



Written by on March 1, 2010

## New U.S. Nuclear Policy in the Works

Citing White House aides and Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, the New York Times reported on February 28 that President Obama is in the process of deciding on a new nuclear strategy for the United States, a strategy that “will permanently reduce America’s arsenal by thousands of weapons.”



The report also cited senior Obama administration and military officials who have participated in several White House Situation Room debates about our nation’s nuclear policy, as well as outside strategists consulted by the White House. These individuals say that many elements of the new strategy have already been completed.

These sources described the new strategy as including a commitment from the United States to develop no new nuclear weapons, including the so-called nuclear “bunker-busters” advocated by the Bush administration.

President Obama plans “dramatic reductions” in the U.S. arsenal of nuclear weapons, as part of a sweeping policy review, a senior administration official told AFP on Monday.

The review of U.S. nuclear policy “will point to dramatic reductions in the stockpile, while maintaining a strong and reliable deterrent through the investments that have been made in the budget,” the official said.

A report in the *Quadrennial Defense Review* issued last month by the Pentagon said the United States will develop missiles that carry a massive payload of non-nuclear, conventional explosives that would allow the United States to deliver a devastating strike without violating any agreements pertaining to nuclear weapons.

In addition to the matter of reducing America’s nuclear weapons arsenal, administration officials are also engaged in formulating a policy prescribing under what circumstances nuclear weapons may be used. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) has urged the administration to declare that the “sole purpose” of our nation’s nuclear weapons arsenal is to deter nuclear attack. The concept that the sole or primary purpose of having nuclear weapons was to defend (or deter) nuclear attack was the implicitly understood policy that prevailed during the Cold War, when both the United States and the Soviet Union had thousands of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) targeted at each other and any use of them short of deterring a nuclear attack was deemed to be provocative and suicidal.

The *Times* report quoted Daryl G. Kimball, the executive director of the Arms Control Association, who stated his opinion: “Any declaration that deterring a nuclear attack is a ‘primary purpose’ of our arsenal leaves open the possibility that there are other purposes, and it would not reflect any reduced reliance on nuclear weapons. It wouldn’t be consistent with what the president said in his speech in Prague” in



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2009, when he unfolded a plan for moving toward the elimination of nuclear weapons.

White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs announced during a briefing on February 26:

On April 12th and 13th the President will host the Nuclear Security Summit at the Washington Convention Center.... The purpose of the summit is to discuss steps we can collectively take to secure vulnerable nuclear materials and prevent acts of nuclear terrorism. As the President stated in Prague, in April 2009, nuclear terrorism is the most immediate and extreme threat to global security....

Earlier this morning the President had a secure video teleconference with British Prime Minister Gordon Brown and German Chancellor Angela Merkel. The President and his counterparts discussed nonproliferation, Afghanistan, terrorism, current economic and trade issues, as well as the upcoming Nuclear Security Summit.

President Obama first called for the Nuclear Security Summit at the G8 Summit in L'Aquila, Italy, last July 8 when White House aide Mark Lippert — the Chief of Staff of the U.S. National Security Council — told the press that the President viewed this as another piece of the nonproliferation agenda he first put forward in his Prague speech in April, where he called for a nuclear-free world.

The Obama administration's public statements advocating a move toward a "nuclear free world" reveal an affinity for a plan first unveiled at the United Nations by President John Kennedy on September 25, 1961. That plan was subsequently printed as State Department Publication 7277, entitled "Freedom From War: The United States Program for General and Complete Disarmament in a Peaceful World."

The plan outlined in "Freedom From War" called for:

- The disbanding of all national armed forces and the prohibition of their reestablishment in any form whatsoever other than those required to preserve internal order and for contributions to a United Nations Peace Force;
- The elimination from national arsenals of all armaments, including all weapons of mass destruction and the means for their delivery, other than those required for a United Nations Peace Force and for maintaining internal order;
- The institution of effective means for the enforcement of international agreements, for the settlement of disputes, and for the maintenance of peace in accordance with the principles of the United Nations;
- The establishment and effective operation of an International Disarmament Organization within the framework of the United Nations to insure compliance at all times with all disarmament obligations.

America's foreign and national defense policies are both the opposite of what is required to ensure real peace. Our nation persists in intervening militarily around the world with neither the congressional declaration of war required by our Constitution nor a reasonable expectation that such intervention is contributing either to our security or the good will of other nations. We have also lost control of our own foreign policy and defense through our membership in the UN and its sovereignty-destroying subsidiaries such as NATO.

We would do far better by making our national defense capabilities the strongest on Earth, in terms of both weaponry and personnel, and then obtaining the world's good will by staying at home and minding our own business. A policy like that would bring us the appreciation of nations led by people of good will, and even begrudging respect from tyrants.



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Our nation should also withdraw from the UN and NATO and should not be a party to nuclear non-proliferation treaties, which almost always are administered under UN mandate.

*Photo: AP Images*



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