

CARUBA: How I learned to love the bomb

With Iran about to go nuclear, I won't stop worrying, though...

By Alan Caruba

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As a child in the 1950s, I learned how to "duck and cover" in order to protect myself from an atomic bomb explosion. Little did I know the instruction should have been, "Kiss your asterisk goodbye."



The Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, when the Soviets wanted to put nuclear-tipped long-range missiles there, led to a confrontation between President [Kennedy](#) and [Nikita Khrushchev](#) that had both sides changing their underwear after it was over.

What do the [United States](#), [Great Britain](#), [France](#), [Russia](#), [Pakistan](#), [India](#), [Israel](#) and [North Korea](#) have in common? They all have nuclear weapons, and, of course, [Iran](#) has been working toward that goal and is very close to achieving it.

Some will argue that [Israel](#) should not be on the list because it has never acknowledged its nuclear capabilities, but everyone knows it has them. Presumably, the Iranian mullahs know that as well, but they are waiting for the mythical 12th Imam to come out of a well and smite the enemies of Islam and, in their view, a catastrophic exchange of nuclear weapons might help that occur.

It is instructive that both [Pakistan](#) and [India](#) acquired their nuclear weapons without anyone being aware of it until after the fact. At [CIA](#) headquarters, when [India](#) announced its successful test, it came as a very big surprise. These days, the [United States](#) is busy reassuring [Israel](#) that [Iran](#) is "at least a year away" from nuclear status, and you can imagine how relieved they are to hear that.

[North Korea](#) is a wild card, and, given the lack of success the [United States](#) or anyone else has had in getting it to abandon its nukes, the same can be assumed for [Iran](#) when it makes its announcement. Meanwhile, it has to content itself with announcing new missiles, the latest of which it has dubbed the "ambassador of death."

The [Preparatory Commission](#) for the [Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization](#) designated last Sunday as the International Day Against Nuclear Tests. Given the total lack of success in thwarting any nation that wants a nuke, my confidence in the [United Nations'](#) treaty is zero.

The International Atomic Energy Agency, a [U.N.](#) component, has been kicked out of [North Korea](#), Iraq and [Iran](#) on several occasions, so one might rationally assume it is useless when it comes to stopping the manufacture of A-bombs.

Olli Heinonen, the former chief of [U.N.](#) nuclear inspections worldwide, told the French newspaper Le Monde that [Iran](#) has stockpiled enough low-enriched uranium for one or two nuclear arms, but he thought doing so made no sense. Betting on the rationality of the Iranian ayatollahs is not a good idea.

Who doesn't want a ban on nuclear weapons testing? The U.S. Senate, for one.

While the [U.S.](#) has "signed" a number of the test-ban treaties that have been around since the 1960s, the Senate has not ratified any of them lately, thus avoiding having to commit the nation to no longer testing new nuclear weapons. For some reason, the Senate does not trust [Russia](#) or the other nuke nations.

In April, President Obama journeyed to [Russia](#) to sign a nuclear arms reduction treaty dubbed New START with Dmitry Medvedev.

Robert R. Monroe, a retired vice admiral in the U.S. Navy and former director of the Defense Nuclear Agency from 1977 to 1980, expressed the opinion, "The treaty has many problems from being unverifiable to giving [Russia](#) virtual veto power over [U.S.](#) missile defense, and more." That's bad enough, but it's worse than that.

Two days before meeting with the Russians, the Obama administration released its Nuclear Posture Review (NPR). Adm. Monroe said, "The NPR is joined at the hip with New START, and together they take this country down a dangerous path. For 65 years, the very existence of our nation has depended upon a strong nuclear deterrent. The new NPR wipes out this proven policy, substituting one of weakness in its place."

There are those who love test-ban treaties. They love the idea of unilaterally disarming the [United States](#) in a world where there are nations that may not love us.

Not surprisingly, the nations with nukes have not signed onto anything that would take away their deterrent factor, and, of course, [Iran](#) is hellbent on getting nukes for itself.

Not a single conflict since the [United States](#) dropped two A-bombs on Japan in 1945 to end a war the Japanese had started has used nuclear weapons. Rational people - even if they have nuclear weapons - know that using them is probably suicidal. Irrational people - like the Iranian ayatollahs - probably are the exception.

Alan Caruba blogs at factsnotfantasy.blogspot.com and is founder of the National Anxiety Center.

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