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Atomic Logic: US Non-Proliferation Initiatives and Presidential Decision-Making, 1961-1974

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Atomic Logic: US Non-Proliferation Initiatives and Presidential Decision-Making, 1961-1974

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Submitted to Lawrence University in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for Honors in Independent Study

30 April 2013

I hereby reaffirm the Lawrence University Honor Code:

Stephen J. Nordin

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Introduction: The Proliferation Problem in the 1960s and 1970s

*Luxembourg is next to go,
And (who knows?) maybe Monaco.
We'll all try to remain serene and calm
When Alabama gets the bomb.
Who's next, who's next, who's next...
Who's next?*

—Tom Lehrer, "Who's Next?" (1965)

The spread of nuclear weapons is a political phenomenon that has captivated post-Cold War presidents and the American public. From Former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's fears that the "smoking gun" of the purported Iraqi nuclear weapons program would be a "mushroom cloud" to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's red line at the United Nations to the posturing of North Korea, fears of nuclear proliferation have prominently driven American foreign policy. President Barack Obama, speaking before Congress in his 2013 State of the Union Address, declared that "America will continue to lead the effort to prevent the spread of the world's most dangerous weapons."¹

By its very nature, proliferation is not just limited to the building of an explosive device, but also the spread of technical know-how. It is also self-sustaining. When India made signs of pursuing a nuclear test, Pakistan's premier, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, declared in 1972 that his countrymen would "eat grass" if it meant the acquisition of a nuclear device.² One scientist working on the Pakistani weapons program, Abdul Qadeer Khan, brought his knowledge to the autocratic regimes of North Korea, Libya, and Iran. The consequences of the phenomenon's early phases of proliferation have a direct effect on contemporary international politics.

¹ Quoted in "Analyzing President Obama's State of the Union Address," *New York Times*, 13 February 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2013/02/12/us/politics/obama-state-of-the-union-2013.html?_r=0#/?annotation=280e1219d (Accessed 25 April 2013).

² Quoted in Quoted in Praful Bidwai and Achin Vanaik, *New Nukes: India, Pakistan and Global Nuclear Disarmament*, (New York: Olive Branch Press, 2000), 189.

As will be discussed in the following chapter, the first two Presidents to possess the nuclear option following the Second World War valued the military and civilian applications of atomic energy too much in order to seek any sort of international limitations on its potential. However, the generation of Democratic politicians that succeeded Truman and Eisenhower were worried by the rapid expansion of the nuclear club to Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and France, with Communist China applying for membership. President John F. Kennedy used the issue of proliferation while still a senator to attack the Eisenhower administration. As President, Kennedy sought to stem the flow of nuclear arms on a case-by-case basis while seeking international controls on the testing of atomic explosives. Kennedy's successor, Lyndon B. Johnson, entered office during a time when the world seemed to become more dangerous by the minute. As international historian Francis J. Gavin notes, "a nuclear armed China under Mao Zedong was far more terrifying [to American policymakers] than anything Iraq's Saddam Hussein or current 'rogue' rulers could muster."³

Johnson, unlike Kennedy, did not have the time or political breathing room to pursue personal guarantees from the dissembling leaders of potential proliferators. He sought to craft an international settlement that would bypass the give-and-take of bilateral negotiations and put effective safeguards on civilian nuclear technology into place. However, crafting a treaty that was acceptable to existing nuclear powers and non-nuclear states proved to be difficult. Getting allies, like Israel, and important non-aligned states, like India, to ratify the 1968 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) or accept international inspections proved impossible. However, for the sake of this Treaty, Johnson was willing to undermine Kennedy's bilateral efforts, or at least

³ Francis Gavin, "Blasts from the Past: Proliferation Lessons from the 1960s," in *International Security* 29, no. 3 (Winter 2004/2005), 100-101.

the ones he knew about, with the most immediate of proliferation dangers, Israel and India. The former acquired weapons on Johnson's watch. The latter would do so under Nixon.

Richard M. Nixon was not concerned about proliferation in the same way as Kennedy and Johnson. As Vice President, he watched Johnson attack Eisenhower from the Senate for his inaction on the proliferation issue. As a candidate for the Presidency in 1960, he sweated under television lights as Kennedy sought to tie his record to Communist China's weapons program. When he was President, nuclear proliferation did not make the international political landscape more threatening—it simply altered its topography. As will be seen in the cases of Israel and India, Nixon and his inner circle merely adjusted to the introduction of nuclear arms into the Middle East and South Asia after the fact, rather than take any sort of preventative measures. He signed the NPT for the sake of appearances, but had no intention of letting it become a constraint on his absolute freedom to conduct American foreign policy.

The second phase of nuclear proliferation—that by non-Security Council countries in the 1960s and 1970s—acted as the impetus for weapons development by regimes in South Asia and the Middle East that proved to be problematic for later presidents. Non-proliferation policy in that time period seems at first glance to be a series of increasingly focused international negotiations culminating in the NPT, though the word "policy" implies a much more unified approach than was the case.

However, through analysis of declassified primary source material, a number of significant influences on American non-proliferation initiatives can be discerned. The following study examine these influences, including presidential attitudes toward the spread of nuclear arms, the role of advisors, intelligence analysis, and the individual President's way of conducting international relations. These competing factors all weighed on the minds of Kennedy, Johnson,

and Nixon when they confronted the spread of nuclear weapons and allowed two seemingly contradictory sets of policies to emerge.

Historiographical Review

There are very few international historians who focus on both bilateral and multilateral American efforts to stymie the horizontal flow of nuclear arms. George H.W. Bush official and historian of non-proliferation Henry D. Sokolski's historical analysis emphasized on what he described as "key nonproliferation initiatives," which were multilateral efforts such as the Baruch Plan, the Atoms for Peace Program, and the NPT.⁴ The purpose of his book was to examine "nonproliferation's past and future" for the sake of contemporary policy. The link between the history of proliferation and advocacy is present in another survey of international non-proliferation efforts—*Bomb Scare: The History and Future of Nuclear Weapons*—written by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace's former non-proliferation director, Joseph Cirincione.⁵ This book also analyzed the Baruch Plan, Atoms for Peace, and the NPT. To Cirincione, the significance of horizontal proliferators is after the fact—the policies they inspired and the threat to American interests they represented. Both of these texts are in favor of increased international controls on nuclear weapons. Sokolski's historical analysis of non-proliferation led him to urge American policymakers to distinguish between liberal and illiberal regimes when placing controls on civilian atomic energy—in order to "ensure that the next [non-proliferation] campaign is the last."⁶ Cirincione's account ended with the wish that "we may

⁴ Henry D. Sokolski, *Best of Intentions: America's Campaign against Strategic Weapons Proliferation* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001), xiii.

⁵ Joseph Cirincione, *Bomb Scare: The History and Future of Nuclear Weapons* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

⁶ Sokolski, *Best of Intentions*, 111.

finally be able to correct the one mistake Einstein thought he made."⁷ Although Sokolski and Cirincione provide excellent narratives of the development of non-proliferation initiatives, their advocacy of a stricter international regulatory regime raises the question of bias in their analysis.

There are a number of excellent surveys on American nuclear relations with specific proliferating countries. The best examples of historical writing for specific cases discussed below, those of Israel and India, use extensive documentary research to produce a compelling account of American diplomatic initiatives to check the spread of nuclear weapons. Avner Cohen's *Israel and the Bomb* is supported by many primary sources declassified at the author's behest, but multilateral US efforts garner only cursory examination as external influences on the Israeli program.⁸ This account is focused on elucidating the compromises between American and Israeli policymakers. For example, the NPT is featured as a sticking point in US-Israel relations, rather than a topic of separate inquiry. After India's Pokhran II nuclear tests of May 1998, George Perkovich, a social scientist by training, wrote a history of India's nuclear program—which was tied very closely to relations with the United States—using both American and Indian sources.⁹ Again, the interplay between multilateral agreements and American policy toward the potential proliferator is minimal; the NPT is again portrayed as a simple diplomatic complication.

The study below seeks to examine both broad and country-specific American non-proliferation initiatives. When bilateral negotiations with Israel and India in the 1960s and 1970s are compared with formal American international non-proliferation policy during that time period, an apparent contradiction is discovered. As Presidents Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon

⁷ Cirincione, *Bomb Scare*, 157.

⁸ Avner Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

⁹ George Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb: The Impact on Global Proliferation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

were overtly working to place increasingly strict safeguards on the civilian nuclear programs of those nations, they were privately undermining their own efforts through a series of oversights and willful compromises.

The following account seeks to explain how American presidents and policymakers could hold in their minds two diametrically opposed sets of motivations and plans. Through the analysis of declassified primary source material, it is possible to reconstruct policymaker perceptions of the "Nth power problem," as international relations theorist Albert Wohlstetter described nuclear proliferation in his influential 1961 article in *Foreign Affairs*.¹⁰ The decision-making processes thus reproduced help explain how the key American officials could support bilateral policies which undermined their own broad non-proliferation efforts.

¹⁰ Albert Wohlstetter, "Nuclear Sharing: NATO and the N+1 Country," in *Foreign Affairs* 3, no.4 (April 1961): 355-387.

A Patchwork Policy: Formal Non-Proliferation Efforts from Truman to Nixon

It will be very difficult to persuade the world that a nation which was capable of secretly preparing and suddenly releasing a weapon, as indiscriminate as the rocket bomb and a thousand times more destructive, is to be trusted in its proclaimed desire of having such weapons abolished by international agreement.

— "Report of the Committee on Political and Social Problems",
Manhattan Project Metallurgical Laboratory (11 June 1945)¹¹

After the shocking debut of the atomic bomb at Hiroshima on 6 August 1945, the White House released a statement explaining this scientific development to American and foreign audiences.¹² While most of the statement is devoted to the Manhattan Project, the technical capabilities of the device, and its implications for the war against Japan, two short paragraphs at predicted the perils of nuclear proliferation:

It has never been the habit of the scientists of this country or the policy of this Government to withhold from the world scientific knowledge. Normally, therefore, everything about the work with atomic energy would be made public.

But under present circumstances it is not intended to divulge the technical processes of production or all the military applications, pending further examination of possible methods of protecting us from the rest of the world from the danger of sudden destruction.¹³

The United States developed a weapon of significant destructive capabilities in secret and opened Pandora's Box to reveal a mushroom cloud. As noted in the statement, the spread of nuclear weapons to other countries was perceived by Truman to be directly against the strategic interests of the United States. Truman also recognized the political difficulty of denying other nations the potential civilian applications of nuclear technology. However, his position as a wartime president led him to maximize the relatively short-term military benefit of the bomb

¹¹ "Report of the Committee on Political and Social Problems, Manhattan Project Metallurgical Laboratory, University of Chicago, 11 June 1945, U.S. National Archives, Washington D.C.: Record Group 77, Manhattan Engineer District Records, Harrison-Bundy File, folder #76.

¹² Cited in Robert C. Williams and Philip L. Cantelon, eds., *The American Atom: A Documentary History of Nuclear Policies from the Discovery of Fission to the Present, 1939-1984* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984), 68-70.

¹³ Williams and Cantelon, eds., *The American Atom*, 70.

through its use instead of catering to long-term political and diplomatic consequences. The moral and political imperatives of the Second World War seemed to predominate within the Truman White House's nuclear policy long after the capitulation of the Axis powers.

The scientists involved with the Manhattan Project, realizing that nuclear weaponry would dramatically alter the geopolitical balance of the world and the stakes of war, repeatedly urged the Truman administration to strive for international regulation of the atom. Earlier in June of 1945, a group known as the Panel of Scientists reported to the Interim Committee, Truman's top-secret advisory body on nuclear power. The members of the Panel were key scientists who developed atomic weaponry and included Arthur H. Compton, Ernest O. Lawrence, J. Robert Oppenheimer, and Enrico Fermi.¹⁴

In their report, the scientists expressed their hope that the use of an atomic bomb would "promote a satisfactory adjustment of our international relations," while noting the "obligation to our nation to use the weapons to help save American lives in the Japanese war."¹⁵ This roughly matches up with Truman's views: there were political incentives for the regulation of nuclear technology, but after the international threat had passed. However, the scientists went further. Drawing on their earlier wishes for an "adjustment of our international relations," they suggested that:

...before the weapons are used, not only Britain, but also Russia, France, and China be advised that we have made considerable progress in our work on atomic weapons and these may be ready to use during the present war, and that we would welcome suggestions as to how we can cooperate in making this development contribute to improved international relations.¹⁶

¹⁴Cited in Williams and Cantelon, eds., *The American Atom*, 63-64.

¹⁵ Cited in Williams and Cantelon, eds. *The American Atom*, 63.

¹⁶ Cited in Williams and Cantelon, eds. *The American Atom*, 63. All four of the aforementioned nations developed nuclear arms by 1964.

Ten days later, on 26 June 1945, George L. Harrison, assistant to Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson on nuclear matters, noted that a large number of Manhattan Project scientists, via anonymously submitted comments:

... [felt] great concern for the future if atomic power is not controlled through some effective international mechanism. Accordingly, most of them believe that one of the effective steps in establishing such a control is the assurance that, after this war is over, there shall be a free interchange of scientific opinion throughout the world supplemented, if possible, by some system of inspection. This they admit is a problem of the future.¹⁷

This sentiment was echoed by a group of Manhattan Project scientists, headed by Leo Szilard, working out of the secret "Metallurgical Laboratory" at the University of Chicago in a petition to Truman on 17 July 1945. In this petition, they expressed the fear that American use of an atomic weapon would lead to an international arms race. Citing the threat of "sudden annihilation," the Chicago scientists urged Truman to consider that:

...the material strength that this lead gives the United States brings with it the obligation of restraint and if we were to violate this obligation our moral position would be weakened in the eyes of the world and in our own eyes. It would then be more difficult for us to live up to our responsibility of bringing the unloosed forces of destruction under control.¹⁸

The Manhattan Project scientists consistently pushed the administration to view atomic weaponry as a political and moral development, not just as a new military technology.

Truman chose to not act on their advice and ordered the dropping of atomic bomb on Japan without warning. He agreed that nuclear weapons ought to be regulated, but continued to place military considerations before diplomatic initiatives. In a memo to Truman, Stimson argued that "civilization demands that some day we shall arrive at a satisfactory international arrangement respecting the control of this new force, the question then is how long we can afford to enjoy our momentary superiority in the hope of achieving our immediate peace council

¹⁷ Cited in Williams and Cantelon, eds. *The American Atom*, 65.

¹⁸ Cited in Williams and Cantelon, eds. *The American Atom*, 67.

objectives."¹⁹ However, there was much disagreement as to who should control atomic secrets: the military or civilian leadership. Truman backed the May-Johnson Bill, which would have created an Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) within the Department of Defense and classified most nuclear information, but organized scientific opposition stalled the bill in the Senate.²⁰

Brien McMahon, a Democratic senator from Connecticut and chairman of the Senate Special Committee on Atomic Energy, sponsored a new bill proposing civilian control of nuclear power. The bill, which passed unanimously in the Senate, established a government monopoly on atomic energy via a five-man and non-military AEC.²¹ It also criminalized unauthorized dissemination of nuclear technology or materials with a penalty of up to \$10,000 and five years in prison.²² This measure was reported to have nearly universal public support, which Anthony Leviero, writing for the *New York Times* attributed to the unanimity of the Senate Special Committee on Atomic Energy.²³ However, the AEC's tight control over atomic secrets alienated wartime allies Canada and the United Kingdom, whom Franklin D. Roosevelt had promised cooperation on nuclear matters.²⁴ This led Clement Atlee to inform W. Averell Harriman, Truman's Ambassador to the Court of St. James, that the McMahon bill compelled Britain to "build her own plants for atomic energy production for both military and civilian purposes."²⁵ This was the first of many instances of a non-nuclear country initiating a development program in direct reaction to exclusion from the "nuclear club."

¹⁹ Cited in Williams and Cantelon, eds. *The American Atom*, 76.

²⁰ Williams and Cantelon, eds. *The American Atom*, 71.

²¹ Anthony Leviero, "Senate Body Votes M'Mahon Atom Bill without Dissent," *New York Times*, 12 April 1946, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/107400869?accountid=12010> (Accessed 17 February 2013).

²² Cited in Williams and Cantelon, eds. *The American Atom*, 90.

²³ Leviero, "Senate Body Votes," <http://search.proquest.com/docview/107400869?accountid=12010>.

²⁴ Raymond Dawson and Richard Rosecrance, "Theory and Reality in the Anglo-American Alliance," *World Politics* 19, no.1 (October 1966): 21-51.

²⁵ Cited in H.G. Nicholas, *Britain and the United States* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1963), 64.

The Atomic Energy Act of 1946 created a domestic regulatory regime for nuclear power with some international consequences. It seems that Truman learned from British and Canadian backlash to the Act. In his memoirs, he states that he conferred with Secretary of State James F. Byrnes on the importance of being "in a position where we could put our plan for international control before the United Nations without being handicapped by a domestic law that would have made it impossible for us to participate."²⁶ Truman assembled a panel of scientists, military officials, corporate executives, and diplomats to write a report on the prospects of international regulation. It took its name from its most prominent authors: Undersecretary of State Dean Acheson and David E. Lilienthal, chairman of the Tennessee Valley Authority.²⁷ The Acheson-Lilienthal Report noted that the board was:

...impressed by the great advantages of an international agency with affirmative powers and functions coupled with powers of inspection and supervision in contrast to any agency with merely police-like powers attempting to cope with national agencies otherwise restrained only by a commitment to "outlaw" the use of atomic energy for war.²⁸

The unauthorized release of this report brought the attention of the press and gave Truman's nominated representative to the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission (UNAEC), respected Democratic financier Bernard Baruch cold feet about the position.²⁹ Baruch explained in a letter to the President that he was uncomfortable with the forming public understanding that his purview would include policy formulation as well as representing US interests at the UNAEC.³⁰ Byrnes assured his fellow South Carolinian that he would continue to be "adviser to Presidents," but politely reminded him that he would act in a capacity of Truman's choosing.³¹

²⁶ Harry S. Truman, *Years of Trial and Hope* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, 1956), 2:7.

²⁷ Both would be promoted shortly thereafter; Acheson to Secretary of State and Lilienthal to chairman of the AEC.

²⁸ Board of Consultants to the Secretary of State's Commission on Atomic Energy, "A Report on the International Control of Atomic Energy," Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., March 16, 1946.

²⁹ Truman, *Years of Trial and Hope*, 2:9.

³⁰ Truman, *Years of Trial and Hope*, 2:8.

³¹ Quoted in Truman, *Years of Trial and Hope*, 2:10.

Baruch accepted the nomination and set to work on converting the Acheson-Lilienthal Report into a proposal for international consideration.

Truman sent Baruch instructions on 7 June 1946 to advocate for international regulation of nuclear power including "managerial control of all atomic energy activities intrinsically dangerous to world security" and inspection powers.³² The Baruch Plan, as it came to be known, was bold and proposed that that national atomic programs had to be "subordinate to the direction and absolute dominion on the part of the international authority."³³ Baruch brought the proposal before the UNAEC on 14 June and within hours encountered sharp opposition from the Soviet Union. The Soviets, as well as the Polish delegation, wanted unilateral American nuclear disarmament, an immediate cessation of atomic bomb production, and a non-use agreement before they would accept the agreement.³⁴ Truman told Baruch that he did not want to "throw away our gun until we are sure the rest of the world can't arm against us."³⁵ The UNAEC approved a plan similar to that proposed by Baruch, but it was indefinitely blocked in the Security Council by the Soviet veto. Baruch, who described international control as "the last, best hope of earth," became disheartened in the face of Soviet obstructionism and resigned in 1947.³⁶ The stalemate in the UN and rapidly degrading relations with the Soviet Union at the beginning of the Cold War frustrated Truman, who gave up on international regulation of atomic energy. He ended the section of his memoirs devoted to the Baruch Plan by writing: "The possibility that Russia would not co-operate in an international control scheme had been anticipated by us. We were prepared, in any event, to safeguard our own national interest."³⁷ The

³² Williams and Cantelon, eds. *The American Atom*, 94.

³³ Williams and Cantelon, eds. *The American Atom*, 97.

³⁴ Truman, *Years of Trial and Hope*, 2:11.

³⁵ Truman, *Years of Trial and Hope*, 2:11.

³⁶ Williams and Cantelon, eds. *The American Atom*, 72.

³⁷ Truman, *Years of Trial and Hope*, 2:11.

failure of the Truman administration to reach any sort of international settlement on the nuclear proliferation question can be attributed to the same conundrum presented in his Hiroshima statement: how to maintain the military advantage of a nuclear monopoly while convincing other countries to forgo weapons development.

The banner of international nuclear regulation was not raised again until almost one year into Dwight D. Eisenhower's first administration. On 11 January 1952, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 02 (VI): "Regulations, Limitation, and Balanced Reduction of All Armed Forces and All Armaments; International Control of Atomic Energy" under joint British, French, and American sponsorship.³⁸ This resolution established a Disarmament Commission under Security Council purview.³⁹ Eisenhower's response came in an 8 December 1953 address before the General Assembly, in which he noted that "the knowledge now possessed by several nations [the US, Great Britain, Canada, and the Soviet Union] will eventually be shared by others, possibly all others" and that "even a vast superiority in numbers of weapons... is no preventive, of itself, against the fearful damage and toll of human lives that would be inflicted by surprise aggression."⁴⁰ He proposed using "Atoms for Peace" by supporting international civilian nuclear development. The United States, he claimed, would be "proud" to show "all the peoples of all nations... that, in this enlightened age, the great powers of the earth, both of the East and of the West, are interested in human aspirations first rather than building up the armaments of war."⁴¹ By stockpiling fissionable material with the UN's International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the US could prevent vertical proliferation, or

³⁸ US Department of State, Office of the Historian, "Editorial Note," in *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1952-1954*, 2:845.

³⁹ UN General Assembly, Sixth Session, "Resolution 502 VI (1951) [On International Control of Atomic Energy], Adopted 11 January 1952, in *FRUS, 1951*, 1:613-615.

⁴⁰ Williams and Cantelon, eds. *The American Atom*, 106.

⁴¹ Williams and Cantelon, eds. *The American Atom*, 111.

increased weapon quantity and quality in existing nuclear nations. This plan was based on the assumption in the US national security establishment that the Soviet Union would have two hundred atomic bombs by 1954, which was enough to destroy the American economy "beyond recovery."⁴² If the fissionable materials necessary for extensive weapons production were impounded, stored, and monitored by international agreement, no nuclear power could have the weapons capacity for a knockout blow to an opponent's economy.

While the Atoms for Peace program sought to combat vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons, it facilitated the horizontal spread of nuclear weapons to other countries. Eisenhower's proposed allocation of fissionable material to non-nuclear countries for the "needs of agriculture, medicine and other peaceful activities," particularly electricity for the "power-starved areas of the world," likely made weapons development possible for those countries.⁴³ The administration was well-aware that Atoms for Peace could facilitate nuclear proliferation; indeed, it was not considered a significant threat to American interests. Eisenhower's Ambassador to the UN for disarmament issues, Harold Stassen, explaining the "substance" of the program, noted that even with the most effective international controls, "it would be perfectly possible... for some... future government... to take away and divert without the knowledge of the inspectors, a quantity of fissionable material from which twenty, forty, or even fifty multi-megaton bombs could be fabricated." However, according to Stassen, this was not a problem because as:

long as there does exist on various sides in the world a remaining nuclear weapons capability, there would not be the incentive for relatively minor diversion into unauthorized weapons. Nor would there be the terrible consequences if there were relatively minor diversion for a few weapons; because those few weapons would be restrained, canceled out and deterred by the remaining capability in the hands of nations on various sides.⁴⁴

⁴²Sokolski, *Best of Intentions*, 26.

⁴³ Williams and Cantelon, eds. *The American Atom*, 110.

⁴⁴ "Statement by the United States Representative (Stassen) to the Disarmament Subcommittee: Nuclear Weapons and Testing, 20 March 1957," in U.S. Department of State, *Documents on Disarmament 1945-1959*, 2:765-768.

The conclusion that some horizontal proliferation of nuclear arms was an acceptable cost of superpower arms reductions seems counter-intuitive. However, as discussed above, American policymakers were concerned with preventing a "knockout blow" to the economy; a true threat was a nuclear arsenal greater than the golden count of two hundred bombs. A country with a smaller arsenal could be deterred in the usual manner without ever seriously having the capacity to significantly endanger the United States. As such, the US Congress amended the Atomic Energy Act in 1958 to allow exports of fissile material, technical designs, and parts, even if the recipients "made significant progress in the development of nuclear weapons."⁴⁵

This all changed when American nuclear strategists began to realize that the strategic balance was much more precarious than previously thought. Robert C. Sprague, an electric company executive and consultant to the National Security Council (NSC), told Eisenhower on 7 November 1957 that a mere two hundred and forty Soviet planes could knock out the airfields and aircraft carriers necessary for a retaliatory nuclear strike before American planes could scramble.⁴⁶ Sprague was director of a group of private citizens known as "The Security Resources Panel of the Office of Defense Mobilization Science Advisory Committee," which was responsible for assessing Soviet strength and American weakness.⁴⁷ Eisenhower rejected the Panel's findings because he thought they underestimated the value of overseas Strategic Air Command (SAC) bases and did not understand the "totality" of the American strategic situation, particularly the importance of appearing strong to allies.⁴⁸ Sprague thought that his meeting with the President was a waste of time and to some extent, he was correct. Eisenhower "disdained hype" and thought it very unlikely that SAC would be so caught by surprise that they would be

⁴⁵ Quoted in Sokolski, *Best of Intentions*, 41.

⁴⁶ Fred Kaplan, *The Wizards of Armageddon* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), 150.

⁴⁷ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Waging Peace, 1956-1961* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, 1965), 219.

⁴⁸ Eisenhower, *Waging Peace*, 221.

unable to retaliate in significant numbers.⁴⁹ However, even if Eisenhower and his Secretary of State John Foster Dulles found the Panel's findings unconvincing, senior Democrats did not. Texas Senator Lyndon B. Johnson pressed the administration to release the Panel's report, known as the "Gaither Report" to the public, albeit with redactions of classified information.⁵⁰ The *New York Times* also helped fan public concern and pressured Eisenhower to release the report, writing that the previous understandings of American strategic superiority were:

...a fool's paradise, and it is past time to come out of it. The truth is one of the tonics we need, and if the Gaither report tells us some harsh truths it is all the more important to proclaim them. The American people are going to be called upon to make some sacrifices to preserve their freedoms, but they must know why this is necessary. It is time for strong medicine, not a soothing pap.⁵¹

Although Eisenhower considered the public pressure over the report to be "a gadfly," it helped challenge the administration's focus on vertical proliferation and strengthened voices against the reasoning behind the Atoms for Peace program within the administration.⁵² One such voice, Ambassador to the UN Henry Cabot Lodge, admitted that a single nuclear weapon could "easily ignite a nuclear conflagration" and that IAEA safeguards were not enough to prevent horizontal proliferation.⁵³ After France tested a nuclear device in February 1960, a National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) determined that "Communist China" likely started a weapons development program and that West Germany, Sweden, India, and Japan had the capacity to begin development.⁵⁴ The intelligence community, unlike Eisenhower, argued via the estimate that horizontal proliferation was a threat to American interests, as "any increase in the number of

⁴⁹ Kaplan, *Wizards of Armageddon*, 151.

⁵⁰ Eisenhower, *Waging Peace*, 221.

⁵¹ Editorial, "The Gaither Report," *New York Times*, 26 December 1957, 18.

<http://search.proquest.com/docview/114268313?accountid=12010>. (Accessed 28 February 2013).

⁵² Eisenhower, *Waging Peace*, 223.

⁵³ "Statement by the United States Representative (Lodge) to the Disarmament Commission, 3 July 1956," in US Department of State, *Documents on Disarmament 1945-1959*, 2:649.

⁵⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, *NIE 100-4-60*, "Likelihood and Consequences of the Development of Nuclear Capabilities by Additional Countries," 20 September 1960, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB155/prolif-5.pdf>. (Accessed 1 March 2013).

nuclear powers could raise the chances that nuclear weapons would be used. It would also increase the dangers which could flow from actions taken through miscalculation."⁵⁵

Non-proliferation also gave the Democrats a stick with which to beat the Eisenhower administration and its designated successor, 1960 presidential nominee Richard M. Nixon. John F. Kennedy, riding a new wave of public outcry over a perceived "missile gap," attacked Nixon in the third televised debate with the linked charge of being complacent toward proliferation, stating:

There are indications, because of new inventions, that ten, fifteen, or twenty nations will have a nuclear capacity—including Red China—by the end of the presidential office in 1964. This is extremely serious. . . I think the fate not only of our own civilization, but I think the fate of world and the future of the human race, is involved in preventing a nuclear war.⁵⁶

The Kennedy administration would prove to be one of the most attentive toward the spread of nuclear weapons, due in no small part to Kennedy himself. Israeli historian and nuclear weapons scholar Avner Cohen, citing numerous interviews with administration officials, asserts that "no American president was more concerned with the danger of nuclear proliferation."⁵⁷ In his first State of the Union address on 30 January 1961, Kennedy asserted that "the deadly arms race, and the huge resources it absorbs, have too long overshadowed all else we must do. We must prevent the arms race from spreading to new nations, to new nuclear powers and to the reaches of outer space."⁵⁸ Robert S. McNamara, the new Secretary of Defense, joined a chorus of voice who rode the wave of public insecurity over the balance of nuclear power into the Kennedy White House. A few months before the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, McNamara argued against the

⁵⁵ CIA, *NIE 100-4-60*, 2.

⁵⁶ "Face-to-Face: Nixon-Kennedy," Online Video, Debate Televised 13 October 1960, John F. Kennedy Library Foundation, <http://www.jfklibrary.org/60-3rd.htm> (Accessed 21 November 2012).

⁵⁷ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 99.

⁵⁸ "Transcript of the President's First Report to Congress on the State of the Union." *New York Times*, 31 January 1961. <http://search.proquest.com/docview/115345154?accountid=12010>. (Accessed 28 February 2013).

Eisenhower administration's assumption that no rational individual would start against a nuclear war, stating:

...the mere fact that no nation could rationally take steps leading to a nuclear war does not guarantee that a nuclear war cannot take place. Not only do nations sometimes act in ways that are hard to explain on a rational basis, but even when acting in a "rational" way, they sometimes, indeed disturbingly often, act on the basis of misunderstandings of the true facts of a situation. They misjudge the ways others will react and the way others will interpret what they are doing.⁵⁹

This attitude toward nuclear weapons raised the public profile of horizontal weapons proliferation as a security threat to the United States.

The military establishment partially concurred, but Lyman Lemnitzer, Kennedy's inherited Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), authored a memo arguing that the US should not support UN Resolution 1576 (XV), known as the "Irish Resolution," which would have restricted the transfer of nuclear weapons between states, including American allies in NATO.⁶⁰ William C. Foster, Arms Control and Disarmament ACDA director, on the other hand, argued in favor of some form of an international non-transfer agreement on 26 July 1962.⁶¹ Secretary of State Dean Rusk backed the idea of a non-transfer agreement as well.⁶² However, the Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962 torpedoed any chance of reaching a multilateral agreement with the Soviet Union on the dissemination of weapons-grade fissionable material and technology.

Indeed, at first glance it is very difficult for a historian to produce evidence of any formal policy on non-proliferation within the Kennedy administration. However, this is not to say that Kennedy's record shows a lack of seriousness on proliferation issues. As noted above, he

⁵⁹ Williams and Cantelon, eds. *The American Atom*, 224.

⁶⁰ Memo from JCS to Kennedy, "Nuclear Arms Control Measures," 23 March 1961 in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-1963*, 7:25-26.

⁶¹ Memo from Foster to Kennedy, "U.S. Program Regarding a Treaty to Ban Nuclear Weapon Tests and Other Disarmament Proposals," 26 July 1962, in *FRUS 1961-1963*, 7:508.

⁶² Memo from Rusk to Kennedy, "Agreement on Non-Diffusion of Nuclear Weapons," 21 September 1962 in *FRUS 1961-1963*, 7:570-572.

considered the spread of nuclear weapons to be a dire threat to global stability. He attacked Nixon in the 1960 campaign by painting the Eisenhower administration as inattentive to the point of negligence. Kennedy made non-proliferation a key goal in American policy toward Israel, even at the expense of felicitous bilateral relations.

Although it is speculation to ask why the Kennedy administration did not produce a formal non-transfer agreement, the findings of the intelligence community seem to downplay the likelihood of proliferation. NIE 4-3-61 noted that France would likely continue with its weapons development program and that Israel "had strong incentives" to start a program.⁶³ In addition to these specific examples of proliferation risks, the estimate determined that the costs of weapons development were dropping in 1961, as Uranium-235, bomb design, reactors, and specialists became more available. Despite this alarming trend, the intelligence community thought that Kennedy's campaign claim that " ten, fifteen, or twenty nations will have a nuclear capacity... by the end of the presidential office in 1964" was unlikely. The estimate concluded that:

...the inhibitions on deciding to start a weapons program are formidable. At the present state of the art, the most limited weapons system program would cost in the hundreds of million dollars and a moderate program of sophisticated weapons and delivery systems would run into the billions. We estimate that over the next several years there will be no technological breakthrough which would significantly alter the complexity and cost of these tasks.⁶⁴

As will be discussed below, Kennedy devoted significant attention to the specific case of Israel and continued to raise the issue of nuclear inspections with Prime Ministers Ben-Gurion and Eshkol throughout his term of office. Beyond Israel, little attention was given to nuclear weapons development, because such a contingency was viewed as highly unlikely.

⁶³ Central Intelligence Agency, *NIE 4-3-61*, "Nuclear Weapons and Delivery Capabilities of Free World Countries Other than the US and UK," 21 September 1961, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB155/prolif-6b.pdf>. (Accessed 2 March 2013).

⁶⁴ CIA, *NIE 4-3-61*, 1.

The issue of non-dissemination rose again during negotiations surrounding a Limited Test Ban Treaty (LTBT). In the months following the Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962, Kennedy reached out to his Soviet counterpart, Chairman Nikita Khrushchev, via Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs and former New York Governor W. Averell Harriman. In a 26 April 1963 conversation with the Chairman, Harriman suggested that the US and the Soviet Union attempt to draft a test ban treaty. Khrushchev reportedly replied "we'll sign one right away, but, with no espionage inspections, ever." Harriman, seeing an opening, attempted to draw a comparison between Soviet concerns over a West German nuclear bomb and American worries of a Chinese program to push for a non-proliferation agreement. Khrushchev asserted that the Chinese and German situations were not analogous, as Germany was a mutual enemy during the Second World War and China was a Soviet ally.⁶⁵ American hopes of linking non-proliferation to a test ban treaty were foiled by Cold War hostilities with the Soviet Union.

The Limited Test Ban Treaty did serve some non-proliferation goals. Article I called for the signatories to ban nuclear tests "in the atmosphere; beyond its limits, including outer space; or under water, including territorial waters or high seas."⁶⁶ It was initially signed by representatives of the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union. Of the countries detailed as potential proliferators in NIE 4-3-61, Israel, Sweden, West Germany, Japan, Canada, South Africa, and Australia all signed the Treaty by October of 1963. The notable exception was China. The *New York Times* praised the "history-making" Treaty on the date of its ratification in the Senate (25 September 1963) as a "Victory for Peace."⁶⁷ However, the Treaty ought to be viewed as a significant check to vertical proliferation and a minor restriction on the horizontal

⁶⁵ Memorandum of Conversation between W. Averell Harriman and Nikita Khrushchev, 26 April 1963, in *FRUS, 1961-1963*, 15:511.

⁶⁶ "Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water," 5 August 1963, Federation of American Scientists, <http://www.fas.org/nuke/control/lbt/text/lbt2.htm>. (Accessed 3 March 2013).

⁶⁷ Editorial, "A Victory for Peace," *New York Times*, 25 September 1963, 42.

spread of nuclear weapons. Israel developed nuclear weapons without a test of any variety. The LTBT did not prevent China in 1964 or India in 1974 from performing conventional ground-based explosions.

Kennedy, speaking in favor of the Treaty at American University in June 1963, argued:

It would place the nuclear powers in a position to deal more effectively with one of the greatest hazards which man faces in 1963, the further spread of nuclear arms. It would increase our security — it would decrease the prospects of war. Surely this goal is sufficiently important to require our steady pursuit, yielding neither to the temptation to give up the whole effort nor the temptation to give up our insistence on vital and responsible safeguards.⁶⁸

American non-proliferation initiatives were derailed by Kennedy's assassination on 22 November 1963.

His successor, Lyndon B. Johnson, inherited many leading voices in the non-proliferation debate when he retained Kennedy's cabinet. Johnson, it should be noted, attacked the Eisenhower administration from the Senate over the Gaither Report in 1957 and viewed the spread of nuclear weapons to additional countries as a dire threat to American security. In his 1971 memoir, Johnson wrote:

All I could do was to move as fast and as far as possible during my Presidency to slow the arms race, to achieve international agreements on their control, and to prevent the continuing proliferation of weapons that could mean the end of civilization as we knew it.⁶⁹

After the LTBT and Kennedy's death, Rusk recalled a "lull" in arms control negotiations.⁷⁰

However, by January 1964, Johnson and his advisors redoubled their efforts to draft an effective international non-proliferation agreement. In his State of the Union address on 8 January,

⁶⁸ John F. Kennedy, "Commencement Address at American University," 10 June 1963, John F. Kennedy Library, <http://www.jfklibrary.org/Asset-Viewer/BWC7I4C9QUmLG9J6I8oy8w.aspx>. (Accessed 8 March 2013.)

⁶⁹ Lyndon B. Johnson, *The Vantage Point: Perspectives of the Presidency, 1963-1969* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), 469-470.

⁷⁰ Dean Rusk, *As I Saw It*, ed. Daniel S. Papp (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990), 340.

Johnson pledged to make "new proposals at [the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Conference (ENDC) in] Geneva toward the control and the eventual abolition of arms."⁷¹

Johnson's director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), William C. Foster, delivered a message from the President at Geneva on 21 January 1964. In this message, Johnson stated that the delegates could agree:

- (a) that nuclear weapons not be transferred into the national control of states which do not now control them, and that all transfers of nuclear materials for peaceful purposes take place under effective international safeguards;
- (b) that the major nuclear powers accept in an increasing number of their peaceful nuclear activities the same inspection they recommend for other states; and
- (c) on the banning of all nuclear weapon tests under effective verification and control.⁷²

This sort of thinking was shared by Rusk and Foster, who also viewed the spread of atomic weapons as a destabilizing force in international politics, as it increased the risk of nuclear war and triggered arms races. As will be discussed in the case studies below, Kennedy favored cutting bilateral secret deals with the leaders of potential proliferators to stem the spread of nuclear weapons. By seeking a binding international settlement on non-proliferation, Johnson was proposing a change in tactics from those used by Kennedy. However, the sought multilateral safeguards drove countries like Israel and India to undermine the substance of the treaty.

Yet in 1964, the greatest proliferation threat was Communist China. Kennedy and his advisors had considered using force, possibly Nationalist Chinese commandos, to strike nuclear facilities on the mainland.⁷³ However, Johnson and his advisors expected China to explode a nuclear device. Their concern, as revealed by Johnson's memoirs, was what to do after China;

⁷¹ Lyndon B. Johnson, "Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union," *Public Papers of the Presidents: Lyndon Johnson*, 8 January 1964 (Washington: GPO, 1965), 116-117.

⁷² Lyndon B. Johnson, "Statement by the President on the Reopening of the Geneva Disarmament Conference," *Public Papers of the Presidents: Lyndon Johnson*, 21 January 1964 (Washington: GPO, 1965), 172.

⁷³ William Burr and Jeffrey T. Richelson, "Whether to 'Strangle the Baby in the Cradle': The United States and the Chinese Nuclear Program, 1960-1964," in *International Security* 25, no. 3 (Winter, 2000-2001): 54-99.

"how to deal with a great many nations, of all sizes and levels of political stability, equipped with nuclear weapons."⁷⁴

Prior to the Chinese test, American policy had been occupied by the prospect of atomic weapons transfers from nuclear states to non-nuclear states. Negotiations with the Soviet Union on a non-proliferation agreement stalled over the US-backed Multilateral Force (MLF) proposals, which would have given NATO countries—including the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG)—some control over American nuclear weapons. Two White House officials, David Klein of the NSC and Steven R. Rivkin of the President's Office of Science and Technology, argued in favor of changing the focus of US non-proliferation policy to independent weapons production by non-nuclear countries.⁷⁵

On a 16 June 1964 meeting of the Committee of Principals, the Kennedy-created interagency group devoted to arms control issues, Rusk noted in discussion of the anticipated Chinese test, that the United States in fact had no official non-proliferation policy.⁷⁶ This remark started formal American international efforts to restrict the production of nuclear weapons by non-nuclear countries. Adrian S. Fisher, the Deputy Director of the ACDA was assigned responsibility for drafting a position paper. Although the ACDA would be the leading federal agency advocating strict non-proliferation controls, Rusk's contribution was significant. As will be discussed in the specific cases below, the State Department often found non-proliferation controls to be a difficult subject to raise with allies, such as Israel, and influential neutral countries, such as India. Rusk consistently proved to be a strong advocate of non-proliferation throughout his term of office.

⁷⁴ Johnson, *The Vantage Point*, 469.

⁷⁵ Memorandum from David Klein and Steven R. Rivkin to McGeorge Bundy and Donald F. Hornig, 2 June 1964, in *FRUS, 1964-1968*, 11:64-65.

⁷⁶ Summary of Actions by the Committee of Principals, "Actions Taken on Verification of Freeze Paper," 16 June 1964, in *FRUS, 1964-1968*, 11:81-82.

ACDA Director Foster forwarded Fisher's draft position paper to Rusk on 14 August 1964 titled "Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons."⁷⁷ The draft paper was the first formal attempt by the American government to create a coherent non-proliferation policy. Foster's paper began by asserting that the process of independent weapons development, once begun, was "maybe impossible to halt."⁷⁸ Therefore, the task of the United States was to:

...develop political inhibitions against the development of further national nuclear capabilities which are sufficiently strong to stand the shock of a Communist Chinese nuclear detonation. The problem which faces the United States is how to develop these political inhibitions against the development of further national nuclear capabilities within the limited period of time available to us.⁷⁹

Foster's understanding of the problem marks the most activist side of the non-proliferation debate within the policy-making apparatuses of the US government. The reason for increased attention to non-proliferation is given by Foster shortly before delving into specific policy:

If we do not solve this problem—either because of mistake or because of delay—we will soon be faced with a world in which there are ten and then possibly twenty states having national nuclear capabilities. This would be a world of the greatest danger and insecurity.⁸⁰

These concerns were very similar to those of Kennedy and Johnson. To Foster, the phenomenon of nuclear proliferation was self-sustaining and destabilizing to the international order.

The draft paper proposed a range of bilateral and multilateral initiatives. Foster argued that "appropriate arguments, pressures, and inducements" ought to be brought on a number of countries with sophisticated domestic nuclear programs capable of developing weapons, namely, Israel, India, Sweden, Japan, and the FRG, with particular emphasis on the first two.⁸¹ As a preventative measure, he also advocated controls on the technical requirements necessary for

⁷⁷ Memorandum from William C. Foster to Dean Rusk, "Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons," 14 August 1964, in *FRUS, 1964-1968*, 11:97-110.

⁷⁸ Foster to Rusk, "Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons," in *FRUS, 1964-1968*, 11:97.

⁷⁹ Foster to Rusk, "Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons," in *FRUS, 1964-1968*, 11:97-98.

⁸⁰ Foster to Rusk, "Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons," in *FRUS, 1964-1968*, 11:98.

⁸¹ Foster to Rusk, "Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons," in *FRUS, 1964-1968*, 11:98.

weapons development, such as rigorous inspection of plutonium stocks and an agreement among nuclear supplier nations to not sell to countries unwilling to accept safeguards.⁸² Finally, the United States was to seek an international non-proliferation agreement, instead of a bilateral agreement with the Soviet Union, albeit with Soviet support through dropping the divisive issue of nuclear transfers. Foster envisioned a series of strict safeguards on national nuclear energy programs monitored by the UN's International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).⁸³ In total, these proposals would have formed a comprehensive non-proliferation regime. However, as noted in the cases below, the Johnson administration found that bilateral negotiations over the implementation of said safeguards were difficult, took time, and gave potential proliferators such as Israel and India breathing room for accelerated weapons development.

Some State Department officials took issue with some of the conclusions of Foster's paper. Ambassador at Large and acting Deputy Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs Llewellyn E. Thompson argued that the Foster draft was a "substantial step forward," but argued that the broad, international approach to a non-proliferation agreement would make it difficult to gain the support of the Soviet Union, China, and European allies such as the FRG and Italy.⁸⁴ The State Department would regularly focus on the difficulty of compelling ostensible allies and neutral countries to accept safeguards. Rather than strain bilateral relations to the point of risking other policy priorities, Johnson and Nixon-era State Department officials continually advocated less strict stances on nuclear safeguards.

A week after the Chinese detonation on 16 October 1964, Johnson convened a group of government officials and private citizens called the "Committee on Nuclear Proliferation." This

⁸² Foster to Rusk, "Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons," in *FRUS, 1964-1968*, 11:102.

⁸³ Foster to Rusk, "Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons," in *FRUS, 1964-1968*, 11:99.

⁸⁴ Memorandum from Llewellyn E. Thompson to Dean Rusk, "The ACDA Memorandum on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons," 25 August 1964, in *FRUS, 1964-1968*, 11:112-117.

group was commonly referred to as the "Gilpatric Committee" after its chairman, Wall Street lawyer and former Undersecretary of Defense Roswell Gilpatric.⁸⁵ The Gilpatric Committee issued a report for consumption by the President and apparently accepted Foster's logic for a robust non-proliferation policy "unanimously," noting that:

The spread of nuclear weapons poses an increasingly grave threat to the security of the United States. New nuclear capabilities, however primitive and regardless of whether they are held by nations currently friendly to the United States, will add complexity and instability to the deterrent balance between the United States and the Soviet Union, aggravate suspicions and hostility among states neighboring new nuclear powers, place a wasteful economic burden on the aspirations of developing nations, impede the vital task of controlling and reducing weapons around the world, and eventually constitute direct military threats to the United States.⁸⁶

The Gilpatric Committee offered a number of controversial recommendations, such as a full-blown American effort to negotiate a non-proliferation treaty, the isolation of nuclear France, a push to induce Great Britain to give up its nuclear arsenal, increased cooperation with the Soviet Union on proliferation issues, and the exclusion of nuclear options from NATO decision-making.⁸⁷ Rusk considered the Gilpatric report "as explosive as a nuclear weapon" and attempted to keep out of the public eye.⁸⁸

Johnson's rival for the soul of the Democratic Party, Senator Robert F. Kennedy of New York, made his maiden speech in the upper chamber on the topic of nuclear proliferation, declaring that it was the "most vital issue now facing the nation and the world."⁸⁹ He urged Johnson to make the drafting of a non-proliferation treaty a "central priority." This deeply

⁸⁵ Francis Gavin, "Blasts from the Past: Proliferation Lessons from the 1960s," 108.

⁸⁶ The Committee on Nuclear Proliferation, "Report for the President," 21 January 1965 in *FRUS, 1964-1968*, 11:173-174.

⁸⁷ Gavin, "Blasts from the Past," 129.

⁸⁸ Quoted in Glenn T. Seaborg, *Stemming the Tide: Arms Control in the Johnson Years* (New York: Lexington Books, 1982), 145.

⁸⁹ E.W. Kenworthy, "Kennedy Proposes Treaty to Check Nuclear Spread," *New York Times*, 24 June 1965, p. 1, ProQuest, <http://search.proquest.com/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/116735745/13DAEC453916076CC06/6?accountid=12010> (Accessed 23 April 2013).

angered the President, especially because it seemed as if the Gilpatric report had been leaked to his rival. In a phone conversation with National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy on the day of Kennedy's speech, Johnson growled that he had been informed by a friendly newspaperman that the Senator hoped to take an "independent posture" from the administration on the issue of non-proliferation.⁹⁰ According to Johnson, Kennedy was trying to "find something that he could disagree [with the administration] on... [as] 'a matter of principle.'" The next day, Johnson told Bundy that he did not "want to get into proliferation in any way so it looks like I'm copying... Bobby..." and Bundy agreed, noting that the "damned nuisance" of the whole affair was that "people will play it as if this was something he prodded us into."⁹¹ Kennedy stole Johnson's thunder and the President initially scrapped the idea of pushing non-proliferation at a speech in San Francisco on the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the UN. Johnson called the editor of the *Baltimore Sun* later that day to deny that he ever planned the announcement of a treaty, saying that "some of the boys in... [the] UN or some of the former Kennedy lobbyists" were trying to push some ideas into the speech.⁹²

However much Kennedy's speech and behind-the-scenes politicking irked Johnson, non-proliferation gained a degree of political salience that further convinced the President of the need to show leadership on the issue. Despite Kennedy's speech, Johnson mentioned in his San Francisco address that he hoped that "others will join with us in coming to our next negotiations with proposals for effective attack upon these deadly dangers to mankind [nuclear weapons]."⁹³ He assigned primary responsibility for drafting a comprehensive non-proliferation

⁹⁰ Quoted in Michael Beschloss, *Reaching for Glory: Lyndon Johnson's Secret White House Tapes, 1964-1965* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002), 368.

⁹¹ Quoted in Beschloss, *Reaching for Glory*, 369.

⁹² Quoted in Beschloss, *Reaching for Glory*, 371.

⁹³ Lyndon B. Johnson, "Address in San Francisco at the 20th Anniversary Commemorative Session of the United Nations," 25 June 1965, in *Public Papers of the Presidents: Lyndon Johnson, 1965* (Washington: GPO, 1966), 2:703-706.

policy, including a multilateral treaty, to the activist ACDA, instead of the skeptical State Department.⁹⁴ A new statement from Johnson to the UN's Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee in Geneva urged international action to halt the spread of nuclear weapons, restrict delivery systems, and draft "a truly comprehensive test-ban treaty."⁹⁵

At a meeting of the IAEA in Tokyo on 21 September 1965, Johnson's remarks, as read by his inherited AEC director, Glenn T. Seaborg, revealed that he advocated different tactics from Kennedy for his non-proliferation plan:

...the IAEA also has the solemn duty—and the unique opportunity—to assure the world that materials and equipment employed for peaceful uses of atomic energy are not used for any military purpose. Prevention of the spread of atomic weapons is one of the most important tasks of our times. It is my deep conviction that the IAEA, through its safeguards system, can make a crucial contribution to achievement of this goal.⁹⁶

Johnson pledged to do all within his power to "assure the success of the Agency's system" and urged other member states of the UN to do so as well in both "principle and practice." As will be seen in Johnson's dealings with Israel and India, his administration attempted to use its bilateral clout to influence countries into accepting international safeguards. Kennedy directly engaged with the leaders of potential proliferators on a case-by-case basis.

Johnson's proposal for a multilateral non-proliferation agreement was not the first to be discussed in the international arena. On 17 October 1958, the Irish foreign minister, Frank Aiken, offered a draft resolution to the General Assembly on the "Further Dissemination of Nuclear Weapons," which provided for a weapons production and freeze during negotiations.⁹⁷ However,

⁹⁴ McGeorge Bundy, "National Security Action Memorandum 335," 28 June 1965 in *FRUS, 1964-1968*, 11:216-217.

⁹⁵ Lyndon B. Johnson, "Message of Greetings to the Geneva Disarmament Conference Committee," 27 July 1965, in *Public Papers of the Presidents: Lyndon Johnson, 1965* (Washington: GPO, 1966), 2:790.

⁹⁶ Lyndon B. Johnson, "Message to the Ninth General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency," 21 September 1965, in *Public Papers of the Presidents: Lyndon Johnson, 1965* (Washington: GPO, 1966), 2:1009-1010.

⁹⁷ Sokolski, *Best of Intentions*, 41.

all NATO countries, concerned about the American nuclear umbrella in Europe, opposed the measure. Aiken withdrew the resolution on 31 October. The following year, Aiken submitted a new proposal that would have banned nuclear transfers and placed restrictions on independent weapons production by non-nuclear nations.⁹⁸ However the US-backed MLF plan again precluded any support from NATO countries. The Swedish delegation submitted an even stricter plan in 1961 which explicitly called for:

an inquiry be made into the conditions under which countries not possess nuclear weapons might be willing to enter into specific undertakings to refrain from manufacturing or otherwise acquiring such weapons and to refuse to receive, in the future, nuclear weapons in their territories on behalf of another country.⁹⁹

This language was adopted by the Soviets and rejected by the US and its NATO allies for the sake of the MLF.

However, by the end of 1965, the situation had changed for the Johnson administration. The Chinese explosion, compounded with pressure from Bobby Kennedy, pushed Johnson to pursue a multilateral agreement. On 17 August 1965, the US submitted an ACDA draft of a treaty to the ENDC.¹⁰⁰ The first two articles called for:

1. Each of the Nuclear States party to this Treaty undertakes not to transfer any nuclear weapon into the national control of any Non-nuclear State, either directly or indirectly through a military alliance, and each undertakes not to take any other action which would cause an increase in the total number of States and other organizations having independent power to use nuclear weapons.
2. Each of the Nuclear States party to this Treaty undertakes not to assist any Non-nuclear State in the manufacture of nuclear weapons.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ Sokolski, *Best of Intentions*, 42.

⁹⁹ Quoted in United Nations Department of Political and Security Council Affairs, *The United Nations and Disarmament, 1945-1970* (New York: United Nations Publications, 1971), 265.

¹⁰⁰ Robert M. Lawrence and Joel Larus, eds., *Nuclear Proliferation: Phase II* (Lawrence, KA: The University Press of Kansas, 1974), 17.

¹⁰¹ Quoted in Lawrence and Larus, eds., *Nuclear Proliferation*, 17-18.

The non-transfer provision of Article I indicates that the United States was willing to abandon the MLF scheme for the sake of non-proliferation. However, the Soviet Union offered a resolution of their own with very restrictive language which would have banned the stationing of American nuclear arms in Europe.¹⁰² This back-and-forth between the superpowers continued in the UN with a series of alternative drafts.

It was the small states in the ENDC that changed the mood of the negotiating table. India's representative, in a speech to the ENDC, emphasized the fact that weapons development in non-nuclear weapons would not wait for the conclusion of negotiations.¹⁰³ Even the ACDA/State Department clash was moderated by the sense of urgency. The State Department's Policy Planning Council produced a document in February 1966, which noted that the:

Achievement of a separate "non-proliferation agreement" would create an additional moral, legal, and political barrier to proliferation of some consequence. Such an agreement would, for the standpoint of U.S. interest, be desirable for that reason.¹⁰⁴

The State Department considered a multilateral treaty to be an effective counter-proliferation measure that had the added benefit of not straining bilateral relations. The deadlock was broken on 24 August 1966, when the American and Soviet delegations submitted identical language to the ENDC, which banned transfers of nuclear weapons equipment or shared control of weaponry, effectively abandoning the MLF plan.¹⁰⁵ Foster wrote Rusk on 11 January 1967 and argued that diplomatic pressure be placed on NATO countries to coordinate EURATOM safeguards on civilian nuclear technology with those of the IAEA.¹⁰⁶ Rusk agreed and sent

¹⁰² Lawrence and Larus, eds., *Nuclear Proliferation*, 18-19.

¹⁰³ Sokolski, *Best of Intentions*, 46.

¹⁰⁴ US Department of State, Policy Planning Council, "The Further Spread of Nuclear Weapons: Problems for the West," 14 February 1966, p.28, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb253/doc01.pdf> (Accessed 23 April 2013).

¹⁰⁵ Quoted in Lawrence and Larus, eds., *Nuclear Proliferation*, 20.

¹⁰⁶ Memorandum from William C. Foster to Dean Rusk, "Non-Proliferation Treaty Safeguards Clause," 11 January 1967, in *FRUS, 1964-1968*, 11:418-421.

instructions to that effect in a telegram to the American Mission in Geneva on 8 March 1967.¹⁰⁷ He told American negotiators to stress with NATO representatives that uncoordinated IAEA and EURATOM safeguards would undermine the stricter of the two. This shows that Rusk was willing to abide by Johnson's decision to have the ACDA run the non-proliferation agenda. Rusk, Foster, and Johnson all believed that the spread of nuclear weapons endangered global security and were willing to put aside bureaucratic and internal politics to tackle the problem of non-proliferation.

Although there were some squabbles between India and the United States over the issue of security guarantees, as will be discussed below, the UN Security Council approved ten to zero with five abstentions a declaration in favor of ratification of the Treaty on Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons by member states.¹⁰⁸ However, the declaration noted that no formal or explicit security guarantees for non-nuclear states were offered by the "nuclear club." The non-binding pledges of "immediate assistance" to blackmailed non-nuclear nations did not extend to countries considering ratification, such as India. The absence of a security guarantee in the Treaty did little to dissipate the political and security pressures for proliferation noted by the State Department's Policy Planning Council in 1966.

President Johnson looked proudly on as Secretary of State Rusk signed the NPT in the East Room of the White House on 1 July 1968. After the representative of fifty-five other nations signed the Treaty, concurrently with their counterparts in London and Moscow, Johnson declared that "after nearly a quarter century of danger and fear—reason and sanity have prevailed to

¹⁰⁷ Dean Rusk, Telegram from the Department of State to the US Mission in Geneva, "NPT Safeguards Article," 8 March 1967, in *FRUS, 1964-1968*, 11:463-465.

¹⁰⁸ Quoted in Lawrence and Larus, eds., *Nuclear Proliferation*, 24.

reduce the danger and to greatly lessen the fear. Thus, all mankind is reassured."¹⁰⁹ He restated his belief that spread of atomic weaponry increased the likelihood of nuclear war, a belief shared by Rusk and Foster, which led them to coordinate the efforts of their respective agencies. Although the NPT had a number of provisions which complicated relations with Israel and India, as will be discussed below, Johnson nonetheless commented that it kept alive and active the "impulse toward a safer world."

The *New York Times* predicted that the Senate would ratify the NPT "without too much difficulty."¹¹⁰ However, the 90th Congress adjourned on 14 October 1968 and stalled any action on the NPT until the inauguration of Richard Nixon.¹¹¹ According to Bundy, Johnson considered calling a special session of Congress to get the NPT ratified at once.¹¹² Johnson, the consummate master of the upper house, noted in his memoirs that dragging senators back to Washington over the winter recess would only cause "bad feelings and increased resistance."¹¹³ Moscow's crackdown in Czechoslovakia led many hawkish senators of both parties to avoid any sign of cooperation with the Soviet Union and delay on ratifying the NPT. Johnson also claimed that the Republican leadership dragged their heels on ratification so that President-elect Nixon could take some credit for the NPT. Johnson bitterly concluded his remarks on the NPT with the assertion that "the world would have been better off if we both had moved faster."

¹⁰⁹ Lyndon B. Johnson, "Remarks at the Signing of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty," 1 July 1968, in *Public Papers of the Presidents: Lyndon Johnson, 1968-1969* (Washington: GPO, 1970), 2:763-765.

¹¹⁰ John W. Finney, "Johnson and Congress: Progress and Defeats," *New York Times*, 30 June 1968, p. E1, ProQuest, <http://search.proquest.com/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/118210509/13DB3B5DE3E2C02D3A2/5?accountid=12010> (Accessed 24 April 2013).

¹¹¹ United States Senate, "Dates of Sessions of the Congress, Present-1789," <http://www.senate.gov/reference/Sessions/sessionDates.htm> (Accessed 24 April 2013).

¹¹² William Bundy, *A Tangled Web: The Making of Foreign Policy in the Nixon Presidency*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998), 87.

¹¹³ Johnson, *The Vantage Point*, 490.

After making an amazing political comeback, Nixon declared at his inauguration on 20 January 1969 that "the greatest honor history can bestow is the title of peacemaker."¹¹⁴ However, his tenure in office would mark a low point in presidential attention to non-proliferation issues. The NSC met to examine the Treaty on 29 January 1969.¹¹⁵ Most of the meeting was informational and consisted of discussion by the new administration of the NPT's various articles. However, Nixon tellingly stated that:

...treaties don't necessarily get us very much but that people tend to overestimate what such a treaty means. For example, suppose a country wanted to make their own weapons, then they could obviously abrogate the treaty without sanctions.¹¹⁶

Nixon considered the benefits of the Treaty to be minimal, stating that "what we are really going to get out of this are prohibitions against what we wouldn't do anyway. Basically, I view the value of the treaty as its psychological impact."¹¹⁷ Nixon supported the NPT as a symbol, rather than in substance. The tactical side of the discussion was not how to get non-signatories to accept the NPT, but rather how to deal with the political fallout of the Treaty itself. Nixon stated that he wanted policy to gain the public support of the FRG and the US Senate before he would even consider bringing the Treaty forward for ratification. Nixon's final comment before the meeting adjourned was: "U.S. people do not want any more commitments, would not permit them and despite what the former President had said, we must not get boxed in on this issue."¹¹⁸

On 5 February 1969, Henry Kissinger, Nixon's NSA, announced to other high-level officials that the President decided to move forward with the ratification of the NPT.¹¹⁹ Kissinger noted that there should be no pressure—beyond a public "tone of optimism that other countries

¹¹⁴ Richard M. Nixon, "Inaugural Address," 20 January 1969 in *Public Papers of the Presidents: Richard Nixon, 1969* (Washington: GPO, 1971), 1: 1-4.

¹¹⁵ Minutes of National Security Council Meeting, 29 January 1969, in *FRUS, 1969-1976*, E-2:1-14.

¹¹⁶ Minutes of National Security Council Meeting, 29 January 1969, in *FRUS, 1969-1976*, E-2:6.

¹¹⁷ Minutes of National Security Council Meeting, 29 January 1969, in *FRUS, 1969-1976*, E-2:7.

¹¹⁸ Minutes of National Security Council Meeting, 29 January 1969, in *FRUS, 1969-1976*, E-2:14.

¹¹⁹ Henry A. Kissinger, "National Security Decision Memorandum 6," 5 February 1969, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB189/IN-04.pdf> (Accessed 12 April 2013).

will sign or ratify"—on other states, especially the FRG. As for the internal government approach to proliferation issues, Nixon desired that "the nature of U.S. commitments abroad be decided when the need arises, based on the circumstances at the time." National Security Memorandum 6 marked the end of the Kennedy-Johnson era of activist non-proliferation policy. Nixon and Kissinger considered the NPT to be a complicating factor in international politics, but were unwilling to publicly oppose it. As such, the administration paid lip service to the non-proliferation norm, but was unwilling to throw any material support behind its goals or ratification. The consequences of this hesitation were predicted by Foster in two months prior to Nixon's inauguration, who wrote:

Any substantial delay on our part will be taken by other key potential signatories as a sign of lack of US interest and will lead them to reevaluate their own attitudes toward the treaty, with the almost certain result that the treaty will not come into force.¹²⁰

The Nixon administration did not consider non-proliferation a policy priority. This inattention had a direct effect on international politics, as will be seen in the cases of Israel and India. In his message to the Senate later on 5 February 1969, Nixon declared that he "always supported the goal of halting the spread of nuclear weapons," even if he opposed ratifying the NPT in 1968 over the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.¹²¹ The first benefit of the Treaty listed by Nixon was its value as an advancement of the administration's "policy of negotiation rather than confrontation with the USSR." He simply stated that it would check the spread of nuclear weapons, rather than make the world as safer place, as Johnson had. This suggests that Nixon still was operating with the Eisenhower-era assumption that vertical proliferation, rather than horizontal, was the danger. Without any sort of presidential pressure to push the Treaty

¹²⁰ William C. Foster, "Basic Issues Regarding NPT and Timing of Ratification," 22 November 1968, p. 9, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb253/doc34.pdf> (Accessed 23 April 2013).

¹²¹ Richard M. Nixon, "Message to the Senate Requesting Advice and Consent to Ratification of the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons," 5 February 1969, in *Public Papers of the Presidents: Richard Nixon, 1969*, 1:62.

through, it took the Senate until 5 March 1970 to give its advice and consent.¹²² Non-proliferation disappeared from the public eye until the Indian "Smiling Buddha" nuclear test of 1974, which prompted a flurry of action. With that explosion, the patchwork nature of American formal non-proliferation efforts was apparent for policymakers. However, compromises with Israel and India in the Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon administrations, undermined their formal efforts to form a comprehensive policy against the spread of nuclear weapons.

¹²² Lawrence and Larus, eds., *Nuclear Proliferation*, 24.

The First Test: Israel Gets the Bomb

*So Israel's getting tense.
Wants one in self defense.
"The Lord's our shepherd," says the psalm,
But just in case, we better get a bomb.
Who's next?*

—Tom Lehrer, "Who's Next?" (1965)

"We are living in an age of scientific revolutions, an era that discloses the atom, its miraculous composition and the tremendous power hidden in it", wrote Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion in a November 1948 pamphlet for new Israeli Defense Force (IDF) recruits.¹²³ The white-haired Zionist leader had guided the state of Israel through a very troubled birth just a few months before, when hostilities broke out between the young country and its Arab neighbors just hours after the announcement of the Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel on the 14th of March. By the time Ben-Gurion published this pamphlet, his people had seen two precarious truces collapse in a flurry of gunfire; Israel existed on a knife's edge. Although Israel triumphed over its ill-coordinated foes, the threat of a second Holocaust at the hands of its Arab neighbors was firmly stamped on Ben-Gurion's mind. An aide quoted him as asking "What is Israel? Only a small spot. One dot! How can it survive in this Arab world?"¹²⁴ For him, self-reliance and military strength were the only chance for the new Jewish state to survive. While he hoped for the day when he could solidify Israel's position in the Middle East, he recognized the vulnerability of a state with a highly concentrated population—it could be obliterated with "a single bomb".¹²⁵ By no means could Tel Aviv become an Israeli Hiroshima.

¹²³ Quoted in Avner Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 11.

¹²⁴ Quoted in Seymour Hersh, *The Samson Option: Israel's Nuclear Arsenal and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Random House, 1991), 22.

¹²⁵ Shlomo Aronson and Oded Brosh, *The Politics and Strategy of Nuclear Weapons in the Middle East: Opacity, Theory, and Reality, 1960-1991 An Israeli Perspective* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1992), 49.

In a 27 June 1963 farewell speech to the employees of Israel's Armaments Development Authority (RAFAEL), Ben-Gurion made clear why he considered nuclear weapons necessary for Israel's survival:

I do not know of any other nation whose neighbors declare that they wish to terminate it, and not only declare, but prepare for it by all means available to them. We must have no illusions that what is declared every day in Cairo, Damascus, Iraq are just words. This is the thought that guides the Arab leaders...

Our numbers are small, and there is no chance that we could compare ourselves with America's 180 million, or with any Arab neighboring state. There is one thing, however, in which we are not inferior to any other people in the world—this is the Jewish brain. And science, if a lay person like myself could say, starts from the brain. And the Jewish brain does not disappoint; Jewish science does not disappoint... I am confident, based not only on what I heard today, that our science can provide us with the weapons that are needed to deter our enemies from waging war against us. I am confident that science is able to provide us with the weapon that will secure the peace and deter our enemies.¹²⁶

This sentiment is virtually unchanged from April 1948, when a directive to gather Jewish scientists in Eastern Europe was justified with the assertion that they could "either increase the capacity to kill masses or to cure masses; both things are important."¹²⁷ Both these remarks suggest that Ben-Gurion considered nuclear weaponry vital for Israel's survival.

The journey of Jewish brain to Israeli bomb was not an easy one. In the early 1950s, only the Hebrew University offered courses in physics, which included only one professor of theoretical physics and one lecturer in nuclear physics.¹²⁸ However, French humiliation during the Suez crisis of the 1956 led them to a nuclear policy more independent from American wishes and the ascent of Maurice Bourges-Maunoury as Prime Minister in May 1957 created an opportunity for Franco-Israeli cooperation.¹²⁹ Bourges-Maunoury was a close ally of Israeli defense establishment *wunderkind* and Ben-Gurion's confidant on all matters nuclear, Shimon

¹²⁶ Cited in Tom Segev, *The Seventh Million: The Israelis and the Holocaust* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993), 369.

¹²⁷ Quoted in Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 13.

¹²⁸ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 35.

¹²⁹ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 58.

Peres, who rose quickly in the bureaucracy because of his reputation for success and miraculous procurement of arms and other military supplies.¹³⁰ Two agreements, one political and one technical, were signed on 3 October 1957 in utmost secret and pledged French support for the building of an Israeli nuclear research site near Dimona, a recently-developed city in the Negev Desert.¹³¹ Although Israel's nuclear program is to this day covered in a heavy blanket of official censorship to this day, Israeli historian and nuclear expert Avner Cohen estimates that the Dimona project broke ground in late 1957 or early 1958.¹³² In April 1959, a secret British report referred to a verbal slip by Peres:

We noted, but did not report at the time, a speech made by Shimon Peres... at a symposium in the Weizmann Institute [of Science] on February 1 in which he criticized the theoretical nature of the research being done at the Institute and referred briefly to a "secret weapon" which Israel was trying to obtain...

The veil of security which was immediately pulled over this speech—one of Peres' typically indiscreet efforts—prevented us from finding out to which weapon Peres referred...

The Embassy then sought to allay fears of nuclear proliferation in the Foreign Office by reporting that the Ministry of Defense had reached the conclusion "that it would be foolish for Israel to try and get an atomic bomb, both because of the expense and because even if Israel were successful, the Soviet Union would undoubtedly arm the Arab countries in similar fashion."¹³³

This Israeli obsession with "nuclear opacity" makes it nearly impossible for a historian to know exactly when the Dimona site produced a nuclear bomb. Shlomo Aronson and Oded Brosh estimate that Dimona had produced enough weapons-grade plutonium for a bomb between 1965 and 1967 and that the French tested a missile delivery system for Israel in 1966, though this is accompanied by the caveat that the unknown sophistication of the weapon could increase

¹³⁰ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 19-20, 58. Peres was Prime Minister in the mid-1990s and is currently President of Israel.

¹³¹ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 59.

¹³² Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 68.

¹³³ Quoted in Aronson and Brosh, *The Politics and Strategy of Nuclear Weapons in the Middle East*, 66-67.

estimated development time by several years.¹³⁴ Cohen more firmly decided on 1966 as the crucial year:

...Israel had thus obtained, or was about to obtain, the three components that constitute a nuclear weapons capability: Fissile material production capacity, design knowledge, and access to delivery means.¹³⁵

Investigative journalist Seymour Hersh estimated that Israel had a nuclear weapon by June 1967, though he relies on a single Israeli source, the boastful pride of a 1948 veteran and future prime minister, Yigal Allon, who reportedly had a tour of a missile sight under construction in December of that year.¹³⁶

The uncertainty of recent historical research on Israel's nuclear weapons program should come as no surprise. Most primary information readily available to the contemporary researcher comes from foreign intelligence, personal interviews, and a great degree of guesswork. The American intelligence community was unable to decisively assert that Israel had a bomb until a 1974 Special National Intelligence Estimate (SNIE) entitled "Prospects for Further Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons". Likely eight years after the fact and certainly after two major Arab-Israeli wars, SNIE 4-1-74 asserted the following:

We believe that Israel already has produced nuclear weapons. Our judgment is based on Israeli acquisition of large quantities of uranium, partly by clandestine means; the ambiguous nature of Israeli efforts in the field of uranium enrichment; and Israel's large investment in a costly missile system designed to accommodate nuclear warheads. **We do not expect the Israelis to provide confirmation of widespread suspicions of their capability, either by nuclear testing or by threats of use, short of a grave threat to the nation's existence.**¹³⁷

¹³⁴ Aronson and Brosh, *The Politics and Strategy of Nuclear Weapons in the Middle East*, 91.

¹³⁵ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 232.

¹³⁶ Hersh, *The Samson Option*, 173-174.

¹³⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, *SNIE 4-1-74*, "Prospects for Further Proliferation," 23 August 1974, p.2, National Security Archive. <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB240/index.htm> (Accessed 21 November 2012).

This conclusion shows that the intelligence community admitted significantly after the fact that Israel likely had nuclear weapons. Israel's pursuit of a nuclear weapon was one of America's first non-proliferation challenges. However, the intelligence community gave remarkably mixed signals to policymakers concerning the Israeli weapons program. From the end of the 1950s to the 1974 SNIE, the intelligence community would consistently ignore data, offer unfounded speculation, and backtrack from previous conclusions. This failure of intelligence analysis to provide their customers in the White House with proper information contributed to the creation of a separate reality for policymakers, in which the spread of nuclear weapons was being checked.

The Dimona facility was discovered by accident in early 1958. A U-2 surveillance flight over an Israeli practice bombing range in the Negev Desert discovered extensive excavations and construction, which analysts determined to be a "probable" nuclear site.¹³⁸ Arthur C. Lundahl, director of CIA's Photographic Intelligence Center (CIA/PIC), took briefing boards of the Dimona excavations to President Eisenhower and Lewis Strauss, chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC). Lundahl reported that the usually intelligence-voracious Eisenhower "did not say a word" during the briefing and made no request for follow-up surveillance.¹³⁹ This habit of presidents selectively ignoring politically inconvenient intelligence would be repeated time and time again in the Israeli case. Dimona was soon forgotten, until June 1960, when the US Embassy in Tel-Aviv reported rumors of Israeli-French collaboration on an atomic energy project in the Negev Desert, near the city of Beersheba.¹⁴⁰ This prompted a flurry of activity during the final months of the Eisenhower presidency. Amory Houghton, the US Ambassador to France, cabled Washington on 19 October 1960 to report the official French denial of any

¹³⁸ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 83.

¹³⁹ Quoted in Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 83.

¹⁴⁰ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 85.

collaboration with the construction of the Dimona site and information from a representative of an American nuclear reactor company returning from Tel Aviv, who also denied the existence of an Israeli nuclear power project.¹⁴¹ However, John A. McCone, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) and future Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) under Kennedy, sought to hedge his bets by meeting with a *New York Times* reporter in December and sputtering in rage "they [the Israelis] lied to us... they said it was a textile plant".¹⁴² The *Times* dutifully obliged him by reporting in a December 18th article that "the suspicion of United States officials about the Israel project has been heightened by the fact that Israel has made no public announcement about the reactor, nor has she privately informed the United States of her plan."¹⁴³

President Kennedy, a week after assuming office, expressed his desire for a review of intelligence the CIA had to date on the Dimona site.¹⁴⁴ Apparently Kennedy was not pleased with the CIA's failure to connect the proverbial dots, so the US Intelligence Board (USIB) requested an official post-mortem on 13 December 1960, which was duly produced.¹⁴⁵ The Agency dutifully concluded that it had failed to recognize developments at Dimona, and that in the interest of "more prompt detection of the possible quest for a nuclear weapons capability by other potential 'Nth' countries", the intelligence community should coordinate better on highly technical nuclear issues.¹⁴⁶ This report included minor admissions of failure on the part of the CIA and mostly externalized blame to the State Department and Atomic Energy Commission.

¹⁴¹ Telegram from the US Embassy in Paris to the State Department, 19 October 1960, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/israel/documents/reveal/02-01.htm> (Accessed 21 November 2012).

¹⁴² Hersh, *The Samson Option*, 71-72.

¹⁴³ John W. Finney, "US Hears Israel Moves Toward A-Bomb Potential," *New York Times*, 18 December 1960, p.8, ProQuest, <http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lawrence.edu:2048/docview/115089822?accountid=12010> (Accessed 21 November 2012).

¹⁴⁴ Letter from Raymond L. Perkins to Nuclear Energy Agency, 27 January 1961, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/israel/documents/reveal/01-01.htm> (Accessed 21 November 2012).

¹⁴⁵ Central Intelligence Agency, *Post-Mortem on SNIE 100-8-60: Implications of the Acquisition by Israel of a Nuclear Weapons Capability*, 31 January 1961, p.1, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/israel/documents/reveal/01-02.htm> (Accessed 21 November 2012).

¹⁴⁶ CIA, *Post-Mortem on SNIE 100-8-60*, 1-3.

Cohen, citing numerous interviews with Kennedy advisors, asserts that "no American president was more concerned with the danger of nuclear proliferation".¹⁴⁷ Israeli weapons development deeply concerned Kennedy.

A mere ten days after assuming office, the new President received a memo from his Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, summarizing all information available about the Dimona site at that time, which was minimal. Apart from the photo analysis and scraps of human intelligence (HUMINT) from the late 1950s, Rusk was only able to report "rumors" received at the Tel Aviv embassy of Franco-Israeli collaboration on the Dimona reactor's construction and noted that all previous intelligence suggested "that Israel has no plans for developing atomic weaponry", which was corroborated by the French.¹⁴⁸ He very clearly stated why Kennedy should take an interest in preventing an Israeli bomb:

- a) Pursuant to congressional legislation and firm executive branch policy the United States is opposed to the proliferation of nuclear weapons capabilities; and
- b) Israel's acquisition of nuclear weapons would have grave repercussions in the Middle East, not the least of which might be the probable stationing of Soviet nuclear weapons on the soil of Israel's embittered Arab neighbors.¹⁴⁹

Rusk's initial summary was reflective of Kennedy's own position on nuclear weapons in Israel, a position which was maintained for the rest of his life. The memo also noted that the American government was "encouraging the Israelis to permit a qualified scientist from the United States or other friendly power to visit the Dimona installation." The next day, Kennedy consulted the outgoing Ambassador to Israel, Ogden Reid, who confirmed the notion that the Dimona reactor

¹⁴⁷ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 99.

¹⁴⁸ Memorandum from Dean Rusk to John F. Kennedy, 30 January 1961, p.1-2, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/israel/documents/first/01-01.htm> (Accessed 22 November 2012).

¹⁴⁹ Rusk to Kennedy, 30 January 1961, 1.

was intended for peaceful purposes and suggested that inspections could be palatable to the Israelis, so long as they were secret.¹⁵⁰

After much delay on the Israeli side concerning the scheduling of the visit, the cover of the American scientists, and a preliminary one-on-one between Kennedy and Ben-Gurion, the visit was scheduled for 18 May 1961.¹⁵¹ State Department instructions for the AEC scientists included advice on controlling leaks and concealing their mission from the public.¹⁵² Ulysses M. Staebler, assistant director of AEC reactor development, and Jesse Croach, an AEC expert on heavy water, arrived in Tel Aviv on the evening of May 17th.¹⁵³ They were received "very cordially" by the director of the Dimona facility, Manes Pratt, and were given a tour.¹⁵⁴ Pictures were not allowed and the Americans were informed that everything they saw was to be treated as classified, ostensibly to keep Israel's Arab enemies in the dark and to prevent them from retaliating against their suppliers. The scientists were thoroughly impressed by what they saw and reported to National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy that "Israel's Dimona project is a most creditable accomplishment both in concept and execution."¹⁵⁵ This visit represents another failure by the American government to discover the capacity for nuclear weapons development at the Dimona site. However, the intention of the scientists' visit was to verify, not challenge, Israeli assertions about the facility.¹⁵⁶ The scientists were not given support from the intelligence community, which did not provide them access to U-2 photos of Dimona. What they saw

¹⁵⁰ Memorandum of Conversation between Ogden Reid and John F. Kennedy, 31 January 1961, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/israel/documents/first/02-01.htm> (Accessed 22 November 2012).

¹⁵¹ Memorandum of Conversation between Mordechai Gazit and James Farley, 4 May 1961, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/israel/documents/first/09-01.htm> (Accessed 22 November 2012).

¹⁵² Memorandum from Phillip J. Farley to John Hall, 5 May 1961, p. 1, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/israel/documents/first/10-01.htm> (Accessed 22 November 2012).

¹⁵³ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 104.

¹⁵⁴ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 105.

¹⁵⁵ Memorandum from Lucius D. Battle to McGeorge Bundy, "US Scientists' Visit to Israel's Dimona Reactor," 26 May 1961, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-1963*, 17:125.

¹⁵⁶ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 107.

matched up with the official explanation they were given; as official guests, they simply were not shown the large underground plutonium reprocessing plant, which would later produce the necessary fissile material for an Israeli weapon.

The overly-optimistic Dimona report allayed Kennedy's fears and resulted in a very smooth visit with Ben-Gurion at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel on 30 May 1961. A satisfied Kennedy encouraged the Prime Minister to allow dissemination of the American findings to the world, particularly the Arab nations surrounding Israel.¹⁵⁷ Given Kennedy's democratic personal life, he used a particularly interesting analogy to justify the need for Israeli openness on the nuclear issue: "a woman should not only be virtuous, but also have the appearance of virtue". Ben-Gurion assented and emphasized the importance of civilian nuclear power for Israeli development. The notes taken by the Israeli delegation suggest that they would not be the "first mover" toward nuclear weapons in the Middle East:

We are asked whether it [the Dimona reactor] is for peace. For the time being the only purposes are for peace. Not now but after three or four years we shall have a pilot plant for separation, which is needed anyway for a power reactor. There is no such intention now, not for 4 or 5 years. But we will see what happens in the Middle East. It does not depend on us. Maybe Russia won't give bombs to China or Egypt, but maybe Egypt will develop them herself.¹⁵⁸

The Israeli understanding of their nuclear situation was shared by the Americans, who reported:

Israel's main—and for the time being, only—purpose is this [cheap nuclear power], the Prime Minister said, adding that "we do not know what will happen in the future; in three or four years we might have a need for a plant to process plutonium." Commenting on the political and strategic implications of atomic power and weaponry, the Prime Minister said he does believe that "in ten or fifteen years the Egyptians presumably could achieve it themselves."¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁷ Memorandum of Conversation between John F. Kennedy and David Ben-Gurion, 30 May 1961, p.1, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/israel/documents/first/15-01.htm> (Accessed 22 November 2012).

¹⁵⁸ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 108-109.

¹⁵⁹ Kennedy and Ben-Gurion, 30 May 1961, 2.

Kennedy, while satisfied with Ben-Gurion's answer, was concerned about the consequences of Israeli weapons development should this bilateral understanding fail. If Israel were to defy American interests and build a bomb, Kennedy feared it would not only ignite tensions in the Middle East, but also undermine the budding non-proliferation norm. It is important to remember that there were only four countries with nuclear weapons in 1961: the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and, since 1960, France. Kennedy's far-sighted policy toward the Dimona reactor was guided by its implications for the future, not for the present. In short, the threat for Kennedy was not the small, controllable blaze of proliferation in 1961, but a future wildfire.

The Dimona reactor did not present Kennedy with any major issues for the rest of his term of office. In a 27 December 1962 meeting with Golda Meir, then Israel's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Kennedy only brought up the Dimona reactor in a peripheral manner and his fears were allayed yet again in an easy manner by Meir.¹⁶⁰ Seven additional visits to the site during the 1960s confirmed the existing American notion that it was not being used for weapons production.¹⁶¹ However, Kennedy's fears of nuclear proliferation ensured that monitoring of the Dimona facility was maintained throughout his term of office.

A second bilateral confrontation with the Israeli government was triggered in 1963 by the failure of the Kennedy administration to broker a multilateral nuclear agreement in Europe. The dangers of nuclear war revealed by the Cuban Missile Crisis steeled Kennedy's resolve to minimize the possibility for further nuclear confrontation anywhere in the world. In March 1963, Kennedy vocalized these fears publicly:

Personally I am haunted by the feeling that by 1970, unless we are successful, there may be ten nuclear powers instead of four, and by 1975, fifteen or twenty... I see the possibility in the 1970s of the President of the United States having to

¹⁶⁰ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 112-113.

¹⁶¹ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 107.

face a world in which fifteen or twenty or twenty-five nations may have these weapons. I regard this as the greatest danger and hazard.¹⁶²

The post-Cuba attention to proliferation issues in the Kennedy administration combined with a missile race in the Middle East raised the specter of Israeli nuclear weapons from Dimona again.

Egypt paraded newly-acquired ballistic missiles in July 1962 on Revolution Day and boasted that they could hit any target "south of Beirut", i.e. all of Israel.¹⁶³ American intelligence successfully kept Kennedy informed about Israeli negotiations to buy MD-620 "Jericho" missiles from the French firm Marcel Dassault, which was agreed upon on 26 April 1963.¹⁶⁴ Kennedy's concern over a Middle Eastern arms race resulted in National Security Action Memorandum (NSAM) 231, which stated:

The President desires, as a matter of urgency, that we undertake every feasible measure to improve our intelligence on the Israeli nuclear program as well as other Israeli and UAR [United Arab Republic, i.e. modern Egypt and Syria] advanced weapons programs and to arrive at a firmer evaluation of their import. In this connection he wishes the next formal inspection of the Israeli reactor complex to be undertaken promptly and to be as thorough as possible.

In view of his great concern over the destabilizing impact of any Israeli or UAR program looking toward the development of nuclear weapons, the President also wishes the Department of State to develop proposals for forestalling such programs; in particular we should develop plans for seeking clearer assurances from the governments concerned on this point, and means of impressing upon them how seriously such a development would be regarded in this country.¹⁶⁵

Sherman Kent, head of the CIA's Office of National Estimates, produced a memorandum on 6 March 1963, which noted the dire consequences of an Israeli bomb for American interests, but was uncertain if Dimona had the capacity to separate plutonium for a weapon.¹⁶⁶ SNIE 30-2-63,

¹⁶² Quoted in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: John F. Kennedy, 1963* (Washington, D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1964), 280.

¹⁶³ Quoted in Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 116.

¹⁶⁴ Cited in Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 116-117.

¹⁶⁵ NSAM 231, "Middle Eastern Nuclear Capabilities", 26 March 1963, in *FRUS, 1961-1963*, 18:435.

¹⁶⁶ Cited in Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 117.

entitled "The Advanced Weapons Programs of the UAR and Israel" summarized American intelligence on the Israeli weapons development program:

We have no positive evidence that the Israeli nuclear program is aimed at achieving a nuclear weapons capability. However, the size of the program, what we know of its nature, and the amount of uranium concentrate acquired all suggest that Israel intends at least to put itself in a position to be able to produce a limited number of weapons relatively quickly after a decision to do so.¹⁶⁷

The estimate also asserted that Israel would have an arsenal of surface to surface missiles (SSMs) with a range of 250-300 nautical miles within two to four years. In 1963, Israel had, or was uncomfortably close to, all the technical elements of a nuclear strike capacity: fissile material production capacity, design knowledge, and means of delivery. The vital factor, and the most difficult to gauge, was Israeli intent. It all came down to Ben-Gurion.

After Ben-Gurion stalled on the issue of semiannual American inspections of the Dimona facility, Kennedy sent a series of messages to the Israeli Prime Minister and after much dissembling on the Israeli side, sent a very confrontational personal note on 18 May 1963. In this note, Kennedy noted that the American security commitment to Israel "would be seriously jeopardized... if it should be thought that this Government was unable to obtain reliable information on a subject as vital to peace as the question of Israel's efforts in the nuclear field."¹⁶⁸ Ben-Gurion never got the letter. The American Ambassador to Israel, Walworth Barbour, cabled back to Washington that the elder statesman of Israel had resigned that day, 15 September 1963.¹⁶⁹

On 5 July 1963, Kennedy sent a near-identical letter to Ben-Gurion's successor as Prime Minister, Levi Eshkol, bluntly stating once again that US support for Israel "could be seriously

¹⁶⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, *SNIE 30-2-63*, "The Advanced Weapons Programs of the UAR and Israel," 8 May 1963, p. 1, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB155/prolif-7.pdf> (Accessed 22 November 2012).

¹⁶⁸ Deptel 835 (Tel Aviv), Dean Rusk to Walworth Barbour, 18 May 1963, in *FRUS, 1961-1963*, 18:543-544.

¹⁶⁹ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 134-135.

jeopardized" should American scientists be denied access to "all areas of the Dimona site and to any related part of the complex, such as fuel fabrication facilities, or the plutonium separation plant."¹⁷⁰ According to Cohen, Kennedy's letter, lacking the context of previous discussions with the highly secretive Ben-Gurion, was received very poorly by Eshkol, who viewed it as a breach of diplomatic protocol, an insult to Israeli sovereignty, and an American attempt to bully him while he found his bearings.¹⁷¹ However, Eshkol decided to avoid confrontation and played for time. He was no foe to Ben-Gurion's nuclear policy, in fact, his was remarkably similar. In an editorial meeting, Eshkol asserted that Israel "should act up to our limits, but we should always make sure that it would not create a rift with the United States."¹⁷² This eventually led him to reassure Kennedy yet again that Dimona was being used for peaceful purposes and told him that they would "be able to reach agreement on the future schedule of visits."¹⁷³

This reassurance from Eshkol settled the Dimona issue for the Kennedy administration. While he disappointed the Prime Minister by refusing to provide a formal guarantee for Israel, Kennedy expressed a firm commitment to the "security and independence of Israel" and asserted that United States had "the will and ability to carry out its stated determination to preserve it."¹⁷⁴ The letter did not link the security issue to the Dimona facility or even mention the site. Cohen asserts that this Kennedy-Eshkol understanding caused America and Israel to stumble "further down the path of nuclear opacity".¹⁷⁵ Lee Harvey Oswald's bullet on 22 November 1963 brought an end to John F. Kennedy's presidency and drained the Israeli nuclear issue of its urgency.

¹⁷⁰ Letter from John F. Kennedy to Levi Eshkol, 5 July 1963, p. 2, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/israel/documents/exchange/01-03.htm> (Accessed 22 November 1963).

¹⁷¹ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 159.

¹⁷² Quoted in Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 159.

¹⁷³ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 163.

¹⁷⁴ Quoted in Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 169.

¹⁷⁵ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 174.

Lyndon B. Johnson treated Israel's nuclear program very differently than his predecessor. Johnson faced, quite simply, a different world. He was not involved as Vice-President with the Israeli nuclear issue. Non-proliferation was gaining attention on the international stage through the efforts of the Irish and Swedish delegations at the UN, who received the backing of the US and the Soviet Union, respectively.¹⁷⁶

However, information was coming in which should have led to more focused American monitoring for Israeli defection from their bilateral agreement with Kennedy. A report written by AEC personnel following a ten-hour visit to Dimona on 28 January 1965 argued:

16. While there appears to be no near term possibility of a weapons development program at the Dimona site, the site has excellent development and production capability that warrants continued surveillance at maximum intervals of one year.
17. Neither the total Israeli capability to produce nature uranium nor to manufacture Pu [Plutonium] at Dimona is now being used... However the potential to enter into these companion efforts is there and could be implemented by installing additional equipment."¹⁷⁷

Rusk, having dealt with the Dimona issue since the start of his tenure as Secretary of State, was very suspicious of the relatively benign AEC findings and Israeli intentions. He wrote a memo to Bundy entitled "Dimona Inspection and Need to Implement Initiative to Prevent Nuclear Proliferation in the Near East." He listed the following facts as reasons to suspect Israeli motives:

1. Israel concealed the existence of the Dimona reactor from us for about two years.
2. Israeli officials did not allow adequate time for thorough inspection of the Dimona site and arranged no visits to sites of projected related facilities.
3. Israeli officials ruled questions about procurement of uranium from abroad "outside the scope of the visits" and suggested taking them up through normal diplomatic channels.
4. Israel is acquiring missiles from France designed to accommodate either high-explosive or nuclear warhead.
5. Public and private statements by Israeli officials suggest military planning that includes the use of nuclear weapons.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁶ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 113.

¹⁷⁷ Quoted in Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 183.

¹⁷⁸ Cited in Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 183.

These breaches of trust led Rusk to suggest a departure from the Kennedy tactic of bilateral deals to pushing Israel to accept IAEA safeguards.¹⁷⁹ However, stories from *New York Times*, written by John Finney, who broke the story on the Dimona facility for Dulles back in 1960, revealed the secret American "inspections" of the site.¹⁸⁰ The term "inspections" rekindled Israeli concerns about sovereignty in nuclear matters and forced the United States to temporarily ease pressure on Dimona. The American "visit"—not "inspection"—of 6 April 1966 did not raise any signs of weapons development, nor did the following one on 22 April 1967.¹⁸¹ However, as discussed above, most current scholarship places the Israeli acquisition of nuclear weapons sometime between 1966 and 1967, certainly prior to the Six-Day War of June 1967.

The United States was not aware that Israel developed nuclear weapons. American policymakers' knowledge of Israeli capabilities was virtually unchanged from 1963. Rusk's suspicions of Israeli intentions had no confirmation from the intelligence community. The findings of NIE 4-66, "The Likelihood of Further Proliferation", prompted by the Chinese test of a nuclear device in 1964, suggested that "beyond the present five nuclear powers, only India is likely to undertake a nuclear weapons program in the next several years."¹⁸² NIE 4-66 suggested that the Israelis "might do so".¹⁸³ However, the CIA determined that the acquisition of nuclear weapons could be delayed "for the next few years, at least," should the Israelis feel secure through shipments of conventional weapons from the West.¹⁸⁴ This NIE also supported

¹⁷⁹ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 184.

¹⁸⁰ John W. Finney, "Israel Permits U.S. to Inspect Atomic Reactor," *New York Times*, 14 March 1965, 1, 8, ProQuest, <http://search.proquest.com.proxy.lawrence.edu:2048/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/116806082/13A9C19E9784639331E/1?accountid=12010> (Accessed 24 November 2012).

¹⁸¹ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 184-185.

¹⁸² Central Intelligence Agency, *NIE 4-66*, "The Likelihood of Further Proliferation," 20 January 1966, p.1, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB155/prolif-12.pdf> (Accessed 24 November 2012).

¹⁸³ CIA, *NIE 4-66*, 1.

¹⁸⁴ CIA, *NIE 4-66*, 9.

Johnson's move toward broader international restrictions on the Israeli program.¹⁸⁵ The failure of the intelligence community to raise a sense of urgency about the Israeli nuclear program, compounded with inconclusive information reaching the White House via diplomatic channels, contributed to the dulling of American non-proliferation policy during the Johnson administration.

However, inaccurate information being given to policymakers by the State Department, AEC, and CIA cannot be described as the main reason for the American inability to check Israel's nuclear ambitions; the policymakers themselves must be held accountable. This is not to say that Johnson ignored the issue of non-proliferation. On 9 February 1966, Rusk told Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban directly that the "only major question that could have disastrous effect on US-Israeli relations was GOI [government of Israel] attitude on proliferation" and added that the United States would be "extremely clear and utterly harsh on [the] matter of non-proliferation".¹⁸⁶ However, given the lack of urgency from the intelligence community and the State Department on the Dimona facility, Johnson's nuclear relations with Israel *primarily* focused on getting that country to sign a multilateral Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Originally intended to replace Kennedy's bilateral agreement with Eshkol, which "bred uneasiness, even resentment, on both sides", Johnson thought that broader measures, like the NPT, would better stem the spread of nuclear weapons.¹⁸⁷ However, he did not link the signing of the Treaty to the sale of American F-4 Phantom fighter jets, which allowed Eshkol to stall and dissemble on the issue.¹⁸⁸ He stalled until Richard Nixon became President-elect on 5 November 1968. Rusk described Israel's nuclear status at that time as being "5-months pregnant," but corrected himself

¹⁸⁵ CIA, *NIE 4-66*, 1.

¹⁸⁶ Cited in Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 185.

¹⁸⁷ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 294.

¹⁸⁸ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 296-297.

in his autobiography by asserting that it was "at least eight and three-fourths months pregnant and could produce nuclear weapons on very short notice."¹⁸⁹ All of Rusk's suspicions came to naught. He, Johnson, and the rest of the administration left the White House in January, ending the Kennedy legacy of non-proliferation.

US policy toward Israel's nuclear program did not prevent the development of a bomb during the Johnson administration. In order to cope with the tactical problems of the bilateral agreement concerning Dimona, Johnson attempted to restrict nuclear power weapons development through international inspections with the IAEA and the regulations of the NPT. Therefore, his non-proliferation policy shifted from the narrow sense, i.e. stopping the spread on a case-by-case basis, to the broad sense—efforts to strengthen the international norm. Unknowingly, this shift in short-term tactics gave the Israeli program time to develop weapons. American inspections and intelligence gave no indication that Israel had the infrastructure or made the decision to pursue the bomb. Despite the best intentions, American non-proliferation policy was too broad and policymakers had no clue that it was not working.

It would take until the Nixon administration for American policymakers to recognize that Israel had nuclear weapons. Shortly after his inauguration, Nixon informed his Cabinet that the United States would ratify the NPT. However, in a classified national Security Decision memorandum circulated to leading administration officials, his National Security Advisor, Henry Kissinger, noted that:

The President directed that, associated with the decision to proceed with U.S. ratification of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, there should be no efforts by the U.S. Government to pressure other nations... to follow suit. The Government in its public posture should reflect a tone of optimism that other countries will sign or ratify, while clearly dissociating itself from any plan to bring pressure on these countries to sign or ratify.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁹ Quoted in Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 320-321.

¹⁹⁰ Kissinger, "National Security Decision Memorandum 6," 1.

This approach characterized Nixon's approach to non-proliferation. He publicly supported checking the spread of nuclear weapons, but was unwilling to strain bilateral relations with nth power countries or subordinate geopolitical goals for the sake of the NPT.

Henry Wilson, a Johnson administration hold-over, future director of the Brookings Institution, and Chairman of the State Department's Policy Planning Council, wrote Secretary Rogers a memo two days later on the "Impact on U.S. Policies of an Israeli Nuclear Weapons Capability."¹⁹¹ Wilson was not only concerned about nuclear weapons' destabilizing effect on the Middle East, but also their effect on the nascent non-proliferation norm. He wrote that one "far-reaching and unfavorable" result of an Israeli weapon's disclosure would be that:

Other nuclear capable countries would be more likely to opt in favor of nuclear weapons for themselves and, even if they did not decide to produce weapons immediately, would be less likely to sign the NPT.¹⁹²

This memo reveals a typical Johnson-era premise for combating the spread of nuclear weapons: proliferation incentivizes further weapons development by nth power countries. This concern was shared by Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird, who argued that the United States should withhold the delivery of a CDC 6400 computer to Israel, as it "could be a critical tool" in Israel's weapons program and lead to the introduction of atomic weaponry into the Middle East.¹⁹³

Another voice urging Nixon and Kissinger to pressure the Israelis was Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs Joseph J. Sisco. In a memo for Kissinger, Sisco advocated "[heading] off Israel's acquisition of nuclear weapons and nuclear-capable strategic missiles" as "one of the most important objectives of our Middle East

¹⁹¹Memorandum from Henry Owen to William P. Rogers, "Impact of U.S. Policies of an Israeli Nuclear Weapons Capability," 7 February 1969, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB189/IN-05.pdf> (Accessed 12 April 2013).

¹⁹²Owen to Rogers, 7 February 1969, 2.

¹⁹³Memorandum from Melvin Laird to Henry A. Kissinger, "Stopping the Introduction of Nuclear Weapons into the Middle East," 17 March 1969, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB189/IN-06.pdf> (Accessed 12 April 2013).

policy."¹⁹⁴ He also believed that the United States should pressure Eshkol's successor as premier, Golda Meir, to sign and ratify the NPT. In order to induce Meir to comply with American wishes, Sisco suggested that the US government would have to suggest that the acquisition of a nuclear device would "cause a fundamental change in the US-Israel relationship, including our long-standing concern for Israel's security." Sisco believed that only the threat of severely damaging bilateral relations with the US or the establishment of a lasting peace with the Arab countries could induce Israel to give up its weapons program. In practicality, however, Sisco considered anything short of heavy-handed use of American influence to be "futile."¹⁹⁵ Even linking individual shipments of American arms to the nuclear issue was an insufficient threat to get Israel to budge from its stance on nuclear weapons.

Kissinger was unwilling to strong-arm the Israelis and sacrifice other security interests for the sake of halting weapons development. He argued in a discussion group that "we should avoid direct confrontation with Israel as well as public knowledge of Israeli nuclear activities."¹⁹⁶ The group concluded that the United States should attempt to extract a public declaration from Meir that Israel would not *develop* nuclear weapons—even if such weapons already existed, as this would force Israel to "hide" its arsenal from the public view. This discussion marked the beginnings of American collaboration with the Israeli policy of nuclear opacity. By neither publicly confirming nor denying the existence of nuclear weapons, Israel could still have the perceived benefit of deterring the Arab states without undermining the non-proliferation norm and antagonizing the United States. In a telephone conversation with Undersecretary of State

¹⁹⁴ Memorandum from Joseph J. Sisco to Henry A. Kissinger, "Israel's Nuclear Policy and Implications for the United States," 3 April 1969, p. 3, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB189/IN-07.pdf> (Accessed 12 April 2013).

¹⁹⁵ Sisco to Kissinger, 3 April 1969, 4.

¹⁹⁶ Memorandum from Rodger Davies to Mr. Austin et al., "Review Group Consideration of Response to NSSM-40," 26 June 1969, p.3, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB189/IN-09.pdf> (Accessed 13 April 2013).

Elliot Richardson, Kissinger mentioned that Nixon was "leery" of pressuring Israel at all with a shipment of F-4 Phantom fighter jets before Meir could meet with him in person.¹⁹⁷ Nixon was unwilling to place non-proliferation over the American alliance with Israel.

In the weeks prior to Meir's visit, Israel gave several signs of that it would not oblige the United States on nuclear matters. First, in response to concerns over Israel's delay to ratify the NPT, the Israeli Ambassador to the US and future Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, reassured Richardson that Israel was still "studying" the implications of ratification, an answer previously given to placate President Johnson.¹⁹⁸ Richardson attempted to clarify what the Israeli promise to not be the first country to "introduce" nuclear weapons into the Middle East meant—did it mean not building a bomb or not acknowledging its existence through a public announcement or test? This was a previous sore spot in negotiations over the NPT and Ambassador Rabin ended the conversation by stating that the Israeli position was well-known and that "he would of course convey Mr. Richardson's comments to Jerusalem."¹⁹⁹ Ambassador Barbour conveyed the concern to Meir on 31 July 1969 that the American inspection team had not been allowed full access to the Dimona reactor, but Meir denied his request to schedule a more complete inspection, citing the necessary and untimely involvement of the Knesset prior to national elections.²⁰⁰ On 28 August, Rabin again rebuffed Richardson's requests for more information about Israel's nuclear intentions, claiming that it was too "difficult" a subject for Israel to tackle

¹⁹⁷ Telecon between Elliot Richardson and Henry A. Kissinger, 16 July 1969, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB189/IN-12.pdf> (Accessed 30 April 2013).

¹⁹⁸ Memorandum from Elliot Richardson to Richard Nixon, "Israel's Nuclear Weapon and Strategic Missile Policy," 29 July 1969, p.4, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB189/IN-18.pdf> (Accessed 13 April 2013).

¹⁹⁹ Richardson to Nixon, "Israel's Nuclear Weapon and Strategic Missile Policy," 6.

²⁰⁰ Telegram from the US Embassy in Tel Aviv to the Department of State, "Dimona Visit," 31 July 1969, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB189/IN-16a.pdf> (Accessed 13 April 2013).

prior to the opening of the polls.²⁰¹ The Israeli government was clearly stonewalling, but Nixon refused to pressure them into cooperating.

Meir's coalition handily won the 28 October 1969 election, which allowed nuclear negotiations to resume. Secretary of State Rogers urged Nixon to cut through Rabin's demurrals and press Meir for a "full and frank discussion" of Israel's nuclear policy.²⁰² Richardson wrote a briefing book for Kissinger on 19 September in anticipation of Meir's visit and noted that:

Israel resents our position, but may well have concluded that, since we have not gone beyond words in pressing our point, we are actually resigned to seeing Israel become a nuclear power. Israel has worked to acquire a nuclear weapons capability as rapidly as circumstances permit. She may already have attained it.²⁰³

This briefing book represents one final attempt by strong non-proliferation voices within the Nixon administration to make apparent the distinct possibility that Israel already possessed nuclear weaponry, which it did.

No record exists of Nixon's conversation with Meir, but a number of subsequent documents indicate that perhaps she told him that Israel possessed nuclear weapons. Following the meeting with Meir, Kissinger noted in a memo that the American government was concerned about the "visible" introduction of weapons into the Middle East by Israel.²⁰⁴ This suggests that Kissinger—and therefore Nixon—accepted and adopted the Israeli policy of nuclear opacity by wishing to avoid the *public confirmation* of a weapons program, instead of preventing weapons development itself. The American government was complicit in Israeli duplicity, as Rabin finally

²⁰¹ Memorandum from Elliot Richardson to Richard Nixon, "Israel's Nuclear Program," 28 August 1969, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB189/IN-18.pdf> (Accessed 13 April 2013).

²⁰² Memorandum from William P. Rogers to Richard Nixon, "Suggested Position to Take With Israeli Minister Meir During Her Forthcoming Visit," 18 September 1969, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB189/IN-20.pdf> (Accessed 13 April 2013).

²⁰³ Memorandum from Elliot Richardson to Henry A. Kissinger, "Briefing Book- Visit of Mrs. Golda Meir," 19 September 1969, p. 1, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB189/IN-21.pdf> (Accessed 13 April 2013).

²⁰⁴ Memorandum from Henry A. Kissinger to Richard Nixon, "Discussions with the Israelis on Nuclear Matters," 7 October 1969

answered Richardson's earlier questions by stating that Israel would "not *become* a nuclear power [emphasis added]." Kissinger noted that this declaration allowed Israel to (inaccurately) remain classified as a "non-nuclear power" under the NPT regime.²⁰⁵ He believed that the United States would "have to settle for... an Israeli commitment that will prevent Israeli nuclear weapons from becoming a known factor and further complicating the Arab-Israeli situation."²⁰⁶ He recommended that the American reply to Rabin emphasize that Israel, as a "non-nuclear" state, should privately abide by the NPT provisions forbidding the receipt or manufacture of nuclear arms by not building any additional devices. A private assurance would alleviate some American concerns while allowing Israel to delay on a decision on the NPT.

Thus began the American cover-up on the Israeli weapons program. Non-proliferation voices, such as Sisco and Barbour were denied copies of records on the Nixon-Meir conversations, presumably in order to solidify the American side of nuclear opacity.²⁰⁷ On 23 February 1970, Rabin stopped his waffling and told Kissinger that "in the light of the conversation between the President and Golda Meir... Israel [had] no intention to sign the NPT."²⁰⁸ He also openly told Kissinger that any attempt to pressure Israel into signing the NPT through arms deals would be "extremely unfortunate." This bold declaration from the Israeli Ambassador indicated that any hope of countering Israel's nuclear weapons program was gone. Nixon was willing to reach an understanding with Meir and move on to coping with the geopolitical implications of Israeli possession, instead of continuing to advocate non-

²⁰⁵ Memorandum from Henry A. Kissinger to Richard Nixon, "Rabin's Proposed Assurances on Israeli Nuclear Policy," 8 October 1969, p. 1, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB189/IN-23.pdf> (Accessed 13 April 2013).

²⁰⁶ Kissinger to Nixon, "Rabin's Proposed Assurances on Israeli Nuclear Policy," 3.

²⁰⁷ Memorandum from Harold H. Saunders to Henry A. Kissinger, "Record of the President's Talk with Golda Meir," 8 December 1969, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB189/IN-26.pdf> (Accessed 13 April 2013).

²⁰⁸ Memorandum of Conversation between Yitzhak Rabin and Henry A. Kissinger, 23 February 1970, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB189/IN-28.pdf> (Accessed 13 April 2013).

proliferation. Opponents of the Israeli program within the American government were kept in the dark by Nixon and Kissinger, as is indicated by a request from Robert Munn, head of the Israel desk at the State Department, to authorize another routine inspection of the Dimona site—a request which was blocked by Kissinger from discussion in the Cabinet.²⁰⁹

The Nixon-Meir conversation almost certainly marked the point when a small group of high-level American policymakers were informed of Israeli possession of nuclear weapons. The adoption of a policy of opacity toward Israel's development program indicates that non-proliferation was secondary to maintaining a strong relationship with Israel and the stability of the Middle East's strategic situation. This policy continued after Nixon's resignation. On 15 October 1975, State Department officials, including Sisco, drafted a response to questions about Israel's nuclear status raised in a congressional hearing. The response included administration officials releasing a statement challenging the assertion in the CIA's *SNIE 4-1-74* that Israel "already [had] produced nuclear weapons."²¹⁰ To the contrary, the State Department would state that it believed Israel had "the technical and scientific capability to produce nuclear weapons if it chooses," but that there was no "concrete evidence" of possession—a blatant obfuscation.

Although the Kennedy administration actively sought to prevent Israel from building a bomb, complications from inspections of the Dimona site led his successor, Johnson, to place his trust in the NPT and IAEA inspections, which gave Israel time to build nuclear explosives. However, the terms of the Treaty were too constricting for the Israeli government to accept and were too important for the United States to ignore, so they delayed on a decision until the

²⁰⁹ Memorandum from Robert H. Munn to Joseph P. Sisco, "Scheduling of Visit to Dimona Reactor," 12 June 1970, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB189/IN-29.pdf> (Accessed 13 April 2013).

²¹⁰ Memorandum from Alfred L. Atherton, Jr. and Myron B. Kratzer to Joseph P. Sisco, "Response to Congressional Questions on Israel's Nuclear Capability," 15 October 1975, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB189/IN-30.pdf> (Accessed 13 April 2013).

political situation in America allowed them to overtly refuse. That situation changed arrived with Nixon and Kissinger in the White House, who were not deeply concerned with confronting the issue of proliferation. As noted above, it seems likely that Nixon and Kissinger viewed the acquisition of an atomic bomb by Israel as inevitable and were concerned with the consequences of leaving the Israeli nuclear question open. By the end of the Nixon administration, the American government was actively collaborating with a proliferating power in secret and misled the American public.

The Paradox: Confronting India's Nuclear Weapons Program

The moral to be legitimately drawn from the supreme tragedy of the bomb is that it will not be destroyed by counter-bombs even as violence cannot be by counter-violence. Mankind has to get out of violence only through non-violence.

—Mahatma Gandhi, 30 January 1948²¹¹

There are no political or foreign policy implications of this test.

—Indira Gandhi to Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, 22 May 1974²¹²

The Republic of India reported to the world that it had conducted a "peaceful nuclear explosion experiment" (PNE) one hundred meters underground in the Rajasthan desert, near Pokhran, on 18 May 1974.²¹³ Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, responding to a query about the test's effect on Indian prominence on the global stage, replied: "I never bother about prestige. It is nothing to get excited about. We are firmly committed to the peaceful uses of atomic energy."²¹⁴ The official reaction from the US State Department was that "the United States has always been against nuclear proliferation for the adverse impact it will have on world stability."²¹⁵ Nixon, who had an "extraordinarily carefree view of nuclear proliferation," in the opinion of Kennedy and Johnson foreign policy advisor William Bundy, does not seem to have been troubled by the test.²¹⁶ Pakistan's alarmed Minister for Defense and Foreign Affairs, Aziz Ahmed, told Nixon: "We are worried. We are holding out, trying to work for peace. You have

²¹¹ Mahatma Gandhi, *The Essential Gandhi: An Anthology of His Writings on His Life, Work, and Ideas*, ed. Louis Fischer, (New York: Vintage Books, 2002), 293.

²¹² Quoted in Bidwai and Vanaik, *New Nukes*, 63.

²¹³ Bernard Weinraub, "India Becomes 6th Nation to Set Off Nuclear Device," *New York Times*, 19 May 1974, p. 1, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/120162433?accountid=12010>. (Accessed 2 April 2013)

²¹⁴ Weinraub, "India Becomes 6th Nation to Set Off Nuclear Device," p. 18.

²¹⁵ Special to the *New York Times*, "U.S. Sees 'Adverse Impact'," *New York Times* (1923-Current File), 19 May 1974, p.19, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/120175207?accountid=12010>. (Accessed 2 April 2013)

²¹⁶ Bundy, *A Tangled Web*, 288.

been very kind and gracious..."²¹⁷ Nixon's weak reply consisted of a promise to "begin an assessment... on the implications of the Indian nuclear weapons."

Bundy asserted that Nixon's non-response was even more baffling given Indo-Pak nuclear tensions during the 1990s than it was in the 1970s.²¹⁸ Although Bundy's affiliation with the Kennedy and Johnson administrations raises the question of bias, it seems fair to assert that the Indian test marked a dramatic shift in the balance of power in South Asia. India, as the first non-aligned nation and the second leg in the Sino-Pakistani-Indian security triangle to explode a nuclear device, publicly demonstrated to the United States the dangers of nuclear proliferation and encouraged a flurry of activity in the Congress and by Nixon's successor, Gerald Ford.

The hesitation—or political inability—of American policymakers in the 1960s and early 1970s to place significant international controls on civilian nuclear technology gave the Indian nuclear program time to secure the necessary technology, expertise, and infrastructure for weapons development. Nixon and Kissinger, who were surprised by the Indian test, ignored its implications for global security—the implications that drew the attention of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations— and merely adjusted to a new condition in international politics.

The Indian case is one fraught with contradiction. Gandhi condemned atomic weaponry as the final folly of ideological violence, a development to be reviled in both India and the international community.²¹⁹ Opposition to nuclear weapons was closely linked to the threads of non-violence and non-alignment in Indian nationalist thought. Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister, speaking in the lower house of Parliament in 1957, declared: "[W]e have declared quite clearly that we are not interested in and we will not make these bombs, even if we

²¹⁷ Memorandum of Conversation between Richard Nixon and Aziz Ahmed, 23 May 1974, in *FRUS, 1969-1976*, E-8: 3.

²¹⁸ Bundy, *A Tangled Web*, 288.

²¹⁹ Gandhi, *The Essential Gandhi*, 259.

have the capacity to do so."²²⁰ The strength of this anti-nuclear norm should not be underestimated. Even in 1974, when India acquired a nuclear capability, Indira Gandhi insisted the explosion was "peaceful" and that the demonstration of a capacity for weaponization was not the same as the possession.

However, the theme of Indian national self-sufficiency was also of great importance to Nehru, who had a "decidedly modernist vision" for the country—one that included nuclear power plants and atomic bombs.²²¹ Speaking in Bombay in 1946, Nehru revealed both a keen understanding of *realpolitik* and similar thinking to Ben-Gurion on nuclear issues:

As long as the world is constituted as it is, every country will have to devise and use the latest scientific devices for its protection. I have no doubt India will develop her scientific researches and I hope Indian scientists will use the atomic force for constructive purposes. But if India is threatened she will inevitably try to defend herself by all means at her disposal. I hope India in common with other countries will prevent the use of atomic bombs.²²²

This duality in official thought on nuclear weapons is directly linked to positioning by the Indian government to convince the United States that there is such a thing as a "peaceful" nuclear explosion. Nehru was able to maintain this apparent contradiction through noting that:

On the one hand, the nuclear bomb and the destruction of Nagasaki and Hiroshima illustrates the horrendous revolution that has taken place in military technology and on the other, the application of nuclear energy to peaceful and constructive purposes has opened limitless possibilities for human development, prosperity and overabundance. This major challenge confronts our times with a choice between co-destruction and co-prosperity and makes it imperative for the world to outlaw war, particularly nuclear war.²²³

American nuclear policy toward India was one of close cooperation through the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations, as long as it was possible for US policymakers to accept the Indian distinction between "peaceful" and "military" nuclear development. Even when

²²⁰ Quoted in Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 13.

²²¹ Verghese Koithara, *Managing India's Nuclear Forces* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2012), 87.

²²² Dorothy Newman, ed., *Nehru: The First 60 Years* (New York: John Day, 1965), 2:264.

²²³ Quoted in Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 15.

American involvement tapered off due to strained bilateral relations, as the dangers of dual-use technology and Indian hesitation to accept international controls grew, the US continued to be unaware of India's progress and was utterly surprised by the 18 May 1974 "Smiling Buddha" detonation.

If Nehru provided the political push for weapons development, then the development of Indian nuclear expertise and infrastructure must be attributed to an extraordinary scientific figure: Homi Bhabha. Born to a wealthy Parsi family and related to the preeminent Tata industrialist family through his aunt, Bhabha earned a doctorate in physics from Cambridge in 1935 and mixed during the pre-war years with leading nuclear scientists such as Niels Bohr, James Franck, and Enrico Fermi, who later would be key figures in the Manhattan Project.²²⁴ After returning to India, he headed the generously-funded Tata Institute for Fundamental Research (TIFR) in 1945 Bhabha frequently referred to the TIFR as "the cradle of the Indian atomic energy programme."²²⁵

Bhabha, the patriotic scientist, had an excellent relationship with Nehru, the nationalist politician, whom he had known since 1937. They both envisioned an India shaking off its stunted scientific legacy from the time of the Raj and pursuing the leading technology of the post-war period—atomic energy. Nehru introduced an Atomic Energy Act in 1948 to the Constituent Assembly—the body responsible for writing the Republic's constitution and India's *de facto* legislature until the first official elections in 1952.²²⁶ The legislation would create an Atomic Energy Commission with secrecy controls over both military and civilian nuclear research even stricter than those of Britain and the United States. The following exchange between Nehru's

²²⁴ Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 16.

²²⁵ Quoted in Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 17.

²²⁶ Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 17.

fellow Congress Party member and critic of the bill's secrecy provisions, S.V. Krishnamurthy Rao, and the prime minister is telling of Indian nuclear policy:

- Rao: May I know if secrecy is insisted upon even for research for peaceful purposes?
- Nehru: Not for theoretical research. Secrecy comes in when you think in terms of the production or use of atomic energy. That is the central effort to produce atomic energy.
- Rao: In the Bill passed in the United Kingdom secrecy is restricted only for defense purposes.
- Nehru: I do not know how you are to distinguish between the two.²²⁷

This shows that Nehru was keenly aware of the dual-use potential of nuclear infrastructure and was determined to wrap as thick a coat of security around a "peaceful" atomic energy program as one might expect for a military research. The bill passed and Bhabha was appointed as one member of the Commission's triumvirate under the direct supervision of the prime minister. The Indian AEC was established on 10 April 1948 and took the lion's share of the Republic's scientific research and development budget with little government oversight.²²⁸

As discussed above, India's atomic energy program was strongly tied to nationalist ideological notions of self-sufficiency, modernity, and anti-imperialism. The 1946 Baruch Plan backed by the US in the United Nations clashed with both Indian ideological and material interests. The Plan's provision for international control of fissile material through an Atomic Development Authority was viewed by Nehru as a dire threat to India's modernization and independence.²²⁹ As a country poor in fossil fuels, India could not afford to sacrifice control over its plentiful fissile ores such as thorium, which not only would help in the development of a domestic atomic power grid, but also would serve as a valuable commodity for international

²²⁷ *Constituent Assembly of India (Legislative Debates)*, 6 April 1948, 5:3328.

²²⁸ Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 21.

²²⁹ Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 21.

trade. Nehru's sister and representative at the UN, Vijayalakshmi Pandit, asserted that the Baruch Plan would create a two-tiered international nuclear order that would allow the superpowers to exploit the resources of India while denying it the benefit of atomic energy. Nehru, though consistently in favor of global nuclear disarmament in public, must have been pleased to see the Plan stagnate in the Security Council.

India's program continued to move from theoretical research to practical application when it signed a nuclear cooperation agreement with the French government in 1951.²³⁰ Nehru continued to provide robust governmental support of Bhabha's programs through a four year plan unveiled in 1952, which funded a nation-wide geological survey of fissile ore reserves and the extraction of thorium from monazite.²³¹ Bhabha also secretly began side deals with atomic scientists in Great Britain, Canada, and the United States to obtain technical knowledge and blueprints in exchange for Indian fissile ores needed to produce thorium and beryllium.²³²

However, a diplomatic confrontation arose with the United States when an Indian public company sought to load a Polish vessel with thorium nitrate for sale in China in July 1953. Thorium nitrate is vital for nuclear fuel and its transfer to China ran afoul the US Mutual Defense Assistance Act of 1951, which legislated cutting all forms of aid to non-aligned countries that traded strategic materials to the communist bloc.²³³ When the US Ambassador to India, George V. Allen, informed Nehru of this development, the prime minister insisted that any American pressure to cancel the shipment was a violation of Indian sovereignty. The situation was resolved after Secretary of State John Foster Dulles offered a compromise wherein the Indian government would declare that it was unaware of the Act and that the thorium nitrate

²³⁰ Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 22.

²³¹ Shyam Bhatia, *India's Nuclear Bomb* (Ghaziabad: Vikas Publishing House, 1979), 88.

²³² Itty Abraham, *The Making of the Indian Atomic Bomb: Science, Secrecy and the Postcolonial State* (London: Zed Books, 1998), 78-81.

²³³ Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 22.

would be used for commercial, not strategic, purposes in China. Although the episode was resolved fairly quickly through deft skirting of American legislation, the US-India interaction is telling. The Indian government under Nehru and his successor, Indira Gandhi, would repeatedly refuse to compromise its sovereignty by yielding to international controls of nuclear technology and materials. Two other developments during the Eisenhower administration would further strain Indian relations with the US and had a significant effect on the weapons program: the American alliance with Pakistan and the Atoms for Peace program.

The American alliance with Pakistan in 1954 and accompanied military aid package was viewed by Nehru as a major obstacle to friendly and cooperative Indo-American relations. This cooling over perceived slights to Indian independence in foreign affairs is reflected in Nehru's declaration on 1 March 1954 that "India has no intention of surrendering or bartering her freedom for any purpose or under any compulsion whatever."²³⁴ He also announced his rejection of an American offer of military aid similar to that extended to Pakistan. The statement not only indicates that Nehru and his government took the realignment in South Asia's security constellation seriously, but also that they considered short- to medium-term military gain insufficient reason to abrogate India's sovereignty.

The independent streak predominant in Indian foreign policy also led Nehru to reject the benefits of internationally-backed civilian nuclear infrastructure development as envisioned by the Atoms for Peace program. As noted above, the Atoms for Peace program was designed to limit weapons development through deposition of fissile material with the IAEA, which in turn would distribute that material for civilian purposes as it saw fit. This proposal ran counter to two of Nehru's foreign policy goals: preservation of Indian sovereignty, particularly in matters of

²³⁴ A. Appadorai, ed., *Select Documents on India's Foreign Policy and Relations, 1947-1972* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1982), 1:270.

weapons development, and the development of a peace-oriented bloc not aligned with either the hegemony of the United States or the Soviet Union. In a speech before the Lok Sabha, or lower house of India's Parliament, on 10 May 1954, Nehru attacked the Atoms for Peace initiative. Although he clearly saw the value in controlling and banning nuclear weapons, he argued that there were major questions of enforcement, stating that "they cannot be controlled by a mere desire or demand for banning them."²³⁵ He clearly had China and its nascent weapons program in mind when he asserted that the United Nations and therefore the IAEA "cannot control any nation which is not in it, which it refuses to admit and with which it would not have anything to do." He also was skeptical of the proposed IAEA's ability to resist pressure from established great powers to restrict nuclear programs in the developing world while collecting their fissile resources, a prospect which resonated with his memory of India's colonial past. To this end, India's UN representative, V.K. Krishna Menon submitted an amendment to the draft statute for the IAEA that gave non-nuclear nations a significant role in the writing of the Agency's rules and constitution as well as provisions to prevent exploitation of countries rich in fissile materials at the hands of more-developed nations.²³⁶

The United States backed down in the face of pressure from non-nuclear nations such as France and India on the topic of substantive international controls of nuclear energy. Strauss, Eisenhower's Chairman of the AEC, argued against the political feasibility of strict inspections and the Pentagon expressed wariness at the prospect of similar inspections of American nuclear sites.²³⁷ Secretary of State Dulles argued against the feasibility of a non-proliferation program with a robust inspections system, as "it would be difficult for nations to forego permanently their

²³⁵ Quoted in Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 25.

²³⁶ Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 26.

²³⁷ Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 30.

right to make nuclear weapons while the U.S., USSR, and U.K. continued to make them."²³⁸ This was precisely the point raised by the Manhattan Project scientists' Committee on Political and Social Problems in 1945. As noted above, the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union enjoyed a significant advantage in atomic matters, which could have theoretically been used to impose conditions on offers of nuclear aid. However, similar to the Israeli case, bilateral and international political obstacles discouraged American policymakers from exercising this leverage and encouraged the United States to cooperate with India on nuclear matters, which gave the Indian government time to present the world with a *fait accompli*.

Similar to the Israeli Dimona site's ostensible classification as a "research" reactor, the United States and its allies failed to recognize the military applications of civilian nuclear technology in India. Nuclear power's strongest advocate, Bhabha, argued that India's lack of conventional power sources necessitated production of atomic energy, which was the only way of bringing up the living standard to American levels.²³⁹ As India lacked the capacity to process uranium ore, he favored acquiring technology for the processing of plutonium, which could in turn produce the necessary U-233 isotope and therefore an endless supply of fuel for other reactors. However, plutonium could also be used in weapons production. This proposal for a sophisticated atomic energy grid presented existing nuclear powers with significant business incentives for cooperation as potential suppliers of equipment and know-how. Construction for India's first research reactor began at Apsara in 1955 with British engineering designs and went critical in 1956 with British uranium. The site near Trombay, which produced the plutonium for the Smiling Buddha test, was called the "Canadian-Indian Reactor, U.S." (CIRUS), as it was financed in part by the Canadian government as part of the anti-communist Colombo Plan.

²³⁸ State Department, Memorandum of Conversation, 3 February 1956 in *FRUS, 1955-1957*, 20:309.

²³⁹ Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 27.

According to an Indian scientist responsible for the construction of the Apsara site, A. Sambasiva Rao, there was "no other great need to go in for plutonium production so urgently except for India's hidden goal."²⁴⁰ In order to make the sale, the Canadian government imposed no strict safeguards or inspection requirements on the Indian government in exchange for the necessary financial and technical support, apart from a secret annex in their agreement. This annex only stipulated a verbal commitment from the Indian government that the resultant plutonium would be used exclusively for "peaceful purposes."²⁴¹ However, in July 1958, Nehru approved a project code-named "Phoenix" to build a plutonium reprocessing plant on the Trombay site by mid-1964 capable of annually producing ten kilograms of weapons-grade plutonium—the explosive equivalent of the Hiroshima bomb.²⁴²

Although Canada and Great Britain supplied most of the plutonium and designs necessary for the development of a national nuclear infrastructure in India, the contributions of the United States are also significant. In the interest of international cooperation on civilian nuclear matters, the American government declassified and disseminated thousands of technical documents in 1955, including those related to plutonium reprocessing, for foreign scientists and engineers.²⁴³ During that year, members of the congressional Joint Committee on Atomic Energy visited India to encourage the purchase of American nuclear technology and indeed offered to supply the CIRUS reactor with heavy water if Indian stocks were unreliable. Between 1955 and the 1974 explosion, 1,104 Indian nuclear scientists and engineers were welcomed to the Argonne Laboratory School of Nuclear Science and Engineering in Illinois and other American facilities for the purpose of research. Although this aid would directly contribute to India's ability to

²⁴⁰ Quoted in Raj Chengappa, *Weapons of Peace: The Secret Story of India's Quest to be a Nuclear Power* (New Delhi: HarperCollins Publishers India, 2000), 84.

²⁴¹ Cited in Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 27.

²⁴² Chengappa, *Weapons of Peace*, 85.

²⁴³ Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 30.

initiate a weapons development program, few American policymakers were willing to sacrifice the US's profitable role as supplier of nuclear technology. Strauss implied this strongly in a letter to Eisenhower dated 10 August 1956, in which he noted that Bhabha viewed safeguard proposals as "more or less of an insult to India's peaceful intentions."²⁴⁴

American policymakers had very little reason to suspect the sincerity of India's nuclear intentions. A 1958 assessment by the CIA's Office of Scientific Intelligence determined that India's nuclear program was peaceful in nature on the basis of Nehru's public statements and closed with the assertion that "there is no indication in government or scientific circles of a change from the traditional Indian pattern of passivity and mediation."²⁴⁵ This cultural assumption within the intelligence community tainted analysis by discounting the allure of a weapons program. Nehru catered to this assumption when he declared publicly on 20 January 1957 that "whatever the circumstances, we shall never use this atomic energy for evil purposes. There is no condition attached."²⁴⁶ However, there is some evidence to suggest that the pursuit of a clear weapon-grade explosive capability—in comparison to a physical warhead capable of delivery—was indeed a goal for Nehru. In 1960, Major General (ret.) Kenneth D. Nichols, who oversaw the design, construction, and operation of Manhattan Project plutonium plants, visited India in his capacity as a consultant to Westinghouse to convince Nehru and Bhabha to consider the purchase of American reactors.²⁴⁷ After Nehru opened up bidding to American producers, Nichols recorded the following conversation in his memoirs:

[Nehru asked] "Can you build an atomic bomb?" Bhabha assured him that he could and in reply to Nehru's next question about time he estimated that he would need about a year to do it. I was really astounded to be hearing these questions

²⁴⁴ Quoted in Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 31.

²⁴⁵ Cited in Jeffrey T. Richelson, *Spying on the Bomb: American Nuclear Intelligence from Nazi Germany to Iran and North Korea* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2006), 225.

²⁴⁶ Quoted in Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 34.

²⁴⁷ Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 36.

from the one I thought to be one of the world's most peace-loving leaders. He then asked me if I agreed with Bhabha, and I replied that I knew of no reason why Bhabha could not do it. He had men who were as qualified or more qualified than our young scientists were fifteen years earlier. He concluded by saying to Bhabha, "Well, don't do it until I tell you to."²⁴⁸

There is no record of this conversation reaching the attention of American intelligence officials or policymakers.

The late 1950s and early 1960s saw a major realignment in American South Asia policy which made nuclear restrictions to hot of an issue to broach. It started with Eisenhower's disenchantment with Pakistan. He called the alliance "the worst kind of a plan and a decision we could have made. It was a terrible error, but we now seemed hopelessly involved in it."²⁴⁹ In order to signal India that the United States was not unconditionally backing Pakistan, the Eisenhower administration decided to "actively encourage India to [consider] U.S. Offers for bilateral assistance in the atomic reactor field..." particularly through declassifying "considerable information about power reactors."²⁵⁰ Pro-India legislators, including John F. Kennedy, backed the Eisenhower administration in raising the amount of economic aid for India from \$400 million in 1957 to \$822 million in 1960, at the behest of the Conference on India and the United States, an incipient "Indian lobby."²⁵¹

The Kennedy administration sought to build on this relationship in order to balance the growth of Communist Chinese power in southern Asia. George McGhee, Chairman of the State Department's Policy Planning Council, wrote a memo on 13 September 1961 advocating that the

²⁴⁸ Kenneth D. Nichols, *The Road to Trinity* (New York: Morrow, 1987), 352.

²⁴⁹ Memorandum of Discussion at the 308th Meeting of the National Security Council, 3 January 1957, in *FRUS, 1955-1957*, 8:25-26.

²⁵⁰ Quoted in Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 50.

²⁵¹ Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 50.

United States preempt a Chinese detonation by supporting an Indian nuclear test.²⁵² McGhee argued: "while we would like to limit the number of nuclear powers, so long as we lack the capability to do so we ought to prefer that the first Asian one be India and not China."²⁵³

McGhee conceded in the memo that the US Ambassador to New Delhi, John Kenneth Galbraith, was "strongly opposed" to his plan and considered "the chances [of Nehru's collaboration] are roughly only one out of fifty."²⁵⁴ Galbraith's assessment seems to be predicated on Nehru's anti-nuclear public posturing. In any case, Rusk rejected the proposal, stating that he was "not convinced we should depart from our stated policy that we are opposed to the further extension of national nuclear weapons capability."²⁵⁵ The McGhee memo reveals that choosing geopolitical advantage over non-proliferation was not unthinkable in the Kennedy-era State Department; its rejection reveals that the Department's head, Rusk, was firmly committed to combating the spread of nuclear weapons.

The memo also reveals the central role of China in India's nuclear decision-making. The intelligence community produced a NIE on 21 September 1961 concerning the nuclear weapons and delivery capabilities of countries other than the United States and the United Kingdom.²⁵⁶ In the section devoted to India, the estimate states:

The explosion of a nuclear device by Communist China would greatly strengthen the view in India, particularly in conservative and military circles, that there is a pressing need for an Indian nuclear capability if India is to avoid either bending to Communist Chinese pressure or being forced into a position of outright dependence on Western external support.²⁵⁷

²⁵² Memorandum from George C. McGhee to Dean Rusk, "Anticipatory Action Pending Chinese Communist Demonstration of a Nuclear Capability," 13 September 1961, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/DOCUMENT/950428.html> (Accessed 7 April 2013).

²⁵³ McGhee to Rusk, "Anticipatory Action," 2.

²⁵⁴ McGhee to Rusk, "Anticipatory Action," 5.

²⁵⁵ Quoted in Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 53.

²⁵⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, *NIE 4-3-61*, "Nuclear Weapons and Delivery Capabilities of Free World Countries other than the US and UK," 21 September 1961, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB155/prolif-6b.pdf> (Accessed 8 April 2013).

²⁵⁷ CIA, *NIE 4-3-61*, 9.

The report even noted that the construction of the "Phoenix" plutonium separation plant at the CIRUS reactor near Trombay was likely intended to free India from foreign uranium sources and dodge the accompanied "restrictions regarding the use of this reactor and the disposition of its fuel." However, the estimate concluded that weapons development was unlikely given that "the psychological and political factors opposing any nuclear weapons program continue to be strong in India."²⁵⁸ This estimate, though possessing solid information on India's nuclear infrastructure, reveals that the intelligence community was not as adept at gauging pro-bomb pressures in India politics. Although the accuracy of this estimate could be examined by a historian, its significance lies in its conclusions' presumed mollifying effect on policymakers who were unwilling to push the Indians on nuclear matters for other reasons in the first place. There was no need to insist on inspections of or international trade restrictions on civilian atomic power facilities if the eventuality of an Indian nuclear detonation seemed unlikely.

However, China continued to play a central role in Indian nuclear policy. In November 1962, Chinese troops invaded India to resolve a border dispute in the Himalayas. The Kennedy administration, far from using the shock of India's defeat as an opportunity to win goodwill with Nehru and his government, offered a relatively small military aid package of \$120 million in conjunction with the United Kingdom.²⁵⁹ This incident, following a disastrous state visit by Nehru in 1961, an awkward confrontation over the expulsion of Portuguese settlers from Goa, and the purchase of Soviet MiG-21 fighters all led to a significant cooling in Indo-American relations and ended the possibility of realignment that began with Eisenhower.

Despite this straining of relations, the United States concluded negotiations with the Indian government on 8 August 1963 to construct a number of reactors near Tarapur for the

²⁵⁸ CIA, *NIE 4-3-61*, 8.

²⁵⁹ Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 55.

production of nuclear energy.²⁶⁰ The Tarapur agreement came with a number of restrictions, particularly that it only could make use of American-supplied uranium and that all equipment, technology, and fuel be devoted "solely for peaceful purposes."²⁶¹ Should this and other provisions not be met, the United States could demand the return of all equipment and fissile material. The agreement also provided for a transfer of inspection responsibility to the IAEA "as soon as practicable." The Tarapur deal engendered a legislative backlash in both India and the United States. A number of Indian critics claimed that the deal compromised the nation's sovereignty through dependence on the United States for fuel, though the restrictions only applied to the Tarapur plant.

Kennedy's final major effort on behalf of non-proliferation prior to his assassination on 22 November 1963 was the Limited Test Ban Treaty. For India, it presented the opportunity to move in the seemingly-contradictory directions of global nuclear disarmament and a weapons development program. Nehru hailed the LTBT as a "watershed" that would lead to "disarmament and peace."²⁶² However, the treaty did not ban underground tests, such as the 1974 Pokhran test. By Kennedy's death, India had made rapid advances in laying the groundwork for a domestic nuclear infrastructure which could be used for the production of atomic weaponry. Kennedy and other policymakers continued Eisenhower's policy of extending technological aid to India for both commercial and political gain, though competition with other supplier countries made it difficult to impose any serious form of inspections or regulations on the Indian nuclear program. This passive approach to the possibility of an Indian nuclear weapons program was continually

²⁶⁰ Surjit Mansingh, *India's Search for Power: Indira Gandhi's Foreign Policy, 1966-1982* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1984), 383-385

²⁶¹ Mansingh, *India's Search for Power*, 384.

²⁶² Quoted in Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 58.

supported by the intelligence community, which concluded in June 1963 that "it is unlikely that such a program will be authorized so long as Nehru remains in power."²⁶³

The administration of Lyndon Johnson increased American determination to impose international controls on the Indian weapons program. However, by that time, India had the necessary infrastructure to move toward the construction of an atomic explosive and began moving in that direction. Bhabha presented a paper at the Pugwash Conference on Science and World Affairs in late January to early February 1964 revealing his plans to use civilian technology for weapons development. In this paper, he noted the geopolitical advantages to be gained from an atomic bomb:

Nuclear weapons coupled with an adequate delivery system can enable a State to acquire the capacity to destroy more or less totally the cities, industry, and all important targets in another State... With the help of nuclear weapons, therefore, a State can acquire what we may call a position of absolute deterrence even against another having a many times greater destructive power under its control.²⁶⁴

Clearly Bhabha had China in mind when he presented this paper. He suggested that Indian policymakers use the possibility of weapons development to extract a security guarantee either from the United States or the Soviet Union. Bhabha's paper also suggested using IAEA heavy water and fissile material for civilian power plants to free uncontrolled material for weapons development, which was the strategy used to produce the Pokhran device.²⁶⁵ This strategy would be adopted by the post-Nehru and Bhabha generation of scientists, diplomats, and politicians. Also attending the conference were future prime minister Indira Gandhi, Bhabha's successor at

²⁶³ Central Intelligence Agency, *NIE 4-63*, "Likelihood and Consequences of a Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Systems," 28 June 1963, p. 9, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb401/docs/doc%201.pdf>

²⁶⁴ Homi J. Bhabha, "The Implications of a Wider Dispersal of Military Power in World Security and the Problem of Safeguards," in *Proceedings of the Twelfth Pugwash Conference on Science and World Affairs*, 27 January-1 February 1964, Udaipur, India, 75.

²⁶⁵ Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 62.

the Indian AEC, Vikram Sarabhai, and V.C. Trivedi, lead negotiator at the US-sponsored Non-Proliferation Treaty talks.

After years of American inaction bolstered by the assumption that the Indian government would stick to its "traditional" disavowal of nuclear weapons, the US intelligence community began to realize that the speed and relative autonomy of India's nuclear infrastructure could easily be converted to military use. Thomas L. Hughes, Kennedy and Johnson's Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research, wrote a letter to John McCone, the Director of Central Intelligence, requesting an update to *NIE 4-63* given new information on the Israeli and Indian programs.²⁶⁶ Two reference questions from the letter reflect a new attention to the perils of dual-use technology and are particularly applicable to the Indian case:

1. What countries now have an adequate technological and scientific base for the development before 1970 of a nuclear weapon and what are their intentions in this regard?
- ...
5. Is clandestine weapon development a realistic possibility over the next five years?²⁶⁷

The new estimate, *NIE 4-2-64*, examined India's nuclear program in much greater detail with extended sections on technical capabilities and the political factors surrounding development decisions.²⁶⁸ This was due in part to the Chinese nuclear test of 16 October 1964, which was cited previously by intelligence officials as a potential catalyst for an Indian weapons program. This estimate noted that India had all the basic facilities necessary to produce plutonium for weapons development. The CIRUS site in particular turned out sufficient fissile material for "one

²⁶⁶ Letter from Thomas L. Hughes to John McCone, 23 April 1964, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb401/docs/doc%202%20letter.pdf>, (Accessed 9 April 2013).

²⁶⁷ Hughes to McCone, 23 April 1964, 2.

²⁶⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, *NIE 4-2-64*, "Prospects for a Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Over the Next Decade," 21 October 1964, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb401/docs/doc%203.pdf>, (Accessed 9 April 2013).

or two weapons in the 20 [kiloton] range."²⁶⁹ Existing safeguards on fissile material and heavy water were considered by the estimate to be not enough to "hinder the Indians from embarking on a weapons program."²⁷⁰ As such, the Indian government could "move into a modest weapons program with little delay and moderate expense."²⁷¹ Although the estimate noted that India had a strong traditional opposition to nuclear weapons for moral and political reasons, it asserted that the Chinese test meant that pro-nuclear arguments would likely gain sway in the government.

The CIA's analysis of India's political situation in *NIE 4-2-64* was accurate, perhaps the most accurate of all subsequent estimates prior to the Smiling Buddha test. Nehru's successor, Lal Bahadur Shastri, was a few months into his term of office and declared:

China has been trying to build herself up as a mighty war machine. The atom bomb is the latest type of weapon which cuts across the general desire of humanity to live in peace. It is a danger and a menace to mankind. I do hope the voice of peace-loving people in all the countries of the world will be raised against it and the world conscience awakened to fight this aggression against peace and security.²⁷²

However, eight days after the test, Bhabha went on All India Radio and publicly argued in favor of a weapons program, using the argument from his Pugwash Conference article, namely, that nuclear weapons were affordable and an excellent way of maintaining a state's sovereignty.²⁷³ Of course, his statement was moderated with the suggestion that weapons development was unnecessary should the United Nations produce a realistic plan for global disarmament. As *NIE 4-2-64* predicted, Shastri came under pressure from right-wingers both within and without his government. On 25 October 1964, Mushtaq Ahmed, president of the Congress Party committee representing New Delhi, declared "the only course for India is to produce her own atom bomb to

²⁶⁹ CIA, *NIE 4-2-64*, 7.

²⁷⁰ CIA, *NIE 4-2-64*, 7.

²⁷¹ CIA, *NIE 4-2-64*, 8.

²⁷² Thomas F. Brady, "India's Anxiety over Red China Rises with Changes at Moscow," *New York Times*, 17 October 1964, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/115903497?accountid=12010> (Accessed 9 April 2013).

²⁷³ Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 67.

defend herself."²⁷⁴ The *Organizer*, the weekly magazine of the conservative and Hindu-nationalist Bharatiya Jana Sangh Party (BJS), attacked Shastri for refusing to commit to the construction of a nuclear bomb:

The eunuch Government decided years ago in its *ahimsic* [non-violent] idiocy to spend crores [South Asian numbering unit meaning ten million] on nuclear power but not to use the same crores on developing the nuclear bomb. We had the chance to do it before China did it and so we could tell that we meant business and that we were ahead of China. In our criminal folly we missed it.²⁷⁵

The Chinese explosion, compounded with a severe food crisis, increasingly placed pressure on Shastri to pursue a nuclear bomb, cut spending on conventional armaments, and devote additional funds to alleviate hunger. B.K. Nehru, the Indian Ambassador to the United States, called William C. Foster, head of the ACDA, to inform him that the Shastri was still opposed to nuclear weapons, but that the Chinese test was "seriously degrading India's position in the Far East" and that continued opposition may have become "politically impossible."²⁷⁶ Foster then floated the possibility of an American security guarantee in exchange for continued Indian nuclear abstinence and support for non-proliferation in the General Assembly. The Ambassador demurred, stating that India's non-alignment policy would not allow any sort of formal agreement with the United States.²⁷⁷

Shortly before Nehru's phone call with Foster, the US Embassy in New Delhi received a tip from an Indian official in the Ministry of External Affairs that Shastri had already authorized Bhabha to "come up with [an] estimate of what was involved in India's attempting an underground 'explosion'."²⁷⁸ On the 23rd and 24th of November, the Lok Sabha debated the

²⁷⁴ Cited in Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 68.

²⁷⁵ Quoted in T.T. Poulouse, ed., *Perspectives of India's Nuclear Policy* (New Delhi: Young Asia Publications, 1978), 105.

²⁷⁶ Memorandum of Conversation between B.K. Nehru and William C. Foster, "Chinese Nuclear Explosion," 3 November 1964, in *FRUS, 1964-1968*, 25:164.

²⁷⁷ Nehru and Foster, "Chinese Nuclear Explosion," in *FRUS, 1964-1968*, 25: 165.

²⁷⁸ Cited in Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 70.

merits of a nuclear weapons program, with most attention being paid to its cost (Bhabha's estimate was inaccurately low), necessity (given the possibility of a US security guarantee), and morality.²⁷⁹ Shastri ended the debate on Indian foreign policy on the 24th by arguing that his anti-nuclear stance was not "deep-rooted" and open for adjustment based on India's new strategic situation, a significant shift from Gandhi's actual and Nehru's perceived opposition to the bomb.²⁸⁰ Indeed, Shastri cited potential civilian uses of nuclear devices, such as digging "big tunnels", clearing "huge areas", and wiping out mountains for development parks.²⁸¹ He argued that nuclear weapons were acceptable within the context of India's morally-charged foreign policy:

...in this context if it is required to use nuclear devices for the good of the country as well as for the good of the world, so then our Atomic Energy Commission is pursuing these same objectives.²⁸²

Although neither the US Embassy nor the intelligence community noticed that Shastri's speech sanctioned the development of nuclear explosives, the headlines of leading Indian newspapers, including the *Times of India*, the *Hindustan Times*, and the *National Herald* all had headlines interpreting the debate as a refusal to depart from existing non-nuclear policy.²⁸³

The CIA produced an estimate on "The Prospects for India" on 10 December 1964.²⁸⁴ A full section is devoted to the nuclear program and noted that the Indian government had fulfilled all the necessary technical requirements for weapons production. The estimate also noted for the first time that Shastri was experiencing "considerable domestic pressure" to pursue an atomic

²⁷⁹ Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 76-83.

²⁸⁰ Quoted in Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 81.

²⁸¹ Quoted in Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 82.

²⁸² *Lok Sabha Debates*, 27 November 1964, trans. Pravin Kumar (New Delhi: Lok Sabha Secretariat, 1964), 154 in Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 82.

²⁸³ Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 83.

²⁸⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, *NIE 31-64*, "The Prospects for India," 10 December 1964 in *FRUS, 1964-1968*, 25: 167-169.

bomb.²⁸⁵ The CIA recognized that Indian weapons development was a distinct possibility given that the necessary constellation of both material and political factors was present for the first time.

In order to cope with the "nuclear problem," Undersecretary of State George W. Ball instructed the US Embassy in New Delhi to stroke Indian pride by emphasizing that the United States was "impressed by Indian achievements of science and technology which we believe exceed those by Communist China."²⁸⁶ However, Ball suggested that Ambassador Chester Bowles should not extend any form of security guarantee beyond the broad assurance against "nuclear blackmail" offered by Johnson in his public statement on the Chinese test.²⁸⁷ Ball's instructions suggest that he assumed that the shock from the Chinese explosion was one to Indian prestige, rather than security. He also suggested in the telegram that "developing one or more ventures in fields peaceful uses nuclear energy and space technology that would serve highlight India's capabilities."

Shastri's suggestion that India pursue "peaceful" nuclear explosives was considered a feasible field of cooperation by American policymakers. Indian journalist Raj Chengappa asserts that Bhabha contacted his American counterparts in 1965 for assistance with the construction of a Ploughshare-type nuclear explosive, though his FOIA sources are not cited.²⁸⁸ Some evidence of US-India cooperation on nuclear explosives can be found in a November 1964 AEC "discussion paper." This paper reveals that the AEC continued to underestimate the pressure on Shastri to pursue weapons development:

²⁸⁵ CIA, *NIE 31-64*, in *FRUS, 1964-1968*, 25: 169.

²⁸⁶ Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in India, 12 December 1964, in *FRUS, 1964-1968*, 25:171.

²⁸⁷ Department of State to Embassy in India, 12 December 1964, in *FRUS, 1964-1968*, 170-171.

²⁸⁸²⁸⁸ Chengappa, *Weapons of Peace*, 97.

There has been a great deal of speculation (due to remarks made by Dr. Bhabha) that India might elect [to] embark on Plowshare device development program as a "Cover" and rationalization for a nuclear weapons program. This appears to be a highly remote possibility due to technical and economic considerations as well as recent statements made by Mr. Shastri disavowing any intention on the part of the Indian Government to embark on a nuclear weapons program.²⁸⁹

Strangely, the discussion paper concluded that American-conducted PNEs could remove the Indian government's incentive for building atomic bombs of their own. This finding failed to take into account the variety of pressures on Shastri by exclusively focusing on the supposed engineering benefits of Ploughshare detonations, rather than security concerns and national prestige. It also underestimated the strength of Shastri and the Congress Party's non-aligned foreign policy by assuming that they would consent to Americans detonating nuclear devices on Indian soil for any reason.

By 1965, international efforts to cope with nuclear proliferation presented the Shastri government with the opportunity to retain its traditional anti-nuclear policy while negating the threat from China. On May 4th, India's representative to the 114-member UN Disarmament Commission, B.B. Chakravarty, offered five conditions he considered necessary for an effective non-proliferation treaty.²⁹⁰ These included: pledges from "nuclear powers" to not transfer weapons to or use weapons on non-nuclear states, a UN security guarantee against "nuclear blackmail," "tangible progress toward disarmament, including a comprehensive test ban treaty, a complete freeze on the production of nuclear weapons and means of delivery, as well as substantial reduction in the existing stocks," and finally, a commitment from non-nuclear powers [i.e. Pakistan] to not manufacture or acquire atomic weaponry. This vision of the non-proliferation treaty would have covered India's security needs vis-à-vis China and Pakistan. Had it been adopted by the international community, it would have been burnished India's—and

²⁸⁹ Quoted in Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 91.

²⁹⁰ Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 103.

therefore Shastri's—standing among non-aligned and non-nuclear countries. However, differences between the American, Soviet, and non-aligned blocs on the issues of nuclear transfers and which parties—nuclear or non-nuclear—should make the first concessions drove negotiations into deadlock until 1967. Ambassador Bowles asserted that:

India and those other non-nuclear powers which are now in position to make bomb cannot over period of time be diverted from produced nuclear weapons by moral exhortations and lectures from members of present nuclear club. Therefore certain amount of give as well as take is essential if we are to cope effectively with this critical situation.²⁹¹

The divide between the "nuclear club" and India became even clearer after a series of border skirmishes escalated to war with Pakistan by September 1965. China took advantage of the war to supply Pakistan with arms and issue India an ultimatum demanding that India withdraw from the Tibetan border or face "grave consequences."²⁹² This was precisely the form of nuclear blackmail from an enemy that India sought to avoid. Johnson wrote in his memoirs that the 1965 war raised "grave doubts about military assistance" to both Pakistan and India in the minds of American policymakers.²⁹³ The United States cut aid from both Pakistan and India during the war to push them to accept a UN-brokered cease-fire, but this further alienated the feasibility of a security guarantee for India. For Indian political elites, the war with Pakistan and China's meddling discredited the pursuit of international controls and contributed to the case for weapons development.

The American intelligence community realized this and produced a special estimate on India's nuclear weapons policy. This estimate concluded that "within the next few years India

²⁹¹ Quoted in Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 105.

²⁹² Cited in Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 109.

²⁹³ Johnson, *The Vantage Point*, 225.

probably will detonate a nuclear device and proceed to develop nuclear weapons."²⁹⁴ It noted that the Indian program had all the technical capabilities necessary for a "modest weapons program" and that the Shastri government had "little success in finding non-nuclear ways to deal with the threat which Chinese nuclear developments pose to its prestige and security."²⁹⁵ This intelligence estimate indicates that American intelligence officials recognized that all the necessary technical factors and political pressures were in place for India to initiate a weapons program.

The Indian nuclear program experienced the dual shocks of Shastri's death by a heart attack on 10 January 1966 and the loss of Homi Bhabha in a plane crash on the 24th. The new Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, appointed Vikram Sarabhai, a Cambridge-educated physicist to head the Indian AEC. Sarabhai was considered by pro-bomb scientists to be "sheltered" and a "peculiar fellow" for holding a staunch Gandhian pacifist stance toward atomic weaponry.²⁹⁶ India's representative at the non-proliferation treaty conference at Geneva, V.C. Trivedi, continued to attack the American position as overly-slanted toward existing nuclear states by construing the "tangible progress toward disarmament" clause to mean universal and sudden abolition of nuclear arms. Trivedi argued that that real progress would encompass a nuclear weapons and delivery system production freeze, which was considered feasible by the United States.²⁹⁷ Secretary of State Rusk admitted in testimony before the Senate in February 1966 that the American approach to non-proliferation was overly weighted in favor of existing nuclear powers.²⁹⁸ Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara argued, to no avail, that the United States accept the logic that India had good reason to pursue nuclear weaponry and attempt to make

²⁹⁴ Central Intelligence Agency, *SNIE 31-1-65*, "India's Nuclear Weapons Policy," 21 October 1965, p. 1, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB187/IN09.pdf> (Accessed 11 April 2013).

²⁹⁵ CIA, *SNIE 31-1-65*, 2-3.

²⁹⁶ Quoted in Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 114.

²⁹⁷ Quoted in Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 115.

²⁹⁸ Glenn T. Seaborg, *Stemming the Tide*, 367.

concessions to Indian security and pride. This logic can be found in a memo Rusk sent to Johnson to prepare for Indira Gandhi's visit to the United States:

I believe that we should, therefore, attempt to head off an Indian decision to produce nuclear weapons. To do so, we might in time have to be more responsive to Indian security needs, preferably in some way that will minimize our own commitment.²⁹⁹

However, Rusk argued that no security guarantees or aid should be extended in the short term to avoid antagonizing India's rivals, presumably Pakistan:

... we must recognize that this response would almost certainly involve an increased and more specific US commitment in the subcontinent and would entail important costs in terms of probable reactions of other states.

This memo reveals that Rusk was willing to subordinate bilateral efforts to stem nuclear proliferation to broader security issues in South Asia. This does not mean that Rusk and Johnson disregarded the Indian case; his memo merely noted that there were very few bilateral solutions considered palatable to both sides. The memo advised Johnson to inform Gandhi that he generally agreed with the concept of security guarantees for non-nuclear countries. In short, Rusk and Johnson were counting on a satisfactory international settlement at Geneva to dissipate pro-bomb pressures on the Indian government.

However, China conducted its third nuclear test on 9 May 1966, which prompted uproar in the Lok Sabha. Indira Gandhi robustly argued in favor the long-standing government policy of building up India's nuclear infrastructure instead of construction an actual weapon, but quixotically asserted that "in the mean time we are increasing our know-how and other competence."³⁰⁰ The Congress Party lost eighty three seats in the Lok Sabha elections during the

²⁹⁹ Memorandum from Dean Rusk to Lyndon Johnson, "Possible Assurances and Nuclear Support Arrangements for India," 16 March 1966, in FRUS, 1964-1966, 25:582-583.

³⁰⁰ *Lok Sabha Debates*, 10 May 1966, col. 15716 in Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, 119.

spring of 1967, which further weakened Gandhi's position.³⁰¹ Out of desperation, she dispatched her secretary, L.K. Jha and Sarabhai to the United States, Soviet Union, and Great Britain in April 1967 to extract security guarantees from those nations and end the nuclear question in India. This venture was ultimately unsuccessful, which discredited Sarabhai and led Gandhi to replace Jha with a pro-bomb AEC member, Parmeshwar Narain Haksar, as her personal secretary. In August 1967, shortly after the arrival of Haksar, Gandhi cleared renewed theoretical research on nuclear explosives at the Trombay site, which was renamed that Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), and ordered Sarabhai to not interfere.³⁰²

Meanwhile, the American negotiators at Geneva continued to endorse the existing advantages of by the "nuclear club" through making little concessions to the autonomy of non-nuclear powers. It became clear that no major power would offer security guarantees against nuclear blackmail. Johnson further alienated Indian support in a personal message read aloud by Foster to the ENDC at Geneva that declared:

I am sure we all agree that a nonproliferation treaty should not contain any provisions that would defeat its major purpose. The treaty must, therefore, cover nuclear explosive devices for peaceful as well as military purposes. The technology is the same. A peaceful nuclear explosive device would, in effect, also be a highly sophisticated weapon.³⁰³

This position on PNEs, though logical, and the absence of any sort of nuclear umbrella for non-nuclear states, ran directly contrary to the Indian vision of non-proliferation and scuppered any chance of Gandhi's support. India's representative, Trivedi, condemned the American approach

³⁰¹ Chengappa, *Weapons of Peace*, 107.

³⁰² Chengappa, *Weapons of Peace*, 112.

³⁰³ Lyndon Baines Johnson, "Message to the Delegates to the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee," 21 February 1967 in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1967* (Washington: GPO, 1968), 1:213.

as "nuclear apartheid" and counseled against ratification.³⁰⁴ When the NPT was opened for signatures in July 1968, India did not sign.³⁰⁵

Indira Gandhi's refusal to submit the NPT for ratification was a major sticking point in US-India relations at the end of the Johnson administration. The President delayed a desperately-needed \$225 million Agency for International Development (AID) loan to India. Walt W. Rostow, Johnson's National Security Advisor, argued that the delay was necessary in order to "find ways to use the loan as political leverage with Mrs. Gandhi and to impress on her how painful it is to get these large sums for a country that isn't always as helpful as we could wish."³⁰⁶ Rostow argued that Johnson could try to "subtly to tie this loan to the Treaty," but noted that strong-arming the Indian government could change their tacit opposition to open lobbying against it with the non-aligned bloc in the UN.³⁰⁷ Concluding that there was little to gain from continually withholding the loan, Rostow urged Johnson to release the funds.

The NPT did not provide sufficient safeguards for non-nuclear nations and the United States was unwilling to severely damage bilateral relations with India for the sake of its ratification. The absence of effective international counter-proliferation initiatives and bilateral security guarantees combined with a strong civilian nuclear infrastructure and continued domestic pressures for weapons development all contributed directly to Gandhi's decision to build a bomb.

Johnson and Rostow's successors, Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger, respectively, worsened relations with India and made no effort to check its weapons development program.

³⁰⁴ Chengappa, *Weapons of Peace*, 113.

³⁰⁵ Thomas C. Reed and Danny B. Stillman, *The Nuclear Express: A Political History of the Bomb and its Proliferation* (Minneapolis: Zenith Press, 2009), 159.

³⁰⁶ Memorandum from Walt W. Rostow to Lyndon B. Johnson, "AID Loan to India," 8 May 1968 in *FRUS, 1964-1968*, 25:970.

³⁰⁷ Rostow to Johnson, "AID Loan to India," in *FRUS, 1964-1968*, 25: 972.

The men had terrible personal relations with Indira Gandhi and were decidedly pro-Pakistan. They referred to Indians as "slippery, treacherous people," "arrogant bastards," and simply, "goddamn Indians."³⁰⁸ In taped Oval Office conversations, Nixon also referred to Gandhi as a "bitch," "whore," and "old witch." Upon arriving in Lahore, Pakistan, Nixon assured dictator Yahya Khan and the assembled crowd that he came "not just as the political leader, the head of state of my country," but also as a "friend of Pakistan."³⁰⁹

In addition to his personal dislike of Gandhi and India, Nixon's foreign policy made cooperation on nuclear issues even more unlikely. His flirtation with India's foe, China, drove Gandhi to sign the Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation with the Soviet Union on 9 August 1971.³¹⁰ Although this treaty was nothing close to an alliance, it was enough for the Nixon and Kissinger to suspect Gandhi was acting as a cat's-paw for Moscow when it intervened in the East Pakistan Crisis. The following telephone exchange between Kissinger and Nixon's Secretary of the Treasury, John Connally, is telling:

Kissinger: Now the argument that State is making is doesn't make any difference anyway, it's too late. Secondly, we will just drive the Indians into the Soviet arms if we get tough.

Connally: ...them I'd like to. Go ahead.

Kissinger: (laughter) Well, you're talking my language. The thing that concerns the President and me is this; here we have Indian-Soviet collusion, raping a friend of ours. Secondly, we have a situation where one of the motives that the Chinese may have had in leaning towards us a little bit is the fear that something like this might happen to them.³¹¹

³⁰⁸ Quoted in George C. Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations Since 1776* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 789.

³⁰⁹ Richard M. Nixon, "Remarks on Arrival at Lahore, Pakistan," 1 August 1969 in *Public Papers of the Presidents: Richard Nixon, 1969* (Washington: GPO, 1971), 303.

³¹⁰ Mansingh, *India's Search for Power*, 131.

³¹¹ Transcript of Telephone Conversation between Henry Kissinger and John Connally, 5 December 1971, in *FRUS, 1969-1976, E-7:doc. 157*.

When the crisis in Bangladesh erupted into open war, Nixon deployed the nuclear aircraft carrier *USS Enterprise* and nine other warships to the Bay of Bengal on 10 December 1971, ostensibly to evacuate the region of American citizens. According to Kissinger's memoirs, the purpose of the task force was to dissuade Gandhi from launching a counterattack into West Pakistan.³¹²

Although India decisively defeated Pakistan in the 1971 war, Nixon's decision to send the *USS Enterprise* gave Gandhi the impression that a triumvirate of hostile powers, namely, the United States, China, and Pakistan were colluding against her nation. On 7 September 1972, she met with her new AEC chief, Homi Sethna, at the Trombay site and upon seeing a model of a proposed nuclear device, declared: "Get it ready. I will tell you whether to do it or not."³¹³ This vague response marked the formal go-ahead to use the research conducted since 1967 to construct a nuclear explosive. Chengappa maintains that India had "made considerable progress on the bomb in those intervening years of 1967 to 1972." Similar to the Israeli case, the secrecy of India's nuclear weapons program makes it difficult to determine precisely when construction of the bomb began.

In any case, the intelligence community was decidedly unsure if Gandhi had given her approval to move ahead with a nuclear test. The State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research argued as early as 14 January 1972 that India could detonate a device over the "next several weeks" and that a "concerted by India to conceal such test preparations...might well succeed."³¹⁴ After a flurry of conflicting reports from American embassies in India, Great Britain, and Canada, Kissinger requested the commissioning of a National Security Study

³¹² Henry A. Kissinger, *The White House Years* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1979), 906.

³¹³ Chengappa, *Weapons of Peace*, 117.

³¹⁴ State Department, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Intelligence Note, "India Go Nuclear?", 14 January 1972, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb367/docs/1-14-72.pdf> (Accessed 12 April 2013).

Memorandum (NSSM) on the implications of an Indian nuclear test.³¹⁵ Kissinger attached a draft NSSM which considered the consequences of a test to include "increased interest and concern in the non-proliferation and test ban contexts," Soviet and Chinese attitudes toward South Asia, and questions concerning the quality of potential Indian weapons.. Nixon and his advisors were preparing to deal with the consequences of an Indian test instead of preventing a detonation. A new estimate from 7 August offered the remarkably vague conclusion that "to New Delhi, the arguments for and against conducting a test are strong" and "the chances are roughly even that India will conduct a test in the next several years and label it a peaceful explosion."³¹⁶ Following the 18 May 1974 test, *SNIE 31-72* was condemned in the intelligence community's post-mortem as "far less bold" in its conclusions compared to earlier estimates.³¹⁷ The post-mortem also openly admitted that "current intelligence publications did not provide any warning of India's underground nuclear test."

Although faulty intelligence can be considered to have contributed to American inaction toward the Indian nuclear program, Nixon and Kissinger's nonchalant approach to non-proliferation raises the question whether "good" intelligence could have jarred them to take preventative measures. As Nixon's non-response at the beginning of the chapter indicates, the Indian test was simply a new condition in the geopolitical landscape to be navigated, not a dire threat to global stability to be confronted directly.

³¹⁵ Memorandum from Henry Kissinger to Richard Nixon, "Proposed NSSM on the Implications of an Indian Nuclear Test," 4 July 1972, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb367/docs/7-4-72.pdf> (Accessed 12 April 2013).

³¹⁶ Central Intelligence Agency, *SNIE 31-72*, "Indian Nuclear Developments and Their Likely Implications," 7 August 1972, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb367/docs/SNIE%20Aug%201972.pdf> (Accessed 12 April 2013).

³¹⁷ Central Intelligence Agency, "Post-mortem Report: An Examination of the Intelligence Community's Performance Before the Indian Nuclear Test of May 1974," July 1974, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb367/docs/7-74%20post-mortem.pdf> (Accessed 12 April 2013).

However, the Indian test had dire consequences for South Asia. It sparked a decades-long nuclear arms race with Pakistan, which led President Bill Clinton to describe South Asia as the "most dangerous place on earth" prior to his visit in January 2000.³¹⁸ The detonation at Pokhran publicly marked the failure of previous non-proliferation efforts and, as Kissinger's NSSM predicted, brought in increased pressures in the United States to develop a complete strategy to stem the tide of nuclear weapons. According to Chengappa, American officials at the ACDA, who could barely get the ears of senators with free lunches prior to the 1974 test, "found Congressmen rushing to them for advice and promising to bolster their cause."³¹⁹ He even suggests that the test forced Kissinger to re-evaluate the perils of nuclear proliferation, as indicated by the warning offered to a Gandhi aide: "Don't do it again. This time we will destroy you."³²⁰ The "Smiling Buddha" test, as it was later known, marked the end of the informal and contradictory American approach toward non-proliferation of the 1960s and 1970s. It also cemented the issue as a key interest of the United States in the minds of policymakers for subsequent decades.

The case of India's nuclear weapons program during the tenure of Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon suggests that inaction, rather than uncoordinated nuclear policy, defined the American role in Pokhran test. The United States, along with other technologically advanced supplier nations, gave the Indian government access to the knowledge and technology for civilian purposes. After this technological base was established, India was capable of conduct weapons research in secret. Indian independence in nuclear affairs, combined with the mistaken American assumption that Gandhian opposition to the bomb was monolithic, led to a lower prioritization

³¹⁸ Quoted in Lowell Dittmer, "South Asia's Security Dilemma," in *Asian Survey* 41, no. 6 (November/December 2001): 897.

³¹⁹ Chengappa, *Weapons of Peace*, 204.

³²⁰ This claim by Chengappa is worthy of examination in a different paper as more documents from the Ford era are declassified.

by American policymakers. The failure to the threatened national interests behind weapons development resulted in India's rejection of multilateral agreements such as the NPT. The United States provided India both the means and leeway needed to build a nuclear explosive—"peaceful" or not.

Conclusion: The Logic of American Non-Proliferation Initiatives

Good nonproliferation policies make for bad politics.

—Lyndon B. Johnson³²¹

As discussed above, efforts to check the spread of nuclear arms in the 1960s and 1970s were disjointed and inconsistent. What Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon said in public at domestic and international venues was dramatically different to what their representatives whispered into the ears of Israeli and Indian officials. If a historian exclusively focuses on overt multilateral agreements on nuclear proliferation sought by presidents, as some have done, American efforts seem to have been a series of increasingly strict international restrictions on the civilian energy programs, albeit with debatable effectiveness. However, analysis of declassified federal primary source material reveals a duality in the perceptions which guided American negotiations with Israel and India—the successful proliferators. The cases above reveal a number of factors that influenced the degree of duality in presidential decisions that produced the patchwork American record on non-proliferation in the 1960s and 1970s, as detailed below.

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Policymaker Attitudes toward the Nth Country Problem

There is no consensus among historians of non-proliferation as to which American administration—Kennedy, Johnson, or Nixon—should be held "most responsible" for the spread of nuclear arms. Gavin argued that John F. Kennedy "did little to halt proliferation" and Nixon "downgraded nonproliferation as a priority."³²² Thomas C. Reed and Danny B. Stillman asserted that Kennedy "understood the dangers of nuclear proliferation," but his successor, Johnson, only cared about his "standing in the polls" and dropped the issue to keep cash from "Israeli-linked

³²¹ Quoted in Reed and Stillman, *The Nuclear Express*, 117.

³²² Gavin, "Blasts from the Past," 102.

financiers" flowing.³²³ Bundy, who worked for both Kennedy and Johnson, argued that Nixon did not consider checking weapons development by non-nuclear countries "either feasible or highly important," as his predecessors had.³²⁴

Although the assessment of "responsibility" for the spread of nuclear arms to Israel and India supposes an inaccurate degree of presidential agency in proliferation matters, as will be discussed below, there seems to be a clear difference in their attitudes toward the spread of the bomb. As Wohlstetter noted in his 1961 article on the proliferation issue, American policymakers had an clear answer to the question: "Is the spread of nuclear strike forces good or bad?"³²⁵ Kennedy and Johnson thought proliferation made the world a more dangerous place, which explains their efforts—bilateral and multilateral—to convince non-nuclear countries to disavow weapons development. They simply differed in terms of tactics, not ideals. Wohlstetter described a third group, one that thought there was "no point in deciding how we feel about the diffusion of nuclear capabilities," as the process was "inevitable."³²⁶ Richard Nixon's preconceptions of the proliferation problem can be classified in this category. He considered the NPT at best a piece of paper he was expected to sign and at worse an unnecessary complication in relations with West Germany, Israel, and India. The acquisition of nuclear arms by a previously non-nuclear country was merely a new variable to be considered in international politics, not a dire threat. This attitude explains the collaboration of the Nixon administration with Israel's policy of nuclear opacity and its inattention toward India.

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The Role of Advisors—A Closed Discussion?

³²³ Reed and Stillman, *The Nuclear Express*, 116-117.

³²⁴ Bundy, *A Tangled Web*, 87.

³²⁵ Wohlstetter, "Nuclear Sharing," 355.

³²⁶ Wohlstetter, "Nuclear Sharing," 356.

Whatever their existing dispositions, Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon did not make policy alone. Nuclear proliferation is both a technical and a political phenomenon. A range of American officials interpreted data, argued amongst themselves, proposed solutions, and acted on presidential decisions. When advisors shared the Commander-in-Chief's attitude toward non-proliferation, they played a key role in the shaping of policy. There was strong disagreement between mid-level ACDA and State Department officials on the relative importance of halting additional weapons development in non-nuclear countries. However, the like-mindedness of their bosses, Foster and Rusk, saw non-proliferation become a policy priority in both the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. The Nixon-Kissinger foreign policy duo clearly were not very concerned about the n-th power problem. Neither gave the NPT more than cursory attention in their memoirs. No mention was made of the Indian test of 1974. Foster's successor at the ACDA, Gerald C. Smith, focused on the SALT talks with the Soviet Union instead of non-signatories of the NPT. Those advisors who held different attitudes from the President were by-and-large excluded from internal policy discussions, such as the Joint Chiefs under Kennedy and Johnson and most of the State Department under Nixon.

The important actors in the account above are limited to a handful of high-level Cabinet and independent agency officials. This is not to suggest that lower-level bureaucrats had no influence on non-proliferation policy. They certainly played a significant role by presenting the facts "on the ground" and their considered opinions to higher levels of government. However, the sensitivity and volatility of nuclear matters in the public sphere, as seen from the pre-Kennedy years up to the present day, ensured that the high-level officials having the greatest influence on policy were shielded by a veil of secrecy. This meant that the number of voices debating policy was limited—even to the point of misleading elected officials in Congress, as was the case in the

Ford administration. Many of the documents used in this study were declassified from "Secret" and "Top Secret" designations. Some—particularly those concerning Israel's weapons program—are either missing from official archives or remain classified. For the purposes of historical study, the closed nature of non-proliferation policy discussions means that that the President's closest advisors had great influence on specific policy outcomes. Although Congress and public opinion certainly could place great pressure on a president to act in general, as was the case with Johnson in 1965, the element of secrecy precluded them from having significant influence on specific policy decision-making.

Input: Intelligence Analysis and Non-Proliferation Policymaking

Presidents and their advisors had preexisting attitudes that influenced their decision, as discussed in the previous two sections. However, they were making decisions in the context of a dynamic world with rapidly changing conditions. Intelligence provided a picture of the world and sought to gauge the extent of the proliferation problem. The intelligence community did not provide accurate information to Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon. The Indian explosion led the intelligence community to admit that they failed to convey a sense of urgency to their customers—the President and his advisors. Nixon's Director of Central Intelligence, William Colby, issued a memo shortly after the Smiling Buddha test directing all intelligence agencies to assess their performance.³²⁷ The resultant post-mortem found that the intelligence community had no "sense of urgency" toward proliferation issues prior to the Indian detonation.³²⁸ This self-admitted "failure" to provide accurate intelligence "denied the US Government the option of

³²⁷ Cited in Richelson, *Spying on the Bomb*, 234.

³²⁸ Intelligence Community Staff, Post-mortem, "An Examination of the Intelligence Community's Performance Before the Indian Nuclear Test of May 1974," July 1974, p.7, National Security Archive, <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb367/docs/7-74%20post-mortem.pdf> (Accessed 24 April 2013).

considering diplomatic or other initiatives to prevent this significant step in nuclear proliferation."³²⁹

Bad intelligence also influenced American policy toward Israel's nuclear weapons program. The Dimona site was constructed in secret and accidentally discovered by a routine U-2 flight. Policymakers were unaware that Israel likely had everything needed to conduct a nuclear strike in 1966 or 1967, which certainly raised the stakes of American policy during the Six-Days War. As noted above, Nixon was probably surprised with a *fait accompli* when Golda Meir visited Washington in 1969. The intelligence community finally expressed their belief that Israel possessed atomic weaponry nearly eight years after the fact, in a 1974 estimate.

The picture of Israel and India's technical capacity for weapons development provided by the CIA and other agencies was less inaccurate than their analysis of political pressures favoring proliferation. The post-mortem correctly attributed the failure to accurately gauge nth country nuclear intentions in part to a dearth of human intelligence.³³⁰ When combined with questionable analysis of photographic (PHOTINT) and signals (SIGINT) evidence, policymakers mistakenly developed the impression that they had more time to formulate policy, as nth country weapons development proceeded apace.

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Tactical Considerations

Once a president developed an understanding of the situation in a particular non-nuclear country, he made a decision to act. As discussed above, Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon dealt with nuclear proliferation very differently in both the international arena and bilateral relations with potential proliferators.

³²⁹ Intelligence Community Staff, An Examination of the Intelligence Community's Performance Before the Indian Nuclear Test of May 1974," i.

³³⁰ Intelligence Community Staff, An Examination of the Intelligence Community's Performance Before the Indian Nuclear Test of May 1974," 11.

Some of this difference in tactics can be attributed to the individual President's foreign policy style and inclinations. Kennedy, as seen in the Israeli case, favored personal communication and deal-making with foreign leaders like Ben-Gurion and Eshkol. This choice of tactics is unsurprising given that he won executive office through knowing—and being born to—politically influential elites. His successor, Johnson made his career in the Senate, twisting arms and making compromises to reach consensus in legislation. As President, Johnson sought agreement with non-nuclear countries on international safeguards and regulations. In bilateral relations with Israel and India, Johnson used American political clout to (unsuccessfully) encourage acceptance of the NPT. Nixon distrusted the established bureaucracy—the "Ivy-Leaguers" at the CIA, the military which dominated policy under Johnson, and what he called those "impossible fags" at the State Department.³³¹ He and Kissinger conducted many secret bilateral deals and eschewed adherence to existing multilateral agreements like the NPT.

However, Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon did not choose tactics in a vacuum. In many respects, their choice of tactics (or absence of tactics, in Nixon's case) in checking proliferation was determined in part by the difficulties of their predecessors. As a candidate, Kennedy lambasted Nixon in the 1960 campaign for the Eisenhower administration's inaction on the proliferation issue and was the first President to address it in policy. Although Kennedy's assassination ended a high-level dialogue with Israeli leaders on the topic of arms control, relations were strained while he was still alive over inspections of the Dimona site. Johnson sought to bypass these difficulties by changing the venue of non-proliferation talks to the UN and the ENDC in Geneva. Nixon saw how non-proliferation talks restricted his Democratic predecessors' freedom to conduct diplomacy with allies such as Israel and West Germany and

³³¹ Quoted in Walter Isaacson, *Kissinger: A Biography* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2005), 197. This is very clear in the previously-mentioned National Security Decision Memorandum 6 to ratify the NPT, in which the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the CIA were merely CCed.

important non-aligned states like India. As such, he paid lip service to the ideal of non-proliferation while secretly lowering its importance in his foreign policy.

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Success, Failure, and Agency

In 1961 Wohlstetter described three sets of scholarly opinions on the spread of nuclear weapons: those who considered it "good," those who considered it "bad," and those who considered it "inevitable." Although the theoretical assumptions behind most previous historical writing on non-proliferation fall solidly within the "pessimist" category, such discussions are better suited for social scientists.

For historians of non-proliferation, there is a parallel dyad of assumptions when analyzing policy during the second wave of nuclear weapons development. The first is that Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon all possessed a great deal of agency over the development of nuclear weapons by previously non-nuclear states. If this assumption is accepted, as it is by previous histories, then it is possible to assign responsibility and to state that a particular President "successfully" or "unsuccessfully" confronted the spread of nuclear weapons.

However, the narrative presented above reveals this assumption to be both overly simplistic and unfair. Between 1961 and 1974, all three administrations discovered that it was very difficult to compel politically significant allied and neutral states with established civilian nuclear programs to voluntarily halt weapons development. Both Israel and India acquired a significant amount of nuclear equipment, material, and know-how from Western firms and governments prior to 1961. Their leaders actively sought to conceal weapons development programs from the American government. There were significant constraints on what Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon *could* do, let alone *choose* to do.

However, the assertion that policymakers had much outside of their control in proliferation matters does not deny them agency. Kennedy chose to allow hundreds of Indian scientists to continue their study at American nuclear facilities. Johnson chose to drop the issue of Dimona inspections with Eshkol. Nixon chose to not push the ratification of the NPT. This assumption is simply based on the fact that the clock on weapons development did not reset with the arrival of a new President in the Oval Office.

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During the 1960s and the early 1970s, American non-proliferation efforts were inconsistent and often self-defeating—even within particular administrations. This unique fragmentation is due to the influences of presidential outlook, individual advisors, and intelligence analysis on policy decision-making, as well as the tactical choices made by Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon. This inconsistency gave India and Israel the time needed to drag out negotiations with American policymakers and develop nuclear weapons.

After the "failures" of the second phase of nuclear proliferation, American officials placed greater emphasis on creating an effective regime of international safeguards and regulations. However, the consequences of Indian and Israeli weapons development are to be found in the nuclear programs of Pakistan, Libya, Iraq, and Iran. The future of non-proliferation is indeed directly linked to its past.

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Appendix A:

TREATY ON THE NONPROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS³³²

Signed at Washington, London, and Moscow July 1, 1968

Ratification advised by U.S. Senate March 13, 1969

Ratified by U.S. President November 24, 1969

U.S. ratification deposited at Washington, London, and Moscow March 5, 1970

Proclaimed by U.S. President March 5, 1970

Entered into force March 5, 1970

The States concluding this Treaty, hereinafter referred to as the "Parties to the Treaty",

Considering the devastation that would be visited upon all mankind by a nuclear war and the consequent need to make every effort to avert the danger of such a war and to take measures to safeguard the security of peoples,

Believing that the proliferation of nuclear weapons would seriously enhance the danger of nuclear war,

In conformity with resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly calling for the conclusion of an agreement on the prevention of wider dissemination of nuclear weapons,

Undertaking to cooperate in facilitating the application of International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards on peaceful nuclear activities,

Expressing their support for research, development and other efforts to further the application, within the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards system, of the principle of safeguarding effectively the flow of source and special fissionable materials by use of instruments and other techniques at certain strategic points,

Affirming the principle that the benefits of peaceful applications of nuclear technology, including any technological by-products which may be derived by nuclear-weapon States from the development of nuclear explosive devices, should be available for peaceful purposes to all Parties of the Treaty, whether nuclear-weapon or non-nuclear weapon States,

Convinced that, in furtherance of this principle, all Parties to the Treaty are entitled to participate in the fullest possible exchange of scientific information for, and to contribute alone or in cooperation with other States to, the further development of the applications of atomic energy for peaceful purposes,

Declaring their intention to achieve at the earliest possible date the cessation of the nuclear arms race and to undertake effective measures in the direction of nuclear disarmament,

³³² Cited in Williams and Cantelon, eds., *The American Atom*, 254-260.

Urging the cooperation of all States in the attainment of this objective,

Recalling the determination expressed by the Parties to the 1963 Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water in its Preamble to seek to achieve the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time and to continue negotiations to this end,

Desiring to further the easing of international tension and the strengthening of trust between States in order to facilitate the cessation of the manufacture of nuclear weapons, the liquidation of all their existing stockpiles, and the elimination from national arsenals of nuclear weapons and the means of their delivery pursuant to a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control,

Recalling that, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, States must refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations, and that the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security are to be promoted with the least diversion for armaments of the worlds human and economic resources,

Have agreed as follows:

Article I

Each nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty undertakes not to transfer to any recipient whatsoever nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly; and not in any way to assist, encourage, or induce any non-nuclear weapon State to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, or control over such weapons or explosive devices.

Article II

Each non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty undertakes not to receive the transfer from any transferor whatsoever of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or of control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly; not to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices; and not to seek or receive any assistance in the manufacture of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

Article III

1. Each non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty undertakes to accept safeguards, as set forth in an agreement to be negotiated and concluded with the International Atomic Energy Agency in accordance with the Statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Agency's safeguards system, for the exclusive purpose of verification of the fulfillment of its obligations assumed under this Treaty with a view to preventing diversion of nuclear energy from peaceful uses to nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Procedures for the safeguards required by this article shall be followed with respect to source or special fissionable

material whether it is being produced, processed or used in any principal nuclear facility or is outside any such facility. The safeguards required by this article shall be applied to all source or special fissionable material in all peaceful nuclear activities within the territory of such State, under its jurisdiction, or carried out under its control anywhere.

2. Each State Party to the Treaty undertakes not to provide: (a) source or special fissionable material, or (b) equipment or material especially designed or prepared for the processing, use or production of special fissionable material, to any non-nuclear-weapon State for peaceful purposes, unless the source or special fissionable material shall be subject to the safeguards required by this article.

3. The safeguards required by this article shall be implemented in a manner designed to comply with article IV of this Treaty, and to avoid hampering the economic or technological development of the Parties or international cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear activities, including the international exchange of nuclear material and equipment for the processing, use or production of nuclear material for peaceful purposes in accordance with the provisions of this article and the principle of safeguarding set forth in the Preamble of the Treaty.

4. Non-nuclear-weapon States Party to the Treaty shall conclude agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency to meet the requirements of this article either individually or together with other States in accordance with the Statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Negotiation of such agreements shall commence within 180 days from the original entry into force of this Treaty. For States depositing their instruments of ratification or accession after the 180-day period, negotiation of such agreements shall commence not later than the date of such deposit. Such agreements shall enter into force not later than eighteen months after the date of initiation of negotiations.

Article IV

1. Nothing in this Treaty shall be interpreted as affecting the inalienable right of all the Parties to the Treaty to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with articles I and II of this Treaty.

2. All the Parties to the Treaty undertake to facilitate, and have the right to participate in, the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Parties to the Treaty in a position to do so shall also cooperate in contributing alone or together with other States or international organizations to the further development of the applications of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, especially in the territories of non-nuclear-weapon States Party to the Treaty, with due consideration for the needs of the developing areas of the world.

Article V

Each party to the Treaty undertakes to take appropriate measures to ensure that, in accordance with this Treaty, under appropriate international observation and through appropriate international procedures, potential benefits from any peaceful applications of nuclear explosions

will be made available to non-nuclear-weapon States Party to the Treaty on a nondiscriminatory basis and that the charge to such Parties for the explosive devices used will be as low as possible and exclude any charge for research and development. Non-nuclear-weapon States Party to the Treaty shall be able to obtain such benefits, pursuant to a special international agreement or agreements, through an appropriate international body with adequate representation of non-nuclear-weapon States. Negotiations on this subject shall commence as soon as possible after the Treaty enters into force. Non-nuclear-weapon States Party to the Treaty so desiring may also obtain such benefits pursuant to bilateral agreements.

Article VI

Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

Article VII

Nothing in this Treaty affects the right of any group of States to conclude regional treaties in order to assure the total absence of nuclear weapons in their respective territories.

Article VIII

1. Any Party to the Treaty may propose amendments to this Treaty. The text of any proposed amendment shall be submitted to the Depositary Governments which shall circulate it to all Parties to the Treaty. Thereupon, if requested to do so by one-third or more of the Parties to the Treaty, the Depositary Governments shall convene a conference, to which they shall invite all the Parties to the Treaty, to consider such an amendment.
2. Any amendment to this Treaty must be approved by a majority of the votes of all the Parties to the Treaty, including the votes of all nuclear-weapon States Party to the Treaty and all other Parties which, on the date the amendment is circulated, are members of the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The amendment shall enter into force for each Party that deposits its instrument of ratification of the amendment upon the deposit of such instruments of ratification by a majority of all the Parties, including the instruments of ratification of all nuclear-weapon States Party to the Treaty and all other Parties which, on the date the amendment is circulated, are members of the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Thereafter, it shall enter into force for any other Party upon the deposit of its instrument of ratification of the amendment.
3. Five years after the entry into force of this Treaty, a conference of Parties to the Treaty shall be held in Geneva, Switzerland, in order to review the operation of this Treaty with a view to assuring that the purposes of the Preamble and the provisions of the Treaty are being realized. At intervals of five years thereafter, a majority of the Parties to the Treaty may obtain, by submitting a proposal to this effect to the Depositary Governments, the convening of further conferences with the same objective of reviewing the operation of the Treaty.

Article IX

1. This Treaty shall be open to all States for signature. Any State which does not sign the Treaty before its entry into force in accordance with paragraph 3 of this article may accede to it at any time.
2. This Treaty shall be subject to ratification by signatory States. Instruments of ratification and instruments of accession shall be deposited with the Governments of the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which are hereby designated the Depositary Governments.
3. This Treaty shall enter into force after its ratification by the States, the Governments of which are designated Depositories of the Treaty, and forty other States signatory to this Treaty and the deposit of their instruments of ratification. For the purposes of this Treaty, a nuclear-weapon State is one which has manufactured and exploded a nuclear weapon or other nuclear explosive device prior to January 1, 1967.
4. For States whose instruments of ratification or accession are deposited subsequent to the entry into force of this Treaty, it shall enter into force on the date of the deposit of their instruments of ratification or accession.
5. The Depositary Governments shall promptly inform all signatory and acceding States of the date of each signature, the date of deposit of each instrument of ratification or of accession, the date of the entry into force of this Treaty, and the date of receipt of any requests for convening a conference or other notices.
6. This Treaty shall be registered by the Depositary Governments pursuant to article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Article X

1. Each Party shall in exercising its national sovereignty have the right to withdraw from the Treaty if it decides that extraordinary events, related to the subject matter of this Treaty, have jeopardized the supreme interests of its country. It shall give notice of such withdrawal to all other Parties to the Treaty and to the United Nations Security Council three months in advance. Such notice shall include a statement of the extraordinary events it regards as having jeopardized its supreme interests.
2. Twenty-five years after the entry into force of the Treaty, a conference shall be convened to decide whether the Treaty shall continue in force indefinitely, or shall be extended for an additional fixed period or periods. This decision shall be taken by a majority of the Parties to the Treaty.

Article XI

This Treaty, the English, Russian, French, Spanish and Chinese texts of which are equally authentic, shall be deposited in the archives of the Depositary Governments. Duly certified copies of this Treaty shall be transmitted by the Depositary Governments to the Governments of the signatory and acceding States.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned, duly authorized, have signed this Treaty.

DONE in triplicate, at the cities of Washington, London and Moscow, this first day of July one thousand nine hundred sixty-eight.