

Introduction

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If one decided to get rid of all nuclear weapons in the world, the first question would be how to go about it. But a second, equally important but less frequently asked question, would be: what else would you then have to do to ensure the safety and security of citizens and the peace and stability of the global community? Ridding the world of nuclear weapons is desirable only if a safer world is actually brought into being. How can we do that?

In this project we took as given that complete nuclear disarmament will happen and focused our attention on what that will imply. We agreed to take as our guiding principle that any proposals for policy should advance the cause of going to zero. Thus, the chapters in the book do not debate whether going to zero is feasible or a good idea. Instead, they address in some detail what nuclear zero will mean for existing institutions, issues, and practices. What has to change for nuclear states to embrace nuclear disarmament as a pressing goal, not a far-distant vision to be disregarded in making policy today? How can countries chafing against, or even outside, the nonproliferation regime be persuaded to abandon their nuclear ambitions? The chapters seek to offer the beginnings of a roadmap to a world in which nuclear weapons will no longer be the currency of power, but instead a historical memory.

This book emerged from a series of conversations and exchanges that took place under the aegis of a generous Carnegie Corporation grant for “Dialogue among Americans, Russians, and Europeans,” or DARE. A group of experts and policy-makers from all three geographic areas were recruited to meet periodically over the past decade to assess issues of transformational significance and to explore the potential for trilateral cooperation. Of particular importance for

nuclear zero issues was a small DARE seminar held in Milan in January 2009, with contributions from that meeting then reflected in lectures during the 2009 ISODARCO Winter School at Andalo, Italy.

These discussions were initially stimulated by the remarkable January 2007 *Wall Street Journal* article by George Shultz, William Perry, Henry Kissinger, and Sam Nunn. In marking the anniversary of the 1986 Reykjavik Summit between Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev, the group stressed the real disarmament opportunity that had been lost in Iceland, called for a world free of nuclear weapons, and outlined a series of practical steps toward reaching that goal. Soon known as the “Gang of Four,” or “The Four Horsemen,” the group has since issued reports, held major conferences, and engaged in a global campaign to emphasize the challenges of eliminating nuclear weapons and the need to move toward that difficult goal. Their initiative galvanized a new discussion of nuclear disarmament and the alternate paths to its achievement in many circles. They led then-senators Barack Obama, Hilary Clinton, and John McCain to endorse the cause during the 2008 U.S. presidential primary campaign. President Obama carried the movement forward when he declared in a stirring speech given in Prague on April 5, 2009, that the United States was committed to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons.

In practical terms, the first steps by President Obama have been more expectable than revolutionary, but they do emphasize renewed American leadership. Working primarily with its leading European allies, the United States has undertaken a diplomatic “reset” with Russia, and altered the national ballistic missile defense system to relocate installations in Eastern Europe. All of these steps have helped alleviate some tensions with Russia, the country that must be the foremost partner of the United States in arms control talks. Work on formal Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (Start III) increased in intensity and led to a new agreement. The president’s second year also saw an April Washington summit on securing all fissile materials, followed in May 2010 by the periodic global nuclear review and renewal of the now-extended Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) regime. There was even an intensive campaign toward Senate approval for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), unratified for more than a decade, a treaty that, if observed, will significantly hinder both horizontal and vertical proliferation. Obama was awarded (some argued prematurely) the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize: his comments and intentions on nuclear disarmament were among the reasons cited by the panel for giving the award to the president so early in his first term.

All of this is promising news after more than a decade in which the issues posed by nuclear weapons were largely eclipsed by concerns over ethnic wars and the threat of terrorism. There is no doubt about serious renewed interest among surprising numbers of foreign policy elites toward the goal of nuclear disarmament. There is, for the first time in decades, a limited bandwagon effect among elites and mass publics. The general public, at least as probed in opinion polls, is more interested in the issue and more willing to support nuclear elimination or limitation. A number of European governments and governmental officials, past and present, including those of Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Norway, have added to the momentum. They have either endorsed the Obama initiatives or gone beyond them to offer specific plans for further cuts in nuclear weapons, improvements in verification technology, and safeguards for nuclear fuel stockpiles.¹

There is, of course, pervasive skepticism as well. Some of it is from predictable sources: from policy “realists,” from self-styled conservatives, and from those who believe the nuclear revolution has unalterably changed the core formulas of state power and the relationship of the weak to the strong. Others question the possibility of technological constraint: can we really restore the genie to its bottle, given the global spread of civil nuclear technologies, the near instantaneous distribution of technical literature, and a global commerce system poised to deliver any and all necessary components through a myriad of legal and illegal channels? Still others note with disdain the absent national voices: what beyond the usual lofty rhetoric of “perpetual peace through nuclear abolition” has been heard on nuclear zero from the Russians, the Chinese, or the Indians, not to mention the Pakistanis and the Israelis? What of the restless threshold states, Iran and North Korea? Policy-makers striving for nuclear zero must also still those voices cautioning against excessive cost or insurmountable risk. Even those who do accept the goal of zero must appreciate the significant costs and risks that must be managed.

Moreover, President Obama’s strong words from Prague have fallen on a largely unprepared audience, both in the United States and around the world. Despite a long history of individual and group activism in behalf of nuclear disarmament, such issues have not been high on the public agenda in recent years. The causes are many. Most obvious are the preferences of the George W. Bush administration and perhaps at the end, that of Bill Clinton.² These were political choices to marginalize nuclear disarmament by administrations that, ironically, actually oversaw major reductions in many categories of nu-

clear launchers and warheads (by more than half in some instances), as well as the destruction, under the Cooperative Threat Reduction regime and other frameworks, of many of the components of the former Soviet nuclear establishment.

Perhaps more important, the George W. Bush team also came to see the end of the Cold War as a closing of the nuclear chapter in terms of great power conflict. His critics, but also some of his supporters, began to define nuclear limitation as the key to stopping further nuclear proliferation, including to terrorist or other nonstate organizations. With Russia and the United States now strategic partners, the Bush administration considered arms control an outdated concept. Complex treaties and negotiated agreements took too long to complete, or could always be circumvented by cheaters or, in the struggle to ratify, generated increased hostility and perceptions of confrontation and adversarial bargaining. So a minimalist SORT (Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty) signed in 2002 was sufficient.

For the move to nuclear zero ultimately to succeed, the discussion of the issues at stake must be expanded to engage a broader cross-section of citizens, scholars, and policy-makers in countries around the world. The task is particularly hard given the present circumstances—the international financial crisis with the attendant fears of economic collapse, unemployment, and social pain; the reform of markets and health care; the winding down of the war in Iraq in circumstances of fragile peace; the ramping up of counterinsurgency by the United States and its allies in Afghanistan; and the challenge of global climate change—all occupy presidential time and attention. The cost for a U.S. president to focus on this issue, early in his first term in office, has been high, and likely to be higher in both financial and electoral terms.

This book takes on the nuclear zero objectives, those hard, long-range yet serious policy questions, and tries to delineate and test practical steps for the nuclear nations to take. Few of the contributors suggest such a process will be easy or swift, gauging the process in decades rather than years. Nuclear weapons, in the sixty-five years since their invention, have come to take up a preeminent position in the strategies and militaries of the countries that own them. Because of that, eradicating them will be more complex than scrapping any other marginally effectual weapons systems—land mines, for example, or chemical and biological weapons. Nuclear weapons defined the superpower relationship for the larger part of the twentieth century. At times populations in both Russia and the United States registered majorities for prohibition, or at least nonuse.

Depending on whom you ask—even in the expert community—their presence brought stability or terror, or perhaps both, to the Cold War. As the ultimate weapon, destructive potency was their biggest advantage, but also their biggest hindrance. The political and ethical barriers to their use (known as the nuclear taboo) and the catastrophe of nuclear retaliation (under Mutually Assured Destruction [MAD], or almost any other formula of deterrence) kept their use constrained throughout the Cold War and especially at its end. Nuclear weapons became as much symbols as weapons, markers of prestige. They purportedly showed that a country had wealth, technical expertise, and a right to have a say in world events.

Among the many challenges we face in ridding the world of these weapons is the need to find a new way of thinking for the international community to conceive of them—not in terms of pride, but of abhorrence. Richard Rhodes has suggested an analogy to a disease that, like smallpox, polio, and other identified public health scourges, is to be controlled and eventually eradicated.³ Rhodes reminds us that public health came to be an expected function of government only in the last 150 years. Now it is a field in which international cooperation is expected and ultimately enforced, where monitoring and mitigating action are now routine, even among individuals and states with few other relations or much mutual admiration.

Others, including the late Randy Forsberg, and Matthew Evangelista in his chapter in this book, have suggested that a better comparison (or at least a history from which to learn lessons) would be the eradication of slavery in the West. The abolition of slavery involved the forgoing of direct economic profit on investment in the name of both moral principle and political-social risk. It had sudden spurts of activity and state enthusiasm, but the slow, deliberate momentum was largely carried forward under British political leadership at a time of its global dominance. Of great interest is the substantial role civil society groups played in changing public opinion in Britain and throughout the world, and the passion and persistence with which they waged their campaigns. We have largely forgotten the various strategies a series of British governments employed, using both hard and soft power, making promises of gain and punishment to states and individuals—methods available for nuclear disarmament advocates today.

Neither analogy captures the risks involved in a non-nuclear world in which a rogue or pariah state might indeed try to be king. Nevertheless, they are suggestive of how a change of thinking about possible outcomes, rather than a blan-

ket rejection of all potential alternative futures, can move policy discussion and action forward. Few outside of the committed bureaucracies believe the NPT regime in its present form, or the nuclear status quo that has endured since the end of the Cold War, will or can continue unchanged and unchallenged. The question is rather what direction of change to choose and pursue. Through the DARE initiative, we invited leading scholars and practitioners to offer their thoughts in the framework of the zero movement. The result is this book.

The first section of the book focuses on the history of the nuclear zero movement, documenting the successes and failures of six decades of nuclear weapons. David Holloway describes the Gang of Four's vision of a world without nuclear weapons, reviewing its architects and the various historical attempts to bring it about. Randy Rydell looks at the history of prohibition discussions at the international level and the role played by or proposed for the international community, and especially the United Nations, in achieving progress on getting to zero. Götz Neuneck strikes an optimistic note with a description of the growing activity in Europe in support of nuclear zero.

Each nuclear weapon state faces different domestic politics, different international commitments, and different foreign policy challenges. Each has established different rules and different principles for its nuclear programs and deployment strategies. Untangling this web of sometimes-contradictory policies will be necessary as diplomats seek to get the verifiable reductions needed to maintain confidence and retain domestic support. Only then will they be able not only to demonstrate their fidelity to the NPT obligations they assumed many decades ago but also to meet the critical test: to bolster the morale and the resolve of the adherent states that remain in compliance, regardless of the behavior of the rogue states.

The second section of the book looks at the past decisions and future perspectives of the major nuclear states in an effort to address this issue. Lynn Eden looks at targeting, lethality, and strategy as critical drivers in the United States. Alexei Arbatov examines Russian views on deterrence. Ian Anthony explains the debate in the United Kingdom with large decisions imminent; Venance Journé investigates France's unique passion for all things nuclear, and how that will impact the disarmament debate; and Jeffrey Lewis spotlights China as it adapts its nuclear policy for the modern age.

In the third section, we turn to regional powers and their policies and prospects for nuclear zero. Nadia Alexandrova-Arbatova describes the international relations dynamics in a postnuclear world, with Europe as her case study; Avner

Cohen wonders what will become of Israel's policy of opacity in a disarming world or in a Middle East that includes a nuclear Iran; Jill Marie Lewis, with Lacie A. N. Olson, describes the evolving Iranian situation and the potential to affect Iran's decisions on nuclear weapons through a broader engagement across other policy areas. Completing the section, Waheguru Pal Sidhu looks at a country that was once at the forefront of the nuclear zero movement but was then tempted by the power of atomic weapons, and asks what the prospects are for India to relinquish its nuclear arms.

After this look at separate countries, the fourth part of the book goes on to consider some of the issues that confront them all. It is on these issues that the combined efforts and experience of the international community will be most applicable. Joint solutions will be needed and shared understandings developed to ensure forward momentum. In contrast to past efforts, short-term expediency or offsetting conditions in getting an agreement or achieving the broadest and lowest level of compliance should not be allowed to trump the long-term goal. James Acton assesses verification solutions; Judith Reppy looks at the institutional future for weapons laboratories in a postnuclear world; Marco de Andreis and Simon Moore connect the worlds of nuclear weapons and civilian nuclear power, and ask whether nuclear energy can ever cease to be a proliferation hazard; Matthew Evangelista discusses military strategy in a world beyond nuclear deterrence, a discussion that Dennis Gormley adds to with his study of how to understand and mitigate the conventional strategic imbalance that will become more prominent as we move even the first steps to nuclear zero. Finally, in the last section, David Holloway and Peter Dombrowski offer their expectations and suggestions for practical steps toward the future.

To conclude, emerging generations of security analysts, as well as many in the attentive publics, have come to see nuclear issues as settled or stabilized, or on the way to being "solved." Present levels of nuclear armament are viewed as "acceptable" and the risk of accident, miscalculation, or unauthorized use is "manageable." In this frame, however, the policy dialogue on nuclear zero is significantly impoverished. The "unknowing" of the previous history of efforts to constrain or eliminate nuclear weapons is especially apparent among younger generations, including present public officials as well as students. Most are hard pressed to remember the ins and outs of critical arms control deals that form the backbone of the present stability. There is a fundamental unfamiliarity with the issues raised by prospects of nuclear disarmament and with the many previous efforts to develop or at least catalog constructive approaches.

Moreover, it is still the early days in the implementation of Obama's commitment to this issue area. The hope for a major change is still strong in many of the interested constituencies, but the length of the national and international road to implementation is still hard to assess. Throughout the administrations of George W. Bush and Bill Clinton, the United States failed to engage in a rigorous dialogue on these complex issues at home or abroad. It did not, as it had in the past, reach out to scholars and policy-makers in Europe and Russia to explore cooperative solutions, or push for education and dialogue, with emerging states that have developed, for example, an interest in civil nuclear power. Leadership of the international nuclear discussion, despite the challenges of Iran or North Korea, the successes of South Africa or Libya, or even of Bush's effective Proliferation Security Initiative, often went elsewhere—or evaporated altogether.

With this volume, we hope to raise the questions and propose some of the answers that will be needed in the years ahead as this debate advances. We believe these essays can provide some signposts to point policy-makers in the right direction, and to bring attentive publics to a new appreciation of both the opportunities and the challenges involved in adopting this ambitious policy goal. More than anything, we hope that the volume will help the global community in taking the beginning steps to zero.

NOTES

1. Vassailos Savvadis and Jessica Seiler, "Nuclear Disarmament Proposals from 1995 to 2009: A Comparative Chart" (3 December 2009), at http://cns.miiis.edu/stories/091203_disarmament_proposals.htm.
2. See Dennis Gormley, Catherine Kelleher, and Scott Warren, "Missile Defense Systems: Global and Regional Implications," Geneva Center for Security Policy (2009), at http://www.gcsp.ch/e/publications/geneva_papers/geneva_paper_5.pdf.
3. Richard Rhodes, "Reducing the Nuclear Threat: The Argument for Public Safety," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* (Web Edition), 14 December 2009, at <http://www.thebulletin.org/web-edition/op-eds/reducing-the-nuclear-threat-the-argument-public-safety>.