

<http://www.nrdi.org/nuclear/NuclearP05.html>

Statement of [Bishop William B. Oden](#)

Reversing the nuclear arms race is the highest priority for the citizens of planet earth. It cuts across national and cultural agendas. There can be no true world peace as long as we depend on our weapons of massive destruction. Nuclear weapons—whether large or small—continue to create barriers of distrust between nations. Any peace that establishes a stable future *cannot* be based on fear of reprisal by nuclear weapons. This is why it is essential to bring military and religious leaders together on this issue. The cause is no less important to one community than the other.

<http://www.nrdi.org/nuclear/NuclearP02.html>

Statement of [Dr. Muzammil H. Siddiqi](#)

All praise is due to God, the Lord and Nourisher of the worlds. Praise be to God for this day. Who could have dreamed that a day like this would come in our life or in the life of our generation? How wonderful it is to see the prominent religious and military leaders of this nation come together to declare that it is "morally untenable and militarily unjustifiable" to produce, acquire or continue to possess the nuclear weapons. It is nothing but the blessing of God that this nation, that is so very capable to produce more of these most powerful nuclear weapons, has some of its leaders share their insight and wisdom — to come forward to say "no" to these weapons.

Blessed are the peacemakers and blessed are those who practice what they preach. We in the United States must take lead to stop the nuclear arms race. This race is against the human race. In this race there will be no winners, only losers. It is nothing but destruction, for humans and their environment. We must say to ourselves first and then to the world that we want a total and universal ban on the possession and production of nuclear weapons. All countries, starting with those that have the largest amount of nuclear weapons, should destroy these weapons. There should be a total ban on their production and testing. Nuclear technology should be used only for humanitarian and peaceful purposes.

As a Muslim, I fully support this declaration, and I urge all Muslims of America and the world to support it. Islam stands for peace and protection of all human beings and their environment.

Islam is against any war in which the innocent and the non-combatants are made to suffer. God says in the Qur'an:

"...Be not cast to ruins by your own hands. Do good. Indeed God loves those who do good."

(2:195) "...Help one another unto righteousness and pious duty, but help not one another unto sin and transgression..." (5:2)

Thank you and may God bless you.

<http://www.nrdi.org/nuclear/NuclearP07.html>

Statement of [Rabbi David Saperstein](#)

In the Bible it was commanded that before the Israelite army could engage in warfare, the priests needed to read to the assembled the rules of what was ethically permitted in warfare and what was prohibited. That interaction between religion and the military created the first ethical strictures of warfare—the foundation of what later became known as "just war theory."

Today we religious and military leaders continue this tradition. We stand together in this House of God, informed by our values, aware of the horrible human cost of war and conflict, weary of the threat posed by nuclear proliferation—to call upon Congress, the President, the American military, and the American people to lead the way towards a process of nuclear reduction and disarmament.

I am here representing the Reform Jewish Movement with some 1.5 million Reform Jews and 1,700 Reform Rabbis in 900 congregations in North America. For we Jews know, perhaps better than most, the danger of linking destructive technology with man's inhumanity to man.

As Samuel Pisar, the eloquent Holocaust survivor said in his extraordinary speech before the Israeli Knesset at the Second Gathering of Holocaust Survivors:

To us, the Holocaust is not only an indelible memory of horror; it is a permanent warning. For we have seen the end of creation. In the shadow of permanently flaming gas chambers, where Eichman's reality eclipsed Dante's vision of hell, we have witnessed a pilot project of the destruction of humanity, the death rattle of the entire species on the eve of the atomic age, of thermonuclear proliferation - the final solution.

Here, with the authority of the numbers engraved on our arms, we cry out the commandments of six million innocent souls, children, of whom I used to be one: never again! From where, if not from us, will come the warning that a new combination of technology and brutality can transform the planet into a crematorium? From where, if not from the bloodiest killing ground of all time, will come the hope that coexistence between so called "hereditary enemies" is possible—between Germans and Frenchmen, Chinese and Japanese, Americans and Russians; above all, coexistence between Arabs and Jews?

Towards that end, at this crucial crossroads of history, we join to call on the world to recognize that violence begets violence; that nuclear proliferation benefits no one; that we can, we will, and we must find other ways to protect ourselves, our nations and our future: for it is not sufficient to have peace in our time, but, instead, we must leave a peaceful world to our children. That is the vision that should link every true soldier and every religious person together. It is the vision that brings us here today.

The Torah instructs us: "Seek peace and pursue it." Our tradition teaches that there are no purposeless words in the Torah, that each and every word carries meaning. So why "seek peace and pursue it?" Is it not enough to seek peace, to actively search it out? Is it not enough to pursue peace, to proactively work for it? Perhaps the injunction of seek peace and pursue it teaches us that peace, lasting peace, is something which we need to hand down from generation to generation.

Editing and additions to Religious Statements

Pax Christi International

Modify as follows introduction to Statement

*In 2000 Pax Christi International published **New Challenges on Nuclear Disarmament**
Agenda: A Call and Statement on Nuclear Disarmament. [URL to be supplied] Signed by
74 bishops from 20 nations on five continenst, the statement declared:*

Additions to Religious Statements.

(1) At the beginning, add in block form the following:

This web page contains statements on nuclear weapons by a variety of religious bodies and religious leaders. Most of them have been made since the end of the Cold War. Without exception they oppose the use of nuclear weapons. Most speak in favor of the elimination or abolition of nuclear weapons. Although some accept the doctrine of nuclear deterrence during an interim period until nuclear weapons are totally eliminated, most oppose nuclear deterrence here and now.

(2) For the introductory paragraph of **Report of the Sixth Assembly (1983)**, amend and add:

The most fully development statement on nuclear disarmament by the World Council of Churches occurred in "Gathered for Life: Official Report of the Sixth Assembly", which met in Vancouver, Canada in 1983. On this occasion the World Council of Churches rejected the doctrine of nuclear deterrence and unequivocally declared

" that the production and deployment as well as the use of nuclear weapons are a crime against humanity and that such activities must be condemned on ethnical and theological grounds."

(3) For **Religious Statements to 1998 NPT PrepCom**, amend and add:

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) has provisions for a Review Conference every five years. In each five year period an NPT Preparatory Committee meets several times to prepare for the next Review Conference. For the 1998 session in Geneva, Switzerland two statements laid out the religious case for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

A joint statement, Act Now for Nuclear Abolition, [below] by the heads of the World Council of Churches and Pax Christi International described nuclear weapons as grossly evil and morally wrong and stated that the doctrine of nuclear deterrence is morally corrupt. The statement offered a set of nuclear disarmament policies for the PrepCom to consider.

The Religious Working Group for Nuclear Abolition offered A Spiritual, Ethical, and Humanitarian Perspective on Nuclear Weapons [below] that spoke of the immorality of nuclear weapons from all three viewpoints. The statement characterized the possession of nuclear weapons as an addiction that could and should be cured.

(4) For the introduction of **U.S Conference of Catholic Bishops** substitute:

The Catholic Church with 60 million members and 19,200 local parishes is the largest religious body in the United States. Bishops are appointed by the pope and serve as spiritual and administrative leaders of 194 dioceses. The bishops join together as the United States

Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) to jointly exercise certain pastoral functions on behalf of the Christian faithful of the United States.

In 1983 the National Conference of Bishops (as it was then known) offer their views on nuclear weapons in a pastoral letter entitled "The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response." [link to below] Following the lead of Pope John Paul II in a speech to the United Nations, the U.S. bishops accepted nuclear deterrence "as a step on the way toward progressive disarmament". However, they noted:

"No use of nuclear weapons which would violate the principle of discrimination or proportionality may be *intended* in a strategy of deterrence."

They also stated:

"In the words of our Holy Father, we need a 'moral about-face.' The whole world must summon the moral courage and technical means to say no to nuclear conflict; no to weapons of mass destruction; no to an arms race which robs the poor and the vulnerable; and no to the moral danger of a nuclear age which places before humankind indefensible choices of constant terror or surrender."

Ten years later the U.S. Catholic bishops reflected on the status of nuclear weapons and the movement toward disarmament in a 1993 report entitled "The Harvest of Justice Is Sown in Peace". [link to below] They retained their conditional acceptance of nuclear deterrence but stated:

"We must continue to say No to the very idea of nuclear war."

They also insisted:

"The eventual elimination of nuclear weapons is more than a moral ideal; it should be a policy goal."

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The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace

[PDF document]

In November 1980 the National Conference of Bishops (as it was then known) appointed a committee of bishops, chaired by Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, to draft a pastoral letter on war and peace. The bishops reviewed two drafts and adopted the third and final draft on May3,1983. A substantial part of this pastoral letter focuses on nuclear weapons. The summary is presented below with permission.

Summary

[pp. i-viii to be added]

Continue with **The Harvest of Justice....**

(5) For Pax Christi International, substitute:

*In 2000 Pax Christi International published **New Challenges on Nuclear Disarmament Agenda: A Call and Statement on Nuclear Disarmament.** [URL to be supplied] Signed by bishops from around the world, the statement indicated:*

The need for abolition [of nuclear weapons] exists because of the real possibility that nuclear weapons could be used in anger for the first time since Hiroshima and Nagasaki, with disastrous results for the whole of humanity. In recent years, we have witnessed policies by several states to extend the role of nuclear weapons in their security policies. India and Pakistan are the most prominent examples. The USA and the Russian Federation too are modernizing and extending the role of nuclear weapons.

We call upon all states to put urgent negotiation of a nuclear disarmament convention at the top of the international agenda.

The Pax Christi International statement then presented a set of immediate steps to move us closer to abolition.

(6) Church of the Brethren. New. See RELIGIOUS STATEMENTS.text.doc.

(7) Islam. Revised. See RELIGIOUS STATEMENTS.text.doc.

(8) Statement by Rabbi David Saperstein. Revised. See RELIGIOUS STATEMENTS.text.doc.

RELIGIOUS STATEMENTS

This web page contains statements on nuclear weapons by a variety of religious bodies and religious leaders. Most of them have been made since the end of the Cold War. Without exception they oppose the use of nuclear weapons. Most speak in favor of the elimination or abolition of nuclear weapons. Although some accept the doctrine of nuclear deterrence during an interim period until nuclear weapons are totally eliminated, most oppose nuclear deterrence here and now.

INTERFAITH AND ECUMENICAL

World Council of Churches

Religious Statements to 1998 NPT PrepCom

1999 Parliament of the World's Religious

Nuclear Reduction/Disarmament Initiative (2000)

National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA

Canadian Council of Churches

Conference of European Churches

DENOMINATIONS

Catholic

Holy See

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

Pax Christi International

Pax Christi USA

Church of the Brethren

Islam

Jewish

Union of American Hebrew Congregations

INTERFAITH AND ECUMENICAL STATEMENTS

World Council of Churches

[logo] *The World Council of Churches* [www.wcc-coe.org] is a fellowship of 342 churches (that is, denominations) from virtually all Christian traditions in more than 120 countries in all continents. It formed in 1948, not long after the end of World War II. For its legislative body the WCC has an Assembly composed of representatives of member churches. It meets every seven years. Between meetings the Central Committee and its Executive Committee serve as governing bodies.

Report of the Sixth Assembly (1983)

The most fully development statement on nuclear disarmament by the World Council of Churches occurred in "Gathered for Life: Official Report of the Sixth Assembly", which met in Vancouver, Canada in 1983. On this occasion the World Council of Churches rejected the doctrine of nuclear deterrence and unequivocally declared

" that the production and deployment as well as the use of nuclear weapons are a crime against humanity and that such activities must be condemned on ethnical and theological grounds."

[PDF document]

"Nuclear Arms, Doctrines and Disarmament"

13. It would be an intolerably evil contradiction of the Sixth Assembly's theme, "Jesus Christ -- the Life of the World", to support the nuclear weapons and doctrines which threaten the survival of the world. We now affirm, as a declaration of this Assembly, the conviction expressed by the 1981 Amsterdam Public Hearing on Nuclear Weapons and Disarmament and commended to WCC member churches by the Central Committee in 1982:

We believe that the time has come when the churches must unequivocally declare that the production and deployment as well as the use of nuclear weapons are a crime against humanity and that such activities must be condemned on ethnical and theological grounds.

Furthermore, we appeal for the institution of a universal covenant to this effect so that nuclear weapons and warfare are delegitimized and condemned as violations of international law.

14. Nuclear deterrence, as the strategic doctrine which has justified nuclear weapons in the name of security and war prevention, must now be categorically rejected as contrary to our faith in Jesus Christ who is our life and peace. Nuclear deterrence is morally unacceptable because it relies on the credibility of the *intention to use* nuclear weapons: we believe that any intention to use weapons of mass destruction is an utterly inhuman violation of the mind and spirit of Christ which should be in us. We know that many Christians and others sincerely believe that deterrence provides an interim assurance of peace and stability on the way to disarmament. We must work together with those advocates of interim deterrence who are earnestly committed to arms reduction. But the increasing probabilities of nuclear war and the spectre of an arms race totally out of control have exposed the cruel illusions of such faith in deterrence.

15. Nuclear deterrence can never provide the foundation of genuine peace. It is the antithesis of an ultimate faith in that love which casts our fear. It escalates the arms race in a vain pursuit of stability. It ignores the economic, social and psychological dimensions of security, and frustrates justice by maintaining the status quo in world politics. It destroys the reality of self-determination for most nations in matters of their own safety and survival, and diverts resources from basic human needs. It is the contradiction of disarmament because it exalts the threat of force, rationalizes the development of new weapons of mass destruction, and acts as a spur to nuclear

proliferation by persistently breaking the "good faith" pledge of disarmament in the Non-Proliferation Treaty, thus tempting other governments to become nuclear-weapon states. It is increasingly discredited by first-strike and war-fighting strategies which betray the doubts about its reliability.

16. We urge our member communions to educate their members in the urgency of delegitimizing nuclear weapons and demythologizing deterrence.

17. In the meantime we affirm our support for the following specific measures:

- a) a mutual and verifiable freeze on the development, testing, production, and deployment of nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles;
- b) completion of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty;
- c) early and successful completion of the Geneva negotiations between the US and USSR for substantial reductions in strategic nuclear weapons;
- d) non-deployment of Pershing II and ground-launched cruise missiles, major reductions of Soviet intermediate range missiles including SS-20s, and successful conclusion of intermediate nuclear forces (INF) negotiations in Geneva;
- e) creation of nuclear-free zones wherever possible;
- f) cessation of all nuclear weapons and missile tests in the Pacific and a programme of medical and environmental aid to promote the health of Pacific peoples affected by nuclear activities;
- g) the negotiation of a treaty providing for the total demilitarization of space, including the banning of all nuclear, anti-satellite and anti-missile systems in space;
- h) commitment by all nuclear-weapon states to a policy of no first use of nuclear weapons; independent, non-negotiated initiatives such as a moratorium on the testing or development of nuclear weapons, renunciation of a specific weapon system, cessation of production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes, or reductions in existing arsenals or projected military.

Statement to 1998 NPT Preparatory Committee

*In 1998 Dr. Konrad Raiser, general secretary of the World Council of Churches, joined with Godfried Cardinal Danneels, president of Pax Christi International, in a statement entitled **Act Now for Nuclear Abolition** [linkage to the statement elsewhere on this page], presented to the 1998 session of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Preparatory Committee. Among other things they stated: [Insert a photo of Dr. Raiser.]*

Nuclear weapons, whether used or threatened, are grossly evil and morally wrong. As an instrument of mass destruction, nuclear weapons slaughter the innocent and ravage the environment....When used as an instrument of deterrence, nuclear weapons hold innocent people hostage for political and military purposes. Therefore, the doctrine of nuclear deterrence is morally corrupt.

Policy Statement of 2001

*In 2001 the Executive Committee of the World Council of Churches, meeting in Potsdam, Germany, issued a **Statement on Nuclear Disarmament, NATO Policy and the Churches.** [<http://www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/who/cc2001/pi5-e.html>] In this statement the Executive Committee:*

Reiterates its deep and long-standing concern at the continued risk of Creation posed by the existences of nuclear weapons.

Welcomes the Final Document [linkage to How to Get to Zero page on this web site] of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, which established a new global agenda for nuclear disarmament.

Calls upon the member states of NATO and NATO itself to ensure that their nuclear weapon policies conform to the obligations undertaken by states in the Non-Proliferation Treaty and are consistent with pursuit of the global nuclear disarmament agenda.

Religious Statements to 1998 NPT PrepCom

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) has provisions for a Review Conference every five years. In each five year period an NPT Preparatory Committee meets several times to prepare for the next Review Conference. For the 1998 session in Geneva, Switzerland two statements laid out the religious case for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

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Act Now for Nuclear Abolition

The Rev. Dr. Konrad Raiser, general secretary of the World Council of Churches, and Godfried Cardinal Danneels, president of Pax Christi International, presented the following statement to the 1998 PrepCom delegates. [insert photo of Dr. Raiser, Cardinal Danneels, and NPT PrepCom chair]

[PDF document]

The time has come to rid planet Earth of nuclear weapons -- all of them, everywhere. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Preparatory Committee has a remarkable opportunity at its upcoming meeting to set the course resolutely for the achievement of this goal.

Nuclear weapons, whether used or threatened, are grossly evil and morally wrong. As an instrument of mass destruction, nuclear weapons slaughter the innocent and ravage the

environment. This was quite apparent in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The same result would probably occur in any further use, and indeed would be worse because of the increased destructive power of modern nuclear weapons.

When used as an instrument of deterrence, nuclear weapons hold innocent people hostage for political and military purposes. Therefore, the doctrine of nuclear deterrence is morally corrupt. It loses sight of the inviolable connection between means and end by failing to recognize that just ends cannot be achieved through wrongful means.

During the past 50 years the production and testing of nuclear weapons has proven grievously harmful to individuals and the environment in the vicinity of mining operations, processing plants, production facilities, and test sites. Numerous locales are burdened with lingering radioactivity and deadly waste products that will take decades to clean up. Some sites may never be restored to safe occupancy.

Psalm 24 teaches, "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein." The First Book of Moses, also known as Genesis, indicates that God made Earth available to humankind to till and keep, that is, to use for mutual benefit and to preserve. Because production and use of nuclear weapons causes grave harm to Earth and its inhabitants, we as good stewards of God's Earth have an obligation to rid the world of this perilous threat.

Numerous religious bodies have condemned nuclear weapons and have called for their abolition. Thus, the Sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches in 1983 stated: "We believe that the time has come when the churches must unequivocally declare that the production and deployment as well as the use of nuclear weapons are a crime against humanity and that such activities must be condemned on ethical and theological grounds. Furthermore, we appeal for the institution of a universal covenant to this effect so that nuclear weapons and warfare are delegitimized and condemn as violations of international law."

Speaking for the Holy See before the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly on October 15, 1997, Archbishop Renato Martino stated: "Nuclear weapons are incompatible with the peace we seek for the 21st century. They cannot be justified. They deserve condemnation. The preservation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty demands an unequivocal commitment to their abolition...This is a moral challenge, a legal challenge and a political challenge. That multiple-based challenge must be met by the application of our humanity."

In principle the nations of Earth agree on the need to eliminate nuclear weapons. Indeed, they have made a strong commitment in Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) "to the cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament." After reviewing this article at the request of the General Assembly of the United Nations, the International Court of Justice unanimously agreed that "There exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control."

Now is the time to take this obligation seriously. We call upon the members of the NPT Preparatory Committee to make the 1998 session a notable landmark in the journey toward the abolition of all nuclear weapons.

First, we ask the delegates to call resolutely upon the nuclear weapon states to embark upon a series of steps along the road leading to nuclear abolition. There is broad consensus among study commissions, retired generals and admirals, scientists, and other civilian experts on what these steps should be. They include:

- Declare a policy of no first use amongst themselves and non-use in relation to non-nuclear weapon states.
- Cease all research, development, production, and deployment of new nuclear weapons.
- Refrain from modernizing the existing nuclear arsenal and increasing the number of deployed nuclear weapons.
- Take all nuclear forces off alert and remove warheads from delivery vehicles.
- Achieve faster and deeper bilateral reduction of nuclear weapons by the United States and Russia.

It would be appropriate for the NPT Preparatory Committee to require the nuclear weapon states to provide annual progress reports on how they are carrying out such measures.

Second, we ask the delegates to take the lead in commencing the process of developing a nuclear weapons convention to outlaw and abolish all nuclear weapons. One appropriate method would be to establish a working group of the NPT Preparatory Committee for this purpose. Although the nuclear weapons states should be part of this process, other nations need not wait until they are willing to become engaged. Rather as stewards of God's Earth, non-nuclear weapon states can begin the task of developing a nuclear weapons convention that specifies a fair and effective program to abolish all nuclear weapons.

We appeal to delegates to the NPT Preparatory Committee to consider what is best for the whole Earth and its inhabitants when they vote on issues of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. Loyalty to all humankind exceeds that of loyalty within political blocs of nations. We urge delegates to act now decisively and courageously for the benefit of all the peoples of Earth.

Godfried Cardinal Danneels, President
Pax Christi International

Rev. Dr. Konrad Raiser, General Secretary
World Council of Churches

March 1998

Co-Signers

The following religious leaders co-signed the statement, "Act Now for Nuclear Abolition".

[format into two columns]

Archbishop Michael
Metropolitan Bishop
Greek Orthodox Church in Austria
President, Ecumenical Council of
Churches in Austria

Superintendent Helmut Nausner
United Methodist Church in Austria
Secretary, Ecumenical Council of Churches

Christine Gleixner
Mother Superior of the Order, Sisters of Bethany, and Vice Chair, Ecumenical Council of
Churches in Austria

Rev. Ivan Petkin
Bulgarian Orthodox Church in Austria

Rev. Johannes El Baramousy
Koptic Orthodox Church in Austria

Bishop Mag. Herwig Sturm
Lutheran Church in Austria

Bishop Bernhard Heitz
Old Catholic Church, Austria

Bishop Dr. Heinrich Fasching
Roman Catholic Church
President, "Justitia et Pax" in Austria

Metropolit Archbishop Ireneji
Russian Orthodox Church in Austria

The Most Rev. J. Barry Curtis
President, Canadian Council of Churches

Archbishop Michael G. Peers
Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada

The Rev. Arie G. Van Eek
Council of Christian Reformed Churches
in Canada

The Rev. Telmor Sartison, Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada
Marvin Frey
Executive Director
Mennonite Central Committee Canada

The Rev. John D. Congram
Moderator
The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Gale Wills

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
in Canada

Commissioner Donald V. Kerr
Territorial Commander
The Salvation Army, Canada

The Very Rev. Bill Phipps
Moderator
United Church of Canada

Rev. Dr. Lothar Engel
Deputy General, Association of Protestant Churches and Missions in Germany

Bishop Dr. Walter F. Klaiber
United Methodist Church in Germany

Rev. John Reardon
General Secretary
Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland

D. Dr. Béla Harmati
Bishop of the Lutheran Church
President, Ecumenical Council
of Churches in Hungary

Dr. Zoltán Bóna
General Secretary, Ecumenical Council
of Churches in Hungary

Rev. Domenico Tomasetto
President, Federation of Protestant
Churches in Italy

Rev. Kenichi Otsu
General Secretary,
National Christian Council in Japan

Rev. Samuel I. Koshiishi
Acting General Secretary
Nippon Sei Ko Kai
(Anglican/ Episcopal Church)

Rev. Junichiro Naito
Executive Secretary
Japan Baptist Convention

Rev. Masakazu Asami

President
Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church

Rev. Satoru Gohada
President
Japan Free Methodist Church

Rev. Sadao Ozawa
General Secretary
United Church of Christ in Japan

William V. Robinson
President, CCANZ (Conference of Churches in Aotearoa New Zealand)

Rev. Jennifer Dawson
President, CCANZ

Rev. Max Reid
President, CCANZ

Mrs. Jan Cornack
General Secretary, CCANZ

Rev. Billy Taranger
President, Christian Council of Norway

Rev. Ingrid Vad Nilsen
General Secretary
Christian Council of Norway

Bishop Nifon of Slobozia and Calarasi
President, Ecumenical Association
of Churches in Romania

Bishop Christoph Klein
Evangelical AC Church in Romania
Vice President, Ecumenical Association
of Churches in Romania

Bishop Kalman Csiha
Reformed Church of Transsylvania
Member, Administrative Council
Ecumenical Association of Churches
in Romania

Christian Teodoresu
General Secretary, Ecumenical Association
of Churches in Romania

Rev. Thord-Ove Thordson
General Secretary
Christian Council of Sweden

Rev. Tord Ström
General Secretary
Free Church of Sweden

Rev. Krister Andersson
President and General Secretary
Mission Covenant Church of Sweden

A Spiritual, Ethical, and Humanitarian Perspective on Nuclear Weapons

[PDF document]

As part of a series of presentations to the 1998 PrepCom meeting by non-governmental organizations, the Religious Working Group for Nuclear Abolition developed this statement. Co-chairs of the Working Group were Howard W. Hallman, Methodists United for Peace with Justice; Ibrahim Abdil-Mu'id Ramey, Fellowship of Reconciliation (USA); and Dave Robinson, Pax Christi USA. The final draft was polished and presented on April 28, 1998 by Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, past president of Pax Christi USA.. [insert photo of Bishop Gumbleton]

Mr. Chairman and delegates to the 1998 session of the NPT Preparatory Committee, we in the community of non-governmental organizations greatly appreciate the opportunity to appear before you and provide information on vital issues that are on your agenda. My role is to offer some ideas developed by the Religious Working Group for Nuclear Abolition.

You meet at a propitious time. With a new millennium rapidly approaching, the people of this planet would like to enter the new century free from the threat of nuclear holocaust. In the next two weeks you delegates here assembled have a great opportunity to take decisive action to set the course for the abolition of all nuclear weapons on Earth.

The moral grounds for nuclear abolition are expressed in a statement by Godfried Cardinal Danneels, president of Pax Christi International, and Rev. Dr. Konrad Raiser, general secretary of the World Council of Church, which you have received. They state

Nuclear weapons, whether used or threatened, are grossly evil and morally wrong. As an instrument of mass destruction, nuclear weapons slaughter the innocent and ravage the environment. ...As an instrument of deterrence, nuclear weapons hold innocent people hostage for political and military purposes. Therefore, the doctrine of nuclear deterrence is morally corrupt.

This view stems from a belief in the sanctity of life, a perspective shared by other world religions: Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism.

I believe that most of you today, who come from different faiths, in your heart of hearts, in the deep recesses of your mind, also understand the moral depravity of nuclear weapons. The challenge to you is to let your moral judgment guide your actions.

A statement developed for this meeting by the International Peace Conference, based in Prague, offers a pair of reasons for the total rejection of nuclear weapons: first, the threat to Creation and, second, the contribution to moral degradation.

"Nuclear weapons," says this statement, "fundamentally differ from all other weapons because of their potential to destroy all life on this planet. They are terminal in relation to Nature. They can destroy the divine Creation....They take from God the sole power to end the created order, and thus usurp the divine prerogative....Nuclear weapons stand condemned because they can destroy 'the sacred gift of life' and are thus innately demonic and blasphemous."

Secondly, the statement notes, "The terrible suffering caused by nuclear weapons, their potential for total destruction, and their perversion of the fundamental nature of matter have contributed immeasurably to the moral degradation of humanity in our time." This moral decline has escalated from the mass slaughter of World War I to the Nazi concentration camps to the mass bombing of cities in World War II to the development of nuclear weapons and their use on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the 1945. Since then "the East-West nuclear confrontation with the readiness of states to commit global genocide further hugely contributed to the moral de-sensitization of our age, now so evident in many aspects of contemporary life."

From an ethical perspective, Judge Mohammed Bedjaoui, when he was president of the International Court of Justice, stated: "The nuclear weapon, the ultimate evil, destabilizes humanitarian law which is the law of lesser evil. The existence of nuclear weapons is therefore a challenge to the very existence of humanitarian law, not to mention their long-term effects of damage to the human environment, in respect to which the right to life must be exercised."

Judge Bedjaoui spoke in connection with the 1996 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice in which the Court decided unanimously that under Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, "There exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all aspects under strict and effective international control."

Notice the words "good faith", two terms with deep religious meaning. In this context they refer to basic honesty, to abiding by one's commitment. You delegates have it within your goodness to act decisively in behalf of all us: humans, animals, plants, the whole community of life. We have faith that you will show yourself worthy of this trust.

Even if no other nuclear bomb is exploded, the Earth will remain scarred by the nuclear weapons era. Earth and its people have suffered grave harm in the mining of fissionable material, by production of nuclear warheads with the byproduct of radioactive waste, and through nuclear testing in the atmosphere and below the ground.

Beyond harm to people and environmental damage, nuclear weapons have taken an enormous economic toll. Since the 1940s the nuclear weapon states have spent more than \$8 trillion to develop, test, produce, transport, deploy, and safeguard their nuclear arsenal. This vast waste of resources brings to mind the words of U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower, himself a former general, words deemed so important that they are engraved beside his tomb in Abilene,

Kansas. " Every gun made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed....This is not a way of life at all....Under the cloud of threatening war, it is humanity hanging from a cross of iron."

The great irony is that the nuclear weapon states through these vast expenditures have failed to produce the security they seek. Indeed, it is their own people who are at greatest risk due to their doctrine of mutually assured destruction. Citizens of the allies of nuclear weapon states are themselves vulnerable to nuclear attack because of the military doctrine of the nuclear powers. Any other nation gaining nuclear weapons would join the ranks of the insecure.

Tragically the nuclear weapon states and their allies are victims of a self-imposed and self-destructive addiction to nuclear weapons. Yes, an addiction. Like many other addictions cure can come in two ways.

First, the addicted can exercise self-will, can renounce the addictive substance or orientation, and can through great determination and inner strength free itself from the addiction that is sapping its vitality. In this case, the nuclear weapon states can say individually or join together in a covenant that says, "We renounce the use of nuclear weapons for war-fighting purposes. We renounce nuclear deterrence as an instrument of foreign and military policy." Renunciation would remove the fundamental blockage to carrying out a series of actions that lead to nuclear abolition. Other speakers on this program will describe the steps that can be taken along this road.

Second, friends of the addicted can apply "tough love". They can talk firmly and insist that the addicted take the necessary steps leading out of addiction. In the matter at hand, you delegates from non-nuclear weapon states can exercise tough love by insisting that the nuclear powers embark upon a course of action that moves toward nuclear abolition. You can even develop a plan in the form of a nuclear weapons convention to outlaw and abolish nuclear weapons. Even if you are part of a political bloc with one or more nuclear weapon states, true friendship requires you to apply tough love by acting independently and supporting measures leading to nuclear abolition. Beyond that, each and every one of you has a higher loyalty to all of humankind, to the well-being of all peoples on Earth.

As you prepare to meet the challenges before you during this session of the NPT Preparatory Committee, I invite you to pause and observe one minute of silence. Draw upon the perspective of your personal faith and use this minute to reflect upon the human suffering caused by nuclear weapons in their more than fifty years of existence: the victims at Hiroshima and Nagasaki; the indigenous people and other inhabitants living in the vicinity of test sites in the western United States, Algeria, Russia, Kazakhstan, China, the South Pacific, and Australia; persons far away from test sites but harmed by drifting radioactive fallout; the people who have suffered by the side effects of mining operations and weapon production facilities.

In silence we can remember all who have suffered.. We can share together feelings of regret and contrition. You who are delegates can also use this moment to reflect on what you can accomplish in the next two weeks. You can re-dedicate yourself to working courageously and with imagination to find ways to end the nuclear arms race and rid Earth of this horrible plague on human existence.

May we pause now in silence. [One minute of silence.]

In the spirit of renewal and re-dedication, the NGO community this afternoon would like to offer you ideas on steps that can be undertaken to achieve the abolition of nuclear weapons, an achievable goal that humankind longs to accomplish. Although NGOs have various perspectives on the issues presented, we have collaborated in preparing these statements. We hope that our ideas will be useful to you in your deliberations. Throughout your session we will be available to you to elaborate on what we have presented today. We look forward to further exchange of ideas in the period leading up to the year 2000 NPT review conference.

Lastly I want to thank you personally for the privilege of speaking to you.

1999 Parliament of the World's Religions

*More than 7,000 persons from around the world assembled in Cape Town, South Africa in December 1999 for a Parliament of the World's Religions. In the course of the gathering religious leaders and people of many faiths presented **A Moral Call to Eliminate the Threat of Nuclear Weapons**. [<http://www.gs institute.org/archives/000029.shtml>] *Among other elements The Call states:**

The threat and use of nuclear weapons is incompatible with civilized norms, standards of morality and humanitarian law which prohibit the use of inhumane weapons and those with indiscriminate effects....We say that a peace based on terror, a peace based upon threats of inflicting annihilation and genocide upon whole populations, is a peace that is morally corrupting.

Nuclear Reduction/Disarmament Initiative (2000)

[logo of NRDI from www.nrdi.org] *In June 2000 at a ceremony at the Washington National Cathedral 21 religious leaders along with 18 military professionals issued a **Joint Nuclear Reduction/Disarmament Statement** [<http://www.nrdi.org/nuclear/Nuclear02.html>]. This initiative began as an interfaith project led by Washington National Cathedral, with assistance from the late Senator Alan Cranston, his *Global Security Institute* [www.gs institute.org], and the *Fourth Freedom Forum* [www.fourthfreedom.org]. After issuance of the statement the *Nuclear Reduction/Disarmament Initiative* [www.nrdi.org] evolved into an educational program and became a part of *The Churches' Center for Theology and Public Policy*, located at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, DC.*

[photo of signers with caption. "Participants in the news conference that released the *Joint Nuclear Reduction/Disarmament Statement* included the Very Reverend Nathan D. Baxter, dean of the Washington National Cathedral; Admiral Stansfield Turner, U.S. Navy (Ret.); Bishop William B. Oden, president, Council of Bishops, United Methodist Church; Dr. Muzammi H. Siddiqi, president, The Islamic Society of North America; and General Charles S. Horner, U.S. Air Force (Ret.). Rabbi David Saperstein, director, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, also participated in the news conference."

Highlights of the statement include:

We deeply believe that the long-term reliance on nuclear weapons in the arsenals of the nuclear powers, and the ever-present danger of their acquisition by others, is morally untenable and militarily unjustifiable. They constitute a threat to the security of our nation, a peril to world peace, a danger to the whole human family.

Historically, military and religious leaders have not always been in agreement on these issues, but now a consensus is emerging. National security imperatives and ethical demands have converged to bring us to the necessity of outlawing and prohibiting nuclear weapons worldwide.

We also believe that reliance on a nuclear deterrent in the long run calls into question our stewardship of God's creation.

And so it is that we now come together to bear witness anew: it is past time for a great national and international discussion and examination of the true and full implications of reliance on nuclear weapons, to be followed by action leading to the international prohibition of these weapons.

National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA

[to be added]

Canadian Council of Churches

[to be added]

Conference of European Churches

[to be added]

DENOMINATIONS

Catholic Church

[Photo of St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome] The Catholic Church is the largest body of Christians in the world. It has about 1 billion members. The pope, who is the bishop of Rome, serves as the head of the Catholic Church and governs from Vatican City, sometimes referred to as the Holy See. The pope appoints cardinals to be his main advisers. As a group, they form the College of Cardinals and elect a new pope after a reigning pope dies or resigns. The pope also appoints bishops who preside over churches in different countries.

[Side bar: Picture of John Paul II with caption: Pope John Paul II has called for the banishment of all nuclear weapons through "a workable system for negotiation, even of arbitration".]

Holy See

In recent years policy statements coming from the Holy See on nuclear disarmament have been made by Vatican delegation to the United Nations in New York. Thus, April 2002 Monsignor Francis Chullikat, deputy head of the delegation, told delegates of the NPT Preparatory Committee:

"There has been a regression" from the commitment to eliminate nuclear weapons.

And he reiterated the Holy See's policy position:

"There can be no moral acceptance of military doctrines that embody the permanence of nuclear weapons."

Five years earlier Archbishop Renato Martino, permanent observer for the Holy See at the United Nations, told the First Committee:

"Nuclear weapons cannot be justified and deserve condemnation."

He added:

"The world must move to the abolition of nuclear weapons through a universal, non-discriminatory ban with intensive inspection by universal authority."

"There Has Been Regression"

[PDF document]

Address by, deputy head of a Holy See delegation to the United Nations, to the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in New York on April 10, 2002.

Mr. Chairman, as the international community begins preparation for the 2005 Review of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, my Delegation notes the deep concern that is widely felt about the state of nuclear disarmament.

At the 2000 Review, it was felt that progress was being made. The Review obtained a clear-cut commitment from the nuclear weapon states that systematic and progressive efforts to implement Article VI would include: "An unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear weapon states to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament to which all states parties are committed under Article VI."

This commitment was embodied in a list of 13 practical steps the conference unanimously agreed to take. However, the progress made in implementing the 13 steps over the past two years has been indeed discouraging. In fact, the prospects for future implementation are alarming.

As an examination of the 13 steps shows, there has not only been a lack of sufficient progress, there has been regression. Although, thankfully, there has been no nuclear testing in this period, the entry-into-force of the CTBT cannot be seen on the near horizon. The Conference on Disarmament is paralyzed. One of the parties to the Anti-

Ballistic Missile Treaty has given notice of withdrawal. Nuclear weapons are still kept on alert status. The admonition of the International Court of Justice for the completion of negotiations towards elimination is ignored.

Even more serious than the lack of progress is the overt determination of some nuclear weapon states to maintain nuclear weapons in a critical role in their military doctrines. While the international community rightly welcomes the willingness of those with the most nuclear weapons to reduce their stocks of operationally deployed warheads, what is the real effect of such unilateral disarmament when it is not made irreversible, i.e., when such stocks can be remounted again quickly?

My Delegation is deeply concerned about the old posture of nuclear deterrence that is evolving into the possibility of use in new strategies. This must be stoutly resisted. The Holy See has constantly recalled the fact that the strategy of deterrence can be envisaged only as a stage in the process aimed at disarmament, even of a progressive nature. So long as it is taken as an end in itself, deterrence encourages the protagonists to ensure a constant superiority over one another, in ceaseless race of over-arming.

Mr. Chairman, the concern of the Holy See mounts in seeing the non-proliferation regime, with the NPT as its cornerstone, in disarray. The old policies of nuclear deterrence, which prevailed in the Cold War, must lead now to concrete disarmament measures. The rule of law cannot countenance the continuation of doctrines that hold nuclear weapons as essential.

There can be no moral acceptance of military doctrines that embody the permanence of nuclear weapons. That is why Pope John Paul II has called for the banishment of all nuclear weapons through "a workable system for negotiation, even of arbitration." Those nuclear weapon states resisting negotiations should therefore be strongly urged to finally come to the negotiating table.

In fact, in clinging to their outmoded rationales for nuclear deterrence, they are denying the most ardent aspirations of humanity as well as the opinion of the highest legal authority in the world. In this regard, my Delegation wishes to reaffirm its well-known position: nuclear weapons are incompatible with the peace we seek for the 21st century; they cannot be justified. These weapons are instruments of death and destruction. The preservation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty demands unequivocal action towards their elimination. Only when such a noble goal is attained can the international community be assured that nations are acting in "good faith".

Mr. Chairman, my Delegation is confident that the Preparatory Committee will seize this opportunity to develop a sharpened sense of urgency to root out nuclear weapons that are the biggest threat to mankind. To keep developing weapon systems that can jeopardize the natural structure upon which all civilization rests seriously undermines the genuine quest of the family of nations to build a culture of peace for the present and future generations.

"Nuclear Weapons Cannot Be Justified and Deserve Condemnation"

[PDF document]

Excerpt from a statement by Archbishop Renato Martino, the Holy See's permanent observer at the United Nations, to the United Nations' First Committee, October 15, 1997. After expressing support of the Holy See for the recently developed treaty to eliminate land mines, he stated:

[Possibly a photo of Archbishop Martino.]

If biological weapons, chemical weapons and now land-mines can be done away with, so too can nuclear weapons. No weapon so threatens the longed-for peace of the 21st century as the nuclear.

Let not the immensity of this task dissuade us from the efforts needed to free humanity from such a scourge. With the valuable admonition offered in the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice, the international community can see the legal and moral arguments against nuclear weapons intertwine with the strategic: since nuclear weapons can destroy all life on the planet, they peril all that humanity has ever stood for and indeed humanity itself.

During the acrimonious years of the Cold War with the emphasis on the military doctrine of nuclear deterrence as a constant justification for the nuclear arms build-up, the international community felt powerless to stop the relentless build-up of nuclear weapons. Not now, in the post-Cold War era characterized by new partnerships, the international community cannot shield itself from the assault on life itself that nuclear weapons represent.

The work of this Committee has done in calling for negotiations leading to a Nuclear Weapons Convention must be increased. Those nuclear weapons States resisting such negotiations must be challenged, for, in clinging to their outmoded rationales for nuclear deterrence, they are denying the most ardent aspirations of humanity as well as the opinion of the highest legal authority in the world. The gravest consequences for mankind lie ahead if the world is to be ruled by the militarism represented by nuclear weapons rather than the humanitarian law espoused by the International Court of Justice.

Nuclear weapons are incompatible with the peace we seek for the 21st century. They cannot be justified. They deserve condemnation. The preservation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty demands an unequivocal commitment to their abolition.

The Holy See has previously stated in this Committee: "The world must move to the abolition of nuclear weapons through a universal, non-discriminatory ban with intensive inspection by universal authority". Today we repeat those words, conscious that there is a gathering momentum of world opinion in support of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. This is a moral challenge, a legal challenge and a political challenge. That multiple- based challenge must be met by the application of our humanity.

U.S Conference of Catholic Bishops

The Catholic Church with 60 million members and 19,200 local parishes is the largest religious body in the United States. Bishops are appointed by the pope and serve as spiritual and administrative leaders of 194 dioceses. The bishops join together as the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) to jointly exercise certain pastoral functions on behalf of the Christian faithful of the United States.

In 1983 the National Conference of Bishops (as it was then known) offer their views on nuclear weapons in a pastoral letter entitled "The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response." Following the lead of Pope John Paul II in a 1982 message to the United Nations, the U.S. bishops accepted nuclear deterrence "as a step on the way toward progressive disarmament". However, they noted:

"No use of nuclear weapons which would violate the principle of discrimination or proportionality may be intended in a strategy of deterrence."

They also stated:

"In the words of our Holy Father, we need a 'moral about-face.' The whole world must summon the moral courage and technical means to say no to nuclear conflict; no to weapons of mass destruction; no to an arms race which robs the poor and the vulnerable; and no to the moral danger of a nuclear age which places before humankind indefensible choices of constant terror or surrender."

Ten years later the U.S. Catholic bishops reflected on the status of nuclear weapons and the movement toward disarmament in a 1993 report entitled "The Harvest of Justice Is Sown in Peace". They retained their conditional acceptance of nuclear deterrence but stated:

"We must continue to say No to the very idea of nuclear war."

They also insisted:

"The eventual elimination of nuclear weapons is more than a moral ideal; it should be a policy goal."

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The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace

[PDF document]

In November 1980 the National Conference of Bishops (as it was then known) appointed a committee of bishops, chaired by Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, to draft a pastoral letter on war and peace. The bishops reviewed two drafts and adopted the third and final draft on May 3, 1983. A substantial part of this pastoral letter focuses on nuclear weapons. The summary is presented below with permission.

Summary

[pp. i-viii to be added]

The Harvest of Justice Is Sown in Peace
A Reflection of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops
on the Tenth Anniversary of The Challenge of Peace

[PDF document]

Ten years after issuing The Challenge of Peace the National Conference of Catholic Bishops reviewed the findings of the 1983 pastoral letter and offered their reflections. The Harvest of Justice [<http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/harvest.htm>] is available on the web site of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. The section dealing with nuclear disarmament is presented below with permission.

[Perhaps a photo or drawing of a wheat field inserted into the above paragraph.]

1.Unfinished Business: Nuclear Disarmament and Proliferation

Our 1983 pastoral letter focused special attention on the morality of nuclear weapons at a time of widespread fear of nuclear war. Only ten years later, the threat of global nuclear war may seem more remote than at any time in the nuclear age, but we may be facing a different but still dangerous period in which the use of nuclear weapons remains a significant threat. We cannot address questions of war and peace today, therefore, without acknowledging that the nuclear question remains of vital political and moral significance.

The end of the Cold War has changed the nuclear question in three ways. First, nuclear weapons are still an integral component of U.S. security policies, but they are no longer at the center of these policies or of international relations. In 1983, a dominant concern was the ethics of nuclear weapons. Today, this concern, while still critically important, must be considered in the context of a more fundamental question of the ethical foundations of political order: How do we achieve *Pacem in Terris'* vision of a just and stable political order, so that nations will no longer rely on nuclear weapons for their security? Second, we have new opportunities to take steps toward progressive nuclear disarmament. In 1983, the first task was to stop the growth of already bloated nuclear arsenals; today, the moral task is to proceed with deep cuts and ultimately to abolish these weapons entirely. Third, the threat of global nuclear war has been replaced by a threat of global nuclear proliferation. In addition to the declared nuclear powers, a number of other countries have or could very quickly deploy nuclear weapons, and still other nations, or even terrorist groups, might seek to obtain or develop nuclear weapons. Just as the nuclear powers must prevent nuclear war, so also they, with the rest of the international community, bear a heavy moral responsibility to stop the spread of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons.

a. *The Moral Judgment on Deterrence.* In 1983, we judged that nuclear deterrence may be morally acceptable as long as it is limited to deterring nuclear use by others; sufficiency, not nuclear superiority, is its goal; and it is used as a step on the way toward progressive disarmament.²⁹

Some believe that this judgment remains valid, since significant progress has been made in reducing nuclear weapons, including the most destabilizing ones, while at least some of those that remain are still necessary to deter existing nuclear threats. Others point to the end of the Soviet threat and the apparent unwillingness of the nuclear powers to accept the need to eliminate nuclear weapons as reasons for abandoning our strictly conditioned moral acceptance of nuclear deterrence. They also cite the double standard inherent in nonproliferation efforts: What is the moral basis for asking other nations to forego nuclear weapons if we continue to judge our own deterrent to be morally necessary?

We believe our judgment of 1983 that nuclear deterrence is morally acceptable only under certain strict conditions remains a useful guide for evaluating the continued moral status of nuclear weapons in a post-Cold War world. It is useful because it acknowledges the fundamental moral dilemmas still posed by nuclear weapons, and it reflects the progress toward fulfilling the conditions we elaborated in 1983. At the same time, it highlights the new prospects — and thus the added moral urgency — of making even more dramatic progress in arms control and disarmament as the only basis for the continued moral legitimacy of deterrence.

b. *A Post-Cold War Agenda For Nuclear Disarmament.* While significant progress has been made in recent years, we believe additional steps are needed if nuclear policies and priorities are to keep up with the dramatic changes in world politics and if our nation is to move away from relying on nuclear deterrence as a basis for its security. Present challenges include the following:

- *The Role of Nuclear Weapons:* We must continue to say **No** to the very idea of nuclear war. A minimal nuclear deterrent may be justified only to deter the use of nuclear weapons. The United States should commit itself never to use nuclear weapons first, should unequivocally reject proposals to use nuclear weapons to deter any nonnuclear threats, and should reinforce the fragile barrier against the use of these weapons. Indeed, we abhor any use of nuclear weapons.
- *Arms Control and Disarmament:* Nuclear deterrence may be justified only as a step on the way toward progressive disarmament. The end of the Cold War, according to the Holy See, "challenge[s] the world community to adopt a post-nuclear form of security. That security lies in the abolition of nuclear weapons and the strengthening of international law."³⁰ A first step toward this goal would be prompt ratification and implementation of the START I and START II treaties. Even once these treaties are fully implemented, there will still be more than 10,000 nuclear weapons in the world, containing explosive power hundreds of thousands times greater than the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Therefore, much deeper cuts are both possible and necessary. The eventual elimination of nuclear weapons is more than a moral ideal; it should be a policy goal.

The negotiation of a verifiable comprehensive test ban treaty would not only demonstrate our commitment to this goal, but also would improve our moral credibility in urging nonnuclear nations to forego the development of nuclear

weapons. We, therefore, support a halt to nuclear testing as our nation pursues an effective global test ban and renewal of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Also, steps must be taken to reduce the threat of nuclear terrorism. We must reverse the spread of nuclear technologies and materials. We welcome, therefore, U.S. efforts to achieve a global ban on the production of fissionable materials for use in nuclear weapons. Finally, one should not underestimate the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency as a forum for the discussion of these issues and as a force encouraging nations to take the steps necessary in this area.

- *Cooperative Security and a Just International Order:* The nuclear powers may justify, and then only temporarily, their nuclear deterrents only if they use their power and resources to lead in the construction of a more just and stable international order. An essential part of this international order must be a collective security framework that reverses the proliferation of nuclear weapons, guarantees the security of nonnuclear states and ultimately seeks to make nuclear weapons and war itself obsolete. The United States and other nations should also make the investments necessary to help ensure the development of stable, democratic governments in nations which have nuclear weapons or might seek to obtain them.

An active commitment by the United States to nuclear disarmament and the strengthening of collective security is the only moral basis for temporarily retaining our deterrent and our insistence that other nations forego these weapons. We advocate disarmament by example: careful but clear steps to reduce and end our dependence on weapons of mass destruction.

In our five-year report on *The Challenge of Peace*, we said: "To contain the nuclear danger of our time is itself an awesome undertaking. To reshape the political fabric of an increasingly interdependent world is an even larger and more complicated challenge."³¹ Now, on this tenth anniversary, we must be engaged in the difficult task of envisioning a future rooted in peace, with new institutions for resolving differences between nations, new global structures of mediation and conflict-resolution and a world order that has moved beyond nuclear weapons once and for all. We are committed to join in this struggle, to bring the Gospel message of justice and peace to this vital work.

²⁹ *The Challenge of Peace*, nos. 186-188.

³⁰ Archbishop Renato Martino, "Address to the United Nations Committee on Nuclear Disarmament," *Origins* 23:21 (November 4, 1993), 382.

³¹ United States Catholic Conference, *A Report on The Challenge of Peace and Policy Developments 1983-1988* (Washington, D.C.: USCC Office for Publishing and Promotion Service, 1988), no. 129.

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[logo from www.paxchristi.net] *Pax Christi International* [www.paxchristi.net] is a non-profit, non-governmental Catholic peace movement that began in France at the end of World War II. Today, it is comprised of autonomous national sections, local groups, and affiliated organizations spread over 30 countries and 5 continents, with over 60,000 members worldwide. The movement works in all areas of peace but has a specific focus on demilitarization, security and arms trade, development and human rights, and ecology.

In 1998 Godfried Cardinal Danneels, president of Pax Christi International, joined with the Rev. Dr. Konrad Raiser, general secretary of the World Council of Churches in a statement entitled **Act Now for Nuclear Abolition** [linkage to the statement elsewhere on this page], presented to Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Preparatory Conference. Among other things they stated: [Insert photo of Cardinal Danneels]

Nuclear weapons, whether used or threatened, are grossly evil and morally wrong. As an instrument of mass destruction, nuclear weapons slaughter the innocent and ravage the environment....When used as an instrument of deterrence, nuclear weapons hold innocent people hostage for political and military purposes. Therefore, the doctrine of nuclear deterrence is morally corrupt.

In 2000 Pax Christi International published **New Challenges on Nuclear Disarmament Agenda: A Call and Statement on Nuclear Disarmament**. [URL to be supplied] Signed by bishops from around the world, the statement

The need for abolition [of nuclear weapons] exists because of the real possibility that nuclear weapons could be used in anger for the first time since Hiroshima and Nagasaki, with disastrous results for the whole of humanity. In recent years, we have witnessed policies by several states to extend the role of nuclear weapons in their security policies. India and Pakistan are the most prominent examples. The USA and the Russian Federation too are modernizing and extending the role of nuclear weapons.

We call upon all states to put urgent negotiation of a nuclear disarmament convention at the top of the international agenda.

The Pax Christi International statement then presented a set of immediate steps to move us closer to abolition.

Pax Christi USA

[logo from www.paxchristiusa.org] *Pax Christi USA* [www.paxchristiusa.org] is the national Catholic peace movement of 14,000 members who are committed to the gospel imperative of seeking peace through nonviolence. It is the United States section of Pax Christi International.

In 1998 on the 15th anniversary of **Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response (the 1983 report of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops)**, Catholic bishops affiliated with Pax Christi USA issued a statement on **The Morality of Nuclear Deterrence**. [URL to be obtained]. Speaking for themselves and not the entire National Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Pax Christi bishops indicated:

For the past fifteen years, and particularly in the context of the Cold War, we, the Catholic bishops of the United States, have reluctantly acknowledge the possibility that nuclear weapons could have some moral legitimacy, but only if the goal was nuclear disarmament. It is our present, prayerful judgment that this legitimacy is now lacking.

They concluded by saying:

Nuclear deterrence as a national policy must be condemned as morally abhorrent because it is the excuse and justification for the continued possession and further development of these horrendous weapons. We urge all to join in taking up the challenge to begin the effort to eliminate nuclear weapons now, rather than relying on them indefinitely.

Church of the Brethren

[logo from web site] The Church of the Brethren [www.brethren.org] has 140,000 members and 1,100 congregations in the United States. It is governed by Annual Conference, with every congregation sending delegates yearly. General Board is the program and administrative agency of the Church of the Brethren. As a peace church the Church of the Brethren through Annual Conference and General Board has addressed the abhorrence of nuclear weapons dozens of times. Though written nearly 20 years ago, the sentiment is perhaps captured best a General Board Resolution of October 1984. [below] *Among concerns expressed were the following:*

Under the banner of national security, our nation fuels a nuclear arms race; but it has not made us more secure. We seek to intimidate enemies with the threat of nuclear weapons, calling it deterrence; but it has not deterred other nations in their weapons buildups. It has only heightened the mutual threat.

Our nation has contributed to a world situation in which few serious negotiations are taking place to reduce the danger of nuclear annihilation.

We call for initiatives by our government toward true security for all and away from belligerence.

We believe and international agreement should be sought to keep outer space weapon-free and that funds should not even be used for "star wars" research.

Here is the complete resolution:

Church of the Brethren General Board Resolution October 1984

In this time of terrible Belligerence

Never in the span of human existence have we known such ultimate threat to life itself. Under the banner of national security, our nation fuels a nuclear arms race; but it has not made us more secure. We seek to

intimidate enemies with the threat of nuclear weapons, calling it deterrence; but it has not deterred other nations in their weapons buildups. It has only heightened the mutual threat.

In growing devotion to military preparation, our national spending priorities have changes. More of our wealth is being moved into war making. The planned outlay of just under \$300 billion for national defense in 1985 is an increase of 70% within four years. At the same time, there are for 1985 planned cuts in spending for programs to assist low-income people. We are not investing our resources wisely. The spending is not consistent with Christian stewardship.

Our nation has contributed to a world situation in which few serious negotiations are taking place to reduce the danger of nuclear annihilation. We assume that all liberation movements are "communist" inspired and controlled. We reduce international relationships to a conflict between "the free world" and "an evil empire." We replace diplomacy with military confrontation as a means to world stability. We place missiles in Europe. We refuse to renounce first strike use of nuclear weapons. Intervention by the United States in regional disputed areas like the Middle East and Central America has increased the level of violence and contributed to conflict rather than resolving it.

In this time of terrible belligerence,

As a people of God, as members of the body of Christ, as members of the Church of the Brethren, we feel impelled to declare our concern about present national direction.

Our nation is not alone in creating conditions of enmity, in engaging in terrorist activity, and in threatening human survival. Our task is not to make a dispassionate, "even-handed" assessment of national blame among the nations of the world. Rather, we must assess the action of our own nation. We must acknowledge and confess our own responsibility for that action. And we must determine the steps we will take as a people convinced that "all war is sin." Ours is a sobering assignment. We come to this time with an awareness that in the eyes of most of the world and in the judgment of most of the Body of Christ, our nation is the most threateningly belligerent on earth. We call for initiatives by our government toward true security for all and away from belligerence.

In this time of terrible belligerence,

We believe events have already demonstrated the negative results of basing Pershing II ballistic missiles and ground-launched Cruise missiles in Western Europe. The announced intention to deploy the weapons unless new arms agreements were reached between the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has not resulted in

agreement. Rather those negotiations are terminated and the Soviets have deployed submarines armed with nuclear weapons near our coastlines. Our relationships with the nations of Western Europe are strained because of opposition by so many people to the presence of the missiles. We call for an end to the deployment of the missiles and the elimination of their presence in Western Europe.

In this time of terrible belligerence,

The MX missile is a dangerous and expensive weapon. IT is a first-strike weapon with great accuracy and a "hard target kill capacity" far exceeding land based missiles now possessed by either the USA or the USSR. It is a weapon that invites a pre-emptive strike and an early launch as a response.

The future threat to human life is a great cost. But a greater cost is the present one of human suffering in poverty that the same resources could be used to alleviate. TO produce the first twenty-one missiles, \$2.5 billion has been budgeted for the 1984 fiscal year. To build the proposed 100 MX Missiles would cost an estimated \$25-\$30 billion. In spite of those costs, reports came of the government's intention to build 200 MX missiles. The cost in weaponry is increased by inflated and accelerated charges. What is already committed represents locked-in long-term costs for the future.

The MX missile is promoted as a "bargaining chip" in arms control negotiations. Such is obviously not the case. Even such justification for the MX missile is a dangerous gamble in a game of violence. We call for an end to the development and production of the MX missile.

In this time of terrible belligerence,

The Trident II submarine-based missile is an even greater threat than the MX. This counterforce weapon is designed to destroy enemy missile silos. It is seen as a threat to the entire Soviet nuclear deterrence force. While the MX would require one-half hour to reach the Soviet Union, the Trident II can be launched near their shores. The projected development of 20 submarines, each with 24 missiles, is estimated to cost more than \$40 billion. We call for a cancellation of the development of this first strike nuclear weapon.

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Millions of dollars are being spent to design and create space weaponry. Even as the nation engages in a limited debate about the desirability of such arms, scientists are openly skeptical about the possibility of developing the proposed defensive nuclear shield in space. Whether possible or not we abhor even the idea of militarizing

outer space. We believe and international agreement should be sought to keep outer space weapon-free and that funds should not even be used for "star wars" research.

In this time of terrible belligerence,

Continuing efforts are made to produce new chemical weapons after a fifteen-year moratorium on such production. Hundreds of millions of dollars are spent annually on chemical warfare. These chemical weapons, most threatening to unarmed civilians, are rejected for deployment by European allies. They should also be rejected by this nation. We call for an end to research and weaponry for chemical warfare.

In this time of terrible belligerence,

We know God's love. Even in our sin of participation in belligerence, God's grace is available to us. Even in the midst of alienation and conflict, we experience forgiveness within the Body of Christ. Even in the midst of death and threats of death, there is resurrection. We are, therefore, encouraged to respond, not only in fear, but also in genuine hope.

In this time of terrible belligerence,

We must pray to the God of all creation.

We pray for the people of El Salvador. May they know an end to the violence of their own government with its death squads, the military, and the guerillas. May they know an end to the United States supplying the arms used by both the military and the guerilla forces. May they experience a peaceful and just national reconciliation.

We pray for the people of Honduras. May they know an end to the militarization of their country by the United States. May they know an end to the militarization of their country by the United States. May they know an end to perpetual military exercises and the building of permanent military bases.

We pray for the people of Nicaragua. May they know an end to the ravages of war by mercenaries funded and directed by the Central Intelligence Agency, and by private interests in the United States. May they experience a new unity within the body of Christ.

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the refugees who are victims of these times be welcome and secure in their own homes.

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We must pray and we must act.

We the General Board, meeting in October, 1984 urge the Brethren

--to assist our government in making a change in national priorities to favor life instead of death;

-- to declare their own properties as nuclear-free zones as a signal of their rejection of nuclear warfare;

-- to oppose military aid to other nations, now especially for countries in Central America;

-- to support economic development assistance that is multilateral especially that which can be offered through the church;

-- to oppose intervention and covert activities against other nations by our intelligence agencies;

-- to seek political efforts those officeholders and those policies that will embody the yearnings of what we have declared and what we have prayed.

Finally, in this time of terrible belligerence,

-- We know that "we cannot retreat from the world" but must move "from where we are to where God's power and purpose have begun to define new possibilities and new necessities." (from a *Statement of the Church of the Brethren of Justice and Nonviolence*, 1977). May God help us and strengthen us in these steps.

The biblical base and the policy foundations for this statement came from the following Annual Conference actions:

"Obedience to God and Civil Disobedience" 1969

"Statement on War" revised 1970

"The Church's Responsibility for Justice and Nonviolence" 1977

One additional resource for study is "The Biblical Basis of a Peace Witness," a four page listing of scriptures dealing with peacemaking.

Islam

Statement of Dr. Muzammil H. Siddiqi

When the Joint Nuclear Reduction/Disarmament Statement

[<http://www.nrdi.org/nuclear/Nuclear02.html>] by religious and military leaders was issued at the Washington National Cathedral in June 2000, Dr. Muzammi H. Siddiqi, president, The Islamic Society of North America, made the a statement

[<http://www.nrdi.org/nuclear/NuclearP02.html>] in which he said,

We in the United States must take lead to stop the nuclear arms race....We must say to ourselves first and then to the world that we want a total and universal ban on the possession and production of nuclear weapons. All countries, starting with those that have the largest amount of nuclear weapons, should destroy these weapons. There should be a total ban on their production and testing. Nuclear technology should be used only for humanitarian and peaceful purposes.

Islam stands for peace and protection of all human beings and their environment. Islam is against any war in which the innocent and the non-combatants are made to suffer.

Jewish

Union of American Hebrew Congregations

[logo from web site] Founded in 1873, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (<http://www.uahc.org>) is the central body of the Reform Jewish Movement in North America, encompassing 1.5 million Jews in 900 congregations across the United States and Canada. The UAHC has a long history of supporting arms control measures aimed at reducing nuclear dangers and eventually eliminating nuclear weapons entirely. Resolutions include:

Control of Nuclear Arms, 1981

<http://uahc.org/cgi-bin/resodisp.pl?file=arms&year=1981D>

Preventing Nuclear Holocaust, 1983

<http://uahc.org/cgi-bin/resodisp.pl?file=nuclear&year=1983>

To End the Manufacturing and Trade In Fissionable Material Suitable for the Production of Nuclear Arms, 1989

<http://uahc.org/cgi-bin/resodisp.pl?file=nucleararms2&year=1989>

Halting the Nuclear Arms Race, 1989

<http://uahc.org/cgi-bin/resodisp.pl?file=nucleararms1&year=1989>

Statement by Rabbi David Saperstein

When the Joint Nuclear Reduction/Disarmament Statement

[<http://www.nrdi.org/nuclear/Nuclear02.html>] by religious and military leaders was issued at the Washington National Cathedral in June 2000, Rabbi David Saperstein, director, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, made a statement

[<http://www.nrdi.org/nuclear/NuclearP07.html>] in which he said:

In the Bible it was commanded that before the Israelite army could engage in warfare, the priests needed to read to the assembled the rules of what was ethically permitted in warfare and what was prohibited. That interaction between religion and the military created the first ethical strictures of warfare—the foundation of what later became known as "just war theory."

Today we religious and military leaders continue this tradition. We stand together in this House of God, informed by our values, aware of the horrible human cost of war and conflict, weary of the threat posed by nuclear proliferation—to call upon Congress, the President, the American military, and the American people to lead the way towards a process of nuclear reduction and disarmament.

At this crucial crossroads of history, we join to call on the world to recognize that violence begets violence; that nuclear proliferation benefits no one; that we can, we will, and we must find other ways to protect ourselves, our nations and our future: for it is not

sufficient to have peace in our time, but, instead, we must leave a peaceful world to our children.

²⁹ *The Challenge of Peace*, nos. 186-188.

³⁰ Archbishop Renato Martino, "Address to the United Nations Committee on Nuclear Disarmament," *Origins* 23:21 (November 4, 1993), 382.

³¹ United States Catholic Conference, *A Report on The Challenge of Peace and Policy Developments 1983-1988* (Washington, D.C.: USCC Office for Publishing and Promotion Service, 1988), no. 129.

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The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response
A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace
National Conference of Catholic Bishops
May 3, 1983

Summary

The Second Vatican Council opened its evaluation of modern warfare with the statement: "The whole human race faces a moment of supreme crisis in its advance toward maturity." We agree with the council's assessment; the crisis of the moment is embodied in the threat which nuclear weapons pose for the world and much that we hold dear in the world. We have seen and felt the effects of the crisis of the nuclear age in the lives of people we serve. Nuclear weaponry has drastically changed the nature of warfare, and the arms race poses a threat to human life and human civilization which is without precedent.

We write this letter from the perspective of Catholic faith. Faith does not insulate us from the daily challenges of life but intensifies our desire to address them precisely in light of the gospel which has come to us in the person of the risen Christ. Through the resources of faith and reason we desire in this letter to provide hope for people in our day and direction toward a world freed of nuclear threat.

As Catholic bishops we write this letter as an exercise of our teaching ministry. The Catholic tradition on war and peace is a long and complex one; it stretches from the Sermon on the Mount to the statements of Pope John Paul II. We wish to explore and explain the resources of the moral-religious teaching and to apply it to specific questions of our day. In doing this we realize, and we want readers of this letter to recognize, that not all statements in this letter have the same moral authority. At times we state universally binding moral principles found in the teachings of the Church; at other times the pastoral letter makes specific applications, observations and recommendations which allow for diversity of opinion on the part of those who assess the factual data of situations differently. However, we expect Catholics to give our moral judgements serious consideration when they are forming their own views on specific problems.

The experience of preparing this letter has manifested to us the range of strongly held opinion in the Catholic community on questions of fact and judgment concerning issues of war and peace. We urge mutual respect among individuals and groups in the Church as this letter is analyzed and discussed. Obviously, as bishops, we believe that such differences should be expressed within the framework of Catholic moral teaching. We need in the Church not only conviction and commitment but also civility and charity.

While this letter is addressed principally to the Catholic community, we want it to make a contribution to the wider public debate in our country on the dangers and dilemmas of the nuclear age. Our contribution will not be primarily technical or political, but we are convinced that there is no satisfactory answer to the human problems of the nuclear age which fails to consider the moral and religious dimensions of the questions we face.

Although we speak in our own name, as Catholic bishops of the Church in the United States, we have been conscious in the preparation of this letter of the

consequences our teaching will have not only for the United States but for other nations as well. One important expression of this awareness has been the consultation we have had, by correspondence and in an important meeting at the Vatican (January 18-19, 1983), with representatives of European bishops' conferences. This consultation with bishops of other countries, and, of course, with the Holy See, has been very helpful to us.

Catholic teaching has always understood peace in positive terms. In the words of Pope John Paul II: "Peace is not just the absence of war. . . . Like a cathedral, peace must be constructed patiently and with unshakable faith." (Cventry, England, 1982) Peace is the fruit of order. Order in human society must be shaped on the basis of respect for the transcendence of God and the unique dignity of each person, understood in terms of freedom, justice, truth and love. To avoid war in our day we must be intent on building peace in an increasingly interdependent world. In Part III of this letter we set forth a positive vision of peace and the demands such a vision makes on diplomacy, national policy, and personal choices.

While pursuing peace incessantly, it is also necessary to limit the use of force in a world comprised of nation states, faced with common problems but devoid of an adequate international political authority. Keeping the peace in the nuclear age is a moral and political imperative. In Parts I and II of this letter we set forth both the principles of Catholic teaching on war and a series of judgments, based on these principle, about concrete policies. In making these judgments we speak as moral teachers, not as technical experts.

I. Some Principles, Norms and Premises of Catholic Teaching

A. On War

1. Catholic teaching begins in every case with a presumption against war and for peaceful settlement of disputes. In exceptional cases, determined by the moral principles of the just-war tradition, some uses of force are permitted.

2. Every nation has a right and duty to defend itself against unjust aggression.

3. Offensive war of any kind is not morally justifiable.

4. It is never permitted to direct nuclear or conventional weapons to "the indiscriminate destruction of whole cities or vast areas with their populations. . . ." (*Pastoral Consultation, #80.*) The intentional killing of innocent civilians or non-combatants is always wrong.

5. Even defensive response to unjust attack can cause destruction which violates the principle of proportionality, going far beyond the limits of legitimate defense. The judgment is particularly important when assessing planned use of nuclear weapons. No defensive strategy, nuclear or conventional, which exceeds the limits of proportionality is morally permissible.

B. On Deterrence

1. "In current conditions 'deterrence' based on balance, certainly not as an end in itself but as a step on the way toward progressive disarmament, may still be

judged morally acceptable. Nonetheless, in order to ensure peace, it is indispensable not to be satisfied with this minimum which is always susceptible to the real danger of explosion." (Pope John Paul II, "Message to U.N. Special Session on Disarmament," #8, June 1982.)

2. No *use* of nuclear weapons which would violate the principles of discrimination or proportionality may be *intended* in a strategy of deterrence. The moral demands of Catholic teaching require resolute willingness not to intend or to do moral evil even to save our own lives or the lives of those we love.

3. Deterrence is not an adequate strategy as a long-term basis for peace; it is a transitional strategy justifiable only in conjunction with resolute determination to pursue arms control and disarmament. We are convinced that "the fundamental principle on which our present peace depends must be replaced by another, which declares the true and solid peace of nations consists not in equality of arms but in mutual trust alone". (Pope John XIII, *Peace on Earth*, #113.)

C. The Arms Race and Disarmament

1. The arms race is one of the greatest curses on the human race; it is to be condemned as a danger, an act of aggression against the poor, and a folly which does not provide the security in promises. (Cf: *Pastoral Constitution*, #81; *Statement of the Holy See to the United Nations*, 1976).

2. Negotiations must be pursued in every reasonable form possible; they should be governed by the "demand that the arms race should cease; that the stockpiles which exist in various countries should be reduced equally and simultaneously by the parties concerned; that nuclear weapons should be banned; and that a general agreement should eventually be reached about progressive disarmament and an effective method of control." (Pope John XXIII, *Peace on Earth*, #112.)

D. On Personal Conscience

1. **Military Service:** "All those who enter the military service in loyalty to their country should look upon themselves as the custodians of the security and freedom of their fellow countrymen; and when they carry out their duty properly, they are contributing to the maintenance of peace." (*Pastoral Constitution*, #79.)

2. **Conscientious Objection:** "Moreover, it seems just that laws should make humane provisions for the case of conscientious objectors who refuse to carry arms, provided they accept some other form of community service." (*Pastoral Constitution*, #79.)

3. **Non-violence:** "In this same spirit we cannot but express our admiration for all who forego the use of violence to vindicate their rights and resort to other means of defense which are available to weaker parties, provided it can be done without harm to the rights and duties of others and of the community." (*Pastoral Constitution*, #78.)

4. **Citizens and Conscience:** "Once again we deem it opportune to remind our children of their duty to take an active part in public life, and to contribute towards the attainment of the common good of the entire human family as well as that of their own political community. . . . In other words, it is necessary that

human beings, in the intimacy of their own consciences, should so live and act in their temporal lives as to create a synthesis between scientific, technical professional elements on the one hand, and spiritual values on the other." (Pope John XIII, *Peace on Earth*, #146, 150.)

II. Moral Principles and Policy Choices

As bishops in the United States, assessing the concrete circumstances of our society, we have made a number of observations and recommendations in the process of applying moral principles to specific policy choices.

A. On the Use of Nuclear Weapons

1. *Counter Population Use:* Under no circumstances may nuclear weapons or other instruments of mass slaughter be used for the purpose of destroying population centers or other predominantly civilian targets. Retaliatory action which would indiscriminately and disproportionately take many wholly innocent lives, lives of people who are in no way responsible for reckless action of their government, must also be condemned.

2. *The Initiation of Nuclear War:* We do not perceive any situation in which the deliberate initiation of nuclear war, on however restricted a scale, can be morally justified. Non-nuclear attacks by another state must be resisted by other than nuclear means. Therefore, a serious moral obligation exists to develop non-nuclear defensive strategies as rapidly as possible. In this letter we urge NATO to move rapidly toward the adoption of a "no first use" policy, but we recognize this will take time to implement and will require the development of an adequate alternative defense posture.

3. *Limited Nuclear War:* Our examination of the various arguments on this question makes us highly skeptical about the real meaning of "limited." One of the criteria of the just-war teaching is that there must be a reasonable hope of success in bringing about justice and peace. We must ask whether such a reasonable hope can exist once nuclear weapons have been exchanged. The burden of proof remains on those who assert that meaningful limitation is possible. In our view the first imperative is to prevent any use of nuclear weapons and we hope that leaders will resist the notion that nuclear conflict can be limited, contained or won in any traditional sense.

B. On Deterrence

In concert with the evaluation provided by Pope John Paul II, we have arrived at a strictly conditional moral acceptance of deterrence. In this letter we have outlined criteria and recommendations which indicate the meaning of conditional acceptance of deterrence policy. We cannot consider such a policy adequate as a long-term basis for peace.

C. On Promoting Peace

1. We support immediate, bilateral verifiable agreements to halt the testing, production and deployment of new nuclear weapons systems. This recommendation is not to be identified with any specific political initiative.

2. We support efforts to achieve deep cuts in the arsenals of both superpowers; efforts should concentrate first on systems which threaten the retaliatory forces of either major power.

3. We support early and successful conclusion of negotiations of a comprehensive test ban treaty.

4. We urge new efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons in the world, and to control the conventional arms race, particularly the conventional arms trade.

5. We support, in an increasingly interdependent world, political and economic policies designed to protect human dignity and to promote the human rights of every person, especially the least among us. In this regard, we call for the establishment of some form of global authority adequate to the needs of the international common good.

This letter includes many judgments from the perspective of ethics, politics and strategy needed to speak concretely and correctly to the "moment of supreme crisis" identified by Vatican II. We stress again that readers should be aware, as we have been, of the distinction between our statement or moral principles and of official Church teaching and our application of these to concrete issues. We urge that special care be taken not to use passages out of context; neither should brief portions of this document be cited to support positions it does not intend to convey or which are not truly in accord with the spirit of its teaching.

In concluding this summary we respond to two key questions often asked about this pastoral letter:

Why do we address these matters fraught with such complexity, controversy and passion? We speak as pastors, not politicians. We are teachers, not technicians. We cannot avoid our responsibility to lift up the moral dimensions of the choices before our world and nation. The nuclear age is an era of moral as well as physical danger. We are the first generation since Genesis with the power to threaten the created order. We cannot remain silent in the face of such danger. Why do we address these issues? We are simply trying to live up to the call of Jesus to be peacemakers in our own time and situation.

What are we saying? Fundamentally, we are saying that the decisions about nuclear weapons are among the most pressing moral questions of our age. While these decisions have obvious military and political aspects, they involve fundamental moral choices. In simple terms, we are saying that good ends (defending one's country, protecting freedom, etc.) cannot justify immoral means (the use of weapons which kill indiscriminately and threaten whole societies). We fear that our world and nation are headed in the wrong direction. More weapons with greater destructive potential are produced every day. More and more nations are seeking to become nuclear powers. In our quest for more and more security we fear we are actually becoming less and less secure.

In the words of the Holy Father, we need a "moral about-face." The whole world must summon the moral courage and technical means to say no to nuclear conflict; no to weapons of mass destruction; no to an arms race which robs the

poor and the vulnerable; and no to the moral danger of a nuclear age which places before humankind indefensible choices of constant terror or surrender. Peacemaking is not an optional commitment. It is a requirement of our faith. We are called to be peacemakers, not by some movement of the moment, but by our Lord Jesus. The content and context of our peacemaking is set not by some political agenda or ideological program, but by the teaching of his Church.

Ultimately, this letter is intended as an expression of Christian faith, affirming the confidence we have that the risen Lord remains with us precisely in moment of crisis. It is our belief in his presence and power among us which sustain us in confronting the awesome challenge of the nuclear age. We speak from faith to provide hope for all who recognize the challenge and are working to confront it with the resources of faith and reason.

To approach the nuclear age in faith is to recognize our absolute need for prayer: we urge and invite all to unceasing prayer for peace with justice for all people. In a spirit of prayerful hope we present this message of peace.

The Church of the Brethren
Church of the Brethren

[logo from web site] The Church of the Brethren [www.brethren.org] has 140,000 members and 1,100 congregations in the United States. It is governed by Annual Conference, with every congregation sending delegates yearly. General Board is the program and administrative agency of the Church of the Brethren. As a peace church the Church of the Brethren through Annual Conference and General Board has addressed the abhorance of nuclear weapons dozens of times. Though written nearly 20 years ago, the sentiment is perhaps captured best in the following resolution.

Church of the Brethren General Board Resolution October 1984

In this time of terrible Belligerence

Never in the span of human existence have we known such ultimate threat to life itself. Under the banner of national security, our nation fuels a nuclear arms race; but it has not made us more secure. We seek to intimidate enemies with the threat of nuclear weapons, calling it deterrence; but it has not deterred other nations in their weapons buildups. It has only heightened the mutual threat.

In growing devotion to military preparation, our national spending priorities have changes. More of our wealth is being moved into war making. The planned outlay of just under \$300 billion for national defense in 1985 is an increase of 70% within four years. At the same time, there are for 1985 planned cuts in spending for programs to assist low-income people. We are not investing our resources wisely. The spending is not consistent with Christian stewardship.

Our nation has contributed to a world situation in which few serious negotiations are taking place to reduce the danger of nuclear annihilation. We assume that all liberation movements are "communist" inspired and controlled. We reduce international relationships to a conflict between "the free world" and "an evil empire." We replace diplomacy with military confrontation as a means to world stability. We place missiles in Europe. We refuse to renounce first strike use of nuclear weapons. Intervention by the United States in regional disputed in areas like the Middle East and Central America has increased the level of violence and contributed to conflict rather than resolving it.

In this time of terrible belligerence,

As a people of God, as members of the body of Christ, as members of the Church of the Brethren, we feel impelled to declare our concern about present national direction.

Our nation is not alone in creating conditions of enmity, in engaging in terrorist activity, and in threatening human survival. Our task is not to make a dispassionate, "even-handed" assessment of national blame among the nations of the world. Rather, we must assess the action of our own nation. We must acknowledge and confess our own responsibility for that action. And we must determine the steps we will take as a people convinced that "all war is sin." Ours is a sobering assignment. We come to this time with an awareness that in the eyes of most of the world and in the judgment of most of the Body of Christ, our nation is the most threateningly belligerent on earth. We call for initiatives by our government toward true security for all and away from belligerence.

In this time of terrible belligerence,

We believe events have already demonstrated the negative results of basing Pershing II ballistic missiles and ground-launched Cruise missiles in Western Europe. The announced intention to deploy the weapons unless new arms agreements were reached between the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has not resulted in agreement. Rather those negotiations are terminated and the Soviets have deployed submarines armed with nuclear weapons near our coastlines. Our relationships with the nations of Western Europe are strained because of opposition by so many people to the presence of the missiles. We call for an end to the deployment of the missiles and the elimination of their presence in Western Europe.

In this time of terrible belligerence,

The MX missile is a dangerous and expensive weapon. It is a first-strike weapon with great accuracy and a "hard target kill capacity" far exceeding land based missiles now possessed by either the USA or the USSR. It is a weapon that invites a pre-emptive strike and an early launch as a response.

The future threat to human life is a great cost. But a greater cost is the present one of human suffering in poverty that the same resources could be used to alleviate. To produce the first twenty-one missiles, \$2.5 billion has been budgeted for the 1984 fiscal year. To build the proposed 100 MX Missiles would cost an estimated \$25-\$30 billion. In spite of those costs, reports came of the government's intention to

build 200 MX missiles. The cost in weaponry is increased by inflated and accelerated charges. What is already committed represents locked-in long-term costs for the future.

The MX missile is promoted as a "bargaining chip" in arms control negotiations. Such is obviously not the case. Even such justification for the MX missile is a dangerous gamble in a game of violence. We call for an end to the development and production of the MX missile.

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conflict, we experience forgiveness within the Body of Christ. Even in the midst of death and threats of death, there is resurrection. We are, therefore, encouraged to respond, not only in fear, but also in genuine hope.

In this time of terrible belligerence,

We must pray to the God of all creation.

We pray for the people of El Salvador. May they know an end to the violence of their own government with its death squads, the military, and the guerillas. May they know an end to the United States supplying the arms used by both the military and the guerilla forces. May they experience a peaceful and just national reconciliation.

We pray for the people of Honduras. May they know an end to the militarization of their country by the United States. May they know an end to the militarization of their country by the United States. May they know an end to perpetual military exercises and the building of permanent military bases.

We pray for the people of Nicaragua. May they know an end to the ravages of war by mercenaries funded and directed by the Central Intelligence Agency, and by private interests in the United States. May they experience a new unity within the body of Christ.

We pray for all the people of Central America. May they have the opportunity to determine their own destiny without outside intervention, May the nations of the world prove neighbor to them by assisting in economic development without exercising political control. May the siege of poverty be lifted. May there be a new devotion to human rights. Let the refugees who are victims of these times be welcome and secure in their own homes.

We pray for the people of the Middle East. May they know an end to the violence of nation against nations, sect against sect. May they live securely within national borders and within their own homes. May the rights of minorities such as Palestinians and Kurds and Baha's be respected. May the resources of the area contribute to the well-being of the citizens and the welfare of the world through just world markets. May people of faith -Baha'i, Islamic, Jewish, and Christian-live in mutual respect and support.

We pray for the people of the Soviet Union that they and we shall not

be implacable foes locked into devastating enmity. May they know with us a mutual search for freedom from the tyranny of war.

We pray for the people of Afghanistan. May they be free of occupation by a foreign power.

We pray for the people of the Philippines, Poland, South Africa, and South Korea. May they know and end to the repressive measures by their governments. May they have a new birth of freedom and justice.

We pray for the people of the United States of America. May we become aware of the dangers of the time and the elements that offer hope. May we identify our own salvation with the saving of other peoples. May we belligerency to peacemaking,

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--to assist our government in making a change in national priorities to favor life instead of death;

-- to declare their own properties as nuclear-free zones as a signal of their rejection of nuclear warfare;

-- to oppose military aid to other nations, now especially for countries in Central America;

-- to support economic development assistance that is multilateral especially that which can be offered through the church;

-- to oppose intervention and covert activities against other nations by our intelligence agencies;

-- to seek political efforts those officeholders and those policies that will embody the yearnings of what we have declared and what we have prayed.

Finally, in this time of terrible belligerence,

-- We know that "we cannot retreat from the world" but must move "from where we are to where God's power and purpose have begun to define new

possibilities and new necessities." (from a *Statement of the Church of the Brethren of Justice and Nonviolence*, 1977). May God help us and strengthen us in these steps.

The biblical base and the policy foundations for this statement came from the following Annual Conference actions:

"Obedience to God and Civil Disobedience" 1969

"Statement on War" revised 1970

"The Church's Responsibility for Justice and Nonviolence" 1977

One additional resource for study is "The Biblical Basis of a Peace Witness," a four page listing of scriptures dealing with peacemaking.

U.S Conference of Catholic Bishops

[Import logo from web site: www.usccb.org]. The Catholic Church with 60 million members and 19,200 local parishes is the largest religious body in the United States. Oversight is provided by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), which represents 300 active and about 100 bishops, who are appointed by the pope. The bishops serve as the heads of 194 dioceses in the United States. [As a matter of policy, we do not permit other organizations to use our logo. Also, I would recommend rewriting this section completely. For example, the USCCB does not exercise "oversight."]

The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace

[PDF document]

In November 1980 the National Conference of Bishops (as it was then known) appointed a committee of bishops, chaired by Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, to draft a pastoral letter on war and peace. The bishops reviewed two drafts and adopted the third and final draft on May 3, 1983. A substantial part of this pastoral letter focuses on nuclear weapons. The summary is presented below. The complete pastoral letter, The Challenge of Peace, is available from USCCB at 800 235-8722, order number 863-0.

[Possibly a photo of Cardinal Bernardin or the drafting committee]

Summary

[pp. i-viii]

[Two side bars, say at one-third and two-thirds through the text.

"No use of nuclear weapons which would violate the principle of discrimination or proportionality may be *intended* in a strategy of deterrence."

"In the words of our Holy Father, we need a 'moral about-face.' The whole world must summon the moral courage and technical means to say no to nuclear conflict; no to weapons of mass destruction; no to an arms race which robs the poor and the vulnerable; and no to the moral danger of a nuclear age which places before humankind indefensible choices of constant terror or surrender."

The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace A Reflection of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops on the Tenth Anniversary of The Challenge of Peace

[PDF document]

Ten years after issuing The Challenge of Peace the National Conference of Catholic Bishops reviewed the findings of the 1983 pastoral letter and offered their reflections. The Harvest of Justice [<http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/harvest.htm>] is available on the web site of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. The section dealing with nuclear disarmament is presented below with permission.

[Perhaps a photo of a wheat field inserted into the above paragraph.]

[At appropriate locations, two side bars:

"We must continue to say No **[bold previous word]** to the very idea of nuclear war."

"The eventual elimination of nuclear weapons is more than a moral ideal; it should be a policy goal."

1.Unfinished Business: Nuclear Disarmament and Proliferation.

[change margins to be like above]

Our 1983 pastoral letter focused special attention on the morality of nuclear weapons at a time of widespread fear of nuclear war. Only ten years later, the threat of global nuclear war may seem more remote than at any time in the nuclear age, but we may be facing a different but still dangerous period in which the use of nuclear weapons remains a significant threat. We cannot address questions of war and peace today, therefore, without acknowledging that the nuclear question remains of vital political and moral significance.

The end of the Cold War has changed the nuclear question in three ways. First, nuclear weapons are still an integral component of U.S. security policies, but they are no longer at the center of these policies or of international relations. In 1983, a dominant concern was the ethics of nuclear weapons. Today, this concern, while still critically important, must be considered in the context of a more fundamental question of the ethical foundations of political order: How do we achieve (Pacem in Terris') *[italicize text in*

parentheses]

vision of a just and stable political order, so that nations will no longer rely on nuclear weapons for their security? Second, we have new opportunities to take steps toward progressive nuclear disarmament. In 1983, the first task was to stop the growth of already bloated nuclear arsenals; today, the moral task is to proceed with deep cuts and ultimately to abolish these weapons entirely. Third, the threat of global nuclear war has been replaced by a threat of global nuclear proliferation. In addition to the declared nuclear powers, a number of other countries have or could very quickly deploy nuclear weapons, and still other nations, or even terrorist groups, might seek to obtain or develop nuclear weapons. Just as the nuclear powers must prevent nuclear war, so also they, with the rest of the international community, bear a heavy moral responsibility to stop the spread of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons.

a. (The Moral Judgment on Deterrence.) *[italicize text in parentheses]*
In 1983, we judged that

nuclear deterrence may be morally acceptable as long as it is limited to deterring nuclear use by others; sufficiency, not nuclear superiority, is its goal; and it is used as a step on the way toward progressive disarmament. (add note)

Some believe that this judgment remains valid, since significant progress has been made in reducing nuclear weapons, including the most destabilizing ones, while at least some of those that remain are

still necessary to deter existing nuclear threats. Others point to the end of the Soviet threat and the apparent unwillingness of the nuclear powers to accept the need to eliminate nuclear weapons as reasons for abandoning our strictly conditioned moral acceptance of nuclear deterrence. They also cite the double standard inherent in nonproliferation efforts: What is the moral basis for asking other nations to forego nuclear weapons if we continue to judge our own deterrent to be morally necessary?

We believe our judgment of 1983 that nuclear deterrence is morally acceptable only under certain strict conditions remains a useful guide for evaluating the continued moral status of nuclear weapons in a post-Cold War world. It is useful because it acknowledges the fundamental moral dilemmas still posed by nuclear weapons, and it reflects the progress toward fulfilling the conditions we elaborated in 1983. At the same time, it highlights the new prospects — and thus the added moral urgency — of making even more dramatic progress in arms control and disarmament as the only basis for the continued moral legitimacy of deterrence.

b. (A Post-Cold War Agenda For Nuclear Disarmament.)) [italicize text in parentheses] While

significant progress has been made in recent years, we believe additional steps are needed if nuclear policies and priorities are to keep up with the dramatic changes in world politics and if our nation is to move away from relying on nuclear deterrence as a basis for its security. Present challenges include the following:

(The Role of Nuclear Weapons):) [italicize text in parentheses]

We must continue to say

No (**bold previous word**) to the very idea of nuclear war. A minimal nuclear deterrent may be justified only to deter the use of nuclear weapons. The United States should commit itself never to use nuclear weapons first, should unequivocally reject proposals to use nuclear weapons to deter any nonnuclear threats, and should reinforce the fragile barrier against the use of these weapons. Indeed, we abhor any use of nuclear weapons.

(Arms Control and Disarmament): [italicize text in parentheses]

Nuclear deterrence may

be justified only as a step on the way toward progressive disarmament. The end of the Cold War, according to the Holy See, "challenge[s] the world community to adopt a post-nuclear form of security. That security lies in the abolition of nuclear weapons and the strengthening of international law." [add note] A first step toward this goal would be prompt ratification and implementation of the START I and

START II treaties. Even once these treaties are fully implemented, there will still be more than 10,000 nuclear weapons in the world, containing explosive power hundreds of thousands times greater than the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Therefore, much deeper cuts are both possible and necessary. The eventual elimination of nuclear weapons is more than a moral ideal; it should be a policy goal.

The negotiation of a verifiable comprehensive test ban treaty would not only demonstrate our commitment to this goal, but also would improve our moral credibility in urging nonnuclear nations to forego the development of nuclear weapons. We, therefore, support a halt to nuclear testing as our nation pursues an effective global test ban and renewal of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Also, steps must be taken to reduce the threat of nuclear terrorism. We must reverse the spread of nuclear technologies and materials. We welcome, therefore, U.S. efforts to achieve a global ban on the production of fissionable materials for use in nuclear weapons. Finally, one should not underestimate the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency as a forum for the discussion of these issues and as a force encouraging nations to take the steps necessary in this area.

(Cooperative Security and a Just International Order:) *[italicize text in parentheses]*

The nuclear powers may justify, and then only temporarily, their nuclear deterrents only if they use their power and resources to lead in the construction of a more just and stable international order. An essential part of this international order must be a collective security framework that reverses the proliferation of nuclear weapons, guarantees the security of nonnuclear states and ultimately seeks to make nuclear weapons and war itself obsolete. The United States and other nations should also make the investments necessary to help ensure the development of stable, democratic governments in nations which have nuclear weapons or might seek to obtain them.

An active commitment by the United States to nuclear disarmament and the strengthening of collective security is the only moral basis for temporarily retaining our deterrent and our insistence that other nations forego these weapons. We advocate disarmament by example: careful but clear steps to reduce and end our dependence on weapons of mass destruction.

In our five-year report on (The Challenge of Peace), *[italicize text in parentheses]* we said: "To contain

the nuclear danger of our time is itself an awesome undertaking. To reshape the political fabric of an increasingly interdependent world is an even larger and more complicated challenge." (add note) Now, on this tenth anniversary, we must be engaged in the difficult task of envisioning a future rooted in peace, with new institutions for resolving differences between nations, new global structures of mediation and conflict-resolution and a world order that has moved beyond nuclear weapons once and for all. We are committed to join in this struggle, to bring the Gospel message of justice and peace to this vital work.

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U.S Conference of Catholic Bishops

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The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace

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Summary

[pp. i-viii to be added]

[Two side bars, at about one-third and two-thirds through the text.]

"No *use* of nuclear weapons which would violate the principle of discrimination or proportionality may be *intended* in a strategy of deterrence."

"In the words of our Holy Father, we need a 'moral about-face.' The whole world must summon the moral courage and technical means to say no to nuclear conflict; no to weapons of mass destruction; no to an arms race which robs the poor and the vulnerable; and no to the moral danger of a nuclear age which places before humankind indefensible choices of constant terror or surrender."

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"We must continue to say **No** to the very idea of nuclear war."

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1.Unfinished Business: Nuclear Disarmament and Proliferation

Our 1983 pastoral letter focused special attention on the morality of nuclear weapons at a time of widespread fear of nuclear war. Only ten years later, the threat of global nuclear war may seem more remote than at any time in the nuclear age, but we may be facing a different but still dangerous period in which the use of nuclear weapons remains a significant threat. We cannot address questions of war and peace today, therefore, without acknowledging that the nuclear question remains of vital political and moral significance.

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a. *The Moral Judgment on Deterrence.* In 1983, we judged that nuclear deterrence may be morally acceptable as long as it is limited to deterring nuclear use by others; sufficiency, not nuclear superiority, is its goal; and it is used as a step on the way toward progressive disarmament.²⁹

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progress toward fulfilling the conditions we elaborated in 1983. At the same time, it highlights the new prospects — and thus the added moral urgency — of making even more dramatic progress in arms control and disarmament as the only basis for the continued moral legitimacy of deterrence.

b. *A Post-Cold War Agenda For Nuclear Disarmament.* While significant progress has been made in recent years, we believe additional steps are needed if nuclear policies and priorities are to keep up with the dramatic changes in world politics and if our nation is to move away from relying on nuclear deterrence as a basis for its security. Present challenges include the following:

- *The Role of Nuclear Weapons:* We must continue to say **No** to the very idea of nuclear war. A minimal nuclear deterrent may be justified only to deter the use of nuclear weapons. The United States should commit itself never to use nuclear weapons first, should unequivocally reject proposals to use nuclear weapons to deter any nonnuclear threats, and should reinforce the fragile barrier against the use of these weapons. Indeed, we abhor any use of nuclear weapons.
- *Arms Control and Disarmament:* Nuclear deterrence may be justified only as a step on the way toward progressive disarmament. The end of the Cold War, according to the Holy See, "challenge[s] the world community to adopt a post-nuclear form of security. That security lies in the abolition of nuclear weapons and the strengthening of international law."³⁰ A first step toward this goal would be prompt ratification and implementation of the START I and START II treaties. Even once these treaties are fully implemented, there will still be more than 10,000 nuclear weapons in the world, containing explosive power hundreds of thousands times greater than the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Therefore, much deeper cuts are both possible and necessary. The eventual elimination of nuclear weapons is more than a moral ideal; it should be a policy goal.

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- *Cooperative Security and a Just International Order:* The nuclear powers may justify, and then only temporarily, their nuclear deterrents only if they use their power and resources to lead in the construction of a more just and stable international order. An essential part of this international order must be a collective security framework that reverses the proliferation of nuclear weapons, guarantees the security of

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²⁹ *The Challenge of Peace*, nos. 186-188.

³⁰ Archbishop Renato Martino, "Address to the United Nations Committee on Nuclear Disarmament," *Origins* 23:21 (November 4, 1993), 382.

³¹ United States Catholic Conference, *A Report on The Challenge of Peace and Policy Developments 1983-1988* (Washington, D.C.: USCC Office for Publishing and Promotion Service, 1988), no. 129.

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The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response **A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace**

[PDF document]

In November 1980 the National Conference of Bishops (as it was then known) appointed a committee of bishops, chaired by Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, to draft a pastoral letter on war and peace. The bishops reviewed two drafts and adopted the third and final draft on May 3, 1983. A substantial part of this pastoral letter focuses on nuclear weapons. The summary is presented below. The complete pastoral letter, The Challenge of Peace, is available from USCCB at 800 235-8722, order number 863-0.

Summary

The Second Vatican Council opened its evaluation of modern warfare with the statement: "The whole human race faces a moment of supreme crisis in its advance toward maturity." We agree with the council's assessment; the crisis of the moment is embodied in the threat which nuclear weapons pose for the world and much that we hold dear in the world. We have seen and felt the effects of the crisis of the nuclear age in the lives of people we serve. Nuclear weaponry has drastically changed the nature of warfare, and the arms race poses a threat to human life and human civilization which is without precedent.

We write this letter from the perspective of Catholic faith. Faith does not insulate us from the daily challenges of life but intensifies our desire to address them precisely in light of the gospel which has come to us in the person of the risen Christ. Through the resources of faith and reason we desire in this letter to provide hope for people in our day and direction toward a world freed of nuclear threat.

As Catholic bishops we write this letter as an exercise of our teaching ministry. The Catholic tradition on war and peace is a long and complex one; it stretches from the Sermon on the Mount to the statements of Pope John Paul II. We wish to explore and explain the resources of the moral-religious teaching and to apply it to specific questions of our day. In doing this we realize, and we want readers of this letter to recognize, that not all statements in this letter have the same moral authority. At times we state universally binding moral principles found in the teachings of the Church; at other times the pastoral letter makes specific applications, observations and recommendations which allow for diversity of opinion on the part of those who assess the factual data of situations differently. However, we expect Catholics to give our moral judgements serious consideration when they are forming their own views on specific problems.

The experience of preparing this letter has manifested to us the range of strongly held opinion in the Catholic community on questions of fact and judgment concerning issues of war and peace. We urge mutual respect among individuals and groups in the Church as this letter is analyzed and discussed. Obviously, as bishops, we believe that such differences should be expressed within the framework of Catholic moral teaching. We need in the Church not only conviction and commitment but also civility and charity.

While this letter is addressed principally to the Catholic community, we want it to make a contribution to the wider public debate in our country on the dangers and dilemmas of the nuclear age. Our contribution will not be primarily technical or political, but we are convinced that there is no satisfactory answer to the human problems of the nuclear age which fails to consider the moral and religious dimensions of the questions we face.

Although we speak in our own name, as Catholic bishops of the Church in the United States, we have been conscious in the preparation of this letter of the consequences our teaching will have not only for the United States but for other nations as well. One important expression

of this awareness has been the consultation we have had, by correspondence and in an important meeting at the Vatican (January 18-19, 1983), with representatives of European bishops' conferences. This consultation with bishops of other countries, and, of course, with the Holy See, has been very helpful to us.

Catholic teaching has always understood peace in positive terms. In the words of Pope John Paul II: "Peace is not just the absence of war. . . . Like a cathedral, peace must be constructed patiently and with unshakable faith." (Coventry, England, 1982) Peace is the fruit of order. Order in human society must be shaped on the basis of respect for the transcendence of God and the unique dignity of each person, understood in terms of freedom, justice, truth and love. To avoid war in our day we must be intent on building peace in an increasingly interdependent world. In Part III of this letter we set forth a positive vision of peace and the demands such a vision makes on diplomacy, national policy, and personal choices.

While pursuing peace incessantly, it is also necessary to limit the use of force in a world comprised of nation states, faced with common problems but devoid of an adequate international political authority. Keeping the peace in the nuclear age is a moral and political imperative. In Parts I and II of this letter we set forth both the principles of Catholic teaching on war and a series of judgments, based on these principle, about concrete policies. In making these judgments we speak as moral teachers, not as technical experts.

I. Some Principles, Norms and Premises of Catholic Teaching

A. On War

1. Catholic teaching begins in every case with a presumption against war and for peaceful settlement of disputes. In exceptional cases, determined by the moral principles of the just-war tradition, some uses of force are permitted.

2. Every nation has a right and duty to defend itself against unjust aggression.

3. Offensive war of any kind is not morally justifiable.

4. It is never permitted to direct nuclear or conventional weapons to "the indiscriminate destruction of whole cities or vast areas with their populations. . . ." (*Pastoral Consultation, #80.*) The intentional killing of innocent civilians or non-combatants is always wrong.

5. Even defensive response to unjust attack can cause destruction which violates the principle of proportionality, going far beyond the limits of legitimate defense. The judgment is particularly important when assessing planned use of nuclear weapons. No defensive strategy, nuclear or conventional, which exceeds the limits of proportionality is morally permissible.

B. On Deterrence

1. "In current conditions 'deterrence' based on balance, certainly not as an end in itself but as a step on the way toward progressive disarmament, may still be judged morally acceptable. Nonetheless, in order to ensure peace, it is indispensable not to be satisfied with this minimum which is always susceptible to the real danger of explosion." (Pope John Paul II, "Message to U.N. Special Session on Disarmament," #8, June 1982.)

2. No *use* of nuclear weapons which would violate the principles of discrimination or proportionality may be *intended* in a strategy of deterrence. The moral demands of Catholic teaching require resolute willingness not to intend or to do moral evil even to save our own lives or the lives of those we love.

3. Deterrence is not an adequate strategy as a long-term basis for peace; it is a transitional strategy justifiable only in conjunction with resolute determination to pursue arms control and disarmament. We are convinced that "the fundamental principle on which our present peace depends must be replaced by another, which declares the true and solid peace of nations consists not in equality of arms but in mutual trust alone". (Pope John XIII, *Peace on Earth*, #113.)

C. The Arms Race and Disarmament

1. The arms race is one of the greatest curses on the human race; it is to be condemned as a danger, an act of aggression against the poor, and a folly which does not provide the security in promises. (Cf: *Pastoral Constitution*, #81; *Statement of the Holy See to the United Nations*, 1976).

2. Negotiations must be pursued in every reasonable form possible; they should be governed by the "demand that the arms race should cease; that the stockpiles which exist in various countries should be reduced equally and simultaneously by the parties concerned; that nuclear weapons should be banned; and that a general agreement should eventually be reached about progressive disarmament and an effective method of control." (Pope John XXIII, *Peace on Earth*, #112.)

D. On Personal Conscience

1. **Military Service:** "All those who enter the military service in loyalty to their country should look upon themselves as the custodians of the security and freedom of their fellow countrymen; and when they carry out their duty properly, they are contributing to the maintenance of peace." (*Pastoral Constitution*, #79.)

2. **Conscientious Objection:** "Moreover, it seems just that laws should make humane provisions for the case of conscientious objectors who refuse to carry arms, provided they accept some other form of community service." (*Pastoral Constitution*, #79.)

3. **Non-violence:** "In this same spirit we cannot but express our admiration for all who forego the use of violence to vindicate their rights and resort to other means of defense which are available to weaker parties, provided it can be done without harm to the rights and duties of others and of the community." (*Pastoral Constitution*, #78.)

4. **Citizens and Conscience:** "Once again we deem it opportune to remind our children of their duty to take an active part in public life, and to contribute towards the attainment of the common good of the entire human family as well as that of their own political community. . . . In other words, it is necessary that human beings, in the intimacy of their own consciences, should so live and act in their temporal lives as to create a synthesis between scientific, technical professional elements on the one hand, and spiritual values on the other." (Pope John XIII, *Peace on Earth*, #146, 150.)

II. Moral Principles and Policy Choices

As bishops in the United States, assessing the concrete circumstances of our society, we have made a number of observations and recommendations in the process of applying moral principles to specific policy choices.

A. On the Use of Nuclear Weapons

1. ***Counter Population Use:*** Under no circumstances may nuclear weapons or other instruments of mass slaughter be used for the purpose of destroying population centers or other predominantly civilian targets. Retaliatory action which would indiscriminately and disproportionately take many wholly innocent lives, lives of people who are in no way responsible for reckless action of their government, must also be condemned.

2. ***The Initiation of Nuclear War:*** We do not perceive any situation in which the deliberate initiation of nuclear war, on however restricted a scale, can be morally justified. Non-nuclear attacks by another state must be resisted by other than nuclear means. Therefore, a serious moral obligation exists to develop non-nuclear defensive strategies as rapidly as possible. In this letter we urge NATO to move rapidly toward the adoption of a "no first use" policy, but we recognize this will take time to implement and will require the development of an adequate alternative defense posture.

3. ***Limited Nuclear War:*** Our examination of the various arguments on this question makes us highly skeptical about the real meaning of "limited." One of the criteria of the just-war teaching is that there must be a reasonable hope of success in bringing about justice and peace. We must ask whether such a reasonable hope can exist once nuclear weapons have been exchanged. The burden of proof remains on those who assert that meaningful limitation is possible. In our view the first imperative is to prevent any use of nuclear weapons and we hope that leaders will resist the notion that nuclear conflict can be limited, contained or won in any traditional sense.

B. On Deterrence

In concert with the evaluation provided by Pope John Paul II, we have arrived at a strictly conditional moral acceptance of deterrence. In this letter we have outlined criteria and recommendations which indicate the meaning of conditional acceptance of deterrence policy. We cannot consider such a policy adequate as a long-term basis for peace.

C. On Promoting Peace

1. We support immediate, bilateral verifiable agreements to halt the testing, production and deployment of new nuclear weapons systems. This recommendation is not to be identified with any specific political initiative.

2. We support efforts to achieve deep cuts in the arsenals of both superpowers; efforts should concentrate first on systems which threaten the retaliatory forces of either major power.

3. We support early and successful conclusion of negotiations of a comprehensive test ban treaty.

4. We urge new efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons in the world, and to control the conventional arms race, particularly the conventional arms trade.

5. We support, in an increasingly interdependent world, political and economic policies designed to protect human dignity and to promote the human rights of every person, especially the least among us. In this regard, we call for the establishment of some form of global authority adequate to the needs of the international common good.

This letter includes many judgments from the perspective of ethics, politics and strategy needed to speak concretely and correctly to the "moment of supreme crisis" identified by Vatican II. We stress again that readers should be aware, as we have been, of the distinction between our statement or moral principles and of official Church teaching and our application of these to

concrete issues. We urge that special care be taken not to use passages out of context; neither should brief portions of this document be cited to support positions it does not intend to convey or which are not truly in accord with the spirit of its teaching.

In concluding this summary we respond to two key questions often asked about this pastoral letter:

Why do we address these matters fraught with such complexity, controversy and passion? We speak as pastors, not politicians. We are teachers, not technicians. We cannot avoid our responsibility to lift up the moral dimensions of the choices before our world and nation. The nuclear age is an era of moral as well as physical danger. We are the first generation since Genesis with the power to threaten the created order. We cannot remain silent in the face of such danger. Why do we address these issues? We are simply trying to live up to the call of Jesus to be peacemakers in our own time and situation.

What are we saying? Fundamentally, we are saying that the decisions about nuclear weapons are among the most pressing moral questions of our age. While these decisions have obvious military and political aspects, they involve fundamental moral choices. In simple terms, we are saying that good ends (defending one's country, protecting freedom, etc.) cannot justify immoral means (the use of weapons which kill indiscriminately and threaten whole societies). We fear that our world and nation are headed in the wrong direction. More weapons with greater destructive potential are produced every day. More and more nations are seeking to become nuclear powers. In our quest for more and more security we fear we are actually becoming less and less secure.

In the words of the Holy Father, we need a "moral about-face." The whole world must summon the moral courage and technical means to say no to nuclear conflict; no to weapons of mass destruction; no to an arms race which robs the poor and the vulnerable; and no to the moral danger of a nuclear age which places before humankind indefensible choices of constant terror or surrender. Peacemaking is not an optional commitment. It is a requirement of our faith. We are called to be peacemakers, not by some movement of the moment, but by our Lord Jesus. The content and context of our peacemaking is set not by some political agenda or ideological program, but by the teaching of his Church.

Ultimately, this letter is intended as an expression of Christian faith, affirming the confidence we have that the risen Lord remains with us precisely in moment of crisis. It is our belief in his presence and power among us which sustain us in confronting the awesome challenge of the nuclear age. We speak from faith to provide hope for all who recognize the challenge and are working to confront it with the resources of faith and reason.

To approach the nuclear age in faith is to recognize our absolute need for prayer: we urge and invite all to unceasing prayer for peace with justice for all people. In a spirit of prayerful hope we present this message of peace.

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U.S Conference of Catholic Bishops

[*Import logo from web site: www.usccb.org*]. The Catholic Church with 60 million members and 19,200 local parishes is the largest religious body in the United States. Oversight is provided by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), which represents 300 active and about 100 bishops, who are appointed by the pope. The bishops serve as the heads of 194 dioceses in the United States.

The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace

[PDF document]

In November 1980 the National Conference of Bishops (as it was then known) appointed a committee of bishops, chaired by Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, to draft a pastoral letter on war and peace. The bishops reviewed two drafts and adopted the third and final draft on May 3, 1983. A substantial part of this pastoral letter focuses on nuclear weapons. The summary is presented below. The complete pastoral letter, The Challenge of Peace, is available from USCCB at 800 235-8722, order number 863-0.

[Possibly a photo of Cardinal Bernardin or the drafting committee]

Summary

[pp. i-viii]

[Two side bars, say at one-third and two-thirds through the text.

"No *use* of nuclear weapons which would violate the principle of discrimination or proportionality may be *intended* in a strategy of deterrence."

"In the words of our Holy Father, we need a 'moral about-face.' The whole world must summon the moral courage and technical means to say no to nuclear conflict; no to weapons of mass destruction; no to an arms race which robs the poor and the vulnerable; and no to the moral danger of a nuclear age which places before humankind indefensible choices of constant terror or surrender."

The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace A Reflection of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops on the Tenth Anniversary of The Challenge of Peace

[PDF document]

Ten years after issuing The Challenge of Peace the National Conference of Catholic Bishops reviewed the findings of the 1983 pastoral letter and offered their reflections. The Harvest of Justice [<http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/harvest.htm>] is available on the web site of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. The section dealing with nuclear disarmament is presented below with permission.

[Perhaps a photo of a wheat field inserted into the above paragraph.]

[At appropriate locations, two side bars:

"We must continue to say No to the very idea of nuclear war."

"The eventual elimination of nuclear weapons is more than a moral ideal; it should be a policy goal."

1.Unfinished Business: Nuclear Disarmament and Proliferation.

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Our 1983 pastoral letter focused special attention on the morality of nuclear weapons at a time of widespread fear of nuclear war. Only ten years later, the threat of global nuclear war may seem more remote than at any time in the nuclear age, but we may be facing a different but still dangerous period in which the use of nuclear weapons remains a significant threat. We cannot address questions of war and peace today, therefore, without acknowledging that the nuclear question remains of vital political and moral significance.

The end of the Cold War has changed the nuclear question in three ways. First, nuclear weapons are still an integral component of U.S. security policies, but they are no longer at the center of these policies or of international relations. In 1983, a dominant concern was the ethics of nuclear weapons. Today, this concern, while still critically important, must be considered in the context of a more fundamental question of the ethical foundations of political order: How do we achieve *Pacem in Terris*' vision of a just and stable political order, so that nations will no longer rely on nuclear weapons for their security? Second, we have new opportunities to take steps toward progressive nuclear disarmament. In 1983, the first task was to stop the growth of already bloated nuclear arsenals; today, the moral task is to proceed with deep cuts and ultimately to abolish these weapons entirely. Third, the threat of global nuclear war has been replaced by a threat of global nuclear proliferation. In addition to the declared nuclear powers, a number of other countries have or could very quickly deploy nuclear weapons, and still other nations, or even terrorist groups, might seek to obtain or develop nuclear weapons. Just as the nuclear powers must prevent nuclear war, so also they, with the rest of the international community, bear a heavy moral responsibility to stop the spread of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons.

a. The Moral Judgment on Deterrence. In 1983, we judged that nuclear deterrence may be morally acceptable as long as it is limited to deterring nuclear use by others; sufficiency, not nuclear superiority, is its goal; and it is used as a step on the way toward progressive disarmament.

Some believe that this judgment remains valid, since significant progress has been made in reducing nuclear weapons, including the most destabilizing ones, while at least some of those that remain are still necessary to deter existing nuclear threats. Others point to the end of the Soviet threat and the apparent unwillingness of the nuclear powers to accept the need to eliminate nuclear weapons as reasons for abandoning our strictly conditioned moral acceptance

of nuclear deterrence. They also cite the double standard inherent in nonproliferation efforts: What is the moral basis for asking other nations to forego nuclear weapons if we continue to judge our own deterrent to be morally necessary?

We believe our judgment of 1983 that nuclear deterrence is morally acceptable only under certain strict conditions remains a useful guide for evaluating the continued moral status of nuclear weapons in a post-Cold War world. It is useful because it acknowledges the fundamental moral dilemmas still posed by nuclear weapons, and it reflects the progress toward fulfilling the conditions we elaborated in 1983. At the same time, it highlights the new prospects — and thus the added moral urgency — of making even more dramatic progress in arms control and disarmament as the only basis for the continued moral legitimacy of deterrence.

b.A Post-Cold War Agenda For Nuclear Disarmament. While significant progress has been made in recent years, we believe additional steps are needed if nuclear policies and priorities are to keep up with the dramatic changes in world politics and if our nation is to move away from relying on nuclear deterrence as a basis for its security. Present challenges include the following:

The Role of Nuclear Weapons: We must continue to say No to the very idea of nuclear war. A minimal nuclear deterrent may be justified only to deter the use of nuclear weapons. The United States should commit itself never to use nuclear weapons first, should unequivocally reject proposals to use nuclear weapons to deter any nonnuclear threats, and should reinforce the fragile barrier against the use of these weapons. Indeed, we abhor any use of nuclear weapons.

Arms Control and Disarmament: Nuclear deterrence may be justified only as a step on the way toward progressive disarmament. The end of the Cold War, according to the Holy See, "challenge[s] the world community to adopt a post-nuclear form of security. That security lies in the abolition of nuclear weapons and the strengthening of international law." A first step toward this goal would be prompt ratification and implementation of the START I and START II treaties. Even once these treaties are fully implemented, there will still be more than 10,000 nuclear weapons in the world, containing explosive power hundreds of thousands times greater than the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Therefore, much deeper cuts are both possible and necessary. The eventual elimination of nuclear weapons is more than a moral ideal; it should be a

policy goal.

The negotiation of a verifiable comprehensive test ban treaty would not only demonstrate our commitment to this goal, but also would improve our moral credibility in urging nonnuclear nations to forego the development of nuclear weapons. We, therefore, support a halt to nuclear testing as our nation pursues an effective global test ban and renewal of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Also, steps must be taken to reduce the threat of nuclear terrorism. We must reverse the spread of nuclear technologies and materials. We welcome, therefore, U.S. efforts to achieve a global ban on the production of fissionable materials for use in nuclear weapons. Finally, one should not underestimate the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency as a forum for the discussion of these issues and as a force encouraging nations to take the steps necessary in this area.

Cooperative Security and a Just International Order:

The nuclear powers may justify, and then only temporarily, their nuclear deterrents only if they use their power and resources to lead in the construction of a more just and stable international order. An essential part of this international order must be a collective security framework that reverses the proliferation of nuclear weapons, guarantees the security of nonnuclear states and ultimately seeks to make nuclear weapons and war itself obsolete. The United States and other nations should also make the investments necessary to help ensure the development of stable, democratic governments in nations which have nuclear weapons or might seek to obtain them.

An active commitment by the United States to nuclear disarmament and the strengthening of collective security is the only moral basis for temporarily retaining our deterrent and our insistence that other nations forego these weapons. We advocate disarmament by example: careful but clear steps to reduce and end our dependence on weapons of mass destruction.

In our five-year report on *The Challenge of Peace*, we said: "To contain the nuclear danger of our time is itself an awesome undertaking. To reshape the political fabric of an increasingly interdependent world is an even larger and more complicated challenge." Now, on this tenth anniversary, we must be engaged in the difficult task of envisioning a future rooted in peace, with new institutions for resolving differences between nations, new global structures of mediation and conflict-resolution and a world order that has moved beyond nuclear weapons once and for all. We are committed to join in this struggle,

to bring the Gospel message of justice and peace to this vital work.

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

The Catholic Church with 60 million members and 19,200 local parishes is the largest religious body in the United States. Bishops are appointed by the pope and serve as spiritual and administrative leaders of 194 dioceses. The bishops join together as the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) to jointly exercise certain pastoral functions on behalf of the Christian faithful of the United States.

In 1983 the National Conference of Bishops (as it was then known) offer their views on nuclear weapons in a pastoral letter entitled "[The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response](#)." [link to below] Following the lead of Pope John Paul II in a speech to the United Nations, the U.S. bishops accepted nuclear deterrence "as a step on the way toward progressive disarmament". However, they noted:

"No use of nuclear weapons which would violate the principle of discrimination or proportionality may be intended in a strategy of deterrence."

They also stated:

"In the words of our Holy Father, we need a 'moral about-face.' The whole world must summon the moral courage and technical means to say no to nuclear conflict; no to weapons of mass destruction; no to an arms race which robs the poor and the vulnerable; and no to the moral danger of a nuclear age which places before humankind indefensible choices of constant terror or surrender."

Ten years later the U.S. Catholic bishops reflected on the status of nuclear weapons and the movement toward disarmament in a 1993 report entitled "[The Harvest of Justice Is Sown in Peace](#)". [link to below] They retained their conditional acceptance of nuclear deterrence but stated:

"We must continue to say No to the very idea of nuclear war."

They also insisted:

"The eventual elimination of nuclear weapons is more than a moral ideal; it should be a policy goal."

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The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace

[PDF document]

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Summary

The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response **A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace**

[PDF document]

In November 1980 the National Conference of Bishops (as it was then known) appointed a committee of bishops, chaired by Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, to draft a pastoral letter on war and peace. The bishops reviewed two drafts and adopted the third and final draft on May 3, 1983. A substantial part of this pastoral letter focuses on nuclear weapons. The summary is presented below. The complete pastoral letter, The Challenge of Peace, is available from USCCB at 800 235-8722, order number 863-0.

Summary

The Second Vatican Council opened its evaluation of modern warfare with the statement: "The whole human race faces a moment of supreme crisis in its advance toward maturity." We agree with the council's assessment; the crisis of the moment is embodied in the threat which nuclear weapons pose for the world and much that we hold dear in the world. We have seen and felt the effects of the crisis of the nuclear age in the lives of people we serve. Nuclear weaponry has drastically changed the nature of warfare, and the arms race poses a threat to human life and human civilization which is without precedent.

We write this letter from the perspective of Catholic faith. Faith does not insulate us from the daily challenges of life but intensifies our desire to address them precisely in light of the gospel which has come to us in the person of the risen Christ. Through the resources of faith and reason we desire in this letter to provide hope for people in our day and direction toward a world freed of the nuclear threat.

As Catholic bishops we write this letter as an exercise of our teaching ministry. The Catholic tradition on war and peace is a long and complex one; it stretches from the Sermon on the Mount to the statements of Pope John Paul II. We wish to explore and explain the resources of the moral-religious teaching and to apply it to specific questions of our day. In doing this we realize, and we want readers of this letter to recognize, that not all statements in this letter have the same moral authority. At times we state universally binding moral principles found in the teachings of the Church; at other times the pastoral letter makes specific applications, observations and recommendations which allow for diversity of opinion on the part of those who assess the factual data of situations differently. However, we expect Catholics to give our moral judgments serious consideration when they are forming their own views on specific problems.

The experience of preparing this letter has manifested to us the range of strongly held opinion in the Catholic community on questions of fact and judgment concerning issues of war and peace. We urge mutual respect among individuals and groups in the Church as this letter is analyzed and discussed. Obviously, as bishops, we believe that such differences should be expressed within the framework of Catholic moral teaching. We need in the Church not only conviction and commitment but also civility and charity.

While this letter is addressed principally to the Catholic community, we want it to make a contribution to the wider public debate in our country on the dangers and dilemmas of the nuclear age. Our contribution will not be primarily technical or political, but we are convinced that there is no satisfactory answer to the human problems of the nuclear age which fails to consider the moral and religious dimensions of the questions we face.

Although we speak in our own name, as Catholic bishops of the Church in the United States, we have been conscious in the preparation of this letter of the consequences our teaching will have not only for the United States but for other nations as well. One important expression

of this awareness has been the consultation we have had, by correspondence and in an important meeting at the Vatican (January 18-19, 1983), with representatives of European bishops' conferences. This consultation with bishops of other countries, and, of course, with the Holy See, has been very helpful to us.

Catholic teaching has always understood peace in positive terms. In the words of Pope John Paul II: "Peace is not just the absence of war. . . . Like a cathedral, peace must be constructed patiently and with unshakable faith." (Coventry, England, 1982) Peace is the fruit of order. Order in human society must be shaped on the basis of respect for the transcendence of God and the unique dignity of each person, understood in terms of freedom, justice, truth and love. To avoid war in our day we must be intent on building peace in an increasingly interdependent world. In Part III of this letter we set forth a positive vision of peace and the demands such a vision makes on diplomacy, national policy, and personal choices.

While pursuing peace incessantly, it is also necessary to limit the use of force in a world comprised of nation states, faced with common problems but devoid of an adequate international political authority. Keeping the peace in the nuclear age is a moral and political imperative. In Parts I and II of this letter we set forth both the principles of Catholic teaching on war and a series of judgments, based on these principles, about concrete policies. In making these judgments we speak as moral teachers, not as technical experts.

I. Some Principles, Norms and Premises of Catholic Teaching

A. On War

1. Catholic teaching begins in every case with a presumption against war and for peaceful settlement of disputes. In exceptional cases, determined by the moral principles of the just-war tradition, some uses of force are permitted.

2. Every nation has a right and duty to defend itself against unjust aggression.

3. Offensive war of any kind is not morally justifiable.

4. It is never permitted to direct nuclear or conventional weapons to "the indiscriminate destruction of whole cities or vast areas with their populations. . . ." (*Pastoral Constitution*, #80.) The intentional killing of innocent civilians or non-combatants is always wrong.

5. Even defensive response to unjust attack can cause destruction which violates the principle of proportionality, going far beyond the limits of legitimate defense. This judgment is particularly important when assessing planned use of nuclear weapons. No defensive strategy, nuclear or conventional, which exceeds the limits of proportionality is morally permissible.

B. On Deterrence

1. "In current conditions 'deterrence' based on balance, certainly not as an end in itself but as a step on the way toward a progressive disarmament, may still be judged morally acceptable. Nonetheless, in order to ensure peace, it is indispensable not to be satisfied with this minimum which is always susceptible to the real danger of explosion." (Pope John Paul II, "Message to U.N. Special Session on Disarmament," #8, June 1982.)

2. No *use* of nuclear weapons which would violate the principles of discrimination or proportionality may be *intended* in a strategy of deterrence. The moral demands of Catholic teaching require resolute willingness not to intend or to do moral evil even to save our own lives or the lives of those we love.

3. Deterrence is not an adequate strategy as a long-term basis for peace; it is a transitional strategy justifiable only in conjunction with resolute determination to pursue arms control and disarmament. We are convinced that "the fundamental principle on which our present peace depends must be replaced by another, which declares the true and solid peace of nations consists not in equality of arms but in mutual trust alone". (Pope John XIII, *Peace on Earth*, #113.)

C. The Arms Race and Disarmament

1. The arms race is one of the greatest curses on the human race; it is to be condemned as a danger, an act of aggression against the poor, and a folly which does not provide the security it promises. (Cf: *Pastoral Constitution*, #81; *Statement of the Holy See to the United Nations*, 1976).

2. Negotiations must be pursued in every reasonable form possible; they should be governed by the "demand that the arms race should cease; that the stockpiles which exist in various countries should be reduced equally and simultaneously by the parties concerned; that nuclear weapons should be banned; and that a general agreement should eventually be reached about progressive disarmament and an effective method of control." (Pope John XXIII, *Peace on Earth*, #112.)

D. On Personal Conscience

1. **Military Service:** "All those who enter the military service in loyalty to their country should look upon themselves as the custodians of the security and freedom of their fellow countrymen; and when they carry out their duty properly, they are contributing to the maintenance of peace." (*Pastoral Constitution*, #79.)

2. **Conscientious Objection:** "Moreover, it seems just that laws should make humane provisions for the case of conscientious objectors who refuse to carry arms, provided they accept some other form of community service." (*Pastoral Constitution*, #79.)

3. **Non-violence:** "In this same spirit we cannot but express our admiration for all who forego the use of violence to vindicate their rights and resort to other means of defense which are available to weaker parties, provided it can be done without harm to the rights and duties of others and of the community." (*Pastoral Constitution*, #78.)

4. **Citizens and Conscience:** "Once again we deem it opportune to remind our children of their duty to take an active part in public life, and to contribute towards the attainment of the common good of the entire human family as well as that of their own political community. . . . In other words, it is necessary that human beings, in the intimacy of their own consciences, should so live and act in their temporal lives as to create a synthesis between scientific, technical and professional elements on the one hand, and spiritual values on the other." (Pope John XIII, *Peace on Earth*, #146, 150.)

II. Moral Principles and Policy Choices

As bishops in the United States, assessing the concrete circumstances of our society, we have made a number of observations and recommendations in the process of applying moral principles to specific policy choices.

A. On the Use of Nuclear Weapons

1. ***Counter Population Use:*** Under no circumstances may nuclear weapons or other instruments of mass slaughter be used for the purpose of destroying population centers or other predominantly civilian targets. Retaliatory action which would indiscriminately and disproportionately take many wholly innocent lives, lives of people who are in no way responsible for reckless actions of their government, must also be condemned.

2. ***The Initiation of Nuclear War:*** We do not perceive any situation in which the deliberate initiation of nuclear war, on however restricted a scale, can be morally justified. Non-nuclear attacks by another state must be resisted by other than nuclear means. Therefore, a serious moral obligation exists to develop non-nuclear defensive strategies as rapidly as possible. In this letter we urge NATO to move rapidly toward the adoption of a "no first use" policy, but we recognize this will take time to implement and will require the development of an adequate alternative defense posture.

3. ***Limited Nuclear War:*** Our examination of the various arguments on this question makes us highly skeptical about the real meaning of "limited." One of the criteria of the just-war teaching is that there must be a reasonable hope of success in bringing about justice and peace. We must ask whether such a reasonable hope can exist once nuclear weapons have been exchanged. The burden of proof remains on those who assert that meaningful limitation is possible. In our view the first imperative is to prevent any use of nuclear weapons and we hope that leaders will resist the notion that nuclear conflict can be limited, contained or won in any traditional sense.

B. On Deterrence

In concert with the evaluation provided by Pope John Paul II, we have arrived at a strictly conditional moral acceptance of deterrence. In this letter we have outlined criteria and recommendations which indicate the meaning of conditional acceptance of deterrence policy. We cannot consider such a policy adequate as a long-term basis for peace.

C. On Promoting Peace

1. We support immediate, bilateral verifiable agreements to halt the testing, production and deployment of new nuclear weapons systems. This recommendation is not to be identified with any specific political initiative.

2. We support efforts to achieve deep cuts in the arsenals of both superpowers; efforts should concentrate first on systems which threaten the retaliatory forces of either major power.

3. We support early and successful conclusion of negotiations of a comprehensive test ban treaty.

4. We urge new efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons in the world, and to control the conventional arms race, particularly the conventional arms trade.

5. We support, in an increasingly interdependent world, political and economic policies designed to protect human dignity and to promote the human rights of every person, especially the least among us. In this regard, we call for the establishment of some form of global authority adequate to the needs of the international common good.

This letter includes many judgments from the perspective of ethics, politics and strategy needed to speak concretely and correctly to the "moment of supreme crisis" identified by Vatican II. We stress again that readers should be aware, as we have been, of the distinction between our statement of moral principles and of official Church teaching and our application of these to

concrete issues. We urge that special care be taken not to use passages out of context; neither should brief portions of this document be cited to support positions it does not intend to convey or which are not truly in accord with the spirit of its teaching.

In concluding this summary we respond to two key questions often asked about this pastoral letter:

Why do we address these matters fraught with such complexity, controversy and passion? We speak as pastors, not politicians. We are teachers, not technicians. We cannot avoid our responsibility to lift up the moral dimensions of the choices before our world and nation. The nuclear age is an era of moral as well as physical danger. We are the first generation since Genesis with the power to threaten the created order. We cannot remain silent in the face of such danger. Why do we address these issues? We are simply trying to live up to the call of Jesus to be peacemakers in our own time and situation.

What are we saying? Fundamentally, we are saying that the decisions about nuclear weapons are among the most pressing moral questions of our age. While these decisions have obvious military and political aspects, they involve fundamental moral choices. In simple terms, we are saying that good ends (defending one's country, protecting freedom, etc.) cannot justify immoral means (the use of weapons which kill indiscriminately and threaten whole societies). We fear that our world and nation are headed in the wrong direction. More weapons with greater destructive potential are produced every day. More and more nations are seeking to become nuclear powers. In our quest for more and more security we fear we are actually becoming less and less secure.

In the words of the Holy Father, we need a "moral about-face." The whole world must summon the moral courage and technical means to say no to nuclear conflict; no to weapons of mass destruction; no to an arms race which robs the poor and the vulnerable; and no to the moral danger of a nuclear age which places before humankind indefensible choices of constant terror or surrender. Peacemaking is not an optional commitment. It is a requirement of our faith. We are called to be peacemakers, not by some movement of the moment, but by our Lord Jesus. The content and context of our peacemaking is set not by some political agenda or ideological program, but by the teaching of his Church.

Ultimately, this letter is intended as an expression of Christian faith, affirming the confidence we have that the risen Lord remains with us precisely in moment of crisis. It is our belief in his presence and power among us which sustain us in confronting the awesome challenge of the nuclear age. We speak from faith to provide hope for all who recognize the challenge and are working to confront it with the resources of faith and reason.

To approach the nuclear age in faith is to recognize our absolute need for prayer: we urge and invite all to unceasing prayer for peace with justice for all people. In a spirit of prayerful hope we present this message of peace.

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Report of the Sixth Assembly (1983)

The most fully development statement on nuclear disarmament by the World Council of Churches occurred in "Gathered for Life: Official Report of the Sixth Assembly", which met in Vancouver, Canada. It is as follows:

"Nuclear Arms, Doctrines and Disarmament"

13. It would be an intolerably evil contradiction of the Sixth Assembly's theme, "Jesus Christ -- the Life of the World", to support the nuclear weapons and doctrines which threaten the survival of the world. We now affirm, as a declaration of this Assembly, the conviction expressed by the 1981 Amsterdam Public Hearing on Nuclear Weapons and Disarmament and commended to WCC member churches by the Central Committee in 1982:

We believe that the time has come when the churches must unequivocally declare that the production and deployment as well as the use of nuclear weapons are a crime against humanity and that such activities must be condemned on ethnical and theological grounds.

Furthermore, we appeal for the institution of a universal covenant to this effect so that nuclear weapons and warfare are delegitimized and condemned as violations of international law.

14. Nuclear deterrence, as the strategic doctrine which has justified nuclear weapons in the name of security and war prevention, must now be categorically rejected as contrary to our faith in Jesus Christ who is our life and peace. Nuclear deterrence is morally unacceptable because it relies on the credibility of the *intention to use* nuclear weapons: we believe that any intention to use weapons of mass destruction is an utterly inhuman violation of the mind and spirit of Christ which should be in us. We know that many Christians and others sincerely believe that deterrence provides an interim assurance of peace and stability on the way to disarmament. We must work together with those advocates of interim deterrence who are earnestly committed to arms reduction. But the increasing probabilities of nuclear war and the spectre of an arms race totally out of control have exposed the cruel illusions of such faith in deterrence.

15. Nuclear deterrence can never provide the foundation of genuine peace. It is the antithesis of an ultimate faith in that love which casts our fear. It escalates the arms race in a vain pursuit of stability. It ignores the economic, social and psychological dimensions of security, and frustrates justice by maintaining the status quo in world politics. It destroys the reality of self-determination for most nations in matters of their own safety and survival, and diverts resources from basic human needs. It is the contradiction of disarmament because it exalts the threat of force, rationalizes the development of new weapons of mass destruction, and acts as a spur to nuclear proliferation by persistently breaking the "good faith" pledge of disarmament in the Non-Proliferation Treaty, thus tempting other governments to become nuclear-weapon states. It is increasingly discredited by first-strike and war-fighting strategies which betray the doubts about its reliability.

16. We urge our member communions to educate their members in the urgency of delegitimizing nuclear weapons and demythologizing deterrence.

17. In the meantime we affirm our support for the following specific measures:
- a) a mutual and verifiable freeze on the development, testing, production, and deployment of nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles;
 - b) completion of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty;
 - c) early and successful completion of the Geneva negotiations between the US and USSR for substantial reductions in strategic nuclear weapons;
 - d) non-deployment of Pershing II and ground-launched cruise missiles, major reductions of Soviet intermediate range missiles including SS-20s, and successful conclusion of intermediate nuclear forces (INF) negotiations in Geneva;
 - e) creation of nuclear-free zones wherever possible;
 - f) cessation of all nuclear weapons and missile tests in the Pacific and a programme of medical and environmental aid to promote the health of Pacific peoples affected by nuclear activities;
 - g) the negotiation of a treaty providing for the total demilitarization of space, including the banning of all nuclear, anti-satellite and anti-missile systems in space;
 - h) commitment by all nuclear-weapon states to a policy of no first use of nuclear weapons;
 - i) independent, non-negotiated initiatives such as a moratorium on the testing or development of nuclear weapons, renunciation of a specific weapon system, cessation of production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes, or reductions in existing arsenals or projected military expenditures.

Marie,

I'm glad to see the draft page for Religious Statements. It's looking good. We're making progress.

Here is a detail critique and suggestions for corrections. After these are made and I give you a little more material, we are close to being ready to put this page on the web site.

1. Masthead. As I said previously, I would like the orange and brown bands for the navigation buttons carried clear to the right margin. For spacing, you may want to return "Your Feedback" to the top row, as you previously had it.
2. When you receive my "Nuclear Weapons A Moral Issue" graphic, you can work on the web page graphic, especially the dove.
3. I like the idea of buttons to connect with the various statements. However, you should use a different design because some might interpret it as a Christian cross, but we're interfaith. I suggest adding them to the four sub-topics under Catholic Church. These are long statements, so users should be able to connect with them directly.
4. For the World Council of Churches, delete the graphic you picked up from their web site. Replace it with the one I sent you. I might be imbedded into the first paragraph, or place separately. This is something we need to decide on and make consistent. You don't need World Council of Churches twice in the paragraph.
5. Now I see how you reference PDF. That's useful.
6. The way you block indent the WCC statement is a pattern to follow for latter statements.
7. Re Statement to 1998 NPT Preparatory Committee. You may want to underline "Act Now for Nuclear Abolition" to link it for the full statement that comes later.
8. I haven't been able to get a picture of Dr. Raiser so far. You can delete that reference, but we may want to add a photo later if we get one.
9. Likewise I don't have the photos for Act Now for Nuclear Abolition. You can delete the reference in brackets. We can add a photo later if we get it.
10. Good job getting the signers into two columns.
11. Re "A Spiritual, Ethical...." Again you can cut out the bracket reference to a photo. I'm trying to get one to add later.
12. This statement should be block indented.
13. The date for the Nuclear Reduction/Disarmament Initiative is 2000, not 2002.

14. I will check with them if we can use their logo. (I know, I suggested it.) I'll be doing the same with others, for this can be a sensitive issue. As a design matter, I wonder whether we want to place logos separate as you have done, or as a paragraph insert. What do you think?

15. I gave you the photo for insertion here.

16. For the three for which we don't have statements -- National Council of Churches, Canadian Council of Churches, Conference of European Churches, are these their logos which you picked up? If so, thanks for the initiative. But if they are merely made up as markers, you can drop them and simply have the words "to be added".

17. DENOMINATIONS. This heading and subsequent headings should be in bold as you have done above. Likewise the introductory paragraphs should be in italic. I assume that you just haven't got around to this yet.

18. For your next version, please include the picture of St. Peter's and Pope John Paul II as a sidebar.

19. "There Has Been Regression": bold heading, block indent, remove photo reference, work in sidebar.

20. "Nuclear Weapons Cannot Be Justified...": bold heading, block indent, remove photo reference, work in sidebar.

21. U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Bold heading. After conferring with USCCB staff, I need to re-write the introductory paragraph, which I will send you. We can't use their logo.

22. "The Challenge of Peace". Bold heading. The Summary isn't available in digital form, so I'm going to have to type it and supply it to you. You can leave [to be added].

23. "The Harvest of Justice". USCCB staff wants me to add footnotes and put a permission paragraph at the end. I'll supply you with revised text.

24. Pax Christi International: heading in bold, underline name in paragraph for linkage. I've asked for a URL for "New Challenges....". I'll give you numbers for blanks in paragraph.

25. Pax Christi USA: heading in bold, underline name in paragraph for linkage. I'm waiting for a URL reference for "The Morality of Nuclear Deterrence". Block indent excerpt.

26. Islam: same matters of bold heading, italic, and block indent.

27. Jewish: ditto.

28. I've asked other denominations for material. The only one I want for certain before we go on line is United Methodist. I can write that if necessary.

I look forward to seeing the next draft.

Howard