

# Timeline of Trump's Path to Nuclear War

By [Walt Gelles](#)

Global Research, December 26, 2017

Region: [Asia](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

In-depth Report: [NORTH KOREA](#), [Nuclear War](#)

*Donald Trump's reckless policies, belligerence, volatile personality, and rejection of diplomacy have brought the world to the brink of war in Korea. Such a war could rapidly turn nuclear, killing hundreds of thousands or millions of people, spreading deadly radiation across the planet, and likely involving China and Russia. North Korea will never give up its nuclear and ballistic missile program under pressure, as it views the program as an indispensable bulwark against U.S. aggression.*

The following timeline reveals how dangerous the situation is—a situation artificially ratcheted up by U.S. President Trump and his fellow warmongers. The world needs to unite against Trump and his war plans, which pose an imminent threat to humanity—just as the world united against Trump's illegal and counterproductive declaration of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

August 8

*Trump threatens apocalypse—*

"North Korea best not make any more threats to the United States," Trump told reporters...."They will be met with fire and fury like the world has never seen. He [North Korean leader Kim Jong Un] has been very threatening ... and as I said they will be met with fire, fury and frankly power, the likes of which this world has never seen before."

(Emphasis added throughout)

—"Trump warns North Korea threats 'will be met with fire and fury' ". [CNBC](#), Jacob Pramuk.

Trump's remarks were widely criticized by both Republicans and Democrats as well as the corporate media.

September 27

"On September 26, four days after the Pentagon sent a flight of B-1 bombers and fighter escorts off North Korea in a display of military force, Pyongyang "moved a small number of fighter jets, external fuel tanks and air-to-air missiles to a base on its eastern coast," according to reports. Trump threatened Pyongyang once again, saying he was prepared for "a military option" to solve the crisis, which would be "devastating."

...Nobody knows how [Trump] will feel when he wakes up to find that Kim has tested another H-bomb, flung a missile over Japan or needled him with another insult. All we know is that when he wanders out in his bathrobe and opens the nuclear football, he's got the keys to Armageddon in his hands."

—"[No One Can Stop Trump From Waging Nuclear War With North Korea, Not Even His Generals](#)". Jeff Stein.

October 8, 2017

*The White House Is "An Adult Day Care Center"—*

"Senator Bob Corker, the Republican chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, charged in an interview that President Trump was treating his office like "a reality show," with reckless threats toward other countries that could set the nation "on the path to World War III." In an extraordinary rebuke of a president of his own party, Mr. Corker said he was alarmed about a president who acts "like he's doing 'The Apprentice' or something." "He concerns me," Mr. Corker added. "He would have to concern anyone who cares about our nation."

...When Mr. Trump, posting on Twitter, accused Mr. Corker of deciding not to run for re-election because he "didn't have the guts." Mr. Corker shot back in his own tweet: "It's a shame the White House has become an adult day care center...." Mr. Trump poses such an acute risk, the senator said, that a coterie of senior administration officials must protect him from his own instincts. "I know for a fact that every single day at the White House, it's a situation of trying to contain him." ....Mr. Corker said his concerns about Mr. Trump were shared by nearly every Senate Republican." "

—"Bob Corker Says Trump's Recklessness Threatens 'World War III'". Jonathan Martin and Mark Landler. [New York Times](#), Oct. 8, 2017

October 13, 2017

*Robert Reich, former U.S. Secretary of Labor—*

"Corker's interview [see above] was followed by a report from Gabriel Sherman of Vanity Fair, who wrote that the situation has gotten so out of control that Trump's chief of staff, John Kelly, and Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis have discussed ways to stop Trump should he order a nuclear attack.... Many of Trump's advisors believe he is "unstable" and "unravelling" quickly.

"Is Trump really unraveling?....I phoned an old friend, a Republican former member of Congress who keeps up with what's going on. I scribbled notes as he talked:

Me: So what's up?....

He: ...Others are thinking about doing what Bob did. Sounding the alarm. They think Trump's nuts. Unfit. Dangerous....[U.S. Secretary of State] Tillerson would leave tomorrow if he wasn't so worried Trump would go nuclear, literally.

...Me: You think Trump is really thinking nuclear war?

He: Who knows what's in his head? But I can tell you this. He's not listening to

anyone. Not a soul. He's got the nuclear codes and, well, it scares the hell out of me. It's starting to scare all of them. That's really why Bob [Corker] spoke up.

...Me: So what's gonna happen?

He: You got me. I'm just glad I'm not there anymore. Trump's not just a moron. He's a despicable human being. And he's getting crazier. Paranoid. Unhinged. Everyone knows it. I mean, we're in shit up to our eyeballs with this guy."

—"[Robert Reich: Trump Is Coming Unraveled, and Republicans Know It](#)".

November 22, 2017

"If Trump wants nuclear war, virtually no one can stop him....There is no law that would make a presidential order to launch a preemptive nuclear strike on North Korea illegal.... Congress has the constitutional responsibility for declaring war, but it has not done so since World War II. That has not prevented every president since then from engaging in military conflicts large and small. Even American participation in the Korean War was not authorized by Congress. So, the absence of a formal declaration of war against North Korea is no barrier to a nuclear strike.

....In addition, Trump has taken a step that further removes the possibility of a legal constraint. He has added North Korea once again to the list of state sponsors of terrorism....The list has frequently been used for political purposes that have nothing to do with terrorism. That is demonstrated by the fact that the Bush administration took North Korea off the list in an attempt to salvage a deal regarding its nuclear program....

The bottom line is that a nuclear war won't be prevented by military officers refusing to obey an order they consider illegal. And such a situation won't be avoided by congressional action. The legislative branch is paralyzed by partisan politics. Using the bomb is up to the discretion of a president who came to office with no experience in the military, government or foreign affairs beyond real estate deals in other countries. And after ten months of on-the-job training, he seems no better prepared for such a responsibility."

—"[If Trump wants nuclear war, virtually no one can stop him.](#)" Dennis Jett, Professor of International Relations, Pennsylvania State University. \_

December 14, 2017

*Senator Lindsey Graham plays golf with Trump and predicts war—*

"...Lindsey Graham [Republican, South Carolina] ...estimated the odds that the Trump administration deliberately strikes North Korea first, to stop it from acquiring the capability to target the U.S. mainland with a long-range, nuclear-tipped missile. And the senator's numbers were remarkably high. "I would say there's a three in 10 chance we use the military option," Graham predicted....If the North Koreans conduct an additional test of a nuclear bomb—their seventh—"I would say 70 percent."

Graham said that the issue of North Korea came up during a round of golf he played with the president on Sunday. "It comes up all the time," he said. "War with North Korea is an all-out war against the regime," he said. "There is no surgical strike option. Their [nuclear-weapons] program is too redundant, it's

too hardened, and you gotta assume the worst, not the best. So if you ever use the military option, it's not to just neutralize their nuclear facilities—you gotta be willing to take the regime completely down."

—["Lindsey Graham: There's a 30 Percent Chance Trump Attacks North Korea"](#).

Earlier, on August 1, "Senator Graham said that President Trump is willing to go to war with North Korea to stop it from being able to hit the American mainland with a nuclear weapon. "There is a military option: to destroy North Korea's nuclear program and North Korea itself," Graham told the Today show's Matt Lauer. "He's not going to allow—President Trump—the ability of this madman [Kim Jong Un] to have a missile that could hit America. If there's going to be a war to stop him, it will be over there. If thousands die, they're going to die over there. They're not going to die over here—and he's told me that to my face."

The North Koreans are not stupid: They know they're militarily outclassed by the United States and South Korea. So their strategy in the event of an out-and-out war, as far as outside analysts can tell, is to inflict overwhelming pain as quickly as possible: to bombard South Korea, US allies in Japan, and any American forces they can find with missiles and artillery to the point where their stronger enemies lose their appetite for a protracted conflict....

A South Korean simulation conducted in 2004, before the North had developed nuclear weapons, estimated that there could be up to 2 million casualties in the first 24 hours of a conflict. Obviously, the death toll would be exponentially higher if North Korea used any of its nuclear weapons. Those could potentially destroy Tokyo (population 9.3 million), Seoul (population 10 million), or other cities in the two countries. It's not clear how many working nuclear weapons the North has, though estimates suggest around 10 to 16. We do know that its missiles have enough range to reach Tokyo, and that the country has tested a nuclear weapon designed to fit on precisely such a missile.

"This is madness," Kingston Reif, the director for disarmament and threat reduction policy at the Arms Control Association, tweeted after seeing Graham's comments. "Unhinged madness."

—[Vox](#)

December 18, 2017

*McMaster pushes for war*

Interviewed by the BBC, US National Security Advisor, General H.R. McMaster said "We have to be prepared, if necessary, to compel the denuclearisation of North Korea without the co-operation of that regime." His statement was almost tantamount to a unilateral declaration of war. ("HR McMaster: Russian meddling 'sophisticated subversion'". BBC News, Dec. 19, 2017 <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-42409144>)

Asked during a PBS interview whether he thought the chance of war was increasing every day, McMaster said: "I think it is still the case. We're out of time with this problem. Not out of time completely but we have a very short amount of time to be able to address the problem of North Korea."

McMaster's reiterating of this ominous warning over the past few months is apparently intended to make a U.S. attack on North Korea sound inevitable.

December 20, 2017

"America is drawing up plans for a 'bloody nose' military attack on North Korea to stop its nuclear weapons programme, The [London] Telegraph understands. The White House has 'dramatically' stepped up preparation for a military solution in recent months amid fears diplomacy is not working, well-placed sources said.

One option is destroying a launch site before it is used by the regime for a new missile test. Stockpiles of weapons could also be targeted. The hope is that military force would show Kim Jong-un that America is 'serious' about stopping further nuclear development and trigger negotiations. Three sources—two former US officials familiar with current thinking and a third figure in the administration—confirmed military options were being worked up."

—"Exclusive: US making plans for 'bloody nose' military attack on North Korea". [London Telegraph](#)

December 22, 2017

*John Bolton beats war drums—*

"North Korea could be hit by a pre-emptive military strike from the US as it continues to ramp up its missile fears to the globe. The rogue state has accelerated its nuclear and ballistic missile testing over the past year, sparking World War 3 fears. Former US Ambassador to the United Nations, John Bolton, said that the US President Donald Trump is "very close" to making a huge decision on the hermit kingdom. Speaking to Fox Business, Mr Bolton said: "I think the President shouldn't be waiting around. I think actually we are very close to a binary decision here.

"Either we leave North Korea with this ballistic missile capability and the possibility of putting a nuclear warhead under the nose cone. Or we take military pre-emptive action." "

—"North Korea WARNING: Trump 'very close' to pre-emptive strike decision amid WW3 threat". Darren Hunt.

### World War Three

Did you hear about the nuclear war?

It was over by half past four.

Most of the planet

went out the door

in that very short nuclear war.

While some folks were swelling with pride

a couple of billion died.

Bombs and radiation

swept over each nation

in that very brave nuclear war.

The people were dumber than dumb.

They never got rid of The Bomb

so it got rid of them—  
women children and men—  
in that one-hour nuclear war.

With a slightly different perspective  
there could have been a corrective  
but the people fell for Trump's invective  
in that terminal nuclear war.

\*\*\*

*Walt Gelles has published articles online at [Countercurrents.org](http://Countercurrents.org), [GlobalResearch.ca](http://GlobalResearch.ca), [OpEdNews.com](http://OpEdNews.com) and other websites.*

*This article was originally published by [Countercurrents](http://Countercurrents.org).*

*Featured image is from the author.*

The original source of this article is Global Research  
Copyright © [Walt Gelles](http://WaltGelles.com), Global Research, 2017

---

**[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)**

**[Become a Member of Global Research](#)**

Articles by: [Walt Gelles](http://WaltGelles.com)

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)

[www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca) contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)