

ed that only 10 percent of Afghans derive any income from the business. Despite the drug trade, Starr believes that Afghanistan “now has a reasonable chance of becoming, over time, a normal and prosperous country.” Last March, encouraged by the progress they’d seen, donor countries decided to give \$4.5 billion in a single year, instead of over three to five years, as previously promised.

“Most Afghans are optimistic about the

future,” says Starr. “This is affirmed by the decision of two million Afghans to return to their homes from Pakistan and another 1.2 million from Iran.” The demise of the Taliban has provided Pakistan and the new states of Central Asia “the greatest opportunity for positive change since they gained independence.” For the United States, the post-9/11 sacrifice of lives and treasure in Afghanistan is slowly paying off in enhanced U.S. security.

## *Coping with the Nuclear Genie*

“Proliferation Rings: New Challenges to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime” by Chaim Braun and Christopher F. Chyba, in *International Security* (Fall 2004), Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Univ., 79 John F. Kennedy St., Cambridge, Mass. 02138.

Last year’s revelations of a Pakistan-based ring headed by scientist A. Q. Khan that clandestinely exported uranium enrichment technology to North Korea, Libya, and perhaps other nations signal the arrival of an ominous new era in which developing countries “trade among themselves to bolster one another’s nuclear and strategic weapons efforts.” No longer will efforts to keep nuclear technology and material in developed countries from being sold or stolen suffice. Combating “proliferation rings” in the developing world will require strong efforts on “both the supply and demand sides of the problem,” write Braun, a senior fellow at Stanford University’s Center for International Security and Cooperation, and Chyba, the center’s codirector.

On the supply side, the Bush administration took “an important new step” in 2003 with the Proliferation Security Initiative. Fifteen nations, backed by more than 60 others, agreed to “practical steps to interdict shipments of missiles, chemical and biological agents, and nuclear components.” The initiative requires good intelligence to work. Its best-known success to date: the 2003 seizure in Italy’s Taranto Harbor of a German-owned ship traveling from Malaysia and bound for Libya with parts for thousands of centrifuges used in uranium enrichment. Libyan president Muammar al-Qaddafi subsequently renounced his country’s nuclear and chemical weapons programs.

Also at the behest of the Bush administration, the UN Security Council last April adopted Resolution 1540, requiring all states to adopt export controls to prevent proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. It’s a laudable effort, say the authors, and more promising than calls for a global treaty with tough enforcement measures, which “could take a long time” to obtain.

But supply-side efforts won’t be enough to halt the “globalization of technology and know-how.” Some countries may eventually be able to produce nuclear weapons on their own. Therefore, demand-side measures also are needed to induce such states to forgo nuclear weapons. These include security guarantees and economic sanctions, which have been used in the past, at times successfully. Carefully designed international efforts to make civilian nuclear power more available to developing nations would be a useful “sweetener.”

Threats of preventive (or, to use the Bush administration’s term, “preemptive”) attacks are likely to be counterproductive, increasing the desire for nuclear weapons, predict Braun and Chyba. “While preventive wars against some proliferators may play their role in the future, the United States will likely often find itself strongly deterred from exercising such options except as a last resort, and in the face of high costs. The United States should therefore place an extremely high priority” on achieving nonproliferation in other ways.