Peace in the Atomic Age

Reports by
Reverend Wilfrid Parsons, S.J.
and the Ethics Committee
Reverend Edward A. Conway, S.J.
Thomas H. Mahony
and the Post War World Committee

THE CATHOLIC ASSOCIATION FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE
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THREE REPORTS

The Ethics of Atomic War
By Reverend Wilfrid Parsons, S.J.
and the Ethics Committee

The International Control of Atomic Energy
By Reverend Edward A. Conway, S.J.
and the Post-War World Committee

The Atomic Bomb and the United Nations—Can the United Nations Keep the Peace?
By Thomas H. Mahony
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THESE are reports by the Ethics Committee and the Post-War World Committee of the Catholic Association for International Peace, and are being issued as studies by these two Committees. They were presented to all members of their respective Committees who had cooperated in their final form. They were then ordered to be published by the Executive Council. As the process indicates, these Studies are not statements from the whole Association.

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PREFACE

Here are three contributions to the current discussion on the atomic bomb.

One is on the right and wrong of its use; the second on ways to control atomic energy. The third is on changes in the United Nations Charter necessary both to control atomic energy and to prevent war.

These are not complete discussions. They supplement earlier reports of C. A. I. P. Committees. They will be supplemented by future reports.
On February 21, 1943, Pope Pius XII delivered to the Pontifical Academy of Science these prophetic words:

... since atoms are extremely small it was not thought seriously that they might also acquire practical importance. Today instead such a question has taken an unexpected form following the results of artificial radioactivity. It was, in fact, established that in the disintegration which the atom of uranium undergoes when bombarded by a neutron two other neutrons are freed, each of which launches itself and is able to meet and smash another uranium atom. Thus the effects go on multiplying, and it can happen that the ever-increasing impact of neutrons on uranium atoms will in a short time increase the number of free neutrons, and, proportionately, the amount of energy developed by them, until we get a total whose enormity is hardly imaginalable.

From special calculation it has been ascertained that in such a way (neutron bombardment causing a breakdown in the uranium atom) in one cubic meter of powder of uranium oxide, in less than one hundredth of a second, there develops enough energy to elevate more than sixteen miles a weight of a billion tons: a sum of energy which could substitute for many years the action of all the great electric power plants of the world ...

... Above all, therefore, it should be of utmost importance that the energy originated by such a process should not be let loose to explode—but a way found to control such power by suitable chemical means. Otherwise there could result not only in a single place but also for our entire planet a dangerous catastrophe.¹

On August 6, 1945, more than two years later, the first atomic bomb fell on Hiroshima, and three days later another on Nagasaki. The energy released by atomic fission in uranium and its derivatives was allowed to explode, and since that time the fear of a world catastrophe foretold by His Holiness has never been very far from the minds of any thinking person. Not only has the whole concept of military strategy and tactics been changed, but most people talk as if a new world era had been ushered in—the Atomic Age.

Since that time, it has become clear that the significance of the atomic bomb is not merely that of a new and terrible explosive. The atomic bomb has given new meaning to the concept of total war. What had been total in the intent of military strategists, but always much less than total in practice, has now become, because of the bomb, certainly total in practice also. In other words, the atomic bomb and the ethics of its use have been merged in the larger question of total war and its ethics, since the bomb had taken the concept of total war out of the realm of theory and firmly established it in the realm of fact.

For that reason, in this report atomic warfare is considered to be total warfare. An atomic war would be a total war in the fullest sense. It therefore becomes increasingly urgent to explore again the whole idea of total war and consequently also the urgent need of armament control.

**What Is Total War?**

In general, total war is that type of warfare in which the whole population, men, women and children, in uniform and out of it, are considered to be waging the war, and therefore legitimate targets for the engines of war on the ground that they are all combatants.

The idea of total war stems from two sources, one of which may be called theoretical and the other of which is claimed as factual.

The theoretical idea is frequently called the Douhet Theory (after the Italian General Giulio Douhet) and is based in turn on the Foch theory of the Will to Resist. According to this theory, wars are won or lost in the last analysis in the wills of the whole population to continue fighting. When that will
is broken, the army disintegrates and the war is lost. Building on this theory, Douhet took the airplane and the aerial bomb, and posited that their direct use against the civilian population was the most expeditious manner of breaking the national Will to Resist. According to him, systematic strafing and bombing of the enemy's large centers of population would quickly break down his will to resist. The Germans at the beginning and end of World War II and the Allies at its end seem to have been motivated by this theory.

On the other hand, from the factual point of view, it is argued that all modern wars are total wars, inasmuch as it is claimed that the whole population, directly or indirectly, is engaged in the war effort, hence that all its members are combatants, and therefore legitimate targets for bombing and the like. Those who hold that this is a fact do not distinguish between persons in uniform and those not in uniform, or between the munitions workers and other workers (e.g., farmers), or between all of these when actually engaged in work and when merely resting from work. Such a war is total in the active sense, in that all are alleged to be contributing to the war effort, and hence also in the passive sense, in that it is claimed all may be legitimately killed.

Somewhat akin to these positions was that taken by the RAF and the AAF bombing commands operating over Germany, and later by the American command over Japan. This consisted in a progressive extension of the concept of military objectives from the front lines to the communications, to the munition factories, to the workers' houses, and finally to whole cities. All of these were considered as one comprehensive whole. Hence arose such terms as "area bombing", "obliteration bombing" and "saturation bombing." Whole districts were systematically destroyed and their inhabitants killed as part of a strategic plan. This kind of bombing was "total" war inasmuch as no distinction was made between war material and private dwelling, between direct participants in the war effort and all others, even women, old men, and children.

In its explosive effects, and apart from the intent of its users, the dropping of the atomic bomb—even the "Model-T bomb" used over Hiroshima—is itself area or obliteration or saturation bombing. All are agreed that within a mile from its central impact every person in Hiroshima was roasted to death or seriously burned; that outside that area, up to two
miles more, blast caused innumerable casualties; that gamma radiation caused a disease which ultimately killed those directly exposed to it but not immediately killed by burns or blast.3

We are told that “present-day atomic weapons might kill 30 per cent or more of a country’s population and destroy a major portion of its industry in a single attack lasting a few minutes” (The Atomic Bomb, by the Atomic Scientists of Chicago, p. 6). The atomic scientists are now talking of “city busters” in place of the old “block buster” of TNT. This effect is inherent in the bomb itself, for by the very nature of the chain reaction which gives it its explosive force there is a certain quantity of uranium 235 or plutonium 239 needed before the reaction will occur. It is said that the minimum amount was used over Hiroshima, but that later bombs will be (and probably now are), immensely more powerful. It follows from this that when the bomb is used over land, it is impossible to restrict its effects to a purely military target, a factory for example, as is done, theoretically at least, in the use of the ordinary bomb.

In view of all this, and of many more facts that could be mentioned, it may be concluded that inasmuch as future warfare will probably be atomic warfare, it will be total war in the passive sense (namely, that when the bomb is used in land warfare the civilian population of the attacked country is inextricably involved in its effects, even if the bomb be intended solely against a military objective).

In this connection, there are two more considerations which in the opinion of most writers on the subject materially confirm the conclusion that any future atomic war will be total war. The first is the assumption that no nation contemplating atomic warfare would have less than several hundred bombs, or, more probably, would even start a war unless it had a few thousand. The second assumption, agreed to by most commentators, is that a nation contemplating atomic warfare would launch most of its bombs without previous warning or declar-
tion of war, and would launch them at once or within a few minutes. The nation against which so many bombs were used thus without warning would, in all probability, within fifteen minutes after the beginning of the war, find all its main centers of population and production pulverized and a large part of its people dead. An island like Great Britain might be completely wiped out, as far as human life is concerned. The whole eastern seaboard of the United States might well meet a like fate, and no doubt most of its greater cities would be devastated. Thus would the concept of total war be brought to its final and logical conclusion.

WHAT IS THE ETHICS OF TOTAL WAR?

The popular reaction to the prospects of total warfare, and in particular to its atomic form, has been largely emotional—a reaction composed of horror, fear and pity. The vista of physical science being turned to the destruction of the human race, of mysterious weapons falling from the sky without warning and wiping out a whole city with fire, blast and radiation, of great nations like our own lying completely without defense against any madman who might choose to launch wholesale destruction upon them—all of this has created a revulsion of feeling unlike that caused by any horror in the past.

Pure emotion, however useful it may be on occasion for making us face the truth, is not a lasting reaction. Use dulls it, and ultimately it will cause people to attempt to escape the truth by flying from it or closing their eyes to it. That danger faces us now, and that is why it is highly necessary to examine total warfare, and in particular atomic warfare with reasoning rather than emotion. It is true that behind the horror, fear and pity which total war arouses there does lie an ethical judgment. It is horrible because it is wrong, not only because it brings death. This is, however, obscured by all the overtones of emotion commonly aroused when the instinct of self-preservation is keenly stirred.

A rational discussion of the morality of total war must concern itself with these four issues: I. Total war in general, using modern methods; II. The morality of starting an atomic war; III. The morality of using atomic weapons in defense; IV. The necessity of controlling war.
I. Theories of Total War

The Douhet theory assumes that the heart of any war is the will of the civilian population to resist, and concludes that breaking this will is the principal aim of military strategy. It proposes to do this by bombing the population indiscriminately.

There are two principal reasons why this theory is not allowable ethically. First, granted that the end is a good one, the means is not a proportionate one. Bombing of this type and for this purpose in this war has shown that the theory is false insofar as it holds that direct bombing of the civilian population tends to break its will. The bombing of the English by the Germans had the directly opposite effect: it strengthened the will to resist. It is true that the dropping of the atom bombs on two Japanese cities was followed in a week by Japan's surrender. But there is good reason now to believe that Japan's will to resist had already been broken by the destruction of its fleet and by repeated land disasters, and that surrender following the dropping of the atom bombs was a quick seizure of a pretext to save face.

Secondly, it cannot be held that the purpose of such bombing is legitimate, namely, to break the will to resist. A people's will is not an allowable object of direct attack. The mere intention to win the war does not render a citizen a combatant or subject to attack by material means, unless over and above the intention he takes tangible measures to put that intention into effect. Otherwise in an unjust war every single citizen would be subject after defeat to capital punishment. No moralist has ever favored this. Hence it must be said that per se total war from this theoretical viewpoint is not justifiable.

From the factual viewpoint the position for total war is no more tenable morally that the theoretical one. It is simply not true that the whole population takes an active part in a war, even in modern times, in such a way as to render it liable to attack as true combatants are. It has been computed by a member of this Committee that if you count up all the aged, the children under sixteen, the housewives, those in civilian service industries, the incapacitated, farmers inasmuch as they work to feed the civilian population, you have about sixty per cent of the people who make no direct contribution to the war effort. So the claim of a total effort of the whole population to the war does not stand analysis.
In atomic warfare, of course, still less of the civilian population would be engaged either directly or indirectly in the war effort. Armies themselves would be largely decentralized, practically the only offensive weapon would be the bomb itself, and there would certainly not be the vast all-out industrial effort to make great varieties of war material. Land warfare, as such, would be largely brought back to small professional bodies operating as occupying forces of countries already reduced to rubble by the bomb. So in atomic warfare the proportion of the military to the civilian would be even less than it is now. Thus there would be still less excuse for treating the whole population as such as engaged in total active warfare.

It can be held as certain, therefore, that the usual claim for total war that the whole population must be treated as combatant is not true in fact, as of the past, and still less for the future.

Hence, we must conclude that atomic total war pursued as an end or objective is illegitimate. It would fall under the same condemnation as area, obliteration and saturation bombing. Like them it would be merely indiscriminate slaughter of mere civilians without any proportionate benefit to be gained. It would treat as combatants, and hence subject to direct attack by bombing, a large proportion of the community which in fact is not combatant. Deliberate and direct attack on this portion of the enemy's people, no matter what the end sought, would be simple murder.

II. The Morality of Starting an Atomic War

Hitherto, we have considered the morality of total war in itself, of which atomic war is a fearful example, abstracting from whether the war is offensive or defensive.\(^4\) We have now to ask ourselves whether what we have said applies to starting an atomic war and after that to examine the question of the morality of a country using atomic weapons in defense when they have first been unleashed against it by another country.

With regard to the first question, there is little need to delay. Since any war that is started in the future will very probably begin with a large shower of atomic bombs and without warning, it is to be doubted that in the future any war

\(^4\) The Committee considers atomic war to be different in nature from ordinary wars and therefore not subject to the traditional rules applicable to ordinary aggressive and defensive war.
at all will be a moral one, certainly one between great powers, who will each be presumed to possess a quantity of atom bombs. Moreover, it is unlikely that the military command in any large country will start a war without using atomic bombs immediately, since it will be presumed that the other side will use them as soon as it is attacked.

Under present circumstances, there is another cogent reason why war in any form should be outlawed. Now that all nations, with few exceptions, adhere to the Charter of the United Nations, there exists a machinery (even though in need of improvement) by which the conditions that lead to war can be settled short of war. If the Charter is observed loyally, there is no reason any more why recourse should be had to armed conflict. As Pope Pius XII said at Christmas, 1940: "Within the limits of a new order founded on moral principles, once the more dangerous causes of armed conflict have been eliminated, there is no place for total warfare or for a mad rush to armaments." The very existence of the United Nations is enough to render the starting of war between nations under present conditions immoral.

III. The Morality of Using Atomic Weapons in Defense

Suppose that an enemy country has already launched thousands of atomic bombs on our country, without warning and all at once. Suppose further that all possibility of our resisting an invading force has been removed, so that he has only to take the further step of occupying our country. Suppose again that the enemy's atomic bombs have not destroyed our own bombs and launching platforms, so that we could immediately send thousands of bombs on his cities in return. The question arises: will it be morally defensible on our part to send these bombs on his cities, even though it meant the loss of millions of civilian lives?

To answer this question, which might well prove to be a very lively one, several considerations have been advanced at meetings of the Ethics Committee which will be summarized here.

1. The purpose of using the atom bombs on the enemy's cities must not be mere retaliation, but defense in a true sense.

2. The purpose must also be to reduce him militarily to the state to which he has reduced us.

3. As an act of defense, the launching of the bombs must be
for the purpose of hindering him from the further act of sending an invading force to occupy our country and to enslave us.

4. The bombs must be launched against the enemy's cities because they contain his military productive capacity. (If all his productive capacity has been decentralized or placed underground, out of reach of the effects of the atom bomb, then the attack on his cities could have no other end than the destruction of non-combatants, and hence would be unlawful.)

5. The destruction of his cities must be the absolutely necessary and only possible defense against the enemy's further aggression.

6. There must be a proportionate reason for permitting the evil effect which accompanies the bombing of his cities (killing of a large number of civilians).

In the situation described above, where the enemy has already bombed our seaboard, for instance, and is preparing to invade our shores, it is held that a proportionate reason exists for our using our bombs in turn on his cities if these cities are the source of his military productiveness. Such a reason is to preserve our country and our whole remaining population from utter enslavement. A lesser reason would not suffice. The evil wrought on the civil population is not intended, but permitted. What is solely intended is making impossible any further military effort against us. Hence, the use of the atom bombs against the enemy cities would under these conditions be permitted as being the only possible and necessary defense.

What is the difference between such a use of the atomic bomb and total war, as described above? It is true that if we can win the war by the use of one means which will incidentally and without intending it mean the death of 100,000 civilians or of another which in the same way will kill 1,000,000 civilians then we may not use the second and larger since the excess of evil is not required for the defense of our right. There is no proportionate reason. But if the second means is the only possible one, say by use of atom bombs, then since we do not intend the destruction of life but only of productive capacity, the permitted deaths of so many are outweighed by the good obtained, the salvation of the innocent country. This is not total war in the condemned sense.

(Note: The Committee is indebted for the discussion under section III to the Rev. F. E. Hennebery, S.J., Professor of Moral Theology at Woodstock College, Maryland.)
THE UNITED STATES SECURITY COUNCIL AND THE ATOMIC BOMB

In this connection, another question of the morality of using the atomic bomb arises, and that concerns its possible use by the Security Council of the United Nations. The assumption here is that by agreement of the United Nations, all countries shall have foregone the right of manufacture and possession of the bomb, this right to be the sole attribute of the United Nations itself. A two-fold problem would then arise: (1) Should the Security Council through its Atomic Commission continue the manufacture, improvement, and stockpiling of the bomb? (2) May it on occasion use the bomb in enforcing the Charter of the United Nations, and the decisions of the Security Council? It is obvious that the first question can be solved only after an affirmative answer to the second.

The Security Council may by the United Nations Charter take affirmative action against a specific country when that country has been judged to be "a present threat to international peace and security." It is understood that such action may include attack by armed force. It is also understood that this attack may be either punitive in its nature, or preventive. It was expected, of course, by the framers of the Charter that the mere threat of such action would be sufficient to keep any country from preparing to violate the peace and security of the other nations.

Supposing, then, that the veto power shall have been removed from the United Nations Charter (for this power renders any affirmative action impossible), the question is: May the Security Council use the atomic bomb on a recalcitrant nation?

This question can be solved only by the principle of proportionate reason as used above in the case of a nation's defensive use of the bomb. If a nation has actually violated its word, manufactured atomic bombs and used them against any specific country, then clearly the United Nations has the same, and a greater, right to use the bomb against the offending nation that any individual nation has. The proportionate reason is the same, and the victim nation has transferred its right to use the bomb to the United Nations.

On the other hand, suppose that the offending nation has not used the bomb but only the ordinary armament. Here a dis-
The Ethics of Atomic War

The extinction would have to be made. If the military preparation of the aggressive nation is of a limited character, and its objective is also limited, then it would seem that the bomb may not be used against it, but only a force proportionate in its own evil effects to those created by the guilty nation, but of course sufficient to defeat it. If, on the other hand, the aggressor nation has made military preparations, even without the atomic bomb, and still more with it, of such a nature that the objective is clearly to enslave the world or a large part of it, then a proportionate reason can be said to exist. The evil effects which the atomic bomb would have on the aggressor’s civilian population is outweighed by the purpose for which the bomb would then be used on him; namely, the salvation of the world from enslavement.

For these reasons also it can be said that the Security Council might be theoretically justified in manufacturing, improving and stockpiling the atomic bomb and in holding it as a threat over any nation that might be contemplating world dominion by armed force. But this, of course, supposes that the United Nations has by that time abolished the veto power, and that an Atomic Development Authority has been established which is truly an international body with exclusive powers.

IV. The Necessity of Controlling War

All that has gone before makes clear the supreme necessity of armament control in an atomic age. It can be assumed that no country would dare to make war in the future unless it were equipped with thousands of atomic bombs. No country would start a war except by the simultaneous launching of most of them, so that all resistance would be paralyzed. Every country would probably find some means of concealing its own launching platform for V-bombs equipped with atomic explosive. The attack made by one country might then be the signal for an immediate attack by all others which possessed the bomb—and the production of atomic bombs may before very long be within the means of small countries.

In view of all this, the greatest armament race by far in the history of the world would be set on foot, if it has not already started. No country will feel safe unless it is fully equipped with atomic bombs; no country will feel safe as long as an-
other country is so equipped. An atomic war in these circumstances would be total war in the grimmest sense. The whole world would be engulfed by it.

It is clear, then, that avoiding such a war is the greatest moral obligation that lies on the countries of the world today. Of course, such a war cannot be avoided unless the political, religious, social and economic reasons for a war are soon removed. But over and above these, an armament race is in itself a cause of war, and in the case of the atomic bomb may be the greatest cause. The mere knowledge that another country possesses a large stockpile of atomic bombs, and the mere fear that they will be used may easily be the determining cause for the start of a war as a means of prevention. If such a war should come, it would be a total war in the fullest sense.

A further moral consideration concerns the continued manufacture by the United States of atomic bombs. It has become evident that this action of ours is contributing to the suspicion with which we are regarded by Russia, and that it lies behind many of Russia's actions in the United Nations. Thus we are adding to the growing danger of war. Moreover, we are thus directly contributing also to a race of atomic armaments, the end of which must inevitably be war. It would seem that we have a direct obligation to stop the manufacture of the bombs, and to announce that we have done so. Otherwise, we may find ourselves in part responsible for the outbreak of another war.\(^5\)

The obvious conclusion, then, is that the world as a united whole must gain control of armaments, and not leave their unlimited production to the will of any one nation. Modern weapons are too fraught with danger to the human race as a whole for any doubt to exist that the race must unite to control them, and not leave them in the hands of a few. How such control must be exercised is not within the limits of this report. But that there must be control every consideration of reason and humanity is present to persuade us.

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\(^5\) Rev. J. K. Ryan, of the Committee, took exception to this statement,
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By Rev. E. A. Conway, S.J.
and the Post-War World Committee

ONE conclusion is forced upon all those who witness at first hand the appalling destructiveness of the atomic bomb. There must never be another war. The Civilian Commission appointed by President Truman to report on the Bikini atom bomb tests concluded its report with these words:

“As was demonstrated by the terrible havoc wrought at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Bikini tests strongly indicate that future wars employing atomic bombs may well destroy nations and change present standards of civilization. To us who have witnessed the devastating effects of these tests, it is evident that if there is to be any security or safety in the world, war must be eliminated as a means of settling differences among nations.”

In keeping with its unique responsibility as the developer and first user of the atomic bomb, the United States has taken the initiative in working toward the international control of atomic energy. Hesitantly at first, but with increasing assurance, it has led the way along this new and uncharted path. It will be helpful to review the more important official steps that have already been taken.

Steps Toward Control

On November 15, 1945, the President of the United States and the Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom and Canada published their “Agreed Declaration”, proposing the establishment of a United Nations Atomic Energy Commission:

(a) to prevent the use of atomic energy for destructive purposes, and
(b) to promote the use of recent and future advances in scientific knowledge, particularly in the utilization of atomic energy, for peaceful and humanitarian ends.

On December 27, 1945, a joint communique, issued from Moscow by the foreign ministers of the United States, Great Britain and the Soviet Union, recommended with slight changes the Truman-Atlee-King resolution to the United Nations Assembly.

On January 7, 1946, Secretary of State Byrnes appointed a State Department Committee on Atomic Energy to prepare recommendations for the use of the American delegate to be appointed to the United Nations Commission. This committee appointed a Board of Consultants, under the chairmanship of David Lilienthal, chairman of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

On January 11, 1946, The General Assembly of the United Nations meeting in London unanimously approved creation of an Atomic Energy Commission consisting of representatives of the eleven nations in the Security Council, with the addition of Canada, prime source of uranium, and one of the countries involved in the production of the atomic bomb.

The General Assembly's resolution called for a Commission to

"(1) inquire into all phases of the problem, and
(2) make such recommendations from time to time with respect to them as it finds possible."

It included the same four specific provisions which were found in the Agreed Declaration and in the Moscow Communique:

"For extending between all nations the exchange of basic scientific information for peaceful ends.
"For control of atomic energy to the extent necessary to insure its use only for peaceful purposes.
"For the elimination from national armaments of atomic weapons and of all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction.
"For effective safeguards by way of inspection and other means to protect complying states against the hazards of violations and evasions."

The resolution further provided that the Commission "shall submit its reports and recommendations to the Security Council" and that the latter "shall issue directions to the Commission in matters affecting security."
On March 16, 1946, after seven weeks of intensive study by its Board of Consultants, the State Department Committee, headed by Dean Acheson, Under-Secretary of State, published its “Report on the International Control of Atomic Energy,” popularly known as the Acheson-Lilienthal Report. In view of the great significance of this report, it will be discussed in some detail below.

Two days later, on March 18, Bernard M. Baruch, widely respected adviser on American policy, was appointed by President Truman as United States delegate on the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission. He selected as members of his delegation, John M. Hancock, New York banker, Herbert Bayard Swope, ex-publisher, Ferdinand Eberstadt, lawyer, and Fred Searls, mining engineer, together with a large group of scientific and political advisers.

On June 14, 1946, the first meeting of the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission was held in New York City. Mr. Baruch presented in behalf of the American government a proposal for the international control of atomic energy substantially the same as that recommended in the State Department Report. It suggested, however, the insufficiency of a mere agreement to outlaw the atomic bomb and urged the necessity of establishing a body of international law “with teeth in it” and of imposing effective penalization of individuals violating such law. During the course of the Commission's debates, it became evident that further elucidation of the American position would be necessary. Hence on July 2, 5, and 12, three memoranda were presented to the Commission by the American delegation, which represent the matured American point of view.

On December 30, 1946, after studying these proposals and debating them through the summer and fall months, the Atomic Energy Commission of the United Nations approved in its entirety the American plan for the international control of atomic energy. The vote in favor of the plan was 10 to 0. It now remains for the Security Council to determine whether or not this plan is to become a reality.

Background of the American Proposals

Central in the American proposals is the establishment of an international or supranational Atomic Development Author-
ity, as a subsidiary agency of the United Nations by means of a multilateral convention or charter specifically defining its authority, policies and functions. It provides for the classification of operations in uranium and thorium as dangerous and non-dangerous. All operations from mining the ore to the assembly of the fissionable product in bombs are to be classified as dangerous and to be prohibited to all nations. Industrial or scientific operations in limited quantities of denatured fissionable materials are to be classified as safe or non-dangerous operations and to be permitted under specific license to nations, corporations or individuals. A system of inspection is to be established in order to insure compliance with the requirements of the Atomic Development Authority.

Such international control, it is suggested, will promote beneficial uses of atomic energy, prohibit its dangerous uses for purposes of war, and maintain international peace and security.

This revolutionary proposal is the end result of intensive public and private debate which had been a major American preoccupation ever since the first bomb had devastated Hiroshima. A review of the major steps which led to the conclusion that such a radical solution was necessary should prove enlightening.

**Why International Control?**

The first paragraph of the Agreed Declaration of November 15, 1945 stated succinctly the reasons why the heads of the three governments which developed the atomic bomb were agreed that only a system of international control could safeguard the world from destruction.

"We recognize that the application of recent scientific discoveries to the methods and practice of war has placed at the disposal of mankind means of destruction hitherto unknown, against which there can be no adequate military defense, and in the employment of which no single nation can in fact have a monopoly."

The authors of the State Department Report appear to

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take for granted that there is universal popular understanding of these three basic facts. Opinion polls, however, present a different picture. Millions of Americans still believe that the atomic bomb is just another weapon, that inevitably the scientific genius which developed it will find a defense against it, and that no other nation can build its own bombs, and that even if it could, the United States could maintain its security by keeping ahead of all competitors. No sound atomic control policy will ever be accepted until these misconceptions are removed.

A number of reports and studies made since the publication of the Agreed Declaration confirm its basic premises:

(1) *Means of destruction hitherto unknown*

When the first atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, there was a tendency after the first shock had worn off to say that it was just another bomb, more terrible and powerful than any other, but that its power was grossly overrated. Many military men expressed doubts that it would have similar effects on modern American cities. The official report of the U. S. Strategic Bombing Survey, prepared from on the ground reports of 1,150 examiners, proves beyond doubt the cataclysmic proportions of the damage done by the new weapon.

“To cause physical damage equivalent to that caused by the (two) atomic bombs, approximately 2,100 tons of ordinary bombs would have had to be dropped on Hiroshima and 2,700 tons at Nagasaki.”

That is to say, the Nagasaki attack would have required 270 B-29’s carrying bomb loads of ten tons each.

After an exhaustive comparison of Japanese and American buildings the Survey concludes that:

“The overwhelming bulk of the buildings in American cities could not stand up against an atomic bomb bursting a mile or a mile and a half from them. . . . American cities too have their crowded slums, and in addition tend to build vertically, so that the density of the population is high in a given area. . . . The casualty rates at Hiroshima and Nagasaki applied to the massed inhabitants of Manhattan, Brooklyn, and the Bronx, yield a grim conclusion. These
casualty rates, it must never be forgotten, result from the first atomic bombs to be used, and from bombs burst at considerable distances above the ground. Improved bombs perhaps detonated more effectively, may well prove still more deadly."

The Bikini Tests

If further proof of the devastating destructiveness of the atom bomb was needed, the Bikini tests provided it. Here again, official reports reveal the full fury of the new explosive. The unique radiological effects of atomic bombs are described in the report of the Army-Navy Joint Chiefs of Staff Commission:

"It is impossible to evaluate an atomic burst in terms of conventional explosives. As to detonation and blast effects, where the largest bomb of the past was effective within a radius of a few hundred feet, the atomic bomb's effectiveness can be measured in thousands of feet.

"However, the radiological effects have no parallel in conventional weapons . . .

"In the case of the air-burst bomb, it seems certain that unprotected personnel within one mile would have suffered high casualties by intense neutron and gamma radiation as well as by blast and heat . . . the second bomb threw large masses of highly radio-active water onto the decks and into the hulls of vessels. These contaminated ships became radioactive stoves and would have burned all living things aboard them with invisible and painless but deadly radiation."³

Despite the spectacular character of the Bikini tests the true significance of the atomic bomb lies in its use not against navies but against cities. This point has been well made by William L. Laurence, special consultant to the War Department:

"The atomic bomb is not primarily a tactical weapon against navies or task forces spread out over several miles of ocean but the ideal terror weapon, to be used strategically for the wholesale destruction of cities, industries and populations.

“In the case of an atomic war against the United States, an enemy could well afford to ignore the existence of the Navy at sea. Professor Oppenheimer has testified that a rain of atomic bombs could wipe out forty million of our population in one night.

“Such an attack would destroy most of our vital industrial centers and the industries where the sinews of war are produced, including the shells for the Navy’s guns, torpedoes, electrical equipment and all the thousands of items of paraphernalia without which a modern Navy could not exist.”

(2) “Against which there can be no adequate military defense.”

Professor Harold C. Urey, Nobel Prize Winner and prominent member of the Manhattan District Project which developed the atomic bomb, has written the most convincing commentary on this point:

“Complete defense against any modern weapon of war does not exist, and the atomic bomb is a weapon of such overwhelming destructiveness that if even a fraction of the bombs launched against a given target arrive, that target will be completely incapacitated. The attack by such weapon is a saturation attack, and no further resistance is then possible. Scientists have repeatedly stated that no adequate defense against the atomic bomb is to be expected in the future, and this point of view has not been successfully contradicted from any quarter.”

(3) “In the employment of which no single nation can in fact have a monopoly.”

Many Americans still believe that no other nation can duplicate the triumph achieved by British, Canadian, and American scientific genius and industrial know-how. The State Department report emphasizes, however, that the basic science on which the release of atomic energy rests is essentially a world-wide science. The principal findings required for the success of this project are well known to competent scientists throughout the world. Professor Urey in discussing the so-called “secret” of the bomb gives this explanation:
"The secrets mentioned in connection with the bomb consist of certain information of an advanced scientific character with regard to engineering details of plants, many mechanical devices or gadgets, and, finally, the complex technical skill which is required for the successful operation of plants and industrial processes. All of this information is in the hands of the United States at the present time, and parts of it have been available to Canadian and British scientists as well. Other countries possess the fundamental scientific information, and through the release of the Smyth Report they have a great deal of additional information about the specific methods which proved so successful in the production of the materials used in the atomic bomb. All these "secrets" can be re-discovered by the scientists and engineers of other countries. Because of the great industrial capacity of the United States, it is probable that we could repeat the work which led to the production of the atomic bomb here more quickly than this could be done by any other country, but it is impossible to keep our methods secret for an indefinite period of time.

"It must be our conclusion that the present American monopoly will not last indefinitely. The consequences of an attempt to maintain this monopoly will not be unchallenged American supremacy in this field and willing acceptance of our assumption of worthiness to guard the sacred trust. Rather, the consequences will be an armaments race in the production of atomic bombs, and a feverish development of new modes of destruction, perhaps even more effective than atomic bombs. The end of that race can only be an atomic bomb war."

WHAT KIND OF INTERNATIONAL CONTROL?

No adequate understanding of the final American proposals is possible without some knowledge of the essentials of the thinking which produced the monumental Acheson-Lilienthal Report. The authors of this report accepted the necessity of international control of atomic energy, because of "the revolutionary increase in the powers of destruction which atomic weapons have injected into warfare, and the fact that neither counter-measures nor the maintenance of secrecy about our own developments offers any adequate prospect of defense."
They proceeded to consider how the danger of atomic warfare could be removed from the world. Major steps in their progress toward their revolutionary conclusions follow:

(1) *Would it be sufficient to “outlaw” the atomic bomb?*

This attractive possibility runs up against a unique scientific fact. Most of the processes involved in the production of fissionable materials are the same, whether the purpose is to make atomic bombs or develop peaceful power projects. If individual states are permitted to develop atomic energy for peaceful purposes they will have most of the facilities for making bombs. Only a few final engineering processes would be necessary to make bombs using the fissionable material they have legitimately produced. Under an unimplemented agreement to outlaw the production and use of atomic bombs, the only assurance of security would be the pledged word of the nations participating in the agreement. “This fact,” says the Report, “puts an enormous pressure upon national good faith.”

Here would be all the elements of a war of nerves. No nation could be entirely sure that its neighbor was successfully resisting the temptation to convert its atomic energy plants into atomic bomb plants. Add to this the fact that the atomic bomb is pre-eminently a weapon of surprise:

“Fear of such surprise violation of the pledged word will surely break down any confidence in the pledged word of rival countries developing atomic energy, if the treaty obligations and good faith of the nations are the only assurances upon which they can rely.”

This argument is a melancholy commentary on the principle which Pope Pius XII has repeatedly emphasized as the basis of all sound international relations:—*Pacta sunt servanda*—“the pledged word must be kept sacred.”

But the atomic bomb as a surprise weapon of annihilating power has introduced a new and unnerving factor into those international relations. The ever-present fear that other nations might be violating their pledge might very understandably drive a nation to entirely irrational lengths to protect itself, even to the length of loosing an all-out attack upon the suspect.
Would international inspection be sufficient?

Might it not be possible to back up the agreement to outlaw atomic bombs by a world-wide inspection system designed to detect any evasion of the agreement? The technical feasibility of a system of inspection has engaged the attention of atomic scientists ever since the first bomb was exploded at Los Alamos. Many of them believed that such a system would work. But the State Department Consultants, after careful consideration of the report of a special Technical Committee on Inspection and Control, decided that plant inspection, while necessary, was not in itself enough to guarantee safety. Something might go wrong with the system at least part of the time, and that, in the case of atomic weapons, would be too often. They formally concluded that a system of inspection superimposed on an otherwise uncontrolled exploitation of atomic energy by national governments would not be an adequate safeguard.

In the words of their report:

"National rivalries in the development of atomic energy convertible to destructive purposes are at the heart of the difficulty. So long as intrinsically dangerous activities may be carried on by nations, rivalries are inevitable and fears are engendered that place so great a pressure upon a system of enforcement by police methods that no degree of ingenuity or technical competence could possibly hope to cope with them."

Therefore the Consultants were driven to the conclusion that only by assigning the dangerous phases of atomic energy to an international organization could this international rivalry be obviated. The problem of control would then, they believed, be possible of solution.

Since neither a simple agreement to outlaw the atomic bomb nor an agreement backed up by an inspection system applied to nationally operated atomic energy plants appeared adequate to safeguard the world from atomic destruction, the consultants turned to the last available alternative—an international agency with exclusive jurisdiction over all intrinsically dangerous operations in the field of atomic energy.

This plan, they believed, would:
(1) reduce to manageable proportions the problem of enforcing an international policy against atomic warfare;

(2) provide clear and unambiguous danger signals if a nation should take steps toward atomic armament development;

(3) assure that no nation is put in too disadvantageous a position compared to other nations, if the system should be violated;

(4) tend to develop the beneficial possibilities of atomic energy, instead of being negative, suppressive, and police-like;

(5) be flexible enough to cope with new situations as they might arise;

(6) minimize rivalry between nations in the dangerous aspects of atomic development.

SCIENTIFIC BASES OF AMERICAN PROPOSALS

The American plan rests squarely upon four scientific facts. It seems advisable to present them briefly at this point.

(1) Fissionable materials (uranium 235, plutonium 239, or uranium 233) can be produced only from uranium 238 or from thorium in combination with uranium:

"Natural uranium is the only known element occurring in nature which can be used alone as the starting point for the release of atomic energy on the basis of present scientific knowledge. With natural uranium, Pu-239 can be synthesized; with natural uranium and thorium, U-233 can be synthesized. If the raw materials and all materials into which they are converted in the several processes leading to the release of atomic energy could be completely controlled, the restriction of atomic energy to peaceful uses could be assured." 4

(2) The development of atomic energy for peaceful purposes follows in much of its course a path parallel with the development of atomic weapons:

"Most of the activities leading to peaceful uses of atomic energy can also lead to military uses; only if these activities are carried on by an effective international organization can there be assurance that these activities are intended for peaceful purposes." 5

(3) Fissionable materials can be denatured. Such denatured materials do not readily lend themselves to the making of atomic explosives but they can still be used with no essential loss of effectiveness for peaceful purposes. In this connection, the Department of State issued a press release on April 9, 1946, saying in part:

"There has been some public misunderstanding of what denaturing is, and of the degree of safety that it could afford. We have thought it desirable to add a few comments on these points . . .

"The [Consultants'] Report points out that the possibility of denaturing explosive materials . . . may contribute to the range of licensable activities, and to the overall flexibility of the proposed controls. The Report does not contend, nor is it in fact true, that a system of control based solely on denaturing could provide adequate safety." 6

(4) A distinction can be made between "safe" and "dangerous" atomic activities. This distinction is not clean-cut and is subject to change as scientific knowledge increases. The Report of October 14, 1946 makes the following distinctions: 6

"Dangerous activities . . .

"Activities from which it would be possible to divert militarily significant amounts of fissionable material at any stage of processing from mine to bomb are considered to be dangerous. Certain other activities not involving large amount of fissionable material are also considered dangerous if deemed primarily useful for the development and

5 Ibid., p. 25.
6 Ibid., pp. 20-23.
manufacture of atomic weapons. Dangerous activities should in every case be under complete control by the Authority . . .

“At present the following activities are considered dangerous:

“(1) The mining of uranium and thorium . . .
(2) The concentrating and refining of uranium or thorium ores or compounds, or of materials containing appreciable quantities of uranium or thorium as by-products.
(3) The production of chemical compounds of uranium and thorium.
(4) The storage and distribution of uranium and thorium in any form.
(5) Construction and operation of plants for separation of the isotopes of any element, if capable, when fed with natural uranium, of producing significant amounts of uranium enriched in U-235.
(6) Construction and operation of all piles capable of producing significant amounts of fissionable material.
(7) Construction and operation of chemical plants for the separation of pile products of a nature such as plutonium.
(8) Research on atomic weapons.

“. . . Safe Activities

“Examples of safe activities are the use and production of fissionable materials in such small quantities as to be insignificant for the production of bombs. . . . These activities must be licensed and inspected by the Authority. . . . One of the safest activities is the application of radioactive isotopes as tracers in scientific, medical, and technical studies . . .

“An activity on the borderline of safe and dangerous is the high power level pile for the development of power for commercial use.”

Basing their argumentation on the above-mentioned scientific facts, the American planners propose an international Atomic Development Authority as the central feature of their system of atomic energy control. The July 2 memorandum 7

of the American Delegation lists the following as the "functions and powers of the control agency":

"a. To obtain and maintain complete and exclusive control or ownership of all uranium, thorium, and other material which may be a source of atomic energy wherever present in potentially dangerous quantities whether in raw material, by-product, processed, or other form;

b. To conduct continuous investigations and surveys of sources of atomic energy throughout the world, in aid of the proper exercise of the foregoing and the Authority's other functions and powers;

c. To acquire, construct, own, and exclusively operate all facilities for the production of U-235, plutonium, and such other fissionable materials as may be specified by the Authority, and to maintain supplies of fissionable materials adequate to fulfill the purposes of the Authority;

d. To define and determine, in the manner set forth in the charter, any other facilities or activities in the field of atomic energy which would be dangerous unless controlled by the Authority, and to supervise and have complete managerial control of all such activities and facilities;

e. To have unhindered access to, and power to control, license, and inspect all other facilities which possess, utilize or produce materials which are a source of atomic energy, and all other activities which utilize or produce, or are capable of utilizing or producing, atomic energy;

f. To have the exclusive right of research in the field of atomic explosives;

g. To foster and promote the non-dangerous use and wide distribution of atomic energy for beneficial purposes under license or other suitable arrangements established by the Authority; and

h. Subject to the provisions of the treaty and charter, to have power to take other necessary action and to issue rules and regulations."

At the request of the Chairman of the U.N. Atomic Energy Commission, the American delegation submitted on July 5\(^8\) an explanation and amplification of the proposed controls.

EVALUATION OF AMERICAN PROPOSALS

Unquestionably the American proposals are novel and even revolutionary. They suggest nothing less than the international socialization of the most important public utility in the world.

The authors of the State Department Report were quite aware of the drastic nature of their recommendations. "It may seem too radical," they wrote, "too advanced, too much beyond human experience. All these terms apply with peculiar fitness to the atomic bomb."

John M. Hancock, member of the American Atomic Energy Delegation, writes, "Some may say that our plan is too stiff, too novel—so demanding that it is doomed to rejection. . . . To this I say it is not stiffer, no more novel, no more demanding than the facts of the problem itself. Any less-than-effective plan for international control of this dread force would be worse than a simple declaration to outlaw the bomb, for it would arouse false hopes of security where no security exists."

Ingenious as the American proposals are, it should be obvious that they do not offer an infallibly effective program for controlling atomic energy. But the crucial question is: are there any better alternatives? The plan may not be ideally perfect, but it seems far superior to any alternative plans. Since some method of international control must be quickly put into operation, we recommend, in the absence of any less drastic alternative, the essential proposal of the American delegation, an international agency which shall own and operate all "dangerous" atomic energy processes. It is to be hoped that these proposals accepted by the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission on December 30, 1946, will be approved by the Security Council without delay.

The successful operation of the Atomic Development Authority would not in itself eliminate war, nor even the use of atomic energy weapons in war. It could reasonably be expected, however, to prevent an atomic armament race, and thereby give all nations of the world protection against the use of atomic weapons in a surprise act of aggression. That minimum of security the world must have if it is ever to turn its hands to the works of peace.
Extension of Control to Other Mass Destruction Weapons

Some disappointment has been expressed because the U.N. Atomic Energy Commission has apparently confined its discussions to the problem of atomic energy control. It has not considered such other ultra-lethal weapons as guided missiles, incendiary bombs, and the whole range of bacteriological warfare. It is significant, however, that the first volume of scientific data submitted to the Commission by the American delegation contained a chapter on bacteriological warfare. It is perhaps inevitable that the Commission should concentrate its efforts on the most pressing problem, atomic energy, but it will not live up to its mandate until it proposes specific plans for the “elimination from national armaments of atomic weapons, and all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction.”

Obviously, it will not be enough to eliminate war waged with atomic weapons if war may yet be waged with biological or radioactive weapons, or even with the weapons of mass destruction in use and coming into use at the end of World War II. It is international war, by whatever means of mass destruction, which must not only be “outlawed,” but effectively prevented.

A great step forward was made when, on December 14, 1946, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted unanimously and by acclamation a far-reaching resolution for world disarmament, applicable not only to atomic weapons but to “all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction,” and providing for “effective safeguards by way of inspection and other means to protect complying states against the hazards of violations and evasions.”

It is to be hoped that many of the techniques applicable to the control of atomic energy can be successfully adapted to other weapons of mass destruction. In the words of the State Department Consultants, these controls “can create deterrents to the initiation of schemes of aggression, and can establish patterns of cooperation among nations, the extension of which may even contribute to the solution of the problem of war itself.”
The Atomic Bomb and the United Nations

Can the United Nations Keep the Peace?

By Thomas H. Mahony
and the Post-War World Committee

THOSE who have studied the subject seriously pretty much agree that international or supranational control of nuclear energy is essential if World War III is to be avoided. Whether the application of atomic energy to peace time industrial uses is to be permitted or not, the scientists assert without contradiction that its application to war purposes by any and every nation must be effectively prohibited. They also substantially agree that a supranational system of inspection is necessary for the discovery and prevention of any misapplication of nuclear energy to war purposes. They assert that such a system can be made to operate. They differ among themselves as other people differ only as to the exact methods whereby a system should be established.

Control Within United Nations

It is generally conceded that international control of atomic energy should, if possible, be carried out within the framework of the United Nations. This assumption is the basis of the Agreed Declaration of the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada of November 15, 1945, as well as of the Moscow Communique of December 27, 1945. It is also at the heart of the resolution passed by the General Assembly of the United Nations on January 24, 1946, the Acheson-Lilienthal report and Mr. Bernard Baruch's presentation of the official United States views on the matter.1 As Mr. Baruch stated in U. S. Memorandum 3, dated July 12, 1946, on "Relations between the Atomic Development Authority and the Organs of the United Nations":

1 For a fuller treatment of these documents, cf. Report by Rev. E. A. Conway, S.J., p. 17 of this pamphlet.
“The control and development of atomic energy, therefore, should not lead to the formation of an international agency unrelated to, or outside of, the United Nations, but rather to one fashioned in sound relationship to the Charter and to the organs thereby created.”

In the light of history any collateral agreement among nations merely to outlaw atomic weapons appears doomed to failure. For multilateral agreements between nations are, in the final analysis, unenforceable except by war. The Great Powers, which constitute the real threat to peace so far as the atomic bomb is concerned, have breached such agreements with impunity. The Nine Power Treaty guaranteeing China’s territorial and administrative integrity, the Pact of Paris (Kellogg-Briand Treaty), forsaking war as an instrument of national policy, and the League of Nations Covenant all bear witness to this fact.

**What Is Effective Inspection?**

To do no more than attempt to outlaw atomic bombs and to set up an inspection system by way of a multilateral agreement of this kind would be to place nations which customarily keep their promises and observe their treaty obligations at the mercy of nations which do not or would not regard such obligations as sacred. It would subject conscientious nations to the jeopardy of overwhelming attack by unscrupulous nations. A nation of the latter type might manufacture bombs secretly, prevent inspection or policing measures and overcome a nation of the former type which adhered to its promise not to make bombs.

To be effective, any proposed safeguards by way of inspection and policing to prevent atomic warfare must necessarily be enforceable against every nation. They should be enforceable by a superior authority, at any time, in any place, against any nation and against any individual. They should operate universally, impartially, and consistently under all comparable circumstances. A measure which can be enforced against a weak nation but not against a strong nation is not an effectively enforceable safeguard. A system which may not operate against any one of the five Great Powers is not an effective safeguard.

To establish a system of inspection, with the hope of preserving peace, and to permit that system to be paralyzed at the
caprice or whim of any nation by the exercise of the veto to prevent the imposition of sanctions for violations of prohibitory regulations is to invite disillusionment and at a time when disillusionment may spell disaster.

It is most important, therefore, to ascertain whether definite, effective, enforceable safeguards can be established under the United Nations Charter in its present form. If this cannot be done, then it is obviously necessary to extend the authority of the United Nations by amending its Charter so as to equip the United Nations with the necessary authority.

Let us examine the matter of providing safeguards against atomic war by means of international inspection. Obviously, this is not the only necessary, nor in some respects, the most important safeguard. It is but one element, as the "Lilienthal Report" points out:

"... the facts preclude any reasonable reliance upon inspection as the primary safeguard against violations of conventions prohibiting atomic weapons, yet leaving the exploitation of atomic energy in national hands;

"... To be genuinely effective for security, the plan must be one that is not wholly negative, suppressive, and police-like. We are not dealing simply with a military or scientific problem but with a problem in statecraft and the ways of the human spirit."

The fact remains that, primary or not, inspection is one of the safeguards which must function smoothly if the system of international control is to succeed.

The term "inspection system" indicates the first of several stages of an adequate police system. The right merely to inspect and to do nothing more by way of enforcement is not enough. An effective inspection or policing system should provide:

1. The establishment of a corps of inspectors or police with a loyalty and allegiance to a supranational authority. Otherwise, it would be merely a multinational espionage system carried on by persons whose only loyalty and allegiance would be to the states of their nationality.

2. The authority for inspectors:

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a. To enter, to leave and to travel anywhere in any country, at any time without hindrance of any kind.
b. To inspect, to "spot check" and to investigate any mine, laboratory, industrial or educational plant, etc., where atomic energy may be developed or used—and to report thereon to that supranational agency.

Punishing Offenders

Even this authority would be insufficient if the United Nations were not empowered to go further. If inspectors were to report that they had reason to believe that atomic energy was being misapplied to purposes of war and the United Nations could do nothing to stop this misapplication, such a system would not be wholly effective. The control system, to be adequate, should include the additional authority to indict, apprehend, try and punish individuals guilty of misapplying atomic energy or conspiring so to do. It is individuals who will do the actual work of misapplying atomic energy. They may do it voluntarily or they may be ordered to do so by an employer, and that employer may be another individual, a corporation or a government. Any such order by any individual to another individual, and compliance with any such order, should be made illegal and punishable by world law.

No governor or legislature of an American state can authorize an individual to violate any United States law. The person who violates a federal law is personally liable to all the penalties provided by Congress for his offense. The inspection and policing system of the United States concerns itself with the individual offender and not with the state in which he violates the federal law.

The United Nations inspectors or police officers should, therefore, have the following additional authority:

c. To arrest on order from the proper tribunal, any person whom they are directed to arrest for misapplying atomic energy to weapons or purposes of war.
d. To transport the person arrested to the place designated in the officer's order.

Unless all these powers are included in an inspection or policing system the control system cannot be wholly effective. To attempt to prevent misapplication of atomic energy solely by coercion of national governments without establishing any
authority to coerce and punish individuals would be a defective system. If only the offending state is to be coerced, it means war eventually and war waged with atomic bombs. The offending nation certainly will use, or attempt to use, the bombs which it has been charged with making unlawfully and will attempt to use them before any coercing agency, acting within or without the United Nations Charter, can prevent such use. The system should function in the first instance against individuals.

Is the Present Charter Adequate?

Can an effective, enforceable inspection and policing system be set up within the framework of the present Charter? If not, how can the United Nations be equipped with the requisite power? A considered appraisal of the Charter will indicate that, at present, it is entirely inadequate for this purpose. Whether or not the Charter seemed adequate prior to August 6, 1945, the atomic bomb dropped that day on Hiroshima so altered the circumstances and conditions upon which the Charter was premised that the Charter is now manifestly ineffective and, therefore, should be strengthened by amendment.

It is inadequate for the following reasons at least:

1. It is based upon and perpetuates the absolute, unlimited sovereignty of member nations, at least so far as the "Big Five" are concerned.

2. The United Nations can not restrain any one of the five Great Powers, nor compel any of them to take any action against its will.

3. The United Nations can not restrain any small nation or compel it to take any action against the will of any one of the Great Powers within whose sphere of influence that small nation may be.

4. It permits the Great Powers with any two smaller nations to restrain and to coerce any one or more of the remaining forty-eight small member nations against their wills, but, it does not permit even the entire other fifty nations to restrain or coerce any one of the Great Powers against its will.

This exalted position and authority of the five Great Powers is due to the fact that the Charter (1) limits the authority to impose sanctions to the Security Council, (2) makes the "Big
Five permanent members of the Security Council, and (3) requires their unanimous vote for the imposition of sanctions or for any other important decision or action. This status, now accorded to these five Great Powers, if continued, necessarily will or may nullify any serious attempt to establish an effective enforceable inspection or police system. The Security Council veto will apply to the establishment of any particular system and to the imposition of sanctions for violations thereunder.

The Veto and Atomic Control

On December 30, 1946, the Atomic Energy Commission of the United Nations recommended to the Security Council the establishment of an international atomic authority with inspection and police powers. However, neither the General Assembly nor the Security Council has any power to incorporate or to enact that recommendation into legislation binding upon all the members. There is no such legislative power vested in the United Nations. If there were to be a mere agreement of the member nations, a veto by any permanent member of the Security Council would make the recommended system inoperative.

Assume, however, that a multilateral agreement were to be entered into by every member nation, but that, in spite of this agreement, and in spite of the Disarmament Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on December 14, 1946, an individual nation should refuse to permit inspectors either to enter its territory or to make any inspection therein. If that recalcitrant nation were one of the Great Powers, there is no way under the Charter by which it could be compelled to permit such entry or inspection. Its veto, legally exercised under the Charter, would prevent any coercive or enforcing action against it by the Security Council. If the offending nation should be a small nation within the sphere of influence of a Great Power, a veto by the latter would prevent any similar coercion against the small nation.

Assume, further, that all member nations should agree to submit to an inspection system and actually permit inspection. Assume also that inspectors were to report that certain persons were carrying on unlawful activities within a particular country. If that nation were a Great Power it could not against its own veto, be compelled by the Security Council to desist or
to restrain its nationals from making the bombs. If the nation complained of should be a small “protected” state, the veto of its Great Power protector would prevent coercive action by the Security Council against it or its nationals. No action could be taken in either case by the Security Council or any agency within its control against the individual wrongdoers or the nations in whose territory bombs were being made.

Assume also that some members of the Security Council were to propose that all members of the United Nations should apply sanctions against the offending state by way of interruption of economic relations and of means of communication, or by way of severance of diplomatic relations, or by the use of military, naval or air forces. Again, if a Great Power were the offender, or were to protect some other offender, its veto would prevent the adoption of such proposals.

It is clear, therefore, that so far as atomic weapons are concerned, effective enforceable safeguards against their use should include not only inspection but also imposition of prompt and certain sanctions for violation of any prohibitory regulation. Sanctions should be applicable to nations and to individuals and no violator should be “protected from the consequences of his wrongdoing by the exercise of any power of veto” in the Security Council. This is the essence of the American proposals presented by Mr. Baruch, and as adopted by the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission on December 30, 1946.3

Every step taken thus far has been helpful. The suggestions contained in the Agreed Declaration of November 15, 1945, and in the Moscow Communiqué of December 27, 1945 were beneficial. The adoption of the resolution by the General Assembly in January 1946, appointing an Atomic Energy Commission was most encouraging. The Lilienthal Report and the Baruch proposals were tremendous steps forward. The unanimous resolution of the General Assembly on December 14, 1946, urging the elimination of atomic warfare and limitation of armaments generally, was of the utmost importance, and the acceptance by the Atomic Energy Commission of the

3 "Once the violations constituting international crimes have been defined and the measures of enforcement and punishment therefor agreed to in the treaty or convention, there shall be no legal right, by veto or otherwise whereby a willful violator of the terms . . . shall be protected from the consequences of violation. . . . The enforcement and punishment provisions of the treaty or convention would be ineffectual if, in any such situations, they could be rendered nugatory by the veto of a state which had voluntarily signed the treaty." (Taken from text of recommendations of the Report made by the Atomic Energy Commission to the Security Council, December 30, 1946.)
American proposals augurs very well for the future. But all these must be followed to their logical conclusion if they are to be effective. These must be pursued to adequate amendment of the charter.

**General Disarmament Necessary**

But security against future international wars will not be achieved solely by an effective supranational control of atomic energy. Disarmament in other fields is likewise necessary. In addition to the atomic bomb we are confronted with other dangers, which may be equally terrifying and devastating. Pilotless, jet-propelled planes, rocket bombs of supersonic speed, traveling in the stratosphere, and against which no adequate defense has been found, may carry other weapons than atomic bombs to our cities. Bacteriological warfare as recently developed and reported upon by our own War and Navy Departments, threatens us also, as do radioactive gases or solids which may be used apart from atomic bombs.

The future security of the world, therefore, demands nothing less than the elimination of war itself. Nothing less will suffice. This will, of course, involve the prohibition of all major weapons of war, especially those adapted to non-combatant mass slaughter.

The resolution on disarmament, adopted unanimously by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 14, 1946, “recognizes the necessity of an early general regulation and reduction of armaments and armed forces.” It also recognizes “the urgent objective of prohibiting and eliminating from national armaments atomic and all other major weapons adaptable . . . to mass destruction,” and recommends to the Security Council speedy consideration of a convention establishing “an international system of control and inspection . . . necessary to insure its [atomic energy’s] use only for peaceful purposes.” The passing of this resolution may well be a milestone in the achievement of lasting peace. But, in the last analysis, resolutions such as this must be effectively implemented and the implementing provisions should not be subject to nullification by a Security Council veto of any one nation.

**World Order and World Government**

War can be stopped and peace organized only by the establishment of a system of world order based upon world law
binding upon every nation and upon all the people of every nation. There can be no permanent world peace in an atomic age without world order; there can be no stable world order without world law; there can be no effective world law without a duly constituted supranational authority or limited world government to enact, apply and enforce such law. The United Nations Charter does not now provide any legislative agency with authority to enact world law. It does not now provide any judicial agency with adequate compulsory jurisdiction to adjudicate all international disputes and to enforce its decisions. It does not now provide any executive authority to administer or to enforce international or world law. The principle of unlimited national sovereignty, the maintenance of the Great Power veto in the Security Council and the one nation-one-vote system in the General Assembly preclude any such functions.

It is essential that political society throughout the world be more closely organized if international peace is to be secure. The necessity of establishing juridical institutions adequate for such purposes was made clear in the “Declaration on World Peace” of October 7, 1943, and the “Goals for San Francisco” of April 5, 1945. It was stressed in the statements issued by the Catholic Bishops on November 10, 1944 and April 5, 1945. It was urged by Pope Pius XII in his 1939 Christmas message in the following words:

“... the absolute order of beings and purposes ... comprises also, as a moral necessity and the crowning of social development, the unity of mankind and of the family of peoples ...

“... an essential point in any future international arrangement would be the formation of an organ for the maintenance of peace, of an organ invested by common consent with supreme power to whose office it would also pertain to smother in its germinal state any threat of isolated or collective aggression.”

On the same day in a cautionary suggestion Pius XII also said:

“... In creating or reconstructing international institutions ... it is important to bear in mind the experience
gained from the ineffectiveness or imperfections of previous institutions of this kind . . ." ⁶

It is essential that political society upon the world level be organized if international peace is to be secure. In 1620 political society in the United States was first organized upon the municipal or village level. In the Mayflower Compact the newcomers to America provided:

“We . . . solemnly and mutually . . . covenant and combine ourselves . . . into a civil body politick, for our better ordering . . . and . . . to enacte, constitute, and frame such just and equal laws . . . from time to time as shall be thought most meete and convenient for the generall good of the Colonie unto which we promise all due submission and obedience . . .”

In 1639 political society was here organized upon the State level. In the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut, the citizens of Hartford, Windsor and Weathersfield provided as follows:

“. . . we the inhabitants and residents of Windsor, Hartford and Weathersfield . . . well knowing . . . the word of God requires that to maintayne the peace and union of such a people there should be an orderly and decent Government established according to God, to order and dispose of the affayres of the people . . . doe therefore associate and enjoyne ourselves to be as one Publick State or Commonwealth; . . .”

In 1787 political society in this country was organized upon a national level. In the Constitution of the United States, the people of the thirteen Colonies provided as follows:

“We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.”

There is no logical, or philosophical, or historical reason why political society should not be organized upon the world level into a limited world government. On the other hand there

⁶Allocution, Dec. 24, 1939.
is every reason why it should be. For in no other way can sufficient authority be established to provide a system of law adequate to maintain peace for the world community.

Inasmuch as the United Nations, as now constituted under the present Charter, is inadequate to cope successfully with these problems of preventing modern, total war, the Charter should be amended in order to provide the additional necessary authority.

The signers of the Agreed Declaration asserted that "the rule of law among nations . . . can only be brought about by giving whole-hearted support to the United Nations Organization, and by consolidating and extending its authority . . ."

In commenting upon this joint statement, Secretary of State Byrnes said in part:

"The civilized world cannot survive an atomic war . . . "This is the challenge to our generation. To meet it we must let our minds be bold. At the same time we must not imagine wishfully that overnight there can arise full grown a world government wise and strong enough to protect all of us and tolerant and democratic enough to command our willing loyalty.

"If we are to preserve the continuity of civilized life, we must work with the materials at hand, improving and adding to existing institutions until they can meet the stern test of time."

If the United Nations is to develop into a true world society, the concept of unlimited national sovereignty must be abandoned.

Pius XII has made this clear in the following words:

"The idea which credits the State with unlimited authority is not simply an error harmful to the internal life of nations . . . but likewise it injures the relations between peoples, for it breaks the unity of supra-national society . . . "A disposition, in fact, of the divinely-sanctioned natural order, divides the human race into social groups, nations or States, which are mutually independent in organization and in the direction of their internal life. But for all that, the human race is bound together by reciprocal ties, moral and juridical, into a great commonwealth directed toward the good of all nations and ruled by special laws which protect its unity and promote its prosperity."
“Now, no one can fail to see how the claim to absolute autonomy for the state stands in open opposition to this natural way that is inherent in man—nay, denies it utterly—and, therefore leaves the stability of international relations at the mercy of the will of rulers, while it destroys the possibility of true union and fruitful collaboration directed to the general good.”

The Great Power Veto Must Go

As a first step in this direction, the system of absolute Great Power veto in the Security Council should be eliminated. Most of the nations of the world appreciate this fact and their statesmen have so indicated in their public statements.

Prior to the dropping of the first atomic bomb, T. V. Soong, of China, made the following statement at the San Francisco conference:

“If there is any message that my country which has been one of the principal victims of this aggression and the earliest victim, wishes to give to this Conference, it is that we must not hesitate to delegate a part of our sovereignty to the new International Organization in the interests of collective security.”

At that same conference, G. Bidault of France said:

“We are ready, for the good of a new world, to make such sacrifices of sovereignty as may be agreed to in common and mutually recognized as necessary to collective security. We are prepared to go as far along this road as our partners in the General Organization.”

On November 23, 1945, Foreign Secretary Bevin of Great Britain said:

“The fact is no one ever surrenders sovereignty. They merge it into a greater sovereignty for a limited and specific purpose. I am willing to sit with anybody of any party of any nation to try and devise a franchise or constitution for a world assembly of limited objective, the objective of peace . . .”

In his message to Congress of January 21, 1946 the President of the United States said:

Encycl. Summi Pontificatus, Oct. 20, 1939.
"It is important that the nations come together as States . . . But this is not enough. Our ultimate security requires more than a process of consultation and compromise. It requires that we begin to develop the United Nations Organization as the representative of the world as one Society."

CONCLUSION

Amendments are necessary to vest in the United Nations a limited but adequate legislative authority based upon a system of balanced representation or weighted voting, as well as adequate judicial and executive authority, to outlaw war, to prohibit the manufacture or use of major weapons of war, to prohibit the development or use of other means of mass destruction, and to insure gradual and progressive disarmament, including the elimination of all national armies save such as are needed for internal order only.¹ No less authority will be adequate to set up a regime of world peace, world law and world order.

The time within which effective, enforceable safeguards against war can be established is short. At most, probably five or ten years. It may be even as little as three years. Amendments, drastic enough to enable the United Nations to provide such safeguards will not be adopted overnight. Time is required to establish an individual and national state of mind and a public will for the adoption of such amendments. Fifty-five nations must consider, discuss and act upon them. To become effective any such amendment must be adopted by a vote of 37 of the 55 members of the General Assembly and ratified by 37 members including all the permanent members of the Security Council. However much effort and energy is exerted in the attempt to secure amendments, it is hardly likely that they will be adopted within two or three years. To delay the proposal and discussion of necessary amendments is, therefore, unwise and fraught with grave peril, if not global disaster. The alternative to such a strengthened United Nations in the face of the threat of total, atomic, biological and other kinds of warfare should be enough to awaken men to the necessity of what might be considered under other circumstances extremely drastic measures.

N. C. W. C. DISCUSSION OUTLINE

The Ethics of Atomic War

I. Total War
1. What is total war? Why is atomic warfare considered to be total warfare? How has the atomic bomb given new meaning to the concept of total war?
2. What is the Douhet Theory of total war? Discuss the reasons why this theory is not allowable on ethical grounds.
3. What facts are given in support of total war? Discuss “area bombing” and “saturation bombing” as types of total war. Cite facts which refute the arguments in defense of total war.
4. Summarize the reasons why total war in general and atomic war in particular may not be pursued as a legitimate end.

II. The Use of Atomic Weapons
1. Should atomic warfare be subject to the traditional rules applicable to aggressive and defensive war? Discuss.
2. How does the general acceptance of the United Nations Charter render immoral the starting of wars between nations?
3. Discuss at length the conditions under which the use of atomic weapons in defense may be ethically allowable.
4. Under what conditions might the United Nations Security Council be justified in manufacturing and using atomic weapons?
5. Discuss the moral responsibility devolving upon the United States as sole manufacturer of atomic bombs at the present time.
6. Discuss the reasons why worldwide armament control is supremely necessary in the atomic age.

Selected References


1 This outline is not a part of the Committee Reports. Cf. particularly footnote references throughout.


The International Control of Atomic Energy

1. Discuss the destructiveness of the atomic bomb as evidenced at Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and Bikini. What grounds are there for saying there is no known military defense against atomic bombs?

2. What provisions for the international control of atomic energy are contained in: (a) the Agreed Declaration of November 15, 1945? (b) the United Nations General Assembly Resolution of January 11, 1946?

3. Discuss the basic American proposals for the international control of atomic energy: (a) Can world security be achieved by a system of inspection? (b) What is the central element of the American plan? (c) On what scientific facts are the American proposals based?

4. Discuss the functions and powers of the Atomic Development Authority as proposed in the American Memorandum of July 2, 1946, and as elucidated in the American Memorandum of July 3, 1946.

5. Is the international control of atomic energy a guarantor of world peace? Discuss. Upon what does the establishment of lasting world peace depend?

Selected References

The Atomic Bomb. Compiled by Julia E. Johnsen. H. W. Wilson, 1946. 335 pages. (Contains an excellent bibliography.)


The Atomic Bomb and the United Nations

Can the United Nations Keep the Peace?

I. The UN and Control

1. Discuss the reasons why the international control of atomic energy should come within the jurisdiction of the United Nations. Wherein lies the weakness of ordinary agreements among nations to outlaw war? Cite examples.

2. Can inspection be depended on as a primary safeguard against violations of atomic control? Why? Is inspection combined with police power adequate? What must an effective system of inspection and policing provide? Should individuals be liable to apprehension for violations? Discuss.

3. Is the United Nations Charter in its present form empowered to set up an enforceable system of inspection and policing? Discuss specific instances.

4. Explain how the veto power of the Great Powers can prevent effective control? Directly? Indirectly? What would be the consequences of the use of the veto against a resolution to punish an offending nation?

II. Toward World Government


6. What is the expressed opinion of representatives of the major governments on the subject of limiting national sovereignty in favor of a limited world government? What is the Church's attitude toward national sovereignty as made known in Papal pronouncements?

7. What steps have already been taken in the direction of attaining a world government?

8. What specific changes would be needed in the existing United Nations Charter to transform the United Nations into a world government? Discuss.

Selected References


The Catholic Association for International Peace is a membership organization. Its object is to further, in accord with the teachings of the Church, the "Peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ," through the preparation and distribution of studies applying Christian teaching to international life.

It was organized in a series of meetings during 1926 and 1927—the first held just following the Eucharistic Congress in Chicago, the second held in Cleveland that fall to form an organizing committee, and the third in Easter week, 1927, in Washington, when the permanent organization was established.

The Association works through the preparation of committee reports. Following careful preparation, these are discussed both publicly and privately in order to secure able revision. They are then published by the organization. Questions involving moral judgments are submitted to the Committee on Ethics.

The Association solicits especially the membership and co-operation of those whose experience and studies are such that they can take part in the preparation of Committee reports.

A junior branch of the Association was composed of students in International Relations Clubs in more than a hundred Catholic colleges and in Catholic clubs of secular universities. The separate clubs were united in geographical federations known as Catholic Student Peace Federations and received the co-operation and assistance of the parent organization. These Student Peace Federations have formed the nucleus of the more recently organized International Relations Commission of the National Federation of Catholic College Students, in relation to which the Catholic Association for International Peace stands in an advisory and consultative capacity.
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