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Nuclear Weapons

1. Iraqi Nuclear Weapons

An unnamed defector from Iraq, a military engineer who fled Iraq one year after UN arms inspectors left, reported to the London Daily Telegraph that nuclear bombs are being built in Hemrin in north-eastern Iraq. The defector said, "There are at least two nuclear bombs which are ready for use. Before the UN inspectors came, there were 47 factories involved in the project. Now there are 64." Melissa Fleming, a spokeswoman for the UN-founded International Atomic Energy Agency, said that the IAEA was unable to confirm that the Iraqi dictator was complying with UNSCOM resolutions, and that this report would be investigated.

"Saddam has made two atomic bombs, says Iraqi defector"

2. German Role in NATO Nuclear Weapons

In a special report prepared for Der Spiegel, director of the Berlin-based institute BITS, Otfried Nassauer, writes that the German air force may give up its current ability to deliver US nuclear bombs. He reports that the type of aircraft scheduled to be deployed on German nuclear bases in the future, Nassauer writes, does not have a nuclear capability, and this may increase the likelihood that US nuclear bombs in Europe may finally be withdrawn.

"Germany May Drop NATO Nuclear Role"

Missile Defense

1. PRC Perspective on NMD

The New York Times reported that US and PRC military officials are engaged in unofficial talks designed to find a means to gaining PRC acceptance of the proposed US missile defense system. Li Bin, a nuclear physicist and arms control expert at Qinghua University who advises the government, said, "If the American intention is to use this system to defend against China, then I can't see any room for compromise. But if they really are just worried about the so-called rogue states, and they aren't trying to undermine China's deterrent then it may be possible in principle to reach agreement." The US military experts, which included Bates Gill of the Brookings Institution, said the PRC would need to give the US a clearer idea of the PRC nuclear arsenal and convince US planners that any nuclear buildup would go only so far, allowing the PRC to keep a minimal capacity for a counterattack that it has had in the past. "Experts Try to Make Missile Shield Plan Palatable to China"

2. Russia-US Talks on NMD

US President George W. Bush spoke for the first time, via phone, with Russian President Vladimir Putin, and Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov also spoke for the first time with US Secretary of State Colin Powell. Details were not released on either call, but it is believed that they may have discussed, among other issues, the 1972 ABM Treaty and the proposed US National Missile Defense system.

"Putin, Bush Talk by Phone for First Time"

Putin, Bush Hold Friendly First Talks by Phone

Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov has proposed a meeting with US Secretary of State Colin Powell in the near future, State Department spokesman Richard Boucher stated, and said the Powell agreed that their meeting to discuss bilateral issues such as the US NMD system is important.

"Ivanov Proposes Meeting, Powell Agrees As Missile Defense Fight Heats up"

The Russian government released a statement to the press which said that a reports of a recent letter to US President to George W. Bush on the subject of the 1972 ABM treaty was a forgery, and that the official Russian position on nuclear disarmament, with the ABM Treaty to be preserved and strengthened, is set out clearly and in detail in the Statement of the President of the Russian Federation of November 13, 2000.

"PRESS RELEASE: In Connection with Some Foreign Media Publications on Russia's START-ABM Position"

3. Russian Response to US NMD

Strana.ru, a pro-Kremlin web site, reported that under the Russian Security Council's "Plan for Building the Armed Forces in 2001-2010," Russia will almost double defense expenditures from 2.8 percent of gross domestic product to 5 percent, if the new US administration deploys a national missile defense system. The plan reportedly calls for cuts to personnel from 1.2 million to 850,000 by 2003, and a downgrading of the Strategic Missile Force, which would be engulfed by the air force.

"Defense Spending Could Double"

Russian news agencies quoted Russian General Valery Manilov, deputy armed forces chief, as having said, "Russia opposes changes to the ABM treaty. Updating the treaty would end up destroying it." Manilov referred to a plan by US Vice President Dick Cheney to "update" the 1972 ABM treaty to let Washington build a national missile defense (NMD) system. While Manilov said, "The modification Americans speak of amounts to emasculating the essence of the ABM treaty, and the purpose for which it was signed -- preserving a balance between strategic defensive and offensive weapons," Cheney told Fox News that the US had signed the 1972 treaty with "a country that no longer exists, and must be modified to allow for the (NMD) program."

"Russia's Military Shoots Down Bush Plan to 'Update' ABM Treaty"

4. US Domestic NMD Debate

Jim Mann, a writer for the Los Angeles Times, stated that the largest obstacle to National Missile Defense is the competition for defense spending among competing interest groups. Mann cited US President George W. Bush's self-established priorities of NMD and military readiness as competing with each other as well as with the US military's and Congressional perspectives on where to place budget priorities.

"Pentagon: A Game of Priorities"

Security

1. Russia-German Talks on NATO

Sergei Ivanov, Secretary of the Russian Security Council, warned German Defense Minister Rudolph Scharping about NATO expansion. Ivanov said, "If implemented, these plans will create a fundamentally new situation in Europe that objectively infringes on Russia's political and military interests." Defense Minister Igor Sergeev stated that Russia would continue to insist on preserving the ABM treaty, calling it a "cornerstone of international security and stability." Scharping said that although Germany was not part of ABM, it "had a strong interest in maintaining and observing the treaty. We must not endanger the international security architecture of arms control and disarmament." There is an upcoming European security conference, which new U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld is expected to attend, and during which talks are expected to include discussion of the U.S. missile defense proposal.

"Russia Worried About NATO Expansion"

Russia warns eastward-looking NATO to keep away

Russia Presses Germany on NMD

2. US Space Warfare

The US Air Force Space Warfare Center staged the first major US war game to focus on space as the primary theater of operations. Military analysts realized that one of the best ways to disrupt a US offensive against Iraq, such as during the Gulf War, appeared to be jamming US satellites or destroying the ground station back in the US that controlled the satellites transmitting targeting data. The space war game was set in 2017, with country "Red" massing its forces for a possible attack on its small neighbor, "Brown," which then asked "Blue" for help. Participants said Red was the PRC and Blue was the US. The scenario assumed that both Red and Blue possessed micro-satellites that can maneuver against other satellites, blocking their view, jamming their transmissions or even frying their electronics with radiation, that both had ground-based lasers that could temporarily dazzle or permanently blind the optics of satellites, and that Blue also had a National Missile Defense (NMD) system and reusable space planes that could be launched to quickly place new satellites in orbit or repair and refuel ones already there. The scenario was also a test for the proposed US NMD and Theater Missile Defense systems.

"Space Is Playing Field For Newest War Game"

3. US Defense Spending

Washington Post columnist William Arkin wrote that former US Secretary of Defense William Cohen lacked backbone in exerting true civilian control over the uniformed military. Arkin concludes that Cohen's failure to make hard decisions and build a convincing national military strategy has created a "lawlessness" in Pentagon planning which will taint Cohen's legacy, with the Air Force, Army and Navy are now arguing that they need \$100 billion more annually.

"Cohen's Legacy: The Man Who Never Was"

Arms Control

1. US Statements

After receiving a letter from Russian President Vladimir Putin, outlining major issues facing both countries and calling for greater cooperation, US President George W. Bush did not reply to the letter directly, but stated that the US would proceed unilaterally with cuts to its nuclear arsenal and deploy a missile defense shield as necessary parts of keeping the peace. In an election speech, Bush had said it "should be possible to reduce the number of American nuclear weapons significantly further than what has been agreed to under START II," which requires both countries to cut their nuclear arsenals to between 3,000 and 3,500 weapons by 2007. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld restated his argument that the 1972 Antiballistic Missile Treaty was no longer relevant because the world has changed so much since then. Although he did not explicitly advocate withdrawing from the treaty, he stated that the treaty "ought not inhibit a country, a president, an administration, a nation from fashioning offensive and defensive capabilities that will provide for our security in a notably different national security environment. Russian President Vladimir Putin warned he is intent on preserving the ABM Treaty, which precludes a national missile defense system for either side.

"Bush Affirms Defense Plans"

"Bush Repeats Call for Arms Reduction and Missile Shield"

Proliferation

1. US-Russia Nonproliferation Efforts

The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace conducted a briefing of their recently completed bipartisan study entitled "A Report Card on the Department of Energy's Non-Proliferation Programs with Russia." The study reviewed US Department of Energy programs on nuclear material protection, control and accounting; the disposal of excess plutonium and highly enriched uranium; programs to address the "brain drain" of former Soviet weapons scientists; and nuclear safety. The group concluded that weak protection of nuclear weapons and material was "the most urgent unmet national security threat to the United States today." The group proposed that the new administration develop a strategic plan to address the problem on an accelerated basis, and suggested the budget for these programs reach \$3 billion annually.

"U.S.-Russian Non-proliferation Cooperation: Setting Priorities for the Future"

2. Proliferation Threats to US

The Commission on National Security in the 21st Century, a congressionally-funded bipartisan study, decided that a direct strike against US territory is likely over the next 25 years. Lacking "coherent or integrated government structures" to prevent such an incident or cope with one when it occurs, they proposed major changes in the US because of the spread of unconventional arms and international terrorism. They recommended increased education spending, the creation of a Cabinet-level National Homeland Security Agency, making the Treasury Secretary a member of the National Security Council, and reforming the State Department.

"U.S. Must Reorganize to Combat Threats: Expert Panel"

Military

1. USSR Bombers The Washington Post reported that the US National Air and Space Museum, after a 12-year investigation in cooperation with the Russian government, explained how Soviet engineers copied the US-made B-29 Superfortress and renamed it the Tu-4 bomber. Three B-29s had landed in Russia during World War II, but only the crews were returned to the US.

"Mystery of Soviet Bomber Pieced Together"

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