

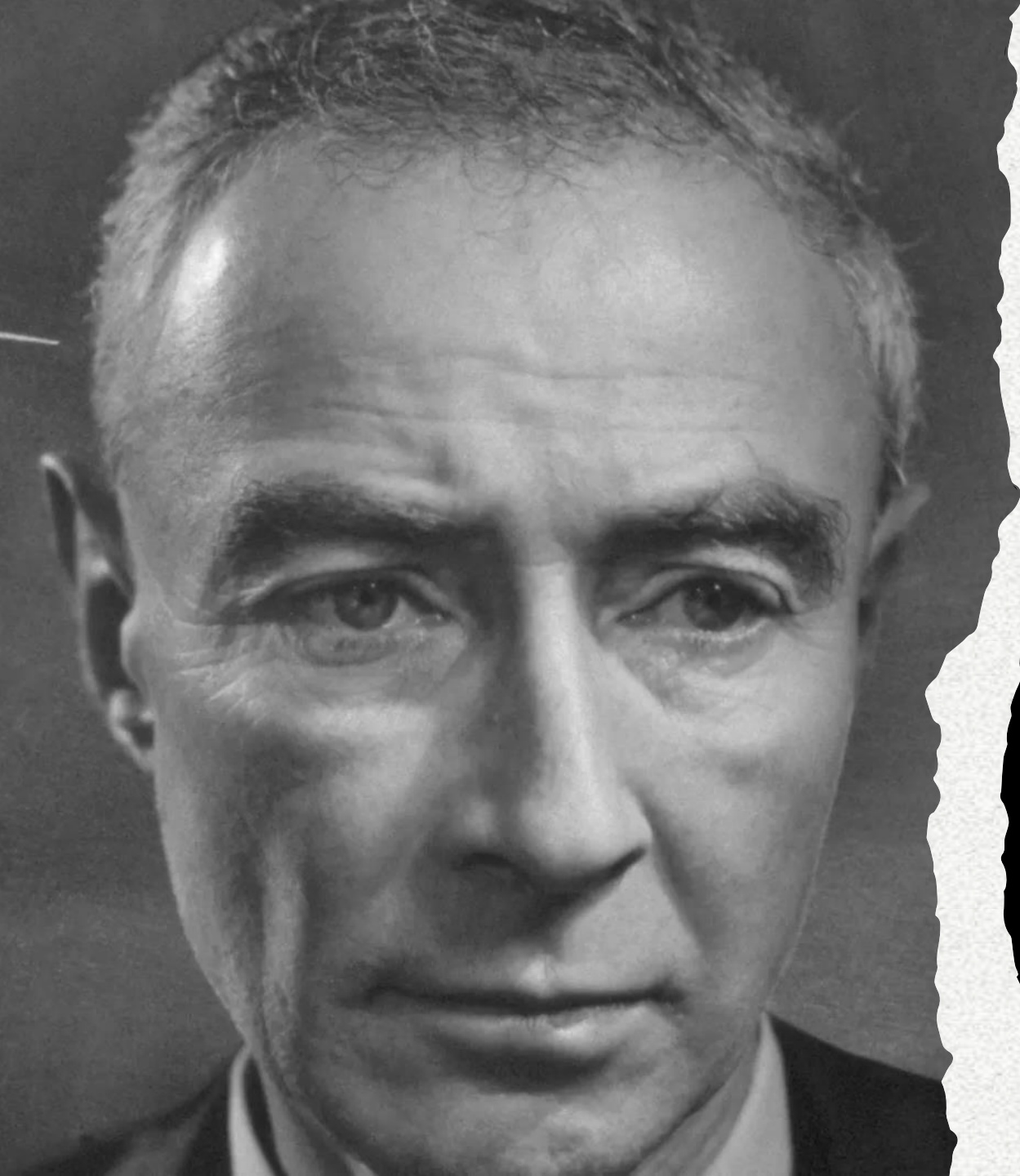


# Does Just War Doctrine Imply Nuclear Pacifism?

*Raymond J. Juzaitis, PhD*

Presentation for the Los Alamos Faith & Science Forum  
Summer 2023 Series  
July 18, 2023





***“Now I am  
become death,  
the destroyer of  
worlds.”***

**Bhagavad-Gita, verse 32**

# Disclaimer

- From a Roman Catholic perspective
- Concerns about recent Church teachings (nuclear pacifism)
- Purpose is not to “wash dirty linens in public”, but to promote engagement between the nuclear professional laity and the Church’s magisterium
  - *Nuclear weapons deserve special moral consideration in all faith traditions*
- Opinions expressed in this talk are my own.

# Church Teaching

# Salvation history presents God as a warrior

- Exodus 15: 2-4, 7

- *The Lord is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation...*

*The Lord is a man of war, the Lord is his name.*

*Pharaoh's chariots and his host he cast into the sea;*

- *In the greatness of your majesty you overthrow your adversaries;  
You send forth your fury, it consumes them like stubble.*

# War is referenced many times in the Bible

- Ecclesiastes 3:1,3,8

- *For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven;*  
... *a time to kill, and a time to heal;*  
... *a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.*

- Psalm 24:8

- *Who is the King of glory?*  
... *the Lord, strong and mighty,*  
... *the Lord, mighty in battle.*

- Psalm 149: 6-9

- *Let the high praises of God be in their throats,*  
*and two-edged swords in their hands,*  
*to wreak vengeance on the nations*  
*and chastisement on the peoples,*  
*to bind their kings with chains*  
*and their nobles with fetters of iron.*

# The Bible and Church tradition condemn the taking of innocent life.

- Ex 20:13
  - *You shall not kill.*
- Mt 5: 21-22
  - *You have heard that it was said to the men of old, 'You shall not kill: and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment.*
- CCC #2258
  - **Human life is sacred** because from its beginning it involves the creative action of God and it remains forever in a special relationship with the Creator, who is its sole end. **God alone is the Lord of life** from its beginning until its end: no one can under any circumstance claim for himself the right directly to destroy an innocent human being.
- CCC #2259
  - *In the account of Abel's murder by his brother Cain, Scripture reveals the presence of anger and envy in man, **consequences of original sin**, from the beginning of human history. Man has become the enemy of his fellow man. God declares the wickedness of this fratricide: "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground."*



# However, the imperative of self-defense is also enunciated in Church tradition.

- CCC #2265-2266

- *Legitimate defense can be not only a right but a **grave duty for someone responsible for another's life**, the common good of the family, or of the state... Preserving the common good requires **rendering the unjust aggressor unable to inflict harm**...For analogous reasons those holding authority have the right to repel by armed force aggressors against the community in their charge.*

- CCC #2263

- *The **legitimate defense** of persons and societies is not an exception to the prohibition against the murder of the innocent that constitutes intentional killing. “The **act of self-defense can have a double effect**: the preservation of one's own life; and the killing of the aggressor...the one is intended, the other not.”*



# See 1 Mac 2:39-41 (Maccabean revolt)

*When Mattathias and his friends learned of it, they mourned for them deeply. And each said to his neighbor: "If we all do as our brethren have done and refuse to fight with the Gentiles for our lives and for our ordinances, they will quickly destroy us from the Earth." So they made this decision that day: "Let us fight against every man who comes to attack us on the sabbath day; let us not all die as our brethren died in their hiding places."*

# Just War Doctrine

**Just War Doctrine was formulated to reconcile these two moral imperatives and establish limits on war.**

## *Jus Ad Bellum*



- Just cause (self-defense)
  - *Pope Pius XII, 1957: but only one cause is admissible*
- Declared and controlled by proper authority
- Last resort
  - *Diplomacy to forestall war*
- Conduct with the right intention
  - *Promote good or avoid evil*
  - *Observe moral limits when defensive war necessary*
  - *Restore peace and justice as soon as possible*

# *Jus in Bello* principles elaborate on the conduct of war

- War must be fought in a **discriminate** manner
  - *Avoid collateral damage to non-combatants (civilian population)*
  - *Military targets are legitimate*
- The means employed must be **proportionate** to the ends to be achieved
  - *Scope of conflict must also be limited*
- Adhere to the principle of “double-effect”
  - *Good achieved must be greater than the evil which precipitated the war*
    - *“...two effects follow, one good and one evil, from an essentially good or at least neutral act: if the evil effect is unintended and not a direct result of the act, and if the good effect is proportionate to the evil effect, the act itself is legitimate”.*

*“The evaluation of these conditions for moral legitimacy belongs to the prudential judgment of those who have responsibility for the common good.”*

CCC #2309

Shift in Teaching?

# Vatican seems to be on a path to changing traditional Church teaching with regard to nuclear weapons and deterrence

- UN General Assembly completed “Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons” (July 2017)
  - *commits signatories not to “develop, test, produce, manufacture, otherwise acquire, possess or stockpile nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices”*
  - *Holy See signed and ratified the Treaty as a “full state member” (September 2017)*
  - *50th ratification received on October 24, 2020*
  - *Entered into force on January 22, 2021*
  - *No monitoring or verification or enforcement provisions*
  - *No nuclear weapons states participated in UN conference*
- Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development organized an international symposium on “Perspectives for a World Free of Nuclear Weapons and for Integral Disarmament”
  - *November 10-11, 2017; organized by Cardinal Peter Turkson (Ghana)*
  - *Attended by Nobel laureates, diplomats, international civic and church leaders*
  - *Venue for Pope Francis to deliver his **public condemnation of nuclear deterrence** (11/10/2017)*

---

“Nor can we fail to be genuinely concerned by the catastrophic humanitarian and environmental effects of any employment of nuclear devices. If we also take into account the risk of an accidental detonation as a result of error of any kind, ***the threat of their use, as well as their very possession is to be firmly condemned.***” For they exist in the service of a mentality of fear that affects not only the parties in conflict but the entire human race...nuclear weapons create nothing but a false sense of security.”

Pope Francis, Address to the Symposium “Perspectives for a World Free of Nuclear Weapons and for Integral Disarmament”, November 10, 2017.



# A foundational moral teaching, or a political statement premised on anti-nuclear zeitgeist??

- Revisiting humanitarian consequences of nuclear war (Hiroshima + 75)
- Misrepresents the essential nature of nuclear deterrence in the contemporary global security environment
- Rejects notion that deterrence has protected world peace
  - *Judges deterrence as “inadequate” to deal with challenges to global security*
- Embraces abolition of nuclear weapons as the essential foundation of collective security
- NPT regime has created a “class structure” in the international system
  - *NWS impose their will on the world (the “oppressors”)*
  - *Explicit support for “Third World” nations (the “oppressed”)*
  - *Bemoans slow progress of nuclear powers toward disarmament obligations*
- Disarmament will result in re-allocation of funds to promote integral human development

***“It is a moral reason that recognizes deterrence as an obstacle to peace, and leads us to seek alternative paths to a peaceful world.”***

”Nuclear Disarmament: Time for Abolition”, 2014

# Cascading influence leads to troubling Pastoral Letter in Santa Fe Archdiocese

- Archbishop John C. Wester issued *“Living in the Light of Christ’s Peace-A Conversation Toward Nuclear Disarmament”* (Jan 2022).
- Desires to engage a “spiritual conversation” (especially in New Mexico) that will lead to nuclear disarmament.
- Urges us to practice universal, non-violent love with no justification for warfare, and “no Just War Theory”.
- Mischaracterizes nuclear deterrence and disparages U.S. nuclear weapons policy.
- Condemns Los Alamos and Sandia nuclear weapons work, promotes pacification of the Laboratories.
- LANL is viewed as net economic drain on New Mexico.
- Cites demographic statistics as evidence of “economic inequality and institutionalized racism endemic to our country.”
- No evidence of prior discussion with Catholics involved in nuclear weapons work.

## Cardinal Robert McElroy (San Diego) has more recently joined the polarized debate on war and nuclear weapons.

- “*Our New Moment: Renewing Catholic Teaching on War and Peace*” (Notre Dame, March 2023)
- Church must redesign its moral framework on war & peace
- Jettison Just War Doctrine in favor of comprehensive non-violence
  - *Just War Doctrine has failed to prevent wars...there are no “just wars”*
  - *Nuclear deterrence has failed to engender disarmament and provides a false sense of security*
- Non-violent resistance must be placed at center of the Church’s “theology of war and peace”.
- Possession of nuclear weapons is morally illicit.

# Why such pronouncements are so troubling...

- Misrepresent the nature of deterrence and the evolution of U.S. nuclear weapons policy
- Are corrupted by the political influence of an anti-nuclear ideology
- Are not substantiated with a deeper reflection on traditional Church teaching founded on Just War doctrine, nor provide a contemporary context to this doctrine
- Are not informed through dialogue with Catholic professionals working in the nuclear and national security fields
  - See *“The Challenge of Peace: God’s Promise and Our Response”* (1983)
  - See *“Nuclear Weapons: A View from Los Alamos”* (1983)



# On Deterrence

**Deterrence maintains peace by persuading enemies that any attack may be met with a response that is credible and is undeniably severe.**

- The action of discouraging an action through instilling doubt or **fear** of the consequences, or
- **Dissuading** bad behavior with the **threat of significant punishment** – a strategy designed to discourage an enemy from attacking by threatening retaliation before such an action occurs

**Nuclear deterrence remains the bedrock of U.S. national security, serving as the backstop and foundation of U.S. national defense and the defense of U.S. allies and partners since 1945.**

***As long as nuclear weapons exist, the fundamental role of U.S. nuclear weapons is to deter nuclear attack on the United States, our allies, and partners. The U.S. would only consider the use of nuclear weapons in extreme circumstances to defend the vital interests of the United States or its allies and partners.***

**2022 NPR**

# Until now, the Popes have envisioned a long path toward disarmament requiring transformation of the human heart (metanoia).

“All must realize that there is no hope of putting an end to the building up of armaments, nor of reducing the present stocks, nor, still less — and this is the main point — of *abolishing* them altogether, unless the *process is complete and thorough* and unless *it proceeds from inner conviction*: unless, that is, *everyone sincerely cooperated* to banish the fear and anxious expectation of war with which men are oppressed. If this is to come about, the fundamental principle on which our present peace depends must be replaced by another, which declares that the *true and solid peace of nations consists not in equality of arms but in mutual trust alone*. We believe that this can be brought to pass, and we consider that, since it concerns a matter not only demanded by right reason but also eminently desirable in itself, it will prove to be the source of many benefits.”

St. Pope John XXIII, “*Pacem in Terris*” (1963). Par 113





# The nature of nuclear weapons compels us to think about war with “an entirely new attitude”

Since peace must be born of *mutual trust between nations* and not be imposed on them through fear of the available weapons, everyone must labor to put an end at last to the arms race, and to make a true beginning of disarmament, *not unilaterally* indeed, but proceeding at an *equal pace according to agreement*, and backed up by true and workable safeguards.

*Gaudium Et Spes*, Par. 81 (1965)

# Pope St. John Paul II (1982) at the UN

- Reaffirmed “clear and consistent” teaching of the Catholic Church
  - *Deplored arms race and called for mutual progressive and verifiable reduction of arms*
  - *Urges that independence, freedom and legitimate security of each nation be respected*
- Issued a conditional moral acceptance of deterrence
  - *“Deterrence” not an end in itself, but as a **step on the way toward progressive disarmament***
  - *It is indispensable not to be satisfied with this “minimum”*
- Only realistic response to the threat of war is negotiation
  - *“Destroy war by the words of negotiations, but do not destroy men by the sword” (St. Augustine)*
  - *Reduction of arms: balanced, simultaneous, and internationally controlled*
- Links the goal of disarmament to the goal of human development
  - *“Root cause of insecurity found in the profound crisis of humanity.”*
  - *Disparity between rich and poor living together on one planet will give birth to justified resentment and violence*



## Popular conceptions of nuclear deterrence have been colored by Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) strategy during the Cold War

- Theoretical basis was developed by Thomas Schelling and Hermann Kahn
- MAD: The nuclear force of one side must be able to survive a first strike by the adversary, and then successfully annihilate the adversary's homeland (population centers and industrial centers destroyed via “spasmodic” exchange of nuclear arsenals)
  - *Can be accomplished by a small number of weapons*
  - *Weapons have low precision and high explosive yields*
  - *Tractable calculus for bilateral deterrence (destroy 30% population, 50% industry- McNamara)*
- Principles of MAD are morally indefensible
  - *Protect retaliatory nuclear forces; don't defend population*
  - *Countervalue targeting preferred over counterforce targeting (morally backward)*
  - *Damage limitation and Ballistic Missile Defenses abandoned (hence ABM Treaty)*
  - *“War-fighting” forces to be avoided in lieu of maintaining vulnerability to retaliatory strike*

# “A nuclear war cannot be won, therefore must never be fought.”

Ronald Reagan, 1983 SOTU

- Weapons themselves are **amoral**; moral consideration attends the **intention** with which they are employed
- *Primary moral intention* of a nuclear deterrent is to never have to use nuclear force by **preventing** any initiating aggressive nuclear attack in the first place.
- *Secondary moral intention* involves maintaining a **credible political and public will** to actually use the deterrent nuclear force.
  - *Government policymaking that is transparent*
  - *Public budgeting of resources for the military nuclear forces*
  - *Maintaining R&D as well as physical production infrastructure*
  - *Maintaining a credible and protected command and control system (C3I)*
- Without being backed up by the secondary intention, the primary intention will not be credible and will be perceived as brinksmanship by the adversary, **inviting it to be tested.**

Deterrence is dynamic, not static

## Nuclear policy has evolved along with the composition and size of the stockpile, as well as geopolitical security environment

- U.S. moved from exclusive consideration of *strategic deterrence* to a deterrence posture that was also effective on the battlefield and in the European theater (NATO).
- *Extended deterrence* (providing U.S. nuclear umbrella) required diversification of nuclear weapon types and yields in order to provide NATO allies with confidence that theater/regional nuclear deterrence was credible.
- Counterforce strategies began to replace countervalue strategies in targeting policy
- A *flexible response counterforce strategy* embodies the intent to end hostilities in a limited theater without escalating to more devastating destruction on a global scale (control of escalation “ladder”).

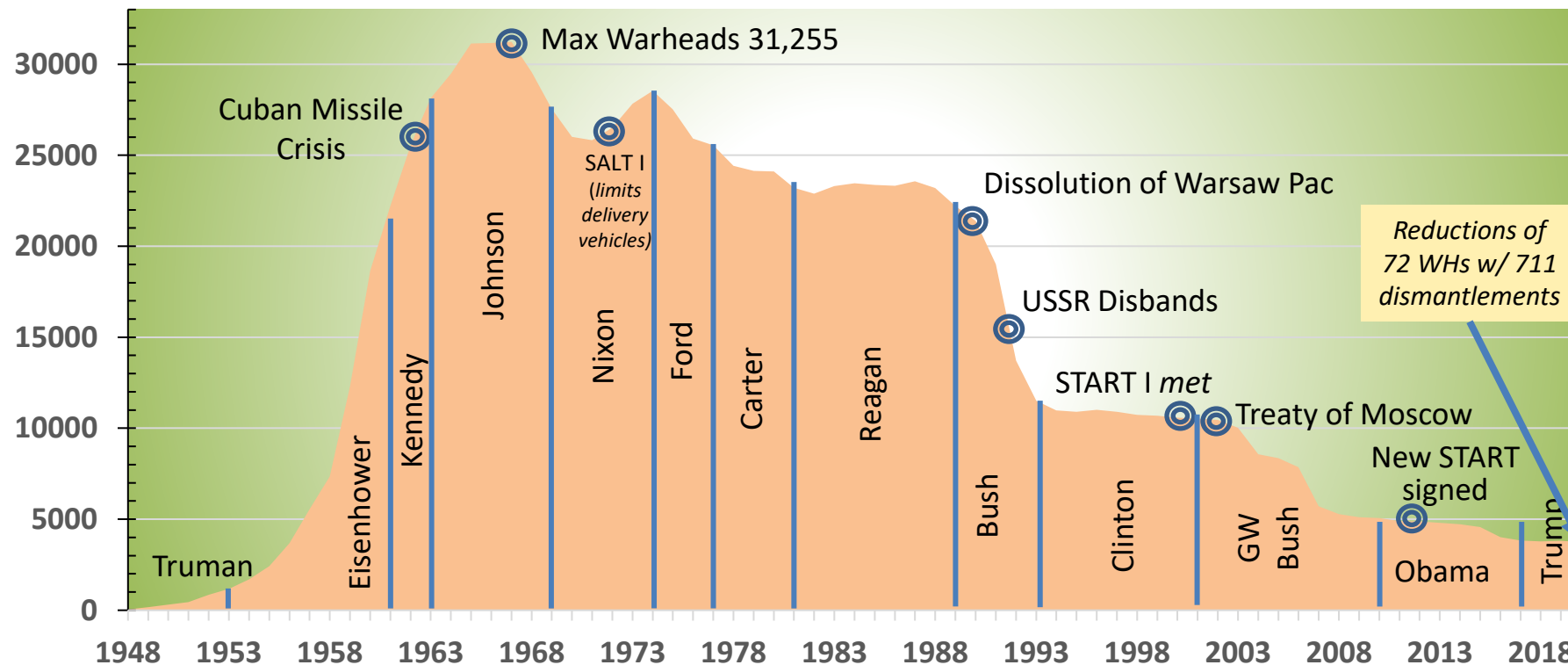


# Nuclear Weapons Stockpile

Chart reflects the changes in the size of Nation's stockpile from a maximum of **31,255** to the 2020 total stockpile of **3750**

- Composed of two types of SLBM warheads
- Two types of ICBM warheads,
- Several types of bombs, and a cruise missile warhead delivered by aircraft

## U.S. Nuclear Stockpile: 1945-2020





# Contrary to Church statements, nuclear deterrence has been successful over the first two nuclear ages.

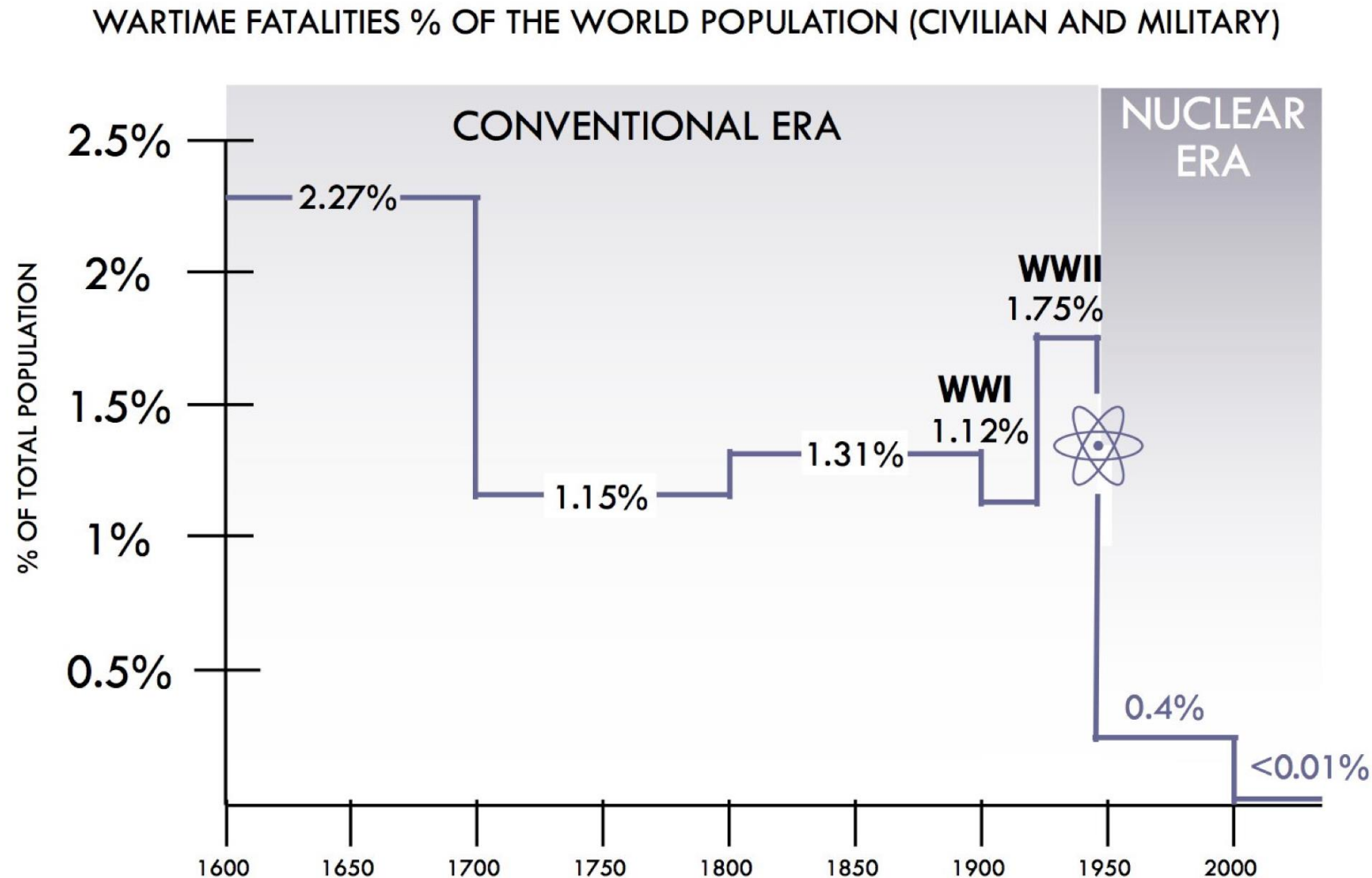


Figure 2. Wartime Fatalities Percentage of World Population  
Data from the DoD Historical Office

# Today we are in the nascent stages of the Third Nuclear Age

- **First Nuclear Age**

- 1945 – 1990
- *Bilateral Cold War standoff between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.*
- *Transitioned from Assured Destruction to Strategic Balance and Defense*

- **Second Nuclear Age**

- 1991 – ~2020
- *De-nuclearization paradigm (START I, Moscow Treaty, and New START)*
- *Nuclear Weapons Stewardship and end of Nuclear Testing*
- *Focus on nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear terrorism (post-9/11)*
- *Consideration of a World Without Nuclear Weapons (Obama, “Four Horsemen”)*
- *An interregnum?*

- **Third Nuclear Age**

- ~2020 – Present
- *Revanchist Russian Federation (2022 war of aggression against Ukraine)*
- *Ascendant China as a nuclear superpower (ICBM silo expansion and MIRV'd missiles)*
- *Iran and DPRK emerging nuclear states with hostile political agendas*



# Challenges posed by Russia

- Numerous strategic over-flights over Europe & North America
- Planned rail-based missile systems
- New high-yield earth-penetrating nuclear warheads
- Probably conducting nuclear explosive testing (“supercritical experiments”?)
- Joint military drills w/North Korea and provisioning of North Korean hackers



Extracted from LA-UR-15-27274





# Russia's so-called "new" Nuclear Systems

**"Satan II" (RS-28 Sarmat)**

ICBM w/ **up to 24 WHs**

**Hyper-glide Vehicle (HGV)**

**Avangard – HGV (deployed)**

ПРОТИВОКОРАБЕЛЬНАЯ РАКЕТА  
3М22 "ЦИРКОН"

**3М22 Tsirkon hypersonic missile**

9/7/21  
10/4/21

**Poseidon Kanyon (Status-6)**

**Nuclear-Powered & Nuclear-Armed Autonomous Torpedo**

**9M729 SSC-8 ("Screwdriver")**

**Non-Strategic Nuclear Weapon (NSNW)**

**Intermediate Range (INF treaty violation)**

**Kh-47M2 Kinzhal**

**Air-launched Ballistic Missile (ALBM)**

**9M730 Burevestnik ("Petrel") SSC-X-9 Skyfall**

**Nuclear-powered Cruise Missile**

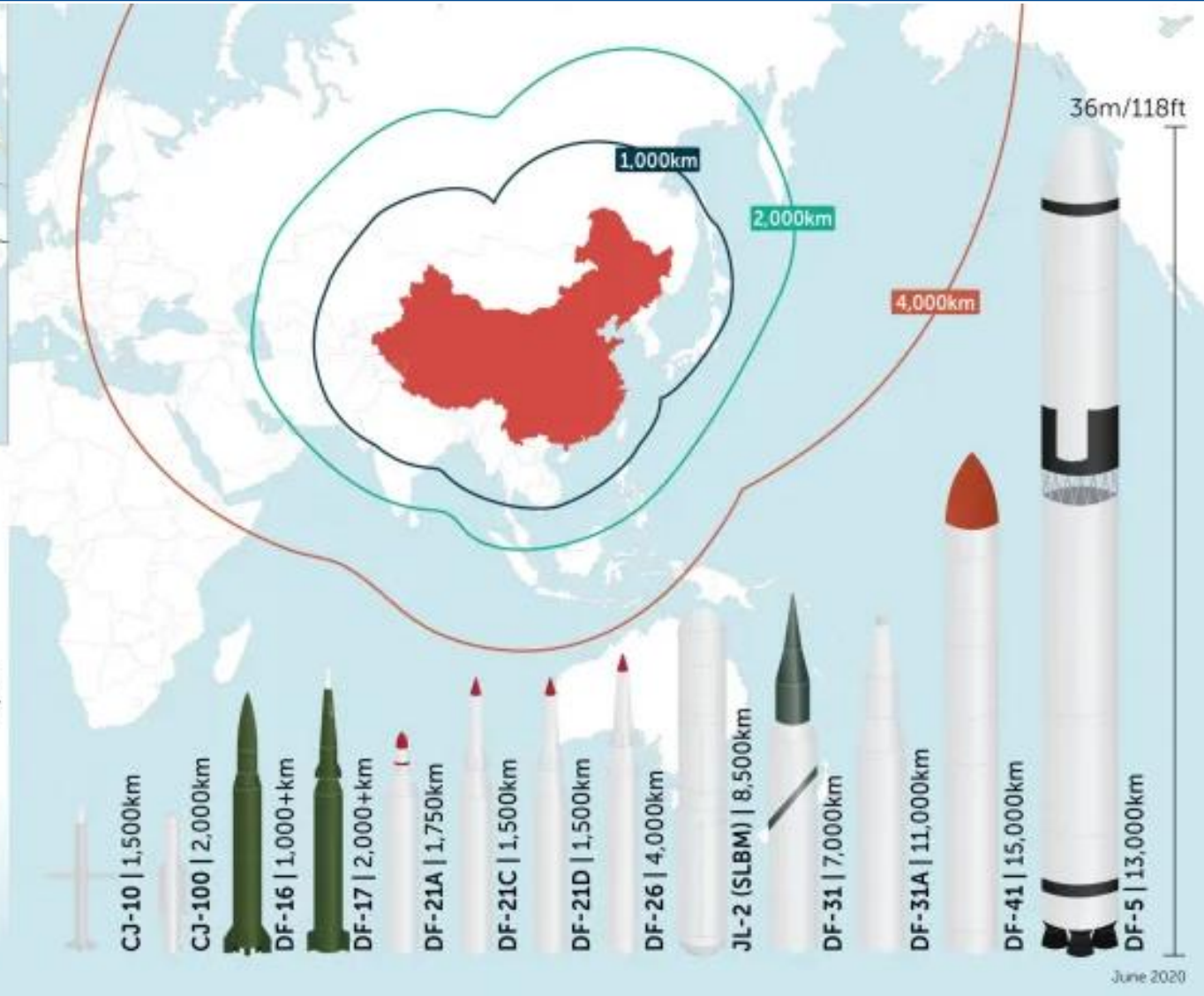


# China's Ballistic and Cruise Missile Threats



China has the most active and diverse missile development program in the world. China is modernizing its ICBMs, developing multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles and hypersonic boost-glide vehicles. China's navy is also deploying a new fleet of nuclear ballistic missile submarines. China's advances in ISR and maneuvering reentry vehicles have given it an emerging capability to attack large naval vessels with long-range ballistic missiles.

CSIS | MISSILE DEFENSE PROJECT







# China Engaged in Most Rapid Expansion & Diversification Nuclear Stockpile EVER



**NEW** MIRV'd ROAD Mobile



**NEW**  
H-20: Nuclear-Capable Bomber (in development)



CSS-4 Mod 3 (DF-5B)

**NEW** Ground-Based MIRV'd ICBM



CSS-X-20 (DF-41)

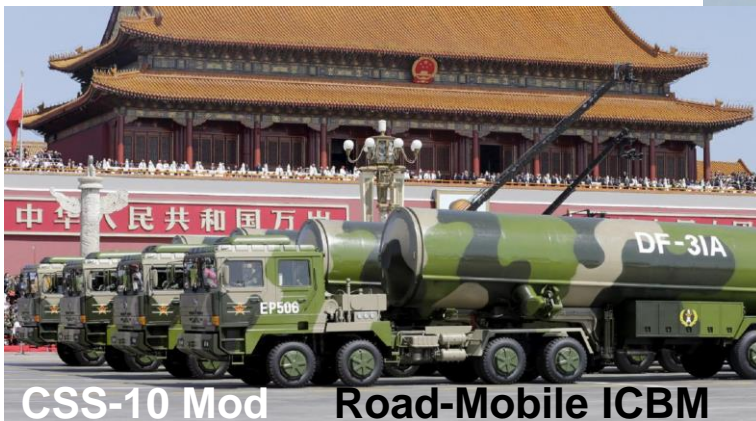
Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM)



Type 094 Chinese SSBN



**NEW**  
JL-3 Test Launch



CSS-10 Mod Road-Mobile ICBM

# The Third Nuclear Age marks the re-emergence of strategic superpower competition on the world stage.

- Both China and Russia will challenge the post-WW II liberal international order (autocracy vs. democracy)
- Simultaneous deterrence of two nuclear superpowers will be substantially different than deterrence in the First and Second Nuclear Ages.
  - *Trilateral deterrence escapes analytical tractability (“Three-Body Problem”)*
  - *Will China and Russia coordinate actions against the United States?*
  - *Combined forces of two adversaries must be considered in deterrence calculus*
  - *Apportionment and survivability of U.S. nuclear forces will be problematic*
  - *Possibility of two simultaneous and coordinated regional wars in different geographical locations – extended deterrence will be challenged as nuclear first-use in two theaters would need to be deterred simultaneously*

# Moral Considerations for the Third Nuclear Age



# Probability that trilateral deterrence will be stable and successful in the long term is no longer certain.

- Deterrence must be complemented by arms control as a *moral imperative* and as a means to prevent an extended arms race
- Post New START verification challenges will be much more challenging
  - *Direct accounting for warheads, components, sub-systems*
  - *On-site verification will demand unprecedented levels of **trust***
- Proceeding to a World Without Nuclear Weapons will require a monitoring and verification effort more challenging, comprehensive, and systematic than anything attempted in arms control before
  - *From bilateral to multilateral negotiations*
  - *Global vs. limited geographical regions*
  - *Involve all aspects of nuclear weapon lifecycles and nuclear fuel cycles*
  - *Objects of accountability will need to include weapons-usable materials*

*In Church deliberations and pronouncements, the importance and difficulty of “mutual and verifiable arms reductions” should not continue to be presented as an obligatory after-thought.*

# Moral considerations for nuclear deterrence in the Third Nuclear Age

- Unilateral disarmament is morally repugnant!
- Arms control and deterrence must be pursued **simultaneously**
  - *Arms control will help build trust and reduce potential damage of deterrence failure*
  - *Arms control without a nuclear deterrent force is a pacifist pipe-dream*
  - *Deterrence without arms control may fail as arms race ensues (nightmare)*
- Modernization of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile will need to continue, and deterrent dynamically evolve to maintain credibility in a very problematic global security milieu
  - *For now, this must be done without resuming nuclear testing*
  - *U.S. production infrastructure is frighteningly obsolete, despite huge budgets*
- Deterrence must remain credible at all levels of conflict
  - ***Escalation control must be strengthened, and command & control enhanced and secured***
- Deterrent nuclear force must trend toward more precision and less collateral damage to civilian populations
- Incorporation of effective active and passive defenses (BMD framework)

# Just War Doctrine is still relevant in the Third Nuclear Age: it provides moral guardrails.

- Just Cause
  - *Defense of freedom and independence of nations*
  - *Post-WWII “rules-based” international order (UN Charter)*
- Competent authority
  - *Command and control must be assured in order to prevent accidental war and ensure escalation control if deterrence fails; cybersecurity is paramount to maintain integrity.*
  - *Humans must never compromise positive moral control in favor of AI-enhanced autonomous systems.*
- Last resort
  - *Communicate, build trust, and negotiate*
  - *Arms Control leading to disarmament is a moral imperative*
  - *Arms reductions must involve verification and eventually become irreversible*
- Right intention
  - *No TOTAL war (e.g., MAD), conditional objectives only*
  - *Ensure that nuclear deterrent is credible in a dynamic geopolitical milieu (no nuclear warfighting)*
  - *If deterrence fails, seek to end hostilities as soon as possible and ensure a just final resolution*

# Just War Doctrine constrains use of nuclear weapons if deterrence were to fail.

- Discrimination

- *Trend toward lower yields and more precision (reduce collateral damage)*
- *Develop and deploy active and passive defensive military systems (BMD+)*
- *Trend away from countervalue targets, move toward counterforce targets*

- Proportionality

- *Keep nuclear threshold as high as possible by strengthening conventional forces*
- *War objectives and scope should be limited*
- *Escalation must be controlled and war must be brought to early termination*
- *Any extended warfighting with nuclear weapons must never be considered*
- *Development of early termination strategies and procedures*
- *Use negotiated arms control to reduce global inventories of nuclear weapons over time (prophylactic action)*

## Church's magisterium must “read the signs of the times” to remain a relevant force for attaining peace in the modern world

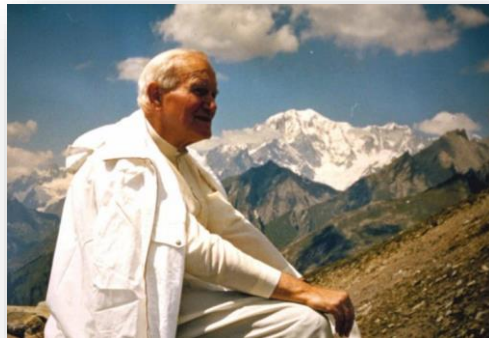
- Aspirational entreaties focusing just on the destructiveness of nuclear weapons will not help “wish them away”.
  - *Insufficient to be compelling for informing the minds and consciences of those involved in the practical realities of nuclear security and maintaining global peace.*
  - *Must be more rigorously bound to Just War Doctrine and Catholic tradition*
  - *Must avoid being co-opted by political agendas*
- Magisterium, both at pontifical and diocesan level, must be willing to also consider perspectives of laity who are personally involved in the practical realities of national security and nuclear weapons work.

“...the Church requires the special help of those who live in the world, are versed in different institutions and specialties, and grasp their innermost significance in the eyes of both believers and unbelievers.”

---

“To the extent that the efforts at arms reduction and then of total disarmament are not matched by parallel ethical renewal, they are doomed in advance to failure”

Pope St. John Paul II, June 7, 1982



**...and more than a little prayer will be required**

*In the tender compassion of our God  
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,  
to shine on those who dwell in darkness  
and the shadow of death,  
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.*

Luke 1: 78-79

# Coming soon...

Late July- August 2023

