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Trends. Supercomputer Sales and Nuclear Proliferation: The Surrealist Top Ten

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United States (US) export policies concerning supercomputers sales which can support nuclear weapons proliferation, e.g., warhead design, detonation simulations, do change from time to time. However, the phenomenon of continued sales and associated nuclear proliferation does not. What follows are the top ten explanations for this, as leaked by an anonymous source. (10) If we don't sell supercomputers to proliferation violators, others will. (9) Front groups, shell companies, and complicated paper requirements provide the convenient fiction that there's no problem and the plausible deniability that there is a problem. (8) Proscribed importers promise to serve as conduit for unrelated covert and clandestine operations. (7) Various US executive departments are engaged in turf battles, political control issues, and special interests which detract from coherent policy development and consistent implementation. (6) The US executive and legislative branches are engaged in turf battles and political control issues which detract from coherent policy development and consistent implementation. (5) Fear of offending countries by disallowing sales (4) Leaving known violators of proliferation agreements off lists of proscribed importers because "everyone should have known." (3) The high base rate of the venal, venial, and intellectually challenged among the makers, implementors, and monitors of policy. (2) Proscribed importers promise to be good and not engage in the dual uses of dual-use technology. (1) No one would really employ nuclear weapons anyways. (See Gerth, J. (July 1, 1997.) White House tightens rules on supercomputer sales. The New York Times. (<http://www.nytimes.com>))