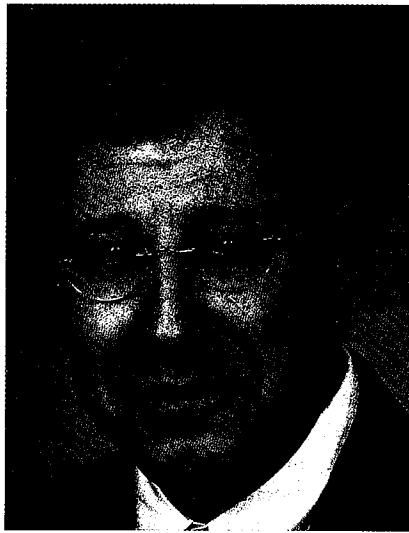


Frank Miller

U.S. and British nuclear weapons will continue to serve the same role they have for many years: to undergird international stability by providing the ultimate guarantee of security for the United States and the United Kingdom, respectively, and for their allies. (If France were to change its policy and unambiguously extend its deterrent to cover its allies, the same statement could be made regarding the future role of French nuclear weapons.)

The long-sought end of the Cold War has not eliminated potential military threats to the United States and its allies, nor has it eliminated the knowledge of how to build nuclear weapons. The apparent determination of rogue states to marry their existing missile capability with nuclear weapons underscores that, without the U.S. deterrent and our ability to extend it, our non-nuclear-weapon allies will either be subject to nuclear blackmail or will need to consider beginning their own nuclear programs. The U.S. umbrella eliminates both alternatives. The positive diplomatic and, indeed, nonproliferation benefits of this, although often ignored, are important and real.

Are U.S. and British nuclear weapons a deterrent to all threats we face in the post-Sept. 11 world? Of course not. No single weapons system or military capability has ever been capable of deterring the full panoply of threats facing us. Robust, advanced, and transformed conventional and counterterrorist forces and the intelligence able to support, direct, and target them promptly need to assume a much greater role in U.S. national security strategy. The Bush administration has made this an important element of its defense policy by requiring that the Department of Defense emphasize the development of smart, long-range, conventional weapons and limited ballistic missile defenses precisely to deal with the proliferation threats of the 21st century. By the same token, however, such conven-



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tional capabilities can never fully replace the roles played by U.S. nuclear forces.

Those roles do not require, however, a massive strategic arsenal. The welcome and continuing reductions of U.S. and Russian strategic forces mandated by the 1991 START I and, since 2002, by the Moscow Treaty, will result by 2012 in an 80 percent reduction in deployed strategic nuclear warheads from the 1990 level and a roughly two-thirds reduction from 2002 levels. This accomplishment, the full achievement of which could even be accelerated, is a dramatic development.

To those critics who belittle it by citing that nondeployed strategic nuclear warheads are not constrained by treaty, I would note that no other nuclear arms control/reduction treaty—SALT I, SALT II, the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, START I, or START II—addressed nondeployed warheads and that, of that set of treaties, only START II addressed deployed warhead numbers at all. All of the other treaties regulated delivery platforms. To those who criticize it by citing Article VI of the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), which calls for good-faith negotiations toward nuclear disarmament and on a treaty on general

and complete disarmament, I would reply that the ultimate abolition of nuclear weapons can be attained responsibly only in world conditions far removed from those in which we now live.

That said, we should not be content with the reductions already agreed on. The nondeployed stockpiles, which are also being reduced significantly, can and should be reduced further. Reductions beyond Moscow Treaty levels should be pursued in the next few years, but to be successful, this must be done in the manner pioneered by President George W. Bush. The task of actually achieving reductions and doing so in a manner that builds U.S.-Russian cooperation rather than one that creates enmity and discord between the two capitals can no longer be left to the U.S. and Russian arms control bureaucracies. They move too slowly; manufacture rather than solve issues; and, by impeding progress and focusing on relative trivia, create distrust between the countries. With respect to nonstrategic nuclear weapons, there is no need for a negotiation. U.S. forces are already at minimal levels. It remains for Russia to follow further the U.S. example and to carry out fully its 1991-1992 nuclear initiative commitments, especially in light of the risk that the loss or theft of even one of these weapons poses to Russia itself as well as to the rest of the world.

Finally, in looking to the future, we must also reflect on the past and from where we have come. The U.S. and British nuclear deterrents played a crucial role in determining the new political/military environment. They helped prevent war with the Soviet Union and protected the defenders of freedom for more than 40 crucial years. During that period, the doctrines underlying deterrence evolved, but what did not change was that the weapons of war were built, deployed, and retired without ever having been used in anger. It was their job to prevent war, not to fight it, and they did that job well. Generations of weapons once fielded—Thor and Jupiter, Atlas and Titan, Pershing and GLCM, B-47s and B-58s and the V-bombers, Polaris and Poseidon—are now only museum pieces. This will happen in time to the current systems as well, and peace and freedom will continue to be preserved. **ACT**

Frank Miller was President George W. Bush's senior director for defense policy and arms control at the National Security Council. His lengthy career in the Department of Defense includes serving as director for strategic forces policy in the Reagan administration and deputy assistant secretary of defense for nuclear forces and arms control policy during the administration of President George H. W. Bush. He is currently a vice president of the Cohen Group.