

are the preserver of stability and promoter of peace. Who would go to war in a nuclear sandbox?

The two sides of the 'stability issue' are presented effectively by observers who were commenting shortly before the tests. Neil Joeck has several publications and papers on the subject, including "Maintaining Nuclear Stability in South Asia" (Adelphi Paper 312 September 1997); and *Maintaining Nuclear Stability in South Asia*, (Oxford University Press, 1998). He maintains "nuclear capabilities have in fact not created strategic stability. Such capabilities neither explain the absence of war over the past decade nor why war is currently unlikely. While limited nuclear capabilities increase the costs of conflict, they do little to reduce the risk of its occurrence." The other side is well presented by Devin Hagerty in his book *The Consequences of Nuclear Proliferation: Lessons from South Asia* (MIT Press, 1998), and in his article "Nuclear Deterrence in South Asia: The 1990 Indo-Pakistani Crisis", (*International Security*, Winter 1995/96). He denies the assertion now widely accepted that both states were already nuclear in 1990, and were forced by outside pressure to pull back from the brink of nuclear war. On the contrary he feels that both sides used self restraint because of the mutual knowledge of nuclear potential. In his book, he is particularly forceful, (as are the South Asian states), in pointing to Western hypocrisy:

The United States should stop preaching nonproliferation while continuing to rely on nuclear deterrence to meet its own security needs. If a country protected by two vast oceans and a seemingly insurmountable lead in conventional military technologies still requires the insurance provided by nuclear weapons, why should India and Pakistan__ with their much more vulnerable geopolitical positions and technological inferiority____ be expected to the denuclearize first? [page 195].

The argument between the 'qualitative' and 'incrementalist' perspectives is as old as the nuclear era. It has just been rekindled by the South Asian situation. Perhaps a good