

New Nuclear Weapons

How a "Mini-Nuke" Could Be Used

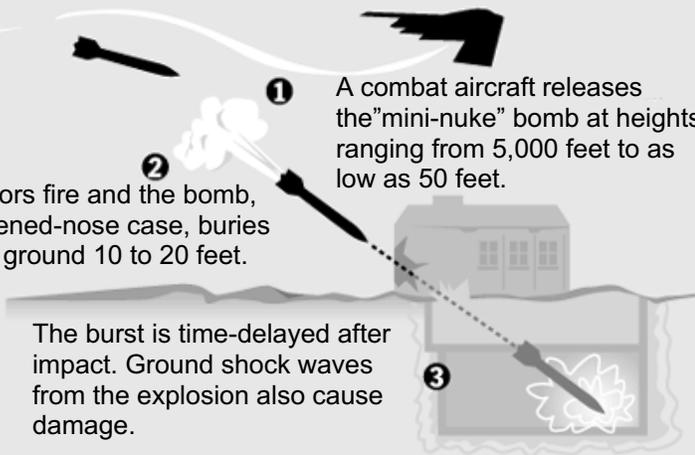
Rocket motors fire and the bomb, with a hardened-nose case, buries itself below ground 10 to 20 feet.

The tactical weapon would be used to destroy underground targets or burst at high or medium altitudes. They are considered useable in urban areas (cities) with "minimal collateral damage."

Comparisons of the areas of death and destruction of ordinary buildings by surface blast effects only (not including widespread fire and radiation effects).

The largest "mini-nuke" warhead is compared to the power of the 15 kiloton bomb dropped over Hiroshima in 1945, and to a warhead with a yield of 9 megatons. The Hiroshima bomb exploded in the air at 17,000 feet.

Other "low-yield" weapons could even be more powerful.



One Titan II warhead 9 megaton blast:: 11 miles in diameter



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Paul Robinson¹ pointed out that **our policy of deterrence has its root in the Latin word *terrere* which means "to frighten with an overwhelming terror."**

In Robinson's brave new world, the US should expand its policy of deterrence beyond the Russian nuclear threat to "the rest of the world," and "we must have the national will to carry out actions."²

Contrary to obligations under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, which calls for non-nuclear states to forgo nuclear weapons and for nuclear weapons states to work to reduce their arsenals to zero, the United States intends to keep nuclear weapons forever. In preparation for escalating weapons work, the US plans to spend a minimum of \$20 billion to upgrade the national nuclear weapons complex. The National Nuclear Security Administration's Stockpile Stewardship Program's already existing aggressive schedule of alterations and refurbishments creates an easy and convenient opportunity to turn existing weapons into "new" low-yield weapons for forward-based sub-launched strategic and cruise missiles capable of penetrating underground bunkers. The Y-12 National Security Complex in Oak Ridge, TN, is key to the planned refurbishments.

Robinson argues that "we would neither have to conduct testing nor redesign for such a weapon [low-yield] because we have them already. Right now, all of our weapons have primary and secondary stages. The primary alone has a yield of 10 kilotons or less and would act as a low-yield weapon. All we have to do is send these weapons back to the factory and replace the secondary stage with a dummy."

Stephen Younger³ advocates the production of a new, "gun-type" mini-nuke which would use only highly enriched uranium. In either case, (replacing a secondary or building a new bomb) the work would be done at Y-12.

SOURCES & FOOTNOTES:

T Brown, FEDERATION OF AMERICAN SCIENTISTS; ARMS CONTROL ASSOCIATION; U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE; FREINDS COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL LEGISLATION, OAK RIDGE ENVIRONMENTAL PEACE ALLIANCE (www.stopthebombs.org)

⁽¹⁾ C. Paul Robinson, director of Sandia National Laboratories and chairman of the policy subcommittee of the Strategic Advisory Group, a panel that advises the four-star commander of U.S. Strategic Command, which is in charge of U.S. nuclear weapons

⁽²⁾ Albuquerque, New Mexico; Nuclear Weapons Decision-Makers conference

⁽³⁾ Stephen Younger, former Assoc. Director of Los Alamos National Lab is now Director of the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DoD)