



## The evolving global threat to nuclear and radiological transports

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## Attacks on transports are a constant threat

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- ❑ May 2021, South Africa:
  - Armed attackers assault on an armored car on the highway
  - 3 vehicles of attackers, automatic weapons, comms jamming
  - 30 shots fired – highly trained driver manages to evade the attackers
- ❑ Attacks occur in countries across the world
- ❑ Thefts also occur when vehicles are parked, crew elsewhere
- ❑ Adversaries often have insider information, even insider help
- ❑ Appropriate security measures, training, security culture essential!



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oGZLYx8StWk>

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## Theft of plutonium or HEU could lead to a horrifying catastrophe

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Source: Time-Life

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## Sabotage could also cause a major disaster

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- ❑ Fukushima caused by inadequate preparation and an extraordinary natural disaster
- ❑ Reaffirmed that a nuclear accident can cause extraordinary terror, disruption, and cost
- ❑ Can be caused by destroying off-site power and backup generators, or destroying cooling system
- ❑ Al Qaeda, Chechens, and other terrorist groups have considered sabotaging nuclear reactors



Source: Air Photo Service, Japan

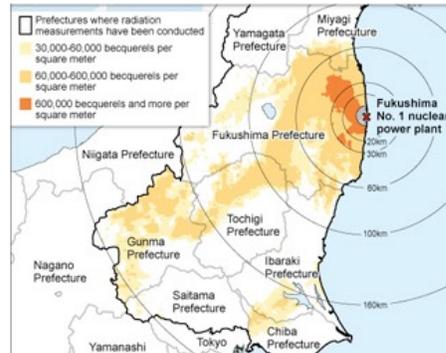
*You can't be safe without being secure.*

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## Disruptions and economic, social, political damage can last for decades

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- ❑ Fukushima profoundly disrupted lives
  - >150,000 evacuated
  - 10s of thousands have still not been able to return home
  - Japanese politics, society changed in many ways
- ❑ TEPCO bankrupted, most Japanese nuclear plants still not operating a decade later
- ❑ \$100s of billions in costs



Source: Asahi Shimbun, from MEXT

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## Sabotage of a nuclear transport could cause a smaller, but still significant, disaster

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- ❑ Attack that caused a radiation release as a transport moved through an urban area could cause major fear, disruption
  - Depending on scenario, could cause important human radiation doses
  - Far larger political, economic impacts
- ❑ Example:
  - Armor-piercing RPG on a spent fuel transport cask
  - Other examples possible



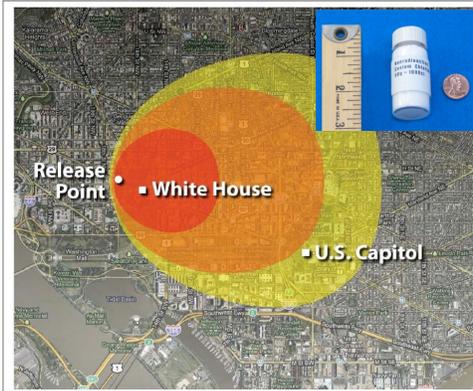
Source: Sandia National Labs

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# An RDD could cause mass fear – “weapon of mass disruption”

- ❑ Some form of dangerous sources used in hospitals, industry, in almost every country -- often modest security
- ❑ Transports frequent
- ❑ Cs-137 is esp. dangerous – powder easy to disperse, very hard to clean

Source: Congressional Research Service, modeling by Sandia National Laboratories, 2010



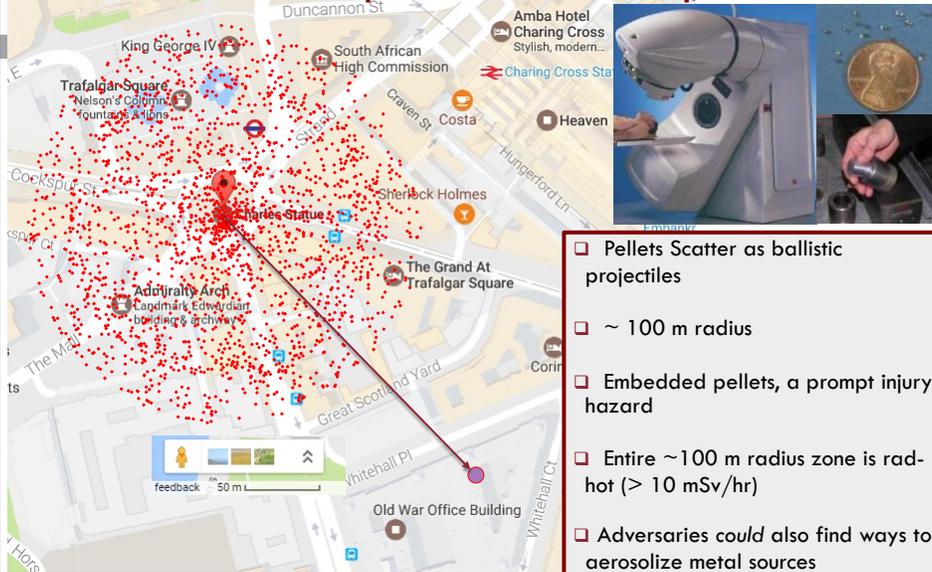
Effects and Actions						
Area	Equivalent	Exceeds relocation	Population	All	Fatal	
km <sup>2</sup>	Dose (rem)	PAG for which year:		Cancers	Cancers	
2.10	0.81	>2.00	First year only	38,000	233	159
7.60	2.93	>0.500	Any subsequent year	94,700	278	189
13.2	5.10	>5.00	50 years (cumulative)	125,000	461	314

Areas and counts are cumulative. RDD detonated at 38.9 N, 77.0 W. PAG: Protective Action Guide

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## Scenario: Co-60 Teletherapy Source

**Less area denial but severe injuries from embedded Co-60 pellets.**



- ❑ Pellets Scatter as ballistic projectiles
- ❑ ~ 100 m radius
- ❑ Embedded pellets, a prompt injury hazard
- ❑ Entire ~100 m radius zone is rad-hot (> 10 mSv/hr)
- ❑ Adversaries *could* also find ways to aerosolize metal sources

Slide from Len Connell

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## Area Denial RDD: Economic Impacts

### Three components.



#### Social costs, hard to quantify:

- Increased fear/anxiety
- Historic buildings quarantined
- Forced relocation from homes
- Increased security/loss of freedom

#### Event Recovery Costs – 1 yr (typically assumed)

- Survey, Decontamination/Demolition, Disposal, New Construction, Relocation, Compensation, Health Care
- Reality-It could take much longer than 1 yr.

#### Business Impacts – < 1 yr (typ.)

- Direct – Lost GDP from business affected inside denied area
- Indirect – Lost GDP from business affected outside denied area
- Induced – Lost GDP from reduced spending by affected households

#### Perception Based Impacts – can persist, many years

- Willingness to purchase goods/services from region
- Willingness to invest in region
- Willingness to work in the region

For a nationally significant RDD, these costs can each approach \$10's of Billions

Slide from Len Connell

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## Public fear of radiation increases disruption from a terrorist radiation incident

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- ❑ The very word “radioactive” provokes fear
- ❑ Public doesn't understand that radiation is all around us – and has deep distrust from past incidents, coverups
- ❑ After an incident, radiation will be detectable in far larger areas than where it's a hazard
- ❑ Scariest items in the media will get the most views, pickup
- ❑ Who will have the public credibility to say what's safe, and be believed?
  - Major unsolved public education problem



Source: CNET

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## Terrorist groups have pursued all three

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- ❑ Aum Shrinkyo – Japanese terror cult
  - Conducted nerve gas attacks in Matsumoto in 1994 and in Tokyo subways in 1995
  - Previously had focused efforts to get nuclear, biological weapons
- ❑ “Core” al Qaeda
  - Focused effort to get nuclear weapons
    - ❑ Reported directly to Zawahiri
    - ❑ Carried out conventional explosive tests for the bomb program in desert
  - Also considered attacks on nuclear reactors
  - Affiliates pursued rad material for “dirty bomb”
- ❑ Chechen terrorists
  - Planted dangerous radiological source in a Moscow park as warning
    - threatened to use “dirty bombs”
  - Repeatedly threatened, planned attacks on reactors
  - Russian officials report catching terrorist teams scoping nuclear weapon storage sites, transports

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## Still a threat? The evolving threat landscape

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- ❑ Al Qaeda and the Islamic State have suffered serious blows
  - Capability for complex, sustained operations greatly reduced
- ❑ But:
  - Globally, more violent jihadists today than on 9/10/2001
  - Both groups (and others) have operations in multiple countries, access to people, money, weapons
  - Motive high: Both groups (and perhaps others) would like to strike back at the “crusader forces,” launch a spectacular attack
  - Modest cell that might not be detected could plan an attack
  - *We do not know how much capability remains – or may grow*
- ❑ The domestic violent extremist threat is now a major part of the threat picture in many advanced democracies
  - Foundational *Turner Diaries* envisions nuclear attacks for racist cause
  - In Norway, Breivik’s manifesto envisions nuclear sabotage

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## Many of the key participants in al Qaeda's nuclear effort are still at large

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### Ayman al Zawahiri



Source: FBI

Now head of the group. Nuclear project reported directly to him.

### Sayf al-Adel



Source: FBI

Senior al Qaeda operational planner, reportedly personally approved attempted purchase of 3 nuclear bombs in 2003

### Abdul Aziz al-Masri



Source: NCTC

aka Ali Sayyid  
Muhammed Mustafa  
al-Bakri

CEO of al Qaeda's nuclear program, oversaw explosives experiments in Afghanistan.

### "Pakistani Nuclear Expert"



2003 communications from al Qaeda leaders reportedly approved purchase of nuclear devices if the Pakistani expert confirms they are real – U.S. Government has never identified or found this expert

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## Rapidly evolving threats

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- ❑ **ISIS and future groups**
  - Not mentioned in 1/14 threat assessment
  - Seized much of Iraq and Syria by 6/14
  - How will these groups evolve next?
- ❑ **Cyber**
  - Constant discovery of new vulnerabilities
  - Nuclear facility + transport requirements still at early stages in many countries
- ❑ **Drones**
  - Commercially available drones getting more advanced every year
  - Could enable wide range of tactics that require defenders to rethink approaches
- ❑ **What's next?**
  - How to keep up with the threat while having some regulatory stability?



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## Insider threats are a particularly dangerous nuclear/radiological security problem

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- ❑ The known HEU and Pu thefts, and most sabotages, involved insiders
- ❑ People don't want to believe their friends and colleagues could betray the organization
  - Leads to serious lapses in protection against insider threats
- ❑ Getting people to report suspicious behavior is very difficult
- ❑ Often even obvious "red flags" go unreported, unaddressed
- ❑ Bunn-Sagan book offers case studies, "Worst Practices Guide" on lessons learned from past mistakes

<http://www.belfercenter.org/publication/insider-threats>



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## A recent example: insider sabotage and a cleared terrorist at Doel-4 nuclear plant

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- ❑ August 2014: An insider at Doel-4 reactor in Belgium drains lubricant, destroys reactor turbine
  - ~\$200 million damage
  - Investigators unable to find culprit
  - Sabotage intended to cause economic damage, not radiation release
- ❑ Investigation finds that long before, contractor Ilyass Boughalab had access to vital area
  - Passed security clearance review in 2009
  - In late 2012, left to fight for terrorists in Syria (reportedly killed later)
  - Later convicted as part of "Sharia4Belgium" terrorist group



Source: Kristof Pieters

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## U.S. domestic extremist insider examples

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- ❑ Ashley Babbitt
  - Killed in attack on Capitol, 1/6
  - Air Force veteran (security force), guard at 2 U.S. nuclear plants
- ❑ >50 of those arrested in Capitol Riot case military, law enforcement
- ❑ Lt. Christopher Hasson
  - 2/19, arrested, charged with plotting domestic terrorism
  - >20 yrs in Coast Guard
  - Allegedly planned to kill leading left-leaning political, media figures
  - 2017 letter: “dreaming of a way to kill almost every last person”
- ❑ Exactly the people security forces would like to hire



Ashley Babbitt, Christopher Hasson  
Sources: NYT, U.S. Justice Department

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## Summary: significant remaining risk

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- ❑ Consequences:
  - Potentially catastrophic
  - Varies by type of nuclear/radiological scenario
- ❑ Probability:
  - Motive: High (for a few groups)
  - Capability: Lower than before, but rapidly changeable
  - Opportunity: Need to keep as low as practicable by maintain effective security for nuclear, radiological materials

*Even a small probability of the worst cases is enough to justify focused action to reduce the risk*



Source: DOE

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## Further reading and background material

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- ❑ *Revitalizing Nuclear Security in an Era of Uncertainty* (2019):  
<https://www.belfercenter.org/NuclearSecurity2019>
- ❑ *The U.S.-Russian Joint Threat Assessment of Nuclear Terrorism*:  
<https://www.belfercenter.org/publication/us-russia-joint-threat-assessment-nuclear-terrorism>
- ❑ *Insider Threats* (Cornell, 2018)
- ❑ Selected presentations and publications:  
[https://scholar.harvard.edu/matthew\\_bunn/nuclear-terrorism-and-nuclear-security?admin\\_panel=1](https://scholar.harvard.edu/matthew_bunn/nuclear-terrorism-and-nuclear-security?admin_panel=1)
- ❑ Full text of *Managing the Atom* publications:  
<http://belfercenter.org/mta>

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## 3 types of nuclear terrorism

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- ❑ Nuclear explosives
  - Incredibly catastrophic
  - Difficult for terrorists to accomplish (though not as implausible as some believe)
- ❑ Nuclear sabotage
  - Very catastrophic *if* highly successful (limited if not)
  - Could cause a Fukushima-scale accident, or worse
  - Also difficult to accomplish
- ❑ "Dirty Bomb"
  - "Weapons of mass disruption" – few if any deaths, but potentially \$10s of billions in disruption, cleanup costs
  - Far easier to accomplish



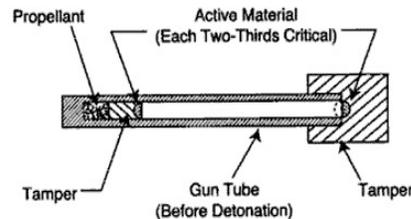
Source: DOE

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## With nuclear material, terrorists may be able to make crude nuclear bombs

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- ❑ With HEU, gun-type bomb – as obliterated Hiroshima – very plausibly within capabilities of sophisticated terrorist group
- ❑ Implosion bomb (required for plutonium) more difficult, still conceivable (especially if they got help)
  - Doesn't need to be as complex as Nagasaki bomb



Source: NATO

Doesn't take a Manhattan Project -- >90% of the effort was focused on producing nuclear material. And making a crude terrorist bomb is *far* easier than making a safe, reliable weapon

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## The Islamic State – good news and bad news

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- ❑ Ideology envisions final war with “crusader” forces – powerful weapons needed
- ❑ Islamic State produced, used its own chemical weapons
- ❑ Clear capacity for disciplined manufacture, technical innovation
  - Manufactured mortars, shells, other arms to precise tolerances
  - Drone and IED efforts repeatedly built, tested new ideas
- ❑ Monitoring of Belgian nuclear official hints at nuclear interest
  - Hours of monitoring of official's private home, by operatives involved in Paris attacks
  - Senior official at facility with HEU, rad sources, research reactor...
- ❑ BUT: IS did nothing with the large Co-60 sources under their control
  - Large sources were in territory they controlled, now back in government hands

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## “Dirty bombs” – a serious ongoing threat

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“My reporting leads me to conclude that the most ominous terrorist threat—based on the relative ease of pulling off such an attack, the possible damage it could do, and, most of all, the danger of overreaction to it—is the dirty bomb.”

— Steven Brill, *The Atlantic*, September 2016



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## An intelligent adversary fundamentally changes probability estimates

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- ❑ Probability is a method developed for random events – planned human actions are not random
- ❑ Earthquakes will not:
  - Preferentially strike the site least able to protect against them
  - Observe the defenses and attempt to bring enough capability to defeat them
  - Consciously plan to cause both primary and backup systems to fail
- ❑ Terrorists will seek to do all of those things
  - In security, failures are *not independent*
  - In security, the past is a less reliable guide to the future – adversaries learn and evolve
- ❑ Nevertheless, estimating the chance of different events – in concert with other methods – can help structure thinking, identify weak points to be addressed

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# Nuclear material is not hard to smuggle – plutonium box for first-ever bomb

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Source: Los Alamos

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## Radionuclide Properties

Analysis

The Power to Contaminate (PTC) measures area denial potential.

Nuclide	T <sub>1/2</sub>	Dose Rate at 1 meter (mSv/hr per Ci)	Typical Form	Area Denial PTC* (Ci/km <sup>2</sup> )	Typical Use and Activity
Co-60 (β,γ)	5.3 yr	14	Hard Metal	10	Irradiators & Teletherapy (~10,000 Ci)
Cs-137 (β,γ)	30 yr	3.8	Salt Powder	40	Irradiators (~1000 Ci)
Ir-192 (β,γ)	74 d	6.0	Hard Metal	100	Portable Radiography (~100 Ci)
Am-241/Be (α,γ, n)	433 yr	0.05	Oxide Powder	~ 10	Portable Well Logging (~ 10 Ci)

Perfect Terrorist uniform spread



\*Power to Contaminate (PTC) = Radionuclide ground contamination level in Curies, uniformly spread over 1 sq. km, that would trigger the US EPA Relocation Protective Action Guide (PAG) of 20 mSv/yr in the first year after the incident. Approximate values. Based on reducing risk of delayed cancers.

PTC values are similar to IAEA Category 2 thresholds

Slide from Len Connell

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## Other important radiological dangers

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- ❑ Sabotage of nuclear power plant – if defenses overcome, potential for major panic, large areas contaminated
- ❑ Sabotage of research reactor – 1000s x less material, but less security, in urban areas
- ❑ “Radiation exposure device” – radioactive material or reaction in place where people will be exposed
- ❑ Poisoning food – unsealed sources could be used secretly, cause major doses
- ❑ Murder/assassination



Source: dieseltruckresource.com

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## Assessing the risk of theft at particular nuclear facilities and transports

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- ❑ Risk of theft at a particular facility or transport:
  - Probability of theft attempt (unknown, presumably reduced by stronger security measures)
  - Probability theft attempt would succeed, determined by
    - Probability distribution of adversary capabilities
    - Capabilities security system can protect against
  - Consequences: probability stolen material could be used to make a bomb, determined by:
    - Adversary capabilities
    - Material quantity
    - Material quality
- ❑ Thieves will seek to observe, exploit security weaknesses

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## Assessing the risk of sabotage at particular nuclear facilities

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- ❑ Risk of a sabotage attempt at a particular facility or transport:
  - Probability of sabotage attempt (unknown, presumably reduced by stronger security measures)
  - Probability sabotage attempt would succeed, determined by
    - Probability distribution of adversary capabilities
    - Capabilities security system can protect against
    - Difficulty of catastrophic sabotage (related to safety measures)
  - Consequences, determined by:
    - Quantity of radioactivity present
    - Potential to mobilize, disperse the material
    - Nearby populations, economic and other assets
- ❑ Saboteurs will seek to observe, exploit security weaknesses

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## Comparing nuclear safety and nuclear security risks: the historical record

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- ❑ U.S. safety goal: 1/10,000 per reactor-year chance of major core damage; 1/100,000 chance of major release
  - Obviously haven't met this goal so far
  - 4 reactors with major releases (Chernobyl and 3 at Fukushima Daichi) in 16,000 reactor-years of operation – 1/4,000 reactor-years
  - Other core damage events (TMI, Fermi I...)
  - But goal remains valid – and given horrifying consequences, goal for preventing nuclear terrorist attack should be *more* stringent
- ❑ Nuclear theft:
  - ~300 global facilities with HEU or Pu -- ~ 7,500 facility-years over last 25 years
  - ~20 seizures of stolen HEU or Pu in that time (some from same theft)
  - > 1/400 per facility-year
  - Most from Russia (but also most facilities there); several seizures may be from same theft – but still, shows rate far too high

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## Comparing nuclear safety and nuclear security risks: the historical record (II)

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### ❑ Nuclear sabotage

- During ~16,000 reactor-years of operation:
- 1 case in which insider placed explosives on steel pressure vessel and detonated them\*
- 1 case (very recent) in which insider sabotage destroyed reactor turbine
- 1 case in which terrorists overwhelmed and captured the guard force, were in full control for extended period before leaving when off-site response arrived\*
- 1 case of RPG being fired at, hitting reactor
- Multiple cases of terrorist groups planning attacks on reactors
- ~ 1 major incident per 3-4,000 reactor-years

*Both theft and sabotage risks appear to be very high compared to safety goals*

\*reactor not yet operational

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## Key steps to reduce the nuclear terrorism risk

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### ❑ Police and intelligence:

- Detect and disrupt terrorist nuclear-related plots
- Aum Shinrikyo disrupted after nerve gas attacks
- Multiple al Qaeda-related plots successfully disrupted after 9/11

### ❑ Security for weapons, materials, and facilities:

- Make it harder for terrorists to get essential ingredients of weapon or sabotage a facility – major progress in last quarter century

### ❑ Block nuclear smuggling

- Radiation detection, targeted police and intelligence
- Enormous challenge: once stolen, material could be anywhere

### ❑ Prepare to reduce consequences

*Effective security for nuclear weapons, materials, facilities as the highest leverage in reducing the risk*

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## North Korea and Iran are likely small parts of the nuclear terrorism problem

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- ❑ Nuclear security:
  - North Korea has only a few bombs' worth of plutonium in a tightly controlled garrison state – theft very unlikely
  - Iran has not begun to produce weapons-usable material – has only a small amount of HEU research reactor fuel
- ❑ Conscious state transfer:
  - Regimes bent on maintaining power unlikely to take the immense risk of providing nuclear bomb material to terrorist groups who might use it in a way that would provoke overwhelming retaliation
  - Transfers to other *states* – who are likely to be deterred from using nuclear weapons – a very different act
- ❑ High-level “rogues” within states
  - As stocks of material grow, could an “A.Q. Kim” sell secretly?
- ❑ State collapse:
  - Could have worrisome “loose nukes” scenario

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## Spread of nuclear power need not increase terrorist nuclear bomb risks

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- ❑ Most nuclear reactors do not use nuclear material that can readily be used in nuclear bombs:
  - Low-enriched uranium fuel cannot be used to make a nuclear bomb without technologically demanding further enrichment
  - Plutonium in spent fuel is 1% by weight in massive, intensely radioactive fuel assemblies (but R-Pu is weapons-usable)
- ❑ Reprocessing (separating plutonium from spent fuel) could increase risks, requires intensive security and accounting
  - Poor economics, few additional countries pursuing – South Korea and China only countries currently considering shift to reprocessing
  - Reprocessing does not solve the nuclear waste problem – still need a nuclear waste repository
- ❑ Power reactors do pose potential targets for sabotage
  - Sabotage would mainly affect nearby countries, global nuclear industry – strong security measures can reduce the risk

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## Nuclear security: the global picture

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- ❑ Global stockpiles include:
  - ~13,000 nuclear weapons
  - ~ 520 tons of separated plutonium
  - ~1335 tons of HEU (+/- 125 tons)
  - <1/3 of plutonium and HEU is physically in nuclear weapons
- ❑ Stocks located in 100s of buildings, bunkers, in ~ 22 countries
- ❑ Widely varying security
- ❑ No global rules specify how secure nuclear weapons or the materials to make them should be



W-48 nuclear artillery shell, one of many thousands of tactical nuclear weapons that have been dismantled

Source: U.S. Department of Energy

*Theft of 0.01% of world stockpile could cause a global catastrophe*

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## Global nuclear security: A system no one designed...

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- ❑ Imagine a system with 100s of nodes:
  - Little or no central control
  - Failure of any node could cause catastrophic damage
- ❑ To reduce risk in such a system, you could try to:
  - Strengthen each node (e.g., technical cooperation)
  - Increase central control (e.g., strong national regulation, international accords)
  - Reduce the number of nodes (e.g., nuclear material removals)
  - Reduce the consequences of node failure (e.g., reactors where failure could cause only limited release, materials difficult to use in a bomb)
  - Increase ability to recover after a node failure

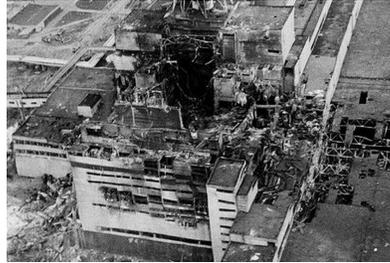
*No engineer in his or her right mind would design such a system*

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## Nuclear security is quite different from nuclear safety, in several dimensions

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- ❑ Safety: preventing, preparing for *accidental* events
- ❑ Security: preventing, preparing for, *intentional* human actions
  - Changes the statistics – multiple failures no longer independent
- ❑ Many overlaps – some conflicts
- ❑ Nuclear security involves:
  - Lower, more controversial threat perception (no widely known incidents)
  - Lower public interest
  - More secrecy
  - Less organizational focus, resources
  - More separation from the rest of the operating organization



Source: The Millenium Report

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## The international nuclear security framework

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- ❑ Key purpose of *international* and *national* frameworks is to ensure effective *local* nuclear security
  - International accords seek to influence national policies, which seek to influence local action – very indirect effect
- ❑ International framework includes many elements – a "regime complex," not a single regime
  - Binding agreements
  - International recommendations
  - Technical cooperation
  - Summits and other high-level discussions
  - IAEA services
  - Requirements of supply agreements
  - Best practice exchanges
- ❑ Constrained by complacency, sovereignty, secrecy, politics, bureaucracy, cost...

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## Substantial nuclear security progress over past 25 years...

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- ❑ Most egregious weaknesses essentially all resolved
- ❑ U.S. in particular has spent billions helping others improve – and launched series of “nuclear security summits”
- ❑ > 50% of all countries that once had weapons-usable material on their soil have eliminated it
- ❑ Many particular improvements
  - Most countries that had no armed guards (even for plutonium and HEU) have corrected that
  - Most countries with major nuclear activities now have a “design basis threat” operators must protect against
  - More countries doing realistic assessment, testing, of nuclear security systems
  - More attention to insider threats
  - More attention to security culture

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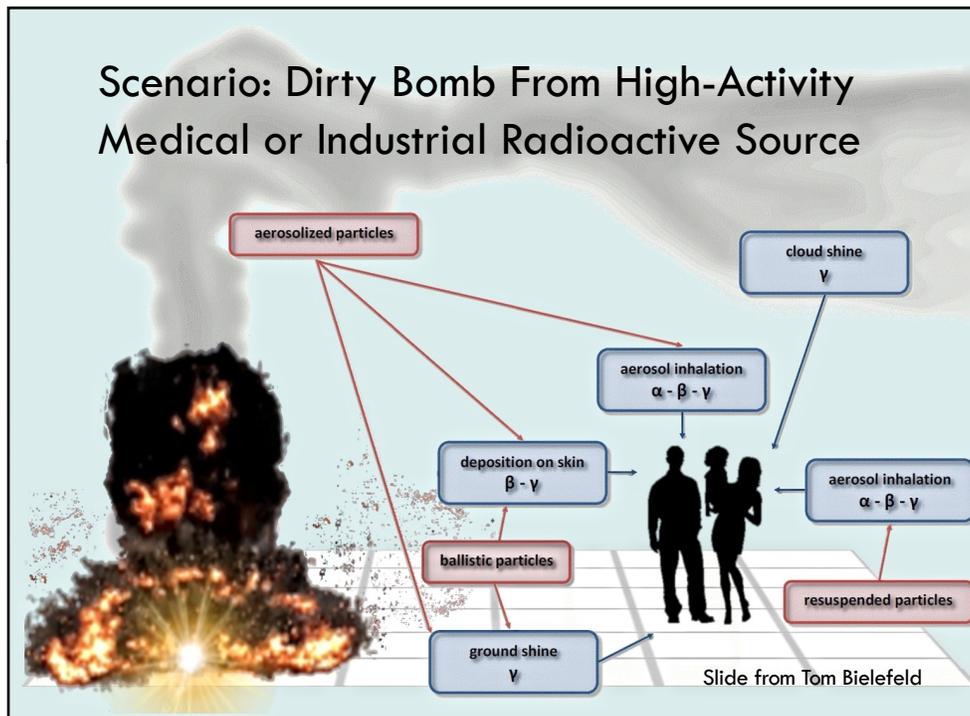
## With “nuclear security summits” in the past, progress is slowing...

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- ❑ Little high-level political attention, little sense of urgency
- ❑ U.S. international nuclear security programs dramatically reduced
- ❑ Some key elements of cooperation cut off or slowed
  - Almost no remaining US-Russian cooperation, post-Crimea seizure
  - Very modest cooperation with wealthy countries (some of which have a lot of material)
  - U.S.-China, U.S.-India cooperation real but modest
  - U.S.-Pakistan cooperation was substantial, most urgent agreed items completed – many items Pakistan not interested in cooperating on
  - Most politically, technically feasible removals of nuclear material already done
- ❑ Still much to do – but each step forward now more difficult

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## Scenario: Dirty Bomb From High-Activity Medical or Industrial Radioactive Source



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## Security for radiological sources – a global cooperative effort

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- ❑ NNSA works to protect, replace dangerous rad sources worldwide
- ❑ IAEA offers recommendations, reviews, training, limited assistance – all voluntary
  - IAEA has no authority to regulate nuclear or radiological security
- ❑ Nuclear security summits raised issue to highest political levels – but how to maintain that momentum?
- ❑ U.S. leadership on radiological security includes “walking the talk”



Recovery of stolen radioactive source in Mexico. Source: NNSA

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## Steps to reduce the nuclear theft and sabotage risks

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- ❑ Nuclear theft:
  - Reduce the number of facilities and transports with HEU and Pu (fewer facility-years per year)
    - More sites, transports with separated plutonium means more risk
  - Increase security for remaining facilities (lower chance of theft per facility-year)
    - Better protection against both outsiders and insiders
    - Critical issue: strengthening security culture – “Good security is 20% equipment and 80% culture.”
- ❑ Nuclear sabotage:
  - Increase security for reactors, other high-consequence facilities
  - Increase passive safety (making large-scale release more difficult for saboteurs to achieve)
    - Example: move cooled spent fuel to dry casks

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## Better security for radiological sources can reduce the risk at low cost

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- ❑ In-device delay – design devices to rad source can't be removed without special tools
- ❑ Alarms, security cameras – linked to local police
- ❑ Security surveys can help identify low-cost, sustainable improvements
- ❑ Transport security is a particular issue – multiple incidents of theft from vehicles, or of vehicles themselves
- ❑ Training, exercises needed to for 1<sup>st</sup> responders to prepare to respond



Source: GAO

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## Replacing radiological sources with other technologies – permanent risk reduction

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- ❑ For many uses, radiological sources can be replaced with other technologies that emit no radiation once turned off
  - Nothing for terrorists to steal or sabotage
- ❑ National Academy of Sciences panel called for replacement of Cs-137 sources in particular
- ❑ France has already replaced its Cs-137 blood irradiators
- ❑ So has Norway
- ❑ Japan has replaced >70% of its Cs-137 irradiators



Source: CRS



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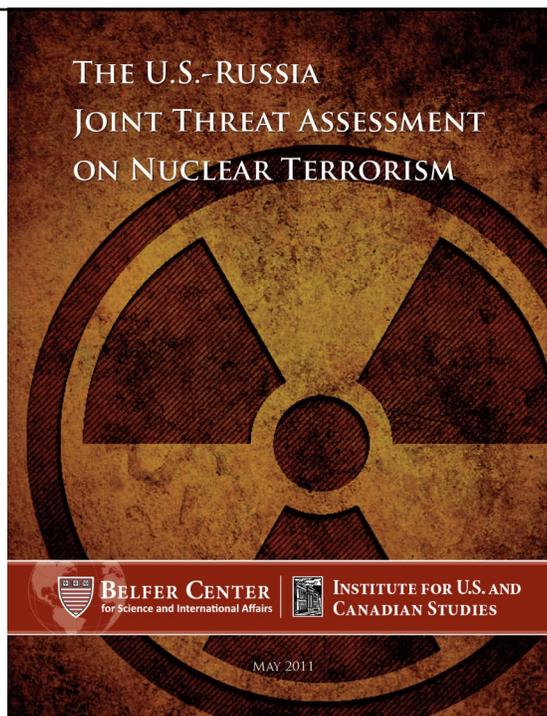
## A joint U.S.-Russian view

- ❑ First ever U.S.-Russian joint threat assessment
- ❑ Concludes the danger is real, urgent action is needed to reduce it
- ❑ Endorsed by broad range of retired military, intelligence experts

<http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/publication/21087/>

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## THE U.S.-RUSSIA JOINT THREAT ASSESSMENT ON NUCLEAR TERRORISM



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## North Caucasus terrorists have pursued nuclear and radiological terrorism

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- ❑ Multiple cases:
  - 2 cases of teams carrying out reconnaissance at nuclear weapon storage sites – 2 more on nuclear weapon transport trains
  - Repeated threats to attack nuclear reactors – terrorists who seized Moscow theater in 2002 considered seizing reactor at the Kurchatov Institute
  - Repeated threats to use radiological “dirty bombs” – buried Cs-137 source in Moscow park
  - Captured documents indicate plan to seize a Russian nuclear submarine (possibly with nuclear weapons on board)



Source: Public Broadcasting Service

47

## Adversaries can arise unexpectedly in Japan: the Aum Shinrikyo case

48

- ❑ Aum’s nuclear efforts
  - Cult leader Shoko Asahara was obsessed with nuclear weapons
  - Repeated shopping trips to former Soviet Union – acquired wide range of conventional weapons, recruited thousands of followers, sought to buy nuclear weapons and materials
  - Purchased farm in Australia, stole enrichment documents – idea to mine, enrich its own uranium
  - Turned to chemical and biological weapons when nuclear proved too slow
  - No intelligence agency was aware of their nuclear, biological, or chemical work until *after* the nerve gas attacks
- ❑ Lesson: Watch for unexpected adversaries, even in “safe” countries



Source: Associated Press

48

## Attack at Pelindaba, Nov. 8, 2007

49

- ❑ Site with 100s of kilograms of highly enriched uranium (HEU)
- ❑ Attack by 2 teams of armed, well-trained men, from opposite sides – evidence of insider help
- ❑ One team:
  - Penetrated 10,000-volt security fence
  - Disabled intrusion detectors
  - Went to emergency control center, shot a worker there, who raised first alarm
  - Spent 45 minutes inside guarded perimeter – never engaged by site security forces
  - Left through same spot in fence – never caught or identified
- ❑ South Africa has since undertaken major nuclear security upgrades, established regulatory design basis threat
- ❑ Lesson: 2 teams of well-armed, well-trained intruders, with insider help, attacking with no warning, is a credible threat

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## Coping with creative, determined, evolving adversaries

50

- ❑ Nuclear security planning must consider the full spectrum of plausible adversary capabilities
- ❑ Adversary capabilities and tactics evolve – DBT from 10 years ago may not match today's threat
- ❑ Adversaries may think of attack strategies the defenders have not considered, e.g.:
  - Deception (fake uniforms, IDs, paperwork...)
  - Blocking response forces (e.g., mining the road)
  - Tunneling under or flying over defenses (routine in crimes worldwide)
- ❑ Solutions:
  - Consider updating, expanding capabilities in Japan's DBT
  - Assign creative team with "hacker" mentality to probe for weak points
  - Carry out realistic tests with unexpected adversary team tactics

50

## The scale of the catastrophe

51

- ❑ Tens of thousands killed; tens of thousands more burned, injured, irradiated
  - Radioactive fallout would require large-scale evacuation
- ❑ Terrorists may claim they had more bombs hidden in cities, threaten to detonate them unless their demands were met
  - Potential for widespread panic, flight from major cities, resulting economic and social chaos
- ❑ Huge pressure on leaders of attacked state to take any action necessary to prevent further attacks – and to retaliate
  - Effects on international affairs likely far larger than 9/11

*Notions of sovereignty and civil liberties may be radically altered – every state's behavior affects every other*

51

## Terrorists might be able to get plutonium or HEU

52

- ❑ ~20 documented cases of theft and smuggling of plutonium or HEU, some in kilogram quantities
  - Most recent seizures: Georgia 2010, Moldova 2011
  - Even small thefts suggest vulnerabilities that could be exploited for larger thefts
  - Small seizures may be samples of larger stocks
- ❑ Major progress in improving nuclear security
  - Dozens of sites with major security upgrades
  - Dozens of sites all material removed
- ❑ But many weaknesses remain, in many countries
  - Protection against only modest threats
  - Lack of on-site armed guards
  - Limited insider protection



Source: Reuters, from Georgian Interior Ministry

52

## What is the evidence that current nuclear security is inadequate?

53

- ❑ Continuing seizures of weapons-usable material
  - ~20 real cases involving HEU or plutonium since 1992
- ❑ “Red team” tests indicate security systems can be defeated by intelligent adversaries looking for weak points
  - Repeated cases in U.S. tests – though U.S. has among the most stringent security requirements in the world
  - Most other countries do not carry out such tests
- ❑ Successful thefts and attacks at well-secured non-nuclear facilities – demonstrating adversary capabilities
  - Repeated cases of use of insiders, covert outsider attacks, unusual tactics, succeeding in stealing from/attacking heavily guarded sites (e.g., banks, military bases, diamond centers...)
  - Existing nuclear security measures in many countries demonstrably insufficient to protect against such adversary capabilities

53

## Security culture matters: Propped-open security door

54



Source: U.S. Government Accountability Office

54

## International assessments of the danger of nuclear terrorism

55

*“Nuclear terrorism is one of the most serious threats of our time. Even one such attack could inflict mass casualties and create immense suffering and unwanted change in the world forever. This prospect should compel all of us to act to prevent such a catastrophe.”*

– U.N. Secretary-General Ban-Ki Moon, 13 June 2007

*“The gravest threat faced by the world is of an extremist group getting hold of nuclear weapons or materials.”*

– then-IAEA Director-General Mohammed ElBaradei, 14 September 2009

*“We have firm knowledge, which is based on evidence and facts, of steady interest and tasks assigned to terrorists to acquire in any form what is called nuclear weapons, nuclear components.”*

– Anatoly Safonov, then counter-terrorism representative of the Russian president, former head of the FSB, 27 September 2007

55

## Summary: the nuclear terrorist threat

56

	Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/> Do terrorists want nuclear weapons?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Is it conceivable terrorists could make a crude bomb if they got the material?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Is there material that might be vulnerable to theft and transfer to terrorists?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Is it likely that terrorists, if they had a crude device, could smuggle it to Moscow, London, Paris, Washington, or New York?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*The probability may not be high – but no one would operate a nuclear reactor upwind of a city if it had a 1/100 chance each year of a catastrophic radiation release – risk of a terrorist nuclear bomb may well be higher*

56

## Hard parts for a crude terrorist bomb

57

- ❑ #1: Getting weapons-usable nuclear material
  - Once they have that, 80% or more of the way there
- ❑ Others:
  - Processing material into appropriate form
  - Casting and machining (U and Pu difficult materials – esp. Pu)
  - Building explosives, reflector, etc., getting them to work
  - For implosion weapons of the standard type:
    - Precise shaped explosives with very precise timing
    - Need to crush material to denser, more critical form, not flatten it into a pancake
    - Neutron generator to provide shower of neutrons at best moment
  - All this requires an ability to recruit/train skilled personnel, raise money, sustain an organizational effort over a period of time...

*Some scenarios might allow some steps to be bypassed*

57

## Two key potential bomb materials

58

- ❑ Highly enriched uranium (HEU)
  - Must separate nearly identical U-235 and U-238 isotopes
  - Nearly all techniques based on their small difference in mass
  - Gaseous diffusion
  - Centrifuges
  - Other: calutrons, laser...
- ❑ Plutonium
  - Cause U-238 to absorb neutrons (typically in a reactor)
  - Chemically separate resulting plutonium from the rest (reprocessing)
- ❑ A few other isotopes could support explosive nuclear chain reactions, have never been used

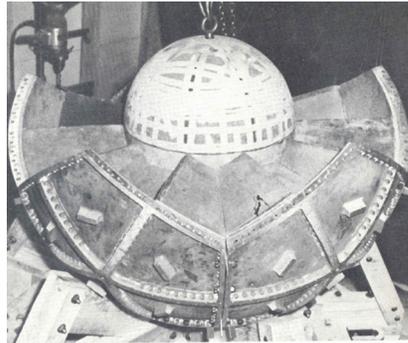
*None of these materials occur in nature; all are extraordinarily difficult to produce*

58

## Implosion-type bombs

59

- ❑ Much more efficient than gun-type bombs
- ❑ Only type that offers substantial yield with plutonium
- ❑ Significantly more complex to design and build
  - More difficult for terrorists, still conceivable (esp. if they got knowledgeable help)
- ❑ Main approaches require explosive lenses, millisecond timing of multiple detonations
- ❑ Some approaches less complex than Nagasaki bomb



Source: Rhodes, *The Making of the Atomic Bomb* (orig. Los Alamos)

59

## Some (sometimes misleading) terms

60

- ❑ *Highly enriched uranium (HEU)*
  - Uranium with at least 20% U-235
  - As opposed to *natural uranium* (0.7% U-235), *low-enriched uranium* (LEU, typically 4-5% U-235), or *depleted uranium* (<0.7% U-235)
- ❑ *Weapons-grade uranium*
  - Uranium with ~90% U-235
  - But bombs can be made with material far below weapons-grade
- ❑ *Weapons-grade plutonium*
  - Plutonium with ~ 90% Pu-239
  - As opposed to *reactor-grade* plutonium (much less Pu-239) – contained in spent fuel from typical nuclear power reactors
  - Weapons-makers prefer weapons-grade plutonium, but reliable, effective weapons can also be made with reactor-grade plutonium (once reprocessed from spent fuel)

60

## Reactor-grade plutonium is weapons-usable

61

- ❑ Higher neutron emission rate:
  - For Nagasaki-type design, even if neutron starts reaction at worst possible moment, “fizzle yield” is  $\sim 1$ kt – roughly 1/3 destruct radius of Hiroshima bomb – more neutrons won’t reduce this
  - Some advanced designs are “pre-initiation proof”
- ❑ Higher heat emission:
  - Various ways to deal with – for example, plutonium component can be inserted into weapon just before use (as in early U.S. designs)
- ❑ Higher radiation:
  - Can be addressed with greater shielding for fabrication facility
  - Last-minute insertion of plutonium component again

*Reactor-grade plutonium is not the preferred material for weapons, but any state or group that can make a bomb from weapon-grade plutonium can make one from reactor-grade*

61

## The amounts of material required are small

62

- ❑ For simple “gun-type” bomb (with reflector):  $\sim 50$ - $60$  kg of HEU (Hiroshima bomb was 60 kg of 80% enriched material)
  - Fits in two 2-liter bottles
- ❑ For 1<sup>st</sup>-generation implosion bomb:
  - $\sim 6$  kg plutonium (Nagasaki)
  - $\sim 3$ x that amount of HEU



*The size of the plutonium core for the Nagasaki bomb*

Source: Robert del Tredici

62

## What's true? Reasons for skepticism about the nuclear terrorism threat

63

- ❑ States have had great difficulty getting nuclear weapons, surely it would be harder for terrorists
  - Hardest part for states is making the nuclear material – 90% of Manhattan Project
  - Making safe, reliable weapons that can be delivered by missile or aircraft is far harder than making crude terrorist bomb
- ❑ Terrorist attacks are mostly not very sophisticated
  - But there is a spectrum – some terrorist groups have used sophisticated explosive designs
  - Significant numbers of well-trained engineers and scientists have worked with terrorist groups
- ❑ Greatly weakened al Qaeda or Islamic State would have difficulty organizing a nuclear bomb effort
  - Killing, capture, disruption of much of top leadership does reduce the risk – but modest cell far from the drone strikes could still be pursuing a nuclear effort

63

## What's true? Reasons for skepticism about the nuclear terrorism threat (II)

64

- ❑ U.S. intelligence has exaggerated terrorist threats – including in the lead-up to war in Iraq
  - Absolutely correct – skepticism justified. *But* notable that *both* George W. Bush and Barack Obama identify nuclear terrorism as greatest threat to U.S. national security
  - Wide range of other countries (both nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear-weapon states) have reached similar conclusions
- ❑ Terrorists could not plausibly get nuclear material
  - Ongoing seizures suggest danger still exists
  - For most seizures, material was never noticed to be missing --how many other thefts have *not* been detected?
- ❑ Terrorists not likely to get state support
  - Probably true – states unlikely to hand such power over to terrorist groups they cannot control
  - But state support helpful, not essential, to terrorist nuclear effort

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## Nuclear terrorism: the good news

65

- ❑ No convincing evidence any terrorist group has yet obtained a nuclear weapon or the materials and expertise needed to make one
  - Despite many claims
- ❑ No evidence any state has helped terrorists with nuclear weapons
- ❑ Making a nuclear bomb is clearly not “easy”
  - Al Qaeda and Aum Shinrikyo, both sophisticated, well-funded groups, appear to have faced major hurdles
- ❑ Overall, threat is probably lower than 10 years ago
  - Many nuclear sites have much better security, or all nuclear material removed
  - Al Qaeda substantially disrupted
  - *But what may be happening without being detected?*

65

## Did you know? Real incidents related to nuclear terrorism

66

- ❑ Events that have genuinely occurred:
  - A large-scale terrorist attack on a U.S. nuclear weapons base
  - A terrorist attack on a nuclear facility (not yet operational) in which the armed guard force was overwhelmed, terrorists were in control of facility
  - More than a dozen real acts of sabotage at nuclear facilities
    - ◆ None apparently intended to cause large radioactive release
    - ◆ One involved an insider bringing explosives into a nuclear reactor, placing them on the steel pressure vessel head, and detonating them (before the facility became operational)
    - ◆ One involved firing a rocket-propelled grenade at a nuclear facility
  - A Russian businessman offering \$750,000 for stolen weapon-grade plutonium, for sale to a foreign client

66

## Terrorists might be able to get material: The 2011 Moldovan HEU case

67

- ❑ 27 June, 2011: Moldovan officials arrest 6 people for nuclear smuggling
  - 4.4 grams weapon-grade HEU seized
  - Smugglers claim to have access to 9 kilograms of HEU, willing to sell for \$31 million
  - Smugglers also claim to have access to plutonium
  - Smuggling through breakaway region of Transnistria
  - Russian leader of group and alleged African buyer are still at large (appears to be first case in some time with serious buyer involved)
  - Moldovan officials report that “members of the ring, who have not yet been detained, have one kilogram of uranium” (not clear if this is true)
  - Little is publicly known about specific characteristics or origins of the material, capabilities of the smugglers, identity of the buyer...

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## Terrorists might be able to get material: Widely varying nuclear security

68

- ❑ No binding global standards for how secure nuclear weapons or nuclear materials should be
- ❑ Pakistan:
  - Small, heavily guarded stockpile
  - But immense threats – potentially huge outsider attacks, corrupt insiders, some with jihadist sympathies
- ❑ Russia:
  - *Dramatically* improved security compared to 15 years ago
  - Cooperative upgrades were nearly completed before suspension
  - *But*, world’s largest stockpiles in world’s largest number of buildings and bunkers; underinvestment in sustainability; security culture still needs work; regulations weak; widespread insider corruption
- ❑ HEU-fueled research reactors
  - ~120 in >20 countries, some only night watchman, chain-link fence

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## July 2012: Protester intrusion at Y-12

69

- ❑ 3 protesters – including an 82-year-old nun – penetrated to the wall of the building where 100s of tons of HEU is stored
- ❑ Failings:
  - New intrusion detection system had been setting off huge numbers of false alarms
  - Cameras that could have assessed alarms had been broken for months
  - Guards assumed alarms were false; guards inside building assumed protesters' pounding was construction they had not been told about
- ❑ Root causes and lessons learned:
  - Profound breakdown in security culture
  - Difficult problem to keep guards motivated when attacks never happen
  - Gen. Habiger: “good security is 20% equipment and 80% culture”
  - Every organization handling nuclear weapons and weapons-usable materials needs intensive program to assess, improve security culture, regular tests, assessments of real security performance

69

## Some anecdotes of insecurity

70

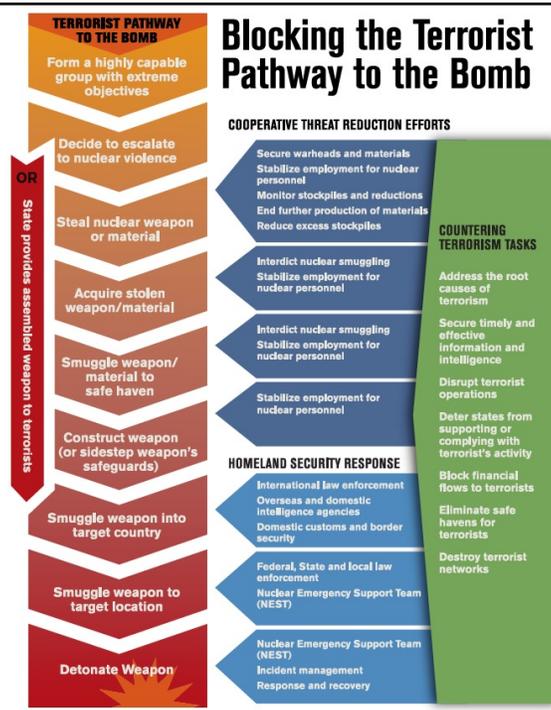
- ❑ Russia: Gen-Major Victor Gaidukov, commander of a nuclear weapon storage site, fired over accusations of accepting >\$300,000 in bribes (2010)
- ❑ Pakistan: Brig.-Gen. Ali Khan arrested for ties to Islamic extremists (2011)
- ❑ Belgium: Peace activists break into nuclear weapon storage base, spend >1 hour there before being detected and stopped (2010)
- ❑ United States: Bomber flies across the country with 6 nuclear weapons on board, no one knows – checks failed (2007)

70

## Blocking the terrorist pathway to the bomb

Source: Bunn, Securing the Bomb 2010: Securing All Nuclear Materials in Four Years (2010)

71



71

## New steps to reduce nuclear weapons and materials sites

72

- ❑ **HEU:**
  - Still some 120 research and training reactors using HEU fuel or targets – Russia has world's largest share, far more than needed
  - Should agree on target of a *complete phase-out* of civil use of HEU
  - Tons of civilian HEU not currently being addressed – should all be put on a path to elimination
  - Should create new incentives to shift toward international sharing of small number of high-capability, LEU-fueled reactors (or accelerators), shut down remainder. IAEA estimate: ~80% of current reactors not needed
- ❑ **Plutonium:**
  - Should agree to end build-up of stocks, limit number of sites
- ❑ **Military stocks**
  - Need new initiatives to consolidate and reduce these as well
  - U.S. saving hundreds of millions a year on safety and security costs from consolidation in the U.S. complex

72

## What would nuclear security success look like?

73

- ❑ Number of sites with nuclear weapons, HEU, or separated plutonium greatly reduced
- ❑ All countries with HEU, Pu, or major nuclear facilities put in place *at least* a “baseline” level of nuclear security
  - Protection against a well-placed insider, a modest group of well-trained and well-armed outsiders (able to operate as more than one team), or both outsiders and an insider together
  - Countries facing higher adversary threats put higher levels of security in place
- ❑ Strong security cultures in place, focused on continual improvement, search for sustainable excellence
- ❑ Measures in place to confirm strong security performance
  - Effective regulation, inspection, enforcement
  - Regular, realistic performance tests – including “red teams”
  - Independent, international review – becoming the norm

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## Essential elements of an “appropriate effective” physical protection system

74

- ❑ A *design basis threat* reflecting today’s threats
- ❑ Effective *regulation* requiring all facilities with potential bomb material or posing a catastrophic sabotage risk to have security capable of defeating the DBT
  - Backed up by inspections, and enforcement
  - Ideally including *realistic tests* of the system’s ability to defeat outsider and insider threats
  - Effective *control and accounting* of nuclear material
- ❑ A strong *security culture*, to ensure that all relevant staff understand the threat and the importance of security
- ❑ *Police and intelligence* efforts focused on ensuring that nuclear conspiracies will be detected
- ❑ *Regular review and adaptation* to ensure the system adapts to changing threats and opportunities

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## The international nuclear security framework is insufficient

75

- ❑ Binding agreements
  - 1980 Physical Protection Convention and 2005 Amendment
    - Parties must have a rule on nuclear security – but what should it say?
  - 2005 Nuclear Terrorism Convention
    - All parties to take “appropriate” nuclear security measures -- unspecified
  - UNSC Resolution 1540
    - All states must provide “appropriate effective” nuclear security -- unspecified
- ❑ International recommendations
  - IAEA “Nuclear Security Series,” especially INFCIRC/225
    - More specific, but still quite general – should have a fence with intrusion detectors, but how hard should they be to defeat?
    - Compliance voluntary (though most countries do)
- ❑ Technical cooperation and funding
  - Nunn-Lugar, comparable programs
  - Global Partnership
  - Secrecy, bureaucracy often make cooperation difficult
  - U.S.-Russian cooperation – world’s largest programs – suspended

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## The international nuclear security framework is insufficient (II)

76

- ❑ Cooperative frameworks
  - Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism
    - 82 nations participating
    - Helps to convince countries of reality of threat
    - Sharing of experience, best practices, capacity-building
    - Modest focus on upgrading nuclear security
  - Proliferation Security Initiative
    - Unlikely to stop smuggling of suitcase-sized items
  - Nuclear Security Summit process
    - Brought together leaders from ~50 countries
    - Accelerated improvements – but now far in rear-view mirror
- ❑ The IAEA role
  - Developing recommendations, peer reviews, assistance, data
    - All voluntary, largely limited to non-nuclear-weapon states

*Many tiles in the mosaic – but is it yet a beautiful picture?  
No common baseline of nuclear security for all Pu and HEU*

76

## Nuclear security is the foundation for the three pillars of the NPT

77

- ❑ Disarmament:
  - Nuclear weapon states will not disarm if insecure nuclear material could allow other states or terrorist to rapidly get nuclear weapons
- ❑ Peaceful uses:
  - Nuclear energy will not gain needed support unless people are confident that it is safe and secure
- ❑ Nonproliferation:
  - Efforts to stop the spread of nuclear weapons will not work if Insecure nuclear material offers states or terrorist groups a rapid path to the bomb

*In all these areas, nuclear security is important to the security of all countries around the world*

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## Belief in the threat – the key to success

78

- ❑ Effective and lasting nuclear security worldwide will not be achieved unless key policymakers and nuclear managers around the world come to believe nuclear terrorism is a real threat to *their* countries' security, worthy of investing their time and resources to address it
- ❑ Steps to convince states this is a real and urgent threat:
  - Intelligence-agency discussions – most states rely on their intelligence agencies to assess key security threats
  - Joint threat briefings – by their experts and our experts, together
  - Nuclear terrorism exercises and simulations
  - “Red team” tests of nuclear security effectiveness
  - Fast-paced nuclear security reviews – by teams trusted by the leadership of each country
  - Shared databases of real incidents related to nuclear security, capabilities and tactics thieves and terrorists have used, lessons learned

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## The threat of nuclear sabotage

79

- ❑ Most nuclear power plants protected by security forces, containment vessels, and redundant safety systems
- ❑ *But*, levels of security vary widely:
  - Some reactors have no (or few) on-site armed guards
  - Few civilian facilities are designed to cope with 9/11 threat -- multiple, coordinated teams, suicidal, well-trained, from a group with substantial combat and explosives experience
  - Some reactors do not have Western-style containments, few redundant safety systems
- ❑ *If* attackers could successfully destroy multiple safety systems, reactor could melt down, breach containment, spread radioactive material – as at Fukushima
- ❑ Similarly, *if* attackers could successfully drain the water from a densely packed spent fuel pool, real risk that fuel could get hot enough to catch fire -- potential Chernobyl-scale disaster

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## The threat of “dirty bombs”

80

- ❑ Dirty bomb could be very simple -- dynamite and radioactive material together in a box
  - Other simple means to disperse radioactive material more effective
- ❑ Dangerous radioactive sources in use for valuable civilian purposes in hospitals, industry, agriculture
  - Even large sources often have minimal security
- ❑ “Weapons of mass disruption” – not mass destruction
  - Would cause zero to a few near-term radiation deaths, potentially a few hundred long-term cancer deaths (undetectable against natural cancer background)
  - *But*, fear of anything “radioactive” could create panic
  - Expensive, disruptive – potentially many blocks would have to be evacuated, cleaned up (possibly 10s of billions in costs)

80

## Dealing with the “dirty bomb” threat

81

- ❑ Better control, accounting, security for radioactive sources:
  - All high-priority sources worldwide should be accounted for, regulated, and have basic security measures (strong locks, alarms, etc.) throughout their life-cycle – IAEA “Code of Conduct”
  - Improved transport security especially needed
  - Retrieve, safely dispose of disused sources
  - Scores of countries worldwide have inadequate controls
- ❑ Radiation detection at ports, borders
- ❑ Improved capacity to detect, assess, respond to attack
  - Need training, regular exercises, for first responders
  - Develop improved urban decontamination technologies
- ❑ Most important: communication strategy to limit panic, tell public how to respond – complicated by past gov’t lies

81

## The challenge

82

Lugar Doctrine: war on terrorism will not be won until every nuclear bomb and cache of bomb material everywhere in the world is secure and accounted for to stringent and demonstrable standards

*On the day after a nuclear terrorist attack,  
what would we wish we had done to prevent it?*

***Why aren't we doing it now?***

82

## Protecting against the insider threat

83

- ❑ Insider threats are the most important and challenging
  - All nuclear material thefts where the circumstances are known perpetrated by insiders or with the help of insiders
- ❑ Insider controls must combine several elements
  - Control the insiders (personnel reliability programs, access control, searches/detectors on entry and exit...)
  - Control the material (tags, seals, cameras, alarms, accurate near-real-time accounting)
  - Control the interactions between the two (two-person rule, monitoring whenever people are near the material)
  - Material accounting is fundamental – especially for stopping slow theft of bits at a time – but uncertainties make it difficult
  - Kinds of accounting and control needed for security are *not* identical to those required for IAEA safeguards
- ❑ Comprehensive, multilayered approaches needed

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## Personnel screening and reliability

84

- ❑ Access control has limited value unless effective screening of personnel is in place
- ❑ Typical approach: background check before hiring (criminal record, terrorist links, financial status, comments from neighbors, co-workers, others)
- ❑ Some organizations also use: polygraph (generally ineffective), psychological interviews (probably ditto)
- ❑ Continuing checks after hiring also important:
  - Drug and alcohol testing
  - Monitoring of on-the-job performance, reporting of unusual activities
  - Regular monitoring of, e.g., financial status
  - Re-investigation every few years (e.g., every 5 years for U.S. "Q" [nuclear weapons information] clearance)
  - Issue: rapid radicalization

84

## Demonstrated outsider threats

85

- ❑ Large overt attack
  - e.g., Moscow theater, October 2002: ~ 40 heavily armed, well-trained, suicidal terrorists, striking without warning
- ❑ Multiple coordinated teams
  - e.g., 9/11/01 -- 4 teams, 4-5 participants each, well-trained, suicidal, from group with access to heavy weapons and explosives, >1 year intelligence collection and planning, striking without warning
- ❑ Significant covert attack
  - e.g., multiple cases of tunneling into bank vaults without detection
- ❑ Use of unusual vehicles
  - e.g., helicopters used in many recent jail escapes
  - e.g., speedboat planned for use in \$200M Millennium Dome theft

85

## Demonstrated insider threats

86

- ❑ Multiple insiders working together
- ❑ Often including guards
  - Most documented thefts of valuable items from guarded facilities involve insiders – guards among the most common insiders
  - Goloskokov: guards "the most dangerous internal adversaries"
- ❑ Motivations:
  - Desperation
  - Greed/bribery
  - Ideological persuasion
  - Blackmail

*A trustworthy employee may not be trustworthy anymore if his family's lives are at risk*

86

## Some tactics of concern

87

### ❑ Deception

- Example: Thieves dressed as police arrive at Gardner Museum, walk off with priceless Rembrandts
- Example: Insider pulls alarm, "emergency, everybody out!" and carries material through emergency exit

### ❑ Rapid barrier breaching or avoiding

- Example: throw a carpet over the razor wire in seconds
- Example: hand-carried explosives can blow through fences, vault doors, even (some) thick walls in seconds
- Example: tunneling into facility, or flying over barriers in helicopter, hang-glider, etc.

### ❑ Conspiracy: multiple insiders, insiders+outsiders

- Hardest threats to defeat – insiders may include guards (41% of thefts from guarded facilities in one study), security experts

87