

NRC Nuclear Risks Briefing

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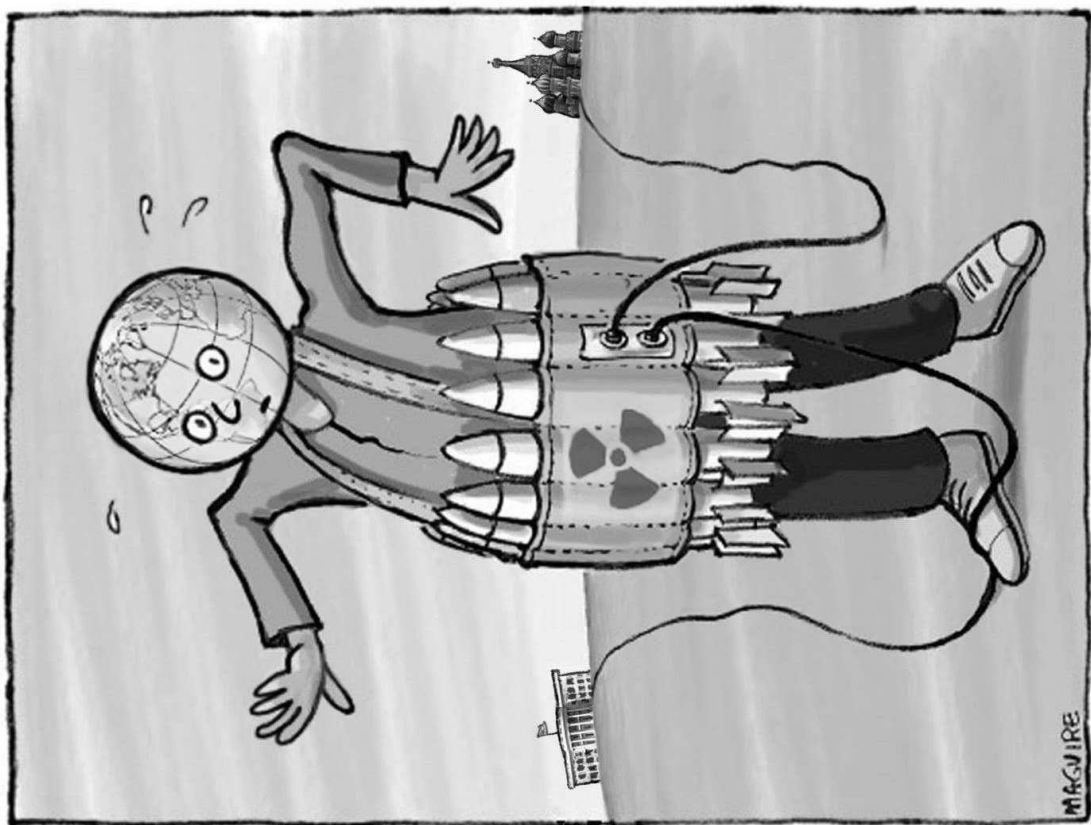
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Upper & Lower Bounding the Risk

- 1% per day is a clear upper bound.
- 1 in a million per year is a clear lower bound.
- Change the upper and lower bounds by factors of 10 until you reach values that cannot easily be ruled out.

Based on knowledge of events like the CMC, Georgia, Ukraine, for most people:

- 0.1% per year is a lower bound.
- 10% per year is an upper bound.
- 1% per year is their order of magnitude estimate.
- A child born today would have worse than even odds.



Similarities in Accident Chains

1962 Cuban Missile Crisis

2008 Cuban Bomber Mini-Crisis

- US deployments: Turkey 1962, Poland 2008
- Russian deployments: Cuba 1962 and 2008
- Each nation saw its actions as defensive and the other's as offensive.

Rethinking National Security

- Signed by Panetta & other national security experts.
- In 1945 the US was totally secure from attack.
- Trillions of dollars to improve our national security.
- Yet today we can be destroyed in under an hour!
- Is national security becoming inseparable from global security? If so, how must our policies change?

1999 Pristina Airport Crisis

- NATO's peacekeeping force moving into Kosovo
- US Gen. Wesley Clark & British Lt. Gen. Sir Mike Jackson
- Jackson: "Sir, I'm not starting World War III for you."
- Clark: "I didn't want to face the issue of shooting down Russian transport aircraft."
- London backed Jackson, ending the crisis.

John Bolton, 2017

“I have argued previously that the only durable diplomatic solution is to persuade China that reunifying the two Koreas is in its national interest as well as America’s, thus ending the nuclear threat by ***ending the bizarre North Korean regime.***” (emphasis added)

Conclusions

- Unclassified data shows the risk is unacceptably high.
- This needn't be a "study for a study."
- Nuclear terrorism is not a greater risk than nuclear war.
- Many assumptions should be reviewed.
- There are over 5,000 options between "deterrence as usual" and nuclear abolition. It is not a binary choice.

A Discussion Within the Committee?

- Congress' wording can be interpreted in different ways.
- My suggestions are within the mandate for this study.
- If this committee has not yet considered the approaches suggested today, especially those in Chairman Cooper's letter, members who want them included in the study should be heard.
- I called for a National Academies study because of its reputation for treating sensitive issues objectively.