



DISADVANTAGES

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Building the Disadvantage

Link: Why will the plan cause this?

Brink: Why is this a critical time?

Uniqueness: Would the disadvantage happen even without the plan?

Impact: How bad would the disadvantage be?

The Link

Start from something the plan does:

Limit U.S. deterrence?

Restrict the power of the President?

Upset Russia?

Upset China?

Spend money?

Abrogate the ABM Treaty?

**Commit to unilateral action without
consulting with U.S. allies?**

**Restrict the use of nuclear or chemical
weapons?**

The Brink

Present recent evidence giving some reason that we are at a critical time:

Economy: On brink of recession now.

Arms Control: U.S. leadership at a crucial turning point.

Proliferation: Several nations are at the decision point.

U.S.-China relations: Recent controversy over spy plane puts the relationship on the brink.

U.S.-Russia relations: Relationship between Bush and Putin at a crucial point.

Bipartisanship: Change-over of the Senate creates a critical brink point.

Uniqueness

The negative needs some reason why the disadvantage will be avoided so long as there is no further push:

U.S.-Russia relations will be O.K. unless missile defense creates additional tension.

Bipartisanship will survive if Congress can avoid contentious issues such as missile defense.

The negative brink evidence should be more recent than the affirmative uniqueness evidence.

Impact



Be as explicit as possible about a scenario to impact: Be prepared to explain how and why the impact will happen.

Turns or Turnarounds

Link Turns: A link turn shows that the plan actually does the opposite of what the negative link claims

For example: On the bipartisanship DA, the affirmative may argue that the plan would actually promote rather than hurt bipartisanship.

Impact Turns: An impact turn shows that the claimed impact is actually good rather than bad

For example: The Disad says that plan passage would result in a Russia-China alliance. The affirmative argument is that a Russia-China alliance would be a good thing, rescuing the Russian economy from collapse.

Beware the Double Turn: The affirmative team must NEVER turn both the link and the impact.

Linear Disadvantages

Linear disadvantages do not need to prove brink, threshold, or uniqueness: Linear disads freely admit that the problem may already be happening in the present system; they simply claim that the affirmative plan produces more of a bad thing.

For example: Proliferation of nuclear weapons. It may be true that there is proliferation in the present system, but the plan would worsen the situation. The more proliferation, the worse for all of us since there will be a linear increase in the risk of war.

The Advantage of Using Linear Disads: More real world; brink arguments are often artificial anyway.

The Problems With Using Linear Disads: Not much impact; difficult to outweigh the affirmative advantages; it is difficult to quantify the “increment” of disadvantage caused by the plan.

How Are Disads Presented?

“The Shell”: The Disad can be first presented in any constructive speech. Most commonly, the Disad is presented in the first negative constructive speech with a 1 to 2 minute “shell” of the argument. In other instances, the disad is presented in the second negative constructive speech; in such cases, the negative team often presents a longer version of the shell.

U.S. UNILATERALISM WILL DAMAGE MULTILATERAL SOLUTIONS

- **The thesis of the unilateralism disadvantage will be that the United States should not make a major shift in its foreign policy without involving its allies in a process of true consultation. The notion that the United States will do what it must do and that other nations will go along produces resentment and opposition, regardless of the merits of the policy.**

NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE WILL DESTROY ARMS CONTROL

- **The key problem with a decision to build a system of national missile defense is that it would violate the ABM Treaty. George Lewis, associate director of the security studies program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, worries that the abrogation of the ABM Treaty could cause the unraveling of the international arms control regime:**
 - **Although it is now technically feasible to “hit a bullet with a bullet” on the test range, adversaries would be able to take straightforward steps to defeat this system, not only preventing it from achieving the high levels of effectiveness claimed for it, but also precluding any significant security benefits. Worse still, deploying such a system would open a Pandora’s box of problems for the United States, unraveling decades of efforts to reduce U.S. and Russian nuclear stockpiles and to limit proliferation of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles worldwide.**
 - **(Lewis, National missile defense: An indefensible system, 2000, p. 121)**

PROMOTION OF A RUSSIA-CHINA ALLIANCE WILL LEAD TO WAR

- **Any hard-line action by the United States, such as the building of a national missile defense system or a new commitment to preemptive destruction of weapons of mass destruction, could push Russia and China further together in an alliance against the United States. Bruce Blair, president of the Center for Defense Information, has warned of such an outcome: “China has indicated more than once that NMD would push it into a strategic partnership with Russia, thereby threatening the revival of the Cold War” (Blair, National Missile Defense: What Does It All Mean?, 2000, p. 25).**

INTRUSIVE INSPECTIONS DESTROY CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

- **The key sticking point in creating an inspection regime for the Biological Weapons Convention is the U.S. insistence that “challenge inspections” would violate the Fourth Amendment restrictions on unreasonable search and seizure. The inspection regime would apply not only to U.S. government facilities, but also to private companies and individuals engaged in biotechnology research. Some affirmative cases will, however, propose that the U.S. adopt the sweeping enforcement protocol of the BWC. The Fourth Amendment disadvantage would apply against such cases. Ronald Rotunda, visiting senior fellow at the CATO Institute, described the Fourth Amendment violation:**
 - **The enforcement protocol is unusual in its enforcement mechanism against private persons and organizations. The protocol will authorize foreign inspectors to search individuals and companies in the United States to uncover evidence of criminal activity. Those searches will often be conducted without the strict protections of the Fourth Amendment and its requirement that a search warrant be issued by a neutral magistrate only after a finding of probable cause. (Rotunda, CATO Inst. Foreign Policy Briefing, Sept. 28, 2000, pp. 2-3)**

INCREASING FEDERAL ANTI-TERRORIST POWERS THREATENS BASIC RIGHTS

- **Affirmative cases seeking to strengthen civil defense preparations to deal with terrorist use of weapons of mass destruction will typically focus on the restrictions contained in the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878. This Act prevents the U.S. military from becoming involved in any law enforcement activities on U.S. soil. Proponents of stronger civil defense preparation argue that the Posse Comitatus Act should be amended to allow the U.S. military to take the lead in preparations to deal with the use of weapons of mass destruction. Russell Howard, deputy head of the social science department for the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, pointed out the risks involved in removing the Posse Comitatus restrictions:**
 - **Even though the President has the authority to use federal troops under certain circumstances, instances of such use have been rare. Posse Comitatus remains a “giant bulwark” against DoD [Department of Defense] participation in domestic operations. This is well understood in the Pentagon, as Secretary Cohen has made clear: As in the past, any military support [in the wake of a domestic attack] must be just that – support. Both legal and practical considerations demand it. The Posse Comitatus Act and the Defense Department’s implementing policies are clear – the military is not to conduct domestic law enforcement without explicit statutory authority, and we strongly believe no changes should be made to Posse Comitatus. (Howard, Papers From the Conference on Homeland Protection, Oct. 2000, p. 119)**

MULTILATERAL ECONOMIC SANCTIONS KILL MILLIONS

- **The strengthening of multilateral economic sanctions might result from affirmative plans in two very different ways. First, hard-line affirmative cases may impose economic sanctions on countries in an effort to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. More likely, however, an affirmative case may strengthen sanctions unintentionally by strengthening U.S. leadership of the non-proliferation regime. Many soft-line affirmative cases will actually claim that adoption of their plan would restore U.S. leadership of international arms control efforts and strengthen international cooperation against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. If true, this means that the affirmative plan would shore up the multinational commitment to the economic sanctions now in place against Iran, Iraq and other “countries of concern.”**
- **The negative disadvantage would argue that multilateral economic sanctions are now losing their force because other nations are no longer following the U.S. lead in economically punishing these “countries of concern.” This is actually a beneficial turn of events, the disadvantage will argue, since a non-porous sanctions regime results in hundreds of thousands of innocent civilian deaths. By restoring U.S. credibility and leadership in the nonproliferation regime, the plan saves the economic sanctions regime, resulting in more death and suffering.**

LOSS OF NUCLEAR DETERRENCE CAUSES NUCLEAR WAR

- **The nuclear deterrence disadvantage could be used against almost all cases which move in a soft-line direction. The thesis of this disadvantage is that a strong nuclear deterrent has kept the peace for half a century; any policy which weakens nuclear deterrence invites disaster. Robert Spulak, a senior analyst at Sandia National Laboratories, argues that nuclear weapons have played a vital role in preventing war:**
 - **Nuclear weapons are arguably the major reason why the second 45 years of the 20th century did not witness the massive devastation of the world wars of the first 45 years. According to Malcolm Rifkind, “The immense power of nuclear weapons removed, long ago, any rational basis for a potential adversary believing that a major war could be fought in Europe and won. . . . The value of nuclear weapons in such circumstances lies not in classical concepts of war-fighting or war-winning, nor just in deterring the use of nuclear weapons in an adversary, but in actually preventing war.” (Spulak, Weapons of Mass Destruction, 1999, p. 52) (ellipsis is in the original)**

BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS SHIFT

- **Affirmative cases which focus on just nuclear or chemical weapons will be vulnerable to a disadvantage claiming that the plan would create a shift to biological weapons. Consider, for example, a plan which corrects problems with the inspection regime in the Chemical Weapons Convention. Presumably, the plan would make it more difficult for “countries of concern” such as North Korea, Iran, Iraq or Syria to obtain chemical weapons. The net result may be that the plan pushes these countries toward biological weapons programs, which are far more threatening than chemical weapons. Raymond Zilinskas, senior scientist in residence at the Monterey Institute of International Studies, warned of such a shift:**
 - **Ironically, as tougher international controls are put into place to deter nations from seeking to acquire chemical and nuclear weapons, leaders may be even more drawn to biological arms as the most accessible form of weapon of mass destruction. (Zilinskas, Biological Warfare: Modern Offense and Defense, 2000, p. 2)**

ENGAGEMENT SOLUTIONS PROMOTE NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

- **Some affirmative cases will argue that the United States should establish friendly international relations with countries such as Iran or North Korea as a means of decreasing their drive toward weapons of mass destruction. The theory is that these nations are acquiring weapons of mass destruction because of their fear of the United States; if the U.S. establishes a friendly and trusting relationship, the drive toward weapons of mass destruction might be blunted.**
- **The key problem with the engagement approach is that it sends a signal that the best way to get the United States to establish a friendly relationship is to acquire weapons of mass destruction. Edward Spiers, professor of military history at the University of Leeds, argues that the Clinton administration policy of engaging North Korea undermined the nonproliferation regime:**
 - **The agreement proved immensely controversial. Critics condemned the litany of American concessions and inducements as “front-loaded” in favor of North Korea, as a “tendered bribe to North Korea in exchange for a limit on its nuclear weapons program,” and as a capitulation to blackmail (effectively treating North Korea as a special case, paying it to honor the non-nuclear obligations that it had once accepted and then violated). Moreover, by seeking to freeze the future nuclear program, the accord left North Korea with any bombs it had already made (or could make before the special inspections occurred) and set a bleak precedent for countering proliferation. “The message to other countries is clear,” wrote Dr. Gary Milhollin (Director of the Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control), “If you join the Nonproliferation Treaty and break it by secretly making bombs, you will receive billions of dollars worth of free nuclear- and fossil-fuel energy.” (Spiers, Weapons of Mass Destruction, 2000, p. 34)**

SOFT-LINE POLICIES WILL ERODE CONFIDENCE IN NUCLEAR DETERRENCE

A. Links: Soft-Line proposals degrade the credibility of U.S. nuclear deterrence.

1. De-alerting proposals decrease U.S. nuclear deterrence.

Robert Rudney, analyst, National Institute for Public Policy, *Comparative Strategy*, Jan./Mar. 2000, p. 27. De-alerting schemes are risky formulas for undermining a prudent U.S. deterrent posture that emphasizes, above all, the safety and security of its nuclear forces. De-alerting could degrade seriously the effectiveness of the U.S. nuclear deterrent, including its vital SSBN leg. The de-alerting measures could increase instability by weakening the U.S. deterrent, making nuclear forces more vulnerable to attack and creating the serious danger of a “re-alerting race” during a future crisis. De-alerting has little value in peacetime, when the likelihood of war is low. In a crisis, when the likelihood of war is higher, forces will not remain de-alerted, and re-alerting could exacerbate the crisis with an escalation spiral.

2. Ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty decreases deterrence.

Jeane Kirkpatrick, senior fellow, American Enterprise Institute & Former U.S. Ambassador to the UN, *Final Review of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty*, Oct. 7, 1999, p. 9. Hrg., Sen. Comm. on Foreign Relations. The safety and reliability of our nuclear stockpiles cannot be taken for granted, but must be monitored. Testing is a vital part of ascertaining and maintaining the reliability and safety of our nuclear weapons. It is also a necessary step in modernizing our nuclear weapons. Testing is vital to maintaining the reliability and credibility of our nuclear deterrent and our confidence in it.

3. “No-first-use” declarations decrease the credibility of deterrence.

David Gompert, vice president of the RAND Corporation, *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Jan./Feb. 2000, p. 76. The most immediate concern is that rogue states, lacking other options, might threaten to use biological weapons against U.S. troops in a local war. The United States can partly neutralize this threat by exploiting information technology – dispersing its forces and striking accurately from afar. But determined enemies will then resort to longer-range means to threaten U.S. forces, allies and territory. Try as it might to stop the spread of these weapons, the United States must prepare to prevent or defend against their use. But defense alone, with anti-missile and counterforce weapons, cannot make American forces and citizens entirely safe from lethal biological agents. Deterrence is crucial. A common argument is that U.S. conventional military superiority – the ability to render an adversary defenseless – should suffice to deter the use of weapons of mass destruction. However, an enemy may already be receiving the full brunt of U.S. conventional strikes when it opts to threaten biological attack. Indeed, the most plausible reason why a rogue state would threaten to use weapons of mass destruction is that the United States has already unleashed its conventional might to defeat local aggression. Given that, the threat of U.S. conventional reprisal presumably would be ineffective. And because the United States has forsworn biological and chemical weapons, deterrence could depend critically on the threat to retaliate with nuclear weapons. That, of course, would be contradicted by a nuclear no-first-use policy.

4. Reliance on conventional forces weakens the credibility of deterrence.

Robert Spulak, senior analyst, Strategic Studies Center, Sandia National Laboratories, *Weapons of Mass Destruction*, 1999, p. 53. If we pretend that conventional weapons could be strategically sufficient, we allow the credibility of our nuclear deterrent to be damaged.

5. Any effort to stigmatize or minimize nuclear weapons destroys deterrence.

Robert Spulak, senior analyst, Strategic Studies Center, Sandia National Laboratories, *Weapons of Mass Destruction*, 1999, pp. 53-54. Minimizing and stigmatizing our nuclear weapons can create a self-imposed taboo with respect to even nuclear adversaries, thereby delegitimizing deterrence and inviting threats to our interests.

B. Internal Link: The success of deterrence depends on credibility.

Frank Zagare, professor of political science at the State University of New York at Buffalo, *Perfect Deterrence*, 2000, p. 296. While a highly valued status quo is an important though neglected determinant of peace, it is not the deciding piece of the puzzle. In perfect deterrence theory, threat credibility emerges as the quintessential determinant of deterrence success.

C. Brink: The credibility of U.S. nuclear deterrence is at a critical point.

John Nagel, professor of international relations, U.S. Academy at West Point, *Searching for National Security in an NBC World*, 2000, p. 72. The danger of weapons of mass destruction being used against America and its allies is greater now than at any time since the Cuban missile crisis of 1962.

D. Uniqueness: In the present system, the U.S. is committed to credible deterrence.

John Steinbruner, director of the Center for International & Security Studies, U. of Maryland, *Principles of Global Security*, 2000, p. 197. This is especially true for the United States, which has emerged from the cold war period in the best position to establish the terms of grand strategy. As discussed in preceding chapters, the United States has adjusted its political rhetoric and its military forces in response to the end of the cold war, but not its fundamental security posture. It remains committed to the basic deterrent operations and contingency reactions that were established over the course of half a century and to the alliance arrangements in which they were embedded.

E. Impact: A strong and credible nuclear deterrent is essential to prevent nuclear war.

Robert Spulak, senior analyst, Sandia National Laboratories, *Weapons of Mass Destruction*, 1999, p. 52. Nuclear weapons are arguably the major reason why the second 45 years of the 20th century did not witness the massive devastation of the world wars of the first 45 years. According to Malcolm Rifkind, “The immense power of nuclear weapons removed, long ago, any rational basis for a potential adversary believing that a major war could be fought in Europe and won. . . . The value of nuclear weapons in such circumstances lies not in classical concepts of war-fighting or war-winning, nor just in deterring the use of nuclear weapons in an adversary, but in actually preventing war.” (ellipsis is in the original)