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The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate

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the complex issues of U.S. ballistic missile defense policy, tracing its evolution from the beginning of the Cold War to the post-Cold War era. Denoon's past responsibilities as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense enable him to provide insight and perspective into issues that in other books are sometimes lacking. Readers seeking a comprehensive understanding of this subject will find this work helpful.

In the first part of the book, Denoon provides a convenient, terse synopsis of the early history of ballistic missile defense. He explains how the concept of deterrence based upon "mutually assured destruction" (MAD) precluded the maturation of ballistic missile defenses during the Cold War, by a confluence of interests among the defense contractors who were building U.S. strategic offensive systems, the Defense Department bureaucracy, and academic defense specialists committed to arms control.

In the second part of the book, the author reviews the ballistic missile threat to the United States and its interests. He discusses how the Persian Gulf War helped to renew interest in ballistic missile defense (which has waned in the mid-1990s) and goes on to address both theater missile and national missile defense. Denoon treats ballistic missile defense as insurance against catastrophe and suggests ways to determine whether its value as protector will outweigh the cost of procurement. He recognizes that deployment of substantial missile defenses by the United States will require changes in political, economic, arms control, and industrial policies as well as in military doctrine and strategy.

It surprised this reviewer that a contemporary book covering such breadth of material would be published without an index, limiting its value as a convenient reference. Also, the attention and space given to discussion of the Patriot

performance in the Gulf war seem at odds with the policy focus of the rest of the book.

Readers familiar with the technical aspects of ballistic missile defense will find value in the book's perspective on the motivation and rationale of both the proponents and opponents of such defenses, while those interested in national security policy will appreciate its succinct and balanced summary of the issues and their evolution.

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Sagan, Scott D. and Waltz, Kenneth N.
The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate. New York: W.W. Norton, 1995. 136pp. \$16.95

Should we welcome or fear the spread of nuclear weapons? This is the question posed by Waltz and Sagan in this book, organized as a debate on the probable consequences of nuclear proliferation. Kenneth Waltz is a "nuclear optimist," while Scott Sagan is the "nuclear pessimist." Each author presents his arguments about the meaning of nuclear proliferation for future world politics in two wide-ranging essays. Also included is a set of rebuttal essays in which Waltz and Sagan respond to each other's criticisms, identify areas of agreement, and discuss their disagreements.

Waltz uses neo-realist assumptions and concepts to support his conclusion that the spread of nuclear weapons will deter their use in the future. He believes that fear of a devastating nuclear reprisal will act as a major restraint on would-be aggressors. To support his position, Waltz discusses the increased deterrent value of small second-strike forces as new nuclear weapons states build and

protect nuclear weapons. He does not believe that leaders of new nuclear states will show less concern about command or control issues than leaders of current nuclear states. Thus he rejects the proposition that military-controlled governments will be more likely than civilian governments to make dangerous preventive strikes.

Waltz also predicts that the gradual spread of nuclear weapons will make nuclear weapons outmoded instruments for blackmail or war. By downplaying the risks of nuclear proliferation (loss of command and control by new nuclear states), Waltz makes a plausible argument that the gradual spread of nuclear weapons may stabilize relations in the international community. According to Waltz, nuclear proliferation will restore "the clarity and simplicity lost as bipolar situations are replaced by multipolar ones."

Sagan, however, rejects the rational deterrence theory and Waltz's argument that future nuclear states will behave reasonably. He doubts that small nuclear states will develop the requisite second-strike capability needed to deter preemptive or retaliatory attacks, or the safety systems and command procedures needed to ensure that these weapons are not inadvertently used. He also discounts the view that military leaders will be as likely as civilian government leaders to refrain from preemptive nuclear strikes. Instead, Sagan believes that future nuclear-armed states will use nuclear weapons because of a lack of civilian control.

Sagan uses an organizational behavior perspective and examples of near-use of preemptive nuclear weapons and nuclear accidents to justify his belief that "professional military organizations—because of biases, inflexible routines, and parochial interests—display organizational behaviors that lead to deterrence failures and deliberate or

accidental war [more] than [do] civilian government officials."

He stresses that nuclear security and stability issues are complicated by the existence of several new sovereign states, such as Kazakhstan and Ukraine. He notes that these states were "born nuclear"; they did not spend years developing nuclear technology. Thus they failed to acquire the experience necessary for the safe handling of nuclear weapons. It is this view that leads Sagan to emphasize how important it is that the United States adopt a strong nonproliferation policy that will reduce the demand for nuclear weapons and facilitate the conditions necessary for alternative security arrangements. Specific policies advocated by Sagan include continued support of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, acceptance of a comprehensive test ban, and adoption of a "stringent doctrine of acceptance of defensive last resort." He also calls for deeper reductions in the U.S. nuclear arsenals so that the United States can "lead by example."

Both authors are eminently qualified to represent opposing viewpoints on this important but complicated policy debate. Kenneth N. Waltz is professor emeritus of political science at the University of California at Berkeley. He is the author of many books and articles on national security and international relations, including *Man, the State, and War*. Scott D. Sagan is an assistant professor of political science at Stanford University. As the author of several analyses on post-Cold War security concerns and of the causes of nuclear accidents, he is gaining a reputation in these fields. Among his studies are *Moving Targets: Nuclear Strategy and National Security* and *Limits of Safety*.

This debate follows the usual format. Both men perform a valuable service by using a clear and jargon-free style. The book offers the reader an easy-to-read and stimulating dialogue that may prove

useful to a wide audience interested in key theoretical and policy issues relating to nuclear proliferation. It may be particularly interesting to those who are too young to remember the "first generation" of debates about nuclear deterrence, and also for those who are unfamiliar with research that uses an organizational behavioral perspective to understand the behaviors of nation states.

Although the authors use different theoretical lenses, their analyses share commonalities that limit the book's usefulness. Both men focus on future probable behaviors of nuclear nation-states and use examples gleaned from the experiences of the two superpowers during the Cold War. Only Waltz briefly considers (but quickly dismisses) the possibility that terrorists may use nuclear materials, including warheads, in the future. In light of the reports of efforts to sell or smuggle nuclear fuel and advanced weapons components from former Soviet states, the idea of terrorist attacks should be seriously considered. Unfortunately, the rapid spreading of nuclear weapons by covert arms deals between nations, crime syndicates, current and former civilian and military employees, and free-agent arms merchants is absent here.

Also absent is any discussion of the lessons we should learn from the leaders of such diverse countries as Argentina, Brazil, and South Africa, who made the decision to abandon all nuclear weapons programs. Both authors have also ignored the findings of a growing body of systematic comparative studies that have examined and compared factors promoting or inhibiting the decision to "go nuclear." Instead, Sagan and Waltz use similar intuitive methodologies of logic and plausibility, bolstered by selective examples, to support their conclusions.

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Godson, Roy; May, Ernest R.; and Schmitt, Gary, eds. *U.S. Intelligence at the Crossroads*. Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, 1995. 315pp. \$25.95

Intense discussion on the future of the U.S. intelligence community dominated, in that sphere, the first part of the 1990s. Although some changes have been made since then and more are sure to come, redesigning U.S. intelligence is so grand an undertaking that changes cannot and should not be implemented without serious discussion. An important contribution to that discussion is this volume of eighteen essays written by academics and senior producers and consumers of intelligence.

In 1992 the Consortium for the Study of Intelligence formed the Working Group on Intelligence Reform. The essays in this book were either presented at group meetings or authored by its members.

Aside from a brief introduction by editors Roy Godson, Ernest May, and Gary Schmitt, the essays are divided into three groups: "Defining the Debate," "Elements and Reform," and "Policies and Policymakers." In "Defining the Debate" the authors explain that at the same time that the U.S. military and intelligence communities are becoming smaller, the distinction between strategic and tactical intelligence is becoming blurred, as policymakers request more information on such topics as economic competition, ethnic conflict, weapons proliferation, and trade negotiations.

The first essay, "What is Intelligence?: Information for Decision Makers," by Jennifer Sims, sets the underlying theme,