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How much power does a president have to lead the U.S. to nuclear war?

By Allison Michaels August 11 at 3:00 AM

On Tuesday, [The Washington Post](#) reported that North Korea successfully produced a miniaturized warhead that can fit inside its missiles. The advancement indicates a major step in the country's nuclear capabilities.

While American presidents have been faced with [threats from North Korea](#) for decades, this development may be the beginning of a new era in U.S.-North Korea relations.

In response to the news, President Trump issued a [very strong statement](#): "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."

Since Trump made those comments, [tensions have grown between the U.S. and North Korea](#), raising alarm and questions about what may happen next.

This week's episode of the "[Can He Do That?](#)" podcast focuses on what may be the biggest "can he do that?" question of all: Can the president lead us to nuclear war?

Also, how much power is concentrated in the hands of the president when it

comes to launching nuclear weapons? And, historically, why has our relationship been so tense with North Korea?

The Post's White House reporter [Jenna Johnson](#) is on the show to assess Trump's actions thus far. Plus, we talk to [Jonathan Pollack](#), senior fellow at the Brookings Institution and author of the book “[No Exit: North Korea, Nuclear Weapons and International Security](#).” And Duke University professor of political science and public policy [Peter Feaver](#) talks about the process in place to launch nuclear weapons. Feaver worked on the National Security Council for President George W. Bush and on counter proliferation for President Bill Clinton.

Listen to the full episode below.

Each week, ‘[Can He Do That?](#)’ examines the powers and limitations of the American presidency, focusing on one area where Trump is seemingly breaking precedent. We answer the critical questions about what today’s news means for the future of the highest office in the nation.

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