

## Sample Con Case

We stand **CON** on the resolution, “Resolved: States should eliminate their arsenals of nuclear weapons.” We support our case with the following **2** contentions.

### Contention 1. Nuclear deterrence works.

Deterrence makes the world safer, as Andrew **Krepinevich** explains, “deterrence works by convincing the rival [...] that the costs involved in pursuing the proscribed action will exceed any benefits derived [...] the introduction of nuclear weapons, with their immense destructive power, [...] has raised the prospective costs of war to such high levels that waging it is an increasingly unattractive proposition for “rational” policymakers [...]”<sup>1</sup> Without nuclear weapons, the world would be much more dangerous. There are **2** warrants.

**A. Historical explanation.** No other reason can explain why no major wars have occurred since the use of nuclear weapons at the end of the Second World War. As Bruno **Tertrais** notes, “History gives us solid arguments in support of the positive role played by nuclear weapons, [...] No major power conflict has taken place in nearly 70 years [...] There has never been a direct military conflict between two nuclear States [...] No nuclear-armed country has ever been invaded [...] No country covered by a nuclear guarantee has ever been the target of a major State attack.”<sup>2</sup> Professor James **Pasley** continues, “nuclear weapons can be a successful deterrent to conflict escalation when they occur in symmetrical interstate relationships. Thus, nuclear weapons appear to have played a significant role in placating relations between the great powers during the Cold War.”<sup>3</sup>

**B. The elimination of uncertainty.** Zachary **Keck** explains, “What makes nuclear weapons so effective for deterrence purposes is that they eliminate the uncertainty in war. With nuclear weapons, states no longer have to defeat an adversary’s military to destroy its cities and citizens. Furthermore, there are no real defenses against nuclear missiles, and those missiles travel quickly. Thus, leaders know that if they use nuclear weapons

<sup>1</sup> Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr. (a Senior Fellow at Hudson Institute. He also serves as president and chief executive officer of Solarium LLC, a defense consulting firm, and as an Adjunct Senior Fellow at the Center for a New American Security. In 1995 he founded the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (CSBA), where he served as its president until 2016), “The Decline of Deterrence”, 12 March 2019, Hudson Institute, <https://www.hudson.org/research/14871-the-decline-of-deterrence>.

<sup>2</sup> Bruno Tertrais (Senior Research Fellow at the Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique in France. He is also a member of the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), and associate editor of Survival as well as a member of the editorial board of the Washington Quarterly and of Strategic and Military Affairs. In 2010, he was the recipient of the Vauban Prize, awarded for his distinguished career and in 2014, he was made a Knight of the Legion of Honor), “In Defense of Deterrence The Relevance, Morality and Cost-Effectiveness of Nuclear Weapons,” In collaboration with the Atomic Energy Commission (CEA), Fall 2011, Security Studies Center of IFRI, <https://inis.iaea.org/collection/NCLCollectionStore/Public/48/009/48009684.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> James F. Pasley (Associate Professor of Int’l Politics @ Louisiana State University), “Chicken Pax Atomica: The Cold War Stability of Nuclear Deterrence”, Journal of International and Area Studies, Vol. 15, No. 2, 2008, pg. 35, <http://s-space.snu.ac.kr/bitstream/10371/96466/1/2.Chicken-Pax-Atomica-The-Cold-War-Stability-of-Nuclear-Deterrence-James-F-Pasley.pdf>.



against or threaten the existence of a nuclear weapon state, it is virtually certain their major cities will be destroyed within hours.”<sup>4</sup>

Conventional wars *outweigh* nuclear war, as professor Thomas **Preston** notes, “a nuclear exchange between small states [...] would be no more costly (and likely far less so) than large-scale conventional conflicts.”<sup>5</sup> For example, World War 2 resulted in over 70 million deaths, far more than the only time nuclear weapons have been used.<sup>6</sup>

Even if miscalculation occurs, deterrence would still be more important. A **study** from 1816 to 1974 of all opportunities to initiate wars shows, “that through [...] nuclear proliferation, we may expect to prevent approximately 40 conventional [...] wars for every [...] miscalculated [...] nuclear exchange.”<sup>7</sup> Thus, deterrence comparatively saves more lives.

## Contention 2. Rearmament.

Aaron **Miles** explains, “In a world where states have eliminated nuclear weapons but retained the knowledge and the technology to produce them, how do we ensure that no state will rearm with nuclear weapons during a future war?”<sup>8</sup> We believe states will rearm. There are **2** warrants.

**A. Rational incentives.** Sinan **Ulgen** furthers, “In a world without nuclear weapons, breaking one’s cartel commitments by developing a nuclear deterrent would seem to have enormous security benefits. [...] When the first rogue state went nuclear, the nonproliferation regime would likely fall apart completely. [...] in a world without the security that nuclear weapons provide, a single episode of noncompliance would likely cause many nations to seek their own deterrents. The result would be a collapse of the regime and a cascade of proliferation. It is a dangerous fallacy to believe that rogue states could be prevented from reintroducing nuclear weapons to a world from which these weapons had been eliminated.”<sup>9</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Zachary Keck (was formerly Managing Editor of The Diplomat where he authored The Pacific Realist blog. Previously, he worked as Deputy Editor of e-International Relations and has interned at the Center for a New American Security and in the U.S. Congress, where he worked on defense issues), “Why Nuclear Weapons Work”, 13 September 2014, The Diplomat, <https://thediplomat.com/2014/09/why-nuclear-weapons-work/>.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Preston (Associate Professor of IR at Washington State U., Faculty Research Associate, Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs), “From Lambs to Lions: Future Security relationships in a World of Biological and Nuclear Weapons”, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers (March 16, 2009) p. 31-2.

<sup>6</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World\\_War\\_II\\_casualties](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II_casualties).

<sup>7</sup> Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and William H. Riker (Department of Political Science, University of Rochester). “An Assessment of the Merits of Selective Nuclear Proliferation.” The Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol. 26, No. 2, Conflict and International Security (June 1982), pp. 283-306 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/173903>.

<sup>8</sup> Aaron Miles (physicist and fellow at the Center for Global Security Research at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory), “Facing the central questions of nuclear disarmament,” 10 September 2018, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, <https://thebulletin.org/2018/09/facing-the-central-questions-of-nuclear-disarmament/>.

<sup>9</sup> Sinan Ulgen (chairman of the Istanbul-based think tank EDAM and a visiting scholar at Carnegie Europe. He has served in the Turkish foreign service in several capacities and was among the



**B. Prior knowledge.** Michael **O’Hanlon** points out that “[...] even once nuclear weapons are eliminated, they may not be eliminated forever. At a practical level, the world will likely have many nuclear power plants as well as all the nuclear waste that nuclear bomb and energy programs will have generated; fissile material can be gleaned from all of these sources. The knowledge to make nuclear weapons will not disappear, and relevant nuclear materials will not do so either.”<sup>10</sup>

Thomas **Schelling** explains the impact, “a ‘world without nuclear weapons’ would be a world in which the United States, Russia, Israel, China, and half a dozen or a dozen other countries would have hair-trigger mobilization plans to rebuild nuclear weapons and mobilize or commandeer delivery systems, and would have prepared targets to preempt other nations’ nuclear facilities, all in a high-alert status [...] Every crisis would be a nuclear crisis, any war could become a nuclear war. The urge to preempt would dominate; whoever gets the first few weapons will coerce or preempt.”<sup>11</sup>

This makes rearmament *more dangerous* than the status quo, as Charles **Glaser** explains, “A variety of considerations suggest that the rearmament race is more dangerous. [...] The nuclear state might [...] use its nuclear advantage to compel the end of a conventional war, or to destroy the adversary’s nuclear-rearmament capability [...] Alternatively, the rearmament race might result in uncertainty about the status of nuclear capabilities. A state [...] might use nuclear weapons only to learn that its adversary had also been able to rebuild quickly.”<sup>12</sup> Thus, states should not eliminate their nuclear arsenals since it would result in rearmament, which worsens every Pro impact.

For all these reasons, we stand CON.

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international security experts tasked by NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen with reporting on the transatlantic relationship in advance of NATO’s September 2014 summit. His research focuses on nuclear policy, the implications of Turkish foreign policy for Europe and the United States, and the security and economic aspects of transatlantic relations. He is co-author of *The European Transformation of Modern Turkey*. “Is “zero” the right target for disarmament?: A Turkish response.” *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 2015, 71(1), 95–97. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0096340214563688>.

<sup>10</sup> Michael E. O’Hanlon (a senior fellow, and director of research, in Foreign Policy at the Brookings Institution, where he specializes in U.S. defense strategy, the use of military force, and American national security policy. He co-directs the Security and Strategy team, the Defense Industrial Base working group, and the Africa Security Initiative within the Foreign Policy program, as well. He is an adjunct professor at Columbia, Georgetown, and Syracuse universities, and a member of the International Institute for Strategic Studies. O’Hanlon was also a member of the external advisory board at the Central Intelligence Agency from 2011-12), “The dangers of rushing to a nuclear-free world”, 6 October 2017, Brookings, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2017/10/06/the-dangers-of-rushing-to-a-nuclear-free-world/>.

<sup>11</sup> Thomas C. Schelling (was an American economist and professor of foreign policy, national security, nuclear strategy, and arms control at the School of Public Policy at University of Maryland, College Park. He was also co-faculty at the New England Complex Systems Institute), “A world without nuclear weapons?”, Fall 2009, American Academy of Arts & Sciences, <https://www.amacad.org/publication/world-without-nuclear-weapons>.

<sup>12</sup> Charles Glaser (Associate Professor of Public Policy at the University of Chicago). “The flawed case for nuclear disarmament.” *Survival*, Vol. 40, Issue 1. 1998. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00396338.1998.9688523>.

