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**Report says lack of focus on threat of nuclear terrorism stems from failure
to grasp global economic consequences of a nuclear terrorist attack.**

REDWOOD CITY, Calif. – Nuclear terrorism, a stated top concern of both major-party presidential candidates, is garnering little attention as an issue because of a failure to focus on the global economic consequences of such an attack, according to a new report by the Saga Foundation released today. The report, *Nuclear Terrorism: Local Effects, Global Consequences*, (available at www.sagafoundation.org) contends that a nuclear terrorist attack is the most serious threat to the U.S. homeland and the most likely nuclear attack scenario the nation faces. While the destructive effects of nuclear weapons have been studied in detail, the economic aftershocks likely to follow such an attack have received scant attention.

The report contends that a nuclear terrorist attack and a predictable set of presidential decisions that would likely follow would spark an economic chain reaction that could freeze the U.S. economy in a matter of days. Fear of a follow-up attack would require a nationwide sweep for other terrorist nuclear devices that could shut down freight transit, bring manufacturing to a halt and – in an age of just-in-time inventory – quickly empty shelves of basic necessities.

In addition to the global economic aftershocks, clean-up costs from a nuclear terrorist attack would dwarf the post-9/11 clean-up. Such an attack would likely plunge the country into war as U.S. forces sought to neutralize the responsible terror group, and any governments supporting it. And post-attack government decision-making would likely entail severe curtailment of our civil liberties.

"Given the bipartisan agreement on the seriousness of the nuclear terrorist threat, it is surprising how little work has been done to fully grasp the consequences of failure in our endeavors to prevent nuclear terrorism," said Saga Foundation President David Bartoshuk. "At a time when all Americans are focusing on grim economic news, it is all the more important to understand the economic stakes involved in a nuclear terrorist attack and, by so doing, energize our efforts to address the threat."

The Saga Foundation, a non-profit organization based in Redwood City, Calif., devoted to addressing the dangers of nuclear terrorism, lauds the efforts made to date to secure nuclear weapons material around the world but believes that much more needs to be done and contends that a clearer public understanding of the consequences of nuclear terrorism will add urgency to these efforts.

Detailed city-by-city studies of nuclear blast effects must now be matched by detailed step-by-step war-gaming of the decision-making that would likely follow a terrorist nuclear attack.

Saga Foundation research indicates that the general public remains concerned about the nuclear terrorist threat but is pessimistic that government can mount an effective effort to prevent such an attack from happening. The report urges current and future U.S. administrations to consider a comprehensive approach to the nuclear terrorism threat, building upon the efforts to date which have focused on securing nuclear material. These include more aggressive use of asset-freezing powers, reduction as well as elimination of nuclear material, robust interdiction efforts, improved global port security, and increased international capability to investigate and thwart nuclear technology smuggling.

The report's authors, David Bartoshuk, John Diamond and Peter Huessy, bring a combined 60 years of experience working in and writing about national security affairs. Their differing perspectives on many national security issues point up the bipartisan nature of the nuclear terrorist threat and the opportunity to achieve consensus on a comprehensive, multi-pronged approach to the problem.

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