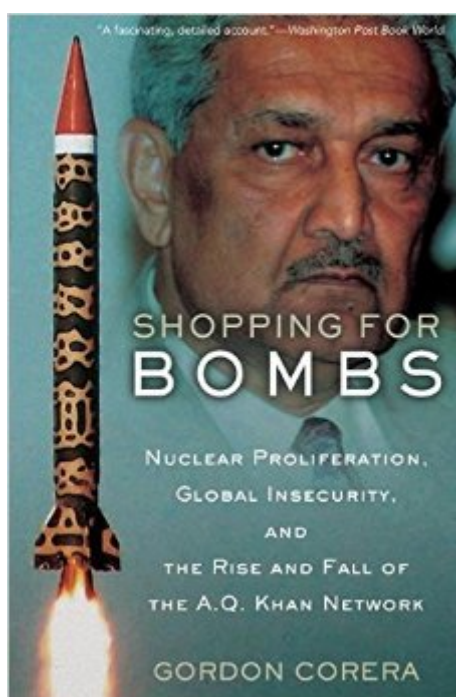


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Shopping For Bombs: Nuclear Proliferation, Global Insecurity, And The Rise And Fall Of The A.Q. Khan Network



Synopsis

A.Q. Khan was the world's leading black market dealer in nuclear technology, described by a former CIA Director as "at least as dangerous as Osama bin Laden." A hero in Pakistan and revered as the Father of the Bomb, Khan built a global clandestine network that sold the most closely guarded nuclear secrets to Iran, North Korea, and Libya. Here for the first time is the riveting inside story of the rise and fall of A.Q. Khan and his role in the devastating spread of nuclear technology over the last thirty years. Drawing on exclusive interviews with key players in Islamabad, London, and Washington, as well as with members of Khan's own network, BBC journalist Gordon Corera paints a truly unsettling picture of the ultimate arms bazaar. Corera reveals how Khan operated within a world of shadowy deals among rogue states and how his privileged position in Pakistan provided him with the protection to build his unique and deadly business empire. It explains why and how he was able to operate so freely for so many years. Brimming with revelations, the book provides new insight into Iran's nuclear ambitions and how close Tehran may be to the bomb. In addition, the book contains startling new information on how the CIA and MI6 penetrated Khan's network, how the U.S. and UK ultimately broke Khan's ring, and how they persuaded Pakistan's President Musharraf to arrest a national hero. The book also provides the first detailed account of the high-wire dealings with Muammar Gaddafi, which led to Libya's renunciation of nuclear weapons and which played a key role in Khan's downfall. The spread of nuclear weapons technology around the globe presents the greatest security challenge of our time. Shopping for Bombs presents a unique window into the challenges of stopping a new nuclear arms race, a race that A.Q. Khan himself did more than any other individual to promote.

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Customer Reviews

The nuclear five missed an opportunity to give up their arsenal and get everyone's covenant to stay away from the bomb. It is only natural that some states and some nations sought to avoid the "less than equal" status by joining the nuclear club overtly and covertly. Pakistan is probably the only state that was smart enough to get the bomb but not wise enough to "control" access to technology.

Individuals were more important than institutions. A Q Khan used the nation's need for a bomb to create a personal fiefdom that was beyond any institutionalized control. Benazir Bhutto, the PM of Pakistan, could not visit his laboratories and got her first glimpse of Khan's facility and work when the United States shared with her the results of their espionage! A Q Khan used his intelligence and his ability to manage perceptions to create several myths: (a) He was not the father of Pakistan's bomb. The bomb came from PAEC and its scientists Munir Khan and Mubarakmand. (Khan had a parallel initiative in Kahuta but did not have enough "cold test" experiences to do the honours). Khan was however the one to take the limelight and give an exaggerated impression of his role. The nation took to the flamboyant A Q K and ignored the true heroes of PAEC. (b) He was not keeping Pakistan's interest in mind. Z A Bhutto was astute in stating that Pakistan's bomb should not take the image of an Islamic bomb. Khan ignored this, and for personal gain, in an uncontrolled manner sold technology (stolen from URENCO) to Iran, Libya and North Korea. For money. Without approval from Pakistan's policy makers. Increasing insensitivity to oppressed causes, increasing unwillingness of majority to live with a homogenous minority, increasing conflict between nations and states have all enhanced threats from terrorism and threats from rogue states for humanity. A Q Khan's clandestine one stop shopping mall for nuclear technology to anyone with money (and often poor credentials) may have handed terrorists and rogue states their first chance to acquire technology that has so far been under the rigorous control of responsible States including the State of Pakistan. At relatively inexpensive prices. A Q Khan has endangered the World and has significantly affected Pakistan's image as a responsible State. Gordon Corra traces the history of Khan's rise and fall. The author must have worked hard to get all the facts from a very sensitive nation, on a very sensitive issue. The author continues to sustain the reader's interest and attention by an easy and narrative style. Yet the book has enough material for a serious researcher to pursue further.

A.Q. Khan was the world's leading black market dealer in nuclear technology and a hero in Pakistan: Khan was known as the Father of the Bomb and built a global network selling nuclear secrets to Iran, North Korea and Libya. It's surprising to note that this is the first book-length survey of the rise and fall of the man and his role in spreading nuclear technology. It use interviews with politicians and key members of his own network to survey not only Khan's life and influence on the spread of nuclear technology, but the methods and intentions of the rogue states who bought from him. New details on how the CIA penetrated his network and broke his ring makes for a unique and eye-opening analysis which is a top recommendation for both general-interest collections strong in terrorist studies and military holdings. Diane C. Donovan California Bookwatch

I've used this is an upper-level undergraduate course on International Security with great success. The students enjoyed the journalistic style (compared to our other texts), but absorbed a lot of the details. It was one of the best-received texts for the course. Best for class sizes that allow substantial discussion.

This book is an excellent piece of work on Nuclear Proliferation. Things that I would have liked to see in this book : *) Substantiated material with actual interviews with intelligence officers. Author uses lots of quotes from private conversations, but how did he get access to those ? That makes me question a bit the authenticity of the research. *) The book keeps on jumping back and forth, which is an excellent case to muddy the presentation. I would have liked a chronological order maintained in the book so that thought processes can be collected and processed efficiently. Overall it is an eye-opener.

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