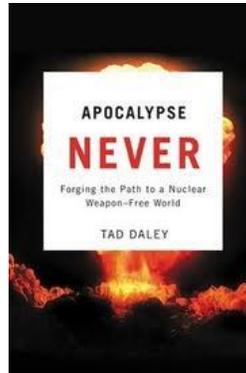




British American Security
Information Council



Apocalypse Never: Forging the Path to a Nuclear Weapon- Free World

**If you have a nuclear addiction, Doctor Tad Daley has the cure. A book review by
Anne Penketh**

May 09, 2011

In his book “Apocalypse Never: Forging the Path to a Nuclear Weapon-Free World,” Daley explains the risks from the most dangerous weapons known to man, describes a nightmare scenario of escalating nuclear non-proliferation, and sets out the steps for their abolition. Why? Because, he argues, nuclear weapons are not needed in the modern world.

Daley convincingly makes the case that the 22,500 nuclear warheads in the world today are actually useless. They cannot be used in asymmetrical warfare; they are no good against terrorists or even against a non-nuclear weapons state. As deterrence, they are questionable as the historical record shows. “Our overwhelming conventional military superiority can probably serve as a greater deterrent than our nuclear arsenal, because its potential use is more credible,” says Daley.

The fear of an incident involving nuclear weapons is real in the public's mind, as witnessed by the frenzied speculation on the American cable news networks in the minutes before President Barack Obama dramatically announced the killing of Osama Bin Laden. Once it became clear that the president's speech on "national security" would not be about the assassination of Libyan leader Moamar Gadhafi, the conversations turned to the possibility of a nuclear explosion or accident. Public attention has also focused in recent months on the dangers from nuclear power plants, since the disaster at the Fukushima Daiichi facility in Japan. Daley's timely work examines all the possible scenarios, including the prospect of nuclear blackmail, nuclear terror, accidental launches and intentional use, and concludes each time that the magnitude and immediacy of the nuclear peril is a reason to disarm.

Two things distinguish this work from others on a similar theme. First is Daley's chatty style, which might be teeth-grating in some places but which renders his book accessible to the general public, its intended readership. For Daley wants people at the grass roots level to get involved in the campaign to abolish nuclear weapons. The book contains a section entitled "NPT for Dummies", explaining the grand bargain in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, that all nuclear disarmament advocates should all use as a crib sheet.

Second is his prescription for reaching global zero, through his detailed description of the architecture of a nuclear weapon-free world founded on a legally binding treaty that would replace the NPT in order to achieve abolition by August 6, 2020. Daley is far from being alone in his quest, indeed the "Global Zero" movement was founded in December 2008 on these principles. The idea of a convention is gaining ground internationally; although not with the Obama administration (or leaders of the other nuclear powers for that matter) which holds that such a time bound pact is unrealistic. Elsewhere in Washington, among Republicans in Congress and in the right-wing think tanks, the very idea of the goal of "global zero" endorsed by President Obama in his 2009 Prague speech is dismissed as idealistic and naïve.

But Daley has an answer for the doubters. "If real political progress toward nuclear weapons abolition is not terribly 'politically realistic' today, then building a civil society movement to shift the terms of the nuclear policy debate can perhaps make it more realistic tomorrow." That's what this book is all about.

"Apocalypse Never: Forging the Path to a Nuclear Weapon-Free World" by Tad Daley is published by Rutgers University Press