

Insane U.S. Plan to Spend Billions on Weaponizing Space Makes Defense Contractors Jump for Joy—But Rest of World Cowers in Horror at Prospect of New Arms Race Leading to World War III

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Imagine this scenario from the year 2045: The U.S. and China, after years of belligerence, go to war over control of the Taiwan straits; most of the battles are fought through cyber-attacks and space-based weapons systems that had been perfected over the previous decades.

In a desperate maneuver, the U.S. activates its “rods from God”—[a scheme developed in Project Thor involving telephone-pole-sized tungsten rods being dropped from orbit reaching a speed ten times the speed of sound \[7,500 miles per hour\] hitting with the force of nuclear weapons](#)—and Beijing’s military command centers and other significant targets are destroyed.



“Rods from God” weapon system. [Source: readingthepictures.org]

The above scenario looks increasingly plausible given a) the growing prospect of war between the U.S. and China; and b) the growing militarization of space by the U.S.—in violation of the landmark Outer Space Treaty of 1967 that sets aside space “for peaceful purposes.”

U.S. Space Force and the Evisceration of the 1967 Outer Space Treaty

Donald Trump declared at a meeting of the National Space Council of the U.S. in 2018 that [“it is not enough to merely have an American presence in space, we must have American dominance in space.... I’m hereby directing the Department of Defense and Pentagon to immediately begin the process necessary to establish a Space Force as the sixth branch of the armed forces ... It is going to be something.”](#)

Indeed, the U.S. Space Force, established in December 2019, is *something*—and can, if not *will*, destroy the visionary Outer Space Treaty of keeping space for peace.

Image on the right: U.S. Space Force patch. [Source: wikipedia.org]



[The Outer Space Treaty](#) of 1967 was put together by the U.S., Great Britain and the former Soviet Union and has wide support from nations around the world. [111 countries are parties to the treaty, while another 23 have signed the treaty but have not completed ratification.](#)

As Craig Eisendrath, who as a young U.S. State Department officer was involved in the treaty's creation, told me—and I quote him in my book [Weapons in Space](#)—“we sought to de-weaponize space before it got weaponized ... to keep war out of space.”

[“This foundational treaty has allowed for half a century of ever expanding peaceful activity in space, free from man-made threats,”](#) writes Paul Meyer, in his chapter “Arms Control in Outer Space: A Diplomatic Alternative to Star Wars” in the book *Security in the Global Commons and Beyond*.^[1]

The Outer Space Treaty bars placement “in orbit around the Earth any objects carrying nuclear weapons or any other kinds of weapons of mass destruction or from installing such weapons on celestial bodies.”

Biden Signs Off on Space Force

Republican Trump's successor as U.S. president, Democrat Joe Biden, has not pulled back on the U.S. Space Force. As *Defense News* headlined in 2021: [“With Biden's ‘full support,’ the Space Force is officially here to stay.”](#)

Its article opened: “U.S. President Joe Biden will not seek to eliminate the Space Force and roll military space functions back into the Air Force, the White House confirmed.” It continued: “White House spokeswoman Jen Psaki told reporters during a Feb. 3 briefing that the new service has the ‘full support’ of the Biden administration.” And it went on: “‘We’re not revisiting the decision,’ she said.”

Most Democrats in the U.S. Congress voted for the legislation providing for formation of the U.S. Space Force as pushed by Trump. All Republicans in the U.S. Congress voted for it.

False Pretext

For decades there has been an effort to extend the Outer Space Treaty and enact the Prevention of an Arms Race, the PAROS treaty, which would bar *any* weapons in space.

China, Russia (and U.S. neighbor Canada) have been leaders in seeking passage of the

PAROS treaty. But the U.S.—through administration after administration, Republican and Democrat—has opposed the PAROS treaty and effectively vetoed it at the United Nations.

Although the PAROS treaty has broad backing from nations around the world, it must move through the UN's Conference on Disarmament which functions on a consensual basis.

A rationale for the U.S. Space Force now being claimed is that it is necessary to counter moves by China and Russia in space, particularly development of anti-satellite weapons.

That is what a CNN report in August 2021, titled [“An Exclusive Look into How Space Force Is Defending America,”](#) centrally asserted. There was no mention in the six-minute-plus CNN piece of how China and Russia (and Canada) have led for decades in the push for PAROS, and how China and Russia in recent times have reiterated their calls for space to be weapons-free.

[“We are calling on the international community to start negotiations and reach agreement on arms control in order to ensure space safety as soon as possible,”](#) said the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Zhao Lijian, in April 2021. “China has always been in favor of preventing an arms race in space; it has been actively promoting negotiations on a legally binding agreement on space arms control jointly with Russia.”

A day earlier, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov called for talks to create an [“international legally binding instrument”](#) to ban the deployment of “any types of weapons” in space. Lavrov said: [“We consistently believe that only a guaranteed prevention of an arms race in space will make it possible to use it for creative purposes, for the benefit of the entire mankind. We call for negotiations on the development of an international legally binding instrument that would prohibit the deployment of any types of weapons there, as well as the use of force or the threat of force.”](#)

Onward and Upward!

Meanwhile, the U.S. Space Force drives ahead.

It has requested a [budget of \\$17.4 billion for 2020 to “grow the service,”](#) reports [Air Force Magazine](#). “Space Force 2022 Budget Adds Satellites, Warfighting Center, More Guardians,” was the headline of its article. And in the first paragraph, it adds “and fund more than \$800 million in new classified programs.” (“Guardians” is the name adopted by the U.S. Space Force in 2021 for its members.)

One after another, U.S. Air Force bases are being renamed U.S. Space Force bases.



Source: militarymachine.com

A recruitment drive is under way.

The U.S. Space Force “[received its first offensive weapon ... satellite jammers,” reported American Military News in 2020.](#) “The weapon does not destroy enemy satellites, but can be used to interrupt enemy satellite communications and hinder enemy early warning systems meant to detect a U.S. attack,” it stated.



As of Dec. 9, 2020, the 45th Space Wing will continue lifting off to new heights as Patrick Space Force Base and Cape Canaveral Space Force Station. (U.S. Space Force photo by Senior Airman Zoe Thacker)

Soon afterwards, the *Financial Times*’s headline: “[U.S military officials eye new generation of space weapons.](#)”

In 2001, the headline on the c4isrnet.com website, which describes itself as “Media for the Intelligence Age Military,” declared: “[The Space Force wants to use directed-energy systems for space superiority.](#)”

Resistance is Futile

A personal experience with the U.S. anti-PAROS stand occurred in March 1999. In *Weapons in Space*, I told of giving the keynote address at a seminar at the UN titled “The Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space.” The event was organized by the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom. On the following day, another vote on the PAROS treaty was to be held at the UN in Geneva.

As part of my presentation, I displayed various documents, including a 1998 report of the U.S. Space Command titled [Vision for 2020](#). (The U.S. Space Command was formed in 1982 as part of the U.S. Air Force to be succeeded by the U.S. Space Force.)

“US Space Command—dominating the space dimension of military operations to protect US interests and investment. Integrating Space Forces into war-fighting capabilities across the full spectrum of conflict,” trumpeted *Vision for 2020*.



[AIRMAN 1ST CLASS ANDREW BERTAIN/U.S. AIR FORCE](#)

I noted *Vision for 2020* saying, “Historically, military forces have evolved to protect national interests and investments—both military and economic.” Nations built navies, says *Vision for 2020*, “to protect and enhance their commercial interests” and, during “the westward expansion of the United States, military outposts and the cavalry emerged to protect our wagon trains, settlements and railroads. The emergence of space power follows both of these models. During the early portion of the 21st Century, space power will also evolve into a separate and equal medium of warfare.”

I displayed the comments of U.S. Space Command Commander-in-Chief Joseph W. Ashy in *Aviation Week and Space Technology* in 1996: [“It’s politically sensitive, but it’s going to happen,” said the general.](#)



[Source: spikeybits.com]

I displayed a photo of the entrance of the headquarters in Colorado of the 50th Space Wing of the U.S. Air Force emblazoned with the unit's motto: "[Master of Space.](#)" The 50th Space Wing is now a component of the U.S. Space Force.

I spoke of the "military use of space being planned by the U.S." being "in total contradiction of the principles of peaceful international cooperation that the U.S. likes to espouse" and "pushes us—all of us—to war in the heavens."

I was followed by [Wang Xiaoyu, first secretary of the Delegation of China](#). "Outer space is the common heritage of the human beings," he said. "It should be used entirely for peaceful purposes and for the economic, scientific and cultural development of all countries as well as the well-being of mankind. It must not be weaponized and become another arena of the arms race."

The U.S., he said, "has over the years continued its efforts in developing space weapons with a view to deploying such advanced weapon systems in outer space in the near future. Huge amount[s] of human, material and financial resources have already been put into relevant plans and programs.

The momentum has recently been greatly intensified. These ominous efforts will bring about the weaponization of outer space and lead to an arms race there. [So, PAROS has already become a present and pressing issue.](#)"

The next day, on my way to observe the vote, I saw a U.S. diplomat who had been at my presentation—and it was clear from his facial expressions during it that he was not happy with my remarks.

We approached each other and on an anonymous basis, he said he would like to explain the U.S. position on militarizing space. As related in *Weapons in Space*, he said that the U.S. has trouble with its citizenry in fielding a large number of troops on the ground. But "we can project power from space" and, said the official, that is why the U.S. military was moving in

that direction. I said if the U.S. moved ahead with this, would not other nations respond in kind?

He replied that the U.S. military had done analyses and determined that China was “30 years behind” in competing with the U.S. militarily in space and Russia “doesn’t have the money.” I contested that and said a huge, potentially catastrophic, miscalculation was being made. We parted in disagreement.

Then he went to vote and I watched as again nation after nation voted for the PAROS treaty—and the diplomat I had spoken to cast a “no” vote for the U.S.

PAROS was blocked once again.

And this was during the time of the Democratic Clinton administration.

Later that day, I sat in the UN cafeteria with a group of young Chinese diplomats who said that, if the U.S. moved into space militarily, China would too. “But we don’t want to,” emphasized one. Rather, he said, China wants to use its resources to educate, house, feed and provide medical care for its people.

Star Wars and America’s Nazis

U.S. interest in militarizing and weaponizing space goes back well before the *Vision for 2020* and other bellicose U.S. plans for space in the 1990s, or Ronald Reagan’s Strategic Defense Initiative dubbed “[Star Wars](#),” in the 1980s. Its roots are with the former Nazi rocket scientists and engineers brought to the U.S. from Germany after World War II under the U.S.’s Operation Paperclip, where more than 1,600 German scientists, engineers and technicians were taken from former Nazi Germany to the U.S. for government employment after the end of World War II in Europe, between 1945 and 1959.

They ended up at the U.S. Army’s Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama—to use “their technological expertise to help create the U.S. space and weapons program,” writes Jack Manno, a State University of New York professor, in his 1984 book [Arming the Heavens: The Hidden Military Agenda for Space, 1945-1995](#) (1984).

“Many of the early space war schemes were dreamt up by scientists working for the German military, scientists who brought their rockets and their ideas to America after the war,” he writes. Many of these scientists and engineers “later rose to positions of power in the U.S. military, NASA, and the aerospace industry.”

Among them were “Wernher von Braun and his V-2 colleagues,” who began “working on rockets for the U.S. Army” and, at the Redstone Arsenal, “were given the task of producing an intermediate range ballistic missile to carry battlefield atomic weapons up to 200 miles. The Germans produced a modified V-2 renamed the Redstone.... Huntsville became a major center of U.S. space military activities.”

Manno tells the story of former German Major General Walter Dornberger, who had been in charge of the entire Nazi rocket program, and how he “in 1947 as a consultant to the U.S Air Force and adviser to the Department of Defense ... wrote a planning paper for his new employers.

He proposed a system of hundreds of nuclear-armed satellites all orbiting at different

altitudes and angles, each capable of re-entering the atmosphere on command from Earth to proceed to its target. The Air Force began early work on Dornberger's idea under the acronym NABS (Nuclear Armed Bombardment Satellites)."

In my subsequent *Weapons in Space*, Manno tells me that "control over the Earth" was what those who have wanted to weaponize space seek. He said the Nazi scientists are an important "historical and technical link, and also an ideological link.... The aim is to ... have the capacity to carry out global warfare, including weapons systems that reside in space."

Dornberger's nuclear link continues in various forms throughout the U.S. military space program. The Strategic Defense Initiative scheme of Reagan—although this was barely disclosed at the time—was predicated on orbiting battle platforms with on-board hypervelocity guns, particle beams and laser weapons. They were to be energized by on-board nuclear reactors.

As General James Abrahamson, SDI director, said at a Symposium on Space Nuclear Power and Propulsion, "without reactors in orbit [there is] going to be a long, long light [extension] cord that goes down to the surface of the Earth" to bring up power to energize space weaponry.^[2]

New World Vistas



Lt. Gen. James Abrahamson and President Ronald Reagan at Strategic Defense Initiative Labs. [Source: [wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strategic_Defense_Initiative)]

A 1996 U.S. Air Force report, [*New World Vistas: Air and Space Power for the 21st Century*](#), speaks of how "new technologies will allow the fielding of space-based weapons of devastating effectiveness to be used to deliver energy and mass as force projection in tactical and strategic conflict. These advances will enable lasers with reasonable mass and cost to effect very many kills."

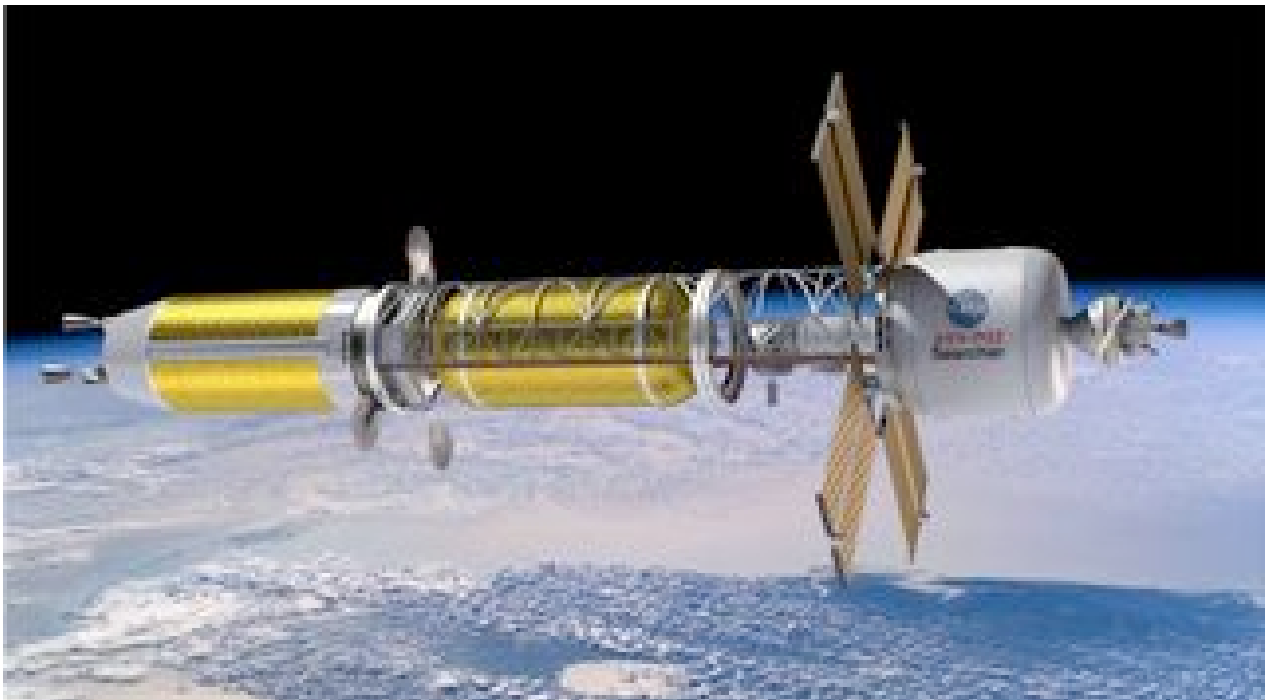
However, "power limitations impose restrictions" on such space weaponry making them "relatively unfeasible," but "a natural technology to enable high power is nuclear power in space." Says the report: "Setting the emotional issues of nuclear power aside, this

technology offers a viable alternative for large amounts of power in space.”

This linkage continues.

A 104-page report issued by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine in 2021 entitled *Space Nuclear Propulsion for Human Mars Exploration* declared: [“Space nuclear propulsion and power systems have the potential to provide the United States with military advantages.”](#)

The report’s central focus is the advocacy of rocket propulsion by nuclear power for U.S. missions to Mars and lays out “synergies” in space nuclear activities between NASA and the U.S. military.



An illustration of a spacecraft powered by nuclear thermal propulsion. (Image credit: NASA/Marshall)

On December 19, 2021, just before he was to leave office, Trump signed Space Policy Directive-6, titled [“National Strategy for Space Nuclear Power and Propulsion.”](#)

Its provisions include: “DoD [Department of Defense] and NASA, in cooperation with DOE [Department of Energy], and with other agencies and private-sector partners, as appropriate, should evaluate technology options and associated key technical challenges for an NTP [Nuclear Thermal Propulsion] system, including reactor designs, power conversion, and thermal management. DoD and NASA should work with their partners to evaluate and use opportunities for commonality with other SNPP [Space Nuclear Power and Propulsion] needs, terrestrial power needs, and reactor demonstration projects planned by agencies and the private sector.”

It continues: “DoD, in coordination with DOE and other agencies, and with private sector partners, as appropriate, should develop reactor and propulsion system technologies that will resolve the key technical challenges in areas such as reactor design and production, propulsion system and spacecraft design, and SNPP system integration.”

The members of the committee that put together the report for the National Academies

included executives of the aerospace and nuclear industry—a key element in U.S. space policy.

For example, as the report states, there were: Jonathan W. Cirtain, president of Advanced Technologies, “a subsidiary of BWX Technologies which is the sole manufacturer of nuclear reactors for the U.S. Navy”; Roger M. Myers, owner of R. Myers Consulting and who previously at Aerojet Rocketdyne “oversaw programs and strategic planning for next-generation in-space missions [that] included nuclear thermal propulsion and nuclear electric power systems; and Joseph A. Sholtis, Jr., “owner and principal of Sholtis Engineering & Safety Consulting, providing expert nuclear, aerospace, and systems engineering services to government, national laboratories, industry, and academia since 1993.”

And so on.

“Rigged Game in Washington”

The Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space was formed in 1992 at a meeting in Washington, D.C., and has been the leading group internationally challenging the weaponization and nuclearization of space.

Its coordinator, Bruce Gagnon, in a 2021 interview with me, said: “The aerospace industry has long proclaimed that ‘Star Wars’ would be the largest industrial project in human history. Add the nuclear industry’s ambition to use space as its ‘new market,’ and one can imagine the money that would be involved. These two industry giants have put their resources together to ensure their ‘control and domination’ of the U.S. Congress. Both political parties are virtually locked down when it comes to appropriating funds to move the arms race into space and to colonize the heavens for corporate profits. Just one example is the recent approval in Congress of the creation of the ‘Space Force’ as a new service branch in the military.”

“During the Trump administration (with the Democrats in control of the House of Representatives) the Space Force was ‘stood up’ as they like to say in the biz,” said Gagnon. “The Democrats could have stopped the creation of this new military branch. During the little congressional debate that did occur, the only thing the Democrats requested was to call it the ‘Space Corps’ (like the Marine Corps). It’s a rigged game in Washington when it comes to handing out money to the aerospace industry.”

Gagnon continued: “In his book, [*The Pentagon’s New Map: War and Peace in the 21st Century*](#), former Navy War College Professor Thomas Barnett writes that, under globalization of the world economy, every country will have a different role. We won’t produce shoes, cars, phones, washing machines and the like in the U.S. anymore because it is cheaper for industry to exploit labor in the global south.

Our role in the U.S., Barnett says, will be ‘security export.’ That means we will endlessly fight wars in the parts of the world where nations are not yet ‘fully integrated’ into corporate capitalism. Having a dominant military in space would enable the US to see, hear and target everything on the Earth.”

“In order to put together a global ‘Leviathan’ military capability,” Gagnon continued, “space must be militarized and weaponized. The cost of doing so is enormous and requires cuts in social and environmental spending and larger contributions from NATO member nations.”

“In addition to using space technology to control Earth on behalf of corporate capital, the new Space Force will have another key job. They will be tasked with attempting to control the pathway on and off the planet Earth. In the 1989 Congressional Study entitled [*Military Space Forces: The Next 50 Years*](#), congressional staffer John Collins writes on pages 24 and 25: “[Nature reserves decisive advantage for L4 and L5, two allegedly stable \[space\] libration points that theoretically could dominate Earth and moon, because they look down both gravity wells. No other location is equally commanding....](#) Armed forces might lie in wait at that location to hijack rival shipments on return.”

Privatized Gold Rush

“The Pentagon is looking to a future where space would be fully privatized and a new gold rush would ensue. Corporations and rich fat-cats like Jeff Bezos, Elon Musk and Richard Branson, while ignoring the UN’s Outer Space and Moon Treaties that call the heavens the ‘province of all mankind,’ would move to control the shipping lanes from Earth into space. The Space Force would be used by these ‘space entrepreneurs’ as their own private pirate forces to ensure they controlled the extraction of resources mined from planetary bodies. This provocative vision would in the end recreate the global war system, which has been deeply embedded into the culture and consciousness here on Earth. Russia, China and other space-faring nations are not going to allow the US to be the ‘Master of Space.’”

Planting Earth’s Toxic Residue in the Heavens and the Fight to Stop It

Says Gagnon: “I call this the bad seed of greed, war and environmental devastation that we are poised to plant into the heavens.”

“It is my hope that the global public would quickly awaken to a deep understanding and not allow corporate oligarchs or the military to encircle our planet with so much space junk that we would be forever entombed on Earth, or continue to punch a hole in the Earth’s delicate ozone layer from toxic rocket exhaust after each of their tens of thousands of coming launches, or ruin the sacred night sky with blinking satellites for 5G that will in the end be used by the Space Force for expanded ‘space situational awareness’ and targeting capabilities.”



Space junk. [Source: news.mit.edu]

“We have reached the point in human history where we need the immediate intervention by the citizen taxpayers of the planet to ensure that our tiny orbiting satellite called Earth remains livable for the future generations,” Gagnon declared. “We can’t fall for the public relations story-line of the cowboy sailing off into space to discover the new world. We know how that movie turns out in the end—just ask the Native American people.”

U.S. Army Colonel John Fairlamb (Ret.), in 2021 wrote in *The Hill*, the Washington, D.C., news website: “Let’s be clear: Deploying weapons in space crosses a threshold that cannot be walked back.” Fairlamb’s background includes being International Affairs Specialist for the Army Space and Missile Defense Command and Military Assistant to the U.S. Secretary of State for Political Military Affairs.

“Given the implications for strategic stability, and the likelihood that such a decision [to deploy weapons in space] by any nation would set off an expensive space arms race in which any advantage gained would likely be temporary, engaging now to prevent such a debacle seems warranted,” wrote Fairlamb.

His piece was headed: “The U.S. should negotiate a ban on basing weapons in space.”

“It’s time,” Fairlamb wrote, “for arms control planning to address the issues raised by this drift toward militarization of space. Space is a place where billions of defense dollars can evaporate quickly and result in more threats about which to be concerned. Russia and China have been proposing mechanisms for space arms control at the United Nations for years; it’s time for the U.S. to cooperate in this effort.”

As Alice Slater, a member of the boards of both the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space and the organization World BEYOND War, says: “The U.S. mission to dominate and control the military use of space has been, historically and at present, a major

obstacle to achieving nuclear disarmament and a peaceful path to preserve all life on Earth. Reagan rejected Gorbachev's offer to give up 'Star Wars' as a condition for both countries to eliminate all their nuclear weapons ... Bush and Obama blocked any discussion in 2008 and 2014 on Russian and Chinese proposals for a space-weapons ban in the consensus-bound Committee on Disarmament in Geneva."

"At this unique time in history when it is imperative that nations of the world join in cooperation to share resources to end the global plague assaulting its inhabitants and to [avoid catastrophic climate destruction or Earth-shattering nuclear devastation,](#)" said Slater, "we are instead squandering our treasure and intellectual capacity on weapons and space warfare."

And yet far worse is to come—unless there is a return to the vision of the Outer Space Treaty of 1967. The latter needs to be expanded, U.S. Space Force dismantled, and a full global commitment made to keep space for peace.

As we go to press, *Breaking Defense* published an article: ["Pentagon Poised To Unveil, Demonstrate Classified Space Weapon."](#) This was its headline. Above the headline it stated: ["Show Coverage: Space Symposium 2021"](#)

The piece begins: ["For months, top officials at the Defense Department have been working toward declassifying the existence of a secret space weapon program and providing a real-world demonstration of its capabilities."](#) It continues: ["The system in question long has been cloaked in the blackest of black secrecy veils—developed as a so-called Special Access Program known only to a very few, very senior government leaders."](#)

The August 20th article features below its headline a large illustration of—as its caption reads—"Directed energy anti-satellite weapons for the future (Lockheed Martin)"

Space Symposium 2021 was to be held in Colorado Springs, Colorado between August 23 and 26. A main speaker was to be General John W. "Jay" Raymond, chief of space operations of the U.S. Space Force.

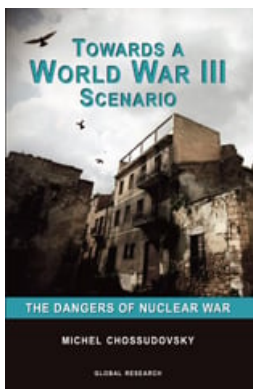
Breaking Defense describes itself as "the digital magazine on the strategy, politics and technology of defense," adding: "It's a new era in defense, where new technologies, new warfare domains and a rapidly shifting military and political landscape have profound implications for national security."

Profound, indeed!

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Reviews

“This book is a ‘must’ resource – a richly documented and systematic diagnosis of the supremely pathological geo-strategic planning of US wars since ‘9-11’ against non-nuclear countries to seize their oil fields and resources under cover of ‘freedom and democracy’.”

–John McMurtry, Professor of Philosophy, Guelph University

“In a world where engineered, pre-emptive, or more fashionably “humanitarian” wars of aggression have become the norm, this challenging book may be our final wake-up call.”

–Denis Halliday, Former Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations

Michel Chossudovsky exposes the insanity of our privatized war machine. Iran is being targeted with nuclear weapons as part of a war agenda built on distortions and lies for the purpose of private profit. The real aims are oil, financial hegemony and global control. The price could be nuclear holocaust. When weapons become the hottest export of the world’s only superpower, and diplomats work as salesmen for the defense industry, the whole world is recklessly endangered. If we must have a military, it belongs entirely in the public sector. No one should profit from mass death and destruction.

–Ellen Brown, author of ‘Web of Debt’ and president of the Public Banking Institute



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