

70.01

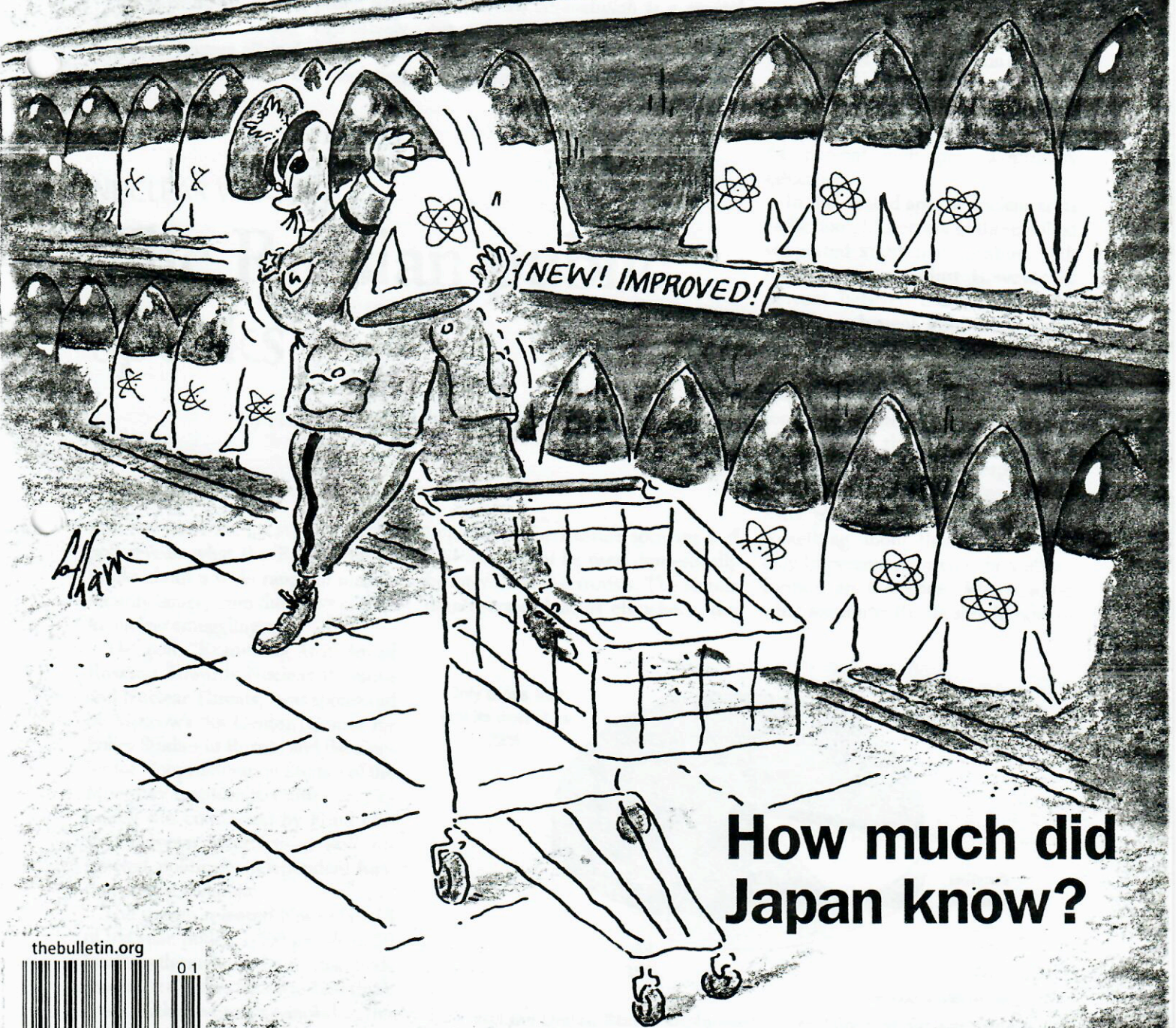
Global security • news & analysis

January/February 2000 \$6.00

the Bulletin

of the Atomic Scientists

Still mad about nukes



How much did Japan know?

thebulletin.org



01

74470 73932 6

And it could be a big fight. In recent months, Pakistan has taken delivery of French Mirage fighters and Augusta submarines, and tanks from Ukraine. Meanwhile, India continues a massive conventional arms buildup.

Even if India engages Musharraf in dialogue, there would be no guarantee that he would rein in the Islamic militants. But it would be a starting point. Prime Minister Vajpayee must be apprehensive about talking peace with Pakistan again, having figuratively burnt his fingers after shaking hands with Nawaz Sharif. But isolating

Musharraf is not likely to decrease his animosity toward New Delhi.

Regardless of who is at the helm, general or prime minister, Pakistan has a place in the international community. A nation with 130 million people and a small nuclear arsenal cannot be isolated just because of a military coup—particularly if that coup has popular support, which seems to be the case. ■

Mohammed Ahmedullah is a special correspondent with the Business Standard in New Delhi. He was a Bulletin visiting fellow last year.

public does not always agree with official government and military positions.

Big picture items

Russians generally valued the concept of nonproliferation, with 76 percent believing that the world would be less stable if more countries had nuclear weapons. Education level was a major influence on how respondents answered that question. For instance, 81 percent of those with a higher education said that the proliferation of nuclear weapons would decrease global stability, compared with 74 percent of those with a secondary education and 64 percent with only a primary education.

In the related area of nuclear arms reductions, 55 percent of those polled supported START II ratification, with only 25 percent against. However, 72 percent believed the United States would implement only those treaty provisions of benefit to itself.

The answers to questions about U.S. plans to develop a national missile defense system (NMD) resulted in some of the most thought-provoking responses: 54 percent of respondents had no previous knowledge of U.S. NMD plans, 25 percent had heard something about them before, and only 16 percent claimed to be well-informed on the issue. When asked what measures Russia should take in

NUCLEAR WEAPONS

The Russian public speaks

By Vladimir Orlov & Ivan A. Safranchuk

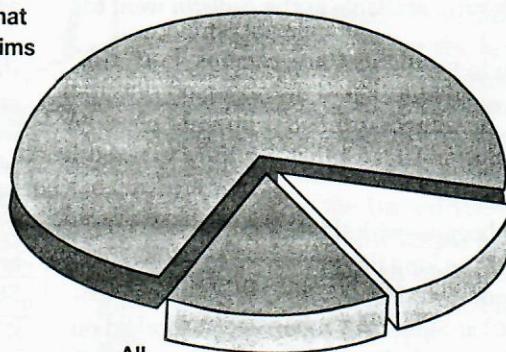
FOR THE FIRST TIME, A PUBLIC OPINION poll reveals what the Russian public thinks about a wide range of nuclear security issues, from the START process to nuclear smuggling.

The poll, "Examining Attitudes of Russians Towards Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Threats," was sponsored by Moscow's PIR Center (Center for Policy Studies in Russia) and the Center for Nonproliferation Studies of the Monterey Institute in California. Research was conducted by Fond Obshchestvennoye Mneniye—a well respected, politically independent Russian polling company.

The survey, released November 16 of last year, polled 1,500 people in 56 localities throughout the Russian Federation. It clarifies how Russians think about nuclear weapons—including the role they play in world politics, their

importance for Russia's security, and how they might be used domestically by international terrorists. The results demonstrate that, as elsewhere, the

Only those that
suit its own aims
72%



Difficult
to answer
13%

All
15%

CENTER FOR POLICY STUDIES IN RUSSIA

Will the United States implement all provisions of nuclear arms reduction agreements, or only those that suit its own aims?

response to a U.S. NMD system, 54 percent supported the development of a Russian NMD system, 32 percent preferred diplomacy, and only 8 percent supported a buildup of Russian strategic nuclear forces (the course of action declared most probable by Russia's military and political elites).

Domestically speaking

Terrorism continues to be a big concern for Russians, and 86 percent of those polled expressed fears that international terrorists might use nuclear weapons against Russia. Only 10 percent thought that such an attack was improbable, and only 4 percent found it difficult to answer this question, indicating that the overwhelming majority of the population is concerned about nuclear terrorism. In contrast,

52 percent expressed concern about nuclear attack by foreign states.

Respondents were even more worried about sabotage of Russian nuclear facilities, including power plants and nuclear munitions storage sites. Ninety percent expressed such a fear. Granted, the poll was conducted after devastating explosions in Moscow and other Russian cities killed more than 1,500 people, but the fact that nine out of every 10 of those asked said that nuclear sabotage is possible demonstrates how great their fear is—and how little they trust official statements claiming that “all strategic facilities are under control.”

The vast majority, 83 percent, also thought it possible that fissile materials could be smuggled out of the country. Ordinary Russians, the poll revealed, simply do not buy assurances by senior

officials, including the Minatom leadership, that there is no way for nuclear thieves to steal weapons-grade fissile materials from the country's nuclear facilities.

It's not just *materials* leaving their country that concerned the average Russian. Even when it might help their economy in a crisis, 78 percent of those polled were against transferring Russia's nuclear weapons and technologies to other states if it contradicted Russia's international obligations or domestic law. Our analysis of answers concerning international stability, nuclear weapons proliferation, and the transfer of Russian nuclear technologies indicates that even those respondents who believed in world stability based on the proliferation of nuclear weapons were against selling Russian nuclear weapons and technologies abroad.

Hua Di convicted

A report in the last issue of the *Bulletin* recounted the “Kafkaesque” case of Hua Di, a high-level Chinese missile scientist who eventually came to the United States to work, only to be imprisoned two years ago when he returned to China for a visit.

Hua was accused of “leaking state secrets.” For nearly two years, Hua's family was not able to learn the specifics of the charge or when a trial would be held.

But in late November, family members revealed that Hua had finally come to trial—in secret—and that he had been convicted and sentenced to 15 years in prison. No other details were available as the *Bulletin* went to press.

Hua was born in Shanghai in 1936, the son of revolutionaries. As a young man, he was sent to Moscow for scientific and technical training. His career skyrocketed. By the late 1970s, he was in the top ranks of Chinese missile scientists.

In 1980, Hua began—with the blessings of the Chinese government—a long though intermittent association with the Center for International Security and Cooperation (CISAC) at Stanford University. He worked on a variety of projects including a history of China's strategic missile programs.

In the late 1980s, Hua was marginally involved in

China's democracy movement. He left China in 1989 after learning that an order for his arrest had been issued during the crackdown on pro-democracy dissidents in and around Beijing's Tiananmen Square. He joined CISAC full time that year and eventually applied for U.S. citizenship. He would have completed that process in July 1998.

According to his colleagues, Hua was reluctant to return to China, even for a visit, because he might be charged in connection with the pro-democracy demonstrations or for leaking state secrets, another charge against him.

But on December 31, 1997, Hua left Stanford for a short visit to China, after being assured by Chinese government officials whom he met in Hong Kong that he would be “welcomed back”—that he would not be arrested on either charge. In fact, he was arrested in Beijing shortly after arriving.

In an effort to help Hua, CISAC sent the Chinese government documentation that Hua's work in the United States had always met with the approval of the Chinese government, and that the factual material he presented in CISAC studies was available in libraries in the United States and Hong Kong.

—Mike Moore

Strength still appeals

A significant number of Russians continued to find comfort in their country's nuclear weapons, with 76 percent of respondents supporting the wording in the Russian National Security Concept that says, "Nuclear weapons play a decisive role in providing national security." Many respondents, 40 percent, believed that Russia would have a say in world politics if it kept its nuclear weapons; 37 percent supposed that other states wouldn't dare attack a nuclear-armed Russia; and 23 percent presumed that nuclear weapons were necessary because the development of nuclear technologies promotes technical progress.

Twenty-four percent acknowledged that it is costly for Russia to maintain its nuclear arsenal, but 32 percent believed that Russia should have as many nukes as the United States. And 26 percent supported the idea of possessing even more nuclear weapons than their Cold War adversary.

Almost half of respondents, 47 percent, also thought that Russia should keep the right to first strike, which corresponds with the official government position. However, a large minority, 38 percent, held the opposite view, and another large group, 18 percent, found the question difficult to answer.

The vast majority did not want to see

their nuclear weapons deactivated: 82 percent thought that Russia's nuclear arsenal should be on active duty and ready for use, while only 12 percent believed that nuclear weapons should be kept in storage. At the same time, most of the respondents backed the concept of detargeting. Some 51 percent were sure that Russian nuclear weapons should not be targeted at any state.

Significantly, nearly one-fifth of respondents, 18 percent, believed that Russia didn't need nuclear weapons at all, and Russians generally seemed to back the idea of complete nuclear disarmament. For instance, 57 percent of respondents thought that the world would be more stable if all nuclear weapons were eliminated. Respondents 60 years of age or older were surprisingly the biggest supporters of complete nuclear disarmament—67 percent believed that eliminating all nuclear weapons would contribute to international stability.

Politically speaking

People's political preferences generally had very little impact on their answers. However, 85 percent of the supporters of Grigory Yavlinsky (leader of the Yabloko party, a 1996 candidate for the presidency, and a 2000 presidential

hopeful) were more inclined than others to believe that Russia needed nuclear weapons.

On the other hand, those who voted for Yury Luzhkov (Moscow's influential mayor and the leader of the Fatherland-All Russia political coalition) had the most *pacifist* intentions. Only 73 percent thought that Russia needed nuclear weapons.

Followers of Yevgeny Primakov (another leader of the Fatherland-All Russia coalition and currently the most likely competitor to Prime Minister Vladimir Putin in the next presidential elections) demonstrated their distrust of the United States in implementing nuclear arms reduction treaties. Most of them, 79 percent, said the United States would not act fairly in fulfilling international agreements.

The followers of Sergei Kiriyenko, former prime minister and a member of the right-wing Pavoye Delo bloc, were strongly against nuclear arms proliferation—87 percent were sure that the world would not be more stable if more countries possessed nuclear weapons.

The majority, 54 percent, of the adherents of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy (the leader of the Liberal-Democratic Party) believed that Russian nuclear arms should be permanently targeted at certain states. However, among the supporters of all the other politicians, only a minority shared this view.

It turns out that the supporters of Gennady Zyuganov (the leader of the Russian Federation's Communist Party) gave the least backing to the idea of U.S.-Russian nuclear parity. About 23 percent of his supporters maintained that Russia should have the same number of nuclear weapons as the United States; 31 percent were sure that Russia needed more. Moreover, Zyuganov's supporters accounted for the largest number of START II opponents. ■

Vladimir Orlov is the director of the PIR Center in Moscow. Ivan A. Safran-chuk is a research associate at the center.

