**Nuclear Warhead Inventories**

**Some people like to count nuclear warheads, both ours and their’s. Their’s refers to the nuclear warheads either, or both, the nuclear warhead inventories of both China and Russia.**

**In our own history, a few decades ago we had around 20,000 warheads. After Start talks with the Russians, both countries reduced their warheads count significantly. Both these two sides still have around 5,000 warheads. A few decades ago, commenting on our large inventory of nuclear warheads, Henry Kissinger stated that we have never answered the question of “sufficiency.” Those who play war games, rely of superior numbers to achieve nuclear superiority, and don’t seem to appreciate that it would take just a few dozen nuclear warheads to cause severe damage, and radiate any enemy in the world.**

**The Chinese were, until very recently, satisfied that roughly 300 nuclear warheads (according to the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists) were sufficient to deter their enemies.**

**In the days of Mao Zedong, then Chinese Premier Chou Enlai decided that 300 nukes would be sufficient deter a nuclear attack on China, because he rationalized that if only 10% of their warheads struck any enemy, 30 nuclear strikes would render enormous damage to any enemy nation.**

**At that time and even today, no nation has a post nuclear attack survival game plan. Today, the survivors of any nation struck with a few dozen nuclear warheads would just have to figure out how to survive and live with radioactivity that will be alive and radiating for decades.**

**Each survivor will need to seek safe shelter, clean air, clean water, and clean food. Growing food will be a challenge as clean earth and clean water are needed to grow clean food. The mental challenges to survive in a post nuclear war scenario cannot be exaggerated.**

**Regarding reports that open source satellite images reveal that China is building ICBM launch sites. We should realize that she has had a fixed number of launch sites for more than half a century. Why now, is she apparently increasing her long range missile launch sites?**

**Could it be that our American civilian and military leaders have declared that China poses an existential threat to America, and this behavior conveys to China that we must plan to destroy her, before she destroys us.**

**Assume that they take our threats seriously, thus just in the recent years she has been adding launch sites in the Gobi Desert and in Xinjiang, far away from her centers of population. I believe that some, most, or all of these sites are dummy sites. I don’t believe China will spend unnecessary billion$ to increase their nuclear delivery systems. If they add hundreds launch sites, it will cause us to attack all those launch sites, which would meet their objective to force us to divert our targeting away from populated locations.**

**Statements that they will have more ICBM launch sites may cause our national leaders to spend more money to add more nukes. Our military industrial complex will get a lot more funding, if we don’t understand the Chinese strategy.**

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**SOURCES:**

**China Now Has More ICBM Launchers than the US**

**Feb. 7, 2023 | By Greg Hadley, *Air Force Magazine***

China officially surpassed the U.S. in total land-based nuclear missile launchers, U.S. Strategic Command told Congress last month, but the American nuclear triad still comprises greater stockpiles of missiles and warheads.

The Jan. 26 letter from STRATCOM Commander Gen. Anthony J. Cotton came in response to a statute in the 2022 National Defense Authorization Act requiring the Pentagon to notify the Senate and House Armed Services Committees if it determined that China has more land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles, ICBM warheads, or ICBM launchers than the U.S.

**As of October 2022, Cotton wrote, China had more launchers. He did not specify exactly how many launchers China has.**

The change shows China’s rapid expansion in nuclear capabilities. **In 2021, satellite images showed China was building 250 to 300 new ICBM silos in three different missile fields, although whether some or any of the silos are actually armed is unclear.** The People’s Liberation Army Rocket Force (PLARF) also has dozens of mobile missile launchers, or transporter erector launcher (TEL) vehicles.

The U.S. has 400 Minutemen III ICBMs in silos spread across three missile fields and no land-based mobile missile launchers. Its ICBMs are capped under treaty with Russia. The U.S. also has nuclear-armed ballistic missile submarines and nuclear-capable bombers.

Cotton said China is developing a “bona fide” nuclear triad during his confirmation hearing. The PLA is developing a nuclear air-launched ballistic missile, a potential new class or subtype of submarine, and a secretive H-20 long-range bomber.

Still, the most recent China Military Power Report from the Pentagon estimates that the Chinese have just six ballistic missile submarines, compared to 14 for the U.S. Navy, and that China only recently began fielding its H-6N nuclear-capable bomber. By contrast, the the U.S. Air Force has more than 90 nuclear-capable B-2 and B-52 bombers.

STRATCOM’s letter to lawmakers focused solely on land-based launchers.

China is building up nuclear weapons and infrastructure at what former Air Force Global Strike Command boss Gen. Timothy M. Ray described called a “breathtaking” pace, **leading the Pentagon to estimate China’s future arsenal will reach 1,500 warheads by 2035**. That has Cotton and others contemplating a future with two “near-peer” nuclear adversaries in China and Russia.

While more than triple China’s current stockpile of around 400 warheads, the projected total is still far less than the 3,700 nuclear warheads in the U.S. arsenal.

“We can be confident that we still retain vast stocks far in excess of what the [Chinese Communist Party’s] ambitions suggest they will be to achieve in the near term,” said Dr. Melanie W. Sisson, a foreign policy fellow at the Strobe Talbott Center for Security, Strategy, and Technology, in testimony before the House Armed Services Committee Feb. 7.

Dr. Brendan S. Mulvaney, director of the China Aerospace Studies Institute (CASI) at Air University, said that China must also deal with issues of command and control between its armed services. In a prior interview with Air & Space Forces Magazine he agreed that China will not match U.S. stockpiles in the near term.

Still, **the fact that China now has more land-based missile launchers was met with concern in the Capitol. Rep. Mike Rogers (R-Ala.), chairman of the House Armed Services Committee**, noted it in his opening statement Feb. 7 and issued a statement alongside Rep. Doug Lamborn (R-Colo.), chair of the HASC strategic forces subcommittee; Sen. Roger Wicker (R-Miss.), ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee; and Sen. Deb Fischer (R-Neb.), ranking member of the SASC strategic forces subcommittee.

“This should serve as a wake-up call for the United States,” the four lawmakers said. “It is not an understatement to say that the Chinese nuclear modernization program is advancing faster than most believed possible. **We have no time to waste in adjusting our nuclear force posture to deter both Russia and China. This will have to mean higher numbers and new capabilities.”**

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