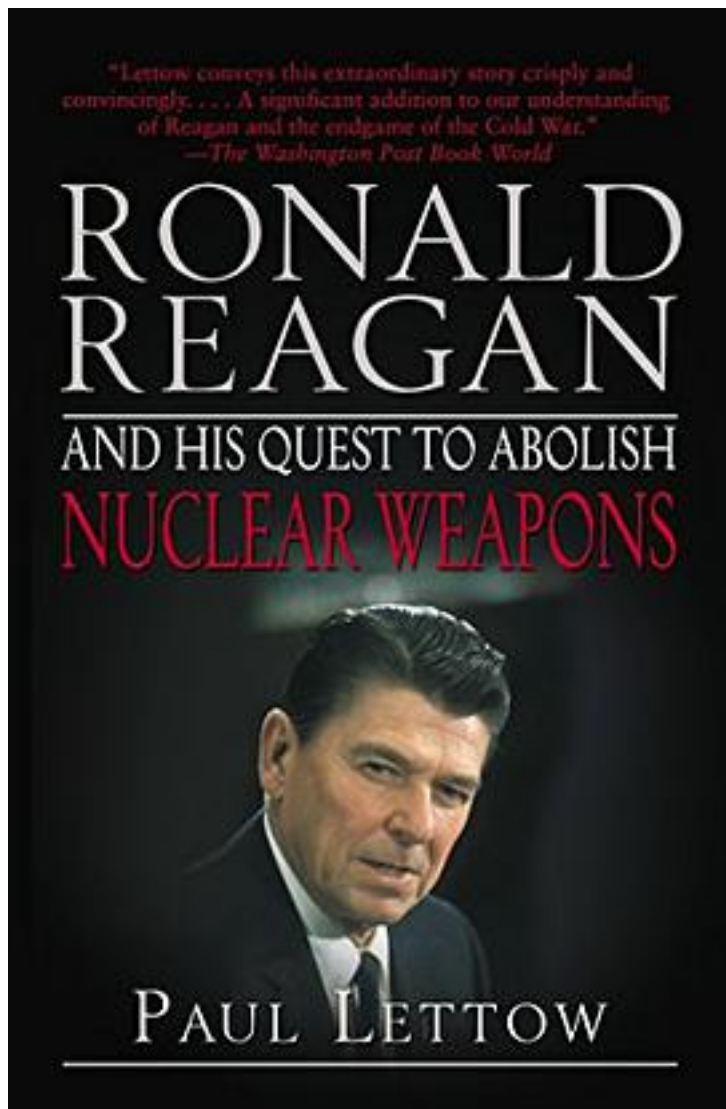


Ronald Reagan and His Quest to Abolish Nuclear Weapons



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In Ronald Reagan and His Quest to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, Paul Lettow explores the depth and sophistication of President Ronald Reagan’s commitment to ridding humankind permanently of the threat of nuclear war.

Lettow’s narrative spans the start of Reagan’s presidency and the 1986 Reykjavík summit between Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, during which America’s Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) was a defining issue. Lettow reveals SDI for what it was: a full-on assault against nuclear weapons waged as much through policy as through ideology. While cabinet members and advisers played significant roles in guiding American defense policy, it was Reagan himself who presided over every element, large and small, of this paradigm shift in U.S. diplomacy.

Lettow conducted interviews with several former Reagan administration officials, and he draws upon the vast body of declassified security documents from the Reagan presidency; much of what he quotes from these documents appears publicly here for the first time. The result is the first major work to apply such evidence to the study of SDI and superpower diplomacy. This is a survey that doesn’t merely add nuance to the existing record, but revises our

very understanding of the Reagan presidency.

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