

ATLANTIC SENTINEL

The view from across the Atlantic

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Don't Risk War with North Korea, Experts Warn

Experts doubt it's possible to mount a limited strike without igniting all-out war on the Korean Peninsula.



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American president Donald Trump's advisors have floated the possibility of what they call a "bloody nose" attack on North Korea.

The Wall Street Journal reports that officials are "quietly debating whether it's possible to mount a limited military strike against North Korean sites without igniting an all-out war on the Korean Peninsula."

Experts doubt it.

- **Van Jackson**, a former nuclear strategist in the Pentagon, argues that the assumption Kim Jong-un would not retaliate is a "sucker's bet" and the price could be hundreds of thousands of deaths. North Korea's dictator would be likely to interpret a "bloody-nose" attack as the beginning of an all-out war, tempting him to retaliate immediately and in full — including with nuclear weapons — to maximize his chances of survival.
- **Abraham M. Denmark**, a former deputy assistant secretary of defense for East Asia, agrees. He writes in *Foreign Affairs* that North Korea's nuclear program is closely tied to the legitimacy of the Kim dynasty. "Nuclear weapons are not only strategically important but fundamental to how the regime justifies its rule. From Pyongyang's perspective, attacking North Korea's nuclear weapons and missiles but sparing its leadership may be a distinction without a difference."
- **In-Bum Chun**, a retired South Korean general and former deputy commander of the First Republic of Korea Army, warns that Northern soldiers are so brainwashed that any conflict would turn into a fight to



An American soldier participates in a joint military exercise with South Korean armed forces at Camp Red Cloud near the city of Uijeongbu, April 2003 (USAF/Efren Lopez)

the death. “I try to explain to the Americans — if we have to go into North Korea, it is not going to be like going into Iraq or Afghanistan. It’s not going to be like toppling [Saddam] Hussein. This would be more like trying to get rid of Allah.”