

The Bush Administration's Nuclear Weapons Policy: A Double Standard with Lethal Implications

by Joseph Gerson and Adam Miles

“Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld on Thursday refused to rule out the U.S. use of nuclear weapons in a possible war with Iraq, while a leading senator told him such a move would trigger a near-total breakdown in American relations with the rest of the world.”

— *Reuters* 2/13/03

“Called the Theatre Nuclear Planning Document, it identifies suspected underground weapons sites for possible targeting by small nuclear bunker-busters. It makes clear that the Bush administration is not necessarily bluffing when it leaves open the possibility of nuclear retaliation against chemical or biological attacks, or the use of nuclear weapons against suspected chemical or biological weapons stockpiles.”

— *Guardian Weekly*, Feb. 6-12, 2003

Priorities for U.S. Policy

- *Eliminate the Bush Administration's preemptive war and first-strike nuclear attack doctrines.*
 - *Ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty*
 - *Halt funding for research and development of new nuclear weapons.*
 - *Stop the deployment of so-called "missile defenses."*
 - *Fulfill U.S. Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty commitments by initiating negotiations for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.*
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THE PROBLEM

Iraq, Iran, North Korea: as the U.S. wages war and practices “coercive diplomacy” in the name of “counter-proliferation” of weapons of mass destruction, it remains committed to the use of U.S. nuclear weapons, including preemptive first strike attacks, to “deter, dissuade, and defeat” a range of enemies.

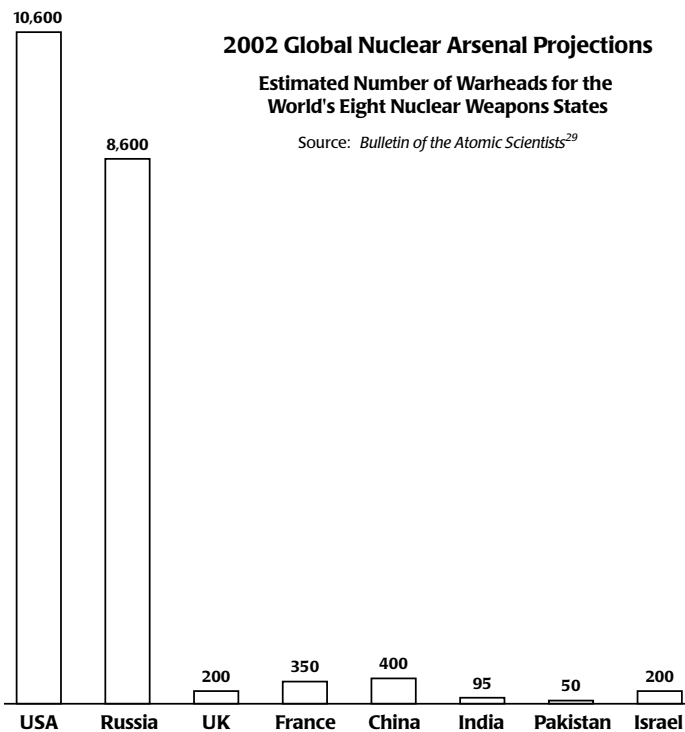
On September 12, 2002 President Bush told the United Nations, “If the Iraqi regime wishes peace, it will immediately and unconditionally forswear, disclose, and remove or destroy all weapons of mass destruction.” In glaring contrast to this statement, the Bush Administration has publicly adopted a policy committed to maintaining its nuclear superiority, developing and deploying new nuclear weapons, and identifying seven nations as the most likely targets of U.S. first strike nuclear attacks.

As the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* editorialized, “Not since the resurgence of the Cold War in Ronald Reagan’s first term has U.S. defense strategy placed such an emphasis on nuclear weapons.”¹ The U.S. example serves as a dangerous model for other countries that are anxious to equalize the hierarchy of terror or to intimidate their enemies through nuclear threats. This approach is a recipe for nuclear holocaust.

There is an alternative which has been mandated by the United Nations General Assembly, by the World Court, and in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty which was signed and ratified by the United States: serious and verifiable nuclear disarmament initiatives with the commitment to negotiate the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. One Hiroshima atom bomb was one too many.

U.S. NUCLEAR WEAPONS POLICY

The foundation of the Bush Administration's nuclear weapons policy was articulated before the administration took control of the Oval Office in January 2001. Published by the National Institute for Public Policy, the "Rationale and Requirements for U.S. Nuclear Forces and Arms Control," written and endorsed by senior, Republican-oriented figures in the national security establishment, set forth three frames of reference for future nuclear weapons policy priorities: 1) "Recent public proposals for nuclear "abolition" or deep force reductions...are likely to be flawed;" 2) "Nuclear deterrence may become even more important in the future than it



has been in the past, and a robust nuclear capability may be essential to support future U.S. deterrence or wartime objectives;" 3) "The 2001 Congressionally-mandated nuclear posture review must take these technical, political, and operational variables into account."²

A year later, the Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) was quietly released at a time when the world's attention was focused on the U.S. war to oust the Taliban and destroy Al Qaeda in Afghanistan. In no uncertain terms, the NPR "reaffirmed that nuclear weapons, for the foreseeable future, will remain a key element of national security strategy."³ It estab-

lished the broad outline for Pentagon nuclear weapons and war fighting strategy, force levels, and infrastructure for the next 10 years and beyond.⁴ And, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld was clear that "offensive strike systems (both nuclear and non-nuclear)" would serve as one of the three pillars of U.S. "security" for the 21st century, as would "active and passive defenses" and a "revitalized defense infrastructure...to meet emerging threats."⁵ In plain English, this means:

- 1) the explicit threat to use nuclear weapons against potential regional rivals such as Iraq, Iran and China
- 2) a renewed commitment to so-called "missile defense" and continued maintenance of the U.S. nuclear arsenal, including massive nuclear weapons stockpiles
- 3) funding for the development, testing and deployment of new nuclear weapons.

Arms control experts concluded that "the Nuclear Posture Review makes it clear that nuclear weapons will remain the cornerstone of U.S. military power for the next fifty years," and that it reflects an "infatuation with nuclear weapons" unseen since the first frightening years of the Reagan Administration a generation ago.⁶ The *New York Times* put it more strongly: The U.S., it editorialized, has become a "Nuclear Rogue."⁷

The Policy

The explicit threat to use nuclear weapons against potential regional rivals

According to the Nuclear Posture Review, "In setting requirements for nuclear strike capabilities, distinctions can be made among the contingencies for which the United States must be prepared. Contingencies can be categorized as immediate, potential or unexpected." North Korea, Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Libya were named immediate or potential U.S. nuclear targets in the NPR, with nuclear attacks against China and Russia left open as a possibility.⁸ The NPR calls for the U.S. to initiate nuclear war under three conditions: 1) to ensure destruction of targets that are invulnerable to conventional weapons, 2) to retaliate for nuclear, biological or chemical weapons attacks, and 3) to

respond to a “surprising military development” a regional war such as an Arab attack against Israel, North Korea attacking South Korea, or China attacking Taiwan.⁹

Toward these ends, the NPR mandated creation of “executable war plans” against these targets and adaptive planning to quickly generate war plans in time-critical situations. These plans involve preparations for the possible first use of nuclear weapons.

The Reality

As the Bush Administration prepared for the invasion of Iraq in September 2002, the President signed a classified document, National Security Presidential Directive 17, which was later leaked to a number of sources, including the conservative Washington Times. The message to U.S. forces, the



DoD photo by Helene C. Stikkel.

Iraqi leadership, and to the rest of the world was stark and intimidating: “The United States will continue to make clear that it reserves the right to respond with overwhelming force — including potentially nuclear weapons — to the use of [weapons of mass destruction] against the United States, our forces abroad, and friends and allies.”¹⁰

The Bush Administration has thus made it widely known that it is prepared to use first-strike nuclear attacks to respond to perceived threats from non-nuclear weapons of mass destruction. (It should be remembered that neither chemical nor biological weapons are comparable to nuclear weapons in terms of the numbers of people they can kill or the devastation they wreak.) This represents a shift in articulated U.S. nuclear policy. It also violates the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which the U.S. ratified in 1970. Among the commitments made when it signed the NPT and again in 1995 when it

renewed this commitment, was a U.S. pledge not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states that are members of the NPT and that are not allied with a nation that does possess nuclear weapons. 187 countries have signed the NPT, which has helped to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and nuclear technology for over 30 years. Iraq also signed the NPT. Iraq was widely known not to possess nuclear weapons, and it was not allied with a nuclear state.

On February 21, 2003, ten U.S. senators protested this change in U.S. nuclear war fighting strategy, warning President Bush that:

“A shift in U.S. policy would deepen the danger of nuclear proliferation by effectively telling non-nuclear states that nuclear weapons are necessary to deter a potential U.S. attack, and by sending a green light to the world’s nuclear states that it is permissible to use them. Is this the lesson we want to send to North Korea, India, Pakistan, or any other nuclear power?”¹¹

Since attacking the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki with the world’s first atomic bombs, the U.S. has threatened to initiate nuclear warfare on more than 20 occasions. Both Bush Administrations and, in 1998, the Clinton Administration threatened first strike nuclear attacks against Iraq, and powerful figures in the Bush Administration are hoping to make good on these threats and to end the taboo against the use of nuclear weapons in the course of U.S. military interventions.¹²

The Policy

- 1) a renewed commitment to so-called “missile defense” and
- 2) continued maintenance of U.S. nuclear stockpiles

Along with offensive strike systems and a revitalized nuclear infrastructure, the Bush Administration plans to integrate so-called “missile defenses” as the third component of its new strategic triad. According to Secretary Rumsfeld, “Missile defenses are beginning to emerge as systems that can have an effect on the strategic and operational calculations of potential adversaries.” The Bush Administration believes that these systems can have a “dissuasive effect” on potential adversaries by making it “more arduous and costly for an adversary to compete militarily with or wage war against the United States.”¹³

Advertised as a major disarmament initiative,

the Bush II-Putin Strategic Offensive Reduction Treaty (SORT) outlines a plan to reduce the U.S. nuclear arsenal from roughly 8,000 to 1,700-2,200 “operationally deployed warheads” by 2012.¹⁴ Building from this, the Nuclear Posture Review proclaimed that, “the combination of new capabilities that make up the New Triad reduce the risk to the nation as it draws its nuclear forces toward the goal of 1,700-2,200 operationally deployed *strategic* nuclear warheads announced by President Bush on November 13, 2001.”

The Reality

The Bush Administration withdrew the United States from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM) in the first year of Bush’s presidency. With the treaty’s abrogation, the Administration has accelerated construction of a “missile defense” base in Alaska. A succession of increasingly secret and rigged tests by the Bush Administration has placed the U.S. on a fast-track for “missile defense” deployments. Linked to space-based systems, these weapons are at the cutting edge of the effort to monopolize the militarization of space. They also provide a rationale and political cover for financing a revolution in military electronics. Strategically, “missile defenses” serve U.S. nuclear war planning, offering the promise and threat of a shield to reinforce the U.S. first-strike nuclear swords. In the tradition of the U.S.-Soviet arms race during the Cold War, the Bush Administration appears to have little concern that its goal of deploying missile defenses



Yorkshire CND photo.

in East Asia to “neutralize” Chinese missile forces is forcing the pace of a regional arms race by goading Beijing into building and deploying as many missiles as will be needed to overwhelm the U.S. missile defense system. This, in turn, could lead Japan, and possibly the Koreas and Russia into a destabilizing and potentially catastrophic regional arms race.

Bottom line: The Bush Administration has allocated \$23 billion over the next three years for missile defenses that will fatten the coffers of the military-industrial complex, that are unlikely to work for the foreseeable future, that increase the dangers of a regional arms race and of nuclear war, and which fuel nuclear weapons proliferation.

As the NRDC reports, the Bush Administration is “faking nuclear restraint” with its ostensible commitment to reduce the U.S. nuclear arsenal from 8,000 to 2,000 warheads by 2012, leaving the U.S. with the world’s largest and deadliest nuclear arsenal, powerful enough to destroy much of the planet’s life. The NRDC and others are clear that “The Bush Administration is actually planning to retain the potential to deploy not 2,000 nuclear weapons, but as many as 15,000.” In addition to the 2,000 strategic warheads permitted by the SORT treaty, the U.S. arsenal will include more than 5,000 intact nuclear warheads labeled as “non-strategic” or “inactive,” and nearly 5,000 plutonium components in storage and that can be readily reassembled and deployed. The number of nuclear warheads in the U.S. arsenal will not change over the next decade. What will change is the way they are counted.

“Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.”

— *Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty*
Article VI

Worse, as the Bush Administration targets Iraq, North Korea and Iran for preemptive “regime change” wars under the pretense of preventing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction,

Washington is preparing its final breakout from the NPT regime. Article VI of the NPT states that all signatories must “pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament.” With its reaffirmation of first-strike nuclear war fighting, commitments to developing and deploying new nuclear weapons and missile defenses, maintenance of vast nuclear weapons stockpiles, and by issuing new nuclear threats, the U.S. has become a “nuclear rogue” that repeatedly violates the NPT and international law.¹⁵

The Policy

Funding for the development, testing and deployment of new nuclear weapons

The Bush Administration plans to revitalize the U.S. nuclear arsenal by upgrading existing “systems” and developing and deploying “entirely new systems.”¹⁶ The NPR calls for modernizing the nuclear weapons complex so that it can design, develop, manufacture and certify new warheads. Specific programs called for in the NPR include:

- Development of tactical nuclear weapons to be deployed on the battlefield to destroy mobile targets in all terrain and weather conditions;
- Development of tactical “low yield” earth-penetrating nuclear weapons (EPWs, mini-nukes or bunker-busters) to destroy “hard and deeply buried targets;”
- Extending the life of the dual-capable jet fighters (F-16C/D, F-15E) or new Joint Strike Fighters that can be armed with either nuclear or conventional missiles;
- Investing in the nuclear weapons laboratories, not only to create these weapons, but to train a new generation of nuclear weapons designers.

To design and deploy these apocalyptic weapons, and to ensure that existing and new nuclear weapons perform as advertised, the Bush Administration and powerful forces in the Republican Party propose reducing the length of time currently needed — approximately 2–3 years — to resume nuclear testing at the Nevada Test Site. Beyond training a new generation of weapons designers, the Administration also seeks to mentor a new generation of weapons testing personnel.¹⁷

U.S. nuclear forces 2003

| Type | Name | Launchers | Year Deployed | Warheads x yield (kiloton) | Warheads (active/spares) |
|-----------------------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---|--------------------------|
| ICBMs | | | | | |
| LGM-30G | Minuteman III | | | | |
| | Mk-12 | 150 | 1970 | 1 W62 x 170 | 150 |
| | Mk-12 | 50 | 1970 | 3 W62 x 170 (MIRV) | 150/15 |
| | Mk-12A | 300 | 1979 | 3 W62 x 335 (MIRV) | 900/20 |
| LGM-118A | MX/Peacekeeper | 40 | 1986 | 10 W87 x 300 (MIRV) | 400/50 |
| Total | | 540 | | | 1,600/85 |
| SLBMs | | | | | |
| UGM-96A | Trident I C4 | 96/4 | 1979 | 6 W76 x 100 (MIRV) | 576 |
| UGM-133A | Trident II D5 | 288/12 | | | |
| | Mk-4 | | 1992 | 8 W76 x 100 (MIRV) | 1,920/156 |
| | Mk-5 | | 1990 | 8 W88 x 475 (MIRV) | 384/16 |
| Total | | 384/16 | | | 2,880/172 |
| Bombers* | | | | | |
| B-52 | Stratofortress | 94/56* | 1961 | ALCM/W80-1 x 5–150 ACM/W80-1 x 5–150 | 430/20 430/20 |
| B-2 | Spirit | 21/16 | 1994 | B61-7, -11, B83-1 bombs | 800/45 |
| Total | | 115/72 | | | 1,660/85 |
| Non-strategic forces | | | | | |
| Tomahawk SLCM | | 325 | 1984 | 1 W80-0 x 5–150 | 320 |
| B61-3, -4, -10 bombs | | n/a | 1979 | 0.3–170 | 800/40 |
| Total | | 325 | | | 1,120/40 |
| Grand Total** | | | | | ~7,650 |

ACM: advanced cruise missile; ALCM: air-launched cruise missile; ICBM: intercontinental ballistic missile (range greater than 5,500 kilometers); MIRV: multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles; SLCM: sea-launched cruise missile; SLBM: submarine-launched ballistic missile.

* The first figure is the total inventory, including those used for training, testing, and backup; the second figure is the primary mission inventory; the number of operational aircraft assigned for nuclear or conventional missions.

** Nearly 3,000 additional intact warheads are retained in reserve or inactive stockpiles.

Chart ©2003 *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists & Natural Resources Defense Council*. Used by permission.

The Reality

The Bush Administration has repeatedly talked about funding and developing both “low yield” and “robust” earth penetrating nuclear weapons (EPWs) to destroy “hard and deeply buried targets.” Many assume that because these weapons are designed to detonate below ground and will be less radioactive than many other weapons in the U.S. nuclear arsenal, that they will produce “minimal collateral damage,” and could be used in or near densely populated areas. However, as Princeton scientist Robert W. Nelson reports, “the goal of a benign earth-penetrating nuclear weapon is physically impossible.” A “successful” EPW explosion that destroys a bunker or weapons facility buried 60-110 yards underground, Dr. Nelson concludes, would be catastrophic. Tens of thousands of people would die from the initial impact of the weapon and thousands more would die over time due to the radioactive fallout that would extend for more than a mile and a half.¹⁸



“Harry”, a 32-kiloton nuclear test exploded in May 1953 at the Nevada Test Site. The Harry shot resulted in the heaviest contamination of “downwinders” — civilians living downwind of the test site — of any U.S. continental explosion.²⁰ Department of Energy photo.

Authorization for funding, research, and development of new nuclear earth-penetrating weapons has been sent to Congress with the Bush Administration’s defense authorization bill. Tucked deep within this bill are two lines calling for the repeal of a 1993 law that bans research and development of these weapons, also known as mini-nukes. This ban, known as the Furse-Spratt provision, bans research and development of precision low-yield weapons development (PLYWD.) It has long enjoyed widespread support and serves as a pillar of what remains of arms control.¹⁹

To develop and begin deployment of these and other nuclear weapons²¹ the Bush Administration wants to end the 12-year nuclear test moratorium, undertaken to halt the U.S.-Soviet arms race and to prevent nuclear weapons proliferation. Secretary Rumsfeld put it diplomatically in his introduction to the Nuclear Posture Review, writing that, “While the United States is making every effort to maintain the stockpile without additional nuclear testing, this may not be possible for the indefinite future.”²² And, in May 2003, the Republican-controlled

“I firmly believe that the atomic bombing was the worst act of terrorism in history.”

— *Senji Yamaguchi*
Nagasaki A-bomb survivor

House Armed Services Committee defeated an amendment that would have required the President to notify Congress 18 months before resuming nuclear weapons testing.

The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), signed by President Clinton in 1996, bans all nuclear explosions for any purpose. Although Republicans have blocked the treaty’s formal ratification by Congress, the U.S. remains bound by the treaty’s stipulations. Since the beginning of the moratorium in 1991, and the negotiation of the CTBT, Congress has authorized and funded the Department of Energy (DOE) to ensure the Nevada Test Site is maintained so that nuclear weapons tests can eventually be resumed. This is insufficient for the Bush Administration which is urging Congress to approve an additional \$15 million for a new “defense” category: “Enhanced Test Readiness.” A major step in preparing the way for renewed nuclear weapons testing is scheduled for

August 2003 when the first “Stockpile Stewardship” Conference in seven years will be held at the U.S. Strategic Command Headquarters. The conference agenda calls for discussing what new nuclear weapons to build, how they can be tested, how these weapons will be “mated” to delivery systems (existing or envisioned), and how to revise the decision making process for authorizing construction of new nuclear weapons. It is widely assumed that if President Bush is reelected, renewed nuclear weapons testing will begin during his second term.²³

Despite the 12-year moratorium, fallout from nuclear weapons testing continues to devastate many U.S. lives and will continue doing so for years to come. According to the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research, “an estimated 80,000 people who lived in or were born in the United States between the years 1951 and 2000 will contract cancer as a result of the fallout caused by atmospheric nuclear weapons testing. Well over 15,000 of these cases would be fatal.”²⁴ Earlier the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that “for

all Americans born after 1951, all organs and tissues of the body have received some radiation exposure”²⁵ as a result of nuclear weapons testing. Levels of radiation exposure have been the highest and most concentrated in areas downwind from the Nevada Test Site, where the U.S. government has tested over 1,000 nuclear devices, including Southern Utah, Eastern Nevada, and parts of Idaho. While most of the victims were subject to exposure from atmospheric testing, venting from underground tests has and continues to be a source of radiation sickness and cancers.

Resumption of testing would place the United States in further violation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. As the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) reports, “The resumption of testing would send a signal to the world that the U.S. is not serious about keeping its pledge of disarmament. It would show instead that the U.S. is committed to maintaining the central role of nuclear weapons in national defense policy.”²⁶ “Rather than making the world more safe by ensuring the safety of the nuclear stockpile,” FCNL warns that, “breaking the test moratorium would destabilize the world. It would undo decades of arms control and possibly set the stage for a new arms race. If the U.S. decides to resume testing, it will most certainly cause other nations like Russia, China, India, and Pakistan to follow suit and resume their own testing. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty would go up in smoke with those tests. The Bush Administration’s test site readiness effort will have adverse effects on U.S. security by potentially starting a global chain reaction of nuclear testing, instability, and danger.”

The Bush Administration’s campaign to fund the research and development of new nuclear weapons and to prepare the way to resume nuclear weapons tests comes amidst administration-manufactured crises over weapons of mass destruction. While the U.S. invades Iraq and threatens “regime change” wars against Iran and North Korea in the name of disarmament and counter-proliferation, it is simultaneously pursuing the modernization of its nuclear war fighting weapons. Senator Jack Reed (RI) put it well when he said: “It is extraordinarily difficult, if not impossible, to urge other nations to forswear the development and use of nuclear weapons if we are so routinely talking about the development and use of nuclear weapons” in the United States.

“I come to you from Southern Utah, downwind from the Nevada Test Site, where the US government has tested over 1,000 nuclear devices...My husband’s father was a uranium miner and died at a young age of lung cancer as a result of working in improperly vented mines...My father died six months after a brain tumor the size of a lemon was removed...the tumor was a result of the fallout that rained over our homes from the nuclear testing.

“At the age of three, our youngest daughter Bethany was diagnosed with a deadly form of cancer...We watched this wonderfully lively, inquisitive child fight so many struggles to live. After three years of chemotherapy, radiation therapy, and surgery she lost her fight...

“Just one month before Bethany died, Cathy, my only sister passed away from skin cancer. She left behind six small children and a husband...

“We all have an opportunity to change the policy of our governments by no longer being silent....We are all victims of the nuclear age. Let us all decide to survive.”

— *Claudia Peterson, St. George, Utah*

THE FUTURE IS IN OUR HANDS

On February 14, 2003 Mohammed El Baradei, head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, reported to the U.N. Security Council that Iraq's nuclear weapons infrastructure had been destroyed in the 1990s and that U.S. charges that Iraq had recently imported uranium from Niger were based on forged documents. Hans Blix, the U.N.'s chief weapons inspector, reported that the Iraqi govern-

“The nuclear deterrence doctrine, which regards the possession of nuclear arms as a useful means to deter nuclear war, suggests that the mere possession of nuclear weapons is safe and harmless. In every stage of the nuclear development process, from mining and refining of uranium, production of warheads, their stockpiling and transportation... Hibakusha are created by residual radioactivity... We must not overlook the fact that the practice of deterrence has been lulling international and national opinion on the abolition of nuclear weapons into a false sense of security.”

— *Dr. Shuntaro Hida*
Hiroshima A-bomb survivor

ment had been generally cooperative as U.N. inspectors scoured the country in search of chemical and biological weapons and the means to produce them. He urged that the inspectors be given the time they needed to fulfill the Security Council mandate. Nonetheless, the Bush Administration launched its “preemptive” invasion of Iraq with no explicit United Nations’ authorization, with little international support, and in clear violation of the UN Charter.²⁷ The primary rationale for invasion provided by the Bush Administration was the United Nations’ inability to completely eliminate Iraq’s ostensible arsenal of weapons of mass destruction.

Sadly, as the Nuclear Posture Review, NPSD 17, and the administration’s defense authorization proposal demonstrate, the Bush Administration is deeply committed to the maintenance, enhancement, and battlefield use of cataclysmic nuclear weapons. The Bush Administration nuclear policy

extends the use of nuclear weapons as the cornerstone of U.S. military power for the next 50 years. The NPR has singled out North Korea, Iraq, Iran, Syria, Libya, China, and Russia as potential nuclear targets. Nuclear extortion remains a fundamental aspect of U.S. military policy. The Bush Administration’s nuclear policy undermines and violates the foundations of international arms control, including the 30 year-old Non Proliferation Treaty and the more recent Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

The hypocrisy inherent in this policy will not be ignored by other nations. Non-proliferation experts, defense advocates and many in Congress agree that the Bush Administration has set the United States on a very dangerous course. If the U.S. government refuses to chart a path away from global dominance based on threats of nuclear annihilation, other nations will surely follow the U.S. example or develop other ways of equalizing the balance of terror.

ACTIONS TO TAKE

Sir Joseph Rotblatt, one of the fathers of the atomic bomb and the chagrined author of the concept of nuclear deterrence, reminds us that “the only alternative is the total elimination of nuclear weapons.” He is clear that “We have to convince the public that the continuation of current policies...is bound to result in a nuclear holocaust in



March on Washington, April 2002. The international community expects the U.S. and other nuclear powers to fulfill their treaty commitments to nuclear weapons abolition.
Joseph Gerson photo.

which the future of the human race would be at stake.”²⁸

If there is to be substantive nuclear disarmament, and if the world’s nuclear arsenals are ever to be eliminated, the process must begin with the most powerful and dangerous nuclear power: the United States.

“A shift in U.S. policy would deepen the danger of nuclear proliferation by effectively telling non-nuclear states that nuclear weapons are necessary to deter a potential U.S. attack, and by sending a green light to the world’s nuclear states that it is permissible to use them. Is this the lesson we want to send to North Korea, India, Pakistan, or any other nuclear power?”

— *Statement signed by ten U.S. Senators*

In addition to traditional public education and essential lobbying efforts, the 2004 election campaign, which has already begun in states like New Hampshire, Iowa, and South Carolina that have early primaries and caucuses, provides a unique

opportunity to place U.S. nuclear weapons and war policies at the forefront of the national debate and to influence those who seek to lead our nation. It is essential that we let our fellow/sister citizens understand the dangerous course to nuclear war that the Bush Administration has set us on: shattering the taboo against using nuclear weapons in combat, embracing the doctrine of preemptive first-strike warfare against non-nuclear nations, preparing resumption of nuclear weapons testing, monopolizing the militarization of space, and sparking dangerous arms races across the planet.

We can transform our political environment and help to identify and create presidential candidates willing to reverse the Bush Administration’s dangerous nuclear doctrines. We must set a determined agenda that will guarantee our security by fulfilling our and other nations’ commitments to nuclear weapons abolition. Ultimately, violation of treaties, international law, and the United Nations Charter will be as catastrophic for those of us living in the United States as they are to all other people.

In a democracy, policy is made not only by casting votes, but through education, organizing, and action. Only we can prevent nuclear war and eliminate nuclear dangers.

NOTES

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- 2 “Rationale and Requirements for U.S. Nuclear Forces and Arms Control.” National Institute for Public Policy. Volume I. Executive Report, January 2001. Its members included Ambassador Henry Cooper, Dr. Fred C. Ikle, Ambassador Max Kampelman, General William Odom, and R. James Woolsey, among others.
- 3 United States Department of Energy’s NNSA Executive Summary, available on-line: <http://www.cfo.doe.gov/budget/04budget/content/NNSAADM/NNSASUM.pdf>
- 4 Natural Resources Defense Council. “Faking Nuclear Restraint: The Bush Administration’s Secret Plan for Strengthening U.S. Nuclear Forces.” February 2002. <http://www.nrdc.org>
- 5 “Nuclear Posture Review.” Submitted to Congress January 2002. Emphasis added.
- 6 Visit the Friends Committee on National Legislation’s website: <http://www.fcnl.org> for updates and information on nuclear weapons issues; Natural Resources Defense Council, “Faking Nuclear Restraint.”
- 7 “America as Nuclear Rogue.” Editorial in the *New York Times*, March 12, 2002.
- 8 Excerpts from “Nuclear Posture Review.”
- 9 Bob Aldridge. “What’s Left After SORT?” BASIC REPORTS, February 2003, No. 83., British American Security Information Council, Washington, D.C.
- 10 Krlev, Nicholas. “Bush Approves Nuclear Response.” *The Washington Times*. January 31, 2003.
- 11 Edward M. Kennedy (MA), Diane Feinstein (CA), Patrick J. Leahy (VT), Jon S. Corzine (NJ), Byron L. Dorgan (ND), Patty Murray (WA), Frank Lautenberg (NJ), Jack Reed (RI), Daniel K. Akaka (HI), Tim Johnson (SD).
- 12 Joseph Gerson, *With Hiroshima Eyes: Atomic War, Nuclear Blackmail and Moral Imagination*, (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1995).
- 13 Excerpts from “Nuclear Posture Review” (see note 5).

- 14 Excerpts from "Nuclear Posture Review" (see note 5).
- 15 See, among others, John Burroughs. *The (Il)legality of Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons: A Guide to the Historic Opinion of the International Court of Justice*. Munster: Die Deutsche Bibliothek - CIP Einheitsaufnahme, 1997.
- 16 Excerpts from "Nuclear Posture Review" (see note 5).
- 17 See "Nuclear Posture Review"; National Institute for Public Policy, "Rationale and Requirements" (see note 2); and "An Agenda for the Nuclear Weapons Program." House Policy Committee, Subcommittee on Security and Foreign Affairs. Washington, D.C. February 13, 2003.
- 18 Nelson, Robert W. "Low Yield Earth Penetrating Nuclear Weapons." *Science and Global Security*. 10;1-20, 2002. Taylor and Francis. <http://www.princeton.edu/~rnelson/papers/epw.pdf>
- 19 Bob Aldridge, "What's Left After SORT?" (see note 9).
- 20 Picture and text provided by Membrane. <http://gawain.membrane.com/hew/Usa/Tests/Upshotk.html>
- 21 In addition to research and development of new earth-penetrating nuclear weapons, after a hiatus of fourteen years, the Los Alamos National Laboratory has renewed production of nuclear weapons pits (the fissile core of a nuclear weapon) that meets specifications for use in the nuclear stockpile and as replacement warheads for Trident II submarine-launched cruise missiles. <http://www.spacedaily.com/news/icbm-03a.html>
- 22 Defense Secretary's introduction to "Nuclear Posture Review."
- 23 Greg Mello. "Leaked document details Pentagon planning process to undercut test moratorium, build new nukes for 'small strikes' Los Alamos Study Group, February 14, 2003. See also http://lasg.org/hmpgfrm_a.html; and David Culp, Friends Committee on National Legislation, speech in Des Moines, IA, March 29, 2003.
- 24 Institute for Energy and Environmental Research. "About Eighty Thousand Cancers..." Press Release, February 28, 2002. <http://www.ieer.org>
- 25 *New York Times*, March 1, 2002.
- 26 "Background on Test Site Readiness." http://www.fcnl.org/issues/arm/sup/nuclear_testing127-03.htm
- 27 Article 51 of the United Nations Charter limits the use of military force to self-defense and only "if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations."
- 28 David Hearst. "World on path to disaster, bomb pioneer warns," *The Guardian*, January 9, 2003.
- 29 Numbers provided by the Nuclear Notebook Nov/Dec 2002 www.thebulletin.org/issues/nukenotes/nd02nukenote.html. Nuclear Notebook is prepared by Robert S. Norris of the Natural Resources Defense Council and Hans M. Kristensen of the Nautilus Institute. Inquiries should be directed to NRDC, 1200 New York Avenue, N.W., Suite 400, Washington, D.C., 20005; 202-289-6868.

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GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

Bunker-Buster/EPW — The 2002 Nuclear Posture Review mandates the funding and development of new nuclear weapons with the ability to penetrate and destroy hard and deeply buried targets. The Bush Administration would like to design a new “bunker-busting” Earth-Penetrating Nuclear Weapon (EPW) with a lower yield than similar weapons in the U.S. arsenal. The “robust” version of this weapon (RNEP) that is being proposed by the Bush Administration will be up to 133 times more powerful than the A-bomb that destroyed Hiroshima (see pages 8-9).

Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) — Article I of The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty states, “Each State Party undertakes not to carry out any nuclear weapon test explosion or any other nuclear explosion, and to prohibit and prevent any such nuclear explosion at any place under its jurisdiction or control.” The U.S. has signed, but not ratified this treaty. It is thus bound by the terms of the treaty unless and until that signature is removed.

Hibakusha — Japanese term for witness/survivor of the atomic bombings. Japanese Hibakusha have universalized the term in recent years, to include all victims of the nuclear weapons production cycle, from mining to manufacture, and from testing to deployment.

International Court of Justice/World Court — The International Court of Justice, also known as the World Court, is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. The Court is composed of 15 judges elected to nine-year terms of office by the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council. In a landmark decision on July 8, 1996, the International Court of Justice declared that the threat or use of nuclear weapons would be “contrary to the rules of international law applicable in armed conflict” and in violation of the UN Charter. The UN General Assembly passed a mirror Resolution, 54/55, in December 1999.

Mini-nuke — Congress has banned the funding and development of nuclear weapons with yields less than 5 kilotons since 1994. In early March 2003, the Bush Administration asked Congress to lift the 10-year ban on the development of mini-nukes (see page 5).

Nevada Test Site (NTS) — Over 900 atomic explosions were detonated at the Nevada Test Site during the years 1951–1992. The Bush administration has asked U.S. nuclear weapons scientists to determine how quickly they could restart nuclear test explosions under the Nevada desert if the administration decides to end the nine-year moratorium on nuclear testing, which has existed since 1992 (see pages 5–7).

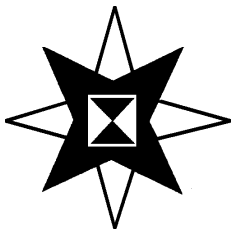
Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) — This treaty is among the most important diplomatic agreements of the 20th century. In essence, the non-nuclear weapons nations agreed not to become nuclear powers in exchange for the access to nuclear power technologies and the nuclear powers’ Article VI agreement to negotiate the elimination of their nuclear arsenals. Successive U.S. Administrations have violated the treaty, which was signed and ratified by the United States in 1970. Article VI of the NPT states: “Each of the parties to the treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.” On October 16, 1998, former U.S. Director of the CIA John Deutch stated that “The U.S. never intended, nor does it now intend to implement Article VI. That’s just something you have to say to get what you want out of a conference.”

Nuclear Stockpile — A nuclear stockpile consists of a nation’s reserve supply of non-deployed nuclear weapons, nuclear weapons components, and fissile material. The United States possesses the world’s largest stockpile of nuclear weapons material.

Strategic Nuclear Weapons — Nuclear weapons intended to be used against counter-force targets (an opponent’s nuclear weapons) or counter-value targets (an opponent’s non-combatant population). While the phrase “strategic nuclear weapons” is often used to describe nuclear warheads attached to intercontinental delivery vehicles (missiles or aircraft), such usage is technically incorrect, as strategic targets can be nearby the state with the weapon in question.

Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT) — Also known as the “Moscow Treaty,” the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty, signed in May 2002, commits the U.S. to reduce the number of strategic warheads in its nuclear arsenal to 1700-2200 by the end of 2012. While a good start, this would still leave the U.S. with the world’s largest nuclear arsenal, enough firepower to effectively destroy the planet, and thousands of additional nuclear warheads labeled “inactive” or “non-strategic” (see page 4).

Tactical Nuclear Weapon — Tactical nuclear weapons generally have smaller yields than do strategic nuclear weapons. Tactical nuclear weapons are designed for deployment on the battlefield. The Bush Administration has placed increased importance on the development of new tactical nuclear weapons and many in the administration would like to end the taboo against using nuclear weapons in combat.



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Further Reading

- “2002 World Conference Against A & H Bombs, Hiroshima and Nagasaki August 2002” Gensuikyō. Transcripts of the yearly conference dedicated to “Working together for a peaceful and promising world without nuclear weapons”.
- *Critical Mass: Voices for a Nuclear Free Future*, Greg Ruggiero and Stewart Sahulka. Open Media and the Campaign for Peace and Democracy. Includes articles by the Dalai Lama, Daniel Ellsberg, Nicole Hala, and Praful Bidwai.
- *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb*, Gar Alperovitz, Vintage Books. The definitive account of the decision to drop the bomb by the leading revisionist scholar.
- “Faking Nuclear Restraint: The Bush Administration’s Secret Plan for Strengthening US Nuclear Forces”. February 2002. www.nrdc.org/nuclear/restraint.asp. This analysis from NRDC’s (see below) nuclear program looks at the likely implications of the Bush Administration’s 2002 Nuclear Posture Review.
- *National Missile Defense: What Does it All Mean?* Center for Defense Information (see below). A collection of articles by the Center staff analyzing various aspects of missile defense.
- *Peacework*. The monthly peace and justice magazine of New England AFSC provides analysis, organizing models and resources, and an events calendar. Subscription information is available from AFSC at the address below.
- *Rogue States and Nuclear Outlaws: America’s Search for a New Foreign Policy*, Michael Klare. Hill & Wong. Describes the use of the “rogue state” rationale to maintain US global dominance in the dawn of the post-Cold War.
- *With Hiroshima Eyes*, Joseph Gerson. New Society Publishers. An introduction to the history of U.S. use of nuclear weapons from the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki through the Clinton Administration’s threats of use.

Films

The following films are available for rental from the film library of the New England Regional AFSC Office (address and telephone below).

- *Hiroshima: Why the Bomb Was Dropped*, Video, 70 minutes. ABC News. This excellent ABC production provides information censored from the 1995 Smithsonian exhibit on the atomic bombing.
- *Hiroshima-Nagasaki, August 1945*, Video and 16mm, 20 minutes. Erik Barnouw. There is no more realistic description of the horrors of nuclear war.
- *The Last Empire*, Video and 16mm, 30 minutes. Joseph Gerson, et al. Excellent brief history of how the U.S. has

used its nuclear arsenal to reinforce its military interventions throughout the Third World.

- *Star Wars Returns*, Video, 30 minutes. Karl Grossman. Informative video about missile defense including interviews with Vandana Shiva, Bruce Gagnon, Regina Hagen, and Michio Kaku.

Organizations

These organizations work to prevent nuclear war.

- Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, 6042 S. Kimbark Ave., Chicago, IL 60637; www.thebulletin.org
- Center for Defense Information, 1779 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington DC 20036; www.cdi.org
- Federation of American Scientists, 1717 K St. NW, Suite 209, Washington DC 20036; www.fas.org
- Friends Committee On National Legislation, 245 Second Street NE, Washington DC 20002; www.fcnl.org
- Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space, PO Box 90083, Gainesville, FL 32607; www.space4peace.org
- Institute for Energy and Environmental Research, 6935 Laurel Ave., Suite 204, Takoma Park, MD 20912; www.ieer.org
- International Court of Justice (World Court), Peace Palace, 2517 KJ The Hague, The Netherlands; www.icj-cij.org
- Lawyers’ Committee on Nuclear Policy, 211 East 43rd St., New York, NY 10017; www.lcnp.org
- Natural Resources Defense Council, 40 West 20th St., New York, NY 10011; www.nrdc.org
- Union of Concerned Scientists, 2 Brattle Square, Cambridge, MA 02238; www.ucsus.org/arms/index.html

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