

# Hawaii's "false alarm" and the advanced preparations for war against North Korea

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The "false alarm" delivered to a population of 1.5 million in the US Pacific island state of Hawaii on Saturday morning has laid bare the clear and present danger of a nuclear war.

Cell phones lit up with the text message "BALLISTIC MISSILE THREAT INBOUND TO HAWAII. SEEK IMMEDIATE SHELTER. THIS IS NOT A DRILL." Television and radio broadcasts were interrupted with the chilling announcement that "A missile may impact on sea or land within minutes. This is not a drill."

For 38 minutes, residents of and visitors to Hawaii were confronted face to face with nuclear Armageddon. Parents frantically sought to find and protect their children, families said last goodbyes and people desperately sought largely nonexistent shelter in anticipation of a nuclear blast.

The fact that this event is so rapidly disappearing from the front pages of major newspapers and is being reduced to a secondary story by television news is itself a disturbing indication of how much more is involved in the Hawaii ballistic missile warning than the public is being told.

The corporate media, working in tight coordination with the US government, is in full containment mode. Monday night, all three US television networks broadcast virtually identical reports based on their admission to Hawaii's Emergency Management System bunker to support the official story that the chaos was caused by the inadvertent error of a single employee.

The official reaction to what constitutes a social crime committed against an entire population is unfolding according to a well-established pattern. The event and its implications are being minimized. No one is going to conduct an investigation and present findings to the public. There will be no televised public hearings before the US Congress.

The explanation being put out by the state and federal authorities, and parroted by the media, fobs off the

nuclear war alert as a mere accident triggered by a single careless worker at Hawaii's Emergency Management System. The unnamed individual supposedly selected the wrong computer menu option, keying in "Missile Alert" instead of "Test Missile Alert."

There is no reason that anyone should blindly accept this official story as true. Given the record of the US government in staging provocations and launching wars based upon lies, not only severe skepticism, but outright suspicion is called for.

How could such an accident happen? Once again, a major public event is shrouded in secrecy. Why has the individual allegedly responsible for the "accident" not been named? The claim that the person is being protected against retaliation by enraged citizens is not credible. At the very least, the single individual who is being blamed for the colossal error should have the right to tell his or her side of the story. And even if the incident was triggered by a single mistaken keypunch, that does not explain why it took a full, excruciating 38 minutes for the authorities to send out a follow-up message announcing that the warning had been a "false alarm."

Even if one were to accept the authorities' version of events as good coin, such an "accident" constitutes a devastating indictment of the criminal indifference of the US ruling establishment toward the lives and safety of the American people. The existence of such a ramshackle system, employing absurdly primitive software and technology as the supposed first line of defense, only makes clear that the ruling class accepts that nuclear war will mean the deaths of millions and has no serious plan to protect anyone. Just as with every other disaster, natural or otherwise, the incident in Hawaii has exposed the total absence of essential infrastructure and social planning.

That these events unfolded in Hawaii, the scene of the so-called "sneak attack" of December 7, 1941, the "date which will live in infamy" of American lore, make them

all the more telling. The headquarters of the US Pacific Command, Hawaii boasts 11 separate military bases comprising units from every branch of the US military.

The significance of Saturday's nuclear war alert becomes clear only within the context of the advanced state of preparations for a US war of aggression against nuclear-armed North Korea.

A glimpse into the scope of these preparations was provided Monday in a front-page article published by the *New York Times*. Absurdly, the piece begins, "Across the military, officers and troops are preparing for a war they hope will not come." Yet the substance of the article makes clear that what is being prepared is not a defense against a North Korean attack, but rather the invasion and conquest of the East Asian country.

The article describes an exercise last month involving 48 Apache gunships and Chinook cargo helicopters practicing "moving troops and equipment under live artillery fire to assault targets." Two days later, it reports, paratroopers from the 82nd Airborne Division staged a jump in Nevada that "simulated a foreign invasion."

Even more ominously, the *Times* reports that for the first time in years, more than 1,000 US Army reservists have been called up for active duty to man "mobilization centers" used for the rapid movement of troops overseas.

The preparations also include a plan to deploy large numbers of Special Operations troops to the Koran Peninsula under the cover of providing security for next month's Winter Olympics.

More and more, these actions begin to resemble the run-up to the US war of aggression against Iraq in 2003, with the exception that this time around the American public is being given no warning of impending mass carnage, outside of the raving tweets of the US commander-in-chief.

That the *Times* article appeared at all—under the byline of Eric Schmitt, the *Times'* chief "embedded" reporter and a faithful conduit for the Pentagon and CIA—makes it clear that the military preparations are of such a magnitude that they are becoming broadly known, requiring the "newspaper of record" to attempt to manage the news.

The article also points to divisions between the White House and the Pentagon and within the US military command itself over impending war with North Korea. Trump and his aides reportedly are toying with what has been termed a "bloody nose" attack targeting North Korean nuclear weapons, based on the assumption that Pyongyang would not retaliate.

Within this context, the "accidental" nuclear alert in Hawaii emerges as a necessary link in the chain of preparations for a catastrophic war. Was the "false alarm" itself one more military exercise? Were the people of Hawaii used as guinea pigs to test the public reaction should a US invasion of North Korea prompt the government of Kim Jong Un to fire off its missiles before they could be destroyed?

There is another possible explanation for the false alarm and the prolonged wait for it to be rescinded. The *Times* also published an article Monday referring to the 1983 KAL 007 incident as an example of how an unintended nuclear war could erupt. It fails to explain, however, that the Korean Airlines passenger jet was shot down by Soviet air defense fighters after it deliberately flew over Sakhalin, the site of numerous top secret Soviet military bases, as part of an operation coordinated with US intelligence agencies. A US spy plane was flying on a parallel course, shadowing the KAL flight, observing the responses of Soviet nuclear installations, radar stations and air bases.

There is no question that once the incoming missile alert was issued in Hawaii, the government and the military, not only in North Korea, but also in China and Russia, were compelled to make their own rapid estimates as to what it meant and how they should respond. The logical conclusion would be that Washington was staging a false pretext for all-out war.

No doubt, military units were placed on alert, weapons were readied or moved and other preparations for possible nuclear conflict were carried out, all under the watchful eyes of US spy satellites, providing intelligence that could prove vital for a planned US invasion of North Korea.

Whatever the cause of Saturday's nuclear scare, one thing is certain. The missile alert staged in Hawaii constitutes a deadly serious warning. It has exposed before millions the very real threat of nuclear war.

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