

Nautilus Reports on Nuclear War-fighting Strategy in Korea

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"Vulnerability of North Korean Forces, Vol. I: Evaluation of Vulnerability of North Korean Divisions to Tactical Nuclear Weapons," Science Applications Inc., March 1978. This study was released to the Nautilus Institute under the US Freedom of Information Act.

"Vulnerability of North Korean Forces, Vol. II: Korean Scenario and Target Arrays," Science Applications Inc., March 1978. This study was released to the Nautilus Institute under the US Freedom of Information Act.

Read Volume I [here](#).

Read Volume II [here](#).

In 1976-78 while the Carter administration was struggling with its withdrawal policy for US forces in Korea, the Defense Nuclear Agency was examining how to use tactical nuclear weapons to coerce North Korea on the battlefield. This study by Science Applications Inc. concludes that the use of tactical nuclear weapons would be most effective against DPRK armored units attacking south of the DMZ. Indeed, the study suggested that at least 30 airburst nuclear weapons would be used in an area only 9 miles away from Seoul and some 15 miles south of the DMZ [Page 5-1, 5-2, Vol. I].

The release of this heavily-redacted study follows on the last Global Disclosure release of the Standard Operation Procedures for the delivery systems of US nuclear forces then located in South Korea [<http://www.nautilus.org/foia/NOSOPROK.html>]. The next release will deal with military exercises involving nuclear -armed artillery in South Korea. These documents suggest that North Koreans may have deeply entrenched nuclear threat perceptions that drive their own strategy to acquire nuclear weapons today. Readers will find detailed summary of these documents in Pacific Powderkeg [<http://www.nautilus.org/DPRKBriefingBook/nuclearweapons/PacificPowderkegbyPeterHayes.pdf>] at pages 62-68.

Read Volume I [here](#).

Read Volume II [here](#).

The study states:

"The key objectives are to determine the vulnerability of deployed NK divisions as a function of quality and quantity of resources in the attack, to identify driving factors affecting vulnerability and to define attractive concepts for enhancing allied capability in Korea. Some attention is also directed to a comparison of the asymmetries existing between NK and Soviet forces under nuclear engagements.

This research was sponsored by the Field Command and the Vulnerability Directorate of Defense Nuclear Agency. The Nuclear Plans and Policy of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans, Headquarters, US Army and the Intelligence Analysis Group (IAG), US Army, assisted in the definition of nuclear resources, operational concepts and enemy threat for the Korean theater." [Page 1]

"The evaluation of NK division vulnerability centers on individual enemy targets or units deployed on the terrain, the capability of allied forces to acquire these targets, the damage achieved against these targets from an appropriate combination of weapons effects, and the significance of this damage on the performance of combat missions. This examination reveals some of the critical factors affecting allied system capabilities, operational procedures, and goals/objectives that can be employed to increase the vulnerability of deployed NK tactical forces. In addition, some comparisons are made between the vulnerabilities of Soviet and NK forces to provide an improved basis for extending the results developed from detailed examinations of possible nuclear conflicts in Europe to the less definitive and heretofore lightly treated Korean theater." [Page 2]

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Nautilus Institute

2342 Shattuck Ave. #300, Berkeley, CA 94704 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:

nautilus@nautilus.org