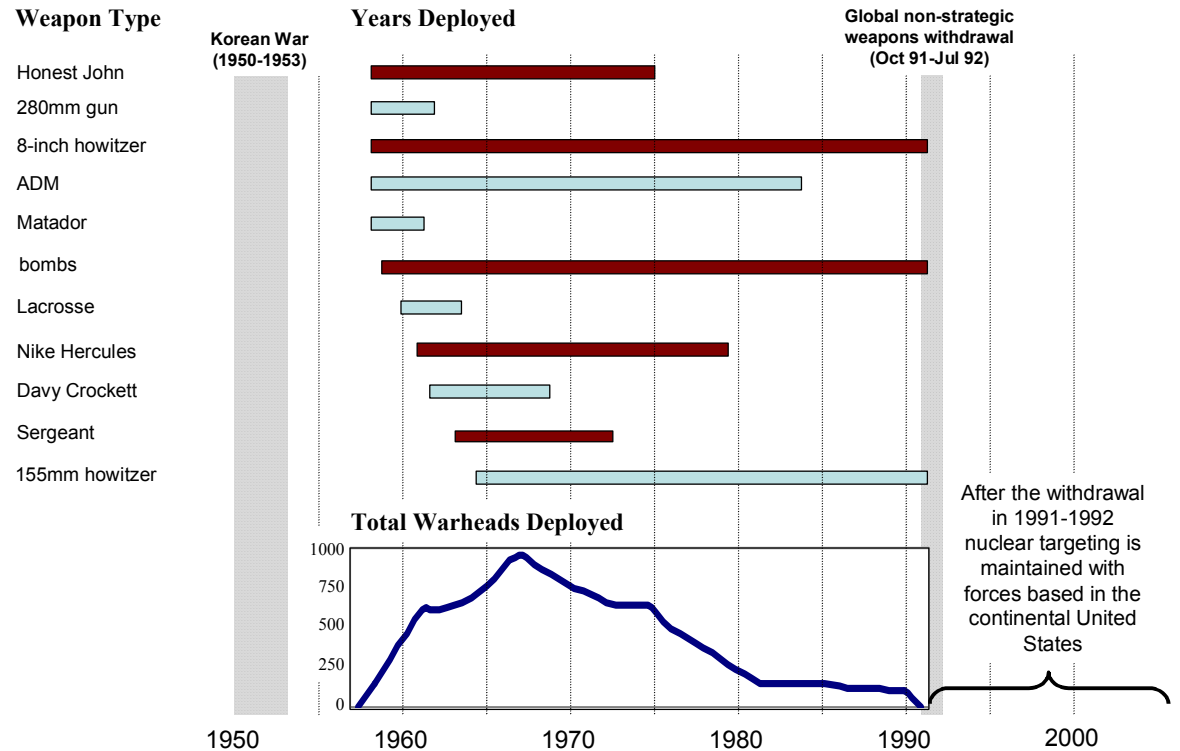
Introduction

First a couple of facts:

- **There are no US nuclear weapons in South Korea**
- **There are no US nuclear weapons in any other country in the Pacific region (including Guam and Hawaii)**
- **There are no tactical US nuclear weapons aboard any ships or submarines in the Pacific**

Deployments During the Cold War

US Nuclear Weapons In South Korea



Deployments During the Cold War

Observations:

- **First warheads didn't arrive in Korea until January 1958**
- **Once they did, build-up occurred very rapidly: 0-950 in a decade (8/m)**
- **1967 peak of 950 warheads coincides with global posture**
- **Broad range of warfighting weapons**
- **NK/China not nuclear; example of nukes against conventional forces**

Deployments During the Cold War

1974 review of PACOM forces

- **Numbers well in excess of military requirement**
- **Security concerns**
- **Lack of political coordination**
- **Beginning to the end for US nuclear weapons in South Korea**
- **Lance warheads never arrived: stranded in Guam**

The 1991 Withdrawal

Presidential Nuclear Initiatives

- Late decision: July 1991, no change possible; September 1991, complete denuclearization decided
- Korea pullout priority for worldwide withdrawal
- Warheads out before Joint Security Committee meeting 20-22 Nov 1991
- Korean pullout completed six months before worldwide withdrawal

The 1991 Withdrawal

- **Withdrawal despite US knowing North Korea was developing WMD**
- **No effect seen from nuclear posture in influencing North Korean WMD ambitions (1994 NPR analysis)**

Post-1991 Nuclear Umbrella

- **Korean and Japanese need for continued security guarantee**
- **Umbrella forces include:**
 - ◆ **CONUS-based DCA (F-15E/F-16)**
 - ◆ **Trident/SLBM**
 - ◆ **Long-range bombers**
 - ◆ **Tomahawk TLAM/N**

Post-1991 Nuclear Umbrella



© Boeing

www.f-15strikeeagle.com

US-based DCA

- F-15E of 4th Fighter Wing at Seymour Johnson AFB in North Carolina
- F-16 of 27th Fighter Wing at Cannon AFB in New Mexico

General Dynamics F-16A "Fighting Falcon"
USAF Museum Photo Archives



Post-1991 Nuclear Umbrella



1998 Strike Exercise

- 4th FW F-15E squadron simulated nuclear strike against NK
- Defense of South Korea against North Korean attack (including chemical weapons)
- In support of OPLAN 5027
- Long-range with refueling and defense (KC-135, AWACS, F-16, F-15)

Post-1991 Nuclear Umbrella

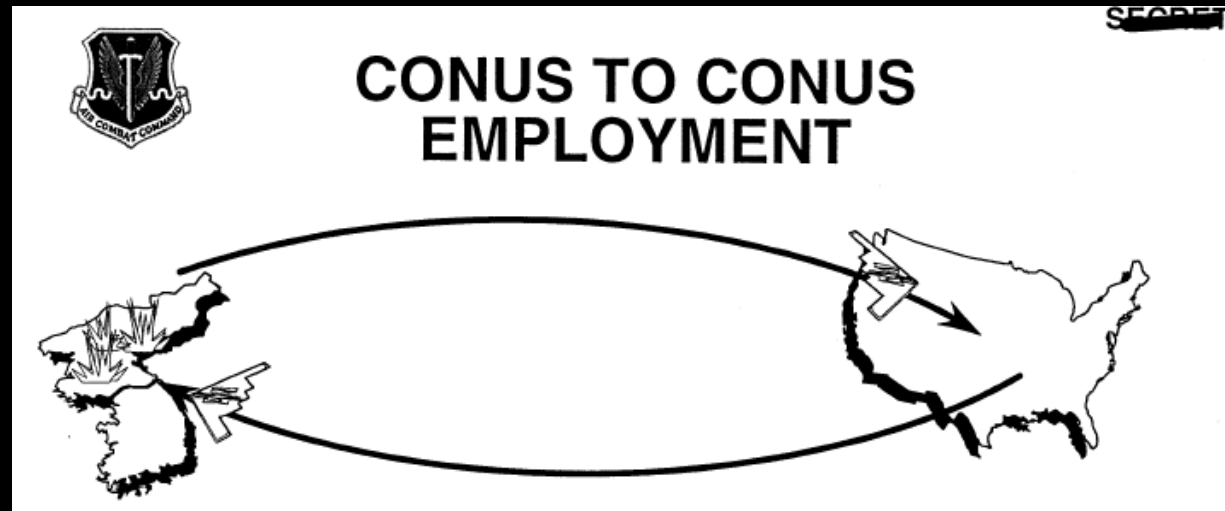


Trident SSBN/SLBM

- Millennium reference to SSBN in USFK/PACOM requirement
- Ohio Class SSBNs based at Bangor in Washington
 - ◆ C4/W76 until 2005
 - ◆ D5/W76 & W88
 - ◆ W88 deployed in Pacific from 2002
 - ◆ D5 deployed in Pacific from 2002

Post-1991 Nuclear Umbrella

Strategic Bombers



- B-2 (B61-7/11, B83-1)
- B-52 (ALCM/ACM, W80-1)
- Adaptive planning

Post-1991 Nuclear Umbrella



Tomahawk TLAM/N

- **Stored on land (Bangor/Kings Bay)**
- **SSN use, periodic certification**
- **Of some 300 missiles, 100 active and 200 inactive**

Post-1991 Nuclear Umbrella

Role of nukes in 1994 crisis

Congress: What role have nuclear weapons played in preventing WMD from being used by Rogue states?

“In my view, sir, it plays a very large role. Not only was that message passed in 1990 by the President [to Iraq], that same message was passed to the North Koreans back in 1995 [sic], when the North Koreans were not coming off their reactor approach they were taking [sic].”

CINCSTRAT, 1997

After the 2001 NPR

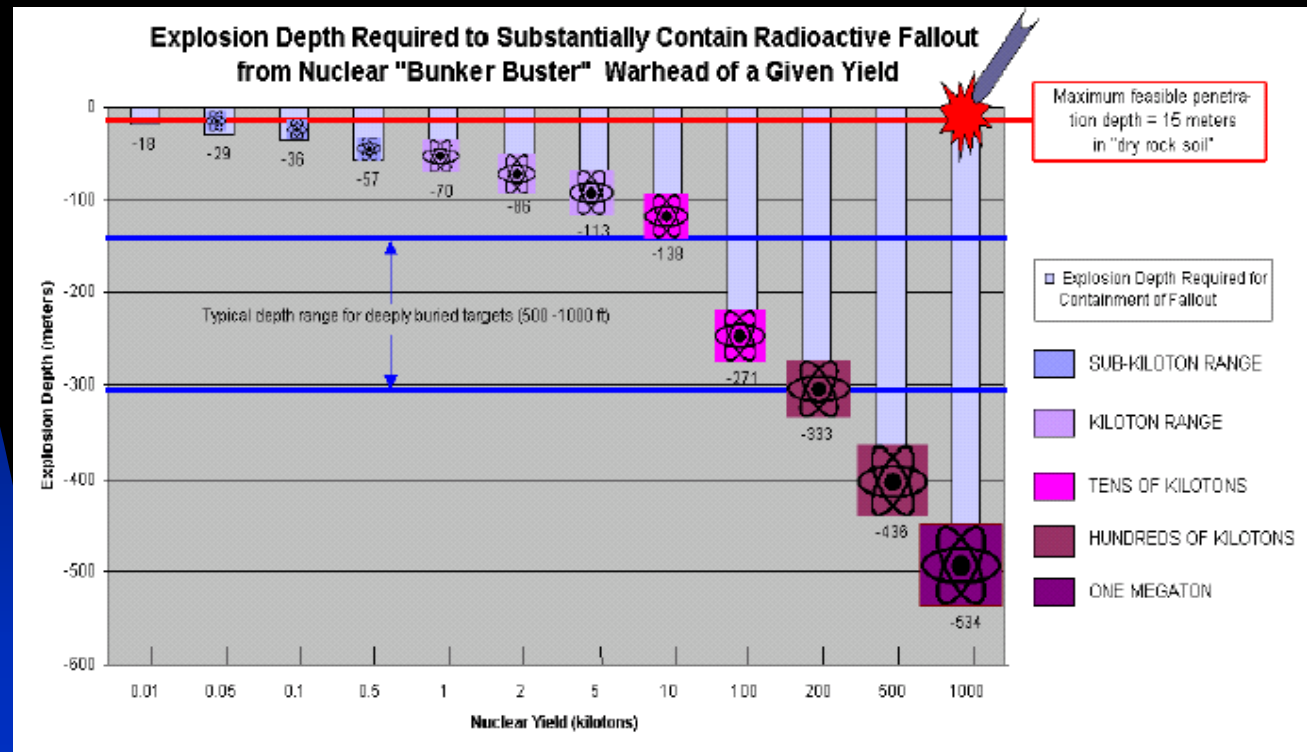
NPR defined North Korea as an “immediate contingency:”

“Immediate contingencies involve well-recognized current dangers... Current examples of immediate contingencies include an Iraqi attack on Israel or its neighbors, a North Korean attack on South Korea, or a military confrontation over the status of Taiwan.”

DOD, Nuclear Posture Review Report,
December 31, 2001, p. 19.

After the 2001 NPR

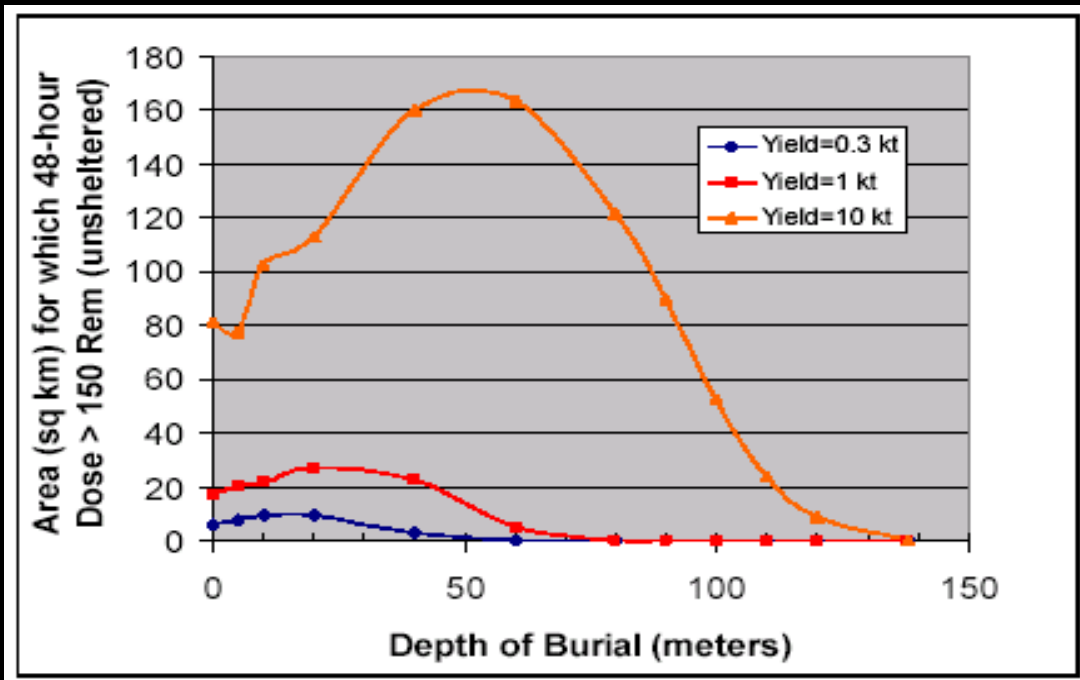
The illusion of containing fallout



Source: Christopher Paine, et al., "Countering Proliferation or Compounding it?," NRDC, May 2003.

After the 2001 NPR

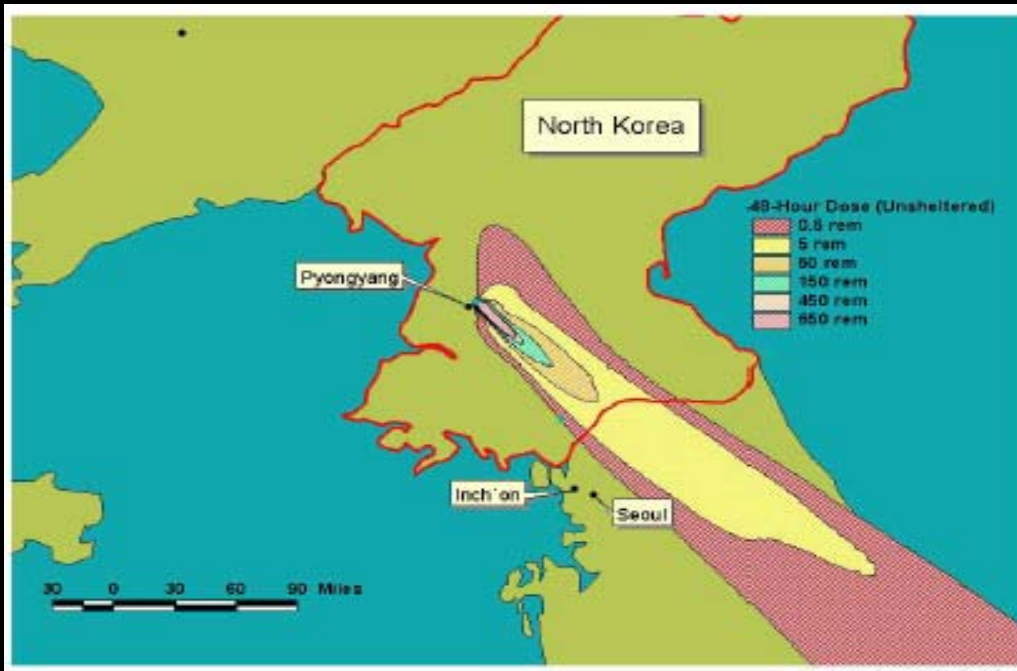
Even with low- and very-low yield fallout is considerable:



Assumes unsheltered population. Source: NRDC

After the 2001 NPR

Fallout from use of a single B61-11 against North Korea:



Assumes depth of 30 feet and yield of 300 kt (actual yield 400 kt). Source: NRDC

Conclusions

The nuclear posture against North Korea has changed, but basic doctrine has not

- **North Korea continues to be an immediate contingency**
- **Detailed strike plans continue to be maintained**
- **Strike exercises continue**
- **Weapons modernization continues**
- **South Korea/Japan continued requirement for nuclear umbrella helps drive posture**