



INTERNATIONAL

NORTH KOREA TAKES THE SPOTLIGHT

– NEW MISSILES, NEW THREATS AND NEW REALITIES FOR THE WORLD TO FACE



Over the summer, North Korea tested the patience of the United States – and frightened the world – by making huge strides in its nuclear weapons development program.

TESTING, TESTING

On July 3, the isolated Asian nation successfully tested an **intercontinental ballistic missile** (ICBM) for the first time. Capable of reaching Alaska, this missile was surpassed by another on July 29: one that could reach deep into the U.S. mainland.

Both test missiles fell harmlessly into the ocean, but they were intended to send “a grave warning to the U.S.” that it “would not go scot-free if it dares provoke” North Korea, the country’s state-run news agency declared.

Then, in August, an even graver reality: U.S. intelligence officials concluded that North Korea had produced a miniaturized nuclear

THE NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY

Nuclear weapons were first used by the United States against Japan during World War II. Since then, more and more countries have acquired nuclear arms. Today, most of them are held by the U.S. and Russia. The United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea have smaller numbers.

In 1970, as the world was becoming aware of the futility of the arms race, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty was created to slow the spread of these terribly destructive weapons. So far, 191 countries have signed this treaty.

By signing, countries that do not possess nuclear weapons agree never to acquire them; countries that do possess nuclear arms agree to share the benefits of peaceful nuclear technology and pledge to work towards disarming, and eventually eliminating, their **arsenal**.

What about countries like North Korea, that refuse to sign the treaty and decide to pursue nuclear arms development? It’s up to the **United Nations Security Council** to take action to try to bring **rogue nations** in line.

warhead that could fit inside its missiles. In all, officials believe that North Korea now has an **arsenal** of 30 to 60 nuclear bombs.

The **rogue nation**, which conducted its first nuclear test in 2006 in defiance of **United Nations Security Council** resolutions, now poses a real security threat to the United States, as well as to U.S. allies South Korea and Japan.

DEFINITIONS

ARSENAL: all the weapons and equipment that a country has

INTERCONTINENTAL BALLISTIC MISSILE: a guided missile with a minimum range of 5500 kilometres, primarily designed for nuclear weapons delivery

ROGUE NATION: a nation which acts in an unpredictable or belligerent manner towards other nations

SECURITY COUNCIL: a key division of the United Nations made up of five veto-wielding permanent members – the U.S., Britain, China, France, and Russia – and ten rotating members. It is often called into session to respond quickly to international crises.

UNITED NATIONS: an international organization of 193 member countries, formed in 1945 to increase political and economic cooperation, improve human rights and reduce global conflicts



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RAPID ESCALATION

On July 30, in response to North Korea's actions, the U.S. military activated its Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD), an anti-ballistic missile system designed to shoot down a range of missiles. The military used it to destroy a medium-range test missile. Then, the U.S. flew two B-1 supersonic bombers over South Korea.

Following these shows of force, on August 4, the U.S. asked the Security Council to impose harsh economic sanctions on the North. On August 5, the council voted 15-0 in favour of this request.

The sanctions will ban countries from buying seafood, iron and lead from North Korea. If enforced, the measures will cost the nation an estimated \$1 billion (U.S.) per year, or about one-third of its export revenue. The sanctions also prohibit countries from hiring North Korean workers and from making any investments or undertaking any business ventures with the nation.

CHINA HOLDS THE KEY

These sanctions are just the latest in a series of measures that have been imposed on the North since 2006. So far, none have succeeded in curbing North Korea's nuclear ambitions. So why is the U.S. trying again? Partly because, for the first time ever, China intends to enforce the sanctions.

China is North Korea's most important ally. Most of the North's food and energy supplies come from China, and more than 90 percent of North Korea's total trade is with this next-door neighbour.

That means that China has the most influence over the North, but in the past, this Asian superpower has ignored sanctions against its ally. This time, however, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said his country is "100 percent" committed to enforcing them.

NORTH KOREA RESPONDS

North Korea was outraged by the harsh new sanctions, and a war of words between the North and the U.S. began.

First North Korea said it would exact revenge on America for the economic losses that will result from the sanctions. In response, on August 8, U.S. President Donald Trump warned that "North Korea best not make any more threats to the United States. They will be met with fire and fury like the world has never seen."

Hours later, Kim Jong-un's regime threatened to attack the U.S. territory of Guam in the Western Pacific. This threat was necessary, said General Kim Rak Gyom, the head of North Korea's strategic forces, because "Sound dialogue is not possible with such a guy bereft of reason and only absolute force can work on him."

U.S. Secretary of Defense James Mattis countered by saying that if North Korea attacked Guam, it would risk the "end of its regime and the destruction of its people."

CALLING FOR CALM

In mid-August, China called for calm, urging President Trump and Kim Jong-un to avoid "any words or actions" that might cause further tensions. Threats of war weren't going

NORTH KOREA - THE HERMIT KINGDOM

North Korea, located between Japan and China, is about twice the size of Nova Scotia. It was created in 1948 and has 25.4 million citizens who are taught to have an almost religious love for their leader, Kim Jong-un, his father Kim Jong-il, and his grandfather, Kim Il-sung.

North Koreans' thinking is strongly influenced by their government. Travel is highly restricted, borders are tightly controlled and the only information available is from a state-run media.

Unfortunately, life in North Korea is not as rosy as the government says it is. The United Nations has accused the regime of brutal crimes against humanity, including imprisoning up to 200,000 people for political reasons. Extreme poverty and hunger are also major problems, partly because much of the state's scarce resources go to the military; North Korea has one of the world's largest standing armies.

Technically, the nation is still at war with South Korea and the U.S. because the Korean War (1950-1953) ended with an armistice, not a peace treaty. More than 28,000 U.S. soldiers are stationed in South Korea.

to solve the problem – and war wasn't the solution, either.

"China calls on all parties to avoid any words or actions that might escalate the situation and make even greater efforts to resolve the issue via talks," said a statement issued by China's foreign ministry. ★

DEFINITIONS

ARMISTICE: a state of peace agreed to between opponents so they can discuss peace terms

BEREFT: lacking in something

SANCTIONS: action by one or more states toward another nation to try to force it to comply with legal obligations



ON THE LINES

Answer the following in complete sentences:

1. How big is North Korea?

2. What is the population of this country? _____

3. Name the leader of this country. _____

4. Briefly describe what life in North Korea is like.

5. How many nuclear bombs does North Korea have?

6. What does ICBM stand for?

7. What did North Korea test in July? What was the purpose of these launches?

8. How did the United States respond militarily to these tests?

9. What did the United States ask the Security Council to impose on North Korea in response to these tests, and what was the outcome of this request?

10. Describe the sanctions that were imposed on North Korea.



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BEYOND THE LINES

- 5mit
1. North Korea is not the first nation to develop nuclear weapons in defiance of the international community. Research other examples. How did the world respond?
 2. Research the history of North Korea and its war with South Korea. Learn more about the first chapters of this ongoing story.

JUST TALK ABOUT IT

- 5mit
1. What, as you see it, are the possible advantages of President Trump's tough-talking approach to North Korea? What are the potential disadvantages? If you were the U.S. president, how would you approach this decades-old crisis? Explain.
 2. When in conflict of any kind, it is important to consider the motivations of the other side. List as many reasons as you can think of to explain the North Korean regime's determination to develop its weapons program. Which of these motives do you think are most important? Least important? Explain.
 3. Consider this quote from Carl Baker at the Pacific Forum of the Center for Strategic and International Studies: "*Every U.S. administration, as they have looked at this problem, has said that all options are available. But that's not really true. We really don't have a military option.*"
 - a) What is your understanding of this statement?
 - b) For what reasons do you agree with this statement? For what reasons do you disagree?
 4. *What if...* you and your family had no access to information outside that provided by your government?
 5. While many countries, especially those in the West, are strongly opposed to North Korea's desire to build nuclear weapons, the nation's government says it has a right to pursue this aim. For what reasons do you agree with North Korea's position? For what reasons do you disagree?

BETWEEN THE LINES

An *inference* is a conclusion drawn from evidence. A *plausible inference* is supported by evidence in the article and is consistent with known facts outside of the article.

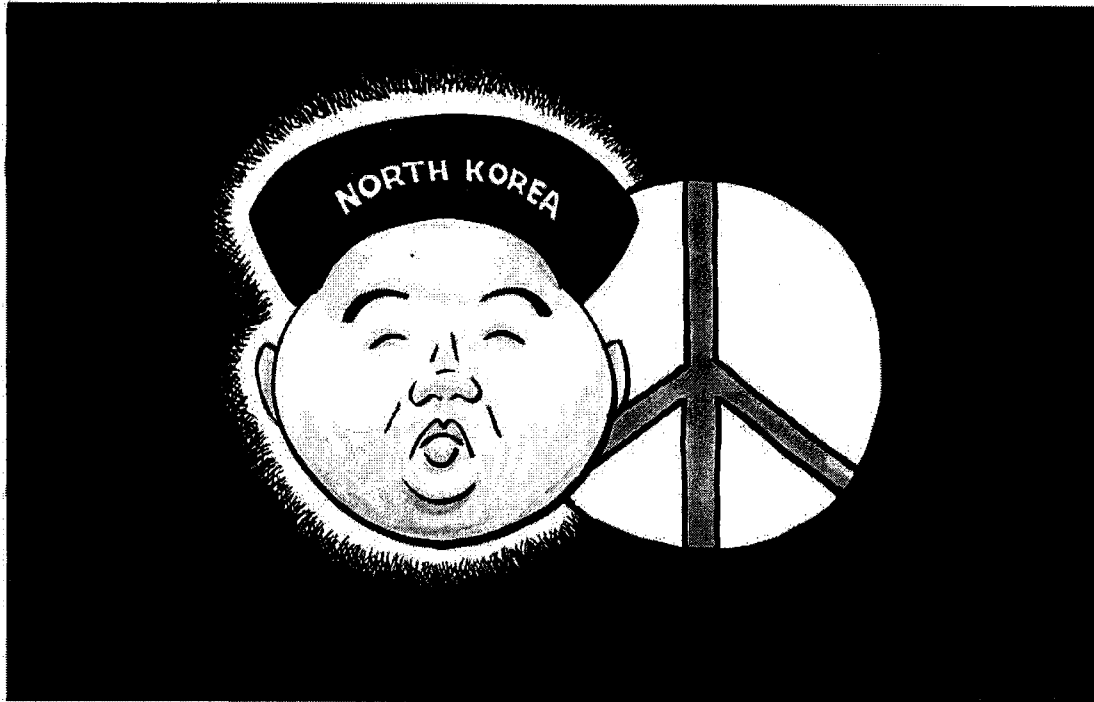
What inference(s) can you draw from the fact that China is planning to enforce sanctions for the first time?



EDITORIAL CARTOON

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Eclipse

MARGULIES
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www.jimandmarymargulies.com

YOUR TASK:

Examine the editorial cartoon. Then, use the questions below to help you decode the cartoon's message. Be specific and include as many details as possible in your answers. *Note:* Background information on what editorial cartoons are and what techniques cartoonists use is available for download at www.lesplan.com/en/subscribers

INITIAL READING: What can an initial look reveal?

1. Glance quickly at the cartoon. What is your first impression – your “gut response”?
2. Consider your background knowledge. What do you already know about the context of the cartoon – the time, place or situation? (List key facts.)

CLOSER LOOK: What's happening in the cartoon?

3. Find **labels**. How do the words (or numbers) in the drawing express ideas or identify people or objects? What message do the labels send?
4. Identify the **symbols**. What do these signs or images represent? How do they add to the message of the cartoon?
5. Look at the **composition**. Where are figures or objects located or arranged in the cartoon? What message does this send about their importance?
6. Consider the **action** in the cartoon. What is happening? Describe what you see.

DRAW CONCLUSIONS: What overall impression can you draw?

7. Identify possible biases. Whose perspective or point of view is expressed in the cartoon?
8. Explain the overall message of the cartoon in a paragraph. (Remember, a good interpretation is *specific and detailed*.) ★

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