

THE SUNflower



NUCLEAR AGE PEACE FOUNDATION

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Perspectives

Preventing Future Nuclear Catastrophes

by David Krieger and Stanley K. Sheinbaum

Throughout the Cold War, nuclear deterrence was at the heart of US nuclear policy. But deterrence has some important limitations that make it highly unreliable, particularly in a time of terrorism. The most critical shortcoming of nuclear deterrence is that the threat of even overwhelming retaliation is not credible against extremist groups that cannot be located. Further, even a credible threat of nuclear retaliation would not be effective against an enemy that was suicidal. Simply put, an enemy that is not locatable or that is suicidal cannot be deterred, no matter how large a country's nuclear arsenal or how clear its threats of retaliation.

To read more, visit: www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2008/02/22_krieger_sheinbaum_future.php.

Comments on Complex Transformation

by Dr. Paul Boyer

The Department of Energy's [Complex Transformation] proposal focuses exclusively on narrow technical detail. I think it is important to place this proposal in a larger context. First of all, note the choice of language. The DOE's goal is to "modernize" our nuclear weapons complex.

Certainly all would agree that "modernization" is a good thing. Right?

Further, underlying the proposal is an unspoken assumption: that nuclear weapons production and stockpiling will continue to be a central aspect of American public policy into the foreseeable future. This represents a further embedding of nuclear weapons into the very core of our nation's economy, culture, and strategic policy. There is no hint of a commitment to *eliminating* these terrible weapons, but rather this proposal simply *assumes* their permanence, and at a level of thousands of weapons—a total that would have appalled all Americans when the first atomic bombs were dropped on Japan in 1945, if they could have foreseen what lay ahead.

To read more, visit: www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2008/02/28_boyer_transformation.php.

Who's Going to Give Them Up First?

by Bianca Jagger

The strategy of defending the manufacture and stockpiling of nuclear weapons, as an effective deterrent to others, is now recognized as a flawed argument. If they were once justified, as a means of American-Soviet deterrence, they are no longer. Nuclear weapons were considered essential to maintaining international security during the cold war, but that is no longer the case.

To read more, visit: www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2008/02/21_jagger_give_up.php.

"Our Goal is Perfection"

by David Krieger

On August 30, 2007, six nuclear-tipped cruise missiles were mistakenly loaded onto the wings of a B-52 aircraft and flown from Minot Air Force Base in North Dakota to Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana. It was a major error in the handling of nuclear weapons, leading to various investigations and the replacement of the commander of Minot Air Force Base. The new commander, Colonel Joel Westa, commented, "Our goal in this line of work is not to make errors. Our goal is perfection. It's one of those missions where the tolerance is very low for error. In fact, it is zero."

Colonel Westa sounds like a well-meaning fellow, but perhaps someone should explain to him that humans are prone to errors, not only of judgment but of memory and inadvertence. For example, on the same day that Colonel Westa was professing that there is zero tolerance for error, February 12, 2008, the US Secretary of Defense, surely not purposefully, slipped on ice outside his home and broke his humerus, the bone connecting the shoulder to the elbow. Accidents occur.

Even Edward Teller, father of the H-Bomb, recognized, “Sooner or later a fool will prove greater than the proof even in a foolproof system.” With 26,000 nuclear weapons still in the world and 3,500 of these weapons still on hair-trigger alert, ready to be fired in moments, and with policies of launch on warning in effect in the US, Russia and other nuclear-armed states, there is unfortunately fertile ground for proving Teller right about the fool proving greater than the proof.

Mikhail Gorbachev, who had his finger on the nuclear button for many years and who called in the mid-1980s for the abolition of nuclear weapons, offered sage advice when he stated, “The infinite and uncontrollable fury of nuclear weapons should never be held in the hands of any mere mortal ever again, for any reason.”

Perfection is not possible, but it is possible to abolish nuclear weapons. Our choices are to play Russian Roulette with the human future, seeking an impossible standard of perfection for all possessors of nuclear weapons, or to recognize the wisdom in Gorbachev’s words and eliminate the overwhelming danger posed by these weapons by eliminating the weapons themselves.

US Nuclear Policy

Wisconsin Elected Officials Speak Out Against Building New Nuclear Weapons

On Saturday, February 16, a citizens’ hearing co-sponsored by the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation was held at the Capitol building in Madison, Wisconsin. US Senator Russell Feingold, US Representative Tammy Baldwin, State Senator Frederick Kessler and State Senator Mark Miller made statements opposing current US nuclear weapons policy and the Department of Energy’s (DOE) proposed nuclear weapons Complex Transformation.

Members of the general public and citizen groups also addressed the DOE’s proposed \$150 billion plan to revamp the industrial infrastructure responsible for building and maintaining US nuclear weapons.

Nuclear Proliferation

Will the Third Time Be a Charm for RRW?

Despite cheers from the disarmament community last year that Congress rejected the Bush administration’s request to fund its Reliable Replacement Warhead (RRW) program, a close look at the Department of Energy’s budget request for fiscal year 2009 reveals that the administration does not plan to give up on its pursuit of RRW so easily.

In the National Nuclear Security Administration’s (NNSA) segment of the budget request, one finds price tags for items related to the improvement and implementation of RRW. The proposed funding would go toward proceeding with the maturation of the RRW design elements that were questioned by review boards last year, as well as to fortify the budget for programs related to the certification and test-readiness of the RRW under the NNSA’s science campaign. The total of these items amounts to more than a \$30 million request for Congress to consider.

While this sum is less than half of the total (\$83 million) requested during fiscal year 2008, the circumstances for Congress’ denial of the request then are no different now. For FY 2008, Congress appropriated \$0 to NNSA for the RRW, stating that the US did not have a clearly defined nuclear policy and Congress would not allocate funds for new nuclear weapons before conducting a new Nuclear Posture Review (NPR).

The current NPR, completed in 2001, addressed security challenges faced by the US and informed the government’s decisions concerning nuclear “policy, doctrine, force structure, command and control, operations, supporting infrastructure, safety, security, and arms control.” It called for the development of more usable nuclear weapons and maintained the option of using nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states.

The new NPR is not due until 2009. For the disarmament community, this provides hope that Congress will stick to its logic from FY 2008, and hold off funding before seeing up-to-date comprehensive data showing a true need for new nuclear weapons.

The US Finally Remembers to Pay Its CTBTO Bill

On February 25, the US paid a sum of \$23.8 million to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO). The payment came in part as a result of immense pressure from the disarmament community after the US had fallen significantly behind on its dues to the organization.

The purpose of the CTBTO is to facilitate the entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and to establish a regulatory system to ensure that nations and individuals comply with the ban. The regulatory system currently in place is called the International Monitoring System (IMS), and consists of 337 monitoring stations around the globe. These stations measure changes in seismic, infrasound, hydroacoustic, and radionuclide levels, and are designed to detect nuclear tests conducted anywhere on earth.

The IMS provided valuable information when North Korea conducted its October 9, 2006 test explosion. According to a study produced by a coalition of organizations in the disarmament community, "Over 10 seismic stations in the IMS detected the blast, which was well below 1 kiloton in yield. In addition, one of the network's 10 experimental 'noble gas' monitoring stations detected trace amounts of radioactive material unique to nuclear explosions. The station, which is located in Canada's Northwest Territories, detected spikes in xenon gas readings in late October."

The US is responsible for contributing the largest amount of dues to the CTBTO, and until this week was \$28.3 million behind in its payments. This figure, according to "Nukes of Hazard" bloggers, equates to roughly two and a half hours of funding the war in Iraq, but enables the CTBTO to maintain and operate the IMS, which detects non-compliance globally.

"US Behind on CTBTO Payments," www.ctbto.org, February 29, 2008.

Nuclear Insanity

Pakistan Denounces US Criticism of Nuclear Arsenal Security

On February 6, Pakistan's foreign ministry denounced a US intelligence report that addressed "vulnerabilities" in the Pakistani military's control of its nuclear weapons arsenal. In its annual threat assessment report, the US claimed that while the current unstable political situation has not completely disrupted the military's control on Pakistan's nuclear weapons, vulnerabilities do exist.

A foreign ministry spokesman rejected US criticisms, assuring his nation and the world that "Pakistan's nuclear assets are safe. There should be no cause for concern over hypothetical scenarios which have zero probability."

The US critique of Pakistan's arms protection came amidst a flood of criticism from Western media sources concerning Pakistan's ability to combat Islamic militancy along the country's shared border with Afghanistan. While Pakistan has killed or captured several Al-Qaeda leaders since September 11, 2001, US officials argue that tribal regions bordering Afghanistan have become safe havens for Al-Qaeda.

"Pakistan Rejects US Intelligence Report on Nuclear Weapons," *Agence France Press*, February 6, 2008.

Missile Defense

China Questions US Destruction of Satellite

China responded this week with questions and criticism to the US destruction of one of its own satellites in space. The Chinese government requested that the US release data concerning the incident, and the Communist Party's newspaper called Washington "callous" in what they saw as a ploy to militarize space. This criticism came in conjunction with equally heated remarks on Washington's rejection of a Russian-Chinese proposal to place an international ban on space arms.

Washington has claimed that the destruction of the satellite was not a test of new military technology, but rather a necessary action as the device was failing and out of control. Despite these claims, even Western experts have argued that the satellite presented the US military with an easy target to test out new defense systems, while also preventing any "sensitive technology" from landing in the hands of the wrong people. Experts also argued that even with its hazardous fuel tank, the satellite posed little danger to those on the ground.

Many also believe that the satellite's destruction was Washington's response to Beijing's destruction of a weather satellite in 2007.

"China Asks US for Satellite Downing Data, Blasts Space Weapons Stance," *Associated Press*, February 22, 2008.

Resources

Revised Model Nuclear Weapons Convention

A revised model Nuclear Weapons Convention is now available in the six UN languages on the UN Documents website at <http://www.un.org/documents/>. The model Nuclear Weapons Convention sets forth legal, technical and political elements for the establishment and maintenance of a nuclear weapons-free world. It is available in Arabic, Chinese, English, Russian, French and Spanish.

[Click here](#) to download the English version of the model Nuclear Weapons Convention.

Complex Transformation Hearings

Before going forward with a dangerous \$150 billion plan to revamp the industrial infrastructure responsible for maintaining and building US nuclear weapons, the Department of Energy is required to hold hearings around the country in communities near nuclear weapons facilities.

The Alliance for Nuclear Accountability (ANA) has compiled a full list of scheduled hearings. [Click here](#) to see if there is a hearing in a town near you.

ANA has also compiled an extensive array of resources to help you form your own comments on the issue, or to help you organize a hearing in your community. [Click here](#) to access these resources.

You can also submit comments to the Department of Energy through the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation's [Turn the Tide](#) campaign. [Click here](#) to see our latest action alert on Complex Transformation.

Toward True Security

The Federation of American Scientists, along with the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS), and independent analysts, have issued a report, [Toward True Security](#), which calls for

immediately declaring that the sole mission for US nuclear weapons is to deter nuclear attack, for taking all nuclear weapons off launch-ready alert, and for reducing the US nuclear arsenal to a total of 1,000 warheads, including reserves, as an immediately achievable, secure step toward a nuclear-free world.

[Click here](#) to download the report.

Foundation Activities

David Krieger to Participate in Middle Powers Initiative Conference

Nuclear Age Peace Foundation President David Krieger will participate in an upcoming conference hosted by the Middle Powers Initiative. The conference is titled “Article VI Forum: NPT: Pathfinder to a Nuclear Weapons-Free World” and will take place from March 26-29 in Dublin, Ireland.

Dr. Krieger will speak on “Framing the Disarmament Debate” in addition to his general participation in the conference.

Commemorating the 5th Anniversary of the Invasion of Iraq

On Saturday, March 15, the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation will participate in a workshop panel titled “Militarism & Nuclearism: Possibilities for Peace” as part of a day of action to commemorate the 5th anniversary of the invasion of Iraq.

Foundation President David Krieger and Director of Programs Rick Wayman will contribute to the panel discussion at the Faulkner Gallery at the Santa Barbara Public Library from 2:30 - 4:30 pm.

Appeal to the Next President Spreads to Latin America

The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation's Director for Latin America, Rubén Arvizu, will be promoting the Foundation's [Appeal](#) to the Next President of the United States on a trip to Mexico from March 14-18.

The Appeal, which calls for US leadership for a nuclear weapons-free world, has been translated into Spanish by Arvizu and is available to be downloaded on [our website](#).

Thousands of people from around the world are signing the Appeal, which will be sent to the next US President when he or she takes office on January 20, 2009.

[Click here](#) to sign the Appeal online today.

Join the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation on MySpace

Are you one of the millions of people using MySpace to network with friends, family and organizations you support?

Go to www.myspace.com/nuclearagepeacefoundation and add us as a friend!

Quotes

“The nuclear club should be abolished and anybody who has a nuclear weapon is the enemy of mankind, so let's get rid of [the weapons].”

-- **George Shultz**, former US Secretary of State (1982-1989).

“In this world atmosphere, in this climate, for us to build a new warhead now would be a real setback to all of our nonproliferation efforts, so I am opposed to it. At this moment I think it would be a mistake for America to go forward with that program.”

-- **Former Senator Sam Nunn**, discussing the proposed Reliable Replacement Warhead program.

“It is already clear that a new arms race is being unleashed in the world...we must not allow ourselves to be drawn into this.”

-- Russian President **Vladimir Putin**, referring to the effects of US plans to deploy missile defense components in Poland and the Czech Republic.

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