THE LAUCKS FOUNDATION —

from time to time calls attention to published material that might contribute toward clarification or understanding of critical issues affecting world peace. The accompanying reprints constitute Mailing No. 20.

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March 6, 1981

OF SAINTS AND SENATORS

An interview on faith and politics with columnist Garry Wills

(From SOJOURNERS
1309 L St.,NW
Washington,D.C.20005
February,1981 issue)

Garry Wills is a nationally syndicated columnist with the Universal Press Syndicate, and the Henry Luce Professor of American Culture and Public Policy at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. He is the author of several books, including Explaining America, Inventing America, *and* Nixon Agonistes.

Wills is perhaps best known for his impassioned editorial writings during the Vietnam war, which helped to articulate the vision of the peace movement and sharpen opposition to the war. A periodic contributor to Sojourners *and a Catholic, Wills was interviewed by* Sojourners' *staff in early January.*

The Editors

Sojourners: How do you assess the results of the fall election? Would you say that liberalism has failed?

Garry Wills: It's hard to know what liberalism really is. In so far as it's an historical body of principles, I think it failed long ago. In the popular sense, liberalism means greater government spending for everything except defense.

I think people are saying that the welfare reform of the '60s, like the New Deal of the '30s, accomplished some things but now lacks the discipline of its original vision. And they want an alternative. But Reagan is not going to cut back significantly on the reforms of the '60s any more than Eisenhower cut back on the New Deal. His "alternative" will be, by and large, a failure.

Unfortunately, the U.S. is in one of those sabre-rattling moods which seems to come from the shocking realization that not only is Vietnam able to defy us, but also the oil emirates, the Iranian mullahs, and the OPEC cartel.

America came out of World War II with the idea that we had won the war, and that under the terms of unconditional surrender, would be able to dispose of the world for our own good. But it turned out that it was not possible to so impose our will, which shocked the psyche of America. It meant, for one thing, that perhaps we had done all that killing for nothing.

Then we got the Bomb and thought we could tell Russia what to do, but Russia wouldn't obey either.

So the assumption bred into Americans out of the World War II experience is being shattered, not only in terms of direct confrontation, but in terms of economic competition as well, with Japan for instance. It hurts our national ego. Reagan, of course, is using all the World War II rhetoric—we are the good guys.

The weird thing about American politics is that it's always easier for the party that wins an election to move beyond the demands of its constituency than it is for the losing party. That's because in an election campaign, a candidate begins with a base constituency and moves toward the middle. The more a candidate moves toward the middle, the more flexible and accommodating he seems, and the more he comes before the electorate as the president of all. The U.S. operates with a non-ideological politics of compromise.

So I don't think there's cause for absolute despair when a candidate from the other party wins—he'll often be able to do your work better than you could yourself, although the trouble is that you never know when he might decide to do so.

Sojourners: You seem to be self-consciously rooting your own politics in biblical religion. Some people think that the two subjects of religion and politics can't be combined, and yet your columns are often about both and the relationship between the two.

Wills: Well, there's nothing original about my doing it. I think Americans have always done so. We just have never reflected on how we have combined religion and politics.

Given the American two-party system, the formulation of issues has traditionally taken place outside politics, and very often in religious circles. Since we have a secular politics, religion is more free to formulate issues in terms of principle and put pressure on society through teaching, preaching, demonstrating—not through electoral politics.

That was true in the time of the abolitionists, and it was true of the civil rights movement of the '50s and '60s, which was strongly influenced by southern baptist preachers: Dr. King, Jesse Jackson, Andrew Young. Reform in Jane Addams' time had a strong religious base; and the temperance movement, the Quakers, and other religious groups have played an important role in the history of American politics.

In all efforts of change in the United States, the initial step can't be taken within the political process because that process is aimed at compromise, vote-getting, and success: winning elections. At the outset of any movement for social change there is no chance of winning an election; the movement is still formulating issues and principles and acquiring a constituency. That work is done by preachers, teachers, and academicians.

As time has gone by, the party system has become more governed by compromise, and the importance of religion in

creating a community of concern over an issue has been increasingly more central, it seems to me, than it was even in the 19th century.

Sojourners: So you would say that people of faith must take the initiative in politics?

Wills: Yes, but there's a paradox in that. On the one hand, our secular politics has freed religion to become quite effective in its own right. On the other hand, we've pretended it wasn't there; we didn't look at it. Our coverage of politics has focused on politicians, which is less than half the story.

Lyndon Johnson and Everett Dirksen finally rammed through the civil rights bill in 1964. But of course the real originators or true sponsors and effective agents who were involved were Dr. King and other people who went to jail and died. That kind of work and sacrifice is hidden by the conventional politics which journalists cover.

Sojourners: Do you think that the United States, as an

imperial nation on the decline, might be more dangerous than it was in its ascent?

Wills: I think there is a danger. A professor at the University of Tokyo told me last summer that handling decline is always hard, especially for a country that was, in 1945, the most powerful in the world. And Americans have shown that we will be irrationally supportive of anyone who asserts that we are not in decline.

For example, look at the totally crazy and unproductive incidents of the Mayaguez raid and Carter's desert fiasco in April, 1980: Both were destructive of lives, and yet both brought about a great popular expression of support for the president.

It's an open question whether the United States' decline puts more pressure on Democrats, who have to prove that they're tough because they are thought to be weak, or on Republicans, whose constituents are constantly clamoring for more evidence of America's might.

In social change efforts, the initial step can't be taken within the U.S. political process because that process is aimed at compromise, vote-getting, and electoral success.

We have been, however, with whatever ill grace, facing up to decline. We got out of Vietnam, cut back on some of our pretensions, and are coming to terms with the fact that we cannot defy the oil countries. In some ways we are almost slavishly admitting that the Japanese and others do some things better than we do. I never allow myself to be very pessimistic. Americans like a bellicose gesture, but when it comes to action, they often pull back.

Sojourners: The Islamic revolution, Latin American liberation theology, the Catholic Worker, Sojourners, the Moral Majority, and the Polish workers all agree that faith has political meaning. What do you think is the significance of the upsurge of such varied religiously based political movements?

Wills: The United States, though secular in terms of overt politics, was in origin largely Calvinist-Protestant sociologically. Changes that were brought about by the immigration influx took place below the level of explicit politics.

What groups like the Moral Majority have done is to assume a number of the social poses of the old Protestant American consensus, without much theological depth. These groups combine and compromise various strains within Protestantism, bringing them down to the least common denominator.

In a country like America—large, secular, mobile, individualistic—building community is very difficult. It goes against expressed creeds which say that everyone is a lone agent voting for the best man, not a member of a stable party who votes the party line.

In that kind of society, religion has the terrific task of making people realize their interdependence, their need for one another and for mutual support. There is little in American expressed theory which says that we must form ourselves into communities.

The United States lacks the feeling of the sacredness of the American life at home. We are missing that sense of solidarity, of the sacredness of the society, except when we assume a bellicose posture abroad. Germans or Iranians had better not harm an American, but that sense doesn't exist regarding a fellow citizen at home. The entire argument against gun control is that our freedom depends on our ultimate ability to protect ourselves against our fellow citizens. The cult of the gun in America is that you cannot trust anyone with your own liberty: Only you can defend it in the end—you and your gun.

Even people who are not "gun nuts," who are rather liberal, enlightened members of the society, are afraid of community in America. Our vision of freedom in America depends on being not only free *of* community but *over against* the community: I am defying the crowd, and if I am not defying the crowd, then I lose this precious independence of the American way of life.

In a country like ours, building community is a terribly difficult task, as labor unions have found out. It takes an almost mystical defiance of common norms to express the ideals of community in America.

Americans do feel the need at various times, in various ways, for community. The Moral Majority is trying to supply it, using nostalgic terms, implying that if we just return to the past, we can all be at peace again. Ronald Reagan has said that when he grew up, everybody got along—well, of course, his world was one that didn't see the oppression and violence.

But that yearning for community can and does take gospel form among people who refuse to be nostalgic—people who say that there is nothing good about a world that used oppression to achieve homogeneity.

The civil rights movement was a good example of how that attitude operates. Ecumenism, which had never gotten anywhere discussing theology, got a terrific shot in the arm during that period. Ministers, priests, rabbis were down in the streets with the people, marching together. They had a community of concern growing out of their various traditions.

Now I hope something like that can take place in a movement against nuclear weapons. Such a movement, it seems to me, is the modern version of the abolitionist movement: It is both a crying need at the moment and yet totally in defiance of political probability. In the 1830s it was crazy to think you could ever abolish slavery in the United States; there was no political channel through which to work. People had to have a basis in faith to believe that the elimination of slavery was imperative and to persevere, whether or not it was practical.

Sojourners: But isn't disarmament today hindered by an interlocking fear on both sides?

Wills: All politicians in America have professed a desire to disarm, but they always say the process must be mutual, respective, and gradual. That will never happen, because the process that is supposed to inspire trust inspires distrust.

For instance, one of the arguments for SALT I was that it was a beginning: It would allow us to bargain, open channels, get to know and trust each other, so that the next step would be easier. It hasn't worked that way, of course. SALT I has made SALT II even harder, for a very simple reason. In order to reach agreement, you bargain and compromise so that you allow each other a little ambiguity, a little play. That means that even if both sides observe the treaty in good faith, the ambiguity always offers the possibility of charging the other side with non-compliance.

The question cannot be: "Do we trust them? Can we depend on them?" If we depend on them, it will never happen. The only way for disarmament to become a reality is for us to disarm unilaterally. I know that sounds crazy, but only because people haven't considered it.

I have raised the option of unilateral disarmament to advocates of disarmament, and have found that even the people who are morally concerned about the issue are not even considering this possibility. That is a tremendous failing.

For one thing, they should consider it simply in terms of the

moral imperative. There is no moral defense of nuclear weaponry, because even a policy of retaliation requires the willingness to kill a certain number of innocent people. So even if we have nuclear weapons, we could never use them. If that's the case, why have them?

But aside from that, my argument is that nuclear weapons have not deterred any action of the Russians. After all, we had a monopoly on nuclear weapons at the end of World War II, and we have not deterred the Russians at all by our possession of these weapons.

The Russians have the built-in problem of managing their empire. We now know from records that Stalin was not behind all of the communist activity in the world, that he was not very interested in the Chinese communists at the end of World War II, that he was not very interested in the Greek communists, that he had his hands full establishing his control over the occupied territories gained after the war. And the same is true today.

The Soviets are having a hard enough time holding down their satellites, Poland and Czechoslovakia; and they have failed to hold down others of their satellites and allies like China, Rumania, Yugoslavia. It is not nuclear weaponry which has checked the Russians; if we got rid of nuclear weapons tomorrow, it would not change the situation at all.

People also have a hard time with the idea of giving up an apparent economic advantage. The argument against abolition was that slavery was an economic necessity to the South and therefore a political and military necessity for the nation. Actually, of course, slavery was a drain. People wouldn't face up to that fact. The same is true of nuclear weaponry today.

These great means of destruction have outraced any political use. That was true even before we had nuclear weapons. After our strategic conventional bombing in World War II, studies showed that our great power to destroy had practically no impact on the war. We didn't disrupt German history: Rail lines were instantly re-established. Rather than breaking the people's will by bombing their cities to the ground, we hardened their will.

The history of highly destructive bombing has been a very sad one for the people who did it. Hitler didn't break the will of the English in the Blitz; we didn't break the will of the Germans at Dresden; we didn't break the will of the Vietnamese in Hanoi.

The assumption has been that if you can conquer somebody, you can control them. And in conventional, old-time warfare, that was probably true, because the means of conquest used manpower. You had manpower on the scene, which could not only destroy, but also police, organize, administer. Now, we are in the position of being able to destroy a country, but not being able to control it.

Let's take the worst possible scenario. Say we unilaterally disarm tonight, and tomorrow the Soviet Union blows up the United States. It's hard to know why the Soviets would, of course; what advantage would it give them? It would poison a hemisphere for them and would certainly not make the rest of the world any more well disposed toward them.

But suppose the Russians do attack. What follows? Nothing. They can't come over and occupy us; they can't force us to pay tribute to them—what are they going to say? "Send us all of your helicopters"? Who'll be left to do it?

The breakdown between conquest and control has occurred now on such a scale that it makes no sense to undertake a conquest. There is a great difference between the destruction of a nation's people and resources and the useful manipulation of them. Yet we continue to think that because we have the power to destroy, we have the power to control.

As I said earlier, the normal political process can't raise these issues. Only the people who speak out on principle can—especially those who speak out of religious imperatives not to kill. Religious motives for nonviolence are the simplest, clearest, and most difficult to argue with—as was true of the religious motives for not owning slaves.

Sojourners: Would you talk a little about your personal faith?
Wills: I grew up in a very anti-communist, Catholic family where the ties between belief and politics were clear: Godless atheism was attacking my country and my church. I went to Catholic schools, and was influenced by G.K. Chesterton and Hillar Belloc, who gave me the first indication that perhaps my growth would lead me into opposition to the super-patriotism espoused by the church. Later, as a young journalist, I also found cause for reflection in the civil rights movement and the Catholic Worker.

Dorothy Day was a Catholic, and so I had always known of her. I was very resistant to her at the outset because she was not anti-communist in the crazy way the rest of the church was. And from the outset she opposed nuclear weapons. I first really started paying attention to her when she was arrested in the '50s for refusing to enter shelters during air raid drills in New York. I was in seminary then, and of course we debated what she did and why she shouldn't have done it. Later, I was at Yale graduate school and she came and spoke, and my resistance to her started to fade.

The U.S. can now destroy other countries, but not control them.

I left seminary in 1957 and wrote freelance articles for *Commonweal*, *America*, and William F. Buckley's *National Review*. Most of my interests then were theological and literary. But my agreement with conservatives was all on the anti-communist issue, never on economics.

Sojourners: What do you see for the future of American politics and the American church?
Wills: I never predict. Predicting is so obviously foolish—and obviously doesn't work. Also, there's something mean-spirited about looking at the odds for the future.

People who are really good at effecting change are the people who don't pay attention to the results of their action. That's why people of faith can start things that no one else can, because they are not making a calculus of the probability of success; they are doing it because they are called. Prophets are always called to apparently useless tasks at the outset.

I think that the principal moral issue today is nuclear weapons. That is the area the churches must move into. Some of them are doing so, even in formal ways in the hierarchies, boards, and ministries.

The church organizes best around perceived needs that it must respond to. The civil rights movement was important not only for the sake of integration, but because in working for that good, Christians of all types got to know one another. I hope the same thing will happen in opposition to nuclear weapons.

Sojourners: Where do you look for signs of hope?
Wills: To the saints. That's where Christians should always look. The growth of Christianity has been through a recognition of the need for saints, martyrs. The cult of the martyrs was the organizing principle of early Christianity.

The early Christians expected the Second Coming momentarily. That sense of urgency should be present in our lives all the time. For a Christian, Christ has always died. That is true no matter what period of history you live in.

The drama of Christ dying for us is always the same whether it is in a nuclear age or during the decline of the Roman empire. We must always realize the faith of the saints—that there is no historical tragedy that can equal the crucifixion. The drama of salvation is always the same. □

National Catholic Reporter
February 13, 1981


— NCR/Bill Kenkelen

PANOFSKY

'Arms prestige pushing world to nuclear war'

By BILL KENKELEN
West Coast Correspondent
Palo Alto, Calif.

U.S. AND SOVIET political leaders have lost touch with the military and scientific realities of nuclear weaponry, engaging in an unnecessary arms buildup that decreases both nations' security, a nuclear physicist said here recently.

The two superpowers, said Wolfgang Panofsky, director of the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center, have driven the world to the brink of disaster through an arms race in which the drive for weapons as symbols of power and prestige has come to outweigh true defense considerations.

Panofsky blasted what he termed the nuclear "game of symbols" at a science and disarmament meeting held by the French Institute for International Relations in Paris last month. Scientists from nuclear-armed nations, including the Soviet Union, attended.

Panofsky's criticism of the arms race comes from a man who vigorously supports a strong national defense. An expert in high-energy particle physics, he participated for decades in projects involving both science and weaponry.

He was a consultant to the Manhattan Project, which developed the first atomic bomb, and has been an adviser to the last four presidents' administrations.

Panofsky's criticism of the arms race is based on technical realities, not moral arguments, he said. The essence of his argument is that the massive buildup of nuclear weapons has decreased U.S. and Soviet security.

Many of the two nations' weapons systems, he said, are unnecessary and inefficient, serving to undermine security. If only technological and military factors were considered, the arms race could be reversed easily, he said.

The factors that have led to a nuclear weapons race and that seem to be leading civilization toward destruction, said Panofsky, include:

— Institutional inertia, or the tendency of vested scientific and industrial interests to work to keep the race going and, indeed, accelerating.

— The "we must have it too" reaction of the U.S. and Soviet Union to news from the other side of new weapons systems. Even if the military significance of the system is minor or nonexistent, Panofsky said, political decision makers do not want to pass up the political prestige of a "perceived technical-military breakthrough."

— The inadequacy of information about nuclear weaponry enables political leaders to either "saber-rattle" or complain about serious military gaps, depending on political expediency. He said the secrecy the Soviet Union practices is particularly harmful.

— The drive toward "technically sweet" — sophisticated — military technology has created a momentum difficult to stop, said Panofsky. Yet increasingly, technological weapons sophistication is strategically destabilizing, he said.

The only solution to the arms race, Panofsky said, is serious arms control negotiations leading to disarmament, adding he is critical and deeply worried about the Reagan administration's attitude toward arms control.

Panofsky was reluctant to speak of ways to promote arms control; because he said he is not a politician or a moral philosopher.

He defended scientists' participation in arms work, saying they are bound to follow their country's military decisions as well as work to prevent abuses of lethal weapons. But he said he would like to "see the balance shift" from the former to the latter duty.

NUCLEAR WAR IS NATIONAL SUICIDE

Now appears to be the time to say it again: the entire industrialized world could be destroyed in 24 hours through nuclear war. Everyone in his fifties or older saw this grim situation of opposing "deterrents" emerge during his adult life. Those in their forties or older, remember real life nuclear war scenarios: the Berlin crisis and the open threats of nuclear use in the Cuban missile crisis.

But those in their twenties have largely escaped confrontation with this reality. And some of their elders may have forgotten it.

The situation, in brief, is this. One bomb can destroy one city. A large warhead with 25,000,000 tons of TNT equivalent (25 "megatons") will level homes 13 miles in all directions from its ground zero. The Soviet Union is ready to deliver 100 to 200 bombs of this size. One such bomb would level the largest city, e.g. New York. A five megaton bomb will do the same for cities with a radius of 7.5 miles. The Soviet Union is ready to deliver 400 such weapons. Warheads of about 1 megaton could level cities that are four miles in radius. The Soviet Union has 6,000 warheads in that range. The U.S. has only 2,000 cities over the minimal size of 10,000 persons. All of those could therefore easily be destroyed.

In 1959, Congressional hearings suggested nuclear war would kill (deaths within 30 days only) 40 million of the 150 million people in 71 urban areas with only 1500 megatons. Today, in a world of many more missile carrying MIRVed warheads, and of *10,000* megatons on the Soviet side, the official estimates are that between 70 million and 160 million people would die—and 20 to 30 million more if the Soviet Union's targeters really tried to kill people per se. America's population stands today at 226 million. Thus, 30% to 70% of the population would die promptly. Tens of millions more would die from non-existent medical care, from unchecked disease, from low temperatures when winter arrived, and from agriculture failures.

Recently, the medical doctors have begun to show the concern which only physicists showed in earlier times—to communicate this danger. They note how little blood plasma would be available and how much medical care is required for a single victim of burns. This seems to get through to people. At the other analytical extreme, economists can describe the difficulties, at present levels of weaponry, which would attend any post-attack economic recovery at all.

Indeed, for the 1980s and beyond, the question will not be how much of the country is destroyed in nuclear war, but how much is left and even whether a functioning country will re-emerge. These calculations do depend upon the course of the war but not as much as one might think. The United States is most unlikely to launch its strategic missiles before the Soviet Union launches its missiles, no matter what course nuclear escalation is taking. And, in any case, the United States will not have the capability for some years, even on paper, and even with a pre-emptive attack, to blunt the Soviet attack significantly. In fact, whether such a pre-emptive attack could ever be achieved in practice is unclear and—as a result of the many uncertainties—unknowable in advance.

Therefore, it must be assumed that most of the Soviet strategic force would find its way to U.S. targets. This is not only a prudent and plausible assumption but one hard to avoid. And even if only one-third to one-half of the almost 10,000 megatons arrived at urban targets, the ultimate conclusion is that the United States is likely to be permanently destroyed as an economically viable unit with the survivors unable to regroup and refunction in ways and time periods we would recognize.

There are, of course, always assumptions which could be piled on assumptions to provide a war-survival capability. *If* the population were both asked and persuaded to evacuate the cities and to do so at just the right time; *if* they then built effective fallout shelters; *if* billions had earlier been spent (and spent effectively) to protect America's industry (i.e., if our industrial plant were somehow taken apart and buried at the right moment); *if* the war also went well, with U.S. forces destroying as much of Soviet forces as they could; and *if* a myriad of other calculables and incalculables turned out optimistically (forest fires, ecological balance, disease, unusual weapons effects, Soviet targeting strategy, etc.); then America might survive the war with *only* several tens of millions of its citizens dead. But this is an extreme version of war-game reasoning passing lightly over one intractable problem after another. And the civil defense preparations in question have been discussed, and not made, for two decades at least—even in periods where they were much more feasible than they are now.

In short, general nuclear war is almost surely suicide for America itself as we know it and not only for most of its citizens. And what we would like to ask our members to determine is this: how many people are unaware of this fact? And what is it they are thinking? The last prominent person to express doubts about this was the present Vice President George Bush who said he did not believe that "There is no such thing as a winner in a nuclear war" and that Soviet planning was based on this "ugly concept of a winner in a nuclear exchange." We promise to try to find out, on a national level, how many believe that the U.S. might win a nuclear war. Making sure that the body politic, and the Administration in particular, are under no illusions on this score is a primary goal. Making sure that the Russians have no illusions about this is another. This is a problem both sides ought to begin to discuss again. □

—Reviewed and Approved by the FAS Council

MANAS REVIEW

FEBRUARY 11, 1981

NIGHTMARES AND A REMEDY

IN these days of anxious concern about "the future," when bibliographies of books and articles on alternative "scenarios" are themselves weighty volumes, there may be point in looking at what the managers of present-day societies are thinking and doing in behalf of the years to come. A useful if depressing book to read for this purpose is *Nuclear Nightmares—An Investigation into Possible Wars* (Viking, 1979, $10.95) by Nigel Calder. This writer is a civilized Englishman, a former editor of *New Scientist* and author of numerous books on scientific subjects. If one needs to have nuclear nightmares now and then, his book would be the one to read.

To what end? The only sensible reason for reading Mr. Calder is that the plans, preparations, and projects of the nuclear powers, under his analysis, point directly to the conclusion that the modern world is guided by madmen. After the reader has become persuaded of this, there remains only the simple question: What should one do?

Mr. Calder's concluding paragraphs are hardly encouraging:

> The avoidance of nuclear war in the 1980s, when proliferation in the Middle East coincides with a peak in counterforce opportunities for the superpowers, will depend on the rate at which the planet generates deadly quarrels. If a grave crisis comes in the next few years, we shall just have to hope that the Soviet Union is indeed deterred from attempting a nuclear "counterbattery" strike by unassailable American missile-carrying submarines, and that the United States will show moral restraint. Do not undervalue moral attitudes: few national leaders want to commit the worst atrocity of all time, and that thought, rather than deterrence, may be what has saved us so far. And the simple touchstone of morality about nuclear warfare is that it remains unthinkable.
>
> Yet it only takes one madman, one politician or soldier growing weary or impatient with peace, or one fool who misunderstands a crisis, to bring Northern civilization to an abrupt end. The post-1945 generation is now taking over the reins of power—individuals who did not experience the shock of Hiroshima and regard nuclear weapons as normal gadgets. Some scientists say that whatever test-ban treaties and disarmament measures may be devised, a multimegaton weapon should be exploded in the atmosphere every few years in front of the assembled leaders of the world's nations, so that they will stand in awe of its incomprehensible heat and force. Even at a safe distance of thirty miles or more, they will feel it like the opening of an oven door, or the gates of hell.

Mr. Calder may be right. Perhaps, instead of celebrating Armistice Day or Veterans' Day, each year, we should observe Ragnarok Day, with nuclear fireworks to symbolize the end of the world. Why not set a competition among Hollywood's most skillful producers to see who is able to scare more people more than anyone else? That, at any rate, seems the main objective of some of the opponents of preparations of nuclear war, who apparently believe that you have to fight the animus of fear by generating a stronger terror. Are *they* right?

We raise the question, not to answer it, but to suggest what horrified people are likely to insist. Would refusing to fear nuclear war be the same as not caring about "human survival"? Not worrying about prospective sudden or agonized death for millions?

One hesitates to make any but an individual decision on such questions. But then, individual decisions may be all that matter. Should we try to persuade one another of this?

Discussing the effectiveness of deterrence, Mr. Calder says:

> There may come a moment when, without any malice in your heart, you have frightened your opponent so badly you must hit him before he hits you. Nuclear deterrence becomes nuclear impulsion.
>
> The reasoning goes as follows: "I am a good guy who would not dream of starting a nuclear war, but I cannot afford to let that bad guy get his blow in first. I know that he knows that I know that, and I just hope he appreciates what a good guy I am, otherwise he might think that I must be getting ready to hit him. But on second thought I see that if he knows that I know that he may suspect me of preparing to hit him, he knows that I must expect him to hit me first, and so he sees I have a very good reason to hit him first, even if he thinks I'm a good guy. To forestall that—hell, he's going to hit me tomorrow. You know what? I have to hit him today!"
>
> Such is the logic of nuclear impulsion, or "strategic instability." No political leader or military chief is, I trust, going to start a war through abstract reasoning of that kind, however remorselessly it progresses. Yet the symmetry of the reasoning has deep implications. It does not depend upon which side is actually stronger, nor does either side need to have any real confidence in the efficacy of its first strike. All that is necessary is that one leader should think that the other imagines that a little "damage limitation" is better than none. And in a real international confrontation, nuclear impulsion promises to corrupt the game of Chicken—in which, remember, the superpowers rush at each other like audacious young men in fast cars.

This is what you find in Mr. Calder's book—common sense, plus an effective account of the horrors, which we have left without attention.

A question occurs. Why don't we choose for leaders men who refuse to think in this way—who reject the claim that mutually assured destruction (MAD) is the only possible deterrent to nuclear war? The question takes us back to individual decision. A modest book published in 1978, *The One-Straw Revolution* (Rodale Press, $7.95), by Masanobu Fukuoka, an erstwhile scientist who became a farmer, gives at the end one man's decision in relation to war—any kind of war. He says:

> To build a fortress is wrong from the start. Even though he gives the excuse that it is for the city's defense, the castle

is the outcome of the ruling lord's personality, and exerts a coercive force on the surrounding area. Saying that he is afraid of attack and that fortification is for the town's protection, the bully stocks up weapons and puts the key in the door.

The act of defense is already an attack. Weapons for self-defense always give a pretext to those who instigate wars. The calamity of war comes from the strengthening and magnifying of empty distinctions of self/other, strong/weak, attack/defense.

There is no other road to peace than for all people to depart from the castle gate of relative perception, go down into the meadow, and return to the heart of non-active nature. That is, sharpening the sickle instead of the sword.

The farmers of long ago were a peaceful people, but now they are arguing with Australia about meat, quarreling with Russia over fish, and dependent on America for wheat and soy beans.

I feel as if we in Japan are living in the shadow of a big tree, and there is no place more dangerous to be during a thunderstorm than under a big tree. And there could be nothing more foolish than taking a shelter under a "nuclear umbrella" which will be the first target in the next war. Now we are tilling the earth beneath that dark umbrella. I feel as though a crisis is approaching from both inside and out.

Get rid of the aspects of inside and outside. Farmers everywhere in the world are at root the same farmers. Let us say that the key to peace lies close to the earth.

In his Preface to this book Wendell Berry remarks that Mr. Fukuoka is like Sir Albert Howard: They both began as scientists and then became organic gardeners. Fukuoka was working as a microbiologist as a young man when, after a serious illness, he had a psychological experience which became the beginning of his real life. The drama of such awakenings takes many forms. The unpretentious beauty of what happened to this young man—telling him what to do, but not how—needs reading in the original.

In the forty years since, he has been working as a farmer, and his success in growing rice and mandarin oranges—he has a small farm of about fourteen acres—has attracted agriculturalists from all over the world. They see his crops but they don't really understand how he does it. He tells them—his language is simple enough—but they don't seem to hear. His agricultural insight is as remote from their ways as his conception of how to assure peace.

Briefly, he hasn't plowed his land in twenty-five years. He uses no chemicals. He is a scientist who understands the relation between man and nature. No matter how rich his crops, his soil gets better and better. His secret, which is no secret, is the use of straw mulch. He doesn't flood his rice field as other farmers do. His method makes the soil hold its water and need less. He harvests between 18 and 22 bushels of rice per quarter acre—a winter crop. In this way marginal land could be returned to use. His solution for the problem of pests is almost romantic.

He teaches students how to farm, and would like to teach trained agricultural specialists, but they are inhibited by their scientific education. He says:

> Self-styled experts often comment, "The basic idea of the method is all right, but wouldn't it be more convenient to harvest by machine?" or, "Wouldn't the yield be greater if you used fertilizer or pesticide in certain cases or at certain times?" There are always those who try to mix natural and scientific farming. But this way of thinking completely misses the point. The farmer who moves toward compromise can no longer criticize science at the fundamental level.
>
> Natural farming is gentle and easy and indicates a return to the source of farming. A single step away from the source can only lead one astray.

The book is simple, but never simplistic. Fukuoka's students translated it and an American farmer living in Japan, Larry Korn, contributed the introduction. *The One-Straw Revolution* is a book non-farmers can read with pleasure, and as a cure for nightmares of all sorts.

MANAS PUBLISHING COMPANY
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 32112
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90032

$10 a Year **30 Cents a Copy**

reprinted from THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.
REPRODUCTIONS NOT PERMITTED
ISSUE OF JANUARY 29, 1981

Don't Limit Iran Inquiry to the Hostage Crisis

Viewpoint

by Morton M. Kondracke

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee's Iran inquiry apparently will focus on the hostage crisis only, but I think it should be much broader. It should encompass our entire recent experience with Iran, beginning with 1953, when the late shah was restored to his throne with the assistance of the United States. The Iran trauma is the product of mistakes by several Presidents, not just Jimmy Carter, and we need to understand what they were, the better not to make them again.

And we could make them again. There are at least a half-dozen important countries in the world governed by authoritarian regimes friendly to the United States. What should the U.S. do if Ferdinand Marcos gets into trouble with the people of the Philippines? Or President Chon, with the South Koreans? There are other Somozas in Latin America, and other shahs in the Middle East. The lessons of Iran will not necessarily apply exactly in other places. But without having looked at the Iran experience closely, we won't know the differences from the similarities.

We shouldn't repeat the mistake we made after the Vietnam war. Congress and the Executive Branch were so anxious to avoid an "orgy of recrimination" that to this day no one has conducted a searching inquiry into the lessons of Vietnam. Yet the trauma festers in the national subconscious. It causes some Americans—including Jimmy Carter, Cyrus Vance and many liberals in Congress—to be afraid to risk armed conflict under almost any circumstances. Other Americans were so wounded by America's defeat that seemingly they can't wait for a chance to send in the Marines in order to prove that we can whup *somebody*. I suspect, if the Reagan administration intervenes in El Salvador, it will be as much for that reason as out of cool consideration of the national interest. Alexander Haig should have been asked at his confirmation hearings what lessons he draws from Vietnam, but he wasn't. The Senate should correct that mistake with President Reagan's other national security appointees.

Now that Iran is replacing Vietnam as the dominant foreign policy experience for most Americans, it's important we all really understand it. I think these are some of the areas the Senate should delve into:

- The shah's regime and U.S. complicity in it. Should the U.S. have depended on Iran to guard our interests in the Persian Gulf, as the Nixon Doctrine provided, or should we have done the job ourselves? Did our policy and the weapons we sold to the shah make him a megalomaniac out of touch with his own people? What *was* the extent of corruption and torture in Iran, and could we have done more to stop it?

- U.S. intelligence capabilities. There are persistent reports that the shah demanded, and we agreed, that the CIA would conduct no domestic operations within Iran, but would depend on intelligence provided by SAVAK. Our diplomats reportedly were under similar orders to stay away from the shah's opposition. Henry Kissinger and former CIA Director (and U.S. Ambassador in Tehran) Richard Helms deny there were any such restrictions, but Carter administration officials insist there were. As a result, they say, we failed to understand the depth of public opposition to the shah and couldn't even warn him. Reportedly, we still have similar agreements with other shaky friends. I think it would prove a resounding lesson of Iran that too few of our diplomats abroad are fluent in the local language and that too many lack contact with the local population. For one of the hostages to complain of brutality because he was deprived of meals prepared by the ambassador's chef and had to eat Iranian food suggests that our embassies (like our Army) are excessively staffed with support personnel.

- Public understanding. Except for the McNeil-Lehrer program on PBS and, much later, ABC's "Nightline," American television treated the Iran crisis either as a freak show, featuring self-flagellants and fist-wavers, or as a soap opera. It's not the Senate's business to inquire why. The networks should ask themselves. The public should demand that they do.

- The shah's fall. Probably, in retrospect, the U.S. should have given unstinting political support to the shah during his days of maximum crisis. It seems clear that equivocation earned us no credit with Khomeini. But should we have encouraged the shah to jail or kill his opponents by the thousands, if necessary, to stay in power? During the shah's final days, President Carter sent Gen. Robert E. Huyser to Iran. Was it to foment a pro-U.S. military coup or prevent one? Which should it have been?

I'm confident that the Senate will look into such other questions as: Should we have let the shah into this country? Should we have negotiated when the hostages were seized, or gone to war? How were the hostages treated? Did President Carter negotiate a good agreement, and should we live up to it?

But those are the obvious questions. We need a deeper inquiry into the Iran experience. The purpose should not be to discover "who lost Iran?" but "how to save Saudi Arabia?"

Mr. Kondracke is executive editor of The New Republic magazine. He will contribute to the "Viewpoint" column on a regular basis.

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