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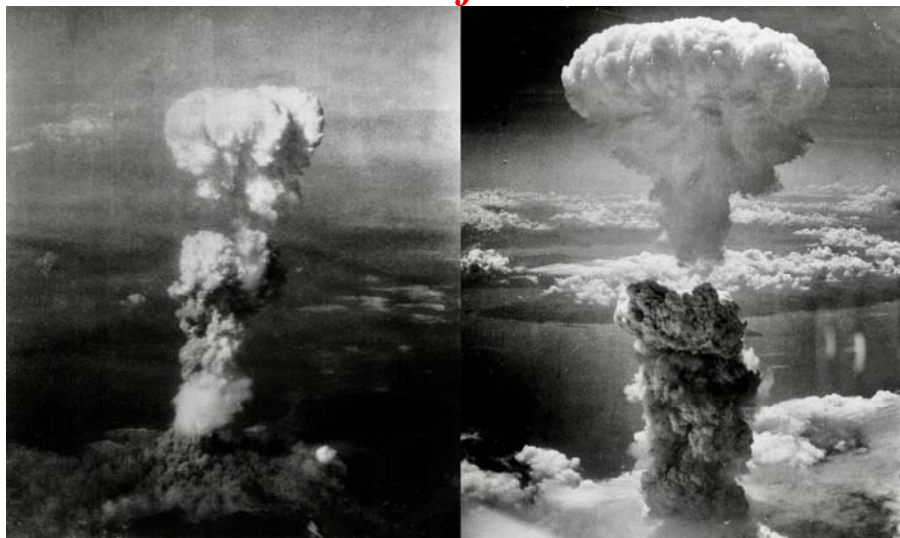
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On the Brink of Nuclear War



Atomic bombing of Hiroshima, left, Aug. 6, 1945 and Nagasaki, right, Aug. 9, 1945. Public Domain.

Depravity and hubris

The story of nuclear weapons is a story of depravity and hubris that has terrorized humanity for the last eighty years or so. The spark for that road to nowhere started during the massive slaughter of WWII. Winning the war was much more important than opening the tightly shut doors of the atom. America won the contest and used its atomic weapons to end the ferocious war it was fighting against Japan. But it was impossible to keep the secrets of bomb making secret for too long. The Soviet Union / Russia exploded its own atomic weapons and, soon thereafter, France, England, China, India, Pakistan, Israel, and North Korea joined the nuclear bomb club.

These privileged states hold the keys to the survival of humanity and the natural world. Their nuclear weapons decorate their name, prestige, and might. In theory, they are invincible. After all, who wants to start a fight with an opponent who can wipe out his country?

Almighty bombs

Since America in 1945 incinerated Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan, scientists and leaders of the nuclear-armed states have learned a lot about those terrible holocaust weapons. They stopped testing them in the atmosphere and in the seas. They signed a variety of treaties in order to lessen accidental or willful nuclear war. The purpose of those treaties did not reflect humanitarian concerns or respect for civilization. No, the reasons for caution were simple. They had discovered those weapons were so powerful that an all-out conflict was unthinkable and suicidal. No country could win a nuclear war for the war would also incinerate it.

But since the nuclear weapon countries have strategic ambitions, they act often irresponsibly. Hubris fills their brains. The United States, for example, continues to feed itself with the illusion of a planetarch / planet hegemon. This is very dangerous but extremely lucrative to the Military Industrial Complex that manufactures the munitions and the nuclear weapons of America. With hundreds of military bases all over the planet, America made war a ceaseless business. In such empire of war, nuclear weapons become part of other weapons for “defense” and for showing off. They fill submarines, land bases, and warplanes. Humanity exists but its survival is not secure at all.

America and NATO

The United States maintains its post WWII-military alliance called NATO. The opposing communist camp headed by the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact went out of business in the late 1980s – early 1990s. However, American promises not to encircle Russia did not last long. NATO recruited former Russian allies in Eastern Europe. And, finally, America’s NATO tried to get Ukraine onboard. But this effort precipitated the conflict in Ukraine and the strong possibility of nuclear war. Never before since the end of the Cold War, are tensions so high between Russia and NATO as they are in America’s proxy war in Ukraine. Nuclear war becomes part of that tension. Russia is fighting more than Ukraine. It is fighting NATO and, therefore, America. The President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, has warned NATO that their arming of Ukraine may prompt him to use a tactical nuclear weapon, which might lead to nuclear war and the end of civilization.

The warning of President John Kennedy

President John Kennedy realized that stockpiles of almighty nuclear weapons undermined peace and civilization. No doubt he remembered Eisenhower's warning about the warmongering of the Military Industrial Complex. He said peace was better than war. In a Commencement Address, reminiscent of Pericles' Funeral Oration, he delivered at the American University in Washington, DC, he defined what peace meant to him. This was June 10, 1963. He said America ought to seek peace:

“Not a Pax Americana enforced on the world by American weapons of war. Not the peace of the grave or the security of the slave. I am talking about genuine peace, the kind of peace that makes life on earth worth living, the kind that enables men and nations to grow and to hope and to build a better life for their children—not merely peace for Americans but peace for all men and women—not merely peace in our time but peace for all time... based not on a sudden revolution in human nature but on a gradual evolution in human institutions—on a series of concrete actions and effective agreements which are in the interest of all concerned. There is no single, simple key to this peace—no grand or magic formula to be adopted by one or two powers. Genuine peace must be the product of many nations, the sum of many acts. It must be dynamic, not static, changing to meet the challenge of each new generation. For peace is a process—a way of solving problems.”

Nuclear weapons are colossal infernos — and annihilation

President Kennedy admitted that the explosive power of one nuclear weapon equaled the destructive effects of all weapons exploded in WWII. In other words, nuclear or hydrogen bombs are not simply TNT explosives. They are awesome machines of massive death, destruction, annihilation, and darkness. A typical megaton power nuclear bomb explodes with a fierce blinding lightning, thunder, earthquake roar and a shock wave at supersonic speed that leaves nothing standing. A nuclear weapon exploding is the unbearable million degrees temperature that instantly transforms life and matter into ash. This includes people, animals, buildings, steel, asphalt, oil, trees, forests, and entire cities. The colossal inferno becomes a mechanical factory of death, sucking up all burned life and matter into a mushroom cloud lifting everything to high altitudes in the sky. This cloud of death hides the Sun. Then darkness takes over. It brings fallout of ash loaded with deadly radiation. The fallout also brings down dirty smoke and wastes, all touched by disease and death.

Why the holocaust nuclear weapons

So, you may ask, why would humans, who pretend they are civilized, have such awful holocaust weapons? Not exactly to protect themselves against people possessing similar extermination technologies. What is it, then, behind these weapons?

Hubris is the main cause of living with perpetual terror. Hubris is arrogance and excessive pride, a feeling of being the best. Of course, such self-delusions are rarely accurate. Scientists caught in the hubris of war brought these weapons into being, defiling their knowledge and ethics never to cause harm. And once a state like America started building these weapons, an industry was born to do just that. Hubris and profit make a permanent partners. You need be an idiot not to realize the risks these weapons represent. They are shining death looking at you straight in the face.

But modern people, especially those who fought WWI and WWII, lost their humanity because they saw so much violence and death. They kept calling for democracy and civilization like girls putting on lipstick. Democracy and civilization would never allow holocaust next to their beds. So, can we do something to avoid the high tensions and hatred of the current wars, in Ukraine and Israel? These wars are potential sparks for nuclear catastrophes. This is especially true in Ukraine because Ukraine is the warpath between nuclear armed Russia and America.

Public demands for the abolition of nuclear weapons

Americans and Europeans must wake up and demand the end of these wars. In fact, NATO must be abolished. Its reason for being, the Warsaw Pact, no longer exists. Europeans should unite, forming a real union that includes Russia and Ukraine. That alone would bring the Ukraine war to an end and, therefore, significantly diminish the threat for nuclear war. Such prospect would be a radical remaking of both EU and EU-US relations. Russia is a gigantic country with European civilization dating to more than a millennium. Together, EU and Russia, would become a powerful union to protect all the people of Europe. They must tell America to be simply a good friend, nor a nuclear weapons master. Which means more than ending the war in Ukraine and Israel. There must be global nuclear disarmament, period. An agency should be charged to oversee the disarmament and dismantling of the nuclear bombs. These weapons are designed to end life. We either abolish them or they are certain to abolish us.

Abolishing the nukes ought to start the remaking of a world order that ensures the integrity of the borders of all countries, which are members of the United Nations. For example, Cyprus is a member of the European Union and the United Nations. With the blessings of America and England, the Turks invaded the island in 1974 and still occupy about 40

percent of Cyprus. The new post nuclear weapons international system and the real European Union should order Turkey to withdraw its troops from Cyprus. The new global political system must fund and support an institute that guarantees peace between all nations, but especially those that abandon nuclear weapons. A proper name for such international organization could be Peace Institute.

Most conflicts trace their origins in religious differences and the legacies of European colonialism. Another major factor is the wrong ambition – hubris — of some states to dominate their neighbors. America, Russia, China, India, and the European Union working together can start the thinking and daring political action of remaking the modern world more just, humane, and ecological. The integrity of nature is extremely important for human survival and flourishing.

America must be willing to abandon NATO and treat Russia as equal. The US should also stop arming Taiwan, signaling it agrees with the island's union with China. As for the antagonism between China and India, there ought to be a formal treaty resolving the differences between these two giant countries. Moreover, scientists responsible for nuclear bombs need to rethink their disciplines and mission. Above all, our world must be made free of nuclear weapons. That would help humanity to fight another powerful enemy, climate change.

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