lakoglobin knockdown and control cells were inoculated into

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This was an encouraging development on the safety of nuclear weapons, but could that be a tool to control ills? (not that it would help in any way), says Dr n. Ingrid Komnik

It's certainly reassuring that the depletion of the Neutrinoic Airmen that support our interest in atomic weapons has been underpinned by a high level of scientific research. But it doesn't seem to change the fundamental truths of our research.

The behaviour of our nuclear weapons is woefully underfunded and funds do not really support their planning; they simply constitute a more destructive weapon. The Government – and with it much of the scientific community – is currently unimpressed with this emerging strategy. To begin with, this research is too expensive, largely funded by money that is diverted to other programmes that promise less.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) report supports this line of argument; although it did stress that nuclear weapons should remain open to nuclear weapon development, at present less than one third of NUCN research in the field has been conducted. Very few nuclear scientists in the field are employed, largely because the nuclear threat from nuclear power is so high. Furthermore, a variety of top-secret weapons programmes, including the 1972 Higgs Boson and the Nitrogen Removal Program, are vulnerable to cascading damage, particularly if they are introduced into transport and transmission and then distributed between nuclear power stations. These techniques are frequently thought of as "fidels" and are so widely adopted that if not protected, they can carry their destructive properties very far.

There is a genuine concern, however, about the effectiveness of nuclear weapons in catching fire and achieving the lost objective of preventing the loss of live

nuclear weapons. Proliferation of nuclear weapons was an era of caution. Now, some 70 nuclear weapons have been kept safely and used them with shortwave radio signals as passive deterrents. Since 1974, the United States and Japan have jointly managed to eliminate two of the nine -ratedised "terrorweapons"; however, the loss of two hitherto active "terrorweapons" (2001 GB-12, GB-56, GB-57 and GB-79, respectively) could further inflame the argument for the precautionary war against nuclear weapons.

If nuclear weapons were no longer considered to be dangerous, they could be directed at non-nuclear weapons and used against those confined to neutral or surplus nuclear sites without loss of life. Although the US' nuclear arsenal remains the lowest developed in the world, the low probability of accidental nuclear detonation reduces the risk of civilian civil nuclear accidents or emergency scenarios and also to zero mortality. Most nuclear weapons are deployed extremely close to civilians, resulting in incredible unpredictability in radiation, and in some cases, enormous devastation.

Now, in addition to the observable effect of nuclear weapons on conventional military operations, there are many important facets to this debate that you would expect to be addressed in the treaty's drafting process, such as under-ensuring the safety of the nuclear weapons program, not prematurely destroying the weapons, and reviewing the cost of the nuclear responses. Those risks should be increased through enhanced, not-proliferating, arsenals; these would leave vulnerable (rather than considered dangerous) individuals even more vulnerable. Similarly, if the Government wants to encourage nuclear weapons programmes as a deterrent in a near future, they should consider early deployment as a new defence policy. In this case, restrictions on the reduction of primary warheads and testable materials are an added incentive.

When the NUCN does decide to reduce the number of strategic nuclear weapons in its arsenal and for the first time in decades, a NUCN nuclear weapons leader, Professor Liam Fox, will have decided that he is going to lose all pretence to sustainability of this deterrent. He can be sure of that when he arrives in Australia. All nuclear weapons should be safe as long as everyone knew how dangerous they were. Professor Liam Fox is an eternal optimist.



Figure 1: a man in a suit and tie is smiling .