

Militarizing Space

America's Grand Strategy:

By Stephen Lendman **September 8, 2010**

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On January 3, 2001, the UN General Assembly's Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space Resolution A/55/32 said:

"The exploration and use of outer space....shall be for peaceful purposes and be carried out for the benefit and in the interest of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development. (The) prevention of an arms race in outer space would avert a grave danger for international peace and security."

Over 140 nations agreed. Only two declined support, both abstaining - America and Israel.

On August 9, 1996, in Aviation Week and Space Technology magazine, then Commander-in-Chief US Space Command, Joseph W. Ashy asserted:

"It's politically sensitive, but it's going to happen. Some people don't want to hear this, and it sure isn't in vogue, but - absolutely - we're going to fight in space. We're going to fight from space and we're going to fight into space. That's why the US has development programs in directed energy and hit-to-kill mechanisms. We will engage terrestrial targets someday - ships, airplanes, land targets - from space."

On April 18, 2002, the Center for Defense Information's Theresa Hitchens headlined, "Weapons in Space: Silver Bullet or Russian Roulette," saying:

Weaponizing space "could actually undermine, rather than enhance, (America's) national security....There is nothing to be gained, and potentially much to be lost, by (pursuing) a momentous change in US space policy."

Co-founder and coordinator of the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space, Bruce Gagnon warned:

"If the US is allowed to move the arms race into space, there will be no return. We have this one chance, this one moment in history, to stop the weaponization of space from happening. The peace movement must move quickly, boldly, and publicly," what so far hasn't happened, most people mindless to the danger.

First revealed in the 1998 US Space Command document, Vision for 2020, it was later released in 2000 as DOD Joint Vision 2020 calling for "full spectrum dominance" over all land, surface and sub-surface sea, air, space, electromagnetic spectrum and information systems with enough overwhelming power to wage and win global wars against any adversary, including with nuclear weapons preemptively, ultimately from space, America wanting unchallenged control.

The Pentagon's Air Force Space Command (AFSPC) plans an array of sophisticated weapons to achieve it, some operational, others being tested, and new ones under development for its Operations Plan (OPLAN) 8010-08 Strategic Deterrence and Global Strike use, the US Strategic Command's (STRATCOM) Strategic War Plan.

Since at least WW II, America's strategy has been permanent war, a topic discussed earlier, accessed through the following link:

[click here](#)

On June 17, Space.com's Jeremy Hsu headlined, "Air Force Sees Hypersonic Weapons and Spaceships in Future," saying:

"A recent (Air Force) scramjet test has hinted at a future where hypersonic vehicles," traveling five times the speed of sound, fly around the world and in space, an "experimental X-51A Waverider," achieving the longest ever Mach 5 flight on May 26, using a rocket booster and air-breathing scramjet.

Charles Brink, head of the Air Force Research Laboratory's X-51 program envisions future hypersonic weapons flying "600 nautical miles in 10 minutes," including in space. NASA's James Pittman, principal investigator of its hypersonics project, hopes to have "large vehicles for access to space using air-breathing propulsion."

Earlier X-43A hypersonic scramjet test flights reached Mach 6.8 in March 2004 and Mach 9.6 in November that year - about 7,000 MPH. The X-51A project uses a more sophisticated scramjet engine, but hasn't yet matched or broken the X-43A's record, nor can it reach orbit, a goal Boeing Phantom Works/Defense hypersonics director Joseph Vogel hopes to achieve in the next 15 - 20 years, saying he expects the technology will be able to fly missions not possible today, the X-51A showing early promise.

In April, after years of development, the Air Force successfully launched the X-37B, its robot space shuttle, a reusable spacecraft traveling like an aircraft at Mach 5 - perhaps another future space weapon. Global Security.org's John Pike told Space.com that projects like the X-37B may "represent the tip of a space weapons program hidden within the Pentagon's secret 'black budget,' or they might be nothing more than smoke and mirrors," intended to deceive America's rivals, fueling a space arms race, hoping they'll "waste money chasing down dead ends."

For its part, the Air Force denies wanting the X-37B for an orbital weapons delivery system or for surveillance. Others disagree, journalist Sharon Weinberger saying "the most daring job of a space plane, and the one least discussed, is (its) role (as) a bomber, (letting it) fly over targets within an hour of launch to release cone-shaped re-entry vehicles that would both protect and guide weapons through the atmosphere."

It would also be able to "carry 1000 or 2000-pound re-entry vehicles armed with precision munitions like bunker-busting penetrators or small-diameter bombs (including mini-nukes more powerful than the atom bombs destroying Hiroshima or Nagasaki), or simply use the explosive impact of kinetic rods cratering at hypersonic speeds to destroy targets."

On the other hand, the X37B's main function may be a test platform, perhaps for developing even more destructive space weapons, part of America's permanent war strategy, waging future ones from space, using technologies adversaries can't match.

OPLAN-08 - The Pentagon's Strategic War Plan

OPLAN 8010-08 is a "family of plans" against six or more potential adversaries, including Russia,

China, North Korea, Iran, Syria, and other "terrorist" states. In 2002, the Bush administration asserted the right to:

"do whatever is necessary to deter the use of (undefined) weapons of mass destruction against the United States, its allies, and its interests. If a weapon of mass destruction is used against the United States or its allies, (or if such use is imminent or threatened), we will not rule out any specific type of military response," including first-strike nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states.

Under Obama, the policy remains in force. His May National Security Strategy "reserve(s) the right to act unilaterally if necessary to defend our nation and our interests." In other words, to wage preemptive wars, using first-strike nuclear weapons "to keep the American people safe (and advance the nation's) values and ideals," ones pursuing unchallenged global and space hegemony, ruling it by intimidation and war.

OPLAN 8010-08 - Updating SIOP

Unlike the Cold War's Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP), OPLAN 8010-08 contains "more flexible options to assure allies, and dissuade, deter, and if necessary, defeat adversaries in a wider range of contingencies." It includes conventional strike options, but it's mostly nuclear, custom designed for each potential adversary.

The nuclear options include the Emergency Response Options (ERO), Selective Attack Options (SAO), Basic Attack Options (BAO), and Directed/Adaptive Planning Capability (DPO/APO) options, specific details, of course, highly classified.

Options range from limited ones to massive "shock and awe" strikes against many targets, by manned and drone aircraft, ICBMs, and from attack submarines and surface ships, using hundreds of strategically located warheads.

The Pentagon's National Target Base includes four categories - military forces, WMD infrastructure, military and national leadership, and war supporting infrastructure - a post Cold War strategy to deter all so-called WMDs, the Bush administration saying America:

"has made it clear for many years that it reserves the right to respond with overwhelming force to the

use of weapons of mass destruction against the United States, our people, our forces and our friends and allies. Additionally, the United States will hold any state, terrorist group, or other non-state actor fully accountable for supporting or enabling terrorist efforts to obtain or use weapons of mass destruction, whether by facilitating, financing, or providing expertise or safe haven for such efforts."

The policy remains unchanged under Obama, OPLAN 8010-08 for preventive or retaliatory "strategic deterrence" and preemptive "global strike." STRATCOM describes the former as its "first line of operation....that includes nuclear force operations." The latter expands national and theater operations globally, the terms Prompt Global Strike and Global Strike used interchangeably, whether with conventional or nuclear weapons, or if prompt or deliberate.

The Air Force's nuclear/conventional command is called Global Strike Command, using America's full attack capabilities to destroy targets, including WMDs preemptively, STRATCOM's counterproliferation strategy designed to destroy all WMDs "before they can be used....(a) preemptive....counterforce....or offensively reactive" strategy.

While claiming to "put an end to Cold War thinking (by) reduc(ing) the role and number of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy," Obama's National Security Strategy puts old wine in new bottles, rebranding it to appear softer while keeping hardline policies in place, backed by a growing arsenal of globally positioned sophisticated weapons, asserting the right to use them preemptively against perceived threats.

During the Cold War, MAD (mutually assured destruction) held both sides at bay. Today's strategy includes "more flexible options (for) a wider range of contingencies (with weapons) to optimize performance," meaning destroy an adversary's capabilities preemptively, then target another.

With America on a nuclear hair-trigger, it's reinvented MAD in new form, threatening potential global nuclear winter, defined as "a long period of darkness and extreme cold that scientists predict would follow a full-scale nuclear war, a layer of dust and smoke in the atmosphere cover(ing) the earth and block(ing) the rays of the sun, (causing) most living organisms (to) perish."

Anti-nuclear expert Helen Caldicott says "one single failure of nuclear deterrence could end human history (quickly). Once initiated, it would take one hour to trigger a swift, sudden end to life on this planet." Only nuclear disarmament and abolition of nuclear weapons can stop it.

In their joint July 1955 Manifesto, Albert Einstein and Bertrand Russell put the nuclear threat bluntly:

"Here, then, is the problem which we present to you, stark and dreadful and inescapable: Shall we put an end to the human race; or shall mankind renounce war? (The) best authorities are unanimous that a war with H-bombs (or today's arsenal) might possibly put an end to the human race." For some, it will be instant, but "the majority (will experience) a slow torture of disease and disintegration." It's our choice. So far we've made it badly.

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Author's Bio: I was born in 1934, am a retired, progressive small businessman concerned about all the major national and world issues, committed to speak out and write about them.

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