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Arms Control

1. US Statements on 1972 ABM Treaty

Officials in the Bush administration stated that the US does not intend to amend the 1972 ABM Treaty to permit development of a missile defense system but will instead seek Russian agreement for mutual withdrawal from the accord. John R. Bolton, undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, reiterated the administration's stance that it would not negotiate a series of one-line changes to the 1972 ABM Treaty, and neither would it negotiate a new formal treaty to replace it. A senior administration official stressed that talks over offensive and defensive systems would be "interrelated, not linked," but declined to discuss offensive arms cuts in depth because of the pending review by the US Defense Department. Douglas J. Feith, undersecretary of defense for policy, testified that a Defense Department compliance review group was evaluating at least three issues previously identified as potential violations of the treaty and would reach a preliminary finding next week.

"U.S. Will Not Seek To Alter ABM Treaty"

2. Bush-Putin Talks

Following the meeting of US President George Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin in Genoa, Italy, on July 22, 2001, the Acronym Institute published the text of their Joint Statement, the text of their press conference, and the subsequent briefing by US National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice.

"Bush-Putin Meeting, Genoa, July 22"

Under pressure from Russian media, which claims Russian President Vladimir Putin has capitulated to the US on the 1972 ABM Treaty, Putin has denied any breakthrough at his recent meeting with US President George Bush at Genoa. Putin repeated that he has proposed greater diplomatic efforts and, as a last resort, a non-strategic anti-missile system which would preserve ABM and prevent a new arms race.

"U.S. Security Adviser Sees Progress on Missile Defense"

Peter Baker writes in the Washington Post that finally the US and Russia agreed on the obvious compromise needed to bring Russia to the table on missile defense, namely, the US needed to offer the prospect of deep cuts in the nuclear arsenal that Russia can no longer afford. Baker argues, however, that the process of consultations is likely to be difficult as domestic considerations in both countries threaten the prospects of an outcome amenable to Russia and the US. While Putin is being firm to prevent the appearance of capitulating to the US on missile defense, analysts were quick to point out that Russia needs these agreements. Boris Makarenko, deputy director of the Center for Political Technologies, a Moscow research organization, said, "The agreement is symptomatic of the understanding by Putin and the foreign policy elite that ...not only can't he afford to spend critical resources on armaments, but he needs all the support he can get from the West."

"Russian, U.S. Arms Talks Face Hurdles"

3. Rice Visit to Russia

US National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice arrived in Russia to help move arms control talks forward with Russia. Rice was to meet Vladimir Rushailo, secretary of the Security Council, followed by meetings with Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov. She said that the two sides had moved beyond their deadlock on missile defense and that the US wished to move quickly on arms control talks.

"U.S. Security Adviser Sees Progress on Missile Defense"

The Russian Foreign Ministry said that Russian officials heard nothing new from US National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice that would cause them to temper their opposition to jettisoning the 1972 ABM Treaty. Rice stated that some elements of the new strategic relationship the Bush administration wants with Russia include an end to formal arms control talks, movement beyond the 1972 ABM Treaty, and US testing and deployment of missile defense systems. Rice said, "I suspect there will be something written between the two sides, but I think we're open as to what form that might take." Russian Deputy Security Council Secretary Oleg Chernov said, "We are for bringing the maximum number of countries possessing nuclear arms or technologies into the process of discussion of strategic stability issues in the framework of the ABM treaty." Chernov even suggested that the DPRK and Iraq be included in talks. White House spokesman Ari Fleischer announced that senior Russian and US defense experts will meet in Washington on August 8 and US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld will travel to Russia the following week for further talks with Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov. He said, "So what is new in the wake of (Rice's) trip to Moscow is this is no longer a discussion of whether we will move forward as two nations, Russia and the United States, on a new strategic framework, but when."

"Russia Opposes Scuttling ABM Treaty"

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"Speed Key in Arms Talks, Rice Says"

4. Commentary

An editorial in the Boston Globe argues that during the meeting in Genoa between US President George Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin, Bush was forced to abandon the notion that the US could proceed unilaterally on arms control and Putin surrendered his defense of the 1972 ABM Treaty in exchange for negotiations to reduce nuclear weapons that Russia can't afford to maintain. The editorial also argues that financial incentives, probably in the form of missile defense system contracts, are likely to be used to encourage Russia to play along with Bush's plans.

"A big arms deal"

Lee Feinstein, a Visiting Scholar at the Carnegie Endowment, writes that simultaneous "consultations" on nuclear cutbacks and missile defense by the US and Russia is the latest sign that the Bush administration is having to adjust its policies in the face of international concern about its unilateralist approach to strategic issues, though US officials still maintain that the US does not need to negotiate anything with Russia. Feinstein argues that Russia can view this as a significant victory and that the Bush administration will increasingly find that these consultations will require both sides to engage in substantive negotiations to have a real chance of success.

"U.S.-Russian Strategic Consultations Begin"

5. Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty

An essay published by the Acronym Institute envisions from a non-US perspective the future that follows after the US withdraws from the ABM Treaty, blocks an agreement on chemical and biological weapons, and fails to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the Kyoto environmental accords. In this possible future, the US actions, which could also include a resumption of nuclear testing, causes international arms control and security regimes to collapse, with the world degenerating into doomsday scenario where someone launches a first-strike and the US still hasn't developed a working missile defense system. The remainder of the essay attempts to demonstrate the utility of the CTBT and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to the US and others, and to demonstrate the "slippery slope" Bush threatens to send the world down through his attempts to redefine the international security regime.

"Who's for a Nuclear Free-For-All?"

Hugh Gusterson, an associate professor at MIT, argues in an editorial in the Los Angeles Times that the US has the most to lose by resuming nuclear testing and abandoning the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Gusterson states that not only acknowledged nuclear states, such as Russia and the PRC, but countries such as India and Pakistan will benefit from an abandonment of the treaty. He argues that because these countries have tested their weapons much less, their nuclear arsenals face a much greater uncertainty, and therefore less utility as a deterrent force, than the US. While critics of the CTBT argue that the US is unable to determine the efficacy of its nuclear weapons as time goes on, Gusterson argues that the US still has greater experience and technology that lends its deterrent force credibility.

"If U.S. Dumps Test Ban Treaty, China Will Rejoice"

Ballistic Missile Defense

1. US Alaskan Test Site

US Senator Carl Levin, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, concluded the July 19, 2001 hearing on missile defense by stating his support for the 1972 ABM Treaty if it is of such importance to Russian President Vladimir Putin and others and if the US gains only an ineffective capability by withdrawing. He also said that, if the Fort Greely site has no real benefits, then it makes no sense to push up against the ABM Treaty by rushing development of a missile defense test site there.

"Senator Carl Levin on National Missile Defense"

The Council for a Livable World released a statement that argues that the proposed US missile defense facilities at Fort Greely would serve no useful purpose for flight testing of the midcourse NMD system and its radar is not sufficient to identify certain types of threats. The statement also argues that since this site cannot be justified as a flight-test facility, and its purpose is to allow for NMD deployment in an emergency, it would be a deployment site under the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty and thus a treaty violation.

"The Alaska Option"

"The Early Missile Defense Deployment Option: Fort Greely, Alaska, in 2004"

2. Commentary

An editorial in the Los Angeles Times argues that Russian President Vladimir Putin's acceptance of the idea of talks on offensive and defensive weapons systems may mean Putin accepts US assurances that a missile defense system would not be targeted to neutralize Russia's nuclear deterrent, but could also mean that Putin is preparing to argue that a missile defense system would be unnecessary if there were major cuts in strategic weapons. The editorial also argues that the US would benefit from facing a smaller and more secure Russian nuclear arsenal and from saving millions of dollars by cutting its own arsenal.

"Fewer Nukes, Better Security"

Barry M. Blechman, Assistant Director of the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency during the Carter Administration, argues in the Los Angeles Times that Democrats in the US Congress, in stating their preference for deterrence over defense against missiles, are forgetting how many times in the past a bad decision could have led to nuclear war.

Blechman states that because deterrence rests upon the decisions of individuals, it is inherently uncertain. Blechman argues that given the circumstances of the times, arms control agreements were the right choice, but now there is an opportunity to restore common sense to strategic planning through nuclear arms cuts and deployment of defenses against missiles.

"Defenses Have a Role in This Scary World of Ours"

Proliferation

1. PRC Missile Proliferation

Diplomats and other sources said that the US has formally protested to the PRC the continued exports of missiles and related technology to Pakistan and other countries despite a pledge last year to halt the trade. The PRC has denied it is continuing to export missile technology and has reiterated its willingness to abide by the regulations of the Missile Control Technology Regime, but it has so far has not responded to US complaints and requests for clarifications from its Foreign Ministry. US analysts believe that a central difficulty is that the PRC government may not be convinced that stopping missile sales benefits its security. Stopping in Vietnam before traveling to the PRC, US Secretary of State Colin Powell said, "Since November, we have been following closely and discussing the [proliferation] issue with them, and the results are mixed. We'll discuss where we think there has been a satisfactory response and where we think more action is required. Yes, proliferation will come up, it will be discussed."

"U.S. Protests Exports Of Missiles by China"

"Powell to Confront China on Weapons"

Security

1. US Posture Reviews

US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld recently revised the US military strategy to reduce the US focus on overseas deployment of US forces and instead is looking to increase budgetary support for missile defense, satellites, counterterrorism and computer warfare. Military officials, fearful this will mean cuts to their conventional forces, joined analysts in stating that this move clearly has reduced the strategic warfare requirements for the US military.

"Military Cuts Are Implied in New Strategy"

William Arkin writes in the Washington Post that the ongoing US nuclear posture review appears to have three phases: the first involving implementation of already decided reductions such as retirement of the MX missile and the second would be to unilaterally reduce further to some 2,000 warheads. In the third phase, seen as possible by the end of the decade, forces would decline to 1,000-1,500 warheads, with still lower numbers of missile warheads, and bombers transformed into "dual capable" airplanes like fighters, released from most of the day-to-day requirement to prepare for nuclear war. This process would be accomplished not through formal treaty negotiations but through periodic consultations between the US and Russia.

"The Emerging Nuclear Posture"

2. South Asia

Samina Ahmed, a Research Fellow at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard University, argues in a new Foreign Policy in Focus brief that US nonproliferation policy faces major challenges in South Asia, as India and Pakistan threaten to deploy deliverable nuclear arsenals. Ahmed also argues that incoherent US nonproliferation policies and inappropriate influence strategies have encouraged India's and Pakistan's nuclear programs but that US nonproliferation policies can influence their future decisions on nuclear weapons.

"Nuclear Proliferation in South Asia: U.S. Policy Challenges"

3. UK Nuclear Program

Angie Zelter writes for the Acronym Institute that Trident Ploughshares, a coalition of anti-nuclear citizen groups, are attempting to dismantle the UK's nuclear weapon system because despite the UK's acceding to the goal of total nuclear disarmament in the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, the UK continues to develop the Trident nuclear weapons system, continues to support the legitimacy of nuclear deterrence, and will permit the US missile defense system to proceed and place systems in the UK. Zelter cites her own Loch Goil Trial in Scotland, in which she and several other activists were acquitted of crimes against the UK state because they acted in the belief that the property they damaged was illegal by international law, an acquittal whose precedence was overturned by the British High Court. Zelter states that Scottish opinion is growing in support of the Trident Ploughshares and in support of removing the Trident from Scotland. She also states that the massive protests against the Trident in Scotland confront the state and the legal system as a major law and order issue.

"People's Disarmament"

Military

1. Kursk Submarine Recovery

On July 18, the salvage ship Mayo left to begin drilling holes in the hull of the Russian nuclear submarine Kursk as part of the salvage process. On July 24 scientists are expected to report on the safety of the nuclear reactors and then on July 27 of the risk assessment of the entire lifting operation. Inspections show that no torpedoes have been found in the vicinity of the hull, whose presence could complicate lifting by threatening damage to the reactors. Once raised, the submarine will be decommissioned near Murmansk over the course of 2002.

"Kursk lifting operation taking pace"

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