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Arms Control and Disarmament

1. US Nuclear Posture Review

a. A bill passed by the U.S. Senate for the 2001 defense budget directs the Defense and Energy departments to conduct a new Nuclear Posture Review. Reversing previous legislation, the bill also orders a study on low-yield nuclear weapons and permits the nuclear laboratories to "conduct any limited research and development that may be necessary" to complete it. The purpose of the study is to develop "a deep penetrator that could hold at risk a rogue state's deeply buried weapons or Saddam Hussein's bunker without torching Baghdad," one former senior Pentagon official told the Washington Post.

"Senate Bill Demands New Nuclear Posture Review"

"Senate Bill S.2549"

"(Text-only back-up)"

See also: "US Nuclear Strategy Reform in the 1990s"

"Nuclear Junkies: Those Lovable Little Bombs"

"MiniBus, Son of Mini-nuke"

b. During a recent conference at the U.S. Defense Threat Reduction Agency (formerly Defense Special Weapons Agency), Senior Arms Control Adviser John Holum outlined his vision for the role of arms control and its relationship with the U.S. military posture.

"Holum Outlines Security Rationale for Arms Control Process"

"Full text"

2. Nuclear Arms Reductions

a. Moscow and Washington could agree on new sweeping cuts in their nuclear arsenals even before 200, Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov told a news conference. "We consider it possible to reach concrete agreement with the United States on START-3 before the end of this year," he said.

"Moscow Sees START-3 Before 2001, Renews ABM Stance"

b. U.S. nuclear war planning is trapped in Cold War principles, writes CDI President Bruce Blair. Top American military officers insist that current nuclear policy prevents them from reducing the arsenal to fewer than 2,000 to 2,500 strategic weapons -- and that going lower would threaten our security. The reason for their position is a matter of simple arithmetic, Blair says and adds that the list of targets for U.S. nuclear forces has grown instead of declining since the last strategic arms reduction treaty, Start II, was signed in 1993. Blair offers a possible alternative force structure that uses only 1,500 nuclear weapons.

"Trapped in the Nuclear Math"

"Background paper on U.S. nuclear planning in the 1990s"

2. Moscow Summit

a. Following a meeting between U.S. Defense Secretary William Cohen met with Russian Defense Minister Igor Sergeyev in Moscow, reporters asked questions about the two countries' positions on the need for missile defense systems.

"US-Russian Press Conference: ABM and the Threat?"

b. Russia's President Vladimir Putin and U.S. President William Clinton reaffirmed their commitment to the 1972 antimissile treaty, calling it "a cornerstone of strategic stability," but disagreed on the need for a missile defense system. They also pledged to continue working toward a third Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START III), and establish a Joint Data Exchange Center in Moscow to exchange information on missile and space launches to avoid miscalculations about missile launches.

"Joint Statement"

"ABM Issue Unresolved as Summit Ends"

c. The White House released this Fact Sheet on the United States-Russian Federation Plutonium Disposition Agreement reached at the Summit Meeting between President Clinton and Russian President Putin in Moscow June 4. The agreement provides for "the safe, transparent and irreversible disposition of 68 metric tons of weapons-grade plutonium -- enough plutonium to make thousands of nuclear weapons," the White House Fact Sheet said.

"United States - Russian Federation Plutonium Disposition Agreement"

d. Despite its apparently limited results, the Clinton-Putin Summit gave President Clinton what he needed to move forward with deployment of a limited national missile defense system, Robert E. Hunter wrote in the Los Angeles Times. Hunter, a former U.S. Ambassador to NATO and currently a Senior Advisor at the Rand Corporation, notes that the Russian president for the first time formally acknowledged the core of the U.S. argument; that there is a "dangerous and growing threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery." According to Hunter, the summit opened up the chance of getting right the new, post-Cold War offense-defense nuclear equation and of taking the national missile defense issue out of the current heated debate "back into the channels of critical analysis and careful diplomacy where it belongs."

"Clinton Got What He Wanted From Russia"

3. Joint US-Russian Alert Center

a. The U.S.-Russian center for early warning of missile launches will start full-scale operations next year, Col. Gen. Vladimir Yakovlev, commander-in-chief of the Russian strategic missile force, stated during a press conference. In the future, "if the dialogue is successful and the Center operates successfully," he added, "the process must be joined by all members of the nuclear club."

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b. A senior U.S. Defense Department official briefed reporters on the joint Early Warning agreement signed by President Clinton and Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Moscow summit. According to the briefing, the agreement calls for the two countries to provide each other "with near real-time, continuous flow of information" from early warning sensors, including launch time, launch point, rough direction of launch, impact point, and time.

"Background Briefing on U.S.-Russia Early Warning Agreement"

Missile Defense

1. U.S. National Missile Defense System

a. A classified report by a Pentagon-appointed panel of experts raises numerous warning flags about the current plan for a missile defense shield, according to the Washington Post. By raising concerns over such issues as problems with the booster rocket for interceptor missiles, doubts about whether the interceptor can distinguish an enemy missile from decoys, and concern that the timetable for constructing a working system in five years is unrealistic, the report adds significant weight to recent criticism of the national missiles defense system.

"More Doubts Are Raised on Missile Shield"

b. A group of arms control advocates and prominent U.S. experts on Russia yesterday made public a letter urging President Clinton not to approve deployment of a National Missile Defense system when he makes a decision on the program later this year.

"Group Urges President To Bar Missile Defense"

c. Citing the Pentagon's own plan, critics of the proposed antimissile defense and even some military experts say all flight tests of the \$60 billion weapon have been rigged to hide a fundamental flaw: The system cannot distinguish between enemy warheads and decoys. In interviews with the New York Times, they said that after the system failed to achieve this crucial discrimination goal against mock targets in its first two flight tests, the Pentagon substituted simpler and fewer decoys that would be easier for the antimissile weapon to recognize.

"Antimissile Testing Is Rigged to Hide a Flaw, Critics Say"

d. During a conference at the Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics on June 5, director of the U.S. Ballistic Missile Defense Organization (BMDO) Lieutenant General Ronald Kadish responded to criticism of the National Missile Defense program by saying that many misconceptions about the program "have taken on a life of their own." He emphasized that the programs is making "significant technological advances" that would make a limited missile defense of the United States possible. "We can hit a bullet with a bullet," Kadish said. Although defensive in nature, he added, the missile defense system will also influence U.S. offensive strategic forces.

"U.S. National Missile Defense: Looking Past the Headlines"

e. A sea-based national missile defense component is a possibility but DOD is concentrating almost exclusively on development of a land-based system because it wants to move as quickly as possible and the U.S. requires a system that will protect all 50 states from a "variety of rogue nations, not just North Korea but rogue nations in other parts of the world as well."

"Pentagon: Sea-Based NMD Unlikely For Now"

f. Washington could negotiate a ban on development, production, and export of North Korea's medium- and longer-range missiles, writes Leon V. Sigal, director of the Northeast Asia Cooperative Security Project at the Social Science Research Council in New York. Doing so would be a less risky way to counter the threat than unproven missile defenses, says Sigal, who is author of Disarming "Strangers: Nuclear Diplomacy with North Korea." Segal criticizes that in the current debate over whether to build a national missile defense, "threatmongers are hyping the missile menace from so-called rogue states to justify spending \$60 billion on defenses."

"Negotiating an End to North Korea's Missile-Making"

2. Russian Proposal

a. Following talks with Russian Defense Minister Igor Sergeyev U.S. Defense Secretary William Cohen said that the Russians had provided additional details on their vision for joint development of a missile defense system and that "such a system could supplement, but not substitute, for the system that the U.S. is developing." Cohen added, though, that the proposal was still vague. "So far, we don't know what the proposal is. Again, it's basically a statement about an idea, but not a system," he said.

"Excerpts from Cohen News Briefing"

"Full briefing transcript"

b. Russia and the United States remained deadlocked over U.S. proposals to build a national missile-defense system. Defense Secretary William S. Cohen called for discussion of such high-tech systems, but Russian Defense Minister Igor Sergeyev responded that the two countries ought to rely instead on an "umbrella" based on diplomacy.

"Russia Wants Political Shield"

a. Russia's proposal of a limited missile defense system as an alternative to the planned U.S. national missile defense system was largely dismissed by U.S. Defense Secretary William Cohen. The Russian proposal is "basically a statement about an idea," Cohen said after bilateral talks in Moscow. "It's not a system," he said adding that the Russian idea was based on an unratified 1997 "Demarcation Agreement" permitting so-called "theater" missile defenses, limited in range to 3,500 km. In Washington's view, a theater-based system that failed to offer protection from potential threats by North Korea, Iran or Iraq was neither a feasible nor a desirable solution. "If that's what they have in mind then there's a serious problem," Cohen told a news conference during a regular meeting of NATO defense ministers.

"U.S. Cool to Russian Alternative Missile Defense"

3. Norway Radar

b. In an article published in Norwegian daily Bergen Tidende, analyst Inge Sellevag writes that the project leader of a controversial radar at Vardo in Northern Norway confirms that the U.S. Air Force attempted to include the radar in a missile defense system. According to the project leader, however, all ties to missile defense were cut when Norway agreed to move the radar to Vardo with space surveillance as a clearly defined mission.

"Hard fight about the Vardo radar"

4. US-Swedish Discussions

a. During a press conference in Stockholm, U.S. Defense Secretary William Cohen and Swedish Defense Minister Bjorn von Sydow discussed missile defense, NATO, nuclear deterrence, peacekeeping, Sweden's non-aligned status, and submarines in Swedish waters.

"Excerpts from Cohen Press Conference with Swedish Defense Minister"

"Full Transcript of press conference"

Russia

1. Subcritical Testing

a. The Russian Ministry for Atomic Energy, or Minatom, plans to continue subcritical testing at the Arctic test field on Novaya Zemlya in the year 2000. The ministry says the tests do not violate the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. In autumn, 1999, Bill Richardson, U.S. Secretary of Energy, requested his Russian counterpart, Yevgeny Adamov, to allow American specialists into the test site to make sure that only subcritical experiments were conducted.

"Nuclear test range in Arctic to be used intensively"

2. Naval Exercise Announced

a. The commander of the Russian Northern Fleet said that it planned to deploy its largest post-Cold War naval force to the Mediterranean Sea. The combat potential of the group "will be ten times greater" than the group Russian deployed in 1995-1996, Fleet Commander Adm. Vyacheslav Popov stated during a press conference. The composition "will even exceed the Soviet-era Mediterranean naval squadron," he noted, consist of up to ten warships, including the aircraft carrier Admiral Kuznetsov, the nuclear missile cruiser Pyotr Veliky, and several nuclear submarines.

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NATO

1. Nuclear Policy

a. Contrary to expectations after the 1999 NATO Summit in Washington, U.S. under secretary of defense for policy Walter Slocombe told reporters on June 8 that NATO did not plan to conduct a review of the alliance nuclear policy. "I don't think there was any plan for a comprehensive review of NATO nuclear doctrine," Slocombe said. Instead he emphasized agreements adopted at the recent U.S.-Russian Summit in which "both countries affirmed their commitment to strategic stability and mutual deterrence and strengthening the viability of the ABM [Anti-Ballistic Missile] Treaty."

"Slocombe Says No Review of NATO Nuclear Doctrine"

"Full briefing text"

b. In his address to the NATO ministers meeting in Italy, Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy NATO must make its nuclear posture "coherent with our non-proliferation and disarmament posture" at the recent Non-Proliferation Conference in New York and the disarmament discussions in Geneva and consider additional disarmament steps. Unlike the other speeches at the NATO meeting, Axworthy's address openly challenged NATO's current nuclear policy saying that it "undermines the credibility of our non-proliferation and disarmament efforts." Axworthy outlined a wide range of disarmament steps that NATO could consider to further distance its nuclear policy from the Cold War.

"Nuclear excerpts from Mr. Axworthy's speech"

"Full speech"

2. Netherlands

a. Karel Koster from PENN Netherlands provided a report on political developments and NGO activities in the Netherlands in the spring of 2000. Koster's report describes political developments in Holland leading up to and including the recent NPT review conference, as well as attempts to influence those developments.

"Report on Nuclear Developments in the Netherlands" The report has three attachments:

"A. Programme of speakers at conference 19 April" (PDF-version)

"B. Report of "Conference on disarmament and non-proliferation: Report of a seminar in the Hague, 19 April 2000" (PDF-version)

"C. Selected quotes from Dutch minister of foreign affairs report on NPT conference to parliament (6 June 2000)"

China

1. Suspected Missile Launch

a. Itar-Tass reported that "informed sources" said a U.S. RC-135 electronic surveillance aircraft has been deployed to Kadena Air Base on Okinawa Island to monitor an expected Chinese ICBM test-launch. A U.S. Navy reconnaissance ship had also been dispatched to the Yellow Sea for the same purpose.

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b. The expected launch by China of a long-range Dongfeng-31 missile is designed as a political posturing directed toward Taiwan, Teipei's Defense Minister Wu Shih-wen said. Wu said that the ROC Ministry of National Defense (MND) had not yet released any news about the expected launch.

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Korean Peninsula

1. North-South Agreement

a. A senior South Korean official said that North Korea's leader Kim Jong-il sent a "positive message" to U.S. President Bill Clinton and that Clinton showed "good response" to Kim's message. Hwang Won-tak, South Korean senior presidential secretary for foreign affairs and national security, visited Washington to brief the results of last week's inter-Korean summit.

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b. President Kim Dae-jung said after his historic trip to North Korea that all key issues including nuclear threats, missiles proliferation and the U.S. military presence in South Korea were addressed during talks with North Korean leader Kim Jong-il.

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c. DOD spokesman Kenneth Bacon answered questions from reporters on now the North-South Korean agreement will affect the U.S. military posture in the region and future missile defense systems. He also commented on U.S.-Russian arms control talks.

"DOD Comments on Korean Agreement and Missile Defense Talks"

2. Underground Plant Described

a. The Japanese paper Sankei Shimbun reported that a North Korean military official who defected to China last year revealed that North Korea used "natural uranium produced in the country" as raw material for its nuclear weapons development program. The defector, Yi Chun-song [name as transliterated], said North Korea had used a "secret" underground plant commonly referred to as the "Mt. Chonma Power Plant" since the end of 1989 for uranium production. The plant was located in the North Phyongan Province.

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