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NUCLEAR AGE PEACE FOUNDATION

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Features

Nuclear Weapons: The Narrowing North-South Divide

by David Krieger

Nuclear weapons have been primarily developed and brandished by the North, and used to threaten other countries, North and South. The South, which for the most part has lacked the technology to develop nuclear weapons, has begun to cross this technological threshold and join the North in obtaining these weapons of mass annihilation. The original nuclear weapons states – the US, Soviet Union, UK, France and China – were largely of the dominant North, although the Soviet Union had major areas of poverty and China, although geographically in the North was the exception, reflecting the poverty of the South after having been subjected to humiliating colonial domination and exploitation.

[Read The Full Article](#)

David Krieger is president of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, and a leader in the global effort to abolish nuclear weapons.

The Middle East And The World Five Years After 9/11

by Richard Falk

This is an excellent moment to evaluate what has happened since September 11, 2001. Five years have passed since the dramatic

attacks on the highly symbolic American targets, the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. The US Government has launched wars against Afghanistan and Iraq. A third war, with likely graver consequences, is threatened in the months ahead against Iran. In a speech given in Atlanta, Georgia in early September, President Bush declared that “America is safer” than it was five years ago, “and America is winning the war on terror.” Bush also insisted that this is not only a war against Islamic extremism, but is also “the decisive ideological struggle of the 21st century,” a struggle that “threatens all civilized nations.” The American president claimed that “today the civilized world stands together to defend our freedom...to defeat the terrorists” and thereby “secure the peace for generations to come.” A sober appraisal of the facts do not support the American president on any of these contentions.

[Read the Full Article](#)

Richard Falk is the Board Chair of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation and a Distinguished Visiting Professor at the University of California at Santa Barbara.

Nuclear Testing

North Korea Claims To Have Conducted A Nuclear Test

On Sunday, 8 October, seismic detectors around the world recorded a large explosion coming from the Northern Region of North Korea. Soon after, North Korean President Kim Jung Il announced to the world that North Korea had successfully detonated a nuclear weapon.

Nuclear experts around the world have been trying to determine whether or not this claim is true. One of the most significant determinants being examined is the size of the blast. The size of the explosion is far smaller than would ordinarily be associated with such a test. There is controversy surrounding the size of the North Korean test, it is thought to be anywhere between .5 and 15 kilotons. By comparison, the nuclear weapons detonated in India in 1998 were 50 kilotons. Additionally, detection devices have yet to record any radiation from the test area.

Regardless of whether the test was a success or not, the international community has responded by condemning North Korea for making the claim. The United Nations Security Council deliberated for 30 minutes before coming to a unanimous decision condemning North Korea. Currently, they are deliberating on whether or not to impose sanctions. The United States is proposing that ships conducting trade with North Korea be inspected for weapons or other materials.

Many critics of the Bush administration see a nuclear detonation by North Korea as a sign that the administration’s approach to non-proliferation is not working. Senate Minority Leader Harry M. Reid stated, “Unfortunately, on the Bush Administration’s watch,

North Korea's nuclear arsenal has grown to as many as a dozen bombs. Distracted by Iraq and paralyzed by internal divisions, the Bush Administration has for several years been in a state of denial about the growing challenge of North Korea, and has too often tried to downplay the issue or change the subject."

US Intelligence has long suspected that North Korea possessed nuclear weapons or the materials to produce nuclear weapons. This is the first test conducted by the North Koreans.

Sources: Abramowitz, Michael and Lynch, Colum, "US Urges Sanctions on North Korea," *Washington Post*, 10 October, 2006. Kessler, Glenn and Baker, Peter, "Bush Axis of Evil Comes Back to Haunt United States," *Washington Post*, 10 October 2006.

Divine Strake

The beleaguered Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) is looking for a place to conduct a controversial nuclear-like explosion that would pave the way for a nuclear bunker-buster. The test, named Divine Strake, was originally set to take place in June at the Nevada Test Site. If the test had been conducted at the Nevada Test Site, it could have released dangerous amounts of radiation that was in the soil from over 40 years of nuclear testing. In March, public interest advocates and activists, including the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation's Youth Empowerment Director Will Parrish, were able to indefinitely postpone the test. DTRA is now looking far and wide for a new location for the test. Last minute public exposure alerted legislators who cancelled plans for locating the test to an Indiana limestone quarry. Pete Domenici, New Mexico Senator and Los Alamos National Laboratory cheerleader, has indicated that he might give the green light to use the White Sands Missile Range in his home state. The test, no matter where it is, will not be until "several months into the calendar year 2007."

Source: Vorenberg, Sue, "White Sands May Host Bunker-Buster Bomb Test," *Albuquerque Tribune*, 14 September 2006.

Missile Defense

Staged Missile Defense Test Successful Only For PR And Big Spending

After a string of failures in the last year, the billion-dollar "star wars" missile defense program has been staging tests to justify its enormous budget. The current system is a land-to-air interceptor that launches a rocket that releases a refrigerator-sized "kill vehicle" to slam into an incoming warhead. A recent September 1 test was far from realistic. It did not have to track the incoming warhead by radar, but was fed coordinates by a GPS device attached to the mock target. The test was billed as a "total success," but even Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has been skeptical of the \$10 billion a year program, saying "I want to see it happen...a full end-to-end process where we actually put all the pieces together. That just hasn't happened." North Korea called the test "a provocation" and said it was just short of a declaration of war.

Sources: Ratnam, Gopal, "U.S. Missile Defense Radar is Still Out at Sea," *Defense News*, September 2006. Jablon, Robert, "Experts Warn Successful Missile Test Only Small Step Forward," *Associated Press*, 2 September 2006. "DoD News Briefing with Lt. Gen. Obering from the Pentagon," U.S. Department of Defense, 1 September, 2006.

Nuclear Insanity

Nuclear Weapons States Oppose Nuclear Weapons Free Zone In Central Asia

The US and several other nuclear weapons states have expressed concern over the signing of a treaty creating a nuclear weapons free zone in Central Asia.

On 8 September 2006, the five ex-Soviet nations of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan pledged not to produce, buy or allow the deployment of nuclear weapons on their soil. Kazakh Foreign Minister Kasymzhomart Tokayev stated, "The countries of our region declared a firm commitment to the principles of disarmament and nonproliferation. This is our contribution to ensuring global security."

The United States is concerned that this treaty would prevent nuclear-powered ships and aircraft from passing through these countries. Also, the United States has forces in Kyrgyzstan. Russia is concerned that this treaty will interfere with one that was signed in 1992 that allows Russian missile deployment in this area. Britain and France have offered other vague concerns. Typically, nations with nuclear weapons are opposed to nuclear weapons free zones because such zones reduce the foreign influence that nuclear weapons often provide.

This is the first nuclear weapons free zone in the northern hemisphere. Supporters argue that the treaty will help strengthen non-proliferation efforts and that not ratifying it could destabilize the region.

Source: Wadhams, Nick, "UK, France, US: No Central Asia Nukes," *Associated Press*, 8 September 2006.

Nuclear Proliferation

IAEA Disputes House Report On Iran's Nuclear Program

On 13 September 2006, International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors sent a letter to the Bush administration and members of congress complaining about a recent report regarding Iran's nuclear program.

The letter, which calls the report "outrageous and dishonest," says the report exaggerated the progress of the Iranian nuclear program. There were five major errors in the 29-page report. Among them were that the report claims that Iranians are generating weapons grade uranium at a reactor in Natanz. Additionally, the letter refutes the claim that uranium is being enriched to a level of 90%.

In addition to the letter, several US intelligence officials have raised concerns about the report stating that it contains at least a dozen inaccuracies.

This is the first time that the IAEA has publicly disputed US allegations about Iran's nuclear program.

Source: Linzer, Dafna, "UN Inspectors Dispute Iran Report by House Panel," *Washington Post*, 14 September 2006.

Weapons Laboratories

University Of California Forms Private Partnership With Bechtel Corporation To Bid For Lawrence Livermore Labs

Darwin Bond-Graham

On September 19th the University of California Board of Regents convened in San Francisco. Among the items they discussed and voted upon was a proposal for the University to join with the Bechtel Corporation in order to form a second for profit, limited liability corporation (LLC). This LLC partnership will now prepare a bid to manage the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, a nuclear weapons research and design facility that is also establishing large centers for bio-weapons research in the Bay Area.

Last year the University's Board of Regents formed a partnership with Bechtel and two other military-industrial-nuclear firms called Los Alamos National Security, LLC. This consortium successfully outbid a partnership between the University of Texas and Lockheed Martin to manage the Los Alamos National Laboratory (the largest weapons of mass destruction facility on the planet - yes, they also do "cancer research" and other non-military projects, but a full 80% of their \$2.2 billion budget is for weapons work). This is a for-profit venture that nets LANS LLC partners \$79 million per year. The September 19th vote prepares UC to go down the same path in order to retain its management of Livermore Lab.

In the last several years the Los Alamos Lab has undergone a rapid transformation from a facility that researches and designs nuclear warheads into a major industrial site that has begun to manufacture the core component of a nuclear weapons, called a plutonium pit. The Lab has begun building pits and is on track to become the major center for the production of this core nuclear weapons component.

Livermore Lab has taken on new roles in bio-weapons research over the past several years and is likely to become the host of a large new facility for this purpose. The government says that it will be strictly "defensive" research. Livermore's role in nuclear weapons remains strong as ever. The Lab is currently competing with Los Alamos to design a new nuclear warhead called the Reliable Replacement Warhead.

[Read More](#)

Nuclear Waste and Energy

Study Determines That Nuclear Reactors Are Prone To Long Closings

A study of nuclear reactors in the United States has shown that they are prone to long, expensive shut downs regardless of the reactor's age or the experience of the employees.

David Lochbaum, of the Union of Concerned Scientists, conducted an analysis that showed that of the 130 nuclear reactors that have been licensed in the United States, 51 have been closed for at least a year. Of those shutdowns, 36 were to restore the plant to adequate levels of safety. Eleven were to replace major parts needed for operations and safety. Four were

for fixing some type of damage. In all, 41 reactors had been shut down once for a year and 10 more had been shut down more than once.

Many in the business thought reactor shut downs were just growing pains from a new technology, but flaws in basic designs are commonly found during long shut downs. While the Nuclear Energy Institute says that the nuclear industry has learned from its mistakes, Lochbaum says that that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission is not good at assessing the ability of reactor staff to keep nuclear plants in good condition.

Source: Wald, Matthew W., "Reactors Prone to Long Closings, Study Finds," *New York Times*, 18 September 2006.

Skull Valley Waste Storage Facility Defeated

Grassroots reservation-based groups, and Native and environmental organizations won a victory they had been seeking for more than a decade. Two federal agencies finally dealt the final blow to plans to build a private nuclear waste dump on the Skull Valley Goshute Reservation in Utah. The two agencies, both within the Department of Interior (DOI), made decisions that permanently end plans for the dump and void the previous Nuclear Regulatory Commission license granted to a consortium of electric companies. Since the formation of the Office of the Waste Negotiator in the late 80s, indigenous lands have been targeted for nuclear waste siting. Seventeen tribes have resisted nuclear waste storage in the last two decades.

The Skull Valley Band of Goshutes has been embroiled in controversy for a number of years. Their current executive committee, the most outspoken advocates of nuclear waste storage, has been accused of misconduct. Attempts to vote out the current committee have been unsuccessful because a quorum has not been met in five years. Weeks after the DOI decision on waste storage, the Bureau of Indian Affairs made the rare choice to oversee an election that may oust the current board of executives. Current chair Leon Bear has said that after the election when business resumes, one of the first decisions will probably be to weigh in on the DOI's decision.

Source: LaDuke, Winona, "Press Statement," Honor the Earth, 21 September 2006. Fahys, Judy, "Goshutes: U.S. Will Oversee Tribal Elections," *The Salt Lake Tribune*, 27 September 2006.

Cost Of Hanford Cleanup Project Rises Again

On 7 September 2006, the estimated cost for cleaning up the Hanford nuclear reservation rose to \$12.2 billion.

Originally slated to cost \$4.3 billion and to be completed in 1999, the clean up project's completion date has been pushed back to November 2019. The bulk of the clean up money is going towards a plant that will convert millions of gallons of waste into glasslike logs to be permanently disposed of in a waste depository. Currently, there are 43 million gallons of waste and 177 underground tanks. This clean up effort is a race against time. It needs to be cleaned up before the waste reaches and contaminates the nearby Columbia River.

Considerable technical difficulties have prevented this from being achieved. "We have had some world-class technical issues," acknowledged John Eschenberg, the federal manager for construction. "I have made mistakes. Bechtel has made mistakes.

If I could relive the last three years, there are things I would do differently." Currently, not a single gallon of waste has been reprocessed.

Source: Vartabedian, Ralph, "Errors, Costs Stall Nuclear Waste Project," *Los Angeles Times*, 4 September 2006.

Foundation Activities

2006 Think Outside The Bomb Conference, Santa Barbara

If the generations to come are to be free from the threat of nuclear war, disarmament should begin now – and the next generation of leaders must be the ones to demand it. The Think Outside the Bomb conferences are precisely about cultivating such a critical mass of young leadership.

The 2006 Santa Barbara Think Outside the Bomb conference is expansive, with applications from all across the western United States and sponsors that include the Atomic Mirror; Code Pink; California Peace Action; the Nevada Desert Experience; the Peace Center of Nevada County; and Veterans for Peace, Santa Barbara. Confirmed for the October 20-22 event are speakers Carrie Dann of the Western Shoshone Nation, atomic bomb survivor Shigeko Sasamori, and former UK Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament Chair Janet Bloomfield. Space is filling up fast, and the deadline is quickly approaching. So if you, or young people you know, are interested, please visit the website below to register. We invite you to join us!

[Learn More](#)

2006 Think Outside The Bomb Conference, New York

November 4-5, young people from throughout the northeast will converge at Pace University to organize for a nuclear-free world. The conference is being sponsored by the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, Educators for Social Responsibility (ESR) Metropolitan Area, Abolition 2000 New York, Peace Boat US and People's Action for Clean Energy (PACE). The conference will focus on nuclear disarmament, nuclear energy and the hazards of the nuclear fuel cycle, as well as the connections between these issues.

Attendees will leave the conference with new insights, knowledge and inspiration, as well as an array of organizing resources and practical hands-on skills to empower them to do the day-to-day work of creating a more peaceful and secure planet. There is an exciting list of speakers, including Jackie Cabasso of Western States Legal Foundation; John Burroughs of the Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy; author and professor Karl Grossman; and director of Peace Boat US, Ryo Ijichi.

[Learn More](#)

Foundation President To Speak In Nagasaki

Foundation President David Krieger will be speaking at the 3rd Nagasaki Global Citizens' Assembly for the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, October 21-23. Nagasaki was the second city

devastated by a nuclear bomb during the United States assault on mainland Japan during World War II. The assembly will draw 1,200 participants from around the globe for discussion, meetings, workshops, and cultural events. The 3rd assembly will focus on breaking through the stalemate created at the NPT Review Conference last May.

23rd Annual Evening For Peace

The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation's 23rd Annual Evening for Peace will be held on Saturday, October 28, 2006. Human rights campaigner Bianca Jagger will receive the Foundation's World Citizenship Award, and former Maryknoll priest and long-time peace activist Blase Bonpane will receive the Foundation's Distinguished Peace Leadership Award.

More Information or contact the Foundation at (805) 965-3443.

Resources

U.S. Nuclear Weapons: Changes In Policy And Force Structure

The Bush administration conducted a review of US nuclear weapons force posture during its first year in office. Although the review sought to adjust US nuclear posture to address changes in the international security environment at the start of the new century, it continued many of the policies and programs that had been a part of the US nuclear posture during the previous decade and during the Cold War. This report, which will be updated as needed, provides an overview of the US nuclear posture to highlight areas of change and areas of continuity.

[Read the whole report.](#)

Critical Issues Of US-India Nuclear Deal Discussed In Report

A recent report analyzes the international implications of the pending US-India Nuclear Deal. Released by the Stanley Foundation, a nonprofit foundation focused on building support for multilateralism, addresses the exceptionalist nature of the nuclear fuel deal and proposes a set of recommendations. The report includes analysis on the importance of US-India relations, but also highlights potential drawbacks, including the likely loss of nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty credibility, stalled Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban progress, and nuclear stability with regional states Pakistan and China.

[Read the whole report.](#)

Scientific Analysis Of Nuclear Topics

The Institute for Energy and Environmental Research (IEER) has released a number of documents that investigate the details of topical nuclear issues. Papers address the nuclear waste management at the Fernald Nuclear Weapons Site, depleted uranium from the National Enrichment Facility, and comments on the Los Alamos National Laboratories Site-Wide Environmental Impact Statement. IEER has a tradition of providing accurate scientific analysis in an accessible format, aimed at democratizing

scientific research in order to provide for a healthier, safer public policy.

- IEEER comments on the Los Alamos Site-Wide Environmental Impact Statement
- IEEER Presentation on Disposal of Depleted Uranium from the National Enrichment Facility
- IEEER Report: Shifting Radioactivity Risks: A Case Study of the K-65 Silos and Silo 3 Remediation and Waste Management at the Fernald Nuclear Weapons Site

Report Of Global Fissile Material Stockpiles

The International Panel on Fissile Materials (IPFM) has released a report covering information on the fissile material. The report assesses the global stockpiles of fissile materials and key nuclear-weapons materials, which includes enough highly-enriched uranium to make more than 100,000 nuclear weapons. Included are hurdles to stockpile reduction and proposals to overcome the problem such as a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty.

Read the whole report.

Quotable

“Each additional signature of this treaty will bring the world closer to achieving its longstanding goal of outlawing all nuclear tests, thereby advancing both nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.”

Kofi Annan, UN Secretary General, commenting on the importance of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

“[I]t doesn’t have the capability to deal with a large barrage from a major power...on the other hand, a major power is deterred reasonably by the deterrent capability we have.”

Donald Rumsfeld, US Secretary of Defense, admitting to the low chance of success by missile defense.

“You want to take somebody out and hang them. It is outrageous what it is costing.”

David L. Hobson, Republican Ohio Representative to Congress, regarding the cleanup cost at the Hanford nuclear waste site.

Editorial Team

- Nickolas Roth
- David Krieger
- Andrew Culp