

research facility that would be invulnerable to conventional weapons.”<sup>100</sup>

Thranert agrees that giving nuclear weapons a role in deterring biological weapons for example “runs counter to other nonproliferation and arms control aims.” Not only would such a policy set a problematic example for curtailing the spread of nuclear weapons, it would indeed go against long-standing American pledges (in support of the NPT) not to use nuclear weapons against a non-nuclear weapons state. Nevertheless,

“Strategically, it is understandable that the US would not wish to rule out nuclear deterrence against the use of biological weapons. Were it officially to renounce the resort to nuclear weapons as a counter to the use of biological weapons by hostile forces, this could be taken by some countries as a virtual invitation to concentrate on the development of biological weapons. There remains, therefore, an irresolubly conflicting relationship between the objectives of arms control and the requirements of strategy. Seen in this light a...nuclear order in which such weapons have been abolished, seems many years in the distance if for no other reason than that the US believes it needs nuclear weapons for reasons stemming from its quest to deter the use of biological weapons.”<sup>101</sup>

O’Hanlon also doubts that American military superiority “is great enough to permit strictly conventional military responses to any battlefield use of weapons of mass destruction against American forces.” There are uncertainties about whether the U.S. military can maintain its present superiority or whether it could cope with chemical, biological or nuclear attacks on its forces and bases. He agrees that the U.S. “military advantage over most potential foes is great enough that American forces could probably prevail without resorting to the use of nuclear weapons.”

“However, they would most likely do so at a price of high U.S. casualties. Rather than accept high casualties, the United States would have powerful reasons to use nuclear weapons against an enemy’s forces and military infrastructure in response, both to save its own troops’ lives and to deter further enemy attacks of that kind in the future. Making the possibility of such a response known in advance, as it did before Operation Desert Storm, could also have deterrent benefits. It could discourage a foe from the belief that it could keep the casualty-adverse United States from responding to its aggression.”<sup>102</sup>

Paul Schulte of the United Kingdom’s Ministry of Defence, argues that despite problems with on-site verification, exacerbated by the failure of the United Nations to continue inspections in Iraq, multilateral efforts should continue to support the Chemical Weapons Convention. But he also stresses the need for counter-proliferation. He points to the efforts by NATO’s Senior Defence Group on Proliferation to improve the Alliance’s training and equipment to operate in a chemical

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<sup>100</sup> Manning, “The Nuclear Age,” p. 81.

<sup>101</sup> Thranert, “Nuclear Weapons, pp. 104-5.

<sup>102</sup> O’Hanlon, *Technological Change*, pp. 165-6.