

# BOOK REVIEWS

## Uncovering the Secrets of International Law: A Survey of Introductory Literature

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International law remains a mystery to many students of international relations. Unfortunately, this lack of understanding extends to many policy-makers whose decisions shape the course of international affairs. International law is too often regarded as an impenetrable undergrowth of foreign relations, an amorphous collection of norms with more or less binding force which are perceived as being insignificant enough to be left to technicians. Instead of making use of the valuable mechanisms international law provides to resolve disputes, decision-makers often ignore them. As a result, states squander their international credibility. The U.S. led invasion of Grenada and the mining of Nicaraguan harbors demonstrate how the clumsy handling of international law can erode a nation's effectiveness in foreign affairs.

Policy-makers' reluctance to use international law is too often the result of their ignorance of the subject. Those who are uncomfortable with the complexities of international law often distrust others who operate within such a structure. They will certainly try to rest their case on familiar ground. As a result, short-sighted strategies of political self-interest prevail over adherence to international law, which in the long run would further the goals of national self-interest. One of the functions of international law is to make interstate relations stable and foreseeable. The advantages of such a system were masterfully utilized by the British to secure their empire — a poignant reminder that international law and political self-interest are not necessarily antithetical.

The first problem confronted by the layman and the municipal lawyer seeking to understand international law is: Where can the substantive basis of international law be found? Article 38 of the Statute of the International Court of Justice, to which one is usually first referred, offers little help. The so-called "sources of international law" that it lists such as "international custom as evidence of a general practice accepted as law" are formulated in terms ambiguous enough to have occupied generations of academic writers. But for the student or practitioner of foreign affairs

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seeking a practical understanding of international law, the introductory literature in the field should be of great interest. The following are particularly useful:

F. E. S. FAWCETT'S *The Law of Nations* has given generations of students their first glance into the operation of international law. It is brief, but the topics it addresses are well chosen. Unfortunately, it has become outdated. The "acceleration of history," which has subjected international law to rapid changes, would require a new edition of this thin volume. Nevertheless, it offers a painless means of familiarizing oneself with the terminology and basic concepts of international law.

The *Law of Nations* of J.L. BRIERLY, in its 6th edition by Sir Humphrey Waldock (1963), is also not up to date. Brierly's book, however, is extremely well written and offers impressive insights into the structure of the international system as seen by a traditionalist. In his introduction, Brierly offers a classic definition of international law as "the body of rules and principles of action which are binding upon *civilized* states in their relations with one another [emphasis added]", (p. 1). But despite this, his book may prove useful to those who seek a coherent and readable overview of the subject. The authority of its distinguished author and editor guarantees its usefulness even beyond introductory purposes.

"Is international law really law?" asks M. AKEHURST in chapter one of his *A Modern Introduction to International Law*. The answer he offers in the enlarged 4th edition of this widely used book is affirmative. A section on the new Law of the Sea Convention, and numerous other recent developments such as air space and outer space law are briefly mentioned. Akehurst is one of the few authors who discusses important theoretical questions that bear directly on actual practice such as the communist or Afro-Asian doctrinal approach towards international law. He also covers the law of war. For those who want an up-to-date account which can be read and understood in half a day, this book can be recommended as a straightforward and comprehensive guide to international law.

Joseph G. STARKE'S *An Introduction to International Law* is written primarily for the practitioner. After briefly surveying some questions of legal theory, he concludes pragmatically that "there is something pedantic" in the attempt to create a watertight theory about international obligation — an endeavor which he terms neither necessary nor desirable, (p. 35). A slightly more pedantic emphasis, however, would have benefited Starke's book. For example, incorrect case references in the index only serve to confuse and frustrate the practitioner he addresses. Starke's introduction, on the other hand, exhaustively covers most areas of substantive international law in its 708 pages. Since its first edition in 1947, each new edition has been selectively brought up to date.

Werner LEVI is a political scientist. His 391-page *Contemporary International Law: A Concise Introduction* seems to have been specifically tailored for student use. It is clearly written and addresses most of the traditional issues, but the author gets carried away in his attempt to detect new dynamics in the international system. The significance of basic notions such as sovereignty is slightly understated, whereas progressive developments towards a "world community" are overstressed. Still, each chapter ends with a number of well-chosen and well-structured references. A digest of eight cases annexed to the text are too condensed to serve as a learning aid. However, frequent references to leading cases within the text compensate somewhat for this deficiency.

Louis HENKIN's *How Nations Behave* is not an introduction to international law as such. It attempts to give a conclusive answer to a question which has long preoccupied scholars and practitioners alike: Why do states obey international law — a system without central authority? Although it does not cover all the details of substantive international law, it contains valuable references to specific areas and a number of significant case studies of the Suez Crisis, the Eichmann Case, the Cuban Quarantine, and the Vietnam War. Its second edition, published in 1979, was updated to cover recent developments.

Morton A. KAPLAN and Nicholas deB. KATZENBACH's book on *The Political Foundations of International Law* (1961) combines several different approaches to systems theory previously advanced by Kaplan, and some elements of the policy perspective on international law that reflect the work of Myres McDougal. Unfortunately, both authors arrive at overly simplistic conclusions. In their introductory chapter, for example, they maintain that "all systems of law tend to break down in crisis situations," (p. 6). Furthermore, they point out that this century has been plagued by recurrent crises. If both of these statements were true, we would be left with a non-system; a legal structure which constantly breaks down is no legal structure at all. Though they acknowledge the legal quality of international law, Kaplan and Katzenbach seem to deny its very basis: a certain degree of stability and continuity in international relations.

The late D. P. O'CONNELL offers a traditional approach in his *International Law*. The second edition of this two-volume work has been updated to include information on questions of current interest such as responsibility for nuclear accidents. A chapter on international litigation is also included. O'Connell's treatise is a very valuable resource for certain specific questions which others do not address. It is adequately footnoted and its extensive indexes are a good starting point for research.

Ian BROWNLIE's *Principles of Public International Law*, now in its

third edition, offers far more than an overview of basic principles, as its title suggests. Brownlie's style is lucid enough to capture the interest of the beginner but he also presents many more complex questions of interest to the legal scholar. His use of annotation provides a good starting point for further research in specific fields. Unfortunately, Brownlie, author of the well-known work, *International Law and the Use of Force by States*, excludes a discussion of the use of force from his basic textbook. Terms such as self-defense and armed conflict do not appear in the index. Brownlie's failure to address these elementary questions of the international legal order weakens his book. These questions could have been included without discussing the laws of war, which Brownlie decided to treat in another framework.

G. von GLAHN, on the other hand, devotes almost a quarter of his *Law Among Nations* to the laws of war. His justification for this unusual emphasis on the legal regulation of armed conflict is that "war is with us and will be so for a long time" (p. x). Von Glahn adheres to this realistic perspective throughout his atypical introductory textbook. Specifically, but not exclusively, designed for undergraduate teaching, this frequently updated book offers a comprehensive treatment of the relevant basic questions, often illustrated by cases and other materials. But unlike other casebooks, which contain too many overly condensed materials to be used independently, von Glahn's work can be easily read and understood outside of a course on international law.

The following treatises on international law go beyond the introductory level. The authors are preeminent legal theorists who offer many competing approaches to the study and understanding of international law.

L. OPPENHEIM's *International Law* (Volume I — Peace) is a classic. Although Oppenheim was born in 1858, the character of his work has been preserved through many editions. For instance, he refers to authorities such as Grotius and Vattel to substantiate his arguments. The editor of the current edition, the late Sir Hersch Lauterpacht, has skillfully adapted this masterpiece to the post World War II international system. Lauterpacht's thesis is that international law is to serve "the ultimate fulfilment of purposes which, in relation to individuals organized in political society, are realized by the state (p. 370)." Unfortunately a new edition has not been released since 1955.

*International Law in Historic Perspective* is presented by J. H. W. VERZIJL. This voluminous study offers fascinating opportunities to explore traditional legal doctrines, as well as to research topics on the development of international law. It does not follow a strictly chronological order, as does the revised edition of Arthur NUSSBAUM's short, yet comprehensive standard textbook *A Concise History of the Law of Nations*.

Divided into different subject areas, Verzijl's book provides a useful background for studies in the basic structure of international law (Volume I) and for research in specific fields, which are covered in subsequent volumes.

The *Manual to International Law* by Georg SCHWARTZENBERGER should be read in conjunction with his earlier theoretical work, *The Inductive Approach to International Law*. Otherwise, this book might leave some questions unanswered. For example, his inadequate and disparaging treatment of individual rights weakens the *Manual*. Schwartzenger's realist approach, however, leads him to discuss important basics often neglected by others. Thus he devotes a chapter to patterns of international law and organization in the nuclear age. Also, the author includes an impressive list of study and research aids of over 200 pages, which is not found in any comparable textbook.

An entirely different view is presented in Hans KELSEN's *Principles of International Law*, which has become even more refined in its second edition by Robert W. Tucker. Again, this book needs to be seen in the context of Kelsen's general theory, which he terms a "pure" theory of law. In order to make reality fit into this neo-positivist and monist structure, he has to perform breathtaking intellectual exercises. Because Kelsen assumes that international law rests on effective sanctions, he devotes the first part of this book to a detailed, but debatable, analysis of the concept of war in international law.

Charles deVISSCHER develops a coherent picture of *Theory and Reality in Public International Law* which in its revised edition has already become a classic. Unlike Kelsen, deVisscher avoids placing himself into the straitjacket of a theoretical construct derived from rigid logic. By acknowledging the transcendental nature of men organized in states, he manages to bridge the gap between abstract legal theory and reality in international relations from a naturalist perspective. His work has been hailed as one of the most persuasive answers to neo-positivism, which he links to philosophical relativism. (p. 67).

Some modernist perspectives can be found in a collection of essays under the title: *Transnational Law in a Changing Society* edited by FRIEDMAN, HENKIN, and LISSITZYN in honor of Philip C. Jessup. The difficulty that modernists encounter is easily demonstrated by an article T. O. Elias contributed to this book. With impeccable logic he proves his assertion that UN General Assembly resolutions often have binding force. In reality, however, a logical conclusion by itself creates no law. What still counts is state practice and consent, a fact often overlooked by those who want to restructure the international legal system according to their interests or ideals. Another approach, which is not so much a

reflection of current reality as a projection of hopes for a just world order, is being pursued by Richard Falk, Samuel S. Kim, and Saul H. Mendlowitz and the numerous contributors to the books they are editing in the *Studies on a Just World Order* series.

*International Law Essays*, edited by the foremost champions of the Yale school, Myres S. MCDUGAL and Michael REISMAN, is recommended in lieu of the more standard, lengthy Yale texts. This reader was designed as a supplement to the editors' casebook *International Law in Contemporary Perspective*, but is fully self-contained. Its contributing authors offer theoretical articles on a wide field of general issues as well as on some specific topics such as sanctions and enforcement, recognition and social change, and nationality and human rights. The Yale School's policy perspective on international law is popular only among some quarters of the United States, but elsewhere is highly contested. Its heavy reliance on the so-called values in the prescription and interpretation of norms exposes McDougal and his followers to the criticism their theories reduce international law to power politics in an ideological contest. Their assumption that national decision-makers will take the values of the international community into account while pursuing their national interests is reminiscent of both the hundred year-old theory of autolimitation and, more recently, in the political science of Morgenthauism. The comprehensive theoretical construct put forward by McDougal and his associates has provided the legal science with little more than a new and elaborate terminology.

*Theory of International Law* from a socialist viewpoint is advanced by Gregorij I. TUNKIN, in a translation by W. E. Butler. The importance of the socialist viewpoint in international relations renders the study of socialist works essential to a thorough understanding of international law. Tunkin begins with a discussion of "the international legal ideas of the October Revolution" which are, according to him, socialist internationalism, equality, and self-determination of nations, and peaceful co-existence. The author's thorough treatment of Western theorists, and his own conservative approach, reveal that he is not wedded to socialist progressivism as advanced by the Soviet Union.

Finally, the *Encyclopedia of Public International Law* deserves to be mentioned. The first installments of this twelve-volume project have been published beginning in 1981 under the editorship of Rudolf BERNHARD, the director of the West German Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law. The *Encyclopedia* is useful for quick reference to single points of interest. Unfortunately, the organization of the articles and the cross-reference system leave much to be desired.

The field of international law lacks neither introductory literature nor more advanced, theoretical treatises. With such tools it should certainly be possible to further general understanding about the nature and functions of international law. This in turn would help promote popular demand for a foreign policy which does not seek to avoid international law, but to use it effectively.

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*The Soviet Impact in Africa*. Edited by Mark V. Kauppi and Craig R. Nation, Lexington, Ma., Lexington Books, 1984, 275 pp.

Reviewed by TIMOTHY JUDAH.

*When elephants fight it is the grass that suffers.*  
Old African saying.

Western analysis of Soviet activity in Africa falls into two categories: the “master plan” approach and the “opportunist” approach. The master plan school is exemplified by academics such as Morris Rothenberg<sup>1</sup> and more importantly by President Reagan:

Let's not delude ourselves. The Soviet Union underlies all the unrest that is going on. If they weren't engaged in this game of dominoes there wouldn't be any hot spots in the world.<sup>2</sup>

*The Soviet Impact in Africa* is a formidable collection of eleven essays which counter the Reagan view by analyzing Soviet action in Africa from the opportunist point of view. By focusing on the past ten years, the book plays an important role in confirming the development of recent African trends. The title, however, is a misnomer: the book deals only with Sub-Saharan Africa, and it does not confine itself to Soviet action — it also provides a look at the involvement of Soviet allies, particularly the German Democratic Republic.

As presented by the authors in this book, the opportunist approach attempts to refute the essential tenets of the Reagan approach, which sees a trouble-making Soviet hand everywhere, denies the internal causes of Third World unrest, and believes the Kremlin to be engaged in implementing a master strategy to incorporate Africa into the Soviet bloc. By contrast, the opportunist approach emphasizes the internal causes of unrest in Africa, the effects of the super-power struggle, and the adeptness of African leaders in mouthing the correct slogans at the correct times to serve their own interests. In one case study, Keith Somerville shows how Soviet support for Joshua Nkomo and ZAPU (Zimbabwe African Peoples Union) lends credence to the opportunist argument. Backed by the USSR during the war of liberation, Nkomo lost the struggle for post-independence supremacy to Robert Mugabe.

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1. See Morris Rothenberg, *The USSR and Africa: New Dimensions of Soviet Global Power* (Miami: Advanced International Studies Institute, 1980).
2. *New York Magazine*, 9 March 1981, cited by Fred Halliday, *The Making of the Second Cold War* (London; Verso Editions, 1984), p. 15.

With it was lost the Soviet bid for influence in the new Zimbabwe. The proponents of the opportunist approach, while dispensing with the notion of a Soviet master plan, do not deny the increased level of Soviet activity in Africa since 1974. They argue, however, that the USSR's greater occupation with the continent is due primarily to *increased opportunity*. Significantly, the rise of Soviet activity coincided with the fall of Haile Selassie in Ethiopia and the collapse of the Portuguese empire in 1974. These events provided the Soviet Union with unparalleled opportunities to expand their influence. Though the Soviet Union took advantage of these events, it can not be said that they were part of a master plan. Additionally, an improved operational capability and a greater will to discredit the U.S. and China in the global contest for influence and strategic advantage heightened the degree of Soviet activity.

All of the above is argued forcefully in *The Soviet Impact in Africa* by distinguished authors such as Colin Legum and Marina Ottaway. Conspicuously missing from the collection, however, is an African contribution.

Still, the essays included are of high quality, especially those on Soviet arms transfers by Joachim Krause, Soviet strategic and military interests by Richard Remnek, and on Soviet behavior in Southern Africa by Seth Singleton.

One of the most interesting essays is "The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe: Patterns of Competition and Collaboration" by Christopher Coker of the London School of Economics. Coker pays particular attention to the Eastern European search for an independent and secure source of raw materials from Africa and also notes that these commodities and an increasing amount of their trade are carried along the very same sea routes used by the West. "In this light," he says, "it is difficult to evaluate objectively who represents the greater threat to the other: NATO or the Warsaw Pact."<sup>3</sup> Thus, he attempts to refute one of the main themes of the Cold War school, which is that Soviet penetration in Africa, especially in the littoral states, represents a particular threat to the West because of its potential for endangering crucial Western oil supplies. Because the East is also increasingly dependent on these sea lanes, neither side would risk interfering with the other.<sup>4</sup>

Coker also discusses frictions between the Soviet Union and its allies in the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA). The prime example of this was the Eastern European countries' near unanimous

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3. Mark V. Kauppi and R. Craig Nation, ed., *The Soviet Impact in Africa* (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1984), p.75.

4. See for example Arthur Gavshon, *Crisis in Africa—Battleground of East and West* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1981).

refusal to admit Angola or Mozambique as a member of the CMEA, a direct result of Eastern European resentment at already having to support Cuba, Vietnam and Mongolia through the organization. This and other examples leads Coker to draw an analogy between West European–U.S. competition and East European–Soviet differences of opinion over Africa:

To the extent that both superpowers find themselves baffled by Africa's problems and uncertain of solutions and more willing than hitherto to allow their respective European partners to influence the shaping of their own policies, the analogy may prove less misleading than previously supposed.<sup>5</sup>

Another trend explored in *The Soviet Impact in Africa* is the decline of the influence of China which had backed the present ruling parties of Zimbabwe and Mozambique during their wars of liberation. This trend of decline, however, has not always led to a corresponding increase in Soviet influence. Zimbabwe is a good example of this; Soviet sway after making headway in Mozambique is now tapering off. In the latter, this is because of weak Soviet roots in the country, disappointment over the results of its Soviet style economy, and the failure of the USSR to live up to its declaratory support of the country against both direct and indirect South African aggression. Additionally in terms of economic development, the Soviet Union simply has not delivered the goods. As a result Mozambique has been looking increasingly to the West, and in a severe blow to Soviet prestige in Africa was forced to sign the Nkomati Accord with South Africa.

The example of Mozambique does not stand alone. In a very real sense it symbolizes the new decline of Soviet influence since its peak in 1977. In both the USSR's other great prizes, Angola and Ethiopia, renewed Western economic interest and aid has been encouraged. The high cost to the Africans of maintaining Cuban troops, between \$14,000 and \$22,000 per soldier per year, has also been a source of friction between the Soviet Union and its African allies. Proletarian internationalism is neither free nor subsidized.

What does all this lead the authors of this book to conclude? In general their message is that despite the Soviet gains in Africa over the past decade there is no reason to suppose that these gains will be necessarily long-lasting. The authors' view Soviet failures in Ghana (1966), Sudan (1971), Egypt (1972), Somalia (1978), and Guinea (1979) as evidence of Soviet inability to forge enduring ties. African leaders have, after all,

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5. Kauppi and Nation, *Soviet Impact*, p. 80.

become masters at exploiting the superpower contest. As one of the editors of the volume, Mark V. Kauppi, points out:

Influence . . . works both ways, and Third World States have reasons to request outside assistance which have nothing to do with the East-West competition. They are quite willing to take advantage of foreign assistance for their own domestic purposes. This point, however, tends to be overlooked if a bipolar perspective is superimposed upon the complexities of African politics.<sup>6</sup>

Looking to the future, the authors of *The Soviet Impact in Africa* warn that though Soviet influence may be temporarily in decline, the door of opportunity has often been opened to the USSR by Western policy failures. On its present course, the West is inviting the Soviet Union to enter through the doors of Zaire, Namibia, and the Republic of South Africa. But lest the authors' concern for East-West issues in Africa lead the reader to lose sight of the African perspective, Ndabaningi Sithole reminds us that:

The whole purpose of African nationalism was not to destroy Western imperialism in order to make room for the Eastern bloc, or to deliver free and independent Africa back to the West. The purpose of African nationalism was to create a free and independent Africa with a distinct posture of its own, befriending both the West and the East but bowing down to neither.<sup>7</sup>

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6. Ibid, p. 223.

7. Ndabaningi Sithole, cited by Keith Somerville, "The Soviet Union and Zimbabwe: The Liberation Struggle and After" in Mark V. Kauppi and Craig Nation, ed., *The Soviet Impact in Africa*, opt. cit.

*From H-Bomb to Star Wars: The Politics of Strategic Decision Making.* By Jonathan B. Stein, Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1984, 118 pp.

Reviewed by KATHRYN SULLIVAN.

In contrast to an Orwellian scenario where personal will is usurped by technology, Jonathan B. Stein's *From H-bomb to Star Wars* demonstrates that individual choice is still the predominant factor in shaping today's most crucial strategic decisions. Stein, a fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies at Georgetown University, would disagree with former Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara's contention that it is "an action-reaction phenomenon that fuels an arms race."<sup>1</sup> Instead, the author argues that the decision to take a next step in nuclear weapons development has always rested with the political leadership. In his opinion it is a fallacy to place responsibility for the development of successive new generations of nuclear weapons on inevitable technological advancement. Stein writes:

Technology is an essential ingredient in any arms race. . . . Its forward advance permits adjustments, modifications, and doctrinal attenuation but it does not by itself dictate the essential rules of the game. . . . Politics provides the determining and sustaining impetus to genuinely new weapons development and acquisition processes.<sup>2</sup>

*From H-bomb to Star Wars* is an implicit continuation of *From Crossbow to H-Bomb* (Indiana University Press, 1973) by Bernard and Fawn M. Brodie; it topically overlaps with the earlier work, but diverges in emphasis. *From Crossbow to H-Bomb* focuses on the advances in weaponry wrought by scientists, while *From H-Bomb to Star Wars* focuses on the development of weapons systems as a result of presidential directives. In other words, while the Brodies concentrate primarily on the "what," Stein focuses on the "why."

By contrasting the role of American policy-makers in the debate over the H-bomb with that over "Star Wars," Stein highlights the evolution of U.S. military doctrine and reminds the reader of the underlying principles in the strategic decision-making of the past three decades.

Although the author presents his arguments forcefully, his obvious

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1. John Newhouse, *Cold Dawn: The Story of SALT* (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1973), p. 9.
2. Jonathan B. Stein, *From H-Bomb to Star Wars: The Politics of Strategic Decision Making* (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1984), p. 4.

bias prevents him from being consistently persuasive. Sometimes, Stein's readiness to denounce the development and deployment of new weapons systems interferes with his presentation of factual evidence. This becomes particularly evident in his narration of the events that led to the building of the hydrogen-bomb. When describing American postwar concerns he proclaims "the solidification of anti-communism and *excessive* national security concerns grew out of a mix of Soviet-American actions and rhetoric. American policymakers became *obsessed* with security."<sup>3</sup>

This reviewer would like to have seen this argument substantiated. For could not the Truman administration's consciousness of security issues just as easily be interpreted as an example of insightful *realpolitik*? Reinhold Niebuhr tended to take this view when he warned after the crises in Iran (1946), Turkey (1946), and Berlin (1948), "we cannot afford any more compromises. We must stand at every point of our far-flung lines."<sup>4</sup> In Niebuhr's time these comments were well-received among politicians and academics alike. What is more, Walter LaFeber points out that the determination to be tough with the Russians was not limited to American policy-makers. Among NATO's founding members it was considered good policy, "to create not merely a balance of power, but a preponderance of power."<sup>5</sup> Stein's evaluation fails to account for the full scope of the post-war security debate.

When Stein proceeds to focus on the intricacies of the H-bomb dialectic, he is again guided by his political credo rather than by scholarly prudence. He creates an unfavorable impression of H-bomb proponents by portraying them as "trying to overwhelm the President," "to railroad him" and "to blitz him into making a hasty decision."<sup>6</sup> In addition, H-bomb advocates are characterized as intolerant of opponents' views: "McMahon told Teller that the advisory group's recommendations (not to build the bomb) 'made him sick.'"<sup>7</sup> Meanwhile, the position of H-bomb opponents is characterized as reflecting wise policy and sound moral reasoning. Stein cites Robert Oppenheimer:

This is a weapon of genocide . . . (Moreover, the economic and military costs would probably outweigh any potential benefits). In determining not to proceed to develop the super-bomb, we see a unique opportunity of providing by example

3. Ibid, p. 12. Reviewer's emphasis.

4. Reinhold Niebuhr, "For Peace We Must Risk War," *Life* XXV (September 20, 1948), pp. 38-39.

5. Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia and the Cold War* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1980), p. 84.

6. Jonathan B. Stein, *From H-Bomb to Star Wars: The Politics of Strategic Decision Making*, opt. cit.

7. Ibid, p. 23.

some limitations on the totality of war and thus of limiting the fear and arousing the hope of mankind.<sup>8</sup>

As a result of Stein's rather biased treatment of the arguments surrounding the final adoption of the H-bomb proposal, the reader is understandably skeptical when Stein proceeds to review the Star Wars initiative, the second case study in the book. Yet, Stein's analysis of what he labels the "politics of strategic defense" includes a rather objective overview of the evolution of nuclear doctrine in which he examines the concept of Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) and the implications of a shift in nuclear doctrine from offensive to defensive, particularly, the ramifications of this shift on the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty of 1972. In addition, the book provides a solid explanation of the technologies involved in space-based defense without delving too deeply into technical jargon. In these respects, *From H-Bomb to Star Wars* is informative and enables its readers to form their own thoughts regarding the Star Wars plan.

Stein builds a strong case against the placement of BMD technology in outer space. He points convincingly to several inherent dangers in the research, development and deployment of space-based BMD systems, and argues that potential by-products of the Star Wars program would mirror unintended consequences of past decisions which initiate new weapons systems. Such unintended consequences, in Stein's view, included "a retreat from arms control, an increase in tensions between the two superpowers and the acceleration of a number of trends that worsen crisis stability."<sup>9</sup>

Given that the author's arguments against the deployment of space-based BMD weapons are coherent, and well-presented, should Stein have simply omitted the case study involving the hydrogen bomb? Definitely not. More than three decades have passed since the adoption of the decision to proceed with the hydrogen bomb, and many of the arguments used then in favor of bigger, better, and more technologically advanced weapons reappear in today's debate. By including an interpretation of the Truman administration's military strategy, Stein provides a historical perspective which highlights the misleading nature of arguments advanced both then and now.

By juxtaposing the H-bomb and Star Wars debates, Stein makes a dramatically clear point: When confronted with a perceived Soviet challenge, U.S. decision-makers all too often rely on the assumption that military answers (the "technical-fix" approach, as Stein calls it) are pre-

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8. Ibid, p. 22.

9. Ibid, p. 27.

ferable to diplomatic solutions. He reveals that the Truman administration chose not to seek an agreement with the Soviet Union barring thermonuclear weapons and instead chose to develop the hydrogen-bomb because of prevailing Cold War sentiments but in the 1980s, the "strategic defense initiative is preferred by the Reagan administration because it is more appealing than protracted arms-control negotiations." In short, "in the absence of negotiations or the grounds for some semblance of mutual trust, Washington and Moscow chose the path of arms escalation instead of arms limitations."<sup>10</sup> Just as the decision to build the H-bomb neither increased national security nor achieved a stable nuclear environment, in the absence of arms-control negotiations, Stein warns that the Reagan administration's strategic defense initiative will obtain similar results — an escalation of the arms race without an increase in security.

*From H-Bomb to Star Wars* is neither the complete nor the final word in the ongoing discussion of U.S. security interests. Despite its shortcomings, it does make a valuable contribution by outlining the relevant issues of the debate in manageable terms. Equally important, the book assures the reader that strategic weapons choices are best understood in the political and institutional context in which presidential decisions are made, and not as a result of technological momentum.

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10. *Ibid.*, p. 86.