America and the Islamic bomb : the deadly compromise

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Abstrak

The turbulent nation of Pakistan, where Osama bin Laden is far more popular than George W. Bush, possesses a nuclear arsenal built with technology from the United States and Europe, and financed with the help of America's allies in the Muslim world. Its dictatorial president, Pervez Musharraf, faces widespread civil opposition, and militant extremists threaten his life every day. The nuclear weapons programs in North Korea and Iran, as well as Libya's now-defunct atomic effort, relied heavily on expertise and materials provided by the nuclear smuggling network headed by Pakistan's national hero, A.Q. Khan. The United States – from Carter and Reagan, through Bush I, Clinton, and the current president – and other Western governments knew all along that Pakistan was first developing and then exporting nuclear technology, yet consistently turned a blind eye in order to gain Pakistan's cooperation during the Cold War and, more recently, in the war on terror. As a result of this Faustian bargain, nuclear technology has been allowed to spread far and wide, dramatically increasing the chances that terrorists or unfriendly regimes will someday get their hands on an atomic device. David Armstrong and Joseph Trento provide a new and unrivalled perspective on the so-called A.Q. Khan nuclear black market scandal, including exclusive accounts from customs agents, intelligence analysts, and other ground-level front-line operatives. Documented in these pages are maddening experiences of official interference and breathtaking instances of indifference and incompetence. Trento and Armstrong name names and reveal stunning new information about proliferators in an exposé that is sure to generate headlines. This secret history of how the Islamic bomb was developed and how nuclear arms have proliferated is as fascinating as it is disturbing