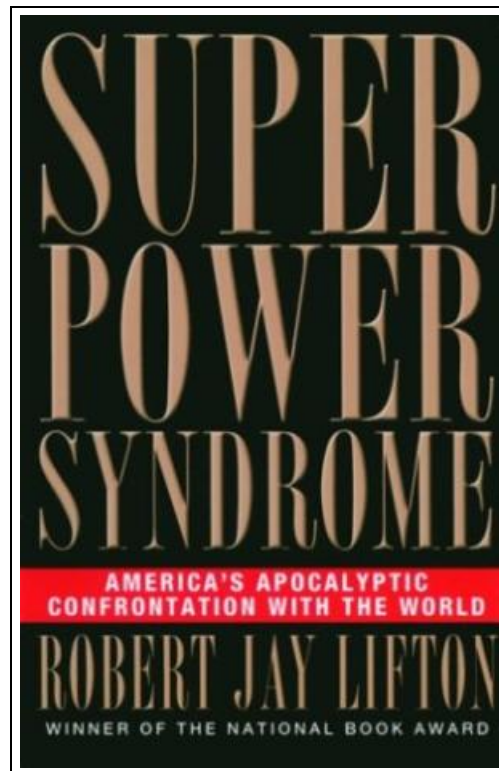


Superpower Syndrome: America's Apocalyptic Confrontation with the World



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SUPERPOWER SYNDROME: AMERICA'S APOCALYPTIC CONFRONTATION WITH THE WORLD

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Thunder's Mouth, Nation Books, 2003. Soft cover. Condition: New. From Publishers Weekly: Lifton brings his unique psychiatric and psychohistorical perspective to the heated issues of the war on terror and America in a unipolar world. Lifton defines superpower syndrome as an aberrant "national mind-set.that takes on a sense of omnipotence, of unique standing in the world that grants it the right to hold sway over all other nations. " He examines parallels with other instances of apocalyptic nations, which he has explored in groundbreaking works about Hiroshima (Death in Life), the Holocaust (The Nazi Doctors), the Vietnam War (Home from the War) and global terrorism (Destroying the World to Save It). Bush's war on terror can be seen as apocalyptic, Lifton says, because of its call 4 an amorphous battle unlimited in time or space and encompassing the absolute eradication of evil. The perceived threat of group annihilation leads apocalypitics to "merge with God in the claim to ownership of death, " asserting the right to "murderous purification" and to decide who lives and who dies. The U.S. response to Nazi violence was similarly apocalyptic, in Lifton's analysis, a battle "for global salvation through the flames of destruction, " such as the bombings of Dresden and Hiroshima. The latter in turn fed into the Aum Shinrikyo doomsday cult in Japan in the 1990s. Similarly, the Bush response is "part of an ongoing dynamic in which the American apocalyptic interacts, almost to the point of collusion, with the Islamic apocalyptic"-an escalation that, Lifton believes, "has in it the potential seeds of world destruction. " Yet escalation isn't inevitable, and with guarded hope, Lifton provides a complex yet clearly articulated roadmap to national self-reflection rather than international destruction. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

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