

THE SUNflower



NUCLEAR AGE PEACE FOUNDATION

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Perspectives

The Missile Crisis that Never Went Away

by Steven Starr, David Krieger & Daniel Ellsberg

Fifty years after the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, and more than 20 years after the end of the Cold War, the US and Russian nuclear confrontation continues. Both nations still keep a total of approximately 800 intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), armed with more than 1,700 strategic nuclear warheads at launch-ready status, able to be launched with only a few minutes warning.

The US now has 450 land-based Minuteman III missiles that carry 500 strategic nuclear warheads. As their name implies, they require at most several minutes to be launched. The US also has 14 US Trident submarines and normally 12 are operational. Each Trident now carries about 96 independently targetable warheads and 5 Tridents are reportedly kept in position to fire their missiles within 15 minutes. This adds another 120 missiles carrying 480 warheads that qualify as being "launch-ready."

The missiles and warheads on the Trident subs have been "upgraded" and "modernized" to make them accurate enough for first-strike weapons against Russian ICBM silos. Missiles fired from Trident subs on patrol in the Norwegian Sea can hit Moscow in less than 10 minutes.

To read more, [click here](#).

Thank You, Vasili Arkhipov, the Man Who Stopped Nuclear War

by Edward Wilson

If you were born before 27 October 1962, Vasili Alexandrovich Arkhipov saved your life. It was the most dangerous day in history. An American spy plane had been shot down over Cuba while another U2 had got lost and strayed into Soviet airspace. As these dramas ratcheted tensions beyond breaking point, an American destroyer, the USS Beale, began to drop depth charges on the B-59, a Soviet submarine armed with a nuclear weapon.

The captain of the B-59, Valentin Savitsky, had no way of knowing that the depth charges were non-lethal "practice" rounds intended as warning shots to force the B-59 to surface. The Beale was joined by other US destroyers who piled in to pummel the submerged B-59 with more explosives. The exhausted Savitsky assumed that his submarine was doomed and that world war three had broken out. He ordered the B-59's ten kiloton nuclear torpedo to be prepared for firing. Its target was the USS Randolph, the giant aircraft carrier leading the task force.

To read more, [click here](#).

US Nuclear Weapons Policy

Peace Activists Protest NATO Nuclear Weapons Testing

On October 15, peace activists used non-violent resistance to attempt to stop the flight of F-16 jet fighter planes from Kleine Brogel, a Belgian military base. The pilots flying the Belgian F-16s were participating in an annual NATO exercise dubbed "Steadfast Noon." In this exercise, pilots are trained in the deployment of nuclear weapons from European military bases. All NATO countries that store U.S. nuclear weapons (Belgium, Germany, Holland, Italy and Turkey) participated in the training.

Protesters argued that the nuclear weapons stationed in Kleine Brogel can never be deployed without committing war crimes and violating international humanitarian law.

["Peace activists hinder departure of F16 Airplanes to NATO nuclear weapons exercise,"](#) *Vredesactie*, October 15, 2012.

Nuclear Disarmament

Thirty-Five Nations Highlight Catastrophic Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons

A statement at the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly calls on all nations to "intensify their efforts to outlaw nuclear weapons and achieve a world free of nuclear weapons." Thirty-five nations signed on to the statement, which discusses the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons.

The [statement](#) reads, in part: "The grave humanitarian concerns resulting from the unique destructive capacity and uncontrollable effects in space and time of nuclear weapons also raise important legal issues. All rules of international humanitarian law apply fully to nuclear weapons, notably the rules of distinction, proportionality and precaution, as well as the prohibition on causing superfluous injury or unnecessary suffering and the prohibition against causing widespread, severe and long-term damage to the environment."

Japan, the only nation to have been attacked by nuclear weapons, declined to endorse the joint statement out of concern for its security arrangement under the U.S. nuclear umbrella, according to Japanese governmental sources. Under Japan's National Defense Program Guidelines, the country's policies towards nuclear weapons are that "as long as [they] exist, the extended deterrence provided by the United States, with nuclear deterrent as a vital element, will be indispensable."

["Japan will not join initiative put before U.N. to make nuclear weapons illegal,"](#) *The Japan Times*, October 19, 2012.

Russia Backs Out of Cooperative Threat Reduction Program

Starting in 1992 after the fall of the Soviet Union, the United States contributed around \$500 million annually to the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, which sought to secure "loose" nuclear weapons in Russia and former Soviet countries. The program has led to the dismantlement of thousands of Soviet nuclear weapons over its two decades of existence.

Russia has said that they no longer need U.S. assistance in securing the Russian nuclear stockpile. Under President Vladimir Putin, Russia has moved away from accepting U.S. aid.

Corey Flintoff, ["Russia No Longer Wants U.S. Aid to Secure Nukes,"](#) *NPR*, October 12, 2012.

Nuclear Insanity

UK Continues Big Spending Before Official Nuclear Submarine Decision

The British Ministry of Defense has made a "firm commitment to maintaining continuous at-sea [nuclear] deterrence for future decades" by signing a \$562 million contract for the development of a new generation of nuclear-armed submarines. However, the Liberal Democrats, junior member of the coalition government

headed by the Conservative Party, noted that a final decision on the replacement of the Trident nuclear weapons system will not be made until 2016.

Bill Kidd, a member of the Scottish Parliament and vice-president of Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament, said, "For the UK government to boast about spending hundreds of millions of pounds on weapons of mass destruction - while at the same time implementing brutal welfare cuts and slashing investment in the economy - is obscene."

Richard Norton-Taylor and Patrick Wintour, "[Tories snub Lib Dems over Trident future](#)," *The Guardian*, October 28, 2012.

Missile Defense

Missile Defense Test Intercepts Four Out of Five Missiles

On October 24 at Kwajalein Atoll, Marshall Islands, the United States military conducted its largest and most complex missile defense flight test ever attempted. Out of five ballistic missile and cruise missile targets that were simultaneously launched, four were successfully intercepted. The Pacific test was designed to demonstrate the defense system's ability to defend against multiple and simultaneous threats, according to the U.S. Missile Defense Agency.

The U.S. has used the Marshall Islands as a military testing ground since the 1940s, when it began a series of 67 atmospheric nuclear explosions. The Kwajalein Atoll is also the target of most tests of Minuteman III Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles fired from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California.

"[Ballistic Missile Defense System engages 5 targets simultaneously during largest missile defense flight test in history](#)," *DVIDS*, October 25, 2012.

Nuclear Testing

U.S. Conducts Electronic Test of Minuteman Missile

The U.S. Air Force conducted an electronic simulation of its Minuteman III Intercontinental Ballistic Missile on September 25. The tests, called Simulated Electronic Launch-Minuteman, are conducted at least twice a year to evaluate the readiness of the missiles, which are armed with thermonuclear warheads.

These tests are in addition to the actual test launches of the Minuteman III from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California to the Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands. The next test from Vandenberg is scheduled to take place in the early morning hours of November 14.

Mark Thompson, "[Launch Party](#)," *TIME*, October 17, 2012.

War and Peace

Britain Considers Pre-emptive Strike on Iran a Violation of International Law

The British attorney general's office has circulated legal advice to Prime Minister David Cameron, the Foreign Office and Defense Ministry warning that a pre-emptive strike on Iran could be in breach of international law.

"The U.K. would be in breach of international law if it facilitated what amounted to a pre-emptive strike on Iran," said a governmental source. "It is explicit. The government has been using this to push back against the Americans."

The U.K. is denying U.S. requests to access airbases on British territories that are strategically located on remote islands. These requests are part of U.S. contingency plans for military action against Iran.

Max Fisher, "[British attorney general thinks strike on Iran could be illegal](#)," *The Washington Post*, October 25, 2012.

U.S. Agrees to South Korea Missile Capability Expansion

South Korea and the United States have reached an agreement which allows South Korea to more than double the range of its ballistic missiles and increase the payload the ballistic missiles can carry. Before the revised guidelines, South Korea was not allowed to deploy ballistic missiles with a range of more than 186 miles and a payload of more than half a ton. Under the new agreement, South Korea can deploy ballistic missiles with a range of up to 500 miles as long as the payload does not exceed half a ton, but can load warheads weighing up to two tons on ballistic missiles with shorter ranges.

The revised South Korea - U.S. agreement is an attempt to counter what the two countries perceive to be a growing threat from North Korea. According to U.S. and South Korean negotiators, the capabilities of South Korea's ballistic missiles were expanded enough to allow any target in North Korea to be reached, but not enough to be considered a threat to China or Japan.

Choe Sang-Hun, "[U.S. Agrees to Let South Korea Extend Missile Range](#)," *The New York Times*, October 7, 2012.

Resources

Ronald Reagan and Nuclear Weapons

Jonathan Granoff, President of the Global Security Institute, has gathered a series of quotes from former President Ronald Reagan about nuclear weapons. The quotes emphasize that Reagan was not just concerned that bad people or countries have the weapon, but that the weapon itself is bad.

To read the full article, [click here](#).

Three Men Go to War

Cuban Missile Crisis: Three Men Go to War focuses on three central figures in the crisis - President John F. Kennedy, Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev and Cuban leader Fidel Castro. The PBS program explores the roles the three leaders played during some of the most dangerous moments in history, set against the human stories of ordinary men in the field such as the Soviet man who shot down the U2 piloted by U.S. Air Force Major Rudolf Anderson on the worst day of the crisis.

To watch the full 55-minute program for free on the PBS website, [click here](#).

Basel Peace Office Opens in November

The Basel Peace Office will officially open on November 16, 2012. It is dedicated to the goal of promoting international peace and security through the elimination of nuclear weapons. The Basel Peace Office is a joint project of the World Future Council, the Global Security Institute, the Middle Powers Initiative and Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament with their local partners, the Canton of Basel-Stadt, swisspeace, the Department of Sociology at the University of Basel and IPPNW Switzerland (International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War).

As part of the opening ceremonies, there will be a symposium on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and the imperative for nuclear abolition on November 17 at the University of Basel, Switzerland. For more information, contact Alyn Ware, Director of the Basel Peace Office, at alyn@pnnd.org.

Inter-Parliamentary Union Handbook

The Inter-Parliamentary Union Handbook: Supporting nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament highlights a range of existing exemplary policies and practices aimed at furthering nuclear disarmament. The report, written by Rob van Riet and Alyn Ware, also explores what parliamentarians can do to advance the goals of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and safeguarding nuclear materials.

The Handbook has been sent to nearly all the parliaments in the world to encourage, support and guide parliamentary action.

To download a copy of the Handbook in English, [click here](#).

Foundation Activities

NAPF Honors Tony de Brum with Distinguished Peace Leadership Award

On October 21, 2012, the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation honored Senator Tony de Brum with its Distinguished Peace Leadership Award.

Senator Tony de Brum has had a distinguished career in government in the Republic of the Marshall Islands. He has spent his entire adult life working for peace, justice and a world free of nuclear weapons on behalf of the Marshall Islanders. He has served as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister for Health and Environment. He currently serves as Minister in Assistance to the President and represents the people of Kwajalein in Parliament.

For a full recap of the event, including photos, [click here](#).

Youth Program on Humanitarian Dimensions of Nuclear Disarmament

In September 2012, with the generous support of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, students from Austria, Brazil, Germany, Mexico, Switzerland, Iran, Italy, Palestine, and Romania participated in the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation's Youth Program on the Humanitarian Dimensions of Nuclear Disarmament. These students met with members of civil society and representatives from several states. The students also participated in a seminar on the humanitarian dimensions of nuclear disarmament in Geneva, Switzerland.

To read a full report about the program, [click here](#).

Foundation Representatives to Speak at Student Nuclear Disarmament Conference

Three NAPF representatives will speak at the First Annual Student Movement for Nuclear Disarmament Conference at Soka University of America in Aliso Viejo, California, on November 17. Rick Wayman (Director of Programs), Paul Chappell (Peace Leadership Director) and Dr. Jimmy Hara (Board Member) will speak about various aspects of nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament.

For more information on the conference, [click here](#).

Poetry Contest Winners Announced

The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation has announced the winners of the 2012 Barbara Mandigo Kelly Peace Poetry Awards. The awards encourage poets to explore and illuminate positive visions of peace and the human spirit.

In the Adult category, Carla S. Schick of Oakland, CA, was awarded first prize for her poem "Their Grandmother's Palm (Pantoum for Palestine)." First prize in the youth (13-18) category was awarded to Philip Lee of Englewood Cliffs, NJ, for his poem "Cultivate." First prize in the youth (12 and under) category was awarded to Beckett Medwid of Georgetown, MA, for his poem "Poetry Hides."

To read all of the winning poems and for information about the 2013 contest, [click here](#).

Quotes

"Some say nuclear disarmament is utopian....I say the illusion is that nuclear weapons provide security."

-- UN Secretary-General **Ban Ki-moon**

"The results of an American or Israeli military strike on Iran could, in my view, prove catastrophic, haunting us for generations in that part of the world."

-- Former U.S. Secretary of Defense **Robert Gates**

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