THE RHETORIC OF NUKEsPEAK

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Nukespeak is the use of metaphor, euphemism, technical jargon and acronyms to portray nuclear concepts in a "neutral" or positive way. This essay identifies two nukespeak strategies, domestication and bureaucratization. Nukespeak functions as a potentially dangerous "terministic screen" for both speakers and audience: The moral and practical implications of nuclear war are ignored or underestimated by nukespeak users, and nuclear policy issues are rendered trivial or less accessible to the general public. Two cases of nukespeak strategy by President Ronald Reagan are examined as illustrations of the implications of nukespeak for the audience: the term "CORRTEX" as an instance of bureaucratization and the use of domesticated metaphors to describe the purpose of the "Strategic Defense Initiative."

NUKEsPEAK has been defined as the "language of nuclear development" which encodes and reinforces the beliefs and assumptions of "the nuclear mindset" (Hilgartner, Bell, & O'Connor, 1982, p. xiii). Nukespeak has been described less technically as a language "consisting primarily of euphemisms, jargon, and bizarre acronyms which serve to cloud the true nature of nuclear weapon systems, nuclear fighting concepts, and nuclear war itself" (Totten, 1984, p. 43).

This essay identifies two nukespeak strategies: domestication and bureaucratization. I define domestication as a rhetorical strategy by which nuclear concepts are introduced into public discourse in a non-threatening manner: "We domesticate these weapons in our language and attitudes. Rather than feel their malignant actuality, we render them benign" (Lifton & Falk, 1982, p. 106). Bureaucratization is defined as a rhetorical strategy by which nuclear concepts are insulated from public inspection by acronyms or sanitized jargon. This essay explicates each strategy and offers relevant examples, then argues that nukespeak has potentially dangerous implications both for its users and for the public as audience. Specifically, it is argued that nukespeak should be recognized as rhetorical in theory and in practice, that anecdotal historical evidence and participant-observer research indicates that nukespeak functions as a morally suspect "terministic screen" for users, and that it functions to discourage public involvement in and decision-making about nuclear policy. Additionally, two cases of nukespeak strategy by Ronald Reagan are examined as illustrations of the implications of nukespeak for the public as audience. The examples are the term "CORRTEX" as an instance of bureaucratization and the use of domesticated metaphors to describe the purpose of the "Strategic Defense Initiative." It is concluded that nukespeak as a rhetorical strategy is deplorable.

There are two guiding methodological and ideological assumptions of this essay. The first is the liberal democratic principle that public deliberation is both necessary and desirable in the formulation of public policy (see: Haiman, 1976, chapters 4 & 5; Tedford, 1985, chapter 12). I agree with Goodnight's position that the "public sphere" of argumentation, though vital as an arena in which to share in the

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construction of the future, is currently being eroded by communicative practices that
denigrate deliberative rhetoric and negate the role of the public as audience (1982).
Goodnight argues that a distinction should be drawn among the personal, public, and
technical spheres of argument. Argument in the personal sphere is relatively
unrestricted and often unsophisticated by normative standards of argument. Techni-
cal argument brings with it the formal expectations of a scholarly community bent on
advancing a “special kind of knowledge.” Public debate ensues when an argument
reaches beyond the boundaries of a specialized community or group of private
individuals and engages a larger group of people known as “the public.” The issues
involved with national nuclear defense policy clearly fall within Goodnight’s “public
sphere,” though in this essay it is argued that nukespeak tends to erode the public
sphere by recontextualizing nuclear issues as personal and innocuous (domestication)
or technical and beyond lay comprehension (bureaucratization).

If deliberative argument in the public sphere is to be salvaged, “then those
practices which replace deliberative rhetoric by substituting alternative modes of
invention and restricting subject matter need to be uncovered and critiqued”
(Goodnight, 1982, p. 227). Accordingly, nukespeak requires critical inspection
because, as argued below, it functions strategically to avoid and to constrain
deliberation over matters of public importance.

The second methodological and ideological assumption on which this essay is
based is that political language is an important form of symbolic action which plays a
major role in constructing social “reality” (Zarefsky, 1986, pp. 1–20). The “facts” of
political life are not “given,” they must be made meaningful through the use of
symbols. Language creates “terministic screens” which select some aspects of
“reality” and deflect others (Burke, 1966, pp. 44–47). Political language not only
gives the events of social life meaning, it is itself “a part of events . . . helping to shape
the political roles officials and the general public play” (Edelman, 1977, p. 4).
Hence, those having considerable influence over the choice of symbols used to define
“reality” have significant power to control not only what is understood as “real” to
much of the polity, but also what attitudes and actions towards different aspects of
“reality” are appropriate. In the United States it is commonly accepted that “the
presidency is the primary source of symbols about public issues” (Zarefsky, 1986,
pp. 6–7), though the Department of Defense is also a primary source for many
nukespeak terms.

An important implication of these assumptions is that nukespeak functions
ideologically as a strategy even if its use is not “intentional.” In Kenneth Burke’s
well-known words, “something of the rhetorical motive comes to lurk in every
‘meaning,’ however purely ‘scientific’ its pretensions. Wherever there is persuasion,
there is rhetoric. And wherever there is ‘meaning,’ there is ‘persuasion’ ” (1969, p.
172). Put crudely, one has the choice of whether to use language to damn something,
praise it, or pseudo-neutrally describe it. Even when language is kept supposedly
neutral or “objective” an attitude of detachment or action such as “passive
observation” is induced (Campbell, 1975). In any case the choice of language is not
neutral, it is strategic (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969, p. 149). Whether
intentional or unintentional, overt or covert, “the nuclearization of language plays a
political role—the structuring of reality in such a way to facilitate the integration of
nuclear weapons into pre-existing thought patterns, and the acceptance of their
existence and possible use” (Hook, 1985, p. 69).

Examination of nukespeak in light of the above assumptions leads to the
conclusion that *domestication* portrays nuclear weapons, strategy, and war in a trivial or even positive light, and that *bureaucratization* sanitizes or technologizes nuclear concepts. Both strategies have behavioral and attitudinal implications quite different from a hypothetical negative nukespeak: language used to condemn or negatively portray nuclear weapons, strategy, and war. As a result, the moral and practical implications of nuclear war are ignored or underestimated by nukespeak users, and nuclear policy issues are rendered trivial or less accessible to the general public.

**DOMESTICATION**

Domestication refers to the use of everyday language to describe the extraordinary in ordinary terms. Specifically, domestication is the use of “friendly” *metaphors* drawn from *ordinary language* to *name* otherwise objectionable nuclear weapons, strategy, and war. Domestication combines some of the most potent rhetorical resources available in a culture, and hence functions as a powerful linguistic strategy.

Though rhetorical theorists disagree on many issues, one thesis that has become axiomatic is that language is never a neutral vehicle of thought; to *name* a phenomenon is to suggest a set of attitudes and behaviors appropriate to the phenomenon (Kauffman, 1989). The suggestive power of naming is magnified when it involves the use of *metaphor*. The significance of metaphor in shaping a community of language-users’ understanding of “reality” is well established (Burke, 1954; Edelman, 1977, pp. 16–17; Sapir & Crocker, 1977). The use of metaphor becomes rhetorical or argumentative when the speaker seeks adherence to a *particular perspective* of “reality” (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969, pp. 167–171). To the extent that metaphor “brings out the thinness of a that,” as Burke puts it, the “character” of a “that” is largely determined by the “this” being used to describe it (1945, p. 503). A “point of view” or particular “bias,” then, is unavoidable when a phenomenon is named via metaphor.

The most persuasive metaphors are those drawn from *ordinary language*. Ordinary language embodies the common *sense* of a community of language-users, which includes the judgments, attitudes and feelings associated with certain words. Metaphors drawn from ordinary language help shape the “meaning” of a newly named phenomenon by eliciting relatively entrenched attitudes and feelings. The oft-repeated experience of ordinary language leads to a high degree of “fixity” or stability to the “meaning” ordinary language evokes (Gregg, 1984, p. 87). Since “ordinary language is by itself the manifestation of agreements of a community of thought,” the use of ordinary language helps to promote agreement between a speaker and audience (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969, p. 153). In sum, since domestication involves naming by *metaphorically* extending *ordinary language*, it is a very persuasive means by which to talk about nuclear phenomena.

Examples of domesticated nukespeak are plentiful. Domestication began at the birth of the nuclear age with the naming of the first atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki: “Little Boy” and “Fat Man” (Musil, 1983, p. 28). Nuclear weapons as a class are less threatening when referred to as “nukes” (Cohn, 1987, p. 710). The atomic bomb was originally described as a “super” conventional bomb. Later, the H-bomb was described as a “super” A-bomb (Hook, 1985, pp. 72–73; Musil, 1983, p. 27). Bombs with less radiation fallout have been referred to as
“clean” or “less dirty” than other classes of atomic bombs (Hilgartner et al., 1982, pp. 218–219). The common sense reflected in ordinary language suggests that some weapons are preferable to others if they are “super,” “clean” or “smart.” Calling nuclear weapons “hardware” evokes “impressions of something familiar, useful, and available in a neighborhood store” (Nash, 1980, p. 26). And, of course, no nukespeak analysis would be complete without mentioning Reagan’s attempt to name the MX missile “The Peacekeeper” (Kauffman, 1989), which was awarded the National Council of Teachers of English “Doublespeak” award (Totten, 1984, p. 44).

Many more examples of domestication are available. The rhetorical significance of domestication is that it normalizes extraordinary technology. Albert Einstein once claimed that “the unleashed power of the atom has changed everything save our modes of thinking” (Nathan & Norden, 1960, p. 376). Domestication perpetuates the use of conventional modes of thought concerning unconventional weapons, strategy and war. For example, Hook has argued that the use of “metaphors of life” has obscured the deadly nature of nuclear weapons (1985, pp. 69–71). The beginning of nuclear weapons development is called the “birth” of a new era which has a number of patriarchs: Robert Oppenheimer, father of the atomic bomb; Edward Teller, father of the hydrogen bomb; and others. Two recent “parents” are Edward Teller as the “father” of Star Wars and S.T. Cohen as “father” of the neutron bomb. The use of life-cycle metaphors is used to describe nuclear weapons from beginning to end: “As members of weapons families, nuclear weapons, like other members of the military, have a ‘useful life’: they ‘enter service,’ are kept on ‘active service’ for a number of years, then ‘retired’ so as to give way to a new ‘generation’ of weapons, produced after a technological ‘gestation’ period, to replace the ‘aging’ weapons” (Hook, 1985, p. 70).

Weapons are procured as the result of public policy decisions which are made more acceptable to the political public through domestication. Calling the vast accumulation of nuclear weapons part of an “arms race” implies that we are involved in a contest which can be won if we are determined to be strong and fast enough. Additional nuclear weapons are seen as desirable when they give us a “wider” or “richer” “menu of options” (Cohn, 1987, p. 699), strengthen our “nuclear umbrella” (Gray & Payne, 1980, p. 16), protect us against bomber or missile “gaps” or a “window of vulnerability” or provide us with a “bargaining chip” (Rowny, 1988, p. 21; Breslauer, 1983, p. 85).

Nuclear war itself is made more palatable when represented through domesticated nukespeak. Lifton and Falk suggest that the mass destruction of two superpowers can seem manageable and even mildly pleasant when dubbed a “nuclear exchange,” a phrase they note “sounds something like mutual gift-giving” (1982, p. 107). Fighting a nuclear war becomes a game when understood through such phrases as “competitive escalation” and “strategic superiority” (Breslauer, 1983, p. 84–85). “Victory is possible” when the winner loses only 20 million lives or so—an “acceptable outcome” (Gray & Payne, 1980).

BUREAUCRATIZATION

Bureaucratization is the counterpart to domestication. If some aspect of nuclear weapons, nuclear strategy, or nuclear war cannot be conveyed persuasively through the use of friendly metaphors, then the next best option is either to sanitize the concept so that it appears neutral and inoffensive, or to technologize the concept by
applying technical terms or acronyms that only insiders or “experts” can “really” understand (Edelman, 1977, chapter 5). In both cases the effect is to mystify—to render nuclear policy irrelevant or inaccessible to public investigation and deliberation. As Burke observes, mystification is equated with class distinctions (1969, p. 122). One consequence of nukespeak is that the nuclear policy making bureaucracy is granted a privileged status because the lower “class” (i.e., the general public) is disenfranchised from the decision-making language. As documented by Farrell and Goodnight’s excellent study of the discourse surrounding the accident at Three Mile Island, “insulated terminology” and “sanitized language” work at cross-purposes with the need for public deliberation (1981, p. 296). With respect to nuclear weapons policy McLean (1986) claims:

As the jargon of strategic debate and the arcane acronyms of weapons systems drive discussion into more and more compartmentalized and specialist fora, these [“expert”] analysts, wargamers and consultants are tending to set the parameters of the defense debate. “These questions are too complicated for either politicians or the public,” said a former national security official in the Carter Administration, “they need help.” (p. 77)

As with domestication, examples of bureaucratization are plentiful. Reagan’s runner-up for the Doublespeak award was an Air Force Colonel who described the Titan 2 missile as a “very large, potentially disruptive re-entry system” (Totten, 1984, p. 44). Because it has been sanitized (though in a transparent effort), the longer description actually tells the audience less than the original domesticated title.

A more complicated instance of bureaucratization is that of the “neutron bomb.” While the name “neutron bomb” does not immediately inform the citizenry of the weapon’s special characteristics, “neutron” implies a difference from other weapons, and “bomb” suggests it kills. The bureaucratized version of “neutron bomb” is “radiation enhancement weapon” (Van Cleave & Cohen, 1987, pp. 33–34). To the nuclearist the phrase is more revealing, but to the “uninitiated” the concept is now bureaucratized because the key word—enhancement—is equivocal and thus mystifying.

Acronyms are particularly useful tools for the bureaucratization of nuclear concepts. The military establishment is infamous for its use of acronyms; hence one of the effects of extending the use of acronyms to nuclear weapons, strategy and war is to render such concepts part of the “normal” military order. The more significant effect, however, is the consequent disenfranchisement of the “laity” who do not know what the acronyms denote. The burden is on the hearer—the public—to understand what MIRV, MARV, ASW, ICBM, SLBM, GLCM, SLCM, LOW, LUA, ELF, EMP, ERW, PAL, MAD, SDI, SBKKV, SALT, BMD, START, etc. actually mean (examples from Department of Defense, 1987; Semler, 1987). It is arguably the case that many people assume an ability to state what the acronym stands for is the equivalent of understanding the concept or strategy.

As in the case of domestication, nuclear war itself is made palatable through bureaucratization. When the Federal Emergency Management Agency refers to a “nuclear or radiological emergency,” it makes what could be the end of the world on par with less threatening disasters such as floods or tornadoes (Winter, 1983, pp. 16–17). Starting a nuclear war by launching missiles or dropping bombs before your enemy has the chance to launch or drop theirs has been called launching a “first strike,” a “pre-emptive” or “preventive” strike, and even an “anticipatory counterattack” (Boyer, 1985, p. 102; Colen, 1988, p. 29; Shenfield, 1985, pp. 63–76). Aiming
missiles to incinerate millions of men, women, and children is called "demographic" or "countervalue" targeting (Cohn, 1987, p. 691; Hilgartner et al., 1982, pp. 209–210; Totten, 1984, p. 45). If one lives through a "protracted period" or a "subholocaust engagement" (a nuclear war) and is not part of the "collateral damage" (unintended death and destruction), then one "operates" in a "postattack environment" (like Hiroshima, August 6, 1945). In nukespeak, "survivability" most often refers to weapons, sometimes to military command and control centers, and least often to human beings.

Implications for "Nukespeakers"

Nukespeak actively structures the consciousness of speakers as well as hearers. Consequently, nukespeak is a potentially dangerous "terministic screen" for those in positions of policy making and in the military establishment. Burke contends that terminologies direct our attention by selecting some aspects of reality to focus on and deflecting others. Hence the range of what one is able to "see" and comprehend is limited by the available terminology, since all else is filtered out by one's terministic screen (Burke, 1966, pp. 44–47). According to Burke's analysis, the likely consequence of nukespeak is that its users will tend to understand nuclear weapons, strategy, and war as benign or beneficial rather than repulsive and horrifying. This hypothesized result is supported by reports of former members of the military establishment and by an observer of military "culture."

Herman Kahn's 1965 book, On Escalation: Metaphors and Scenarios, provides an excellent example of the bureaucratic entelechy fostered by nukespeak. Kahn maintained that certain metaphors were more appropriate than others to describe the escalation of nuclear war. Kahn rejected the "strike" and "chicken" metaphors as "misleading" and recommended reference to the "rungs of the escalation ladder" as a "useful" metaphor (1965, p. 37). In contrast to the image of a violent strike or the irrational and dangerous game of chicken, Kahn offers his own, domesticated vision of an escalating nuclear war:

Another metaphor as useful as the escalation ladder would be that of an elevator stopping at various floors. We can think of a typical escalation situation between the United States and the Soviet Union in terms of a department store with seven floors, each offering a number of options of varying intensity but still appropriate to that floor, from which the decision-makers on one side or the other may choose. (p. 41)

In Thomson's analysis of the Vietnam war, he insists that it is impossible to understand the decision-making process without reference to the role of language (1973, p. 275). From his own experience in the military establishment Thomson provides examples of what have been described here as bureaucratization and domestication. Thomson states that use of such terms as "systematic pressure," "targets of opportunity" and "body count" bred a "bureaucratic" or "game-theory" detachment. Describing the intensity of a proposed bombing and strafing strategy, Thomson quotes an Assistant Secretary of State: "It seems to me that our orchestration should be mainly violins, but with periodic touches of brass" (1973, p. 274). Thomson concludes, not surprisingly, that such language led to "professional callousness" in the conduct of the Vietnam war.

Nash provides a similar report based on his experience as a former intelligence analyst for the Air Targets Division of the Air Force. He recounts a variety of maxims, acronyms, and loaded terms which "helped to obscure the reality of what
the work was all about—to distract attention from the homicidal reality and give a brighter hue to the ominous” (1980, p. 26). His examples match the twin strategies of bureaucratization and domestication. Nash states that the use of such phrases as “power vacuum” and “power equilibrium” had “the ring of respected and predictable laws of the physical sciences that had nothing to do with such things as war and annihilation” (1980, p. 26). Nash also provides anecdotal evidence of the effects of domestication:

I recall the time in the late 1950s when the term “baby H-bomb” was commonly used in referring to low yield, small tactical nuclear weapons suitable for use in limited wars. This image of the lovable “baby” bomb helped to make a typical question in war planning such as “should we deliver 10 or 15 baby nukes on the Irkutsk Party headquarters?” seem like an innocent inquiry. (p. 26)

Conceived in the domesticated and bureaucratized language of nukespeak, nuclear war becomes far more than “thinkable,” it becomes the banal by-product of the ultimate “trained incapacity.” By domesticating the results of a nuclear attack through such “humanizing” metaphors as “crippling” and “disabling,” nuclear war appears recoverable and limitable, and hence contributes to “the underestimation of the risks involved in starting a nuclear war” (Hook, 1985, p. 71). By bureaucratizing nuclear war through sanitized jargon and metaphors based on trade, games and physics, military planners avoid the major moral considerations of nuclear war, since nukespeak “enables America’s nuclear war planners to maintain a moral self-image, treat the extermination of millions as a ‘job’, and obfuscate the value problem underlying the use of nuclear weapons” (Hook, 1985, p. 72).

An “anthropological” or “ethnographic” study by Carol Cohn (1987), senior research fellow of the Center for Psychological Studies in the Nuclear Age of the Harvard University Medical School, provides additional evidence of the incapacitating effects of nukespeak on users. Cohn spent a year as a participant and observer in a university “center on defense technology and arms control.” The center was populated by “defense intellectuals”—persons who move between government positions, influential defense “think tanks” and academic institutions—who “create the theory that informs and legitimates American nuclear strategic practice.” During Cohn’s research she “attended lectures, listened to arguments, conversed with defense analysts,” and generally went “native” in an effort to understand the “rationality” of the “professional discourse” of nuclear theorists (pp. 687–688).

Cohn reports that language patterns learned in her study (described here as domestication and bureaucratization) had the overall effect of reconstructing the consciousness of nukespeak users. In terms of domestication, Cohn found that the use of abstraction and euphemism redirected attention away from the realities of a nuclear situation. The words were “so bland that they never forced the speaker or enabled the listener to touch the realities of nuclear holocaust that lay behind the words” (p. 690). The reliance on harmless sounding metaphors such as “Christmas tree farm” for a line of submarine missiles ready for launch, “footprint” for the pattern in which missile warheads land, “BAMBI” for an early version of an antiballistic missile system, and “cookie cutter” for the neutron bomb took away the emotional fallout that would result if it were clear one was talking about plans for mass murder, mangled bodies, and unspeakable human suffering” (p. 691).

What has been described here as mystification by bureaucratization was also documented by Cohn. Early in her research, Cohn was reluctant to learn and use the “expert” language. This reluctance to communicate in the language of the nuclear
strategists had the effect of disenfranchising Cohn. Her opinions were inferior: "No matter how informed or complex my questions were, if I spoke English rather than expert jargon, the men responded to me as though I were ignorant, simple minded, or both. It did not appear to occur to anyone that I might actually be choosing not to speak their language" (p. 708). This attitude made it imperative for anyone who wished to contribute in the exchange to learn the technical language.

In short, nukespeak actively structures the consciousness of speakers in ways that separate the technical possibilities from related moral and ethical concerns. Specialized professional vocabularies are unavoidable. Their use is inevitable and even beneficial for the conceptual progress of intellectual disciplines. However, the uncritical use of nukespeak by "expert" speakers neglects the fact that nuclear policy involves issues of public concern. Moreover, there is a risk that nukespeak will use its speakers as much as they use it. Once the nukespeaker turns technician, the issue is no longer whether or not an action should be taken, but simply a question of logistics. The use of nukespeak cognitively separates competing "technical" and "social" knowledge claims and renders the attendant moral concerns obsolete.

Implications for the Public as Audience

Farrell and Goodnight have suggested that the status of deliberative rhetoric is constrained by "prevailing conceptions of the public" (1981, p. 299). It is clear that with regard to nuclear issues the public has been conceived as a crowd to be calmed rather than co-creators of public policy (cf. Park, 1972). Demonstrating that the relationship between language and public attitudes has been recognized almost from the start, the 1950 book How to Survive an Atomic Bomb laments the fact that people have been scared by the words "radiation" and "radioactivity" and condemns the "loose talk" about the atomic bomb and the "rays" it makes (Gerstell, 1950, p. 22). The public's fears concerning atomic war in the early 1950s are well known. Accordingly, it is hard to believe it was an accident that in 1953 the Atomic Energy Commission named measured amounts of radiation as "Sunshine Units" (Hilgartner et al., 1982, p. 219). During the development and testing of the hydrogen bomb, President Eisenhower reportedly suggested to the Chairman of the A.E.C. in May of 1953 that "we leave 'thermonuclear' out of press releases and speeches. Also 'fusion' and 'hydrogen'." Eisenhower was reported to have said "keep them confused as to 'fission' and 'fusion' " (U.S. Congress, 1979, p. 151).

Domestication of nuclear issues renders them accessible to the public, but in a trivial manner. There is no need to deliberate over that which is not a problem or threat. Bureaucratization of nuclear issues insulates them from public inspection and critical appraisal. The result of nukespeak in both cases is a further decline in the "public sphere" of argumentation. Nukespeak "covertly tends to quell citizen involvement and decision-making about the nuclear arms race" (Totten, 1984, p. 44).

In Farrell's and Goodnight's words, nukespeak is a form of communication that becomes "self-confirming" (1981, p. 299). Greene, in an essay advocating that peace education be critical of positivism and "technical talk and control," warned that "danger lies" in the public's acceptance of a reality defined by "official others" (1982, p. 130). In Greene's view, failure to critique self-confirming interpretations is disastrous: "The more people are drawn into technical talk and the belief that some Other has the right to define the world, the more likely a nuclear war will be" (1982, p. 134).
Once the question is put as whether the nukespeak strategies of domestication and bureaucratization are beneficial or detrimental to the practice of deliberative argumentation, only diehard "nuclearists" would challenge a negative verdict. No one disputes the horror nuclear war would produce. Language which masks this horror makes its avoidance more difficult. As Sagan has put it, "If everyone had a profound and immediate sense of the actual consequences of nuclear war, we would be much more willing to confront and challenge national leaders of all nations when they present narrow and self-serving arguments for the continuation of mutual nuclear terror" (1983, p. 3).

It may seem paradoxical that nukespeak calms and pacifies the public and yet researchers have documented widespread terror of nuclear war, anxiety so strong that Lifton and Falk describe it as "nuclear numbing" (1982, chapter 10), anxiety so acute that Sagan and others suggest that it triggers "denial"—"that makes us feel it's so horrible that we might as well not think about it" (1983, p. 3). To resolve the paradox a distinction must be made between the experience of anxiety and the experience of fear (Fisher, 1984, pp. 11–12; Hyde, 1980, pp. 140–154; cf. Levitt, 1977, pp. 74–75). Anxiety is a generalized existential dread that is associated, for example, with a highly uncertain future or death. Anxiety concerning nuclear war fits this description, for it is the threat of non-existence that "numbs" or brings about "denial." Fear, on the other hand, is specific: "That which is feared always presents itself as something definite existing in a person's world" (Hyde, 1980, p. 147). Nukespeak cannot completely eliminate awareness that nuclear war could annihilate the planet, hence it does not prevent (though it may mask) nuclear anxiety. But nukespeak decreases the fear of the specific instruments of nuclear death; the weapons and policies whose deadly nature are clouded by domestication and bureaucratization. Understanding nukespeak is an important key to interpreting the paradoxical public sentiments concerning the issues of a nuclear age: Nukespeak leaves people with general anxiety but without the appropriate motivation to evaluate and act towards the objects of nuclear war-making.

**TWO CASE STUDIES OF NUKE SPEAK**

The study of nukespeak is slowly becoming a recognized area of scholarly research (Aubrey, 1982; Chilton, 1985). However, rhetorical analyses of how nuclear language quells public deliberation over nuclear defense strategy have not yet appeared (Williams, 1988). The preceding sections describe the theoretical reasons for the rhetorical effects of nukespeak. The following sections provide evidence for those effects in practice. Two cases of nukespeak strategies used by Ronald Reagan are sketched here as illustrations of the implications of nukespeak for the public as audience. Those examples are the term "CORTEX" as an instance of bureaucratization and the use of domestication to describe the purpose of the Strategic Defense Initiative.

"CORTEX" as Bureaucratization

Three claims are supported here with respect to the use of "CORTEX" as an example of bureaucratization. First, in early 1986 pressure increased on President Reagan to respond positively to the Soviet Union's moratorium on nuclear test explosions and Gorbachev's offer to negotiate a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Second, Reagan's response was to offer the Soviet Union "CORTEX," a
"verification" technology of uncertain value. Third, because little was known or told
of CORRTEX, its value was primarily symbolic. CORRTEX became "proof" of
Reagan's cooperative and generous nature and of the "impracticality" of the Soviet
Union's overtures. CORRTEX was a successful instance of bureaucratization
because it appeared to respond to the Soviet initiatives (hence it quieted or
sidetracked public debate), yet in substance CORRTEX was irrelevant to the Soviet
testing moratorium and to a Comprehensive Test Ban.

With an eye toward ratification of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (or CTBT),
General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev announced on July 29, 1985 that the Soviet
Union would unilaterally cease nuclear testing until the end of the year. The
moratorium began on August 6, 1985, and in December was extended by Gorbachev
another three months. In early 1986, Gorbachev extended the moratorium a third
time, claiming that the U.S.S.R. would continue to refrain from testing nuclear
weapons until the U.S. conducted another nuclear test. He further pledged to meet
President Reagan under any circumstances to begin negotiations for a CTBT. This
offer to begin negotiations for a test ban treaty in the face of unilateral cessation of
testing was significant given the consequences advocates have persistently claimed
that a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty would provide.²

The Soviet Union's nuclear testing moratorium and offer to negotiate a CTBT
met with considerable support from arms control enthusiasts. Scientists, non-
governmental organizations, public interest groups, arms control experts, and
members of Congress already had concluded that a comprehensive ban on the testing
of nuclear weapons was vital (Epstein, 1986). Hence, the moratorium was perceived
by many as a golden opportunity to press for U.S. progress toward a test ban.

Pressure on President Reagan to respond positively to the Soviet's initiative came
from a number of quarters. Congressional support for a CTBT "had been
mounting" ("U.S. Conducts Test," 1986, p. 1) and a joint resolution from the House
calling on the Administration to resume negotiations for a complete nuclear testing
ban passed on February 26. A similar resolution already had passed the Senate. The
resolutions, while not legally binding on the President, were urged because of their
was also urged by "peace groups." SANE, a Washington, D.C.-based organization
called a test ban "the No. 1 issue," and lobbied in early 1986 for a House bill that
would deny funding for nuclear tests.

International pressure for positive movement towards the CTBT was building as
well. Between September of 1985 and February of 1986, 121 countries passed four
resolutions in the United Nations General Assembly calling for the conversion of the
Partial Test Ban Treaty to a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty: "No measure of
disarmament has been pursued so long and so persistently [in the U.N.] as a ban on
all nuclear testing" (Epstein, 1986, p. 29). In August of 1985, the leaders of six
non-aligned nations, the "New Delhi group," reported that they were "convinced
that no issue is more urgent and crucial" than ending nuclear tests. Early in March,
1986, these leaders called on Washington to "conduct no more tests" (Atlas, 1986, p.
4) and to "proceed to negotiate a comprehensive treaty that would ban all nuclear

Consequently, the Reagan administration was reported to be facing significant
pressure both to participate in the moratorium and to begin negotiations for a test
ban treaty. The Associated Press reported on March 15, 1986 that "the Soviets have
put international pressure on the Reagan administration" ("Reagan sends," 1986),
and Reuters' New Service on March 23, 1986 reported that in Congress "pressure has been mounting on President Reagan to resume negotiations with Moscow for a comprehensive test ban treaty" ("U.S. Conducts Test," 1986).

Summarizing the climate that Gorbachev's offer created, William Arkin, director of the national security program at the Institute for Policy Studies, claimed "the Soviet Union has demonstrated a keen understanding of the American debate, shrewdly dangling a few more months of their unilateral test moratorium in front of American noses in every quarter to feed outside political pressures on the U.S. government. These offers are becoming more and more difficult to refuse" (1986, p. 4). The U.S. response to the Soviet invitation was described by one Congressperson as crucial, sending "signals of governmental importance to the world at large" (Gingrich, 1986, p. E572).

Reagan's rhetorical response to the pressure to respond positively to the Soviet initiatives was to offer the Soviets "CORRTEX." Gorbachev's March 13th offer to extend the testing moratorium prompted the response from Reagan who offered the Soviets CORRTEX the next day (Gerstenzang, 1986, p. 1). A White House official admitted that the CORRTEX announcement was made earlier than originally planned because of Gorbachev's offer (Robinson, 1986). In a written statement issued by the White House, the President acknowledged "correspondance which I have had recently with Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev, the leaders of six nations known as the New Delhi Group, and Senate Majority Leader Dole" (1986b, p. 364). Reagan's response was to offer General Secretary Gorbachev a "new, very specific, and far-reaching proposal concerning nuclear testing limitations." His "specific new technical method," CORRTEX, was "unique" in its "specificity and concreteness." He referred to CORRTEX as a signal of his "resolve to make tangible progress," and urged that the Soviet Union engage with the United States in "this first practical step" to solve "verification" uncertainties (1986b, pp. 364-365).

As a rhetorical strategy, "CORRTEX" was unquestionably a success in directing attention away from Soviet CTBT initiatives. The CORRTEX offer was characterized as representing "the latest American rejoinder to a Soviet nuclear arms initiative" (Robinson, 1986). It was depicted in various newspaper headlines on March 15 as "Reagan sends Soviet leader plan to detect nuclear blasts," "U.S. offers New plan on A-Tests" (Gerstenzang, 1986), "Reagan gives nuclear plan to Soviets," "Reagan offers Soviets new system to monitor underground arms tests" (Robinson, 1986), and "U.S. offers nuclear test plan." Opponents of a nuclear test ban used CORRTEX as a means of downgrading the Soviet efforts. Conservative members of Congress and the Administration lauded the President's "specific, concrete proposal" (Garn, 1986, p. S5240; Wilson, 1986, p. S5049), as a "realistic approach" (Goldwater, 1986, p. S6625), suggesting that the Soviet moratorium and offer to negotiate a CTBT were "a ploy" and "outrageous hypocrisy" not to be treated seriously (Wilson, 1986, p. S5049). A number of Republican senators argued that the Soviets had rejected all U.S. initiatives in this area and failed "to address these concerns in a constructive manner" (Adelman, 1986, p. S5241). Senator Garn (1986, p. S5240) suggested that "it is incumbent upon the Soviet leaders to take the President up on his offer." CORRTEX also was used to gain Congressional support for the President. Robert B. Barker, Deputy Assistant Director for Verification and Intelligence at the Arms Control and Disarmament Association, argued that "Congressional support for the President's proposal can only enhance the prospects for a positive Soviet response" (1986, p. S5244), and Senator Goldwater (1986, p.
S6625) urged that the President “should be commended for his efforts” and that “Congress should stand behind him on this issue.”

Because the name CORRTEX was unfamiliar—even the meaning of the letters was not explained in the White House statement—and because the concrete details and specifics of the proposal were not revealed to the press in the President’s statement of March 14, most news accounts were able initially only to report the fact that the President was generously giving CORRTEX to the Soviets. The Associated Press account of the President’s statement reported that an arms control expert outside of the Administration had never heard of CORRTEX. A “fact” reported only by *The Los Angeles Times* was that CORRTEX was not the “new technology” as portrayed by the President. An administration official, speaking anonymously, said that “it has been used in monitoring about 100 nuclear tests in the last decade” (Gerstenzang, 1986, p. A1). *The New York Times* reported that the superpowers discussed a similar technology during 1976 treaty negotiations (Gwertzman, 1986). The Los Alamos National Laboratory, which developed CORRTEX, was using it to measure test yields at the time Reagan called the technology “new” (Kerr, 1986, p. S6627).

As “verification” technology, the necessity and value of CORRTEX is debatable since few people outside of the Reagan administration have any doubt about the “verifiability” of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (Evernden & Archambeau, 1986). As a rhetorical strategy, CORRTEX was unquestionably successful as an example of bureaucraticized nukespeak. The obscurity of CORRTEX muffled public debate and allowed Reagan to portray himself as cooperative and generous. In effect Reagan hoped that by tossing a ball to the Soviets, he could deflect attention away from the Soviet “ball” that had been sitting on the U.S. court for almost a year. The President packaged CORRTEX as a sophisticated technological solution to problems between the superpowers. Reagan symbolized his offer as “new,” “specific,” “detailed,” “tangible,” “concrete,” “far-reaching,” “practical,” and a “first step.” The implication was that Gorbachev’s proposal, a CTBT, was old, general, vague, short-term, and impractical. Reagan’s offer was “real” but Mikhail Gorbachev’s was merely a “ploy” (Wilson, 1986, p. S5049).

Reagan was able to camouflage his rejection of CTBT in science and “practicality.” His offer did not deal with the merits of ceasing testing and did not explain why the Administration insisted on further tests. Reagan’s chief claim in his opposition to a CTBT was that limits on testing were not “verifiable” (Arkin, 1986, p. 5). Muchkind Dubey, India’s representative to the United Nations Conference on Disarmament, claimed that “verification has now become a political ploy . . . an excuse not to engage in meaningful and serious discussions. The Western nuclear powers use the red herring of verifiability to justify their rejection of all proposals” (1985, p. 29). Critic Alexander Cockburn concurred in harsher language: “The whole verification ploy, as now being operated by the Reagan Administration, is a gigantic non-issue, designed to bamboozle the sheep and sidetrack discussion away from arms control” (1986, p. 39). The symbolic offer of CORRTEX allowed Reagan to appear active and cooperative toward the Soviet Union and permitted him to invoke another well-known bureaucratization: “verification.” The Soviet Union, for the moment, was left with the moratorium—a vague symbol of inaction.

When faced with a losing battle for world public opinion in the period between July, 1985 and the Spring of 1986, Reagan’s response was not to reject a CTBT directly. Rather, Reagan chose to mystify the matter through the use of a
bureaucratization—CORRTEX—that functioned "rationally" as no more than a red herring, but was rhetorically successful in deflecting public pressure until new symbols were required.

The Domestication of SDI

Two claims are supported here concerning Reagan's use of language employed in the defense of the Strategic Defense Initiative. First, during the period of March 1983 until he left office in January 1989 President Reagan consistently portrayed the goals of SDI to the public with the use of domesticated language implying SDI's purpose was to protect the civilian population. Second, the President's language was misleading since the programmatic goals of SDI shifted from the purpose of population defense to missile protection soon after 1983. Reagan's misleading defense of the project helped maintain SDI's support by the public throughout the elections of 1984, during key arms control discussions at Reykjavic, and throughout the remainder of his occupation of the White House.

On March 23, 1983 Reagan broadcast an address to the American people which, in its closing minutes, introduced a "new idea," a "threshold" in "changing the course of human history": the Strategic Defense Initiative (1983a, pp. 447–448). While the speech has come to be known as the "Star Wars" Address, the Administration has insisted on calling the program the "Strategic Defense Initiative," a more favorable and arguably less descriptive phrase. SDI has the virtues of "strategy, defense and initiative . . . rolled into one" (Galtung, 1987, p. 248). The address gave the clear impression to the public that his project would render these weapons "impotent and obsolete." In the transition to his discussion of SDI in the address, Reagan posed the question of whether it would not be better to "save lives than avenge them?" Incoming hostile missiles would be destroyed before they "reached our soil" (1983a, p. 447) John Pike of the Federation of American Scientists commented on Reagan's imagery when he asserted that many Americans "have the idea that with SDI, during a nuclear attack they simply run out to the backyard, pull up a lawnchair and watch this terrific laser light show" (in Coney, 1986, p. 5).

The metaphors employed by Reagan over the past six years have done nothing to change the perception of SDI as population defense. Responding to questions asked by the West German magazine Bunte soon after the introductory address, Reagan said the system would "free our populations from serving as hostages underwriting the peace" (1983b, p. 687). The 1985 State of the Union Address portrayed SDI as saving "millions of lives" and possibly "humanity itself" (1985a, p. 145). During a radio address in the summer of 1985 dedicated exclusively to the subject, SDI became a "security shield" (1985c, p. 902)—an obvious use of domestication designed to comfort the public and make SDI appear "defensive." Reagan told the General Assembly of the United Nations that the goal of SDI was to make nuclear missiles "obsolete" (1985d, p. 1293) and in a radio address to the world he claimed this "security shield" would make nuclear weapons "obsolete" (1985e, p. 1376). Another metaphor Reagan employed was that of the gas-mask. In November of 1985 Reagan referred back to Geneva of 1925 when all nations banned poison gas, but "kept their gasmasks . . . [SDI] is kind of the gasmask thing" (1985f, p. 1387). Reagan's 1986 State of the Union address echoed the theme of a "shield" for security that moots nuclear attacks (1986a, p. 138). A textbook case of domestication was achieved before a high school commencement audience in which SDI became a "roof" protecting a
family from "rain" (1986c, p. 839). Even in the context of population defense, the implied logical inference was that even a leaky roof is better than none. Later in 1986 Reagan described SDI as a "vital insurance policy" for the "security" of the United States" (1986e, p. 1556).

The metaphor of a shield was dropped for the next State of the Union Address and the connection of SDI defending "human life" was made directly (1987a, p. 62). The end of the year was marked by a statement in response to questions submitted by Izvestiya when Reagan said SDI will "protect people instead of target them" (1987b, p. 1442). As the project reached its fifth-year anniversary in 1988, Reagan still described SDI as true to its original goals. In a speech at Notre Dame University, the choice of Americans to erect a "shield" rather than a "sharper sword" was a chance to raise the "moral standards of mankind" (1988a, p. 318). On March 14 of 1988, at a "birthday party" for the project, Reagan confirmed that his goal remained a "fully comprehensive defense system" (1988b, p. 342). A new domesticated metaphor was introduced to secure the President the moral high ground against critics of SDI: "Isn't it time to begin curing the world of this nuclear threat? If we have the medicine, can we in good conscience hold out on the patients?" (1988b, p. 342). On March 23 of 1988 in a statement on the anniversary of SDI, it was described as a system to "protect American people" (1988c, p. 381). During the summer Reagan described SDI as a "defensive weapon" that can "just make it impossible for missiles to get through the screen" (1988d, p. 729). Reagan continued his use of the "shield" metaphor as long as he was in office (1988e, p. 1209).

During this time, in contrast to what Reagan was saying about the project, SDI was undergoing what some have called a "covert reorientation" from the Star Wars address' vision (Waller & Bruce, 1987, pp. 2–8). Rather than a population defense, the system's objective is missile defense (U.C.S., 1986, pp. 1–5). The distinction between SDI as population or missile defense is extremely important. To protect the U.S. population, SDI would have to be virtually 100% effective, or "leak-proof," as even a tiny fraction of Soviet missiles would wipe out the U.S. population. As missile defense to "enhance" the ability to "retaliate" against a Soviet strike, SDI could be less effective, though precise estimates of "minimal" protection needs vary. The two visions of SDI are dramatically different. Population defense was billed by Reagan as a way to eliminate the doctrine of "mutually assured destruction" (or "MAD") while missile defense is seen as augmenting "MAD." Despite the inconsistency, the Administration has defended SDI on both levels. Broad's research has documented that as early as May of 1984 SDI researchers were acknowledging the impossibility of population defense yet advocating SDI as missile defense (1985, pp. 206–220). A year later, news of the shift in program objectives began to surface publically (albeit rarely). Mike Heylin, editor of Chemical & Engineering News, noted in June 1985 that some in the defense establishment felt a "leaky" shield would be useful to maintain our "retaliatory posture" (p. 3). The Union of Concerned Scientists noted in 1986 that SDI officials are now speaking of "radically different objectives" than the "astrodome" shield. The "real" strategy of military planners who control SDI is to defend the "targets" of the United States' retaliatory force ballistic missiles (Paine, 1985, p. 7). Recently the priority of the SDI project has been the "early deployment" of ballistic missile defenses: "This reorientation is not awaiting a publicly announced presidential decision to commit to near term deployment" (Bunn, 1988, pp. 20–21; Waller & Bruce, 1987, p. 2).

It is not difficult to understand the motives for misrepresenting the purpose of
SDI. Public opinion concerning SDI has been ambivalent, with survey results varying widely according to the wording of the questions asked (Graham & Kramer, 1986). Some surveys showed opposition to SDI from the start. The Harris Survey (Harris, 1983) reported a 58–36 percent majority opposed “spending billions of dollars for the U.S. to develop a laser-beam and particle-beam outer space defense system.” Two years later nearly identical results were found in The Harris Survey (Harris, 1985). However, public opinion research has indicated that there is considerably more support for population defense than for missile defense. In a 1987 study by The Cambridge Reports, Americans supported population defense by a margin of 81% to 17%, but opposed “point” defense—missiles, military bases and Washington, D.C.—by 83% to 15% (cited by Council for a Livable World, 1987). An almost identical study by Martilla and Kiley, Inc. in 1985 yielded similar results: Population defense was favored by 86% to 9%, while “point” defense was opposed by 73% to 21% (Council for a Livable World, 1987; Graham & Kramer, 1986). Hence research towards Reagan’s dream of a “leak-proof” population defense is the least likely to succeed, but the most likely to maintain political support for SDI.

An exemplary test of SDI popularity came after the summit meeting between Reagan and Gorbachev in Reykjavik, Iceland in October, 1986. When Reagan spoke on nationwide television to defend his unwillingness to trade SDI for large reductions in, or total elimination of, nuclear weapons, he compared SDI to “gasmasks” and described SDI as “America’s insurance policy” (1986d, pp. 1376–1377). Reagan portrayed his motive for launching SDI as the belief that “a policy of mutual destruction and slaughter of their citizens and ours was uncivilized.” Reagan claimed he would not limit SDI research because “there was no way I could tell our people their government would not protect them against nuclear destruction.” Despite the fact that Administration figures already had acknowledged the reorientation of SDI to missile defense, Reagan’s myth of SDI as population defense brought him a surge of public approval for his Reykjavik “performance” (Hoffman, 1985, p. 37).

SDI has been accessible to the general public primarily in domesticated and misleading terms. Galtung claims that, by selling SDI as making nuclear weapons “obsolete,” the administration has “brainwashed” the public with the dream of a “leak-proof” shield (1987, pp. 248–250). Significantly, there is evidence that Reagan is aware of the deceptiveness of his word choice. When pressed on the feasibility of a “leak-proof” SDI during a 1985 press conference Reagan stated that 100% effectiveness would be unnecessary for SDI to protect missiles. He quickly added “now, that isn’t really the goal of the Strategic Defense Initiative.” Caught with the inconsistency of admitting a 100% effective defense was not feasible and yet defending SDI’s goal of population defense, Reagan shifted to a defense of SDI as a means to disarmament. He added “this is what I mean by making nuclear weapons obsolete” (1985b, pp. 154–155, emphasis added). Such a reinterpretation is hard to reconcile with his public speeches. Nonetheless, it is clear from the exchange that Reagan did, in fact, understand the difference between the objectives of population and missile defense, and that he may have been aware that his words could be misleading.

SDI has been reoriented to a defense for ballistic missiles without significant public debate and without a “publicly announced presidential decision” (Waller & Bruce, 1987, p. 2). The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists posed the question of “what kind of public resonance” the president would have received if SDI was explained as a component of existing “deterrence” policy (Paine, 1985, p. 7). Portrayed as just
another option to enhance “deterrence,” SDI’s comparison to cheaper and less destabilizing strategic choices or even arms control would help clarify the debate over U.S. defense policy (U.C.S., 1987, p. 5). An enhanced debate would be desirable because SDI has been and promises to be an extremely costly and potentially dangerous program.4

Several studies have identified important rhetorical aspects of President Reagan’s Strategic Defense Initiative. Goodnight (1986) and Bjork (1988) have argued that SDI allowed Reagan to capture anti-nuclear sentiments while managing to retain support for a continued nuclear weapons buildup. Rushing (1986) contends that Reagan’s “Star Wars” address symbolically transformed science and technology from threat (nuclear war) to promise (deliverance from nuclear war) by transporting the “New Frontier” mythology into space. In addition to noting the effectiveness of Reagan’s rhetorical strategies concerning SDI, it is important to recognize that for nearly six years Reagan’s choice of domesticated metaphors to portray the programmatic goals of SDI as population defense misled the public and clouded debate on an important and complex issue.

CONCLUSION

This essay is a preliminary analysis of the linguistic phenomenon of nukespeak. Because the language of nuclearism permeates the current American Zeitgeist, it is easy, as Wittgenstein would have put it, to look at “nukespeak” without actually seeing it: “We talk, we utter words, and only later get a picture of their life” (1958, p. 209; cf. p. 211). The nuclear threat is “fundamentally a textual problem,” posed in part by linguistic strategies which conceal their rhetorical nature (Williams, 1988, p. 193). Accordingly, an essential part of “nuclear criticism” is promoting new ways of seeing familiar language-patterns. Two patterns have been identified and named in such a way as to emphasize that their use constitutes strategic action: One casts nuclear weapons, strategy, and war in a positive light (domestication) and one sanitizes or technologizes nuclear concepts (bureaucratization). By inference a negative nukespeak would consist of linguistic strategies to portray nuclear weapons and war as dangerous and immoral. As a thoroughly rhetorical enterprise, nukespeak demands further study because of its role in shaping the consciousness of speakers and hearers alike.

It would be inconsistent with the view of language advanced in this essay if I were to suggest or imply that the analysis presented is the result of “disinterested observation.” As recent essays by Philip Wander suggest, rhetorical criticism is ideological whether it wears its ideology on its sleeve or not (Wander, 1983, 1984). History suggests that rhetoric flourishes as an art according to the status of the audience. If one accepts the principle that public deliberation is both necessary and desirable in the formulation of public policy, then an important task of the rhetorical critic is to maintain and promote live options for potential audiences that might otherwise disappear from view. In Wander’s terms, the challenge for the rhetorical critic is to identify the “Third Persona” of texts—the audience “negated” (ignored or excluded) by discourse (1984). Nukespeak, as understood in this essay, requires ideological inspection primarily by its negation and exclusion of audiences. Nukespeak consists of symbols that are, in Goodnight’s words, designed to keep us watching as opposed to inviting us to participate in the construction of a future (1982, p. 225).
Rhetorical critics have had the opportunity to examine what went wrong in the discourse of such historical events as Three Mile Island and the Vietnam War. The first step toward "correcting" nukespeak is to recognize that rhetorical critics will not have a similar "second chance" should nukespeak's ultimate "event" end the possibility of rhetoric, and, with it, history itself.

NOTES

1 The terms "anthropological" and "ethnographic" are mine, not Cohn's. Her study can be treated as a sociological study of going "native" with those she calls "defense intellectuals." A pioneering example of this sort of study is Latour and Woolgar, Laboratory Life: The Social Construction of Scientific Facts (1979). Both Cohn and the Latour and Woolgar studies involve going "native" with "experts" with specialized language-patterns who see themselves as behaving "rationally" but not "rhetorically."

2 Test ban supporters have argued that testing nuclear weapons allows technological developments that "destabilize" the qualitative aspect of the nuclear arms race. Rapid or radical developments create a dramatically increased risk that the weapons will be used. For instance, continued testing can result in the improved development of so-called "first strike" capability, which many arms control experts have concluded would disturb the "nuclear balance" between the superpowers to the point of "inevitable" nuclear war (Aldridge, 1980; Caldwell, 1980). If the United States and the Soviet Union no longer tested nuclear weapons, the potential for dangerous qualitative improvements in nuclear weapons would be foreclosed. A Comprehensive Test Ban would thus call a halt to the so-called "qualitative arms race."

3 CORTEX stands for "Continuous Reflectometry for Radius versus Time Experiment." According to the Department of State Bulletin (October 1986), p. 15, CORTEX "is a hydrodynamic yield measurement technique that measures the propagation of the underground shock wave from an explosion." It is useful only for measuring the "yield" of large, nearby explosions—it is useless for the purposes of a CTBT. Scientists argue that CORTEX is equally useless for the Threshold Test Ban Treaty—the use to which the Reagan administration wanted to put it (Gulid, 1987).

4 For detailed assessments of SDI, see the works by: Office of Technology Assessment, 1985; U.C.S., 1986; Boffey, Broad, Gelb, Mohr, & Noble, 1988; and Smith, 1987. A favorable treatment can be found in Haug, 1987.

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