

Nuclear War

How many of us are learning about the Cold War in our history classes? Fun isn't? The Cold War, in one light, can be seen as an escalation of supremacy. Who can destroy the other how many times more? Let me tell you something about the Cold War- we're still in it. At any moment the two superpowers that could have incinerated the world in the 1940s, could still do the same thing today-ten times over! The US and Russia both hold 20,000 to 30,000 nuclear weapons at a moment's readiness.

http://www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2004/09/27_krieger_ending-nuclear-threat-humanity.htm) If ever there was to be a stray nuclear weapon, if ever there was to be an accidental pre-emptive strike, that's all it would take, for total commitment to nuclear war.

How does that make you feel? Any of you? Did you ever think this could or might happen? Do any of you care? For those of you who are answering "No" to these questions, then I'm sorry to inform you that you are under the influence of what we call "Psychic Numbing." Psychic Numbing is a state of mind that denies real world facts so that one may maintain a "stress free life." Unfortunately, it's due to psychic numbing that persuading the public to think differently is hard. So many of us keep going about our normal lives without a thought of nuclear war. (Nuclear Arms Race, Pg. 422) Psychic numbing has kept us, and is keeping us, to focus on our own day-to-day lives. We worry about our homework, our job, the traffic, or the weather.

In the presence of nuclear war, during an attack, the United States and Russia would fire nuclear missiles against each other at key strategic positions. With few to none disarming or counter methods, there would be close to nothing standing in the way of these implements of nuclear death. Each nuclear weapon would be pointed at a major city or military installation. These sites would most likely be places like: San Francisco, New York, and Washington DC. In both the US and Russia, there would be no running. Either burnt in the blast or killed by fallout, no one would be spared. No one. That is unless you have a strong bomb shelter that you can live in for a few years. Even in those shelters you may not survive. The weapons of today create fallout, which would continue to poison

US soil from the atmosphere for years. Fallout in essence, is radiation falling to the Earth's surface from different level of the atmosphere. Levels like the troposphere, lower atmosphere, and the stratosphere, high atmosphere. This radiation poisons our food, our water, the land that we live on in the form of ordinary rain. (Nuclear Arms Race, Pg. 303-306) Those who survived the initial blasts, lived with burning flesh and numerous problems contributed to high levels of radiation. Later, people who consumed food from radiated areas could and most likely get cancers. If those poor people were lucky, they wouldn't have to suffer for weeks on end before dieing.

During the Cold War, people in the US were afraid of nuclear war. To them the threat was very real, and they were scared. If nuke missiles were ever fired, annihilation was inevitable. They would not have long before the counter missiles from Russia hit the US. No more Aptos, Washington DC, New York, or USA left for that matter.

These fears still live on in the world. During the Cold War protests were made against nuclear weapons. Why don't we see anybody protesting now against nuclear weapons? Again, I think it is psychic numbing. We all see the Iraq War and think, "Bad Bush! Get our troops out of there!" But shouldn't we also be saying, "Bad Bush! Stop making more nuclear weapons and use those funds for more essential purposes!"

Yeah, I said it. According to the book "Nuclear Arms Race" the United States of America is building more ICBMs. This, is a step backwards; a step towards the destruction of all humanity. To solve this problem we'll need the majority of everyone. We'll need everyone to step up and see the big picture that's going on around us. "Unfortunately, the US, under the Bush administration, has not only failed to show leadership to prevent nuclear terrorism and nuclear double standards, but has actively sought to improve its nuclear arsenal."

(http://www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2004/09/27_krieger_ending-nuclear-threat-humanity.htm) The bottom line is our government is screwing up right now. They're doing a poor job in more than just the "nuclear" issue, but to stay on topic, we the public, need to tell our government that they can't get away with plans that will have devastating draw backs to our Earth.

In years past, groups, like the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation led by David Krieger, have started to fight back against the nuclear superpowers on what is right. It's not enough though they're loosing their battle with every new weapon that is built. That's where we the people come in. We, the general public, we, the voters (or almost voters), we, the everyone, can make a difference. We can make a big difference. We only need one thing to achieve this. It's determination. Determination. You, the general public out there has to want to save the world. You have to care about the future about the world in which the next generation will be raised. If you really want to help, if you really want to make a difference, then you simply need to write to your congressmen or state senator. Write about the impending doom of total nuclear war, or more importantly a commitment to help prevent it. If writing's not your style, then go with your school; get those directly around you to help out. Start there and work towards getting you voice heard to more and more people. Like I said, it takes, determination to put an end to a world crisis. How many of you are ready? How do we measure the quality of our success as a nation?

I'll tell you one thing government isn't-government isn't ready to change. To government, nuclear weapons are a strengthening tool of security. What an oxymoron. Some government officials believe the idea that America would survive nuclear war. They've said that because Hiroshima and Nagasaki have both been rebuilt after World War II. In their mind, there is no reason to fear nuclear war. (Nuclear Arms Race, Pg. 422) Sad isn't it. The truth is, the nuclear weapons that our government is building for its "safety" are actually "undermining" its security and safety. (Nuclear Arms Race, Pg. 423) The spot light has been shining on these weapons for far too long and with too much intensity. We've started to loose sight of other smaller threats that, for the time being, hurt us more than nuclear weapons. Threats like terrorism and global warming (though it isn't that "small" of a topic). Don't get the impression that I want the government to forget about nuclear weapons. What I'm saying is with the disarmament of nuclear weapons, the government wont have to guard its stockpile. Also is no nukes, we will not be always in the threat of total obliteration.

Do you see what we see now? Do you see the danger, the constant impending doom that grows ever closer? The creation of nuclear weapons has to be stopped. The stock piles in the US and Russia have to be eliminated. Do any of you remember the movie "Sum of all Fears?" The one where a nuclear missile was stolen and was going to be used against either the US or Russia. That "fictional" outcome isn't very far fetched. I've said it before and I'll say it again. The threat of a nuclear missile strike upon the US home front is a very real situation. You can cower away if you wish. You can try to run. You can try to hide. Though, when those bombs drop, most of us will not be around to tell you, "I told you so." Then again, you will not be around to listen. So, I repeat one last time, how many of you are ready to make a difference? I am, who'll join me?

Matthew Lew
Period 6
4/23/07

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