

Weekly Report to the ICON from the ICBM EAR November 20, 2020 Previews of Coming Distractions

Quotes of the Week

Former Senior OSD Official in the Obama Administration

“The ICBM leg of the Triad is going to be seriously reviewed by the incoming Biden administration as a top candidate for elimination. Now I hope the adults in the room will prevail as this is no time to unilaterally disarm in the face of Russian and Chinese major nuclear buildups. But ICBMS are definitely on the table.” 11-17-2020

Congressman Jeff Fortenberry

“As co-founder of the Congressional Nuclear Security Working Group, I’m proud the House just passed H.Res.825, recognizing the 50th anniversary of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and US leadership in nuclear nonproliferation—to prevent the unthinkable.”

Heritage Foundation Report on Nuclear Capability

https://www.heritage.org/military-strength?_ga=2.201674967.719560887.1605710726-1026599898.1605710726

The Heritage Foundation on Tuesday painted a grim picture of the military's ability to carry out the [National Defense Strategy](#). “The common theme across the services and the U.S. nuclear enterprise is one of force degradation,” it said in its [latest report card](#) on military strength, blaming “many years of underinvestment, poor execution of modernization programs, and the negative effects of budget sequestration.”

Biden Team for National Security

Biden held a virtual meeting with national security advisers on Tuesday, including retired Army Gen. **Lloyd Austin**; **Nicholas Burns** of Harvard; **Antony Blinken**, a longtime Biden foreign policy aide and possible Secretary of State; **David Cohen**, a former deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency; **Avril Haines**, another former CIA deputy director; **Kathleen Hicks**, who’s heading Biden’s agency review team for the Pentagon; **Stanley McChrystal**, the retired Army general who Obama fired in 2010 and who endorsed Biden last month; retired

Adm. **William McRaven**; **Carmen Middleton**, who's on Biden's agency review team for the intelligence community; **Samantha Power**, the former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations; **Vince Stewart**, one of the team leads for Biden's intelligence community review team; **Linda Thomas-Greenfield**, who's heading up Biden's State Department agency review team; and **Robert Work**, a former deputy Defense secretary who might be a top candidate for Secretary of Defense.

FIGHT OVER THE HAC CHAIR

DeLauro battles Wasserman Schultz over Appropriations Chair

(From Politico)

The race to lead the powerful House Appropriations Committee has turned into a generational clash between a longtime ally of [Nancy Pelosi](#), Rep. [Rosa DeLauro](#), and upstart [Debbie Wasserman Schultz](#).

DeLauro, a senior appropriator who oversees the largest chunk of non-defense spending, enjoys broad support across the Democratic caucus and has secured backing from almost every major outside group in her bid for the gavel. The 77-year-old Connecticut Democrat has long-been considered the likeliest choice to take over the panel, recently rolling out endorsements from the AFL-CIO, the National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, and the National Women's Law Center.

But allies of Wasserman Schultz — eager for generational diversity within the leadership ranks — expect the Florida Democrat who resigned in disgrace as chair of the DNC to pick up strong support, including from freshmen, moderates, and members of the Congressional Black Caucus.

“This is still a very competitive race and I can't underscore that enough,” said Rep. [Stephanie Murphy](#) (D-Fla.), a co-chair of the moderate Blue Dog Democrats who's pushing her colleagues to support Wasserman Schultz. “And I think that in the aftermath of the election, it makes clear that the old ways of doing things just aren't going to work anymore.”

After a disappointing election in which House Democrats saw their majority shrink, the race could become a proxy fight for simmering unhappiness with the top House Democrats, with some seeing Wasserman Schultz, 54, as a relief valve for pent-up angst with the top-down leadership style.

But backers of DeLauro — who is also close with retiring Chair [Nita Lowey](#) (D-N.Y.) — are confident that she'll win and think the prospects for a tight race are overblown. The Steering Committee will vote the week of Nov. 30, with the entire caucus holding elections in early December. The full caucus typically backs the Steering Committee's pick.

“She got all of these endorsements because she has 44 members on her whip team,” said Rep. [John Larson](#) (D-Conn.), who's stumping for DeLauro. “She has such broad support because

people respect her. They've witnessed her work product. They've watched her over the years work on legislation, work across the aisle, develop relationships with caucus members."

Rep. [Marcy Kaptur](#) (D-Ohio), the most senior member of the House Appropriations Committee and the longest-serving woman in Congress, is also in the running and is expected to pick up some support.

But Kaptur, 74, who's perceived as more conservative than her opponents, isn't expected to garner enough support for a serious bid. What votes she initially receives could ultimately fall to DeLauro, according to lawmakers and aides watching the race.

Supporters of Wasserman Schultz point to her fundraising for Democrats and the detailed equity and reform plans that she has put forth for the appropriations process. Rep. [Anthony Brown](#) (D-Md.), a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, said he's whipping for Wasserman Schultz because of those proposals and because she has been the most "consistent in articulating her vision."

Rep. [Ami Bera](#) (D-Calif.), a leader of the moderate New Democrat Coalition, said, "Debbie has always been there for me, introducing me to her donors. I don't think you can underestimate that in terms of who's a team player." Wasserman Schultz is also seen as a "mentor" to freshmen members about annual spending bills, Bera said, and she has pledged to ramp up that education if she's elected chair.

"Debbie was the first person to ever talk to me about that," Bera said of the annual appropriations process.

But Wasserman Schultz also remains somewhat contentious, with baggage such as her resignation from the DNC in 2016 after WikiLeaks released her emails disparaging Sen. [Bernie Sanders](#)' presidential campaign.

DeLauro's allies point to her extensive record of working across the aisle with senior Republican appropriators like Rep. [Tom Cole](#) (R-Okla.), in addition to 18 years as a co-chair of the Steering and Policy Committee, where she helped countless members secure committee spots. DeLauro and Wasserman Schultz have both pledged to reform the appropriations process, increase member education, and bring back earmarked spending.

DeLauro raised some eyebrows last week when she announced that she would be giving up her top spot on the Steering and Policy Committee, which some took as a projection of confidence that she would win the Appropriations gavel next month.

Others in the caucus privately noted that DeLauro shouldn't be managing the process as she campaigned for chair. Pelosi picked Rep. [Cheri Bustos](#) (D-Ill.) to fill DeLauro's position, allowing the Illinois Democrat to remain in the speaker's leadership circle after deciding not to pursue another term as campaign chief.

“A vote of the caucus in this nature is very personal,” Larson said. “And Rosa DeLauro will work right up until the moment of that vote. Obviously, we feel confident that she has the votes and that she will prevail, but she’s taking nothing for granted.”

“At the end of the day, it’s a relationship business,” he added. “And I dare say Rosa DeLauro is going to do extraordinarily well with freshmen and with every single caucus group within the Democratic caucus.”

Rep. [Jim Himes](#) (D-Conn.), who represents a neighboring district to DeLauro, is a former chair of the moderate New Democrat Coalition. Himes said he has previously sparred with DeLauro, who’s more liberal, on trade issues. But he’s endorsing her bid because of how she handled those disagreements.

“The way she handled it with me is something that I’ll never forget,” he said. “She’s a listener and I saw up close and personal how she disagrees with people. ... We’ve been on opposite extremes and she just behaved in a way that was exemplary.”

The competition between DeLauro and Wasserman Schultz recently flared over the Hyde Amendment, a provision tucked into annual spending bills for decades that bars the use of federal funds to pay for abortion.

During a recent call with the New Democrat Coalition, DeLauro said she helped maintain the amendment in annual spending bills in order to curb fighting that could blow up the appropriations process.

“I think she forgot who she was speaking to,” said Rep. [Kathleen Rice](#) (D-N.Y.), a leader of the New Democrats who backs Wasserman Schultz. “We’re very socially forward. ... Her point was it was not a good time to be arguing over the Hyde Amendment. But she didn’t give any indication about what her position would be going forward.”

“I will say anyone who says they have it locked up isn’t telling the truth,” Rice said of the race.

But DeLauro has publicly pledged to fight for the removal of the Hyde Amendment, which earned her the endorsement of the National Women’s Law Center last week.

Himes, who also listened in on the New Democrat call, said DeLauro was raising Hyde as an example of her “willingness to do things that are completely contrary to what she believes in in service of a broader goal.”

“There’s no secret“ where DeLauro stands on Hyde, he said. She allowed it to remain “even though it went against every fiber of her being,” he said.

Lawmakers backing Kaptur are hopeful the race comes down to the Ohio Democrat and DeLauro. Kaptur’s allies say they support a leadership election system that honors seniority, the pursuit of more Midwest representation in congressional leadership and Kaptur’s blue-collar roots.

“I’m someone who believes in seniority,” said Rep. [Mark Takano](#) (D-Calif.), who’s whipping for Kaptur. “In an era where we need to restore some sense of norms ... we can’t just throw out seniority.”

Takano said he doesn’t believe that Kaptur is trailing DeLauro or Wasserman Schultz in terms of support.

“I think Rosa has a strong presence,” he said. “I do think that it’s a question of who’s still standing after the first round of votes.”

USAF Chief of Staff Brown Says Nuke Mods=Priority #1

U.S. Air Force chief’s top modernization priorities aren’t what you think they are

Defense News Online, 17 Nov. 20 | Valerie Insinna

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. Air Force is spending tens of billions of dollars every year to buy new aircraft, including F-35 Joint Strike Fighters, KC-46 tankers, the T-7A trainer jet and more. But none of those platforms makes the list of Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Charles Q. Brown’s top three modernization priorities.

“In some cases, I’m not so much enamored with airplanes, although, you know, I flew airplanes,” Brown said during a Nov. 12 interview where Defense News asked him to list his top three weapons priorities for the Air Force.

“It’s really the capability” that matters, he said. “And as we look at, you know, future conflicts, we may be fighting differently. I don’t know that for a fact. But when I came in, cyber wasn’t a thing. Now it is. Space was a benign environment. Now, not as much.

Here’s what Brown put on his list:

1. Nuclear modernization

Brown pointed to the recapitalization of the Air Force’s nuclear weapons and delivery systems as his No. 1 modernization priority.

“Nuclear modernization is there at the top,” Brown said. “That’s important.”

The Air Force plans to field new ICBMs and develop a new stealth bomber, almost concurrently, through the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent and B-21 Raider programs. During Brown’s four years as chief of staff, both efforts will hit critical milestones.

The B-21 program is further along, having completed a critical design review in 2018. The first B-21 bomber is currently under construction by Northrop Grumman at the company’s facilities in Palmdale, California. In August, Maj. Gen. Mark Weatherington, commander of Eighth Air Force, said the aircraft would fly in 2022.

The Air Force plans to buy at least 100 B-21s, though it is considering a larger program of record.

Meanwhile, the Air Force awarded Northrop a \$13 billion contract for the GBSD program in September. Although the legacy Minuteman III ICBMs won’t begin to be retired and replaced until 2029, it will be Brown’s job to ensure the program stays on track and gets the funding it needs during the pivotal early days of its engineering and manufacturing development stage.

Aside from major delivery systems, the Air Force is also pursuing a dual-capable air-launched cruise missile: the Long-Range Standoff Missile.

The Air Force is responsible for two legs of the nuclear triad —intercontinental ballistic missiles and nuclear bombers — with the Navy responsible for ballistic missile submarines. With the Navy currently replacing its current Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines with the Columbia class, all of the nation’s major nuclear modernization bills will be coming to a head around the same time.

That may create pressure on the Air Force’s and the Navy’s budgets in the coming years, especially as spending is projected to flatten. But the services have contended there is no time to waste when it comes to nuclear modernization — all programs must stay on schedule.

2. Advanced Battle Management System

Like his predecessor, now-retired Gen. Dave Goldfein, Brown wants the Air Force’s shooters and sensors to be able to instantaneously share data with the joint force — a concept the military has termed Combined Joint All-Domain Command and Control.

Brown’s second priority, the Advanced Battle Management System, is the Air Force’s effort to field a series of technologies that will make CJADC2 a reality.

“I look at ABMS [as critical] because that’s going to help us enable our decision-making and how we contribute to Joint All-Domain Command and Control,” Brown said. (The “C” in the concept’s name was recently added.)

However, Brown acknowledged the service has more work to do to convince lawmakers of the viability of the ABMS program. The Air Force envisions ABMS as a family of systems — think everything from cloud computing technologies, artificial intelligence algorithms and smart devices alongside traditional communications gear like radios.

Instead of issuing exact requirements, the service wants to test what industry has available in a series of “on ramp” exercises, eventually buying what works after technologies are customized to meet user needs.

Congress, however, has been skeptical. While the Air Force requested \$302 million for the program in fiscal 2021, the House and Senate Appropriations committees would subtract anywhere from \$50 million to almost \$100 million from that sum, citing concerns about the service’s acquisition strategy and lack of detailed requirements.

“That’s feedback to me, feedback to the Air Force that something is maybe being lost in the translation,” Brown said. “We’re doing this a bit different than we have done a traditional acquisition program. ... And for us, for the Hill, it is a bit different. I think it’s an area that we, as an Air Force, do need to do a little bit better job of how we talk it up.”

3. Cutting-edge acquisition methods

Brown’s third modernization priority isn’t a program at all: He wants to see continued advancements in new acquisition methods that allow the Air Force to buy new equipment more quickly at lower prices.

Currently, “by the time [new technology] gets to the hands of the war fighter, the software that’s in it is a decade or two decades or 15 years old. How are we able to do things a bit faster in that regard?” Brown said.

He pointed to advanced manufacturing processes like digital engineering, which employs detailed data and models during the design of a product, and simulates how it will be manufactured, tested, operated, and sustained throughout its life cycle.

Air Force acquisition executive Will Roper has heralded techniques like digital engineering for enabling the rapid development and recent first flight of a full-scale demonstrator aircraft, which was tested as part of the service’s Next Generation Air Dominance program. Roper told Defense News in September that it will be up to Brown and other Air Force leaders to decide whether it’s worth buying into the Digital Century Series plan for NGAD, which would involve the service more rapidly purchasing small batches of aircraft from various manufacturers.

While Brown didn’t comment on whether the Air Force has committed to the Digital Century Series model for purchasing future combat jets, he cited the approach as one that could potentially speed up the fielding of new technologies.

“If we keep doing the same approach we have since I’ve been in the Air Force and expect a different result, then we’re not going to do very well,” Brown said.

“We have to change our approach. And this drives change in our thinking, change about how we think about acquisition, it changes how we as an Air Force engage with and collaborate with [the Office of the Secretary of Defense], with [the Pentagon’s Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation office], with the Hill, with industry. And, you know, I think we’ve gotten some traction in certain areas, but it’s going to require constant dialogue and collaboration and transparency.”

KILL GBSD

Nuclear Policy in Next Administration: Comments by William Perry, Representative Jayapal (D-WASH); Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Senator Ed Markey (D-MA), and HASC Chairman Smith.

William Perry continued his argument that the ICBM leg of the US Triad will cause an inadvertent launch of US missiles because of a false warning of missile attack, or compel a USA President to launch early in the case of a missile attack but without necessarily having such an attack verified.

Representative Jayapal called for eliminating what she described as the \$268 billion ICBM/GBSD program, calling for the amount of funds to be spent on other more pressing domestic and other CV-19 requirements. She also called for at least a 10% cut in the defense budget, coupled with the elimination of the LRSPO cruise missile program.

The new head of the Union of Concerned Scientists said the US must adopt a policy of “Masks not missiles”. She claimed nuclear weapons do not keep the US safe witness the deaths of

250,000 Americans from the CV-19. In addition, she explained that more nuclear weapons we have the more it is possible an accident will happen, and a nuclear weapon will be detonated—now is the time to stop wasteful nuclear spending.

Senator Warren both called for the complete elimination of the ICBM force, including stopping all funding for the GBSD. She used \$268 billion as the cost of GBSD, and pushed for the elimination of the LRSO, and continuing described defense contractors as “corrupt”. She and Markey and Jayapal all called for the passage of the CTBT, an adoption of No First Use as US nuclear policy, adoption of the SANEACT legislation to cut \$100 billion over the FYDP from the nuclear accounts (\$20B a year on average or nearly 50% of the account totals).

Both Warren and Markey accentuated their view that the Trump administration “razed” arms control deals to the ground, and only “did harm to arms control.” They further claimed Iran was not a threat and we had to retire the “fire and fury” rhetoric. Markey and Warren blamed the Trump administration for the end of the INF treaty and the JCPOA agreement, and the end of the Open Skies agreement. The two Senators also said they would seek to un-deploy the low yield D-5 missile warheads—in their view the low-yield deployments made nuclear war more likely. They saw a Biden administration as a real opportunity to effect serious change in the nuclear policy and deterrent strategy of the United States and “unwind bad ideas” pushed onto the American people for the past 4 years.

As for the plans of the Biden administration, the two Senators concurred the incoming administration would extend New Start for five years without condition, return to the JCPOA with Iran, end the sanctions on Iran and stop the drift toward war with Iran, stop the push by the KSA (Saudi Arabia) to get nuclear weapons and their work with China to do so, and use smart diplomacy with North Korea to get denuclearization achieved on the Korean peninsula by a new policy of “stand with our allies.”

Markey insisted that his push for a nuclear freeze in 1980 spurred Reagan to finally adopt arms control deals, and he is now proposing a new nuclear freeze called the HALT ACT, to extend New Start, ratify the CTBT, have a fissile material cut-off, and begin a new NPR assessment immediately.

Markey said that once you begin to use nuclear weapons even in retaliation, you cannot stop using them. “They are like Pringles”—once you start you cannot stop. Therefore, no nuclear warfighting is possible. “We need to get the US away from having the ability to use nuclear weapons in an offensive war.”

The new NPR said Markey had to devote more than 1 out of 100 pages to arms control as the 2018 NPR did; the US had to continue the moratorium on testing and ratify the CTBT; the Biden administration should stop the Navy cruise missile and shelve the low-yield D-5 warhead.

Markey said ICBMs are a relic of the Cold War and the fear of a Soviet first strike—that is why the ICBMs were kept on such a high alert level so as to be able to be launched on warning. The “use it or lose it” strategy needs to be jettisoned by getting rid of not just the strategy but the missile themselves. William Perry is right to warn us of this danger—the Soviet fake missile

salvo warning in 1979; the danger of the Norwegian rocket that had the Russians activate their launch procedures; the warning Hawaii received a possible missile strike; and thus the US has to end our policy of launch under attack or launch on warning. And the 5-state “nuclear sponge” of ICBM silos needs to be terminated he said.

HASC Chairman Smith

The Nuclear Deterrent for the US is too expensive, and we can deter with a lot fewer weapons. We cannot sell global zero—but we can sell minimal deterrence. And we can negotiate such a posture with Russia and China. Need to redo the NPR including the Obama era NPR; the Obama NPR was made worse by Trump, but it was not good to begin with. We do not have a good message as we have lost 12 seats in the House. And we did not win to get a change in US nuclear policy but that is what we now have to work on. We cannot sell being anti-nuke, but we can sell the current force is too expensive and unnecessarily risky. We need to revisit the Triad and reduce the number of nukes in our arsenal and we can do that unilaterally. The new NPOR should seriously question doing the \$268B GBSD. We can sustain Minuteman III for 30 years more but not 60-80 years; the only issue is whether we need new “pits” for the MMIII. That is a very tough battle to win to kill GBSD; Republicans will not support and “I am not optimistic we can win that.” If we push for global zero and keep losing, we lose credibility; we need to take some issues from the laundry list and win a couple. We adopted gun safety, not gun control and that was a winning message.

As for GBSD, we are proposing to spend \$260B over three decades; the missiles are in fixed silos, they are unstable in that the Russians know where they are; in the five states where MM is deployed the people are vulnerable; and the missiles have to be launched just minutes after being ordered to do so and have to be launched quickly when warning of an attack is present; we have a use ‘em or lose ‘em policy that can easily unleash war. Submarines are sea are enough retaliatory capability. Perry-Collina oped in the Washington Post opposing the GBSD is the right argument.

Comments by General Frank Klotz discussing the Rand Corporation Report on the military advantages of extending the New Start Treaty for five years. Remarks on 18th of November, at the Mitchell Institute seminar series on nuclear deterrence. Link is here: <https://youtu.be/cTcooTzhKVw>

General Klotz said the New Start treaty extension would provide the US military a set of numbers and information about Russian nuclear deployments that would provide a transparency highly useful for planning deterrence. As such this information enhances stability and is consistent with the decades since 1960 when we adopted arms control as part of our overall strategic deterrent strategy. The arms control numbers we get gives us insight into Russian plans and operations of its nuclear forces. And movement of such forces has to be declared and that

[information must be provided to the US. 18 onsite inspections a year provide the verification we need. We did have two years between 2009-10 when START I had expired and before New Start was initiated. Arms control constrains Russian forces—as the arms race was always fueled by a fear of a technological breakthrough and the US worry about a pre-emptive first strike by the Soviets/Russians; arms control helps us understand the long range intentions of the Russians and lets the US plan accordingly. Now it also must be US policy to maintain absolute parity with the Russians; but we also do not want to add to the SNDV, and warhead levels allowed by the treaty because of budget implications. Eventually we will have to deal with the non-strategic parts of the arsenal, and novel nuclear systems which Putin brags about; but New Start and arms control is the best option we have to keep restraints on legacy systems.](#)

UNION OF CONCERNED SCIENTISTS: NEW US MISSILE DEFENSE TEST BLAMED FOR FUTURE RUSSIA AND CHINA NUKE EXPANSION

The Missile Defense Agency on Tuesday [hailed a test off the coast of Hawaii](#) in which the destroyer USS John Finn "intercepted and destroyed a threat-representative intercontinental ballistic missile target with a Standard Missile-3." "This was an incredible accomplishment and critical milestone," MDA Director Vice Adm. Jon Hill said in a statement.

But Laura Grego, a senior scientist in the Union of Concerned Scientists' Global Security Program, contended [in a string of tweets](#) that demonstrating how a regional missile defense system can also destroy a long-range ICBM is risky. The dramatic expansion of strategic defense cannot escape the notice of Russia and China," she wrote. "It is likely to have a crushing effect on prospects for new nuclear arms control agreements and will also provide motivation (or justification) for Russia and China to diversify and grow their nuclear weapons arsenals." (As if Russia and China have not already done so!)

Topic

Transforming National Security: Nuclear Policy for A New Era

Wednesday, November 18, for the Ploughshares Fund nuclear policy forum. Learn about the national security outlook for the Biden administration and how hundreds of billions of dollars in excessive nuclear weapons spending could be better spent on higher national priorities such as responses to coronavirus, racial injustice and climate change.

Senator Elizabeth Warren will deliver a special message emphasizing how we can work together to transform national security and nuclear policy for a new era. As we look ahead to the ushering

in of the Biden administration, we'll hear Sen. Warren's views on the nuclear weapons budget and strategy. Sen. Warren will join Sen. Ed Markey, Rep. Pramila Jayapal and House Armed Services Committee chair Rep. Adam Smith to explore what a Biden administration will do on nuclear weapons policy and how a Democratic House and contested Senate will respond.

The event will also feature two exciting panel discussions:

Nukes as Billpayer will look at how hundreds of billions of dollars in excessive nuclear spending could fund higher national priorities, including responses to the coronavirus, racial injustice, and climate change.

Outlook for the Biden Administration will focus on national security and what the first 100 days of the Biden administration could look like.

Unlike all other instruments of war, nuclear weapons are the president's weapons. Only the commander in chief can authorize use. With this authority comes the responsibility for presidents to take the lead on transforming nuclear policy so these weapons are never used again.

George Mason University's [National Security Institute](#)

GMU teamed up with [consulting firm Duco](#) to ask 100 national security experts to analyze the House and Senate versions of the defense policy bill and weigh in on a host of other topics. Among [the takeaways](#) from the survey: "There is near consensus that the United States' military advantage is shrinking relative to key adversaries and one of the means of addressing this trend is by making it easier to procure domestic commercial technologies."

Key Takeaways

1. There is a greater threat perception of China vis-a-vis other adversaries, with a majority of survey respondents consistently supportive of defending against China even though doing so may have economic consequences. China is viewed as a strategic competitor, and a plurality of survey respondents supported placing constraints on China, even if there were economic costs to U.S. firms.
2. There is near consensus that the United States' military advantage is shrinking relative to key adversaries and one of the means of addressing this trend is by making it easier to procure domestic commercial technologies. By and large, respondents were supportive of the government investing more in the defense industrial base, making it easier for the defense

department to procure commercial technologies, and limiting the dependence on foreign suppliers.

3. There is broad acceptance that the U.S. defense industrial base is vulnerable and that the federal government bureaucracy makes it harder for commercial firms to do business in the federal market. While experts differed on the approach, a majority favored “Buy American” regulations, reforming the acquisition process to make it easier for non-traditional suppliers, cutting regulations, and having the government pay more to increase competition.

4. There is broad consensus that the Department of Defense (DoD) budget, requirements, and contracting processes are unnecessarily burdensome and too bureaucratic. Experts believe that it is in the long-term interest of the DoD to engage in policy changes that make the process less bureaucratic in order to increase competition and foster a strong defense manufacturing base.

New State Department Report on China Threat



20-02832-Elements-
of-China-Challenge

Michaela Dodge Nuclear Modernization Restraint Doesn't Work

<https://warontherocks.com/2020/11/history-shows-u-s-nuclear-restraint-is-a-one-way-street/>

History Shows U.S. Nuclear Restraint Is a One-Way Street

[Michaela Dodge](#)

November 18, 2020

[Commentary](#)

The United States in the midst of modernizing its nuclear forces for the first time in decades. The modernization program entails a ground-based strategic deterrent [program](#) to replace the intercontinental ballistic missile, a new [bomber](#), a nuclear certification for the F-35 [aircraft](#), a new strategic [submarine](#), [a long-range standoff cruise missile](#), and [sustainment](#) of accompanying warheads and supporting infrastructure. The United States is [slated to spend](#) \$35 to \$40 billion per year over the next 30 years on these efforts.

Opponents of U.S. nuclear weapons modernization programs argue that it is a primary driver in starting arms races. In 2017, Sen. Ed Markey [argued](#), “Instead of wasting taxpayer money on new nuclear weapons that could trigger a global nuclear arms race, the United States should exercise international leadership by cutting unnecessary and destabilizing nuclear weapons systems.” He added that the president [should](#) “contain the massive new nuclear weapons

programs now underway before they lock in another 40 years of nuclear brinksmanship” as a solution to the problem.

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But efforts by the United States to modernize its nuclear forces will not start a nuclear arms race. In fact, if history is any guide, letting America’s nuclear stockpile atrophy would likely result in a diminished U.S. geopolitical position over the long term with no comparable in-kind restraint on other countries’ nuclear modernization and procurement efforts. If anything, unilateral restraint tends to induce adversaries to compete more vigorously in those areas where the United States exercises forbearance.

The Arms Race Dynamic

Arguments about U.S. actions starting arms races are decades old. Given its gravity, the term itself is surprisingly ill-defined in the general literature on the topic. In 1967, then-Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara [described](#) the arms race dynamic as follows:

Whatever be their intentions, whatever be our intentions, actions — or even realistically possible actions — on either side relating to the buildup of nuclear forces, be they either offensive or defensive forces, necessarily trigger reactions on the other side. It is precisely this action-reaction phenomenon that fuels the arms race.

Granted, interactions between adversaries and opponents are an undeniable fact of international relations. After all, it would be foolish to plan weapon systems intended to serve for decades without considering an adversary’s current and future posture in a strategic competition. But there is very little historical evidence to support the notion that it is U.S. nuclear modernization programs that start arms races. Policy prescriptions calling for an end to U.S. nuclear weapons modernization to prevent an arms race, or for U.S. unilateral nuclear weapons reductions that “could even start a [peace race](#),” are wishful thinking.

In fact, sometimes U.S. [inaction](#) can trigger other states’ aggressive steps. For example, the United States scaled back its strategic offensive missile buildup at the end of 1960s, allowing the Soviet Union to achieve a level of parity in strategic offensive missiles in the 1970s. The U.S. pause likely weakened its hand in the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks I process with the Soviet Union. John S. Foster, Jr., director of defense research and engineering from 1965 to 1973, [stated](#):

[S]ince 1966 the U.S. momentum in strategic systems, in retrospect, appears to some to have been too low. Nevertheless, the United States consciously set it that way and that has made it more difficult for our negotiators. Had they had more to trade, they perhaps could have gotten a better deal.

Additionally, the United States was not building any nuclear submarines during the strategic arms negotiations, leading President Richard Nixon's National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger to [comment](#), "The United States was in a rather complex position to recommend a submarine deal [in Strategic Arms Limitation Talks I] since we were not building any and the Soviets were building eight or nine a year, which isn't the most brilliant bargaining position I would recommend people to find themselves in."

In its quest for mutually assured destruction, the United States significantly limited its strategic ballistic missile defense development program and cancelled any additional deployments after the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, codifying its population's vulnerability to a Soviet missile attack. Washington [cancelled](#) a program to develop multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles that could be effective against Soviet silos at the end of 1960s, and made the development of hard-target kill capabilities (e.g., MX Peacekeeper missile) [contingent](#) upon how far the Soviet Union would go in 1970s.

How did Moscow respond to these examples of U.S. restraint? By doing exactly the opposite of what proponents of mutually assured destruction in the United States [expected](#). Instead of slowing down their own offensive nuclear buildup in the absence of U.S. defenses, the Soviet Union *accelerated* their nuclear deployments. The Soviets' force posture decisions were clearly driven by a much more complex set of considerations than just what the United States did, including the preferences of the leadership in Moscow and their closeness to the defense industrial complex.

Additionally, the buildup was not without consequences for the United States. According to Soviet officials, it [translated](#) into a more [assertive](#) Soviet foreign policy, despite U.S. efforts to pursue détente. In other words, U.S. strategic restraint did not lead to Soviet restraint. Rather, it was followed by a continuing Soviet nuclear buildup that had significant negative consequences for U.S. foreign policy around the world, including in [Angola](#), [Ethiopia](#), [Mozambique](#), [South Yemen](#), and [Afghanistan](#) in the latter half of the 1970s.

Opponents of U.S. nuclear weapons modernization and missile defense programs predicted that the Soviet Union would stabilize its nuclear buildup once it reached parity with the United States. Some even saw an increased rate of the Soviet missile buildup as a positive development that would facilitate arms control. For example, in 1969 Herbert York, the former director of the Lawrence Radiation Laboratory (today known as Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory), stated in a *Scientific American* [article](#) that the prospects for arms control were improved because "both sides will be discussing the matter from a position of parity. Moreover, this parity seems reasonably stable and likely to endure for several years." This was not the case. Moscow showed no tangible slowdown in their nuclear missile modernization programs. As a result of increasing Soviet hard-target kill capabilities, the U.S. land-based nuclear force became vulnerable to a Soviet nuclear attack. Perhaps no one described this [dynamic better](#) than President Jimmy Carter's Secretary of Defense Harold Brown, "Soviet spending has shown no response to U.S. restraint — when we build, they build; when we cut, they build."

Unlike the United States, which had placed a premium on deterrence stability through the mutual possession of a credible, second-strike retaliatory capability since McNamara's time, the Soviet

approach [placed](#) a premium on deploying strategic and theater capabilities to [prevail](#) in the event of war. Granted, this interpretation [remains contested](#), with some authors arguing that the United States was interested in nuclear [superiority](#) and robust [counterforce](#) capabilities even after McNamara's tenure. Still, it is now evident that while the United States developed its nuclear posture largely to secure the benefits of a stable balance of terror and extended deterrence (rather than, for example, in a way that would incentivize Soviet investments into defensive systems), the Soviet Union placed primacy on developing and deploying counterforce nuclear capabilities to target U.S. nuclear forces and limit damage from potential retaliatory strikes.

This recognition was shared by both Democratic and Republican administrations and led Carter to initiate a comprehensive review of the U.S. strategic forces policy. The resulting [Presidential Directive 59](#) (PD-59) acknowledged that the United States had entered “an era of strategic nuclear equivalence” and mandated the pursuit of nuclear delivery systems that could provide wider target coverage with greater survivability, including the development of the MX Peacekeeper intercontinental ballistic missile, the B-2 bomber, improvements to the sea-based leg of the strategic triad, and enhancements to strategic command and control and early warning systems. These actions were a reaction to the Soviet nuclear buildup and deemed necessary to sustain deterrence — and to improve Carter's reelection chances hurt by the appearance of a weak foreign and defense policy that emboldened the Soviet Union to invade Afghanistan in 1979. They did not and were not intended to match (or outmatch) the Soviet Union on a weapon-for-weapon basis, but to restore the credibility of the U.S. nuclear deterrent in the face of a Soviet drive for nuclear superiority. They were reactive and driven by different motivations and priorities, and hardly reflect the U.S.-led action-reaction arms race narrative publicly espoused by critics of the U.S. nuclear modernization program.

The Reagan Buildup Helped to End the Cold War Rather than Turning It Hot

The administration of Ronald Reagan continued and expanded the programs outlined in PD-59 in what turned out to be the last comprehensive U.S. nuclear modernization effort to date. It [resulted](#) in the 1980s introduction of the new [MX](#) Peacekeeper intercontinental ballistic missile; two new long-range bombers, including the stealth [B-2](#); more accurate [D-5](#) sea-launched ballistic missiles; air-launched and sea-launched cruise [missiles](#); and an overall revitalization of the nuclear complex. The United States still relies on some of these systems to meet its nuclear deterrence requirements. In addition to modernizing nuclear forces, the Reagan administration also modernized conventional forces.

Far from starting a new round of the arms race, however, these efforts were a consequence of the lack of Soviet restraint after years of relative U.S. inaction. Fred Iklé, Reagan's undersecretary of defense for policy, [described](#) the dynamic as follows:

For two decades we shrank our budget for nuclear offensive forces nearly every year. We reduced expenditures on our defenses against nuclear attack drastically, and after 1970, we cut them practically to zero. And, most dangerous of all, we permitted our intelligence projections for Soviet forces to become warped by our own dogma. In particular, from the mid-1960s to the early 1970s, we misled ourselves by the mistaken forecast that the Soviet Union, in light of our

self-restraint, would not want to overtake us in nuclear offensive forces, much less seek a capability for destroying most of our deterrent strength.

As Brown [stated](#) in 1981, “The unquestioned Soviet attainment of strategic parity has put the final nail in the coffin of what we long knew was dead — the notion that we could adequately deter the Soviets solely by threatening massive retaliation against their cities.” Despite criticism of the Reagan administration at the time — for example, former U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union W. Averell Harriman [charged](#) the administration with “squandering” an opportunity to “reverse the nuclear arms race” and “ushering in a new era of strategic instability” — its national security policy generated a heavy strain on the Soviet economy. The [pressure](#), as well as [internal](#) problems, [contributed](#) to the Soviet leadership’s decision to undertake political and economic reforms that ultimately led to the Soviet Union’s demise. The comprehensive U.S. nuclear weapons modernization program also put Washington in a better position to negotiate arms control agreements with the Soviet Union and its successor state, the Russian Federation.

Others Act Even When the United States Does Not

More recent evidence undermines the argument that it is U.S. nuclear modernization that initiates arms races, or that stopping U.S. nuclear modernization will prevent an arms race because opponents will react with corresponding restraint. From the end of the Cold War until very recently, the United States essentially refrained from any major nuclear weapons modernization efforts. It let its nuclear warhead infrastructure [atrophy](#), although it conducted life extension programs on strategic and selected short-range weapons in its nuclear arsenal. The United States implemented unilateral tactical nuclear force reductions and reduced its conventional forces in Europe — to some degree concurrently with the Russian Federation, although [questions](#) about the degree to which Russia has abided by its commitments remain. It stopped all nuclear warhead testing in 1992, including very small-yield experiments that the directors of national nuclear laboratories [said that they needed](#) to ensure that the first stages of U.S. nuclear warheads were operating successfully. The 2001 *Nuclear Posture Review* sought to devalue the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. national security strategy by no longer [planning, sizing, and sustaining](#) U.S. nuclear forces “as though Russia presented merely a smaller version of the threat posed by the former Soviet Union.” After the Cold War, Congress cancelled even modest adjustments to existing nuclear warheads, like the robust nuclear earth penetrator and the reliable replacement warhead program. The 2010 *Nuclear Posture Review* [continued the trend](#) toward a diminished role for nuclear weapons in U.S. national security strategy. Consequently, the United States is faced with a situation in which it needs to modernize its nuclear delivery systems and extend the service lives of its nuclear warheads simultaneously over the next several decades at a [cost](#) of about \$1 trillion. Critics of these costs [argue](#) that the United States can reduce its nuclear systems. However, this idea is currently inadvisable for [other](#) reasons.

These changes reflected a new assessment of the international security environment in which nuclear proliferation was considered much more of a [threat](#) than “a massive conventional attack by the Warsaw Pact through the Fulda Gap.” The United States sought to “[demonstrate leadership](#)” by “reducing the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. security” at a time when “the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, rather than the nuclear arsenal of a hostile superpower, poses the greatest security risk.”

And while Russia's nuclear arsenal did decline after the end of the Cold War, the drawdown appears to have been driven more by a lack of resources and the availability of or interest in diplomatic options to draw down in a verifiable arms control manner, rather than a genuine reassessment of Russia's threat perceptions or nuclear aspirations. Russia retains a large advantage in tactical nuclear weapons and, unlike the United States, has pursued a comprehensive [nuclear weapon modernization](#) program for many years, including delivery systems outside of the current arms control framework. Russia has also engaged in nuclear weapons experiments that have the potential to [improve](#) its nuclear warheads and keep its workforce proficient in activities necessary to build new warhead designs. China, too, is engaging in an [expansion](#) of its nuclear capabilities, and even more countries joined the nuclear weapons club by conducting explosive tests since the end of the Cold War: [India](#) (which conducted a peaceful nuclear explosion in 1974) and [Pakistan](#) in 1998, and [North Korea](#) in 2006.

In short, countries will make their own choices based on what they perceive to be in their own national security interests. Sometimes, those considerations are influenced by U.S. nuclear modernization policies, and sometimes not so much. But the notion that the United States is an instigator of an action-reaction arms race is simplistic and empirically inaccurate. Calls for the United States to stop nuclear weapons modernization as a solution to prevent an arms race tend to assume that if the United States stops its nuclear weapons modernization, others will stop their programs because they will not be compelled to respond to U.S. steps. History shows that there is very little empirical evidence for this proposition. In fact, quite the contrary. The one-way street of U.S. restraint has led us to a strategic cul-de-sac and hoping that others will follow our lead by exercising similar strategic restraint has proven to be a dead end.

Dr. Michaela Dodge is a research scholar at the National Institute for Public Policy, former senior defense policy advisor for Sen. Jon Kyl, and former research fellow for missile defense and nuclear deterrence at the Heritage Foundation. She has a book forthcoming in fall 2020 examining U.S.-allied post-Cold War relations and Russian influence operations, U.S.-Czech Ballistic Missile Defense Cooperation: Alliance Politics in Action.

By [Mark B. Schneider](#)

November 18, 2020

(Russian Defense Ministry Press Service via AP)

Strategic Nuclear Weapons and the Russian Navy

Russia sets its highest value on its strategic nuclear forces. In November 2020, President Vladimir Putin stated, I want to emphasize that, despite the constantly changing nature of military threats, the nuclear triad remains the primary, key guarantee of Russia's military security. From a broader perspective, this applies to global stability as well. Preserving this

balance of power neutralizes the threat of a large-scale military conflict, making vain any attempts to intimidate or pressure our [country](#).”

Russian attitudes about nuclear weapons are very rare in the world. In 2006, President Putin declared that the new Borei class ballistic missile submarine would “secure Russia’s glory as a great sea [power](#).” Indeed, strategic nuclear forces are literally the highest priority of the Russian Navy. Talking about the “glory” associated with nuclear missile systems is uniquely Russian and reflects their world view concerning the role of nuclear weapons.

Russian naval nuclear strategy is a subset of what is contained in Russian military strategy documents. In 2017, President Putin signed into law a very important directive to the Russian Navy. Fortunately, this was translated into English by the Russia Maritime Studies Institute of the U.S. Naval War [College](#). It dealt with the broad range of issues relating to the Russian Navy and its modernization, including nuclear weapons. It reflects Russia’s “escalate to de-escalate” (or “[escalate to win](#)”) nuclear [strategy](#). Specifically, it says, “The key components of the strategic deterrence system are nuclear and non-nuclear deterrence. The general-purpose naval forces occupy an important place in meeting strategic deterrence challenges.” The Navy is directed to “maintain the combat potential of the naval strategic nuclear forces at a high level,” while stating that the first priority of the Russian Navy is “to modernize and maintain naval strategic nuclear forces at a high level as a part of strategic ballistic missile submarine [groups](#).”

With regard to Russian SLBM targeting, Colonel General (ret.) Viktor Yesin, former Commander of the Strategic Missile Forces, has stated that Russian ballistic missile submarine missiles “...hit targets that do not have any serious protection, such as cities and enterprises...”^[1] Since this statement was made in 2010, it is possible that Russia’s SLBM targeting may have expanded somewhat due to the introduction of improved Russian missiles.

In June 2020, Putin signed a decree on nuclear deterrence. Putin's decree contains four announced conditions for nuclear weapons use, all of which involve first use of nuclear weapons. It states:

19. The conditions which determine the possibility for the use by the Russian Federation of nuclear weapons are:

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a. the receiving of creditable information concerning the launch of ballistic missiles attacking the territories of the Russian Federation and (or) its allies;

b. the use by an enemy of a nuclear weapon or other types of weapons of mass destruction against the territories of the Russian Federation and (or) its allies;

- c. enemy actions against critically important state or military facilities of the Russian Federation, the disablement of which will lead to a disruption of retaliatory operations of the nuclear forces;
- d. aggression against the Russian Federation involving the use of conventional weaponry which threatens the existence of the state [itself](#).[\[2\]](#)

The condition on the use of nuclear weapons in response to non-nuclear attacks on “nuclear forces” rather than “strategic nuclear forces” in paragraph 19(C) opens up the possibility of a nuclear response to a non-nuclear attack on a vast number of Russian military facilities, airbases, naval ships and Army bases and units. This is because dual capability (conventional and nuclear capability) is [almost universal](#) in Russia.[\[3\]](#) Russia may use the threat of nuclear escalation to enforce rules of engagement on U.S. and allied forces that assure a Russian victory.

In August 2020, noted Russian journalist Pavel Felgenhauer warned, “The Kremlin is constantly playing the deterrence game by trying to scare the West. But this situation has two dangerous ramifications. First, the nuclear threshold is becoming lower: in any serious skirmish, the Russian navy would either need to go nuclear or risk being sunk. And second, while the Russian leadership believes it has surpassed the West militarily thanks to its dazzling superweapons, Moscow’s threshold for employing military force in conflict situations may also drop [further](#).” Indeed, Putin’s new superweapons are all nuclear armed or nuclear [capable](#). Felgenhauer, who has for over twenty years warned about the risk posed by Russian first use of [low-yield](#) nuclear [weapons](#), continues to believe that Russia might use nuclear weapons in very limited conflicts.[\[4\]](#)

Thornberry: Georgia Senate Runoffs Could Derail Bipartisan NDAA

By Rachel S. Cohen, AFA

The drama of the twin Georgia Senate runoff elections looming in January could seep into negotiations over the 2021 defense policy bill, a key GOP lawmaker warned Nov. 17. Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-Texas), who is retiring this term as ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee, is one of the “Big Four” lawmakers tasked with cobbling together a compromise on defense issues from nuclear weapons development to troop deployments. But a gridlocked Congress has been slow to advance its policy and spending bills during a heated election season that will now stretch two months longer.

Election Review: the Big OOPS!

Ahead of the 2020 election, the Cook election report [listed](#) 27 races as “toss-ups,” meaning they were too close to predict one way or the other. Republicans won all 27.

That’s not a typo. Despite being assured by that conservatism was about to drown beneath an impending “blue wave,” Republicans won every single close race.

Republicans also won all 26 races deemed “leaning or likely Republican,” and even picked up 7 of the 36 seats listed as “leaning or likely Democrat.”

Despite nearly unanimous predictions that Democrats would further cement control of the House, they now hold just a 218-204 advantage, with Republicans poised to pick up more seats, as they lead in 8 of the remaining 13 races. Could end up 223-212, the closest House make-up in close to a century. This means a switch of only a few votes in the House can mean the defeat of legislative measures that in the current House might pass handily.

Appropriators aim for agreement on government funding totals by week’s end

Top appropriators hope to secure bipartisan, bicameral agreement by the end of the week on overall funding totals for a massive 12-bill spending package, which would prevent a government shutdown on Dec. 11 and boost agency budgets for the remainder of the fiscal year.

“The next few days will tell us a lot about whether Congress can pull off the bipartisan, bicameral appropriations process that I believe both sides would like to deliver,” Senate Majority Leader [Mitch McConnell](#) said on the floor on Tuesday.

“Our colleagues on the committee and their counterparts in the House need to continue their bicameral discussions and settle on top-line dollar amounts for each separate bill,” he said. “I hope they will be able to reach this broad agreement by the end of this very week.”

Senate Appropriations Chair [Richard Shelby](#) told reporters that “extensive talks” are happening “on the staff level and so forth.”

“We’re trying to get there,” the Alabama Republican said of an agreement on overall totals for the 12 appropriations bills that would comprise an omnibus spending deal, otherwise known as 302(b)s. “We believe there’s a little bit of momentum here now, so let’s see what we can do.”

Both House and Senate appropriators have to work out the differences between their versions of fiscal 2021 spending bills. Senate Republicans released their appropriations bills last week, while House Democrats unveiled their measures and passed most of them in two bundles earlier this year.

“We have some basic agreements in principle,” but nothing has been agreed upon, Shelby said on Tuesday.

Sen. [Roy Blunt](#) (R-Mo.), a senior appropriator, said the best chances for passing pandemic aid during a lame duck session of Congress might be rolling the stimulus into an omnibus package.

STATEMENT FROM DASD RE LIFE EXTENSION FOR LEGACY SYSTEMS IS END OF LIFE MARGIN REVIEW <https://news.usni.org/2020/11/16/navy-may-extend-life-of-ohio-ssbns-to-provide-cushion-for-introduction-of-columbia-class>

“Although the headline frames this as a “life extension” for OHIO, it is not what most people think of when they hear those words. Rather, this is part of a broader effort in DoD to find “end of life margin” in existing, legacy nuclear delivery systems. We know these systems cannot be “life extended” another 10+ years, but some individual airframes, boats, etc., may be able to give us another ~1-3 years if we are proactive about it right now. The idea is not to immediately take these additional months/years to the bank, but rather to do what we can to have them available if their modern replacement delivery systems deliver later than currently planned. This is all about being proactive to mitigate risk during the transition from legacy to modern systems. I just want to ensure this crowd knows the DoD thought process behind this and encourage the use of the term “end of life margin” for these types of actions rather than “life extension.”

Drew Walter, PTDO DASD(NM), Pentagon - Room 3B884, Office: 703-697-3060

'No doubt' China is upgrading its nuclear power to be on par with U.S., Russia

By [Bill Gertz](#) - The Washington Times - Sunday, November 15, 2020

[China](#) is rapidly building up its nuclear forces, including the expansion of plutonium and uranium plants as part of a secretive, crash program to add warheads to its growing missile and bomber forces, according to declassified U.S. briefing slides obtained by [The Washington Times](#).

The four slides were part of a recent briefing for NATO allies in the past month on Chinese nuclear forces and show three facilities that appear to have sharply increased in size since 2010.

One plutonium production area, the Jiuquan Atomic Energy Complex, doubled in size at a nuclear reprocessing zone in the past two years alone and added another reactor in the past year.

U.S. officials view the significant construction at Jiuquan as part of what the [Pentagon](#) said recently is a plan by Beijing to double the size of its warhead stockpile in the next decade. [China](#) has more than 200 warheads and is building more for its growing force of multiwarhead missiles.

Intelligence from the briefing challenges widely reported studies on Chinese fissile material production. As recently as 2017, international experts concluded that [China](#) ended plutonium production for weapons in 1991 and uranium production for arms in 1987.

“The world deserves to know what [China](#) is up to. They have never admitted how many nuclear weapons they have and how many they plan on building,” said [Marshall Billingslea](#), the State Department’s lead envoy for arms control.

“But it is clear from imagery that [China](#) is engaged in a secretive crash buildup of its infrastructure. There is no doubt that [China](#) wants to be on par with the United States and [Russia](#) in terms of its military and nuclear capabilities,” he added.

The information from the slides is part of the Trump administration’s effort to persuade [China](#) to join New START nuclear arms talks with the United States and [Russia](#). Beijing so far has rebuffed U.S. appeals to join the arms talks.

A second satellite photo made public shows extensive expansion of the nuclear-weapons-related research complex at Mianyang, in south-central [China](#). Mianyang produces warheads and conducts research, development and testing of nuclear arms under the direction of the China Academy of Engineering and Physics, or CAEP.

The academy has been compared to a combination of the [U.S. Energy](#) Department’s [Los Alamos National Laboratory](#), where nuclear weapons were designed, and the Pantex plant in Texas that assembles the warheads that can deliver nuclear weapons to targets.

The CAEP has been described as a brain trust and the leading institution in [China](#) engaged in nuclear work, both military and civilian. It also conducts extensive financial transactions as part of its international business portfolio.

A third satellite photo made public reveals that [China](#)’s military reactor complex at Leshan over the past decade grew by about 20 times the size of the original reactor in place in 2010.

Leshan, in southern Sichuan province, is the site used for making nuclear-weapons-related materials and naval nuclear reactors. In the past, a uranium enrichment plant was located in Leshan.

The Leshan complex appears to be part of [China](#)’s major buildup of nuclear-powered ballistic missile and attack submarines.

An obligation to negotiate

Mr. [Billingslea](#) said Beijing has a legal obligation under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to engage in arms talks.

“For months now, we have been calling on the Chinese Communist Party to come to the table and negotiate in good faith,” he said. “This is not merely an ask that we have. This is an obligation of theirs. [China](#) is legally bound to honor it. The NPT states plainly that all parties must pursue negotiations in good faith. [China](#) is perilously close to standing in violation of the NPT due to their repeated refusals to meet.”

Earlier, the Trump administration declassified new briefing slides on Chinese excavation at the Lop Nur nuclear testing site. Work at the facility recently increased, and the administration has suggested in official reports that [China](#) may have carried out nuclear tests there.

The briefing also included satellite photos of Chinese missiles paraded during the annual national day festivities.

A comparison of parades of missiles since 2009 showed that the latest parade in 2019 was 10 times longer than the first and displayed new missiles such as the DF-17 hypersonic missile, DF-26 intermediate-range ballistic missile, and DF-31 and DF-41 ICBMs, along with the JL-2 submarine-launched missile.

“In the past, I’ve said that in 2019 [China](#) launched 225 ballistic missiles. That is a huge number, more than the rest of the world combined,” said Mr. [Billingslea](#), the arms envoy.

“The same was true in 2018,” he said. “As of October of this year, even with COVID-19, [China](#) has shot off 180 ballistic missiles.”

Adm. Charles Richard, commander of the Strategic Command, told reporters in September that [China](#)’s nuclear buildup should not be measured by numbers of warheads, which are far fewer than the United States’ 1,550 deployed warheads.

Adm. Richard said a nation’s stockpile is a relatively crude measure of capabilities.

“You have to look at the totality of it: the delivery systems, what they’re capable of, what their readiness is,” he said. “And [China](#), in particular, is developing a stack of capabilities that, to my mind, is increasingly inconsistent with a stated no-first-use policy.”

[China](#) has claimed its nuclear arsenal is far smaller than those of the U.S. and [Russia](#) and that it would not be the first to use nuclear arms in a conflict. That claim is under scrutiny because of the nuclear forces buildup.

“Given the huge gap between the nuclear arsenals of [China](#) and those of the U.S. and the [Russian Federation](#), it is unfair, unreasonable and infeasible to expect [China](#) to join in any trilateral arms control negotiation,” Geng Shuang, [China](#)’s deputy permanent representative to the United Nations, told the U.N. General Assembly last month. He called the U.S. demand to join the nuclear talks “a trick to shift the focus of the international community.”

[China](#)’s submarine missile capability is also a concern.

“[China](#) now has the capability to directly threaten our homeland from a ballistic missile submarine,” Adm. Richard said. “That’s a pretty watershed moment.”

The annual [Pentagon](#) report on the Chinese military stated that [China](#)’s nuclear forces will “significantly evolve” in 10 years with advanced weapons and larger numbers of a land-, sea- and air-based delivery system.

“Over the next decade, [China](#)’s nuclear warhead stockpile — currently estimated to be in the low-200s — is projected to at least double in size as [China](#) expands and modernizes its nuclear forces,” the report said.

It was the first time in decades that the [Pentagon](#) had revealed its estimate of warheads. Some experts say the number is much larger and includes hidden stockpiles of warheads.

A Chinese Embassy spokesman did not return an email request for comment.

Some Nuclear News Articles of Interest

Four New Weapons That Will Define The Biden Defense Posture;

How Russia's Nuclear Weapons Keep Becoming More Powerful; Russia Claims Its RS-28 Sarmat ICBM Has Nearly 'Unlimited Range'

Iran expects US to return to nuclear deal without conditions

Pyongsan Uranium Mines: Despite Typhoons, Mining and Processing Operations Continue

China is Already Preparing for the Next Korean War

As China's military confidence grows, it's now looking to 'design' how war is fought

Indian Missiles, Rockets Score Direct Hits On Pak Bunkers

The Navy is Moving 'Tactical Control' of Its Nuclear-Armed Ballistic Missile Submarines

Iran Uranium Levels Raise Nuclear Concerns, but Tehran Says It Is Still Being Transparent

One of Biden's First Acts as President-Elect Was to Antagonize Kim Jong Un

North Korea nuclear problem - Can Biden fare better?

No doubt' China is upgrading its nuclear power to be on par with U.S., Russia

Global Strike Command Releases New Nuclear Handbook, “Guide to Nuclear Deterrence in the Age of Great-Power Competition”



Guide to Nuclear
Deterrence in the Age of Great-Power Competition

Here is a project the ICBM Ear originated with the LTRI folks in Louisiana with support from Global Strike Command, completed from April 2020-September 2020 and now published in

October 2020 with 23 chapters written by 25 of the top nuclear professionals in the United States, including among many others Admiral Mies, Keith Payne, Mark Schneider, Michaela Dodge, Stephen Blank, Peter Huessy, Franklin Miller, Richard Fisher, Mark Gunzinger, and Frank Klotz. Here are the chapters, the author's, and the subject of the chapters. Chapter 17 is on ICBMs; chapter 16 is on bombers; and chapter 19 is on the submarine leg of the Triad.

Contents

Illustrations *ix*

Foreword *xi*

About the Authors *xv*

Acknowledgements *xxv*

PART 1

DETERRENCE AND NATIONAL SECURITY

1 Artisans and Advocates: The Importance of Strategic Deterrence Education 3

Curtis McGiffin

2 American Nuclear Deterrence Policy: What Is It and How Is It Implemented? 23

Franklin C. Miller

3 Nuclear Superiority Matters 37

Matthew Kroenig

4 The Cost of Nuclear Deterrence 51

Michaela Dodge

5 The Legislative Process: How Congress Funds Deterrence 65

Brooke Mitchell

6 Nuclear Crisis Stability: Cold War Legacies and New Era Challenges 81

Peter Huessy

7 Deterrence and Disarmament: Pulling Back the Curtain 99

Keith B. Payne

vi

CONTENTS

8 The NNSA Contribution to the Nuclear Mission 117

Frank G. Klotz

9 Nuclear Weapons Physics 139

Lee Hobbs

PART 2

AMERICA'S ADVERSARIES

10 Russian Nuclear Strategy and Forces 155

Mark B. Schneider

11 China's Nuclear Challenge 181

Richard D. Fisher, Jr.

12 The Challenge from the Islamic Republic of Iran 197

Matthew Kroenig

13 North Korea's Nuclear Strategy and Forces: Trusted Shield and Treasured Sword 213

Bruce Klingner

14 Reflections on Russian Nuclear Strategy 229

Stephen Blank

15 Russo-Chinese Military Cooperation: The Nuclear Agenda 245

Stephen Blank

PART 3

THE SERVICE CONTRIBUTION TO DETERRENCE

16 US Air Force Bombers: The Most Versatile Leg of America's Nuclear Triad 283

Mark Gunzinger

vii

CONTENTS

17 The Role of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles in National Security 299

Peter Huessy

18 Understanding Nuclear Command, Control, and Communications 315

Adam Lowther and Shane Grosso

19 The Strategic Ballistic Missile Submarine in National Security 331

Richard W. Mies

20 Missile Defense in US Deterrence Strategy 349

Ian Williams

21 Fight Through: Command and Control...Nuclear and Joint All Domain 365

Jason Armagost and William Murphy

22 Why Minimum Deterrence Is Doubtful 381

Stephen J. Cimbala

23 The Role of Conventional Nuclear Integration 395

James Ragland

Mitchell Institute and Huessy Nuclear, Missile Defense, NNSA and Space Seminar Series

Recent Events

Nuclear Deterrence Forum: Henry Sokolski

- **Event Date:** *October 22, 2020*
- **Speaker:** *Henry Sokolski, executive director of the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center*

Nuclear Deterrence Forum: Lt Gen Frank G. Klotz, USAF Ret.

- **Event Date:** *November 18*
- **Speaker:** *Lt Gen Frank G. Klotz, USAF Ret., Senior RAND fellow and former Under Secretary of Energy for Nuclear Security*

Previous Events

Mitchell/ANWA DC NNSA Series: Nuclear Deterrence Forum on Maintaining a Credible Strategic Nuclear Deterrent: Modernizing the NNSA Nuclear Weapons Complex

Infrastructure

- **Event Date:** *October 29, 2020*
- **Speakers:** *Mr. James J. McConnell, Associate Administrator for Safety, Infrastructure and Operations, National Nuclear Security Administration, U.S. Department of Energy, and Mr. Robert B. Raines, Associate Administrator for Acquisition and Project Management, National Nuclear Security Administration, U.S. Department of Energy*

Nuclear Deterrence Forum: David Albright - [Video](#)

- **Event Date:** *October 8, 2020*
- **Speaker:** *David Albright, president of the Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS)*

Nuclear Deterrence Forum: Dr. Brad Roberts - [Video](#)

- **Event Date:** *September 21, 2020*
- **Speaker:** *Dr. Brad Roberts, director of the Center for Global Security Research at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory*

Nuclear and Missile Defense Forum: Mr. Moshe Patel

- **Event Date:** *September 9, 2020*
- **Speaker:** *Mr. Moshe Patel, Director of Israel Missile Defense Organization*

Nuclear Deterrence Forum: Dr. Rob Soofer

- **Event Date:** *September 2, 2020*
- **Speaker:** *Dr. Rob Soofer, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear and Missile Defense Policy*

Mitchell/ANWA DC NNSA Series: Nuclear Deterrence Forum with Dr. Brent Park - [Video](#)

- **Event Date:** *August 27, 2020*
- **Speaker:** *Dr. Brent K. Park, National Nuclear Security Administration Deputy Administrator for Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation*

Nuclear Deterrence Forum: Lt Gen Richard Clark - [Video](#)

- **Event Date:** *August 19, 2020*
- **Speaker:** *Lt Gen Richard M. Clark, Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Deterrence and Nuclear Integration*

Nuclear Deterrence Forum: Ilan Berman - [Video](#)

- **Event Date:** *August 6, 2020*
- **Speaker:** *Ilan Berman, Senior Vice President of the American Foreign Policy Council*

Nuclear Deterrence Forum: ADM Charles Richard - [Video](#)

- **Event Date:** *July 30, 2020*

- *Speaker: ADM Charles "Chas" Richard, Commander, U.S. Strategic Command*

Nuclear Deterrence Forum with Dr. Charles Verdon - [Video](#)

- *Event Date: July 29, 2020*
- *Dr. Charles Verdon, NNSA's Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs*

Nuclear Deterrence Forum with Mr. Uzi Rubin - [Video](#) | [Report](#) | [Article](#)

- *Event Date: 14 July 2020*
- *Speaker: Mr. Uzi Rubin, Former Director of the Israel Missile Defense Organization*

Nuclear Deterrence Forum with Mr. Gordon Chang and Mr. Rick Fisher - [Video](#)

Event Date: 11 June 2020

- *Speakers: Mr. Gordon Chang, renowned author and China expert, and Mr. Rick Fisher, Senior Fellow on Asian Military Affairs at the International Assessment and Strategy Center*

NNSA Nuclear Deterrence Forum with Mr. Drew Walter - [Video](#)

Event Date: 26 May 2020

- *Speaker: Drew Walter, Performing the Duties of Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear Matters at U.S. Department of Defense*

Nuclear Deterrence Forum with Dr. Schneider & Dr. Blank - [Video](#)

Event Date: 22 May 2020

- *Speakers: Dr. Mark Schneider, Senior Analyst with the National Institute for Public Policy, and Dr. Stephen Blank, Senior Fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute*

Nuclear Deterrence Forum with General Ray - [Video](#)

Event Date: 29 April 2020

- *Speaker: Gen Ray, Commander, Air Force Global Strike Command*

Recent Events

Space Power Forum: Lt Gen B. Chance Saltzman

- *Event Date: October 16, 2020*
- *Speaker: Lt. Gen. B. Chance Saltzman, Deputy Chief of Space Operations, Cyber, and Nuclear, USSF*

Space Power Forum: NASA/USSF Partnership in Space

- *Event Date: September 22, 2020*
- *Speakers: NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine and Gen John "Jay" Raymond CSO, USSF*

Upcoming Events

Space Power Forum: Col. Robert P. Bongiovi

- *Event Date: November 19*
- *Speaker: Col. Robert P. Bongiovi, Director of Launch Systems Enterprise Directorate, Space and Missile Systems Center, Air Force Space Command*

Space Power Forum: Gen Raymond and the Sentinels

- *Event Date: December TBD*
- *Speakers: TBD*

Previous Events

Space Power Forum: DAFRCO/SpRCO | The Need for Specialized Acquisition Offices - [Video](#)

- **Event Date:** August 13, 2020
- **Speakers:** Mr. Randall Walden, Director and PEO, Department of the Air Force RCO and Mr. Mike Roberts, Director and PEO, Space RCO

Space Power Forum: Charles L. Beames, founder and Chairman of the SmallSat Alliance - [Video](#)

- **Event Date:** July 22, 2020
- **Commercial/DOD Small Satellites**

Space Power Forum with Lt Gen JT Thompson - [Video](#)

- **Event Date:** 17 June 2020
- **Speaker:** Lt Gen JT Thompson, Commander, Space and Missile Systems Center, Los Angeles Air Force Base, California

Space Power Forum with Lt Gen DT Thompson - [Video](#)

- **Event Date:** 12 May 2020
- **Speaker:** Lt Gen DT Thompson, Vice Commander, U.S. Space Force

Space Power Forum: US Space Command/NRO Operations - [Video](#)

- **Event Date:** 24 April 2020
- **Speaker:** BG James, Joint Task Force-Space Defense Commander and US Space Command J3, and Maj Gen Guetlein, Deputy Director, National Reconnaissance Office

Aerospace Nation: A conversation with Gen John Raymond - [Video](#)

- **Event Date:** 7 April 2020 WATCH NOW
- **Speaker:** Gen Raymond, Chief of Space Operations of the United States Space Force and Commander of the United States Space Command

The Importance of Space in National Security - [Video](#)

- **Event Date:** 10 March 2020
- **Speaker:** The Honorable Barbara Barrett, Secretary, U.S. Air Force

Space Force: Organizing, Training, and Equipping for Combined Space Operations

- **Event Date:** 10 January 2020
- **Speaker:** Maj Gen John Shaw, Combined Force Space Component Commander, US Space Command, and Commander, 14th Air Force