

## PREFACE

Victor Gilinsky

I'm blown away that Henry collected some of what I've written—some of it coauthored with him—and by the exceedingly generous introductions to the book's eight sections by persons I respect very much. I'll be happy if any readers come away thinking more deeply about the various subjects, whether they agree with me or not.

A word about the background: The articles cover the warlike side of nuclear energy; the use of it for generating electricity; and the sometimes successful—and sometimes not—effort to keep a wall between them.

I wasn't involved much on the war side, but at the RAND Corporation, I was close to people who were. I was never much impressed by what passed for "nuclear strategy." The Physics Department sent me to a course on nuclear weapon employment at Maxwell Air Force Base, which I took in the company of 40 highly motivated SAC commanders, and later toured missile silos and nuclear weapons labs. I came away thinking we would be lucky to survive the Cold War, a feeling strengthened by what we've learned since. Is the worst behind us? We don't know.

In the late 1960s, Jim Schlesinger invited me to his small RAND project on limiting the spread of nuclear weapons. I investigated the civilian side of nuclear energy and what it offered for rapid conversion to weapons programs, and also the question of international inspections, which didn't amount to much at the time.

After Schlesinger became chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission in the Nixon administration, he asked me to join the agency to investigate the bottleneck in nuclear power plant safety reviews conducted by the AEC's licensing organization. The truth was that the AEC, which was pressing for rapid installation of nuclear power plants, underestimated the safety problems, and the license applica-

tion reviewers were underequipped to deal with them. It took me a while to understand that the AEC headquarters mafia deliberately undercut the safety licensing organization to keep it from threatening the AEC's core project—the plutonium-fueled fast breeder reactor. The AEC's neglect of nuclear plant safety turned out to be costly.

When I later joined the newly created Nuclear Regulatory Commission, which took over the role of the AEC safety licensing organization, I did what I could to correct the flaws of the earlier organization. An accident of legislative drafting also gave NRC licensing authority over nuclear exports and imports, and as a result, for a time, and almost despite itself, NRC was able to contribute significantly to tightening nuclear export standards.

Mercifully, Henry did not include in this volume some material I would just as soon forget, having modified my views along the way. I sometimes find myself agreeing with persons whose opinions I had earlier dismissed. One of the lessons: keep an open mind; although, as a debater once warned me, not so open your brains fall out.