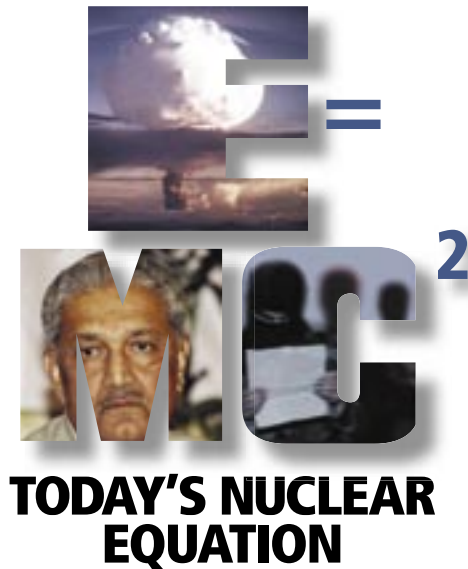


ABOUT THIS ISSUE



Just when we thought that the end of the Cold War also meant the end of nighttime terrors about nuclear annihilation, that evil atomic specter, rising out of a terrible mushroom-shaped cloud, has reappeared. In the calculus of the Cold War, the world lived with the threat of two superpowers unleashing thousands of megatons of destructive power at each other – and thereby threatening the existence of the human race.

While that threat has receded, this edition of *Foreign Policy Agenda* examines the elements in today's nuclear equation. Instead of superpowers facing off, we encounter rogue states, stateless terrorist organizations bent on acquiring the means of mass murder, and black-market networks of renegade suppliers (like Pakistani nuclear scientist A.Q. Khan pictured on the cover) willing to deal in the materials and technical expertise that lead to nuclear weapons. The ensuing nightmare could

materialize quite unexpectedly in any large city, wreaking death and destruction on thousands or tens of thousands of ordinary people going about their daily routine.

Since the end of the Cold War, the main barrier hemming in the nuclear nightmare has been the 35-year-old Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Under its terms, a review conference is held every five years to assess the status of nuclear proliferation dangers and nonproliferation progress. The next month-long review begins on May 2, 2005, in New York City.

This electronic journal, "Today's Nuclear Equation," is published in advance of the conference to offer the U.S. position on critical treaty-related issues as well as a range of expert opinion on the thorniest current issues in nuclear nonproliferation.

The Editors