

Weekly ICBM EAR Report



Image: Illustration of the Sentinel next-generation ICBM. Credit: Northrop Grumman - Space News

Prepared by Peter Huessy

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ICBM EAR Week of September 14-20, 2026

Prepared by Peter Huessy, Senior Fellow, National Institute for Deterrence Studies, Senior Fellow at the Gold Institute for International Strategy, and President of Geostrategic Analysis

Key Events

Peter Huessy on September 15, “Nuclear Deterrence and Russian Coercive Threats”
With Peter Huessy, Senior Fellow NIDS and Gold Institute

On The John Batchelor Show, Senior Fellow Peter Huessy examines Vladimir Putin’s use of nuclear threats as blackmail and coercion, and the U.S. extended deterrence that answers it. [Listen →](#)

Here is the transcript from the Robert Taylor remarks at the NIDS nuclear seminar from US Strategic Command.



NIDS_Robert_Taylor_
Seminar_Transcript_S

Upcoming Virtual Events:

9/25/2026 – General In-Bum Chun – Deterrence, Education, and War Prevention on the Korean Peninsula

10/2/2026 – Dr. Mathew Kroenig – Deterring Two Nuclear Peers: America’s Strategy for China, Russia, and the Future of Nuclear Deterrence

10/16/2026 - Maj Gen (Ret) Garrett Harencak – The Nuclear Knowledge Gap: Why Deterrence Matters

10/30/2026 - VADM’s Robert M. “Rob” Gaucher, Adm Douglas L. Williams and Adm Richard Seif on the Future of the Undersea Nuclear Submarine Deterrent

You can register for all of our virtual and in-person events at [Events - National Institute for Deterrence Studies](#). If you can’t make it to an event, our weekly topical podcasts are available here: [NIDS Podcast Network - National Institute for Deterrence Studies](#).

Russian Nuclear Threat

An additional review of Russian nuclear threats was distributed by NIPP’s Mark Schneider and which is here:

Potential for Russia Escalating War Continues

Summary:

- Escalation between Russia and the West is becoming more likely as Russia’s war against Ukraine continues. The potential of a new front in Ukraine, with troops possibly coming south from Belarus, and hybrid threats from Russia against Europe continue to rise.
- An expanded military threat will become more likely following Russia’s upcoming Duma elections on September 18–20, if Russian President Vladimir Putin calls for a mobilization.
- Russia appears to be ramping up its hybrid attacks, most recently in Germany after reports of an armed drone near the Leipzig/Halle airport and in Poland after a thwarted assassination attempt against a Ukrainian rapper.

The potential of wider conflict between Russia and the West, or the opening of a new front in Ukraine—with troops possibly coming south from Belarus in a second attempt to take Kyiv—has been gaining speculation for a while now. Such guesses, including a rumored new and full mobilization after Russia’s State Duma elections on

September 18–20, do not necessarily augur a massive new conflict in Europe (see [EDM](#), June 23). Escalation seems all but a foregone conclusion in Russia's war against Ukraine, but how the war may escalate remains debatable. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) substantially outweighs Russia militarily, helped by unity of command. A new mass kinetic conflict becomes more practical after the Duma elections, with the possibility of Russian President Vladimir Putin calling for a mobilization. While elections do not really matter in Putin's system, as the results will be whatever the Kremlin wants them to be, Moscow prefers not to falsify data too much for fear of provoking another round of mass protests similar to the 2011–2013 Bolotnaya protests (see [EDM](#), May 7, 2012). This is arguably the main reason Kremlin spin doctors decided to prevent the liberal opposition party Yabloko, which campaigned on a platform of peace, from running in this year's elections ([Meduza](#), August 18). As a result, any kinetic move is expected to come after the elections so the public cannot register their opposition in any form. Rumors of a new mobilization are being taken seriously enough that some human rights defenders have prepared guides for conscripts and mobilized reservists on how to refuse to serve ([Meduza](#), August 14). Similarly, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov gave an interview to Russian news outlet *Vesti*, in which he threatened the United Kingdom for the "direct participation of British missile forces" in an August 17 strike on Russia ([Vesti](#), August 18). Lavrov said he will "feel sorry for Britain" if it continues aiding Ukraine ([Vedomosti](#), August 18). The ostensible trigger for such a rebuke was reporting that U.K.-made drones from the Callen-Lenz brand of BAE Systems had been supplied to Ukraine for at least six months and used to attack refineries in Volgograd and Yaroslavl ([United24 Media](#), August 16). Putin has set his sights on ending NATO's influence in Europe. One of Moscow's public demands to avert war in 2021 was that NATO members not deploy troops to Eastern Europe ([Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#), December 17, 2021). As goals evolve during war, so too has this demand. Putin allegedly set a goal in 2025 of achieving "the collapse of NATO and the European Union from within" by the end of 2026, with one possible way of doing so through Moldova ([Meduza](#), August 14). Russia trained forces in Serbia to interfere in the September 2025 elections in Moldova and hoped to use the country as a springboard for further hybrid attacks against the West (see [EDM](#), September 25, 2025). Reportedly, Orthodox priests were also given money to buy the votes of pensioners in favor of the pro-Moscow candidate ([Center for Countering Disinformation](#), September 1, 2025). Moldovan President Maia Sandu's victory and the country's continued path toward integration with the European Union can be attributed, in part, to the Moldovan security forces, which prevented Kremlin operatives from acting freely. The threat of new hybrid attacks in Europe, however, is still serious. This is an example of Russia's use of hybrid attacks as a form of escalation. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has warned European countries of possible Russian hybrid attacks in Europe, most probably in Poland or the Baltic, with the aim of re-connecting to the exclave of Kaliningrad ([Gordon.ua](#), August 13). Some European officials do not rule out the possibility that the act of preparing for war was itself a hybrid psyops move designed to spread panic in the target countries. This may take the form of a false-flag attack on infrastructure in Latvia or Poland. In Germany, the Leipzig/Halle airport, which is used for NATO logistics and is a European hub for Ukrainian Antonov Airlines, suspended flights temporarily after detecting an armed drone near a plane ([Parlament.ua](#), August 13). Markus Reisner, an Austrian colonel, said in an interview with German newspaper *Welt* that the drone discovery represented a "completely new level of threat" and, while it is impossible to be sure of who sent it, the most likely culprit (and beneficiary) is Moscow. He went on to say that while a direct military clash between Moscow and the West is unlikely, the threat of information chaos is imminent and real. In this case, "1,000 Internet trolls in our societies are more effective than 100,000 heavily armed soldiers" ([Welt](#), August 17).

Quotes of the Week

The Finnish Defense Ministry: Announced the country is joining France's nuclear deterrence initiative, calling the move a "natural step" that allies Norway, Sweden and Denmark have already taken.

Sen. Deb Fischer (R-NE): Supporters of the Golden Dome missile defense system still have work to do to build support on Capitol Hill and especially relying on budget reconciliation to fully fund the program going forward.

Rep. Don Bacon (R-NE): "Great news! The Air Force just informed me that it has approved \$150M for design work toward a project to deliver a new multi-facility campus to bed down one squadron of E-4C Survivable Air Operations Center aircraft and associated equipment and operations at @Offutt_AFB."

Air Force Secretary Troy Meink: The United States has deployed "on-orbit space control weapons capable of defending the joint force against hostile adversary action."

Maj. Gen. Ty Neuman, Eighth Air Force and J-GSOC commander: Long range strike operations underscored the bomber force's readiness and endurance while reinforcing the need for penetrating, low-observable capabilities and continued modernization to hold increasingly hardened and defended targets at risk.

Strategic Command Commander Adm. Rich Correll: Discussions are "essential to preserving senior leader decision space and ensuring we can present the broadest array of military options with the Joint Force to shape strategic outcomes."

USSF Chief of Space Operations Gen. Douglas A. Schiess: "As I reiterated [Tuesday], Guardians operate on-orbit weapons that can defend the Joint Force against space-enabled attacks. We don't just monitor the domain. We stand ready to defend it, all with the ultimate aim of deterring conflict."

NNSA Principal Deputy Administrator Scott Pappano: Spent a full day at the Nevada National Security Site and got an inside look at modern stockpile management and deterrence capabilities in action.

Vice Defence Minister Kim Kang Il: North Korea's status as a nuclear weapons state was irreversible and pledged to continue expanding its nuclear arsenal.

General Dale White, Director of Critical Major Weapon Systems for the Department of Defense: "While [first Sentinel ICBM assembled] is a significant achievement, we will keep driving, firmly focused on delivering a modernized, credible strategic deterrent that will safeguard the nation and its allies well into the future. This is more than a milestone; this integration demonstrates our commitment to moving forward with the pace necessary to modernize the ground-based leg of our nuclear triad and deliver critical capability to the warfighter."

China

They Always Blame America—Again

First reported in the *South China Morning Post*, a recent *documentary* celebrating the 99th anniversary of the People's Liberation Army (PLA)—China's military—features a segment on Cui Daohu, an army engineer who works "in the deep mountains and deserts... in unknown places... building houses for missiles." The video, produced by China's national television broadcaster CCTV, is significant for two main reasons: It is the first acknowledgment of the silo project from a state-linked source in China and, in it, Cui emphasized the rush to complete the project, a requirement he says originated from high up in the government. The latter is an important data point in explaining Chinese leadership's motivation for its nuclear expansion. The documentary's framing of the importance of filling gaps in China's nuclear deterrent is significant. The *urgency suggests China's growing nuclear arsenal is driven by exogenous insecurities, like the US pursuit of Golden Dome, rather than a change in nuclear doctrine or a desire to employ nuclear weapons in a more aggressive manner.* [Editor's Note: This quote from "The Proliferation News" assures us China has not changed its nuclear use or deterrent strategy despite increasing (projected to 2035) its nuclear warheads 250%. But the catalyst for the Chinese expansion was the US research and development in Golden Dome. However, the new Chinese ICBM silos were discovered in 2023 while Golden Dome was put in the DoD budget in mid-2025. The pursuit to kill missile defenses has a long pedigree among America's enemy's. Remember in 1968, USSR General Secretary Breschnev called President-

elect Nixon and demanded that missile defenses had to be banned. Moscow claimed the "limited" defense proposed (1966) by then Secretary of Defense McNamara wasn't aimed at China, as claimed, but at the USSR. In 1972, the US Senate approved the ABM Treaty banning all missile defenses except for a token deployment of 100 interceptors. And in 1997, the Russian Duma added a provision to START II, requiring that all missile defense research be limited to the laboratory. And Gorbachev turned down Reagan's offer of eliminating ballistic missiles because Reagan would not also agree to eliminate all deployments of missile defense. What the essay writer misses is what was the reason for Golden Dome? It was to deter Russia, China and North Korea, among other nations, from using missiles, drones and rockets as instruments of blackmail, coercion and terror.]

Key ICBM Development

[First Sentinel ICBM Fully Assembled for Planned 2027 Test Launch - The Aviationist](#)

By: [Kai Greet](#) Published on: September 16, 2026 at 1:46 AM CEST

Some three years after a massive victory for the Sentinel by a House vote of 308 in favor and 115 against, the Sentinel is working rapidly toward its first flight launch in 2027, working toward a deployment sometime in the early 2030's which would be the first new ICBM deployed by the United States since October 1986, now 40 years ago, and which was itself 16 years after the first Minuteman III was deployed. An LGM-35A Sentinel intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) has been vertically stacked at Vandenberg Space Force Base, California, as preparations continue ahead of the missile's anticipated first test launch next year. The LGM-35A Sentinel, built by Northrop Grumman, is due to replace the U.S. Air Force's venerable force of LGM-30 Minuteman III missiles which have stood on alert, loaded with nuclear warheads, since 1970. Initial deployment is penned in for the early 2030s, providing the scheduled 2027 test launch proceeds according to plan. The completion of the Sentinel's vertical stacking was the result of a four month program of transportation and testing, verifying all of the major components as well as ensuring the readiness of handling processes and personnel. Individual parts of the Sentinel stack have been tested extensively in isolation, including [test firings](#) of the solid-fueled first, second, and third stages. The Mk21A reentry vehicle that will sit on top of the missile in service and carry the nuclear payload has been tested using Minotaur I launch vehicles. Current plans are for each missile to carry a single warhead, though the theoretical launch payload for the missile is widely thought to be able to support multiple warheads and/or decoy and countermeasure systems. Similarly, the Minuteman III was designed with the capability to deploy as many as three independently targetable warheads but current doctrine limits each missile to one warhead. "Sentinel is no longer conceptual or designs for what the nation's next-generation ICBM looks like; it's a physical, fully integrated system that is one major step closer to being ready for flight testing." Said General Dale White, Director of Critical Major Weapon Systems for the Department of Defense. "While this is a significant achievement, we will keep driving, firmly focused on delivering a modernized, credible strategic deterrent that will safeguard the nation and its allies well into the future." "This is more than a milestone, this integration demonstrates our commitment to moving forward with the pace necessary to modernize the ground-based leg of our nuclear triad and deliver critical capability to the warfighter," he added. The [first flight test Critical Design Review](#) for the LGM-35 was completed alongside the stacking event by 719th Test Squadron of the Air Force Test Center (AFTC) and Northrop Grumman. The 719th TS, headquartered at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, oversees testing, evaluation, modernization, and life extension for all U.S. Air Force ICBMs. Northrop Grumman's vice president and general manager for strategic deterrent systems, Amanda Davis, said: "This vertical assembly demonstrates the momentum toward test launching Sentinel in 2027 and having missiles on alert by the early 2030s, ensuring the United States' ground-based nuclear capabilities remain strong and reliable for decades to come. "The first test launch, at least, will be conducted from above ground. For Minuteman III test launches, Vandenberg is equipped with a number of Minuteman III-style silos, and presumably the same will apply for the Sentinel in the future. The first prototype Sentinel silo is currently [being developed by Northrop Grumman in Utah](#).

634 operational Sentinel missiles are to be procured by the U.S. Air Force, not including 25 missiles dedicated for developmental use. These 634 missiles will support a frontline force of 400 missiles, allowing units to be rotated in and out for maintenance and upgrades over time.

Congressional Strategic Developments

The House on September 14, 2026, for a third time, voted to end the war in Iran, approving a war powers resolution that would halt President Donald Trump's ability to continue military action without congressional approval.

Democratic lawmakers are pushing a bill to disapprove of a nuclear cooperation agreement struck between the United States and Saudi Arabia in a bid to strike down the proposal during a three-month period of congressional review. Democratic Reps. Gregory Meeks, the top Democrat on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, along with Brad Sherman, John Garamendi and Don Beyer introduced a Joint Resolution of Disapproval on Wednesday, shortly before lawmakers left Washington to return home ahead of midterm elections. A vote could come in November, after the midterms. Without a two-thirds vote, President Donald Trump could veto Meeks' bill and the nuclear deal would take effect as it is written.

International Strategic Developments

Saudi Arabia's approach to nuclear power reflects a potential trend among U.S. allies to hedge their bets when it comes to security guarantees and keep nuclear options open. Other U.S. allies and partners are also showing a greater interest in developing independent nuclear programs. [From Proliferation News] The agreement submitted to Congress is much improved over what was leaked to the press. The actual deal does have several worthwhile provisions that reduce the....risk...[From Proliferation News]

Poland and Ukraine denounced Russian strikes close to the Polish border, including on a Warsaw-bound train and near a frontier checkpoint, as an escalation in the war.

Finnish President Alexander Stubb: "The defense partnership between Finland and France is deepening. Our cooperation took a significant step forward this summer when France announced its contribution of troops to NATO's Forward Land Forces in Finland. Today, we took a new step forward as Finland joined the French forward deterrence initiative. The initiative is first and foremost about strengthening European security. It reinforces Europe's responsibility for its own defense and helps prevent escalation. The French initiative does not replace or overlap with NATO's nuclear deterrence. Finland's foremost priority is to act as part of NATO and the European Union. Finland does not intend to station nuclear weapons on its territory in peacetime."

Administration Strategic Developments

The National Nuclear Security Administration's Principal Deputy Administrator Scott Pappano recently spent a full day at the Nevada National Security Site and got an inside look at . From PULSE to P-Tunnel, Principal Deputy Administrator Pappano got an inside look at modern stockpile management and deterrence capabilities in action. His visit also spanned the historic Sedan Crater and the Mercury Shooting Range, highlighting both the rich legacy of @NNSANevada and the daily protective force operations that keep the site safe."

The Air Force: Announced two major B-52 modernization efforts reached key acquisition milestones, with the engine replacement program entering engineering and manufacturing development following its June Milestone B decision and the radar upgrade receiving Milestone C approval for low-rate initial production in August.

First Sentinel ICBM Fully Assembled for Planned 2027 Test Launch

ICBM EAR Essay of the Week

Always Blame America

RealClearDefense.com, Sept. 11 | [Peter Huesy](#)

In "The Powder Keg in Outer Space" Jeffrey Lewis warns the United States, Russia, and China may not yet be in an arms race, but they are gearing up for one. He worries that "Washington is building a new intercontinental ballistic missile, strategic bomber, and ballistic missile submarine." And Russia is developing a "heavy ICBM and a new warhead while planning upgrades to its submarines and bombers." Even worse, he notes "China has dug more than 300 new missile silos and fielded air-launched ballistic missiles, and it is developing a new generation of submarines and a stealth bomber." He concludes all three countries are making decisions about modernizing their nuclear weapons programs "that will bear fruit in the decades to come—a worrisome but notable reversal after decades in which the United States and Russia dismantled thousands of nuclear weapons and China seemed content maintaining a minimal deterrent."

What happened? Lewis thinks the U.S. ruined any chance for arms control by getting out of the ABM Treaty in 2002. It was only then that Russia and China decided to go forward with their own aggressive nuclear modernization plans. What's wrong with this grievance theory of nuclear arms racing? First, while the U.S. did jettison the ABM Treaty in 2002, over the next decade the U.S. and Russia agreed to two strategic arms deals with Russia—the Moscow Treaty and New START which cut nuclear warheads from 6000 to roughly 2000, a big 67% reduction. Second, the U.S. decided in 2010, some 16 years ago, in a bi-partisan agreement between the Obama administration and the U.S. Congress, to proceed with the nuclear modernization effort we are now undertaking. Third, the U.S. is not engaging in any arms race or contemplating entering such a race as the modernization effort only replaces our legacy nuclear systems that are between 42-70 years old. And that replacement would leave the U.S. with a nuclear deterrent force at exactly the level agreed to under the New START agreement of 2010. Fourth, the decisions have been made to undertake this modernization effort as the only alternative would have been to gradually disarm through ongoing obsolescence. And fifth, the current U.S. policy is hardly a reversal of 2010's decision. It is in fact a continuation of the 2010 non-partisan agreement to bolster our nuclear deterrent for what now appears to be an even more difficult and tough future nuclear environment. While it is true the U.S. might add to its nuclear force, in the real world the U.S. is doing what it must to deter. And that includes missile defense. The current arsenal may be augmented through the deployment of theater or regional nuclear forces such as a new land launched or sub launched cruise missile, but both were not ever banned by any arms deal. And whatever limited number of additional strategic and extended deterrent weapons the U.S. does deploy, it is not in search of any objective requiring some kind of "arms race." The U.S. already faces a very lopsided regional or theater nuclear balance that is getting worse. The 2023 Strategic Posture Commission recognized this, for example, and unanimously agreed that it needs to be remedied quickly. That is not the U.S. racing but trying to right an imbalance.

Lewis provides no current alternative to the U.S. replacing its aging and legacy force but nonetheless he has to make it appear as the U.S. is doing bad things. The U.S. has to be at fault as Ambassador Jeanne Kirkpatrick famously said, "They always have to blame America." Lewis cleverly resurrects an old bete noire from the height of the Cold War. U.S. missile defenses are bad, bad, bad. He complains that in 2002 the U.S. left the ABM Treaty and built a missile defense. Bad, bad, bad. This narrative allows Lewis to excuse the Russian and Chinese nuclear buildup, although he concedes the 2002-3 U.S. missile defense build was minimal compared to what Russia and China feared the U.S. would do. So, an arms race engendered by missile defense or SDI or Golden Dome is front and center in Lewis's fevered imagination. And oh, what fairy tales he feeds us.

First, Lewis embraces the ABM Treaty of 1972 for its supposed arms control benefits. But the companion 1972 SALT deal didn't result in lower levels of nuclear weapons but actually a 6-fold increase in deployed Soviet strategic weapons by the mid-1980s.

Second, according to a recently declassified portion of a 1983 net assessment by OSD, the Soviets could have increased their strategic arsenal to 24,000 warheads under the terms of the SALT II agreement (withdrawn by President Carter in 1979 as its supporters determined there were less than 30 votes for its ratification.)

Third, Reagan's modernization of our own nuclear deterrent and pursuit of missile defense research and development, while also taking down and bankrupting the USSR empire, were the secret to securing under START I major nuclear warhead reductions, not the nuclear freeze favored by Reagan's opponents.

For example, Mr. Robert McFarlane, President Reagan's national security adviser, told me that with the support of the entirety of the military joint chiefs, it was the Strategic Defense Initiative or missile defense initiative of March 1983, along with the deployment of U.S. Pershing and Ground Launched Cruise missiles, that was a significant factor in bringing the Soviets to the arms control table. McFarlane related how in late 1983 he hosted a group of

Senators who asked how long they had to vote to fund Reagan's missile defense before an arms control deal with the USSR would be completed. McFarlane told them an INF type treaty would be done in four years—which was exactly what happened when INF was signed in December 1987.

Lewis finds credible the strange Russian and Chinese narrative or paradigm that sees American missile defense as a shield behind which the U.S. can strike first to try and disarm an adversary. Thus, China and Russia are building up their nukes. However, in the real world, the U.S. limited defense now deployed against strategic long range missiles was primarily to defend the U.S. from North Korean and potentially Iranian threats. Mr. Lewis seems to take the position of the Russian Duma. In 1999 Moscow's Duma would support the START II treaty but only if the U.S. kept all missile defense work in the laboratory. Even as the Russians armed the North Koreans and Iranians with the very weapons technology that made U.S. missile defenses necessary! Missile defense isn't and won't ever be perfect. It does not have to be. It significantly complicates any attackers plans and thus enhances deterrence. The past decade has seen the launch of thousands of Iranian and terrorist ballistic missiles, drones, and rockets at U.S. interests in the Middle East, especially at Israel. These launches were terror attacks, pure and simple.

According to Dr. Uzi Rubin, the premier missile defense expert in the world, Israel shot down 99% of the Iranian ballistic missiles while overall all allied nations shot down between 84-99% of all engaged missile, drone, and rocket launches. There is no diplomatic virtue in being 100% vulnerable to missile threats. Would Lewis rather trade protection for vulnerability if the rockets were being launched from Canada or Mexico into the United States? Golden Dome is necessary for our protection and to frustrate the aggressive designs of Russia, China, North Korea, and Iran. These "brothers mayhem" have such weapons with which to make or threaten war on their enemies. The U.S. and its allies have such weapons including defenses to deter and prevent just such wars. It's called "peace through strength."

--Peter Huessy is President of Geostrategic Analysis, Senior Fellow at the National Institute for Deterrence Studies, the Gold Institute of International Strategy, and a nuclear expert guest every week on the John Batchelor show.

Key Issue of the Week

The Campaign to Stop the Deployment of American Theater/Regional Nuclear Weapons Continues

New Essay from Ambassador Rose Gottemoeller: Excerpt:

The United States and Russia currently hold 1,550 deployed strategic nuclear weapons each. These are the limits left over from the New START Treaty, which went out of force in February 2026. [3] At the moment, Washington and Moscow **are not rushing to exceed these limits**, so Beijing, London, and Paris could bolster the status quo by pledging together not to undermine them. For China, which has approximately 620 warheads but is rapidly building new ones, [4] this statement would serve an important function. It would bolster the argument of **Chinese experts that Beijing is not rushing to parity with the United States and Russia** but is simply strengthening its nuclear retaliatory forces. [5] For the UK and France, each deploying fewer than 300 warheads, the statement would reconfirm **their own emphasis on a nuclear retaliatory doctrine**. Like many good policy initiative, it would serve to strengthen their bona fides, in this case as responsible nuclear powers. Second, Beijing, London, and Paris are looking on as the conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East give rise to an extraordinary proliferation of missiles and drones over a broad spectrum of ranges, from a few hundred meters to thousands of kilometers. Although they are not directly involved in the conflicts, they are all involved in supplying the missile programs in Ukraine or Russia and Iran, or elsewhere in the Middle East. They therefore have a responsibility to ensure that the missile buildup under way does not turn into a major new nuclear proliferation headache. These three countries could accomplish this goal by **promoting a ban on nuclear warheads on short- and intermediate-range missiles and drones**. In essence, they would be tackling the escalatory pressure of systems that can launch both nuclear and conventional weapons—excluding the nuclear option from the vast majority of missiles and drones. Of course, states possessing nuclear weapons know this issue well. The United States and the **USSR banned all ground-launched intermediate-range missiles for forty years**, concerned that they could not distinguish between nuclear and conventional variants. [6] Nowadays, China and Russia are deploying dual-capable missiles; so are

India and Pakistan. Likewise, the United States, the UK, and France have not shied away from deploying dual-capable air-launched missiles at longer ranges. The point of a new ban would not be to deny carve-out options to states that require them. The point would be to ensure that the vast array of short- to intermediate-range missiles now being created and rapidly deployed worldwide generally remain non-nuclear.

[Editor's Commentary: While the US and the USSR banned all intermediate range ground based missiles under the INF agreement of 1987, Russia has violated that agreement and that is why the US left that agreement. In addition, while President Bush unilaterally eliminated all but 200 of our theater nuclear weapons, leaving a small deployment of air delivered gravity bombs (100) in Europe, the Russians did not follow suit and have remaining says Mark Schneider some 1900-4000+ such battlefield or regional nuclear weapons, vastly more than the United States, along with a nuclear doctrine of "escalate to win"—an outgrowth of the Yeltsin 1999 decree calling on Russia to develop and deploy highly accurate, low yield, battlefield nuclear weapons capable of winning a conventional conflict. The US has no such weapons in all of the Pacific. And it on the wrong end of a 20/40 to 1 imbalance of such weapons. Not only does China have dual use platforms, but it also has no transparency for its regional or theater nuclear forces.]

Iran

Iranian Update, March 2026 and September 26, Victor Davis Hanson

An Iranian Update---From September 17, 2026

Iran, the Midterms, and October Surprises

Victor Davis Hanson
American Greatness

Many narratives swirl around the U.S. war with Iran as the November 3 midterm elections loom.

The Left is giddy with confidence that Democrats may take control of Congress. It is therefore planning a circus of impeachments, lawfare, and investigations to neuter the last two years of the Trump administration. High gas prices and the current unpopularity of the Iran conflict, coupled with the historical reality that the president's party has lost seats in Congress in 39 of the last 41 midterm elections, have convinced Democrats that they could win enough seats to cut off funds for the war. Yet the elections are still seven weeks away, and the sheer number of known unknowns ensures an uncertain outcome. Every side is now gaming the midterms. The Democrats believe the unpopular war can at last halt Trump's momentum and are already declaring it all but lost. The Iranian theocracy agrees. It will do its best to ratchet up tensions with a series of October surprises in hopes that Trump loses control of Congress and the United States reverts to familiar Democratic policies of ending sanctions and downplaying Iran's race toward nuclear weapons. Its leaders also remember Barack Obama's "hands-off" policy when a million Iranians took to the streets during the Green Revolution of 2009. Then-President Obama remained silent as thousands of protesters were jailed and killed. As for Trump, he remains enigmatic and says only that the war will likely end shortly after the midterms.

Trump could simply mean that Iran is on the ropes and the regime cannot survive much more than two months. Or Trump may be hinting that after the midterms, regardless of who controls Congress, he will be free of electoral pressures and able to resume military operations to accelerate the theocracy's ongoing economic ruin. But it is often forgotten that two other groups may also be gaming the midterms with October surprises of their own—and in quite different ways. If Iranian dissidents—35,000 of whom were killed by their own government in January—believe that a Democratic takeover of Congress would benefit the murderous regime they hate, then they may face very different deadlines and renewed incentives to resist. The embattled opposition, suffering existential food and energy shortages, might conclude that if the regime is tottering in October, this may be its last chance to overthrow it before Democrats restrain Trump and spare the hated mullahs. The same mindset might be embraced by some 10–15 million restive Iranian Kurds, who periodically resist the theocracy in Tehran. If they, too, believe that ascendant post-midterm Democrats might defund the current American strikes against the theocracy, or that Trump will eventually be pressured into ending American involvement, then they may see overthrowing the hated regime as a now-or-never proposition. The point is not what might actually happen if the

Democratic opposition controls Congress or otherwise pressures Trump this fall to end the conflict. The key, instead, is the perception that it would. There are still more known unknowns. This remains a strange conflict in which almost no news emerges from Iran. The United States has used no ground troops. There are no embedded correspondents. Western media are largely barred from Iran unless they regurgitate theocratic propaganda.

Thus, no one knows the true extent of the damage to Iran's nuclear, industrial, and military complexes. Nor do Westerners know precisely how much the new sanctions, secondary boycotts, strangulating blockades, and frozen foreign assets have further weakened an already crippled regime—and driven a starving, fuel-starved, and furious populace to desperate measures. It is understandable why the bloody popular uprisings of early 2026 failed against an oil-rich Iran whose half-century-old, half-trillion-dollar military-industrial complex was still largely intact. Not now. The theocracy is now vastly diminished after months of Israeli and American bombing and crushing new sanctions. Moreover, the desperate regime has continued to murder dissidents in the months since the failed uprising of January 2026. In sum, the Iranian conflict is one of the strangest wars of the modern age. The Iranian regime has suffered terrible material and financial damage. Its nuclear program is likely in ruins, and its original command-and-control leadership has been destroyed. The people detest it. The Kurdish minority loathes it. Conditions on the ground are dire, with terrible shortages of food, medicine, and fuel. The resistance may sense that the Trump administration would double down on kinetic force to finish off the wounded regime if a mass popular uprising emerged and needed support from the air. Taken together, these possible October surprises before the November midterms could make the next 50 days the most volatile in modern memory.

An Iran Update—Our Long Road to War With Iran. March 10, 2026

Victor Davis Hanson
American Greatness

Until last year, for some 46 years, Iran enjoyed a North Korea-like reputation in the heart of the Middle East: always unpredictable, reckless, dangerous, inevitably to be nuclear, self-destructive, and nihilistic. All that said, was it really ever all that formidable? The mullahs came into power after the removal of the Shah and, subsequently, the interim secular socialists. They did so by taking American hostages, murdering opponents, executing former supporters, and transforming the most secular and modern of the Middle East Muslim nations into the most medieval that routinely hung homosexuals, adulterers, and almost anyone who questioned the authority of the ayatollahs. In other words, these were gruesome people, but they didn't necessarily have a competent military. The theocracy's only constant with the prior monarchical Iran was that it inherited near limitless oil and natural gas reserves, sophisticated arms, and the Shah's modernized cities. It controlled the key strategic chokepoint at the Strait of Hormuz and enjoyed a geostrategic ally critical location between Asia and the Middle East. It fueled Iran's historical chauvinism and pique that the millennia-long historical preeminence of Middle Eastern Persia was not fully appreciated by its Arab neighbors. So, there were lots of natural advantages—and all for the most part squandered. Under the camouflage of Shiite puritanism and otherworldliness, the ayatollahs proved even more corrupt (and far more incompetent) than the Shah's entourage. They fought a destructive eight-year war with Saddam Hussein's overrated Iraqi dictatorship and showed they were mostly just as militarily incompetent. **Over decades, they killed and wounded thousands of Americans by bombing U.S. embassies, barracks, and bases in the Middle East—without directly confronting the American military. For years, they sent lethal shaped charge IEDs to the Shiite insurgents to slaughter and maim thousands of Americans in Iraq and to the Taliban to do the same in Afghanistan.** At the first sign of popular protests, the regime never hesitated to gun down thousands of unarmed protesters. And, of course, they were abject hypocrites—hating the West, damning the Great Satan—and sending their pampered children to universities in America. The apparatus proved quite earthly in its desire for money, estates, foreign travel, and the good life.

Their general strategies were never hard to follow. **One, the theocrats' prior familiarity with Americans under the Shah and in exile in Europe bred an irrational fixation with and hatred of the West in general that made them useful proxies for the grand designs of communist and then later oligarchic Russia, and later ascendant communist China. Iranian realpolitik alliances with secular communists were based on the quid pro quo of granting Russia and China access to the Gulf, selling oil to China, and buying arms from both.** Two, they were endlessly chagrined that the Persian Shiites had been overshadowed by more populous Sunni Arab neighbors that supposedly lacked their own historical sophistication and more legitimate claims of embodying and speaking for global Islam. So, they would correct that historical travesty by doing their best to mobilize their clients and proxies to bully, isolate, and weaken Arab autocracies, especially those that are pro-Western. **Three, their planned eventual destruction of Israel would ensure that theocratic and Shiite Iran regained its lost prestige and honor by finally accomplishing what the Sunni world had failed to do. By arming murderous clients in Lebanon, Gaza, Syria, the West Bank, and Yemen, they fashioned a global network of death that compromised European foreign**

policy toward the Middle East and terrified Western leaders and many of their Arab neighbors. Fourth and finally, they sought to diminish the role of the United States in the Muslim world, drive it from the Middle East, and wage a virtual 47-year opportunistic war against American citizens and soldiers, with help from their terrorist surrogates. **Iran's zenith in power and prestige came during Obama's presidency (2009–17), and the so-called "Iran Deal" that they believed would guarantee them eventual nuclear power status. But far more importantly, their massive acquisitions of air, land, and sea weapons and the empowering of terrorists, coupled with their passive-aggressive claims to victimhood, both scared and enticed President Obama into dropping sanctions. Soon, he was apologizing for supposed past sins and nocturnally sending them millions of dollars in Danegeld. But worse by far, Obama thought he had squared the circle of neutralizing the supposed Middle Eastern Iranian juggernaut by envisioning it as an empathetic victim—and eventual friend if not ally.** Iran was to be rebooted as the Persian and Shiite righteously aggrieved underdog—bullied unfairly by Western imperialists [ow you understand DSA!] and their surrogate corrupt Arab petro-kingdom clients for its asceticism and courage in fighting the West since its own birth in 1979. **Obama would remedy this "injustice" by bolstering Iran as a counterweight to not just the Sunni Arab world but to Israel itself. The reset would include an American détente with the murderous pro-Iranian Assad regime in Syria, the supposedly benign neglect of Hezbollah's takeover of Lebanon, and the championing of the "Palestinians," which de facto had insidiously become indistinct from Hamas terrorists.** Such creative tension between the Iranian Shiite crescent and a diminished Arab world would be adjudicated from time to time by Obama himself, **whose America would go from oppressor to ally of the oppressed.** So, by 2017, Iran, for some reason, was considered all-powerful in the Middle East with its missiles, soon-to-be nuclear status, and Hamas, Hezbollah, and Houthi killers who would murder Westerners and Israelis year after year. **For the last seven American presidents, the very thought of challenging Iran militarily had been considered taboo, all the more so after the American misadventures in Afghanistan and Iraq.**

No one, perhaps not even the Israelis, actually calibrated the true status of Iranian arms or diplomacy. Despite its huge advantages in population, Iran could not defeat Iraq and was reduced to sending 10-year-olds as human pawns to clear minefields. It never directly confronted Israel but always used surrogates to murder Jews, either abroad, as in the slaughter in Argentina, or through its "ring of fire" terrorist cliques that surrounded the borders of the Jewish state. In sum, no one apparently realized—with the exception of Donald Trump and Benjamin Netanyahu—**that beneath its rough, ugly shell, theocratic Iran was rotten and decayed inside. Its corruption and the hatred of its own people ensured that even its huge revenues and sophisticated Chinese and Russian weapons could never translate into a modern, lethal military.** And in summer 2025, the Israelis and Americans first proved that Iran was indeed hollow. Its Arab partner in Syria imploded in weeks. The supposedly goose-stepping Hezbollah shock troops were decimated. The scary subterranean Hamas may have proved deadly in surprise attacks against unarmed women, children, and the aged, but they were nearly obliterated by the IDF. The Houthis mimicked Iran's madness as they sent drones and missiles to shut down the Red Sea and hit Israel. But the U.S. and Israel finally taught them that while the Houthis had no power to harm their enemies' interior, their Western opponents easily could destroy their airports, ports, power generation, and modern economy in days, and would happily do so if the terror continued.

So here we are, in March 2026, watching the systematic destruction of the entire five-decade façade of a supposedly invincible Iranian military, the systematic elimination of its theocratic leaders, and the dismantling of the Iranian military and Revolutionary Guard terrorists. The regime has no military ability to ensure its survival. Instead, **its rope-a-dope strategy assumes that the U.S. will be attuned to domestic criticism, the looming midterms, the price of gas, and pressure from allies to end the war before the global economy sinks into recession.** We are left somewhat confused. Why did prior presidents not hold Iran accountable for its killing, thus nourishing the myth of Iranian invincibility? Why did Israel not respond earlier to Iran itself rather than just its terrorist clients? And what now are the surviving theocrats thinking? What is their strategy of survival? The remnants of the theocracy intend to ride out the bombings and, at some point in extremis, expect an armistice from "negotiations." Their ultimate strategy is to wait out the tenures of both Trump and Netanyahu and hope for another sympathetic president like Obama, or a non-compos mentis Biden, or someone ideologically akin to Mamdani or Aachen **Trump and Netanyahu are out of office, they dream of using their oil to rearm and resume their role as Chinese and Russian proxies, eventually getting the bomb, and the second time around, perhaps using it. [Why does DSA want Iran to "win?"—Editor's note.]** Theocratic Iran, in its fantasies, still believes that if it ever destroyed Israel with a bomb or two, the world, especially given the recrudescence of Western antisemitism, would be appalled—for a day or two. **Then it would resume business with it. And with a dozen or so deterrent nuclear-tipped missiles, the Iranian ritual boilerplate of crazed pronouncements would follow of supposedly welcoming a nuclear pathway to an eternal virginal Paradise. And thus, we would go full circle back again to a "crazy" Iran, its murderous clients, and its unhinged—but effective—threats.**

ICBM EAR Essay of the Week

THE CRUMBLING DEFENSE OF EUROPE

FRANKLIN C. MILLER, ERIC EDELMAN, AND WALTER B. SLOCOMBE

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The United States appears ready to pull much of its military from Europe. The Trump administration's 2025 National Security Strategy, a key policy document, declared that it was time for the continent to "stand on its own feet" and take "primary responsibility for its own conventional defense"—or, put differently, that it needs to get ready for when Washington withdraws. At a June 2026 meeting of NATO's defense ministers, U.S. Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth announced that the Pentagon was "moving fast and irreversibly toward Europe stepping up to take primary responsibility for the defense of Europe." Two months later, in August, U.S. Undersecretary of Defense Elbridge Colby said that NATO would transition to what he called "a stronger, more equitable and sustainable alliance," or one in which the continent would do most of the work of defending itself. The administration followed up by sending a questionnaire to all NATO allies, seeking to elicit whether they were aligned with President Donald Trump's policies and priorities; unspoken was the clear threat that those who were not would face decreased U.S. support. Purportedly, the Pentagon is working on a study to determine the optimal level of U.S. forces in NATO, but it is clear that the study's task is merely to provide a cover story for the course Trump, Hegseth, and Colby have already chosen.

To [Trump](#) and his officials, withdrawing from Europe makes perfect sense. The continent, they argue, is rich and powerful enough to fully defend itself. Washington, meanwhile, must spend its military resources on growing challenges in Asia and the Middle East.

But the administration's logic is incorrect. Pulling back from Europe will not advance Washington's interests in any part of the world. Quite the contrary: it will weaken not only [NATO](#) but all of the United States' partnerships. It could even threaten the American homeland. The administration's planned pullback is not motivated by any meaningful appreciation for alliance management, threat analysis, or historical understanding. Instead, it is the product of sheer bias against Europe, which makes it as damning as it is dangerous.

MAKING THE WORLD UNSAFE FOR DEMOCRACY

When Trump returned to the White House, many European officials hoped that the president's bark would continue to be worse than his bite, as it was during his first term. But it soon became apparent that Trump was actually going to follow through on his pledge to pull away from the continent. In October 2025, the administration announced that it was permanently removing roughly 1,000 troops from Romania, downsizing its presence on NATO's eastern flank. In May 2026, his team canceled the deployment to Europe of an army task force equipped with the new Dark Eagle hypersonic weapons system, which would have threatened important military targets in Russia and thus strengthened deterrence. Also in May, the Trump administration canceled the deployment of the Second Armored Brigade Combat Team, which was supposed to replace an existing U.S. unit, leaving the continent with roughly 5,000 fewer troops.

According to June 2026 reporting by *The New York Times*, the Pentagon's policy office has told U.S. allies that deeper cuts are coming. Washington plans to slash the number of U.S. Air Force F-15E and F-16 fighter jets stationed in Europe by a third, remove all eight aerial refueling tankers operating there, reassign one of the two bomber plane groups assigned to Europe, withdraw 15 of the 26 maritime patrol aircraft stationed on the continent, and pull back a cruise-missile-firing submarine and an aircraft carrier group. It is also scheming to extract much of the U.S. military from NATO's command system. In July, for example, Hegseth reduced the rank of the commander of U.S. Army Europe to three stars from four. In the process, he forced the retirement of a well-respected combat leader, General Chris Donahue. Hegseth apparently also plans to replace many of the American officers currently in senior command positions with European officers. In the future, the White House is

even considering having a non-American become NATO's supreme allied commander, its top military officer. (Having an American serve as NATO's supreme allied commander is a principle of American leadership and a key part of NATO solidarity going back to the organization's formation.)

If this comes to pass, Europe has talented commanders who will take these spots. But the reality is that the continent cannot provide what the [United States](#) does. No European commanders, for example, have the same kind of experience at leading large formations in wartime or at coordinating and training many countries' militaries, as do their American counterparts. European countries cannot compensate for the lost U.S. marine patrol aircraft, which means they will struggle to monitor Russian submarine activity. To aggravate this further, in early September, the U.S. Navy declined for the first time in decades to participate in a NATO antisubmarine warfare exercise in the North Atlantic—an unbelievably foolish and dangerous move given that Russian submarines armed with nuclear-tipped cruise missiles use those very waters to approach the U.S. coast. In a similar vein, NATO cannot today replace the aerial refueling aircraft, the aircraft carrier battle groups, or the long-range bomber capabilities that the Pentagon is planning to withdraw.

Washington's pullback could endanger the U.S. homeland.

The diminishment of NATO in toto would be highly questionable in normal times, but these times are anything but normal. Russian President [Vladimir Putin](#) is pressing on with his invasion of Ukraine, and he is also directly threatening NATO countries at a newfound scale. Putin has spent over a decade waging what experts call “gray zone” or “hybrid warfare” against NATO, in which Russia conducts sabotage attacks against member countries and then denies carrying them out. Moscow, for example, has assassinated anti-Russian émigrés, placed incendiary devices in Western factories and cargo aircraft, sent explosive drones to attack airports in NATO territory, cut undersea cables in the Arctic Ocean and the Baltic Sea, interfered in elections, and conducted cyberattacks. In December 2025, the head of the United Kingdom's Secret Intelligence Service, Blaise Metreweli, stated that Russia posed an “acute threat” to the continent, plotting arson and sabotage operations and cyberwarfare and drone attacks across Europe.

Over the past 15 months, Russia has carried out such actions with far more frequency and in a far more brazen fashion. In August 2026 alone, suspicious activity linked to Russia has occurred in Bulgaria, Estonia, Germany, Italy, Poland, and Slovakia. In early September, London apprehended a British national hired by the Russian intelligence services to sabotage a drone factory in the United Kingdom. Putin has also deployed more military assets to the parts of Russia that border NATO states. This has, in turn, prompted several of the alliance's senior military and intelligence officers to warn that Putin is planning to conduct limited ground operations against NATO within the next several years.

The fact that Putin has grown more belligerent at precisely the same time as Washington is pulling back is not a coincidence. In a world with aggressive and revanchist national leaders—and Putin is certainly one of them—the perceived weakness and unreliability of the United States invites such behavior. (Conversely, a credible American commitment to defending European targets is the best way to deter gray zone attacks.) In fact, Washington's unreliability in Europe creates major uncertainty about its dedication to the defense of other places, including the Indo-Pacific. Chinese leader Jinping and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un will almost certainly see the United States' decisions to back away from defending its NATO allies as an indication that Washington will not stand by Taiwan and South Korea. The United States' security pledges are not severable: the perception that the country is withdrawing from commitments in one theater inexorably raises doubts in the minds of allies and adversaries about its commitments elsewhere.

In fact, Washington's pullback could even endanger the U.S. homeland. Deploying American air, naval, and ground forces abroad helps keep enemy forces far from U.S. shores. The proposed withdrawal of American antisubmarine warfare forces, including both patrol aircraft and attack submarines, provides a perfect example: it eases access to the United States for Russian forces.

NUCLEAR DELUSIONS

The Trump administration claims it is not wholly abandoning Europe. In response to concerns and criticisms about its decisions, the government has suggested that Europe will still have the backstop of U.S. nuclear deterrence. Indeed, the *Financial Times* has reported that American officials say the administration is considering stationing U.S. nuclear weapons in more European countries, under arrangements similar to those governing the existing deployment of nuclear bombs and aircraft in Europe.

But this plan leaves out some of the nuclear reforms most likely to strengthen deterrence, such as accelerating a program to build new nuclear-armed sea-launched cruise missiles. And even if Trump were pursuing such reforms, it is unrealistic to imagine that more U.S. nuclear weapons at bases in Europe or indeed any other

nuclear hardware fix will shore up deterrence. After all, if the United States is not willing to station substantial conventional forces to assist in Europe's defense, then there's little reason for Putin (or other leaders) to conclude that Washington will ever take the awesome step of using nuclear weapons.

What is fundamentally at issue is the credibility of U.S. threats to use military force—both conventional and nuclear—if NATO is overtly threatened or attacked. As the late British nuclear policymaker and scholar Sir Michael Quinlan once noted, nonnuclear war is “the likeliest route to nuclear war—in practice indeed the only likely route. . . . The risk would be at its highest when bitter conflict had already broken out at a lower level. War-prevention needs therefore to operate upon all levels of military conflict between nuclear-capable states. Any serious consideration of the use of nuclear weapons is overwhelmingly likely to come in either an imminent or ongoing conventional war. Conventional and nuclear deterrence are inextricably linked. The presence of U.S. nuclear forces on European territory during the competition with the Soviets was always intended to broadly couple the defense of the United States with that of Europe. Reducing Washington's contribution to the conventional defense of the continent ultimately weakens both conventional and nuclear deterrence against renewed Russian aggression.

There is, then, no logical or military reason for the United States to withdraw from Europe. Instead, the only plausible explanation is a decidedly illogical one: Trump hates the continent.

DRAW THE LINE

Given that this administration, left to its own misbegotten prejudices, is imperiling U.S. national security, Congress needs to assert itself and ensure that no further harm is done. It must enact legislation in accordance with last year's National Defense Authorization Act, which forbids the use of authorized or appropriated funds to reduce or modify American troop levels in Europe. It should, in fact, ban any presidential administration from reducing U.S. troop levels on the continent without explicit congressional approval. And it should force the White House to provide annual classified and unclassified reports on threats to NATO and on the alliance's ability to deter and defend against such threats—along with suggestions and recommendations for how NATO can become stronger. The report should indicate how U.S. deployments in Europe help defend the American homeland and improve Washington's military operations outside Europe.

Congress will also need to protect the very structure of NATO from Trump's poor judgment. In future defense authorization acts, for instance, it should require that the position of supreme allied commander in Europe be held by an American military officer of four-star rank, so that neither Trump nor a future president can give the position up. Doing this will not only make sure the alliance is maximally effective; it will also protect the “nuclear release chain,” or the command arrangements that ensure—and have ensured since the 1950s—that U.S. nuclear weapons can be employed in combat only under the president's specific authorization. Finally, it will help guarantee that U.S. nuclear deterrence remains credible.

Remarkably, given Trump's threats against Canada and Greenland, Congress will also have to explicitly ban the United States from seizing any NATO country's territory by force. To reinforce this, Congress should prohibit an administration from moving U.S. forces to any allied country during peacetime unless the recipient country requests it or agrees to it. Washington must also pay better attention to peacetime planning overall. If the United States is going to defend Europe and defend itself, it must not only have the military and other instruments needed for success in war. It must also convince both friends and prospective enemies that it can be relied on to fight beside allies if necessary.

Since 1949, the United States has maintained its commitment to the most successful military alliance in modern history. It has done so despite deep fears that the Soviet Union would overwhelm the alliance and despite repeated debates from within, including over its purpose. The United States has built and sustained allied confidence in U.S. security guarantees. Thanks to American stewardship, NATO has kept Europe at peace, helped end the 40-year Cold War, and produced a continent whole and free. To fritter this alliance and the trust of U.S. partners away at the altar of unproved theories and petty grievances would be a supreme act of self-harm—one that imperils the peace and prosperity of the American people.

About the ICBM EAR

Peter Huessy's ICBM EAR Report was originally prepared for the USAF in 1981 to help inform US nuclear deterrent policy professionals at the height of the Cold War. Eventually it was provided only to key elements of the Nuclear related Aerospace Industry. The objective: help build an informed political community on nuclear deterrent issues, especially the deployment of the US nuclear deterrent, especially the MX (Peacekeeper) missile. The report covered developments in the nuclear arena on a weekly basis, including developments in Congress, key events, threat assessments, remarks of top US officials, international activity key to US security interests, nuclear budget and program element issues, and arms control and proliferation matters as well.

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