

Why A North Korean EMP Is Far From Fantasy

2017-05-04 08:15:30 By Bill White

North Korea has nukes, and tells the world that they are not afraid to use them. What is Trump going to do about it?

The pot is boiling and expected to blow up. And if it does, it's going to be huge.

North Korea was one of the various ongoing situations that Donald Trump inherited. The former president, Barack Obama inherited that too, as has every president since the end of World War II, when the Korean peninsula was divided.

A History Lesson to Keep in Mind

The problems associated with North Korea erupted into bloodshed in 1950, when the North Korean army invaded the south. Although South Korea and the United States were totally unprepared for that conflict, we ultimately fought the North Koreans and their Chinese backers to a standstill.

The armistice signed in July of 1953 has led to an uneasy peace for the last 64 years.

I say an "uneasy peace" because it has been punctuated by many threats, probes, and shots fired across the DMZ (demilitarized zone), the no-man's land between the two countries.

But the North has never been happy with the agreement, nor with the division of the Korean peninsula. They have remained convinced that Korea should be reunited under their leadership.

It doesn't matter that the South Korean economy is over 30 times larger than the North's, or that the people there live in freedom, under a democratically elected government.

In the eyes of the North, and especially in the eyes of their government, South Korea belongs under their rule.

A Hidden Connection

This is actually very similar to the problem between China and Taiwan. To the communist Chinese government, Taiwan is nothing more than a rebellious province, having broken off from China in the aftermath of World War II.

The reason why mainland China can't do anything about it is the same reason why North Korea can't do anything about South Korea, both South Korea and Taiwan are backed by the might of the American military, the most powerful military in the world.

For this reason, our relations with China have been strained since World War II, even though we helped to liberate them from the Japanese.

It is also behind the hatred that North Korea has maintained towards the USA.

A Legacy of Hate

Kim Jong-Un's grandfather, the first dictator after the Korean War, used his propaganda machine to teach the North Korean people that American soldiers tore the limbs off of innocent Koreans and cut off their eyes, noses and lips, hanging them on trees.

This sort of propaganda is necessary, even though it is untrue, to help Kim's regime keep the people in check.

The North Korean policy of "military first" which keeps the people starving, while every possible Won (the North Korean currency) is spent on the military, creates an atmosphere that is ripe for rebellion.

By giving the people a common enemy who is pictured as cruel and destructive, Kim is able to keep his own people in check, while investing millions in building an nuclear arsenal and missiles capable of reaching the hated enemy.

Of course, the North Korean leadership knows the truth about the Korean war, and as has been heard from defectors, there are people who still remember the kindness that American soldiers showed to their children. But the younger generation didn't experience that and has largely bought into the government's propaganda.

It appears that Kim Jong-Un believes his own propaganda machine as well, or at least believes it enough to match his rhetoric to the official line he is promoting.

But there is an inherent danger in that. That is, at some time his actions much match his rhetoric, or he will be shown to be a fraud. That's something he can't afford.

So whether Kim actually wants to launch nuclear tipped missiles at the United States or not, he has painted himself into a box where he will eventually have to.

As a dictator, the price of not doing so would be too high. He would lose face before his people, which could easily be followed by losing his head.

The Real North Korea's Nuclear Capacity

Whether Kim John-Un's actions and rhetoric are intentional or merely the ravings of a madman are inconsequential at this time. Like the rest of the world, he must live and die with what he's said. Chances of his backing down are extremely slim.

So North Korea continues on the march to becoming a nuclear power, developing nuclear bombs and long-range missiles which can be mated together to become ICBMs that can reach the United States.

The real question at this point in time, is how close he is to actually accomplishing that goal.

It is a known fact that North Korea possesses nuclear bombs. The question there is whether they have achieved the necessary miniaturization needed in order to put them on the top of a missile.

While North Korea claims that hit has reached that point, we just don't know. Of course, we have to assume that they have, as to assume anything else would be extremely risky.

But to accomplish his goals, Kim needs a missile that can reach at least the West Coast of the United States.

In that, his scientists and engineers have been running into some difficulty. While they currently have four different missiles in their inventory, the one which has the greatest range also appears to be the most unreliable.

As seen in their most recent test flight, firing a missile into the Sea of Japan, it has a propensity to blow up all on its own.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ipuFBE_eVDg

Video first seen on [CBS News](#).

Yet North Korea persists and we can assume that they have competent engineers. That means that each failure of a missile brings them one step closer to finding all the problems that can cause them to go awry and brings them closer to having a successful, reliable missile.

Once that happens, we are truly in danger.

Right now, we're protected by the fact that North Korea doesn't have the technical expertise to match their leader's ego. But that can't last for long.

Killing people who fail is a great incentive for those who remain alive. They push harder to ensure that they won't be the next one executed.

Is the Risk of a North Korean Missile Attack a Fantasy?

I have to put myself firmly in the camp of those who say: "It isn't a question of whether North Korea will initiate a nuclear missile strike, but when."

Kim Jong-Un has painted himself into a box and I really don't see any indication that he wants out of it. He seems to see his out as going through with that attack and proving to the world that his tiny nation is more powerful than the United States of America.

The other question that we have to consider is what form that attack will take.

The fact that North Korea's missiles are all on mobile launchers gives Pyongyang an incredible amount of flexibility. It also makes both locating and countering those missiles a much harder task for our military.

It would be extremely easy for the North Koreans to load missiles and their launchers into specially constructed cargo containers and send them our way. As long as those containers were on the top level of containers in the ship, they could be launched without impediment.

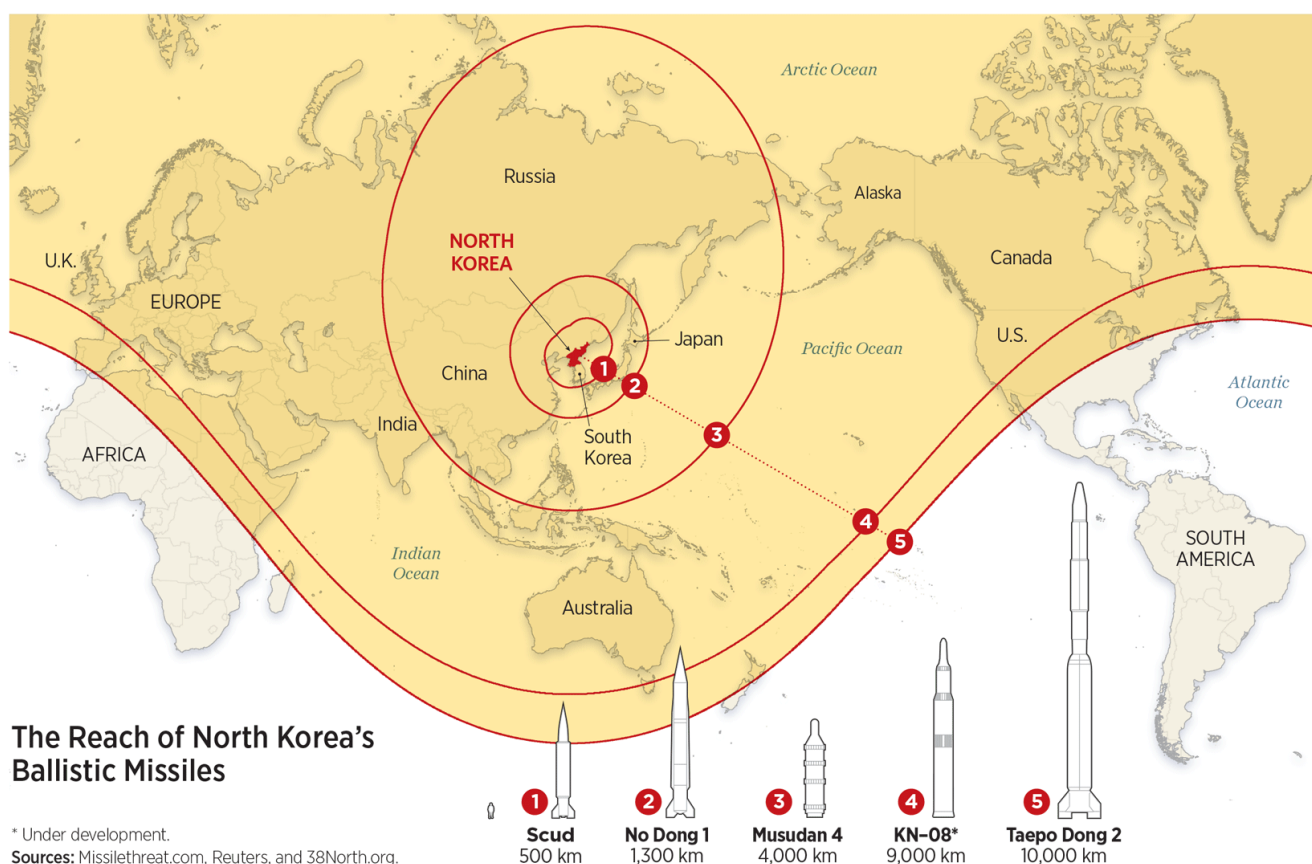
The scary part of that scenario is that such a launch could be made very near our shores, extending the effective range of their missiles.

In such a case, it wouldn't just be Los Angeles that would be at risk of being targeted, but a large part of the Continental United States. If you include the Gulf of Mexico in any potential planning, there are

few parts of the United States that North Korean missiles couldn't reach, based upon what we currently know about their missiles.

The greater risk to our country is not from a ground burst or near ground burst, but from a [high-altitude EMP](#).

As attested to by the report of the EMP Commission, such an attack would destroy the USA, putting us back somewhere around 150 years. We would become a very unique third-world country.



What Can We Do?

Now we need to look at the other side of the equation, what can the United States military do against such an attack? There are always two sides to any military equation and hopefully North Korea is failing to do their math right.

Defending against nuclear missiles is not a new problem for the United States military.

Throughout the Cold War, we lived under the threat of the now-defunct Soviet Union lobbing thousands of ICBMs at us. President Regan's "Star Wars" program was developed in anticipation of such an attack.

By comparison, the few missiles that North Korea could send our way is a minor risk.

But the problem we have is that the United States of America is a vast country, with thousands of miles of borders.

A truly effective anti-ballistic defense network would have to cover all our borders and US possessions around the globe. That complete a system has never been fielded, due to the massive cost of such a huge system.

Rather, the Department of Defense has deployed "midcourse defensive systems" in strategic areas: Fort Greely, Alaska and Vandenberg Air Force Base, California, which stand an excellent chance of thwarting any attack by Pyongyang.

While that may not seem like much, we have to take into consideration the altitude that ballistic missiles fly. Missiles from either Alaska or California have the capability of intercepting ICBMs at the apogee of their flight, over most of the North Pacific Ocean.

The greater risk is if the North Koreans launch their missiles off of a container ship, nearer to our coastline. That would reduce the reaction time that these missile systems and their operators would have to react to the attack.

If the North Korean missiles came in at a lower trajectory, rather than at a true ballistic trajectory, they might actually be able to make it through those defenses.

In such a case, we could expect the damage to be extensive, at least to a few American cities. Which cities that would be is a question that is hard to answer, but it would be a disaster, for sure!

A lot would depend on the results that Pyongyang was seeking. While destroying Washington, DC would be the most logical military target, with the greatest impact on the USA, it would also probably be one of the hardest targets for them to hit.

You can be sure the nation's capital will be defended and such an attack would have to come from the Atlantic Ocean, which increases the danger for the North Koreans.

A Preemptive Strike?

Former President Obama's policy of appeasement hasn't worked any better with the North Koreans, than it did with the Iranians. That is, unless the goal was to help those two rogue nations become nuclear powers. If that was the goal, he was highly successful.

President Trump hasn't followed the same policy. Rather than bowing down to the rest of the world, he reasserted the United States place as a world leader.

While some have complained about this, including Kim Jong-Un, it was definitely the right thing to do. Only the United States has proven to the world that we can be trusted to be the world's police.

As part of that, Trump is taking a very hands-on approach to the multiple problems that exist with North Korea, especially their threats to the United States.

As part of that, the United States of America has sent the USS Carl Vinson and its associated fleet to the area off North Korea as a deterrent, as well as other naval forces, including a nuclear-powered missile submarine, armed with both nukes and Tomahawk cruise missiles.

Of course, North Korea is taking that as an escalation, not as a deterrent. They're also accusing the USA of creating the tension in the region.

Neither are surprising. Despotic rulers and governments always try to blame their actions on others; just look at Hitler's actions at the beginning of World War II.

But having naval forces in the area gives President Trump and the Pentagon some additional options, including a preemptive first strike.

Should it look like North Korea is preparing to launch a nuclear-tipped missile at anyone, that might be the best action to take. But it's not an action without consequences. [North Korea](#) would definitely take that as a provocation and respond to it.

In other words, trying to stop one nuclear launch could very well become the trigger to causing another. The situation is that complicated now. North Korea apparently feels they can't back down, so they may very well push things into a war.

While there is nothing that President Trump has said, which indicate that he wants war with North Korea, it is looking more and more like one is coming.

Sometimes, when you push the bully, the bully backs off; but there are other times when the bully chooses to fight. This is beginning to look like one of those situations where the bully chooses to fight.

But What About China?

The wildcard in all this is China. The Chinese President, Xi Jinping, recently spent a weekend with President Trump in his Mar-a-Lago resort.

At the end of it, Trump claimed success and that the Chinese president was willing to work with the US to curb North Korean violence. That could be a real game changer, as China is North Korea's biggest ally and biggest trading partner.

So far, China has moved 150,000 troops to the North Korean border, in a move that can be seen either as putting pressure on Pyongyang or as offering them support. As we haven't heard the message that went with that move, we can only guess.

But the Chinese have also refused to accept shipments of coal from North Korea, which is the North Korean's biggest export. So, from that alone, it appears that China is playing ball.

Between Chinese pressure and US diplomacy, it is possible that war can be abated. But in reality, I think that the best we can hope for is for it to be delayed. Unless something happens to Kim Jong-Un, who is still a young man, chances are that North Korea will continue in their warlike direction.

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What do you think? Is this the North Korean attack a matter of If or WHEN?

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