

Do nuclear weapons protect us by deterring other nations?

No. Here are the FACTS:

- Nuclear weapons do **NOT** protect us. The notion that having nuclear weapons will “deter” other nations from attacking us is fatally flawed. Nuclear weapons threaten other nations and provoke those nations into building their own nuclear weapons. Global tensions rise. The “deterrence” theory is a reckless psychological experiment full of errors at the human and technical levels. If anything goes haywire, nuclear weapons could destroy us in just a few minutes. The “deterrence” theory leads to mutual suicide!
- The U.S. designed nuclear weapons for our “first-strike” policy of starting a nuclear war. But a nation fearing that we are on the verge of launching its nuclear weapons might launch its own first, so their own missiles will not be destroyed while still in their silos. This fear of an enemy’s launch could actually provoke – rather than deter – a nuclear attack. The only remedy is to eliminate nuclear weapons entirely.
- We can do that all at once or step-by-step. Decades ago, “Confidence Building Measures” (CBMs) were proposed so the US and the Soviet Union could take small verifiable steps mutually and develop confidence that we could take mutual steps toward reducing the danger. The world needs to promote CBMs now, instead of the escalation that the U.S. recently began.
- Some people think deterrence has worked because we have not used nuclear weapons since 1945. Actually the U.S. **has** used them by always keeping our nuclear weapons ready to use in an instant, and also by threatening to attack certain other nations (including nations without their own nuclear weapons) on many occasions. This is “using” nuclear weapons in the same way that a robber stealing your wallet at gunpoint is guilty of Armed Robbery even if he never shoots. In criminal law, threatening with a weapon **is** “using” it.
- Instead of the phony “deterrence” theory, let’s use the \$100 BILLION or more spent each year on nuclear weapons to deter – and abolish – poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental problems, etc. See the fact sheet debunking the myth that we can afford nuclear weapons.
- Even if deterrence were true, accidents and near-misses keep occurring and keep us in perpetual danger of nuclear destruction. See the fact sheet debunking the myth that safety precautions are adequate.

Connect with the Olympia Coalition to Abolish Nuclear Weapons

We meet monthly to organize a good variety of strategically smart, useful activities.

We reach out to educate and mobilize the public, and we urge the government to abolish nuclear weapons.

Contact us at nuclearweapons@olympiafor.org (360) 705-2407 or (360) 491-9093.

See <http://parallaxperspectives.org/category/nuclear-weapons>

Our statewide coalition is Washington Against Nuclear Weapons, www.WANWcoalition.org (206) 547-2630.

Are nuclear weapons' safety precautions adequate?

No. Here are the FACTS:

- Accidents and near-misses occur very often! Since the 1940s, a great many accidents and near-misses have nearly caused horrible destruction, but the government and news media refuse to report them honestly.
- Search the internet for “nuclear weapons accidents” and see startling information about a great many accidents that easily could have caused horrible destruction. See much information at http://www.atomicarchive.com/Almanac/Brokenarrows_static.shtml and even more examples at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_military_nuclear_accidents
- Since 1950 there have been 32 accidents (referred to as “broken arrows”). In these, 6 nuclear weapons have been lost and never recovered. Some were from the U.S. and some from the USSR. They have occurred in many locations throughout the world.
- The nuclear accident nearest to our local community occurred on Sept. 25, 1959, when a Navy airplane with an unarmed nuclear depth charge crashed into Puget Sound near Whidbey Island WA. The nuclear weapon was never recovered.
- On January 24, 1961, a B-52 carrying nuclear weapons broke apart while flying 2,000 feet over North Carolina. It dropped two nuclear weapons. Each nuclear bomb had 7 switches that needed to be switched in order for it to detonate, and 6 of those 7 switches were switched when it landed. Only 1 switch prevented much of North Carolina from nuclear destruction. <https://taskandpurpose.com/nuclear-bomb-accident-north-carolina/>
- Olympia's committee (see below) showed the film “Command and Control,” which is based on Eric Schlosser's book by the same name. It documents the frightening accident that occurred in Arkansas in 1980. A Titan II missile exploded in its silo and blew a live nuclear warhead more than 600 feet away into a ditch. The disaster's complexity and problems and dangers were amazing.
- Accidents do happen, despite safety precautions. Anything as complicated as nuclear weapons has many, many things that can go wrong. An accident can destroy us all.

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Can we afford to pay for nuclear weapons?

No. Here are the FACTS:

- Nuclear weapons are horribly expensive. The U.S. government is planning to spend **\$1.7 TRILLION** over the next 30 years to replace **all** of our nuclear bombs, missiles, submarines, etc., with brand new ones, including some designed to be more “usable.” To pay for them, Congress will want to cut many billions of dollars from useful programs that help people.
- On October 31, 2017, the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office estimated that the Obama Administration’s 2017 plans for nuclear forces would cost \$1.2 trillion (in 2017 dollars) over the 2017–2046 period. Other expert sources have estimated even higher amounts. Trump and the Republican-dominated Congress have been pushing to escalate nuclear weapons even further, but even the Obama proposal was recklessly expensive – and unnecessary.
- Instead of spending ourselves into bankruptcy in order to build suicidal nuclear weapons, wouldn’t it make more sense to change to a peaceful foreign policy and nuclear disarmament? For a fraction of that cost we could solve many of the problems that result in war (poverty, hunger, environmental and climate-related problems that provoke migration, and so forth).
- An excellent source of information is the Arms Control Association (www.armscontrol.org). Their 8-18-2017, Issue Brief “The Trillion (and a Half) Dollar Triad?” provides useful information. It debunks some Trump lies, and it says – although Obama had begun a massive building of all new nuclear weapons – the Obama administration and the Joint Chiefs of Staff determined that the U.S. could “reduce the size of its deployed strategic nuclear arsenal by up to one-third below the 2010 New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) levels.”
- Nuclear weapons cost much more than appears in the Dept. of “Defense” budget. The bombers, submarines, etc., are in the DoD budget, but the weapons themselves are in the Dept. of Energy budget. Building those creates huge amounts of nuclear waste. The current DoE budget shows some money for nuclear waste cleanup, but future costs are totally ignored, and American taxpayers will be paying to protect us from it for many thousands of years.
- Weapons systems are marketed to Congress with low projected costs, but after Congress approves them, their costs rise significantly and continuously. Congress is unwilling to cancel recklessly unnecessary, overpriced weapons, but keeps throwing more of our money at them.

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Does international law allow nuclear weapons?

No. Here are the FACTS:

- Nuclear weapons violate International Law in many ways. They violate the United Nations Charter. The U.S. has been violating the 1970 Non-Proliferation Treaty. In 1996 the World Court ruled against nuclear weapons. In 2017 the United Nations passed a treaty prohibiting them, and 50 nations signed it promptly.
- The U.S. Constitution's Article VI declares that "all treaties ... shall be the supreme law of the land." When the U.S. violates the United Nations Charter, various treaties and various aspects of international law, the U.S. is thereby violating the U.S. Constitution.
- After World War II, the U.S. led the efforts to prosecute Nazi war criminals at Nuremberg. The Nuremberg decision asserts that people must refuse to obey orders to commit "crimes against humanity." Certainly a nuclear war is a crime against humanity. Therefore, both international law and, thereby, the U.S. Constitution require people to refuse to be complicit in nuclear weapons. The Nuremberg decision asserts that "I'm just following orders" is not a valid defense. Our nation and individuals must reckon with conscience.
- The U.S. has been violating the Non-Proliferation Treaty since 1970. The world's nations passed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty to stop the spread of nuclear weapons to additional nations. The non-nuclear nations agreed not to acquire nuclear weapons, and the nations that did have nuclear weapons agreed to start planning to get rid of theirs. However, the U.S. and other nuclear nations have continued keeping nuclear weapons in violation of the NPT. The rest of the world knows this.
- In 2010 Congress and Obama decided that the U.S. will replace ALL of our nuclear weapons and build new missiles, bombers, submarines, etc., and new types of warheads. This blatantly violates the NPT. Now the U.S. is provoking a new nuclear arms race that will provoke other nations to respond with their own.
- On July 8, 1996, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) unanimously agreed that any use or threat to use nuclear weapons would have to comply with those provisions of the UN Charter which prohibit the use of force except in cases of self-defense, and with the rules of international law applicable to armed conflict. Certainly the U.S. and other nuclear-armed nations have indeed been threatening to use nuclear weapons in violation of the UN Charter and the ICJ. See information at <https://www.armscontrol.org/print/7556>
- On July 7, 2017, the United Nations took strong action toward outlawing nuclear weapons. Of the UN's 193 member states, 122 of them – almost two-thirds of the world's nations – supported the "Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons." If enough nations sign on, the treaty will prohibit the possession, development, testing, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons. The 2017 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the organization that successfully organized this treaty, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). Democracy Now! reported on this great news. See this link: www.tinyurl.com/y79zxo49

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Would electing Democrats protect us from nuclear weapons?

No. Here are the FACTS:

- Both political parties have been funding nuclear weapons and have been supporting their use since the 1940s. Franklin D. Roosevelt started building them. Harry Truman dropped two on Japan, killing many thousands of innocent civilians. John Kennedy fully expected to use them during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. Barack Obama authorized the replacement of ALL U.S. nuclear weapons (at a cost of much more than \$1 TRILLION). Congress's Democrats have been funding nuclear weapons since the 1940s. **The crisis is truly bi-partisan!**
- Overall, the U.S.'s foreign policy has been **bi-partisan** for many decades. Regardless of which political party has the President or runs Congress, for more than a century the U.S. has felt entitled to violently impose its will upon other nations, to bomb any nation we want, to overthrow their governments (including many democracies, such as Iran in 1953 and Guatemala in 1954 and Chile in 1973), and so forth.
- The Vietnam War was started by Truman and Eisenhower, continued by Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon and Ford. Bush/Cheney overthrew governments in Afghanistan and Iraq and launched an endless "war on terror," which Obama inherited and in some cases escalated. He overthrew Libya's government, increased U.S. militarism in Africa, and escalated drone attacks in many parts of the world. Trump inherited all of that, pulled out of the highly successful Iran deal, escalated some current wars, and has been threatening several new wars.
- Likewise, both of the big political parties have meddled in other countries' elections, used the CIA and other covert ways of destabilizing and overthrowing governments.
- Every four years American voters elect presidential candidates who say they want peace. Voters reject the more hawkish presidential candidates. But no matter who is elected – **no matter which party** – the militaristic foreign policy and the threat of nuclear war persist uninterrupted. To read a summary of the presidential elections from 1964 to 2016, see this link: <http://parallaxperspectives.org/since-1964-voters-have-elected-presidents-who-promised-peace-but-they-always-gave-us-more-war>

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After the Cold War, are nuclear weapons no longer a problem?

Still a problem! Here are the FACTS:

- After the Cold War ended, the public stopped paying attention. The numbers of nuclear weapons declined, but the U.S. still has a policy of willingness to **begin** a nuclear war (not merely retaliate), and the nuclear weapons are still on **hair-trigger alert**. Accidents, miscalculations, and – under Trump – moments of irrational anger can still destroy the world. **And now the U.S. is actively provoking a new nuclear arms race!**
- On January 26, 2017, Trump’s recklessness about nuclear weapons – and his denial of the climate crisis – caused atomic scientists to move “Doomsday Clock” to only 2 ½ minutes to midnight. The scientists’ statements said that for the first time in the clock’s 70-year history, “the board has decided to act, in part, based on the words of a single person: Donald Trump.” They cited reckless things Trump has been saying since he started campaigning – and also the actions he took during the first few days of his administration. See the article at www.tinyurl.com/h3bajrx One year later, on January 25, 2018, these atomic scientists moved the Doomsday Clock’s hands to only 2 minutes to midnight, the closest ever to global doomsday. See announcement at <https://thebulletin.org/sites/default/files/2018%20Doomsday%20Clock%20Statement.pdf>
- The article at this link – www.tinyurl.com/yacm3b49 – says, “Trump sees power as military strength – and nukes as the apex of that power.
- **But Trump is only the latest (albeit the worst) cause of the bi-partisan post-Cold War nuclear danger.** In the winter of 1989-1990 when East Germany collapsed and was going to be reunited with West Germany, the U.S. promised that the U.S.-dominated NATO would not expand “one inch eastward,” and Germany’s unification proceeded. However, the U.S. did indeed expand NATO by bringing many Eastern European nations into the anti-Russia alliance and pushed NATO’s military weapons all the way up to Russia’s border.
- Likewise, the U.S. has been escalating militarism toward China. President Obama’s “Pivot to Asia” is all about threatening China. The U.S. has been encircling both Russia and China with military weapons.
- The U.S. persists with a “first-strike” policy of willingness to begin a nuclear war, rather than merely respond in case we’re attacked. The U.S.’s weapons are designed specifically to aggressively start a nuclear war.
- The U.S. is planning to build ALL new nuclear weapons and ALL new delivery systems (missiles, bombers, submarines, etc.). This is provoking a horribly expensive new nuclear arms race – especially with Russia and China – but the government and news media have failed to adequately inform the public (and taxpayers).
- Some of the new nuclear weapons are being designed to be “more usable” – more likely to start nuclear war.
- Congress remains corrupted by campaign contributions and lobbying by giant corporations that build military weapons. They donate to campaigns and deliberately sub-contract and sub-sub-contract into many congressional districts in order to “buy” the support of Congress members who otherwise would have better sense than to waste money on weapons that can destroy the world.

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