The basic axioms of the nuclear age have been four — impossibility of defense; vulnerability of cities; surprise attack and a capability of retaliation.

Nuclear strategy is an area of thought provoking that transcends all boundaries that separate disciplines of thought, professions, churches, nations, religious and secular realms. George F. Kennan says,

"There is no issue at stake...no hope, no fear, nothing to which we aspire, nothing we would like to avoid...which could conceivably be worth a nuclear war."

There continues to be a search for ways to punish the aggressor in other ways than use nuclear weapons and without causing undue suffering, all the time remembering that fear and weight of armed superiority are inherent qualities of human nature. "War in all its contemporary forms is sufficient to bring forth the exhaustion of all reasonable hopes of avoiding it." Chapter I deals with the strategy of deterrence.

The greatest danger that any country faces or its people face is their utmost confidence and belief in the "absoluteness" of security. "The atom bomb ended this idea of absolute security and also the very destructiveness of which prompted peace movements, scientists, strategists and even the churches to break away from their normal routine and speak against the use of the same—the possession of nuclear weapons."
US strategic doctrine and the accompanying force structure has been built around nuclear weapons. The root cause of their security dilemma is clearly linked with the decision of post-war American leadership resting security largely on technology—to compensate for a perceived Soviet superiority in manpower and conventional weapons—by relying on the dubious doctrine of nuclear deterrence and nuclear weapons. Nuclear deterrence became the ultimate national strategy and has remained unchanged in principle.

Deterrence is however a means in fact to make nuclear employment unnecessary. An opponent would in fact say that the nuclear weapons are largely a function of specific targeting strategies. Chapter 2 deals with nuclear deterrence and nuclear targeting.

Deterrence is not primarily a military concept but an aspect of diplomacy. To be successful it has to be based on weapons—but the ultimate success rests on non-use of these very weapons. As Schelling puts it, modern technology has enhanced the importance of "threats of war as techniques of influence, not of destruction; of coercion, of deterrence, not of conquest and defense, of bargaining and intimidation." This very threat of weapons that could annihilate whole regions indiscriminately—intentionally or accidentally—is the very cause of moral concern regarding the justness of use of these weapons under any circumstances. The Just War doctrine is one of the best principle to deal with the moral—

Schelling, T., Arms and Influence (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966)
concerns of the nuclear age. Chapter 3 provides for an understanding of the same.

The nuclear debate has provoked many people from different fields to question the morality of the very possession of these weapons and 'the threat to use them in case of necessity. Moral thinkers believe that not only must the cause of war be just but the means used should also be just. This line of thinking prompted one of the most remarkable piece of judgement provided by the religious sect - The Pastoral Letter of the American Catholic Bishops. Chapter 4 provides for a brief analysis of this letter and a study of nuclear weapons, deterrence and the national security based on these weapons. This is an area of study which witnessed the most vociferous comments for and against the induction of nuclear weapons for national security. Johnson says, "Thinking about war in terms of just war tradition means allowing one's individual reflections to be guided by the experiences and reflections of the others in a rich cultural history who have attempted to deal with practical problems both at the practices of war and at moral theorizing about war to "keep faith" with this tradition.

The thesis concludes with a review of START I and II and the hope for a new future, based on mutual trust and cooperation and with the continued belief that "nuclear war can never be won and thus should never be fought."
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