

**Nuclear Disorder or Cooperative Security? U.S. Weapons of Terror, the Global Proliferation Crisis, and Paths to Peace** edited by Michael Spies and John Burroughs. New York, Lawyers' Committee on Nuclear Policy, 2007. 275 pp. \$12.00.

Uttered in the wake of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Einstein's warning could hardly be more timely today: "The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything save our modes of thinking and thus we drift toward unparalleled catastrophe" (for example, in Peter H. Lewis, "'New Thinking' in a Nuclear Society," *The New York Times* "Week in Review," 21 June 1987).

According to this book, the problem runs deeper than the George W. Bush administration's approach to nuclear proliferation: it is rooted in conventional thinking about national security. *Nuclear Disorder* provides an authoritative critique of that obsolete paradigm and an alternative that is at once visionary and practical.

The alternative security paradigm promoted by this book is not altogether new and untried. It is the path of multilateral, irreversible, verifiable, and transparent arms reduction agreements. The centerpiece of this agenda is revitalizing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which requires that nuclear-armed signatories eliminate their nuclear weapons and that non-nuclear weapons signatories not acquire them. The authors note that while all the nuclear-armed parties remain out of compliance with their Article VI disarmament obligations, the non-nuclear weapons signatories, with few exceptions, have complied with the regime. This asymmetrical record of compliance lends credence to criticism by the non-NPT states—Israel, India, Pakistan, and North Korea—that the treaty sanctions nuclear apartheid.

The authors argue that the world is at a crossroads: either revitalize the NPT by serious progress toward disarmament, or the nuclear double standard will continue to erode the regime's legitimacy. The first path is part of a demilitarized approach to security that includes increased reliance on international law and multilateral institutions. The second path increases the likelihood of proliferation, war, and eventually the use of nuclear weapons.

The treaty's 1995 and 2000 review conferences, with U.S. concurrence, agreed to specific policy objectives that would jump-start nuclear disarmament, including ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, negotiation of a ban on fissile materials for nuclear weapons, and a reduced role for nuclear weapons in security planning. The Bush administration rejected this approach in favor of a militarized counterproliferation policy that would leave the nuclear

double standard intact. In 2006, an independent commission chaired by Hans Blix issued a report reasserting the earlier consensus.

*Nuclear Disorder* provides an assessment of the Blix report and its implications for U.S. policy, and goes further. Part I usefully briefs non-specialists on international law, the NPT, and the UN as they bear on nuclear weapons. Part II authoritatively reviews recent U.S. policy and the political forces that shaped it, including preventive war and counterproliferation, the role of U.S. nuclear weapons labs, and delivery systems, including current U.S. global planning for “full spectrum dominance.”

Part III addresses the relationship between nuclear weapons and civilian nuclear energy. Civilian nuclear programs of non-nuclear weapons states are monitored under the NPT to prevent the diversion of fissile materials to nuclear weapons. However, states possessing uranium enrichment facilities, such as Japan, can produce weapons-grade fissile materials. *Nuclear Disorder* sheds light on the Iran situation in this context, and discusses more generally how a planned global expansion of nuclear power would increase the risk of nuclear weapons proliferation. In part IV, the book concludes with eloquent and informed discussions of the gender psychology of militarism, its opportunity costs, nuclear ideology, and the emerging concept of “human security.”

Some readers will argue that *Nuclear Disorder* unfairly targets the United States. The authors say that the United States is their area of expertise and that as the world’s sole superpower, it merits special scrutiny. This book is a model of critical scholarship that needs to be replicated for other actual or would-be nuclear weapons states.

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*Global Action to Prevent War and Armed Conflict*