President Considering Air Strikes in Response to Surprise North Korean Missile Test

North's Nuclear-Capable Missiles Can Now Reach Entire U.S.

Associated Press

Washington - High-ranking administration officials confirm that the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) briefed President Trump today on military plans for destroying North Korea's nuclear facilities and missiles.

The President ordered the Joint Chiefs to review U.S. military options after North Korea's unannounced test of a long-range, nuclear-capable missile yesterday.

The U.S. air strikes would have a 50% chance of destroying North Korea's nuclear arsenal.

The Hwasong-15 missile, with a range of over 8,000 miles, was not equipped with a military warhead for this test. It landed in a remote area of the Pacific Ocean.

The test comes after a month of escalating tensions between North Korea and the United States over the North's refusal to take verifiable steps to dismantle its nuclear weapons and missile programs.

U.S. intelligence sources confirm that North Korea can now strike anywhere in the United States with nuclear weapons.

North Korea's nuclear facilities and missile sites are dispersed, and the mobile missiles are often hidden in caves. The JCS report provided to the president, therefore, describes a large-scale conventional air strike. The attack would target all known missile locations, air defenses, and key military command and control centers.

According to the report, the air strikes would have a 50% chance of destroying North Korea's arsenal of approximately 40 nuclear weapons, leaving a 50% chance that the North would be able to retaliate against the United States with nuclear missiles.

Although U.S. military planners would make every effort to avoid civilian casualties, many North Korean military targets are located nearby civilian population centers. As a result, the report estimates that approximately 5,000 North Korean civilians would be killed in the first days of the strike, in addition to 10,000 North Korean military fatalities.

Should the attack fail to destroy all the North's nuclear weapons, the report describes the likely results of North Korean nuclear retaliation against three targets in the United States – the Pentagon, in Washington, D.C., the U.S. naval base in San Diego, and Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana.

An estimated 300,000 Americans, mostly civilians, would be killed in the attack, including thousands who would die years later of the long-term effects of radiation.

North Korean nuclear retaliation against the U.S. would kill an estimated 300,000 Americans.

Whether or not the attack is successful in eliminating North Korea's nuclear weapons, however, the Joint Chiefs estimate that the North would retaliate with thousands of conventional missiles and artillery, killing approximately 30,000 South Koreans.

The Joint Chiefs did not recommend a course of action, but cautioned that military action against North Korea would likely be less effective in the future as the North continues to increase its nuclear arsenal and modernize its defenses.

	Expected Fatalities
IF U.S. AIR STRIKE IS SUCCESSFUL **• 50% chance •**	**• North Korea: 5,000 civilians & 10,000 military in U.S. strike** **• South Korea: 30,000 from N. Korean conventional retaliation**
IF U.S. AIR STRIKE IS NOT SUCCESSFUL **• 50% chance •**	**• North Korea: 5,000 civilians & 10,000 military in U.S. strike** **• South Korea: 30,000 from N. Korean conventional retaliation** **• United States: 300,000 from N. Korean nuclear retaliation**

Table Reproduced from JCS Report to the President