

Nuclear Disarmament

I shall never forget my first sight of what was the result of the first atomic bomb: a group of young women, eighteen to twenty years old, clinging to one another as they dragged themselves along the road. One had a blister that almost covered her chest; she had burns across half of her face, and a cut in her scalp, while great quantities of blood coursed freely down her face. On and on they came, a steady procession of some 150,000. This gives some idea of the scene of the horror that was Hiroshima.

Fr. Pedro Arrupe, SJ, who was then Superior of the Jesuit Community in Nagatsuka, Japan, 1945

Led by physicist Leo Szilard, the petition [that questioned the morality of using nuclear bombs] was signed by 155 Manhattan Project scientists at labs in Oak Ridge Tennessee and Chicago. These scientists, who had helped create the atomic bomb and fearing what they had unleashed, “urged that the bombs first be demonstrated and then locked under international controls to forestall a nuclear arms race.” They were frightened at the thought of an international arms race and the destruction that could follow.

Smithsonian, October, 2005

Catholic Social Teaching on Disarmament

The arms war does not ensure peace. Far from eliminating the causes of war, its risks aggravating them.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, #2315

The Church’s social teaching proposes the goal of general, balanced and controlled disarmament. The enormous increase in arms represents a grave threat to stability and peace. Policies of nuclear deterrence must be replaced with concrete measures of disarmament based on dialogue and multilateral negotiations.

Compendium of the Social Teaching of Church, Vatican City, 2004, #508

How can one justify that huge sums of money, which could and should be used for the development of peoples, are instead . . . assigned to the increase of stockpile of weapons?

Pope John Paul II, *On Social Concern*, 1987

We oppose the continued readiness of the United States to use nuclear weapons, especially against non-nuclear threats, and the potential development of new weapons for this purpose. . . Our nation should lead in the challenging task of envisioning a future rooted in peace, with new global structures of mediation and conflict-resolution, and with a world order that has moved beyond nuclear weapons.

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Statement on U. S. Nuclear Weapons*, 2002

The Holy See emphasizes that the peace we seek in the 21st century cannot be attained by relying on nuclear weapons. . . Nuclear weapons assault life on the planet, they assault the planet itself and in so doing they assault the process of the continuing development of the planet.

Archbishop Celestine Migliore, Vatican Representative to the U.N., May 4, 2005

Reflection Questions

1) While some say that the banning of nuclear weapons is unrealistic, others (including scientists who developed nuclear power) say it is unrealistic to think governments can keep producing and stockpiling nuclear weapons without an act of war, or an accident, that will lead to large-scale destruction of life. How does the belief in reverence for life, central to the Catholic faith, shape the Church’s response to nuclear weapons?

2) Some support for nuclear buildup is based on fear; why does the Church reject fear as a basis for the arms race?



The International Non-Proliferation Of Nuclear Weapons Treaty--1960s to 2005

In 1965, the Geneva Disarmament Conference began consideration of a draft nonproliferation treaty, seeking to promote cooperation and equal access to peaceful nuclear technology, while preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. Negotiations were completed in 1968 and the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) was submitted to UN nations. On March 5, 1970, the NPT entered into force. The United States, United Kingdom, and the former Soviet Union were among the 43 original signing nations.

From 43 original parties in 1970, the number grew to 96 in 1975, 132 in 1985, 177 in 1995, and stands at 189 countries by 2005. Israel, India and Pakistan remain outside the Treaty. (North Korea joined the NPT in 1985, but in January 2003 announced its intention to withdraw from the Treaty.) In 1995, the UN members agreed to extend the NPT indefinitely; a follow-up NPT review meeting was held in 2000. At this review meeting, the Vatican was concerned that nations were not complying with the full intent of the treaty. At the UN Summit in 2005, the Vatican echoed this concern.

Recent Vatican Responses to the NPT

In 2000, the Vatican representative to the United Nations, Archbishop Celestino Migliori, warned that the danger of nuclear war was growing, not diminishing, and the NPT must be observed "in details and in its entirety." The Vatican challenged the U.S. to display leadership in obeying the treaty. The U.S. agreed to 13 steps toward nonproliferation, but by 2005, only one step was implemented by the U.S. administration.

By 2005, the U.S. was spending more than \$27 billion on nuclear weapons. Archbishop Migliori again spoke out: "The fragile state of the NPT at this moment is very worrying, as proliferation of these weapons greatly increases the likelihood of terrorist acquisition." Migliori emphasized in September, 2005 that the Holy See supported full disarmament: "We must respond to growing dangers by uncreasing our resolve to build a body of international law to sustain a nuclear weapons-free world." **The Vatican Representative called for "courageous leadership and a high sense of political responsibility in advancing the culture of peace based upon the primacy of law and respect for human life."**

Prayer for Nuclear Disarmament

You have given us life, intelligence and the beauty of Creation, O Lord.
Your good gifts were given so we might be stewards of all that is alive.
In our arrogance, we have unleashed fearful forces that destroy.
We have brought down fierce fire from the sky.
Your children have been burned, your gentle green earth scorched.

Fear rules us now, not Love; we have given in to evils, lesser and greater.
In your mercy, help us turn from destruction, from the bombs and barricades.
Lead us to Life again, to affirmation of all goodness and to international disarmament.
With your grace, may we begin to dismantle the bombs, beat the swords into plowshares,
And so transform the nuclear nightmare into the peace you have proposed.
Hear our prayer, Lord, and guide us in your ways. Amen



Match the decade on the left with the Church's response, on the right. (See page 4 for answers)

Nuclear Development by the Decades

1940s

1945 The U.S. uses nuclear weapons to destroy the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as an effort to end World War II in the Pacific.

1949 The Soviet Union tests its first nuclear weapon ending the U.S. monopoly.

1950s

1952 The United Kingdom tests its first nuclear weapon.

1952 The U.S. detonates the first hydrogen bomb, and less than a year later, the U.S.S.R detonates its first thermonuclear weapon.

1954 The U.S. Secretary of State announces a doctrine of massive retaliation threatening the use of nuclear weapons against Communist aggressions.

1957 The UN creates the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to promote "peaceful" uses of nuclear energy.

1958 The U.S. deploys the first Intercontinental Ballistic Missile.

1960s

1960 France tests an atomic weapon.

1963 A hot line agreement between the U.S. and U.S.S.R goes into effect.

1964 China becomes the fifth nation to possess nuclear weapons.

1967 China conducts its first thermonuclear weapons test.

1968 In the late 1960s negotiations were discussed regarding the Non-Proliferation Treaty. In 1968, the U.S., U.S.S.R., and Britain sign the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

1970s

1970 The NPT enters into force.

1972 The Strategic Arms Limitation Talks and Anti-Ballistic Missile treaties are ratified by the U.S. and Soviet Union. The agreement freezes the number of strategic ballistic missiles at current level for five years.

1974 India conducts its first nuclear test.

1980s

1980 The U.S. conducts massive build-up of nuclear arms.

1985 Israel is reported to have up to 200 nuclear weapons stockpiled.

1990s

1993 Belarus (formerly a satellite of Russia) dismantles nuclear weapons and enters the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon state.

1994 Kazakhstan and the Ukraine dismantle nuclear weapons and enter the NTP as non-nuclear weapons states.

1995 180+ nations meet and agree to indefinitely extend the NTP.

1998 India tests two atomic bombs and one hydrogen bomb, insisting Pakistan is a nuclear threat. Pakistan then implements five nuclear tests.

2000s

2000 Libya is found to be in non-compliance with the NPT by IAEA and in violation of safeguards agreements. Libya then pledges to eliminate its nuclear weapons program, declare all of its nuclear activities to the IAEA, and allow immediate inspections and monitoring to verify these actions.

2001+ North Korea proceeds with unsanctioned nuclear development.

Catholic Social Teaching and Disarmament

A. "Everyone . . . must realize that, unless this process of disarmament be thoroughgoing and complete, and reach men's very souls, it is impossible to stop the arms race, or to reduce armaments, or—and this is the main thing—ultimately to abolish them entirely. Everyone must sincerely co-operate in the effort to banish fear and the anxious expectation of war from men's minds."

B. "The obvious contradiction between the waste involved in the overproduction of military devices and the extent of unsatisfied vital needs is in itself an act of aggression against those who are the victims of it. It is an act of aggression which amounts to a crime, for even when they are not used, by their cost alone armaments kill the poor by causing them to starve."

C. "The old policies of nuclear deterrence, which prevailed during the time of the Cold War, must lead now to concrete disarmament measures, based on dialogue and multilateral negotiation, which are essential values in the disarmament process."

D. "Our worldwide arms systems impinge in great measure on cultural developments. But at the heart of them all there are present spiritual questions which concern the very identity of man, and his choices for the future and for generations yet to come."

E. "With the progress of time, technology has introduced and prepared such murderous and inhuman weapons as can destroy not only armies and fleets, not only cities, towns and villages, not only the treasurers of religion, of art and culture, but also innocent children with their mothers, those who are sick and the helpless aged."

F. "The Holy See thinks that nuclear disarmament is a part of general and complete disarmament. Nuclear disarmament – like nuclear non proliferation – is indispensable for the elimination of the risk of nuclear war. However, it must be accompanied by the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction and a limitation on conventional weapons."

G. "It is by force of reason, not by force of arms that justice makes progress, and empires which are not founded on justice are not blessed by God."



Urge U.S. Leaders to Support the NPT and Disarmament

Write a letter/email or call President Bush and your Senators and Representatives in Congress, telling them that you oppose the readiness of the United States to use nuclear arms, especially against non-nuclear threats and to develop new weapons for this purpose.

Dear President Bush (or Representative, Senator, etc.),

As a person of faith, I am very concerned about nuclear arms buildup. I support the Vatican's call for complete compliance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty and for the United States to take the lead in initiating full disarmament of all nuclear powers.

I also agree with Archbishop Celestine Migliore, the Vatican Representative to the UN, who stated that the "peace we seek in the 21st century cannot be attained by relying on nuclear weapons. . . Nuclear weapons assault life on the planet, they assault the planet itself and in doing so they assault the process of the continuing development of the planet."

Sincerely,

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City, State, Zip Code

White House Mailing Address:

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Contacting the Senate: see this website for U.S. Senators Contact Information-- http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm

Contacting the House of Representatives: see this website for the Members of the House of Representatives Contact Information--<http://www.house.gov/writerep/>

Answers to the Matching Activity on p. 3

1940s -- G. (Pope Pius XII regarding World War II)
1950s -- E. (Pope Pius XII, *Summi Maeroris*, Encyclical on Public Prayers for Peace, July 19, 1950)
1960s --A. (Pope John Paul XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*, April 11, 1963)
1970s --B. (Document of the Holy See to the UN, May 1976)

1980s -- D. (Pope John Paul II, Message to the Second Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly Dedicated to Disarmament, June 7, 1982)
1990s --F. (Msgr. D. Mamberti, Statement at the NPT-V, April 24, 1995)
2000s --C. (Msgr. Renato R. Martino, First Committee of the General Assembly of the UN on General and Complete Disarmament, October 1, 2002)

