

NPP Weekly FLASH Update 14 July, 2000

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Missile Defense

1. US Missile Defense Test

Speaking about the failed test of a US missile interceptor this last weekend, US Defense Department officials said that the malfunction occurred during the routine procedure of launching a payload, not in the much more innovative technology required to knock down a warhead. Lieutenant General Ronald Kadish, Director of the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization's (BMDO) National Missile Defense (NMD) Joint Program Office, announced that an intercept was not achieved due to an apparent failure of the interceptor's kill vehicle to separate from the interceptor's second stage rocket motor. Senator Byron L. Dorgan (D-N.D.) said, "It's hard to see how they can recommend a deployment decision of a missile system that doesn't work. I think the test failure should and will mean the president will not announce a deployment decision."

"Failure of Booster Foiled Missile Test"

"Defense Department Briefing, Saturday, July 8, 2000 (National missile defense conducts intercept test)"

US Defense Secretary William S. Cohen said that Saturday's failed test of a missile-defense shield was not a major setback, and that he could still recommend going ahead with the project. While there are plans for 12 to 15 more flight tests before the system would be ready, Cohen said he was hoping the Pentagon could achieve two intercepts before he makes the deployment recommendation.

"Cohen calls failure of missile test minor"

The US Senate defeated an amendment to a US\$310 billion bill authorizing defense programs that would have required that the US Defense Department test the proposed missile defense system against countermeasures that could be deployed by an adversary to foil the system. Senior Senate Democrats urged US President Bill Clinton on Thursday to put off a decision on proceeding with a national anti-missile defense system. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for July 14, 2000.]

"Senate Approves \$1.9 Billion For Missile Defense"

"Senate Votes on Missile Testing"

"Clinton Urged To Defer Missile Rule"

2. US Views of Missile Defense

The Arms Trade Research Center published an online report describing problems with the development of a US missile defense system. New York Times science writer William Broad revealed that Nira Schwartz, a senior research scientist at TRW, had filed suit against TRW alleging that she had been fired for refusing to falsify basic research findings on the essential question of whether an NMD interceptor can tell the difference between a decoy and a nuclear warhead. The article examines the role of several companies in the testing process, including Raytheon, Boeing, TRW, and Lockheed Martin. The article also includes public media sources for some of the material.

"Nuclear Missile Deception: Corruption and Conflicts of Interest in the National Missile Defense (NMD) Test Program"

Author Frances Fitzgerald spoke at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace about her new book, "Way Out There in the Blue: Reagan, Star Wars and the End of the Cold War." She said that US desires to build a missile defense reflects a US belief in its own invulnerability that Europeans do not share.

"Frances Fitzgerald on the National Mythology of Missile Defense"

US Senators Jon Kyl, Carl Levin and Joseph Biden spoke on June 27 at the Symposium on National Missile Defense sponsored by the Jean and Samuel Zacher Foundation and the Cato Foundation regarding the merits and demerits of deploying a national missile defense.

"Remarks of Senators Jon Kyl, Carl Levin and Joseph Biden on National Missile Defense"

The Federation of American Scientists (FAS) on July 6 released a letter to US President Bill Clinton signed by 50 US Nobel laureates in the sciences stating that under current circumstances, "any movement toward deployment" of a ballistic missile defense system would be "premature, wasteful, and dangerous." The letter said, "We urge the President not to make any move toward deployment before carefully considering technical and diplomatic alternatives."

"Nobel Laureates Warn Against Missile Defense Deployment"

In an editorial carried by the Christian Science Monitor, Daniel Schorr argued that the recent failure of the national missile defense system was a blessing because if it had been a success there first would have been a debate as to whether the test was rigged to be overly simple, and then President Clinton would have been under congressional pressure to take the first steps toward deployment. He argued that continuing repercussions would include fear by US allies of the end of the deterrent protecting them and the PRC and Russia threatening a new arms race. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for July 14, 2000.]

"Missile Failure Bodes Success"

An editorial in Business Week argued that the recent failure of the national missile defense system is a blessing and the US should use the opportunity to terminate a program when talk about its deployment before it is ready is internationally destabilizing. With the threat posed by some states, a missile defense system may be needed in the future, and research and testing should continue, but the US should assess the diplomatic damage being done. [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for July 13, 2000.]

"A Misguided Missile Policy"

3. Other Views of Missile Defense

Meeting in advance of US President Clinton's trip to Okinawa next week for the G-8 summit conference, foreign ministers adopted a statement saying they are "deeply concerned" about the missile proliferation which would occur as a result of a US missile defense effort. They also urged "preserving and strengthening" the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty "as a cornerstone of strategic stability." [Ed. note: This article was included in the US Department of Defense's Early Bird news service for July 14, 2000.]

"G-8 Ministers: Shield Unwelcome"

The Chinese news agency Xinhua reported that the "Shanghai Five" nations (China, Tajikistan, Russia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan) had issued a joint statement saying that the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty must be unconditionally maintained and strictly respected. The statement said that the ABM treaty is a cornerstone of global strategic stability and the basis of further cuts of strategic offensive weapons.

The article "'Shanghai Five' Nations Stress Importance of ABM Treaty" is available from The Technion-Israel Institute of Technology issued a press release announcing the application of "game theory" to the problem of missile defense system development by professor Josef Shinar at the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology, located in Israel. Shinar created a "guidance law" that considers the worst evasive moves a tactical ballistic missile could make, thereby improving the homing accuracy of future defensive systems, applying what is known as "zero-sum pursuit-evasion game theory."

"New Research Analyzes the Game of Missile Interception"

Nonproliferation and Arms Control

4. Russian Nuclear Reductions

Russian President Vladimir Putin stated in a letter addressed to the mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki that Russia is ready to reduce its nuclear arsenal to 1,500 warheads. Referring to a joint pledge by the five major nuclear powers at the recent Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference to work towards nuclear disarmament, Putin stated, "we have a firm orientation towards a gradual and comprehensive advancement of all the five nuclear powers along the way of nuclear disarmament." Putin also warned that a US decision to deploy a national missile defense system would make such nuclear disarmament impossible.

The article "Russia Ready To Reduce Nuclear Arsenals to 1500 Warheads" is available from World News Connection

5. US-Russian Nuclear Cooperation

During START III consultations in Geneva on June 28-30, ISAR-TASS reported, Russian and US officials discussed existing and new possible initiatives on bilateral and multilateral cooperation to strengthen strategic stability and global security, continue arms limitation and reduction, and improve nuclear and missile non-proliferation regimes.

The article "Russia, US Hold Consultations on START III" is available from World News Connection

6. US-PRC Arms Control Talks

Senior Advisor for Arms Control and International Security John D. Holum reported on the US-PRC non-proliferation and arms control talks, and said that while the PRC and US disagree on many regional security issues, there are more areas of agreement than disagreement. He said that both countries agree that "the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery are in neither side's interests, nor in the interest of peace and stability in the region or in the world."

"Arms Control Chief July 8 Beijing Press Conference"

7. Middle East Nuclear Free Zone

The Arab League is preparing a treaty for making the Middle East free from all weapons of mass destruction. A League technical committee started drafting the treaty in 1996 and holds two meetings a year at the League headquarters. Nabil Mi'mari, who chairs the committee, said that the treaty was approved "at its first reading and we have only to continue to follow it up." The treaty includes all nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons of mass destruction and seeks to include Turkey, Iran, and Israel.

The article "Arab League Seeks To Include Israel, Iran in Treaty on Mass-Destruction Weapons" is available from World News Connection

8. Global Nuclear Disarmament

The Acronym Institute published a speech by Jayantha Dhanapala, United Nations Undersecretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, to the All-Party Group on Global Security and Non-Proliferation of the British House of Commons on July 3, 2000. In his speech he argued that global nuclear disarmament requires the ability to sustain a high profile for disarmament issues, in a manner that does not require shocking events like new nuclear detonations but does require an educated public and enlightened leaders, reinforced by strong institutions. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan offered the convening of a major international conference to focus on disarmament, non-proliferation, safeguards, export controls, confidence-building, the international transportation and disposition of fissile material, and even relevant environmental problems.

"Eliminating Nuclear Arsenals: The NPT Pledge and What it Means"

Nuclear Weapons

9. Russian Nuclear Arsenal

The commander in Chief of the Russian the Strategic Missile Troops, Colonel General Vladimir Yakovlev, said that the number and alert status of strategic nuclear weapons is not as important as the quality and survivability of the command and control system intended to ensure that the weapons reach their targets in a nuclear war. Colonel Yakovlev's remarks were in response to the START II treaty and Russia's proposal for additional reductions under a START III agreement.

The article "Russia: Strategic Missile Troops Chief on START II" is available from World News Connection

10. Indian Nuclear Policy

An article in the Indian daily The Hindu criticized the Indian government's failure to formulate a nuclear policy. The article said that building nuclear bombs is not enough to provide a credible nuclear deterrence, but the weapons must be accompanied by a coherent and reasoned policy. The article specifically faults India's stated nuclear policy for being formulated by "too many voices" creating confusion about what the policy actually entails. Since the nuclear tests in 1998, the article describes, India's nuclear policy has taken a "meandering course" that is now "seemingly petering out into an amorphous entity spoken in many voices."

The article "India urged to spell out unambiguous nuclear policy" is available from World News Connection

11. Nuclear Terrorism

Jane's Defense Weekly reported that the Defense Science Board (DSB) Task Force on Unconventional Nuclear Warfare Defense is scheduled to make recommendations by August 31 to Jacques Gansler, Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, and Jay Davis, director of the Defense Threat Reduction Agency. US Defense Secretary William Cohen said, "I think that an act of terrorism taking place on the United States is more likely than an intercontinental ballistic missile." Defense Department spokesman Ken Bacon added that Cohen believes terrorists are more likely to use chemical and biological weapons than nuclear weapons and that more comprehensive defences are needed to address both the terrorist and missile threats.

"USA evaluating defences against nuclear terrorism"

Missiles

11. Russian Strategic Missiles

Russian Defense Minister Igor Sergeyev, a former chief of Russia's Strategic Missile Forces, advocated a plan to beef up Russia's Strategic Missile Forces to make them the core of a new deterrent force into which the nuclear capabilities of the Navy and the Air Force would be incorporated to deter potential aggressors. However, this has created a major conflict among the military's top brass because commanders of conventional forces are demanding more money for tanks and artillery as the offensive in Chechnya drags on, and some suggest that nuclear weapons programs are taking up too much of the military funding. Russian President Vladimir Putin said on July 14 that, "There is no reorganization of the Russian strategic missile program. There are talks around problems that are discussed by military specialists."

"Russian Military Argues Over Nukes"

"Putin Tries to Quiet Russian Military Feud"

12. PRC Missile Sales to Pakistan

The Monterey Institute of International Studies carried a report covering US intelligence reports showing that China has transferred complete M-11 missiles, missile related technology, and manufacturing assistance to Pakistan.

"China's Missile Exports and Assistance to Pakistan"

13. Alleged Israeli Missile Test

Israel and Sri Lanka denied a report that an Israeli submarine had test-fired a nuclear-capable cruise missile off Sri Lanka's southern coast. A report in the London Sunday Times recently claimed that Israel would equip new German-supplied submarines with nuclear-tipped cruise missiles and that a test launch had occurred off Sri Lanka in May.

The article "Sri Lanka Denies Israel Cruise Missile Tests" is available from World News Connection

Security

14. PRC Naval Exercise

The Hong Kong based paper Ming Pao reported that PRC submarines recently conducted a naval blockade exercise. The paper quoted "an informed source" saying that the exercise was possibly targeted against Taiwan.

The article "Chinese Submarines Conduct Naval Blockade Exercises" is available from World News Connection

15. US Preventive Defense

The Center for Defense Information's Weekly Defense Monitor carried an article by Colonel Dan Smith, USA (Ret.) Chief of Research, in which he argued that early indications suggest the third report of the US Commission on National Security/21st Century will emphasize preventing rather than simply reacting to threats to national security. He argued more spending should be put into preventative diplomacy, including programs such as overseas development investment and AIDS prevention.

"Update: The U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century and Preventive Diplomacy"
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