

Report

Toward a Nonviolent 21st Century

A Proposal To Greet The New Millennium:For All Humanity

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A Joint Declaration of Independence from the Genocidal-Suicidal-Ecocidal Global Nuclear War System by the Military Leaders of India and Pakistan

As a former soldier become explorer of *Nonkilling Global Political Science* (forthcoming 2000) this is respectfully to urge the military leaders of India and Pakistan jointly to assert nonviolent moral leadership for the world to begin the 21st Century and New Millennium. Everlasting universal respect can be received by them and their peoples by leading their nations to become the first countries in the world to respond to the universally desired hunger for complete abolition of genocidal-suicidal nuclear weapons as called for the First U. N. General Assembly Special Session on Disarmament in 1978.

Is it reasonable to expect military leaders who are professionals in the art and science of killing to take such a momentous step towards a nonviolent 21st Century?

And if so, why should it be the military leaders of India and Pakistan who are called upon to take the critical first step for 21st Century nonviolent moral transformation of the world?

Should it not be the United States as inventor and first user of atomic weapons, its former colonialist allies Britain and France, and revolutionary Russia and China who should take the first steps? Yes, of course they should, but do they have the spiritual and nonviolent civilizational resources and courage to do so that are available to the military leaders of India and Pakistan?

Should it not be the religious leaders of the world - the saints, imams,

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priests, rabbis, and others - who should do so? Of course, yes, they have been urging respect for life and God's creation for ages.

Should it not be political leaders and government leaders who by election, coercion, appointment, or other means have gained decision-making power over vast resources of mind, manpower, money, and materials? Of course, yes, since most political leaders customarily seek to base their claims to authority to some degree upon appeals to morality.

Should it not be the great body of humanity from whom all earthly power derives - indispensable upholders of all political, military, economic, social and cultural conditions - who should stand up and insist upon the abolition of genocidal-suicidal nuclear weapons as a first step of moral leadership to ensure the continuance of life on and of the earth? Yes, of course, for it is they/we who are fated to be the first, most numerous, and final victims of intentional or accidental nuclear annihilations.

Nevertheless the case can be made that military leaders, however surprising this may be, possess the greatest responsibility and greatest political moral potential to lead humanity into a new nuclear-weapon-free era. This claim rests partly upon the claim of military leaders themselves that they who have participated in the murderous tasks of waging war understand and cherish peace more than those who have not - despite the fact that vastly greater numbers of civilians than soldiers are slaughtered as a result of modern military lethality. It also rests upon the intensifying rejection of claims by military leaders that atrocities planned and executed under their command are excusable because they are carried out under constituted political authority. That Hitler or other elected political leader ordered me to commit genocide is no longer an acceptable defense in the court of world opinion. Military leaders increasingly are vulnerable to universal moral condemnation as nuclear war criminals who are preparing to commit the ultimate crime against humanity.

Paradoxically the time has come for military leaders to step forward and lead humanity in the abolition of nuclear weapons as a critically essential first step toward the complete abolition of war as a human institution.

Inspiration for this bold step can be found in the moral and practical legacy of some of the greatest past and present military leaders themselves.

Emperor Asoka. In South Asia, the compassionate and rational nonviolent response of victorious Emperor Asoka to the corpse-strewn battlefield of Kalinga has bequeathed an example of courageous commitment to *Ahimsa* that is as relevant today as it was over two millennia ago. What would Emperor Asoka's response be to the nuclear holocaust of Hiroshima and Nagasaki? And to the unspeakable horror of other 20th Century Kalingas?

Napoleon Bonaparte. Renowned even in defeat as one of the world's

greatest military commanders, Napoleon helps us to understand that military leadership can be transformed into even more powerful nonviolent leadership:

There are only two powers in the world, the sword and the spirit. In the long run the sword will always be conquered by the spirit.

General K.M. Cariappa (later Honorary Field Marshal). In my opinion, General Cariappa of the Indian Army deserves to be honoured among the greatest military figures of all time who have sought to find alternatives to violence and war. Three times - on December 1 and 3, 1947 and again on January 18, 1948 - General Cariappa sought out Mahatma Gandhi and respectfully sought to engage him in a dialogue on the military relevance of nonviolence. Gandhi had no easy answer. He said, "I am still groping in the dark for the answer. I will find it and give it to you some day" (M.K. Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. 90, p. 166). They agreed to continue their discussion. Tragically the assassination of Gandhi on January 30, 1948 cut short this momentous series of dialogues that even now contains the seeds of globally significant nonviolent transformative capability. With deepest respect, I salute the nonviolent initiative of General Cariappa.

General Douglas MacArthur. The imperative necessity for the abolition of war and for bold new thinking about peace and security in the atomic era has nowhere been expressed better than in a speech by General MacArthur to veterans of the American Legion in Los Angeles on January 26, 1955.

Please listen to the General:

You will say at once that although the abolition of war has been the dream of man for centuries, every proposition to that end has been promptly discarded as impossible and fantastic. Every cynic, every pessimist, every adventurer, every swashbuckler in the world has always disclaimed its feasibility. But that was before the science of the past decade made mass destruction a reality. The argument then was along spiritual and moral grounds and lost....

But now the tremendous and present evolution of nuclear and other potentials of destruction has suddenly taken the problem away from its primary consideration as a moral and spiritual question and brought it abreast of scientific realism. It is no longer an ethical question to be pondered solely by learned philosophers and ecclesiastics but a hard core one for the decision of the masses whose survival is at stake....The leaders are the laggards....Never do they state the bald truth that the next great advance in civilization can not take place until war is abolished....When will some great figure in power have sufficient imagination

to translate this universal wish - which is becoming a universal necessity - into activity.

We are in a new era. The old methods and solutions no longer suffice. We must have new thoughts, new ideas, new concepts....We must break out of the straight jacket of the past. (Cousins, The Pathology of Power, 1987, pp. 67-9).

For General MacArthur the abolition of war is no longer only a spiritual and moral question but has become a matter of “**scientific realism.**” No one has posed the challenge more clearly.

General Dwight D. Eisenhower. Similarly, no pacifist, peace scholar, politician or religious figure has more powerfully portrayed the economic effects of the “colossal waste” of resources in military expenditures than has General and former President Eisenhower in a speech to the American Society of Newspaper Editors on April 16, 1953. In considering the General’s words, please note that the total cost of the Nuclear Weapons Program of the United States alone over the 56-year period from 1940 to 1996 has been \$5.821 **trillion** (Shwartz, Atomic Audit, 1998).

Every gun that is fired, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed. This world in Arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children.... This is not a way of life in any true sense. Under the cloud of war, it is humanity hanging from a cross of iron.

General George Lee Butler. On December 4, 1996, in a speech before the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., General Butler, recently retired commander of all U.S. nuclear war-fighting forces on land, sea and air, called for the complete abolition of nuclear weapons on the following grounds:

Nuclear weapons are inherently dangerous, hugely expensive, militarily ineffective, and morally indefensible.

He then called for the United States to take the lead in their abolition. Otherwise it would have no moral authority to demand that other nations neither produce nor possess them.

After reviewing evidence that military leaders are capable of taking surprisingly creative initiatives for nonviolence and peace, let us consider a draft declaration that military leaders of Pakistan and India might make.

*Joint Declaration of Independence from the
Genocidal-Suicidal-Ecocidal Global Nuclear War System*

1. We, the highest military commanders of India and Pakistan, jointly pledge before God, our peoples, and people of the whole world that before the sun sets on the Year 2000 we will completely abolish our genocidal-suicidal nuclear weapons capabilities and supporting programmes; and will liberate all the talents and resources saved thereby to serve the economic and social needs of our peoples.
2. Following the lead of the United States of America, the world's inventor and first mass killer by atomic annihilation, as later joined by the former colonial powers Britain and France, revolutionary Russia and China (all permanent members of the UN Security Council), and Israel, we have demonstrated our scientific and technological capabilities to produce the most lethal weapons yet devised by the mind of man to threaten extinction of both human and planetary life.
3. We have demonstrated to the United States, the world's leading military superpower, and the other nuclear weapons states that we too have minds, talents, and technologies capable of mass nuclear genocide and ecocide. The whole world has taken notice of this.
4. But upon reflection we have come to realize that the intent to employ such genocidal-suicidal weapons completely contradicts the core of all South Asian spiritual contributions to the development of world civilization. The teachings of Al-Qur'an, Ahimsa, and the Dharma - of Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Sikhism, Zoroastrianism, and others -- equally do not permit us to participate in the extinction of life on earth.
5. We simply cannot lead the world into a New Century and New Millennium on the basis of genocidal-suicidal military thought and preparation. Therefore we renounce production and use of nuclear weapons as a critical step toward the abolition of war that has become a matter of "scientific realism" for the continuation of life on earth.
6. In renouncing nuclear weapons on spiritual and scientific grounds we also mean to liberate our peoples from the "colossal waste" of economic resources that is inherent in preparations of a genocidal-suicidal nuclear war. We pledge to avoid the tragic diversion of human and material resources away from service to the fundamental human needs of our peoples. An example of "colossal waste" is the gigantic cost of the United States Nuclear Weapons Program over 56 years from 1940 to 1996 that has totaled 5.821 trillion dollars and still continues at a rate of some 30 billion dollars per year. By social service use of nuclear weapons resources we can help to stop the "holocaust" of millions of preventable deaths each year resulting from poverty

and malnutrition in our countries and throughout the world.

7. In carrying out our pledge to abolish our nuclear weapons, we call upon all the religious leaders of India and Pakistan, all our political leaders, all our people, and all people of the world to support us in faithfully and effectively taking this historic leadership initiative for the spiritual, security, and economic well-being of humanity as we enter the 21st Century and New Millennium.
8. We call upon the military leaders of the United States and all the other nuclear weapons States, and the military commanders of all potential nuclear weapons countries, to follow us in liberating humanity from the genocidal-suicidal-ecocidal and economic threat of nuclear weapons in the New Century and New Millennium.

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