

By William J. Broad

Now, U.S. designers are studying how

Representative David Hobson, Republican of Ohio, the chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, praised the program in a speech on Thursday and said it could lead to an opportunity for drastic cuts in America's nuclear arsenal. "A more robust replacement warhead, from a reliability standpoint," he said, "will provide a hedge that is cur-



A-bomb



H-bomb

Relative scale is approximate

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By the late 1990s, top officials and experts began to openly question whether such maintenance could continue to stave off deterioration and ensure the arsenal's reliability. As a solution, some called for a new generation of sturdier designs. "Robust, alternative warheads," John Foster Jr., chairman of a federal panel on stockpile reliability and a former director of the Lawrence Livermore weapons laboratory in Cali-

Another official, speaking on the condition of anonymity because the topic is politically delicate, said that such testing would come only as a last resort and that the Bush administration's current policy was to maintain the moratorium.

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