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Nuclear Weapons

1. US Nuclear Policy

Eric Schmitt writes that the principal arguments about US nuclear policy are for or against missile defenses and about strategies to fight the spread of nuclear weapons, but no one really knows where the nation's nuclear doctrine is headed. He presents anecdotal evidence for the need to completely review US nuclear policy, as otherwise it is difficult to pressure other states to curb proliferation or even disarm.

"In Search of a Missing Link in the Logic of Arms Control"

A study by Robert Civiak for Tri-Valley CAREs, provides a comprehensive review of the US Department of Energy's Stockpile Stewardship program and its alternatives. The report identifies curatorship, remanufacturing, or passive options as offering substantial improvements over the current Stewardship program. The report then makes five recommendations to evaluate and implement one of these approaches.

"Managing the U.S. Nuclear Weapons Stockpile: A Comparison of Five Alternatives"

2. NATO Nuclear Policy

Karel Koster from PENN Netherlands provided a report on the Dutch Foreign Minister's answers to Parliamentary questions about NATO's nuclear policy and negative security assurances. The questions were asked in May, during the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in New York.

"Dutch Foreign Minister Answers Nuclear Policy Questions"

3. Russian Nuclear Arsenal

The Russian military failed to resolve an internal dispute over how the country's strategic nuclear weapons are controlled. First deputy chief of the General Staff, Colonel-General Valery said that "there is no integral version which could be accepted as the basis." Options under consideration range from consolidating nuclear forces under a single command, like the U.S. did in 1992 under Strategic Command, or retaining a split command structure. Army General Vladimir Yakovlev, commander of the force, said that the current structure of the Russian strategic missile force in which ground-based missiles make up the core must be maintained. There is no good reason why this structure must change.

The articles "No Agreement Cited on Strategic Missile Force Reorganization" and "Commander Wants Russia To Maintain Structure of Strategic Missile Force" are available from World News Connection

Stratfor.com published a report on the recent divisions within the Russian military, arguing that Russia's military and civilian leaders are weighing continued dependence on nuclear weapons versus a new conventional focus, and that Russia perceives this force structure dilemma as a choice between a global role and a regional one.

"Superpower vs. Great Power: Inside the Russian Defense Debate"

4. Nuclear News

The Russian American Nuclear Security Advisory Council (RANSAC) published their weekly news report, including a news release announcing the US Senate acceptance of an appropriations bill amendment to make non-proliferation programs for Russia conditional on Russian rapid downsizing of its nuclear weapons arsenal. The report also includes Russian-media articles on the recent conflict within the Russian Defense Ministry over the future force structure, and news on Russia's response to the US national missile defense proposal, which includes plans to reintroduce into its arsenal a modernized intermediate-range missile. "RANSAC Nuclear News, 17 July 2000"

5. Indian-Israel Nuclear Cooperation

An editorial in the Pakistani daily The News expresses concern over what it sees as an emerging Indian-Israeli nuclear axis. The paper says that the West under US leadership shows a double standard by criticizing Pakistan's cooperation with the PRC and the DPRK while turning a blind eye to still closer ties between Indian and Israel. The alleged partnership will be a Muslim issue and the Muslim world will generally be the losers, the paper warns.

The article "Pakistan Daily Worried by 'Emerging' India-Israel Nuclear 'Nexus'" is available from World News Connection

The Indian Foreign Office was planning to brief Ambassadors from Arab countries about the recent Indian top-level visit to Israel to calm widespread Arab concern over an emerging nuclear alliance between the two countries. This report in The Hindu provides a background on recent events on the matter.

The article "India to Allay Arab Nations' Fears Over Israel" is available from World News Connection

6. Spanish Nuclear Protests

The Spanish paper El Pais reported that a British nuclear-powered submarine docked at a Gibraltar base for repairs has provoked protests in Southern Spain. The Association of Professionals against Cancer in the Campo de Gibraltar (Asinca) condemned the repair of the submarine in installations which, it says, "are not prepared for it." Spanish authorities were reported to be monitoring for possible radioactive contamination. The paper said that "sources close to the British Government" had confirmed that "a large contingent" of vessels were on their way to tow the submarine back to Devonport in England.

The article "Crippled British Nuclear Submarine Sparks Protests" is available from

Missile Defense

1. US Missile Defense

The Washington Times reported that Texas Governor George W. Bush and Vice President Al Gore elaborated their positions on the national missile defense (NMD) system. Gore said that his highest priority would be to preserve the 1972 ABM Treaty, and he would seek to deploy a system that would require the fewest changes to the treaty. Bush, however, embraced a sea-based anti-missile system that could shoot down ballistic missiles before they have released their warheads and decoys. He would also terminate self-imposed testing restrictions that limit the speed and range of the Navy's interceptor missiles and that preclude the sea-based system from using space-based sensors. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for July 20, 2000.]

"Two Visions Of NMD"

Ivo H. Daalder, Senior Fellow in Foreign Policy Studies at the Brookings Institution, argued that US President Clinton's straddling the national missile defense system issue is the right decision given the "uncertainties about the evolving threat and technology." Daalder stated, "if politics abroad and technological setbacks at home continue, it may still be some time before there is a decision to deploy a system." The Coalition to Reduce Nuclear Dangers and the Council for a Livable World Education Fund have updated "Pushing the Limits: The Decision on National Missile Defense." The briefing book recommends alternative defenses against a missile attack and ways to minimize the threat.

"Pushing the Limits: The Decision on National Missile Defense"

"The Domestic Politics of National Missile Defense"

The Heritage Foundation published an article by Jack Spencer and Joe Dougherty, in which they argue that the US has finally moved beyond "mutually assured destruction" as a nuclear policy with the impending National Missile Defense (NMD) system. However, rather than using President Clinton's expensive land-based system which abrogates the 1972 ABM Treaty and threatens the PRC and Russia, the US should deploy a sea-based NMD which incorporates the US Navy's Aegis cruisers and adds increased opportunities to destroy missiles. The article also says that the US is "dumbing down" the system it is developing when it could develop a more robust system.

"The Quickest Way to Global Missile Defense: First from the Sea"

2. US Missile Defense Test

The Coalition to Reduce Nuclear Dangers published an issue brief on the recent failed US missile defense system test, which argues that if President Clinton asserts a broader interpretation of the ABM Treaty, doing so could undermine US credibility under every treaty to which the US is a party. It warns that the cost both financial and to international arms control agreements is too high, and "there remains an absence of a credible, imminent long-range missile threat from any of the so-called 'states of concern' to justify a crash program." The Heritage Foundation published an article by Research Fellow Baker Spring, in which he argued that the July 7 test of the National Missile Defense (NMD) system failed because of a problem with the military's standard rocket technology, not with the newly designed "kill vehicle," and that critics wrongly assert this means the US is unable to field a functional missile defense system. He argues that the US should make every effort to field missile defenses as soon as technologically possible.

"Anti-Missile System Still Not Be Ready for Prime Time: President Should Decide Not to Deploy"

"Putting the Missile Defense Test in Perspective"

3. Naval Missile Defense

The US Defense Department announced on July 5 that the Navy is creating a new office to deal with the subject of theater ballistic missile defense (TBMD) and other related issues. The new office, to be headed by Navy Rear Admiral Rodney Rempt, is designed to strengthen the Navy's TBMD organization and simplify efforts to coordinate operations, testing and deployment.

"Navy Creates New Office to Handle Theater Missile Defenses"

"Text-only version"

The Baltimore Sun reports that consensus is emerging for a sea-based boost-phase intercept (BPI) anti-missile system, rather than the land-based National Missile System (NMD) that President Clinton is currently proposing. The system would require that interceptor missiles be positioned close to the launch site of an enemy missile, and the challenge would be to deploy enough ships to suppress the threat or, in the case of a land-based boost-phase system, to know exactly where to build it. John Holum, undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, said that a joint US-Russian boost phase intercept (BPI) system could not replace a land-based National Missile Defense (NMD) system because "it is not a substitute for the mid-course intercept capability we're pursuing if, as is generally believed to be the case, we're pursuing a capability in the mid-2000s." [Ed. note: These articles were included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for July 19, 2000.]

"Consensus Grows For 'Boost-Phase' Missile Defense"

"Holum: Russian Boost Phase Concept Not A Substitute For NMD"

4. Australian Participation in NMD

Australian Defense Minister John Moore said that Australia would consider a request for participation if the missile defense system gets the go-ahead, with participation likely to be centered around the jointly run Pine Gap satellite tracking center in central Australia.

"U.S. Defense Secretary Says Iran Test No Surprise"

"US wants base for missile plan"

Critics in Australia fear that participating in the NMD system could damage Australia's relations with the PRC to the point that the PRC might consider using its long-range missiles to strike at the radar detection facility at Pine Gap. Former Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser warned that "Any government that agreed ... to a proposal to participate in giving an anti-ballistic missile defense shield to the United States alone, any government that contributed to that would be jeopardizing Australia's own security." [Ed. note: These articles were included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for July 18, 2000.] "

"Don't Help US Nuclear Shield, Warns Fraser"

"Missile Shield Stirs Up Dissent In Australia"

5. Canadian Participation in NMD

The Canadian organization Ploughshares Project has created a web-page with information about Canada's role in US ballistic missile defense programs, US program planning, and arms control implications.

"Canada and Ballistic Missile Defense"

6. PRC View of Missile Defense

Sha Zukang, head of the PRC Foreign Ministry Department of Arms Control and Disarmament, warned that US deployment of a national missile defense (NMD) system could push the PRC and Russia closer together in a strategic alliance to protect common security interests. Sha also said, "It is only with the strategic stability as provided by the ABM treaty we will have the mutual trust, the mutual confidence knowing that you are not going to attack me, I am not going to attack you. Against that background we can proceed with arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation." Bates Gill of the Brookings Institution said that the PRC is already blocking US international initiatives in arms control because of the US NMD system.

"U.S. Missile Plan Could Boost Beijing-Moscow Axis"

"China Threatens Arms Control Collapse"

The article "Chinese Arms Control Director Talks About Nuclear Disarmament, NMD and TMD" is available from World News Connection

A commentary in the Los Angeles Times by Tom Plate argued that the PRC is drawing parallels between the current US\$60 billion national missile defense system and US tactics in the 1980's designed to spend the Soviet Union into oblivion.

"The Costs of a Ridiculous 'Defense'"

7. Other Views of Missile Defense

The US Information Agency reported on overseas media's treatment of Russian President Vladimir Putin's taking his "crusade against the U.S. NMD project" to the PRC and DPRK. Many questioned the viability of an alternative missile defense system and the "Moscow-Beijing axis" bound together "only by their respective opposition to NMD." There were also doubts about the DPRK's apparent promise to abandon its missile program if other states provide it with technology for "peaceful space research." While foreign critics of the plan continued to far outnumber its supporters, there was an emerging chorus of voices either expressing support for the plan or advising against "knee-jerk hostility" to NMD.

"USIA Issue Focus: Missile Defense: Putin's 'Crusade Against NMD;' Defying U.S. 'Hegemony'"

Military

1. US Military Policy

Charles Knight argued that the thrust and orientation of US military policy in the last decade has been refocused to expand the influence of the US into the power vacuum left by the collapse of Soviet power. However, there is a continued emphasis on procuring weapon systems conceived and initially developed in the last years of the Cold War, partly because the Quadrennial Defense Review sets a higher military preparedness standard than had been in effect during the Cold War. He argued that the militarization of US foreign policy, as demonstrated by the growth of the Defense Department's budget and the decline of the State Department's, should be worrisome.

"U.S. Military Policy -- Expanding to Fill the post-Soviet Vacuum"

2. US Laser Development

The Wall Street Journal reported that the General Accounting Office put the total cost of the National Ignition Facility project at US\$3.9 billion, which is at least US\$600 million more than that estimated by the US Department of Energy and officials at Livermore National Laboratory. US Representative Mac Thornberry said that the GAO findings raise new problems for other weapons programs because Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson has said that he would not ask Congress for more money for the laser project but would get the money from other departmental nuclear-weapons-related programs. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for July 20, 2000.]

"Giant Laser Project Is Running Over Budget, The GAO Reports"

3. US-PRC Military Relations

US Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen said that military-to-military relations are part of the policy of engagement designed to advance stability and prosperity for the US and the PRC. Cohen said that he had explained the limited national defense program that the US is currently researching and had discussed with Chinese leaders the importance of curbing the spread of weapons technology, but that "differences remain."

"Military relations part of successful U.S.-China engagement"

4. PRC Military Development

The Institute for Defense and Disarmament Studies published a report by Frank W. Moore, in which he reports on details about the current and likely near-future state of the PRC's military power. The PRC is modernizing its forces and increasing defense spending, but the prospective improvements in overall military capability need to be compared to the starting point of its armed forces. The article begins by looking at recent trends, possible future developments, and then discusses potential military courses of action by the PRC.

"China's Military Capabilities"

5. US Weapons Sales to ROK

The US Defense Department announced that the ROK has asked to buy 110 SM-2 Block IIIA Standard missiles and support equipment from the US. The ROK plans to use the missiles as the primary defensive system aboard the KDX-II Destroyer for anti-missile ship protection.

"Proposed Military Sale to South Korea Announced"

6. Russian Weapons Sales to Iran

The Kuwaiti daily newspaper Al-Qabas said that the Russian nationalist parliamentarian Vladimir Zhirinovskiy had carried one of two portable rocket jamming devices to Baghdad from Russia. Iraq has said that it has the capability to neutralize U.S. anti-radar HARM missiles.

"Zhirinovskiy Denies Giving Iraq Military Device"

7. Iranian Missile Development

Iran said that it had successfully tested the 1,300-km (800 miles) range Shahab-3 missile, which is modeled mainly on the DPRK's Nodong-1 and improved with Russian technology. Iranian news sources said the test was in line with Iran's "policy of strengthening its defense capability on the basis of the principle of deterrence." Israel Deputy Defense Minister Ephraim Sneh expressed concern Saturday about the missile test, "because Iran actively and relentlessly undermines the peace process through various terrorist organizations." Another Israeli Defense Ministry source said there was no immediate threat." US Defense Department that Iran may soon be testing longer-range ICBMs. Spokesman Ken Bacon said, "There isn't any conceivable reason why Iran needs a missile of intercontinental range if it's worried about regional security issues." US Defense Secretary William Cohen said that Iran "will continue to develop a longer-range missile capability and that is one of the reasons why we believe it is important that the United States continue its research and testing and the development program for the NMD, precisely to deal with countries such as North Korea, Iran, Iraq and others."

"Iran Tests Ballistic Missile"

"Cohen: U.S. Needs Missile Defense"

"Iranian Shabab-3 Missile Test Sparks Pentagon Concern"

Diplomacy

1. Indian Regional Diplomacy

The South Asia Monitor, published by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), carried a report on India's regional relationships, in which it argued that India has been quietly developing expanded relations in Asia in the two years since its nuclear tests. India-PRC relations are wary, dominated by their geo-strategic rivalry, but have little trade and threaten to be competitors internationally. The content of the growing relationships with Japan and Southeast Asia is primarily economic, and broader regional cooperation still very limited. However, India is developing security relationships with Japan and Vietnam.

"India Looks East"

2. Russia-PRC Relations

Stratfor.com published their third-quarter report on foreign policy developments, which said that while both Russia and the PRC want to use the threat of an alliance to constrain the US, neither want an alliance right now, because both regimes are signaling to the US that they are available for investment and therefore will compete with one another. The only short-term needs holding together the Sino-Russian relationship is the PRC's need for arms and oil.

"Forecast for the Third Quarter of 2000: The Major Players Focus on the Great Game"

3. US Policy toward DPRK

Former US Defense Secretary William Perry's strategy of engaging the DPRK is working, writes Fourth Freedom Foundation Vice-President Alistair Millar in response to the recent Korean summit meeting. US President Bill Clinton has finally decided to listen to his former Defense Secretary and the DPRK has provided ample evidence over the past six years that it is willing to keep its end of the deal if the US and its allies do the same.

"It's time to tear down the wall with North Korea"

"text only version"

4. East Asian Bilateral Relations

Ralph A. Cossa, Executive Director of the CSIS Pacific Forum, reports in his overview of the bilateral relations in East Asia during the last three months that conditions in Asia underwent permanent changes. First, Chen Shui-bian's inauguration as Taiwan's first non-Kuomintang leader is validation of the fundamental change that began in 1996 with the democratic presidential election. Second, DPRK leader Kim Jong-il emerged into the international spotlight with his visit to the PRC and then with the inter-Korean summit with ROK President Kim Dae-jung. Cossa argues that both developments will impact US security strategy and interests and on the prospects for peace and stability in East Asia.

"CSIS Comparative Connections, July 2000"

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