

‘Stop the Insanity’: Demand Grows to Strip Trump of Nuclear Strike Authority

On anniversary of Nagasaki bombing, calls to end "saber-rattling" and de-escalate tensions with North Korea

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The morning following his “[fire and fury](#)” remarks on Tuesday—which promised retaliation if the North Korean regime continues to threaten the United States—President Donald Trump [took to Twitter](#) to [praise](#) America’s “powerful” nuclear arsenal, comments that intensified the groundswell of calls to end the pro-war rhetoric and strip Trump of his nuclear-strike authority.

Trump’s threat against North Korea came on the heels of a [report](#) by the *Washington Post* indicating that Pyongyang had “successfully produced a miniaturized nuclear warhead that can fit inside its missiles.”

The Kim Jong-un regime responded just hours after Trump’s remarks, promising to hasten “[the tragic end of the American empire](#)” and announcing it would review [plans](#) to “strike areas around the U.S. territory of Guam,” where the U.S. maintains large military bases, “with medium-to-long-range strategic ballistic missiles.”

Reacting to Trump’s “[crazy](#)” comments and to the growing fear that the U.S. is inching closer to nuclear war, activists and lawmakers urged Congress to revive legislation that would strip the executive branch of the power to launch a pre-emptive nuclear strike.

“No U.S. President, certainly not Trump, should have sole authority to initiate an unprovoked nuclear war,” wrote Sen. Ed Markey (D-Mass.).

In an interview with *MSNBC*’s Chris Hayes Tuesday night, Markey said Trump’s comments “bring us back to August of 1945, when nuclear weapons were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.”

Watch the interview:

[@SenMarkey](#) responds to Trump’s “fire & fury” remarks on North Korea: “The president needs to tone it down” [#inners](#) <https://t.co/J0ErqrB3Eg>

— All In w/Chris Hayes (@allinwithchris) [August 9, 2017](#)

Others echoed Markey's call for legislation that would remove the power to launch a nuclear first strike from the president. Rep. Pramila Jayapal (D-Wash.), pointing to [previous reporting](#) by *Common Dreams*, highlighted the urgent necessity of removing the power to launch a nuclear first strike from the hands of the president—a move that has proven to be immensely popular.

I believe Congress must authorize any nuclear first strike and have co-sponsored [@TedLieu](#)'s important bill. <https://t.co/1hHwQQFKsj>

— Pramila Jayapal (@PramilaJayapal) [August 8, 2017](#)

In May, as *Common Dreams* [reported](#), more than 500,000 people signed a petition expressing support for the Restricting First Use of Nuclear Weapons Act of 2017, a bill introduced by Rep. Ted Lieu (D-Calif.) that, if passed, would bar the president from launching a nuclear strike without congressional authorization.

Do reckless comments of [@realDonaldTrump](#) scare you? Support HR 669 by [@SenMarkey](#) & me. Requires approval of Congress for nuclear 1st strike. <https://t.co/VZyJodhp5q>

— Ted Lieu (@tedlieu) [August 9, 2017](#)

"This saber-rattling from the president is dangerous," concluded Rep. Barbara Lee (D-Calif.). "We need to de-escalate tensions so that diplomacy can work."

Adding to the calls for de-escalation is a [newly drafted petition](#) by MoveOn.org, which is set to be delivered to the White House.

The petition, which already has over 57,000 signatures, reads:

"Stop the insanity. Don't provoke a war with North Korea."

"Donald Trump is making us all more unsafe with every war-mongering comment, tweet, and threat. His rhetoric threatening North Korea with 'fire and fury' is exacerbating a dangerous situation, putting the people of Guam—and everyone around the world—in grave danger," the petition adds. "While a nuclear North Korea is a real concern, the answer must be diplomacy-first, not a rush to a potentially devastating nuclear war."

The growing threat of nuclear war comes as Wednesday marks the 72nd anniversary of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, Japan by the U.S.

Carol Turner, vice chair of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, said in a [statement](#):

"It beggars belief that the US president has chosen the 72nd anniversary to threaten North Korea with 'fire and fury like the world has never seen.' These words mark the real possibility of a nuclear confrontation."

Speaking at a [memorial event](#) on Wednesday, Tomihisa Taue, the mayor of Nagasaki, highlighted the “increasingly tense” international situation and argued that all nations should do away with nuclear weapons.

“A strong sense of anxiety is spreading across the globe that in the not too distant future these weapons could actually be used again,” Taue said. “The nuclear threat will not end as long as nations continue to claim that nuclear weapons are essential for their national security.”

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