

National Guard, Pentagon hold drills testing preparations for nuclear attack on the US

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With little public notice, government agencies at the local, state and federal level, in conjunction with the Pentagon, began exercises at the end of last month war gaming the reaction of emergency responders and the military to the detonation of a nuclear bomb in a major American city.

Contemporaneous exercises are taking place around the country involving thousands of emergency responders as well as members of National Guard units in New York and Michigan along with soldiers under the auspice of the US Army's Northern Command (NORTHCOM).

The Ardent Sentry exercises, a NORTHCOM training series which was initiated in 2004, have been focused on developing military support for the National Guard and local authorities in the event of natural or nuclear disasters.

This year, however, Ardent Sentry 17, which took place between April 24 and April 30, was focused on developing coordination between the National Guard, NORTHCOM and local authorities in the event of the detonation of a nuclear bomb in a major American city.

Approximately 80 New York National Guard soldiers took part in exercises which simulated the detonation of a 10 kiloton nuclear bomb on the New Jersey side of the Lincoln Tunnel, which thousands of commuters use to get to and from work in New York City every day. This was followed by full-scale training for soldiers in medical treatment, decontamination and search and rescue operations at Fort Dix in New Jersey.

"An IND [improvised nuclear device] goes off in New York City; a million people killed right up front, and 6 million people needing shelter and food and medical help for at least four days in the most complicated megalopolis in the world. This is graduate level stuff," New York Air National Guard Brig. Gen.

Timothy LaBarge, director of staff for the New York Air National Guard and commander for the drill, told attendees at a planning session in March.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency also participated in the simulated nuclear detonation in New Jersey under the signature "Operation Gotham Shield." Emergency responders from multiple jurisdictions ran through joint response exercises at MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey simulating what it would take to provide aid to thousands of injured people.

Members of the Michigan National Guard's 46th Military Police Command also participated in the Ardent Sentry exercises last week, simulating their response to a 10-kiloton nuclear bomb being dropped on downtown Indianapolis, Indiana.

The US Army's main component of Ardent Sentry was the Guardian Response 17 exercises involving 4,100 soldiers at its massive 1,000-acre Muscatatuck Urban Training Center near Butlerville, Indiana.

The training grounds were prepared to simulate the aftermath of a nuclear attack, complete with partially demolished buildings and flaming automobiles. Video published by the military shows personnel in rubber hazmat suits digging through rubble, calmly carting mannequins and practicing decontaminating actors playing victims irradiated by the fallout.

Slightly smaller than the bomb the United States dropped on Hiroshima at the end of World War II, an attack by a 10-kiloton nuclear bomb would completely demolish most of the buildings within a one-mile radius of the blast zone. The simulated blasts would have a devastating impact on New Jersey and Manhattan and effectively eliminate Indianapolis from existence.

Emergency responders would not be seeking to aid those in areas immediately affected by the blast, as radiation levels would be too high and most people

would have been vaporized, but areas within a 12-mile radius in which windows would be blown out and survivors trapped under debris.

By some estimates an attack of such a magnitude on Indianapolis, a city of nearly a million people, would result immediately in nearly 60,000 injuries and fatalities. New Jersey would see at least 70,000 casualties from such a blast.

On top of the massive destruction the lingering toxic effects of the nuclear fallout would affect tens of thousands more. A ground blast would shoot a cloud of nuclear fallout into the sky which would extend for more than 50 miles, impacting potentially millions of people.

In their comments to the media, military officials have insisted that the exercises are not related to the supposed threat from North Korea. “This exercise is annual. It’s not prescribed with any of the world events going on right now,” Brigadier General White told Battle Creek, Michigan’s News Channel 3. “It’s not a reaction to anything going on in the bigger picture. We are charged with helping the nation in a time of disaster and that’s exactly what we train for and do.”

However, these exercises are taking place as the Trump administration escalates tensions with North Korea, hyping the threat posed by the country’s small nuclear arsenal and repeatedly threatening to launch a preemptive war. Lurid claims have been promoted in the media that the government of Kim Jong Un is close to developing nuclear tipped missiles which could potentially hit the US mainland.

Citing Trump’s threats to North Korea, the Hawaii legislature passed a resolution last month calling on the Pentagon to assist it in the updating of its long defunct system of nuclear fallout shelters.



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