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Countering the Proliferation and Use of Weapons of Mass Destruction

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Hays, Peter L., Vincent J. Jodoin, and Alan R. van Tassel, eds. *Countering the Proliferation and Use of Weapons of Mass Destruction.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1998. 365pp. $27.49

This book examines the general problem of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), focusing specifically on using military means to counter the spread of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons.

The central theme that animates this work is the desire to "contribute to the counter proliferation dialogue," addressing what the editors argue is the "most important threat facing the Department of Defense." The term "counterproliferation" emerged in the beginning of the first Clinton administration, when Secretary of Defense Les Aspin organized the counterproliferation initiative (CPI) to create new military capabilities for dealing with WMD. Undoubtedly, the failure of coalition forces during the Persian Gulf War to find Iraqi Scud missiles (in the infamous "Scud hunts")---not to mention the extraordinary failure of international nonproliferation regimes to discern the existence of Iraq's extensive WMD facilities—signaled that the United States must be prepared to deal militarily with WMD in regional conflicts. The consensus is that the failure to produce credible and effective military options for finding and destroying such weapons will have devastating consequences for the U.S. military.

To complicate matters, there is a growing realization that the United States and the international community cannot depend on nonproliferation regimes to prevent states (notably Iran, Iraq, North Korea, and Libya) from acquiring weapons of mass destruction. The most dangerous

scenario is that those regimes might use such weapons against U.S. troops or American cities. Facing this possibility, the Defense Department has organized a program to deal with WMD.

The editors of this volume have collected the ideas of some of the important thinkers on the subject of proliferation. With a foreword by former secretary of defense William Perry, it begins with an examination of the origins of the CPI and proceeds to consider a number of programs and policies that together constitute what is meant by counterproliferation. These descriptive chapters are useful to the extent that the reader can understand the political and bureaucratic forces that have changed how the U.S. defense establishment thinks about the proliferation of WMD, and more importantly, why the United States is developing technical means for finding and destroying such weapons.

The more analytical chapters focus on the implications of proliferation for states and military organizations. For example, the chapter by Brad Roberts examines the policies and mechanisms for preventing states from developing WMD. An important observation from this chapter, at least to this reviewer, is that various international regimes have failed to prevent the proliferation of WMD. The chapter by David Kay on "involuntary reversal" considers the value of measures that are available to the international community for forcing states to relinquish WMD. As one of the architects of the UN Special Commission on Iraq (UNSCOM), Kay has leavened his thoughts on this matter with his first-hand experience in finding and dismantling Iraq's WMD facilities. The chapter by David Bernstein and Lewis Dunn on deterring WMD threats is a useful

discussion of the value of using such weapons to deter their use by rogue states. Finally, the chapter by retired general Charles Horner and Barry Schneider examines the feasibility of using counterforce attacks to destroy WMD facilities.

I mention these chapters in particular because they contribute new and useful insights. Unfortunately, while many other chapters are also useful, their value is weakened by their failure to advance our thinking about this problem—surprisingly, since the overall quality of the chapters, which are unusually tightly organized for edited works, suggests that the editors went to considerable lengths to harmonize all the parts into a coherent whole.

As a general observation, this is a useful work that contributes to what we could call the proliferation, nonproliferation, or counterproliferation debates. But the variety of views highlights the underlying weakness of the current debate about WMD. In essence, counterproliferation is a logical extension of nonproliferation, because, as these words suggest, the success of nonproliferation has been less than stellar. The concept of counterproliferation not only implies but trumpets that we must be prepared to counter proliferation because nonproliferation has failed to contain the number of states that possess WMD. This change in the strategic landscape has profound implications for U.S. national security and foreign policy. Yet author after author feels obliged to pay homage to the critical and enduring value of nonproliferation, despite the fact that, as the title of this work suggests, we have moved from preventing proliferation to managing nonproliferation's failures.

As the editors note in the conclusion, "much remains to be done." Their book

is an important first step toward analyzing how counterproliferation represents the next step in the search for new ways to deal with the weapons that dominated strategic thinking during much of the twentieth century.

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Bateman, Robert L., ed. *Digital War: A View from the Front Lines.* Novato, Calif.: Presidio, 1999. 299pp. $29.95

In *Digital War*, Captain Robert L. Bateman III, U.S. Army, a history instructor at West Point, has assembled an interesting collection of essays discussing the future of the Army in the digital age. The articles are "from the front lines" in that most of the authors are active-duty Army officers, which makes the book a useful review of what some of the service's most thoughtful writers have to say about such future Army visions as Force XXI and the "Army after Next."

For the most part, the essays take a careful, critical view of the Army's official visions of the future battlefield. Many of the potential problems discussed will be familiar to readers of *Parameters* and other military journals; they include such issues as: Can the United States afford the systems that will truly digitize (or network) the entire military? If we do achieve a completely "networked" force, how will that affect command and control?

One article, by Lieutenant Colonel John A. Antal, veers off into the sort of *Blade Runner* future that Phillip K. Dick describes in his novel of that name. However, for the United States, Antal believes the real bad guys are not the enemies