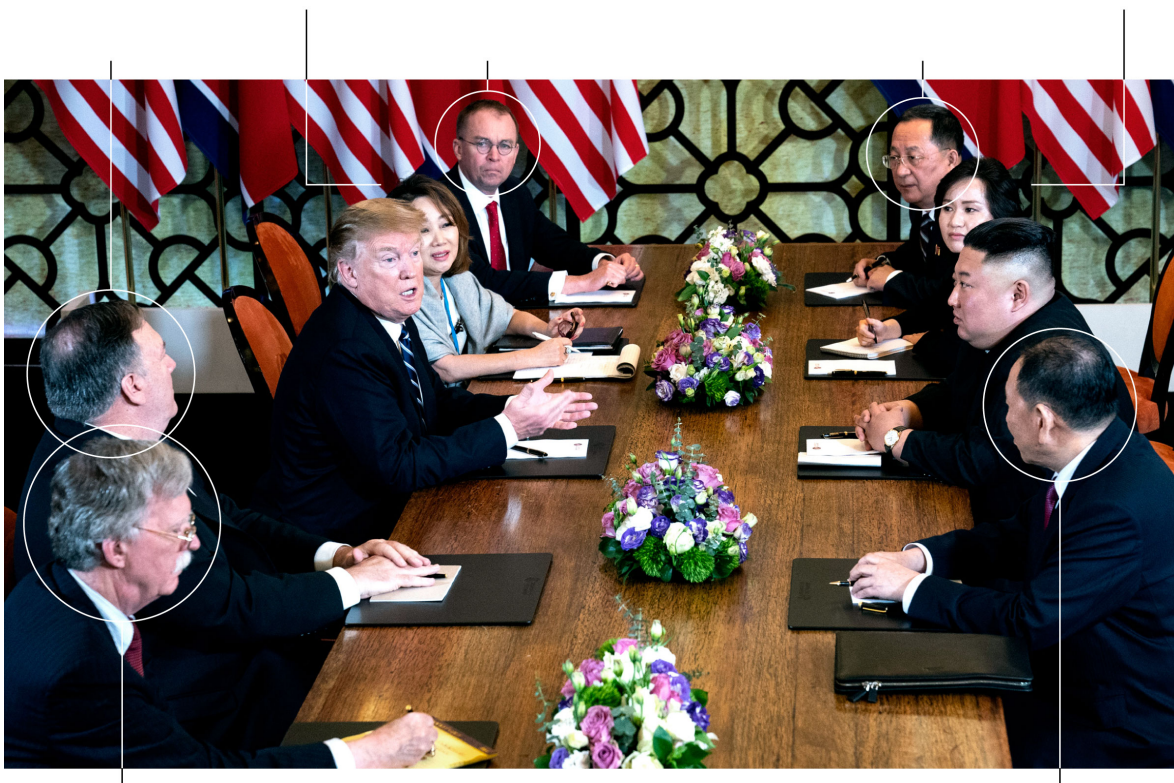


When It Comes to Negotiating, Kim Jong-un's Team Is More Experienced

By RUSSELL GOLDMAN, JIN WU, MOTOKO RICH and CHOE SANG-HUN
The New York Times, FEB. 28, 2019

As negotiators for the United States and North Korea sat down on Thursday in Hanoi, Vietnam, to discuss denuclearization, the team on Kim Jong-un's side of the table had one clear advantage — experience.

As a group, the Americans joining President Trump had less practice dealing directly with the North Koreans than their counterparts had negotiating with Americans.



Mick Mulvaney

White House Chief of Staff

Ri Yong-ho

Foreign Minister

Yun Hyang Lee

Interpreter

Sin Hye-yong

Interpreter

Mike Pompeo

Secretary of State

He has met at least three times with Kim Jong-un, including negotiating for the release of American detainees.

The president's closest adviser is a former congressman with little foreign policy experience.

He began negotiating with the United States in the 1990s, and led North Korea's delegation at the six-party talks.

John R. Bolton

National Security Adviser

Kim Yong-chol

Vice Party Chairman

A former ambassador to the United Nations and an arms control expert, he joined Mr. Trump at the previous summit in Singapore.

A former Korean spymaster, he has visited the White House.

North Korea

Several members of the North Korean delegation were veterans of the Six-Party Talks, a series of meetings held in the 2000s intended to halt the country's nascent weapons program, and have dealt with the Americans for decades. Many of those joining Kim Jong-un were at his side at the previous summit meeting in Singapore, and were selected for their experience and avowed loyalty.

United States

Many of the State Department's most experienced North Korea experts recently retired from government. Mr. Trump's team had to quickly get up to speed, dealing

first with a series of weapons tests and then with a newly engaged North. The president sees himself as a master negotiator, experts said, and often relies on his instincts rather than his advisers.