



ADVANCING THE TRILATERAL EUROPE-U.S.-JAPAN SPACE SECURITY PARTNERSHIP

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Twelve Implications to Consider of Attacks on US and Allied Space Assets by Peter Huessy, PSSI Conference, June 5-7, 2016 Prague, Czech Republic

Can we identify what state or non state actor together or singly did the act or acts?

Can we reconstitute the attacked capability? Given that our launch technology and ability in reconstituting space assets now is very limited, it would be very difficult to do so. Although reuseable rockets would of course help and should be high on our to-do list;

Cyber or even space laser or ASAT attacks that take down space networks could cripple segments of USA industrial society to an extent which we in the USA have not experienced except locally from hurricanes or other natural disasters. In short the trauma to our society might be catastrophic as well as to our ability to govern – exactly what bad guys would want to see happen in a crisis;

The breakdown of our deterrent capability would be obvious if such hostile acts were conducted.

To what extent does this show the world our deterrence is thus weak and others may take quick advantage of what they see as a weakness and strike as well in a kind of cascade of attacks;

Does this politically require or motivate our leadership to seek to conduct a very strong USA response thus to hopefully reestablish deterrence and show "we won't be passive", but with the risk it provokes a stronger subsequent attack;

Further implications could be as former secdef Les Aspin said in 1993 about the rise of the rogues and small actors that seriously harm whole networks with small attacks; the small guys can have very big impacts especially as they have no stake in the order of things.

Let's postulate that a "Cyber" attack brings down our grid and such attacks are largely surreptitious i.e. "who did it" becomes unanswerable. That makes for political instability in spades, the public asks "what! you can't protect us?" ;

Worst such threat is EMP as the missile can be launched from the sea and thus "no return address" or state origin is obvious.

An EMP attack can shut down the USA economy and leave millions to perish for very low cost to aggressor and also leaves the aggressor unknown.

Use of surrogates is possible as in the global war by terrorists against USA; this was of course the strategy used by former Soviet Union to attack the West;



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Our Survivability from attacks on our key space assets would be based primarily on resiliency and reconstitution – two very big unknowns at this time;

China, Russia, Iran and DPRK have incentive to show what they can do with mild or demonstration attacks or forays such as the Sony pictures attack by North Korea and China's attack on the suburban NY electric grid. These are in part "don't mess with us" because "this is what we can do to you" messages from adversaries and micro attacks as part of strategy to establish hegemonic power;

What are the implications of a less than all-out attack? How should the USA and its allies respond?

Do International cooperation linkages make for more credible deterrent and more cooperative defense? Should USA and Europe and East Asian allies link up defense posture for protecting space assets? Linkage is a two way street of course and the bad guys know that. Allies may wish to demonstrate "we are not with those guys" and "we are friends with everyone" syndrome;

Space Deterrence works both like and unlike traditional conventional and nuclear deterrence, but requires new and carefully thought out strategy.