

Letter to the Editor

By

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Is Nuclear Missile Defense Important?

No, it's not important – it is **CRITICAL!** The single most effective deterrent the United States has had since World War II has been what is called the nuclear option. No, we never want to utilize that option again. There are those who might dare to challenge our capability to defend democracy in other parts of the world, but have no question regarding our resolve to protect our Nation by whatever means necessary.

Yes, this is about politics, national defense, economy and rocket science all rolled up into a not so neat a package. Some of you know the SALT Talks with Russia are ramping up again. So let's look at how that is shaping up so far. First a couple of definitions:

A **tactical nuclear weapon** refers to a nuclear weapon which is designed to be used on a battlefield in military situations. Russia has 6,000 tactical nuclear weapons and the U.S. has 1,000. This has been taken off the table by Russia as a non-negotiable item in terms of changes. This is as opposed to **strategic nuclear weapons** which are designed to threaten large populations, to damage the enemy's ability to wage war, or for general deterrence. Here Russia is willing to make cuts as do some in U.S. leadership positions. In fact, No tactical nuclear weapon has ever been used in an actual conflict. They were a large part of the peak nuclear weapons stockpile levels during the Cold War.