



# War Scare: Russia and America on the Nuclear Brink

*Peter Pry*

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Why do some American intelligence officials maintain fallout shelters and private contingency plans to evacuate their families in the event of a Russian nuclear strike—even in today's post-Cold War era of U.S.-Russian partnership? The frightening answer lies within the pages of *War Scare*, a terrifying assessment of the prospect for nuclear holocaust in our day. Written by Peter Vincent Pry, a former CIA military analyst, *War Scare* provides a history of our country's little-known brushes with nuclear war and warns that, contrary to popular opinion and the assurances of our political leaders, the possibility of a Russian attack still exists. Nuclear deterrence has been the foundation of Western security for the last 50 years, but since the end of the Cold War, Russian military doctrine has become more destabilizing, and much more dangerous, than is commonly believed.

By making use of a wealth of declassified and unclassified material, Dr. Pry illustrates how Russia's brutal past continues to shape the consciousness and decision making of its leaders, many of whom are unreconstructed ideologues from the old Soviet regime. Gripped by a perpetual perception of imminent threat—a war scare—the Russian General Staff, which controls the technical capability of launching a nuclear strike, has shown itself to be unstable at best. The author explores recent history and near-disasters such as the Bosnian crisis, the Norway missile incident, and U.S. air strikes on Iraq from the perspective of the Russian General Staff, believing that only by understanding their viewpoint can we minimize the risk of unintentionally provoking a deadly attack. Wary of NATO expansion and reeling from the Russian economy's descent into chaos, the General Staff may interpret Western military exercises and operations in the Middle East and elsewhere as concealing surprise aggression against Russia. This is a grave situation, indeed, as even after the START I, II, and III agreements, Russia will retain enough nuclear weapons to destroy the world—not to mention significantly expanded chemical and biological warfare capability. *War Scare* convincingly shows that we ignore these facts at our peril.

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