

## **Nuclear Weapons and New Security Challenges**

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I am delighted to be here tonight with a group that is so distinguished and so welcoming. I am especially pleased that Wendy Starman was selected for the Distinguished Service Award. Since the end of the Cold War, trying to educate religious groups and other citizen organizations about nuclear weapons has often been a thankless task because people would prefer to believe that the danger disappeared with the Soviet Union. So while I hope that Wendy has a few blissful months in which nothing else matters but her new baby, I also hope that she returns to the cause with renewed energy because she has one more very important reason to reduce nuclear weapons, stop proliferation, and prevent nuclear war.

When Andrew Young delivered the 2001 Wedel lecture, he spoke extensively about the relationship between religion, business, and poverty alleviation. Rarely do security experts speak so openly about the relationship between religion and nuclear weapons policy. Too often, one's credibility as a nuclear expert is judged by one's perceived ability to think about the unthinkable in a purely "rational" fashion, without regard to religious beliefs or emotional considerations.

Religious leaders have made strong and influential statements about nuclear weapons at critical moments. The 1983 Pastoral Letter on War and Peace from the National Conference of Catholic Bishops was released shortly before I started working as a first-year teacher at Our Lady Queen of Peace School in Madison Wisconsin. I found that statement very empowering even though I was not a Catholic, and did not even consider myself to be especially religious at that time. It helped channel my own amorphous fears of nuclear war into a more focused plan of action. It provided cogent analysis and moral authority which increased my confidence when I spoke about nuclear issues to parents and the principal at my school. It strengthened my commitment to teaching about war and peace in the nuclear age, which is one reason why I returned to graduate school and devoted my professional life to nuclear arms control.

More typically, a different type of theology shapes debates about nuclear weapons. When I accompanied General Shalikashvili and Ambassador Goodby to speak with U.S. Senators, government officials, and others about the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, we were often told that controversies surrounding the Treaty stemmed from basic "theological disagreements." Of course, nobody was suggesting that attitudes toward nuclear weapons are necessarily determined by people's religious affiliation. Instead, they meant that ideas about nuclear weapons are heavily influenced by worldviews – i.e. fundamental beliefs about human nature and about how people should behave in a world that lacks an overarching secular authority.

Tonight, I want to start by talking about how the interplay between different worldviews during the Cold War led to a grand bargain and what is sometimes called the “nuclear restraint regime.” I will say a few words about why the new security challenges that have emerged since make a legally based nuclear restraint regime more, not less, important. I will then make the case that the Bush Administration has responded to these new security challenges by systematically repudiating the grand bargain and undermining central elements of the nuclear restraint regime. Finally, I will conclude by suggesting that the situation today is much like it was in 1983, in that the security policies being pursued by the government are spreading fear, increasing hatred, and producing actions that degrade the quality of life as they raise the risk of nuclear war. What is missing now is any serious democratic debate or sustained opposition to rhetoric and policies that reflect an extreme version of one worldview and a narrow conception of national interests while violating key tenets of other worldviews and more comprehensive conceptions of the global good.

## **Worldviews and Attitudes toward Nuclear Weapons**

Beliefs about nuclear weapons are heavily influenced by abstract worldviews because we have little empirical evidence about what makes deterrence work or fail, let alone about the consequences of using nuclear weapons in war. Moreover, nuclear weapons can cause almost incomprehensible destruction, so it is hard to relate them to any more familiar form of weapon, warfare, or security policy.

The divergent worldviews that have shaped a half century of nuclear debates have much older origins. They can be traced back to philosophical and religious traditions that shaped the earliest arguments about security in a world of sovereign states. One perspective may dominate temporarily, but none has drowned out the other voices for long. Nor do I believe that any one perspective will remain triumphant in the future, for the simple reason that each perspective contains some elements of truth and some serious weaknesses.

Unilateralists are the intellectual descendants of Thomas Hobbes, the seventeenth century theorist who maintained that life in an anarchic world is necessarily “nasty, brutish, and short.” Key elements of this world view are that:

- Humans and states are inherently self-interested and competitive.
- World politics is fundamentally conflictual – it is a zero sum game between “us” and “them,” or between “good” and “evil.”
- All politics is about coercive power, and nuclear weapons are the ultimate source of coercive power. They offer potentially unlimited destructive capabilities, but are not qualitatively different from other weapons. They can be used not only for deterrence, but also for many other political and military goals.
- Arms control is a dangerous illusion in a world where peace is a pause for rearming between wars. The “bad guys” will cheat, while the “good guys” are

prevented from taking steps necessary to deter attack or prevail in the next war. Symbolic arms control can be useful for public relations purposes, but leaders must be careful that it does not lull citizens and allies into reduced vigilance.

- Cautious Cooperators are the intellectual descendants of Hugo Grotius, who is known as the seventeenth century “father of international law.” This tradition also includes strong elements of Just War Theory, with earlier antecedents in Catholic thought. Cautious Cooperators believe that:

- Humans and states have a mix of common and conflicting interests. In particular, they have common interest in avoiding lengthy, massively destructive wars fueled by religious or ideological disagreements. They can co-exist by agreeing to let each sovereign do as he wishes within his own territory, then negotiating rules to facilitate interactions among states.
- In the nuclear age, states face an extreme security dilemma. Most states are defensive rather than aggressive, but because they lack a central protector, they need arms as insurance against the possibility that somebody else might try to exploit them. Since no other state can be sure that the first state’s aims are purely defensive, prudence dictates that they must increase their arms in response. The result is a dangerous and costly arms race that neither side wants, but that is difficult to avoid.
- It is possible to have the benefits of nuclear deterrence without excessive costs or risks by negotiating agreements to coordinate behavior and minimize unintended consequences. During the Cold War, Cautious Cooperators favored arms control to set agreed force levels, stabilize deterrence, and avert proliferation.

- Globalists are the philosophical descendants of Immanuel Kant, who is known best for his eighteenth century book, Perpetual Peace. They believe that:

- Economic interdependence and other mutually beneficial interactions mean that people have far more common interests than conflicting ones.
- The world functions as a universal community in which states are important players, but scientific experts, business leaders, non-governmental organizations, and many other types of non-state actors are also important.
- Military power is ineffective, if not counter-productive, in the pursuit of many important goals.
- Nuclear weapons do more to threaten security than they do to protect it. Most globalists assume that there are no real threats to security that cannot be addressed as well or better through other means. They also maintain that the practice of deterrence carries high risk that nuclear weapons will eventually be used due to

escalation during a conventional war, launch in response to a mistaken perception of impending attack, or increased proliferation.

- Arms control should be used not only to stabilize deterrence, but also to transform political relationships and reorient security policies in a more cooperative direction.

### **The Grand Bargain and the Nuclear Restraint Regime**

Proponents of all three world views were influential in public debates and policy deliberations over nuclear weapons during the Cold War. The result was a philosophical “checks and balances” system which kept U.S. policy from going too far in any one direction for too long. This produced a type of grand bargain to the effect that U.S. nuclear weapons policy should contain three elements which appealed in varying degrees to proponents of the three worldviews:

1. Nuclear weapons are needed for deterrence, at least in the short term.
2. The United States should be a proponent for progressive mutual restraint to slow, then reverse, the superpower arms race and to avert proliferation.
3. The long term objective is a transformed world in which nuclear weapons are no longer necessary and everyone enjoys a stable, just peace.

Negotiations between the United States, the Soviet Union (which had counter-balancing power), and various other countries, many of which also had their own internal debates and uneasy compromises, produced the nuclear restraint regime – a patchwork of more or less formal agreements that played an important role in keeping the Cold War cold and minimizing proliferation:

- The 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which is essentially a bargain between those countries that already had nuclear weapons and those that did not. The Non-Nuclear Weapons States Parties promised not to acquire nuclear weapons if the Nuclear Weapons States Parties promised to share peaceful nuclear technology and to negotiate in good faith on the reduction and ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons.
- The 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty acknowledged that any attempt to defend against nuclear weapons could be easily overcome by offensive counter-measures. It underscored that ballistic missile defense should only be by mutual agreement and should be linked to agreed limits on offensive capabilities.
- The SALT and START accords, which capped, and then reduced, offensive strategic weapons and reshaped arsenals to reduce first-strike incentives.

- The 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, which outlawed all nuclear explosions. Negotiating this Treaty was a key element in the political bargain that secured the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995. It increases the scientific challenges facing proliferators, especially ones that want not just basic fission weapons but also more powerful and efficient designs. It also forecloses the possibility of third-generation nuclear weapons, such as nuclear x-ray lasers and enhanced radiation weapons.

These and numerous other agreements reinforced the global norm that nuclear weapons are fundamentally different from other weapons, that they should be governed by special rules, and that they should be used only as a last resort, if at all. Although this norm is not embodied in a formal treaty, the “nuclear taboo” and the associated imperative to preserve a very high, clear threshold between conventional and nuclear weapons, form a fifth important component of the nuclear restraint regime.

### **New Security Challenges Increase Importance of Cooperative Nuclear Restraint**

The end of the Cold War removed the fear of a massive attack by the Soviet Union as the central threat around which the United States could organize its security policy. It also left the United States as the sole remaining superpower with no peer competitor to provide a near-automatic check on U.S. exercises of power.

The first ten years of the new era brought no agreement on organizing principles for U.S. security policy. The proponents of the three worldviews had very different ideas about the nature of the new security environment and the implications for U.S. nuclear policies. With the superpower confrontation over and the fear of nuclear war receding, there seemed to be no urgent need for action. So most people turned their attention to other issues and tolerated a situation where forward movement on each element of the nuclear restraint regime was blocked by a few committed unilateralists who opposed any constraints on U.S. nuclear might.

Political paralysis inside the Beltway did not stop the world from changing; it just stopped the United States from adapting its policies in response to changes wrought by critical trends associated with globalization. I will only touch briefly on some of these trends tonight. Anyone who wants to know more should read Principles of Global Security by John Steinbruner, my colleague at the University of Maryland.<sup>1</sup>

- Decades of rapid population growth. The world currently has over 7 billion inhabitants, and the number will probably rise by several billion more before it stabilizes in the next century. It is important to note that 97% of that population growth is occurring at the lowest income levels.
- Rapid advances in information technology are making it possible for economics, politics, and socio-cultural movements to operate on a global scale in near-real time.

- Breakthroughs in other fields, such as biotechnology, offer tremendous life-saving and life-enhancing benefits to those that can afford them, but also make it possible for a small group of people or a weak state to acquire tremendous destructive power using materials and knowledge that is widely available around the world.
- The economic benefits of globalization are very unevenly distributed. A United Nations Development Program study found that in 1970, the income of the richest fifth of the world's population was thirty-two times that of the poorest fifth. If current trends continue, the disparity between the top and bottom fifths will be 100 fold by 2025 and nearly 200 fold by 2050.<sup>2</sup>

These long-term trends have important implications for security policy. On the one hand, there is less reason to worry about a massive deliberate attack from a clearly defined peer competitor. On the other hand, there is more reason to be concerned about diffuse threats that are difficult to anticipate or identify. Furthermore, we need to pay attention not only to the possibility that a terrorist group or small hostile state will deliberately launch an "asymmetrical attack" against the United States, but also to the potentially catastrophic unintended consequences of individual actions in a world where things are tightly wired together, happen nearly instantaneously, and involve immensely powerful technologies.

The changing nature of threats requires a corresponding transformation of security policy. In a global world, defense of territory is less important than defense of legal order. Nobody is seriously worried that terrorists or hostile states will try to seize and govern New York or Washington, D.C. Instead, we fear that they will use small scale attacks or weapons of mass destruction to sow panic; disrupt financial, communication, and transportation systems; and cause widespread disorder or a suspension of civil liberties. Laws and less formal understandings about appropriate behavior are essential to the smooth functioning of market systems and democratic politics inside states. They are increasingly important worldwide as economics, politics, and culture occurs on a global scale.

In a world of diffuse dangers, misperceptions and mistakes could be as destructive as deliberate attacks. Security policies should place more emphasis on reassurance and systematic prevention of dangerous situations, not just deterrence or contingency response after another, potentially much more devastating attack. The objectives of arms control also need to be broadened from quantitative limits and access controls to include more refined agreements about appropriate activities with dangerous dual-use technologies.

As U.S. military planners have already recognized, adroit management of information is now more important than firepower. The information revolution can be exploited for cooperative ends by creating sophisticated ways to verify that disclosed information is correct and complete, plus reliable arrangements to ensure that information which is revealed for cooperative purposes does not compromise security or hurt commercial interests.

We also need stronger, more trusted international institutions that can work effectively with national governments and non-state actors. These institutions need the resources and expertise to create incentives for cooperation and to help countries that want to follow the rules,

but lack the capacity to do so. They also need the authority and power to help organize the international community for an effective response should violations threaten global security.

### **Current U.S. Policy Undermines Cooperative Nuclear Restraint**

The changes to security policy that I have just outlined are clearly not what Defense Secretary Rumsfeld has in mind when he speaks about military transformation. For the first eight months of new administration, a rough balance existed between the Unilateralist faction led by Secretary Rumsfeld and the Cautious Cooperator faction led by Secretary of State Powell. The Bush administration relied heavily on vague rhetoric that would appeal for different reasons to different parts of the political spectrum, such as calling for a new security framework based on “more than the grim premise that we can destroy those who seek to destroy us.”<sup>3</sup> There were several intense internal policy debates over nuclear arms control issues, but in each instance, the Administration stopped short of decisive decisions that only Unilateralists would favor, such as announcing an intent to abrogate the ABM Treaty or ending all U.S. funding for the organization charged with building the Test Ban Treaty monitoring system. The vague rhetoric and internal policy compromises kept open the prospect that the Bush administration would muddle along and end up reproducing the stalemate that characterized nuclear policy debates during the Clinton years.

The events of September 11, 2001 and the subsequent anthrax attacks changed all that. They underscored that we are operating in a new security environment. They restored a strong sense of urgency: with another attack potentially imminent, a continuation of the security stalemate was no longer acceptable, regardless of whether that stalemate resulted from legitimate differences in world views or partisan politics. Cautious Cooperators and Globalists hoped that the Bush administration would adopt a more multilateral approach to security policy because the war on terrorism required other countries’ cooperation for practical purposes such as intelligence sharing and basing rights. They also hoped it might generate a broader recognition that members of the “civilized world” needed to accommodate each others’ interests in order to present a united front against terror.

Although the Bush administration used a fair amount of multilateralist rhetoric, it insisted that it would and could act unilaterally whenever international support was not forthcoming. In December 2001, President Bush gave notice that the United States would withdraw from the ABM Treaty even though Russia and NATO allies still valued that accord and considered it to be compatible with the logical next stages of U.S. work on missile defense. A series of such actions suggest that Unilateralists in the Bush administration decided to take advantage of a time when domestic critics were remaining silent for the sake of national unity and when most other countries also wanted to show solidarity with the United States.

Current U.S. security policy is framed in essentially Unilateralist terms. Top officials depict the war against terrorism as a zero sum conflict between good and evil, in which other countries are either “with us or against us.” There is no effort to see others’ perspectives or to consider that they might have legitimate grievances; anyone who attempts to do so is denounced

as an apologist for the attackers. Likewise, there is no room for compromise or accommodation in dealing with terrorists or rogue states.

The Administration's huge increases in defense spending are premised on the belief that U.S. security necessitates "full spectrum military dominance" -- i.e. the ability, operating alone or with allies, to defeat any adversary and control any situation across the range of military operations. Defense planners assume that military superiority can be used to accomplish a wide range of ambitious objectives. For example, the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review specifies that the U.S. military must be able to dissuade future competitors, deter threats and coercion, and decisively defeat any adversary -- including imposing a change of regime if the President orders.<sup>4</sup>

Despite military and intelligence capabilities that dwarf those of any other country, top Administration officials assert that our enemies are so highly motivated to harm the United States that they will "inevitably" acquire and use weapons of mass destruction. Tighter export controls might complicate efforts to acquire dangerous materials, while improved intelligence sharing might disrupt some planned operations. Rather than placing increased emphasis on preventive measures, though, the Administration stresses their inadequacies and favors contingency response through counter-proliferation, pre-emption, defense, and preparations to manage the consequences of a WMD attack.

Although the Administration voices support for existing non-proliferation accords, it operates from the premise that the United States should not be bound by any agreement that interferes with self-defense. Its November 2001 decision to repudiate long-standing international efforts to add a verification and enforcement protocol to the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention, like its subsequent rejection of the ABM Treaty, stem from the Unilateralists' opposition to anything that prevents the United States from taking full advantage of its military, economic, and scientific prowess. Although the Administration often depicts arms control as an "outmoded relic of the Cold War," the basic objection is one that Unilateralists have used for decades: arms control constrains the "good guys" without reducing the dangers they face because the "bad guys" either remain outside the regime, or join for political cover while they cheat.

The Bush administration sees no need to preserve the grand bargain because it thinks that no one at home or abroad can currently mount an effective challenge to purely Unilateralist policies. In effect, it wants to broaden the first element of grand bargain, such that nuclear weapons become necessary not only for deterrence, but also for a range of other political and military goals. It wants to weaken the second element by moving from advocacy for progressive mutual restraint to supporting one round of reciprocal unilateral reductions, undertaken if and when the United States decides the time is right, with no expectation of further reductions. It has largely repudiated the third element, and no longer even pays lip service to the idea that the United States should be actively working toward a world free of nuclear weapons, where a stable and just peace depends on something other than having a benign hegemon impose it through military and economic superiority.

The Bush administration also appears to be working systematically to dismantle the nuclear restraint regime -- at least as it applies to the United States:



- **Strategic Defense** – U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty will take effect on June 13, 2002. The Administration has shown no interest in developing an alternative legal framework to help countries pursue missile defenses without threatening each others' legitimate security interests and provoking a dangerous counter-reaction. Instead, it has offered vague reassurances about wanting only a "limited" system that will not undermine Russia's deterrent and being willing to cooperate on some aspects of the program.
- **Strategic Offense** – The press has been referring to the recent agreement between Presidents Bush and Putin as the "Treaty of Moscow" because the two sides could not agree on what the accord should be called. The name that the Administration is using – the "Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty" -- has the acronym of SORT, which is embarrassingly appropriate given that this is only sort of a treaty and only sort of arms control. Administration spokespeople are depicting the accord as a historic breakthrough, but in reality:

It is barely legally binding. There are no requirements for reductions on a fixed schedule. The only obligation is to reduce deployed strategic nuclear warheads to no more than 2200 on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012, the day when the Treaty expires unless extended by mutual consent. At any point before then, either side can withdraw after 90 days notice.

The numbers do not represent real reductions below what the Clinton administration had hoped to achieve. The difference between 2200 and START III's proposed upper limit of 2500 reflects an accounting gimmick of excluding nuclear warheads based on submarines that are in port.

The Treaty does not require the dismantlement of any weapons. In moving from the START I limit of 6000 accountable deployed strategic warheads to the future limit of 2200 accountable deployed strategic warheads, the Administration plans to put most, if not all, of the excess warheads into a responsive force that can be quickly reloaded onto existing delivery systems, as well as an inactive stockpile that could be returned to operational status if needed.<sup>5</sup>

The Treaty provides no new verification measures. By stating that START I will remain in force in accordance with its terms, the new Treaty preserves the earlier accord's verification provisions only through 2009, when START I will expire unless extended by mutual agreement.

The Treaty represents backwards movement from major accomplishments of START II. By failing to mention START II, the new Treaty reflects a tacit agreement to let Russia reduce the cost of keeping large numbers of strategic warheads by continuing to place multiple warheads on intercontinental ballistic missiles, something considered highly destabilizing during the Cold War. Important verification provisions will also be lost. Russian ratification of START II depended on full U.S. compliance with the ABM Treaty, and the Russian

Ministry of Foreign Affairs has already indicated that it will withdraw from START II when the United States withdraws from the ABM Treaty.

- **The Test Ban Treaty** is in severe trouble. The Bush Administration has never supported this Treaty, but has not yet nullified U.S. signature as it did for the accord establishing the International Criminal Court. The Administration says that it has no immediate plans to end the ten-year-old moratorium on U.S. nuclear testing. However, its Nuclear Posture Review discussed test resumption not only to ensure the reliability of the existing stockpile, but also to develop new types of nuclear weapons to attack hardened and deeply buried targets or to neutralize biological weapons without spreading radioactive fallout over large distances.<sup>6</sup> The Administration wants to improve “test site readiness” – i.e. to shorten the time between a Presidential decision to resume testing and a fully instrumented explosion. However, it is hard to distinguish between efforts to increase test site readiness and evidence that someone is conducting secret nuclear explosions instead of the sub-critical experiments that both U.S. and Russia routinely use to preserve stockpile reliability. The Washington Times often carries allegations of Russian cheating at their test site in Novaya Zemlya. Russian officials routinely deny that they are doing anything more than sub-critical experiments, which are not prohibited by the Test Ban Treaty. The most recent exchange involved a new development. A senior Russian Atomic Energy Ministry Official reiterated Russian compliance with the Test Ban Treaty, but justified activities at Novaya Zemlya as necessary to make sure the infrastructure and experts at the test range are “fully prepared to conduct full-blown nuclear tests” should a political decision be made to do so.<sup>7</sup>
- **The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty** is at risk. At the Spring 2002 meeting to prepare for the NPT Review Conference in 2005, there was mounting frustration about policy developments by the Nuclear Weapons States, particularly the United States, that are inconsistent with the NPT and the political commitments made at the Review Conferences in 1995 and 2000. Nobody wanted to press their concerns very hard this year, either because they felt that it would be wasted effort or they feared appearing like a disloyal ally or a terrorist sympathizer. Outside the formal meetings, though, there were angry comments by states that felt cheated, and growing concern that dissatisfaction with the NPT review process could erode confidence in the wider nuclear restraint regime.<sup>8</sup>
- **The Nuclear Taboo** – Although the Bush Administration claims that it is trying to reduce the salience of nuclear weapons by developing alternatives to deterrence – i.e. missile defenses and precision-guided conventional weapons, its actions may have the opposite effect. Saying that 2200 deployed strategic warheads is the lowest possible number consistent with the security of the world’s strongest conventional power is no way to tell weaker states that nuclear weapons are not useful. By blurring distinctions between nuclear and conventional weapons, the Administration is effectively lowering the nuclear threshold. Even if it ultimately

decides not to develop or test new types of nuclear weapons, loose talk about the potential utility of nuclear weapons can seriously weaken the nuclear taboo.

The sum of these actions suggests that the Bush administration is following a classic Unilateralist strategy of using symbolic arms control to lull the U.S. public and its allies while the country rearms.

### **The Need to Resume Debate, Restore Balance, and Return to Nuclear Restrain**

Why does it matter if the United States wants to withdraw support from the nuclear restraint regime as long as the Cold War is over and the chances for a massive nuclear exchange are slim? At least four arguments against nuclear complacency come quickly to mind:

1. If the threat that justified huge arsenals is gone, then it is no longer rational or morally acceptable to run any risk that large numbers of nuclear weapons maintained on ready-alert status might be launched due to a mistaken perception of attack, a computer malfunction, or any other scenario for inadvertent nuclear war between the United States and Russia.
2. Our first line of defense against terrorist attack with nuclear or radiological weapons is to safeguard the security of Russian nuclear weapons and materials. The United States is engaged in cooperative threat reduction programs with Russia, but the problem could be addressed much more systematically and effectively if undertaken in the context of equitable agreements that require the verified dismantlement of strategic weapons and address tactical nuclear weapons.
3. India and Pakistan, both nuclear-armed states, stand on the brink of war over Kashmir. Both countries are using belligerent language and the Pakistani press alleges that both countries have moved tactical nuclear warheads close to the line of control. Neither seems fully aware of the devastation that could be caused by a nuclear war. For example, India claims to have shelters that could protect 30 people from WMD agents for up to 96 hours, but U.S. intelligence estimates that a full-scale nuclear conflict between India and Pakistan could kill 12 million people immediately and injure 7 million more. The United States is reportedly making plans to evacuate 1000 U.S. troops and 63,000 U.S. citizens from the region, if necessary. Of course, neither side wants nuclear war, but neither is yet willing to forego the bargaining leverage that they think will come from increasing the salience of nuclear weapons in the current crisis.
4. In addition to these immediate dangers, there are also real reasons to be concerned about what changes in U.S. nuclear policy could do to our political and military relationship with China. Over the longer term, one should also worry about the damaging effects on global security if countries like Japan lose faith in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the larger nuclear restraint regime.

It is possible to change course and return to cooperative nuclear restraint as the guiding principle for security policy. The underlying problem is that the United States has such disproportionate economic and military power that no other country feels it can afford to raise strong public objections. I had hoped that Russia might refuse to legitimate U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty and U.S. plans to retain a nuclear arsenal far larger than anything Russia can afford, but I understand why President Putin concluded that holding out for a more equitable agreement would not be a prudent course of action.

I was in a recent discussion with some Scandinavian defense officials where the American arms control supporters expressed hope that Denmark would withhold approval for U.S. use of an ABM radar in Greenland until the Bush Administration provided firmer reassurances about limits on missile defense and other steps to address Russian and Chinese concerns. Only later did I realize what a sad day it is when citizens of the strongest country on earth feel that they cannot influence their over government directly, but must ask little Denmark to stand up on their behalf.

We each need to do what we can to revive democratic debate about security principles and policies. We must restore philosophical checks and balances to make sure that the United States exercises self-control. We cannot expect any other country to do it for us unless we wait for U.S. unilateralism to provoke an extreme counter-reaction.

Given the importance of worldviews in shaping nuclear policy, religious leaders who think long and hard about the fundamental questions of life have as much expertise to contribute as do weapons scientists or security experts. It may actually be easier for you to speak up and be heard without being accused of being unpatriotic or seeking partisan advantage.

It is essential to reiterate why any use of nuclear weapons remains unacceptable even though it might not lead to full scale nuclear war. It is equally important to provide a positive vision, along with concrete benchmarks for progress toward a world where peace depends not on nuclear weapons, but on cooperative mechanisms for mediating conflicts and meeting human needs.

Tonight there are many people in this country and around the world who are like the first-year teacher that I was in the mid-1980s ... scared; convinced in an inarticulate fashion that my life need not inevitably be nasty, brutish, and short; and eager for people who were older and wiser than I to provide both a vision of a better world and a conviction that each individual can help accomplish that goal.

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### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> John Steinbruner, Principles of Global Security (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 2000).
- <sup>2</sup> In Allen Hammond, Which World, (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 1998), p. 80.
- <sup>3</sup> Remarks by the President to Students and Faculty at National Defense University, May 1, 2001.
- <sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, Quadrennial Defense Review Report, September 20, 2001, p. 13.
- <sup>5</sup> See Jack Mendelson, “The US Nuclear Posture Review: Plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose,” Disarmament Diplomacy 64 (May-June 2002) and the Natural Resources Defense Council, “Faking Nuclear Restraint: The Bush Administration’s Secret Plan for Strengthening U.S. Nuclear Forces,” (February 13, 2002).
- <sup>6</sup> Excerpts from the classified Nuclear Posture Review (January 2002) can be found at [www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/policy/dod/npr.htm](http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/policy/dod/npr.htm).
- <sup>7</sup> Russian First Deputy Atomic Minister Ryabev, reported by Global Security Newswire on May 28, 2002.
- <sup>8</sup> Rebecca Johnson, “The 2002 PrepCom: Papering over the Cracks?” Disarmament Diplomacy 64 (May-June 2002).