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The rise of hostile rogue states, new terrorist threats, and the proliferation of WMD and missile technology have all highlighted our need for an effective deterrence strategy in this post-Cold War environment. The fundamental questions of strategy we now face are to understand what and how we may be able to deter in a *new* strategic environment.

Unfortunately, most of what we believed was true about deterrence during the Cold War is now misleading because international conditions have changed so dramatically. During the Cold War, deterrence typically was considered a relatively easy matter of posing a nuclear retaliatory threat to Soviet targets. Many U.S. officials and commentators mechanistically equated the certainty of deterrent effect with the U.S. nuclear capability necessary to threaten Soviet society with "Assured Destruction." The frequent Cold War promise was that deterrence would be "stable" if the United States deployed particular, "stabilizing" strategic forces.

That promise rings hollow in the contemporary threat context. The painful truth is that deterrence now is unpredictable regardless of the number and types of forces we may possess. Deterrence is beset by irreducible uncertainties: no one truly knows what now constitutes a "stabilizing" force structure, or whether or how deterrence will work across the wide spectrum of contemporary opponents, stakes and circumstances.

This conclusion does *not* suggest that we discard deterrence. It does, however, explain why our Cold War strategy of deterrence based on offensive nuclear forces and a mutual balance of terror must be reconsidered in toto.

Intelligence Dedicated to Deterrence Planning

One part of the answer to our contemporary strategy question of "how to deter" is tailored intelligence. To understand how best to deter in any contingency we need first to understand the specific opponent's mind-set and behavioral style, and the different ways opponents can perceive and respond to our deterrence threats. Deterrence now is first and foremost a matter of intelligence. It requires a much broader, dedicated intelligence effort for this purpose than was the case in past decades. A recent study published by the National Defense University lists some of the questions about opponents that must be

addressed for deterrence purposes, whether those opponents are states or terrorist organizations:[1]

- What are the nation's or group's values and priorities? How are these affected by its history and strategic culture?
- What are their objectives in the particular situation?
- What factors are likely to influence their decisionmaking?
- Who makes decisions, how does the leadership think, what is their view of the world and their experience with and view of the United States
- How do they calculate risks and gains?
- What do they believe their stakes to be in particular situations (stakes may vary depending on the scenario)?
- What is the likely credibility of U.S. deterrence options to this adversary – for both imposing cost and denying gains?
- How risk-taking – or risk-averse –is the leadership?
- How much latitude does the leadership have to either provoke or conciliate?
- What are their alternative courses of action?
- What do they believe the costs and benefits of restraint to be? Do they think they are worse off if they do not take the aggressive action? Do they see any positive benefits in not taking the action in question?
- What do they perceive as America's answers to the questions above – for example, U.S. objectives, stakes, or risk-taking propensity?

When deterrence is our goal, there is no substitute for understanding the specific how's and why's of opponents' decision making; we no longer can presume to know the boundaries of opponents' possible thinking and behavior. This is true whether we seek to deter the leadership of a state or a terrorist organization.

I should note in this regard that the frequently-heard assertion that terrorists must be undeterrable is mistaken. The historical record on terrorists, anarchists, and other violent, extremist groups is sufficient to conclude that they may be deterrable, depending on the context and circumstances—which is all that can be said of traditional state leaders. The

[1] Elaine Bunn, "Can Deterrence Be Tailored?" *Strategic Forum*, No. 225, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University (January 2007), p. 3.

question is whether we will understand terrorist opponents well enough to know *when* a strategy of deterrence is likely to be a useful tool, and if so *how* to employ it. In the absence of dedicated intelligence for this purpose, we will deter successfully only by luck. This again is true whether the opponent is a state or a terrorist organization.

Deterrence Forces

It is important to understand what types of U.S. deterrence threat will be best suited to deterring a particular opponent, in particular circumstances and for particular purposes. In some cases, *non-military* approaches to deterrence may deter best, in others, *non-nuclear force options* may be adequate and advantageous, in still other cases, *nuclear* threat options may be necessary to deter. Each type of capability is likely to have a role in deterring attacks; to reject any as unnecessary for deterrence is to presume knowledge about how foreign leaders will think and how deterrence will function across place and time that is wholly unsupportable.

For example, in some past cases, including the 1991 Gulf War, U.S. *nuclear* capabilities appear to have been essential to deterrence working to prevent war or the use of biological and chemical weapons. It would be extremely optimistic to believe that we will be so fortunate as not to confront similar cases in the future.

In his final speech to the U.S. Congress, Winston Churchill warned: "Be careful above all things not to let go of the atomic weapon until you are sure and more than sure that other means of preserving peace are in your hands!" There is no basis to conclude that those "other means" are at hand for our deterrence purposes. Occasionally it is suggested that our advanced conventional forces alone are adequate for deterrence. In fact, no one knows or can know whether that is true because deterrence depends on our opponents' judgements, and we simply do not know how contemporary and future opponents will calculate in this regard: to choose nuclear disarmament as the priority goal now would be to risk foregoing those U.S. forces that have served as decisive means of deterrence in the past.

Some see an incongruity in the U.S. maintaining a nuclear arsenal for deterrence while simultaneously advocating nuclear non-proliferation. I have heard this seeming incongruity likened to a drunkard advocating abstinence. In reality, this seeming incongruity is not hard to see through; indeed, the U.S. deployment of nuclear capabilities makes an essential contribution to nuclear non-proliferation. This positive linkage may be counterintuitive, but it is unquestionable.

How so? It is on the basis of the U.S. nuclear "umbrella" that allied countries such as Japan have chosen to remain non-nuclear: the continued credibility of our nuclear umbrella is critical to their decisions to remain non-nuclear, and their decisions to remain non-nuclear have been and continue to be critical to non-proliferation. It is hard to imagine a greater stimulus to nuclear proliferation than decisions by U.S. allies and friends to "go nuclear" themselves as a result of their loss of confidence in the U.S. nuclear umbrella. A detailed review of specific countries by noted regional experts

reaches a similar conclusion: "The case studies suggest that the perceived reliability of U.S. security assurances will be a critical factor, if not *the* critical factor, in whether such countries as Japan, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Taiwan, and Turkey reconsider their nuclear options."[2]

The contemporary environment is increasingly challenging in this regard. North Korean and Iranian aspirations for nuclear weapons pose unprecedented nuclear threats to allies traditionally covered by the nuclear umbrella. Their responses to these emerging nuclear threats have highlighted the continuing critical role the U.S. extended nuclear deterrent plays in non-proliferation. For example, a 2006 Japanese study headed by former Prime Minister Nakasone concluded that "In order to prepare for drastic changes in the international situation in the future, a thorough study of the nuclear issue should be conducted." Mr. Nakasone noted that Japanese security is dependent on U.S. nuclear weapons, but that the future of the U.S. extended deterrent is unclear.

Since the North Korean testing of nuclear weapons in 2006, there have been numerous and once-unthinkable statements by Japanese officials that *Japan would be forced to reconsider its non-nuclear status in the absence of the U.S. nuclear umbrella*. For example, remarks by then-Director General of the Japanese Defense Agency, Akio Kyuma reflected the theme of a potential Japanese interest in nuclear weapons, and the reassurance provided by U.S. nuclear capabilities: "Japan should have a nuclear deterrent capability. Yet, Japan is not allowed to possess nuclear arms; on the other hand, the United States has them."

Similarly, former South Korean defense ministers recently asked that U.S. nuclear weapons removed from South Korea in 1991 be returned, and public sentiment has turned strongly in favor of South Korea having a nuclear weapons capability.[3] A recent South Korean delegation to the United States, led by Defense Minister Yoon Kwang-ung, sought an explicit U.S. public declaration that if North Korea employed nuclear weapons against South Korea, the United States would respond in kind as if the United States itself had been attacked.

Our extended deterrent is perhaps the single most important and least recognized nuclear non-proliferation tool in existence. As various new domestic initiatives for U.S. nuclear disarmament emerge, we need to recall Churchill's warning and be conscious of the potential severe downsides of such initiatives for deterrence, extended deterrence, and nuclear non-proliferation.

It is in this contemporary context that the Reliable Replacement Warhead (RRW) program is of potential value for the following basic reasons: it may contribute to sustaining a U.S. nuclear arsenal with increased warhead safety and security measures—

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[2] Kurt Campbell, Robert Einhorn, and Mitchell Reiss, *The Nuclear Tipping Point* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2004), p. 321.

[3] See respectively, Dana Linzer and Walter Pincus, "U.S. Detects Signs of Radiation Consistent With Test," *The Washington Post*, October 14, 2006, p. A14; and, Reuters, "S. Koreans want nuclear weapons due to North—survey," October 12, 2006, available at, http://asia.news.yahoo.com/061012/3/2r7t9.html.

without testing; it could help preserve the special skills and expertise necessary to maintain the U.S. capability to develop and produce nuclear weapons, and modernize portions of the industrial infrastructure necessary for that purpose; and, it could contribute to the prudent reduction of the nuclear stockpile. Because the retention of U.S. nuclear capabilities is important for U.S. deterrence and extended deterrence purposes, each of these possible benefits of RRW is potentially important.

Although still widely misunderstood, the Bush Administration's 2001 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR)—consistent with President Bush's May 1, 2001 mandate—sought to minimize U.S. reliance on nuclear weapons. It concluded that the immediate requirement for U.S. nuclear weapons could be met with far fewer deployed nuclear weapons, and that U.S. nuclear requirements could recede further as advanced non-nuclear weapons and defenses mature. That conclusion was a basis for the 2002 Moscow Treaty's agreed two-thirds reduction of deployed strategic nuclear weapons.

The NPR also emphasized that nuclear weapons alone are *not sufficient* for a strategy of deterrence. It identified the need for a much broader range of deterrent threat options than we inherited from the Cold War, particularly including *non-nuclear* options. The reasoning is straightforward: in many prospective post-Cold War contingencies, U.S. nuclear threats may be incredible for U.S. deterrence purposes. In some cases, strategic conventional weapons may be key. The U.S. capability to strike with non-nuclear weapons against high value or fleeting targets at global ranges could contribute significantly to deterrence, the assurance of allies, and directly to counterproliferation.

Unfortunately, progress toward non-nuclear strategic capabilities has been slow; now, almost six years after the 2001 NPR, nuclear-armed missiles remain the *only* prompt, U.S. global strike options available. I agree strongly with General Cartwright that it is important to move forward on a conventional capability for prompt global strike, Conventional Trident being the near-term option.

U.S. Defensive Capabilities and Deterrence Uncertainty

The contemporary uncertainty of deterrence vis-à-vis multiple new threats compels a review of Cold War strategy choices with regard to the role and value of active and passive defenses such as air defense, civil defense and ballistic missile defense (BMD). It may be recalled that in a *reversal* of the Johnson Administration's deterrence strategy, the Nixon Administration pursued a strategy of intentional U.S. societal vulnerability to virtually *any* strategic threat; it did so in deference to a balance of terror deterrence strategy with the Soviet Union. That Nixon Administration strategy and its subsequent perpetuation led to the continued limitation or further degradation of U.S. air defense, civil defense and ballistic missile throughout the remainder of the Cold War years and after.

Such strategy decisions have consequences—as was amply demonstrated on September 11, 2001 when the U.S. could muster only a single handful of air defense interceptors for

the defense of the entire Northeastern portion of United States, two of which apparently were unarmed. According to *The 9/11 Commission Report*, this lack of U.S. air defense capabilities, "…led some NORAD commanders to worry that NORAD was not postured to protect the United States." This vulnerability, however, should have come as no surprise: decades before the U.S. government consciously chose as a matter of strategy to leave largely uncontested the vulnerability of U.S. society to air and missile attack. In fact, during the Cold War, U.S. strategic air defense was reduced to being described officially and with no intended irony as being capable of limited control of U.S. airspace *in peacetime*.

In the contemporary environment of multiple WMD threats and deterrence uncertainty, it is critical that the U.S. approach to deterrence strategy include rather than eschew defensive capabilities. A balance of terror will provide no predictable protection against perplexing leaders such as North Korea's Kim Jong Il or Iran's President Ahmadinejad**.** It would be highly imprudent now to perpetuate the Cold War strategy choice of essentially unchallenged societal vulnerability when a good measure of protection is feasible in many plausible cases. As WMD threats multiply and deterrence becomes increasingly unpredictable, U.S. defensive capabilities must take on a new, higher priority.

Why so? Because we can no longer rely on deterrence working reliably to prevent strategic attack as we did during the Cold War. Deterrence can and likely will fail unpredictably in the future, as it has in the past. In those instances it will be important to limit damage to our society and economic infrastructure to the extent possible. This is one reason why various forms of strategic defense and damage-mitigations measures against mass destruction attacks are now so important, particularly including defenses against limited biological and nuclear attacks.

President Bush's 2002 decision to deploy strategic BMD against limited offensive missile threats reflected a partial reversal of the Nixon Administration's Cold War choice to eschew most forms of defense in favor of the intentional vulnerability of a balance of terror deterrence strategy. Much more remains to be done in this regard.

Particularly apparent is the need to deploy regional and strategic missile defense capabilities that are sufficiently timely, adaptable and global to meet emerging missile threats. With regional rogue states moving toward nuclear weapons and missiles of increasing range and payload, layered missile defense has become an essential element of U.S. post-Cold War strategy.

Promptly moving to counter the emerging Iranian missile threat, for example, is important to our key strategic goals of assuring allies, deterring attack, protecting against attacks that are not reliably deterrable, and possibly dissuading Iran from continuing to invest heavily in missiles as its favored delivery platform. It should be noted in this regard that these goals for U.S. BMD are not new. In the late 1960s the Johnson Administration identified the same set of objectives for its planned defense against Chinese strategic missiles—a program that remained in train until withdrawn in 1969 by the Nixon Administration.

Conclusion

The broad outlines of a U.S. post-Cold War deterrence strategy are apparent and reflect both continuities and discontinuities from past strategy and practice. Nuclear deterrence and extended nuclear deterrence remain important, with U.S. extended nuclear deterrence now playing a particularly critical role in non-proliferation. As emphasized in the NPR, the number of U.S. nuclear weapons can be lowered prudently, and the value of non-nuclear strategic forces and damage-limiting capabilities has ascended. Once we establish a political consensus on the "how's and why's" of U.S. post-Cold War deterrence strategy, I am confident that we will correspondingly pursue force development and deployment consistent with our strategy. We generally did so throughout the Cold War. We have yet to establish that post-Cold War strategy consensus and need to get on with the task.