

# International nuclear order: a rejoinder

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My article 'Nuclear enlightenment and counter-enlightenment' was not written in any expectation that a special issue of an international journal would be constructed around it.<sup>1</sup> I was delighted when the Editor of *International Affairs* proposed the special issue which would be published in May 2007. I was aware that the article was rather idiosyncratic and would be uncongenial to some audiences. And although I was and remain intrigued by the enlightenment/counter-enlightenment trope, I realized that its adoption had taken me on to some thin ice, as Pierre Hassner, Michael Rühle and others pointed out in their contributions.<sup>2</sup>

However, this seemed a justified hazard and I agreed with the Editor that the special issue was needed to encourage debate on international nuclear order. As Brad Roberts observes, the present is one of those moments when fundamental questions about nuclear order need to be asked and answered. Unfortunately, they have tended to be driven out of sight as the attention of governments, think-tanks and the media have been obsessively drawn to the particular, whether it be Iran, the deployment of missile defences in eastern Europe, the 'war on terror' or some other issue of the day. It remains to be seen whether the special issue will succeed in its objective. For my part, I am glad to have provoked several fine articles, even if some hefty bricks have been aimed at me.

My one reservation about the special issue is that it lacks balance.<sup>3</sup> While some voices are too similar and insistent (notably the Krause–Rühle–Yost triumvirate), others are missing. There are, for instance, no voices from outside the United States and Europe, or, within Europe, beyond France, Germany and the UK; there are no female voices; there are no regime theorists or liberal institutionalists among the authors; and, Hassner apart, there is silence on the moral dilemmas that have long infused nuclear politics and strategy. The result is under-representation or absence

<sup>1</sup> William Walker, 'Nuclear enlightenment and counter-enlightenment', *International Affairs* 83: 3, May 2007, pp. 431–54.

<sup>2</sup> Pierre Hassner, 'Who killed nuclear enlightenment?', *International Affairs* 83: 3, May 2007, pp. 455–68; Michael Rühle, 'Enlightenment in the second nuclear age', *International Affairs* 83: 3, May 2007, pp. 511–22.

<sup>3</sup> I deliberately played no part in the initial choice of contributors. I suggested other possibilities to the Editor when problems of balance became apparent, resulting in two additional contributions. I am grateful to David Yost for having devoted significant time and effort, as guest editor, to the special issue's assembly. It is nevertheless perplexing that he did not adopt the impartial stance that is customary for this role.

of valid and influential viewpoints, as held for instance by the frequently derided 'liberal arms controllers', leaving the debate somewhat skewed.<sup>4</sup>

My article had its origins in two observations and the desire for understanding that flowed from them. The first, which is as old as the nuclear age, is that the nuclear weapon has created an unparalleled problem of order within the state system (the subtitle of Bernard Brodie's *The absolute weapon* of 1946 was *Atomic power and world order*). That problem has been the rightful concern of all states and peoples, given the weapon's destructive power and global reach. Nuclear history has therefore been marked by the struggle to establish an order, and to mobilize support for a persuasive conception of order, that would be effective, legitimate and trustworthy despite unavoidable disparities in states' access to and usage of the technology, and that would enable nuclear technology to be diffused for civil purposes without constantly spawning security dilemmas.

The second observation was that the problem of nuclear order intensified in the second half of the 1990s and early part of the 2000s after a decade of apparently exceptional achievement in addressing it. This intensification was accompanied by increasing discord within the United States, and between the United States and most other states, over ordering strategies. The intensification arose partly from negative trends and events in the post-Cold War period which need not be rehearsed again here. However, both the intensification and the discord also stemmed from a revisionist turn in the United States away from a certain public conception of order to which US governments had held, with only brief interruptions, across the decades. No doubt this turn was a reaction to developments in the external environment and the perceived difficulty of tackling them by established means. There was need for innovation on several fronts. But it was also given impetus within the United States by advocates of a set of ideas and stratagems, acting in coalition with special interest groups, who were antagonistic towards the prior conception of order and saw an opportunity to displace it.

While Hassner and Roberts are, in their articles in the special issue, broadly sympathetic towards these observations, they are challenged by Krause, Rühle and Yost, who assert that the conception of order that I described was not widely accepted in the United States, and certainly not elsewhere in the world. I shall return to this contention. Along with Pilat, they also assert that the United States has exhibited more continuity than discontinuity in its thought and behaviour in recent times.<sup>5</sup> On the nuclear strategic level, they may have a point. On the political level, I cannot accept their argument. They seem blind to the 'politics of fear' and to neo-conservatism and its proposed remedies for the ills of the world; there is hardly a mention in their articles of the US National Security Strategy of 2002 and its advocacy of preventive war and coercive democratization; and they pay little attention to the cavalier way in which the Bush administration has sought, across

<sup>4</sup> We should be troubled by the derogatory tone that three authors in the special issue adopted when referring, without attempt at definition, to 'liberal arms control' and 'liberal arms controllers'. In so doing they were conjoining, consciously or unconsciously, 'liberal' and 'arms control', which have become terms of hate in sections of the political right in the United States and Europe.

<sup>5</sup> Joseph F. Pilat, 'The end of the NPT regime?', *International Affairs* 83: 3, May 2007, pp. 469–82.

so many international fields, to free the United States from the constitutionalism that most previous administrations had championed.<sup>6</sup>

The assertion about continuity was allied to a claim that I had exaggerated the ability of the United States to influence the behaviour of others. David Yost chided me for insisting that ‘the US government’s fundamental mistake was to bring punishment, regime change and counter-proliferation into the foreground of nuclear politics without simultaneously deepening its own and everyone else’s commitment to the norms and rules that underpinned the *whole* international nuclear order’ (in quoting me, he omitted the part of the sentence up to ‘nuclear politics’)—as if, Yost maintained, ‘Washington had it in its power to control the level of commitment of other governments’.<sup>7</sup> Writing now, I would not change a single word of my sentence. To suggest that the United States, in its unipolar moment and at the exceptional height of its structural power (in Susan Strange’s sense of the term), was unable to deepen commitments to international norms and rules is to deny the meaning of hegemony.<sup>8</sup> It simply chose not to, preferring to place trust in its own Promethean energy and military might when the international situation became more complex and its relative power expanded.

It is in regard to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and its famous bargains that a gulf opens between the contributors to the special issue. In my article and the earlier Adelphi Paper, I argued that the nuclear order comprised two managed systems—of deterrence and abstinence. Brad Roberts observes that ‘the need for balance among these two managed systems of deterrence and restraint [*sic*] is axiomatic—but no one seems to know how to achieve it. Walker uses the word “interlinked” to describe the relationship between these systems. They are not simply two parallel but separate entities. This is an absolutely key point.’<sup>9</sup> I agree as, I think, do Pierre Hassner and Henry Sokolski, if from different angles.

This is not, however, the view of Yost and his colleagues. While highlighting one form of linkage—the extended deterrence over allies which diminishes their desire to acquire their own nuclear arms—they are loath to give credence to the notion that the NPT is rooted in politico-legal contracts among the nuclear weapon states (NWS), among the non-nuclear weapon states (NNWS), and especially between the ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots’, namely the NWS and NNWS parties to the Treaty. They thereby deny the validity of my ‘hydra-headed problem of reconciliation’, allowing themselves the luxury of evading issues of legitimacy and justice which are inescapably tethered to the non-proliferation norm and regime. In opposing my argument, Krause and Yost set out to demonstrate that the incorporation of

<sup>6</sup> In a growing literature on the politics of fear, that is, the use of fear as a political tool in democratic societies, see Al Gore, *The assault on reason: how the politics of fear, secrecy and blind faith subvert wise decision-making, degrade democracy and imperil America and the world* (London: Bloomsbury, 2007). His book is openly presented as a defence of the American tradition of enlightenment in the face of various forces of counter-enlightenment acting within and against the American polity and society.

<sup>7</sup> David S. Yost, ‘Analysing international nuclear order’, *International Affairs* 83: 3, May 2007, p. 562.

<sup>8</sup> ‘Structural power . . . confers the power to decide how things shall be done, the power to shape frameworks within which states relate to each other, relate to people, or relate to corporate enterprises’: Susan Strange, *States and Markets* (New York: Blackwell, 1988).

<sup>9</sup> Brad Roberts, ‘“All the king’s men”? Refashioning global order’, *International Affairs* 83: 3, May 2007, p. 527.

Article VI—the article that speaks of arms control and disarmament—during the NPT's negotiation in the 1960s was a late and largely insincere tactical move by the United States and Soviet Union to win over non-aligned states, and that the weight subsequently placed on this Article has been unjustified and largely detrimental to the NPT's main objective, which is to stem nuclear proliferation.

Where the NPT's negotiation in the 1960s is concerned, we are probably all guilty of over-egging the pudding, in opposite directions (we could trade myths). What Krause and Yost neglect to observe, however, is the manner in which the non-proliferation regime grew and was consolidated in the 1980s and 1990s. Affirmation of the NPT's bargains was an essential source among several sources of that growth and consolidation. It certainly played a prominent part in the US-led campaign in the run-up to the 1995 NPT Extension Conference, whose aim was to achieve universal membership of the Treaty and give it indefinite life. Although Hassner justifiably draws attention to the hypocrisy of the nuclear weapon states' stance on the Treaty, it was an unavoidable hypocrisy that all but India were then prepared to downplay (conditionally) in their desires to rein in nuclear weapons for the national and collective good.

As for my comment that 'most state parties had by now come to regard the NPT Conference as a quasi-legislative assembly with authority to set the broad agenda', this is a statement of fact. Whether the 1995 and 2000 Conference decisions had political or legal standing (I did not emphasize the latter, contrary to Yost's claim), the sense of betrayal that has followed the nuclear weapon state parties' subsequent retreat from them has been palpable and injurious. Besides the collateral damage, which runs wide, an unsurprising consequence is that it has become increasingly difficult to persuade non-nuclear weapon states to join new initiatives and to accept still tighter international regulation of their nuclear activities and further intrusions on their sovereignty. A notable and distressing example has been the growing reluctance of states to accede to the Additional Protocol which was negotiated in the mid-1990s to strengthen the IAEA's safeguards system, and the use by some states of the NWS' backsliding as an easy pretext for not coming on board.

Krause's and Yost's denial of the NPT's essential contractual nature amounts to an assertion of the autonomy of the nuclear-armed states and the supremacy of their political and military strategists in the design and management of the international security order. Yet how can the nuclear weapon states legitimately, and with positive political effect, claim autonomy if its removal from other states is so central to the prevention of nuclear proliferation? Why should other states and peoples place their trust in military organizations and strategists and grant them freedom to do what they will with weapons that can exterminate? These questions are neither recognized nor answered. In consequence, much of the political and moral agony of nuclear weapons is stripped away: they become just another, if an unusually influential, instrument of power politics. That being the case, an exceptional cooperative politics is not needed to sustain international order; indeed, the attempt to practise it can do more harm than good.

Behind their claim lies the heavy hand of neo-realism and its insistence that international norms and institutions are epiphenomenal. There is also more than a hint of the Waltzian view of the international order as a self-organizing system which will naturally seek equilibrium as great powers and their allies endeavour rationally to balance power, especially now that they are nuclear-armed. Krause even suggests that the Cold War's arms racing brought more stability than instability to the non-proliferation regime and was less dangerous than often depicted. 'The East–West conflict saw an armaments competition, but it was not the cause of that conflict and it did not do much harm.'<sup>10</sup> Has he forgotten the Berlin crisis of 1958–61 and the Cuban missile crisis of 1962? No one would suggest simple cause and effect, but the arms race unquestionably aggravated the East–West conflict while threatening great populations and even civilizations with extinction through the massive accumulation of nuclear explosive power.

Contrary to these views, the essential objective of the architects of international nuclear order has largely been, and should remain, the achievement of *mutual restraint* and *containment*, out of concern that these qualities will not emerge naturally or predictably in the anarchic international system. As stressed in my article, this restraint and containment cannot be achieved only by a realist exercise of power, nor only by resort to constitutionalism through the NPT and other rule-bearing institutions. What is entailed is a pragmatic, judicious and inescapably difficult *balancing* of John Ikenberry's hegemonic, balance-of-power and constitutional approaches to order.<sup>11</sup> Grant any one of these approaches generalized supremacy over the others, and the capacity to shape order for the individual and common good, engage in collective problem-solving, and respond effectively to non-compliance will be jeopardized, as the United States has found to its cost in the past few years.

Is this balanced statecraft of nuclear order not confounded by the NPT's Article VI and the persistent calls for complete nuclear disarmament? I think not. Despite their rhetoric, few governments have hitherto believed that complete nuclear disarmament is achievable and trustworthy or could happen soon. Besides the issue of equity, what has truly concerned non-nuclear weapon states has been the direction of travel and the sincerity of the nuclear weapon states in exercising restraint over their armament programmes and nuclear doctrines. In this regard, it has not been inconsistent for Japan and Germany to advocate disarmament while relying on the US nuclear umbrella.

As emphasized in my article, it is therefore the movement *towards* disarmament, and trust that such movement is taking place, that matters. If it is taking place—demonstrably, verifiably and irreversibly—most states will be satisfied. How to reconcile that movement with confidence in deterrence will of course remain an important question. However, states see that there is still scope for substantial arms reductions, with the US and Russian nuclear arsenals remaining bloated and held on trigger alert beyond necessity. They are also justifiably concerned that

<sup>10</sup> Joachim Krause, 'Enlightenment and nuclear order', *International Affairs* 83: 3, May 2007, p. 495.

<sup>11</sup> John Ikenberry, *After victory: institutions, strategic restraint and the rebuilding of order after major wars* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

the weakening of arms control and proposed introduction of missile defence are leading the nuclear-armed states down a slippery road *away* from disarmament. The approaching lapse of START I and the Moscow Treaty, Mr Putin's recent threat to abrogate the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, China's modernization of its nuclear arms, the open advocacy of an Indo-US alliance against China, and the UK's recent decision to replace Trident are raising fears that we are entering a new phase of nuclear armament.

Some contributors insist that the NPT is *not* a disarmament treaty, and is weakened by claims that it is. I would agree that it is not primarily a treaty on complete nuclear disarmament. However, it is still a disarmament treaty, especially as seen from the viewpoint of non-nuclear weapon states. After all, non-proliferation is disarmament by another name: it is about holding states permanently in their unarmed condition, a condition entered through sovereign decisions to renounce nuclear weapons under international law. How can the non-proliferation norm possess meaning and legitimacy if its grounding in disarmament is denied, and if NNWS come to regard the NPT as a duplicitous instrument for locking them into permanent inferiority and dependence? No, the more profound difficulty is that, precisely because the NPT *is* a disarmament treaty, the Treaty and its Conferences can neither ascribe value to nuclear deterrence nor countenance discussion of it, irrespective of the importance that leading powers and their allies attach to it, and irrespective of the role that it might play in paving the way for deep arms reductions or disarmament. To pay open homage to nuclear deterrence is to jeopardize the non-proliferation norm and regime. Nuclear deterrence is always the ghost at the table whose presence is understood but whose contribution to regional and global security cannot openly be acknowledged or weighed. A reluctant acceptance of this presence by most states, if seldom by Israel's neighbours, has been part of the NPT's essential pragmatism.<sup>12</sup>

The exercise of mutual restraint, through a pragmatic blending of ordering strategies, must therefore lie at the centre of any project to construct an international nuclear order that will be effective and attract wide support. Unfortunately, the notion of and faith in mutual restraint have been eroded from three directions in particular—by the actions and deceptions of Iran and North Korea in their volatile regions; by the hegemon's efforts to create greater freedom for itself, a freedom that has naturally been infectious, while threatening retribution against nominated transgressors; and by other NWS sheltering behind the United States and equivocal support for its campaign against rogue states. At the same time, radical groups and movements have emerged for which the words 'mutual' and 'restraint' have little or no meaning, and which seem bent on violence, equipped by an increasing armoury of sophisticated weapons, possibly including some type of nuclear weapon down the line.

<sup>12</sup> Nor, for that matter, can political impacts on the non-proliferation regime be readily considered when deterrence is discussed within strategic communities. The avoidance of discussion of deterrence in the NPT context, and of non-proliferation in the deterrence context, is one reason why epistemic communities involved with deterrence and non-proliferation often ignore or talk past one another. The pragmatism is usually instituted at a high political and diplomatic level.

Faced with these developments, it is hardly surprising that political order has frayed, 'poisoned by absolute hostility, or a search for revenge, or at least an ever-deepening distrust and contempt', as Hassner puts it in his fine article.<sup>13</sup> However, some at least of the poisoning has come from folly, hubris and serious misjudgements in political strategy, and from a resulting inability to coordinate responses where coordination has been essential. Although absolute hostility always has to be opposed, using force if necessary when it is the only recourse, departure from the principle and exercise of mutual restraint carries a heavy cost, especially in an extensively globalized environment.

Most authors conclude, observing disarray and having few ideas on how to escape it, that 'muddling through' is the best and probably the only available international strategy. Hold on to the NPT, reform it where possible and insist on compliance with the Treaty and its strengthened safeguards system; increase the involvement and effectiveness of the UN Security Council in the oversight of non-proliferation policy; strengthen extended deterrence and missile defence to protect potential victims of nuclear proliferation; 'set some priorities and focus on a few key, hard problems';<sup>14</sup> and so on. There is wisdom in this advice, but I am not persuaded that muddling through can stem the decay without broader agreement on political strategy and on the rudiments of international nuclear order, and without the United States signalling, for instance through ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), that it is recommitting itself to the notion of reciprocal obligation. Pierre Hassner argues for drawing a distinction between short-, medium- and long-term goals, essentially involving the application of sticking plaster in the short term, the settlement or de-escalation of regional conflicts in the medium term, and the renegotiation of the NPT in the long term 'on a basis which overcomes its present hierarchical and unbalanced character'.<sup>15</sup> Again this is wise advice, but few states are likely to agree to park the NPT and the debates about norms, rights and obligations swirling around it while selected challenges are addressed. They are unlikely to accept arguments that the general and the particular can and should be divorced from one another, nor that attention should be diverted away from the *whole* problem of nuclear weapons.

Brad Roberts opened his article by using the metaphor of Humpty Dumpty to denote the global nuclear order, which has had a great fall and which all the king's horses and all the king's men cannot put together again by. He might like to recall Alice's variation of the nursery rhyme in *Through the looking-glass*: 'all the king's horses and all the king's men couldn't put Humpty Dumpty in his place again' (that is, back on his wall).<sup>16</sup> I may agree with Roberts that 'the effort to resurrect the last global nuclear order is doomed to failure'.<sup>17</sup> However, if Humpty Dumpty is taken to represent the set of ideas and strategies that gave wing to the global nuclear order, then I disagree with him. In this regard, there remains a compelling

<sup>13</sup> Hassner, 'Who killed nuclear enlightenment?', p. 463.

<sup>14</sup> Roberts, "All the king's men?", p. 529.

<sup>15</sup> Hassner 'Who killed nuclear enlightenment?', p. 467.

<sup>16</sup> Lewis Carroll, *Through the looking-glass and what Alice found there* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1872).

<sup>17</sup> Roberts, "All the king's men?", p. 523.

logic and responsibility to put Humpty Dumpty 'in his place again', albeit while always seeking rules and instruments appropriate to the contemporary security environment.

Roberts ends his article with a brief section headed 'An auspicious moment for order?', his conclusion being that this is not such a moment. It is hard to disagree when confronted with mayhem in the Middle East, Iran's stubborn defiance of the UN Security Council, the open-ended Indian and Pakistani weapon programmes, the flexing of Russian muscles, the loss of US authority, and much else besides. No doubt there are more nasty surprises in store (competition for control over Pakistan's nuclear capabilities after the current military government's downfall is becoming a favourite among doomsters). Yet I wonder whether this degree of despondency, which has become commonplace and risks becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy, will turn out to be justified, especially if leading states and policy entrepreneurs now summon the effort to arrest the slide, with the 2010 NPT Review Conference providing an obvious occasion on which to recommit states to the Treaty and associated norms, rules and instruments. Ned Lebow has correctly observed that 'social orders at every level undergo cycles of consolidation and decline'.<sup>18</sup> Might the international nuclear order be heading, after the decline that followed its early post-Cold War consolidation, towards renewed consolidation? Here are six reasons why, hoping against hope, this might occur.

First, a chastened United States has embarked on a reconsideration of its international strategies which, if not returning it precisely to the status quo ante, is likely to draw it back towards cooperative actions and innovations, and towards a more respectful attitude towards international norms, laws and institutions, especially after a new President has assumed office in January 2009.

Second, there has recently been more convergence than divergence of objectives and policies among the concert of power that have formed to manage relations with Iran and North Korea, and among the wide community of states lending support within the IAEA and United Nations.

Third, the IAEA has shown remarkable resilience over the past decade, gaining rather than losing international prestige despite many setbacks and a serious shortage of manpower and financial resources. Furthermore, there have been significant advances in the techniques of detection and verification—technical change can be helpful as well as unhelpful—upon which a stronger system of regulation and early warning can now be constructed.

Fourth, the need to expand civil nuclear trade and investment in response to global warming is driving a search for means of cooperative governance that will allay fears of weapon proliferation. Although there are drawbacks with Henry Sokolski's proposals in the special issue, they provide an illustration of the search that is under way.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Richard Ned Lebow, 'Fear, interest and honour: outlines of a theory of international relations', *International Affairs* 82: 3, May 2006, p. 447.

<sup>19</sup> Henry Sokolski, 'Towards an NPT-restrained world that makes economic sense', *International Affairs* 83: 3, May 2007, pp. 531–48. His proposal to rely on a 'market-fortified NPT' to smoke out states that are seeking nuclear technology for non-economic reasons would be persuasive if (which I doubt) there were agreed methods for

Fifth, Hassner rightly emphasizes the hierarchical nature of the NPT, and the problems that are likely to arise when the hierarchy of power that has pertained over most of the Treaty's lifetime, and is embedded in the Treaty's identification of specific states having rights to call themselves NWS, gives way to another hierarchy of power in coming decades. Power transition theory warns of the conflicts and arms races that can arise when emerging powers, such as China and India in years ahead, challenge established great powers.<sup>20</sup> Rising powers in Asia and elsewhere will also wish to play a larger part in the shaping of international norms and institutions. However, the behaviour of China and India could turn out to be more constructive than destructive of nuclear order: China is committed to strategic caution by its pre-eminent interest in economic stability and in avoiding Japan's nuclearization; and India may (only may) become a constructive force if a mutually satisfying *rapprochement* with the United States and with the non-proliferation regime can be negotiated. Furthermore, the US development of missile defence might ameliorate rather than aggravate great power relations if it were used as a bargaining stick to negotiate deeper arms reductions, if missile defences were limited to the provision of common protection against proliferating states, and if China and Russia could be given convincing guarantees that missile defences and associated technologies would not be deployed to gain strategic advantage over them. Ideally, the regulation of missile defence should become part of a wider agreement on limiting the militarization of space, including bans on the targeting of satellites.

Finally, there has developed a strong common interest among states in preventing terrorist groups, insurgents or their criminal suppliers from gaining access to nuclear materials and technologies. In retrospect, I gave too little attention to the risks that nuclear weapons could, in some form, begin to play a part in irregular warfare, as did other contributors to the special issue. States' responses to those risks also merited more discussion. The desire to minimize them has tended to unify more than divide states, notwithstanding their many disputes, and will probably continue to do so. Paul Schulte's remark about the contemporary need, in addition to the systems of deterrence and abstinence, for a 'system of policing' has given me particular pause for thought.<sup>21</sup> Although he refers to a system of policing that mainly addresses the detection of states' clandestine weapon programmes and prosecution of actions against them, which I would still incorporate in the system of abstinence, his observation is surely correct if the system is extended to cover the policing of non-state actors' access to technology, materials and expertise relevant to nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.<sup>22</sup> UN Security

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comparing economic and environmental costs across energy technologies together with an acceptable institutional mechanism for passing judgement on the conclusions. He is also correct to criticize the Bush administration for lauding the benefits of nuclear reprocessing while openly denying its rightful exercise to all but a handful of selected states. Unfortunately, this can only whet appetites and the desire to gain self-sufficiency in the technology.

<sup>20</sup> Power transition theory originated in Alfred A. Organski, *World politics* (New York: Knopf, 1958).

<sup>21</sup> Paul Schulte, 'Universal vision or bounded rationality?', *International Affairs* 83: 3, May 2007, p. 506. Schulte writes of 'a system of policing capable of effectively intrusive verification, fearless international adjudication of intentions on the uncensored statement of technical probabilities, and determined enforcement'.

<sup>22</sup> Whether 'system of policing' is the most appropriate phrase requires more thought.

Council Resolution 1540, which prohibits states from transferring nuclear capabilities to potentially dangerous non-state actors and enjoins states to strengthen their internal controls, can be regarded as the first substantial global building-block of such a system.

Taking these considerations into account, the problem of order becomes even more complicated, involving henceforth the optimization and interlinkage of three managed systems with their often different norms, rules and agencies, so that the problem of reconciling them becomes a hydra with even more heads. Along with the dangers of proliferation and renewed arms racing, this may lead states of all sizes and sorts to wonder afresh about the feasibility of the whole enterprise, especially if the attainment of order will require an ever deeper penetration of private spaces and state sovereignty in the quest for confidence that lethal technologies are not falling into the wrong hands. While I hold to my remark that 'the more desirable [in history disarmament] appears, the more elusive it becomes as order fragments and states look to their own defences',<sup>23</sup> we may be approaching a juncture when systems of governance are, certainly in perception, being overwhelmed by the challenges before them. This perception was evident in the letter advocating nuclear disarmament written by George Schultz, William Perry, Henry Kissinger and Sam Nunn to the *Wall Street Journal* and published in the issue of 4 January 2007.<sup>24</sup> It was also evident in the speech given by Margaret Beckett, the British Foreign Secretary, in Washington DC on 26 June 2007 extolling the importance of non-proliferation and disarmament.<sup>25</sup>

As Hassner suggests, advocacy of disarmament by former statesmen 'who for decades made the case for nuclear deterrence' may be regarded 'with irony and distrust' outside the United States.<sup>26</sup> It was also a bit rich of Margaret Beckett, however good her intentions, to call for disarmament so soon after the UK parliament had decided to extend the life of Britain's nuclear deterrent into the 2050s.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, one senses that another shock is all that is required to bring states to the point where nuclear disarmament—or a much more substantial confinement of nuclear weapons and capabilities than has been attempted hitherto—becomes compelling. What other political and emotional response could there be, for instance, to a nuclear terrorist attack having the impact described by Perry, Carter and May in the *New York Times*?<sup>28</sup> Come what may, the problem of nuclear weapons will not be addressed to anyone's satisfaction without a more profound and enlightened international cooperation than has recently been evident.

<sup>23</sup> Walker, 'Nuclear enlightenment and counter-enlightenment', p. 451.

<sup>24</sup> George P. Schultz, William J. Perry, Henry A. Kissinger and Sam Nunn, 'A world free of nuclear weapons: a bipartisan pleas for nuclear weapons abolition', *Wall Street Journal*, 4 Jan. 2007.

<sup>25</sup> Untitled speech given by Margaret Beckett at the Carnegie Endowment on International Peace's Conference on Nonproliferation, Reagan Center, Washington DC, 26 June 2007.

<sup>26</sup> Hassner, 'Who killed nuclear enlightenment?', p. 465.

<sup>27</sup> On the national and international benefits that might have followed a British decision to abandon Trident, see Michael McGwire, 'The rise and fall of the NPT: an opportunity for Britain', *International Affairs* 81: 1, Jan. 2005, pp. 115–40.

<sup>28</sup> William Perry, Ashton Carter and Michael May, 'After the bomb', *New York Times*, 12 June 2007.