

# COLD LIGHT ON COLD WAR

by Walter C. Clemens, Jr.

Americans can be thankful for their many wise and articulate analysts in such places as the Brookings Institution and *Time's* Washington bureau, as well as in the State Department and other branches of the U.S. Government. Leon V. Sigal, for example, was a visiting scholar at Brookings when he wrote *Nuclear Forces in Europe*. His already wide reading knowledge had been enriched by experience as assistant director of the Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs in 1970-80 and by discussions with others at Brookings (for instance, Raymond L. Garthoff, former executive secretary of the SALT I delegation). Strobe Talbott has written two previous books on arms control and foreign policy while working in Washington as *Time's* diplomatic correspondent. Trained at Yale and Oxford, he has served also in the London and Moscow offices of *Time*. Talbott has read widely and seems to have easy access to many U.S. policymakers on arms control. Sigal and Talbott display not only a powerful mastery of the relevant facts, but also an ability to present complexities with elegant clarity. They have additional gifts of empathy, wisdom, and cautious realism concerning what can and should be done about arms limitation.

By contrast, the decisionmakers about whom they write, along with the decisionmaking system, seem strangely out of place. Talbott shows us a president with a fuzzy understanding of nuclear weapons who perks up only when he is presented with the draft of a speech to make on the subject. Meanwhile the decisionmaking system is held in nearly perpetual checkmate by the machinations of middle-level bureaucrats in the Pentagon and the State Department, each anxious to prevent any real progress in arms control negotiations.

When the U.S. and its confused allies finally act, they do the wrong thing. As Sigal makes clear, the momentum to deploy long-range theater weapons had been generated within NATO long before the Kremlin started to deploy SS-20s; and as Garthoff pointed out in *Survival* (May/June, 1983), NATO gave hardly any thought to the Kremlin's explanation that the SS-20s amounted only to a modernization that would add little to the existing Soviet nuclear

capability against Europe. The Pershing II and the ground-launched cruise missiles deployed in Europe are the wrong kinds of weapons altogether. They are highly vulnerable and give both Moscow and NATO heightened motives to strike first. The best that can be said for them is that they were adding another layer of tangles to America's entanglement at a time when doubts were resurfacing about U.S. willingness to risk Chicago for Hamburg. What the West needed, if anything, was a new weapons system invulnerable to a Soviet first strike, one that could ride out a Soviet attack and thereby soothe the itchy trigger fingers on both sides.

The experts who really know what is being done and what should be done are not usually in power, it seems, while those in power are more often experts in public

**Nuclear Forces in Europe: Enduring Dilemmas, Present Prospects**, by Leon V. Sigal (The Brookings Institution; vii + 181 pp.; \$22.95/\$8.95)

**Deadly Gambits: The Reagan Administration and the Stalemate in Nuclear Arms Control**, by Strobe Talbott (Alfred A. Knopf; xiv + 380 pp.; \$17.95)

**Conventional Deterrence: Alternatives for European Defense**, ed. by James R. Golden, Asa A. Clark, Bruce E. Arlinghaus (Lexington Books; ix + 245 pp.; \$25.00)

**Generals for Peace and Disarmament: A Challenge to US/NATO Strategy**, introduction by Brigadier Michael N. Harbottle; foreword by Admiral Gene R. La Rocque, USN (Retd.) (Universe Books; vii + 151 pp.; \$15.00/\$6.95)

**Cold War, Cold Peace: The United States and Russia Since 1945**, by Bernard A. Weisberger; introduction by Harrison Salisbury (American Heritage, distributed by Houghton Mifflin Co.; 341 pp.; \$17.95)

**Survival Is Not Enough: Soviet Realities and America's Future**, by Richard Pipes (Simon and Schuster; 302 pp.; \$16.95)

---

*Walter C. Clemens, Jr., is Professor of Political Science and Associate of the Center for International Relations at Boston University. Among his several works are The USSR and Global Interdependence and National Security and U.S.-Soviet Relations.*

relations than in strategic stability. The lay citizenry of the U.S. and other countries may well end up feeling as disoriented as Alice in Wonderland. Since nuclear exchanges have not yet occurred, perhaps they just yawn and leave it to the experts.

Another serious book on European defense problems is *Conventional Deterrence*, edited by three instructors at the U.S. Military Academy. All the essays in the volume express the opinion that it is unwise to shift NATO's defense strategy toward reliance on conventional deterrence. Seventeen chapters examine various aspects of the problems, from finding a rationale in Clausewitz for a war-fighting doctrine in the nuclear age to an analysis of the budgetary limitations on Western defense capabilities. An especially thoughtful chapter by Michael R. Gordon deals with modern technologies that could facilitate reliance upon conventional deterrence. These include cruise missiles to attack Warsaw Pact airfields, "ballistic offensive suppression systems," joint surveillance and target attack radar systems (JSTARS), terminally guided submunitions (TGSM), and parachute-dropped Skeet submunitions. These exotic weapons, Gordon warns, have not worked well in tests so far and may be too complex for battlefield use. And if they did function well, they might drive the Soviets to initiate the use of nuclear weapons! The conclusion: Go slow. Do not discard quickly an approach that has not yet failed. Build up and modernize the conventional arms of the Alliance, but at a measured pace. Basically these essays argue against faith in "smart" conventional weapons as a way to raise the nuclear threshold—a faith now popular in NATO headquarters and endorsed by Kenneth L. Adelman, director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency in the Winter 1984-85 issue of *Foreign Affairs*.

Still another collective effort is by a group of retired West European generals and admirals who issue blanket attacks on U.S. policies in *Generals for Peace and Disarmament*. They have seen NATO from within and have gone home disillusioned. They cite many technical military factors that give an advantage to the West over the Warsaw Pact. Like Robert McNamara and some other former U.S. defense planners, they believe that the arms competition is hurtling along with a mad momentum that needs to be stopped. But their comments are sometimes neither judicious nor balanced: Churchill's "anti-Soviet Fulton Speech" (incorrectly dated here as May 5 instead of March 5, 1946) is said to have "disappointed the democratically minded anti-Fascist officers of the former allies against Hitler and ... alarmed the peoples who had suffered so much in the war."

<sup>5</sup> The book is a rough translation from its German original, and the U.S. edition includes the final statement of a May, 1984, meeting between the retired NATO officers and retired Warsaw Pact generals. While such meetings could be useful, this one seems to have been marked by multifaceted support for Soviet demands current at the time, e.g., "that resumption of negotiations can only be possible if there is a return to the position that existed in Europe before the deployment of Cruise and Pershing II missiles." The book gives the names but does not otherwise identify the Western generals, one of whom—Nino Pasti—I met in Italy in 1976. He was, at the time, an advisor on military affairs to the Communist party. Some of his views are quoted from *Neue Zeit*, not otherwise identified here. *Neue*

*Zeit* is, of course, *Novoe Vremia*, or *New Times*, the Soviet foreign affairs weekly meant for foreign readers.

If *Generals for Peace and Disarmament* leads the reader giddily to the left, then *Cold War, Cold Peace* leaves him equally giddy in the middle and *Survival Is Not Enough* takes him toward the brink on the right. I intend to examine the latter two in detail, not just because they will get more attention in this country, but because they indicate a near abdication of professional responsibility by the authors and, indirectly, by their publishers.

## FROM BLOOPERS TO BIAS

Ads for *Cold War, Cold Peace*, graced by an introduction by Harrison E. Salisbury, indicate rave reviews. Bernard Weisberger is said to have written fourteen books and to have served as consultant to Bill Moyers at PBS. There are no footnotes, but the book does have a long bibliographical essay that looks competent. Turn to any page at random, however, and you will find historical bloopers. On page 5, for example, we learn that the Korean airliner 007 was shot down by the USSR in July rather than September of 1983. On page 6 we find that *both* the Pershing and the cruise missiles can fly from Europe to Moscow in six minutes and that Andropov was president of "Russia"; on page 15 we find out that in the 1920s the Kremlin signed a treaty with Chiang Kai-shek, "who had defeated a Communist army to come to power"—an imaginary scenario if ever there was one! On page 187, Weisberger calls the 1958 Quemoy-Matsu shelling a "small flap" after which "no one changed positions." He does not appear to know about U.S. atomic threats, about the strains imposed on Sino-Soviet relations, or about the ensuing talks between the U.S. and the People's Republic. To round it off, on page 302 we learn that Eugene Rostow was dismissed as head of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency "in the spring of 1983" instead of on January 12, that the president then appointed an arms control skeptic, Kenneth L. Adelman, as "deputy director" rather than "director," and that Brezhnev died early in 1983 rather than late in 1982.

Even the bibliographical essay has its share of inaccuracies. It asserts that "Moscow only rarely published diplomatic documents, and then with great circumspection"—a strange assessment to anyone who follows the serial publication of *Dokumenty vneshnei politiki SSSR* or even the occasional documents published in *New Times* or *International Affairs*. Weisberger also says that "there are no accessible collections of 'private' papers of Soviet officials"—ignoring the rich detail found in Lenin's published papers, those of Trotsky on file at Harvard and elsewhere, and the two volumes of Khrushchev's memoirs edited and translated by Strobe Talbott (although Weisberger himself refers to them on page 189).

*Survival Is Not Enough* brings us from bloopers to bias, and I conclude by giving rather detailed attention to this latest book by Harvard history professor Richard Pipes. His views are politically significant because he served as senior Soviet specialist on the National Security Council during 1981 and '82 and because he continues to be influential in the ranks of conservative intellectuals. Portions of the book appeared last year in *Foreign Affairs* as well as in *Commentary*. The dust jacket contains enthusiastic comments by Jeane Kirkpatrick, Caspar Weinberger, Paul

Nitze, Robert McFarlane, Edward Rowny, and Max Kampelman, along with a noncommittal remark by Zbigniew Brzezinski. Public relations, it appears, more than enlightenment.

Pipes's previous book, *U.S.-Soviet Relations in the Era of Detente* (1981), contained serious inaccuracies, some of which may be explained by leanings that are not only profoundly anti-Soviet but anti-Russian. Pipes asserts, for example, that Russia "initiated" China's dismemberment in 1896, ignoring that Britain took Hong Kong in 1842 and that Japan seized Taiwan and other Chinese territories in 1895. Pipes's contention, in that earlier book, that "The Soviet Union Thinks It Could Fight and Win a Nuclear War," has as its major sources *Western* writers whose views, Pipes asserts, are probably persuasive to Soviet strategists. These include, at one extreme, the "pro-Soviet" English physicist P. M. S. Blackett; at the other, thinking-the-unthinkable Herman Kahn and Albert Wohlstetter!

*Survival Is Not Enough* rests on more solid foundations. Pipes incorporates Michael Voslensky's analysis of the *nomenklatura*, or "bureaucracy" principle, in Soviet governance and recent analyses by Murray Feshbach and others showing the declining public health standards and economic difficulties of the Soviet system. However, from these strong premises Pipes proceeds with a combination of self-contradiction, factual error, and logical inconsistency that boggles the mind.

Pipes's tone is everywhere self-righteous. In the opening pages he avers that his book is virtually unique in its analysis of the ways the Soviet domestic situation impacts on Soviet foreign policy. This is to ignore the fifteen experts who contributed to Seweryn Bialer's *The Domestic Context of Soviet Foreign Policy*, as well as the seminal writings of George F. Kennan who, in 1947, in an article on "The Sources of Soviet Conduct" in *Foreign Affairs* reached a conclusion similar to the one Pipes touts as his own conceptual breakthrough. In Kennan's words, the internal compulsions of the Soviet regime push it to "justify retention of the dictatorship by stressing the menace of capitalism abroad." Pipes writes that international tension is "unavoidable, no matter what the Western powers do," so long as the *nomenklatura* dominates Soviet decisionmaking; but Kennan also warned in 1947 that "Soviet pressure against the free institutions of the western world ... cannot be charmed or talked out of existence."

Since Stalin's death both the USSR and Kennan have evolved. In recent years Kennan and other Sovietologists have portrayed the Politburo as a troubled and fatigued gerontocracy. My own research suggests this and also that the Kremlin leadership, from 1954 to 1982, often staked its legitimacy on the viability of reaching arms accords with the West. In Brezhnev's day the Soviet *Diplomatic Dictionary* emphasized the number of visits that he and other top Soviet leaders made to foreign countries, and the word "détente" (*razriadka*) might appear as many as eight times on any given page of a Soviet journal on international affairs. The *nomenklatura*, I would argue, can justify its existence by vindicating the Soviet Communist party's Peace Program just as well as by hurling allegations of capitalist encirclement. Judging by Mikhail S. Gorbachev's recent travels, "visits" to capitalist countries are again coming into vogue.

Despite his studies many years ago of the *Formation of*

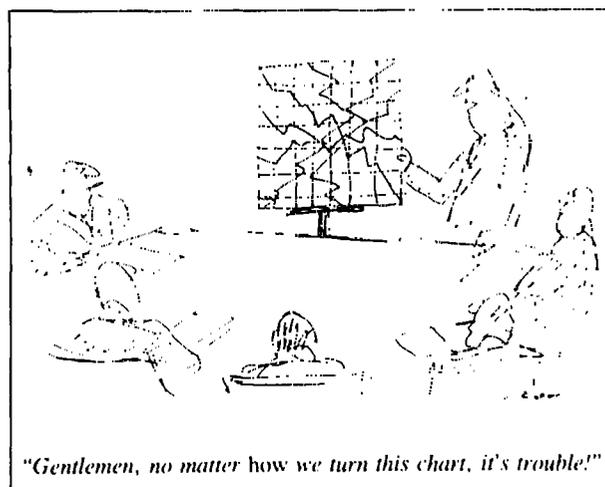
*the Soviet Union*, Pipes errs on the most elementary points. He states here that the Communist party's "administrative and theoretical authority were concentrated in the person of Lenin, the infallible *vozhd'* (*Fuhrer*) ...." But this does not take account of the vigorous debates within the Party leadership in late 1917-early 1918 regarding the Brest-Litovsk peace agreement, of the acerbic disagreements between Lenin and Trotsky (documented in Harvard's Trotsky archives), or of the other factional disputes that continued fairly openly until the Party tried to ban them in 1921.

Assessing Soviet strengths and weaknesses, Pipes describes a "unique geographical situation that assures the USSR of relative immunity from conquest by hostile powers and yet allows it to probe and exploit ... opportunities for expansion ...." This would seem to put down any notion that the Kremlin leaders suffer anxieties because of their long borders peopled by hostile powers from Japan to Poland, or because of earlier invasions from the East, West, or South.

On contemporary topics Pipes panders to the stereotypes of the American right wing. Over and over he refers to the "Communists Bloc" or "Soviet Bloc," as though the USSR and Eastern Europe form a monolith. He even asserts that "the Soviet Union and countries that copy its system tend to be expansionist." While Vietnam, North Korea, and Cuba may be regarded as expansionist, this epithet hardly fits Eastern Europe, Angola, Mozambique, or Ethiopia.

Sometimes Pipes's penchant for exaggeration leads him to phrases which, one hopes, he cannot mean. Comparing Soviet and Western involvements in the Third World, Pipes writes that Soviet expectations have fallen short but that "Western powers have nowhere been expelled." Certainly, economic and other ties persist between the West and the Third World. But does he not know that what the Soviets term "national liberation wars" did in fact expel the Netherlands from the East Indies, France from Algeria and Vietnam, Portugal from India and Africa, and the United States from Indochina?

Given this kind of erudition, we must expect even more egregious distortions in the area of arms control. Pipes presents a large table comparing "NATO/Warsaw Pact land-based surface-to-surface nuclear forces in Europe," which shows that the Warsaw Pact led by about five to



# WORLDVIEW is available in Microform.



## University Microfilms International

Please send additional information

for \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Institution \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

300 North Zeeb Road  
Dept. P.R.  
Ann Arbor, Mi. 48106

one in warheads and megatonnage as of 1983. The comparison, of course, is meaningless, since it omits the main components of NATO strength: planes (land-based and carrier-based) and submarines. It also omits the French nuclear triad, since it is not formally dedicated to NATO. As for Pershing II and cruise missiles in Europe, Pipes seems unaware that they were planned before SS-20 deployments began.

Here, as in his 1981 book, Pipes lashes out against Kissinger and détente. He puts down the potential utility of incentives and restraints in dealing with the Soviet Union as if this approach has been tried and failed. In truth, because Congress spurned most-favored-nation treatment and long-term credits to facilitate U.S.-Soviet trade in the mid-1970s, the Kissinger strategy has not really been tried. Pipes's characterization of the Nixon-Kissinger years borders on outright falsehood. Ignoring the many caveats about détente emanating from the White House in those years, he writes: The "architects of detente in Washington [in the early 1970s] promised nothing less than comprehensive and permanent friendship with the Soviet Union." Pipes asserts further that the U.S.-Soviet pledge in May, 1972, to "negotiate and settle differences by peaceful means" has "probably only one analogy in the history of international relations, and that is the Holy Alliance" of 1915. Pipes, it would appear, has never read the Covenant of the League of Nations, the Kellogg-Briand Pact, the Litvinov Protocol, or the United Nations Charter. His discussions of arms control, in fact, reveal a nearly Neanderthal mentality: "SALT and other arms control accords are treaties and, as such, diplomatic and not military acts, for which reason they cannot serve as a substitute for maintaining the military balance." He cannot imagine that the ABM treaty, for example, might reduce the need for either superpower to develop new and more awesome penetration aids to assure its retaliatory capabilities.

Pipes believes that carrots and sticks are to no avail in dealing with the USSR. One must somehow modify the very sources of Soviet aggressiveness:

"This is not a call for subverting Communism but for letting Communism subvert itself. By neutralizing its military threat and, at the same time, withholding those political concessions and the economic assistance which enables the Soviet elite to maintain the status quo, the West may well, in time, help to force it to emulate the example set by the post-Mao leadership in China and alter its priorities."

In short, Pipes would try to aggravate the problems of the Soviet leadership. He would drive the Bear into a corner, even though he agrees that the Soviet leaders would regard even war as "an acceptable price" to relieve the crisis closing in upon them.

The quality of some of these books is as high as in other cases it is low. Yet if books on world affairs address issues on which human survival depends, is it right that publishers be guided by the same principle that guides purveyors of pornography: Will it sell? Some of these books are marketed with images as gross and glaring as the neon signs on Times Square, with reviews as exuberant as a football player's endorsement of a new brand of underpants. Granted that "freedom of the press" is a value to cherish, are there no canons short of censorship to help publishers reject *dezinformatsia* in favor of enlightenment? WV