implementation of Lavrov's proposals, and the problem with the use of the Russian language can be settled through soft policy. geared towards minorities in Latvia.

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Alien's passport. Source: http://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%A4%D0%B0%D0%B9%D0%BB:Pasport_negrazhdanina_Latvii_1.JPG

Endnotes

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The New Geopolitics: Why Nuclear Weapons No Longer Serve US Interests

Richard Burt
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Richard Burt is the former U.S. ambassador to Germany, and recently played a critical leadership role in the ratification of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START). Burt had previously served as a correspondent for the New York Times, and is a current managing director of McLarty Associates. The following essay is a transcription of his lecture at Cornell University, given on December 2.

One of the big issues in Washington right now is whether or not this lame duck Senate is going to ratify the new START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty). I want to start by making a proposition or offering hypothesis about nuclear weapons. In my view, they are very much 20th century weapons. We often forget that the technology really goes back to the famous Manhattan project during the course of World War II. But they are 20th century weapons, geopolitically in my view, in part because they are seen as weapons of deterrence. In the minds of many historians and politicians, when they think of WWII, they think about the failure of deterrence — the whole Munich analogy: the fact that France, Britain, and other European countries failed to deter Nazi Germany, and that nuclear weapons going forward from WWII were seen as instruments that threatened unacceptable damage, thus deterring any new manifestation of Adolf Hitler or Nazi Germany.

Of course these were the weapons of the Cold War, another 20th Century phenomenon. They were in some ways a principle instrument of waging the Cold War, by both the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Nuclear weapons were seen as a means of controlling and moderating a grand ideological and global competition between the two superpowers. Threatening unacceptable damage was viewed as a

rational means of dampening a conflict, which could be triggered by an isolated incident — say an incident in divided Berlin during the Cold War, which could then escalate to a superpower nuclear exchange. Thus, the U.S.-Soviet nuclear competition during the Cold War — what came to be known as the “Arms Race” — became a way of measuring and sometimes testing commitment and courage in not letting the other side gain the upper hand. There would be no nuclear eunuchs. Both sides were determined to demonstrate that deterrence would work, and not allow the other side to achieve global political and military domination. Thus, memories of appeasement were a critical factor for both sides, and more broadly, so were the lingering memories of WWII during the Cold War more broadly.

Now I talk about the Cold War because I personally was very much part of that process. After graduating from Cornell, I attended the Fletcher school, where I discovered my passion, which was studying the dynamic of the U.S.-Soviet nuclear competition. From there, I went to the New York Times, where I was the recipient, not of WikiLeaks, but of many other leaks that described the new developments of nuclear weapons in the Soviet Union, and the response of the United States. Then, I went onto the State Department, where I was put

in charge of one of the most complicated and challenging tasks of U.S. diplomacy during that era. I had the job of rallying NATO support, or our European allies' support for the deployment of 572 nuclear-armed missiles, based in Europe, but targeted against the Soviet Union. This was a very different era. There were huge protests in Europe against the deployment of these so called "Euro Missiles," and there were also Soviet threats. The Soviet Union, in an effort to dissuade the alliance from deploying these missiles, threatened a new "Ice Age" in East-West relations. The bottom line was, in the fall of 1983 we — i.e. the Reagan administration and its European Allies — prevailed. We deployed the missiles, a move viewed as one of the important turning points in the Cold War.

At the same time, already in the 1980s, things were beginning to change. On the U.S. side, I remember very clearly that both Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush were both looking for a way out of what they thought, or what appeared to be, an endless arms competition with the Soviet Union. And perhaps more importantly, there were changes on the Soviet side too. Mikhail Gorbachev came to power, and I think he rapidly reached two critical conclusions in the mid to late 1980s. First, the Soviet Union did not have the economic wherewithal to keep pace with the United States in this nuclear arms competition. It was just too expensive, and too technologically demanding. Secondly though, Gorbachev also understood that both the Soviet Union, and the broader Soviet empire — the Warsaw Pact, the eastern European countries under Soviet military, political, and economic domination — required reform. I now remember a meeting that my boss, George Schultz, convened in the mid 1980s on the 7th floor of the State Department. It was a Saturday morning. He brought a lot of the U.S. Government experts on the Soviet Union together what to informally discuss Gorbachev and was what was going on in the Soviet Union. The one thing I remember

very clearly was a young, talented C.I.A. Russian analyst named Bob Gates, the current Secretary of Defense. After hearing many people argue that Gorbachev represented something "new," and that he was a reformer, and was ready to change the Soviet Union, Gates said, "Mr. Secretary," looking at George Shultz, "Mikhail Gorbachev is Leonid Brezhnev in a nine hundred dollar suit."

Well, Bob Gates was wrong, at least about Gorbachev, and you know the end of the story. The Soviet Union collapsed because Gorbachev, despite his best efforts, revealed the contradictions of reforming a highly authoritarian system. Once you begin to try to reform it, it begins to unravel. Thus, since the early 1990s, what we have seen with the end of the Cold War, the end of the Soviet Union, is a slow but steady transition to a new and different international system. This system is more open, more polycentric; it has more points of power, and is one, in my view, that is less based on geopolitics, or perhaps better put, less based on military politics and more based on geo-economics. Strangely, the United States, and to some extent the new Russian Federation, have had the most difficulty since the early 1990s in making this transition to a new international order. To understand this, you need to better understand the nature of this new international system. For great powers, for the major power in the United States, Russia, mature European democracies, emerging markets like China, India, and Brazil, this new system is in some respects, a return to the 19th century. It is a kind of balance of our world where we have shifting alliances rather than permanent alliances. We have a flexible focus on short term calculations of national interest, but unlike the 19th century, the currency of power has changed, and this is what's critical for understanding the new role of nuclear weapons. The currency of power has changed from military power to economic, technological competitiveness.

Thus, this is where we see perceptive analysts like Tom Friedman, who understands

and has explained to us that for the foreseeable future, the key elements of national power will be economics, technology, and education. For the first time in over half a century, the United States will be competing on a more level playing field. Unlike the 19th and 20th centuries, wars of acquisition, of territorial enlargement, will look less unattractive to major powers, and will look increasingly risky. Instead, countries will

Schematic showing nations with nuclear weapons programs. Nations shown in dark grey are part of the NPT.

be able to achieve their objectives without territorial acquisition, because in a globalized world economy, trade and investment can do the job. Look at Japan and Germany. In the 1930s Germany unleashed a war in Europe based on the desire for *lebensraum*, the idea of living space, of needing more space to grow and prosper. Germany of course was decisively defeated; the *lebensraum* dream disappeared. But, look at Germany today. Germany accounts for one third of the European G.D.P., and their businesses have penetrated every market in the European Union. They've even gone beyond the European Union, and are Russia's number one trade and investment partner. In today's world, it releases its very productive and very capable industries. They have succeeded, if you will, in their 1930s dream, but through a geo-economic strategy, not a military one.

Japan is also a case and point. In WWII, Japan wanted to create a "greater Asian co-prosperity sphere," and in fact they pretty much did that in the 1960s and '70s. The Japanese may have problems with their economy today, but it has nothing to do with the fact that their

impressive economic growth during the post-war period underscored the new currency of power in International Relations. Thus, the bipolar world that we were familiar with during the Cold War, and the short period where at least some people in Washington, especially the neo-cons, talked about a uni-polar world with only the United States. The bi-polar and uni-polar states have passed away. What we have now is a cluster of mature economies and big emerging markets, like the B.R.I.C.s, that will secure their interests, chiefly through innovation, trade, and investment in the years ahead.

Now, does this mean that nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrence will entirely lose their relevance? Not completely. If the United States were to shift its strategy overnight, drop the idea of nuclear deterrence, and unilaterally disarm its nuclear arsenal, such a move would be highly destabilizing. It would be misunderstood by our political adversaries, who would view it as an inexplicable act of unilateral disarmament. It would unsettle our allies, who have come to depend on U.S. military power, to some degree, for deterrence. But, I do believe that among the new cluster of great powers, that nuclear weapons and deterrence will over the next decade or so become increasingly irrelevant. We are entering a period when patterns of both international cooperation and conflict will shift quickly, depending on the issue, depending on the national interest of the country involved, and where threatening unacceptable damage with nuclear weapons will no longer seem like a rational foreign policy decision. For example, under what circumstances today would the United States threaten to use nuclear weapons against Russia? I can't really think of a plausible scenario where we would launch hundreds or thousands of nuclear weapons against Russia. And why, for example, would China threaten the United States with nuclear weapons, particularly knowing that they're not going to get any of the money back that they've lent us if they destroy us as a functioning society? In

the great power world of the future, nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrence become less relevant and less important.

I guess at this point in the lecture I could just stop and say 'Welcome to the brave new world, isn't it wonderful?' Unfortunately, I can't, because the other side of this G-20 world, the other side of this major power world —, which is focused on economic competition, innovation, trade and investment as ways for countries to make their mark and protect their interests —; there is another world;; a darker world of rogue states, like north Korea and Iran; of failing states, potentially like Pakistan, and sub-state actors, some of them entirely irrational, i.e. al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and others. And here, unfortunately, as nuclear weapons become less relevant for the G-20 world, nuclear weapons are becoming more important, rather than less important. For one thing, the technology is just much more available than it was before. Remember, this technology is now over 50 or 60 years old. You can find plans on the Internet, and if you can obtain either the plutonium or the enriched uranium, then you can build one. It may not be as efficient or as capable as those deployed in the U.S. stockpile, but it can kill several million people if you detonate it in downtown Manhattan. That know-how and that material are becoming much more available.

More importantly, the desire to obtain this capability on the part of rogue states, failing states, sub-state actors, terrorists and others, is equally as strong. Let me give you a couple of examples. I agree with the vice president Joe Biden, who has been quoted in saying, "Pakistan is the most dangerous country on this planet." Think about it. It's a three-for. They have a government that is arguably failing. It can't deal with the normal stresses and strains of government, let alone the pressures it's under from insurgent attacks, natural disasters, and a governance divided between incompetent civilian leadership and a very powerful military leadership — in short, failing governance. Number two, they

are hosting — whether they know it or not — a group like al-Qaeda in the northwest provinces, and the Pakistani Taliban is increasingly active throughout the country. They are increasingly becoming a platform for terrorism both within Pakistan and externally. Finally, they not only have a stockpile of nuclear weapons, but of all the existing nuclear powers, they are building them faster, and manufacturing more weapons grade material than any other country in the world. Pretty scary.

Not too far from Pakistan of course, is Iran. I'm not sure whether the Iranians (this is a controversial thing to say in Washington) have yet decided to acquire nuclear weapons. In fact they may not actually, if they do build a "weaponized" nuclear weapon — one that can be deployed on a missile or delivered by an aircraft. They may not even tell anybody. They may want to keep people guessing about whether or not they've gone nuclear. For me, the danger of an Iranian nuclear weapon is not that they are going to immediately, once they acquire it, nuke Israel or Saudi Arabia.

In the case of Israel, the Iranians are rational enough to know exactly what the Israeli response would be. The danger is what some people call the cascade effect. I mentioned

In the great power world of the future, nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrence become less relevant and less important.

the Wikileaks articles just a few minutes ago. One thing that is very clear, despite what Arab leadership in the gulf says about Iran, is that in private they are very worried about Iran, and they are very concerned about Iranian domination of the gulf. If the Iranians go nuclear, you have got to believe that other countries in that neighborhood that will start to think about nuclear weapons. I was just in Turkey three weeks ago, sitting around with Turkish government officials, and I asked them what Turkey will do if Iran acquires a nuclear weapon. There is no real debate or

disagreement about it. It seemed very clear to all of them that Turkey would have to acquire its own nuclear capability. I think the Saudis seriously consider that option; the Egyptians

Barack Obama and Dmitri Medvedev shake hands after signing the New START Treaty.

would be another country that would consider that option. We could then see, rather than Iran just going nuclear, three or four or more countries moving towards nuclear weapon status. Add the Israelis, add the Iranians, and we're then talking about the world's most volatile region with five or six nuclear powers. Iran and nuclear proliferation are enormously dangerous.

I won't even go into detail about North Korea — it is probably closest to what some analysts call a crazy state. I don't think that Iran is a crazy state. I don't even think Pakistan is a crazy state, but North Korea must fit that definition better than anybody else. Now I think that they have used their already existing nuclear arsenal for blackmail purposes — to get money, support, aid, attention of the international community, get people back to the negotiating table — anything to keep themselves on the front page. But they are going through a period of transition, and some of the things that they have done recently — sinking the South Korean frigate, shelling an island — tells me that if there's a place where a miscalculation could lead to a holocaust, it's North Korea. That's the dark side of this new G-20 world— the proliferation side of the G-20

world, and I think as these cases all in one way or another demonstrate, its hard to come up with a silver bullet solution to this problem; there's no kind of overarching simple solution. You can try to buy some of these countries off. We've tried that with North Korea — we've offered them food aid, other sorts of support, but they've continued to pursue their nuclear program. We could look at military force. There are those who advocate the Israeli or American bombing of Iran. But as people who have looked at that problem carefully will tell you, it doesn't solve the problem. It may defer the problem for a few years, but we don't know where the Iranian infrastructure is, and we don't know where all of those sites are.

What about the unintended consequences? What could the Iranians do to us in Iraq or in Afghanistan? What could they do to the shipping lanes through the straights of Hormuz? Military solutions are not as attractive as some people think, once you look at them more carefully. There's nation building. We could go into Pakistan and spend billions of dollars and try to give them good schools; we could try to clean up their creaky bureaucracy and infrastructure, but that's a long-term enterprise. By the way, I don't think that Americans are good at nation building anyways — we're not patient enough. We're not like the British in the 18th and 19th centuries that spent their careers in India. We rotate people back and forth every six months. We're not good nation builders; I don't think nation building is a solution.

What is necessary in my view, first and foremost, is building a strong international consensus around the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation treaty, which recognizes the relationship between what analysts call vertical proliferation — building more nuclear weapons by countries who already have them, piling them up — and horizontal proliferation — new countries acquiring nuclear weapons for the first time. Our goal in the long run should be to de-legitimize nuclear weapons in largely the same way that we have delegitimized

chemical weapons and biological weapons. I don't know anybody today who deploys biological weapons. There have been efforts in the past, and there has been some biological terrorism, but basically we have ruled biological and chemical weapons out of acceptable international behavior. We should have the capacity to turn those countries that want to have nuclear weapons, and get them into international pariah states. They should be isolated. The way to do this in my view is to elaborate and then implement, as we've done at Global Zero, but other groups are doing the same work as well, a twenty-year-or-so program in which the existing nuclear powers — the major powers — would make a serious effort to reduce and explore the complete elimination of nuclear weapons over a period of 20-25 years.

Now you say, "that's a bold initiative, that's a bold dream, but is it really realistic?" Well, what's interesting is that we're making some headway already, and we take that headway for granted. For one thing, we couldn't, and I'm saying this as a Republican, we couldn't make a plausible case for Global Zero if it wasn't for Barack Obama, because he put nuclear weapons back on the front page. And he talked, and has talked repeatedly about the elimination of nuclear weapons worldwide. He did it most impressively in his Prague speech early on in his presidency. He

I'm not sure whether the Iranians (this is a controversial thing to say in Washington) have yet decided to acquire nuclear weapons.

got Dmitri Medvedev, the Russian president to sign up to the same goal. This was the first time a Russian and American leader had ever jointly called for the elimination of nuclear weapons. Then, in the first U.N. security council meeting ever chaired by a U.S. President, he got the French, the British, the Chinese, and the other members of the security council, to sign up for the long term goal of nuclear elimination.

More recently, in his nuclear posture review last year, he deemphasized the role of nuclear weapons and said, "The United States would never use a nuclear weapon against another member of the Nuclear Non-proliferation treaty that was abiding by that treaty." That was an important initiative.

Obama convened a nuclear security summit, where over fifty countries and heads of government came to Washington and agreed on a three-year work program to address the "Loose Nukes" problem, and to begin to gain control of all of this nuclear material and nuclear know how, so that it didn't fall into the wrong hands. That's good progress, but the real test is for the existing major nuclear powers to get this reduction regime underway. The first step, obviously, is to get this new START treaty ratified — the one that the U.S. and Russia have negotiated, which brings down the number of deployed nuclear weapons down to 1500 and 50, and the number of launchers, missiles and bombers down to 800. If that treaty gets ratified, we can go back to the Russians and negotiate a follow on treaty, which I believe could bring weaponry down to a thousand or so nuclear weapons. I think that's a magic number. If you can get both sides' number of nuclear weapons down to roughly 1000, I think you have a fair chance of getting China to the table.

The Chinese have never willing to compromise, or formally negotiate any constraints on their nuclear forces. Why would they do it under this circumstance? They would see, they would understand, that without their agreement to come to the table, there's no incentive for the Russians to go much further. Because what the Russians will tell you privately is that 'we're not going to go that much lower, because we have to worry about the Chinese.' But if you can tell the Russians that the Chinese will be there, in another negotiation where you come down to 1000, then you've got a win-win for China and Russia. What happens when you get China to the table? Then you have the leverage to get

the Indians into the negotiation. What we need to aim at is not just another round of the old fashioned U.S.-Russian negotiation, but a great power negotiation — a multi-lateral negotiation where everyone including the Pakistanis and the Israelis would agree to schedule proportional reductions.

At some point you enter what people call the endgame, where you get to zero. I am not going to address that because that's a long way off. I just want to focus on the next ten years. Our goal for the next ten years, though, should be to get this new U.S.-Russia agreement ratified, get another U.S.-Russia agreement that brings warheads down to a lower level of around 1000, and gets this multilateral negotiation with all of the major nuclear powers underway.

I will conclude by saying that if we can't get this rather modest, existing treaty, that's before the Senate, ratified now, then all bets are off on the ability to pursue the this ambitious two-decade goal of nuclear elimination. For one thing the Russians aren't just going to say, "well, too bad you couldn't follow through on the deal let's start again." No. The Russians have already indicated, "We can't do business with you guys. We're going to pursue our own options; some of them will be military. If you can't negotiate a treaty and then get it ratified, then there's no real future in this process." What is that going to do to

the credibility of our non-proliferation policy? How do we look Mr. Ahmadinejad in Iran in the eye, and say "you can't have nuclear weapons," when he's going to say "you can't reduce nuclear weapons! You've got thousands of nuclear weapons. You and the Russians have 95 percent of the world's stockpile, and you can't get a treaty ratified to reduce a few hundred of them?" We will look totally ridiculous in that situation. We give the Iranians, the North Koreans and anybody else who wants to acquire nuclear weapons the talking points for doing so, because the talking points are very simple. The Americans talk a good game but they can't get it done. Finally, at a time when we are paralyzed in Washington over coming together on a plan to reduce our fiscal deficit, and our national debt, to not be able to carry out a critical foreign policy initiative, the United States might begin to resemble what Richard Nixon, at the height of the Vietnam War, might call a "pitiful, helpless giant."

That's the challenge, that's what this treaty is all about. It's not just about another old fashioned, U.S.-Russia Cold War agreement. It's about launching a grand process, which will deal with the dark side of globalization — the spread of nuclear weapons — and strengthen the bright side of globalization — a globalized economy with greater productivity, innovation and prosperity.

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http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Obama_and_Medvedev_sign_Prague_Treaty_2010.jpeg
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