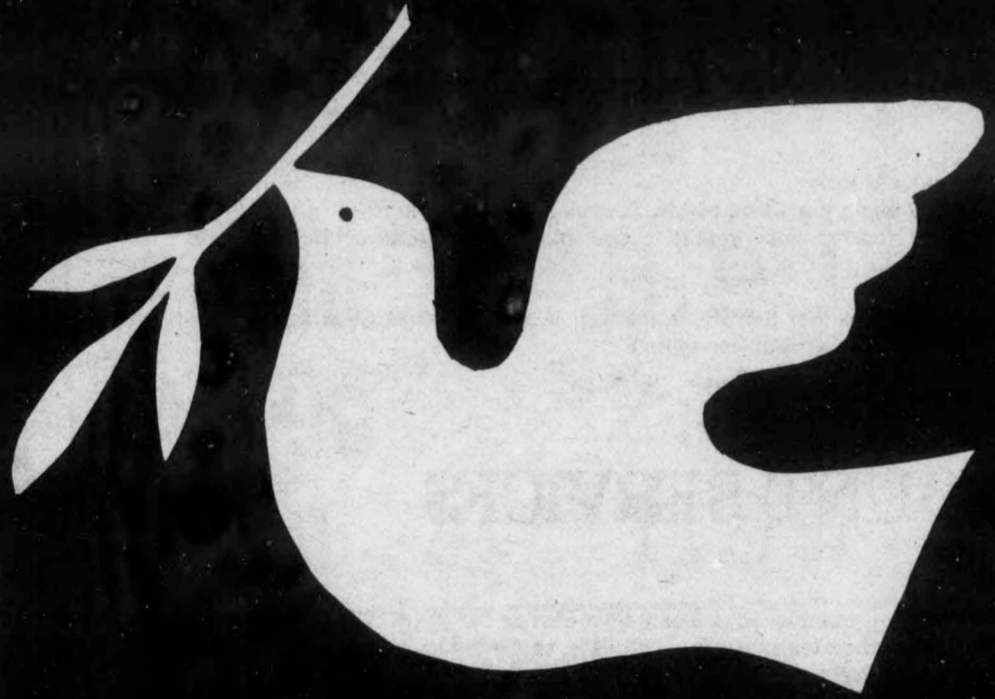


DISARMAMENT WILL COME ONE WAY ... OR ANOTHER



Editor's note:

This is the second installment of a two part article dealing with the issue of disarmament in keeping with the aims of International Disarmament Week.

The entire firepower of World War II was + megatons; (1 megaton = one million tons of TNT) the existing firepower of nuclear weapons is 18,000 megatons; equal to 6,000 World War IIs. The statistics and the implications are terrifying. Inga Thorsson, a former Under-Secretary of State for the Swedish government and a delegate to various UN bodies asks:

"What does this destructive power, beyond anyone's imagination, really mean? I must frankly state that it is beyond my understanding." Even those who once developed nuclear weapons and at one time elaborated the nuclear doctrines now call into question the concepts of deterrence, of balance of terror and nuclear strategies and tell us enough is enough, that we have to reconsider and change course.

We, like Inga Thorsson do not pretend to understand the rationale behind the development of the arms race, however, we can by briefly relating two aspects of the nuclear arms issue, make you, the reader, aware of our rationale.

An advertisement placed in the New York Times by the Physicians for Social Responsibility provided the following facts: "...the effect of one single 20 megaton bomb exploded at ground level on an American city would produce a fireball one and a half miles in diameter and have a temperature of 20-30 million degrees Fahrenheit, vaporizing everything. At six miles from the explosion centre a silent heat flash moving at the speed of light would kill everyone. To ten miles there would be 50% dead and 40% injured and to twenty miles 50% dead or injured by direct heat and blast.

Random, spontaneous fires from gas lines and oil storage tanks would coalesce into a firestorm 1,000 square miles in area. Immediate deaths would be between one and two million people. Any survivors of this would die of radiation - and everyone up to 100 miles downwind could receive a lethal dose of radiation. Sublethal dose of radiation would produce fetal malformation, cancer and persistent genetic change. A calcula-

tion of 1 megaton = 1 megadeath is probably approaching the likely facts.

If a firestorm is generated, the lethal area is increased five-fold. This can occur because a pressure wave travels outwards at more than the speed of sound, followed by a wind greater than 1500 km per hour. The surrounding air rushes in and fans fires which, inevitably, have started."

One U.S. government estimate is that 150 million people would die in an all-out nuclear attack on the United States. Food, air and water would be contaminated. Survivors would die of thirst and starvation, radiation sickness and uncontrolled infection. The widespread destruction of hospitals and health personnel would incapacitate health care. Dr. Ron Bates a Canadian delegate of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, sponsored by Science for Peace, a UNB-F based peace group, spoke at MacLaggan Hall on September 27th and warned his audience of this. He also stated "There is no medical response to nuclear war."

The British Medical Association agrees, and in its 1983 report states that a nuclear exchange would kill most doctors and nurses; drugs would be scarce, law and order would break down; diseases such as tuberculosis and cholera would break out; in short, the BMA says, civilized life as we know it, and the human values and ethical standards upon which the practice of medicine are based, would cease to exist. Britain's government claims that rescue services could help immediately after a nuclear attack...the BMA refers to this hope as dangerously unrealistic.

Another factor that must be considered is the economic one. The arms race is draining the economy. According to a study by a coalition of arms control groups, World Military and Social expenditures 1982, nuclear and conventional arms races have wasted resources without enhancing international security.

"Under its heavy military burden, the global economy has suffered", writes the author of the study, Ruth Leger Sivard. "The diversion of resources from civilian needs is a silent killer, curbing productivity and development, and adding more millions to the hundreds of millions of people who lack the most basic necessities for life." The report, using information supplied by the Pentagon, the C.I.A., United Nations organiza-

tions and several international organizations, including Project Ploughshares, claims that "...World Military costs have risen to \$600 billion a year, well over \$1 million a minute."

One person in five is trapped in degrading poverty, malnourished, illiterate, surviving at a level below human decency. At least 450 million people in the world suffer from malnutrition and hunger.

The global social deficit is large and continually growing. But solutions are within the power of the world community, given the political will. One natural starting point is the reduction of the world's massive military burden. The economic objective is two-fold: to release public funds and to reduce the harmful effect of military spending on the world economy.

A rough financial estimate based on World Bank studies indicates that in order to meet the basic needs of all mankind, it would take \$125 billion invested over a ten year period and broken down into:

NEED	BILLIONS OF \$
Food and nutrition	42
Education	25
Rural/urban water supply	28
Urban housing	16
Urban transport	8
Population and health programs	6

Arms spending by the developed nations is currently estimated at between \$200-250 billion per year!

Briefly then, there is no defence against nuclear attack...it means the destruction of the fabric of human society. It means extinction. The only hope is to rouse the concern and the anger of the people. This last point is one of the aims of WORD - we hope to do this by way of information booths, workshops, sponsoring speakers, distributing pamphlets and publishing articles such as this.

Like a member of the Physicians for Social Responsibility I entertain the hope that we can save the frail beauty of this world; I believe that we who are desperately worried and afraid, are part of the majority of humankind. I believe that the future lies with us...or there is none.