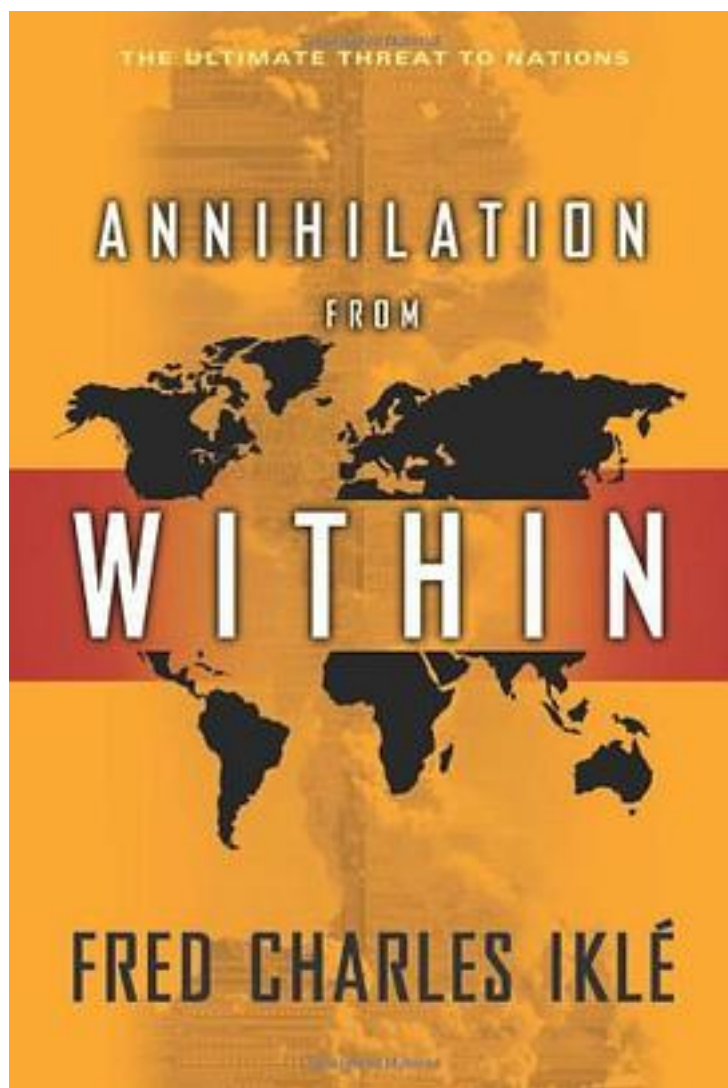


Annihilation from within



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In this eloquent and impassioned book, defense expert Fred Ikle predicts a revolution in national security that few strategists have grasped; fewer still are mindful of its historic roots. We are preoccupied with suicide bombers, jihadist terrorists, and rogue nations producing nuclear weapons, but these menaces are merely distant thunder that foretells the gathering storm. It is the dark side of technological progress that explains this emerging crisis. Globalization guarantees the spread of new technologies, whether beneficial or destructive, and this proliferation reaches beyond North Korea, Iran, and other rogue states. Our greatest threat is a cunning tyrant gaining possession of a few weapons of mass destruction. His purpose would not be to destroy landmarks, hijack airplanes, or attack railroad stations. He would annihilate a nation's government from within and assume dictatorial power. The twentieth century offers vivid examples of tyrants who have exploited major national disasters by rallying violent followers and intimidating an entire nation. To explain how we have become so vulnerable, Ikle turns to history. Some 250 years ago, science was freed from political and religious constraints, causing a cultural split in which one part of our culture remained animated by religion and politics while the other became guided by science. Since then, technological progress and the evolving political order march to different drummers. Science advances at an accelerating pace while religion and politics move along a zigzag course. This divergence will widen and endanger the survival of all nations. Drawing on his experience as a Washington insider, Ikle outlines practical measures that could readily be implemented to help us avert the worst disaster.

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