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## Contents

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Introduction by Thomas Maddux, California State University, Northridge .....	2
Review by Joshua Botts, Office of the Historian, Department of State.....	6
Review by Jerald A. Combs, Professor of History Emeritus, San Francisco State University	10
Review by Sarah-Jane Corke, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia .....	15
Review by Alonzo L. Hamby, Ohio University .....	18
Response by Nicholas Thompson, <i>The New Yorker</i> .....	22

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Introduction by Thomas Maddux, California State University, Northridge

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Nicholas Thompson has taken an imaginative approach to the Cold War by presenting a comparative study of the public careers of Paul Nitze and George Kennan, two significant U.S. officials who participated in the Cold War from its post-WWII origins to its surprising conclusion. With access to the records of his grandfather, Nitze, and the diaries of Kennan, Thompson is able to develop their evolving relationship and the impact of their respective temperament, experience, and ambition on their policy views and involvement in the Cold War.

The book's title, *The Hawk and the Dove*, suggests a sharp divergence between Nitze and Kennan, but the reviewers favorably note that Thompson explores both the strengths they displayed in working together in the early Cold War years and the differences that became increasingly evident in the 1970s and 1980s. Jerald Combs, for example, notes the successful cooperation of Nitze and Kennan in the development of containment, particularly the Marshall Plan, their similar views on keeping Germany together, their agreement on intervention in Korea and preference to keep the conflict limited by stopping at the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel in 1950. Joshua Botts also points out shared reservations about Vietnam in the 1960s, although Kennan went public with his criticism whereas Nitze kept his reservations within closed doors as he served in Robert McNamara's Pentagon and, like many officials, failed to make a strong stance in person when questioned by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1965. (pp. 201-202).

The emerging differences between Nitze and Kennan receive more assessment by Thompson, although the reviewers would have welcomed more analysis in this area. Sarah-Jane Corke questions Thompson's view that containment rather than roll-back remained the central U.S. strategy and suggests that Thompson fails to evaluate Nitze's views on covert operations and roll-back. Alonzo Hamby and Joshua Botts favorably note Thompson's emphasis on the different views that Kennan and Nitze held about what the U.S. could accomplish in international relations with the latter being far more optimistic throughout their careers and the former becoming more pessimistic after leaving the State Department and brief service as Ambassador to the Soviet Union in 1952 and Ambassador to Yugoslavia in 1961-62. Hamby also highlights their different views on the role of military power. Despite a lack of precision in his "Article X" on containment and willingness to support force in Korea and covert political operations, Kennan clearly favored diplomacy and non-military means to address Cold War issues. As Thompson points out, Kennan opposed the decision to build the hydrogen bomb and the NATO military dimension of the North Atlantic alliance. Nitze, on the other hand, was more comfortable with military power and developed a correlation of forces concept in which he believed that good things would move in the U.S.'s favor if it maintained a favorable balance of power vis-à-vis the Soviet Union and its allies. As Kennan's successor as head of the Policy Planning Staff in the State Department, Nitze directed the preparation of

NSC-68 which provided the rationale for a major buildup of U.S. nuclear and conventional forces around the globe and transformed Kennan's containment strategy.

Thompson also illustrates that underlying Nitze and Kennan's growing disagreements was a fundamental difference on how to evaluate the challenges posed by the Soviet Union. As the reviewers note, Nitze put the highest importance on available means. When the Soviet Union began to catch up with the U.S. in number of intercontinental missiles and obtain an advantage in total throw weight, i.e., the "heft of the weaponry each missile could carry over a particular range," (p. 232), Nitze, as a participant in the SALT negotiations, became increasingly concerned about an unfavorable correlation of forces, worried about a Soviet first strike with missiles, and turned against détente, Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger, and Jimmy Carter. In part a personal response to perceived mistreatment by Nixon and Kissinger and a failure to connect with Carter, Nitze became a founder of the Committee on Public Danger in 1976 and active public critic of SALT II. Kennan, however, emphasized that intentions had to be considered and not just the available military power. Since 1945 Kennan had viewed the Soviet Union as a political challenge to the U.S. and not a military threat. Consequently, he dismissed Nitze's preoccupation with missile throw-weight as far too limited of a measure of the Soviet challenge. Furthermore, Kennan worried about the U.S. ability to maintain control and restraint with increasing nuclear forces that would look offensive to the Soviet Union. Thompson points out that by the late 1970s Nitze and Kennan, as leaders of rival organizations, the Committee on Public Danger and the American Committee on East-West Accord, focused on reducing tensions among the superpowers, engaged in a public campaign against each other on talk shows, before Congress, and in the press. (pp. 270-272)<sup>1</sup>

Most of the reviewers note that Thompson does not take sides on Nitze and Kennan and is not uncritical of either of them. Botts notes that Thompson discusses Kennan's contradictions, his involvement in FBI surveillance of Americans in the 1960s, and his growing criticism of U.S. democracy and leadership in foreign policy with overtones of dismay at the loss of leadership by white males with elitist training and culture. (pp. 40-41, 222, 237-239) Combs detects a pattern in Nitze's behavior from Thompson's study: when Nitze was out of power he lacked restraint and engaged in several disreputable attacks on officials and friends such as Paul Warnke whom Carter picked to lead SALT negotiations rather than Nitze; when in a position of influence, such as Ronald Reagan's arms control negotiator, Nitze attempted unsuccessfully to negotiate a compromise agreement on intermediate range missiles. In conclusion, Thompson gives both men credit for their contributions to the successful end to the Cold War and stresses that they complemented each other with Kennan playing a "crucial role, both in framing the conflict and then serving as the nation's conscience as those horrifying weapons hypnotized the superpowers more and more. Kennan, the outsider, accurately foresaw how the Cold War would play out. Nitze, the insider helped bring about the Cold War's

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<sup>1</sup> Kennan's views appear in *The Cloud of Danger* (1977).

end by behaving as if Kennan's prophecy would never come true." (p. 313) Corke, however, found a "gendered binary where Nitze appears the masculine ideal and Kennan feminine," and Corke offers a number of contrasts in the depictions of the two strategists. (2-3)

The reviewers do raise some reservations about Thompson's study particularly with respect to the Cold War context and specific issues. Combs suggests that the Cold War context "is often rendered so briefly and with such lack of nuance that a non-expert would have difficulty judging the wisdom or foolishness of the policies advocated by" Nitze and Kennan. (1) Where the two advisers were in agreement on policy in the early Cold War, Combs points to a lack of analysis on the Soviet perspective and concerns. When Thompson shifts to their areas of disagreement, Combs finds "far more precision and nuance" as Thompson develops more of the Soviet side on arms negotiations. Botts goes further than Combs in concluding that throughout the study Thompson failed to adequately explain "why Soviet leaders did what they did or how American policy influenced their choices" which makes it difficult to judge the debate between Kennan and Nitze: "Did Soviet leaders see their arms buildup as a way to open a 'window of vulnerability' for the United States that would break the will of the free world as Nitze and his allies in the Committee for the Present Danger argued in the late 1970s? Or did they, as Kennan alleged, invest heavily in nuclear weapons because of deeply-held anxieties about the vulnerabilities of their own society and their concerns about the West's sophisticated nuclear arsenal and the first-use doctrine embedded in NATO war plans?" (3) Thompson does refer to post-1990s studies and interviews of Soviet military planners and strategists that tend to provide more support for Kennan's perspective than that of Nitze. (pp. 261-262)

Since Kennan produced a number of historical works and foreign policy prescriptions, Hamby would have welcomed more attention to these studies, although this would necessarily take some attention away from the close comparison of Kennan with Nitze, who was far more actively engaged in policy making and produced few studies besides a memoir. Hamby notes Kennan's reputation as a realist and the desirability of placing him in the context of foreign policy realism and his contemporaries such as Hans J. Morgenthau and Reinhold Niebuhr. Kennan's many studies dealing with Russia, Soviet-American relations, and his personal experiences in Moscow in the 1930s would have strengthened our understanding on his assumptions about the Soviet challenge and how to deal with Moscow.

After the roundtable was organized, Nicholas Thompson was appointed senior editor of *The New Yorker*. Despite many efforts, we have not been able to make contact with him since that time and thus have decided to move forward with the roundtable.

### **Participants:**

**Joshua Botts** earned his Ph.D. in history from the University of Virginia in 2009. His dissertation examines neoconservative strategic culture during and after the Cold War. He also wrote “Nothing to Seek and ... Nothing to Defend’: George F. Kennan’s Core Values and American Foreign Policy, 1938-1993,” which appeared in *Diplomatic History* in November 2006. He is currently a historian at the U.S. Department of State.

**Jerald A. Combs** (Ph.D. UCLA 1964) is Professor of History Emeritus at San Francisco State University where he retired after serving nine years as chair of the History Department and two years as Dean of Undergraduate Studies. He is the author of *The Jay Treaty: Political Battleground of the Founding Fathers* (University of California Press, 1970); *American Diplomatic History: Two Centuries of Changing Interpretations* (University of California Press, 1983); and *The History of American Foreign Policy* (3d ed., M.E. Sharpe, 2008). His latest publication is “A Missed Chance for Peace? Opportunities for Détente in Europe,” in *The Cold War after Stalin’s Death: A Missed Opportunity for Peace?* edited by Klaus Larres and Kenneth Osgood (Rowman and Littlefield, 2006).

**Sarah-Jane Corke** is an assistant professor at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. She graduated with a Ph.D. from the University of New Brunswick in 2000. Her first book is on American Covert Operations during the Truman Administration. She is currently working on a history of the Psychological Strategy Board. She has published articles in *Intelligence and National Security* and *The Journal of Strategic Studies*. Her *U.S. Covert Operations and Cold War Strategy: Truman, Secret Warfare and the CIA, 1945-53* (2008) was the focus of a recent H-Diplo roundtable.

**Alonzo L. Hamby** is Distinguished Professor of History at Ohio University. He is the author of five books: *Beyond the New Deal: Harry S. Truman and American Liberalism* (Columbia University Press, 1973), *The Imperial Years: The United States since 1939* (Weybright & Talley, 1976), *Liberalism and Its Challengers* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Oxford University Press, 1992), *Man of the People: A Life of Harry S. Truman* (Oxford University Press, 1995), and *For the Survival of Democracy: Franklin Roosevelt and the World Crisis of the 1930s* (Free Press, 2005), as well as numerous articles and reviews.

Review by Joshua Botts, Office of the Historian, Department of State

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The views expressed here are my own and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of State or the U.S. Government.

“By the late 1970s,” Nicholas Thompson remarks near the end of *The Hawk and the Dove*, “[George] Kennan and [Paul] Nitze had become the diplomatic equivalents of Larry Bird and Magic Johnson: competing icons who admired each other and would be forever linked” (270). He might have added that, for one of them to win, the other had to lose. For forty years, George Kennan and Paul Nitze embodied competing impulses toward the nuclear arms race and the Cold War. Though the two men shared many of the same priorities at the dawn of the Cold War, by the end of the Truman administration they had parted ways on many of the central questions that American policymakers faced during the next forty years. Their most consequential disagreement focused upon whether American policy should be guided by increasingly dire estimates of Soviet capabilities or nuanced, sober assessments of Soviet intentions. Kennan argued that the Soviet Union was weak and that its expansionist impulses derived from its leaders’ perceptions of vulnerability. Nitze countered that Soviet power steadily escalated throughout the Cold War, culminating with his fears that Moscow was poised to wrest strategic superiority from the United States in the late 1970s. Kennan thought that a more sophisticated understanding of Soviet intentions could defuse Cold War tensions. Nitze believed that greater awareness of Soviet capabilities was necessary to snap the United States out of its dangerous complacency. Kennan scorned the vulgarity of American culture, the mediocrity of American society, and the incompetence of American political institutions. Nitze remained confident of the benevolent role that the United States played in the world. Nitze and Kennan, Thompson argues, “represented two great strains of American thought during the second half of the twentieth century.” “One can understand,” he continues, “much of the story of the United States during the Cold War by examining the often parallel, and sometimes perpendicular, lives of Paul Nitze and George Kennan” (6).

In *The Hawk and the Dove*, Thompson grapples with central themes in the history of the Cold War by tracing the convergences and divergences between Nitze’s (who was Thompson’s grandfather) and Kennan’s prescriptions for American foreign policy between 1945 and 1991. When the two men agreed, as they did on the Marshall Plan, limiting Korean War aims, and opposing American intervention in Vietnam, they were usually right (though, perhaps, not when they urged the unification and neutralization of Germany in the late 1940s or when they participated in covert programs designed to neutralize domestic radicalism in the 1960s). Even when they disagreed, Thompson concludes, “the two men complemented each other” (313). For Thompson, Kennan “had an uncanny ability to predict many of the great events of his lifetime,” including how the Cold War would end, how the division of Germany would harden Cold War boundaries,

how the pursuit of security would result in a nuclear arms race that threatened humanity's destruction, and how fissures in the Communist world would give American policymakers opportunities to exploit (4). Nitze, on the other hand, was responsible for transforming Kennan's prescriptions for containment into the strategy that kept the United States and its allies safe until the end of the Cold War. By following Nitze's "militant version of containment," by "making the United States a less tempting target for the Soviets and negotiating deals that would make an attack less likely," the United States outlasted the Soviet Union (312).

In telling Nitze and Kennan's story, Thompson employs a wide variety of published and unpublished sources, including interviews and privately held manuscripts unavailable to previous biographers. Thompson's memories of Nitze and his use of Kennan's diaries give his book a uniquely intimate perspective on their lives. That intimacy allows readers to imagine Nitze family tennis tournaments and to glimpse Kennan's anxieties about the propriety of his private conduct. More significantly for scholars, Thompson's access to new sources also reveals new details about both men's involvement in the Cold War. This is especially true for Nitze, whose personal papers at the Library of Congress remain closed to the public. Thompson uses these papers in two ways. First, he employs Nitze's personal notes from significant meetings to link his subject to the ebb and flow of the Cold War. During the Kennedy administration, for example, Thompson traces the mounting pressure to intervene in Vietnam through Nitze's eyes (180) and describes the uncertainties in ExComm that prevented an immediate preemptive attack on Soviet missiles in Cuba through Nitze's hand (184). Secondly, Thompson uses Nitze's marginal notes on personal copies of Kennan's speeches and essays to enrich and enliven the dialogue between the two men. For instance, after Kennan spoke before the Council on Foreign Relations in 1977 to criticize his "friends" who "lose themselves in the fantastic reaches of what I might call military mathematics" and suggest that Americans set aside "all the arguments about who could conceivably do what to whom if their intentions were the nastiest," Nitze marked up a copy of Kennan's speech to challenge his friend's characterization of Brezhnev as "a man of peace" and refute his fear that "the uncertainties [the arms race] involves are rapidly growing beyond the power of either human mind or computer" (269-270). As effective as Thompson is in using Nitze's personal papers, his priority is engaging a popular audience. Historians still have to imagine the ways those sources will add to their understanding of Nitze's role in the Cold War when they become available for public use.

Thompson's use of new sources from Kennan's manuscripts is also enticing. Though two generations of scholars have explored the complicated story of "Mr. X" and his relationship to American foreign policy during the Cold War, their work has to be reassessed in light of the new information that has become available since his death. Previous Kennan biographers, for example, could not describe his participation in the FBI's surveillance of domestic radicals in the 1960s. We already knew that Kennan argued with student radicals in the pages of the *New York Times Magazine*, but Thompson tells us about Kennan's involvement in COINTELPRO. In the same vein, Thompson uses

Kennan's diaries to illustrate the depth of his alienation from American political and social life, providing additional support for a major theme in the existing literature. Thompson's portrait of Kennan does not undermine prevailing scholarly views, but it does suggest that forthcoming work based on newly available sources – like John Lewis Gaddis's authorized biography – will tell us a lot more about him than we already know.

Thompson begins *The Hawk and the Dove* with vivid descriptions of Nitze's and Kennan's experience of the end of World War II. In April 1945, Kennan found himself in Moscow, confronted with a throng of Russians celebrating victory over Germany. He worried that Joseph Stalin would pursue a very different kind of vision from his putative allies in Washington and, even more anxiously, that American policymakers would remain unaware of the challenges the Soviet Union posed to U.S. objectives. Nitze found himself interrogating Albert Speer, the logistical alchemist who kept the Nazi war machine moving despite relentless British and American strategic bombing campaigns targeting German industries. By the end of the summer, Nitze had been reassigned to the Pacific, where he evaluated the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The two men's experiences – one absorbed in divining Soviet intentions and explaining them to disinterested officials in Washington and the other engaged in evaluations of strategic doctrines and examining the aftermath of a nuclear war – shaped their priorities for the next four decades.

After establishing Kennan's and Nitze's personalities with accounts of the austerity and alienation that filled the former's journey from Wisconsin to Princeton and beyond and the conviviality and confidence that the latter displayed as he marched from Harvard to Wall Street to Washington, Thompson surveys their contributions to Truman's foreign policy. He provides the immediate context for initiatives like the Marshall Plan, the Berlin Airlift, the Korean War, and the hydrogen bomb, but his discussion of the Cold War is clearly intended for general readers and not professional historians. Indeed, as Thompson follows Kennan's and Nitze's lives in the aftermath of their heroic days in the Truman administration, his ambitious attempt to draw as much of the history of the Cold War as possible into his book leads to frequent tangents that seem unconnected to Nitze's and Kennan's fundamental debate. Narrative threads like U.S. Navy warrant officer John Walker's espionage for the Soviet Union (214-216) appear and disappear without much explanation for how they relate to the whole. In an attempt to broaden his book, Thompson neglected opportunities to deepen his analysis of his key themes.

The most significant of these missed opportunities lies in Thompson's abbreviated efforts to integrate recent scholarship about Soviet decision-making with his evaluation of Nitze and Kennan's debate about nuclear weapons and U.S. foreign policy. Without explaining why Soviet leaders did what they did or how American policy influenced their choices, Thompson can offer only shaky conclusions in his assessment of the decades-long debate between Nitze the hawk and Kennan the dove. Should American policy be guided by Nitze's increasingly dire estimates of Soviet capabilities or by Kennan's nuanced, sober assessments of Soviet intentions? With brief discussions of probable Soviet reactions to

American restraint in 1950 (109), of Leonid Brezhnev's anxieties about Soviet military spending (234), of Soviet anxieties about American technological prowess and intentions and the boundless appetite of the Soviet military-industrial complex during the 1970s (261-262) and Mikhail Gorbachev's prioritization of domestic reform over military spending in 1980s (307-308), Thompson gives his readers insufficient evidence to judge the merits of his protagonists' cases. Did Soviet leaders see their arms buildup as a way to open a "window of vulnerability" for the United States that would break the will of the free world, as Nitze and his allies in the Committee for the Present Danger argued in the late 1970s? Or did they, as Kennan alleged, invest heavily in nuclear weapons because of deeply-held anxieties about the vulnerabilities of their own society and their concerns about the West's sophisticated nuclear arsenal and the first-use doctrine embedded in NATO war plans? Was the arms race a consequence of Soviet malevolence or did it reflect a security dilemma that grew out of the sense of vulnerability that plagued both the United States and the Soviet Union in the nuclear age? Thompson never really engages this question, but his conclusion, that Nitze's militarized containment and his zealous attention to the nuclear balance between the two superpowers kept the United States safe until the fulfillment of Kennan's prophecy of a Soviet collapse, only makes sense if he embraces Nitze's perspective. To the limited extent that his book addresses Soviet decision-making, the evidence does not address the veracity of Nitze's fears and therefore does not justify Thompson's claims.

*The Hawk and the Dove* is an engaging biography of two men who made significant contributions to America's Cold War. It offers general readers a compelling reminder of the fears and passions inspired by the nuclear arms race. It anticipates a new round of scholarship on George Kennan and teases historians with glimpses of the materials hidden in boxes of Paul Nitze's papers in the Library of Congress. Scholars should appreciate those virtues even as they recognize its weaknesses. Thompson has vividly captured the lives of these "icons" of the Cold War that will be "forever linked," but, because he does not establish which man "won," we are still left to argue just who was Magic and who was Bird in the great Cold War debate.

Nicholas Thompson, the grandson of Paul Nitze, has written a fascinating dual biography of his grandfather and George Kennan, Nitze's most prominent rival as a defense and foreign policy intellectual. Thompson's connection to Nitze gave him access to a great deal of unexploited material, including the private papers of his grandfather and Kennan's private diaries. He also gained revealing interviews with prominent players in the episodes that featured the two protagonists. With these resources, Thompson has been able to go beyond the extant literature, which has done well in analyzing the policies of Nitze and Kennan, to delve more deeply into the rationales, motives, and emotions behind those policies.

This book is intended for the general reader as well as the scholar. The writing is direct, clear, and filled with colorful anecdotes, personalities, and odd facts. The scholar will notice, however, that the Cold War context of the conflict between Nitze and Kennan is often rendered so briefly and with such a lack of nuance that a non-expert would have difficulty judging the wisdom or foolishness of the policies advocated by the two men. This is particularly the case in Thompson's descriptions of the early Cold War when Nitze and Kennan were in general agreement about the need to contain the Soviet Union. Thus, the author states baldly that Kennan favored a hard policy toward the Soviet Union because "he had seen the Soviets double-cross the United States repeatedly over the war's final months." (p. 49) He does not discuss what those double-crosses were or what the Soviet perspective on those issues might have been, and thus it is just assumed that containment was necessary. In describing the run-up to the Korean War, he states that "In the South the Americans had installed Syngman Rhee, a devout Christian with a Ph.D. in politics from Princeton." (p. 127) He offers no further description of the chaotic and repressive situation in South Korea, but simply points out that Stalin approved Kim Il-Sung's request to invade and thus makes it a given that Nitze and Kennan were correct to approve U.S. intervention. He recites Communist moves in Europe in 1948, including the Berlin Blockade, without mentioning that the Allies had already decided to unite their zones and issue a separate currency, thereby challenging Stalin's hold over eastern Germany. Thus, in almost every case where Nitze and Kennan were in agreement, the situation is described in such a way as to assume that their policies were correct.

Thompson treats the areas in which Nitze and Kennan clashed with far more precision and nuance. He does simply label the two men hawk and dove in the title of the book and idealist and realist in body of his work. He is certainly correct that Nitze was a hawk who almost always urged massive increases in arms along with a considerable readiness to use them while Kennan for the most part urged restraint in the building and use of arms. He is also correct that Nitze was an idealist in that he believed that the United States, as the center of power in the free world, had to arm itself and act boldly to frustrate the Kremlin and change the world for the better. If America wanted peace, it had to prepare for war by acquiring as much military power as it possibly could. Meanwhile, Kennan was a realist in

that he believed it was best for the United States to avoid grandstanding and meddling in cultures it did not understand. Instead, the nation should cultivate “an attitude of detachment and soberness and readiness to reserve judgment.” (p. 133) But Thompson goes well beyond the labels of hawk and dove or idealist and realist in his analyses of the policy conflicts between the two rivals.

First, he points out that Nitze and Kennan were actually in agreement at several of what Thompson calls “strange” but “critical” moments in the Cold War. Nitze played a significant role in helping Kennan to implement his policy of containment, especially in formulating the Marshall Plan. Nitze went on to agree with Kennan about avoiding the division of Germany between East and West, although Nitze abandoned his opposition long before Kennan did. Nitze and Kennan agreed on the intervention in Korea and both argued against going north of the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel. They both opposed the CIA intervention against Mossadegh in Iran. They also both opposed escalation in Vietnam, although Nitze temporarily backed away from his opposition at the very moment he might have had an effect on Lyndon Johnson. Finally, after the Cold War had ended, Nitze came around to agree with Kennan that the United States should seek the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

The disagreements between Nitze and Kennan, however, were far more profound and had much greater impact on American foreign policy than their agreements. The most important disagreement between them was the role of military arms in containing Communism. Kennan opposed building the hydrogen bomb; Nitze favored it. Kennan opposed the creation of NATO; Nitze not only favored NATO but pushed for a major expansion of it in authoring NSC-68. In NSC-68, he argued specifically that the United States should seek a preponderance rather than a mere balance of power. He especially wanted a preponderance at the nuclear level on the grounds that it would permit a greater freedom of action at lower levels of conflict. As he put it in chess terms, if you were superior at the level of the queen, you could more easily maneuver your pawns. Later on, as the Soviet Union built its own nuclear forces, Nitze argued more often that the United States needed to build its arms to prevent the Soviets from achieving a preponderance of power rather than to achieve a preponderance itself. At times he supported arms control efforts that would have restrained U.S. arms building and thus seemed to advocate at least some moderation in American policy. But Thompson points out in the most interesting part of his book that Nitze was almost always more restrained when he was in power than when he was out.

As a member of the SALT I team negotiating arms control under Richard Nixon, he was willing to trade limits on missile defense for limits on the Soviet lead in large intercontinental missiles that could carry a great number of nuclear warheads. But he soon found that National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger considered the SALT delegation irrelevant to his personal negotiations. Kissinger first tried to get Nitze to act as a back channel to himself and the president, thus circumventing the leader of the delegation, Gerard Smith, whom they distrusted. When Nitze refused, Kissinger

disparaged Nitze's calculations as Talmudic and dismissed the delegation as a disaster. Nixon and Kissinger even believed that Nitze had had a part in leaking the Pentagon Papers to the press. Consequently, Kissinger ignored the SALT team and traded an Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty for a temporary agreement limiting missiles but setting no limit on the size and throw-weight of the missiles. Kissinger and Nixon figured that given the greater accuracy of U.S. missiles plus the fact that neither the missiles of the NATO allies nor America's lead in aircraft-delivered warheads were counted against the American side, the two sides would achieve a rough parity. But Nitze was livid about the agreement, and his mood was not improved when Nixon and Kissinger kept the SALT delegation in Helsinki rather than bringing its members to the 1972 Moscow Summit where final adjustments to the agreement were made. Nixon and Kissinger called only at the last minute for the delegation to come to Moscow for the signing. Nitze found himself stranded at the Moscow airport, arrived late to the ceremony, and was left standing in the hall as Nixon and Brezhnev departed with their entourages.

When Kissinger began negotiating SALT II, he again bypassed the SALT delegation and omitted the issue of throw-weight from the agreement. Nitze resigned in the midst of the negotiations and in the process did his best to sabotage both SALT II and détente. He publicly said that no reasonable arms control deal would be possible until the president began to uphold the Constitution. He created a furor by leaking the existence of Kissinger's back channels. He fed Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson, the leader of the Democratic hawks, questions he could use to embarrass Kissinger when Kissinger appeared before the Senate Armed Services Committee in defense of the SALT negotiations.

Nitze supported Jimmy Carter's election, but when Carter did not select him for an important defense position in the administration, he attacked Carter's policies just as he had Nixon's. As a member of the CIA Team B, appointed by President Gerald Ford to check on CIA National Intelligence Estimates of Soviet military strength that Nitze and other hawks considered too low, he embarrassed the Carter administration and the CIA by claiming the Soviets were far stronger than the CIA estimated and much more malevolently intentioned. He also organized the Committee on the Present Danger to publicize this view, and in the process brought together Scoop Jackson Democrats and Goldwater Republicans in a coalition that would be later dubbed neoconservative. In the process, he testified before the Senate committee considering Carter's appointment of Paul Warnke to lead the SALT negotiations. Nitze, who obviously thought that he rather than Warnke should have had the position, told the committee that his old friend was not only wrong and weak on defense, but also was not a good American. He then helped to derail Senate ratification of SALT II.

Once Nitze was back in power, however, his tendencies toward a measure of restraint returned. Appointed by Reagan along with many of Nitze's fellow member of the Committee on the Present Danger to lead the administration's arms control negotiations, Nitze took his famous "walk in the wood" to try to fashion a compromise agreement over

intermediate range missiles in Europe. Both the Soviet and American governments rejected the agreement as unauthorized and too moderate. Moreover, while Nitze favored Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative and did his part to undermine the ABM treaty that hindered its development, he did not share Reagan's illusions that Star Wars could actually intercept a Soviet missile attack. Instead, he thought it would be an excellent bargaining chip to trade for the Soviet giant missiles and their throw-weight. Thus, Thompson concludes, while Nitze was excessively hawkish in his policies and none too scrupulous in promoting them, he was ultimately a pragmatist willing to work things out with America's adversaries.

Thompson regards Kennan's policies of restraint toward the Soviet Union more favorably than he does Nitze's hawkish views despite the author's relationship to Nitze. While Thompson ignored the Soviet side of things in his treatment of the early Cold War, he makes good use of Soviet sources in his account of the later period and concludes that Kennan was more correct about Soviet capabilities and intentions than Nitze. While Thompson implies that Kennan sometimes placed too much emphasis on the Soviet Union's supposed intentions and too little on its actual capabilities, he defends Kennan against Nitze's claim that Kennan went so far as to insist that Western Europe needed no more than a couple of divisions to defend itself.

Thomson also agrees with Kennan's insistence that the containment policy he originally devised was intended to be primarily political rather than military, and that the militarized containment policy brought about by Nitze's NSC-68 and the Korean War went well beyond his recommendations. But Thompson goes on to point out the various times that Kennan supported CIA interventions and military actions that pushed the boundaries of political containment. Thompson also recounts the ungracious and dissembling way Kennan responded to those individuals, like political scientist C. Ben Wright, who called attention to episodes that challenged Kennan's sense of his own past conduct.

Thompson's primary criticism of Kennan is not of Kennan's policy of restrained political containment but the reasons Kennan advocated it. Kennan's realist policy was not based exclusively on an attractive modesty about America's supposedly unique virtues or the effectiveness of U.S. intervention into cultures it did not understand well. Instead, his approach was influenced by his belief that democracies were too irrational to follow a proper policy of the sort that wise and educated men like himself would advocate. This was especially true, in his opinion, of a democracy like the United States, which Kennan saw as declining in intelligence and morality as its core of Northern European manly culture was diluted and corrupted by the rise in influence of lesser ethnicities, genders, and cultures. This bigoted and reactionary side of Kennan has been exposed to some extent by Kennan's previous biographers, but it comes through more powerfully in quotations Thompson found in Kennan's private diaries.

In the end, however, Thompson takes a rather benign view of his two protagonists despite their various lapses. Kennan was often wise in his counsels of restraint. Nitze usually

came around to a pragmatic view of American policy. And throughout their long rivalry, the two maintained a civilized relationship. As angry and dismissive as they might be of the one another's views at times, they exchanged civil letters, hosted one another at social events, and even toasted one another graciously at Kennan's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday party. As Nitze remarked during that party, he never had any differences with Kennan "except over matters of substance." (p. 2)

In the spring of 1995, as I began the research for my doctoral dissertation, I traveled to Independence, Missouri. One of my goals, while visiting the Harry S Truman Library, was to look at Paul Nitze's oral history. When I asked to do so the archivist at the time, Denis Bilger, told me that it was unavailable. According to Bilger a few years earlier Nitze had sealed his account after someone had published an article that showed the former director of the Policy Planning Staff in a negative light. Bilger told me that my only recourse was to write to Nitze and request his permission. I was initially skeptical but I sent the letter anyway. In my note I told him I was working on my Ph.D. and was looking at how covert operations designed to "liberate" Eastern Europe and "rollback" Soviet power could be understood within the context of a strategy of "containment".<sup>1</sup> Much to my surprise about a month or so later I received his reply.

The letter read in part: "The hope and expectation of the containment doctrine was that, if the USSR could be denied the capture and exploitation of additional territory by military means, their top people would look inward and begin to face their panoply of external problems... We thought it might be useful and wouldn't hurt much, to give the process a push by overt or covert stratagems." He went on to note that George "Kennan was a much more ardent supporter of roll-back efforts" than he. Apparently, Nitze "was leery of covert operations because he doubted the ability of the American "military capability to carry [them] through to success in the face of the Soviet reaction."<sup>2</sup>

These were shocking words. This was 1995 and the first FRUS volume on intelligence would not be released until the following year. Thus I had to wonder if perhaps Nitze was being a bit disingenuous. His note contradicted the conventional wisdom that Kennan was the author of a strategy of containment, and Nitze, under the guise of NSC 68, had not only militarized Kennan's strategic vision but also called for a dramatic increase in the number of covert operations conducted by the CIA.

Of course the political scientist Beatrice Heuser, and the historians Eduard Mark, Walter Hixson and Melvyn Leffler had all suggested that perhaps Kennan's strategy went beyond that of the containment of the Soviet threat, and a few journalists had brought to light the covert operations that had taken place during Truman's presidency. Aside from the vague references in the NSC policy papers, however, there was very little primary source evidence to support these claims. As a result, the majority of scholars remained wedded to the traditional argument. Despite the vast array of new evidence available today, and

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<sup>1</sup> I should note that while today I always put danger quotes around "containment" I did not then. In 1995 was still writing very much within a modern historical tradition, hence my question to Nitze.

<sup>2</sup> Paul Nitze to author, June 1, 1995

the number of books and articles that have been published on the subject, sadly this continues to be the case.

Nicholas Thompson is no exception. His is very much a traditional history of the cold war. Despite his orthodox interpretation, which is somewhat surprising given his position at *Wired* magazine, which purports to be “on the front lines of the 21<sup>st</sup> century,” it troubles me that he remains wedded to the belief “that for the most part” the United States “was never actually trying to roll back the Soviet Union.” More importantly, perhaps, although he does recognize that Kennan was, at least initially, a strong advocate of covert operations, he gives us no hint whatsoever about how his grandfather felt about these campaigns.

Yet, despite the lack of a substantive discussion on his grandfather’s position, a subject, which perhaps only I am interested in, I did find his biography noteworthy for what it tells us about the relationship between the two directors of the Policy Planning Staff under Harry Truman. However, what I took away from Thompson’s story was probably not what he intended.

Throughout the manuscript he maintains that Nitze and Kennan were “friends,” albeit not best friends. (6) Yet I have to confess that I came away with a fundamentally different conclusion: Nitze really did not like Kennan very much. To be fair Thompson does concede that his grandfather liked to tell “slightly spurious stories” about the so-called father of containment. Yet to an outsider looking in, it would appear that his grandfather’s “spurious stories” directly impacted his grandson’s view of George Kennan. This tension comes out in the language that Thompson uses to characterize the two men.

Throughout the book he sets up Nitze and Kennan as cold war archetypes: the hawk and the dove—the realist and the idealist.<sup>3</sup> But he goes farther than this and creates a gendered binary where Nitze appears the masculine ideal and Kennan feminine. For example he writes that Nitze was active and adventurous, an “insider,” and a “doer.” He was always “organized,” “logical,” “rational,” and “practical.” He was also “scientific” in how he approached the challenges he faced and was “great with numbers.” Moreover he was “popular,” and “confident.” Not only was he always “the smartest man in the room,” but he was a great dresser to boot. Apparently at one point in his life he was robbed and the only thing the thief stole was his clothes! (94-95, 281, 284)

Kennan in contrast, was a “poet,” a “thinker” “a designer,” and “a luddite.” No one “felt deeper, thought harder or wrote more beautifully.” Moreover Kennan’s ultimate goal in

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<sup>3</sup> Now he does concede that these were not hard and fast characterizations, and that neither men “conformed exactly to the labels” but he concludes that for most of their lives these characterizations were 90% accurate. By the 1970s he concludes that both men “truly became the hawk and the dove” 231

life was simply to achieve “peace and quiet.” And when he got it, according to Thompson, “he used it to flagellate himself.” ...Hmmm.....

Moreover, unlike Nitze he was always in “doubt, both of himself and others.” Kennan was both a “fatalist,” and “an outsider.” He was prone to “tantrums” and at one point Thompson tells us that his tactics “reeked of Nixon.” I have to assume that he does not mean this in a positive sense. Indeed, he later compares Kennan to a pterodactyl, which, at least according to my dictionary, is an extinct flying reptile. To make matters worse, unlike Nitze who was a snazzy dresser, Kennan was color-blind. (226, 254, 256)

If you have not bought my argument yet compare Thompson’s use of language when he talks about how each man dealt with difficult challenges. In this context, Nitze becomes “alarmed” by events, while Kennan is “afraid.”

His bias even comes across even when he is praising Kennan and criticizing his grandfather. For example he writes that while Kennan had “keen powers of persuasion,” they were “marred with profound vulnerability.” But when “Nitze lost his cool” it was because he was a fiendishly clever man... who was “slow to take orders” and was challenging only those whose job he coveted. (192) The subtext here is of course that he was ambitious. A quality heralded in men but seldom in women. Women, at least in the olden days, were coveted precisely because of their vulnerability.

Despite his reliance on gendered stereotypes, which I find more interesting than problematic, I have no doubt that this book will contribute to the growing historiography that challenges our perception of Kennan as the master strategist of the cold war; and rightly so. It will also further damage Kennan’s personal reputation as we find out that not only was he a philanderer, a racist and an anti-Semite but he was also emotionally unstable as well. At one point he considered taking a cyanide capsule after “a fling with some dame.” (138)

Now don’t get me wrong, this was a fun book to read and I have my own problems with Kennan, who by his own admission was a sexist. For this and a number of other reasons I enjoyed the book immensely. It was wonderfully written and contains a number of interesting insights into the characters of both men as well as some juicy tidbits that will keep you interested to the end. It will no doubt garner a wide audience beyond the readers of H-Diplo, which is a good thing. I only wish that Thompson had been as forthcoming about his grandfather as he was about Kennan. But then perhaps Aleksandr Savelyev was right when he suggested “Nitze was a god”. (3)

P.S. Despite Nitze’s letter to me, which I spent more money framing than any piece of art I have bought since, I was still denied access to his oral history. Perhaps I’ve never got over that....

Review by Alonzo L. Hamby, Ohio University

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George Kennan and Paul Nitze, Nicholas Thompson tells us, “were the only two people to be deeply involved in American foreign policy from the outset of the Cold War until its end.” (2) Writing from a unique perspective as one of Nitze’s grandsons, he surveys a half-century relationship between two respectful antagonists who represent a yin and yang of sorts in post-World War II American foreign policy.

Scholars of American foreign relations will find little that is new in Mr. Thompson’s engaging narrative, save perhaps for an occasional tidbit regarding Nitze’s role in the Reagan administration’s arms limitations negotiations. Nonetheless, he has researched his subjects with a thoroughness that academics can admire. An editor at *Wired* magazine, he writes fluently and focuses as much on character as on policy. Eschewing stereotypes, he depicts two individuals with considerably different personalities and modes of policy conceptualization, reacting to fluid situations with less predictability than his title leads us to expect.

The Kennan story will be more familiar to most readers of H-Diplo. Mr. Thompson adds no new twists. He effectively recounts the saga of a boy born to a moderately well-off family in Milwaukee, only two months old when his mother died, raised by sisters and an indifferent stepmother, sent off to a military prep school, going on to college at Princeton. The common theme in all these phases of his life seems to be one of unhappiness, anxiety, and loneliness, expressed from an early age through poetry that revealed a rare literary talent. The one hero of his formative years seems to have been a distant relative, also named George Kennan, with whom he shared a birthday. A prolific liberal-minded writer on Russian culture and politics, the early Kennan seems to have sparked an interest in Russian history and culture that defined the career of his young cousin. The Foreign Service, a Russian/East European specialization, then postings to Moscow and other important European capitals followed.

The Nitze story is less well known. His father, a University of Chicago professor of philology, was rigorous and demanding. His non-conventional mother dabbled in radical politics, was attracted to avant-garde art, and took her son on trips to Europe. Mr. Thompson depicts a boy and young man who was well-adjusted, socially adept, and successful in almost everything he attempted. “Kennan never fit in,” Thompson observes, “Nitze always did.” (24) He moved effortlessly from Chicago to Hotchkiss prep school to Harvard, where he achieved the ultimate distinction of being elected to Porcellian. After graduation, he took a job with the prestigious financial house Dillon Read and became a protégé of James Forrestal. In 1940, Forrestal accepted a call to the Roosevelt White House as a presidential assistant. One of his first acts was to send a telegram to his younger aide: “Be in Washington on Monday.” (38) The end of World War II found Nitze working with the Strategic Bombing Survey, interviewing Nazis (including Albert Speer)

in Germany, then pondering the impact of nuclear weapons as he examined the ruins of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan.

Nitze's conclusion in the Survey's final report that the atomic bomb was not the major reason for Japan's surrender, Thompson declares, "was not merited by the evidence." (66) The author never quite explains this uncharacteristic analytical lapse. Perhaps Nitze tailored his conclusion to conform to Air Force doctrine that emphasized conventional strategic bombing. Nitze, the author tells us, does seem to have been convinced that the bomb, for all its power, was essentially another weapon. It is true that at the very beginning of the nuclear age conventional bombing raids were capable of inflicting equally extensive (if non-radioactive) devastation on other Japanese cities. Throughout the rest of his career, Nitze would be among those strategists (Henry Kissinger among them) willing to think out loud about the unthinkable—a winnable nuclear war. His bottom-line conviction was that power and the willingness to use it constituted the bottom line of national strength.

Kennan, back in Moscow for the opening salvos of the Cold War, received a request from Washington for an analysis of Soviet obstreperousness in the months after the Japanese surrender. The result—his famous "long telegram" later published as "The Sources of Soviet Conduct" in *Foreign Affairs*—soon had him back in Washington at the head of a new Policy Planning Staff under Secretary of State George C. Marshall. One of his colleagues in the new enterprise was Paul Nitze. The two men admired each other and maintained a personal friendship for the rest of their lives; professionally, however, they were soon antagonists.

In the long telegram, Kennan had laid down the doctrine of containment, but he also possessed the professional diplomat's aversion to military force, had an acute understanding of the limits of American power, and thought of containment as something to be pursued by soft means. Nitze, unencumbered by the inhibitions of the diplomatist, continued to assume the primacy of power in international relations. Kennan recoiled from American universalism, as expressed in the Truman Doctrine; Nitze welcomed it as a sign of American toughness and resolve. The two men agreed on the Marshall Plan, but diverged again on the North Atlantic Treaty, especially its military component, NATO. They also were at odds on the decision to build the hydrogen bomb.

Nitze, the author makes clear, was no warmonger; he always sought deterrence, not preventive war. Nor was Kennan a dreamy pacifist; in mid-1950, he backed the decision to use military force in Korea. Nearly thirty years later at the onset of the Iranian hostage crisis, he was willing to support a declaration of war against the Islamic Republic. Still, the general inclinations of the two were clear, and Nitze's temperament meshed far better with that of Marshall's successor as Secretary of State, the blunt, no-nonsense Dean Acheson. Nitze replaced Kennan as the head of Policy Planning in 1949. In 1950, Kennan began his disengagement from the department. By then, with Acheson's encouragement and support Nitze had spearheaded the production of NSC-68, a policy document geared

toward a defense buildup of wartime proportions. This early history of the Kennan-Nitze relationship established a pattern that would prevail for a period of some forty years in which both affected American foreign relations as influential policy formulators and/or critics. Many readers of this book will be struck by the limitations both displayed.

Nitze's NSC-68, for example, sought to remedy real deficiencies in deployable U.S. military strength, but overshot the mark. Harry Truman refused to sign off on it until the third month of the Korean War; Dwight Eisenhower effectively cancelled it upon becoming president. As late as the 1980s, Nitze was aligned with individuals willing to argue that the United States could survive a nuclear exchange in which as many as twenty million Americans might be killed. Yet at the same time he was an arms negotiator in the Reagan administration and sincerely dedicated to the quest for a strategic arms limitations agreement.

The quality of Kennan's mind and the seductiveness of his prose have obscured his own weaknesses, both as a man of action and as a thinker. Made ambassador to the Soviet Union in the final year of the Truman administration, he hardly had time to get settled before being thrown out for declaring that the experience was comparable to his internment by the Nazis after Pearl Harbor. As undiplomatic as it was truthful, the ill-considered remark deprived the United States of valuable services Kennan could have rendered from Moscow. Appointed ambassador to Yugoslavia by John F. Kennedy, he unnecessarily antagonized Yugoslav dictator Joseph Broz Tito, whom he criticized for supporting Nikita Khrushchev's resumption of nuclear testing. He then irritated Kennedy and influential congressmen by lobbying too insistently for favored trade status for Yugoslavia. After two years he resigned, having failed to make the most of his position at a strategic outpost of the Cold War. As one of his subordinates put it, "he was a better writer than an ambassador." (183)

But perhaps he was also a better writer than a foreign policy thinker. Throughout his career, Kennan complained about being misunderstood. Walter Lippmann, who wrote a dozen articles, later published as a small book, attacking "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," is the best-known example, but hardly the only one. Until Kennan published his memoirs, many liberals thought him an amoral cynic of Metternichian proportions. He was not good at managing the tug of war between the foreign policy realism to which he was rationally attached and the highly developed moral sense that he felt deeply.

Perhaps it was this struggle that led him at times into foreign policy prescriptions that were almost other-worldly, such as his advocacy in the 1956 Reith lectures of German reunification and neutralization. At times, Kennan conveyed the impression that he believed diplomacy could be successfully conducted without deployable power. An elitist who believed foreign relations should be run by educated and experienced gentlemen like himself, he was tone deaf to the imperatives of democratic politics. If nothing else, Paul Nitze served as a necessary counterbalance.

Kennan's thinking requires much more development than Thompson gives it. Kennan's classic *American Diplomacy* (1950) receives scant examination. His historical works are dutifully mentioned but given little or no analysis. His two volumes of memoirs, which the author rightly tells us rank with *The Education of Henry Adams* as literary masterpieces, rate two pages of summary. Kennan's influential and widely read *Russia and the West under Lenin and Stalin* (1960) is not mentioned. Nor is there any effort to develop a context for his thinking within a larger school of foreign policy realism. Kennan was often bracketed with Hans J. Morgenthau and Reinhold Niebuhr, neither of whom appear in this book.

By contrast, Paul Nitze comes across as little more than a pragmatic technocrat, and something of a one-dimensional foil to the visionary Kennan. Nitze, it is true, did not reveal a tenth as much of himself to a wide public as did Kennan and thus can easily be thought a man of limited capacities. Still, the author's memory of Gramps sipping red wine and reading Joseph Conrad suggests a wider-ranging mind than we see in his narrative. ("Missiles are boring," Nitze tells his grandson. "Conrad is interesting." ([317]) It is a shame that we cannot know more about what seems to have been a complex inner self.

Nicholas Thompson has given us a well-crafted piece of popular history that will motivate at least some of its readers to delve more deeply into the lives of its protagonists and to learn more about the Cold War in which they were soldiers.

Response by Nicholas Thompson, *The New Yorker*

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**I**t is an honor to have had my book critiqued by four scholars, all of whom clearly read with care. Each also asks questions I had not thought of, and offers lines of inquiry that I would like to pursue. I am of course, delighted, by the various compliments.

As a general response, I note that there is a slight tension in the critiques and the praise given to the book. The central theme of the praise is that the book is briskly written; the central theme of the criticism is that it would have been better had it delved more deeply into one of several complicated subject areas. Briskness and thoroughness are not, of course, mutually exclusive, and I would hope that all the reviewers would agree that there are some parts of the Cold War into which I dug quite deeply. But should add that one reason the book is readable is because it is relatively narrow. I constantly crossed out potential chapters and sections in a desperate effort to keep the book relatively contained, no pun intended. I wanted to cover the Cold War, and the lives of two extraordinary men, in a volume that would not be so thick that it would menace people, unread, from their bookshelves.

That defense is not of course absolute. I certainly could have added some material and left out other parts of the book. I agree, actually, with Professor Combs that I should have spent more time explaining the historical context in situations where Kennan and Nitze agreed, particularly regarding policy toward Berlin in the late 1940s. Professor Hamby is correct to flag the fact that I was not able to offer a complete and persuasive explanation for Nitze's puzzling analysis of the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki; that episode remains, to me, one of the mysteries of his life. Professor Corke is correct to note that I do not add a great deal to the historical literature about Nitze's involvement in early CIA operations; I just didn't find any. Mr. Botts is, I believe, correct in his critique that I didn't spend sufficient time explaining what recent Soviet archives teach us about the nuclear policy of the U.S.S.R. in the 1970s and 1980s. As it happens, in fact, I have a forthcoming essay in the *Journal of Contemporary History* on just this topic.

Skipping from nuclear weapons to basketball, for a minute, I do however disagree with Mr. Botts, in one place. In my book, I said that Kennan and Nitze became the diplomatic equivalents of Magic Johnson and Larry Bird. Mr. Botts notes this and writes, "He might have added that, for one of them to win, the other had to lose." That's true for a given game, but it's not true for a career. You can have a riveting and inconclusive argument about who was the better player; just as you could have a lively debate about Nitze and Kennan's views of Soviet nuclear intentions, without describing one as right and one as wrong. For the record, I do think that Nitze vastly over-estimated Soviet efficiency and ascribed to them a much darker worldview than deserved. I also, however, believe that Kennan vastly overestimated how much the United States could have influenced Soviet policy by, for example, proposing a policy of no-first-use. (Also: I grew up in Boston and Bird was better than Magic.)

Along these lines I am quite pleased that Professor Corke and Professor Hamby came to different conclusions. Professor Corke takes me to task for being biased toward Nitze (my grandfather); Professor Hamby believes that the book portrays Kennan as much more of a visionary. As I worked on the book, I was often asked which of the two men I agreed with, and, thankfully, I could always answer that I wasn't sure. Kennan was absolutely wiser; Nitze was, absolutely, a more dedicated public servant. Readers to the book have likewise had differing views of the relative merits of the two men.

As to Professor Corke's claim that I portray Kennan as a woman and Nitze as a man, there's probably something to it. Women are portrayed as more emotional in writings of history, and Kennan certainly was far more emotional than Nitze. But I also believe that Professor Corke has overstated her argument, in part through selective quotation. To take one example, at the end of a paragraph listing praise from the book for Nitze, and criticism for Kennan, she writes, "To make matters worse, unlike Nitze who was a snazzy dresser, Kennan was color-blind." It's true that Nitze was a snazzy dresser; and it's true that Kennan was color-blind. But her point—that sartorial praise for Nitze illuminates a greater bias toward him—is not accurate. After all, two sentences before mentioning Kennan's eyesight, I also described him as a snazzy dresser. It's a trivial matter, but I think the selective quotation is telling and reveals a flaw in what I consider an overstated critique.

Overall, the essays are all reasoned and illuminating. And to Mr. Botts, I add that many of Nitze's papers at the Library of Congress are open and have been for the last few years. (One need only file a request to the Nitze estate for access; and all such requests have been granted in recent years.) I donated a further collection of papers—the sixty or so boxes that I discovered behind a boiler at the School of Advanced International Studies—to the Library about eighteen months ago. Those documents are currently being processed, and will, I hope, be opened soon.

**Nicholas Thompson** is a senior editor at the *New Yorker*, a contributor to CNN International, a contributing editor at Bloomberg Television, and a senior fellow in the American Strategy Program at the New America Foundation.

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