

United States Says ‘Yes’ to Nuclear Weapons Tests, ‘No’ to a Nuke Ban Treat

US military: “We are prepared to use nuclear weapons”

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Twice in seven days the United States shot nuclear-capable long-range missiles toward the Marshall Islands, but the same government refused in March to join negotiations for a new treaty banning nuclear weapons.

Tests conducted [April 26](#) and [May 3](#) from Vandenberg Air Force Base launched modernized Minuteman-3 ballistic missiles, and the US Air Force said in a statement that such tests ensure

“the United States’ ability to maintain a strong, credible nuclear deterrent as a key element of US national security...”



A Taurus rocket carrying Taiwan’s ROCSAT-2 satellite lifts-off from Space Launch Complex 576E at Vandenberg AFB.

Image courtesy U.S. Air Force.

In late March, US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki [Haley explained](#) why the US would boycott the “treaty ban” negotiations that began March 27 at the UN in New York City. Haley said about nuclear weapons,

“[W]e can’t honestly say that we can protect our people by allowing the bad actors to have them, and those of us that are good, trying to keep peace and safety not to have them.”



US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley

North Korean president Kim Jong-un could have said the same thing about his seven nuclear warheads, especially in view of US bombs and missiles currently falling on seven countries — Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, and Libya — and engagement in massive war games off the Korean peninsula.

Ambassador Haley managed to avoid being two-faced on one level. Joining the ban treaty talks would have been openly hypocritical while her colleagues in the war department were preparing both new nuclear weapons production and a series of test launches. [Another April test](#), at the Tonopah bombing range in Nevada, dropped a so-called “B61-12” the newest US H-bomb now in development and scheduled to go into production after 2022.

Jackie Cabasso, of the Western States Legal Foundation, [explained April 20](#),

“In 1997... President Bill Clinton signed Presidential Directive-60, reaffirming the threatened first use of nuclear weapons as the ‘cornerstone’ of US national security.... President Obama left office with the US poised to spend \$1 trillion over the next 30 years to maintain and modernize its nuclear bombs and warheads.... Over the past couple of years, the US has conducted a series of drop tests of the newly modified B61-12 gravity bomb.... Each new bomb will cost more than twice its weight in solid gold.”

Of the 480 B61s slated to become B61-12s, about 180 are scheduled to be placed at six NATO bases in Europe.

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As it did Feb. 21 and Feb. 25, 2016, the Air Force regularly tests Minuteman-3s. Deputy Pentagon Chief Robert [Work explained](#) before the Feb. 25 launch that the US had tested “at least” 15 since January 2011,

“And that is a signal ... that we are prepared to use nuclear weapons in defense of our country if necessary.”

This is a Big Lie. To “use” nuclear weapons produces only massacres, and massacres are

never defensive.

Jason Ditz put the rocket tests in context for Antiwar.com:

“Everywhere and (mostly) without exception, the test of an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) would be angrily condemned by the United States as a dangerous provocation, and the firing of a nuclear-capable rocket would be treated as tantamount to an act of war. Not today [April 26], of course, when the missile in question was test-fired from California by the United States flying some 4,000 miles before hitting a test target near the Marshall Islands. The missile was identified as a Minuteman III, a nuclear-capable weapon of which the US has 450 in service.”

The two times Haley flubbed her March 27 “peace and safety” speech were alarming. Haley stumbled once saying,

“We would love to have a ban on nuclear treat... nuclear weapons.”

A ban on nuclear treaties is clearly what Haley’s bosses do want. So she didn’t correct herself when she said,

“One day we will hope that we are standing here saying, ‘We no longer need nuclear weapons.’”

Translation: today the US does not even hope to get rid of nuclear weapons.

Instead, the United States is simultaneously bombing and rocketing across the Middle East, hitting civilians with drones, Cruise missiles, depleted uranium, and even a 21,600-pound “Massive Ordnance Air Blast” or MOAB bomb, also tested April 13, destroying caves in Afghanistan. This giant “thermobaric” or “fuel-air” explosive (FAE) has the mass of five Lincoln Continentals, and reportedly killed 95 people including a teacher and his son. Such is the peace and safety delivered by “those of us that are good.”



One Defense Intelligence Agency report uncovered by Human Rights Watch said that because

“shock and pressure waves cause minimal damage to brain tissue...it is

possible that victims of FAEs are not rendered unconscious by the blast, but instead suffer for several seconds or minutes while they suffocate.”

On March 29, two days after her UN speech Haley spoke to the Council on Foreign Relations and cleared up any confusion the Pentagon’s bombing spree might cause. Haley declared,

“The United States is the moral conscience of the world.”

Well, “And I,” Dorothy Parker said, “am Marie of Romania.”

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John LaForge is on the [Nukewatch](#) staff and edits its Quarterly.

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