

US Post-Cold War Nuclear Planning in Korea

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Following the ending of the Cold War and the [withdrawal](#) of nuclear weapons from South Korea, US planning has continued for nuclear strike missions against North Korea.

Delivery of non-strategic bombs is now the responsibility of fighter wings based in the continental United States. In 1998, for example, F-15E fighter bombers of the 4th Fighter Wing at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in North Carolina simulated long-range nuclear strikes against North Korea. Strategic nuclear systems earmarked for Korean scenarios include Trident submarines and long-range bombers.

Missile defense [planning](#) on the Korean Peninsula, moreover, suggests a US posture that is highly focused on a need for preemptive strikes against North Korean ballistic missile facilities in the early phases of a war with the North.

These issues, for which background documents are available in the right-hand bar, are described more in the article "Preemptive Posturing" from the September/October 2002 issue of the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists.

FOIA Documents

>> 4th Fighter Wing [simulated nuclear strike](#) against North Korea, 1998.

>> 1994 Nuclear Posture Review discussion of impact of forward deployment of nuclear weapons in South Korea. General NPR documents available here.

>> 7th Air Force, briefing, "[Theater Missile Defense](#)," n.d. [1998] (warning: 8.5 MB).

>> **NEW** *The Nation*, "Endgame in Korea," November 25, 2002, refers to "Preemptive Posturing" and 4th Fighter Wing simulated nuclear strikes against North Korea.

>> Article: Hans M. Kristensen, "Preemptive Posturing," Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, September/October 2002, pp. 54-59.

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