A Meditation on the Destruction of Hiroshima

BY DANIEL BERRIGAN, S.J.

It was a day to stop the heart in its tracks.

The President exulted; the generals were jubilant. Later, in a more serious mood, Truman summed things up with laconic exactness: "We had the Bomb and we used it." It was 34 years ago this week, Aug. 6, 1945, the day an atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. Three days later, a second bomb was dropped on Nagasaki.

What Truman did not see, what very few saw except a number of pacifists, was that the humanity, the self-understanding of Americans, had undergone a sea change. The Bomb exploded in Japan, but the fallout was here. Thirty-four years later, it continues to fall.

The effects were not immediately apparent. Japan surrendered, America gave a great collective sigh of relief, the GI's came home, cold war replaced hot, Russia was contained abashed, the churches sang a muted *Te Deum*.

But a shadow lay over the sun. What was learned could not be unlearned; this was sterner than a law of nature, it was a law of conscience. We had stolen fire, the payment came due, a Promethean wild fire.

Who could have told on that August day when the guns went silent, when a living city joined the cities of the dead, who could have known what a monstrous future we had hatched? The President rejoiced. We had traded lives, theirs for ours, and won. We had delivered the Russians an exemplary lesson. The future belonged to us. The Bomb had proven itself; it was the very apotheosis of political savvy. It was manifest proof of destiny, even of divine favor, of the unassailable superiority of Western technique. It reminded God of something; that we were god-like—not his rivals to be sure, but his guardian spirits in the world.

Thus, from the beginning, a religious aura attached itself to the Bomb, and lingered there. In fact a serious case could be made for the assertion that on Hiroshima day, the Bomb gained a capital letter and the Biblical god lost one.

Such a statement is not lightly made. It is desperately important today, that we look the reality of nuclear war courageously in the face, that we announce one to another what we have seen there. Even if the sight turns us to stone—the sight not only of apocalyptic horrors, but also the sight of ourselves, a people, who seriously with forethought, are preparing our own demise.

A grinning irony, a kind of wolfish death's head looks back at us. At the moment when we declare ourselves masters of fate, Merlins who hold the key to the arcanum of the universe—at that moment our doom gathers. Masters of fate? Merlins? We are immodest, the universe will cut us down.

The first fruits of our skill and overskill, the people of Hiroshima, are long dead. A few, on this anniversary, still cling to the tree of life, scarred and ailing. But there will be also a second harvest as a greater storm shakes that tree. We shall live to feel it.

No prophetic insight is required to think such thoughts. One has only to hear the latest scares conjured by the Pentagon, to witness the scrambling of politicos scoring points at death factories and weapons fairs, to read with dismay the SALT debate in Congress, a mad tea party if ever there was one. Americans are now capable of vaporizing every living being on earth some 17 times over; our opposite number can dispose of everyone of us some eight times over. Enough? Will the generals and their henchmen in the labs and thinktanks and Congress declare a standoff, hang up their bombs and go fishing? Like hell they will.

Three decades after Hiroshima, we have by no means renounced that crime. Indeed, we are fervently preparing to destroy more than a distant city. The nuclear stakes have risen; we are now preparing simply to end the world. We are proceeding on this mad course with a persistence, skill, investment of resources, income and scientific talent incomparably greater than is expended on housing or schooling or health or food, or all of these taken together. The dollar goes where death goes; and in the mega-industry of death, the dollar goes far indeed.

The changes in Americans since Hiroshima, changes inevitable in peoples East or West, will gird us for all-out nuclear war, for such changes are above all a spiritual phenemenon; to be understood, they exact of us a painful self questioning. What is our responsibility toward the innocent, the children, the unborn? What sort of world do we want (if indeed we want a world at all) for ourselves and for them? Finally, perhaps most austerely, what do we believe in, what does our God (our gods) look like?

At Hiroshima, we underwent a sea change: the nuclear blade entered our very souls. Thirty-four years later we lead the world's weapons race; but it could as well be said that the weapons race leads us. The weapons lead our leaders. The weapons grow wise and oracular, they dictate foreign policy and domestic spending. Our true sanctuaries and synagogues are now the bunkers and Trident bases and Strategic Air Command fields. In them, the high priests of our destiny assemble: the money moguls, the political shamans, the generals incanting exorcisms against our enemies. They surround their idol, the Bomb, they invoke a tribal god-on-our-side, they pour the bowls of blood: the blood of the poor, the blood of soldiers, of civilians, of women and children, of the ill, the aged. They pour the blood of the unborn. They pour healthy blood and tainted; a great and growing flood of the latter pours out, cancerous blood, blood of the fallout.

And of money tribute, no end. Billions upon billions. Those gods, faceless, impervious, steely, their appetite is that of a thousand Neros. They will have the world raped and polluted and dumped at their feet.

Thus goes the liturgy in the caves. The sponsor of such worship is the Church of the Blind Gods, whose worship has spread with the virulence of a plague. Faith in the Bomb has absorbed other faiths, silenced them, inducted them, shamed them with its success in the world, its adherents under every sun, its command over the best and brightest; finally with its ineffable slogans: "War is Peace," "Duplicity is Truth," "Secrecy is Candor," "Terror is Peace," "Law is Order." The Church of the Blind Gods! It is aggressively ecumenical; its icons, drawn from every nation and religion, gleam in the caves and bunkers. There, the faithful may invoke Jesus-with-the-Bomb, Luther-with-the-Bomb, Calvin-with-the-Bomb, Penn-with-the-Bomb, Isaiah-with-the-Bomb. In the old images of the saints and martyrs the instruments of their death were held in hand. But the Bomb has lent them a sterner visage. They stand there in the darkness, aggressive, steely. Their eyes follow you like a war poster; The Blind Gods Want You!

Whom the Blind Gods want, they get. Especially the blind.

On the memorial to the dead of Hiroshima, the following words may be read: "Rest in peace, the crime will never be repeated."

Never? □

Daniel Berrigan, the Jesuit priest and poet, served 18 months in federal prison for engaging in civil disobedience against the Vietnam war. He now lives in New York.

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LOS ANGELES TIMES — AUGUST 5, 1979

blackburn

National Catholic Reporter
April 6, 1979

'. . . And upon this trap I will build my church'

Trenton, N.J.

AS LONG as I am borrowing Rick Casey's space (he's on vacation for three weeks), I may as well borrow an idea from him, too.

He wrote in this space two weeks ago about the strange power money has over the life of the mind at his alma mater. I have a similar story about my own alma mater, but before I get to it, I would like to state the axiom I hope to demonstrate.

It is: institutions may be founded for many reasons, but they continue in existence to perpetuate themselves.

I have, in my checkered career, worked for many institutions, large and small, public and private. With the possible exception of *NCR*, I don't think any, given the choice, would go out of business doing what it was started to do if it could stay in business doing something entirely different, even antithetical.

You will notice oil companies frantically acquiring other businesses as a hedge against the time the oil runs out. Substitutes may be found for gasoline, but Exxon will live on transmitting messages and Mobil will survive as a mail order house. (You thought they would look for more oil with their profits. But they are buying non-oil businesses with them. That's what you get for believing them.)

Now to get to my own alma mater, which has straightened out and has been flying right since the events which I am about to relate transpired. I was flacking for it at the time and had a ringside seat.

National Review, it happened, had surveyed various universities and discovered that my alma mater had an unusually high number of students who believed in God. The news should have startled no one; they were paying a premium to go to a Catholic college. You would think God might have had something to do with it for most of them.

The news so delighted our school's then-president that he wished to send copies of the article to all and sundry alumni who might have a little cash lying around to further religious beliefs. *National Review* also had learned our youngsters were more likely than their peers to favor right-to-work laws, distrust the United Nations and hold a variety of similar viewpoints the *National Review* held dear.

If one were to translate the magazine's statistics from percentages of the student body into real numbers, though, one would have discovered some oddities. More of our students relied primarily on the New York *Times* for news than there were copies of the *Times* sold within 30 miles. One could imagine James Reston being passed from hand to hand like *samizdat* at alma mater. Or one could get suspicious.

Some of our social science faculty members got suspicious. They ran down *National Review's* well-meaning pollster-in-place and found a student (engineering, as I recall) whose grasp of random sampling techniques was rather primitive. When gentle persuasion failed to dissuade the president from sending out this survey that would get no better than C-minus from the faculty, they took the unusual step of censuring him. Not that that kept the mailing from its appointed rounds, and it presumably came back with checks enclosed.

Teaching social science techniques at a university is one thing, but keeping the university afloat is another, far, far better, thing.

Now, what was operating here was nothing nefarious and malicious. It's just that you don't get to run an institution unless you are willing to do anything to keep it running. Anything within reason — which doesn't have to be very sophisticated reason — and the law insofar as your lawyers are able to interpret it favorably.

If Pope John Paul weren't running the church, he could go to Poland any damn time he wanted to. Of course, he has the institution to think about. If he doesn't accommodate the Polish government, his people will be harassed. Property may be seized. All sorts of dire things could happen — not to John Paul but to the church.

Jesus never let himself get stuck in such a situation. He went so far as to appoint the first diocesan comptroller (who sold him out), but he left it to his successors to trap themselves in an institution.

The moral is not to tear down institutions but to recognize that we keep getting stuck with them.

A few years ago, when antiestablishmentarianism was all the rage, Andrew Greeley snapped (to the effect), "As soon as three people get together to accomplish a purpose, they have to have an organization."

Greeley, of course, is from Chicago and very well knows that Tinker, Evers and Chance — "trio of bear Cubs, and fleeter than birds" — would be forgotten today if the Peerless Leader, Frank Chance, had decided he wasn't into covering first base on the day Franklin P. Adams showed up with his scorecard and rhyming dictionary.

You gotta have organization.

What you can't do is let it get you.

Herewith, a parable, which is also a true story.

Once upon a time, a man decided to start a magazine to spread the word of God. He found a printer to print it, and he began to sell it. Soon it was selling so well that his successors decided they could afford their own printing press to make the mechanical part of the operation easier.

They bought a printing press and continued to spread the word of God. Then they discovered that they could pay some of the overhead by taking in job printing. So they became a printing concern as well as the publishers of the magazine to spread the word of God. Finally, one day they discovered that the printing press was doing very well, but it could do better if it weren't bogged down every week working on the magazine they had bought it to print.

So, they folded the magazine that was founded to spread the word of God, and now they are a printer.

The moral of this story is, if you don't keep your eye on what *you* are doing, you'll discover that your institution never takes its eye off what *it* is doing, which is perpetuating itself.

— Thomas E. Blackburn

Blackburn, former NCR *staffer who is now editorial writer and theater critic for the* Trenton *(N.J.)* Times, *is a Marquette University graduate.*

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Reflections on a Pope's Visit

By Daniel Henninger

Pope John Paul II is back in Rome, and America is back to business. But for seven days the Pope had most of America's rapt attention. We know what we saw: He is a gentle man with a wide, sturdy back. His joyfulness flows from a small smile and happy eyes that one might expect in the drawings for a children's book. The Pope has great charisma; indeed, one guesses that not a few of his peers among the world's secular leadership might willingly sell a tiny piece of their souls to have John Paul's public presence. As one American Jesuit remarked, "Looking humble and important at the same time isn't easy, but John Paul does a pretty good job of it."

We know what we saw, but what are we to make of all that we heard? Despite the warm feelings he created, John Paul's words left behind a fairly difficult program for dealing with contemporary life. For instance his thoughts on the obligations of rich nations to the underdeveloped world run headlong into the cultural and political morass of development economics. His suggestions for spiritual reform could start today, but might, for some people, seem too difficult a week from today.

It is possible that as distance forms between the trip's high emotions and the flatter ground of daily life, reasons may proliferate for judging John Paul's message as inspiring — but impractical. Businessmen may say he doesn't understand economics, nuns that he doesn't understand women, married and single people that he doesn't understand the innocent and therapeutic uses of sex without intent to procreate.

Perhaps the first thing one has to do to get a clear view of John Paul's message is to have an unobstructed view of who the Pope is and what serves as the source of his opinions about society and our role in it. Normally anyone who stands up in public today to speak his mind on social justice or personal morality will be assigned a position in the ideological armies of the right or left. Thus, analyses of the Pope have him falling to the left on social issues and to the right on matters of personal morality and the American Catholic Church.

John Paul is a disciple of neither Adam Smith nor Karl Marx. He is a disciple of Christ. He is a Catholic who has just brought his message to a country that is nominally Judeo-Christian but that has become heavily secularized in recent times. John Paul believes in God, believes that Jesus was the son of God, that there is life after death and that the purpose of life is to show one's love for God by showing one's love for other men.

Intensity of Purpose

All this may strike secular ears as excessively religious, especially in the U.S., where church-state separation has historically confined religiosity to the privacy of internal prayer or ceremony. John Paul's unembarrassed expression of Christian thought derives not only from a belief in its legitimacy but from a belief that this tightly reasoned position provides the strength necessary to let church teaching stand up to competing philosophies. Indeed the Pope's gentle demeanor perhaps belies an intensity of purpose that is driving him around the world.

This is what Karol Cardinal Wojtyla said while visiting the U.S. in 1976: "We are now standing in the face of the greatest historical confrontation humanity has gone through. I do not think that wide circles of the American society or wide circles of the Christian community realize this fully. We are now facing the final confrontation between the Church and the anti-Church, of the Gospel and the anti-Gospel. . . . It is a trial of not only our nation [Poland] and the church, but in a sense a test of 2,000 years of culture and Christian civilization with all of its consequences for human dignity, individual rights, human rights and the rights of nations."

These words help explain the astonishing universality of interests displayed by this Pope. He is obviously afraid that Christian values are in danger of being decisively overwhelmed and is quite willing to take his considerable presence to the front lines. In Eastern Europe and Russia the assault on religious life is specific and systematic; John Paul went to Poland. In Latin America the danger is that the theology of liberation has roots in socialism, an ideology the Pope does not regard as compatible with Christianity; John Paul went to Mexico and warned his priests against committing themselves to political ideologies.

In the West, the threat takes form as a rising, very pleasurable secular materialism, and a steep decline in spiritual values. "A critical analysis of our modern civilization," John Paul said at the UN, "shows that in the last hundred years it has contributed as never before to the development of material goods; but it has also given rise, both in theory and still more in practice, to a series of attitudes in which *sensitivity to the spiritual dimension of human existence is diminished*" (John Paul's emphasis).

John Paul II is obviously afraid that Christian values are in danger of being decisively overwhelmed, and he is quite willing to take his considerable presence to the front lines.

Given John Paul's perspective, he had basically two choices as Pope for remedying the imbalance between material and spiritual values. He could try to somehow make Christian teaching more palatable to the "series of attitudes" he saw in modern life; or he could propose a program of spiritual values able to stand and compete on its own feet. He has chosen the latter course.

This decision puts him directly at odds with the progressives in the American Catholic Church, who have spent most of the last 15 years building a Catholicism based on the course John Paul did not take. Indeed it is not too much to say that Pope John Paul's philosophy is "out of sync" with the prevailing flow of moral thought over the past several hundred years.

Much of John Paul's thinking is based not only on the New Testament but on the Christian thought of Thomas Aquinas, whose ideas derived partly from Aristotle. All these men are natural-law philosophers in that they believe that universal truths, or objective moral laws, are knowable. This accounts for what seems to be the rule-oriented tenor of Catholic teaching. Up to the early 1960s, most Catholic schoolchildren learned their religion through rules that told them what was right and what was wrong.

Much secular philosophy, however, took a different route some 300 years ago, arguing that moral truth was a more subjective, doubtful enterprise. Subjective philosophy didn't get much of a hearing in the American church until about 1960. Since then, some prominent Catholic theologians have tried to modify Church teaching to make it more pragmatic or applicable to modern life.

The split is not academic or trivial, but goes right to the heart of John Paul's papacy and the message he brought to the U.S. Indeed it has much to do with many of the tensions now evident in American culture. Within limits, subjective thinkers argue that an individual should be able to make up his or her mind about private behavior. By this measure, the church's institutional strictures on birth control, divorce, abortion and nonmarital sex are seen as badly out of step with the prevailing culture.

Pope John Paul clearly doubts the abil-

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ity of Christian values to survive on the dominant culture's fluid terms. Instead, he is offering a stable, specific program of spiritual life, which he expects to coexist with the material culture, which John Paul, like every Pope in this century, has praised for its improvements of physical life. In a sense, John Paul has a love-hate relationship with the material culture, praising its accomplishments, condemning its selfishness.

John Paul has been Pope for less than a year and could sit in the Chair of Peter for at least 20 more years. It seems safe to assume that his alternative philosophy of life is only emerging, that he is using his travels partly to learn more of the world and that he will use what he learns to enlarge his program.

Though he said much in the U.S., John Paul seemed to have two fundamental themes, those of human dignity and self-giving (or charity). Taken together, these two ideas suggest that the Pope thinks we are, simply, caring less about each other. To hope to change that, he first has to make other people seem worth caring about in something more than a vague, social-contract sense. Thus, the concept of human dignity.

'Endowed With Dignity'

"Each [man and woman]," he said at the United Nations, "is endowed with dignity as a human person, with his or her own culture, experiences and aspirations, tensions and sufferings and legitimate expectations." This sentiment suffused nearly everything John Paul said. He used it to argue on behalf of "social justice" for the poor, a simple plea that raises complex dilemmas of implementation.

But in his last major American address, on the Capitol Mall in Washington, D.C., John Paul delivered a homily on family life, which pulled together in clear terms the theory and practice of the message he tried to express during his seven days in America:

"I do not hesitate to proclaim before you and before the world," John Paul said, "that all human life—from the moment of conception and through all subsequent stages—is sacred, because human life is created in the image and likeness of God. Nothing surpasses the greatness or dignity of a human person. . . .

"Life is also precious because it is the expression and the fruit of love. This is why life should spring up within the setting of marriage, and why marriage and the parents' love for one another should be marked by generosity and self-giving.

"The great danger for family life, in the midst of any society whose idols are pleasure, comfort and independence, lies in the fact that people close their hearts and become selfish. The fear of making permanent commitments can change the mutual love of husband and wife into two loves of self—two loves existing side by side, until they end in separation. . . .

"Each member of the family has to become, in a special way, the servant of the others and share their burdens. Each one must show concern, not only for his or her own life, but also for the lives of other members of the family: their needs, their hopes, their ideals. . . .

"All human beings ought to value every person for his or her own uniqueness [because] every child is a unique and unrepeatable gift of God."

Mr. Henninger is a member of the Journal's editorial page staff.

Weapons: Einstein would want the world to renounce them

By Theophilus Lane Barrow

Editor's note: This essay won the $1,000 first prize in the "Einstein, Man of Peace" essay contest conducted by Santa Barbara City College. The prize money was given by Irving F. Laucks, nationally known philanthropist in the cause of peace. Mr. Barrow, 32, is a graduate of City College and an English major at UCSB.

On the morning of August 6, 1945, the clear sky over the Japanese city of Hiroshima was shattered by an explosion of such intensity that it vaporized steel transmission towers and fused the sand beneath them into glass. By week's end the Japanese government had begun to count 100,000 dead. The task of burial was made easier by the incredible fact that many had simply ceased to exist — cremated in a nuclear pyre described by one survivor as "brighter than a thousand suns."

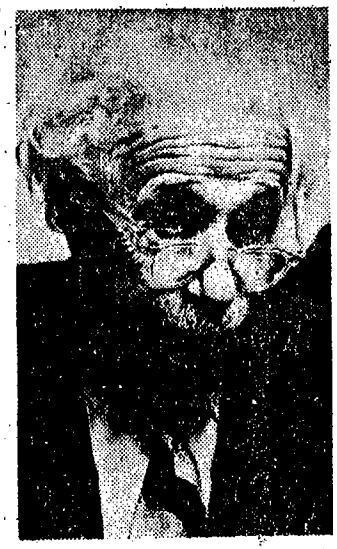
America's mood on hearing the news was essentially triumphant. Japan, it was felt, would quickly surrender in the face of this weapon. In Princeton, New Jersey, however, one man had a quite different reaction. When Albert Einstein was told of the Hiroshima bomb, he said simply and quietly, "Alas."

Einstein's despair over the bomb was deeply rooted. Throughout a life marked by genius and courage, he retained a passion for the fundamental social issues of his day. The great love and respect which he enjoyed around the world stemmed as much from his concern for humanity as from his achievements in physics. He saw, with characteristic clarity, the terrible danger which faced mankind in an atomic age. He had an absolute horror of the bomb, and it scarcely mattered to him whether it was in democratic or dictatorial hands. Until the end of his life he devoted his immense influence and prestige toward securing nuclear disarmament and world peace. In looking back on his letters and public statements, it becomes obvious that he was a man with a clear vision of the problems and a keen desire to find rational solutions.

Einstein saw that though the bomb dramatically increased the destructiveness of war, it did nothing to reduce international tensions. If anything, it heightened them. Nations persisted in planning for war at a time when it had become unthinkable. Today we are sadly accustomed to such planning. We live in a world of first-strike capabilities, kill-ratios, MIRVs, MARVs, and megatons. Any attempt to question the wisdom of our flirtation with disaster is answered with the old justification of "national security."

The conventional wisdom among many military and government leaders is that our national safety depends upon the unlimited stockpiling of weapons which we will never use. Their use is unnecessary, we are told; their very existence acts as a deterrent. Einstein, whose probing challenges to conventional wisdom earned him a Nobel Prize, saw an error in such thinking. He recognized that the impetus which leads nations to arm is security, but he denied that security is best attained by such a counter-productive methods:

The idea of achieving security through national armament is . . . a disastrous illusion. It is impossible to achieve peace when every single action is taken with a possible future conflict in mind.



ALBERT EINSTEIN
'Man of peace'

Einstein spoke these words in 1950. Their logic is as clear and compelling now as then. Yet three decades later, the United States sits atop a stockpile of 10,000 nuclear warheads, most with a destructive power over 500 times that of the Hiroshima bomb. The Soviet Union, by most estimates, has a comparable number. The Rand corporation, whose job it is to think the unthinkable, has predicted that an atomic war would kill 250 to 300 million people in Russia and America alone. The effects of residual radiation on the rest of the world are unknown. It is difficult to see any security in a runaway arms race that threatens to reduce our planet to a radioactive wasteland.

But suppose the experts are right. Suppose that the balance of terror works, and these weapons are never used. What then? Last year the United States spent over $125 billion on military appropriations. Since 1945 we have spent upwards of $2 trillion on "defense." Our present inflation is largely a result of this massive diversion of capital into non-productive hardware. This wealth could have been of inestimable benefit to mankind, in scientific and medical research, in social programs, in agricultural projects. Instead, it sits in silos and cruises beneath the oceans waiting for a signal which, we are constantly reassured, will never come. The choice is dismal: cremation or bankruptcy.

Yet there are alternatives, and viable ones. But we must recognize that they require fresh approaches, new ways of dealing with old problems. "The existence of the bomb," Einstein said, "has changed everything except our way of thinking." Yet that is exactly what must change. The actions and responses of Soviet and American policymakers are rooted in the past, tied to a type of knee-jerk nationalism that has sustained a climate of mutual suspicion and hostility for thirty years. If we hope to last another thirty, we need to accept that the old concepts of "nationalism" and "security" perished in the fireball at Hiroshima. "Past thinking and methods did not prevent world wars," Einstein continued, "but future thinking must."

This change in thinking, Einstein believed, can only come from the hearts of the people. And that, in turn, must originate with public discussion and understanding of the issues. "Only talk among men promotes feeling in the heart," which is the true wellspring of human achievement. Any definitive step toward lasting peace must, therefore, begin with our commitment to an aggressive dialogue with the policymakers, about SALT II, about "defense" expenditures, about

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human need versus national security. We need to remind military and government leaders of a fact which they so often forget — that they work for us.

Such a commitment often requires courage. Einstein's life is proof of that. But the times require courage of us all — courage to challenge the poverty of vision at the top. This country prides itself on its democratic heritage. If it seems, lately, that the voice of the people is not being heard, then it behooves us to speak louder. With the lessons of Vietnam still fresh in our minds, it should be obvious that only massive popular pressure can overcome the inertia of policy. Through public meetings, citizen's lobbies, through the media, schools and churches, we need to make clear that the survival of life on this planet requires not just arms limitation, but arms **elimination.**

This does not mean we should condemn the recent SALT II treaty as being inadequate. Far from it. Though it is true, as Einstein pointed out, that we often place too much faith in the legalisms and protocol of governments, he never suggested that we should scorn their positive efforts toward peace. The SALT treaty is a long way from disarmament, but it shows that the United States and the Soviet Union are capable of reasoning together in spite of deep differences. We should be willing to support this kind of communication, even while working for more immediate solutions.

Einstein believed that the United States, with its great wealth, its educated populace, and its democratic tradition, is in a better position to initiate a dialogue of peace than the Soviet Union. He urged the nation to accept the moral responsibility which is the true sign of greatness by making a gesture of good faith to the Russians:

At present the Russians have no evidence to convince them that the American people are not contentedly supporting a policy of military preparedness which they regard as a policy of deliberate intimidation . . . Not until a genuine, convincing gesture is made to the Soviet Union, backed by an aroused American public, will one be entitled to say what the Russian reponse would be.

Perhaps we already have some indication of that response. When the United States unilaterally stopped its atmospheric nulcear testing in 1963, the Russians followed suit, and neither country has resumed them since. The significance of this incident should not be overlooked. Without painstaking negotiation, without years of preliminary bargaining, one nation made a move toward sanity which was welcomed and emulated by its bitterest rival.

Another such gesture of courage and sanity is desperately needed. We should urge that the United States announce a unilateral halt on **all** nuclear weapons testing, with an invitation to the Soviets to do the same. If such a move seems foolhardy or naive, consider the alternatives — continued nuclear competition with its moral and economic consequences, and the increasing danger of unlimited nuclear proliferation in a world torn by factionalism.

This sort of unilateral action may offer the best way out of the nuclear stalemate. There is every reason to believe that the Russians want to end the arms race as badly as we do; the SALT agreements show that. But SALT is a painfully long process, and time is not on our side. Every passing year increases th possibility that through malice, mishap or miscalculation, we will finally destroy ourselves. We must begin now to eliminate that possibility.

Albert Einstein died in 1955. The last public act of his life was to publish with Bertrand Russell a warning to all mankind. The choice was spelled out clearly: "Shall we put an end to the human race, or shall mankind renounce war?" It is to our everlasting discredit that we did not heed him then. Perhaps it is not too late.

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