### Wording

From TAP: eliminating its reliance on one or more legs of its nuclear triad, and/or

Eliminate one or more leg of its nuclear triad

Eliminate one or more prong of its nuclear triad

Eliminate its intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles and/or nuclear-capable bombers

Diminish the nuclear triad by eliminating one or more of its intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles and/or nuclear-capable bombers

The United States should:

* Define a sole purpose for its nuclear weapons, and/or;
* Eliminate its intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles and/or nuclear-capable bombers, and/or;
* Dismantle at least a majority of its nuclear weapons.

### Eliminate---ICBMs

Yes “eliminate,” rationale:

Any looser term invites subsets (make them less threatening by taking the same missiles from silos and putting them underground, change their size, slightly reduce their number, etc.)

Any looser term potentially includes “stop modernizing”

It gets at the “big changes” question without a nebulous modifier like substantial/significant

#### There are solvency advocates, especially in the ICBM area. Good wonks + the movement folks (codepink) want elimination.

#### Here’s one…

Hennigan 22 (WJ, “Inside the $100 Billion Mission to Modernize America’s Aging Nuclear Missiles,” TIME, https://time.com/6212698/nuclear-missiles-icbm-triad-upgrade/)

Critics say this thinking is antiquated Cold War dogma. The thermonuclear missiles carried on submarines and long-range bombers are more than enough to dissuade hostile nations from reaching for their own nukes, they say. What’s more, they worry, ICBMs could trigger an inadvertent nuclear disaster through a faulty launch warning, an adversary’s miscalculation over U.S. intentions, or some other blunder. There were multiple near misses during the Cold War, when the annihilation of much of the human race was averted thanks only to luck or the common sense of a low-level officer. In February, the Pentagon postponed a long-planned ICBM test launch to avoid escalating tensions with Russia amid its war in Ukraine. Antinuclear groups call that kind of precarious circumstance evidence that perhaps the weapons should be scrapped altogether.

#### Elimination is the “Best Policy”

Hartung 20 (https://thehill.com/opinion/national-security/503928-its-time-to-eliminate-land-based-nuclear-missiles/)

To the extent that the possession of nuclear weapons is justified to deter an attack against the United States , that function can be fulfilled by submarine-launched ballistic missiles, which, as the UCS report notes, are “virtually undetectable and therefore invulnerable” — and therefore not subject to the need to launch them on warning of a potential attack. This provides a crucial margin of safety against a mistaken nuclear launch. The best policy would be to eliminate ICBMs altogether. But this approach will no doubt generate fierce opposition from the ICBM lobby, which includes senators from states with ICBM bases, as well as contractors like Northrop Grumman, which stand to make billions of dollars from the development and production of a new land-based missile — dubbed the Ground-Based Strategic Deterrent (GBSD). This lobby has had considerable success in preventing changes in ICBM policy. Among other things, the contractors and their congressional allies have been instrumental in blocking efforts to even explore alternatives to current plans for the development and deployment of new ICBMs. It’s long past time to prevent special interest pleading from blocking policies that will make us safer from a nuclear war.

#### Another big change advocate

Talbot 20 (Eliminating ICBMs—as part of a 21st-century deterrence strategy, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00963402.2017.1413067?journalCode=rbul20)

The United States, if it follows through on plans to modernize all three legs of its nuclear triad, would perpetuate a Cold War deterrence structure inappropriate to contemporary threats. The Cold War nuclear triad may have been appropriate for deterring nuclear aggression by the Soviet Union, but today the United States must prepare to deter all nuclear powers, especially rogue states such as North Korea. Establishing strategic deterrence for the 21st century will require, in addition to maintaining an appropriately structured nuclear force, focusing on missile defense, intelligence, and conventional long-range strike capabilities – as well as on alliances, partnerships, and institutions at all levels. Intercontinental ballistic missiles have become unnecessary. They are less accurate than submarine-launched ballistic missiles. They are easier for adversaries to target. And because they can plausibly be used only against Russia, they do little to deter prospective nuclear rogue actors. Intercontinental ballistic missiles should be phased out of the US nuclear arsenal beginning no later than 2030.

#### William Perry’s NYT op-ed on the subject

https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/30/opinion/why-its-safe-to-scrap-americas-icbms.html

First and foremost, the United States can safely phase out its land-based intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) force, a key facet of Cold War nuclear policy. Retiring the ICBMs would save considerable costs, but it isn’t only budgets that would benefit. These missiles are some of the most dangerous weapons in the world. They could even trigger an accidental nuclear war.

#### UCS wants them ‘retired’

Union of Concerned Scientists, 2020 (https://www.ucsusa.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/rethinking-land-based-nuclear-missiles.pdf)

The United States developed its nuclear weapons policies early in the Cold War—some 60 years ago—and they were shaped by the weapons technologies of the time. These technologies have changed radically since then, but the United States has not modified key nuclear policies to reflect those changes.  In particular, the United States continues to field silo-based nuclear missiles (ICBMs) and keeps them on high alert so they can be launched quickly on warning of an incoming attack— creating the risk of a mistaken nuclear war in response to a false warning. Yet, the original rationale for ICBMs—and for keeping them on alert—no longer applies. These outdated policies have persisted largely for reasons unrelated to security, including Air Force interests, congressional support for ICBM facilities that bring jobs to their state, and lobbying by defense contractors. This report examines the rationales for retaining ICBMs and keeping them on alert, as well as the feasibility of extending the lifetime of the current Minuteman ICBMs. It concludes that the United States should retire the ICBM force. In the meantime it should maintain the Minuteman fleet rather than build a new missile, and immediately take these missiles off high alert and eliminate the option of launching them on warning of attack.

### Eliminate---Bombers

#### Advocate

Watson 17 (Strategic Studies Quarterly, https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/SSQ/documents/Volume-11\_Issue-4/Watson.pdf)

For over 50 years, the structure of the US nuclear triad has remained the same. Relying on strategic bombers, intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM), and submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBM), the United States has sought to deter strategic threats from a variety of sources. The current threat environment, however, is radically different from what was being considered when the triad was created. From the continued evolution of terrorism to the increasing threat of cyberattacks, both the nature of the threats facing the United States and the deterrence frameworks necessary to counter them have changed. The United States needs to critically reassess the current triad with an eye toward eliminating redundant or potentially ineffective delivery systems such as the strategic nuclear bomber.

#### Strengthens deterrence

Watson 17 (Strategic Studies Quarterly, https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/SSQ/documents/Volume-11\_Issue-4/Watson.pdf)

The decline in the potential applicability and relative effectiveness of the strategic bomber is at the core of the current debate.4 The argument offered here is that these underlying rationales for continuing investment and development of strategic nuclear bomber forces are either outdated regarding the threat environment, ineffective due to technological advancements, or increasingly inefficient because of the relative unit cost for nuclear deterrence attained through ICBMs and SLBMs. The United States must begin to consider eliminating the strategic bomber leg of the nuclear triad to both streamline the nuclear deterrent and permit strengthening deterrence within the cyber and space domains.

### Subsets are real

#### Reduce “silo-based” ICBMs

Oelrich 21 (Ivan, “Deep thoughts: How moving ICBMs far underground will make the whole world safer,” BAS, https://thebulletin.org/2021/04/deep-thoughts-how-moving-icbms-far-underground-will-make-the-whole-world-safer/)

It probably is time to get rid of the great majority of silo-based ICBMs, but it would be a mistake to conflate ICBMs with the silos that house them. There are other basing options that have advantages compared both to the current land-based silos and to submarine-based missiles. Keeping land-based missiles in underground tunnels—where they would be essentially invulnerable to attack and therefore need not be kept on high-alert status—is a realistic option that has not received sufficient attention. Moving to such a basing system could open **dramatic possibilities** for an arms control grand bargain, in which the United States gives up its theoretical first-strike capability, and Russia greatly reduces its nuclear arsenal.

### “Reduce size of arsenal” Doesn’t Cut It

#### This does not have to reduce the number of warheads

von Hippel 21 (The United States would be more secure without new intercontinental ballistic missiles, https://thebulletin.org/2021/02/the-united-states-would-be-more-secure-without-new-intercontinental-ballistic-missiles/)

Transition the US strategic triad to a dyad? In 2016, former Secretary of Defense William Perry published an op-ed in the New York Times titled, “Why It’s Safe to Scrap America’s ICBMs.” In 2020, he coauthored a second op-ed, this one for the Washington Post, reiterating the argument: These dangerous missiles are not needed for deterrence, as we would use survivable weapons based on submarines at sea for any retaliation. Yet ICBMs increase the risk that we will blunder into nuclear war by mistake. Because ICBMs are vulnerable to attack (they sit in fixed silos in the ground, and Russia knows exactly where they are), they are kept on high alert at all times to enable their launch within minutes. In the case of a false alarm, a president would be under great pressure to “use them or lose them” and launch our own missiles before a possible attack arrives. False alarms have happened multiple times, and in an era of cyberattacks on US command-and-control systems, the danger has only grown. Starting a nuclear war by mistake is the greatest existential risk to the United States today. The ICBMs are, at best, extra insurance that we do not need; at worst, they are a nuclear catastrophe waiting to happen. Scrapping the ICBMs would reduce the US triad of silo-based ICBMs, submarine-launched ballistic missiles, and nuclear bombers to a dyad. The warheads on the ICBMs represent about one-quarter of US deployed strategic warheads. More than half of deployed US strategic warheads are mounted on submarine-launched missiles, and the remainder are nuclear bombs and warheads on air-launched cruise missiles in storage bunkers at the three US strategic bomber bases. The total number of deployed warheads could be maintained by deploying an additional 400 warheads to US ballistic-missile submarines. That might not be necessary, however, since the DOD’s 2013 Nuclear Employment Strategy of the United States concluded that the US could “maintain a strong and credible strategic deterrent while safely pursuing up to a one-third reduction in deployed nuclear weapons from the level established in the New START Treaty.”

### Should this JUST be ICBMs

#### This is really the “ICBM” area

Oelrich 21 (Ivan, “Deep thoughts: How moving ICBMs far underground will make the whole world safer,” BAS, https://thebulletin.org/2021/04/deep-thoughts-how-moving-icbms-far-underground-will-make-the-whole-world-safer/)

Rethinking the triad, and the case against SLBMs. Looking at the ever-declining number of nuclear weapons and the inefficiency of spreading smaller numbers of weapons among three basing systems, some more venturesome military thinkers, including a former Secretary of Defense, have suggested that it is time to abandon the triad of nuclear forces by eliminating entirely one of its legs, that is, moving to a “dyad.” Virtually every such proposal specifically recommends getting rid of the land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and relying only on bombers and submarine-based missiles. The strongest argument against ICBMs is that they undermine nuclear stability because they are vulnerable to surprise attack. Because of this vulnerability, they are kept on high alert, ready to launch at all times before incoming enemy missiles can arrive and destroy the ICBMs in their silos, thus creating a “use-it-or-lose-it” conundrum if an enemy attack were detected. Under some circumstance, such as a false alarm, this vulnerability and the high-alert needed to compensate for it could lead to a completely avoidable cataclysm.

### DA links

#### Reducing “any leg” hurts deterrence

Congressional Research Service Defense Primer, 2023 (https://news.usni.org/2023/02/08/defense-primer-u-s-strategic-nuclear-forces)

The Trump Administration also reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to the nuclear triad and to the modernization programs for each of the components of that force structure. The 2018 NPR notes that “the triad’s synergy and overlapping attributes help ensure the enduring survivability of our deterrence capabilities against attack and our capacity to hold a range of adversary targets at risk throughout a crisis or conflict. Eliminating any leg of the triad would greatly ease adversary attack planning and allow an adversary to concentrate resources and attention on defeating the remaining two legs.” The Biden Administration’s 2022 NPR supports continuing investments in the modernization programs for all three legs of the triad.

#### Eliminating ICBMs leads to bomber high-alert

Insinna 21 (US bombers could go back on alert if ICBMs are curtailed, top general says, <https://www.defensenews.com/air/2021/04/20/us-bombers-could-go-back-on-alert-if-icbms-are-curtailed-top-general-says/>)

If the Defense Department is forced to get rid of its intercontinental ballistic missiles, it will have to move its bombers to alert status to pick up the slack, the head of U.S. Strategic Command said Tuesday. The U.S. military maintains a “nuclear triad” of ICBMs, bombers and ballistic missile submarines meant to deter nuclear-armed adversaries from attacking the nation, as the United States could respond with a subsequent attack even if a portion of its nuclear arsenal was wiped out.

“The basic design criteria of the triad is that you cannot allow a failure of any one leg of the triad to prevent everything the president has ordered you to do,” said Adm. Charles Richard during a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing.

When bombers are on alert status, they sit parked on the runway, ready to take off with nuclear weapons loaded. Richard argued that, because the United States removed its bombers from alert status after the end of the Cold War, it essentially functions with only its Minuteman III ICBMs and Columbia-class ballistic missile submarines prepared to take on the nuclear mission at a moment’s notice.

“What is not often recognized is that we do not have a triad from day to day. ... Day to day, what you have is basically a dyad,” Richard said.

“If you don’t have intercontinental ballistic missiles ... you are completely dependent on the submarine leg,” he said. “I’ve already told the secretary of defense that under those conditions, I would request to re-alert the bombers.”