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## Book Review

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# BOOK REVIEW

INTERNATIONAL ARMS CONTROL: ISSUES AND AGREEMENTS. By the Stanford Arms Control Group. Edited by John H. Barton & Lawrence D. Weiler. California: Stanford University Press, 1976. Pp. ix, 444. \$18.50.

It is a pleasure to welcome a well-written book on arms control, and one, moreover, that has grown out of the exigencies of an undergraduate course and is designed to meet the needs of students. Because *INTERNATIONAL ARMS CONTROL: ISSUES AND AGREEMENTS* was the work of several hands, its lucidity and consistency are the more admirable. Comprehensive in scope, it goes just far enough in setting arms control in its various contexts (political, military, cultural, and ethical) without straying out of bounds. It raises a multitude of questions without pretending to answer them all. I found it refreshing to read a piece of advice that writers on arms control in the tradition of the "numbers game" and scenario construction—modes less amenable to reflective consideration of the premises on which their glittering edifices have been constructed—would be wise to heed: "It is important to keep in mind that there are no 'experts' on nuclear war; there are only 'theoreticians.' There is dispute on whether a strategic doctrine adequately describes human behaviour or possible nuclear war."<sup>1</sup>

Much of the book is historical. The student learns that arms control is not something that President Kennedy invented along with an Arms Control and Disarmament Agency in 1961 or (worse fallacy still) that President Nixon and General Secretary Brezhnev launched in 1969. At the same time, the less directly historical aspects of arms control are equally well handled in chapters on the cultural context and motivations for arms control, on the institutions of arms control (American and intergovernmental), and on strategic doctrine.

Readers are given some details along the way of which it is salutary to be reminded, such as the extent of popular opposition to rearmament even *within* Adenauer's Federal Republic, and the perseverance of the Irish delegation at the three U.N. General Assemblies of 1959-61, surviving American and Soviet abstentions in turn before eventually coming up with a conceptual formula on

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1. STANFORD ARMS CONTROL GROUP, *INTERNATIONAL ARMS CONTROL: ISSUES AND AGREEMENTS* 123 (1976).

non-proliferation (the famous Irish Resolution) which satisfied almost everyone. The point is made, in the chapter on regional efforts,<sup>2</sup> that Britain was more sympathetic than the other Western powers to the plan for nuclear disengagement in central Europe proposed by Adam Rapacki, Foreign Minister of Poland, in 1957. Indeed, Selwyn Lloyd, who was Foreign Secretary at the time and probably the most genuinely interested in arms control and disarmament of all Britain's postwar Foreign Secretaries, has never ceased to urge the adoption of the Rapacki Plan or a later variant.

For a masterly treatment of a subject whose importance shows no sign of diminishing, the section on nuclear proliferation and attempts at control is particularly well worth reading. The diplomatic history of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is an oft-ploughed furrow, but here the negotiations of 1965-68, fascinating though their retelling is in itself, are usefully set out in a wider context. This section includes at one end the development of alliance arrangements within NATO which involved West German rearmament and failed to forestall nuclear proliferation to Britain and France; and at the other end, the reasons which led India, Israel, and (until 1976) Japan to stand aloof from the NPT.

Barton and Weiler could perhaps have made more of the failure by the nuclear-weapon states to give the non-nuclear-weapon states a guarantee not to use, or threaten the use of, nuclear weapons against them. The authors mention that such a guarantee was proposed by Romania and others during the NPT negotiations. Mexican draft protocols to embody just such an undertaking were presented to the First NPT Review Conference in 1975, but were not accepted by the nuclear-weapon states present. It now looks as if "nuclear assurances" will be a bargaining issue when the General Assembly's special session devoted to disarmament opens in May 1978.

There are, however, twenty countries in which such assurances have already been given the authority of international obligation, to wit, the members of the Latin American Nuclear Free Zone. These twenty have obtained, through the Treaty of Tlatelolco, what nobody has yet been able to obtain through the NPT. Pledges not to use, or threaten the use of, nuclear weapons against those states were given when Britain ratified Additional Protocol II to the Treaty in 1969, followed by the USA in 1971. The authors correctly state that this Protocol is the only arms control agree-

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2. *Id.* at 249.

ment (since the Geneva Protocol, at any rate) which France and China have been willing to sign, although they omit to mention the even more significant fact that both countries ratified their signatures in 1974, leaving only the USSR outside the security assurances regime of Tlatelolco.<sup>3</sup>

One stylistic point deserves mention: "England" and "Great Britain" are used interchangeably in the text. May a reviewer who is proud to be both British and English respectfully submit that the two are not the same? England, being part of a larger political unit (the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), has no more claim to *international* status than California or Ontario. That status belongs solely to the United Kingdom, and it would take a more profound dissolution of the Union than is contemplated in the present "devolution" debate to restore it to the constituent nations of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

INTERNATIONAL ARMS CONTROL: ISSUES AND AGREEMENTS gives a generally sound and concise history of efforts to ban, first the use in war, and now even the continued possession, of chemical and biological weapons. The obstacles which have rendered the negotiation of a Chemical Weapons Convention so laborious are clearly set out, although the authors possibly underestimate the problems of definition and classification<sup>4</sup> which compound the other difficulties. Due credit is accorded to President Nixon for his decision in November 1969 to renounce biological weaponry in any form, including retaliation, to destroy the American stockpile, and to extend this measure of unilateral disarmament to toxins three months later. The international debate at this time, however, was conducted principally between Britain and the Soviet Union.

The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament began serious consideration of BW [biological weapons] and CW [chemical weapons] during the summer of 1969. The Soviet Union initially insisted on an essentially unverified ban on both CW and BW. Great Britain, supported by the United States after November 1969, responded with a draft treaty that would prohibit BW development and production but would not affect CW.<sup>5</sup>

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3. *Id.* at 294.

4. Terms which have been proffered hopefully in the quest for agreement include: toxicity; molecular structure; "lethal," "incapacitant," and "harrassing" or "irritant" chemical warfare agents; "long-term physiological harm," and other equally inadequate formulae.

5. STANFORD ARMS CONTROL GROUP, *supra* note 1, at 119.

While the main focus of the debate—separability of BW from CW in negotiations—is correctly expressed, the diplomatic sequence is stated in a misleading way. The British draft convention tabled that summer was solely a “response” to Britain’s own path-breaking working paper of July 1968 which had first proposed the case for separability. The Soviet Union and its allies did not produce their draft treaty on CW and BW until September 19, 1969, and deliberately tabled it in the General Assembly at New York, not at the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) at Geneva. Whether the eventual Convention on Biological and Toxin Weapons, opened for signature in 1972 and in force since 1975, shows as much evidence of its descent from the British initiatives of July 1968 and July 1969 as it does of hasty compromises in the 1971 session of the CCD is a matter of opinion, but that Britain opened this particular diplomatic sequence which led to “the first real disarmament treaty” is beyond dispute.

It is hardly surprising that the authors have chosen to devote a substantial part of the book to the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT). They take this continuing saga up to the Brezhnev-Ford “summit” meeting at Vladivostok in November 1975 and its immediate aftermath. Due regard is accorded the Standing Consultative Commission and other structural innovations of the developing Soviet-American relationship which would have been inconceivable in earlier arms control negotiations. The interests of Congress and its interaction with the bureaucracy and the military are likewise examined, while the nuclear stances of France and China and their implications for the future pattern of SALT are wisely not overlooked.

Writing when they did, the authors considered antisubmarine warfare (ASW) and cruise missiles the biggest untouched problems facing the SALT teams. The second of these has come to the fore in terms of public concern. For Britain, however, with an even heavier reliance than France on missile-carrying submarines for the disposition of its nuclear warheads, not to mention a tradition of supremacy in ASW and counter-measures which it is keen to maintain, any shift in the balance of offensive and defensive capabilities beneath the waves is of particular interest; that is, so long as Britain retains nuclear weapons.

The book contains an admirably complete set of treaty texts, suggestions for further reading, and questions for discussion on each chapter. These annexes complement in their thoroughness the high quality of the main text. The book ends with a sober and in some respects unconventional chapter, “Towards an Evaluation of Arms Control,” an essay which questions the functions of arms

control in various perspectives. The following extracts may give the flavor of the discussion:

[A]rms control agreements can help prevent some wars, although only some. Whether enough arms control agreements are actually negotiable to play a major role in war prevention is another question . . . .

At most an arms control agreement, like any peacetime treaty, can generally only strengthen and confirm pre-existing intentions of governments. No treaty will be accepted unless it is in the interests of all parties. Arms control has thus tended to become a tool of stabilizing very specific military balances and of coordinating national military intentions.<sup>6</sup>

One is left with a sense that arms control negotiations have importantly affected Soviet society—far more than they have affected U.S. society.<sup>7</sup>

The authors are skeptical of the claims made for step-by-step incrementalism of the kind that has typified arms control negotiations since 1962. They call this process “a questionable strategy.”

The general tendency, as with the 1922 Naval Accord, the Limited Test Ban, and SALT I, is to agree first on what is easy. The second step is usually disappointing . . . . One is strongly tempted, therefore, in order to gain the benefits of arms control, to pursue extensive agreements like those sought in the negotiations of the 1950's. Conceivably, such agreements might be possible during times of particularly favorable political balances in the various nations.<sup>8</sup>

In the same vein, referring to a specific arms control diplomatic sequence, they warn, “SALT will retain central attention only if actual force reductions and the slowing of technological innovation are considered.”<sup>9</sup>

A testimony to the care with which the book has evidently been compiled is that developments subsequent to its completion do not seriously undermine its value, but can be readily absorbed within the framework of analysis and argument provided. The utility of *INTERNATIONAL ARMS CONTROL: ISSUES AND AGREEMENTS* as a text for students' use is thereby greatly enhanced. Some of these subsequent developments, notably setbacks in SALT, reinforce the au-

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6. *Id.* at 314.

7. *Id.* at 318.

8. *Id.* at 314.

9. *Id.* at 223.

thors' prudent warnings that arms control is never a panacea for the world's ills. Other developments suggest a rosier picture. Three in particular stand out: the agreement on a UN-chaired Consultative Committee of States Parties to investigate complaints of non-compliance under the 1977 "En-Mod" Convention banning weather warfare, and potentially under a Chemical Weapons Convention as well; the apparent readiness of the Soviet Union to consider, at long last, on-site inspection of the destruction of stocks, again in the context of a Chemical Weapons Convention; and the submission of Tlatelolco's Additional Protocol I to the United States Senate in order to bring Puerto Rico, Guantanamo, the American Virgin Islands, and the Canal Zone within the Latin American Nuclear Free Zone.

All these events are steps forward in the long, slow history of arms control, yet they are marginal advances. The uncertain relationship between confidence, credibility, and compliance still bedevils all negotiations for new treaties.

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