

GOP Senator Says Trump Is Ready to Start War with North Korea, Which Would be “One of the Worst Catastrophic Events in History”

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

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It didn't get much notice, but Sen. Jim Risch made extremely alarming remarks on Sunday at the Munich Security Conference, in which he said President Donald Trump is prepared to start a “very, very brief” war with North Korea that would be “one of the worst catastrophic events in the history of our civilization.” Trump would go to these extraordinary lengths, the Idaho Republican said, in order to prevent the government of Kim Jong-un from developing the capacity to deliver a nuclear warhead to the U.S. via an intercontinental ballistic missile.

Kim claimed in his [2018 New Year's address](#) that North Korea can already strike all of the U.S. with nuclear weapons. While U.S. intelligence [does not believe](#) this is currently true, CIA Director Mike Pompeo [stated recently](#) that North Korea may be able to hit at least some of the U.S. mainland in a “handful of months.”

Risch will likely become chair of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, if the GOP maintains control of the Senate and the current chair, Sen. Bob Corker, R-Tenn., retires. Risch said he and Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H. — who was sitting next to him on stage at the conference in Germany — had “drilled down with the administration” on its North Korea policy. Risch emphasized that the Trump administration was not bluffing.

If Risch is correct, Trump is willing to cause “mass casualties the likes of which the planet has never seen” in a conflict with North Korea, rather than rely on principles of deterrence that have prevented nuclear war between the U.S. and Russia and the U.S. and China for many decades.

Risch's claims are congruent with Trump's [own statements](#), including that North Korea will face “fire and fury like the world has never seen” if it threatens the United States. Trump's National Security Adviser H.R. McMaster [recently said](#), “We're not committed to a peaceful [resolution], we're committed to a resolution. ... We have to be prepared if necessary to compel the denuclearization of North Korea without the cooperation of that regime.” Last August, Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., [spoke](#) of how “there is a military option to destroy North Korea's program and North Korea itself.”

None of Risch's remarks addressed the fact that the U.S. Constitution gives Congress, rather than the president, the power to declare war.

These are Risch's most disturbing words, with video below:

There is no more dangerous place on the earth than the Korean peninsula right now. ...

The president of the United States has said, and he is committed to, seeing that Kim Jong-un is not able to marry together a delivery system with a nuclear weapon that he can deliver to the United States. ...

The consequences of that are breathtaking when you think about how this could happen. ...

If this thing starts, it's going to be probably one of the one of the worst catastrophic events in the history of our civilization. It is going to be very, very brief. The end of it is going to see mass casualties the likes of which the planet has never seen. It will be of biblical proportions. ...

The president can do this quickly, and as I said, it is at his fingertips.

Risch's statement can be see in full [here](#), starting at 11:00, or read below:

Turning to North Korea, the answer I'm going to give is really quite easy to give, although the message is pretty dire. And that is that this is a really dangerous situation that we're facing right now on the Korea peninsula. I would argue that there is no, from a mass casualty standpoint, that there is no more dangerous place on the earth than the Korean peninsula right now.

This is all in the hands and the minds of a single person. And that of course is Kim Jong-un. What he does, what he decides to do, is going to be decisive of how this matter resolves. And it is not going to resolve well if he continues on the course that he is continuing on.

The president of the United States has said, and he is committed to, seeing that Kim Jong-un is not able to marry together a delivery system with a nuclear weapon that he can deliver to the United States. He has said that very clearly. That is, our president has said that very clearly. And anyone who doubts the president's commitment to see that that doesn't happen does so really at their own peril.

The consequences of that are breathtaking when you think about how this could happen. There is no "bloody nose" policy. Senator Shaheen and I drilled down with the administration on that, and nobody knows where that came from. It appeared in the national media, the administration says they've never used the term, they've never considered the strategy, there is no such thing.

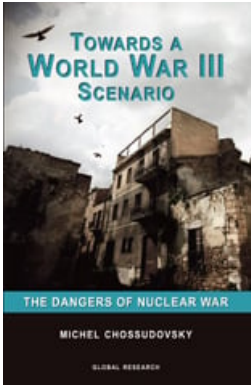
And if you think about it, it absolutely makes sense. If this thing starts, it's going to be probably one of the one of the worst catastrophic events in the history of our civilization. It is going to be very, very brief. The end of it is going to see mass casualties the likes of which the planet has never seen. It will be of biblical proportions.

Anyone who doubts that this president isn't committed to that, I would suggest that they step back, take a breath, listen to what he has said, review the facts on the ground. This president has at his fingertips the ability to dispense what he has said he's going to dispense, if the North Korean regime, if Kim Jong-un, that he is, uh, the president can do this quickly, and as I said, it is at his fingertips.

I respect any opinion that any of you may have regarding what's happened, what should happen, where it's going to go, but please, please, don't ignore

the facts that are there.

Risch's most significant words on North Korea were [first reported](#) by Tom Wright of the Brookings Institution.



[“Towards a World War III Scenario: The Dangers of Nuclear War”](#)

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only superpower, and diplomats work as salesmen for the defense industry, the whole world is recklessly endangered. If we must have a military, it belongs entirely in the public sector. No one should profit from mass death and destruction.

-Ellen Brown, author of 'Web of Debt' and president of the Public Banking Institute



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