

## **The ICBM Ear Weekly of October 2, 2020 Presented by Peter Huessy, President of Geo-Strategic Analysis**

### **NEW GOOD NEWS**

OSD Announcement: Drew Walter was officially named the DASD for Nuclear Matters this week, so he is the real deal. Also, cost estimates for GBSD for the next five years have been fully funded by the USAF plans, and the total cost came down significantly from the higher CAPE estimates. General Ray says GBSD was on time for EMD. He also says the B-21 is on time and the USAF may speed up the acquisition of the cruise missile LRSO. And for those seeking to view the Joint September 22, 2020 Minot Task Force 21/Geostrategic Analysis Symposium, here is the link: <https://taskforce21.com/>

### **CR/DOD Funding News**

The House and Senate have passed and the President has signed legislation funding the US government at the FY20 level for FY21 through December 11, 2020; at that time it is assumed the lame-duck Congress will work to pass defense authorization conference report—usually takes around 40 legislative days to do so. Given the Senate’s relative lack of action on appropriations bills, (although written now to be brought up in Committee markup), there is concern that the funding bill for FY21 may be put off until the new year depending on the results of the election. Press reports note the legislative funding patch now gives congressional leaders more than two months to either negotiate a massive spending deal by mid-December — which would increase agency budgets for the remainder of fiscal 2021 — or pass yet another stopgap bill to stretch current levels of government cash into next year. Some legislators suggested Feb. 26 end date for the continuing resolution and let the new Congress pass a spending bill.

Still, according to one news report, “a bipartisan appropriations deal is actually one of the easier responsibilities on the congressional to-do list, with overall funding limits in place to guide lawmakers as they craft 12 discretionary spending bills that flow from those toplines.” Those budget caps — which set defense spending at \$740.5 billion and non-defense spending at \$634.5 billion in fiscal 2021 — carry Congress through the final year of the Budget Control Act of 2011, essentially ending the current sequestration, or automatic spending cuts if a funding bill is not completed..

### **Nuclear Escalate to Win, Theories of Victory**

#### **PREVAILING UNDER THE NUCLEAR SHADOW | DETERRENCE AND ARMS CONTROL 2020 PAPER EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In important nuclear news, the LLNL’s Brad Roberts theme of examining the Russian and Chinese theories of victory is getting more serious attention. The CNA, Center for Naval Analysis, just published “Prevailing Under the Nuclear Shadow”, which details a proposed framework for “nuclear escalation management.” Here is an excerpt from their summary:

The United States has characterized today's geopolitical environment as a "long-term, strategic competition between nations." This competition includes renewed emphasis on the role of nuclear weapons in international affairs by the nuclear-armed competitors of the US—Russia, China, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). These adversaries view competition with the US as having a nuclear dimension that is not confined to high-end warfare.

Accordingly, the US must anticipate that nuclear weapons will play a central role in a regional conflict with any of these opponents. This reality underscores the importance of preparing policymakers to manage escalation during a conflict taking place under the nuclear shadow. The use of nuclear weapons in a war between the US and its allies and Russia, China, or the DPRK would be not only militarily significant, but would also have major political and normative consequences.

Yet practical concepts for escalation management are lacking in the post-Cold War, contemporary great power context. **To fill that gap, this report proposes foundational elements for a nuclear escalation management framework. This novel framework leverages key concepts from escalation theory and risk management literature to create a structured, analytical process for US policy-makers and planners to evaluate potential courses of action (COAs) that could be employed to achieve favorable escalation management with nuclear-armed competitors.**

## Iran's Other Threat to Civilization

by [Peter Vincent Pry](#) and [Peter Huessy](#)

October 1, 2020 at 4:00 am

- The US and its allies need to do everything possible never again to be caught in a state of unpreparedness.
- The Congressional EMP Commission estimates that, given U.S. current unpreparedness, within one year of an EMP attack that causes a nationwide blackout... up to 90 percent of the U.S. population could perish from starvation, disease, and societal collapse. An EMP attack, therefore, would confer upon Iran an "assured destruction" capability against the United States.
- The Congressionally created EMP Commission assesses that North Korea already has super-EMP nuclear weapons and the capability to deliver them.... Iran may also already -- or soon -- have the capability to deliver an EMP attack.
- "By sending a military satellite into space, Iran now has shown that it can target all American territory; the Iranian Parliament had previously warned [the U.S.] that an electromagnetic nuclear attack on the United States would likely kill 90 percent of Americans." — Iran's state-controlled Afkar News.
- The formal end of the UN arms embargo -- at the end of September 2020 -- could provide Iran with even more missile and nuclear technology possibly from Russia or China.

- "Iran should be regarded by national security decision makers as a nuclear missile state capable of posing an existential threat to the United States and its allies... The fact of Iran's ICBM capability and their proximity to nuclear weapons necessitates that Iran be regarded as a nuclear missile state — right now." — William R. Graham, Henry F. Cooper, Fritz Ermarth and Peter Vincent Pry, Newsmax, February 1, 2015.

The Islamic Republic of Iran may soon have the capability, if it does not already, of carrying out electromagnetic pulse (EMP) attacks against its enemies. An EMP attack could black out not only the US national electric grid but also virtually all life-sustaining equipment that relies on electrical power and computer systems. An EMP attack could thus pose an existential threat to modern civilization. (Image source: iStock)

The Islamic Republic of Iran may soon have the capability, if it does not already, of carrying out electromagnetic pulse (EMP) attacks against its enemies. Such an attack involves exploding a nuclear warhead some 30-400 miles above the United States, for instance, and unleashing a downward electronic pulse that can destroy the (currently unprotected) infrastructure. That would include such as critical electronic systems in virtually all civilian systems: food manufacturing and supply chains, automobiles, airplanes, trains, elevators, communications and the US electric grid -- actually, just about everything on which a modern country relies.

An EMP [attack could](#) black out not only the US national electric grid but also virtually all life-sustaining equipment that relies on electrical power and computer systems. An EMP attack could thus pose an existential threat to modern civilization. This would totally alter the risk-benefit calculations for the United States and its allies for being able to defend the post-1945 world order.

Recently, the Iranian state-controlled Afkar News [claimed](#) that Iran is now able to carry out just such an EMP attack over the United States:

"By sending a military satellite into space, Iran now has shown that it can target all American territory; the Iranian Parliament had previously warned [the U.S.] that an electromagnetic nuclear attack on the United States would likely kill 90 percent of Americans."

### **Does Iran Already Have Nuclear Weapons?**

Washington's [conventional consensus](#) is that Iran does not yet have nuclear weapons or missiles capable of threatening the United States with a nuclear attack. The Obama Administration [assessed](#) that Iran could develop an atomic weapon in six months to two years, prior to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which pretended to stop an Iranian A-bomb. Iran ostensibly agreed to the JCPOA five years ago, on July 14, 2015. Iran [never signed](#) the agreement, and started violating its terms almost [immediately](#).

A 2020 assessment by Israel confirmed that Iran continues to cheat on its JCPOA obligations and will be able develop atomic weapons in six months to two years.

Some senior Israeli analysts and U.S. experts [disagree](#) with the "consensus view" and [assess](#) that Iran already has nuclear weapons. According to a [report](#) in Newsmax, titled "Experts: Iran Now a Nuclear-Ready State, Missiles Capable of Hitting US":

"Regardless of intelligence uncertainties and unknowns about Iran's nuclear weapons and missile programs, we know enough now to make a prudent judgment that Iran should be regarded by national security decision makers as a nuclear missile state capable of posing an existential threat to the United States and its allies...The fact of Iran's ICBM capability and their proximity to nuclear weapons necessitates that Iran be regarded as a nuclear missile state—right now."

### **The North Korea Connection**

The Congressionally created EMP Commission [estimates](#) that North Korea already has super-EMP nuclear weapons and the capability to deliver them. North Korea and Iran are collaborating and have signed an [agreement](#) to cooperate in "science and technology."

Iran may already -- or soon -- [have the capability](#) to deliver an EMP attack. It has successfully launched several civilian satellites -- in 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2015 -- including on southern polar trajectories, [assisted](#) by North Korean missile technology and North Korean technicians. On April 22, 2020, Iran orbited a military satellite over the United States, launched by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) -- the world's deadliest terrorist organization. The IRGC's Noor-1 satellite is tiny, weighing only about 30 pounds, but the Space Launch Vehicle's third stage also went into orbit, demonstrating a capability to circle over the U.S. a net payload weighing several hundred pounds -- [enough](#) for a nuclear weapon.

North Korea sold the mullahs much of the technology for Iran's most sophisticated ballistic missile, the Shahab-III, which is an improved version of North Korea's Nodong missile. Iran's Shahab-III is capable of delivering a high-altitude EMP attack over America's heartland if the missile is launched, say, from a freighter in the Gulf of Mexico. Iran has apparently already practiced launching and fusing Shahab-III missiles that could carry out a high-altitude EMP attack. Iran has also demonstrated that it is [capable](#) of launching a ballistic missile from a vessel at sea. Worse, the formal end of the UN arms embargo -- at the end of September 2020 -- could provide Iran with even more missile and nuclear technology possibly from Russia or China.

### **The Terrorist Connection**

Iran, as the "[world's worst state sponsor of terrorism](#)," could become a conduit for giving nuclear EMP attack capabilities to terrorists. The EMP Commission [warns](#):

"Terrorists or state actors that possess relatively unsophisticated missiles armed with nuclear weapons may well calculate that, instead of destroying a city or military base, they may obtain the greatest political-military utility from one or a few such weapons by using them — or threatening their use — in an EMP attack."

Congressional testimony in 2004 by US President Ronald Reagan's Science Adviser and one of the EMP Commissioners [warns](#) of the prospects of an anonymous EMP attack launched from a freighter by Iran hired terrorists:

"DR. GRAHAM: Iran, the world's leading sponsor of international terrorism, has practiced launching a mobile ballistic missile from a vessel in the Caspian Sea. Iran has also tested high-altitude explosions of the Shahab-III, a test mode consistent with EMP attack, and described the tests as successful. Iranian military writings explicitly discuss a nuclear EMP attack that would gravely harm the United States."

### **Iranian Military Doctrine Endorses EMP Attack**

An official Iranian [military textbook](#) from 2010, but not released until 2017, endorses a nuclear EMP attack against the United States, as well as deception measures to conceal nuclear weapons -- in violation of international agreements. The textbook is used to train officers at Iran's prestigious military academy and think tank, the Martyr Lt. General Sayad Shirazi Center for Education and Research.

Strangely for a book titled *Passive Defense*, its overarching focus is [offensive](#) -- how to black out electric grids -- including by nuclear EMP attack.

Calculations in the book that America could be vanquished by a nuclear EMP attack appear to be correct.

### **Strategic Implications**

The Congressional EMP Commission [estimates](#) that, given U.S. current unpreparedness, within one year of an EMP attack that causes a nationwide blackout, two-thirds or more, up to 90 percent, of the U.S. population could perish from starvation, disease and societal collapse.

An EMP attack, therefore, would confer upon Iran an "assured destruction" capability against the United States. The geopolitical consequences of this development are so grave that U.S. and global security would, in effect, go into free-fall. Where the U.S. would land, into what kind of future, is of course unknown.

If Iran and North Korea both decided to use threats to America or its allies with an EMP-generated genocide, it could destroy the foundations of the existing world order. If the US can no longer be the superpower that since 1945 has halted the cycle of world wars and sustained the global advancement of freedom, the consequences would be existential and catastrophic.

An EMP assured destruction capability changes the strategic calculus of risk for the United States in being able to uphold its role as a superpower and would necessarily erode the confidence of U.S. allies -- perhaps to the point where they would feel the need to develop their own nuclear weapons.

Most alarmingly, the U.S. is fast moving to a place where, for the first time, smaller failed states such as Iran and North Korea would have the power to blackmail or destroy the largest and most successful societies on Earth. These rogue states have long perceived themselves to be at war with the United States, and have already demonstrated that they are desperate, highly dangerous characters.

The US and its allies need to do everything possible never again to be caught in a state of unpreparedness. We know how to protect our electric grid and the President of the United States has [ordered](#) the government bureaucracy to take the necessary steps to do so. Progress, however, regrettably [remains slow](#). The emerging threats from Iran and North Korean outlined here should compel the United States to take faster action -- now.

*Dr. Peter Vincent Pry is Director of the Task Force on National and Homeland Security. Peter Huessy is Director of Strategic Deterrent Studies at the [Mitchell Institute](#). He is also senior consulting analyst at Ravenna Associates, a strategic communications company.*

Link is here: [https://www.cna.org/CNA\\_files/PDF/CRM-2020-U-027973-Final%20\(002\).pdf](https://www.cna.org/CNA_files/PDF/CRM-2020-U-027973-Final%20(002).pdf)  
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## **America Must Do More to Prevent an Iranian Nuclear Weapon**

**Amb. Edelman and General Wald, JINSA**



Diplomacy with Iran is coming. Whichever candidate wins in November, it seems likely they will attempt renewed engagement with Tehran over its nuclear weapons program, either by reentering the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) or pursuing a new agreement.

Simply returning to the 2015 deal would be seriously mistaken. Despite its name, it is not comprehensive, since it really restricted only one of the three elements needed to deliver nuclear weapons: it actually loosened the international ban on Iran's development of nuclear-capable ballistic missiles, and today we know much more about Tehran's efforts to put a warhead atop these missiles thanks to Israel's seizure of secret nuclear archives than from Iran's "compliance" with the JCPOA.

Moreover, the caps on uranium and plutonium are limited and reversible, as Tehran's ongoing violations make plain. They also start expiring in five years, giving Iran direct paths to the bomb and an industrial-scale enrichment program over the next decade-plus.

Similar "sunset" clauses will terminate a slew of UN Security Council measures against Iran's illegal proliferation activities. Most notably, American diplomats have been racing to prevent the conventional weapons embargo on Tehran from lapsing next month, but that "snapback" process has been much more difficult than the JCPOA's supporters suggested when coining the term. Ultimately, the deal formally legitimizes Iran's nuclear program, jeopardizing future sanctions and threatening the Nonproliferation Treaty regime—arguably the single greatest achievement of arms control.

Iran received significant upfront sanctions relief for agreeing to such lenient terms. It promptly plowed this windfall into aggression around the Middle East, including attacks against American personnel.

For all these reasons, the Trump Administration should be commended for re-imposing and robustly enforcing sanctions in its "maximum pressure" campaign against the Iranian regime.

But as we lay out in a new report from the Jewish Institute for National Security of America (JINSA), the United States must bolster this leverage before approaching the negotiating table.

In this regard sanctions are vital, but insufficient. The regime still is not convinced it needs to talk, even amid major economic pain. Nor can sanctions alone deter or deny Iranian counterpressure—just look at its increased nuclear activities and kinetic escalation around the Middle East beginning last summer. Tehran can now be expected to build further leverage as a prelude to diplomacy.

That is why the United States needs to reinforce sanctions with credible military threats, rather than playing them down as it did during negotiations leading to the JCPOA. Coercive diplomacy can most reliably compel Iran to negotiate in good faith and keep it from dashing for a bomb if new talks fail. Moreover, it is the best alternative to an unstable situation that always carries the danger of inadvertent escalation.

The Pentagon should update contingency plans to neutralize Iran's nuclear facilities, and to defend against Iranian tests of nuclear-capable missiles, including visible demonstrations of U.S. missile defense interceptors and clear threats to shoot down these tests if necessary. Rules of engagement for U.S. forces should permit appropriately forceful self-defense responses to aggression by Iran and its proxies.

Even with these steps, prospective negotiations would occur in a context of receding American presence in the Middle East. Washington must build up concentric regionwide pressures on Iran by ensuring Israel has the tools to defend itself and U.S. interests, and by fostering greater regional cooperation on air and missile defenses, maritime security, intelligence and cyber.

Greater leverage increases the likelihood of securing an acceptable agreement that truly blocks Iran from nuclear weapons capability. This will entail a full and verifiable accounting of all possible military dimensions of Iran’s nuclear program, as well as legal prohibitions—such as existed before the JCPOA—on developing nuclear-capable ballistic and cruise missiles. It also entails correspondingly more intrusive inspections.

Sunsets, if they exist at all, should be conditioned on inspectors reaching a “broader conclusion” as to the peaceful nature of Iran’s nuclear program, which will only be possible if a new agreement is indeed comprehensive. Sanctions relief also should be contingent on Iranian behavior, not front loaded or set to predetermined time frames with round numbers like five or ten years.

If a successor agreement meets these criteria, it should be formalized in a treaty to lend consistency and credibility to U.S. policy toward Iran.

And with greater leverage this time around, American officials must articulate redlines, explicitly tied to threats of military action, to prevent further expansions of Iran’s nuclear program whether or not the two sides come to the table.

As both the Obama administration and Donald Trump said in 2015, “a bad deal is worse than no deal,” but not establishing and enforcing appropriate redlines might be the worst result. Peacefully resolving the threat of a nuclear-capable Iran would be ideal, but the most important thing is to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons capability.

### **October 1, SDC: General John Hyten Remarks**

General Hyten made several very important points in a SDC Coalition symposium remarks October 1, 2020 including some key points re Russia and arms control and the lateness with which the US came to the nuclear modernization table:

Nuclear weapons brought about a very large drop in great power war and casualties following August 1945

The US Peacekeeper deployment was a significant force that ended the Cold War. Some 15 years ago, the PK ended its service after being deployed in October 1986, some 34 years ago. Some 16 years ago was the last launch of a Peacekeeper missile, that was critical to winning the Cold War.

The General made some very important points about arms control and the Russians. Immediately after signing off on the Moscow treaty and accelerating after the New START agreement, the Russians went forward with a huge modernization effort not only of systems controlled by the New Start agreement but also multiple weapons systems OUTSIDE of the treaty limits, including theater and strategic systems. A future arms control agreement must include all Russian and US nuclear systems, including theater nuclear weapons, and we must bring China into the discussion on arms limits as well.

Cannot walk away from the strategic modernization because we will cause grave harm to the US and its allies if we do not stick with the program.

The platforms must also have NC3 and nuclear warheads to complete the nuclear modernization--aligning warheads with the platforms, with the command and control and have a partnership with NNSA, STRATCOM, and the USAF and NAVY.

We also need the low yield Navy warhead and a new sea-based cruise missile.

The most remarkable part of the nuclear enterprise are the people in the services and in the civilian workforce—especially considering having to operate within the context of the CV-19. All elements of the force however are healthy and doing a top job and that is due to the great people we have doing this critical job.

### **SDC October 1 Remarks: Lt Gen Tom Bussiere, Deputy Commander, US Strategic Command**

We must deliver the weapons we need; and be prepared to deter the conflict we will face and not the conflict we want to be our mission to deter. Deterrence crosses the full spectrum of capabilities and must include all elements of our forces. The world is multipolar; our adversaries require tailored approaches to deterrence, as there is not a one size fits all. We cannot dismiss events that have a low probability of occurring especially if the risk is catastrophic. How then do we mitigate the risk of a deterrent failure? That leaves us no choice but to fully modernize.

The submarines are reaching 42 years, the longest of any submarine in history. The MM first went on alert in the early 1960's; the B-52 bomber is going to reach 100 years in service. Our adversaries are modernizing their forces seeking to gain an advantage. Thus, our top focus of the DOD is the modernization of our nuclear forces. Our adversaries are engaging in aggressive behavior that if not checked will result in more such behavior.

Russia's stockpile is not restrained. Their nuclear hypersonic and cruise and torpedo are not constrained by any arms agreements. Russia does not accept international norms.

With respect to China, the country is rapidly catching up. At the end of the decade, China will be a serious and major nuclear power, as well having invested in space and hypersonic technologies.

China will soon have a nuclear Triad, along with their road mobile and fixed ICBMs. This Chinese buildup is certainly not consistent with their stated policy of no-first use.

North Korea since 2017 have tested ICBMs three times; Iran tests and deploys ballistic missiles throughout the Middle East.

Tom Bussiere notes that Chinese previous force levels and its rhetoric about minimum deterrent and no first use matched; that is not true today, as China is building a nuclear Triad plus NC3, so their capacity is markedly being strengthened. China's complete lack of transparency is truly frightening. And there is not the international pressure to challenge China's lack of transparency.

Radio Discussion by Peter Huessy, Secure Freedom Radio <https://simplecast.com/s/43ef95cd>

Dr. Huessy spoke about how the IMF is pushing the US Congress to increase the drawing rights of the IMF upwards of \$3 trillion; this would mean an increase of \$170B for China, \$50B for Russia, and \$15 billion for Iran. A House proposal to amend the increase in drawing rights to restrict the use of IMF drawing rights on US banks and to restrict how the funds can be used. The bill passed the House increasing IMF funding but with no strings attached. Thus, such funds could be used for nuclear modernization.

Report from the House Intelligence Committee says we are not prepared for the threat from Communist China. Link is here.

[https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-09-30/us-intelligence-community-not-prepared-china-threat?utm\\_medium=newsletters](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-09-30/us-intelligence-community-not-prepared-china-threat?utm_medium=newsletters)

### **Breakfast Series: Nuclear Deterrence Forum: Dr. Brad Roberts**

- *Event Date: September 21, 2020*

*Speaker: Dr. Brad Roberts, director of the Center for Global Security Research at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory* <https://www.mitchellaerospacepower.org/aerospace-nation>

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

[September 21, 2020](#)

**Great discussion of the Russian and Chinese theories of victory, as part of a further discussion initiated by a September LLNL workshop on nuclear issues.**

**A new arms race with Russia will drain funds from the forces that influence and deter Beijing.**

[By Alex Moore](#)

September 22, 2020

Choosing to extend the bilateral nuclear arms reduction treaty with Russia is a low-hanging fruit that would serve U.S. interests in a multitude of ways, including buttressing Washington's position *vis-à-vis* Beijing.

Nuclear and China hawks alike have teamed up for more than a year now to push a common goal: the [inclusion](#) of China in talks to extend New START, a 2010 agreement between the U.S. and Russia to verifiably decrease one another's respective strategic nuclear arsenals. Critics of such attempts allege the Trump administration's persistent drive to include China in a trilateral arms framework is unrealistic at best and at worst a transparent attempt to make New START the [latest](#) in a [string](#) of fruitful arms control arrangements President Trump has [scrapped](#).

While earnest engagement with China on the arms-control front is a laudable longer-term goal, the Trump administration's attempts to include Beijing in a trilateral framework have been

flatly [rejected](#) and have yet to produce so much as even a vague outline of what such an arrangement would look like. While the U.S. and Russia are both estimated to [possess](#) over 6,000 nuclear warheads, China's approximate [figure](#) is less than 300. Even this vast disparity only tells part of the story. Given China's relatively minimalist nuclear posture, it would only be accountable for a small fraction of the warheads that the U.S. and Russia are under New START rules, which only count deployed warheads and heavy bombers. With these factors in mind, Beijing's reluctance to entertain Washington's attempts at creating a trilateral framework make sense.

Nonetheless, the clock is ticking. This final major bilateral arms treaty is set to expire on Feb. 5. Failure to renew the agreement would leave the world's two biggest nuclear arsenals unconstrained for the first time in a half-century.

Such a failure would bring a [multitude](#) of strategic and fiscal consequences. It would reduce what the U.S. knows about Russia's nuclear arsenal, thereby reducing America's national security. The consequent effort to shore up nuclear security would, for example, divert finite resources from Washington's conventional force posture in East Asia to balance China.

This year's defense budget of \$738 billion may be massive, but amid economic pressure thanks to the coronavirus fallout, hard choices must be made to prioritize where and how the U.S. delegates its finite resources to secure vital national security interests.

Given China's rapid economic rise, it seems prudent to consider China the predominant foreign issue worth expending resources and attention to address from the U.S. standpoint, both now and into the future. As such, extending New START and ensuring that the U.S. will not need to divert funding from priorities at home or in Asia to bankroll an arms race with Russia makes sense, particularly when one factors in the price tag of Washington's ongoing nuclear modernization efforts.

Nuclear weapons and the means to reliably deliver them do not come cheap. The U.S. nuclear triad is currently in the midst of extensive modernization and life extension, manifesting itself in next-generation complexes ranging from a new ICBM to an upgraded nuclear-capable stealth bomber. The [projected](#) cost of this modernization effort is upwards of \$1.7 trillion, a figure that even the Trump administration Nuclear Posture Review concedes is "[substantial](#)." The Congressional Budget Office [forecasts](#) that spending on modernized nuclear complexes will peak at around \$50 billion annually in the late 2020s and early 2030s, consuming upwards of 15 percent of DoD's acquisition costs and 8 percent of national defense expenditures.

All of these costs are predicated upon the assumption that Washington's nuclear force posture will be within New START-imposed limits on force size. As Frank Klotz, a former Air Force Global Strike Commander, [noted](#), New START is "baked" into modernization efforts, which are more or less a one-for-one replacement program for existing nuclear systems. Allison Bawden, GAO's Director for Nuclear Security, [found](#) that NNSA hasn't considered the implications of

New START expiration on its modernization plans given DoD's assumption of its warhead and delivery system limits bracketing the U.S. arsenal. Even with these assumptions, GAO says the rising modernization costs could come at the expense of other weapons procurement initiatives with DOE seeking \$15 billion more than expected in 2021 through 2025 in its 2021 budget [estimate](#).

Any potential diversion of funding from conventional complexes to fund a nuclear arms race would disproportionately hurt what is already an [overburdened](#) U.S. posture in the Pacific. Speaking bluntly, Gen. Dave Goldfein, previously Air Force Chief of Staff, [said](#) tradeoffs will be necessary to fund nuclear modernization while simultaneously bolstering Washington's conventional edge, and even this presupposes New START treaty limits.

These offset impacts have already been felt by the Navy, a vitally important service branch for projecting power to deter China, which was forced to not only [cancel](#) plans to add 10 years to the life of the *Arleigh Burke*-class destroyer but also cut five of the planned ships to prioritize funding for the modernized nuclear missile submarine. Officials were also forced to make cuts to planned *Virginia*-class attack submarine and FFG(X) guided missile frigate procurement plans. With the Navy's widely publicized plans for a 355-ship armada already being [squeezed](#) by SSBN modernization costs, it is easy to see how New START's demise could further hurt the Navy's ability to project conventional power in East Asia.

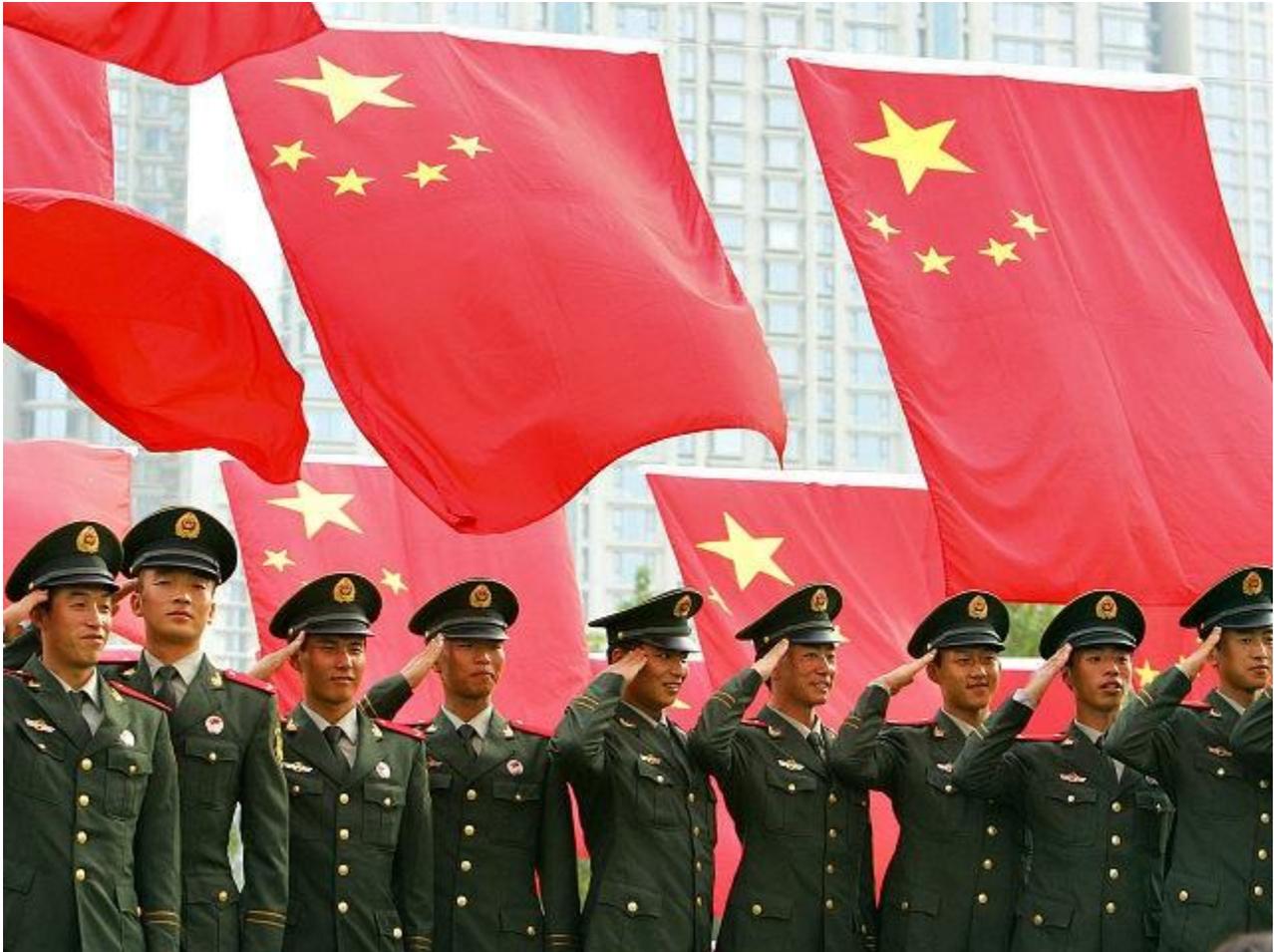
As U.S. power relative to China continues to shrink, it will only become more imperative for policymakers to make sharp decisions and prioritize resources for the most important task at hand: preventing China from becoming a Eurasian hegemon. While still a great power, Russia is a country in decline and is hardly the geopolitical menace the Soviet Union once was. Engaging in an arms race with Russia—a country with which we already have a strategic relationship characterized by mutually assured destruction—would be an imprudent use of finite resources better spent elsewhere. China is the most important strategic challenger to the United States—the next president would be smart to extend New START to bolster America's ability to compete.

*Alex Moore holds a master's degree in International Conflict and Security from the Brussels School of International Studies. [What the author doesn't understand is while the New START treaty gives Russia a very large upload capability, the US can increase its fast-flying missile warheads by roughly 3100 warheads, although the time to upload might take 3-4 years depending on how fast the MM III could be uploaded or a future GBSD. This cost would be in the millions of dollars.]*

# House Republican China Task Force Unveils Detailed Plan on How to Counter China

<https://www.breitbart.com/politics/2020/09/30/house-republican-china-task-force-plan-counter-china/>

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[Kristina Wong](#)

30 Sep 2020 145

4:46

The House Republican China Task Force on Wednesday unveiled a detailed plan on how to counter the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) efforts to replace the United States as the world's superpower. House Republicans launched the task force in May to develop new solutions to address the CCP's malign behavior. The House Republican China Task Force on Wednesday unveiled a detailed plan on how to counter the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) efforts to replace the United States as the world's superpower.

House Republicans launched the task force in May to develop new solutions to address the CCP's malign behavior. House Democrats had originally agreed to be part of the task force but backed out days before the launch, with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) calling the focus on China a "distraction." Instead, Democrats have tried to focus blame for the coronavirus's impact on President Donald Trump rather than on China.

However, Republicans forged ahead with the challenge of figuring out how to reorient the U.S.'s policy towards China, meeting with 125 policy experts, business leaders, other members of Congress, and current and former administration officials from both sides of the aisle.

Their resulting report includes more than 400 specific recommendations that can be done within a year to 18 months. Of the recommendations, 178 are legislative recommendations and 62 percent of those are bipartisan, and one-third of those have already passed either the House or the Senate.

"Americans increasingly recognize the danger posed by our dependence on Communist China," House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy said Wednesday at a press conference.

He slammed Democrats' unwillingness to participate: "This is not about partisanship. One of my greatest pride in the China Task Force [is that] more than 60 percent of all the ideas in here are bipartisan."

House Minority Whip Steve Scalise (R-LA) criticized China for allowing the coronavirus to spread from within its borders. "It's critical that we hold China accountable." He also slammed Pelosi for not participating in the task force: "Why won't Speaker Pelosi hold China accountable?"

[China Task Force Executive Summary](#) by [Kristina Wong](#) on Scribd

The task force brought together 11 House committees, and its recommendations on countering China would encompass all tools in the U.S. government's apparatus — not just military.

The recommendations include securing the supply chain — prioritizing national security and critical medical supplies, including targeted tax incentives to accelerate research and development for critical technology like semiconductors; considering a requirement to divest from companies with ties to the Chinese military-industrial complex; and working towards a bilateral free trade agreement with Taiwan.

The recommendations also include increasing funding for STEM education to create a more capable, skilled American workforce; investing in the U.S. military and activities needed to maintain its superiority over the CCP's military; evaluating whether the CCP's crimes against humanity in Xinjiang amount to genocide; and providing a safe harbor for Hong Kong refugees.

"COVID has woken up America to our supply chain problem. Not just in medical but from critical minerals and on," McCarthy said. "Secondly, we need to innovate the DOD. You think of hypersonics, AI, and others. We cannot sit back and think the rise of China will not affect us."

House Foreign Affairs Committee Ranking Member Michael McCaul (R-TX) added: “For years and years we tried to bring the People’s Republic of China into the family of nations as a friend, as an ally. But as [former Secretary of State James] Baker recently told me; it just did not work.”

“For decades, the United States and its allies have been asleep at the wheel, until COVID-19,” McCaul added. “COVID created an awakening experience for the American people. And the sleeping giant has finally awoken.”

A task force aide called the plan “definitely one of the first statements of its kind,” in that it views the CCP as a national security threat due to its Marxist ideology.

The aide said it was also rare in that so many different committees worked together on one topic versus being protective of their own jurisdiction.

“A new consensus is emerging,” the aide said. “We’ve seen over the past in recent months a new attitude toward China, waking up to the threat of the CCP.”

“We are taking on this threat from all angles ... putting our best policy foot forward to change course,” the aide said.

### Missile Defense Report from CSIS

Given much of what develops in the missile defense business also are related to our nuclear enterprise, I am including the top-notch CSIS Missile Defense Project report for this month. I urge you to read the essay by Brian Green, our ICON member for many years as an official with the Aerojet company.

**MISSILE DEFENSE PROJECT**  
missilethreat.csis.org

**MISSILETHREAT**

**CSIS** | CENTER FOR STRATEGIC & INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

August-September 2020 | Missile Defense Project Newsletter

New This Month:

- Publication: America Should Integrate a Strike Capability with Its Missile Defense Systems ([C4ISRNet](#))
- *Missile Threat* Newswire
- New and Noteworthy on *Missile Threat*
- Selected Speaking Engagements
- Selected Media Citations

## Publication

### America Should Integrate a Strike Capability with Its Missile Defense Systems



"Populated by more numerous, diverse, maneuverable, accurate and sophisticated missile threats, the modern battlefield is becoming faster and more lethal. And adversaries such as China, Russia, North Korea, and Iran are developing more innovative ways to employ them. As a result, the United States can no longer take for granted the ability to deploy superior military forces whenever and wherever needed. As defense budget constraints begin to bite, the challenge is to find innovative approaches that will effectively defeat these threats without breaking the bank."

Read the full article by Brian Green at [C4ISRNet](#).

## *Missile Threat Newswire*

- [US State Department Approves PAC-3 Sale to the Netherlands](#)
- [US Intercepts Low-Altitude Cruise Missile in Test](#)
- [India Tests Prithvi-II Ballistic Missile](#)
- [Romania Acquires Patriot Missiles](#)
- [Yemen Conflict Update: June 16-September 16](#)
- [Germany To Buy More Antiship Missiles](#)
- [Air Force Intercepts Missile with Hypervelocity Projectile](#)
- [US Air Force Test Fires Minuteman III ICBM](#)
- [China Launches Antiship Ballistic Missiles in Test](#)
- [Patriot Missile Misfires in Test](#)
- [US Army Completes Second IBCS Limited User Test](#)
- [Iran Reveals New Ballistic, Cruise Missiles](#)
- [Army Downs Cruise Missiles in IBCS Test](#)
- [Hungary Purchases AMRAAM, NASAMS](#)
- [Israel, US Test-Fire Arrow 2 Interceptor](#)
- [China Tests Intermediate-Range Ballistic Missiles](#)
- [US Air Force Test Fires Minuteman III ICBM](#)
- [Iran Tests New Missiles in Combat Drills](#)

### New and Noteworthy on *Missile Threat*



On [August 26](#), [China](#) test fired four ballistic missiles, which landed at a site near Hainan and the Paracel Islands in the South China Sea. Missiles tested included the [DF-21D](#) and [DF-26B](#) antiship-capable ballistic missiles.



On [August 4](#) and [September 2](#), the U.S. Air Force test launched unarmed Minuteman III ICBMs from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California. The missiles traveled approximately 6,760 km to their target in the Kwajalein Atoll.

Between [June 16 to September 16](#), Saudi Arabia reported 17 Houthi missile attacks on its territory and within Yemen. [CSIS data](#) now includes 177 publicly reported intercepts.



On [September 16](#), Romania received its first battery of [Patriot](#) surface-to-air-missiles from the United States. Romania is expected to receive an additional three batteries in the coming year and its final three batteries in 2022.

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### Selected Speaking Engagements

- Tom Karako, “State of the Army,” Defense One Conference (online), September 8, 2020.
  - Ian Williams, “Iranian Drone Capabilities,” Al Arabiya (TV), September 3, 2020.
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- Tom Karako, “The Missile Defense Enterprise at an Inflection Point,” Space and Missile Defense Symposium (online), August 4, 2020.

### Selected Media Citations

[“US Army to exploit crucial weakness in Russian, Chinese air defences,”](#) *Flight Global*, September 24, 2020.

*To shield it from low-altitude weapons, the Russian military typically surrounds the S-400 with short-range air defence systems, such as the Pantsir-S1 gun and missile battery. “They always co-locate them with their longer-range air defences, in order to protect them from these kinds of threats,” Williams says.*

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[“SpaceX Eyes Mars But Could Be God Of War As Key Pentagon Enabler,”](#) *Investor’s Business Daily*, September 11, 2020.

*Satellites in low-Earth orbit like Starlink are closer to Earth's surface than current early-warning satellites and can track ballistic and hypersonic missiles "from birth until death," says CSIS analyst Karako. Existing satellites can't follow missiles that far. And early warning for a hypersonic missile requires a clear idea of where it's headed and precise tracking information, he adds. "There is a huge demand signal for a lot more space capabilities from this growing cottage industry," he said.*

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[“Former Commander of Army Europe Criticizes Plan to Withdraw 1,200 Troops,”](#) *Military.com*, September 9, 2020.

*Redistributing forces is one way to make forces more difficult targets for adversaries such as Russia, Karako said, calling the forces in Germany a "big, fat juicy target...There is a strategic argument for doing things differently to adapt to a new*

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environment," he said. "Of course, the devil is in the details. We have to wait and see, but I think we ought to be open to some different force structure in Europe."

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[“US Air Force Chief of Staff ‘I can't guarantee an advantage anymore,’”](#) VOA Korea, September 5, 2020.

*Tom Karako: "It's no longer enough to rely upon dedicated sensors. The integration and timely usage of all manner of sensors has become increasingly important to contend with air and missile threats. The F-35's sensor suite has some untapped potential for providing missile warning, and even helping to prosecute a missile defense intercept."*

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[“US security experts ‘I will only watch the US even if North Korea gives out a new weapon in October,’”](#) NewDaily, September 4, 2020. [Korean language]

*Ian Williams, deputy director of the Missile Defense Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, also predicted that "North Korea will be able to release a new weapon in the next month's fever ceremony." He continued, "but it's a separate matter whether the weapon is real."*

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[“North Korea cannot secure solid fuel technology for ICBM – Problems such as lack of infrastructure and manpower,’”](#) VOA Korea, September 4, 2020. [Korean language]

*Ian Williams: “I would say that the past year or two was a real renaissance in the use of solid fuels for North Korean missiles. I think almost all of North Korea's missile tests for the past few years have been newer models with solid fuel. That being said they also have a fairly short range, so there is still a bit of a gap what they have expected for the solid fuel ICBM. I do believe that their solid fuel ICBM is their ultimate goal for their nuclear missile program.”*

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[“Norquist clips MDA's wings, giving services, CAPE, OSD, COCOMs new leverage in missile defense,”](#) Inside Defense, September 1, 2020.

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*“Even as the rest of the department delegates decision-making for big ACAT programs down to the services while whispering 'speed of relevance,' this directive could slow things down by pulling decisions up,” Karako said.*

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[“Will Hawaii’s \\$1.9 Billion Missile Radar System Get Built?”](#) *Honolulu Civil Beat*, August 31, 2020

*“We don’t get to choose the threats we face,” said Tom Karako, director of the Missile Defense Project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. “All those threats are not distant — they’re real and very possible.”*

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[“The price of peace: Why Japan scrapped a \\$4.2bn US missile system,”](#) *Nikkei Asian Review*, August 5, 2020.

*"Today, what is needed is not just protection against ballistic missiles but Integrated Air and Missile Defense, which protects from ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, and other aerial threats," Karako said. "So, from a capability standpoint I think Japan had very good reasons to rethink its plans."*

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[“US preps midrange missile to pierce China's 'anti-access' shield,”](#) *Nikkei Asian Review*, August 1, 2020.

*"The so-called A2/AD by China and Russia is designed to complicate the U.S. projection of power and the combined operations of the U.S. and its closest allies like Japan," said Tom Karako, a senior fellow at CSIS. "It is targeted to drive a wedge between the U.S. and its allies," he said.*

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**Omaha Reporter Essay on ICBMS as a Nuclear Sponge**

## **New generation of ICBMs means Nebraska will continue to be 'nuclear sponge,' warn nuke skeptics**

- [https://omaha.com/news/state-and-regional/new-generation-of-icbms-means-nebraska-will-continue-to-be-nuclear-sponge-warn-nuke-skeptics/article\\_2f8f686b-05a5-5411-86f3-cad7de1a44e0.html?utm\\_source=Sailthru&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=EBB%2009.28.20&utm\\_term=Editorial%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief#tracking-source=home-the-latest](https://omaha.com/news/state-and-regional/new-generation-of-icbms-means-nebraska-will-continue-to-be-nuclear-sponge-warn-nuke-skeptics/article_2f8f686b-05a5-5411-86f3-cad7de1a44e0.html?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBB%2009.28.20&utm_term=Editorial%20-%20Early%20Bird%20Brief#tracking-source=home-the-latest)
- [Steve Liewer](#) Sep 27, 2020
- 
- In the unhappy event that the world's nuclear powers cut loose with their atomic weapons, Nebraska would become an especially hellish place. That's because the Cornhusker State is one of a handful in the West and Midwest whose role in Armageddon is to soak up an unfathomable first strike of Russian bombs. Under the weird logic of mutually assured destruction, the 450 Minuteman III missile silos containing 400 nuclear-tipped intercontinental ballistic missiles in Montana, North Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado and western Nebraska are meant to be sitting ducks for any first strike by Russia, or any other potential adversary.

“The specific mission of the ICBMs is to be a nuclear sponge,” said Tom Z. Collina, director of policy for the Ploughshares Fund, a group dedicated to eliminating nuclear weapons. “They’re sitting in their silos. Their only purpose is to be a target.” Today, the nation is once again at a nuclear crossroads. Tensions between the U.S. and Russia, its biggest nuclear adversary, have simmered to a boil since 2014, when Russia annexed Crimea from Ukraine (a U.S. ally) and used proxies to occupy the eastern part of its territory. Russia has begun modernizing its nuclear arsenal, and China is building one, leaving the U.S. in a rush to catch up because almost every plane, submarine, missile, and bomb is 30 to 50 years old.

In addition, the New START arms control agreement, signed by the U.S. and Russia in 2010, expires in February. Negotiations to extend the agreement started late and have not gone far, leading to fears of a renewed nuclear arms race. “The world has never been as dangerous,” said former Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, who also represented Nebraska as a U.S. senator.

The modernization of the nuclear arsenal includes construction of the new Columbia-class ballistic missile submarines (replacing the Ohio-class boats), B-21 strategic bombers (replacing the B-1, B-2 and some B-52s), and the new “ground-based strategic deterrent (GBSD),” an ICBM to replace the Minuteman III. Cost estimates exceed \$300 billion. In Congress, the

modernization has wide support in both political parties. Just this month, the Pentagon awarded defense contractor Northrop Grumman \$13.3 billion to start work on the GBSB, a down payment on a \$100 billion project.

Nebraska has an outsized stake in America's nuclear enterprise. U.S. Strategic Command, which commands the arsenal, is at Offutt Air Force Base, on the east side of the state, and 82 Minuteman III silos are in the state's far western counties. The silos are underground and heavily reinforced — sturdy, but not invulnerable to a nuclear strike. They're spaced far enough apart that it would take an enormous number of bombs to wipe them out.

"I've always wondered why the Midwest states don't raise more of a ruckus," Collina said. "You're the states that have a target on your back." He and others have raised the possibility of scrapping the ICBM leg of the nuclear triad and doing away with the "nuclear sponge."

Of course, the basic idea of nuclear deterrence is that the missiles' presence means that they will never be used. "ICBMs would only be used in world-ending situations," said Matt Korda, a researcher with the Federation of American Scientists' Nuclear Information Project. "If they don't have any purpose in post-Cold War nuclear strategy, then what is the cost of keeping them?" The idea is that an enemy would have to expend a huge portion of its own nuclear arsenal right off the bat to destroy all those missiles, said Christopher Yeaw, research director for nuclear programs at the University of Nebraska's National Strategic Research Institute.

America's nuclear defenses should be so formidable that attacking them would be unthinkable. "Several hundred to 1,000 nuclear strikes to the heartland of America is something that an adversary really could not contemplate," said Yeaw, who advises StratCom leaders on nuclear policy. Since the 1960s, Russia and the U.S. have relied on a three-legged nuclear triad of land-based ICBMs, gravity bombs dropped from bombers and nuclear-tipped missiles that can be launched from submarines at sea.

The ICBMs are valued because they are instantly ready and are a massive target for an enemy to overcome. The air leg is highly flexible because the planes can fly anywhere but can also be called back. And the sea leg is both mobile and well-hidden, the sub-based missiles impossible for a foe to detect and take out in a first strike. "The whole concept of the nuclear triad was

constructed to give us offensive capabilities with options — to present to our enemy a more confusing pattern as to where we could strike,” Hagel said.

Each leg, proponents say, reinforces and bolsters the two others.

“I can’t imagine how we could respond without all three legs,” then-StratCom commander Gen. John Hyten, now vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told *The World-Herald* in 2018.

“They have to strike fear into the hearts of our potential adversaries.” Collina and others say the ICBMs have outlived their usefulness. The nuclear sponge, they say, is too dangerous and expensive to maintain. The air- and sea-based legs of the triad offer more than enough firepower to destroy any enemy that would dare to attack the U.S.

“If you remove all the ICBMs, we would be safer than we are today,” Collina said. He and Korda fear an accidental nuclear war because of the speed with which a president must launch the missiles if sensors detect an incoming strike.

“The president would have only a couple of minutes to decide before they are destroyed,” Korda said. “The risk of miscalculation is very high.” “The point of deterrence is if you attack us, we will devastate your country,” Collina said. “That invites the nightmare: that we might start a nuclear war by mistake.” There were several close calls during the Cold War. But Yeaw said StratCom’s network of sensors — in the air, on land, at sea, even in outer space — is so vast and so much better now that an incoming attack would be unmistakable.

“These kinds of issues, they make great movies,” Yeaw said. “But there’s a whole chain of things that have to happen. There’s no hair trigger. In reality, these guns are locked in their holsters.” He believes that doing away with the ICBMs and the nuclear sponge would be more dangerous. A potential adversary might be tempted into a preemptive strike because it could deal a crippling blow by taking out three air bases and two submarine bases.

“The calculus has now shifted grossly in favor of the adversary,” Yeaw said. Hagel said the military should often reexamine its nuclear doctrine and make sure that it doesn’t harden into dogma. But he, too, believes that the ICBMs are worth keeping, at least for now. Most importantly, nuclear war must remain unthinkable. “If there’s a nuclear exchange, there’s not

going to be a winner,” he said. “More than Nebraska and Wyoming and North Dakota are going to suffer.”

Yeaw would like to retire the “nuclear sponge” metaphor because the whole idea of the triad is to prevent that awful day from ever happening. “Rather than thinking of it as a sponge, think of it as a sword or a shield,” he said, adding that Nebraskans should be proud of helping to prevent Armageddon for 75 years.

“It is a great opportunity to play that role for America,” he said. “To hold that shield.”

Exchange of notes with author from Peter Huessy is posted here:

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From: Steve Liewer <[sliewer@owh.com](mailto:sliewer@owh.com)>  
Sent: Monday, September 28, 2020 1:00 PM  
To: Peter Huessy <[PHuessy@afa.org](mailto:PHuessy@afa.org)>  
Subject: Re: ICBMS as a sponge

Hi Peter,

Thanks very much, it is great to get feedback from someone who has been working in this field for a long while! You make some excellent points -- deterrence theory is a fascinating and complex field. Sec. Hagel and Dr. Yeaw I think did make some counterpoints to the disarmament experts who were quoted in the story, and Dr. Yeaw did get the final word in the story. My overarching point was to remind Nebraskans who may have forgotten about the missiles in their backyard, that they have a large stake in the nuclear enterprise.

I expect to be writing about nuclear issues in the future -- USSTRATCOM is a big part of my military beat here. I hope that I might have permission to contact you for upcoming stories. Thanks again for getting in touch!

Steve Liewer  
Military Reporter  
Omaha World-Herald  
402-444-1186 - Office  
402-444-1231 - Fax  
Email: [Steve.Liewer@owh.com](mailto:Steve.Liewer@owh.com)  
1314 Douglas St.- Suite 700  
Omaha, NE 68102  
Twitter: @SteveLiewer

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From: Peter Huessy <[PHuessy@afa.org](mailto:PHuessy@afa.org)>

Sent: Monday, September 28, 2020 10:40 AM  
To: Steve Liewer  
Subject: ICBMS as a sponge

Dear Sir:

I have been working as a nuclear professional for 40+ years particularly in the ICBM business. Your recent news report on the ICBM leg of our Triad being a sponge misses an important series of points that the disarmament lobby (some of whom you quoted) doesn't take into account which I would like to share with you.

1. In any scenario other than an all-out Russian attack on the US mainland, the ICBMs survive largely intact to respond. Former Def Sec Perry and others now claim such an all-out Russian attack is the least likely of any nuclear event, recently saying the chances of such a Russian attack are "near zero."
2. There is no requirement that the US President quickly launch our ICBMs if the US mainland and CONUS is attacked. The ICBMS would not be launched under current policy and strategy until there are confirmed detonations of enemy nuclear weapons on US territory-here or on one of our bases overseas for example.
3. Why would Russia attack 495 ICBM assets but not 3 bomber bases and 2 submarine bases where there are over 1200 'sitting duck' warheads---a far more lucrative prize than just taking out 400 ICBM warheads.
4. Even worse from the point of view of strategic stability, putting all 1490 allowed missile warheads (1550 minus 60 bombers) on submarines would mean each of our 16 missiles on 12 Columbia class submarines would have to carry 7.8 warheads each-though the maximum capable loading is 8 warheads. This means we would be maxed out re our total force loadings. Without additional submarines or missiles available, the US would not have any hedge capability to respond to a Russian breakout---although the Russians can easily reach 4500-5000 deployed strategic nuclear warheads with the existing platforms they have under New START...as a study we are doing has revealed. To build new submarines capable of deploying on alert 400 warheads to replace Minuteman or GBSB would require building and equipping another 12 submarines and 192 missiles at a cost exceeding \$200 billion.

I hope these points might be useful should you further write about the Nebraska nuclear deterrent mission.

All the best, Peter Huessy  
Director of Strategic Deterrent Studies, AIR FORCE Association.

Sent from

Mail<<https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fgo.microsoft.com%2Fwlink%2F%3FLinkId%3D550986&data=02%7C01%7CPHuessy%40afa.org%7C06e811d8e3d94430107a08d863cfe14e%7Cf859a9b6f0be470bab687d418ac3866c%7C0%7C0%7C637369091802244598&sdta=26haitGuH2EwT7WBWQPZD%2FUlbShJmo7Htz9ZN1tTiOQ%3D&reserved=0>> for Windows 10

## **Trump administration orders assessment on bolstering nuclear warheads as talks with Russia stall**

By Daniel Lippman, Bryan Bender, Lara Seligman

09/28/2020

The Trump administration has asked the military to assess how quickly it could pull nuclear weapons out of storage and load them onto bombers and submarines if an arms control treaty with Russia is allowed to expire in February, according to three people familiar with the discussions.

The request to U.S. Strategic Command in Nebraska is part of a strategy to pressure Moscow into renegotiating the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty before the U.S. presidential election, the people said.

In making the request, the Trump administration wants to underscore that it is serious about letting the treaty lapse if Russia fails to meet U.S. demands. The negotiating team is leery that Russia is dragging out the talks in the hope that Joe Biden — who has pledged to extend New START under what Moscow believes will be more favorable terms than what this White House is offering — wins the election.

“It’s a clear signal that the costs for not negotiating before the election are going to go up,” said one of the people, who requested anonymity to relay sensitive discussions. The Trump administration is “trying to create an incentive, and it’s a real incentive, for the Russians to sit down and actually negotiate.”

The request for the assessment came in the last two weeks from a group of officials at the National Security Council and State, Defense and Energy departments that’s supporting Ambassador Marshall Billingslea in negotiations with Moscow to try to replace New START before it runs out in February.

The assessment will determine how long it would take to load nuclear weapons now in reserve onto long-range bombers, ballistic missile submarines and land-based silos to beef up the U.S. nuclear force in the event Russia increases its arsenal.

It comes as Billingslea has publicly raised the possibility of putting more weapons on bombers and submarines if New START lapses and has sharpened his rhetoric in recent days to try to secure more concessions from the Russians.

“It would certainly be a question that you would want to ask STRATCOM,” said retired Air Force Lt. Gen. Frank Klotz, who oversaw nuclear forces before serving as head of the DOE’s National Nuclear Security Administration. “You would want to fully understand all the possible implications of your negotiating approach, both if it should succeed or, alternatively, if it should fail.”

But former senior arms control and military officials also consider the move a risky gambit. It could send a message that the Trump administration, which has already pulled out of two other nuclear-related treaties with Russia, is no longer interested in any limits on the world's largest arsenals. And it could goad the Russians into taking similar steps.

"I call that megaphone diplomacy," said Rose Gottemoeller, who served as deputy secretary general of NATO until last year and negotiated New START when she was at the State Department. "Do we want to end up in a less stable place? Because we would be nuclear arms racing."

"It's very stupid," added a former GOP arms control official who declined to be identified because he still advises the government. "It makes absolutely no sense to threaten to upload. It becomes a valid leveraging point only if the other side can't do it. The Russians can do it, too."

"But more importantly," this person added, "the systems we have deployed today are the ones we believe are necessary to provide an adequate deterrent. There is no obvious reason and every reason not to in the absence of a change in the threat. It's not going to scare the Russians. The likelihood of success with the Russians is about nil."

A State Department spokesperson declined to comment on Billingslea's behalf.

Capt. Bill Clinton, a spokesperson for Strategic Command, declined to address the military's role in the deliberations. "We don't talk about future operations, and really can't speculate on arms control talks (as that is not [our] responsibility)," he wrote in an email.

An NSC spokesperson declined to comment.

New START, signed in 2010, mandated both sides draw down to [1,550 deployed strategic weapons](#) and includes provisions to verify compliance, including reciprocal on-site inspections of nuclear bases.

The pact is set to expire on Feb. 5 unless both sides agree to an extension for up to five years.

[Russia in December offered to extend the treaty](#) without preconditions. The position of the Trump administration, which withdrew from both the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces and the Open Skies treaties, has been that New START is too narrow and a replacement is needed that covers more classes of weapons, such as "tactical" or battlefield nuclear weapons.

At the outset of negotiations in June, the U.S. also insisted that China be party to any new agreement but dropped that demand after Beijing balked.

The U.S. negotiating team has insisted on a number of Russian concessions: a commitment to follow-on talks about a new arms deal that includes all U.S. and Russian nuclear weapons; a pledge to eventually bring in China, which is projected to double its relatively small nuclear arsenal in the next decade; and strong compliance measures.

Billingslea's current public negotiating position is that the U.S. and Russia must agree on at least the outlines of a new framework that both Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin can sign in order for Washington to consider extending New START.

Asked in an interview published last week by a Russian newspaper if the Trump administration would scrap the treaty if the two sides can't agree on such a "presidential agreement," Billingslea responded, "absolutely."

"In such a situation, we will not extend the treaty," he told Kommersant, according to an English translation of the interview. "Given all the deficiencies of New START, we consider it disadvantageous to the United States. It imposes constraints on the United States that it does not impose on Russia."

In the same interview, Billingslea also indicated that the United States would take steps to increase the number of its deployed nuclear warheads if the pact is not extended.

"If that doesn't happen, we will simply reconvert our weapons as soon as the treaty expires in February," he told the newspaper.

Billingslea also said that the longer the Russians delay, the less attractive it would be for Moscow.

"I suspect that after President Trump wins reelection, if Russia has not taken up our offer, that the price of admission, as we would say in the U.S., goes up," he said.

[Billingslea has previously also threatened](#) that the U.S. could spend Russia, as well as China, "into oblivion" in a [nuclear arms race](#).

Already, the U.S. and Russia have a much larger number of weapons in storage that could be placed on alert if they decided to take that course.

According to the [Federation of American Scientists' Nuclear Security Project](#), which tracks global inventories of atomic arms, the U.S. has 3,800 warheads stockpiled, while Russia has 4,310.

Some in reserve could be made ready to deploy more quickly than others, according to [Hans Kristensen](#), director of FAS' Nuclear Security Project.

Of the three legs of the nuclear triad — bombers, submarines, and missile silos — the quickest would be the bombers.

"Those weapons are just a few hundred yards from the aircraft," Kristensen said. "They could be loaded in days. Others would have to be transported to the bases. Maybe a week or so."

Next would be the fleet of Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines, beginning with those already in port and the rest when they return from deployment.

Finally, there are the intercontinental ballistic missiles deployed in underground silos at bases in North Dakota, Wyoming, and Montana.

“The slowest leg would be the ICBMs,” Kristensen said. “They only have so much capacity to do that. That’s a very slow process. That would take a long time for 400 silos. Many months.”

Both the ICBMs and the subs currently carry only one nuclear warhead on each missile, but they are designed to carry more.

If the U.S. decides to upload all of its reserve force, “it would more than double the deployed force,” Kristensen added. “The question of course is why.”

To the Trump administration, the STRATCOM assessment is necessary to be prepared for the treaty to expire, but also to strengthen its hand with the Russians.

“I think there’s an element of, ‘the Russians might not make a deal, we need to be ready,’” said a former White House official who is one of the three people familiar with negotiations. “The administration is planning on what to do the day after. They want to be ready but being ready doesn’t actually mean that they will.”

“We don’t just want to rubber stamp New START, so we need to start doing some prudent planning to see what other options there are,” the first person familiar with the discussions added. “They’re getting ready with options to raise the price.”

But at what cost, asked a number of veterans of nuclear negotiations who said they were alarmed at the administration’s strategy.

Gottemoeller, who is now a research fellow at the conservative Hoover Institution at Stanford University, expressed concern the approach could merely increase the chances of a new arms race if New START expires.

“We can upload,” she said, referring to the U.S. reserve nuclear stockpile. “But the Russians can upload, too. I would argue they could get a jump on us.”

Klotz, who also served as defense attaché in Moscow during previous arms control negotiations and [is now an analyst](#) at the government-funded Rand Corporation, agreed.

“It’s my personal view that the United States might initially be at a disadvantage,” he said. “The Russian nuclear modernization program is already well underway, while the U.S. program is still in its very early stages. Moreover, the systems the Russians have developed generally have the ability to carry more warheads than analogous U.S. systems.”

The Trump administration, he added, “rather glibly says, ‘we’ll spend you into oblivion’ in any potential nuclear arms race. But wouldn’t it be far better to avoid getting into that situation in the first place, especially when there are so many other capabilities our military needs?”

Kristensen, of the Federation of American Scientists, said the prospect of setting off a new competition to increase the two sides' arsenals "only underscores the need to keep New START to keep those numbers in check."

"Without it you don't really know where you are going."

## WHAT IS THE US/RUSSIA BREAKOUT OR HEDGE CAPABILITY?

### Comment on New STAR Extension and Matching Possible Russian Breakout:

The above essay by Politico exclusively interviews those analysts favoring the extension of New Start and none with an alternative viewpoint. However, General Klotz acknowledges the disadvantage the US finds itself facing re being able to upload or surge to higher numbers of nuclear weapons.

The Ohio class submarines are assumed to be able to upload to 8 warheads per 240 SLBMs, while bombers could have a wide range of additional bombs or cruise missiles. Jim Howe's estimate is the US could upload to around 3100 fast flying ballistic missile warheads—with 1200 on 400 Minuteman and some 1920 on 240 SLBM/D-5 missiles. However, Columbia class submarines have only 16 missiles and have an 8-warhead capacity as well, implying 1536 total warheads on the entire SLBM fleet along with an assumed maximum ICBM force of 1200 warheads under a future GBSD. That is a near doubling of the current NEW START limits of 1490 missile warheads (an implied number assuming we know the loadings of the 640 missile SNDVs allowed by the treaty).

As General Hyten and General Ray both emphasized during their remarks October 1, the Russians fully went forward after signing off on New START—the chart here shows the IOCs for all Soviet and Russian strategic nuclear systems. And Russia from 2010 through 2027 will have deployed 31 NEW types of ICBMs, cruise missiles, SLBMs, submarines and bomber. In contrast, the US will have deployed a Minuteman III and a D-5 SLEP during that same period.



Russia  
Timeline\_Proof3\_092

Here is a Draft Memo as companion to the graphic of USSR/Russian nuclear deployments 1955-2035.

When the Soviet Union fell in 1991, there was great hope within the Western democracies that the economic and human costs of the Cold War would be a thing of the past, including high defense budgets required to deter Soviet aggression. The Bush administration's signing of two major strategic nuclear arms control agreements—START I in 1991 and START II in 1993—promised Russia and US strategic nuclear warheads were destined to fall 75% from near 12,000 to 3,500.

Even more hopeful was Russian leader Yeltsin proposing at the United Nations a global missile defense regime, coupled with nuclear weapons reductions, designed to stop accidental, rogue, or pre-emptive missile strikes. The Bush administration sought out the Russians to discuss this joint effort, understanding, or at least recognizing, future nuclear and missile threats might be serious enough to still require the US and Russia to “keep their powder dry.”

One popular historian, Francis Fukuyama, went much further, concluding “it was the end of history” and that liberal democracy no longer had competition from terrorism or communism and their totalitarian ideologies. And with the election of William Clinton to the Presidency in 1993, apparently a lot of people decided “it was the economy stupid.” Under Clinton, the peace dividend was cashed in, defense budgets across the West slid downward, and Les Aspin-- the new American Secretary of Defense—“took the [missile defense] stars out of Star Wars” to cheers from the nuclear disarmament community.

Later in the decade, the National Academy of Sciences and the new Secretary of Defense William Perry declared Cold War nuclear threats from China and Russia were no longer so serious. Top US generals concluded nuclear weapons were simply not credible military tools, and consequently the US delayed any thought of refurbishing an aging nuclear deterrent. Indeed, it was assumed it was the end of history.

But things were not as rosy as many US national leaders assumed.

Storm clouds were gathering in Russia, China, the Korean peninsula, and the Middle East. Terrorist attacks at Khobar Towers, the World Trade Center '93, our embassies in Africa and in Yemen against the USS Cole, were harbingers of more terrorism to come, including 9-11.

In 1999, the Russian Duma unexpectedly killed the START II treaty again resurrecting the old Soviet ploy of trying to include in the arms deal an end to US missile defense work. Unfortunately, the US Senate said “no deal”, so not only did the START II warhead reductions not occur, the treaty provision to ban all multiple warheads on land-based missiles was deep sixed, even though there has been hope the treaty would go into force after having secured near unanimous support in the US Senate.

On the Korean peninsula, North Korea in 1998 surprisingly launched an ICBM test rocket, revealing an emerging capability to range the continental United States with a ballistic missile. A most troubling development given the DPRK previously discovered and not fettered nuclear weapons program.

As for China, the communist leaders were beginning a long-term major modernization of their conventional and nuclear forces, including building military fortresses on strategic southwest Pacific islands, reminiscent of Imperial Japan.

Most worrisome was the Russia push to modernize its nuclear forces.

During the Cold War, the Soviets deployed on average 1.8 new strategic nuclear bombers, submarines, or ballistic missiles every year.

In the immediate post-Soviet era, while Russian nuclear modernization did slow significantly, it was in large part due to Russia being nearly bankrupt. The post-Cold War slowdown was matched by the last four Cold War years when modernizations dropped to roughly one a year.

But with the accession of Vladimir Putin to the presidency in Russia, that changed dramatically. Putin announced in 2000 that nuclear weapons were indeed a diplomatic and military tool to be used, particularly early in a crisis or conflict.

Despite agreeing to further nuclear reductions in the 2002 Moscow treaty and acquiescing to the Bush administration push in 2003 to end the ABM treaty, Putin was planning a very extensive nuclear modernization effort.

The Moscow or SORT treaty bought Russia time to get back on its nuclear feet.

In 2004 Putin outlined a massive modernization of Russia's nuclear arsenal.

In 2011, Putin announced the nuclear modernization efforts would be completed by 2020.

In 2019 Putin announced the modernization campaign would reach just short of that goal --90% of its target by 2020. In 2020, Russia's defense minister said the target was 87% achieved, confirming Putin's earlier revelation.

While Russian nuclear weapons deployments were accelerating, the US was by contrast, amid a prolonged "nuclear nap" says our Commander of US Strategic Command, Admiral Charles Richard.

In a new study we are conducting, we preliminarily determined the Admiral is right. In the post-Soviet era, projected to 2027, the Russians will deploy 27 new nuclear armed strategic nuclear bombers, land based and sea-based missiles, cruise missiles, and submarines, reaching the exact pace of the 1972-1987 Cold War.

Our study also has examined Cold War nuclear arms control deals—the SALT I and INF treaties of 1972 and 1987 respectively—and concluded they had no appreciable impact on Moscow's push to build nuclear platforms. Apparently, the START I, Moscow Treaty, and New START agreements of 1991, 2002, and 2010 while dramatically reducing Russian warheads, did not presage a new more benign era in the US-Russian nuclear competition.

Although the Russians *slowed* new nuclear production for a short period after the end of the Cold War, that was soon reversed. Between the Moscow treaty of 2002, through the New START implementation to early 2021, and projected through 2027, Russia will deploy four new bombers and four associated cruise missiles; six new classes of land based missiles; five new or upgraded submarines and three accompanying sea-launched ballistic missiles.

And with these new platforms, Russia will be able to easily deploy some 4500+ warheads, and may have nearly 2800-3200 deployed today, despite the official New Start warhead ceilings of 1550.

Why is this? Russia has multiple platforms on which to add ballistic missiles, in addition to mobile land-based missiles which are extremely difficult to verify under current New Start rules.

On top of which, most Russian missiles each have large numbers of warheads, while two-thirds of US missiles have single warheads.

By contrast, as it comes to modernization, new US strategic nuclear deployments during 1996-2028 will be zero. The US won't deploy a new nuclear armed strategic bomber or new land-based strategic missile until 2029, and in 2032 the first Columbia class submarine goes in the water. To be fair, during this period the US will have extended the service life of the aging MMIII ICBM and sustained both submarine and bomber legacy systems as well.

Most worrisome is that the US upload or "hedge" capability might not be able to reach much beyond 3000 warheads, compared to a significantly greater Russian capability. On top of which, a US upload effort could take 3-4 years to implement and not be able to balance in a timely manner a Russian treaty breakout, (an example of one of the key flaws in the New Start treaty that the administration is seeking to rectify).

Thus, assertions by disarmament groups, echoed credulously by major media outlets, that US deployment of modernized nuclear capabilities, beginning in 2029, are now igniting an arms race are without foundation. The facts we have put together illustrate quite clearly that Russia will have already deployed by 2027 nearly thirty new classes of nuclear bombers, submarines, and missiles, before the US deploys a single upgraded nuclear delivery platform.

A simple extension of the New Start treaty as many analysts support would simply perpetuate these Russian advantages while also leaving unchecked Russian and Chinese nuclear systems not restricted by the treaty.

Unilateral US restraint has been suggested as an anecdote to aggressive Russian nuclear expansion. But as former Secretary of Defense Harold Brown wisely explained years ago, when it comes to nuclear arms, when the US builds, so do the Russians. And when the US stops building, as we did at the end of the Cold War, Russia continues to build.

## **Some Real GOOD News: US Policies Boosted Lower, Middle Income Americans: Neil Munro**

30 Sep 2020

Lower- and middle-income Americans gained ground in President Donald Trump's first-term economy, while upper-income Americans gained the most under President Barack Obama, according to a survey by the Federal Reserve banking system.

"Families near the bottom of the income and wealth distributions generally continued to experience substantial gains in median and mean net worth between 2016 and 2019," says the [report](#), titled, "Changes in U.S. Family Finances from 2016 to 2019: Evidence from the Survey of Consumer Finances."

The report says:

During the three years between the beginning of the 2016 and 2019 surveys, real gross domestic product grew at an annual rate of 2.5 percent, and the civilian unemployment rate fell from 5.0 percent to 3.8 percent.

...Families at the top of the income and wealth distributions experienced very little, if any, growth in median and mean net worth between 2016 and 2019 after experiencing large gains between 2013 and 2016 [during the Obama administration].

The 2016-2019 survey does not include the economic damage caused by the coronavirus crash in early 2020.

The Federal Reserve report comes shortly after the Census Bureau report showed that wages for full-time male employees at the midpoint of the national wage scale grew by an average of 2.1 percent to \$57,456 in 2019.

Median full-time female employees gained 2.5 percent, up to \$47,299, says the September 15 [report](#), titled, "Income and Poverty in the United States: 2019."

According to the Federal Reserve report, the median income for families rose by five percent from 2016 to 2019. The median is the number at the midpoint between the top and the bottom. For example, the median income of 101 people is the dollar value earned by the 50th-ranked person in the middle.

The median people in the bottom quarter of personal wealth gained 11 percent in income, while people in the top quarter gained six percent, the reserve reported.

Young people under age 35 gained the most, while people over age 55 lost income, which does not count stocks or savings.

The report notes that college graduates did poorly from 2016 to 2019. The family median income level of high school graduates rose by six percent while the median or midpoint income of college graduates fell by [two percent](#), according to the report.

"Families without a high school diploma saw a 9 percent increase in their median income, while families with a college degree saw a 2 percent decrease," the report says.

The drop may reflect a growing share of Americans who hold lower-value degrees, such as art history, and a declining share of Americans with high-value degrees, such as engineering.

But salaries for U.S. graduates are being suppressed by the large-scale inflow of visa workers into Fortune 500 jobs. Roughly 1.3 million foreign graduates [hold](#) jobs needed by American graduates, often at lower wages, because the visa workers are hoping to get green cards from their employers.

The report ignores the wage-boosting impact of Trump's lower-immigration policy, which [forces](#) employers to compete for workers by offering higher wages.

There is [overwhelming evidence](#) that migrants [displace](#) many Americans and lowers many people's wages — even as immigration also expands the scale of the economy, raises the number of jobs, and boosts the stock market.

But Joe Biden's 2020 [plan](#) includes several proposals to expand the inflow of foreign workers and consumers into the United States. He promises to let mayors import foreign workers for [local jobs](#), let companies import [more visa workers](#) for college jobs, expand the inflow of [chain-migration migrants](#), suspend immigration enforcement against illegals, dramatically increase the inflow of [poor refugees](#), and also provide [more health care and other aid](#) to arriving migrants.

Any huge inflow of migrants will [lower](#) Americans' wages, transfer more wages to investors, shift jobs from the interior states to the coasts, reduce investment in wealth-generating technology, and exacerbate the chaotic diversity that has damaged U.S. society and politics

## Democrats Tried to Give Billions to Iran, Russia, and Communist China

This was America's way of helping the world to overcome economic damage from the pandemic.

by [Peter Huessy](#)

The House of Representatives passed a [major appropriations bill](#), 229 to 182, on July 31, 2020. Among other things, the bill contained funding for the next fiscal year for all eleven departments of the U.S. government. For most news outlets, that was not particularly surprising since Congress must pass a budget for the government every year. Except that this time there was something unusual. [The House Rules Committee](#), just before the legislation reached the House floor, inserted a new section in the bill. According to Rep. Bill Huizenga (R-Mich.) with little debate, a whopping [\\$3 trillion was tacked](#) onto existing [International Monetary Fund](#) (IMF) drawing rights or funding, and by a [party-line vote](#).

The new section directed the IMF to send the \$3 trillion dollars—with no strings attached—as coronavirus relief aid to all nations based in part on their respective GDP and financial losses. That was not done by mistake. Adding such a huge expenditure to any bill must have had the prior agreement of Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) or the idea would have gone nowhere.

Nearly \$300 billion was tucked in the bill for [Iran, Venezuela, Syria, China and Russia](#), a rogue gallery of countries masquerading as normal nations but behaving more like criminal gangs. For example, the U.S. State Department has officially stated that Iran [commits more terror](#) attacks than any other country on earth. If there are any doubts about Iran's intentions regarding the United States, read the exultant headline of Iran's state controlled Afkar News, "American Soil Is Now Within the Range of Iranian Bombs." They were celebrating the fact that Iran now has the technology to get them [within reach](#) of deploying intercontinental missiles capable of reaching the continental United States.

China [gave us the coronavirus](#) and, as a consequence, more than half a million people have been killed and trillions of dollars of economic damage has been done worldwide. Russia continues to send little green men to subvert Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia, and Moldova while [building up the largest arsenal](#) of nuclear weapons in the world. As for Syria, thousands of its people have been killed in a brutish civil war, and providing the Assad regime vast sums of money is the same as furnishing it with even more [horrible war machines](#) than the chemical weapons it has already used against its own people.

Venezuela continues its downward spiral into economic chaos while working with Cuba [and Iran to subvert](#) the United States and its allies in the hemisphere. The specific funding for these countries, [according to Rep. Huizenga](#), is staggering: \$20 billion for Iran, \$75 billion for Russia, \$170 billion for Communist China and \$17 billion for Syria.

Democrat supporters of the bill may wish us to believe that such a huge gift of taxpayer's money to the IMF is America's way of helping the world to overcome economic damage from the pandemic. However, there was no mention of other nations contributing to the IMF or of the impact that giving \$3 trillion to other nations—including America's enemies—would have on its national debt.

And there are other downsides.

First, there are no "strings" attached to the funds. And even if there were, how would such restrictions be enforced? What is to prevent the recipients from buying weapons with their American money? Second, Russia and [China](#) recently [threatened at the United Nations to veto](#) a U.S. resolution to extend the arms embargo on Iran. And there is every indication that [Russia](#) and China are anxious their arms industries to crank out weapons for Iran to buy, including more missiles or missile technology capable of carrying nuclear weapons. With no arms embargo, what's the chance that Iran might use \$20 billion in easy money from the IMF to purchase such weapons or [the advanced technology needed](#) to finally deploy missiles capable of reaching New York or Washington, DC?

Huizenga produced [a Facebook video](#) that admonished the procedure used to pass the House bill, explaining in it that [the bill](#)'s IMF provision had no committee hearing and that

opponents like him were allocated only one minute to speak in opposition. A minute is insufficient time for informed debate on spending \$3 trillion let alone giving \$300 billion to rogue states. Even worse, a floor amendment the Michigan lawmaker tried to offer would have prohibited U.S. banks from using money in U.S. accounts for an IMF bailout of Iran. The Speaker of the House ruled that it was not in order.

Will this bill become law? The Senate companion bill has not yet been scheduled for committee or floor action, and according to Senate Appropriation Committee sources the funding for Iran, China and other villainous nations won't fly. Those same Senate sources say the Treasury Department has also weighed in and emphatically told Senate appropriators, "No way." Nevertheless, in the strange world of international institutions the member nations of the "world community," irrespective of their behavior, all get freebies from the IMF. One-quarter of those funds come from U.S. banks and American account holders. And while IMF regulations may stipulate the funds are "loans," history shows that those loans will be rolled over into bigger loans down the road and then eventually be forgiven.

Thankfully, Huizenga has drawn attention to this astounding House bill, even if it seems to have no chance of passing in the Senate since the majority, and at least some of the minority, won't approve it. But be warned. [The makeup of Congress](#) and the administration itself may change in the coming elections. And terrible ideas like an IMF bailout of America's enemies might be resurrected.

*Peter Huessy is president of GeoStrategic Analysis. He is also the director of the Nuclear Deterrence Center at The Mitchell Institute.*