

The Terrible and Rapidly Increasing Danger of A Nuclear Holocaust

What should Canada be Doing?

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In-depth Report: [Nuclear War](#)

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- Nagasaki, located some 1000 kilometers southwest of Tokyo, was bombed 3 days after Hiroshima, killing over 70 000 people instantly. Many thousands died later from the effects of radiation.
- Nagasaki was not the original intended target. Certainly, like Hiroshima, it was not even a major military target.
- The primary target was the city of Kokura, but it was covered by clouds, and the U.S. bomber headed instead for Nagasaki. However, it too was covered by clouds, and the plane was quickly running out of fuel. But, at the last moment, a small break appeared in the clouds and the bomber "Bockscar" dropped the atomic bomb.
- Earlier, U.S. President Harry Truman, had enthusiastically proclaimed "this is the greatest thing in history" when told of the Hiroshima bombing.
- But were the bombings and the destruction and mutilation of hundreds and thousand of men, women and children even necessary?
- According to J. Samuel Walker, chief historian of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
"It is clear that alternatives to the bomb existed and that Truman and his advisers knew it."
- According to Curtis E. Lemay, the U.S. Air Force general who led the B-29 bombings of Japanese cities
"The war would have been over without the atomic bomb. The atomic bomb had nothing to do with the end of the war at all."
- For Harry Truman's good friend, Fleet Admiral Leahy
"In being the first to use the atomic bomb, we adopted an ethical standard common to the barbarians of the Dark Ages."

- And for Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, commander -in- chief of the U.S. Pacific Fleet

“There was no military justification for the dropping of the bomb.”

- Dwight Eisenhower clearly voiced his grave misgivings and twice recommended to Truman against the use of the bomb. According to Eisenhower

“It wasn’t necessary to hit them with that awful thing... to use the atomic bomb, to kill and terrorize civilians... was a double crime.”

- Other U.S. military leaders including General Douglas MacArthur, said that it would be unnecessary and immoral.

- Albert Einstein attacked the use of the bomb, as did Norman Cousins and many other prominent Americans. But, most Americans were strongly in support.

- President Harry Truman said he was “jubilant.”

- For Admiral Leahy, the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were “barbarous weapons”

“I was not taught to make wars in that fashion, and wars cannot be won by destroying women and children.”

- For the Chief of the U.S. Naval Operations, Ernest J. King, the use of the atomic bomb was both “unnecessary and immoral.” (according to American author John Denson).

- After the bombings, the U.S. occupation authorities censored the reports from the devastated cities, and would not allow photographs of the tens of thousand of corpses and the mutilated survivors to be made public.

- The bombs that devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki were about 15 kilotons. The average U.S. nuclear warhead today is 100 kilotons, and some are 250 kilotons, and some are as high as 5 megatons. Just one of these bombs could completely destroy a small country or a huge city, killing millions of men, women and children, destroying all buildings, and making the entire area uninhabitable for decades. All to this would happen in only a few seconds, and most likely with little or no warning.

- In Vancouver two months ago, Hans Blix, the U.N.’s former chief weapons inspector spoke of

“the stagnation of global disarmament...” the fact that “the U.S. and Britain are developing a new generation of nuclear weapons...” and that “Last year heads of state at a UN summit failed to adopt a single recommendation on how to attain further disarmament or prevent proliferation.” Moreover, “Work at Geneva has stood still.”

- At the UN, Blix said there is

“a serious and dangerous loss of momentum in disarmament and non-proliferation efforts...work has stalled...the nuclear states no longer take their commitment to disarmament seriously.”

- And only a few days later, in a TRULY incredible statement, the Deputy Director of Nuclear and Security Affairs for the U.S. State Department said

“the peaceful use of space is completely consistent with military activity in space...there is no consensus about the supposed weaponization of space” and “the Conference on Disarmament is not the appropriate venue for such discussions” and “it’s impossible to define a workable ban on space-related weapons systems.”

- From Geneva, also in June, “The United States on Tuesday reasserted its right to develop weapons for use in outer space...and ruled out any global negotiations on a new treaty to limit them.”

- From Stockholm, the same day, “the U.S. spends 48% of all military spending (2005) and accounted for 80% of the 2005 military spending increase.” Per capita, China \$31.20, U.S. \$1 602 (51.4 times as much!)

- The 30-year-old Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty commits the 177 non-nuclear nations that signed the agreement not to acquire nuclear weapons and the “Big Five” nuclear powers- the United States, Britain, France, China, and Russia - to dismantle theirs.

- But, the Big Five have now largely ignored their obligations, and the Bush Administration’s Nuclear Posture Review unilaterally withdrew its previous promises.

- Meanwhile, both the U.S. and France have developed new ways of designing new generations of nuclear weapons that skirt the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and Donald Rumsfeld has talked openly about violating the treaty.

- It has recently been suggested that if the U.S. proceeds with new testing, up to 40 nations would take steps to begin to manufacture their own nuclear weapons.

- What the major nuclear nations that are now ignoring their previous commitments are doing is encouraging many other countries to acquire these weapons. And, why not? If the Big Five think they must have these weapons for their own security, why would countries such as Iran, North Korea and Syria not come to the same conclusion?

- If the U.S. and China have not ratified the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty, why would we expect Pakistan and India and Israel to abide by it? Or, any other country?

- In November, 2004, there was a vote in the United Nations on a treaty to place all production of fissile materials under international control, so that these materials could be used for nuclear power, but not for nuclear weapons. 147 countries voted in favour of such a treaty. One country, and only one country, the United States, voted against.

- If you take the \$467 billion for the military that has already been approved by the U.S. congress, and add in additional spending for Iraq and Afghanistan and other military costs to come, the total will be well over \$600 billion.

- The U.S. White House and Congress are becoming increasingly paranoid about China, but China’s military budget for this year is well under \$50 billion.

- The American hypocrisy is remarkable.

- It is O.K. for the U.S. to have thousands of nuclear weapons and modernized delivery systems to send them crashing to earth, anywhere on earth, but you, Iran and North Korea, cannot have even one nuclear weapon.
- It's O.K. for the U.S. to send a test missile with three dummy warheads 4, 200 miles to targets in the Kwajalein Missile Range in the Marshall Islands, but how dare North Korea try to test its own new long-range missile!
- It's O.K. for Russia to launch a ballistic missile from a submarine to strike a target in the Kamchatka Peninsula, 5,000 miles away, but others better not have similar aspirations.
- It's O.K. for the U.S. to budget a mammoth \$6.4 billion for new nuclear activities in 2007, but we all better start worrying about China's military budget which is less than one tenth the American spending.
- And it's O.K. for the U.S. and Russia to have over 95% of the 27, 000 stockpiled nuclear weapons, of which some 4, 000 are dangerously on hair-triggered alert, but other countries better not plan to build their own supply of nuclear weapons.
- It's O.K. for the U.S. to deploy 500 Minuteman III missiles on high alert, each carrying a nuclear warhead with a yield 27 times more powerful than the bomb that destroyed Hiroshima.
- It's O.K. for the U.S. to criticize others for testing missiles despite the fact that the U.S. has conducted at least 48 tests of intercontinental ballistic missiles in recent years.
- It's O.K. for the U.S. under both the Clinton and G.W. Bush administrations to target North Korea in their Nuclear Posture Review, and spend billions of dollars to improve their global strike capability, but North Korea must be condemned for their recent test by the United Nation Security Council.
- It's O.K. for China, India, Pakistan, Israel, North Korea and the United States to have avoided ratifying the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, which has been endorsed by more than 100 countries, while somehow expecting that countries such as Brazil, South Africa, Iran and Syria will somehow feel obligated not to test nuclear weapons in the future.
- So, just forget the 1995 and 2000 disarmament-related commitments by the major nuclear powers.
- Forget supporting the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.
- Forget allowing a verifiable ban on the production of fissile materials for bombs.
- Forget a moratorium on new uranium enrichment and plutonium separation plants.
- Forget any significant steps to strengthen the nonproliferation treaty.
- Forget any idea of withdrawing U.S. tactical nuclear weapons from Europe.
- Forget any agreement on the use of space for missile defence, even though Russia, China, Japan and the European Union favour such a prohibition.
- And, forget the fact that the new U.S.- India nuclear deal implicitly promotes proliferation,

a terribly dangerous double standard and a basic weakening of the nonproliferation treaty.

- What the new U.S. - India deal does is almost completely undermines international trade rules to stop the spread of nuclear weapons, and progress towards disarmament, and sets in place double standards which will certainly entice other countries to ignore the long-standing provisions of the Non-proliferation Treaty.

- The Economist magazine summed up George W. Bush's plans in a single sentence:

"What folly for America to spend billions on missile defences, while unravelling the rules which limit the weapons that may some day get through or around them."

- As for the ridiculous, completely ineffective American missile defense plans, Hans Blix urges the U.S. to abandon these plans because they threaten global peace and security, and are "creating or aggravating arms races."

- Over and above the already long list of detailed Pentagon and U.S. Air Force plans for the weaponization of space, which I detailed in my last book, and in my recent speech in Vancouver to the World Peace Forum, a brand new report, from Washington's Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis claims the U.S. has no alternative but to place weapons in space, because otherwise there will be major gaps in American national security, security which only space can provide.

- Meanwhile, the U.S. has agreed to sell 66 advanced F-16 fighter planes to Taiwan after already agreeing to sell it 150 earlier versions of the F-16, and eight submarines, plus 12 submarine-hunting aircraft, plus a large supply of patriot missiles.

- In 2005, the U.S. sold just under \$19 billion in fighter planes, bombers, helicopters, tanks, and other weaponry, exporting more arms than the next 6 exporters combined.

- And now, the U.S. has begun construction of a new \$1 billion plutonium research centre as part of an ambitious plan to modernize its nuclear weapons and build more than 125 new nuclear bombs a year, at an extra cost of \$10 billion.

- Those who believe that the principal threat to North America will come from ICBMs fired from thousands of miles away are incredibly naïve.

- The threat will come from missiles fired from submarines, from cruise missiles launched from freighters 200 miles off the North American shorelines, from nuclear bombs hidden in some of the myriad of unexamined containers that land in North American seaports every day.

- The real danger from North Korea is not the prospect of it developing ICBMs, but rather the fact that it has had a 400% increase in its stock of plutonium, a dangerous supply some of which it would most likely not hesitate to sell to the highest bidder, as it probably has already.

- Given the activities of the evil Pakistani metallurgist Abdul Qadeer Khan, and his grossly irresponsible sale to North Korea, Iran and Libya, and untold others, of nuclear bomb secrets in "full-service bomb builder packages," given that most of his activities even today are still unaccounted for, who among us cannot be fearful?

- And terrorists?
- This is no fantasy. It is in fact an appalling dangerous reality.
- Mohamed El Baradei, head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, said recently,

“extremists have become more sophisticated in trying to lay their hands on nuclear weapons. This is a real threat.”
- And why would they have much difficulty in getting what they need from Iran, or from North Korea, or even from sources in Pakistan?
- And why would they be reluctant to use these horrible weapons on New York or Washington or London?
- Or, since Afghanistan, on Toronto?
- In the election campaign earlier this year, Stephen Harper promised that Canada’s foreign policy, under a Conservative government, would “reflect true Canadian values and advocate Canada’s nation interests.”
- But, since the election, Canada’s foreign policy seems, more often than not, simply a reflection of U.S. foreign policy.
- Whether it’s Afghanistan, missile defences, our new attitude towards peacekeeping, the Middle East, our vastly increased military spending, the Kyoto Protocol, our terribly poor foreign aid performance, or in many other areas, more and more we’ve moved away from traditional Canadian policies, and more and more we seem to echo George W. Bush, Condoleeza Rice, and that awful man, Donald Rumsfeld.
- What should Canada be doing?
- We should be leading the world and working with the dozens of like-minded states to:
 1. Battle any plans by any country to weaponize space.
 2. We should work with the same countries to quickly strengthen the Non-Proliferation Treaty.
 3. We should lead the way in the development of a verifiable Fissile Materials Cut-off Treaty.
 4. We should do our best to have hold-out states sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty.
 5. We should work with the International Atomic Energy Agency to help them strengthen their verification capabilities.
 6. We should develop in Canada a Center for the Elimination of All Nuclear Weapons, and invite Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Norway, Slovakia, Turkey, Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, Sweden and South Africa and other willing, like-minded countries to join us in all these endeavors

- My friend Douglas Matten of San Francisco quotes Euripides: “Whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad.”
- Matten goes on to ask “How else can you describe the strange apathy over the daily threat posed by nuclear weapons?”
- The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists surely now have it wrong. The hands on their doomsday clock should now be moved much closer to midnight.
- The combined events of the past few years are the greatest threat to the survival of our civilization that I can ever remember.
- The breakdown or abandonment of important international agreements, the increasingly uncontrolled proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear materials, the dangerous, belligerent U.S. administration, the rapid growth of militant terrorists around the world, the broad dissemination of bomb-making and bomb delivery systems, U.S. plans to weaponize space and the inevitable response from Russia and China to do the same, American, Russian and Chinese plans to upgrade their nuclear weapons and to modernize their weapons delivery systems.....
- Surely all of this is a guaranteed recipe for a cataclysmic nuclear holocaust unless urgent steps are taken to reverse these potentially horrific developments.
- Ultimately, there is one and only one solution: the total abolition of all nuclear weapons.
- There should be not other goal as important for Canadians. We Canadians should and can help lead the way to nuclear disarmament. Nothing should distract us from this task. Nothing should ever allow us to forget Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

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