King's Research Portal

DOI:

[10.1080/13523260.2017.1291206](https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2017.1291206)

Document Version

Peer reviewed version

[Link to publication record in King's Research Portal](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Williams, H., & Michaels, J. (2017). The nuclear education of Donald J. Trump. *Contemporary Security Policy*, 38(1), 54-77. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2017.1291206>

Citing this paper

Please note that where the full-text provided on King's Research Portal is the Author Accepted Manuscript or Post-Print version this may differ from the final Published version. If citing, it is advised that you check and use the publisher's definitive version for pagination, volume/issue, and date of publication details. And where the final published version is provided on the Research Portal, if citing you are again advised to check the publisher's website for any subsequent corrections.

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the Research Portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognize and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the Research Portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the Research Portal

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact librarypure@kcl.ac.uk providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

The nuclear education of Donald J. Trump

Authors and affiliation:

Jeffrey Michaels

Defence Studies Department, King's College London, United Kingdom

Heather Williams

Defence Studies Department, King's College London, United Kingdom

Correspondence details

Heather Williams

King's College London

Defence Studies Department

Centre for Science and Security Studies

The Strand, K6.58

London WC2R 2LS

United Kingdom

Email: Heather.w.williams@kcl.ac.uk

Abstract

During the 2016 American presidential campaign Democrats and Republicans alike repeatedly raised concerns at the prospect of Donald Trump in charge of America's nuclear arsenal based on his seemingly unstable personality. Unfortunately, this emphasis on Trump's character distracted attention from any in-depth investigation into his longstanding interest in

nuclear issues. This article seeks to remedy this shortcoming by highlighting the nuclear legacy Trump will inherit from Obama, surveying his statements on nuclear issues over more than three decades, and providing an analysis of constraining factors on his administration's nuclear agenda, particularly domestic institutions. It finds that most of Trump's views on nuclear issues are relatively consistent with past Republican presidents. Where he is unique, however, is in his use of social media, which has potential implications on nuclear signaling.

Keywords: Trump, nuclear weapons, Twitter, U.S. defense policy

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank Sir Lawrence Freedman, Wyn Bowen, Andrew Futter, and the anonymous reviewers for their valuable insights. In addition, the research for this article was kindly supported by the MacArthur Foundation, Grant No. G-108975-0.

Disclosure statement

No conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Biographical note (150 words per author maximum)

Jeffrey H Michaels is a Senior Lecturer with the Defence Studies Department, King's College London and concurrently a Visiting Fellow at the Oxford Changing Character of War Programme. He has also worked as a Visiting Research Fellow at the Egmont Institute in Brussels and as a Research Associate in the Department of War Studies at King's. Earlier experience included working for the U.S. Defense Department and NATO.

Dr. Heather Williams is a Lecturer in the Defence Studies Department at King's College London, and a co-convenor for the Master's programme on Arms Control in the School for Security Studies. Until January 2015, she was a Research Fellow on Nuclear Weapons Policy at Chatham House, and previously worked for the Institute for Defense Analyses and the U.S. Department of Defense. She has a PhD from the Department of War Studies at King's College London, a BA in International Relations and Russian Studies from Boston University, and an MA in Security Policy Studies from The George Washington University.

The 2016 U.S. presidential election brought nuclear weapons to the forefront of the American political debate in a way not seen since the Cold War era. But at issue were not the merits or drawbacks of the candidates' policy prescriptions on nuclear weapons. Instead, nuclear weapons policy was mainly discussed in the context of Donald J. Trump's competence to be the next president, with many pointing to his comments on the topic. For example, in the December 2015 Republican Primary debate, Trump responded to a question about the nuclear triad by saying, "I think, for me, nuclear is just the power, the devastation is very important to me." This statement prompted *Rolling Stone* to title a story, "Trump's Terrifying Answer at the Debate Should End His Campaign (But It Won't)" (Berney, 2015). As Hillary Clinton stated in her foreign policy speech in San Diego: "This is not someone who should ever have the nuclear codes because it's not hard to imagine Donald Trump leading us into war because someone got under his very thin skin" (as cited in Eliot, 2016). These criticisms were not limited to Democrats, however, as a number of Republicans asked similar questions about whether Trump could be trusted with nuclear weapons (McCormack, 2016). Even Tony Schwartz, ghostwriter of Trump's book, *The Art of the Deal*, stated, "I genuinely believe that if Trump wins and gets the nuclear codes there is an excellent possibility it will lead to the end of civilization" (as cited in Mayer, 2016).

The current issue of *Contemporary Security Policy* includes an important exploration into the constraining role of institutions on the incoming President, which this article seeks to build upon. For example, Lanoszka (2017) concluded that due to intra-alliance politics, "more continuity than change will characterize how Donald Trump will manage U.S. security relationships as President" (p. 1). Unfortunately, emotive references to Trump and criticisms of his utterances on the nuclear issue during the campaign distracted attention from a more in-depth effort to explore Trump's attitude to nuclear weapons, how it has evolved,

constraining domestic and international factors, and potential policies for the new Trump Administration. Specifically, what role will institutions, such as Congress and alliances, play in constraining Trump's nuclear agenda? How does Trump's approach to nuclear weapons differ from that of other Republicans? And lastly, can recent literature on nuclear signaling provide insight into the impact of Trump's use of social media as part of his nuclear policy?

There is a public perception that whoever holds the office of the American President is the sole determinant of national interests, particularly with regard to nuclear weapons policy. The media's persistent focus on the chief executive contributes to exacerbating this "false image" of the president as a unitary actor, yet research confirms "presidents can rarely shape policy alone...and must instead depend on others" (Azari, 2015). In particular, domestic actors play a constraining role on presidents, even when it comes to nuclear weapons, and individuals are not acting as unitary actors in leadership roles; rather, institutions are "*constitutive* of actors as well as vice versa. It is therefore not sufficient in this view to treat the preferences of individuals as given exogenously: they are affected by institutional arrangements, by prevailing norms, and by historically contingent discourse among people seeking to pursue their purposes and solve self-defined problems" (Keohane, 1988). Recent literature on the role of personalities (Jervis, 2013; Hall & Yarhi-Milo, 2012) has built on Waltz's (1954) "first image" of the role of individual character in policy-making, but it has also demonstrated the influence of domestic and external constraints on those individual preferences, particularly on foreign-policy making (for example, Mattes, Leeds, & Carroll, 2015). We analyze how these constraints will interact with Trump's approach to nuclear weapons, as determined by a survey of his statements on the topic over the course of three decades. This approach is particularly well-suited to a study of Trump, whose personality and style of communication often draw attention away from the substance of the message he is

delivering or the context in which he will be crafting and executing policy. Trump the President will be under very different public, political, and personal constraints than Trump the candidate.

This article begins by examining the nuclear legacy that Obama will bequeath to Trump framed over five themes as identified in Obama's 2010 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR). This will be followed by a catalogue of Trump's comments on nuclear issues across three decades and how these map to the five themes, along with a summary of his use of social media, particularly how tweeting may interact with nuclear signaling. Finally, we will look at the constraining role of Congress, the executive bureaucracy, adversaries, and allies based on institutional literature and past example. This research contributes to thinking on the constraining impact of institutions on presidential powers with regards to nuclear weapons policy-making, along with providing original empirical research on the evolution of Trump's attitudes towards specific nuclear policy questions. In addition, we identify a future area of research with a view to understanding the impact of social media on nuclear signaling, particularly in crises.

Our research finds that Trump's views and rhetoric on nuclear weapons are largely consistent with past Republican administrations, especially those of Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush. Like Reagan and Bush, despite his unilateral and hawkish rhetoric, institutions are poised to play a constraining role on Trump's nuclear policies. One of Trump's unique traits is his identity as a "dealmaker;" however, the substance and success of those deals will require incorporating the interests of various domestic and international stakeholders.

Obama's nuclear legacy

President Obama left office with nuclear weapons having been prominent throughout his tenure. Highlights included the 2009 Prague speech (Obama, 2009), calling for the “peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons,” along with the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with Iran. Obama’s nuclear legacy, however, is mixed and considered too dovish by hawks and too hawkish by doves. Pifer (2015) has argued Obama’s ability to achieve some of the more ambitious goals outlined in the Prague speech were constrained by three factors: Russia’s lack of political will to engage in further reductions, Republicans in Congress, and reluctance by the Administration itself to expend additional political capital on nuclear issues. Obama’s nuclear legacy suggests a classic case study of Putnam’s (1988) “two-level game,” whereby negotiations occur at both the domestic and international levels, with institutional constraints on both fronts. We will return to this two-level game in examining Trump’s own constraining factors.

In order to identify key nuclear issues that Trump will face upon taking office and over the course of his administration, the 2010 NPR—the Obama administration’s overarching nuclear policy document—provides a useful framework across five themes: non-proliferation; reducing reliance on nuclear weapons; maintaining deterrence and strategic stability, including arms control; assuring allies; and maintaining a safe, secure, and effective arsenal, including modernization of all three legs of the nuclear triad. An overview of Obama’s nuclear legacy also provides an introduction to the institutional constraints that President Trump will inherit: first, the primary *issues* requiring buy-in and institutional support; and second, the *actors* limiting a President’s ability to implement his policy objectives.

Turning first to non-proliferation, during his term in office Obama prioritized securing nuclear material to prevent terrorists from acquiring nuclear weapons. While he successfully launched the Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) initiative, the process was not expected to extend beyond Obama's term in office and it is unlikely to continue at the head-of-state level, if at all. Before leaving office Obama confirmed Iran was fulfilling its verification commitments under the JCPOA and that the United States would proceed with sanctions relief (Obama, 2016). However, the agreement remains highly contentious in Congress and may potentially be abandoned (Knopf, 2017). Additionally, North Korea tested nuclear weapons four times during Obama's Presidency and remains a serious nuclear threat as it continues to develop its intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) capabilities. Indeed, during the Trump Presidency North Korea may acquire the ability to launch a nuclear weapon on the continental United States.

Second, Obama began his presidency with a strong message in the April 2009 Prague speech encouraging the pursuit of a world without nuclear weapons (Obama, 2009; Warren, 2011). While the Prague vision was seemingly idealistic in its commitment to nuclear disarmament, it was also cautious in acknowledging such a goal may not happen in the President's lifetime and committed the United States to maintaining an effective nuclear deterrent as long as other states continued to possess nuclear weapons. During Obama's tenure, a large number of the Non-Nuclear Weapon State signatories to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) expressed frustration over the lack of progress on disarmament, despite the Prague speech. That frustration was captured in the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons initiative, launched in 2012, and has now led to a UN General Assembly First Committee resolution to start negotiation on a nuclear weapons ban treaty in March 2017 (UN General Assembly,

2016). The ban discussions will likely exacerbate existing tensions within the NPT and result in a difficult review cycle ahead of the 2020 Review Conference.

Third, the current state of U.S.-Russia relations is a far cry from the Obama-Medvedev “reset” of 2009, which included the New START Treaty committing both sides to reduce their arsenals to 1,550 warheads, 700 delivery vehicles, and 800 launchers by 2018, and included on-site inspections and ongoing regular data exchanges (U.S. Department of State, 2010). But with increased tensions in Ukraine since 2014 and Russia’s increased reliance on nuclear weapons, there are little prospects for further arms control, not least due to a July 2014 State Department report that alleged Russia was in violation of the 1987 Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty (U.S. Department of State, 2014).

Fourth, in the midst of reducing reliance on nuclear weapons and engaging in arms control with Russia, Obama also committed the United States to maintain forward-deployed tactical nuclear weapons in Europe and missile defenses as a manifestation of its commitment to assure allies. The European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA) missile defense system includes ground-based interceptors in Poland and interceptors in Romania. Missile defense is one of the most contentious issues for Russia, which asserts it upsets the offense-defense balance and jeopardizes further arms control.

A final issue involves nuclear modernization because all three legs of the U.S. nuclear triad will require replacement or extension decisions during a Trump presidency (Futter & Williams, 2016). Obama’s 2010 Nuclear Posture Review (U.S. Department of Defense, 2010) unequivocally concluded, “Retaining all three legs will best maintain strategic stability at reasonable cost, while hedging against potential technical problems or vulnerabilities” (p.

21). The 30-year long modernization will entail replacement of 14 Ohio-class nuclear-armed submarines with procurement set to begin in 2021; a new long-range strategic bomber to accompany and eventually replace the B-1 and B-52; and replacing the Minuteman-III intercontinental ballistic missiles. In addition to these replacement costs, the nuclear infrastructure itself is also in need of sustained investment. In early 2015 the Congressional Budget Office (2015) estimated nuclear investments will amount to \$348 billion over the next ten years.

By no means is this list exhaustive in terms of extant challenges; for example, the rise of China also has implications for U.S. deterrence and assurance in East Asia. Nevertheless, in summary, the Trump administration faces at least seven pressing nuclear issues: 1) securing nuclear material, 2) reigning in North Korea's nuclear ambitions, 3) implementing the JCPOA with Iran, 4) addressing the nuclear weapons ban treaty and pressure to disarm from members of the NPT, 5) continuing U.S.-Russia arms control, 6) assuring allies, and 7) managing modernization costs.

Trump's statements on nuclear weapons

Gaining insight into Trump's views on nuclear weapons necessitates examining not only his statements on the subject as a presidential candidate, president-elect, and president, but also his comments dating back much further. By taking a broader approach it is possible to identify continuity and change in his outlook prior to a contextual analysis of how these views will interact with the policy-making process.

By his own account, Trump's initiation into the nuclear realm began when he was a child and his uncle, MIT professor John Trump, told him about the power of nuclear weapons and the potential for their miniaturization (Davidson, 2016). Trump recalled that his uncle "talked about a lone fanatic detonating a weapon at Penn Station that would level the whole town." In a 1984 profile of Trump (Romano, 1984), it was observed that he was "taking calls on his car phone and talking nonstop about the threat of nuclear war again." It also noted that he had a "fantasy of becoming the US negotiator on nuclear arms limitation talks with the Soviets" (as cited in Romano, 1984). However, Trump refused to discuss the details of any such agreement and it appeared as though the end state was less important than *how* he would achieve it, a reflection of his identity as a negotiator that is evident today. He sought to distinguish himself as someone "that knows how to negotiate and not the kind of representatives that I have seen in the past" (as cited in Romano, 1984). As for the substance of an arms control deal, he said, "It would take an hour-and-a-half to learn everything there is to learn about missiles ... I think I know most of it anyway" (as cited in Romano, 1984).

Three years later, in an interview with Rosenbaum (1987), Trump provided further insight into his thinking about nuclear issues. On arms control, he referred to Strobe Talbott's book *Deadly Gambits* and was highly critical of the Reagan Administration, seeking to contrast his own deal-making abilities with those of arms control negotiators who "wouldn't know how to make a deal if they found one staring them in the face" (as cited in Rosenbaum, 1987). The problem of nuclear proliferation was of special concern to Trump, even more so than the superpower nuclear standoff. Whereas the Soviets seemed to be rational, a "psycho" like Qaddafi would be more likely to "press the button" (as cited in Rosenbaum, 1987). In addition, Trump mentioned his concern about the future miniaturization of nuclear weapons,

referring to “the briefcase bomb,” or one the size of a “tape recorder” (as cited in Rosenbaum, 1987).

Due to his belief that the NPT was not working, Trump proposed in the course of the Rosenbaum interview a U.S.-Soviet deal to prevent other nations from obtaining a nuclear capability by whatever means necessary, though in America’s case he emphasized “economic retaliation”. Rather than limit non-proliferation to then-emerging nuclear states such as Pakistan, Trump’s vision extended to U.S. allies such as France, which would be forced to give up their nuclear arsenal or face economic sanctions. Apart from his views on nuclear issues, what struck Rosenbaum was Trump’s seriousness, observing that “the life-or-death nature” of nuclear weapons “transcends mere real estate” (as cited in Rosenbaum, 1987). However, despite indicating in both 1984 and 1987 that he hoped to engage on arms control there is no evidence that he seriously applied himself in this regard.

Several years later, Trump again returned to the theme of nuclear war in a 1990 interview with *Playboy* Magazine. When asked about his longer-term view of the future he replied, “I often think of nuclear war ... I’ve always thought about the issue of nuclear war; it’s a very important element in my thought process” (Plaskin, 1990). He then complained about the state of the U.S. nuclear arsenal, casting doubt on whether American nuclear weapons actually worked. Trump would return to this theme in the 2016 election.

In his 1999-2000 campaign manifesto for leadership of the Reform Party (Trump with Shiflett, 2000), Trump expounded on what he would do if he became president. Dealing with the nuclear threat posed by North Korea was a special concern for Trump. For example, he referred to it as

an outlaw, terrorist state run by a family of certifiable loons ... building nuclear bombs while the rest of the country is starving Am I the only one who thinks it might make more sense to disarm the North Korean nuclear threat before it shows up in downtown Seattle or Los Angeles. (Trump with Shiflett, 2000, pp. 26-27)

As for how he would go about disarming North Korea, Trump boasted, “Am I ready to bomb this reactor? (referring to the Yongbyon nuclear reactor) You're damned right” (Trump with Shiflett, 2000, p. 130). More specifically, he enunciated his views about the timing and extent of any use of force and how this would be undertaken as part of a negotiation strategy, which is worth quoting at length:

I can tell you that negotiation with these madmen will be fruitless once they have the ability to lob a nuclear missile into Chicago, Los Angeles, or New York. I don't advocate a thermonuclear war, but if negotiations fail, I advocate a surgical strike against these outlaws before they pose a real threat. ... Let me be precise and clear. I remember what happened to Barry Goldwater when he advocated the use of nuclear weapons to defoliate the jungles of Vietnam. And I want there to be no media distortion or misunderstanding about my views ... I'm not trigger happy, nor would I consider the use of force lightly, but as president I would be prepared to order a strike—using conventional weapons—against North Korean targets if it prevented nuclear blackmail or the destruction of the U.S. population. I'm not talking about an extended air campaign against North Korea and certainly not a ground war. I'm talking about taking out a very specific target and then returning to the bargaining table (Trump with Shiflett, 2000, p. 130).

Trump not only viewed a “surgical strike” on North Korea as useful in that one case, but also believed that it would send “a message around the world that the United States is going to

eliminate any serious threat to its security, and do so without apology” (Trump with Shiflett, 2000, p. 130).

In stark contrast to his advocacy for missile defense in the 2016 election, as discussed below in greater detail, his 2000 manifesto argued *against* building a missile defense system because he did not perceive an imminent nuclear-armed missile threat from rogue states. In his view, it would be a wasted investment against an overblown threat, because even though “Libya, North Korea, or Syria” may have “fanatical [leaders] ... they're not out to destroy their own countries” – which would be the result if they launched a “traceable” missile against the United States (Trump with Shiflett, 2000, p. 150). Instead, referring back to his uncle’s warning about miniaturization, he concluded, “our real threat is not going to be flying in on a missile. It's going to be delivered in a van, or a suitcase, or a fire-hydrant-sized canister” (Trump with Shiflett, 2000, p. 150).

More recently, throughout the 2016 campaign Trump confronted questions about nuclear weapons on numerous occasions, and his responses indicate a degree of continuity across decades, particularly his characterization of the nuclear issue as “the single greatest threat” during the first presidential debate in September 2016 (Trump, 2016a). To better understand his views, we can return to the five nuclear themes of Obama’s Presidency as a framework for the challenges and major decisions Trump has inherited.

Non-proliferation

Walid Phares, one of Trump’s foreign policy advisors during the campaign, noted in July 2016 that, “At the moment, the top two priorities (for Trump) are how to deal with issues of

nuclear proliferation and how to completely destroy Islamic jihadist organizations, including and especially ISIS” (as cited in Carroll, 2016). Phares went on to say that Trump “thinks about it (nuclear proliferation) as the greatest threat that we and the rest of the world will face. I would say that North Korea and Iran, and the nuclear threat would be number one” (as cited in Carroll, 2016). Turning first to Iran, since 2011, Trump has overwhelmingly tweeted about Iran’s nuclear program, as revealed in an archive of Trump’s nuclear-related tweets: during the period September 8, 2011 until January 2, 2017 Trump made 58 references to Iran, six to China, five to Russia, and three to North Korea (Trump Twitter archive, 2017). Criticism of the 2015 Iran nuclear agreement was a major theme both before and during the election campaign. In his April 2016 foreign policy speech he said, “Iran cannot be allowed to have a nuclear weapon and, under a Trump administration, will never be allowed to have a nuclear weapon” (Trump, 2016b). On numerous occasions Trump has referred to Iran as “the number one state sponsor of Radical Islamic terrorism” and argued that the nuclear deal puts Iran “on a path to nuclear weapons” (Trump, 2016d). In most cases Trump’s references to the Iran deal have served the dual purpose of criticizing the Obama administration and bolstering his own credentials as a “dealmaker”. His pronouncements on the subject remain unclear as to whether he would abandon the agreement entirely or attempt to renegotiate its terms.

Referring to North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, Trump has questioned the value of deterrence since, “We don’t know if he’s all bluster or is he a serious maniac that would be willing to use it” (as cited in Haberman and Sanger, 2016). In one statement, Trump recommended that, “China should solve that problem for us. China should go into North Korea” (Trump, 2016a). This theme of Chinese control over North Korea is one that Trump has held for at least several years. For instance, on April 5, 2013, he tweeted: “North Korea can’t survive, or even eat, without the help of China. China could solve this problem with one phone call-they love

taunting us!” Yet gaining Chinese support for pressuring North Korea is likely to be difficult for a variety of reasons, as discussed below (Perlez, 2016). Nevertheless, it is notable that compared with his view from 2000 about launching a surgical strike against North Korean nuclear facilities, Trump’s more recent rhetoric suggests he views the solution to this problem as one of negotiation rather than military force. Notably, Trump’s Secretary of State Rex Tillerson (as cited in Davenport & Reif, 2017) and Secretary of Defense James Mattis (Mattis, 2017) have also emphasized working with China rather than taking military action.

In answer to a question about protecting Japan from North Korea, Trump seemingly prioritized burden-sharing over non-proliferation when he replied that the U.S.-Japan defense relationship was one-sided and that this needed to change with Japan doing more for its own security, reviving an argument he previously made in a 1987 advertisement (Kruse, 2016). In reference to what capabilities Japan might pursue to strengthen its security, he more recently said, “Now, does that mean nuclear? It could mean nuclear” (as cited in Haberman & Sanger, 2016). As Phares later clarified

To be clear ... Mr. Trump is not committed to any particular action ... he will not ask Japan or South Korea to invest in building nuclear weapons but he will speak with their leaders about how to create a safer and more stable environment in the East Asia theatre (as cited in Carroll, 2016).

Disarmament

Trump’s views of nuclear disarmament set him apart from Obama’s visionary rhetoric. For example, in response to a question from *GQ* in 2015 as to whether or not he would get rid of nuclear weapons he answered, “No, no, we wouldn't get rid of the weapons. Because you

have so many people out there (with nuclear weapons)” (as cited in Heath, 2015). From this and other statements, it is clear Trump will not show the same interest as Obama, even at a rhetorical level, in a world without nuclear weapons because they provide a bargaining chip and flexibility in decision-making.

On nuclear declaratory policy and a “no first use” option, Trump has often said that using nuclear weapons would be an “absolute last step” and that, “I will be the last to use it. I will not be a happy trigger like some people might be” (as cited in Sanger, 2016). On the other hand, he doesn’t “want to rule out anything” (as cited in Kim, 2016). Trump has equated a commitment to “no first use” as “taking cards off the table” and said he would not do so “because you'd be a bad negotiator if you do that” (Trump, 2016a). Interestingly, Trump’s understanding of General Douglas MacArthur’s nuclear threats during the Korean War was that, “you don’t know if he wanted to use them but he certainly said that at least I think he played, he did play the nuclear card but he didn’t use it, he played the nuclear card” (as cited in Haberman & Sanger, 2016). Put another way, the lesson Trump takes from this case was that MacArthur’s threat to use nuclear weapons served as a useful negotiating ploy. As with other security issues, Phares attempted to clarify Trump’s statements, explaining that “the exception (to no first use) would be if in a case that terrorists would obtain nukes, then maybe his adviser will tell him, we would need that” (as cited on PBS, 2016).

Strategic stability and arms control

Trump’s views on arms control more broadly are mixed. On the one hand he has highlighted his admiration for the “dealmaker” Richard Nixon, “who began our dialogue with communist China and forced the Russians to the bargaining table to achieve the first meaningful reductions in nuclear arms” (Trump with Shiflett, 2000, pp. 111-112). On the other hand, in

the same book, he criticized U.S. diplomats for “constantly falling over themselves to make goodwill offerings at the bargaining table” (Trump with Shiflett, 2000, p. 112). Again, Trump’s identity as a negotiator frames many of his statements. Not only has Trump not mentioned how his administration would approach U.S.-Russia arms control, but also his references to building up missile defense capabilities will place him on a collision course with Russian objections on the issue (Lilly, 2014). Turning to multilateral arms control, he assumed that of the many countries that have signed up to the NPT, none of them actually obey it. He linked this to his view of domestic gun control on the grounds that “when weapons are banned, only the outlaws have them” (Trump with Shiflett, 2000, p 112).

Assuring allies

Trump’s comments have already had a damaging impact in terms of assuring U.S. allies. For decades he criticized allies for failing to pay for their own defense and in 2016 stated, “I think NATO’s great. But it’s got to be modernized. And countries that we’re protecting have to pay what they’re supposed to be paying” (Trump, 2016f). In the same speech he called the alliance a “free ride”. These statements are nothing new, however, and the Obama administration had also attempted, though unsuccessfully and more discreetly, to pressure allies to confirm their commitment to spend 2% of GDP on defense. Nevertheless, Trump’s comments have caused serious concern among NATO members about the US commitment to the alliance (Chan, 2016). Indeed, Trump may see extended deterrence as another bargaining chip to compel allies to invest more (Jackson, 2017).

It is Trump’s current views on missile defense, an important component of American assurance to allies, which demonstrates the most significant change from his earlier position.

In his April 2016 campaign speech outlining his foreign policy, Trump accused Obama of “degrading” missile defense, but stated that a Trump administration would “seek to develop a state of the art missile defense system” (Trump, 2016b). Though few details are provided, the plan referred to an initiative to modernize U.S. Navy cruisers that “will cost around \$220 million per modernization as we seek to modernize a significant portion of these 22 ships.” It also mentioned procurement of “additional modern destroyers that are designed to handle the missile defense mission” (Trump, 2016b). On his inauguration day, the White House reiterated Trump’s pledge to push ahead with missile defense “to protect against missile-based attacks from states like Iran and North Korea” (Office of the White House, 2017).

The triad and nuclear modernization

Finally, Trump portrays an American nuclear complex that has been “allowed to atrophy and is desperately in need of modernization and renewal” (Trump, 2016b). During the campaign he claimed that, “We have nuclear arsenals which are in very terrible shape. They don’t even know if they work” (as cited in Haberman & Sanger, 2016). Comparatively, Trump believes that Russia’s modernization of its nuclear arsenal is at a more advanced stage (Trump, 2016g). Trump warned: “We’re in very serious trouble, because we have a country (referring to Russia) with tremendous numbers of nuclear warheads – 1,800, by the way – where they expanded and we didn’t, 1,800 nuclear warheads” (as cited in Blake, 2016). Furthermore, he criticized what he viewed as dilapidated hardware, specifically the B-52 bomber, stating “they’re old enough that your father, your grandfather could be flying them. We are not – we are not keeping up with other countries” (Trump, 2016c).

In sum, Donald Trump's views on nuclear issues are not significantly different from previous administrations. Like past Republicans, he sets a very high bar for any nuclear agreements with North Korea or Iran, and opposes limiting America's capabilities because it would reduce flexibility in negotiations and decision-making; additionally, he wants to see greater burden-sharing by allies, and supports investment in missile defense and the nuclear infrastructure, policy priorities carried over from the Obama Administration. By way of one example whereby Trump's views align with past Republicans, Payne (2015), former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Forces Policy to George W. Bush, outlined the principles of realism in nuclear policy as prioritizing flexibility, assurance to allies, and defensive capabilities. The evolution of Trump's views on nuclear weapons suggests some alignment with Payne's definition of nuclear realism, but questions remain particularly with regards to his position towards allies. One area where Trump differs from past administrations, however, is the lack of detail and consistency in his nuclear statements. Indeed, with regards to nuclear signaling, Trump is particularly unique, and potentially destabilizing, in his use of Twitter.

Nuclear tweeting as nuclear signaling

Trump has consistently used Twitter to express his views on policy issues, further adding to the confusion about what will be the U.S. position in coming years. Recent studies on social media find that, "posting tweets is part of ... identity maintenance and the constancy of active Twitter users confirms this relationship or, as a Cartesian aphorism: I tweet, therefore I am" (Murthy, 2015). In Trump's case, Twitter not only reinforces his identity and the influence of his personality (per Waltz's "first

image”), but is also a unique means of expression favorable to his style of communication and unpredictability. As a candidate, Trump’ s use of Twitter was a means of self-affirmation with limited consequences given that his history of Twitter and political incorrectness had yet to induce any real costs on his candidacy. As Trump once tweeted in November 2012:

“I love Twitter.... it’s like owning your own newspaper--- without the losses.” There is some debate though about whether Trump’ s tweets genuinely reflect his thinking, or whether they are a deliberate “smoke screen” -as with much provocative rhetoric-to deflect attention from personal and policy matters (for example Shafer, 2016; Blake, 2016). With regards to nuclear weapons signaling to allies and adversaries alike, as a President, Trump must be more conscious of “audience costs” (Fearon, 1997), covert versus overt signaling (Carson & Yarhi-Milo, 2017), and the risk of misperception (Jervis, 1976).

Twitter as a policy-making tool is indeed unconventional, and in terms of nuclear weapons policy it is also dangerous (Gilsinian & Friedman, 2017). In two instances as president-elect, Trump used Twitter to suggest nuclear policies that have demonstrated the potential of social media to destabilize relations. In the first instance, on December 22, 2016, Trump tweeted, “The United States must greatly strengthen and expand its nuclear capability until such time as the world comes to its senses regarding nukes.” This was likely in response to a speech given by Putin the

previous day outlining a build-up of Russia's military forces, and also followed a meeting Trump had with Lieutenant General Jack Weinstein, the Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Deterrence and Nuclear Integration (Miller, 2016). Shortly afterwards, Trump's spokesman Jason Miller attempted to clarify the meaning of this tweet stating that it referred to "the threat of nuclear proliferation and the critical need to prevent it - particularly to and among terrorist organizations and unstable and rogue regimes" (Miller, 2016). Yet a day after the initial tweet, in a conversation with a journalist on a morning talk show, Trump reportedly stated, "Let it be an arms race. We will outmatch them at every pass and outlast them all" (as cited in Pilkington and Pengelly, 2016). In terms of policy, these statements would be consistent with the trends observed above: Trump will not show an interest in nuclear disarmament, and he will increase defense spending and proceed with nuclear modernization. At the same time, the incident raises questions about the future of the U.S. arsenal for allies and adversaries alike.

In the second instance, on January 2, 2017, upon North Korea's announcement of its intent to test an ICBM this year, Trump tweeted, "North Korea just stated that it is in the final stages of developing a nuclear weapon capable of reaching parts of the US. It won't happen!" This was immediately followed with a second tweet, "China has been taking out massive amounts of money & wealth from the U.S. in totally one-sided trade, but won't help with North Korea. Nice!" Again, these tweets align with his earlier views on North Korea acquiring an ICBM capability and reveal his expectation that Beijing take on a greater burden-sharing role. This

tweet begs the question, what tools will Trump employ to ensure North Korea does not develop an ICBM? By no means are these examples exhaustive; however, they demonstrate ways in which social media presents a new challenge for nuclear messaging.

With regard to research on nuclear signaling, Trump's use of Twitter raises at least three concerns. First, costly signals contribute to nuclear deterrence by increasing the credibility of a threat, whereby if the signal sender fails to make good on a threat he/she will suffer "audience costs" with the domestic public, and lose credibility with allies and adversaries. According to Fearon (1997), "a threat may be rendered credible when the act of sending it incurs or creates some cost that the sender would be disinclined to incur or create if he or she were in fact *not* willing to carry out the threat" (p. 69). But social media is not automatically conducive to credible and costly signals. **It is unclear to the sender, the receiver, and the audience: what is the audience cost of a tweet?**

Second, personal tweets are sent without the benefit of expert advice to ensure factual accuracy, or consideration of the various audiences, as mentioned above. Social media as a means of "self-actualization" has the potential to give primacy to the "first-image" and an individual ego, removed from institutional constraints. Yet it can also have the unintended effect of undermining policy priorities, not to mention generating a

negative international reaction. Reliance on such overt means of messaging for the sake of the “first image” ego also reduces the potential benefits of signaling commitment to adversaries and allies alike through covert messaging, which can be an effective “credible indicator” with fewer risks (Carson & Yarhi-Milo, 2017, p. 124).

Lastly, and related to the second risk, Twitter is particularly prone to misperception. Jervis (1970) describes one component of perception particularly useful for our study, wherein an actor will “scrutinize those presumably uncontrolled aspects of personal behavior that are indices to the adversary’s goals, estimate of the situation, and resolve” (as cited in Hall & Yarhi-Milo, 2012). Twitter therefore provides insight into Trump’s thinking; but at the same time, as a means of signaling it increases the risk of misperception because of the often contradictory, obtuse, and mercurial nature of his tweets. Nuclear policy-making often requires more than 140 characters.

These risks have already been somewhat manifested in responses to the examples above. Trump’s tweet about expanding U.S. nuclear capabilities and his subsequent reported statement about an arms race generated fears that Washington would abandon previous arms control agreements (Fisher, 2016). Trump’s tweet on North Korean ICBMs was interpreted as a new “red line,” further evidence of the policy risks of tweets being read in a way not intended (Acton, 2017). In addition to the misperceptions arising from

his tweets, many of Trump's "off the cuff" statements have also generated reactions to his supposed policies. For example, during the course of an interview shortly before his inauguration, when asked about lifting economic sanctions on Russia, he mentioned the prospect of negotiating a good deal, and then referred to the need for nuclear reductions as a possible exchange. Although Trump's intent in making this reference is somewhat unclear, the link between the lifting of sanctions and nuclear reductions was nevertheless reported in the press (Faulconbridge & James, 2017), generating a negative reaction from the Russian government (Radio Free Europe, 2017).

Social media is particularly risky as a tool for crisis signaling. As Sagan and Suri (2003) have demonstrated in the case of Richard Nixon's "madman" theory to deploy nuclear weapons as a signal of commitment in Vietnam, historical nuclear crises do not necessarily invoke caution on the part of decision-makers nor are signals accurately received by the adversary. Instead, they demonstrate that while the institutional constraints of bureaucracies and the military on nuclear decision-making are visible under normal circumstances, these constraints can be reduced during a time of crisis. Similarly, Furham and Sescher (2011) have shown that hand-tying is an effective signal to allies during crisis scenarios, forcing states to act on allies' behalf; however, Twitter may not have the same signaling effect due to lack of audience costs and thereby weaken the credibility of crisis signals. We highlight this tension between

traditional thinking on nuclear signaling and Twitter primarily to open discussion for further research on the emerging impact of social media on nuclear policymaking.

Constraints on Trump's nuclear agenda

Just as Obama's original ideas about nuclear policy had to be adjusted once in office (Soofer, 2016), Trump will also need to compromise on his preferences. As Putnam (1988, p. 434) characterizes the dynamic, a political leader is negotiating on two game boards: Leaders must manage pressure from domestic actors, such as Congress, along with the interests of other states. The result is a constraining influence on what an individual leader can realistically achieve in defense and foreign policy objectives (see for example, Cowhey, 1993; and Mattes, Leeds, & Carroll, 2015). For example, while Trump may seem to be ambivalent to popular support, members of Congress, particularly those up for re-election in 2018, will be cognizant of public opinion. This section examines several of such institutional and structural constraining factors, namely Congress, the executive bureaucracy, U.S. adversaries, and allies on the Trump Presidency as it relates to nuclear weapons policy. In the process, it also makes cautious predictions about Trump's nuclear policies, such as the prospect for further arms control with Russia.

Republicans in Congress, despite being of the same party as the President, are poised to be one of the strongest constraints on Trump's personal preferences for nuclear policy. Whereas Republicans undermined many of Obama's arms control efforts such as the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty—seemingly for political reasons rather than on substantive grounds (Pifer, 2015, p. 110)—Trump may have party support for his initiatives but this should not be taken

for granted. For example, the 2016 Republican Party platform expressed opposition to further arms control with Russia and viewed New START as “so weak in verification and definitions that it is virtually impossible to prove a violation” (Republican National Committee, 2016, p. 41). New START passed in 2010 by the narrowest margin of any major arms control agreement in U.S. history and with the caveat that the next agreement must include tactical nuclear weapons (U.S. State Department, 2010). Should Republicans remain opposed to *any* arms control initiative with Russia, Trump would then have the option of trying to convince Moscow to accept an executive order limiting strategic weapons, despite Russia’s traditional objections to anything less than a treaty (Krutz & Peake, 2009).

Trump is also poised to face opposition from both Republicans and Democrats depending on how his policies on missile defense and nuclear modernization evolve. Though his 2016 political manifesto advocated more spending on missile defense, his earlier view from 2000 was that it was unnecessary and cutting missile defense was a useful way to fund other projects. Furthermore, Trump’s seemingly pro-Russia stance may lead him to accommodate Moscow’s preferences by abandoning or bargaining away missile defense, or at least those European-based elements of it. Given the consistently strong missile defense lobby within the Republican Party, Trump will receive considerable backing if he carries through with his plans to increase spending in this area, but may be strongly opposed if he chooses to abandon the program as part of a deal with Putin. Indeed, the 2016 GOP platform supported increased funding for a missile defense system, but as part of a strong extended deterrent and in order to “rebuild relationships with our allies, who understand that as long as the U.S. nuclear arsenal is their shield, they do not need to engage in nuclear proliferation” (Republican National Committee, 2016, p. 42).

While the executive branch—composed of political appointees and career civil servants—ostensibly carries out the orders given to it by the commander-in-chief, in actual fact it also plays a constraining role on the leader. Defense policy is one area where Trump has less experience or clearly-defined policy objectives than other areas, therefore he will be dependent on the executive branch for policy substance more so than in domestic or trade policy, for example. Non-conformist attitudes among his political appointees, many of whom hail from the Republican foreign policy establishment, include visceral antagonism to any seemingly pro-Russia policy, for example, which may influence Trump’s ability to engage with Putin. In his confirmation hearing for Secretary of Defense, James Mattis (2017, p. 87) listed Russia as the biggest threat to the United States, a position at odds with Trump and other White House officials that have instead emphasized Islamic terrorism (Friedman, 2016). Similarly, with regards to the Iran deal, Trump will be obliged to contend with two competing views on this issue within his administration: whereas he and others have advocated abandoning the JCPOA, both Mattis and Tillerson have expressed a preference for ensuring strict compliance with its terms (as cited in Davenport & Reif, 2017; Mattis Testimony, 2017).

At the international table, Trump is particularly interested in improving relations with Putin, and, historically, similar shifts in relations—such as *détente* in the 1960s and 1970s, along with the 2009 “reset”—have included a nuclear arms control component. For Russia, at least with regards to potential topics for arms control negotiation, this includes limits on U.S. missile defenses, a legally-binding multilateral agreement, and potentially withdrawal of U.S. forward-deployed tactical nuclear weapons from Europe or inclusion of advanced conventional weapons. Trump may attempt a deal through an executive order or non-legally binding agreement, such as the 1991 Presidential Nuclear Initiatives, in order to bypass

Congress, but this would not be in keeping with Russian interests. Therefore, an arms control agreement that satisfies both Congress and Russia would potentially be a “lowest common denominator” option, similar to the 2002 Moscow Treaty, such as the extension of the New START Treaty or a reciprocal reduction in deployed strategic forces to 1000-1200 warheads on 700 strategic delivery vehicles. As for China, Beijing’s modernization and expansion of its nuclear capabilities is partially a reaction to developments in the evolving U.S. missile defense posture (Zhang, 2011). Gaining Chinese support on arms control and on North Korea is also likely to be frustrated by Trump’s harsh comments about China on economic issues and his protocol-breaching phone call with the Taiwanese president (Perlez, 2016).

Allies may be one of the weaker constraints on Trump based on his comments to date, but nonetheless the endurance of institutions such as NATO and America’s other longstanding security commitments constitute an additional variable in Trump’s policy-making. Despite previous criticisms of NATO as being obsolete, he has nevertheless been obliged to reaffirm U.S. commitments to the alliance. For example, during Prime Minister Theresa May’s January visit to the White House she stated, “On defence and security cooperation, we’re united in our recognition of NATO as the bulwark of our collective defence and we reaffirmed our unshakeable commitment to this alliance. We’re 100% behind NATO” (as cited in Stewart, 2017). Frühling and O’Neil (2017) have also demonstrated the constraining role of non-nuclear allies in NATO, observing that “almost all aspects of nuclear weapon cooperation in an alliance require the consent and contribution, at significant political and financial cost, of the non-nuclear allies” (p. 5). With regard to Iran, Trump’s suggestion that he would either withdraw from or attempt to renegotiate the JCPOA will be rebuffed by allies in Europe and the Middle East who argue that the agreement is on course. Beyond Iran, Trump’s statements from his 2000 manifesto about launching a “surgical” military strike on

North Korea's nuclear facilities, along with his more recent tweet on North Korean ICBMs, are almost certain to be opposed by South Korea and Japan on the grounds that the North would retaliate against them. The assumption with all of these potential constraints, of course, is that Trump will be aware of the interests of others and amenable to compromise.

Conclusion

This article was not designed to predict Trump's nuclear policies but rather to analyze his various statements on nuclear weapons and identify trends in the context of constraining domestic and international institutions. Trump's presidency, at least in its early days, will be characterized by a struggle within the administration to define the ends, ways, and means of policy as it embarks on the process of crafting a new National Security Strategy, National Defense Strategy, and Nuclear Posture Review. An additional factor that will impact on the policy-making process in the longer term, which we did not include in our analysis of constraints but should be kept in mind, is strategic shock. The exemplar of this was the rise of Gorbachev and eventual collapse of the Soviet Union, which undermined any predictions of Reagan's nuclear policies. In the present context, this could include positive trends such as Russian withdrawal from Crimea or a breakthrough in attempts to limit North Korea's nuclear program. Of course the future could also hold negative strategic surprises, as occurred for George W. Bush on September 11, 2001. Given the unsettled nature of contemporary security policy, and international politics more generally, the notion of *ceteris paribus* can only be taken so far.

The most consistent theme across Trump's nuclear statements is his self-image as a dealmaker. He has repeatedly made statements such as, "all options are on the table". In terms of the substance of his policy, Trump perceives missile defense, nuclear weapons, and

other assets as bargaining chips that should not be unilaterally discarded or even negotiated away except for what he perceives to be a good deal. Trump's characterization of nuclear proliferation as the world's "single greatest threat" combined with his personal long-standing interest indicates that nuclear issues will receive a high priority in his administration. Furthermore, Trump's use of Twitter will increase the relevance and visibility of social media in U.S. nuclear policy-making, and is likely to generate unintended reactions from other nuclear states.

Reference List

Acton, J. (2017, January 6). Can Trump Enforce his Red Line on North Korea? *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/01/trump-twitter-north-korea/512450/>

Azari, J.A. (2016). How the News Media Helped to Nominate Trump. *Political Communication*, 33, 677-680. doi: 10.1080/10584609.2016.1224417

Bateman, R. (2016, August 8). Here's Why Trump Can't Be Trusted with the Nuclear Codes. *Esquire*. Retrieved from <http://www.esquire.com/news-politics/politics/news/a47436/trump-nuclear-codes-noonan/>

Berney, J. (2015, December 16). Trump's Terrifying Nuke Answer at the Debate Should End His Campaign (But It Won't). *Rolling Stone*. Retrieved from <http://www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/trumps-terrifying-nuke-answer-at-the-debate-should-end-his-campaign-but-it-wont-20151216>

Bilefsky, D. (2016, November 30). CIA Chief Warns Donald Trump against Tearing up Iran's Nuclear Deal. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/30/world/americas/cia-trump-iran-nuclear-deal.html>

Blake, A. (2016, November 29). Why We Can't – And Shouldn't – Ignore Donald Trump's Tweets. *Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2016/11/29/why-we-cant-and-shouldnt-ignore-donald-trumps-tweets/>

Carroll, J.P. (2016, July 4). Exclusive: This Is Trump's Foreign Policy, A Conversation With Top Trump Adviser Dr. Walid Phares. *The Daily Caller*. Retrieved from <http://dailycaller.com/2016/07/04/exclusive-this-is-trump-foreign-policy-a-conversation-with-top-trump-adviser-dr-walid-phares/>

Chan, S. (2016, July 21). Donald Trump's Remarks Rattle NATO Allies and Stoke Debate on Cost Sharing. *New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/22/world/europe/donald-trumps-remarks-rattle-nato-allies-and-stoke-debate-on-cost-sharing.html?_r=0

Congressional Budget Office (2015, January). *Projected Costs of U.S. Nuclear Forces, 2015-2024*. Retrieved from <https://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/114th-congress-2015-2016/reports/49870-NuclearForces.pdf>

Davenport, K., & Reif, K. (2017, January 12). What Tillerson Said, and Didn't Say, About Nuclear Policy. *Arms Control Association*. Retrieved from <https://www.armscontrol.org/blog/ArmsControlNow/2017-01-12/What-Tillerson-Said-And-Didnt-Say-About-Nuclear-Policy>

Davidson, A. (2016, April 8). Donald Trump's Nuclear Uncle. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved from <http://www.newyorker.com/news/amy-davidson/donald-trumps-nuclear-uncle>

Elliot, P. (2016, June 2). Hillary Clinton Tears into Donald Trump on Foreign Policy, Temperament. *Time*. Retrieved from <http://time.com/4355791/hillary-clinton-donald-trump-temperament/>

Faulconbridge, J., & James, J. (2017, January 16). Trump's offer to Russia: an end to sanctions for nuclear arms cut - London Times. *Reuters*. Retrieved from <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-russia-arms-deal-idUSKBN14Z0YE>

Fearon, J. D. (1997). Signaling Foreign Policy Interests: Tying Hands versus Sinking Costs. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 41, 68-90. doi: 10.1177/0022002797041001004

Fisher, M. (2017, January 28). Trump Administration Holds Off on Issuing UN Funding Order. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/28/world/americas/trump-un-funding-order.html>

Fisher, M. (2016, December 23). Trump, Promising Arms Race, Could Set World on Uncertain Path. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/23/world/trump-nuclear-arms-race-russia-china.html>

Friedman, U. (2016, November 29). Donald Trump and the Coming War on “Radical Islam”. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/11/trump-radical-islam/508331/>

Frühling, S., & O’Neil, A. (2017). Nuclear weapons, the United States and alliances in Europe and Asia: Toward an institutional perspective. *Contemporary Security Policy*. This issue. doi: 10.1080/13523260.2016.1257214

Fuhrmann, M., & Sescher, T. (2014). Signaling Alliance Commitments: Hand-Tying and Sunk Costs in Extended Nuclear Deterrence. *American Journal of Political Science*, 4, 919–935. doi: 10.1111/ajps.12082

Futter, A., & Williams, H. (2016). Questioning the Holy Trinity: Why the US Nuclear Triad Still Makes Sense. *Comparative Strategy*, 35, 246-259. doi: 10.1080/01495933.2016.1222838

Gilsinan, K., & Friedman, U. (2017, January 5). Donald Trump’s Asymmetric War on the Establishment: The Logic of Policy by Tweet. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/01/trump-asymmetric-war-establishment/512231/>

Gordon, M. R., & Schmitt, E. (2016, December 1). James Mattis, Outspoken retired Marine, is Trump’s Choice as Defense Secretary. *New York Times*. Retrieved from

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/01/us/politics/james-mattis-secretary-of-defense-trump.html>

Haberman, M., & Sanger, D. (2016, March 26). Transcript: Donald Trump Expounds on His Foreign Policy Views. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/27/us/politics/donald-trump-transcript.html>

Hall, T., & Yarhi-Milo, K. (2012). Personal Touch: Leaders' Impressions, Costly Signalling, and Assessments of Sincerity in International Affairs. *International Studies Quarterly*, 56, 560-573. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2478.2012.00731.x

Heath, C. (2015, November 23). This Donald Trump Interview Is the Best. You're Gonna Love It. *GQ*. Retrieved from: <http://www.gq.com/story/best-donald-trump-interview-gq-men-of-the-year>

Jackson, V. (2017). Let's make a (nuclear) deal: Bargaining, credibility, and the third offset strategy. *Contemporary Security Policy*, 38. This issue. doi: 10.1080/13523260.2016.1271967

Jervis, R. (1970). *The Logic of Images in International Relations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Jervis, R. (1976). *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Jervis, R. (2013). Do Leaders Matter and How Would We Know? *Security Studies*, 22, 153-179. doi: 10.1080/09636412.2013.786909

Keohane, R. O. (1988). International Institutions: Two Approaches. *International Studies Quarterly*, 32, 379-396. doi: 10.2307/2600589

Kim, E. K. (2016, April 28). Donald Trump: Primary thing Hillary Clinton “has going is she’s a woman.” *Today*. Retrieved from <http://www.today.com/news/donald-trump-today-primary-thing-hillary-clinton-has-going-she-t89201>

Knopf, J. (2017). Security assurances and proliferation risks in the Trump administration. *Contemporary Security Policy*, 38. This issue. doi: 10.1080/13523260.2016.1271688

Kruse, M. (2016, February 5). The True Story of Donald Trump’s First Campaign Speech – in 1987. *Politico*. Retrieved from <http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/02/donald-trump-first-campaign-speech-new-hampshire-1987-213595>

Krutz, G. S., & Peake, J. S. (2009). *Treaty Politics and the Rise of Executive Agreements: International Commitments in a System of Shared Powers*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Lanoszka, A. (2017) Goodbye to all that? Institutionalist theory, U.S. alliances, and Donald Trump. *Contemporary Security Policy*. This issue. doi: 10.1080/13523260.2016.1268031

Lilly, B. (2014). *Russian Foreign Policy toward Missile Defense: Actors, Motivations, and Influence*. London: Lexington Books.

Mattis, J. (2017, January 12). *Transcript before the Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate to Conduct a Confirmation Hearing on the Expected Nomination of Mr. James N. Mattis to be Secretary of Defense*. Washington, DC. Retrieved from http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/17-03_01-12-17.pdf

Mayer, J. (2016, June 25). Donald Trump’s Ghostwriter Tells All. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved from <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/07/25/donald-trumps-ghostwriter-tells-all>

McIntyre, J. (2016, July 29). NATO Commander Agrees Members Should Pay Up. *Washington Examiner*. Retrieved from <http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/nato-commander-agrees-members-should-pay-up/article/2598183>

McCormack, J. (2016, August 6). Rubio: I Still Believe Trump Can't Be Trusted with America's Nuclear Codes. *Weekly Standard*. Retrieved from <http://www.weeklystandard.com/rubio-i-still-believe-trump-cant-be-trusted-with-americas-nuclear-weapons-codes/article/2002759>

Miller, Z. J. (2016, December 22). Donald Trump Wants to Build Up America's Nuclear Arsenal. *Time*. Retrieved from <http://time.com/4616711/donald-trump-nuclear-weapons/>

Murthy, D. (2012). Towards a Sociological Understanding of Social Media: Theorizing Twitter. *Sociology*, 46, 1059-1073. doi: 10.1177/0038038511422553

Obama, B. (2009, April 5). Statement by the President. Hradcany Square, Prague, Czech Republic. Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-barack-obama-prague-delivered>

Obama, B. (2016, January 17). Statement by the President on Iran. Cabinet Room, White House Office of the Press Secretary, Washington, DC. Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2016/01/17/statement-president-iran>

Office of the White House (2017, January 20). Making Our Military Strong Again. Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/making-our-military-strong-again>

O'Toole, M. (2016, November 17). GOP Foreign Policy Power Brokers in Congress Could Foil Trump. *Foreign Policy*. Retrieved from http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/11/16/gop-foreign-policy-power-brokers-in-congress-could-foil-trump/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=New%20Campaign&utm_term=%2ASituation%20Report

Payne, K. B. (2015). US Nuclear Weapons and Deterrence: Realist versus Utopian Thinking. *Air & Space Power Journal*, 29, 63-72. Retrieved from <http://www.au.af.mil/au/afri/aspj/digital/pdf/articles/2015-Jul-Aug/V-Payne.pdf>

PBS (2016, March 31). Trump's Foreign Policy Adviser on Nukes, NATO and China. Retrieved from <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/trumps-foreign-policy-adviser-on-nukes-nato-and-china/>

Perlez, J. (2016, December 12). If Donald Trump Pushes on Taiwan, How China Could Push Back. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/27/us/politics/donald-trump-transcript.html>

Pifer, S. (2015). Obama's Faltering Nuclear Legacy: the 3 R's. *Washington Quarterly*, 38(2), 101-118. doi: 10.1080/0163660X.2015.1064712

Pilkington, E. and Pengelly, M. (2016, December 24). "Let it be an arms race": Donald Trump appears to double down on nuclear expansion. *Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/dec/23/donald-trump-nuclear-weapons-arms-race>

Plaskin, G. (1990, March). Interview: Donald Trump. *Playboy*. Retrieved from <http://www.playboy.com/articles/playboy-interview-donald-trump-1990>

Putnam, R. (1988). Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of the Two-Level Game. *International Organization*, 42, 427-460. doi: 10.1017/S0020818300027697

Radio Free Europe (2017, January 17). Russian Official Rejects Trump Offer To Lift Sanctions For Nuclear Arms Deal. Retrieved from <http://www.rferl.org/a/ryabkov-rejects-trump-offer-lift-sanctions-in-deal-curb-nuclear-arms/28238248.html>

Republican National Committee (2016). Republican Party Platform. Retrieved from <https://www.gop.com/the-2016-republican-party-platform/>

Romano, L. (1984, November 15). Donald Trump, Holding All the Cards: The Tower! The Team! The Money! *Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/1984/11/15/donald-trump-holding-all-the-cards-the-tower-the-team-the-money-the-future/8be79254-7793-4812-a153-f2b88e81fa54/>

Rosenbaum, R. (2016, March). Trump's Nuclear Experience. *Slate*. Retrieved from http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/the_spectator/2016/03/trump_s_nuclear_experience_advice_for_reagan_in_1987.html

Sagan, S., & Suri, J. (2003). The Madman Nuclear Alert: Secrecy, Signaling, and Safety. *International Security*, 27(4), 150-183. doi: 10.1162/016228803321951126

Sanger, D. W. (2016, September 27). Would Donald Trump Ever Use Nuclear Arms First? He Doesn't Seem Sure. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/28/us/politics/donald-trump-hillary-clinton-nuclear-policy-cyber.html>

Shafer, J. (2016, November 19). Stop Being Trump's Twitter Fool. *Politico*. Retrieved from <http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/11/stop-being-trumps-twitter-fool-214470>

Soofer, R. (2016). Documentation: "The Politics of Nuclear Weapons Policy," Presentation to Johns Hopkins University Graduate School Symposia. Washington, DC. April 8, 2015. *Comparative Strategy*, 35, 169-175. doi: 10.1080/01495933.2016.1176478

Sparrow, A. (2017, January 27). Trump "100% behind Nato", says May at joint White House press conference- as it happened. *Guardian*. Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/blog/live/2017/jan/27/donald-trump-and-theresa-may-hold-joint-white-house-press-conference-politics-live>

Trump, D. J. with Shiflett, D. (2000). *The America We Deserve*. Los Angeles: Renaissance Books.

Trump, D. J. (2016a, September 26). First US Presidential Debate. Hempstead, NY. For full transcript, see for example, Fenton, S. (2016, September 2017). Presidential debate: Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump's first clash - full transcript. *The Independent*. Retrieved from <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/first-presidential-debate-full-transcript-read-hillary-clinton-donald-trump-a7332081.html>

Trump D. J. (2016b, April 2017). *Foreign Policy Speech*. Washington, DC. Retrieved from <https://www.donaldjtrump.com/press-releases/donald-j.-trump-foreign-policy-speech>

Trump, D. J. (2016c, September 7). *National Security Speech*. Philadelphia, PA. Retrieved from <http://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/campaign/294817-transcript-of-donald-trumps-speech-on-national-security-in>

Trump, D. J. (2016d, August 15). *Radical Islam and the Age of Terror*. Youngstown, Ohio. Retrieved from <http://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/presidential-campaign/291498-full-transcript-donald-trump-addresses-radical>

Trump, D. J. (2016e, October 10). Second Presidential Debate. For full transcript, see, for example, *Politico*. Retrieved from: <http://www.politico.com/story/2016/10/2016-presidential-debate-transcript-229519>

Trump, D. J. (2016f, July 27). Speech in Doral, Florida. For full transcript, see, for example, Kottasova, I. and S. Vashi (2016, July 27). Reality check: Trump on NATO countries paying their fair share. *CNN*. Retrieved from <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/07/27/politics/donald-trump-nato-allies/>

Trump, D. J. (2016g, October 20). Third Presidential Debate. For full transcript see, for example, *Vox*. Retrieved from <http://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2016/10/19/13336894/third-presidential-debate-live-transcript-clinton-trump>

Trump, D. J. (2017, January 16). Full Transcript of Interview with Donald Trump. *The Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/full-transcript-of-interview-with-donald-trump-5d39sr09d>

Trump Twitter Archive (2017). Retrieved from <http://www.trumptwitterarchive.com/#/archive>

UN General Assembly First Committee (2016, October 14). 71st Session, Agenda item 98 (kk), A/C.1/71/L.41. Retrieved from

<http://reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/1com/1com16/resolutions/L41.pdf>

U.S. Department of Defense (2010). *Nuclear Posture Review*. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office. Retrieved from <http://www.defense.gov/npr/docs/2010%20nuclear%20posture%20review%20report.pdf>

U.S. Department of State (2014, July). *Adherence to and Compliance with Arms Control, Nonproliferation, and Disarmament Agreements and Commitments*. Retrieved from <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/230108.pdf>

U.S. Department of State (2010, April 8). *New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty*. Signed in Prague, Czech Republic. Retrieved from <http://www.state.gov/t/avc/newstart/c44126.htm>

Waltz, K. (1954). *Man, the State, and War*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Warren, A. (2011). The Promises of Prague versus Nuclear Realities: From Bush to Obama. *Contemporary Security Policy*, 32, 432-457. doi: 10.1080/13523260.2011.590364

Zhang, B. (2011). US Missile Defense and China's Nuclear Posture: Changing Dynamics of an Offence–Defence Arms Race. *International Affairs*, 87, 555-569. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2346.2011.00990.x