North Korea to drop nuclear weapons program

Tori Moffitt
Staff Writer

On Sept. 19, North Korea agreed to abandon its nuclear arms program.

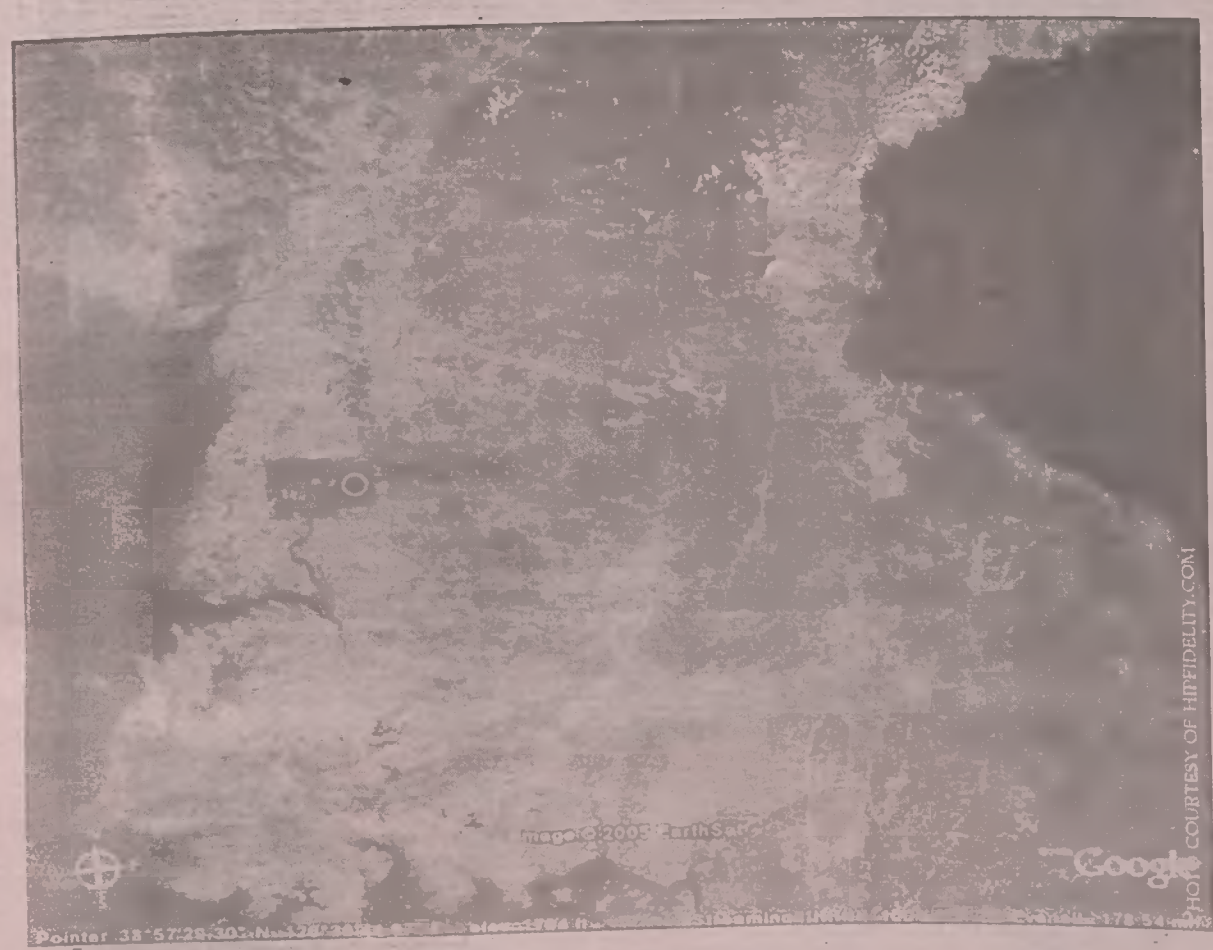
All nations involved in the talks signed the joint statement: Japan, China, Russia, U.S., South Korea and North Korea. It stated that North Korea would dismantle its nuclear weapons and nuclear program in exchange for economic aid and security assurances.

"This is the most important result since the six-party talks started more than two years ago," said Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei in a report from the Associated Press.

Signing the agreement brought North Korea closer to international acceptance. It also opened the nation to foreign trade and will allow Kim Jong Il, the North Korean leader, to remain in power.

On Sept. 20, North Korea took a step back, insisting once again that it will not dismantle its nuclear weapons program until the U.S. provides them with a light-water nuclear reactor.

"Life is too short to overreact to every statement coming out of Pyongyang. It obviously was not a helpful statement, but it was not unexpected either," said Christopher Hill, Assistant Secretary of State, in a Washington Post article.



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China and the U.S. urged North Korea to stick to their original pledge. Other countries quickly backed this statement.

"If North Korea fails to cooperate now with these five countries, they may be seen as a future investment risk by governments, multilateral development organizations, and international corporations. They may miss important opportunities to increase the living standard of their people," said Deena Burris, Visiting Instructor in Business Management.

U.S. officials feel that North Korea cannot be trusted [illegible] any nuclear program [illegible] Bush's 2002 State of the Union Address, he called North Korea, Iran and Iraq an "axis of evil" that is "arming to threaten the peace of the world."

During Clinton's presidency the 1994 U.S. - North Korea agreement was enacted, which promised North Korea two light-water nuclear reactors for power. That project was brought to a halt in late 2002 after U.S. officials said North Korea admitted to having a secret nuclear program.

According to CNN.com, President Bush said, "Five nations have spoken and said it is not in the world's interests that North Korea have a nuclear weapon."

All countries involved in the talks said that only after North Korea rejoins the Non-Proliferation Treaty and accepts inspections from the International Atomic Energy Agency will they discuss the light-water reactor.

While speaking to reporters at the United Nations, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said, "the light-water reactor issue will be discussed down the road - not immediately."

The countries will return to Beijing in early November to continue the talks. Hill told the Washington Post that verification procedures would be the priority.

"We will never get access in terms of verification," said Assistant Professor of Political Science Ken Gilmore.

At the November talks they also plan to discuss how the U.S. and other countries can confirm North Korea's dismantlement of its weapons program and the shut down of its Yongbyon research reactor.

"At the moment we still can't be sure of Kim's intentions," Patrick Lamb, a politics [illegible] at Ionia University of Singapore [illegible] "[illegible] reach a stalemate that is simply too early to celebrate."⌘

Christopher Walken to run for President in '08, some call it a hoax

Chris Friende
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Many celebrities have tried to gain success outside of what they are normally known for in the world of politics. A risk comes with their status as a celebrity, as some people will not take their political endeavors seriously.

On the other hand, some celebrities do find success in politics and that success gives them more exposure than what originally made them famous. Many times, this is an attempt by the celebrity to save their career or make a change for what they feel passionate about.

Actor Christopher Walken, who has appeared in such films as Pulp Fiction and Deer Hunter, is one of the most recent celebrities rumored to be entering the world of politics.

According to the website walken2008.com, Walken is running in the 2008 presidential election. The website includes a biography, where Walken stands on issues in America, and information on the Walken 2008 campaign.

Walken recently appeared in the comedy Wedding Crashers and is currently filming Click, which is set to be released in 2006, so he has been staying busy if the rumors are true.

"I don't know if it's true or not, but I wouldn't put it against him if he is trying to boost his career if it isn't going anywhere right now," says sophomore Amy Phillips. Walken is still finding success in the film world, so an attempt to save his career seems farfetched. Walken's fame and popularity could help him gain supporte in his campaign from his fans.

"I think that if Walken can play Russian roulette in The Deer Hunter, then I think that he'll be a great President," says Part-time Lecturer in English Tom Huey.

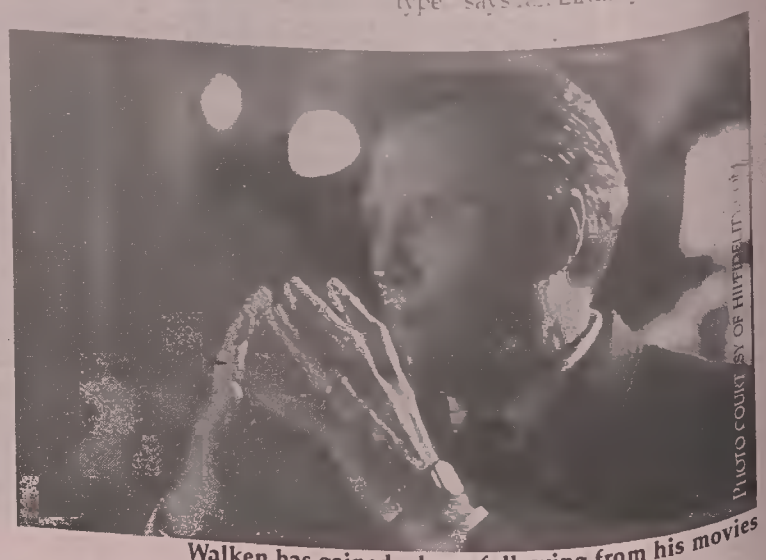
One cannot forget that other celebrities have ran for office and won, like California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and former governor of Minnesota, Jesse Ventura. Schwarzenegger and Ventura both had passionate feelings towards political issues which could be part of the reasons that they gained votes.

According to the walken2008, Walken has strong opinions and is not afraid to take them on, and is fighting to lead America into a better place. The website also claims that Walken said that as President, he will "not abandon our troops in Iraq or the Iraqi people, both of whom have made great sacrifices in the name of peace and freedom."

One question is whether this campaign is legitimate or not. According to worldnetdaily.com, the website is a hoax by members of the General Mayhem forums, one of the largest message boards on the internet.

Whether this campaign for Walken is true or not, there is no doubt of the popularity that he has already gained through his work in the film world. If it is true, there is a good chance that Walken fans will support his endeavor.

"I think that celebrities in politics can, at times, bring a refreshing new outlook on the Process -- as long as the celebrity isn't best known for being a mercenary cyborg. Christopher Walken strikes me as the presidential type," says fan Lindsey Cole ⌘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Walken has gained a large following from his movies