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NATIONAL: SPLIT ON TRUMP HANDLING NORTH KOREA

Plurality say “fire and fury” comments make things worse

West Long Branch, NJ – Americans are divided when it comes to their confidence in Donald Trump’s ability to deal with the threat posed by North Korea. The *Monmouth University Poll* finds a plurality who say that the president’s “fire and fury” statement is making things worse. And most expect that Trump’s probable response if North Korea actually went ahead with a missile test near Guam is likely to escalate the situation.

The public is split in their faith in Pres. Trump’s ability to deal with the North Korea situation. About 4-in-10 (42%) say they feel confident and 38% do not feel confident while another 20% are unsure. When those who are unsure are asked which way they lean, the proportion of Americans who feel confident goes up 6 points to 48% while the number who do not feel confident increases 11 points to 49%. Overall, 84% of Republicans either feel confident or lean toward feeling confident, 51% of independents say the same, and just 14% of Democrats agree with that sentiment.

Most Americans (81%) have heard about Trump’s response that North Korea “will be met with fire and fury” if they threaten the United States. Nearly half (47%) say that statements like this are making the situation worse, just 20% say they make the situation better, and 28% say they have no impact on how the situation will ultimately turn out. Among Republicans, just 18% say Trump’s pronouncements make things worse while 36% say they improve the situation. Among independents, 42% say the president’s words are making the situation worse and 21% say they are making the situation better. Most Democrats (78%) say Trump’s statements are having a negative effect and just 4% say they are improving the situation.

“There’s a real question in the public’s mind about whether Trump in the Situation Room behaves differently than Trump in public,” said Patrick Murray, director of the independent Monmouth University Polling Institute.

More than half the public say they are worried – 28% a great deal and 32% some – that North Korea will launch a nuclear missile against the U.S. or one of its territories. Just under 4-in-10 say they do not worry about this much (17%) or at all (21%). Nearly 3-in-4 Democrats (74%) are joined by 56% of Republicans and 53% of independents in expressing at least some concern that this type of attack will happen.

Most Americans (70%) believe that Trump will react in a way that escalates the situation if North Korea fires non-nuclear test missiles near Guam. Just 15% think that the president will react in a way that calms the situation.

“While public confidence in the president’s ability to handle North Korea is evenly split, most are fairly certain that Trump will not look for a diplomatic solution if that nation does decide to test its missiles near Guam,” said Murray.

The *Monmouth University Poll* was conducted by telephone from August 10 to 14, 2017 with 805 adults in the United States. The results in this release have a margin of error of +/- 3.5 percent. The poll was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute in West Long Branch, NJ.

QUESTIONS AND RESULTS

(* Some columns may not add to 100% due to rounding.)

[Q1-10 previously released.]

11. Have you heard about North Korea’s recent nuclear missile testing program, or have you not heard about this?

	August 2017
Yes, have heard	88%
No, have not heard	12%
(n)	(805)

12. How much do you worry about the possibility that North Korea will attack the United States or one of its territories with a nuclear missile – a great deal, some, not much, or not at all?

	August 2017
Great deal	28%
Some	32%
Not much	17%
Not at all	21%
(VOL) Don't know	1%
(n)	(805)

13. Are you confident or not confident in President Trump’s ability to deal with the North Korea situation, or are you not sure? [If NOT SURE: Do you lean more toward feeling confident or more toward feeling not confident?]

	August 2017
Confident	42%
Not sure, lean confident	6%
Not sure	3%
Not sure, lean not confident	11%
Not confident	38%
(n)	(805)

14. Have you heard about President Trump’s recent statement that North Korea “will be met with fire and fury” if they threaten the U.S., or have you not heard this?

	August 2017
Yes, have heard	81%
No, have not heard	19%
(n)	(805)

15. Do you think Trump’s public statements like this about North Korea are making the situation better, making the situation worse, or have no real impact on how the situation will turn out?

	August 2017
Better	20%
Worse	47%
No real impact	28%
(VOL) Don't know	6%
(n)	(805)

16. If North Korea fires non-nuclear test missiles near the U.S. territory of Guam, do you think Trump is more likely to react in a way that calms the situation or more likely to act in a way that escalates the situation?

	August 2017
Calms the situation	15%
Escalates the situation	70%
(VOL) Neither, other	6%
(VOL) Don't know	10%
(n)	(805)

[Q17-23 held for future release.]

METHODOLOGY

The *Monmouth University Poll* was sponsored and conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute from August 10 to 14, 2017 with a national random sample of 805 adults age 18 and older, in English. This includes 401 contacted by a live interviewer on a landline telephone and 404 contacted by a live interviewer on a cell phone. Telephone numbers were selected through random digit dialing and landline respondents were selected with a modified Trolldahl-Carter youngest adult household screen. Monmouth is responsible for all aspects of the survey design, data weighting and analysis. Final sample is weighted for region, age, education, gender and race based on US Census information. Data collection support provided by Braun Research (field) and SSI (RDD sample). For results based on this sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling has a maximum margin of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points (unadjusted for sample design). Sampling error can be larger for sub-groups (see table below). In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

DEMOGRAPHICS (weighted)	
Self-Reported	
27% Republican	
42% Independent	
32% Democrat	
48% Male	
52% Female	
31% 18-34	
34% 35-54	
35% 55+	
65% White	
12% Black	
15% Hispanic	
7% Asian/Other	

MARGIN OF ERROR		<i>unweighted</i>	<i>moe</i>
		<i>sample</i>	<i>(+/-)</i>
TOTAL		805	3.5%
REGISTERED VOTER	Yes	706	3.7%
	No	99	9.9%
SELF-REPORTED	Republican	213	6.7%
PARTY ID	Independent	335	5.4%
	Democrat	237	6.4%
IDEOLOGY	Liberal	181	7.3%
	Moderate	302	5.6%
	Conservative	276	5.9%
GENDER	Male	406	4.9%
	Female	399	4.9%
AGE	18-34	185	7.2%
	35-54	297	5.7%
	55+	320	5.5%
RACE	White non-Hispanic	549	4.2%
	Other	222	6.6%
COLLEGE GRADUATE	No degree	421	4.8%
	4 year degree	376	5.1%
INCOME	<\$50K	252	6.2%
	\$50 to <100K	223	6.6%
	\$100K+	259	6.1%
2016 VOTE BY	Trump 10+pts	289	5.8%
COUNTY	Swing< 10pts	179	7.3%
	Clinton 10+pts	337	5.3%

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		TOTAL	REGISTERED TO VOTE		PARTY ID			POLITICAL IDEOLOGY			GENDER
			Yes	No	Rep	Ind	Dem	Lib	Mod	Con	Male
11. Have you heard about North Korea's recent nuclear missile testing program, or have you not heard about this?	Yes, have heard	88%	90%	76%	90%	87%	88%	85%	89%	90%	90%
	No, have not heard	12%	10%	24%	10%	13%	12%	15%	11%	10%	10%

		GENDER	AGE 3-WAY			RACE		COLLEGE GRAD		INCOME
		Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White non-Hisp	Hsp-Blk-Asn-Oth	No degree	4 yr degree	<\$50K
11. Have you heard about North Korea's recent nuclear missile testing program, or have you not heard about this?	Yes, have heard	86%	80%	90%	93%	90%	83%	85%	94%	82%
	No, have not heard	14%	20%	10%	7%	10%	17%	15%	6%	18%

		INCOME		2016 MARGIN by COUNTY		
		\$50-100K	\$100K+	Trump 10+pts	Swing <10pts	Clinton 10+pts
11. Have you heard about North Korea's recent nuclear missile testing program, or have you not heard about this?	Yes, have heard	88%	98%	88%	89%	87%
	No, have not heard	12%	2%	12%	11%	13%

		TOTAL	REGISTERED TO VOTE		PARTY ID			POLITICAL IDEOLOGY		
			Yes	No	Rep	Ind	Dem	Lib	Mod	Con
12. How much do you worry about the possibility that North Korea will attack the United States or one of its territories with a nuclear missile - a great deal, some, not much, or not at all?	Great deal	28%	28%	28%	25%	23%	39%	32%	27%	27%
	Some	32%	33%	25%	31%	30%	35%	32%	37%	30%
	Not much	17%	18%	15%	17%	21%	11%	19%	16%	18%
	Not at all	21%	20%	30%	25%	23%	15%	16%	19%	24%
	[VOL] Dont know_Refused	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	0%	1%	1%	1%

		GENDER		AGE 3-WAY			RACE		COLLEGE GRAD
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White non-Hisp	Hsp-Blk-Asn-Oth	No degree
12. How much do you worry about the possibility that North Korea will attack the United States or one of its territories with a nuclear missile - a great deal, some, not much, or not at all?	Great deal	19%	37%	23%	31%	30%	25%	34%	30%
	Some	26%	37%	33%	30%	32%	33%	30%	31%
	Not much	23%	12%	19%	16%	17%	19%	15%	16%
	Not at all	30%	13%	24%	22%	19%	21%	21%	22%
	[VOL] Dont know_Refused	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%

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		COLLEGE GRAD	INCOME			2016 MARGIN by COUNTY		
		4 yr degree	<\$50K	\$50-100K	\$100K+	Trump 10+pts	Swing <10pts	Clinton 10+pts
12. How much do you worry about the possibility that North Korea will attack the United States or one of its territories with a nuclear missile - a great deal, some, not much, or not at all?	Great deal	26%	34%	24%	25%	29%	25%	29%
	Some	34%	30%	34%	33%	32%	36%	29%
	Not much	20%	16%	19%	18%	20%	12%	18%
	Not at all	19%	18%	21%	23%	17%	26%	23%
[VOL] Dont know_Refused		1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%

		TOTAL	REGISTERED TO VOTE		PARTY ID			POLITICAL IDEOLOGY		
			Yes	No	Rep	Ind	Dem	Lib	Mod	Con
13. WITH LEANERS: Are you confident or not confident in President Trumps ability to deal with the North Korea situation, or are you not sure?	Confident	42%	43%	36%	78%	42%	11%	19%	31%	67%
	Not sure, lean confident	6%	6%	9%	6%	9%	3%	0%	8%	9%
	Not sure	3%	2%	5%	1%	2%	3%	0%	3%	2%
	Not sure, lean not confident	11%	10%	14%	4%	13%	13%	10%	13%	10%
Not confident		38%	38%	37%	11%	33%	70%	71%	45%	12%

		GENDER		AGE 3-WAY			RACE		COLLEGE GRAD
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White non-Hisp	Hsp-Blk-Asn-Oth	No degree
13. WITH LEANERS: Are you confident or not confident in President Trumps ability to deal with the North Korea situation, or are you not sure?	Confident	50%	34%	34%	42%	49%	51%	27%	46%
	Not sure, lean confident	8%	5%	7%	8%	4%	7%	6%	7%
	Not sure	3%	2%	2%	2%	4%	2%	4%	3%
	Not sure, lean not confident	12%	10%	14%	11%	8%	9%	14%	12%
Not confident		27%	49%	43%	37%	34%	31%	48%	33%

		COLLEGE GRAD	INCOME			2016 MARGIN by COUNTY		
		4 yr degree	<\$50K	\$50-100K	\$100K+	Trump 10+pts	Swing <10pts	Clinton 10+pts
13. WITH LEANERS: Are you confident or not confident in President Trumps ability to deal with the North Korea situation, or are you not sure?	Confident	34%	40%	41%	45%	54%	38%	34%
	Not sure, lean confident	5%	4%	11%	4%	7%	9%	4%
	Not sure	2%	3%	2%	2%	1%	2%	5%
	Not sure, lean not confident	8%	16%	7%	6%	9%	12%	12%
Not confident		51%	37%	39%	43%	29%	39%	45%

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		TOTAL	REGISTERED TO VOTE		PARTY ID			POLITICAL IDEOLOGY			GENDER
			Yes	No	Rep	Ind	Dem	Lib	Mod	Con	Male
14. Have you heard about President Trumps recent statement that North Korea "will be met with fire and fury" if they threaten the U.S., or have you not heard this?	Yes, have heard	81%	85%	62%	83%	82%	80%	80%	84%	81%	85%
	No, have not heard	19%	15%	38%	17%	18%	20%	20%	16%	19%	15%

		GENDER	AGE 3-WAY			RACE		COLLEGE GRAD		INCOME
		Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White non-Hisp	Hsp-Blk-Asn-Oth	No degree	4 yr degree	<\$50K
14. Have you heard about President Trumps recent statement that North Korea "will be met with fire and fury" if they threaten the U.S., or have you not heard this?	Yes, have heard	78%	71%	82%	91%	85%	73%	78%	91%	75%
	No, have not heard	22%	29%	18%	9%	15%	27%	22%	9%	25%

		INCOME		2016 MARGIN by COUNTY		
		\$50-100K	\$100K+	Trump 10+pts	Swing <10pts	Clinton 10+pts
14. Have you heard about President Trumps recent statement that North Korea "will be met with fire and fury" if they threaten the U.S., or have you not heard this?	Yes, have heard	83%	93%	82%	82%	81%
	No, have not heard	17%	7%	18%	18%	19%

		TOTAL	REGISTERED TO VOTE		PARTY ID			POLITICAL IDEOLOGY		
			Yes	No	Rep	Ind	Dem	Lib	Mod	Con
15. Do you think Trumps public statements like this about North Korea are making the situation better, making the situation worse, or have no real impact on how the situation will turn out?	Better	20%	21%	12%	36%	21%	4%	7%	13%	35%
	Worse	47%	45%	56%	18%	42%	78%	75%	52%	24%
	No real impact	28%	28%	23%	39%	30%	14%	17%	30%	33%
	[VOL] Dont know_Refused	6%	5%	8%	6%	6%	4%	1%	5%	8%

		GENDER		AGE 3-WAY			RACE		COLLEGE GRAD
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White non-Hisp	Hsp-Blk-Asn-Oth	No degree
15. Do you think Trumps public statements like this about North Korea are making the situation better, making the situation worse, or have no real impact on how the situation will turn out?	Better	22%	18%	15%	20%	24%	22%	16%	21%
	Worse	38%	55%	57%	44%	41%	40%	58%	44%
	No real impact	33%	23%	23%	32%	28%	31%	21%	29%
	[VOL] Dont know_Refused	6%	5%	5%	5%	7%	6%	4%	6%

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		COLLEGE GRAD	INCOME			2016 MARGIN by COUNTY		
		4 yr degree	<\$50K	\$50-100K	\$100K+	Trump 10+pts	Swing <10pts	Clinton 10+pts
15. Do you think Trumps public statements like this about North Korea are making the situation better, making the situation worse, or have no real impact on how the situation will turn out?	Better	18%	20%	18%	22%	27%	15%	16%
	Worse	52%	49%	49%	44%	36%	51%	54%
	No real impact	24%	25%	27%	33%	32%	27%	24%
	[VOL] Dont know_Refused	6%	7%	7%	2%	5%	7%	5%

		TOTAL	REGISTERED TO VOTE		PARTY ID			POLITICAL IDEOLOGY		
			Yes	No	Rep	Ind	Dem	Lib	Mod	Con
16. If North Korea fires non-nuclear test missiles near the U. S. territory of Guam, do you think Trump is more likely to react in a way that calms the situation or more likely to act in a way that escalates the situation?	Calms the situation	15%	15%	13%	24%	16%	4%	7%	11%	23%
	Escalates the situation	70%	69%	73%	54%	66%	89%	86%	79%	53%
	[VOL] Neither, other	6%	6%	4%	10%	6%	1%	2%	4%	9%
	[VOL] Dont know_Refused	10%	10%	10%	11%	12%	6%	5%	6%	15%

		GENDER		AGE 3-WAY			RACE		COLLEGE GRAD
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White non-Hisp	Hsp-Blk-Asn-Oth	No degree
16. If North Korea fires non-nuclear test missiles near the U. S. territory of Guam, do you think Trump is more likely to react in a way that calms the situation or more likely to act in a way that escalates the situation?	Calms the situation	16%	13%	10%	15%	18%	17%	10%	16%
	Escalates the situation	67%	72%	81%	70%	60%	65%	77%	67%
	[VOL] Neither, other	6%	5%	3%	6%	7%	6%	4%	6%
	[VOL] Dont know_Refused	12%	9%	7%	10%	14%	11%	9%	11%

		COLLEGE GRAD	INCOME			2016 MARGIN by COUNTY		
		4 yr degree	<\$50K	\$50-100K	\$100K+	Trump 10+pts	Swing <10pts	Clinton 10+pts
16. If North Korea fires non-nuclear test missiles near the U. S. territory of Guam, do you think Trump is more likely to react in a way that calms the situation or more likely to act in a way that escalates the situation?	Calms the situation	12%	17%	10%	16%	18%	12%	12%
	Escalates the situation	75%	71%	72%	70%	65%	68%	74%
	[VOL] Neither, other	4%	4%	5%	7%	7%	5%	5%
	[VOL] Dont know_Refused	9%	8%	13%	7%	9%	15%	9%