
The Ghost of Bertrand Russell Stalks Cheney-Rumsfeld Pentagon

by Jeffrey Steinberg

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The United States nuclear weapons policy known as the “negative security assurance” aimed at stopping the proliferation of nuclear weapons and encouraging all nations not currently possessing nuclear weapons to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and other treaties, was publicly promulgated a quarter-century ago. On June 12, 1978, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance addressed the United Nations Security Council and delivered a pledge from the U.S. government that America would never use nuclear weapons against a non-nuclear power, except under the unique circumstances of that country joining with one of the nuclear powers in an attack on the U.S.A. or its allies.

In 1995, Secretary of State Warren Christopher reaffirmed Washington’s commitment to the negative security assur-

ance, and on April 11, 1995, the other four permanent members of the UN Security Council (China, Russia, Great Britain, and France), all nuclear powers, ratified a Security Council resolution embracing the same principle.

But on Feb. 22, 2002, John Bolton, the senior arms control and disarmament official at the State Department, and a leading neo-conservative hawk, repudiated the negative security assurance as “an unrealistic view of the international situation,” in the aftermath of Sept. 11. Bolton’s announcement that the Bush Administration was abandoning a 24-year U.S. policy that had been endorsed by all of the UN Security Council Permanent Five, was no isolated act of utopian hubris on his part. A month earlier, the Administration had provided the Congress with its Nuclear Posture Review, which had openly discussed the use of nuclear weapons against seven countries—Russia, China, Iraq, Iran,

North Korea, Libya and Syria—only two of which provably had nuclear weapons.

An in-depth review by *EIR* has turned up chilling evidence that a group of utopian war planners, who now hold critical posts in the Pentagon civilian bureaucracy and in the Office of the Vice President, have been promoting a new U.S. imperial doctrine of offensive nuclear war against Third World targets for a dozen years, and are now well on the way to putting their mad scheme into practice. As bad as the Dr. Strangelove Cold War doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) was, these utopians are now promoting a doctrine of “Unilateral Assured Destruction,” to literally terrorize the world into submitting to a new, mini-nuke-armed Pax Americana.

Russian Academician and former Defense Minister official Gen. Leonid Ivashov was correct, in early 2002, in denouncing the new utopian “mini-nuke” scheme as a form of Malthusian warfare. Such madness has not been seen since Lord Bertrand Russell, at the close of World War II, called for the U.S.A. to use its monopoly on nuclear weapons to pre-emptively attack the Soviet Union and establish an Anglo-American-run world government.

‘Nukes in the New World Order’

The corpse of the Soviet empire had not yet been interred when the Russellite idea of pre-emptive nuclear war began to be revived. According to Canadian arms control activist Dr. Fred Knelman, the March 1990 Joint Chiefs of Staff “Military Net Assessment” focused on “increasingly capable Third World threats” of developing weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and demanded that the United States retain and modernize a wide range of nuclear weapons.

Immediately after Operation Desert Storm, Secretary of the Air Force Donald Rice told Congress that the United States must “deter emerging regional nuclear capabilities.” In response, then-Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney issued a top-secret “Nuclear Weapons Employment Policy” (NUWEP), formally tasking military planning for the use of nuclear weapons against Third World nations thought to be capable of developing WMDs. In April 1991, Los Alamos National Laboratory issued the first written proposal for the development of a new generation of mini-nukes, for possible use against the Third World.

According to a retired senior military source familiar with these events, nuclear weapons designers and strategists at America’s leading government laboratories, fearing serious “peace dividend” budget cuts in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, began aggressively promoting the need for such a new generation of mini-nukes, to provide a credible deterrent to Third World states, developing biological, chemical, and nuclear WMDs. The United States could never use strategic nuclear weapons against Third World targets, their argument went. Therefore, it needed to invest research and development dollars in the new generation of nuclear weapons that could credibly be used against Third World “rogue state” targets.



The famous one-world Malthusian “pacifist” Bertrand Russell’s public demands for pre-emptive nuclear attacks on the Soviet Union, from 1946-50, are echoing in the halls of the Pentagon now.

In the Summer of 1991, a team of Los Alamos nuclear weapons scientists delivered a briefing to the Defense Science Board, provocatively titled “Potential Uses for Low-Yield Nuclear Weapons in the New World Order.” Gen. Lee Butler, who headed the Strategic Air Command (soon to be reinvented as the Strategic Command, StratCom), created a Deterrent Study Group, which reported its recommendations to the SAC in Autumn of 1991. The panel was chaired by former Air Force Secretary Thomas Reed, and co-chaired by Col. Michael Wheeler. While Reed and Wheeler were the principal authors of the study, a curious list of advisors were tapped for their input, among them: John Deutch, future Deputy Defense Secretary and CIA Director; Fred Iklé, former Deputy Defense Secretary, co-chair of the Wohlstetter Commission, and suspected member of the “X Committee” of Israeli spies who ran Jonathan Pollard; current National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice; and future CIA Director R. James Woolsey.

The Reed Report recommended that U.S. nuclear weapons be retargeted at “every reasonable adversary around the globe,” and called for the creation of nuclear armed strike forces to counter “nuclear weapons states [that] are likely to emerge.” It also recommended “first use” of nuclear weapons, where U.S. forces faced conventional “impending annihilation . . . at remote places around the globe,” according to William M. Arkin and Robert S. Norris, who wrote a scathing critique of the Reed Report in the April 1992 issue of *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* (“Tiny Nukes for Mini-Minds”).

Perhaps the most explicit statement to appear in the Reed Report promoting a new generation of exotic nuclear weapons was the following: “The technology is now in hand to develop power projection weapons and very low yield nuclear weap-

ons in earth penetrators with precision guidance.”

Simultaneous to the Reed Report, two Los Alamos nuclear weapons scientists who had participated in the July 1991 Defense Science Board briefing, Thomas Dowler and Joseph Howard, published a provocative piece in the Autumn 1991 issue of *Strategic Review*, titled “Countering the Threat of the Well-Armed Tyrant: A Modest Proposal for Smaller Nuclear Weapons.” They argued, “The existing U.S. nuclear arsenal had no deterrent effect on Saddam and is unlikely to deter a future tyrant.” They argued for “the development of new nuclear weapons of very low yields, with destructive power proportional to the risks we will face in the new world environment,” and they specifically called for the development and deployment of “micro-nukes” (with explosive yield of 10 tons), “mini-nukes” (100 tons), and “tiny-nukes” (1 kiloton).

Dowler and Howard concluded: “We doubt that any President would authorize the use of the nuclear weapons in our present arsenal against Third World nations. It is precisely this doubt that leads us to argue for the development of sub-kiloton weapons.”

‘Bush 41’ Rebuffs the Madmen

At this time, the U.S. Air Force launched “Project PLYWD” (“Precision Low-Yield Weapons Design,” pronounced “Project Plywood”) to investigate “a credible option to counter the employment of nuclear weapons by Third World nations.” PLYWD was the outgrowth of a Dec. 17, 1991 briefing by lab scientists and nuclear planners to a joint session of the Defense Science Board and the Defense Policy Board, on “potential NSNF (non-strategic nuclear forces) weapons concepts for the 21st Century,” according to a January 1993 *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* exposé by Arkin (“Nuclear Junkies: Those Lovable Little Bombs”).

In January 1992 testimony before the Congress, Reed let it all hang out: “It is not difficult to entertain a nightmarish vision, in which a future Saddam Hussein threatens American forces abroad, U.S. allies or friends, and perhaps even the U.S. itself, with nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons,” he railed. “If that were to happen, U.S. nuclear weapons may well be a resource for seeking to deter execution of the threat.” Reed then launched into a direct attack on the negative security assurance of 1978, telling the Congress, “We are not comfortable with the . . . suggestion that a nation can engage in any level of chemical or biological aggression and still be shielded by an American non-nuclear pledge.”

Defense Secretary Cheney had opened the first-use Pandora’s Box with his Nuclear Weapons Employment Policy secret mandate, right after Desert Storm. But it appears that President George H.W. Bush was not swayed. On Sept. 27, 1991, Bush declared that the U.S. would eliminate all of its ground-based tactical nuclear weapons. In his Jan. 1992 State of the Union message, he announced plans to reduce the entire U.S. arsenal of non-strategic nuclear weapons. And on Oct. 2, 1992, Bush the Elder approved a moratorium on nuclear weapons testing, a serious blow to those advocat-

ing the development of a new generation of mini-nukes, “bunker busters,” and other exotic nuclear weapons that would all require live-fire testing.

Bush’s stance was at odds with the Pentagon and weapons lab utopians, who continued to peddle the idea of integrating offensive nuclear weapons into the new post-Cold War doctrine of pre-emptive imperial wars. After several false starts and behind-the-scenes policy brawls, Cheney and his utopian aides got in the final word—after Bush lost his 1992 re-election campaign. The January 1993 “Defense Strategy for the 1990s,” in only slightly Aesopian language, peddled the idea of offensive nukes against Third World targets. The principal author of the “Defense Strategy” was I. Lewis Libby, then a deputy to Assistant Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, and currently chief of staff and chief national security advisor to Vice President Cheney. Libby is also notorious as the longtime attorney for Israeli-Russian Mafiya “Godfather” and Ariel Sharon-booster, Marc Rich.

Laying Low But Moving Ahead

Shortly after Bill Clinton entered the White House, Representatives John Spratt (D-S.C.) and Elizabeth Furse (D-Ore.) introduced an attachment to the FY 1994 defense authorization bill, prohibiting U.S. weapons labs from conducting any research and development on low-yield nuclear weapons. The measure, which was passed and signed into law by President Clinton, defined low-yield nukes as having a yield of five kilotons or less. All the micro-, mini- and tiny-nukes envisioned by Dowler and Howard were, in effect, placed in the deep freeze.

Or were they? In his prescient January 1993 *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* piece, “Nuclear Junkies,” Arkin had warned, “The programs are far from dead. Support for [mini-nukes] has spread like a virus, infecting the nuclear laboratories, the Air Force and the Navy, Strategic Command (formerly SAC), the Defense Nuclear Agency, and the Central and European Commands. . . . Nuclear enthusiasts publicly describe continued nuclear testing and research as a way for the labs to maintain ‘nuclear competence’ and to prevent technological surprise in the future—with the side-benefit of improving weapons safety. They say they have no hidden agenda. . . . But behind the traditional ‘safety’ advocates hide a new, post-Gulf War constituent—nuclear zealots intent on developing a new generation of small nuclear weapons designed for waging wars in the Third World.”

Indeed, buried deep within the vast Pentagon bureaucracy, at least one mini-nuke program was carried all the way through, from research and development to field deployment, during the Clinton era. Greg Mello, director of the Los Alamos Study Group, penned a most revealing article in the June 1, 1997 *Washington Post*, under the headline, “The Birth of a New Bomb—Shades of Dr. Strangelove: Will We Learn to Love the B61-11?”

According to Mello, in October 1993, Harold Smith, Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Atomic Energy, sought

Stockpile Stewardship Conference Planning Meeting Minutes

10 January 2003

Pentagon, Room 3C912

0930-1200

1. Mr. Fred Celec (ATSD(NCB/NM)) opened the meeting on behalf of Dr. Dale Klein (ATSD(NCB)). A list of attendees is at attachment 1.
2. Mr. Celec began by discussing the background leading to the Stockpile Stewardship Conference. The genesis of the conference is the October 2002 memo from the NWC Chairman, Mr. Pete Aldridge (USD(AT&L)), to the NWC on risk in the stockpile stewardship program; specifically, the risk associated with not testing our nuclear weapons. Ambassador Linton Brooks (NWC member and Acting Administrator, NNSA) and General Peter Pace (NWC member and Vice Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff) replied to the memo, expressing their support for the conference and offering comments on its expected content. The scope of the conference then evolved to include additional topics associated with the nuclear deterrent in a post-Nuclear Posture Review environment. The Stockpile Stewardship Conference will be used to present the results of the work of four panels to the NWC, and others as appropriate, and to establish recommendations for the way-ahead. Although the conference will consider issues related to nuclear testing, it is not the policy of the Administration to return to nuclear testing.

3. **ACTION:** The Executive Committee members agreed to revise the draft purpose statement.

Purpose: In concert with the NPR, evaluate the issues of maintaining confidence in the nuclear deterrent; evaluate the risks in our current assessment process and ways to reduce those risks, and the current and planned infrastructure capacity and capability.

4. The organization of the conference was discussed. Mr. Aldridge, the NWC Chairman, will chair the conference and Admiral Ellis (STRATCOM) will host it. The preparatory work will be performed by four panels. An Executive Committee (ExCom), chaired by Dr. Dale Klein, will provide oversight, assure that the work of the panels is in alignment throughout the process, integrate the findings of the panels, and plan the conference. To assure alignment of the panels, it was agreed that the ExCom would meet several times during the process to review the progress of the panels. It was agreed that the four panel chairs will be part of the ExCom. The members are:

ATSD(NCB) – Dr. Klein, Chairman

STRATCOM - RADM Byrd

Joint Staff – RDML Walsh

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The leaked announcement of a Jan. 10, 2003 meeting in the Pentagon which aimed to begin a period of operational studies and trials of mini-nuclear weapons for use against “rogue states.”

approval to develop an alternative to the B53 high-yield nuclear bomb, which was the principal “bunker buster” weapon in the U.S. arsenal. The B53 was also the heaviest payload nuke in use, weighing 8,900 pounds, and only deployable from B-52 bombers.

Under the guise of “weapons modernization,” Smith was pushing the development of the first mini-nuke, the B61-Mod 11.

By November 1993, despite Spratt-Furce, the Nuclear Weapons Command Standing Safety Committee had approved the B61-11 proposal. On Feb. 6, 1995, Deputy Secretary of Defense John Deutch, a veteran of the Reed Panel advisory board, signed off on the plan. The project was placed on a fast track: On April 18, 1995, the Department of Energy made a classified request to six Congressmen to get funding for the B61-11. The money was flowing by July 1995. On Nov. 15, 1995 Smith pressed for the weapons labs to accelerate the R&D timetable, so the first B61-11 could be delivered to the military before the end of 1996.

The new nuclear weapon that replaced the B53 weighed 1,200 pounds, and could carry a nuclear payload ranging from 300 tons to 340 kilotons.

Even before the first B61-11 was delivered, Smith was threatening its use. He told a group of Pentagon correspondents in Spring 1996 that the United States would soon have

a nuclear bunker-buster that could destroy an alleged underground Libyan chemical weapons plant at Tarhunah, 40 miles southeast of the capital, Tripoli, which the United States considered a serious threat. On May 7, 1996, Defense Department spokesman Ken Bacon scrambled to repudiate Smith’s threat, telling reporters at a regular Pentagon briefing, “There is no consideration of using nuclear weapons, and any implication we would use nuclear weapons against this plant pre-emptively is just wrong.”

Don’t Forget Israel

The current Bush Administration, top-heavy with mini-nuke proponents from the “Bush 41” Pentagon, has put the issue of pre-emptive nuclear war back on the front burner. The *Los Angeles Times* reported on Jan. 25, 2003, in an article by Paul Richter, “As the Pentagon continues a highly visible buildup of troops and weapons in the Persian Gulf, it is also quietly preparing for the possible use of nuclear weapons in a war against Iraq. . . . Military officials have been focusing their planning on the use of tactical nuclear arms in retaliation for a strike by the Iraqis with chemical or biological

weapons, or to pre-empt one.” Richter reported that one plan under consideration would include “the possible use of so-called bunker-buster nuclear weapons against deep buried military targets.”

A senior retired U.S. military intelligence official, close to the Bush White House, told *EIR* that President Bush has not signed off on these nuclear weapons schemes, and that, beyond the B61-11, no other mini-nukes presently exist in the U.S. arsenal. Furthermore, he emphasized that even the untested B61-11 is a most dubious proposition, with a majority of nuclear experts contending that the idea that such bunker-busters would have limited radioactive spread, was pure nonsense.

Nevertheless, the utopian gang in the Bush civilian Pentagon bureaucracy and the Office of the Vice President have thrown their weight behind the idea of pre-emptive nuclear war against Third World “rogue” targets. This poses one of the most profound threats to global peace and stability in a generation. While there are undoubtedly sane voices in the U.S. military and intelligence establishment who would counter this new generation of Dr. Strangeloves, were the Utopians to reach for the nuclear button, who can vouch for Ariel Sharon’s nuclear-armed Israel, which plays a perverse game of “monkey see, monkey do,” with Washington’s war party?