

THE SO-CALLED PROLIFERATOR THAT WASN'T: THE STORY OF ARGENTINA'S NUCLEAR POLICY

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For more than three decades, most of the international community, particularly the United States, suspected that the nuclear policy of Argentina aimed at the development of an atomic weapon. Argentina was viewed as a potential proliferator and as a risk to the security of its neighbors and the world. The purpose of this article is to show the true nature of the Argentine nuclear program. For 30 years, Argentina pursued a peaceful program whose objective was to achieve mastery of the complete nuclear fuel cycle, so as to make the country independent of foreign suppliers and influence. Argentina's nuclear program never had the goal of developing a nuclear weapon.

The article begins by stressing certain characteristics of the

Argentinean psychology that help explain why the country adopted certain attitudes regarding nuclear matters that were not followed by the majority of developing countries. A brief description of the different phases of Argentina's nuclear development follows. The article then outlines the changes in nuclear policy that took place in the 1980s and 1990s, showing that they represented a decision to de-emphasize autonomy in order to give reassurance to the international community. The article next discusses the reasons behind this shift, giving special weight to a decision to improve relations with the United States. The article ends by trying to explain why Argentinean nuclear policy retained its peaceful objectives and never included any program dedicated to developing nuclear weapons.

NUCLEAR ENERGY AND THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE ARGENTINEAN PEOPLE

Before describing the nuclear policies pursued by the Argentinean government, it seems proper to address the manner in which the Argentinean people have viewed the steady progress of their country in the mastery of nuclear technology. Although this subject was never a topic of major interest for Argentineans, who were more concerned about questions directly related to daily life, it cannot be denied that the Argentinean people were always proud of the progress made by their country in a technology commonly associated with highly developed nations. Such progress helped reinforce for Argentineans their feelings of being more ad-

vanced than the great majority of Third World states.

The Argentines have long held this opinion of themselves. There was a period of about two-thirds of a century when their development and prosperity were remarkable, when their per capita income was among the highest in the world, and when they were considered to be a potential future United States of the South. From the 1880s onwards, Argentina's rapid modernization helped attract millions of European immigrants, who then furthered the development process. This period of astonishing development began to decline at the onset of the worldwide depression in 1930 and ended with the Second World War.

One of the consequences of this period of prosperity was the existence of a large population that identified with Europe and sought to retain its standards of literacy and culture. Argentina was especially different from most of its neighbors and other developing countries in its level of scientific expertise. For example, Argentinean citizens, educated in their own country, received three Nobel Prizes in the sciences.

The Argentinean people thus found it natural that mastery of the atom and the various technologies resulting from this mastery should be initiated and developed in Argentina. This seemed to be a logical application of what Argentines considered to be the extraordinary intellectual capacities of the Argentinean people. And indeed nuclear development in Argentina produced much better results than in many other countries at a comparable stage of development.

This exceptional situation in Argentina, which ended about 50 years ago, no longer exists today, but socioeconomic data take a considerable time to penetrate into the awareness of the common people. When nuclear energy appeared in Argentina, and during the first decades of its development, average Argentines still viewed their country as highly modernized, which gave rise to general support, perhaps subconsciously, of national activities in the nuclear field.

Accompanying this general satisfaction with indigenous achievements in nuclear technology was a reluctance to permit external control of these developments, and especially to accept comprehensive safeguards. It did not seem right that foreigners should come to check what Argentines had achieved or could achieve in the future by their own efforts. Obviously the question of whether or not Argentina should accept safeguards was never put to the people, but for 40 years the Argentinean government remained confident that its refusal to accept foreign control was always backed by informed public opinion.

Nothing in the preceding paragraphs implies that there was ever a popular or government-led movement in Argentina in favor of the production of nuclear weapons. If there had been any interest, the objective probably would have been to possess the bomb as an object of prestige that confers international power status, or else to match possible nuclear weapons development by any neighboring country, particularly Brazil, whose nuclear development was in many fields similar to Argentina's.

In sum, the nuclear policy maintained by successive Argentinean governments always enjoyed the support, sometimes explicit but generally implicit, of the Argentinean people, who considered national nuclear development to be a confirmation of the country's intellectual and scientific qualities. However, there was never any public demand for the eventual production of nuclear weapons.

NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT IN ARGENTINA

Nuclear activities of a very modest nature began in Argentina soon after the detonation of the first atomic bomb in 1945. These efforts began to be organized and consolidated after the National Commission for Atomic Energy (CNEA) was established in 1950. Apart from some initial complications in the first few years, mainly caused by the interference of an Austrian scientist of doubtful credentials who had gained the confidence of President Perón,² the CNEA was entrusted with the direction and development of nuclear activity in Argentina in the following decades. CNEA was always directly under the control of the office of the Argentinean head of state, and had no competitors, either private or public. It was assigned relatively generous resources and other state bodies always respected its field of action.

For other departments and offices of the Argentinean public administration, the years between 1950 and the early 1980s were marked by instability. Abrupt changes came in quick succession, often resulting in complete changes of direction. But CNEA was the exception. All its

activities showed remarkable continuity. After a brief inaugural president departed, in the next 30 years only three men presided over CNEA, whereas the people responsible for other state institutions turned over frequently. In addition, CNEA was always viewed as a respectable and efficient entity by competent international observers.

It has frequently been argued that the continuity and special treatment of the CNEA were largely due to the fact that its leaders were always officers of the Argentinean armed forces until the consolidation of democracy in 1983, with the three long-term heads all coming from the Navy. With the exception of the first of these CNEA presidents, these naval officers had the appropriate technical credentials, but the question remains whether CNEA could be considered to have been an extension of the Navy. The answer to this question is negative.

During the various decades in which the Argentinean government was headed or strongly influenced by the military, it was perhaps logical that an area of such strategic importance as nuclear activity should have been placed under a sort of informal supervision by a branch of the armed forces. However, the first heads of CNEA were clearly loyal to Perón and did not have a separate military service agenda. The initial (for a short time) president of the CNEA, Colonel Enrique González, was a personal confidant of Perón, who wanted to keep nuclear activities under his direct control. The first naval president of the CNEA, Captain (later Rear-Admiral) Pedro Iraolagoitia, was likewise a personal confidant of Perón. This relationship was the determin-

ing reason for the appointment, given that Iraolagoitia was the president's naval aide-de-camp and lacked any knowledge of nuclear matters, as he was a naval airman. In other words, personal confidence and not the desire to put CNEA under the control of a branch of the armed forces was the origin of the later practice of appointing Navy officers as presidents of the Commission. Moreover, CNEA officials strongly deny that the Navy had any serious influence in the management of the Commission.³

CNEA reported (and still does) directly to the president and not to the Navy, the members of the Directorate of the CNEA were civilian scientists, the vast majority of staff were also civilians, and decisions on policy and activities were made collectively. The Navy had neither the power nor the competence to implement these decisions; nor did it pursue its own nuclear activities on the fringe of the CNEA. In Argentina, in contrast to Brazil for example, the armed forces never had their own nuclear programs. CNEA was always the only institution concerned with nuclear matters in Argentina.

Some people may think that because for many years Argentina had military-headed or military-influenced governments, its nuclear activities must have been of a warlike character. But in Argentina the military takeovers were always due to internal political reasons. The attention of military governments was always directed to internal problems. In the only case that could be considered an exception, the Malvinas/Falklands war, the root of the military action was of an internal nature (political survival), and no

Argentinean nuclear activity was involved.⁴

Some foreign analysts believed that a missile, the Condor II, developed by a faction of the Air Force, was intended to be a nuclear delivery vehicle. This is not the place for extended discussion of this program, but, however it appeared to outsiders, in the author's experiences with Argentinean policymaking there was never a question of an atomic weapon being eventually transported by that missile.

From the 1950s onwards, the CNEA gradually improved its efficiency.⁵ Commission members presented papers to the first International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, held in Geneva in 1955. In 1958, the first experimental reactor constructed in Argentina was put into operation. Although this reactor was based on a US design, reactors built subsequently were of Argentinean design. Argentina ended up building reactors abroad in Peru, Egypt, and Algeria.

In 1965, CNEA began a feasibility study for a nuclear electricity-generating plant. The plant, Atucha I, was built using German technology but with major participation by the Argentine nuclear industry. It began operating in 1974. A second plant with twice the capacity, Embalse, was constructed using Canadian technology. A third plant, Atucha II, is still in the construction phase, but has suffered major delays.

The intention was to finally construct nuclear power plants using purely Argentinean technology. The 1975-1985 Nuclear Plan, which marked the zenith of the Argentinean nuclear process, fore-

saw the construction of three more electricity-generating plants, each with a capacity of 600 MW, during the 1980s. This plan was not completed, however, because of the deteriorating economic state of the country and because of government decisions in favor of other competing options such as the development of hydroelectric power.

CNEA continued with its activities in other fields: by 1983 it had developed uranium enrichment technology and built a heavy water plant. Argentina had finally achieved an objective it had long pursued: mastery of the complete fuel cycle. This showed Argentina could develop its nuclear program autonomously, without dependence on foreign suppliers. Argentina was now in a position to re-examine and perhaps to modify its nuclear policy.

ARGENTINEAN NUCLEAR POLICY, 1950-1985

This section seeks to clarify the motivations behind Argentina's nuclear policy before the changes initiated in the second half of the 1980s. Change began in 1985, when the rapprochement with Brazil was started during the presidency of Raúl Alfonsín, and resulted in a decidedly new policy by 1990, by which time Carlos Menem had become president. But the nature of this change can only be recognized if the goals of the earlier policy are understood. This section will show that Argentina's goals in 1950-1985 were often misunderstood, in part because some of Argentina's policies contributed to suspicions of military intent.

I thus stress again that both before and after 1985 Argentina's program involved peaceful uses of

nuclear energy only and no decision to manufacture atomic weapons. During the earlier period, two somewhat complementary principles guided nuclear policy: *nationalism* and the desire for *independence* in the nuclear field. Argentina wanted to depend as little as possible on foreign suppliers of materials and technology, who would otherwise have been able to hinder or even block nuclear development in Argentina. Hence the main objective of Argentina's nuclear policy was to complete its own nuclear fuel cycle, an objective achieved at the end of 1983 with the successful outcome of research into uranium enrichment technology.

Despite this objective, it is clear that attitudes adopted by successive Argentinean governments gave rise to a lack of trust and to suspicions. Because of several positions adopted by the country, Argentinean nuclear policy was long considered ambiguous at best. These positions included the non-ratification of the Treaty of Tlatelolco (to establish a Latin American nuclear-weapon-free zone), the emphatic refusal to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the refusal to accept full-scope safeguards, and the insistence on the right to carry out nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes.

There are reasonable explanations for each of these positions. For Argentina, with its young but ambitious nuclear program, giving up options and accepting restrictions which often seemed unjustified or discriminatory meant a real sacrifice, not just a meaningless gesture, as was the case for the majority of countries that signed the NPT. Because there were other reasons for

Argentina's refusal to accept the above nonproliferation measures, they should not be interpreted as evidence of desire to build nuclear weapons.

The refusal to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty was based on the discriminatory character of the NPT and on other failings I have discussed elsewhere.⁶ Many countries, not only Argentina, at first viewed the treaty with doubt and distrust. In the course of time and under the pressure of the nuclear powers, especially the United States, the situation began to change, but by then Argentina's position with regard to the NPT had crystallized. Moreover, not only had the treaty's defects not been eradicated, its application also left much to be desired. Even if other countries, often without a nuclear industry, turned a blind eye to this reality, Argentina had a legitimate interest in these matters and could not ignore the NPT's objectionable elements. Once the membership of the NPT became almost universal, however, then Argentina's position had to be re-examined.

The Argentinean government signed but did not until 1994 ratify the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (also known as the Treaty of Tlatelolco). Argentina repeatedly declared its support of the fundamental principles of the treaty and its commitment not to adopt any measures not in keeping with these principles, in conformity with the requirements of Article 18 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties.⁷ However, although theoretically the rules of the Treaty of Tlatelolco affect all countries, in practice they apply almost exclu-

sively to Argentina and Brazil, the only countries in the region to have attained significant progress in nuclear matters. So it is not surprising that these two countries examined the Tlatelolco regulations with special thoroughness.

Brazil ratified Tlatelolco a short time after it signed the treaty, but in practice it was a meaningless gesture. Brazil did not waive the conditions specified in Article 28, which if not waived delay entry into force until all eligible countries have signed, so the treaty did not come into force for Brazil. The treaty only became operative for Brazil when it ratified some amendments to the treaty and waived the above-mentioned conditions. Thus, Brazil only became a member in practice in 1994, some time after Argentina, which ratified the treaty earlier that year.⁸

In fact, Argentina and Brazil always held similar points of view with regard to Tlatelolco. For example, both countries argued that Article 18, which permits peaceful nuclear explosions (PNEs) under certain conditions, should be interpreted according to a literal reading of its text, and not, as the text was interpreted by some nuclear powers, as a restriction on PNEs until the technology required for them could be distinguished from the technology necessary for the manufacture of atomic bombs.⁹ An eloquent sign of the change of Argentina's nuclear position is the 1991 treaty it signed with Brazil renouncing the right to carry out peaceful nuclear explosions until this technology can be differentiated from military-related efforts, thereby accepting the same argument that it had rejected for a quarter of a century.¹⁰

Successive Argentinean governments also sought to make sure that the agreements on safeguards with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), as required by Article 13 of the treaty, corresponded to the rights and obligations included in the Latin American treaty rather than those in the NPT. Just as some countries did before ratifying the NPT, Argentina wanted to negotiate this agreement on safeguards *before* ratifying Tlatelolco, not *afterwards*. The negotiations with the IAEA were drawn-out and difficult, especially as the IAEA sought to get Argentina to accept the same agreement on safeguards that the IAEA applied to NPT parties. For most of the countries involved in Tlatelolco, this point was not important because they were also NPT signatories, but for Argentina the situation was different, as it opposed the NPT. The negotiations remained stalled for several years, which was one reason for Argentina's unwillingness to ratify Tlatelolco.

The problem was finally resolved on December 13, 1991, when a Quadripartite Agreement on Full-Scope Safeguards was signed by Argentina, Brazil, the IAEA, and the ABACC (the Brazilian-Argentine Agreement for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials). This agreement, according to the director general of the IAEA, was perfectly adapted to the requirements of the Treaty of Tlatelolco.¹¹ Argentina's other doubts with regard to Tlatelolco¹² were finally addressed by the proposed amendments put forward in 1992 by Argentina together with Brazil, Chile, and Mexico.

On this occasion the problem of PNEs was not an issue, as previously

Argentina and Brazil had renounced any intention to carry them out in a bilateral treaty dated July 18, 1991. But for many years Argentina was a stubborn defender of its right to carry out PNEs. It is not easy to explain this interest in reserving the right to conduct a peaceful nuclear explosion, when in fact no known project existed, not even a serious idea. Perhaps this defense of its freedom of action to carry out nuclear tests can be regarded as another manifestation of the general policy of opposition to restrictions that would limit Argentina's possibilities of using, in any way it wished, the technology it had itself developed. But it is also likely that Argentina wanted to maintain a way to respond in kind if Brazil ever tested a nuclear device, an issue I address more fully below.

A further cause of international mistrust was Argentina's refusal to accept the so-called full-scope safeguards of the IAEA. This does not mean that Argentina refused to admit any type of safeguard. In fact, it accepted them for all installations planned or constructed with assistance from abroad, whether on a bilateral or international basis. For a long time the most important nuclear facilities in Argentina were all subjected to safeguards. However, given Argentina's concern with the autonomy of its nuclear development program, it refused to authorize foreign inspections that would cover *all* its nuclear activities, whether constructed with foreign assistance or not, including activities that would occur in the future.

The rejection of safeguards may also have had a tactical motivation. As a non-signatory of bilateral or multilateral agreements on nonproliferation, Argentina often had dif-

ficulty obtaining authorization to import technologies or facilities from the government of the supplier country. When such negotiations reached deadlock, Argentinean authorities proposed the following alternative: either the operation would be approved, in which case IAEA safeguards could be applied, or the operation would not be approved, in which case Argentina could develop the required technology itself, probably at a higher cost and with greater effort, but without international safeguards. This gambit was frequently successful. If Argentina had already accepted total safeguards, it would have been impossible to conduct negotiations in this way.¹³

Another argument made against IAEA safeguards on processes and technologies developed independently by Argentina was the desire to preserve the secrecy of technologies of commercial importance—secrets that might no longer be secrets if the installations were inspected by foreign citizens. Argentina is an emergent nuclear supplier, which competes with suppliers from more advanced countries, so Argentina felt deeply worried about the possibility inspections might lead to a loss of industrial secrets.

Despite these concerns, from the very beginning, Argentina followed a policy which (a) required the application of IAEA safeguards to all technologies and equipment exported abroad; (b) required the recipient country to use the transferred material exclusively for peaceful purposes; and (c) prohibited the recipient country from re-exporting transferred material to third countries without the previous consent of the Argentine government. At the

present time Argentina is a full member of (and has served as chair of) the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). Argentina was accepted as an NSG member in 1994, but has applied the export regulations of the so-called London Club since 1992.

In sum, every example of reluctance to accept prohibitions and controls from abroad can be explained without any need to assume Argentina was seeking nuclear weapons. Nonetheless, and without claiming that it excludes the others, there could have been another reason that was never voiced officially. Although the Argentinean government always gave assurance that its nuclear program had exclusively peaceful objectives, it is probable that there was one exception: the possibility that a neighboring country, in particular Brazil, would manufacture a nuclear weapon or, at least, set off a peaceful nuclear explosion. It was always assumed, without needing to be stated, that in such a case, for strategic and national security reasons, Argentina would have no option but to do the same.¹⁴

Although this was never publicly stated as a reason for refusing certain nonproliferation measures, it would further explain the Argentinean reluctance to accept obligations that would legally prevent it from responding in like manner to the actions of its neighbor. At that time neither Brazil nor Chile had ratified the NPT or permitted the Treaty of Tlatelolco to be applied to themselves. This suggests these two countries harbored the same fear regarding a possible Argentine nuclear explosion. Given this overall record of behavior, it can therefore be admitted that the adjectives *ambiguous* and *doubtful*, which were

often used to describe Argentinean nuclear policy, were not arbitrary, nor were they the result of a particular prejudice against Argentina.¹⁵

THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION, 1985-1989

The course pursued so consistently for 35 years began to be modified when President Raúl Alfonsín took over the government at the end of 1983. It was the first really strong civilian government that Argentina had had for several decades. Its immediate predecessor, a military government that lasted seven years, had ended under the cloud of defeat in the South Atlantic war of 1982 and a deteriorating economic situation. The presidential elections were clean, and a clear winner, Alfonsín, emerged. Under these conditions, the new president was able to implement one of his principal ideas on foreign policy, the establishment of a new basis for Argentina's relations with its neighboring countries, especially Brazil and Chile.

At the end of the 1970s, Argentina and Chile had been at the brink of open conflict over the possession of some tiny islands in the extreme south of the continent. Alfonsín reversed that state of affairs. He negotiated and concluded a Treaty of Peace and Friendship with Chile in 1984, obtaining not only parliamentary approval but also popular consent through a referendum.

Argentina's relations with Brazil were not hostile but were characterized by the traditional rivalry and competition existing between the two countries since colonial times. As they are the two largest and most developed South American countries, good relations between them

were not only important for the two countries themselves but for the region as a whole. Yet all efforts to achieve cooperation between these two giants of South America had foundered for various reasons.¹⁶

In 1985, a completely civilian government assumed power in Brazil after decades of governments dominated by the military. Alfonsín found an especially receptive partner in the new Brazilian president, José Sarney. Both leaders undertook joint action aimed at ending once and for all their ancient rivalry and at establishing genuine cooperation in a broad range of areas, particularly in the socioeconomic field. An Act of Argentinean-Brazilian Integration was signed in 1986, and during the subsequent term of Argentinean President Carlos Menem the process of rapprochement culminated in a treaty establishing a Common Market, which came into effect on January 1, 1995.

Argentina and Brazil were competitors in nuclear matters, so it was natural that such an important and politically sensitive subject should be included in their process of rapprochement. The remarkable thing is that such a thorny problem was successfully tackled at the beginning and not at the end of the bilateral process, and that progress was so rapid and so significant. Two favorable circumstances on the Argentine side contributed to this achievement: President Alfonsín's personal ideas, which were infused by a spirit of pacifism,¹⁷ and the views of his Radical Party on the Argentinean nuclear program. Most of the Radical leaders were more lukewarm in their support of nuclear activities than the Peronists. Many of them felt that the priority ac-

corded to the nuclear program was not justified; that Argentina did not need, at least not at that time, nuclear electricity plants; and that in any case the enormous resources traditionally assigned to the nuclear program were excessive, especially at a time of increasing economic hardship, and that they should to some extent be used for other purposes.

Nuclear rapprochement with Brazil represents the foundation on which all later changes in Argentina's international nuclear policy rested.¹⁸ Without first resolving the challenging nuclear relationship with Brazil, no Argentinean government could have taken the measures that transformed the country's nonproliferation posture. The turning point in the nuclear relationship with Brazil was an agreement between the two countries signed in 1980 by the then-president of Brazil, General Figueiredo, and the then-Argentinean president, General Videla. The agreement failed to produce concrete results for several reasons, most of them having nothing to do with nuclear matters, but its value lies in the fact that it marked the end of competition and the beginning of cooperation in nuclear questions.

Five years lapsed before the next step was taken, when Presidents Alfonsín and Sarney signed a Joint Declaration on Common Nuclear Policy. This was followed by a series of actions (state visits, mutual technical assistance, interchange of scientists and students, full two-way flow of information, joint action in the international arena) that resulted in the establishment of a climate of mutual trust and confidence. With these steps, fears on both sides that

their neighbor might be engaged in nuclear weapon projects were definitely laid to rest.

This change of policy had to do only with Brazil, however. Alfonsín did not alter Argentina's position on Tlatelolco or the NPT. This last instrument was criticized again by Alfonsín's foreign minister, Dante Caputo, when he visited the Geneva Conference on Disarmament in 1984.¹⁹

Moreover, even the new relationship with Brazil, although it succeeded in building mutual confidence, did not call for reciprocal control measures, bilateral safeguards, or inspections in the two countries. Each was expected to place its trust in the other's good faith and in the possibility of checking up on suspicious activities by visits, exchanges, etc., none of which were enforceable. It was President Menem, elected in 1989, who continued this process to its logical conclusion by implementing legally binding agreements, which completed the radical change in Argentina's nuclear policy.

THE NEW NUCLEAR POLICY, 1990-1995

Alfonsín was personally so closely associated with the new course that it was feared that the new policy might be sidelined or jettisoned after the end of his term. The same doubts surfaced in Brazil a year later, when President Sarney's tenure ended. But immediately after taking office, Argentina's new president, Carlos Menem, gave signs of following the same policy. His first visit abroad was to Brazil, where he reaffirmed with Sarney the commitment to continue the same policy.

It soon became apparent that the confidence-building measures adopted to that point by the two states were not enough. They could not completely allay all the doubts still prevailing in certain quarters. These doubts were fed by the suspicion of some that the neighboring country could still nurture secret projects that would not be uncovered by the informal agreements then in place.

Perhaps even more important was the fact that the rest of the international community continued to be deeply suspicious of the true nature of the Argentinean and Brazilian nuclear programs. Neither country was bound by any legally enforceable system of control and verification, and, even if a bilateral system of mutual inspection were to be implemented, no third party could check whether the system was effective. Though improbable, the possibility could not be excluded that the two countries would enter into collusion against an imaginary third nation. Thus, even if Argentina and Brazil had created a situation with which they were both satisfied, this was certainly not the case with the rest of the international community. It seemed necessary therefore to implement a fundamental change in Argentina's nuclear policy.

Fortunately, President Menem found a well-disposed partner in his Brazilian counterpart, President Fernando Collor de Mello, who succeeded Sarney. The two countries took several important steps, which can be summarized as follows:

- They signed, in November 1990, a declaration on nuclear policy that pointed the road to the establishment of a system of mutual

control, acceptance of full-scope IAEA safeguards, and full accession to an amended Tlatelolco Treaty.

- On July 18, 1991, they signed a treaty in which they underlined the peaceful nature of the two nuclear programs, renounced the right to conduct PNEs, and established ABACC (Agencia Brasileño-Argentina de Contabilidad y Control de Materiales Nucleares).

- On December 13, 1991, the four parties (Argentina, Brazil, ABACC, and the IAEA) signed a full-scope safeguards agreement, which was very similar to the model applied to NPT parties.²⁰

- At the same time, both countries (along with Chile, the other Latin American country outside the Tlatelolco regime) agreed on a set of amendments to be introduced to the Tlatelolco Treaty, to improve the functioning of its verification system. The amendments were unanimously approved by a conference of the treaty parties in 1992, and ratification by Argentina and Chile took place on January 18, 1994. Brazil ratified the treaty some months later, on May 30, 1994.

These steps came about much sooner than had been expected. For Argentina and Brazil, a commitment not to manufacture nuclear weapons or any other nuclear explosive device was now firmly anchored in the bilateral declarations issued in the second half of the 1980s, the ABACC establishment in 1991, the agreement with the IAEA, and their full membership in Tlatelolco. The sum total of all the obligations contained in the latter three treaties, all ratified by the parliaments of both

countries, represent a *broader and stricter complex of commitments than those resulting from the provisions of the NPT.*

Given this, Brazil felt there was no reason for it to join the NPT, as it had already accepted more stringent obligations than those required by the NPT.²¹ The Argentine government, although it started from the same premise, arrived at the opposite conclusion. Since it was already bound by further reaching commitments, why not also accede to the NPT, which, rightly or wrongly, had come to symbolize a nearly universal policy of nonproliferation of nuclear weapons?

In the years 1985 to 1995, the period in which all these changes occurred, acceptance of the NPT was never declared to be the final step of the process. Among interested observers, this development was not foreseen at all, considering the almost 30 years of continuous Argentinean criticism of this international instrument. The decision of the Argentine government to seek parliamentary approval of the acceptance of the NPT was thus unexpected. President Menem proposed ratification to Congress on July 7, 1994, and first the Senate and then the Chamber of Deputies gave their approval with unusual speed and without any complications. Certainly the opposition parties voted against the proposal, but the major debate and the bitter polemics that had been expected simply did not happen. Argentina deposited the instrument of ratification in Washington on February 10, 1995, and became one of the most active advocates of the indefinite and unconditional extension of the NPT at the

treaty review conference a few months later. The contrast with the attitudes of only a few years earlier could not be more startling.

Analysis of this change shows that Argentina's turnabout is in the last instance reasonable.²² It is true that the treaty did not change, and still has the same defects today as it did in 1968. The Argentine government could have continued to hold fast to its past critical views if it based its arguments solely on ideals and principles. Alas! In practice international policies cannot be based solely on moral or principled positions. Today there are more states subscribing to the NPT than to any other international disarmament agreement. With very few exceptions, NPT members are the same countries that belong to the United Nations, the most representative body of the international community. Countries of any importance on nuclear affairs that are not parties of the NPT can be counted on the fingers of one hand: for the majority of them, national security motivates their policy.

The Republic of Argentina could not invoke such arguments for not joining the NPT. Failure to join would have left a residue of doubt about the sincerity of the new nuclear policy. Despite the important successes that Argentina had achieved in nonproliferation, it would have been named as one of the small number of conspicuous absentees from the international nonproliferation club. Despite its previous position, Brazil had no alternative but to follow the same road taken by Argentina, and it ratified the NPT a few years later.

THE REASONS FOR THE CHANGE IN NUCLEAR POLICY

It could be argued that the title of this section is erroneous, as Argentina's nuclear policy in certain key respects did not undergo a fundamental change. Just as in the past, this policy continues to be one of utilizing atomic energy exclusively for peaceful purposes under the best possible conditions. Statements that the various measures described in the previous section forced the Argentine government to *halt* or *cancel* a nuclear weapon production project are totally wrong. There was no project to cancel.

What did change from 1985 onwards, and especially after 1990, was Argentina's policy with regard to the rest of the world, particularly with regard to its neighbor and rival, Brazil. Argentina decided—and the importance of this decision needs to be emphasized—to give security guarantees in this area by means of legally enforceable international treaties. The change primarily involved a greater willingness to accept international commitments that reduced Argentina's autonomy in the nuclear realm. Whether a policy of keeping options open in case it might become necessary to produce a nuclear weapon ever actually existed or not, it is certain that this option disappeared completely by the beginning of the 1990s.

So there is no doubt that something changed in Argentina. What were the reasons for this change? At least nine factors contributed to this policy shift. Of these, the most important was probably the emergence of a new attitude toward relations with the United States.

The first factor that requires mention, however, is the surprising and rapid changes in the world situation at this time. The existence or non-existence of a "new world order" could be discussed, but what is indisputable is that there were extraordinary contextual changes. The disappearance of one of the two superpowers helped diminish the importance of nuclear weapons, whose utilization today in a conflict seems almost impossible.

A second, parallel development was an increase in the number of binding agreements aimed at preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and in the number of states ratifying them. Treaties negotiated in the 1980s and 1990s established three new nuclear-weapon-free zones and prohibited chemical weapons. Even more importantly, the NPT, which Argentina had formerly been able to ignore without incurring major disadvantages, gradually developed into an almost universal agreement and thus became quasi-obligatory for all countries. Staying aloof from the NPT became increasingly difficult. Certainly the change in Argentinean nuclear policy did not consist only of its accession to the NPT, but there is no doubt that the growing consolidation of this treaty was a clear indication that accepting legally binding commitments in the field of nonproliferation, even if they were not connected to the NPT, had ceased to be a voluntary *option* and had become a politically inescapable *obligation*.

A third key factor was improved relations with the United States. After 100 years of more or less difficult, or at least never very cordial, relations with the United States,

President Menem's government decided to commit itself wholeheartedly to the West and to develop a foreign policy of alignment with the United States. As nonproliferation was one of the pillars of US international policy, it would have been counter-productive for the Argentinean government to have maintained a markedly different position on this issue.²³

In addition, the United States and its allies had long been carrying out a campaign to pressure successive Argentinean governments to change their nuclear policy. Resisting this pressure in the political and technological fields was expensive for Argentina, but not impossible. With the passage of time, Argentina became more and more isolated in the world nuclear system, and the price to be paid for this attitude became more and more onerous. The costs imposed by international pressures were thus a fourth factor, but given the other forces at work the influence of these external pressures on the change in the Argentinean attitude should not be over-estimated.

A fifth, related factor was the increasing difficulty in obtaining foreign technology. New restrictions imposed by the Nuclear Suppliers Group made themselves felt in Argentina. The Argentinean authorities expected that changing their attitude to international commitments on nonproliferation would facilitate or even precipitate considerable international assistance in this area. In retrospect, this view seems overly optimistic. Moreover, the run-down state of the Argentinean nuclear industry has restricted the need for international assistance in technology and supplies.

The new status of Argentinean nuclear activities was probably a sixth factor, but certainly not a decisive one, in Argentina's attitude change. Since 1950, the National Commission for Atomic Energy, the center of all nuclear activity in the country, had been supported constantly and amply—some said excessively—with financial and human resources. The economic and financial situation of the country was deteriorating, however, and a time arrived when it was no longer possible to continue to grant such preferential treatment to nuclear activities.

In addition, Argentina's rivalry with Brazil had obliged each country to make efforts in the nuclear field which were perhaps unnecessary, purely for the sake of maintaining parity. Ending this race was a seventh factor that contributed to policy change, by making it possible to avoid having to invest money in non-essential activities. This is not to say that the rapprochement with Brazil was due solely or even primarily to economic reasons. Rather, the process was part of an all-embracing philosophy that included many matters other than just nuclear energy. The nuclear realm was just one part of a larger effort to place relations between the two countries on a new footing.

The establishment of a policy of full cooperation in nuclear affairs was facilitated by the fact that Brazil and Argentina had similar or even identical positions in international fora, despite the competitive spirit that characterized the two countries' nuclear programs. Mutual support in international bodies was the rule and not the exception. With

increasing frequency, a single delegate spoke to a conference in the name of the two.

The personal influence of Presidents Alfonsín and Menem was an eighth important factor in Argentina's change of attitude to nuclear affairs. Both took a direct interest in the various activities that were developing, and they both formulated the general guidelines for this process. Although Alfonsín's attention centered on the rapprochement with Brazil, whereas Menem concentrated on reaching binding bilateral and multilateral agreements, in both cases the leadership of the president was particularly effective. Further, Alfonsín and Menem both headed especially solid and stable governments, in stark contrast to the situation of civilian governments in preceding years.

A ninth factor that smoothed the process was the decision to assign the main responsibility to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, rather than to the nuclear authorities or a military-dominated body, like a Council of National Defense. Perhaps because their people were better informed about the international climate on the issue of nonproliferation, and consequently more disposed to take measures that, seen from a national point of view, were difficult to take, the initiative and the vigor with which the foreign office conducted operations must be regarded as a major factor in the final success of this process.

Obviously not all actions were easy to take. Other state institutions had to be consulted. In the case of Argentina, despite some inevitable differences in points of view, this process was relatively simple. This

may be because the two institutions that had to be consulted, the CNEA and the armed forces, were in a much weaker state than in the past. CNEA no longer had the budget and authority of earlier years, and the armed forces, whose support was absolutely necessary since questions of defense and national security were often involved, had become more willing to accept civilian rule after the unfavorable experiences of the preceding decades.

Trying to assess the relative weight of these different reasons for the change of Argentine policy at the beginning of the 1990s, I believe the most important factor was the decision of President Menem to strongly align the Argentinean government to the United States. Regarding nonproliferation, not to adopt policies particularly promoted by the United States would after that have been unthinkable. This alignment manifested itself, for example, in Argentina sending a ship (it was the only Latin American state to do so) to cooperate in the Gulf War; in Argentina's support of the Haiti operation; and in changing votes at the United Nations General Assembly to put Argentina more in conformity with US positions. Not for nothing was Argentina selected as a non-member ally of NATO.

WHY ARGENTINA DID NOT NEED NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Because Argentina for several decades rejected legally binding international nonproliferation commitments, a question naturally arises: why did Argentina, which possessed the necessary technology to develop nuclear weapons, choose not to do so? Mainstream analyses emphasize two reasons why a coun-

try might desire to manufacture nuclear weapons: *national security* and *prestige*. If we analyze the strategic situation of Argentina and the surrounding region, we can easily arrive at the conclusion that the country had no need for nuclear weapons for its defense and security, assuming for the moment that the possession of those weapons enhances, rather than diminishes, national security.²⁴

South America is an extraordinarily peaceful continent, in comparison with other parts of the world. Almost all the current disputes between South American countries concern border questions, an inheritance from the colonial era when borders were frequently not clearly demarcated. These disputes have for the most part been resolved peacefully. The remaining cases have resulted in minor hostilities from time to time, but no major wars have broken out in South America for more than 60 years.

In the past Argentina had a series of border disputes with Chile, which have now all been resolved peacefully. Waging war on this account would have been irrational, but even if war had ensued, the use of nuclear weapons would have been not only irrational but unimaginable. The stakes could not possibly justify such a use, and geographic proximity would have meant that the country using nuclear weapons would suffer harm itself as well.

In the case of Brazil, border conflicts in the last century were resolved by arbitration. The latent rivalry during the 20th century never developed into an armed conflict, but was rather a contest for the supposed leadership of South

America, never clearly defined and never excluding a good relationship in other areas or indeed cordial bilateral relations during some periods. There was a dispute over the utilization of the waters of the Paraná River in the 1970s, resolved by an agreement signed in 1979, but this would certainly never have led to war. The resolution of this dispute did, however, facilitate the first step in the bilateral nuclear relationship, taken in 1980.

Even if we admit for argument's sake the possibility of a major conflict erupting between Argentina and one of its neighbors, two circumstances are evident:

- In today's world, with the United Nations and the Organization of American States, this hypothetical armed conflict could not realistically last longer than two or three days, during which time the parties would doubtless act with one eye firmly on the two organizations charged with maintaining international peace and security. They would not want to take steps that would make them appear as the aggressor or as potentially willing to be the first state to use nuclear weapons since 1945.
- Whatever the nature of this imaginary conflict, the use of nuclear weapons would be simple madness. The consequences of using these weapons would be politically and physically so serious that the final result would be a disaster for the side using them.

The old argument for the deterrent power of nuclear weapons also does not carry any weight in South America. The use of nuclear weapons in South America would be so crazy that the threat to use them would not have any credibility, un-

less we are talking of the actions of totalitarian, irrational governments. In practice, the security of any state that sought to acquire nuclear weapons would be seriously weakened instead of strengthened. The emergence of a new nuclear power, and the imbalance this would create in regional and world power structures, would inevitably be met with sanctions and other forms of pressure by the major powers, perhaps even including the use of force. It would be practically suicidal for a Latin American country to take a nuclear path to war.

These considerations are valid even in the case of the 1982 conflict in the South Atlantic, which caused some Argentine citizens, for the only time in Argentinean history, to want the country to possess nuclear weapons. In this conflict a developing country confronted a nuclear power. It was believed that the British naval forces had nuclear weapons on board, even if this was because they had not had time to remove them. Even accepting that their possible use was "unthinkable," as British delegates claimed at various international fora, the fear that their mere presence inspired put the Argentinean forces at a disadvantage. More than one Argentinean thus considered that the outcome could have been different, or at least the defeat would not have been so humiliating, if his country had possessed nuclear weapons, even without using them.

However, the case of the South Atlantic conflict does not invalidate the points of view expressed previously. If Argentina had possessed nuclear weapons, the invasion of the Malvinas (Falklands) in 1982 would not have been less risky or

senseless, no matter how justified Argentina's 150-year-old claim of sovereignty. Brandishing nuclear weapons in the face of an enemy that possessed them in much greater number and had much more efficient and numerous means of delivery would have been irrational, and the outcome of the conflict would not have been different.

In terms of national security motivations, therefore, we must conclude that the Argentinean government acted sensibly in not launching a program for developing nuclear weapons. Even if, at the beginning of the nuclear program, it might have considered this option, it soon abandoned these thoughts, no doubt inspired by its understanding of the best interest of the country.

Some of the considerations already mentioned are also applicable to the manufacture of nuclear weapons for reasons of *prestige*. Many countries believe that the possession of nuclear weapons brings with it connotations of prestige or, and this is essentially similar, an increase of the status of a country in the international community. Perhaps it is a coincidence, but it is also a fact that the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, with veto rights, are the five powers recognized by the NPT as possessing nuclear weapons.

From this point of view it can at least be imagined that a country, even if it does not require nuclear weapons to ensure its security, could consider the manufacture of such weapons a means of projecting a stronger presence internationally. In this view, it is not absurd that some Brazilians could have believed that the likelihood of their country ob-

taining a permanent seat on the Security Council—an objective which it is at present striving to achieve—could be measurably increased by Brazil having carried out a nuclear explosion, even if only once. In any case that country's aspirations to be regarded as a great power, as it considers its due given its size, population, and strength, would be reinforced. That this reasoning is nonetheless wrong is shown by the fact that India, with good chances of having been selected as a permanent member for Asia, has seen those chances greatly diminished by its recent nuclear weapons tests.

In any case it cannot be doubted that the fear of such an act by Brazil was present in the minds of interested Argentinean observers, and may have been one reason for their unwillingness to accept international control. The repercussions of a Brazilian atomic explosion in Argentina would have been extraordinarily negative, and the government would have been practically obliged to follow suit. It is not logical to suppose that in such a situation the Argentinean authorities would have been content to accept restrictions, especially if their neighbor was not subject to any.²⁵

Perhaps the Brazilians had similar feelings regarding Argentina, which would somewhat explain the similarity of the two countries' positions in international fora. The fears would have been mutual, and the policies coherent. The reciprocal lack of trust could have continued indefinitely, resulting in spiraling costs. Fortunately common sense prevailed, and through bilateral and multilateral treaties the two countries overcame their mutual distrust. The fear of their neighbor

detonating a nuclear explosion has disappeared.

Chile has been mentioned as the other country with which Argentina's relations were sometimes stormy. However, Argentina had no fears of Chile's nuclear potential. Its nuclear industry was not very well developed, and its refusal to join the NPT or to allow Tlatelolco to be applied to itself was tied to the Argentinean position. When Argentina changed that position, Chile changed too.

Thus, although prestige considerations may have had some influence on Argentinean policy, it was only indirect. As long as Argentina feared that Brazil might explode a nuclear device for prestige reasons, it was unwilling to foreclose its own options. For itself, Argentina had neither security nor prestige motivations to seek the bomb.

To return to the question raised at the start of this section: why were nuclear weapons not developed when it was legally possible to do so? I believe the underlying reason is that Argentina's orientation is peaceful, so that it did not appear useful or necessary to possess nuclear weapons. Argentina has not fought a war in the last 130 years, with the exception of the 1982 conflict. It does not have territorial ambitions. The Malvinas (Falklands) and other islands in the South Atlantic are not regarded as new territory to be conquered, but as territory that was taken from Argentina by force, at the height of the European colonial era, and whose restitution Argentina has been demanding for over 150 years. Argentina has no major problems at present with neighboring countries, and any which may occur in the fu-

ture will certainly be resolved peacefully, as they were in the past. What point would there be then in developing nuclear weapons, except to gratify an irrational nationalism?

Thus, when circumstances were favorable for giving the international community sureties of good faith, Argentina did not have to abandon any nuclear weapon program, whether publicized or secret. There was no secret program to cancel. Argentina gave ample sureties because the international scene was changing, because its objectives of mastering nuclear technology had been achieved, and because the principal reasons for its distrust had ceased to exist. Argentina was always a careful nuclear supplier and, at present, is a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, whose guidelines it follows for all nuclear and armaments exports.²⁶

In other words, what must be emphasized is that the long-term behavior of Argentina in nuclear matters was neither erratic nor dangerous. Argentina never had any ambition to wage nuclear war, nor did Argentina judge it opportune or necessary to possess nuclear weapons. No political party ever proposed developing an atomic bomb. Argentina always kept to the path of peaceful utilization of nuclear energy. The legally binding obligations Argentina entered into in the 1990s only formalized and made mandatory Argentina's already existing, long-term nuclear policy.

¹ The views expressed in this article are totally personal and unofficial. They are based for the most part on contacts maintained with officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and of the Argentinean National Commission for Atomic Energy (CNEA-Comisión Nacional de Energía Atómica) in the course of the approximately 20 years in which the author was involved directly or indirectly with nuclear affairs.

² These initial years are described in detail in Mario Mariscotti, *El secreto atómico de Huelmo-Crónica del origen de la energía atómica en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana-Planeta, 1987).

³ Interviews by the author. Those interviewed insist that only once did the Navy show any interest in a specific atomic development, the design of a small reactor which could have been used in an atomic submarine, and this project was never completed.

⁴ A view of the nuclear side of the 1982 war can be found in Julio Carasales, "¿Armas atómicas en Malvinas?", *Todo es historia* (Buenos Aires), No. 357 (April 1997), pp. 8-27.

⁵ Descriptions of the progress of the Argentinean atomic industry can be found in Jorge A. Sabato, "Energía atómica en Argentina," *Estudios internacionales* 29 (October-December 1968); Carlos Castro Madero, "La energía nuclear en la República Argentina," *Revista de la Escuela de Defensa Nacional* 19 (March 1978); and Carlos Castro Madero and Esteban Takacs, *Política nuclear argentina* (Buenos Aires: Editorial El Ateneo, 1991). A comprehensive report on the different facets of the Argentinean nuclear program is to be found in Carlos Aga, ed., *El desarrollo nuclear argentino* (Buenos Aires: Consejo para el Proyecto Argentino, 1985), a publication that includes papers delivered at a 1984 seminar organized by the Consejo para el Proyecto Argentino in Buenos Aires. The chapter entitled "Autonomía nacional y desarrollo nuclear" (National autonomy and nuclear development) is particularly interesting: it includes the transcription of a debate in which Rear-Admirals Oscar Quihillalt and Carlos Castro Madero, the last two naval presidents of CNEA, played a considerable part.

⁶ For the Argentine position regarding the NPT, see Julio C. Carasales, *El desarme de los desarmados—Argentina and the Non-Proliferation Treaty* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Pleamar, 1987).

⁷ The clearest description of this position was given by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Argentina in the first Special Session of the UN General Assembly, when he said, "In contrast to the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Treaty of Tlatelolco does not recognize a category of privileged countries. All the brother countries of Latin America are placed on a strictly equal footing when assuming the obligations stipulated by this treaty. By means of the creation of a zone free of atomic weapons, the treaty has made a real contribution to nuclear disarmament while giving due protection to the development of atomic power for peaceful purposes."

Statement by Vice-Admiral Oscar Montes, UN General Assembly, 5th plenary meeting, May 26, 1978.

⁸ Even the early ratification by Brazil was the result of the decision of a particular government, which did not last. Conversations of the author with Brazilian diplomats brought him to the conclusion that Brazil would not have ratified the treaty if it had been negotiated ten years later, and would have adopted the same position as Argentina. In any case, the author, as a participant in the negotiations on Tlatelolco in the mid-1960s, can confirm that during these negotiations the Argentinean and Brazilian delegations kept in close touch with one another and that their positions were always similar if not identical. The Brazilian political decision to ratify was taken in the highest circles.

⁹ The text of these interpretations is reproduced in *Situation of the multilateral agreements on the regulation of armaments and disarmament* (New York: United Nations, 1987).

¹⁰ For the story of Argentina's position regarding peaceful nuclear explosions, see Julio C. Carasales, "Las explosiones nucleares pacíficas y la actitud argentina," *Boletín del Centro Naval* (Buenos Aires), No. 787 (July-September 1997).

¹¹ Declaration of Director General Hans Blix to the Board of Governors of the IAEA on December 8, 1991.

¹² The reservations are detailed in Julio C. Carasales, "The future of Tlatelolco twenty years after its signature," *Disarmament* 11 (Winter 1987-1988), pp. 74-85.

¹³ This explanation was offered in interviews by the author with leading officials of the CNEA. See also Madero-Takacs, *Política nuclear argentina*, p. 49. This gambit never being publicly related, it does not seem possible to pinpoint particular operations in which it worked.

¹⁴ This subject was dealt with on several occasions by a leading Argentinean strategic analyst, General Juan E. Guglielmelli. In the influential journal which he founded and edited, *Estrategia*, he published several articles on this topic: "Argentina, Brazil y la bomba atómica" (September-October 1974), pp. 1-15; "¿Y si Brasil fabrica la bomba atómica?" (May-August 1975), pp. 5-15; and "¿Fabrica el Brasil una bomba atómica?" (January-March 1982), pp. 5-11.

¹⁵ North American commentators tended to assume that each and every action taken within the framework of the Argentinean nuclear program was motivated by the ultimate goal of producing nuclear weapons. An example of this view is an otherwise excellent book by Mitchell Reiss, *Bridled Ambitions* (Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1995), pp. 47-48.

¹⁶ General Guglielmelli's visionary words, written in 1974, became a reality in the 1980s. In "Argentina, Brasil y la bomba atómica," he emphasized "the convenience of negotiating an agreement which would make precautions superfluous and allay fears and suspicions and which would, moreover, open the way for mutual cooperation of benefit to both countries" (pp. 1-2). Guglielmelli not only proposed negotiating an

agreement of trust and cooperation in the nuclear field with Brazil, but also recommended that this agreement should incorporate wider areas of interest, that negotiations should be "on a package of pending subjects which affect Argentinean-Brazilian relations today, and whose solution demands negotiations on all subjects if we genuinely aspire to trustworthy, concrete and complete understanding." The prophetic ideas of General Guglielmelli became a reality ten years later.

¹⁷ An example of this spirit was Alfonsín's participation in the Five Continents Peace Initiative during the 1980s. As a minor example of the same ideology, a personal friend of President Alfonsín told this author that Alfonsín had admitted that his conscience had bothered him when he had to authorize export sales of Argentine armaments.

¹⁸ Julio Carasales, "Goals of Argentine-Brazilian Nuclear Cooperation," in Paul Leventhal and Sharon Tanzer, eds., *Averting a Latin American Nuclear Arms Race* (Washington: Macmillan, 1992), pp.47-62; Julio Carasales, "The Argentine-Brazilian Nuclear Rapprochement," *The Nonproliferation Review* 2 (Spring-Summer 1995), pp. 39-48; and Julio Carasales, *De rivales a socios—El proceso de cooperación nuclear entre Argentina y Brasil* (Buenos Aires: Grupo Editor Latinoamericano, 1997). See also John Redick, Julio Carasales, and Paulo Wrobel, "Nuclear Rapprochement: Argentina, Brazil and the Nonproliferation Regime," *The Washington Quarterly* 18 (Winter 1995), pp.107-122; and John Redick, *Nuclear Illusions: Argentina and Brazil*, Occasional Paper 25 (Washington: The Henry L. Stimson Center, December 1995).

¹⁹ Conference on Disarmament, Plenary Session 245, February 28, 1984 (CD/PV. 245).

²⁰ The Quatipartite Agreement is analyzed in John R. Redick, *Argentina and Brazil's New Arrangements for Mutual Inspections and IAEA Safeguards* (Washington: Nuclear Control Institute, February 1992).

²¹ Paper presented by Antonio Guerreiro, a senior official in the Brazilian Foreign Office, at a seminar on "Issues for Latin America and the Caribbean at the 1995 NPT Conference," organized by the Programme for Promoting Nuclear Nonproliferation, in Caracas, Venezuela, May 3-6, 1994.

²² The motives for the change in Argentina's policy towards the NPT are discussed in two newspaper articles: Enrique de la Torre "Del ostracismo al consenso internacional," *El Cronista*, July 20, 1995, and Julio Carasales "La no proliferación y el TNP," *La Prensa*, March 3, 1995. At greater length, the issue is dealt with in Julio Carasales, "A Surprising About Face: Argentina and the NPT," *Security Dialogue* (September 1996).

²³ This quotation from Foreign Minister Guido di Tella is symptomatic of the change in Argentinean policy towards the United States: "Argentina must maintain excellent relations with the principal world power, which is also the principal power in our hemisphere, the principal creditor, the principal investor, etc. We are do-

ing what Europe is doing, what Felipe González did when he began by joining NATO." Interview in *Clarín*, March 3, 1996.

²⁴ This subject is well developed in Vicente Espeche Gil, "La Argentina no tiene, no quiere ni necesita armas nucleares," *Criterio* (Buenos Aires), May 24, 1984, pp. 227-231.

²⁵ A poll conducted in May 1996, at the request of this author, by the Centro de Estudios para la Nueva Mayoría consulted more than 1,000 people in the Federal District and Greater Buenos Aires about whether Argentina should have retained the option to develop nuclear weapons. A surprising 38 percent answered that Argentina should have kept its freedom of action; 40 percent agreed with the government decision to foreclose the nuclear option; and 9 percent thought that Argentina should have actually produced nuclear weapons. It should be noted that the position of keeping the nuclear option open received greater support among the young people and the most educated segment of those polled. The author thinks, however, that this single poll gives an inaccurate impression of the feelings of the Argentinean people.

²⁶ The exporting activities of Argentina in the nuclear field are discussed in Julio Carasales and Roberto Ornstein, eds., *La cooperación internacional de la Argentina en el campo nuclear* (Buenos Aires: Consejo Argentino para las Relaciones Internacionales, 1998).