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Language

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There is an immense literature on strategic thinking about nuclear weapons since the late 1950s, as theories of deterrence and arms control evolved and as missile deployments and strategic rationales altered over time. The titles selected here focus on moral, political and strategic arguments which influenced campaigners. But a well-regarded survey of official nuclear policies is: Mandelbaum, Michael , [The Nuclear Question: The United States and Nuclear Weapons 1946-1976](#) [1] Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, , 1979, pp. 288

[Hibakusha. Survivors Of Hiroshima And Nagasaki](#) [2], Tokyo, K?sei Publishing, 1986, pp. 206

First hand account of 25 hibakushas, survivors of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. They include soldiers, doctors, nurses, students, housewives, small children, Koreans brought to Japan for forced labour, and victims who were yet unborn.

Alfven, Hannes, [Honest language. Semantics of the nuclear debate](#) [3], Waging Peace Series, 1986, pp. 1-13

Physicist Hannes Alfven offers a careful examination of the ways language guides the thinking on nuclear deterrence.

Church of England, Board of Social Responsibility, [The Church and the Bomb: Nuclear Weapons and Christian Conscience. The Report of the Working Party under the Chairmanship of the Bishop of Salisbury](#) [4], London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1982, pp. 190

Influential report which concluded that Just War principles forbid the use of nuclear weapons, and recommended that the UK should renounce its independent nuclear deterrent, followed by a phased withdrawal from other forms of reliance on nuclear weapons including, ultimately, the presence of US air and submarine bases.

Downing, taylor, [1983: Reagan. Andropov and a World on the Brink](#) [5], New York, Little Brown, 2018, pp. 400

Downing demonstrates how on 9 November 1983 the USSR put its nuclear forces on high alert in fear of a pre-emptive US nuclear strike, bringing the world close to nuclear war. (Fortunately the US did not react rapidly.) Whereas in 1962 both sides in the Cuba crisis knew it could trigger nuclear war (and tried frantically to avert it), in 1983 the Reagan Administration had no idea that its renewed Cold War anti-communist rhetoric and military build-up (including 'Star Wars' plans) were seen by Moscow as a rationale and strategy for an attack. A NATO exercise and change in codes were therefore interpreted as a prelude to attack. Downing revealed the main lines of this story in a TV documentary in 2008.

Holroyd, Fred, [Thinking about Nuclear Weapons: Analyses and Prescriptions](#) [6], London, Croom Helm in association with the Open University, 1985, pp. 409

Covers a range of perspectives on nuclear weapons. Includes influential Bundy, McGeorge ; Kennan, George F.; McNamara, Robert S.; Smith, Gerard , [Nuclear weapons and the Atlantic Alliance](#) [7] Foreign Affairs, 1982, pp. 753-766 , arguing that NATO should not use nuclear weapons in response to a conventional attack. Also includes section from the Alternative Defence Commission report on 'The rationale for rejecting nuclear weapons', as well as an extract from Edward P. Thompson's 1980 pamphlet [Protest and Survive](#) [8] (see below).

Schell, Jonathan, [The Abolition](#) [9], London, Picador in association with Jonathan Cape, 1984, pp. 170



Definition of the nuclear predicament and radical proposals for the abolition of all nuclear weapons.

Stein, Walter, [Nuclear Weapons and Christian Conscience](#) [10], [1961], With Foreword by Archbishop Roberts., London, Merlin Press, 1981, pp. 163

Essays by six leading Catholic thinkers on the moral issues raised by nuclear weapons. Had considerable influence in Christian and wider circles. The 1981 edition has a postscript by Anthony Kenny on Counterforce and Countervalue nuclear doctrines.

Thompson, Edward P., [Protest and Survive](#) [8], London, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, 1980, pp. 33

This polemic, whose title was prompted by government civil defence advice 'Protect and Survive', provided considerable impetus to the rejuvenated nuclear disarmament movement of the 1980s, and the launch of the European Nuclear Disarmament (END) campaign in which Thompson played a leading role.

Urquhart, Clara, [A Matter of Life](#) [11], [1963], London, Praeger and Jonathan Cape, 1973, pp. 255

A collection of brief essays or speeches by eminent proponents of peace or nonviolence on dangers facing the world and role of civil disobedience. Contributors include Martin Buber, Danilo Dolci, Erich Fromm, Kenneth Kaunda, Jawaharlal Nehru and Albert Schweitzer. There are essays by founding members of the Committee of 100: Bertrand Russell, Michael Scott and Robert Bolt.

US Bishops, [The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and our Response: The US Bishops' Pastoral Letter on War and Peace in the Nuclear Age](#) [12], London, CTS/SPCK, 1983, pp. 34

Influential Catholic document. Argues that 'a justifiable use of force must be both discriminatory and proportionate' and that 'certain aspects of both US and Soviet strategies fail both tests'. Urged greater consideration of nonviolent means of resistance whilst upholding the right of governments to conscript (with provision for general or selective objection).

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**13:43):**<https://civilresistance.info/section/d-peace-movements-1945/d3-opposition-nuclear-weapons-1990/d3a-theoretical-debates-about>

#### Links

[1] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/1979/nuclear-question-united-states-and-nuclear-weapons-1946-1976> [2] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/1986/hibakusha-survivors-hiroshima-and-nagasaki> [3] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/1986/honest-language-semantics-nuclear-debate> [4] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/1982/church-and-bomb-nuclear-weapons-and-christian-conscience-report-working-party-under> [5] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2018/1983-reagan-andropov-and-world-brink> [6] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/1985/thinking-about-nuclear-weapons-analyses-and-prescriptions> [7] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/1982/nuclear-weapons-and-atlantic-alliance> [8] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/1980/protest-and-survive> [9] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/1984/abolition> [10] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/1981/nuclear-weapons-and-christian-conscience> [11] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/1973/matter-life> [12] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/1983/challenge-peace-gods-promise-and-our-response-us-bishops-pastoral-letter-war-and>

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