

# RETHINKING U.S. NUCLEAR WEAPONS POLICY

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

There have been remarkable changes in recent years in U.S. nuclear weapons policy under the administration of President George W. Bush that have not been adequately analyzed and that call for serious reconsideration. These changes were announced in 2002 in three official documents and they constitute a new doctrine, the *Bush doctrine*, ending the security system and nuclear weapons policies of the Cold War period and creating the basis for the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq starting in March 2003. They represent a discontinuous sea change in the international security system that calls for discussion, debate, and analysis, none of which

have occurred. The earlier bipolar world has been replaced by a proposed unipolar world with the U.S. under President Bush seeing itself as the dominant power or sole superpower. The mutual deterrence system that was part of the Cold War has been replaced by U.S. unilateral actions against possible rivals, including “regime change” as seen in Afghanistan and Iraq. Cooperative approaches to national and international security and alliance systems that had existed in the earlier epoch have been replaced by unilateral U.S. policies and actions. Arms control has been replaced by unilateral U.S. arms initiatives.

The purposes of this paper are to present these current concepts related to U.S. nuclear weapons doctrine; to evaluate them; and to consider an alternative approach, that of global security. The current concepts as well as alternatives, such as global security, call for a wide-ranging debate both nationally and internationally. Unfortunately, this has not happened, possibly due to the concern over the U.S. wars in Afghanistan and Iraq that were, ironically, examples of these new policies put into action. Both the new policies and their underlying goals should be subjects of intense scrutiny and they call for rethinking in Washington and elsewhere. Apparently some rethinking is already taking place as in the news report of the *Financial Times* of January 6, 2006, in a front-page article, “U.S. to

Revise National Security Stance” that appears below in the last section of this paper.

## **2. BACKGROUND TO THE NEW BUSH POLICY**

The background to these new nuclear weapons doctrines include the end of the Cold War in 1989; the dissolution of the Soviet Union on Christmas day 1991; the Project for a New American Century (PNAC) that was established in 1997 “to promote American global leadership” [www.newamericancentury.org/](http://www.newamericancentury.org/); the advent of the new Bush Administration in January 2001, which included many of the PNAC individuals in major leadership positions (Cheney, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, Perle, Armitage, Bolton, Khalilzad, Libby, Zakheim, Zoellick, and others); the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon; and the ensuing declaration by the Bush administration of a “War on Terrorism” later broadened to a “Global War on Terrorism [GWOT]”. Following on the adoption of these new policies were the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq.

## **3. CHANGES IN POLICY ANNOUNCED IN THREE MAJOR POLICY DOCUMENTS IN 2002**

The changes in U.S. nuclear weapons policy were announced in three official documents that were released by the administration in 2002. The first of these documents is the U.S. *Nuclear Posture Review* (NPR) that was delivered to the U.S. Congress by the U.S.

Department of Defense in January 2002. It is a classified document that is mandated by Congress and produced periodically, the last one having been that of the Clinton administration in 1994. The *Los Angeles Times* leaked the latest version in March 2002. According to the NPR, “A combination of offensive and defensive, and nuclear and non-nuclear capabilities is essential to meet the deterrence requirements of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.” It is a wide-ranging analysis of the requirements for deterrence in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It states that it does not provide operational guidance on nuclear targeting or planning. Rather, it states that the Department of Defense continues to plan for a broad range of contingencies and unforeseen threats to the U.S. and its allies in order to deter such attacks in the first place. It does, however, refer to the “...possible use of nuclear weapons in an Arab-Israeli conflict, in a war between China and Taiwan, or in an attack from North Korea on the South.” It also refers to the possible use of nuclear weapons against targets able to withstand non-nuclear attack, in retaliation for attacks by nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons, or “...in the event of surprising military developments.” Thus, it calls for possible plans for the use of nuclear weapons in various contingencies, including against non-nuclear weapons states and in response to conventional weapons. It also states that the administration is fashioning a more diverse set of options for deterring the threat of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), which

emerged as the last of these three policy documents in December 2002.

Overall, according to the NPR, nuclear weapons play a critical role in the defense capabilities of the United States, its allies and friends. They provide credible military options to deter a wide range of threats, including WMD and large-scale conventional military force. The NPR states that these “...nuclear capabilities possess unique properties that give the United States options to hold at risk classes of targets [that are] important strategic and political objectives.” This document calls for the integration of nuclear weapons into conventional strike options, thus diminishing the firewall separating nuclear and conventional weapons and the development of new nuclear weapons to provide a wider range of options to defeat hardened and deeply buried targets. It also calls for a reduced reliance on nuclear weapons via missile defense and non-nuclear strike forces, including precision conventional forces, but, at the same time an indefinite retention of nuclear weapons under the 2002 Strategic Offensive Reduction Treaty (SORT) – the Moscow Treaty.

The second of these documents is the *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (NSS) that was issued by the Office of the National Security Advisor to the President, Condoleeza Rice, in September 2002. It is an unclassified and open public document that is available on the White House website.

According to the NSS, there are plans to ensure that no nation could rival U.S. military strength. The emphasis is on defeating rogue states and global terrorists, noting that deterrence will not work against such enemies. It proclaims the doctrine of U.S. preemption, where it states that the U.S. "...cannot let our enemies strike first" and gives arguments for such preemption. (Some scholars and analysts have noted, correctly, that this is not a doctrine of *preemption* but rather one of *preventive war*.) For example, it notes that, "For centuries, international law recognized that nations need not suffer an attack before they can lawfully take action to defend themselves against forces that present an imminent danger of attack." It further states that, "The U.S. has long maintained the option of preemptive actions to counter a sufficient threat to our national security." It should be noted, however, that the U.S. did not preempt in most of the recent wars it has fought, including the two World Wars, Korea, Vietnam, and the Gulf War, while its attempt at preemption in the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba was a total failure. Far from there being historical precedents, this new policy represents a fundamental shift from a U.S. policy of reaction to a new policy of initiation – from wars of necessity to wars of choice. It is too early to say that this policy of preemption in the Iraq War was a success or failure, but the costs in terms of both casualties and dollar spending have been immense and much larger than expected. Indeed, this war is being seen more and

more as a quagmire and likened to the Vietnam War. As to its dollar cost a careful accounting of its costs in January 2006 by Nobel Laureate economist Joseph E. Stiglitz and Linda Bilmes, former Assistant Secretary of Commerce who now teaches public finance and government budgeting at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard, estimated its cost as much higher than previously reckoned, amounting between \$1 trillion and \$2 trillion, depending primarily on how much longer it lasts. This study provides an important analysis of the cost of Bush's preemption strategy in Iraq. See [www.informationclearinghouse.info/](http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/)

The NSS notes that “To forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary act preemptively.” Such a policy of preemption is, however, a violation of the UN system that was set up in large part to prevent precisely such preemption, as in Hitler’s invasion of Poland or Japan’s invasion of China. The UN Charter forbids a member state from taking military action against another member state unless it has itself been attacked or has the authorization of the Security Council. The U.S. acted preemptively in the current Iraq War, which represented the first application of the NSS policy, but, at the same time, also represented a violation of the UN Charter. In terms of international law, the U.S. was as much an outlaw in its attack on Iraq as Saddam Hussein was in his attack on Kuwait.

President Bush's West Point Commencement Speech of June 2002 articulates many of the points in the NPR and the NSS. In fact, this speech set the stage for the NSS, which quotes at length from it.

The third of these documents is the *National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction* (NSWMD) that was issued by the White House in December 2002. As in the case of NSS, NSWMD is an unclassified and open public document that is available on the White House website. It notes that WMD, including nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons in the possession of states hostile to the U.S. or terrorists represents one of the greatest security challenges facing the U.S. It states that an effective strategy for countering WMD, including their use and further proliferation, is an integral component of the National Security Strategy of the U.S. It states that, as in the war on terrorism, the strategy for homeland security, and the new concept of deterrence, this new approach to WMD represents a fundamental change from the past. It affirms that the highest priority is accorded to protection of the U.S. and its allies from the threat of WMD. The three pillars it announces are *counterproliferation* to combat WMD use, *strengthened nonproliferation* to combat WMD proliferation, and *consequence management* to respond to WMD use. It discusses such policies as interdiction of WMD, new methods of deterrence with threats of

overwhelming force, and defense mitigation, including the destruction of an adversary's WMD before their use, on a first-strike attack as in the preemptive policy enunciated in NSS, as well as traditional nonproliferation approaches. It does not exclude the use of nuclear weapons to destroy facilities that could produce nuclear weapons.

The policies set out in NSWMD were further elaborated by President George W. Bush in his February 11, 2004 speech at the National Defense University, in which he developed a seven point agenda, including international cooperation against proliferation, requiring all states to criminalize proliferation, an expansion of the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction program, the required renunciation of reprocessing and enrichment for non-nuclear weapons state parties to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), a required additional protocol for states to import equipment for civilian nuclear reactors, the formation of a special committee of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board to focus on safeguards and verification, and a requirement that states under investigation for violations of the NPT not be allowed to serve on the IAEA Board of Governors.

#### **4. TARGETS FOR NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

According to the NPR the U.S. reserves the right to use nuclear weapons, thereby possibly breaking the long-standing taboo against

their use that has existed since their first and only use – by the U.S. against Japan in August 1945. According to this statement of U.S. policy they are to be treated like any other weapon, with no sharp distinction from non-nuclear weapons, unlike traditional doctrine that sees them as weapons of last resort.

Nuclear targeting discussions have been a part of U.S. military strategy for some time, but the leak of the NPR reveals for the first time an official “hit list” of targets for nuclear weapons. The NPR lists seven nations as possible targets for U.S. nuclear weapons. First are the two “old” enemies of Russia and China. Second are the three countries listed as members of the “Axis of Evil” in President Bush’s 2002 State of the Union speech, namely Iran, Iraq, and North Korea. Third are two countries that are listed by the U.S. as terrorist states: Syria and Libya.

Of these seven nations that could be targets of U.S. nuclear weapons, three are non-nuclear weapons states that are parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the NPT, namely Iran, Syria, and Libya (“regime change” has occurred in Iraq as a result of the U.S. invasion, while North Korea has withdrawn from the NPT). The U.S. along with other nuclear weapons states that are parties to the NPT, however, gave so-called “negative security assurances” to non-nuclear weapons state parties to the NPT in 1978, pledging that it would not use nuclear weapons against such

non-nuclear states unless they were allied with nuclear powers. The most recent such pledge was given on April 5, 1995 during the Clinton administration by Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who stated:

"The United States reaffirms that it will not use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons except in the case of an invasion or any other attack on the United States, its territories, its armed forces or other troops, its allies, or on a State toward which it has a security commitment, carried out or sustained by such a non-nuclear-weapon States in association or alliance with a nuclear-weapon State."

This pledge was reiterated by the U.S. State Department spokesman Richard Boucher on February 11, 2002 but undermined by his saying that if WMD were used against the U.S. the Administration would not rule out any specific type of military response.

Thus, targeting any of these three nations with nuclear weapons would be a violation of these U.S. negative assurances that provided an inducement for these states to join the NPT and that were reiterated at the time of the NPT Review and Extension Conference in 1995.

The NPR also calls for lesser reliance on the massive stockpiles of nuclear weapons as a deterrent to attack, with greater reliance on precision-guided weapons to deter attacks. It states that because of improvements in precision-guided weaponry, as demonstrated in the war in Afghanistan, the U.S. military can now rely more on powerful, highly accurate conventional bombs and missiles.

## 5. A NEW TRIAD

According to the NPR there is a new triad. The old triad consisted of three different basing modes for nuclear weapons: long-range bombers, land-based missiles, and submarine-launched ballistic missiles.

By contrast, the NPR refers to a new triad with three component parts of the U.S. strategic system. First are *offensive strike weapons*, both nuclear and non-nuclear, including all three components of the old triad. Second are *defenses*, both active and passive, including the new national missile defense system that is currently under construction despite repeated failures in tests of the system. Third is a *revitalized defense infrastructure* that could “...design, develop, manufacture, and certify new warheads in response to new national requirements and maintain readiness to resume underground testing [at the Nevada Test Site] if required.”

The Bush administration had obtained agreement from Congress to lift its ban on the design of new nuclear warheads, and there were

plans to develop two such weapons. One is a low-yield weapon, a “mini-nuke,” that could potentially be used as a weapon in regional conflicts thus possibly changing the role of nuclear weapons from that of deterring war to that of an instrument of war. The other is the Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator (RNEP), a “bunker buster,” that can destroy underground facilities, including missile silos in Russia, China, and elsewhere. At this point, however, in 2006, the mini-nuke and RNEP are probably defunct, and the new concern is with the “Reliable Replacement Warhead.” (RRW) as discussed in [http://www.cdi.org/program/document.cfm?DocumentID=3286&from\\_page=../index.cfm](http://www.cdi.org/program/document.cfm?DocumentID=3286&from_page=../index.cfm)

The Bush administration has already started to construct a missile defense system at Fort Greeley, Alaska, and the Secretary of Defense has asked his Science Board to look into the possibility that the new system might use nuclear-tipped interceptors. Such interceptors would be much more effective in destroying incoming missiles than the more conventional hit-to-kill interceptors that are being testing now, and they could even neutralize a Russian second-strike deterrent.

Thus, the NPR is a strategy for indefinite reliance on nuclear weapons with plans to improve the capabilities of the existing arsenal and to revitalize the infrastructure for improving US nuclear forces in the future. It promotes a nuclear strategy of maximum flexibility as

opposed to measures for irreversible nuclear disarmament as agreed to at the 2000 NPT Review Conference in the form of “13 Practical Steps” related to Article VI of the NPT Treaty that calls for the elimination of nuclear weapons. The U.S. and the other nuclear weapons states that are parties to the treaty agreed to these steps. They included “...an unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals”; an early ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty; and a diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies, including irreversible and verifiable reductions of both strategic and tactical nuclear weapons. According to NSWMD and the other 2002 documents, however, the U.S. has no intention of giving up its nuclear weapons but rather sees them as playing an even more important role in its security strategy and as part of a continuum of weapons, with no clear breaks or taboos against their use. Indeed, it is clear that the Bush administration is totally opposed to Article VI of the NPT, with the U.S. planning to use nuclear weapons for many decades. Ambassador Linton Brooks, the Administrator of the Department of Energy National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) told attendees at a panel discussion on “The Future of the U.S. Nuclear Weapons Stockpile” on January 25, 2006 in Washington, D.C. sponsored by the Arms Control Association:

“I don't believe I will live to see the political conditions for abolition [of nuclear weapons], and I don't believe that if I live to see

the political conditions that abolition will be technically verifiable in my lifetime...I am assuming that the real issue that faces the U.S. is not whether we have nuclear weapons, but what kind and for what purpose and under what conditions.”

## **6. PREEMPTION AND ITS DANGERS**

The NSS places major emphasis on preemption (more properly, as already noted, a preventive war) and calls for preemption rather than deterrence as the fundamental basis of national security. The Iraq War is the initial case of such preemption, with the U.S. retaining its right to preempt in defending its vital interests. (The Afghanistan War can be more properly interpreted as a retaliatory strike for the September 11, 2001 attacks on the U.S.)

Such a policy of preemption requires massive defense spending, and the U.S. now spends more than \$400 billion annually on defense, more than most of the rest of the world combined. In his recent proposed budget for the fiscal year that begins in October 2006 President Bush calls for defense spending amounting to \$439 billion and that does not include most of the cost of the ongoing military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. This Bush military budget request for FY-2007 is, in fact, even higher than anticipated; see <http://www.armscontrolcenter.org/archives/002239.php> and

<http://www.armscontrolcenter.org/archives/002238.php>

In addition to its costs, there are significant dangers associated with preemption. First, it creates antagonism toward the U.S. and possible further terrorist attacks. Second, it sends a message to the rest of the world, that they should not attempt to fight the U.S. with conventional weapons, leading to the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Third, this policy sets a precedent for other nations to also engage in similar preemption, including China in Taiwan and India in Pakistan. Fourth, there are dangers stemming from U.S. hubris after its quick defeat of Saddam Hussein's forces in Iraq, with the next step possibly being an invasion of the other nations on President Bush's "Axis of Evil" list: Iran and North Korea, or possibly others on the NPR nuclear hit list, such as Syria or Libya, or yet others, such as Sudan or Cuba. These nations will see such a possibility as looming and try to protect themselves, possibly by building their own nuclear weapons, as has already happened in North Korea. According to The New York Times editorial of March 12, 2002:

If another country were planning to develop a new nuclear weapon and contemplating pre-emptive strikes against a list of non-nuclear powers, Washington would rightly label that nation a dangerous rogue state. Yet, such is the course recommended to President Bush by a new Pentagon planning paper...Nuclear weapons are not just another part of the military arsenal. They

are different, and lowering the threshold for their use is reckless folly.

## **7. A NEW NON-PROLIFERATION AGENDA**

The new non-proliferation agenda included “old approaches” such as controls on materials and technology and “new approaches” such as reserving the right to destroy facilities used to make WMD. A precedent for the latter was the Israeli destruction of the Osirak reactor near Baghdad in 1981 before it could be used to make nuclear weapons. Many nations criticized Israel for this action that was in violation of international law, including the U.N. Charter, given that the Security Council did not authorize it. Similar criticisms could be directed at the U.S. if it were to engage in such acts. Furthermore, if the U.S. claims a right to such acts then other nations could also make such a claim, creating very dangerous situations. For example, India might claim the right to destroy Pakistani nuclear facilities using the same logic or China could claim a right to destroy the nuclear infrastructure of Taiwan or Japan. Such policies and actions would make the world a much more dangerous place.

One could also argue that the “old” problem of proliferation was that of nations acquiring nuclear weapons, while the “new” problem is one of terrorist groups acquiring such weapons. More should be done on a cooperative international basis to deny such

weapons to terrorist organizations or subnational groups in general. This should be done under the auspices of the U.N. as a truly international cooperative effort. As to the old problem, involving such nations as Iran and North Korea, a case could be made that their acquiring such weapons could, in fact, be stabilizing rather than destabilizing if the effect is to deter the U.S. from using its weapons against these nations seeking further “regime change” in these nations. The world has noted that the U.S. invaded and occupied two non-nuclear nations, Afghanistan and Iraq, but that it did not invade North Korea or Iran, nations that were on President Bush’s “axis of evil” list in his January 2002 State of the Union address, possibly since the former already has nuclear weapons while the latter could possibly acquire them in the near future. Indeed, the U.S. 2002 documents on nuclear policy create powerful incentives for states to proliferate to deter a U.S. preemptive strike.

## **8. AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH: GLOBAL SECURITY**

There is an alternative to the policies that are enunciated in the NPR, the NSS, and the NSWMD, namely *global security*. The concept refers to security for the planet as a whole to replace the concept of national security, which is outmoded. National security, which defined up to certain well-defined borders, makes little sense given the globalization that has occurred. The goal of global security would be that of protecting the planet as a whole from threats to its

vital interests. This approach recognizes the value of global cooperation, in particular, the value of cooperative efforts among the current great powers of the U.S., the E.U., Japan, Russia, China, India, Indonesia, Brazil, Argentina, South Africa, and others.

The concept of global security recognizes the need to create a new global system comparable to the creation of a new world system after World War II, one that would encompass not only security but also economics, politics, and other issue areas. This new global system would treat problems of security, both military and non-military, through strengthening existing international institutions or creating new global institutions. These new institutions could be built, in part, on the UN system and its components. They would involve supranational decision-making and authority, with enforcement capabilities, transparency, and accountability and with global perspectives and responses. Participation in the global decision-making process would be through close international cooperation. There would be a prohibition against preemption by any one nation, no matter how powerful, in favor of collective action. Such a system of global security should be preferred to the current system of the U.S. as a hegemonic global power.

Among the specific steps that might be taken in an agenda to foster such a system of global security are reducing world stockpiles of nuclear weapons and other WMD, especially the enormous

stockpile of chemical weapons in Russia; a ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty; taking nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert and generally denuclearizing WMD; a reaffirmation of the moratorium against nuclear testing; international cooperation to prevent nuclear proliferation; implementation of the 13 steps program under the NPT with specific timetables for each of these steps, including an abandonment of all plans to develop new nuclear weapons; a sharing of permissive Action Link (PAL) technology with all nuclear weapons states to reduce the chance of accidental nuclear war; a U.S. renunciation of its policy of preemption and its reaffirmation of the UN Charter; and cooperative efforts against terrorism, especially the acquisition of WMD by terrorist groups.

## **9. DOMESTIC STRATEGIES FOR CHANGING U.S. NUCLEAR POLICY**

Domestic strategies could result in a change in U.S. nuclear policy and a move to its replacement by the concept of global security the above action items. First must be an educational program letting the public know about the nuclear strategies now being followed by the Bush Administration and their consequences. This can be done through articles, Op Eds, speeches, courses, etc. by those aware of the current policy. Second, political leaders of both parties must be informed about these matters and prodded to work to change the current policy. Foreign leaders can also play an

important role in urging a change in this policy that could have disastrous consequences.

In fact, there appears to be a movement to rethink and revise these policies. According to the *Financial Times* of January 6, 2006, in a front page article, “U.S. to Revise National Security Stance” by Caroline Daniel in Washington:

The White House is in the final stages of updating its National Security Strategy Document, the first formal reassessment of its foreign policy posture since the landmark 2002 paper that set the stage for pre-emptive strikes against terrorist threats.

The revised version is expected to be published next month, administration officials confirmed. It is being drafted by the National Security Council officials, led by Peter Feaver, a former Duke University academic, but has not yet been presented to President George W. Bush for approval

The September 2002 document, which marked the most profound shift in US foreign and security policy since President Harry S. Truman in 1947 laid out the strategy of containing the Soviet Union, provoking controversy by claiming the right to strike unilaterally and preemptively against hostile states and terrorist groups seeking to develop weapons of mass destruction. The US invaded Iraq six months later.

The new document will mark the first time Stephen Hadley, national security adviser, has put his stamp on the administration's security policy. Condoleeza Rice, now secretary of state, led the 2002 review.

NSC officials declined to comment on what changes were likely to be made to the existing strategy. However, analysts predicted it would emphasize nation building and the problems of weak states, rather than the targeting rogue states. Mr. Bush mentioned many of the key themes of the 2002 document in speeches ahead of its publication, suggesting that his recent four keynote Iraq speeches will set the tone of the current review.

Ivo Daalder, senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said, "In 2002 the fundamental nature of the threat was al-Qaeda and links with state sponsors, and was about rogue states. The president's speeches over the last three, four months have identified the threat away from states to an organized group to extremist ideologues, and that democracy is the way to counter that. None of that is in the 2002 document, so there is a re-evaluation of the threat."

Some neo-conservatives expressed concern that the updated document could mark a retreat from the more assertive positions of 2002, such as pre-emption, the signature strategy

of the administration. Danielle Pletka, vice-president at the American Enterprise Institute said: "A lot of people didn't like the original and see the second term as a time for new thinking. I think this could be a strong attempt to step back. The question is whether it will get past the president and the vice-president."

A review coincides with the quadrennial defense review, which has been recently released and will redirect military priorities.  
<http://www.defenselink.mil/qdr/>

It notes that the United States is a nation engaged in what will be a long war and states:

Since the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, our nation has fought a global war against violent extremists who use terrorism as their weapon of choice, and who seek to destroy our free way of life. Our enemies seek weapons of mass destruction and, if they are successful, will likely attempt to use them in their conflict with free people everywhere. Currently, the struggle is centered in Iraq and Afghanistan, but we will need to be prepared and arranged to successfully defend our nation and its interests around the globe for years to come.

This 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review is submitted in the fifth year of this long war. The QDR is part of the continuum of transformation in the Defense Department. Its purpose is to

help shape the process of change to provide the United States with strong, sound and effective warfighting capabilities in the decades ahead.

One can only hope that this rethinking of our nuclear policy will take place despite the opposition of the neo-conservatives and will be approved by the President. Otherwise we may have to wait until a new Administration takes office in Washington and reconsiders this policy with the hope that the current policy will not lead to a disaster before that takes place.

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