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Freeze: The Literature of the Nuclear Weapons Debate



Recommended Citation

"Freeze: The Literature of the Nuclear Weapons Debate", September 17, 2012, https://nautilus.org/foia-document/freeze-the-literature-of-the-nuclear-weapons-debate/

The call to freeze nuclear development in the United States gained momentum in the 1970s and came to its height in the 1980s. The anti-nuclear demonstration in New York City in June 1982 was one of the largest political demonstrations in U. S. history with one million demonstrators. A main goal of the movement was to establish a nuclear freeze between the United States and the Soviet Union in order to bring an end to the Cold War.

This report examines the literature that has influenced the anti-nuclear movement. It discusses the strengths and weaknesses of each book, the potential effect on Administration policy and the effectiveness of the literature in achieving intelligent debate rather than pure attention to the movement.

"On the positive side, the reviewed literature serves a worthwhile function by bringing a previously isolated but critically important drama onto center stage. Each book has distinct policy orientations, although addressing different levels (e.g., Kennedy-Hatfield call for immediate political action, Katz poses analytic issues, and Schell is much more philosophical). Taken as a whole, these books provide sufficient information and impetus to the reader so that he or she can intelligently participate in the political exchange which will determine the nuclear stance of the United States." (p 10)

This report was released to the Nautilus Institute under the US Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

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