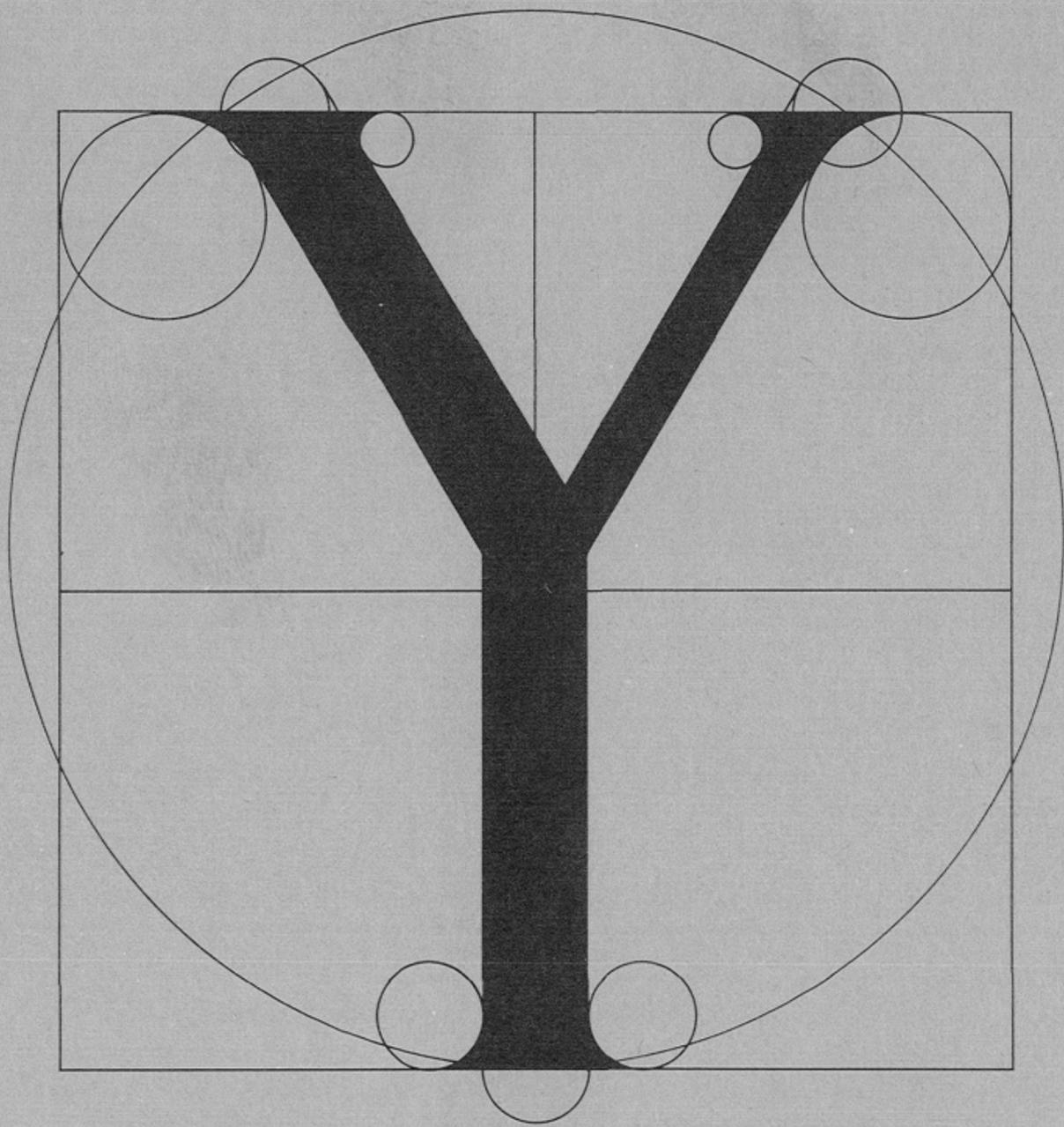


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Guest Editor's Preface

Gary L. Browning

My colleagues as guest editors for this special issue of *BYU Studies* in the interest of peace are Garold N. Davis, professor of German; Ray C. Hillam, professor of political science; and S. Neil Rasband, professor of physics. Along with many others within the LDS community, we are deeply concerned about nuclear arms and their proliferation. We believe that citizens in a democracy have an obligation to share their best thinking, all the more so during periods of crisis. To remain willfully uninformed, complacent, timid, or aloof at such times is irresponsible. We believe that we on this planet are now in a severe and deepening crisis. As President Gordon B. Hinckley observed in a clarion call to follow the Savior: "We live in a world of pomp and muscle, of strutting that glorifies jet thrust and far-flying warheads. It is the same kind of strutting that produced the misery of the days of Caesar, Genghis Khan, Napoleon, and Hitler."¹ We are particularly troubled because, for the first time, fallible governments possess the technology to destroy much of God's earthly creation.

For this special issue, we solicited material from nearly one hundred people, predominantly members of the BYU community, inviting them, as committed believers, to contribute their perspectives on war and peace. We indicated we were especially interested in balanced and well-expressed contributions that took into account the relatively new reality of the immense destructive potential of the superpowers' nuclear arsenals.

Although we contacted a broad spectrum of LDS thinkers, including scholars of various political persuasions, university administrators, and religious leaders, and assured each that we would carefully consider material "from any responsible position," the actual submissions did not reflect the broad range of views for which we had hoped. We believe, however, that the manuscripts selected for inclusion in the issue constitute a body of responsible thought that is worthy of publication. None of the

authors claims to possess enough, let alone all, of the answers, but we have tried to read broadly, to consider our own experiences and consciences critically and sincerely, and to think and write as carefully as our individual capacities permit. We emphasize that the authors are speaking for themselves and not for Brigham Young University or The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It may be that the publication of this issue will stimulate others to express different views. If so, we would welcome continued discussion of this vitally important topic. For the present, we recommend that readers wishing to review alternative arguments consult the easily available articles, books, and statements by such writers as Richard Pipes, Caspar Weinberger, Richard Perle, Edward Teller, Kenneth Aldeman, and Arkady Shevchenko.

Our treatment of the problem of nuclear arms is generally based on theological, scientific, sociological, and personal perspectives, although most of us are driven by moral considerations. The nuclear arms race *is* eminently a moral issue because the lives of most humans are imperiled and could be sacrificed without their consent; because most of those who would die in a nuclear holocaust are, at least on this level, innocent, including women, children, the elderly, and other noncombatants; because the range of opportunity for yet unborn spirits could be significantly abridged; because spreading the Savior's gospel might become nearly impossible; because much of civilization's cultural heritage could be destroyed; and because current pressing human needs are relegated to lower priorities in favor of an arms race.

Christians are familiar with the most effective principles for establishing and maintaining peace, although to implement these principles requires great faith. Further, Latter-day Saints are aware that the Savior *twice* taught the doctrines of peace that distinguish his disciples from the overwhelming majority of others who have ever lived on this earth. His Sermon on the Mount, preached on two continents, introduced his earthly ministry and concluded it. We may ignore, rationalize, or reject these words, but the fact remains that the Savior selected from the rich store available *these* eternal truths to instruct his children in ancient America. We of all people should ponder, embrace, and espouse the Savior's words, as the First Presidency once again urged in a 1985 Easter Message: "Only as we look to the Prince of Peace will we find true peace as individuals, as families, and as members of the world community."² *Living* the teachings of the Savior is not naive, even though many among us assert otherwise. And it is a most promising way for us to respond to a prophet's plea

to become "peacemakers even though we live in a world filled with wars and rumors of wars,"³ for "when there is enough of a desire for peace and a will to bring it about, it is not beyond the possibility of attainment."⁴

To conclude this preface and to introduce the articles to follow, we quote the unequivocal words of Spencer W. Kimball found in his bicentennial address, "The False Gods We Worship":

We are a warlike people, easily distracted from our assignment of preparing for the coming of the Lord. When enemies rise up, we commit vast resources to the fabrication of gods of stone and steel—ships, planes, missiles, fortifications—and depend on them for protection and deliverance. When threatened, we become antienemy instead of pro-kingdom of God; we train a man in the art of war and call him a patriot, thus, in the manner of Satan's counterfeit of true patriotism, perverting the Savior's teaching:

Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;
That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven (Matt. 5:44–45).

We forget that if we are righteous the Lord will either not suffer our enemies to come upon us—and this is the special promise to the inhabitants of the land of the Americas (see 2 Ne. 1:7)—or he will fight our battles for us (Exod. 14:14; D&C 98:37, to name only two references of many). . . .

What are we to fear when the Lord is with us? Can we not take the Lord at his word and exercise a particle of faith in him? Our assignment is affirmative: to forsake the things of the world as ends in themselves; to leave off idolatry and press forward in faith; to carry the gospel to our enemies, that they might no longer be our enemies.⁵

—April 1985

NOTES

Gary L. Browning is a professor of Russian at Brigham Young University. He writes: "May I express deep appreciation to Edward A. Geary, Linda Hunter Adams, M. Shayne Bell, and Mary Astrid Tuminez for their competent and genial editorial assistance."

¹Gordon B. Hinckley, "What Shall I Do Then with Jesus Which Is Called Christ," *Ensign* 13 (December 1983): 2.

²"First Presidency Easter Message," *Church News*, 31 March 1985, 2.

³Spencer W. Kimball, "Remember the Mission of the Church," *Ensign* 12 (May 1982): 5.

⁴"First Presidency Christmas Message," *Church News*, 20 December 1980, 2.

⁵Spencer W. Kimball, "The False Gods We Worship," *Ensign* 6 (June 1976): 6.

Thinking of the End in Fire

If leaving branches wither
in some confusion of hard weather

If the last quick sparrow should fall,
his fine brown inlay, his inquiring call

If the last child should stare
gasping into burned and blinding air

If the least grass should go

—Bruce W. Jorgensen

Scriptural Perspectives on How to Survive the Calamities of the Last Days

Hugh W. Nibley

“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come” (Matt. 24:14). That is an established pattern: hard upon the preaching of the gospel comes its rejection followed by destruction and darkness. Each time, it is called the end of the *aeon*, the age or dispensation. This description appears most plainly in Joseph Smith’s inspired rendering of the so-called Little Apocalypse, the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, in which the end of the world is described three times.

First the Lord prophesies “great tribulation on the Jews, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, such as was not before sent upon Israel . . . no, nor ever shall be sent again upon Israel” (JS—M 1:18; compare Matt. 24:21). It was a true prophecy; never were the Jews so completely obliterated as in the days of the Apostles (A.D. 70 and A.D. 130). And yet this was “only the beginning of the sorrows which shall come upon them” (JS—M 1:19)—the beginning of two thousand years of persecution. Time and again they were on the verge of extinction and only one thing saved them: “And except those days should be shortened, there should none of their flesh be saved” (JS—M 1:20). There is no point to foretelling woes from which there is no deliverance, and the Lord does not leave the people helpless but tells them specifically what they are to do.

In the first place those who lived in the Judean area were to do what they had always done in such an emergency: they were to flee to the mountains containing hundreds of caves and gorges a few short miles from the city (see JS—M 1:13). But, unlike the other times, they were under no conditions to go back to the city again; no one was to “return to take anything out of his house; neither let him who is in the field return back to take his clothes” (JS—M 1:14–15); it was not to be the usual return to the city after the trouble had passed; there

were no arrangements whatsoever for returning. The Lord gave fair warning that pregnant women should be got out of the city before it was too late. They were not to wait for winter, which would be a bad time to flee; and of course things should be so arranged as not to flee on the Sabbath (see JS—M 1:16–17).

So it was foretold and so it happened. The Lord then describes the next End, the end of the Church, which is to take place “after the tribulation of those days which shall come upon Jerusalem” (JS—M 1:21). At that time people will come claiming to have the gospel, but they are not to be believed. The Saints, “who are the elect according to the covenant,” will be led astray by “false Christs, and false prophets” (JS—M 1:22; see also 1:21). To prepare them for this cruel blow which must come to pass, the Lord is giving them an explanation ahead of time—“see that ye be not troubled. . . . Behold, I have told you before” (JS—M 1:23–24). The next verse anticipates the sectaries of the desert and the secret conventicles which flourished in the second century; the Saints were to join none of them—“Wherefore, if they shall say unto you: Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: Behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not” (JS—M 1:25).

Next comes the restoration of the gospel; some vivid imagery is used. First, “the morning breaks, the shadows flee”; “for as the light of the morning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, and covereth the whole earth” so should it be in the time of “the coming of the Son of Man” (JS—M 1:26). Now comes one of the most disturbing parables in the Bible, which in the true context as given here is perfectly clear. The manner of the Gathering we are told will be in the same miraculous and mysterious way as the gathering of eagles to a carcass lying in the desert—they appear suddenly and inexplicably in the four quarters of the sky and come together from vast distances to that single spot (see JS—M 1:27). Just as the breaking of the light from the east describes the manner of the Restoration, with no reference to geography, so this passage describes the manner of the Gathering—no other comparison is implied in introducing such an unsavory object as a carcass.

It will be a terrible time with “wars, and rumors of wars” (JS—M 1:28), with world unrest; “nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes” (JS—M 1:29). “And again, because iniquity shall abound, the love of men shall wax cold” (JS—M 1:30). Yet at that very time “this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the

world, for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come” (JS—M 1:31). A thick pall of dust and smoke shall cover the earth, “the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light” (JS—M 1:33). The generation in which these things happen will see the final end (see JS—M 1:34): unlike all the other great destructions, this one involves the entire globe when “all the tribes of the earth mourn” (JS—M 1:36). Then the Son of Man shall come, but first “he shall send his angels before him with the great sound of a trumpet” for a last gathering—“and they shall gather together the remainder of his elect from the four winds” (JS—M 1:37). “As it was in the days which were before the flood,” it will be business as usual right up until the end, which shall come suddenly and unexpectedly—“they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage; and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be” (JS—M 1:42–43). Again an interesting comparison occurs when the Lord likens himself to a thief in the night; there are no criminal connotations, but the metaphor is used purely to describe the *manner* of his coming—it will be a complete surprise. How does one prepare for it, then? One does not. Jesus makes it very clear that the only preparation is to live every day as if the Lord were coming on that day. In striking contrast to the Jerusalem situation, he gives no specific instructions but explains that “then shall be fulfilled that which is written, that in the last days, two shall be in the field, the one shall be taken, and the other left; two shall be grinding at the mill, the one shall be taken, and the other left” (JS—M 1:44–45), which means that there is no point in devising ingenious schemes for survival. There is but one real course of escape. What you should do is to watch yourself at all times (see JS—M 1:46); to be found doing good all the time (see JS—M 1:49); to not act as if it were going to be business as usual indefinitely, as if the great event belonged to a vague and indefinite future (see JS—M 1:51). The one thing you can be sure of is that it will be “in such an hour as ye think not” (JS—M 1:48). So the only preparation is to do what? To abstain from taking advantage of others, oppressing the poor, and living in luxury (see JS—M 1:52).

Each of these ends is expressly called the end of the world with the explicit statement of what is meant by the expression “the end of the world, or the destruction of the wicked, which is the end of the world” (JS—M 1:4; see also 1:31; 55). This is followed by the most important explanation of all, namely, that the end of these dispensations is not the destruction of the globe, for “the end of the

earth is not yet, but by and by” (JS—M 1:55), that is, at some unspecified future date. Just as we do not believe that the creation of the world was the instantaneous beginning of everything, neither do we suppose a Star Wars ending. What we are plainly told is that the phrase *End of the World* refers expressly to the destruction of the wicked. So who are the “wicked,” and how are they to be “destroyed”? The Book of Mormon is the complete handbook on the subject. Twenty times it tells us of the great overburn and each time assures us that while the wicked shall burn as stubble the righteous need not fear. The question that concerns us, then, is not how such a miracle can be arranged—that is quite beyond our imagination at present—but who are the righteous and who are the wicked? We may think we have an easy answer to that one, but it is not the answer that the scriptures give us.

The righteous are whoever are *repenting*, and the wicked whoever are not repenting. “Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee” who gave thanks to God that he was not a crook or a lecher, that he fasted twice a week, paid a full tithe, and was very strict in his religious observances. All this was perfectly true. The other man was a tax collector and rather ashamed of some of the things he had done, and instead of thanking God by way of boasting, he only asked God to be merciful to him, a sinner (see Luke 18:10–13). The surprise is that the sinner was the righteous one—because he was repenting; the other one who “exalteth himself shall be abased”—because he was not repenting (Luke 18:14). None but the truly penitent are saved, and that is who the righteous are (see Alma 42:22–24).

What do you repent of and how do you repent? It is all a matter of *seeking*: when you repent you turn from seeking some things to seeking others. What you seek are the desires of your heart, as Alma says, and by them alone you will be judged (see Alma 41:3). “Now the cause of this iniquity of the people was this—Satan had great power, unto the stirring up of the people to do all manner of iniquity, and to the puffing them up with pride, tempting them to seek for power, and authority, and riches, and the vain things of the world” (3 Ne. 6:15). The condition is first laid out by Nephi and often repeated throughout the Book of Mormon: all who seek “to get gain, and all who are built up to get power over the flesh, and those who are built up to become popular in the eyes of the world, and those who seek the lusts of the flesh and the things of the world, and to do all manner of iniquity; yea, in fine, all those who belong to the kingdom of the devil are they who need fear, and tremble, and quake; they

are those who must be brought low in the dust; they are those who must be consumed as stubble; and this is according to the words of the prophet” (1 Ne. 22:23). The first commandment given to the restored Church was “seek not for riches but for wisdom” (D&C 6:7, 11:7), the Lord well knowing what most people are prone to seek. We need not expand on how those four things are inseparably joined “in one specious and glittering mass,” as Gibbon says of the Romans; the appeal of the primetime TV show would be defective and our joy would not be full if any of the four were lacking in “Dallas,” “Dynasty,” or “Falconcrest.”

The Nephites of old had their own idea of who were righteous and who were wicked, as we do, which conveniently avoided the necessity of repentance until they were forced to it by violent events. And we are warned to “beware of pride, lest ye become as the Nephites of old,” who, the same verse tells us, sought the wrong kind of riches—that was their wickedness (D&C 38:39).

Very well, what do the righteous seek? Isn’t “wisdom” rather vague? The righteous in the Book of Mormon sought to live “after the manner of happiness” (2 Ne. 5:27), and in at least five instances succeeded. It is their example we should follow, but I don’t think we will until we get rid of our own definition of who are “the good guys” and who are “the bad guys.”

All the writers in the Book of Mormon are worried men. Nephi ends his days disappointed, discouraged, and saddened. He had once led a society that lived “after the manner of happiness,” but all that has changed.

Wherefore, now after I have spoken these words, if ye cannot understand them it will be because ye ask not, neither do ye knock; wherefore, ye are not brought into the light, but must perish in the dark.

And now I, Nephi, cannot say more; the Spirit stoppeth mine utterance, and I am left to mourn because of the unbelief, and the wickedness, and the ignorance, and the stiffneckedness of men; for they will not search knowledge, nor understand great knowledge, when it is given unto them in plainness, even as plain as word can be.

. . . It grieveth me that I must speak concerning this thing.

(2 Ne. 32:4, 7–8)

His last words show us the old Nephi, upright, passionate, obedient till the last: “These words shall condemn you at the last day. For what I seal on earth, shall be brought against you at the judgment bar; for thus hath the Lord commanded me, and I must obey” (2 Ne. 33:14–15).

If Nephi's last words are neither happy nor hopeful, the first words of Jacob, to whom he turns over the record, are positively alarming; he begins on a note of "great anxiety," because he has been shown what is going to happen (see Jacob 1:5). Jacob and his descendants are religious leaders, not kings, working to forestall a growing trend, trying to "persuade all men not to rebel against God" (Jacob 1:8). Already under Nephi the Second (see Jacob 1:11), they begin "to grow hard in their hearts," indulging "somewhat" in Solomon's luxurious vices and "lifted up somewhat in pride"—that "somewhat" still leaves the door open to repentance (Jacob 1:15–16). But they do all this under the guise of sanctity, justifying themselves by the scriptures (see Jacob 2:23). Jacob is very reluctant to speak about this sort of thing; he "shrink[s] with shame" at it (Jacob 2:6). But things are definitely getting worse: "This day [I] am weighed down with much more desire and anxiety for the welfare of your souls than I have hitherto been. . . . I can tell you concerning your thoughts, how that ye are beginning to labor in sin" (Jacob 2:3, 5). At the launching of a new civilization which is to last for a thousand years, things must not get out of hand and Jacob is desperate to control the situation. He is plainly embarrassed to bring up the sins, wickedness, crimes, and abominations under which the people are beginning to labor (see Jacob 2:5–6, 9–11).

Just what are these vices, we begin to wonder, and the answer is loud and clear: "This is the word which I declare unto you, that many of you have begun to search for gold"; they have not been opposed in this, he tells them, for God means the riches of the promised land to be enjoyed (Jacob 2:12). But what he does not like is the invidious comparison of a competitive economy: "*Because* some of you have obtained more abundantly than that of your brethren ye are lifted up in the pride of your hearts. . . . Ye suppose that ye are better than they" (Jacob 2:13; emphasis added). It is inequality that the prophets deplore throughout the Book of Mormon; pride stands at the head of every one of those many lists of crimes that beset the society. Above all, this reverence for wealth will not do, Jacob tells the people; do they have any idea how contemptible this thing is in God's sight? If they value his opinion, they will not set up their own artificial scale of values (see Jacob 2:16). There is nothing wrong with having plenty, but let's all be rich! "Be familiar with all and free with your substance, that they may be rich like unto you" (Jacob 2:17). Then comes a classic on equality: "Ye were proud in your hearts, of the things which God hath given you, what say ye of it? Do ye not suppose that such things are abominable unto him who created all

flesh? And the one being is as precious in his sight as the other” (Jacob 2:20–21).

With seeking for wealth goes a “grosser” attendant vice of licentious living (see Jacob 2:22–23). God does not bring people to the promised land for a repeat of the Old World follies; here he is determined to “raise up unto me a righteous branch from the fruit of the loins of Joseph. Wherefore, I the Lord God will not suffer that this people shall do like unto them of old” (Jacob 2:25–26). God’s people may never enjoy the luxury of living after the manner of the world (see D&C 105:3–5). The promised land is a testing ground offering both great opportunity and corresponding risk: “Wherefore, this people shall keep my commandments, saith the Lord of Hosts, or cursed be the land for their sakes” (Jacob 2:29). In the Old World are civilizations which were ancient at the time Lehi left Jerusalem, and they still survive, but of those in the land of promise we are told that when they are ripe in iniquity, when the cup is full, they shall be swept off from the land. Compared with other continents this one has no history, no surviving cultures, though far and wide civilizations whose identities remain a mystery have left their ruins and their scattered descendants.

The Nephites always fancied themselves to be good people because the Lord had brought them to the land of promise and accordingly they styled their enemies as the wicked. And indeed the enemy was a real and constant element in all their operations. The dangerous illusion that the populace may be classified simply as the good guys (our side) and the bad guys (their side) becomes the main theme of the book of Jacob, as of the Book of Mormon itself. While Jacob spares no words in describing the wickedness and depravity of the Lamanites, he can declare of his own people at that early date: “Behold, ye have done greater iniquities than the Lamanites” (Jacob 2:35). Where does that leave us? With a polarized world that emerges in Jacob 3:

Except ye repent the land is cursed for your sakes; and the Lamanites, which are not filthy like unto you, nevertheless they are cursed with a sore cursing, shall scourge you even unto destruction.

And the time speedily cometh, that except ye repent they shall possess the land of your inheritance. . . .

Behold, the Lamanites your brethren, whom ye hate because of their filthiness and the cursing which hath come upon their skins, are more righteous than you. . . .

. . . the Lord God will not destroy them, but will be merciful unto them.

(Jacob 3:3–6)

So later: “I will not utterly destroy them, but . . . concerning the people of the Nephites: If they will not repent, and observe to do my will, I will utterly destroy them” (Hel. 15:16–17). Bad guys? You “persecute your brethren because ye suppose that ye are better than they” (Jacob 2:13). As Isaiah told the Jews at Jerusalem, it is not for them to decide who are God’s people—that is for God to decide (see Isa. 1:12).

Throughout the Book of Mormon the wicked have a perfectly beautiful self-image, to which Jacob now refers: “A commandment I give unto you, which is the word of God, that ye revile no more against them because of the darkness of their skins; neither shall ye revile against them because of their filthiness; but ye shall remember your own filthiness, and remember that their filthiness came because of their fathers,” while “your filthiness, [may] bring your children unto destruction” (Jacob 3:9–10). Even Nephi in his youth recognizes and combats the natural tendency to put oneself on the right side: “Yea, why should I give way to temptations, that the evil one have place in my heart to destroy my peace and afflict my soul? Why am I angry because of mine enemy? Awake, my soul! No longer droop in sin. Rejoice, O my heart, and give place no more for the enemy of my soul. Do not anger again because of mine enemies” (2 Ne. 4:27–29). He recognizes that no matter how vicious his enemies are they are not responsible for his condition. We cannot repent for our enemies—what do we know about their personal lives? *Repent* is a reflexive verb—“I do repent me.” I can sorrow for the wickedness of another, but I cannot repent of it unless I have caused it. For Nephi, the perennial tension is laid down as a condition of life for his people, “And inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments, ye shall prosper, and shall be led to a land of promise; yea, even a land which I have prepared for you; yea, a land which is choice above all other lands. And inasmuch as thy brethren [the Lamanites] shall rebel against thee, they shall be cut off from the presence of the Lord. . . . For behold, in that day that they shall rebel against me [fulfilled in Jacob 3:3], I will curse them even with a sore curse, and they shall have no power over thy seed except they shall rebel against me also. And if it so be that they rebel against me, they shall be a scourge unto thy seed, to stir them up in the ways of remembrance” (1 Ne. 2:20–21, 23–24). Thus it is God’s intention to keep the “bad guys” in place permanently, and it is of no use for the Nephites to try to get rid of them, since they can be rendered harmless by the Nephites’ righteousness.

The same message is given to Jacob's son Enos: "I will visit thy brethren according to their diligence in keeping my commandments. I have given unto them this land, and it is a holy land; and I curse it not save it be for the cause of iniquity" (Enos 1:10). With this goes a vivid description of just how thoroughly bad the Lamanites are; every effort of approach or conciliation by the Nephites is rebuffed, "Our labors were vain; their hatred was fixed, and they were led by their evil nature that they became wild, and ferocious, and a blood-thirsty people . . . and they were continually seeking to destroy us" (Enos 1:20)—perfect typecasting for the bad guys. And yet Enos declares that this dangerous confrontation is exactly what the Nephites need! They will not behave themselves without being thoroughly scared and admonished: "Nothing save it was exceeding harshness, preaching and prophesying of wars, and contentions, and destructions, and continually reminding them of death" has the desired effect of "stirring them up continually to keep them in the fear of the Lord" (Enos 1:23). The prophecy of Nephi is being fulfilled: "They shall be a scourge unto thy seed, to stir them up in remembrance of me; and inasmuch as they will not remember me, and hearken unto my words, they shall scourge them even unto destruction" (2 Ne. 5:25). Isn't that all a bit severe? Not with "a stiffnecked people, hard to understand" (Enos 1:22). Jarom, the son of Enos, tells how "the prophets of the Lord did threaten the people of Nephi, according to the word of God, that if they did not keep the commandments, but should fall into transgression, they should be destroyed from off the face of the land"; and Jarom explains that "by so doing they kept them from being destroyed upon the face of the land; for they did prick their hearts with the word, continually stirring them up unto repentance" (Jarom 1:10, 12)—Nephi's formula again.

Strictly speaking, there are no good guys: "All men that are in a state of nature, or I would say, in a carnal state, are in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity; they are without God in the world" (Alma 41:11). Hence, "this is my doctrine . . . that the Father commandeth all men, everywhere, to repent and believe in me" (3 Ne. 11:32). It is as pointless, then, to ask who are the good guys and who are the bad guys as it is to ask who should repent. The answer is always the same: I am the sinner, and I must repent. How much? Until, like the Son of Man, I am "full of grace and truth" (2 Ne. 2:6). When will that be? Not in this life! Here, all one can hope for is a passing grade.

Jacob's warnings of destruction take on an ominous note when his son Enos prays to the Lord that "if it should so be, that my people, the Nephites, should fall into transgression, and by any means be destroyed" that their record be preserved for the Lamanites (Enos 1:13, 16). The most hopeful thing that Enos's son Jarom can say for his own people is that "God is exceedingly merciful unto them, and has not as yet swept them off from the face of the land," in spite of "the hardness of their hearts, and the deafness of their ears, and the blindness of their minds, and the stiffness of their necks" (Jarom 1:3). Are the Lamanites, then, so deserving? At that time, Jarom tells us, they "loved murder and would drink the blood of beasts" (Jarom 1:6). The best Jarom can hope for is to postpone the tragic end, and many righteous people among the Nephites set themselves to the task: "The prophets of the Lord did threaten the people of Nephi, according to the word of God, that if they did not keep the commandments, but should fall into transgression, they should be destroyed from off the face of the land" (Jarom 1:10).

Why this constant insistence on destruction—can't the people simply be punished or corrected? The ceaseless labors of prophets, priests, and teachers are all that "kept them from being destroyed upon the face of the land; for they did prick their hearts with the word, continually stirring them up unto repentance" (Jarom 1:12). Apparently the severe penalty clause for those who fail to meet conditions of survival in the promised land comes with the territory.

And who are the righteous in this land of backsliding Nephites and depraved Lamanites? The answer is written all over the Book of Mormon—the righteous are whoever are *repenting*. "I say unto you that as many of the Gentiles as will repent are the covenant people of the Lord; and as many of the Jews as will not repent shall be cast off; for the Lord covenanteth with none save it be with them that repent" (2 Ne. 30:2). Nephi is repeating a lesson given earlier to his brethren Laman and Lemuel, who assumed that they were the good guys and that the traditional enemies of Israel, the Amorites who formerly inhabited the land, were the bad guys. "Not at all!" says Nephi:

Do ye suppose that the children of this land, who were in the land of promise, who were driven out by our fathers, do ye suppose that they were righteous? Behold, I say unto you, Nay.

Do ye suppose that our fathers would have been more choice than they if they had been righteous? I say unto you, Nay.

Behold, the Lord esteemeth all flesh in one; he that is righteous is favored of God. But behold, this people had rejected every word of God, and they were ripe in iniquity; and the fulness of the wrath of God was upon them; and the Lord did curse the land against them, and bless it unto our fathers; yea, he did curse it against them unto their destruction, and he did bless it unto our fathers.

(1 Ne. 17:33–35)

The same land is blessed and cursed depending entirely on how the people behave. “And he leadeth away the righteous into precious lands, and the wicked he destroyeth, and curseth the land unto them for their sakes” (1 Ne. 17:38). And now Nephi tells them it was the Jews’ turn to come under the curse: “And now, after all these things, the time has come that they have become wicked, yea, nearly unto ripeness; and . . . the day must surely come that they must be destroyed” (1 Ne. 17:43).

Laman and Lemuel, being patriots, weren’t having any of that; for them the Jews were ipso facto the good guys: “And we know that the people who were in the land of Jerusalem were a righteous people; for they kept the statutes and judgments of the Lord, and all his commandments, according to the law of Moses; wherefore, we know that they are a righteous people; and our father hath judged them” (1 Ne. 17:22). It is this very argument to which Isaiah gives such a stinging rebuke. Jarom’s son Omni admits that he is a wicked man and has spent his time fighting Lamanites rather than keeping “the statutes and the commandments of the Lord as I ought to have done” (Omni 2). Omni’s son, Amaron, announces the fulfillment of the prophecy in his own day when:

The more wicked parts of the Nephites were destroyed.

For the Lord would not suffer, after he had led them out of the land of Jerusalem and kept and preserved them from falling into the hands of their enemies, yea, he would not suffer that the words should not be verified, which he spake unto our fathers, saying that: Inasmuch as ye will not keep my commandments ye shall not prosper in the land.

Wherefore, the Lord did visit them in great judgment; nevertheless, he did spare the righteous that they should not perish.

(Omni 1:5–7)

How is it possible to be so selective in times of war and confusion? It is done by the process of leading the righteous away. When the lights go out and the grandson of Amaron reports that there is “no revelation save that which has been written, neither prophecy” in his day (Omni 1:11), then the righteous man Mosiah is “warned of the Lord that he should flee out of the land of Nephi” (Omni 1:12),

taking any who will go with him—it is Lehi all over again, another society of Saints in the wilderness.

Mosiah becomes a king in the land of Zarahemla where his son, the righteous King Benjamin, is able to establish the semblance of a decent society by using “much sharpness because of the stiffneckedness of the people,” speaking “the word of God with power and with authority” (W of M 1:17). At the time he hands over the crown to his son King Mosiah at the conventional great assembly of the nation, a *panegyric* is held after the manner of the ancients everywhere: “I have not commanded you to come up hither to trifle with the words which I shall speak,” he tells them (Mosiah 2:9). Benjamin is the idol of his people to whom his courage and skill have brought victory and prosperity. The meeting is in an ecstasy of patriotic fervor. But what does the king do? He studiously throws cold water over every spark of national pride. When he sees that in response to his words “they had fallen to the earth, for the fear of the Lord had come upon them” (Mosiah 4:1), he congratulates them on being awakened “to a sense of your nothingness, and your worthless and fallen state” (Mosiah 4:5). “Believe that ye must repent of your sins and forsake them, and humble yourselves before God. . . . I would that ye should remember, and always retain in remembrance, the greatness of God, and your own nothingness, and his goodness and long-suffering towards you, unworthy creatures, and humble yourselves even in the depths of humility” (Mosiah 4:10–11).

Why this relentless suppression of every impulse to self-congratulation? It is to prepare the people’s minds to receive the doctrines of the Atonement and the Redemption, which otherwise appear strange and alien to prosperous people, and to prepare them to receive the Covenant. Only those who are aware of their lost and fallen state can take the mission of the Savior seriously, and before one can embrace it in terms of the eternities it must be grasped on the level of common everyday reality—Benjamin’s people know that they are in real danger a good deal of the time and, thanks to his teachings, know that there is only one way they can get through. And now he wishes to bring home to them the need for a Savior and Redeemer as something even more real and urgent than holding off the Lamanites. Their righteousness must be put to a very practical test: “Ye will administer of your substance unto him that standeth in need. . . . Perhaps thou shalt say: The man has brought upon himself his misery; therefore I will stay my hand, and will not give unto him of my food, nor impart unto him of my substance” (Mosiah 4:16–17).

Justifying busy acquisition by equating it with righteousness is a great sin (compare Alma 4:6), and unless one who commits it “repenteth of that which he hath done he perisheth forever,” for he has denied our common dependence on God “and hath no interest in the kingdom of God. For behold, are we not all beggars?” (Mosiah 4:18–19). He wants them to realize that this dependence applies at every level: “If God . . . doth grant unto you whatsoever ye ask that is right, in faith, believing that ye shall receive, O then, how ye ought to impart of the substance that ye have one to another” (Mosiah 4:21). The essence of Benjamin’s preaching is to purge the people, if possible, of their flattering self-image as good guys.

It is in the time of Benjamin’s son Mosiah that Zeniff is sent on patrol to spy out the weak points of the Lamanite defenses, “that our army might come upon them and destroy them—but when I saw that which was good among them I was desirous that they should not be destroyed” (Mosiah 9:1). For this treason the leader of the patrol, “being an austere and a blood-thirsty man [a real commando] commanded that I should be slain” (Mosiah 9:2)—musn’t be soft on the bad guys! After all, Zeniff tells us the Lamanites really “were a lazy and an idolatrous people; therefore they were desirous to bring us into bondage” (Mosiah 9:12). What is more, they “taught their children . . . an eternal hatred towards the children of Nephi” (Mosiah 10:17). How can you deal with such people? That problem is solved in the proper way at a later time by the mightiest warrior of the Nephites, the great Ammon.

One might expect Ammon, the super-swordsman of the Book of Mormon to whom no man or platoon of men can stand up, to wade in and teach the Lamanites a lesson; so when he proposes to go with a few companions among the Lamanites as a missionary everybody “laughed us to scorn,” as he reports it. “For they said unto us: Do ye suppose that ye can bring the Lamanites to the knowledge of the truth? Do ye suppose that ye can convince the Lamanites of the incorrectness of the traditions of their fathers, as stiffnecked a people as they are; whose hearts delight in the shedding of blood; whose days have been spent in the grossest iniquity; whose ways have been the ways of a transgressor from the beginning? Now my brethren, ye remember that this was their language” (Alma 26:23–24). Of course everybody is for the standard solution: “Let us take up arms against them, that we destroy them and their iniquity out of the land, lest they overrun us and destroy us”—the only realistic solution (Alma 26:25). But not for the mighty Ammon! “We came into the

wilderness not with the intent to destroy our brethren, but with the intent that perhaps we might save some few of their souls” (Alma 26:26). And so the terrible warrior “traveled from house to house,” patiently suffering every privation, “relying . . . upon the mercies of God,” teaching the people in their houses and in their streets, being “cast out, and mocked, and spit upon, and smote upon our cheeks; and we have been stoned and bound with strong cords, and cast into prison. . . . And we have suffered all manner of afflictions, and all this, that perhaps we might be the means of saving some soul” (Alma 26:28–30). And that is the way you deal with the bad guys.

The result of that effort is a body of converts who accept Ammon’s own philosophy, who “buried their weapons of war, and they fear to take them up lest by any means they should sin” (Hel. 15:9), the righteous people of Ammon, who spend their days repenting of the murders they had committed as acts of war and refusing to fight the bad guys under any circumstances (see Alma 24:5–30).

When Abinadi comes with the usual message—“except they repent I will utterly destroy them from off the face of the earth” (Mosiah 12:8)—the people of King Noah say Abinadi is crazy, because they are the good guys:

And now, O king, what great evil hast thou done, or what great sins have thy people committed, that we should be condemned of God or judged of this man?

And now, O king, behold, we are guiltless, and thou, O king, hast not sinned. . . .

And behold, we are strong, we shall not come into bondage, or be taken captive by our enemies; yea, and thou hast prospered in the land, and thou shalt also prosper”[peace and prosperity, standing tall all the way].

(Mosiah 12:13–15)

In reply, Abinadi points out that while being actively religious they are doing the two things so fervidly condemned by Jacob, “If ye teach the law of Moses why do ye not keep it? Why do ye set your hearts upon riches? Why do ye commit whoredoms and spend your strength with harlots, yea, and cause this people to commit sin?” (Mosiah 12:29).

We must not forget those Book of Mormon super-good guys, the Zoramites—hard working, independent, fiercely patriotic, brave, smart, prosperous Zoramites—strictly attending their meetings and observing proper dress standards. What a perfectly wonderful self-image! “Holy God, we believe that thou hast separated us from our brethren. . . . We believe that thou hast elected us to be thy holy

children. . . . And thou hast elected us that we shall be saved, whilst all around us are elected to be cast by thy wrath down to hell; for the which holiness, O God, we thank thee. . . . And again we thank thee, O God, that we are a chosen and a holy people” (Alma 31:16–18). To Alma, these quintessentially good guys are the wickedest people he has ever known: “O Lord God, how long wilt thou suffer that such wickedness and infidelity shall be among this people? O Lord, wilt thou give me strength, that I may bear with mine infirmities. For I am infirm, and such wickedness among this people doth pain my soul” (Alma 31:30). And yet instead of condemning them he prays God to give him strength to bear his afflictions among them (see Alma 31:33), because “their souls are precious” (Alma 31:35). And in what does the “gross wickedness” of these people consist? In this, that “they cry unto thee, and yet their hearts are swallowed up in their pride. Behold, O God, they cry unto thee with their mouths, while they are puffed up, even to greatness, with the vain things of the world. Behold, O my God, their costly apparel . . . and all their precious things which they are ornamented with; and behold, their hearts are set upon them, and yet they cry unto thee and say—We thank thee, O God, for we are a chosen people unto thee, while others shall perish” (Alma 31:27–28).

The prophet Nephi makes the same charge against the people of Zarahemla: “Ye have set your hearts upon the riches and the vain things of this world, for the which ye do murder, and plunder, and steal, and bear false witness against your neighbor” (Hel. 7:21). But God is not going to put up with it; he is withdrawing his protection:

The Lord will not grant unto you strength, as he has hitherto done, to withstand against your enemies.

For behold, thus saith the Lord: I will not show unto the wicked of my strength, to one more than the other, save it be unto those who repent. . . . It shall be better for the Lamanites than for you except ye shall repent.

For behold, they are more righteous than you, for they have not sinned against that great knowledge which ye have received; therefore the Lord will be merciful unto them; yea, he will lengthen out their days and increase their seed, even when thou shalt be utterly destroyed except thou shalt repent.

(Hel. 7:22–24)

How often does this have to be repeated? Why do you think such great pains and sufferings have been experienced to get the message of the Book of Mormon through to us? Nephi goes on, “Yea, wo shall come

unto you because of that pride which ye have suffered to enter your hearts, which has lifted you up beyond that which is good because of your exceedingly great riches!” (Hel. 7:26).

In the twelfth chapter of Helaman the demoralizing effect of riches on society is stated as a general rule: “At the very time when he doth prosper his people . . . then is the time that they do harden their hearts” (Hel. 12:2). Why do they do it?—“O how great is the nothingness of the children of men”—thus is their beautiful self-image rebuffed (Hel. 12:7).

Jesus Christ, visiting the Nephites, personally sees to it that the preaching of Samuel the Lamanite be included in the record, from which it had been omitted, perhaps because Samuel is an alien or speaks too frankly:

For this cause hath the Lord God caused that a curse should come upon the land, and also upon your riches, and this because of your iniquities.

. . . ye do cast out the prophets, and do mock them. . . .

And now when ye talk, ye say: If our days had been in the days of our fathers of old, we would not have slain the prophets; we would not have stoned them, and cast them out.

Behold ye are worse than they; for as the Lord liveth, if a prophet come among you and declareth unto you the word of the Lord, which testifies of your sins and iniquities, ye are angry with him, and cast him out and seek all manner of ways to destroy him; yea, you will say that he is a false prophet, and that he is a sinner, and of the devil, because he testifieth that your deeds are evil.

(Hel. 13:23–26)

They want to be told that they are the good guys and so when a man comes and tells them not what is wrong with Zarahemla but what is right with Zarahemla they will “say that he is a prophet” and reward him with large sums of money “because he speaketh flattering words unto you, and he saith that all is well, then ye will not find fault with him” (Hel. 13:27, 28).

Giddianhi, the robber leader, insists that his followers *are* the good guys who are only trying to protect their sacred rights and property against the bad guys, “because of the many wrongs which ye have done unto them” (3 Ne. 3:4). He is the chief of the large and powerful “secret society of Gadianton; which society and the works thereof I know to be good; and they are of ancient date and they have been handed down unto us” (3 Ne. 3:9). The chief is merely trying to “recover their rights and government,” lost to them “because of your wickedness in retaining from them their rights” (3 Ne. 3:10). It is the rigid tribal morality of the Mafia.

The shining hero of the Book of Mormon is Moroni: “If all men had been, and were, and ever would be, like unto Moroni, behold, the very powers of hell would have been shaken forever; yea, the devil would never have power over the hearts of the children of men” (Alma 48:17). You do not expel evil from “the hearts of the children of men” by shooting them or blowing them up or torturing them—the Inquisition operated on that theory. Nor can “the powers of hell be shaken” by heavy artillery or nuclear warheads. The devil does not care who is fighting or why, as long as there is fighting; “[the devil] is the father of contention, and he stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger, one with another.” “Behold, this is not my doctrine, to stir up the hearts of men with anger, one against another; but this is my doctrine, that such things should be done away. Behold, verily, verily, I say unto you, I will declare unto you my doctrine . . . that the Father commandeth all men, everywhere, to repent and believe in me” (3 Ne. 11:29–32). There is no possibility of confrontation here between Good and Bad. This is best shown in Alma’s duel with Amlici. The Amlicites are described as coming on in all the hideous and hellish trappings of one of our more colorful rock groups, glorying in the fiendish horror of their appearance (see Alma 3:4–6). Alma on the other hand is the “man of God” (Alma 2:30) who meets the monster Amlici “with the sword, face to face” (Alma 2:29), and of course wins. Yet the Nephites consider that debacle to be “the judgments of God sent upon them because of their wickedness and their abominations; therefore they were awakened to a remembrance of their duty” (Alma 4:3). The moral is that whenever there is a battle both sides are guilty.

Nobody knows that better than Moroni, whose efforts to avoid conflict far exceed his labors in battle. When he sees trouble ahead, he gets ready for it by “preparing the minds of the people to be faithful unto the Lord their God” (Alma 48:7). His military preparations are strictly defensive, and he is careful to do nothing that will seem to threaten the Lamanites; all of his battles are fought on Nephite soil (see Alma 48:8–10). We are repeatedly reminded that Moroni is “a man that did not delight in bloodshed” (Alma 48:11). By him “the Nephites were taught to defend themselves against their enemies, even to the shedding of blood if it were necessary; yea, and they were also taught never to give an offense, yea, and never to raise the sword except it were against an enemy, except it were to preserve their lives” (Alma 48:14). Any thought of preemptive strike is out of the question; Moroni even apologizes for espionage, for if they only have

sufficient faith God will “warn them to flee, or to prepare for war, according to their danger; And also, that God would make it known unto them whither they should go to defend themselves.” This is a great load off their minds “and his [Moroni’s] heart did glory in it; not in the shedding of blood but in doing good, in preserving his people, yea, in keeping the commandments of God, yea, and resisting iniquity” (Alma 48:15–16). Resisting iniquity where? In the only place it can be resisted, in their own hearts. Not only is a preemptive strike out of the question but Moroni’s people have to let the enemy attack at least twice before responding, to guarantee that their own action is purely defensive (see Alma 43:46). The highest compliment that Alma can pay Moroni is “Behold, he was a man like unto Ammon” (Alma 48:18), who, as we have seen, renounced all military solutions to the Lamanite problem.

Later it is the decision of the Nephites, after a series of brilliant victories, to take the initiative against the Lamanites and “cut them off from the face of the land” that makes a conscientious objector of Mormon, their great leader, who “did utterly refuse from this time forth to be a commander and a leader of this people” (Morm. 3:10–11). “And when they had sworn by all that had been forbidden them by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, that they would go up unto their enemies to battle, and avenge themselves of the blood of their brethren [a perfect John Wayne situation], behold the voice of the Lord came [to Mormon] saying: Vengeance is mine, and I will repay” (Morm. 3:14–15). So Mormon, from being top brass, becomes a detached observer and reporter for our express benefit, “I did stand as an idle witness. . . . Therefore I write unto you, Gentiles, and also unto you, house of Israel” (Morm. 3:16–17). He explains that the fatal mistake of the Nephites was to take the offensive: “And it was because the armies of the Nephites went up unto the Lamanites that they began to be smitten; for were it not for that, the Lamanites could have had no power over them” (Morm. 4:4). Then comes the bottom line: “But, behold, the judgments of God will overtake the wicked; and it is by the wicked that the wicked are punished; for it is the wicked that stir up the hearts of the children of men unto bloodshed” (Morm. 4:5). The battle is not between Good and Bad—the wicked shall destroy the wicked.

Mormon places the Nephites and the Lamanites side by side for our benefit. As the war between them continues, each sinks deeper and deeper into depravity. First, after a Nephite victory, are four years of peace devoted not to repentance but to warlike preparations as the

Lord removes his beloved disciples from among the Nephites because of the wickedness and unbelief. The Lord even forbids Mormon to preach repentance, which preaching will now do no good “because of the hardness of their hearts the land was cursed for their sakes” (Morm. 1:17). They have passed the point of no return. The people have begun to worry and seek safe investments, to “hide up their treasures in the earth.” But the Dow Jones keeps going down as their riches “became slippery, because the Lord had cursed the land, that they could not hold them, nor retain them again” (Morm. 1:18). It is interesting that amid all this military fury riches still hold the number one position in their minds. Then, as at the end of the Antique World, total lack of security forces people to turn in desperation to “sorceries, and witchcrafts, and magics” (Morm. 1:19)—they feel haunted, helpless, surrounded by demons. “The land was filled with robbers”; insecurity is total but “notwithstanding the great destruction which hung over my people, they did not repent . . . and it was one complete revolution throughout all the face of the land” (Morm. 2:8). Then come those awful words, “and I saw that the day of grace was passed with them” (Morm. 2:15). Though Mormon relents under extreme pressure and leads the army to more victories (see Morm. 5:1), “nevertheless the strength of the Lord was not with us; yea, we were left to ourselves” (Morm. 2:26). After all the Lord has done for them, the poor fools “did not realize that it was the Lord that had spared them, and granted unto them a chance for repentance”—his arm is still stretched out (Morm. 3:3).

Meanwhile, what are the bad guys up to? The Lamanites have been sacrificing Nephite women and children (see Morm. 4:15), yet “notwithstanding this great abomination of the Lamanites, it doth not exceed that of our people,” who practice cannibalism “for a token of bravery” (Moro. 9:9–10). When things reach this state, Mormon says: “I pray unto God that he will spare thy life, to witness the return of his people unto him, or their *utter destruction*; for I know that they must perish except they repent” (Moro. 9:22; emphasis added). “O the depravity of my people! They are without order and without mercy” (Moro. 9:18). Mormon prays for the people he had loved and led, though he knows his prayer cannot be answered (see Morm. 3:12). “And if they perish it will be like unto the Jaredites, because of the willfulness of their hearts, seeking for blood and revenge” (Moro. 9:23).

And all this is meant for us: “These things must surely be made known. . . . A knowledge of these things must come unto a remnant of these people, and also unto the Gentiles,” by being

“hid up unto the Lord that they may come forth in his own due time” (Morm. 5:8–9, 12). As to Mormon’s own people, the Lord has reserved their blessings, which they might have received in the land, for the Gentiles who shall possess the land (see Morm. 5:19). But they will have another chance, for “after they have been driven and scattered by the Gentiles, behold, then will the Lord remember the covenant” (Morm. 5:20). Then it will be our turn to be concerned: “And then, O ye Gentiles, how can ye stand before the power of God, except ye shall repent and turn from your evil ways?” (Morm. 5:22). That hardly describes us as good guys; there is only one hope for us: “I prayed unto the Lord that he would give unto the Gentiles grace,” says Moroni, “that they might have charity”—that is the only thing that can save us, unilateral generosity; if I expect anything in return for charity except the happiness of the recipient, then it is not charity. The Lord’s answer to Moroni is chilling: “The Lord said unto me: If they have not charity it mattereth not unto thee” (Ether 12:36–37). Mormon was shown our generation, which he describes with photographic accuracy: “Behold, I speak unto you as if ye were present, and yet ye are not. But behold, Jesus Christ hath shown you unto me, and I know your doing” (Morm. 8:35). He then proceeds to describe a people immensely pleased with themselves: “There are none save a few only who do not lift themselves up in the pride of their hearts, unto the wearing of very fine apparel, unto envying, and strifes, and malice, and persecutions, and all manner of iniquities”—the high-living fiercely competitive crime-ridden world of the 1980s. And then to the heart of the matter: “For behold, ye do love money, and your substance, and your fine apparel, and the adorning of your churches [Communists do not adorn churches], more than ye love the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted.” Why, he asks, do we allow the underprivileged to “pass by you, and notice them not,” while placing high value on “that which hath no life” (Morm. 8:36, 37, 39). All the meanness and smugness of our day speaks in that phrase; and these very self-satisfied, church-conscious, and wicked people are about to be destroyed by war: “Behold, the sword of vengeance hangeth over you; and the time soon cometh that he avengeth the blood of the saints upon you, for he will not suffer their cries any longer” (Morm. 8:41).

We have not mentioned the case of the Jaredites; it should hardly be necessary to tell the story of Shiz and Coriantumr, each obsessed with the necessity of ridding the world of his evil adversary. Both sides were exterminated. Not many years ago all of this Book

of Mormon extravaganza belonged even for Latter-day Saints to the world of pure fantasy, of things that could never happen in the modern civilized world—total extermination of a nation was utterly unthinkable in those days. But suddenly even within the past few years a very ancient order of things has emerged at the forefront of world affairs; who would have thought it—the Holy War! the ultimate showdown of the Good Guys with God on their side versus the Godless Enemy. It is the creed of the Ayatollah, the Jihad, Dar-al-Islam versus Dar-al-Harb, the Roman *ager pacatus* versus the *ager hosticus*. On the one side *Deus vult*, on the other *Bi'smi-llah*; it is a replay of the twelfth century, the only way the “good people” can be free, that is, safe, is to exterminate the “bad people” or, as Mr. Lee counsels, to lock them up before they do any mischief—that alone will preserve the freedom of “us good people.”

And now there is even talk of Armageddon with Gog and Magog, the two giants of the North, ending in extermination. There are those who insist that we are the good guys fighting the bad guys at Armageddon, but there is no such affair in the scriptures, where the only actual fighting mentioned is when “every man’s sword shall be against his brother”—the wicked against the wicked. Then God intervenes with pestilence, “hailstones, fire, and brimstone” (Ezek. 38:21, 22), with much slaughter, but no mortal army has a hand in it. In the New Testament version it all happens after the Millennium, when fire comes out of heaven and destroys the army besieging the Saints, but there is no mention of a battle anywhere (see Rev. 20:7–10). We have seen that for us there is only one way to prepare for the great events ahead, and that is to be found doing good when the Lord comes, with no one taking advantage of temporary prosperity “to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken” (JS—M 1:52).

Mormon’s message to us is not without a word of hope and advice: “Behold, I speak unto you as though I spake from the dead; for I know that ye shall have my words. . . . Give thanks unto God that he hath made manifest unto you our imperfections, that ye may learn to be more wise than we have been” (Morm. 9:30–31). His address is expressly to the inhabitants of “this land” into whose hands “this book” shall come—specifically, it is meant for us.

Islands of Peace

Summer's first day, before
if the sun were hot enough,
someone would think of water.
We'd run to search in cupboards
for our old swimming trunks,
roll them in towels
and make our way upriver.
We'd pass the thinning houses
at the edge of town,
pass Pulman's cautious house
behind its wall, his raging
mastiff choking in its snarls.
Two fifty-six pound weights
dragged after him, slowed him.
Old Pulman came out sometimes,
calling his nervous threats,
easing his beast to calm,
wiping the white froth
with his hands
from the dog's jowls.

But we would be long gone,
aimed for a green elbow
of the river, below the bridge,
where quiet water lingered.

In April once, early sun
deceiving us, we found
three taller boys,
hooting with brisk chill,
already in our pool,
calling us to join them.
They could all swim,
floated downstream,
churned water, struck
across the current.

But the tireless river
throughout its seasons
had filed a narrow channel,
deep, carrying hidden water.
It kept us splashing near the bank,
timid on shallow pebbles.

Boysie Wild carried me across,
my small weight almost sinking him.
But he swam on, head lifted,
gasping, keeping his breath dry.
He set me in another country,
waist deep in a strange river,
on the far side of danger.
Little waves floated me,
bumped me, inch by inch,
on the stone ledge. I watched
my legs hang pale
in deepest water. Later,
grown cold, I pushed
away, thrashed with my arms
above imagined fathoms,
crawled safely out. The kind
of useless daring I was good at.

That was the day Reg Smith,
knowing that Channel swimmers
cover themselves with grease
to still the cold,
brought half a pound of lard
to keep his white skin warm.
And in he stepped, laid his plumpness
in the clean river. At once
the fat slid off, spreading
in frailest rainbows, fled
in films until the broken shallows
took them.

Walking home,
glowing, we were fulfilled.

It was a known world then.
We lived in it, we made it
with our voices. Somewhere,
though we did not know where,
there would be islands
in which the temperate sun
allowed for daylong swimming.
In a world like ours
perfect things were probable.
The islands of peace, of course.
We all believed in them.

Meanwhile we walked a world
sound to its very core.
Who could have known
its crust so thin that men
would burn it dry, shatter it?
We could not imagine
our days would be counted.

In Africa Reg Smith, only child
of old parents, his body
wrapped in khaki, burned away
and vanished in his smoke.
With many others, appalled,
confused, all certainty gone.
They did not find the islands.

I have not found the islands
of the blest, islands of peace;
but would believe in them,
would search for them, would
keep them floating
with my breath.

—Leslie Norris

Violence and the Gospel: The Teachings of the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the Book of Mormon

Edwin Brown Firmage

INTRODUCTION

A United Nations study estimates that the direct effects of an all-out nuclear exchange—the initial blasts, the consequent radiation, and the ensuing fires—would kill 1.1 billion people.¹ Beyond those direct effects, indirect, radiation-related effects would create an unprecedented pandemic that would kill another billion people.² As though such a human toll were insufficient evidence of the perverseness of modern weaponry, recent studies on the long-term atmospheric and biological consequences of nuclear war raise the spectre of a “nuclear winter” that would devastate the earth, perhaps to the point of the extinction of all life.³

Concerned people everywhere are searching for ways to avoid these disasters. Throughout history, law—often inspired by and based on religious teachings—has been used in attempts to prevent or limit force and war as means of resolving disputes. That legal steps are absolutely necessary, and every effort should be made toward such short-term measures as arms control agreements, is as true today as ever.⁴ Nevertheless, one must question the capacity of law to furnish a lasting solution: the fundamental solution is beyond the reach of law. But even if by some miracle—or at least by a mighty feat of political genius and courage—nuclear weaponry could be radically reduced or eliminated altogether, every generation forever will possess the awful capacity to develop, manufacture, and deploy these weapons of ultimate destruction. We can never again return with innocence to a prenuclear Eden.

Perhaps only a collective change of mind can achieve the fundamental solution beyond the reach of law. Whether through an elevation of social consciousness or a religious conversion, humankind

must come to perceive itself, across national, racial, and religious boundaries, as brothers and sisters of common descent.

A previous article of mine examined the Old Testament doctrine of Holy War as the paradigm of allegiance and discussed Latter-day Saint teaching on force and war from Joseph Smith and Brigham Young to Spencer W. Kimball.⁵ In this article, I continue my study of religious teachings on force and war as they apply in the nuclear age. In particular, I shall examine Old Testament prophetic teachings, as distinguished from Israel's experience in the conquest of Canaan through the Davidic monarchy; teachings of Jesus on force and violence; and Book of Mormon teachings on force and war. These teachings may be more important now than ever. All of them culminate in a sublime, transcendent message for our day: we must learn to love God above all and to love others as ourselves, to see all humankind as our brothers and sisters.

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETIC TRADITION ON FORCE AND WAR

The Later Prophets consistently challenged the ways of war endemic to monarchy by reiterating Israel's commitment to Yahweh as the Divine Warrior.⁶ Yahweh was Israel's provider and defender, and only faith in Yahweh could provide the security kings sought in armies and weapons of war. The prophets inherited this notion from available traditions.⁷ Although the idea of God's acting in history is not unique to Israel, the prophets stressed its implication to an unparalleled degree.⁸ This emphasis, rather than particular forms of warfare, is Israel's legacy to the world.⁹

The antiquity of the idea of Yahweh's unchallengeable kingship over Israel is clearly evident in the great debate occasioned by the institution of an earthly monarch in Israel (see 1 Sam. 8–11). Israel's proposal to have a king "like other nations" directly challenged Yahweh's exclusive rights to their loyalty. Yet, while this reaction no doubt represents one view, it cannot be maintained that the prophetic message, taken as a whole, is essentially antimonarchical. On the contrary, it suggests a synthesis of the two camps, an integration of what for Israel was the new idea of an earthly monarch into the older ideology of the federated tribes under Yahweh's command.¹⁰ Such a synthesis was obviously effected, since even the monarchy's harshest critics, the prophets, never hinted at its ultimate abolition. Isaiah, for example, foresees the coming of a virtuous king when the present era of history ends (see Isa. 11:1–4). Books such as Deuteronomy,

while they carefully regulate the behavior of the king, do not view kingship itself as antithetical to the principles of Israelite religion (see Deut. 17:14–20).

The ultimate testimony of the way in which kingship became an essential part of Israel's religion, as opposed to a tolerated aberration, is the messianic hope. Without the experiences, good and bad, under the kings, the notion of a messiah—the anointed king—might have been incomprehensible, perhaps historically impossible. When we speak therefore of the biblical conception of kingship, and especially when we attempt to draw theological conclusions from it, we must keep in mind that we are dealing with an evolving phenomenon which changed to meet the needs of circumstance.

The monarchy brought fundamental changes to Israelite society. Especially during the eighth century, when classical prophecy arose, the monarchy and its foreign policy simply devastated the lower classes. With furious anger, Isaiah attacked the unscrupulous nobles and judges who had conspired to rob the helpless of their rights (see Isa. 1:21–23, 3:13–15, 5:8, 10:1–4).¹¹ He denounced the decadent upper class, pampered and concerned only for material possessions and venal pleasures (see Isa. 3:16–4:1, 5:11–12, 22). Israel was like a vineyard that should have brought forth good grapes but was being consumed by briars and thistles because of her lavish rituals by which she hoped to placate Yahweh's demands (see Isa. 1:10–14). Israel could repent and become God's dwelling place, however, by giving up her faith in human armaments and placing faith in Yahweh's judgment:

And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people:
and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into
pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall
they learn war any more.

(Isa. 2:4)

Isaiah's prophetic call required him to oppose a national pride vested in military superiority and strong alliances. Isaiah first challenged Judah's national policy in 735–733 B.C. when the Aramaean–Israelite coalition came against Jerusalem to compel Judah's alliance against Assyria.¹² Isaiah confronted King Ahaz about his plan to appeal to Assyria for help, promising that the coalition would fail in its purpose if Judah would trust in Yahweh's promises (see Isa. 7:1–8). Ahaz refused Isaiah's prophetic counsel, however; he sent a tribute to Tiglath-pileser and surrendered Judah's independence (see 2 Kgs. 16–17). Isaiah responded by prophesying national calamity (see Isa. 7:18–25, 8:5–8).

Isaiah also opposed Judah's alliance with Egypt against Assyria about 714–712 B.C. Isaiah insisted that Yahweh would defend Judah and overthrow Assyria in due time if Judah would only wait (see Isa. 14:24–27). Dressed as a prisoner of war, Isaiah walked through the streets of Jerusalem to symbolize the dire results of Judah's reliance on Egypt rather than Yahweh (see Isa. 20). Isaiah again predicted disaster for Judah's idolatrous reliance on armies and alliances with Egypt rather than waiting upon Yahweh (see Isa. 28:14–22, 30:1–7).

Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord!

(Isa. 31:1)

Isaiah taught that Judah's reliance upon weapons and the ways of war would bring destruction, not security. Peace would come only through righteousness and faith in Yahweh.

Isaiah was vindicated when King Hezekiah, the son of Ahaz, stood firm against the Assyrian invasion of Judah about 688 B.C. Isaiah alone stood by his king in declaring that the Assyrian pride had exhausted divine patience (see Isa. 37:21–29). He promised that Yahweh would never allow Jerusalem to be taken by blasphemous Assyria as long as Judah placed faith in Yahweh (see Isa. 29:5–8, 37:33–35). Hezekiah heeded Isaiah's counsel, and the city successfully survived the Assyrian siege.

Isaiah apparently did not give up hope that his teachings could change a spiritually corrupt people (see Isa. 6:9–10); his belief in God was too expansive for him to suppose that Judah's unfaithfulness could frustrate divine purpose no matter how much it injured divine love. Judah's impending tragedy manifested the divine chastening of a people that would purge the dross and leave a purified people (see Isa. 1:24–26, 4:2–6). As a sign of his hope, Isaiah gave his first son the ominous name of *She'ar-jashub* ("a remnant shall return"), emphasizing not the exile but the remnant that would return. Thus, Isaiah turned to the future fulfillment of God's promises to provide hope to Israel, God's chosen people.

Moreover, Isaiah taught that peace among nations and with all nature would eventually result from a virtuous king's judgment. The lamb would lie with the wolf, the leopard with the kid, and the cow with the bear (see Isa. 11:6–9). Zion's defense would be the munitions of rocks, and Jerusalem would be a quiet habitation, a place of beautiful rivers and streams (see Isa. 33:16, 20–21). Zion would be characterized

by a love of peace and trust in God: “The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places” (Isa. 32:17–18).

God revealed himself to Israel in his covenant. Yahweh chose to manifest his divine vulnerability in making a covenant that entailed divine response to human commitment. Israel’s greatest prophets consistently employed the most intimate relationships known to mortals to characterize Yahweh’s relationship with wayward Israel. God is Israel’s Father and Israel his infant child; Yahweh is Israel’s husband and Israel his unfaithful bride. Yahweh’s promise to David is expressed in terms of the father–son covenant:

I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.

And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee: thy throne shall be established forever.

(2 Sam. 7:14–16)

Hosea echoes Yahweh’s pain at Israel’s rejection of his covenant. He applies the excruciating metaphor of a loving husband who remains faithful despite his wife’s infidelities. Hosea is commanded by God to marry a prostitute. He is to heal her with redeeming love, a type of what Yahweh promises to do by covenant love with Israel (see Hosea 1:2). So Hosea married Gomer, a prostitute, who bore him children, named of the Lord to symbolize Israel’s infidelities to Yahweh. The first son is named *Jesrel*, where Jehu massacred the descendants of Omri; the daughter, *Not having obtained mercy*, “I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel.” The next son was named “Not my people,” since Israel was “not my people, and I will not be your God” (Hosea 1:3–9). Gomer responded by returning to prostitution, seeking fulfillment in her lovers and their money (see Hosea 2:5–10).

Yahweh, who had demonstrated his love for Israel as Hosea had to Gomer, withdrew his corn, his wine, wool and flax that “were given to cover her nakedness; And now will I discover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers” (Hosea 2:9–10). He would reveal her shame until she recognized that Yahweh, like Hosea with Gomer, was really the source of Israel’s well-being and redemption. No progress was possible without commitment to Yahweh (see Hosea 2:11–13). Through unrequited love, Israel, like Gomer, would be wooed back to a faithful relationship (see Hosea 2:14–18).

When that day comes—it is Yahweh who speaks—she will call me “my husband.” A faithful covenant of unbreakable love will be made between Israel and Yahweh encompassing all life and all nature: “and in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely. And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord. . . . I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, thou art my people; and they shall say, thou art my God” (Hosea 2:16–23).

Yahweh then directed Hosea a second time to redeem Gomer from the slave market and once again to betroth her. “Go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the Lord for the children of Israel, who look to other gods.” So Hosea purchased her and asked a pledge of fidelity. “Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for another man: so will I also be for thee”—just as Israel, long without a king or country, one day would be redeemed by her Messiah (Hosea 3:1, 3).

These divine metaphors playing upon the most profound human emotions are not mere literary convention; they reveal to us the nature of Israel’s God. As Terence Fretheim recently demonstrated,¹³ the prophets of the Old Testament interacted with a God who suffers because of a broken relationship, the people’s rejection of his loving covenant. God suffers with the people who suffer. God suffers for his people. As foreign as the idea may be to classical theology that emphasizes impassibility and immutability, the Old Testament prophets express the incomprehensible divine hurt that, in spite of all God had done for the people, they have ignored his call. Thus, Jeremiah begins his book with a picture of the pain and anguish of God rejected as a parent and a husband:

But I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? and I said, Thou shalt call me, My father; and shalt not turn away from me. Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the Lord.

(Jer. 3:19–20)

Yahweh’s love for Israel is expressed by the Hebrew *hesed*, or “faithful and intimate, redemptive covenant love.”¹⁴ *Hesed* is the basis

for atonement of humankind and all creation, the healing of a relationship vital to human welfare or salvation. As the parent heals the child and the mate transforms the marriage partner with long-suffering and unconditional love and mercy, so the Messiah will reconcile Israel and all the world with their Father, amongst themselves, and within the inner cosmos of every person's soul. This concept of covenant-love was Judaism's most influential teaching on early Christianity. The concept of atonement and the Father's intimacy with humans became the hallmark of Jesus' teachings. The Apostle Paul expressed this tenderness when he described the movement of the Spirit within us impelling us to become God's sons and daughters, "whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:15). Jesus was unique in applying the term *abba* that must have shocked his contemporaries with its connotations of intimacy. Jesus did not invoke the more common liturgical form, *abinu* ("our father"), by which God was addressed in the synagogue, nor even the more personal *abi* meaning "my father." Instead, Jesus used the domestic word by which a father was addressed in the affectionate intimacy of the immediate family, thus expressing a sense of nearness to God engendering implicit trust.¹⁵ *Abba* literally means "daddy," the most intimate tender-hearted and child-like expression of the relation between child and father (compare Mark 14:36). Jesus' teachings are a profound expression and fulfillment of God's love for Israel expressed through the great prophets like Isaiah, Hosea, and Jeremiah, among others.

Jesus would expand the concept of faithful covenant-love to the entire world. He would direct his disciples, as lights in a darkened world, as the salt of the earth, to carry the message of redeeming love through example, direct teaching and parable. The Good Samaritan would teach early Jewish Christianity to broaden the concept of neighbor. The Laborers in the Vineyard and the Wedding Feast would establish that God's love is universal and the kingdom open to all, whatever ancient Israel's heritage of thousands of years. The teaching of enemy love would complete a mandate of converting, atoning, redemptive covenant-love requiring Christians to accept all people no matter what their beliefs, nationality, or politics. The great commandment linked inextricably the necessity of love of others and self as any distinction between them was obliterated forever. To externalize evil was prohibited as a beam would preclude seeing the mote. Jesus had come to heal the broken relationship.

VIOLENCE AND THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS

Without repudiating the Law and the Prophets, Jesus ushered in the kingdom of God. Isaiah had seen that to Israel a child would be

born, a son given: “and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6).

Redemptive, sacrificial love was seen by the gospel writers as the crux of the Messiah’s atoning act and his teachings. Matthew particularly saw in Jesus the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy of the Suffering Servant.¹⁶

Jesus announced his messianic fulfillment and the inauguration of the kingdom of God at the beginning of his public ministry. Speaking in a synagogue in Nazareth, where he grew up, Jesus turned to a text of Isaiah and read from chapter 61:

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;

to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called Trees of righteousness, The planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.

(Isa. 61:1–3)

Luke then records that Jesus closed the book, returned it to the minister, sat down and, while “the eyes of all” were “fastened on him,” he pronounced that the kingdom of God was upon them in his fulfillment of the messianic prophecy: “This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears” (Luke 4:20–21). The Righteous King had come.

After the calling of the Twelve, Jesus gave them his great ordination address, the Sermon on the Mount. There, as The Prince of Peace, he presented the core of his gospel. Blessed would be the poor in spirit who recognized their total dependence upon the Father; those that mourn would be comforted. One need not be aggressive against another to acquire territory, for the meek would inherit the earth. By extending mercy (as in avoiding judgment of others) our own hearts can be softened and our spirits made contrite; we may therefore receive mercy. Peacemakers will be God’s children.

The goal of the gospel, as Jesus announced his Father’s kingdom, was that we be whole, be complete, as the Father is whole or complete. Jesus taught all who would listen and comprehend that the kingdom of God is, in a sense, within them. Dramatic transformation of their minds and souls, their very being, is what was demanded. Jesus’

kingdom was not of this world. Jesus asked for the conversion of souls, not simply outward conformity.

To be part of this kingdom, not only must we not kill, but we are forbidden to be angry without cause. Ritual, even worship, will not speak to our souls as an aid to their transformation. We may not approach and emulate the Father in worship unless we first be reconciled with our brothers and sisters. Christian reconciliation he stated not as immutable law, ignorant of the enormous problems of institution and circumstance; rather, he enjoined our efforts to the greatest extent possible with our capacity and situation. He advised conciliation with our adversary lest the institutions of the state grind both down. He excluded vengeance from the life of the disciple and repealed the *lex talionis* (proportionate retaliation). An eye for an eye, while far better than indiscriminate massacre and blood feud, was nevertheless beneath a son of God.

Finally, in climax to the Great Sermon's description of the personalities that would inhabit his Father's kingdom, Jesus preached love for one's enemy:

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you. . . .

For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

(Matt. 5:43-44, 46-48)

But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,

Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. . . .

For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.

And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.

But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

(Luke 6:27-28, 32-33, 35)

It takes no special effort to love those who love us and hate those who hate us. But the Christian's mission is to make both neighbor

and enemy our brother and sister in the kingdom of God. And how else can we touch them, inspire them, and convert them, but by loving them? Then we will indeed be the light of the world, a city set on a hill that cannot be hid. In this way we transform ourselves, with the spirit of Christ, as we extend redeeming love to others, neighbors and enemies, as he did for us all. We must love as he loves. In no other way can we be his disciples and children of our Father, whole and complete, faithful to the covenant.

For the Christian, nonviolence, then, is not primarily based upon its necessity for our preservation in a world gorged with thermonuclear weapons, however accurate that perception. Nor is nonviolence practiced simply as a higher moral principle than violent response to provocation. Rather, Christ's mandate that we love neighbor and enemy as brother and sister and children of our Father compels that we love and not kill.

Jesus knew that no dispute is finally solved by violence. The underlying cause usually remains, simply exacerbated by the evil progeny spawned by war: hatred of our brothers and sisters, as if they were somehow fundamentally different from ourselves; the teaching and glorification of violence; lust; ignorance; propaganda; and finally, suffering, starvation, disease, and death.

According especially to Matthew's gospel, following Peter's confession of faith, Jesus "from that time forth began . . . to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day" (Matt. 16:21).

John's gospel records what is in all probability his remembrance of Peter's confession in a somewhat different circumstance and locale (at Capernaum rather than Caesarea Philippi), at the conclusion of the Master's profound sermon on the Bread of Life, following the miracle of the loaves and fishes (see John 6:48-51).

Jesus taught a "hard saying": that he would sacrifice his flesh and his blood in order that an atonement for all humankind could be accomplished. Only in such a manner, he taught, could he "raise [us] up at the last day" (John 6:44).

Many in Israel, including presumably Jesus' disciples, had expected a Messiah who would free Israel from foreign dominion and establish again an independent and united state. The concept of a Messiah who would transcend death and hell and accomplish atonement between God and all his children by offering himself as a sacrifice through crucifixion was more than most could comprehend. (I believe, in fact,

that this spectre of a crucified Messiah was in all probability more than any disciple contemporary with Jesus could comprehend, until after the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, and the Pentecost. Only retrospectively, and with the gift of the Holy Spirit to bring to their remembrance all Jesus had taught, would the Apostles themselves come gradually to comprehend a concept so unfamiliar and transcendent.) John records that “many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? . . . From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him” (John 6:60, 66).

Then John records Peter’s confession of a faith without alternative:

Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

(John 6:67–69)

Yet Matthew records that Peter, convinced that his Master was indeed Israel’s Messiah, still did not comprehend the nature of his transcendence, the way of atonement: that indeed Jesus’ kingdom was not of this world.

Peter, in natural human response to Jesus’ teaching of his impending death, and reflecting misunderstanding about the nature of the Messiah’s role as healer of us all in atonement with his Father, rebuked Jesus: “Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee” (Matt. 16:22).

Jesus’ response rejected the natural human reaction of resort to violence. Jesus refused even that level of violence implicit in Peter’s statement, itself evidently far short of the Zealot alternative. Jesus said to Peter: “Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offense unto me: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men” (Matt. 16:23).

Then Jesus directed his words and his example to all who would be disciples, words that contain the power to heal and atone between men as well as between man and God:

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

(Matt. 16:24–26)

The complete fruition of Jesus' transcending power to lift all humanity to him through atonement rests upon such discipleship.

Jesus rejected Peter's attempt to use the forceful ways of the world. Such ways, even if successful for a time, would have prevented Jesus' atoning act, the transcendent act of redemptive love. Jesus commands that we follow: "Little children, yet a little while I am with you. . . . A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:33-35).

He recognized that violence could do nothing but lead to more violence. Even after Jesus' rebuke following Peter's confession, Peter did not comprehend. At the betrayal and arrest Peter again sought to defend his Messiah with the sword. Jesus again commanded: "Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Matt. 26:52). Tertullian, a second-century Christian leader in North Africa, concluded: "The Lord afterward, in disarming Peter, unbelted every soldier."¹⁷

THE PROPHETIC TRADITION AND FORCE AND WAR IN THE BOOK OF MORMON

[The Book of Mormon] should convince all living souls of the futility of war and the hazards of unrighteousness. A few prophets, swimming in a sea of barbarism, find it difficult to prevent the crumbling and final collapse of a corrupt people.¹⁸

—Spencer W. Kimball

The so-called "battle-books" of the Book of Mormon, those grim chapters most readers ignore, are classical history in the best sense. Like the historical books of the Old Testament and the greatest Greek history, Thucydides' account of the Peloponnesian War, they have a moral purpose, one consistent with the intent of the work as a whole. The express desire of the authors is not so much to chronicle history for its own sake, for they ignore the vast majority of their history, but to preserve a record of their doings for posterity—a testament to their faith and an insistent, but loving warning to our own society.

The Book of Mormon exhibits many of the literary traditions evident in the Old Testament, among them the exodus typology of divine deliverance instead of heroic deliverance through military

strength.¹⁹ Nevertheless, the Book of Mormon does not altogether follow the pattern of biblical warfare. It demonstrates a complete disregard for the ritual purity associated with that tradition in the Old Testament texts available to us. The Book of Mormon also demonstrates other responses to war such as pacifism and what would best be described as a “just war” theory. All of the Book of Mormon approaches to war demonstrate one thing in common: only faith in God can insure well-being, while trust in human military might is idolatry and insures destruction.

Divine Deliverance and Exodus Paradigms

The purpose of the exodus typology, evident throughout the Old Testament, is to demonstrate that Yahweh is mighty to deliver his people from their enemies in remembrance of his covenant.²⁰ The presence of exodus typology in the Book of Mormon has been demonstrated previously. The Book of Mormon writers repeatedly employ exodus typology in constructing their narrative: Alma is delivered from King Noah (see Mosiah 18:1–19:2), the people of Limhi are delivered from bondage under the Lamanites (see Mosiah 21:13–22:16), and Alma is again delivered from the Lamanites (see Mosiah 24:10–25). Alma departed from King Noah’s court and established a colony in a place called Mormon, near “a fountain of pure water.” When Alma’s small colony learned that King Noah had dispatched an army to apprehend them at this secret place, “they took their tents and their families and departed into the wilderness” (Mosiah 18:34).

After escaping from King Noah, Alma’s people came into bondage under the Lamanites who were “taskmasters over them” (Mosiah 24:9). Alma’s people thus began to “cry mightily to God” that he would deliver them and God responded: “Lift up your heads and be of good comfort, for I know of the covenant which ye have made unto me; and I will covenant with my people and deliver them out of bondage” (Mosiah 24:10–13). The Lord then gave instructions to Alma, as he had to Moses, to deliver his people from bondage (see Mosiah 24:17). Alma’s people gathered their flocks and grain and departed when the Lord caused a deep sleep to come upon the Lamanite guards. When Alma’s people had hidden in the wilderness, they gathered together and gave thanks to God for delivering them from bondage, for “none could deliver them except it were the Lord their God” (Mosiah 24:18–21).

Limhi’s people had become subjected to the Lamanites. The Lamanites had exacted heavy burdens, causing Limhi’s people to “cry

mightily to God; yea, even all the day long did they cry unto their God that he would deliver them out of their afflictions” (Mosiah 21:14). Limhi caused his people to gather together at the temple at what appears to be a covenant renewal ceremony.²¹ He told his people that “the time is at hand, or is not far distant, when we shall no longer be in subjection to our enemies” (Mosiah 7:18). He promised that if they would trust in God, they would be delivered:

Therefore, lift up your heads, and rejoice, and put your trust in God, in that God who was the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob; and also, that God who brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, and caused that they should walk through the Red Sea on dry ground, and fed them with manna that they might not perish in the wilderness. . . . That same God has brought our fathers out of the land of Jerusalem, and has kept and preserved his people even until now; and behold, it is because of our iniquities and abominations that he has brought us into bondage.

(Mosiah 7:19–20)

Limhi’s people “could find no way to deliver themselves out of bondage, except it were to take their women and children, and their flocks, and their herds, and their tents, and depart into the wilderness” (Mosiah 22:2). Thus, Limhi’s people escaped bondage without bloodshed by trusting in God. The exodus as Yahweh’s paradigm of deliverance is apparent in these Book of Mormon accounts. As historian Richard Bushman notes, “Book of Mormon prophets saw the major events of their own past as comprising a series of deliverances beginning with the archetypal flight of the Israelites from Egypt.”²² This paradigm emphasizes that war is not necessary, vast arsenals are superfluous, for Yahweh’s covenant with Israel was sufficient to defend his people if they would be faithful to the covenant. But the paradigm also teaches that armaments are not merely unnecessary, they may be obstructions to peace and welfare because God *alone* can deliver.

Israel was not justified in war unless the prophet consulted Yahweh and received affirmation through revelation.²³ Old Testament tradition proclaims that Yahweh delivered Israel’s enemies into her hands rather than Israel from the hands of her enemies as in the exodus typology. This tradition is reflected in Captain Moroni’s defense of Nephite freedoms. Further, Moroni is the focus of Mormon’s message to our own day. When battle was imminent, Moroni sent two men to the prophet Alma “desiring him that he should inquire of the Lord whither the armies of the Nephites should go to defend themselves against the Lamanites” (Alma 43:23). Alma received the divine

approval required under Holy War tradition and instructed Moroni where to deploy his armies. The Lord justified the Nephites in engaging the Lamanites in battle because it was the “only desire of the Nephites to preserve their lands, and their liberty, and their church” and the purpose was clearly defense against an unjust aggressor (Alma 43:30; see also 43:46). Mormon was adamant that “the Nephites were inspired by a better cause, for they were not fighting for monarchy nor power but they were fighting for their homes and their liberties, their wives and their children” (Alma 43:45). Thus captain Moroni “thought it no sin that he should defend them by stratagem” provided by the Lord (Alma 43:30).

The stratagem given from the Lord was effective to rout the more numerous Lamanites without excessive shedding of blood (see Alma 43:51–44:2). When the Nephites had surrounded the Lamanites and victory was ensured, Moroni commanded the shedding of blood to cease. The restoration of peace was the only purpose sought by Moroni (see Alma 44:3–10). As wise as Moroni was, he was willing to allow the Lamanites to return to their lands unharmed if they would only enter into a covenant of peace (see Alma 44:15–20). He gained no ultimate victory, no absolute assurance that the enemy would keep his word and not invade again, but only righteous trust in the Lord and hope that the enemy would repent and value peace. The people rejoiced “because the Lord had again delivered them out of the hands of their enemies; therefore they gave thanks unto the Lord their God” (Alma 45:1). Thereafter, Alma consecrated the land to those who would keep the commandments of God. Alma also prophesied and “blessed the earth for the righteous’ sake” and cursed the land to all those that do wickedly. Alma thus pronounced the “cursing and the blessing of God upon the land” as a completion of the covenant ceremony acknowledging God’s holy war (Alma 45:8–16).²⁴

Moroni was compelled to military action once again when a political insurrection attempted to establish a monarchy that threatened the freedom of his people. Amalickiah attempted to establish himself as king over the Nephites by promising power and position to “lower judges” (Alma 46:4). Moroni sensed a danger from this insurgent political group and opposed Amalickiah’s efforts. Seeking political support, Moroni rent his coat and wrote upon it “in memory of our God, our religion, and freedom, and our peace, our wives, and our children,” and fastened it to a pole (Alma 46:12). These words, ritualized in Nephite society and often quoted by Mormon,²⁵ became a rallying point as Mormon went among his people seeking support and reminding

the people that God alone could defend them (compare Alma 46:7–8). Even Moroni may have momentarily lapsed into a crueler ethic when he used his position as chief captain over the armies to threaten death to all “Amalickiahites that would not enter into a covenant to support the cause of freedom” (Alma 46:35).

After having been rejected by the Nephites, Amalickiah succeeded, through murder and intrigue, in establishing himself as a king over the Lamanites (see Alma 47). Amalickiah later incited the Lamanites to come to battle against Moroni’s people. Moroni thus prepared his people for protracted warfare by building defensive measures against the more numerous Lamanites (see Alma 48:8–10). Mormon was careful to note that Moroni now taught his people “never to give an offense, yea, and never to raise the sword except it were against an enemy, except it were to preserve their lives.” He taught them that if they would be faithful God would prosper them in the land. Further, they were taught that God “would make it known unto them whither they should go to defend themselves against their enemies, and by so doing, the Lord would deliver them” (Alma 48:14, 16). The Nephites would enter battle only to preserve freedom and peace, for they were “sorry to take up arms against the Lamanites, because they did not delight in the shedding of blood” (Alma 48:23). Mormon thus goes to lengths to inform us about a proper attitude toward war. The Holy War paradigms of Moroni’s covenant, which in effect guaranteed his people the land through victory, and the consultation with the prophet to receive Yahweh’s assurance of victory are well enough known not to need repeating.

Pacifism and Covenant

The Book of Mormon presents the only instance in scripture of a society committed by covenant to pacifism, the rejection of war in all forms through passive nonresistance to violence. Though Jesus taught nonviolence and the early Christian communities were committed to pacifism²⁶ until about A.D. 170, only in Alma 24 do we find an entire community embracing pacifism as a moral obligation realized in response to the gospel. The narrative divulges more than a profound commitment to nonviolence; it also reveals that evil is not found primarily in one society among combatants. The tacit but powerful message is that the externalization of evil, the distorted view that finds the solution to the world’s problems in a common enemy, is a misunderstanding of the gospel. The structure of the Book of Mormon narrative reveals repeatedly that enemies mirror one another in their

mutual commitment to military and economic superiority. Evil is found by looking within and is conquered through personal conversion.

The Book of Mormon narrative demonstrates a persistent sense of brotherhood, even with enemies. This sense of brotherhood had a profound influence on the way the Book of Mormon prophets considered the use of force. It was also the catalyst behind repeated missionary activities of the sons of Mosiah among the Lamanites, a people the Nephites in general feared as an enemy. The Lamanites often demonstrated an amazing receptivity to the gospel and a commitment to live it fully once they had accepted it (see Alma 23:6). A certain group of Lamanites, having accepted the gospel, changed their names to Anti-Nephi-Lehi. The new name symbolized the necessity of a new way of life and social structure demanded by conversion, the turning from a way of life and re-turning to God (see Alma 23:16–18).

The Anti-Nephi-Lehis felt that accepting the gospel also required them to repent of their warlike life. They gathered to hear their king and to enter into a covenant with God that was a testimony of their new faith (see Alma 24:17–18). Their king spoke eloquently of the implications of their new faith for force and war:

Since God hath taken away our stains, and our swords have become bright, then let us stain our swords no more with the blood of our brethren. Behold, I say unto you, Nay, let us retain our swords that they be not stained with the blood of our brethren; for perhaps, if we should stain our swords again they can no more be washed bright through the blood of the Son of our great God, which shall be shed for the atonement of our sins.

. . . since it has been as much as we could do to get our stains taken away from us, and our swords are made bright, let us hide them away that they may be kept bright, as a testimony to our God at the last day . . . that we have not stained our swords in the blood of our brethren. . . .

And now, my brethren, if our brethren seek to destroy us, behold, we will hide away our swords, yea, even we will bury them deep in the earth, that they may be kept bright, as a testimony that we have never used them.

(Alma 24:12–13, 15–16; compare Isa. 2:4)

The Anti-Nephi-Lehis thus buried their swords as a sign of the covenant and a testimony before God that “rather than shed the blood of their brethren they would give up their own lives; and rather than take away from a brother they would give unto him; and rather than spend their days in idleness they would labor abundantly with their hands” (Alma 24:18). This covenant was the result of a sense of familial

relationship even with their enemies, emphasized by the repeated reference to their enemies as “brothers.” The Anti-Nephi-Lehis had a profound respect for their common Father and their shared humanity that transcended national and even religious sectarian boundaries. They could not turn against their own people, especially because of their new religion, which required them to love humans, no matter to what side of a particular conflict they may belong. All are brothers and sisters. Particular conflicts pale in significance to that simple fact.

The strength of their commitment to the covenant and their sense of brotherhood was put to the ultimate challenge. Those among the Lamanites who had refused to embrace the new religion sought to replace the king over the Anti-Nephi-Lehis through force and war. When the Anti-Nephi-Lehis saw that the Lamanites were about to attack, they actually went to greet them and prostrated themselves before their enemies (see Alma 24:21). The Lamanites, surprised and confused, simply began to kill them. When the Lamanite warriors finally perceived that they were slaughtering a nonresistant and passive people, they were horrified by their acts. The Lamanites threw down their swords in disgust and remorse (see Alma 24:25). Indeed, many of the attacking Lamanites were so astonished and touched that they too were converted (see Alma 24:27).

Just War Paradigms

Mormon has a purpose in showing us this civil strife, in the middle of his history of the Nephite and Lamanite wars, because his narrative is not chiefly concerned with the issue of Lamanite versus Nephite, but rather with its place within his documentary of the self-destruction of his own people because of their wickedness. Mormon’s attitude toward war, revealed in the structure of his account as much as in what it says, has remarkable parallels to classical just war theory. Just war theory, elucidated primarily by Augustine and later developed by scholastics,²⁷ holds that some wars are necessary to prevent greater evils and Christians are therefore justified before God in participating in them. A just war is characterized by: (1) just cause of defense against an unprovoked aggressor; (2) just intent of restoring peace; (3) just means or use of force only necessary to restore the peace; and (4) war as a last resort engaged only when negotiation, arbitration, compromise, and all other peaceable paths fail. Slaughter and destruction of an enemy’s civilization are forbidden.

Mormon’s very civilization was threatened by the Lamanites, but the real threat in Mormon’s view was the iniquity of his own people.

Mormon was preoccupied with the intent of his people in engaging the Lamanites in war. Mormon hoped that the previous slaughter of his people would cause them to rely on the Lord, but he lost all hope when he saw that the sorrow of his people was “the sorrowing of the damned.” Mormon sorrowed for the fallen of his people, but his sorrow was inconsolable because he saw “that the day of grace was passed with them, both temporally and spiritually” (Morm. 2:13–15). Nevertheless, Mormon was willing to lead his people as long as they were justified in their cause. He urged them to enter battle with just intent, to “fight for their wives, and their children, and their houses, and their homes” when they were attacked by the Lamanites (Morm. 2:23). He was willing to prepare his people for defense of their lands (see Morm. 3:4–6). As long as the Nephite posture was defensive and for the purpose of restoring peace to their land, Mormon was willing to lead them in battle and they were successful against the Lamanites (see Morm. 3:8; compare 2:9, 25–26).

Mormon refused to participate in war with his people when they sought revenge and adopted an aggressive posture. When the Nephites had successfully waged war against the Lamanites, they began to boast of their own strength and to seek revenge for their numerous casualties (see Morm. 3:9, 14). They had completely abandoned trust in God and sought to ensure their position through weapons of war. Even when the Nephites gained temporary victory, Mormon was without hope because “the strength of the Lord was not with us; yea, we were left to ourselves” (Morm. 2:26). Notwithstanding Mormon’s love for his people, he would not join them “because of their wickedness and abominations” when they swore to take the offensive against their enemies (Morm. 3:10–11). This war was not between just and unjust nations; it was a struggle between two depraved nations seeking mutual destruction. Mormon thus became a conscientious objector because his people had forgotten God and because they were not justified when they sought revenge and military power.

Mormon was persuaded to lead his people once again, however, when he saw his people “driven and slaughtered with an exceedingly great slaughter; their women and their children were again sacrificed unto idols” (Morm. 4:21; see also 5:1). Mormon expressed his predicament in terms of hopelessness throughout his account:

I did go forth among the Nephites, and did repent of the oath which I had made that I would no more assist them; and they gave me command again of their armies, for they looked upon me as though I could deliver them from their afflictions.

But behold, I was without hope, for I knew the judgments of the Lord which should come upon them; for they repented not of their iniquities, but did struggle for their lives without calling upon that Being who created them.
(Morm. 5:1–2)

Mormon witnessed the destruction of his people. He saw the slain of his people, their flesh and bones and blood left to rot on the face of the earth. His pains for this people are evident in his record, and his words of warning echo in our ears because they are all too familiar—we can relate only too well. His lonely and terrible soliloquy spoken to his slaughtered people is a terrible warning to us:

O ye fair ones, how could ye have departed from the ways of the Lord!
O ye fair ones, how could ye have rejected that Jesus, who stood with open arms to receive you!
Behold, if ye had not done this, ye would not have fallen. But behold, ye are fallen, and I mourn your loss.
O ye fair sons and daughters, ye fathers and mothers, ye husbands and wives, ye fair ones, how is it that ye could have fallen!
But behold, ye are gone, and my sorrows cannot bring your return.
(Morm. 6:17–20)

Mormon's record, then, is a warning for us. It treats wars because we can learn from them and, perhaps, just maybe, escape their fate. We come to appreciate the Book of Mormon because we are shown ourselves in what has been and in what we have become—a warlike people trusting in our own military might rather than God and preoccupied with our economic well-being. Like that of Jeremiah and even Thucydides, Mormon's concern is fundamentally moral; the issue of who wins is secondary to the reasons for the loss. The decisive question is not which side of the human conflict you belong to, but whether you keep your covenants with God. The issue is not between good and evil societies. There can be no political or social correlation of absolutely good or bad, since both sides have a share of low and high moments; both face the same fate. Neither the Lamanites nor the Nephites were identified with consistently good behavior. Quite the contrary, Mormon's theme is how quick *both* sides are to forget God (see Alma 46:8; Morm. 3:9), to allow themselves to be caught up in pleasing ideologies—the ideologies of kingship, Lamanite revisionist history, Nephite self-righteousness, sophistry, materialism, legalism, self-seeking gain, and chauvinistic politics—all frauds. The externalization of evil is self-delusion.

We often forget, too, that both sides are indebted to the same God for their well-being. Though the Book of Mormon is written from

the perspective of God's dealings with one nation, like the Old Testament, there is nevertheless the unmistakable message that God seeks to persuade all nations to return to him. Thus, Mormon is also at pains to chronicle the Nephite missions to convert the Lamanites and to include the message also of Lamanite prophets. God must be the God of all.

Mormon's message is that the crux of life is whether people are continuing to repent, whether they can hear the voice of the Lord calling them. One of the tests of that repentance, however, is whether we are willing to trust in God rather than armaments, whether we believe he will preserve us in a nuclear age, whether we will value God over material goods, and whether we will value the welfare of persons more than belonging to the upper class. In contrast to the spiritual decadence often portrayed in Nephite society is the marvelous well-being, though not necessarily ease, of those who keep their covenants with God. In contrast to Mormon's slaughtered people are those who witnessed and lived following Christ's visit: "There could not be a happier people" (4 Ne. 1:16). One of the ironies of the Book of Mormon is that the Lamanites, whose lives we see, incidentally, only through Nephite eyes, when given the chance, show a remarkable willingness to repent. Many of them joined the people of Anti-Nephi-Lehi, the pacifists, as evidence of their total conversion (see Alma 62:27-29). The choice given under the covenant, then, is clear even if who is good and evil is not: "Therefore, cheer up your hearts, and remember that ye are free to act for yourselves—to choose the way of everlasting death or the way of eternal life" (2 Ne. 10:23).

NOTES

Edwin Brown Firmage is a professor of law, University of Utah College of Law. He writes: "Thanks to Stephen Clark and Blake Ostler, my colleagues, friends, and research assistants for their help in the research that went into this article; to my son, Ed, for his help with Old Testament sources and insights; and to my secretary and friend, Lora Lee Petersen, for her help in preparing the manuscript."

¹Group of Experts, Report of the Secretary General of the United Nations, "Effects of the Use of Nuclear Weapons," in *Toward Nuclear Disarmament and Global Security: A Search for Alternatives*, ed. B. H. Weston (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1984), 29-56.

²Detailing these and other effects of nuclear weapons, see United States Strategic Bombing Survey, *The Effects of the Atomic Bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1946); Committee for the Compilation of Materials on Damage Caused by the Atomic Bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, *Hiroshima and Nagasaki: The Physical, Medical and Social Effects of the Atomic Bombings* (New York: Basic Books, 1981); Office of Technology Assessment, Congress of the United States, *The Effects of Nuclear War* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, May 1979).

Physicians are becoming increasingly concerned about the devastating effects of nuclear war. The seminal and still key research in the area of the medical consequences of nuclear war is Frank R. Ervin et al., "The Medical Consequences of Thermonuclear War," *New England Journal of Medicine* 266 (1962): 1127-37; see also, Howard H. Hiatt, "The Final Epidemic: Prescriptions for Prevention," *Journal of the American Medical Association* 252 (3 August 1984): 635-44.

³Carl Sagan, "Nuclear Winter: Global Consequences of Multiple Nuclear Explosions," *Science* 222 (23 December 1983): 128; Paul R. Ehrlich et al., "Long-Term Biological Consequences of Nuclear War," *Science* 222 (23 December 1983): 1293-1300. According to these studies, even a relatively limited nuclear exchange would ignite tremendous fires whose toxic plumes of black smoke would shroud the Northern Hemisphere in a pall of darkness for weeks or months. The physical environment of the earth would instantly become inhospitable to virtually all life forms; freezing, starvation, sickness, irradiation, death—and perhaps extinction—would follow.

⁴J. Reuben Clark, Jr., was a counselor in the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. But prior to that time he had served as solicitor to the Department of State and eventually as under-secretary. In those roles he negotiated a number of arms control and disarmament agreements for the United States. He reproached those who attacked such agreements as unenforceable and ineffective in eliminating some of the causes of war:

It will not do for us to think these treaties may be dismissed with a contemptuous smirk that being merely treaties, they mean nothing, are made only to be broken, that they are valueless. This is the doctrine of despair and must not be propagated. For what, I ask you, is the alternative? If nations may not establish by mutual undertaking the rules and principles by which they are to be governed; if the sovereign plighted faith of mighty peoples is hereafter to be freely and without censure flaunted; if in short nations may not trust one another, then I say to you the world is lost. (Edwin Brown Firmage and Christopher L. Blakesley, "J. Reuben Clark, Jr.: Law and International Order," in *J. Reuben Clark, Jr.: Diplomat and Statesman*, ed. Ray Hillam [Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1973], 112-13)

⁵Edwin Brown Firmage, "Allegiance and Stewardship: Holy War, Just War and the Mormon Tradition in the Nuclear Age," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 16 (Spring 1983): 47-62. As was his custom, Brigham Young minced no words on the subject when he said:

Much of the skill, ingenuity, and ability of the Christian nations are now devoted to manufacturing instruments of death. May we be saved from the effects of them! As I often tell you, if we are faithful, the Lord will fight our battles much better than we can ourselves. (Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 10 February 1861, 26 vols. [Liverpool: William Budge, 1854-86], 8:325)

Lest one hypocritically believe that the prophets condemned only other countries, and that America's participation in the arms race is justified, it is well to recall the following words of President J. Reuben Clark:

Thus we in America are now deliberately searching out and developing the most savage, murderous means of exterminating peoples that Satan can plant in our minds. We do it not only shamelessly, but with a boast. God will not forgive us of this. If we are to avoid extermination, if the world is not to be wiped out, we must find some way to curb the fiendish ingenuity of men who have apparently no fear of God, man or the devil, and who are willing to plot and plan and invent instrumentalities that will wipe out all the flesh of the earth. . . . [We] Americans wiped out hundreds of thousands of civilian population with the atom bomb in Japan. . . . [Not] only did the people of the United States not rise up in protest against this savagery, not only did it not shock us to read of this wholesale destruction of men, women, and children, and cripples, . . . it actually drew from the nation at large a general approval of this fiendish butchery. (J. Reuben Clark, Conference Report, 5 October 1946, 89)

The modern LDS First Presidency has not retreated in substance or in tone from those earlier prophetic exhortations:

We are a warlike people, easily distracted from our assignment of preparing for the coming of the Lord. When enemies rise up, we commit vast resources to the fabrication of gods of stone and steel—ships, planes, missiles, fortifications—and depend on them for protection and deliverance. When threatened, we become antienemy instead of pro-kingdom of God; we train a man in the art of war and call him a patriot, thus, in the manner of Satan's counterfeit of true patriotism, perverting the Lord's teaching. (Spencer W. Kimball, "The False Gods We Worship," *Ensign* 6 [June 1976]: 6)

The 1980 Christmas and 1981 Easter messages from the First Presidency sounded similar warnings, and the emphasis on this topic three times within six months through this formal means of pronouncement represents an extraordinary concern. Finally, in the heat of the MX missile controversy, the First Presidency spoke unequivocally against the nuclear arms race:

We repeat our warnings against the terrifying arms race in which the nations of the earth are presently engaged. We deplore in particular the building of vast arsenals of nuclear

weaponry. (The First Presidency, "Statement of the First Presidency on Basing of the MX Missile," *Church News*, 9 May 1981, 2)

⁶Frank Moore Cross, "The Divine Warrior in Israel's Early Cult," in *Biblical Motifs: Origins and Transformations*, ed. A. Altmann, *Studies and Texts* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966), 3:11-30.

⁷Discussed in Patrick D. Miller, "Faith and Ideology in the Old Testament," in *Magnalia Dei: The Mighty Acts of God*, ed. Frank Moore Cross, Werner E. Lemke, and Patrick D. Miller (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1976), 464-76, especially 470-71.

⁸See B. Albrektson, *History and the Gods* (Lund, Sweden: Gleerup, 1967).

⁹See M. Weippert, "Heiliger Krieg in Israel u. Assyrien," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 84 (1972): 460-93.

¹⁰See D. J. McCarthy, "The Inauguration of Monarchy in Israel," *Interpretation* 27 (1973): 401-12.

¹¹Much of the treatment of Isaiah's mission is dependent on John Bright, *A History of Israel* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1981), 291-93.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Terence Fretheim, *The Suffering of God: An Old Testament Perspective* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 108ff.

¹⁴See Nelson Glueck, *Hesed in the Bible*, trans. Alfred Gottschalk (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1926). Perhaps the closest English connotation of *hesed* is "mercy." (See Josh. 2:12; Hosea 4:1, 6:4, 10:12, 12:6; Micah 6:8, 7:18; Zech. 7:19. "With an everlasting love have I loved you / therefore I have prolonged loyalty [hesed] to you" [Jer. 31:36]).

¹⁵See Joachim Jeremias, Abba. *Studien zur neutestamentlichen Theologie und Zeitgeschichte* (Göttingen, West Germany: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1966); R. Beanvery, "Mon Père et votre Père, Refus du père et paternité de Dieu," *Le Vie* 104 (1974): 75-88; F. F. Bruce, *New Testament History* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1980), 170-71.

¹⁶See W. F. Albright and C. S. Mann, eds. and trans., commenting on Matthew 21-28, the Passion narrative, 61-63. *Matthew*, Anchor Bible (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1971).

¹⁷"One soul cannot be due to two *masters*—God and Caesar. And yet Moses carried a rod, and Aaron wore a buckle, and John (Baptist) is girt with leather, and Joshua the son of Nun leads a line of march; and the People warred: if it pleases you to sport with the subject. But how will a *Christian man* war, nay, how will he serve even in peace, without a sword, which the Lord has taken away? (Matt. 26:52; John 18:36). For albeit soldiers had come unto John, and had received the formula of their rule; albeit, likewise, a centurion had abelieved; *still* the Lord afterward, in disarming Peter, unbelted every soldier. No dress is lawful among us, if assigned to any unlawful action." ("On Idolatry," *The Apology of Tertullian XIX*, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writers of the Fathers down to 325 A.D.* [American ed., Buffalo, 1886; reprint, Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1969])

¹⁸General Conference 1963, as quoted in Spencer W. Kimball, *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982), 414.

¹⁹See Richard L. Bushman, "The Book of Mormon and the American Revolution," in *Book of Mormon Authorship*, ed. Noel Reynolds (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Monograph, 1982), 189-211; Hugh Nibley, *An Approach to the Book of Mormon*, 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1964), 169-80; George S. Tate, "The Typology of the Exodus Pattern in the Book of Mormon," in *Literature of Belief*, ed. Neal E. Lambert (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Monograph, 1981), 246-62.

²⁰J. Wingaards, "The Dramatization of Salvific History in the Deuteronomical Schools," in *Oudtestamentische Studien* (Leiden, West Germany: E. J. Brill, 1969), 52; Bernard W. Anderson, "Exodus and Covenant in Second Isaiah and Prophetic Tradition," in *Magnalia Dei*, 339-60.

²¹See Nibley, *An Approach to the Book of Mormon*, 254-55.

²²Bushman, "The Book of Mormon and the American Revolution," 196.

²³1 Sam. 28:6, 30-37ff; 2 Sam. 5:19, 23.

²⁴Compare Deut. 11:25-28; 23:5-6; 30:5-9, 19.

²⁵These words recur in the same formulaic language when the Nephites are compelled to war (see Alma 43:9, 26, 30, 45; 46:12, 20; 48:14; 58:10; Morm. 2:24).

²⁶See Roland H. Bainton, *Christian Attitudes toward War and Peace* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1960), 85-100.

²⁷Ibid.

Berlin

Friday, August 26, 1955: I arose very early as was my custom. No one was around. I strolled out across the street, around the block, for several blocks and wept at the sight of the devastation. I plunged into a reverie and fell into the mood to write it down and returned to the typewriter:

Ten years now since the world war tragedy!

High fences

Rusty fences

Proud, haughty fences around the former grand estates leveled in
humiliation

Windblown gates unkept now hang and creak on rusty hinges

Ghosts of yesterday

Ghost houses, ghost yards

Broken swimming pools remind of luxury of the forgotten rich

Proud estates, spectre houses, all so still

No playful shouts, no children laugh

Silent walls, silent houses, silent death

Empty mailboxes—no letters ever more for them

Buildings leveled, pride leveled, innocence suffering

Naked pockmarked walls, and weeds that grow from toothlike
stabbing jaggedness indicating where—

Chipped walls

And glassless windows, cold and open to storm and sky

Boarded windows

Bricked-up windows

Jagged chimneys pierce the skies

Iron bedsteads hang

Plumbing pipes reach into space like dragon claws

Twisted steel
Doorways without walls
Arches without buildings
Porches and doorways, nothing else, porches and doorways
Ceilings of splintered wood, shattered plaster hanging
 like cobwebs
Stairways lead to no place

Here are trees
Tall trees that lean, one sided
Amputated limbs and trunks but not by saw
Jagged stumps of arms that point at—whom?
Grotesque figures stand against the sky, pointing
 into space accusingly

Excavations like graves
Excavations which are graves where rodents play and insects find
 their homes
Bricks are here
Broken bricks and pulverized
Piles of bricks that cover bones of people never found

Rubble
Foundations upended
Rotting wood
Twisted steel
Destruction, devastation, desolation
Broken fountains
Shattered statues
Creaking shutters
Rustiness
Ugliness
Jaggedness
Screaming jaggedness.
Walls, chimneys, trees, all grotesque writhing apparitions
Persons? Things? Dragons?
Disfigured deformed giants slumped in misery and shame

Pockmarked trees, gaping wounds healed over
Vines climbing naked trunks to cover broken limbs of
 torn and battered trees

Green ivy trying hard to cover nakedness of gaping walls
Ivy trying! trying!
Small trees, ragged shrubs growing untended from the rubble
Grass atop the jagged walls holding brave little flowers
 struggling for existence
Nature trying to sweeten sourness
Squirrels scampering
Tiny birds twittering
To bring back life to deadness

—Spencer W. Kimball

Mormons and Foreign Policy

Ray C. Hillam and David M. Andrews

General Omar Bradley once said of contemporary Americans, “We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount.” In a “world of nuclear giants and ethical infants,” he continued, “we know more about war than we know about peace, more about killing than we know about living.”¹ His concern over our society’s infatuation with the instruments of death rather than the conditions for peace is paralleled in the teachings of President Spencer W. Kimball. Addressing members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, President Kimball remarked sadly that “we are a warlike people” and warned against our tendency to turn to the false gods of armaments “for protection and deliverance.” He lamented that members of the Church “are easily distracted from our assignment of preparing for the coming of the Lord.”²

President Kimball’s statement, the scriptures, and the history of the restored Church suggest the importance of foreign affairs to the Church and its members. The Doctrine and Covenants is quite explicit about the matter: It is “expedient for you to understand . . . things which are abroad; the wars and the perplexities of the nations, and the judgments which are on the land; and a knowledge also of countries and of kingdoms” (D&C 88:78–79). This paper presents some introductory thoughts on several themes involving the Church and foreign policy, particularly (though not exclusively) U.S. foreign policy. It will no doubt conclude with more questions than answers. This essay is therefore by no means definitive in its development of the issues, its analysis, or its prescriptions; rather, it is a general statement and is intended as an invitation to others to address these important questions.

THE GOSPEL AND FOREIGN POLICY

Insofar as the scriptures are concerned, there can be no debate about the relative merits of war and peace. Satan is the father of contention; Christ is the Prince of Peace. Nephi foresaw that there

would be “wars and rumors of wars among all the nations” (1 Ne. 14:16); the Doctrine and Covenants states that in the last days “it [Zion] shall be the only people that shall not be at war one with another” (D&C 45:69). Both prophecy and scriptural injunction—“therefore, renounce war and proclaim peace” (D&C 98:16)—make it clear that the followers of Christ are to endorse and seek peace. Indeed, this is one of the precepts Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount: “Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God” (Matt. 5:9).

Yet the clear waters of peace-seeking are muddied by modern-day life. For “the hour is not yet, but is nigh at hand, when peace shall be taken from the earth, and the devil shall have power over his own dominion” (D&C 1:35). The international reality of power politics is paralleled by the domestic and individual reality that everyone lives within the boundaries and under the jurisdiction of one or another of the world’s nations. There are, as a result, responsibilities and duties incumbent upon each of us, as taught by Paul and summarized in the twelfth article of faith: “We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law.” Generally, members of the Church are obligated by the tenets of their faith and the responsibilities of their citizenship to support the foreign policies of their countries. This obligation includes the responsibility to support foreign policies which uphold the legitimate interests of their country, including those interests which may require defending through a just war.

The key words here are *legitimate* and *just*. Unfortunately, there are times when it is difficult to determine when a foreign policy is legitimate and when a war is just. But it is not impossible for a war to be just. There are scores of scriptural examples of righteous peoples successfully defending their homelands from aggression, for example.³ Members of the Church, then, are expected to search for a clarification of these points and to arrive at an understanding of the issues. They are expected to pursue a course consistent with the tenets of their faith and the laws which govern their citizenship. This question of individual responsibility will be discussed in more detail later.

THE CHURCH AND THE SECURITY OF THE UNITED STATES

There are several reasons the security of the United States is important to all Church members. First, the Book of Mormon and historic pronouncements by Church leaders proclaim the United States

a promised land in which important events in the religious history of the world were and are to occur.⁴ Second, the gospel was restored and developed as a religious institution in the United States. Third, the United States is the domicile of many Church members and their institutions. The headquarters of the Church, most of its leadership, and much of its financial support are within the United States. Fourth, the Constitution of the United States is believed by Mormons to have been authored by inspired men and its government divinely instituted (see D&C 101:77), providing an early sanctuary for the Church and its members to pursue their own interests. Also, many Mormons believe that certain of the principles found in the Constitution are universal (see D&C 98:5). Fifth, a religiously tolerant and strong United States has enabled the Church to prosper at home and to pursue its proselyting interests abroad. Church leaders often speak of this special mission to preach the gospel in every nation and to every culture. With reference to the changing structure of the international system and the role of the Church, President Kimball said, “The Spirit of the Lord is brooding over the nations to prepare the way for the preaching of the gospel. . . . Some political events,” he added, “have a bearing upon the spread of the truth. It seems as though the Lord is moving upon the affairs of men and nations.”⁵

This fundamental missionary interest of the Church is served by an exemplary America pursuing a foreign policy based on the principles of the Constitution of the United States and George Washington’s Farewell Address—a foreign policy which emphasizes nonintervention in the domestic affairs of other states, national self-determination of peoples everywhere, and international stability and peace; a foreign policy which seeks to resolve international disputes through mediation, adjudication, and other forms of diplomacy; a foreign policy which turns to coercive forms of diplomacy only as a last resort and only when national security is in peril. A free, secure, and exemplary United States means a free and secure Church. Thus, to support foreign policies which insure both the security of the United States and its behavior as an exemplary international role model is not only a civic duty for Latter-day Saints in the United States but is an obligation of Church members everywhere.

Unfortunately, at times the United States has not lived up to such high standards. There have been foreign policies and instances of international behavior which have not been “legitimate” or “just.” In such cases, Church members everywhere have a civic and sacred duty to raise their voices in opposition. They may in fact be obligated to

do something about it in an active and legal way. Again, the question of individual responsibility of Church members in the foreign policy arena will be discussed later.

THE CHURCH AND PEACETIME FOREIGN POLICY

The Church does not often speak directly on foreign policy issues, but this does not mean the Church is not involved. The Church has day-to-day involvement in foreign affairs, most of which can be described as nongovernmental or “private” foreign relations. The Church is therefore an actor in the international system, but it is not politically sovereign. Unlike the Vatican, it does not maintain its own secretary of state and professional foreign service. It is, rather, a private international institution with its own “foreign policy” specialists who function daily within the context of a complex network of global relationships, both public and private.

The Church is daily involved with such matters as the international transfer of persons, money, information, and institutions. The Presiding Bishopric’s Office, the Church Educational System, and the International Mission are three Church institutions involved in the political, economic, and social structures of the international system. For example, the daily functioning of the International Mission regarding such matters as passports and visas, personal security measures, and financial and information transfers are all matters that can easily go unnoticed.

As previously noted, a major international function of the Church is its missionary efforts, and in times of peace the Church works to alleviate diplomatic and political barriers to proselyting. Indeed, one of the major pragmatic reasons the Church opposes warfare is the attendant effects on the missionary effort. On the simplest level, the more nations that maintain positive diplomatic and economic ties with the United States, the more nations that are open to the proselyting efforts of American elders and sister missionaries. However, in order to alleviate the dependency of the Church’s proselyting efforts on the current status of U.S. foreign relations, Church policy is to encourage non-American members to serve as missionaries within their own countries. To date, however, using local missionaries is practical in only a small portion of the world; there continues to be a great reliance on American missionaries—and therefore a great vulnerability to the United States’ diplomatic posture.

Another equally important international function of the Church is its obligation to care for the institutional development of the Church

abroad. The Church not only has missions abroad but also stakes, temples, and other properties which require a Church "foreign policy" not inconsistent with American foreign policy.

Thus far, we have discussed the Church's peacetime foreign policy goals and the rather inobtrusive ways the Church promotes them. There are times, however, when the Church will take a controversial position on a major political issue. Examples include the First Presidency statements on universal military training after World War II and, more recently, on the deployment of the MX missile.⁶ In both cases, Church leaders expressed opposition to policies they perceived as neither in the best interest of the nation nor the Church. Such instances are rare, however; Church leaders generally express their peacetime foreign policy views on an individual basis or work as a unit behind the scenes.

THE CHURCH AND WAR

The occasions when the Church is vocal on foreign policy issues, even becoming an active participant, are characteristically periods of national crisis. In particular, there have been a number of official Church declarations concerning specific wars. The Mexican-American War, for example, was the first major foreign policy issue that leaders of the restored Church confronted. The *Millennial Star* spoke of "the long reign of intolerance that has darkened the dominions of Mexico," declaring that Mexico "must receive a fatal blow from American arms."⁷ But the same publication also spoke of an American "lust of dominion" while "grasp[ing]" for wide expanses of Mexican territory.⁸ Apparently in the Mormon community as in the rest of the country, patriotic fervor was combatting moral abhorrence of wars of aggression. The motivation of the Mormon recruits who fought in the war was probably as much pragmatic Church self-interest as patriotism.⁹ As for their conduct, these recruits were counseled by Parley P. Pratt to neither "misuse their enemies" nor "spoil their property."¹⁰

The Spanish-American War brought considerable discourse from Church leaders. Most Mormons, like most Americans, were caught up in the emotions of the times. However, President George Q. Cannon said that we should not "indulge in warlike demonstrations. . . . We should be . . . seeking peace, and endeavoring to escape all the horrors of war." Speaking of the McKinley administration and war, President Cannon expressed admiration for the desire of the White House "to push off war and do all in their power to avert it." He further said, "Spain has not yet proclaimed war against this nation. . . .

The Lord says we should lift up a standard of peace.” On the eve of the war, President Cannon continued to urge peace, quoting Joseph Smith: “We must proclaim peace; do all in our power to appease the wrath of our enemies; make any sacrifice that honorable people can to avert war.”¹¹ Apostle Francis M. Lyman said, “Pray for it, live for it, and do everything on earth for peace that is honorable before we engage in war.”¹²

It is clear that Church leaders urged peacemaking as a national policy; however, once America declared war, the Church leaders issued a statement calling for the membership to support the national effort, and even “telegraphed local [Church] leaders to encourage troop enlistment.”¹³ Why the change? There are two possible explanations. Church leaders may have become convinced that there were sufficiently “just” reasons for intervention, or perhaps the Church determined that once Congress had declared war it became an obligation of citizenship to support the nation in the conflict.

When World War I was triggered at Sarajevo, Church leaders fully supported Woodrow Wilson’s policy of neutrality and believed the war to be “without adequate cause” and “the supreme crime of all history.”¹⁴ But once America entered the war, President Joseph F. Smith urged members to respond to their country’s call. Nevertheless, he severely chastised participants of all countries, saying, God “is working with men who never prayed, men who have never known God, nor Jesus Christ. . . . God is dealing with nations of infidels,”¹⁵ strongly suggesting that despite Church members’ duty to support their respective countries, the war itself was unjustified.

In the final analysis, however, World War I became for most Latter-day Saints what it was to most Americans—a moral crusade.¹⁶ Heber J. Grant of the Council of the Twelve spoke of Mormons being engaged in a “war of righteousness.”¹⁷ Apostle B. H. Roberts said, “We fight not that war might be perpetuated, but that war might eternally cease upon the face of the earth. . . . Can you name a more righteous war than that?”¹⁸ Orson F. Whitney thanked God “that our boys have the privilege of participating in this glorious strife” and said, “God bless America in her heaven appointed task of . . . keeping alive the fires of freedom, and maintaining the rights of man!”¹⁹

Yet during World War I, Mormons continued to support a foreign policy based on “renouncing war and proclaiming peace,” since most members (along with most Americans) believed it was a war to end all wars. B. H. Roberts said the conflict promised to “end all wars”

after which “there shall come world peace, and the earth shall rest.”²⁰ However, the political decisions at Versailles rendered these promises meaningless.

In the 1930s, disillusionment with the “fruits” of World War I was perhaps greater among Mormon leaders than among most Americans. Heber J. Grant, President of the Church, changed from an advocate of the “war to end all wars” to a skeptic over the value of “just wars.” Church leaders, like many Americans, spoke of “lessons learned” from World War I, supported America’s neutrality acts, and condemned World War I as a tragic misadventure. “Never again,” leaders resolved in the *Deseret News*.²¹ To some, even the Munich Agreement seemed justified appeasement. And when war did break out again in Europe, Mormon leaders were skeptical. The First Presidency said, “Each side claims to believe it is in the right.”²² J. Reuben Clark, himself a member of the Church’s First Presidency, even doubted if the attack on Poland were adequate reason for Britain and France to declare war on Germany. President Clark believed that America could best proclaim its mission by “moral example,” by not fighting. Other Church leaders suggested that should America go to war Church members might want to “exercise the right of conscientious objection.”²³ After Pearl Harbor, however, the Church gave its full support for America’s entry into the war. Nevertheless, the Church continued to decry the institution of war itself. With its statement on war, the First Presidency announced that “the Church is and must be against war. . . . It cannot regard war as a righteous means of settling international disputes; these could and should be settled—the nations agreeing—by peaceful negotiation and adjustment.”²⁴

With the defeat of fascism and the dramatic rise of communism following World War II, Mormon leaders became alarmed by “communism on the march” and gave their support to America’s Cold War policies of containment. Yet while President Clark warned against militarism and internationalism that could lead us beyond our exemplary role, President McKay spoke of an international role for America. President McKay saw the Korean War as a justified effort to contain the spread of communism; President Clark viewed the war as unconstitutional. Both condemned communism with vigor, but they often disagreed on American foreign policy and techniques of containment.

While there was little enthusiasm for the Korean War, Church members generally responded to the demand for their participation

as yet another civic duty. The Vietnam War, however, was more puzzling to Mormons. The containment of Communist aggression in Vietnam was much less clear and the barbarity of the war far more obvious. The war gave rise to increasing pacifism and political dissent across the United States. As in Korea, most Mormons served as called upon, although some members became conscientious objectors. Church leaders reminded the membership of their "civic duty," yet acknowledged that individual members might become conscientious objectors, not by virtue of Church membership, but because of personal conscience.²⁵

During the Vietnam War the Church reaffirmed its support of a foreign policy which "renounced war and proclaimed peace." In 1968, Elder Boyd K. Packer called war "a heinous, hideous, ugly thing" and referred to the 1942 First Presidency statement, which states that "the Church is and must be against war. . . . It cannot regard war as a righteous means of settling disputes. . . . [There should be] peaceful negotiations."²⁶ Elder Gordon B. Hinckley, a frequent visitor to the horrors of Vietnam, was even more emphatic: "War I hate with all its mocking pageantry. It is a grim living testimony that Satan lives. It is the earth's greatest cause of human misery, destroyer of lives, promoter of hate and waster of treasure. . . . It is man's greatest folly, his most tragic misadventure."²⁷ On Memorial Day, 1971, President Harold B. Lee reaffirmed the 1942 First Presidency statement. He concluded, "The true Christian's position on war is clearly set forth by a declaration in which the Lord says, 'Therefore, renounce war and proclaim peace.'"²⁸ Following the previously established pattern, however, President Lee followed his condemnation of war by encouraging Church members to serve their respective countries if required to do so. The perplexing dichotomy of condemning war as an institution while urging citizens to support their respective nations continued.

POLITICAL DEBATE WITHIN THE CHURCH COMMUNITY

American Latter-day Saints differ little from most of their fellow citizens on U.S. foreign policy preferences. Historically, some have been isolationists and others internationalists. This was evident during the League of Nations debate within the Church and later during the Clark and McKay pronouncements on foreign relations in the 1940s and 1950s. With reference to the global mission of the Church, Mormons have always been internationalists. But with reference to American foreign

policy, they have stood at different points along the isolationist–internationalist continuum. Today, few, if any, Church leaders could be characterized as isolationists. Most agree that America must accept responsibility for at least some of the direction of international affairs on a worldwide scale. But they are not necessarily inclined to support diplomacy which could be considered coercive. Almost all agree that communism is a danger in the world; most feel that the United States must use its influence to counter the spread of Communist institutions. And because the Soviet Union spearheads the Communist challenge, members tend to accept the notion that America must respond to the expansion of Soviet influence. But within these broad parameters, considerable room is left for debate. Even the parameters themselves are beginning to shift. This is particularly true as the Church expands its borders into Communist and Socialist nations, where Church members are again expected to “honor, obey, and sustain the law” of their respective countries.

There is considerable speculation as to where Mormon leaders, individually and as a group, stand on the contemporary foreign relations of the United States. Church leaders rarely speak on the specifics: balance of payments deficits, the nuclear freeze, normalization of relations with China, human rights in the Third World, Israeli troops in Lebanon, martial law in Poland, Communist guerrillas in El Salvador, and so forth. But this does not mean that the Church is not interested or that it is not involved. The Church is very much interested in the outcome of these affairs and is privately concerned and involved on a day-to-day basis as it endeavors to pursue its own foreign policy and to look after its members’ interests globally.

We need only consider a few examples to see the very real concern the Church has regarding international relations. To imagine, for example, that the Church is not interested in events in Central America is absurd. The Church has missions, even stakes of Zion, in Central America. Its institutions and membership in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua are being affected adversely by the region’s instability. A peaceful settlement which assures stability and the opportunity for the Church to pursue its mission in that region of the world is of utmost concern. Likewise, peace and stability in the Middle East are also in the best interest of the Church. A political settlement which would assure the legitimacy of Jewish and Palestinian rights would be very desirable for the Church. As is the case in other conflict areas of the world, the Church supports an American foreign policy based on peaceful negotiations and diplomacy. Likewise, the

Church is very concerned with Polish internal affairs. The Church has recently been established in Poland. It is officially recognized by the present government, which, if totally subordinated to the Soviet Union, might terminate this recognition. In recent years, through the quiet diplomacy of a special representative of the Church, better relations have been established with a number of governments formerly hostile to the Church and its interests, including Greece, China, Portugal, and Poland. Truly, for the first time in its modern history, the Church is global not only in intent but in reality.

The question of American East–West policy arises. An ongoing debate exists within the Church community as to which orientation best suits the needs of the Church in the present era—accommodation or containment. Both schools of thought point to empirical, historical evidence to support their position. For example, the advocates of containment refer to the Korean War as an event in American foreign relations which had enormous impact on Church interests abroad, illustrating the positive effect American response to Soviet policies has on the Church. American containment of Communist aggression in Korea provided an opportunity for the Church to establish itself in South Korea. The fortunate conversion of a prominent Korean and the presence of many Mormon servicemen led to many conversions and the establishment of Church institutions. Today, the Church has thirteen stakes of Zion, three missions, and a temple in South Korea. But the failure of American foreign policy in Indochina was disastrous to Church interests in Vietnam. The Communist victory in South Vietnam meant the denial of the opportunities for the Church to become firmly established there. Today, Vietnamese membership in the Church is mostly limited to refugees in America, and there is little or no opportunity for the Church to pursue its mission in Vietnam itself. Thus, Communist wars and revolutions have (in these two instances) had significant impact on Church interests. The proponents of containment therefore assume that the Church is or ought to be greatly interested in an effective American response to war and revolution anywhere in the world.

On the other hand, those who favor accommodation with the East point out that deteriorating U.S.–Soviet relations have led to difficulties for Church members throughout Eastern Europe and Latin America. As previously noted, Church membership in Eastern bloc nations changes the foreign policy negotiating stance of the Church. In fact, improving U.S. relations with the Communist nation of mainland China may ultimately result in LDS missionaries' access to

that nation's one billion inhabitants, in great measure fulfilling the prophecy that the gospel must be shared with every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. The advocates of accommodation therefore conclude that this approach is the most functional policy, given current global realities.

In fact, most Church leaders, like most Church members, are not very doctrinaire in their approach to foreign affairs, adopting neither a purely accommodative nor containment stance. Rather, they pragmatically examine each case in light of changing circumstances to determine the best way to further the work of the Lord on the earth. Generally, the only position they consistently assume is opposition to war and coercion as means of resolving international disputes.

In recent years, the nuclear arms race has been the single most important foreign policy issue in official Church pronouncements. Few foreign policy issues have received so much attention in the Church press. The original clear expression of concern about this matter, a First Presidency Message by President Kimball, appeared in the June 1976 issue of the *Ensign*. He spoke of Latter-day Saints, on the whole, as "an idolatrous people—a condition most repugnant to the Lord"—because they worship the false gods of armaments. "We are a warlike people," he said. "We commit vast resources to the fabrication of gods of stone and steel—ships, planes, missiles, fortifications—and depend on them for protection and deliverance. . . . When threatened, we become antienemy instead of pro-kingdom of God."²⁹

This warning by the prophet about the false gods of armaments was followed by several official statements denouncing the nuclear arms race. In their 1980 Christmas Message, the First Presidency said: "We are dismayed by the growing tensions among the nations, and the unrestricted building of arsenals of war, including huge and threatening nuclear weaponry." In their statement, they discussed the destructive qualities of nuclear war and expressed their confidence in a foreign policy based on reason. While they recognized the need for America to have sufficient strength to repel any aggressor, they continued to reiterate the requirements of a foreign policy which would "renounce war and proclaim peace." "We call upon the heads of nations," the message continued, "to sit down and reason together in good faith to resolve their differences." They expressed confidence in diplomacy and the negotiating process, which could "save the world from a holocaust."³⁰ In their 1981 Easter Message the First Presidency warned again of unceasing global tensions and the escalation of arms. They urged American and other world leaders (the Soviets) to resolve their differences through negotiations.³¹

The most dramatic and certainly the most influential pronouncement of Church leaders for American foreign relations was the MX statement issued on 5 May 1981.³² It was influential because the Pentagon's location and basing mode for the MX had yet to be (and is still not) resolved. The MX will not be deployed in Utah, and the First Presidency position is that it should not be deployed in other areas where the lives of people are endangered. The MX statement again expressed the deep concern Church leaders have about the arms race. The First Presidency deplored nuclear weapon proliferation and remarked on the dangers of the MX missile to world security. Once again they clearly advocated an end to the arms race and urged negotiations. This is probably the single most significant example of the Church leadership's impact on national security policy in recent history.

However, Church interest in arms control did not come about with the advent of nuclear weapons. Church leaders have had a historic interest in the elimination or control of the "instruments of death." President Brigham Young said nations which manufacture weapons eventually use them. "A large share of the ingenuity of the world is taxed to invent weapons of war. What a set of fools!"³³ During the arms race at the turn of the century, Brigham Young urged world leaders to disband their armies and turn their "weapons of strife into implements of industry."³⁴ World War I, President Joseph F. Smith concluded, showed that peace does not come from preparation for war, as popularly assumed. B. H. Roberts, in a general conference address during the Washington Conference on Disarmament, said, "The old theory used to be that in order to preserve peace you must be prepared for war. The years between August, 1914, and the eleventh day of November, 1918, demonstrated the fallacy of that theory." He spoke of the "folly . . . of armaments" competition and saw the limitation of armaments at the Washington Conference as "an indication that the Spirit of the Lord is working in the hearts of . . . statesmen."³⁵ President Clark participated personally in the disarmament negotiations. Throughout his career as a public servant and Church leader, he remained a strong advocate of disarmament, calling upon the heads of nations to sit down together in good faith to resolve their differences. President Clark felt so strongly about the evils of an arms race that he urged the need to "reach a mutual live-and-let-live" understanding with the Soviet Union. He argued that the right course for the United States is to "honestly strive for peace and quit sparring for military advantage."³⁶

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

The principle of free agency lies at the very heart of Mormon doctrine. The entire purpose of earthly existence, according to Latter-day Saint belief, is to provide individuals with the opportunity to develop wise judgment. “Verily I say, men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness; for the power is in them, wherein they are agents unto themselves” (D&C 58:27–28). Ethical decision making is thus a divine imperative as well as a practical necessity of social existence. Man’s moral relationship to the state, particularly in time of war, constitutes a crucial test of this moral capacity. Loyalties to self, state, fellow human beings, and even God are tried and tested. And, as is typically the case with such earthly trials, Latter-day Saints believe that God has not seen fit to “command in all things; for he that is compelled in all things, the same is a slothful and not a wise servant” (D&C 58:26). In other words, members of the Church believe they should not expect the solution to temporal dilemmas to be handed to them. Nevertheless, broad gospel guidelines are available to supplement the process of prayerful and studious consideration of possible alternatives.

As we mentioned earlier in this text, there is general agreement among the scriptures, ancient and modern, as well as policy statements of the restored Church, that there are “just” and “unjust” wars. In the first case, citizens are obliged to support the war efforts of their respective states. “Governments were instituted of God for the benefit of man,” states the Doctrine and Covenants (D&C 131:1; see also Rom. 13:1), and faithful Latter-day Saints are encouraged to “honor, obey, and sustain the law”—including martial law. It is the Church’s policy to encourage its members to be good citizens of whichever nation they are part of. But it is the responsibility of individual members of America or any nation to discern between just and unjust war. Church members are expected to study and pray in order to reach a decision acceptable to God. But what are the religious and civic duties of an individual Mormon who has become convinced his nation is engaged in an unjust war or conflict?

In a representative democracy such as the United States, members of the Church normally have three legal options when confronted with a war they believe may be unjust: they can support the war-making effort anyway and transfer the moral culpability to the state; they can vocally and constitutionally oppose the war; or they can find ways of

“sitting out” the war. Let us consider each of these alternatives individually.

There is a belief shared by many Church members that the war-making decision is a prerogative of the state and that it is the duty of the citizen to support the government in whatever military policy decisions it reaches. In other words, the duty of the citizen is to the state, and the ultimate moral responsibility for war-making rests with the nation’s leaders. A casual or selective reading of Church policy statements and the writings of the General Authorities might lead one to believe that this is unequivocally the official policy of the Church. But in a republic founded upon liberal democratic principles such as our own, this position is highly problematic. Since we believe that the moral authority of our government is derived from the consent of the governed, and that this is a government “of the people, by the people, and for the people,” it is doubtful that the people can effectively abdicate all moral responsibility for the government’s decisions, particularly crucial life-and-death decisions. After all, according to the Doctrine and Covenants, the United States Constitution was founded for the express purpose “that every man may act in doctrine and principle pertaining to futurity, according to the moral agency which I have given unto him” (D&C 101:78).

On the other hand, it is not any more reasonable to believe that the responsibility for the behavior of a state acting within the international system rests fully upon the shoulders of each individual citizen. Instead it is a question of degree, wherein the individual Church member must decide for himself whether the action or policy of his nation is so reprehensible that actively supporting such a policy would constitute a moral offense.

The second option available to faithful Saints is to exercise their Constitutional freedoms of speech, press, and assembly to express their dissatisfaction with the nation’s policy. Although such behavior can become “unpatriotic,” it is not inherently so. In fact, often great, honorable Americans have felt obliged to stand up against what they perceived as deviations from America’s special moral role in the international community, despite the excitement and jingoism of the times. Such was the case with Abraham Lincoln, who protested the United States’ declaration of war on Mexico in 1846. Motivation is therefore the key by which to judge the appropriateness of such actions. Protesting a particular foreign policy, including the decision to go to war, can certainly be patriotic if the fundamental motivation

consists of the desire to protect and preserve the best interests of one's nation.

Although the option of protesting the foreign policy of one's nation can be pursued in principle either as a private citizen or as a member of the armed forces, the practical restriction of individual and civil rights in the latter case may severely impede any effective expression of dissenting opinion. However, if an individual finds a particular war to be objectionable, he can generally opt to serve in some kind of support position, such as the medical or engineering corps where he will aid his country without personally contributing to the destruction of his nation's adversary. Although sometimes dangerous, in certain cases this kind of assignment may provide a morally acceptable position for members of the Church who would otherwise be troubled by more direct involvement.

The final option available to Latter-day Saints who are opposed to their nation's martial conduct is to legally "sit out" the war. For American citizens, there have been two chief ways to pursue this course: flight from the country or legal conscientious objector status. The former case seems a clear instance of rejection of the Church mandate to honor, obey, and sustain the law unless the individual actually renounces citizenship and seeks permanent residence in another nation. Obtaining conscientious objector status is quite another matter. To exercise this legal right is consistent with both domestic law and Church guidelines for individual members.

CONCLUSION

America is required to participate in an international system where power is valued and conflict is normal; indeed, all nations within the system seek power in the name of peace. Historically, the Church has remained aloof from power politics. The Church deplores foreign policies which employ the instruments of coercion and violence, and it condemns violent revolution and war except in the most extreme circumstances. The Church seeks peace and order, not war and anarchy, and therefore encourages its members to support a foreign policy based on peace. It was in this tradition that a 1983 *Deseret News* editorial proclaimed that the U.S. Senate should approve the establishment of a Peace Academy. Such an academy was initially recommended by George Washington. The *Deseret News* declared that a Peace Academy is "an idea whose time finally ought to have come." The article quoted Senator Spark M. Matsunaga of Hawaii: "We have

military academies to which we send . . . the finest of our youngsters to learn the art of war . . . but peacemaking is as much an art to be learned as war.”³⁷ Does this mean the debate on the Church’s position on foreign policy and war is over? Of course not. The *Deseret News* editorial is only one of the latest entrants in the continuing dialogue concerning the future of the nation and the international system. All converts to the gospel of Jesus Christ have peace as their ultimate foreign policy objective; the debate persists about how best to achieve that goal.

Such discussion is not new to the Church community, as references to the controversies surrounding the formation of the League of Nations, the United Nations, and the MX missile have made clear. It is in the best tradition of democratic political systems to disagree, discuss, and finally reach a consensus on such matters. It is also in the best tradition of revealed religion. Nowhere else, except in the home, do the principles of obedience and agency, social responsibility and religious duty interplay more actively than in the political arena. Church members are enjoined by scripture and their prophets to be good citizens, to vote according to their conscience during elections, and to participate in the political process. To limit such participation to domestic policy issues would be a tragic mistake. To be effective citizens, Latter-day Saints are enjoined by God to be knowledgeable about “things abroad.” To be peacemakers they must be knowledgeable about “wars and the perplexities of nations.” They are likewise enjoined by scripture to be “anxiously engaged” in the cause of peace. Our constitutional system requires citizen participation in all its affairs, including foreign relations, if the promises of both the founding fathers and the scriptures are to be fulfilled. The proper concern of Latter-day Saints is therefore not that the debate end but that all participate and exercise their capacity as wise moral agents, “free to choose for themselves.”

NOTES

Ray C. Hillam is director of the David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies. David M. Andrews received an MA in international and area studies, David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies, and has been accepted at MIT for graduate study.

¹Omar Bradley, cited in Louis Fischer, *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1950), 349.

²Spencer W. Kimball, “The False Gods We Worship,” *Ensign* 2 (June 1976): 6; see D&C 98:16.

³Consider the righteous people of Ammon. In the book of Alma, they are protected by the Nephites from a massive Lamanite attack (chap. 27–28); a similar instance is recorded in chapter 43, and in chapter 53 their faithful sons serve under Helaman’s command.

⁴See 1 Ne. 13:30. There are many other such references in the Book of Mormon, including 1 Ne. 12–14, 10:13, 22:12; 2 Ne. 9:2; 3 Ne. 20:29.

⁵Address by President Spencer W. Kimball to Regional Representatives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 29 September 1978.

⁶“Letter of the First Presidency Concerning Military Training,” *Improvement Era* 49 (February 1946): 76–77, and “First Presidency Statement on Basing of the MX Missile,” *Ensign* 11 (June 1981): 76.

⁷*Millennial Star* 9 (15 June 1847): 187.

⁸*Millennial Star* 9 (1 March 1847): 73.

⁹See Ronald W. Walker, “Sheaves, Bucklers and the State: Mormon Leaders Respond to the Dilemmas of War,” *Sunstone* 7 (July–August 1982): 46; see also James B. Allen and Glen Leonard, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake: Deseret Book, 1976), 226–30.

¹⁰As quoted in Hosea Stout, *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout, 1844–1861*, ed. Juanita Brooks (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1964), 1:179. Thus, Church leaders became willing participants in an American war of aggression. J. Reuben Clark later referred to this war as not having “shed any great credit on us” (see J. Reuben Clark, Jr., “Our Dwindling Sovereignty,” Address delivered at the University of Utah in 1952 and reprinted in *Stand Fast by Our Constitution* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1962], 96).

¹¹George Q. Cannon, in Conference Report, Spring 1898, 85–87; cited in Walker, “Sheaves, Bucklers and the State,” 48.

¹²Francis M. Lyman, in Conference Report, Spring 1898, 58.

¹³The Church-administered ZCMI department store allegedly offered half-pay for the war’s duration to employees who volunteered. Utah was one of the first states to fill its initial quota of recruits (Walker, “Sheaves, Bucklers and the State,” 48–50, nn. 61 and 62).

¹⁴*Salt Lake Herald*, 11 August 1914, cited in Walker, “Sheaves, Bucklers and the State,” 49.

¹⁵James R. Clark, ed., *Messages of The First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1971), 5:71; cited in Walker, “Sheaves, Bucklers and the State,” 49.

¹⁶The Church even expended some of its own funds for Liberty Bonds. By the end of the war, Utah had over eighteen thousand enlisted men under arms (Walker, “Sheaves, Bucklers and the State,” 49–50, nn. 75 and 76).

¹⁷Heber J. Grant, in Conference Report, Spring 1918, 24.

¹⁸B. H. Roberts, in Conference Report, Fall 1917, 103.

¹⁹Orson F. Whitney, in Conference Report, Fall 1918, 43–44; cited in Walker, “Sheaves, Bucklers and the State,” 50.

²⁰B. H. Roberts, in Conference Report, October 1916, 143; cited in Walker, “Sheaves, Bucklers and the State,” 50–51.

²¹“Potentialities of War,” *Deseret News*, 14 September 1937, 4; cited in Walker, “Sheaves, Bucklers and the State,” 50–51.

²²Walker, “Sheaves, Bucklers and the State,” 51, n. 93.

²³Richard L. Evans, in Conference Report, April 1941, 52; cited in Walker, “Sheaves, Bucklers and the State,” 51.

²⁴“Message of the First Presidency to the Members of the Church,” Conference Report, 5 April 1942, 94; also in *Improvement Era* 45 (May 1942): 348.

²⁵See Joseph Anderson letter, 20 March 1970, in Gordon C. Thomasson, *War, Conscription, Conscience and Mormonism* (Santa Barbara: Mormon Heritage, 1972), 6.

²⁶Boyd K. Packer, “The Member and the Military,” Conference Report, 5 April 1968, 34–35; also in *Improvement Era* 71 (June 1968): 60.

²⁷Gordon B. Hinckley, BYU Forum Address, *Daily Universe*, 11 November 1970, 3.

²⁸Harold B. Lee, “From the Valley of Despair to the Peaks of Hope,” *New Era* 1 (August 1971): 4.

²⁹First Presidency Message, *Ensign* 6 (June 1976): 6.

³⁰“Christmas Message from the First Presidency,” *Church News*, 20 December 1980, 3.

³¹“LDS Leaders Say Peace within Reach,” *Deseret News*, 17 April 1981, A1–A2.

³²“First Presidency Statement on Basing of the MX Missile,” 76.

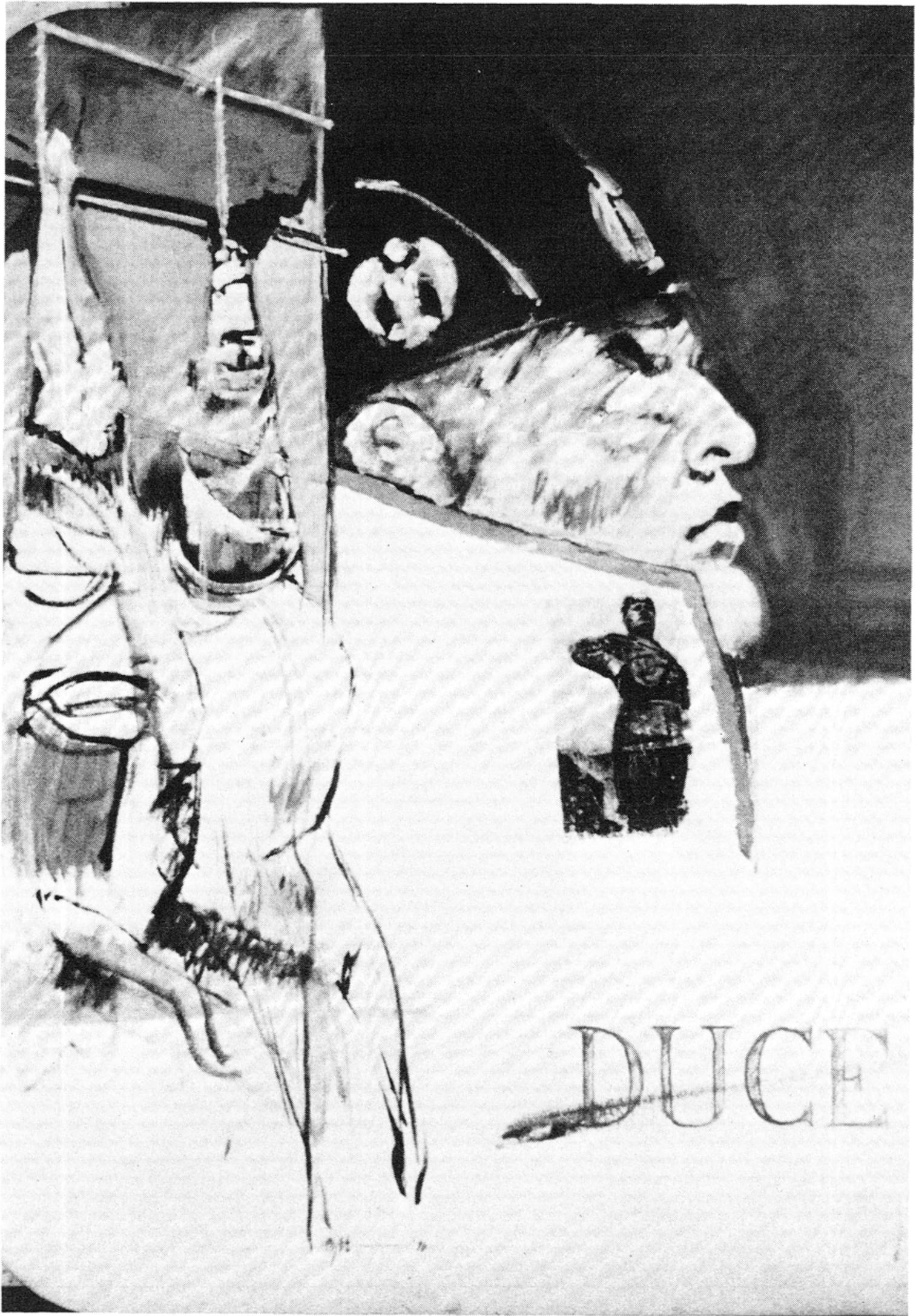
³³*Journal of Discourses*, 10 February 1861, 26 vols. (Liverpool: William Budge, 1854–86), 8:324–25.

³⁴James R. Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 3:334.

³⁵B. H. Roberts, in Conference Report, Fall 1921, 195–96.

³⁶J. Reuben Clark, Jr., “Let Us Have Peace,” *Stand Fast by Our Constitution*, 70, 76, 78.

³⁷“Senators, Stop Stalling on Peace Bill,” *Deseret News*, 17 July 1983, A19.



Duce by Peter L. Myer

Peter L. Myer is a professor of art at Brigham Young University.



Goebbels by Peter L. Myer



The King Dethroned by Roman Andrus

Roman Andrus is a professor emeritus of art at Brigham Young University.

Nuclear War and Computer-Generated Nuclear Alerts

Douglas Campbell

Both the U.S. and USSR military systems are based on two assumptions about computers and nuclear alerts: Everything will work the way it is supposed to work; Nothing will happen until it is supposed to happen.

In the recent movie *War Games*, an ingenious teenager penetrates the Pentagon's computer codes and touches off a nuclear alert at the headquarters of the U.S. missile detection and launch facilities. The computer-generated screens indicate that Soviet missiles—launched from offshore submarines—will arrive in five minutes. The teenager tells the military officer in charge that the alert is an accident, that the “attack” is not real but is computer-generated, and that he should ignore all the computer data. Thus, the officer must decide within five minutes whether to believe the computer data so graphically displayed before his eyes or to believe that this multi-million dollar defense system upon which our security depends could accidentally trigger a nuclear alert. If the alert is real and the officer ignores it, the U.S. military offensive capacity could be destroyed, along with millions of citizens. If the alert is only a computer glitch and the officer acts as if it were real, he could accidentally launch World War III. At the last second, he rejects the computer system, trusts his own human judgment, and does not launch.

This sequence may seem implausible, but at the end of this article I will narrate a documented historical event that approximates the movie. Although the movie is farfetched in some respects, it is true that our entire nuclear arsenal is intimately and absolutely linked to decisions made by computer systems. How did this dependence arise? Do the inherent dangers point to a need for a change in national policy?

THE RISE OF THE COMPUTER IN NATIONAL DEFENSE

Our military dependence on computers goes back to World War II, to a time when Congress still declared war and the president was commander-in-chief, to a time when the Allies invented the computer for code-breaking and nuclear weapons for mass destruction. At the end of World War II, two huge oceans protected us from a surprise

Soviet attack. To launch fleets of airplanes loaded with conventional bombs would involve tens of thousands of men, massive amounts of materiel, and numerous telltale signs available to ordinary intelligence gathering. Conventional bombers required twelve hours from takeoff to attack—twelve hours in which there would be time for diplomatic consultation, exchange of cables, rational thought; twelve hours in which the planes could be ordered to turn back or could be granted an emergency landing. At worst, if emergency negotiations failed, conventional bombs would cause modest damage but not annihilation.

In the sixties and seventies, however, the development and perfection of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) capable of carrying nuclear warheads greatly increased the possibility of massive destruction by surprise attack. ICBMs can be launched without tipping off the other country by mobilizing tens of thousands of navigators, pilots, bombardiers, and supply officers. The time from launch to destruction could be as short as two hours—two hours to use the hot line to make sure that an “attack” is not a flock of Canada geese or the rising moon, two hours to make sure the attack is a government decision and not Dr. Strangelove in charge of an isolated squadron, two hours to moderate the response and have only a limited nuclear war, two hours to warn the civilian population to evacuate their cities. But even if hot line negotiations succeed, there is no way to call back the missiles, no way to provide them with an emergency landing field.

In the seventies and eighties, the perfection of submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) on submarines cruising a few miles off the enemy’s shoreline reduced the time from launch to destruction to fifteen minutes—no time for hot line negotiation, no time for recall of missiles, barely enough time for detection. From the moment the duty officer determines that an attack is under way, there are only two minutes to decide on the level of response and to issue the order to “launch on warning” to computer-controlled missiles aimed at computer-selected targets kept in computer databanks.

But in the eighties and nineties, new “Star Wars” technology will allow multiple nuclear warheads to be delivered by geostationary satellites in four minutes and twenty seconds—no time for human determination of an attack; no time for human evaluation of different responses; barely time for the computer to determine that an attack has been launched, to decide on the appropriate response, choose the weapons, and launch them; barely enough time for the computer to notify the human government of what it has chosen to do, is doing, and has done.

Any modern military is dependent on C³I (Command, Control, Communication, and Information). Modern technology has forced the complete interaction of these four elements into smaller and smaller windows of time using computer systems.

COMPUTERS AND CONTROL

In World War I, mobilization took months. Solzhenitsyn, in his novel *August 1914*, spends hundreds of pages describing the mobilization in Russia—months to create the paperwork to move each man, to create the paperwork to buy supplies, to create the paperwork to stockpile supplies, to create the paperwork to move supplies. No military machine could move faster than its paperwork.

Things moved somewhat faster in World War II. In a marvelous scene in Len Deighton's recent novel *Goodbye, Mickey Mouse*, the colonel in charge of a small group of American bombers stationed in England tries to discover whether his group will fly the next day. He phones an old friend at Eighth Air Force headquarters late in the afternoon for a chat. Sure enough, in the background he hears the teleprinters churning. He hangs up and announces to his group that they will fly.

He could visualize the scene at Division, where they would be staring at the cryptic gobbledygook of closely teleprinted figures. It would take what was left of the afternoon to translate it all into specific orders—routes, aiming points, bombing altitudes, timings, radio procedures, and detailed instructions about the formations, forming-up procedures and emergency measures.¹

That was the sequence for just one ordinary bombing run of one small group under the Eighth Air Force.

No modern nuclear delivery system can depend on human paperwork for execution of defense or offense. Only computers can control the volume of information and the correct ordering of events within the narrow window of time in which events must occur.

COMPUTERS AND INFORMATION

A modern nuclear delivery system digests vast amounts of information with the aid of a computer. For example, the U.S. Navy's Sound Surveillance System (SOSUS) is a "collection of underwater acoustic sensors" to locate ships by the sounds of their propellers, motors, and random noises. Vast amounts of real-time data are generated and coordinated with reports from spy satellites, reconnaissance

flights, and ordinary covert intelligence.² Indexing, storing, retrieving, and assessing this volume of data by hand would take years, not hours.

Automatic computer interpretation of massive, seemingly worthless low-level data can provide important high-level information. For example, the German military machine was very carefully run during World War II. All tanks, planes, tires, and trucks were given serial numbers to provide for property control, billing, recalls, and internal quality control. By studying the serial numbers of captured German material and performing various mathematical analyses, the Allied forces were able to make reasonable estimates about the level of German war production; they could deduce which factories were responsible for what percentage of key items. This information changed the priorities on bombing runs.³ Currently, the automatic analysis of literally thousands of different types of low-level data is done automatically for the military by the computer with minimal human intervention.

Another example of computer interpretation of massive data involves electronic eavesdropping on international telephone and embassy microwave information. The computer is programmed to save any conversation that uses such key words as *nuclear*, *missiles*, *war*, or whatever may be of current interest. Conversations that do not involve a key word are discarded. The recorded conversations are then evaluated by humans. The sheer volume of mostly routine conversations would swamp any human attempt to do this screening.⁴

Computers also simulate and then analyze nuclear attacks and counterattacks. The analysis is crucial to assessing the consequences and probabilities of particular attack plans. In the event of a real attack, the United States has a computer model known as SIDAC (Single Integrated Damage Assessment Capability) at the Pentagon as well as at the protected underground Alternate National Military Command Center.⁵ SIDAC is programmed to take data from satellites, ground stations, weather stations, and other sources to estimate damage and to plan our second-round attack. However, a nuclear explosion produces an electromagnetic pulse (EMP) which may cause widespread damage and disruption to computers.⁶ Such damage means that computers may not be available for a second-round attack. Since the EMPs of a surprise attack may knock out computers and prevent a first- as well as a second-round counterattack, both sides must plan to launch everything as soon as an attack is detected. This necessity eliminates the possibility of a "limited nuclear war" strategy.⁷

COMPUTERS AND THE HUMAN ELEMENT

Humans foul up. "Seemingly inexplicable, inconsistent, and unpredictable human 'goofs' account for 50–70 percent of all failures of major weapons and space vehicles."⁸ The loss of the submarine *Thresher*, for example, was due to a relief valve's being installed backwards. It would obviously be very desirable if human errors could be reduced or eliminated by the use of computers.

But replacing people by computers does more than minimize human goofups. The U.S. volunteer military, one of the finest in the world, has about 115,000 people who are closely connected with nuclear duties. Each year the Defense Personnel Reliability Program removes from nuclear duties those persons whose reliability, trustworthiness, and dependability become inconsistent with standards. The number of people removed for various causes is surprisingly large. Here, for example, are the figures for a three-year period in the mid-1970s:⁹

PERSONS REMOVED FROM NUCLEAR DUTIES IN DEFENSE
PERSONNEL RELIABILITY PROGRAM

Reason	1975	1976	1977
Alcohol abuse	169	184	286
Drug abuse	1970	1474	1365
Negligence or delinquency in performance of duty	703	737	825
Court martials or civil convictions of a serious nature	345	388	350
Behavior or actions contemptuous of the law	722	945	885
Significant physical, mental, or character trait or aberrant behavior, medically substantiated as prejudicial to reliable performance	1219	1238	1289
Total	5128	4966	5000

Humans in a nuclear alert system operate under stress, boredom, and isolation, performing repetitive tasks for hours at a stretch and interacting only with a terminal. For weeks, nothing happens as they wait in a silo outside of Bismarck, North Dakota, staring at an unchanging green screen, waiting alongside missiles with the equivalent of millions of tons of explosives. Although five thousand is a large number, it is amazing that under such circumstances only that many people a year are found unsuitable for service.

In contrast to humans, a computer does not suffer stress, is not subject to boredom, and does not care about isolation. It would seem highly desirable, then, to replace people with computers that don't take drugs, won't go schizoid, don't drink, aren't subject to blackmail, and will obey orders automatically.

PROBLEMS WITH COMPUTERS

The types of warning sensors that feed data to NORAD (North American Aerospace Defense Command) in Colorado Springs are as sophisticated as they are varied. They include infrared warning satellites, the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System, a phased array radar system, Perimeter Acquisition Radar Attack Characterization Systems, Cobra Dane (a radar system on Shemya Island, Alaska), and Cobra Judy (a floating version of Cobra Dane, located in the Arctic). In addition, we have three Defense Support Program satellites in fixed orbit providing overlapping coverage of the USSR and China for ICBM launches and the Atlantic and Pacific oceans for SLBMs. The real-time information supplied by these satellites is sent to Denver or to Alice Springs, Australia, for processing before being forwarded simultaneously to NORAD, SAC, and the Pentagon.

When the sensors indicate sufficient strange data, NORAD holds one of three types of conferences: Missile Display, Threat Assessment, or Missile Attack. No Missile Attack conference has ever been held. The exact number of the other two conferences has not been declassified. However, a declassified section of a 1980 Congressional Report states that there were 147 Missile Display conferences and five Threat Assessment conferences in the eighteen months from 1 January 1979 to 30 June 1980.¹⁰

Descriptions of most such conferences are classified, but a few have appeared in various printed sources. Rather than discuss the DEW-line (Distant Early Warning) false alerts in the 1950s caused by a flock of Canada geese or the BMEWS (Ballistic Missile Early Warning System) false alerts in the 1960s from meteor showers and lunar reflections, I will concentrate on incidents from the 1970s and 1980:

20 February 1971: A human operator at NORAD accidentally transmitted the emergency message, authorized by the proper code for that date. All radio and television stations were ordered off the air by presidential order. It took forty minutes to find and send the proper cancel code.¹¹

27 February 1972: While President Nixon was in China, a hoax message that the president had been assassinated and that World War III had been declared by Vice President Agnew was sent to twenty-two units of the Eighth Coast Guard District.¹²

1973: A computer misinterpreted sensor data about a Soviet test missile fired from a site near Iran. The computer predicted it would land in California and sparked a United States alert. The missile landed instead near Kamchatka, Siberia.

3 October 1979: Mount Hebo radar station picked up a low-orbit rocket body that was close to decay and generated a launch and impact report that forced NORAD to hold a Threat Assessment Conference.

9 November 1979: A NORAD technician inadvertently put on a tape that contained data simulating a mass Soviet attack. NORAD sent a warning of Soviet submarine missile attack to defense command centers across the U.S. Ten fighters were scrambled, and missile and submarine bases were automatically switched to a higher level of alert.¹³

15 March 1980: As part of a troop training exercise, the Soviets launched four SS-N-6 missiles from submarines. One of the launches generated an unusual threat fan and forced NORAD to hold a Threat Assessment Conference.

3 June 1980: SAC received computer data indicating SLBMs and ICBMs had been launched toward the United States. NORAD was forced to hold a Threat Assessment Conference even though nothing was appearing on its screens. It turned out to be a hardware failure.

6 June 1980: Three days after the 3 June hardware failure, SAC again received computer data indicating that a Soviet missile attack had been launched, and NORAD was forced to hold another Threat Assessment Conference.¹⁴

As we can see, accidental alerts have been generated by human carelessness, jokes, decaying satellites, computer hardware errors, computer software errors, and wrong computer tapes being loaded.

PROBLEMS WITH COMPLEX SYSTEMS

Murphy's law—If anything can go wrong, it will—functions in our defense warning systems. Surely the reader, living in the modern world, has experienced the computer-generated error that cannot be changed, the computer-produced mislabeled utility bill which seems impossible to correct. A dozen telephone calls to as many individuals only generates the infuriating response, "The computer is doing it, and no one seems to know how to make it stop." Computer-controlled multi-state power grids have failed; computer-controlled trains have derailed; computer-engineered bridges and dams have fallen down; computer-controlled nuclear power plants have come close to meltdowns. The best-intentioned complex systems have failed. Ford Motor Company did not intentionally put bad gas tanks in the Pinto. But despite "sophisticated testing systems, computer simulations, an army of quality-control procedures, engineers, and inspectors," despite having built other fine car systems, despite the enormous potential liability, the design of the complex system was flawed. The Three Mile Island nuclear power plant was not built until every aspect of the design had been examined by dozens of regulatory agencies and innumerable engineering studies had been conducted. The defenders of atomic power plants asserted that "getting hit by a meteor was far more likely than a major nuclear plant accident." And yet the complex system failed.¹⁵

A complex computer system can go awry for many reasons. One is that the large amounts of money spent put tremendous pressure on proponents of the system to deliver something that is working, even if this means patchwork that goes against "the rules" of the system. Especially in complex military systems, there is a tendency for informal and usually oral understandings to circumvent the procedures specified in the rulebooks. For example, with SAGE, one of the early radar warning systems, if rulebook procedures were followed to the letter small amounts of radar jamming paralyzed the system. Oral agreements between operators solved this problem, but the agreements never showed up in official reports.¹⁶ The system that was designed, the system that was built, and the system that was used were all different. Congressional oversight committees and the generals in charge, often lacking technical computer skills, only evaluate written plans, not the kludged-up versions actually used.

No complex system would ever run if rule books were followed to the letter. System analysts, designers, programmers, coders, and

operators all circumvent official procedures at times in order to get a system up and running within the time and money constraints. Such rule-cutting is oral, informal, and undocumented. No wonder, then, that a complex computer system, which barely works under ordinary circumstances, does bizarre things in crisis mode.

An incredible number of things can go wrong in a system, things obvious in retrospect but not at all obvious before. The NORAD system, upon which all of our C³I for nuclear defense rests, is a chilling example. The system was built in 1965 and is completely dependent on computers which shut down automatically if there is a drop in the power supply. As of 1981, NORAD still had no reliable emergency power supply.¹⁷ Duty officers at NORAD have four recent historical reminders to evaluate carefully what apparently may be erroneous data. Despite the power and thoroughness of the system, it is difficult for it to detect surprise attacks. In fact, despite what in retrospect seem to be clear warning signs, the U.S. global satellite warning system failed to give advance notice of the “Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia, the Tet offensive in Vietnam, . . . the 1973 Yom Kippur War,”¹⁸ and the Argentine invasion of the Falkland Islands.

COMPOUND STIMULI TO COMPLEX SYSTEMS IN CRISIS MODE

It is feasible to make plans for a computer system to handle single unplanned incidents—plans to prevent inadvertent releasing, arming, or launching of a missile with a nuclear warhead; plans which systematically remove humans from the sequence of events launching a nuclear-tipped missile; plans to prevent accidental detonations by wiring safety switches that arm the warhead; plans for a computer-scheduled launch when humans may be panicking or thinking of the wife and kids for one last time. But it is not feasible to design a computer system that will correctly handle multiple unplanned incidents. The number of different ways N incidents can interact is governed by the combinatorial explosion and rapidly goes beyond any possible computer technology even for such small values of N as 60 or 70. There has been at least one such multiple incident event involving our early warning system.¹⁹ The British and French invasion of the Suez occurred at the same time as the Hungarian uprising in November 1956. On 5 November, Moscow issued a statement strongly hinting possible rocket attacks on London and Paris and inviting the U.S. to join the USSR in a joint action in the Suez. That night, the U.S. military command in Europe reported that unidentified aircraft

over Turkey had put the Turkish Air Force on alert. A hundred MiG-15s were reported over Syria; a British Canberra bomber was reported as downed over Syria; and the Russian fleet was reported moving through the Dardanelles.²⁰

If NORAD had existed back in 1956, it is highly probable that these multiple reports combined with the high state of international tensions due to the Hungarian uprising would have increased the alert status of U.S. forces. Let us see why a warning system does not necessarily mean better security in such a situation.

A warning system may accidentally become part of the offensive system by issuing an alert erroneously. Two mutually linked warning systems may unintentionally amplify such mistakes. The outbreak of World War I provides a concrete example of what can happen with mutually linked systems. The decision to mobilize in the early months of 1914 set thousands of orders into operation, each of them ratcheting the military system to a higher level until it reached a state where the system reacted to itself. When country A went on alert at a time of tensions, country B reacted to the changed state and went on alert to protect itself. When country A observed that country B had gone on alert, country A had added reason to believe its earlier interpretations of the data which had forced it to go on alert. Country A therefore took additional preparatory steps. As each country went to a higher level of alert, both countries had to take actions to make sure they could perform after an attack. Both countries therefore prepared to be attacked, interpreting the other's preparation to be attacked as a step in preparing to launch an attack.²¹ In effect, the European political leaders' decision to mobilize in early 1914 was a declaration of war months before the hostilities actually broke out. "The most appalling feature of World War I was not the destruction; . . . but rather it was the war's pointlessness. Ten million men died and monarchies were swept from power simply because governmental leaders did not think through the implications of their actions and the institutions they had constructed [for the prevention of] war!"²²

The reality of the events of 5 November 1956 was as follows: The jets over Turkey were a flock of swans. The hundred MiGs over Syria were an escort for the Syrian president returning from a state visit to Moscow. Britain's Canberra bomber landed in Syria because of mechanical failure. The Soviet fleet was going through the Dardanelles on fleet exercises that had been scheduled long in advance.

The warning system in a crisis situation had accidentally amplified multiple independent, unpredictable events into a nonexistent pattern.

NUCLEAR ALERTS AND ACCIDENTAL NUCLEAR WAR

Modern military systems are complex, geographically dispersed, and technologically sophisticated. The development of nuclear weapons has advanced faster than the development of reliable control of nuclear weapons. In an attempt to provide control, both the U.S. and the USSR have used computers. Thus the reliability of the mutually linked nuclear systems depends on the reliability of the underlying complex computer systems. But humans designed, programmed, coded, and now operate these systems that systematically replace humans as much as possible and bypass a constitution designed for an isolated and sparsely settled nation. Although the Constitution asserts that only Congress can declare war and that the president is commander-in-chief, these provisions have been made irrelevant. The decision to go to war must be made in less than fifteen minutes by an unelected, presidentially authorized duty officer dependent on computer-generated data.

The president of the United States and the premier of the Soviet Union may be compared to the president of a nuclear power plant.²³ As long as things are running normally at the power plant, the president has both real and symbolic powers. But if it is announced that a core meltdown could occur in fifteen minutes, the president—who doesn't know heavy water from drinking water—will do exactly what he or she is told to do, if he or she is consulted at all. Technicians and institutional procedures take over. Split-second decisions are made based on massive amounts of ambiguous technical information. Some humans will question whether this isn't a test or a mistake, and some computer systems will not quite cover what is happening. These parts of the system will hang suspended awaiting orders from someone who has—or will take—responsibility. The figurehead president cannot take action and issue technical orders because of the sheer volume and ambiguity of the information and the incredibly narrow time window. Similarly, at the moment of a nuclear alert, the massive amounts of highly technical and ambiguous information from warning and intelligence systems would be gibberish to a technically naive president or premier awakened in the middle of the night and given five minutes to respond. The political leader can only hope that the duty officer making the final evaluation is competent.

If the duty officer sees either an expected pattern or a pattern that is manifestly absurd, the system will probably work as it is supposed to. On the other hand, if the pattern is ambiguous, strange, unexpected, or contradictory; if it occurs during a brownout, or shortly

after a new system has come on line, or shortly after one of the satellites has been moved, or just before, during, or just after a training exercise, then the complex system will be in an untested configuration with unpredictable results. Only one thing is certain—Murphy's law will hold.

If the Soviets attack in a stylized and highly predictable way, NORAD will probably react correctly. But if the attack is ambiguous, or if it occurs in conjunction with a flock of geese, a lunar reflection, a NORAD simulated tape accidentally inserted, a defective computer chip, or any other pattern that does not fit the NORAD notion of a Soviet attack, it may not be discerned in time.

Both the U.S. and the USSR are hostages to the fear that their forces will be eliminated by a preemptive attack occurring so quickly that they cannot respond. Game-playing strategy suggests that both sides will move to a "launch on warning" mode in which each side warns the other that upon detection of attack the order will be given to launch automatically. Both sides will then be at the mercy of every forty-six-cent chip bought at lowest bid and of every software error that accidentally generates a warning of an impending attack.

THE 3 JUNE 1980 NUCLEAR ALERT

The event that occurred on 3 June 1980 was in fact generated by a forty-six-cent computer chip malfunction. At approximately 2:26 A.M., Eastern Daylight Time, the fluorescent display screens connected to a Nova Data General computer at SAC headquarters flashed a warning indicating that two SLBMs had been launched toward the United States on a "depressed trajectory" from submarines positioned offshore. Eighteen seconds later, the SAC display system showed an increased number of SLBM launches. The SAC duty controller scrambled 116 B-52 crews and directed them to start their engines and to prepare for takeoff if it became necessary to survive. Nuclear submarine commanders were also alerted. The SAC display then indicated that Soviet ICBMs had been launched toward the United States. The separate NMCC command post confirmed that it too was receiving indications that SLBMs had indeed been launched toward the U.S. NORAD still reported nothing on its screens. The airborne command post of the Pacific Command took off. NORAD was forced to hold a Threat Assessment conference even though nothing was appearing on its screens.²⁴

Had the episode lasted a few minutes longer, the president would have been awakened at 2:30 A.M. He would have been informed that

he had only a few minutes in which to get to his plane, decide and issue a retaliatory plan, and get on the hot line to Moscow.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Perhaps peace is not so much a technological problem as it is a political and moral problem.

The United States and the Soviet Union have previously made arrangements concerning accidental nuclear war. Before President Nixon's 1971 visit to China, the USSR feared that China might try to provoke a U.S.–USSR confrontation by arranging for a submarine off the U.S. coast to launch a missile which would be blamed on the Soviets. Therefore, on 30 September 1971 the two governments signed an agreement designed to prevent the accidental outbreak of nuclear war. Article 3 states:

The Parties undertake to notify each other immediately in the event of detection by missile warning systems of unidentified objects, or in the event of signs of interference with these systems or with related communications facilities, if such occurrences could create a risk of outbreak of nuclear war between the two countries.²⁵

This 1971 agreement was made when there were perhaps thirty minutes between detection and retaliation. If it appeared that either side's computers had detected a launch, there was time—time to evaluate the data, time to notify the opposing side, time for the opposing side to show the error in the data. Since 1971, reaction time has decreased from thirty minutes to fifteen. With space war technology, it will go from fifteen minutes to five.

Instead of asking whether nuclear war can be avoided, we should first tackle the more manageable, but equally important, question, can nuclear alerts be avoided? Going on alert when the window of time is a mere fifteen minutes may be so provocative that the other side will be forced to go on alert to protect itself. At this point, the side with the weaker C³I computer system may be forced into a "use it or lose it" preemptive launch. What a tragedy, especially if the alert is generated by a computer chip malfunction or a software error!

NOTES

Douglas Campbell is a professor of computer science at Brigham Young University.

¹Len Deighton, *Goodbye, Mickey Mouse* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1982), 115.

²Paul Bracken, *The Command and Control of Nuclear Forces* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 14.

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⁴Nicolas Danieloff, "How We Spy on the Russians," *Washington Post Magazine*, 9 December 1979, 25; Harry Rositzke, *The KGB: The Eyes of Russia* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1981), 197-98.

⁵United States Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Catalog of War Gaming and Military Simulation Models, Studies Analysis and Gaming Agency*, 1977, 217-18.

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⁷*Ibid.*, 12 June 1981, 1249.

⁸Charles E. Cornell, "Minimizing Human Errors," *Space/Aeronautics* 49 (March 1968): 72.

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¹⁰Senate Committee on Armed Services, "Recent False Alerts from the Nation's Missile Attack Warning System," 96th Cong., 2d sess., 1-3.

¹¹"War Alert, a Comedy of U.S. Errors," *London Times*, 22 February 1971; "Why America Ignored This Message of Doom," *London Times*, 28 February 1971.

¹²"On the Alert on a Hoax," *Newsday*, 8 March 1972.

¹³A. O. Sulzberger, Jr., "Error Alerts U.S. Forces to a False Missile Attack," *New York Times*, 11 November 1979, 30; "U.S. Aides Recount Moments of False Missile Alert," *New York Times*, 16 December 1979, 25.

¹⁴Richard Burt, "False Nuclear Alarms Spur Urgent Effort to Find Flaws," *New York Times*, 13 June 1980, A16; "Missile Alerts Traced to 46-Cent Item," *New York Times*, 18 June 1980, A16; "Pentagon Identifies Cause of False Missile Alert," *Soviet Aerospace*, 23 June 1980, 58.

¹⁵Bracken, *Command and Control of Nuclear Forces*, 49-51.

¹⁶N. F. Kristy, *Man in a Large Information Processing System—His Changing Role in SAGE* (Santa Monica, Ca.: Rand Corp., 1963), 8-10, 31.

¹⁷"Fears of NORAD Blackout Chill Panel," *Baltimore Sun*, 21 May 1981, 8.

¹⁸Bracken, *Command and Control of Nuclear Forces*, 34.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 65-66.

²⁰Herman Finer, *Dulles over Suez* (New York: Quadrangle Books, 1964), 418-21.

²¹Bracken, *Command and Control of Nuclear Forces*, 53.

²²*Ibid.*, 2.

²³*Ibid.*, 58.

²⁴Burt, "False Nuclear Alarms Spur Urgent Effort to Find Flaws," *New York Times*, 13 June 1980, A16; "Missile Alerts Traced to 46-Cent Item," *New York Times*, 18 June 1980, A16; "Pentagon Identifies Cause of False Missile Alert," *Soviet Aerospace*, 23 June 1980, 58.

²⁵Gerald C. Smith, *Doubletalk: The Story of the First Strategic Arms Limitation Talks* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1980), 518.



Pearl Harbor and Tojo by Peter L. Myer



Mob by Peter L. Myer

Pearl Ships

Steaming out of Pearl Harbor,
Warships barely ruffle waves at work.
Behemoth battleships defy the waters,
Afloat in steel enormity.

In a celebrated corner, grim reminders
Mark old memories.
Streams of Japanese and Haoles
Line up for movies, ride the launch,
Peer down beneath the surface at the hulk.

Should outsiders once again
Wage hate against this island,
Besides the undertow and sharks,
Blue bubbles and the coral's razor edge,
We face a deadlier foe that will not cross the Koolaus,
Propellers buzzing early Sunday morning,
But streak silent cross the sky
And by telemetry destroy,
In a zephyr of wind, a shimmering blur.

Like 007, a trumped excuse
Might trigger devastation on the whim
Of some cantankerous colonel.
So I watch the great ships
Slip through the water, mechanical leviathans,
Plodding protectors against a phantom enemy.

—Jim Walker

Biological Effects of Nuclear War

James L. Farmer

Do we really need another article on nuclear war, on death and destruction? I suspect that we do. We need to be reminded about these grim subjects, just as we need to be continually warned about the wages of sin. War, like any other sin, is oddly attractive to many people. It is too often easy to send other people to their deaths in order to accomplish our political goals. War might become again the popular sport that it once was if we do not frequently remind ourselves of its terrible consequences. We must also share the little wisdom we have gained with each new generation so that they may avoid the mistakes of previous generations. Finally, there are occasionally new things to be said about this old subject.

Wars have been killing people for a very long time. People have been blown apart by high explosives for more than a century. They have been burned, drowned, poisoned, and killed by flying objects for millennia. Nuclear war does not provide us with any new ways to die.¹ Most of the people who die in a nuclear blast are killed by heat or flying objects. Even most of the people who die as a result of radiation exposure expire from such mundane and ancient causes as fluid loss caused by diarrhea, starvation caused by damage to the intestine, or infection complicated by damage to the immune system. Millions or billions of people would die very unpleasantly in a major nuclear war, but they would suffer no more than those who have died in conventional wars. Even the immense scale of destruction in a nuclear war is not unprecedented. Tens of millions of people died in World War II. Nor are wars the only cause of mass destruction. The black death of the fourteenth century killed about one-third of the people in the world.

There are two major differences between nuclear war and conventional war. Nuclear war could destroy the world in a matter of hours, while conventional war is waged gradually, with at least the possibility of reaching a settlement at some point before destruction has reached its maximum. Also, nuclear warfare potentially has long-term

biological consequences which are far more severe than those of conventional warfare. Recent discoveries have even raised the possibility that these biological effects might cause the collapse of human civilization and, perhaps, the extinction of human beings.

How could nuclear war cause such a catastrophe? During World War II, Hiroshima and Nagasaki were destroyed by nuclear bombs and Dresden was destroyed by incendiary bombs. In all three cities, the bombing produced a fire storm.² The fire was so large and so hot that gases and smoke rose at great speed high into the atmosphere. The decreased pressure at the base of the plume sucked surface air into the conflagration at hurricane speed. People were killed by flying objects, by being thrown into stationary objects, by cremation, and by suffocation, since the fire consumed the oxygen so rapidly. Huge amounts of dust and smoke were carried into the atmosphere.

It is well known that large amounts of dust, smoke, or ash in the atmosphere can change the climate of the earth. A volcanic explosion was responsible for the very cold summer of 1816 (known as "eighteen-hundred-and-froze-to-death"). There are good reasons to suspect that rare collisions between the earth and asteroids or comets have produced enormous dust clouds which have cooled the earth sufficiently to cause mass extinctions. If fire storms resulting from a nuclear war were to inject very large amounts of dust and smoke into the upper atmosphere, the results might be catastrophic.

When large quantities of dust and smoke get into the upper atmosphere, they do not immediately settle out. Atmospheric nuclear weapons tests have produced clouds of radioactive dust which have circled the earth several times before slowly dissipating by fallout.³ The same pattern was seen following the nuclear accident at Chernobyl. Dust clouds from volcanic eruptions have also circled the earth repeatedly while falling out. The dust and smoke from a nuclear war could conceivably persist for some time and be carried around the world, at least in the Northern Hemisphere.

Considering the immediate massive destruction which would be caused by a nuclear war, should we be very concerned about the additional destructive effects of dust and smoke in the atmosphere? We have survived fire storms in the past, both those which burned cities and those which burned forests. However, we have never before experienced a large number of simultaneous fire storms. No one knows for certain what effects would result from large quantities of smoke and dust in the atmosphere, but studies in the United States, Europe, and the Soviet Union have pointed to an unprecedented climatic

disaster.⁴ According to these studies, a major nuclear war might produce what has been called a "nuclear winter." The "day after" would be cold, dark, and radioactive, and this condition might persist for days, weeks, or months. It is possible that little if any sunlight would penetrate to the surface of the earth. The average temperature drop over land away from the sea coasts might be very large. The magnitude of the cooling is in dispute. Thompson and Schneider estimate, for a medium-size nuclear war, a temperature drop of about nine degrees C (sixteen degrees F). Turco et al., more pessimistically estimate it at about twenty-two degrees C (forty degrees F).

A cooling as catastrophic as the larger estimates would probably destroy civilization in the Northern Hemisphere through large-scale failure of agriculture and the destruction of many native plants and animals. In addition, the disturbance of atmospheric circulation would probably cause the pall to spread to the Southern Hemisphere, causing substantial cooling there as well. If this estimate is correct, there would be few survivors to envy the dead.

Even a cooling as modest as the lower estimate would be disastrous if it occurred during the northern-hemisphere summer. The wheat and corn crops of Canada, Siberia, and the northern U.S., and the major rice crops of the world would probably be lost. The cooling would probably cause a change in the monsoon weather pattern, which would result in drought in south Asia. Mass starvation throughout the Northern Hemisphere would be the likely result. By this estimate, the news is better for countries in the Southern Hemisphere, since the climatic effects there would probably not be serious.

The well-known biological effects of nuclear explosions would still be serious even in the absence of climatic effects. Living things close to the point of impact would be incinerated. From a few hundred yards up to a few miles away, most living things would be killed by mechanical blast effects, by heat radiation, or by gamma radiation. Over large distances, in some cases hundreds or thousands of miles downwind, living things would be damaged or killed by radioactive fallout. Dangerous radioactive fallout levels would persist for days, months, or years.⁵ If nuclear reactors were destroyed by nuclear weapons, the fallout would make large areas uninhabitable perhaps for millennia. Nuclear explosions produce large amounts of nitrogen oxides and inject them into the upper atmosphere, where they degrade the ozone layer. Holes in the ozone layer would allow more ultraviolet radiation to reach the ground. A large increase in ultraviolet radiation would cause extensive damage to plants; it would

blind animals and greatly increase the frequency of skin cancer in human beings.

If nuclear winter were added to these effects, the prospects of survival would be much, much worse. Ehrlich et al., in "Long-Term Biological Consequences of Nuclear War," claim that after a major nuclear war a summer day in North America, Europe, or Asia might be as dark as night with a high of about fifty degrees F and a low of twenty degrees F. These conditions would kill most plants and unprotected people and animals. As vegetation died, more animals would die of starvation. Rotting corpses would become reservoirs of infectious disease and would provide feeding places for insects, resulting in an enormous population explosion of flesh-eating insects. Although the temperature drop would probably be less extreme in the tropics, the results would still be disastrous, since many tropical plants and animals have no protection at all against low temperatures. There could well be mass extinctions in the tropics. Although it would be winter time in the Southern Hemisphere, the effects there would not be negligible, since the lower temperatures might well persist into its summer. For the same reason, a nuclear war during the northern-hemisphere winter would still have disastrous effects since it would cause an extremely bitter winter, cold enough to kill many animals and perennial plants, followed by a cold, dim spring and summer unlikely to produce a harvest.

The first estimates of the climatic effects of nuclear war, by Turco et al., suggested that there might be a threshold level of nuclear explosions which would cause a nuclear winter essentially as severe as that which would result from any larger number of explosions. The threshold appeared to be fairly low, perhaps low enough to make a nuclear attack suicidal for the attacking country even if the attacked country did not retaliate. Thompson and Schneider's more recent and more detailed analysis suggests that there is no threshold, but rather that the severity of climatic effects would increase in proportion to the number of nuclear explosions. The later analysis also suggests that the magnitude of the cooling and its effect on the Southern Hemisphere would be much less than that estimated previously, due to the moderating influence of the oceans. However, as its authors point out, the effects of even a modest cooling could be disastrous to rice and Canadian wheat crops, as described above. Since a major nuclear war would probably destroy American, European, and Soviet crops as well, a severe famine would be unavoidable, even in noncombatant countries. Thus even the most optimistic estimate makes disaster seem certain.

A PERSONAL STATEMENT

The religious beliefs of some people might lead them to argue that divine intervention would moderate the effects of nuclear war or, conversely, that nuclear war would cleanse the earth in preparation for the coming of the Messiah. Perhaps one of these beliefs might be true, but as I read the scriptures, I find another message: When people are sinful, even God's chosen people, he allows them to suffer the consequences of their folly, even to the point of extinction. With only rare exceptions, the innocent suffer along with the guilty. The scriptures indicate that God might not approve of some of our weapons systems, since he has spoken plainly against preemptive strikes (see Morm. 3:8-15, 4:1-5). He has also told us to strive for security in his way rather than seeking it our way (see 2 Ne. 1:6-11).

Nuclear weapons are the most visible symbols of our failure, the triumph of evil over good in our world. They are symbols of the temptation to use Satan's ways to overcome what many people perceive to be satanic forces. Even if we cannot have a triumph of good over evil in this world, we should not surrender to evil. God does not excuse us from obeying his commandments when obedience is difficult. Why should we expect him to excuse us from loving our neighbors or from being peacemakers at a time when the world needs love and peace? We are fond of saying that Christians should be in the world but not of the world. We should carefully consider how that philosophy might shape our attitudes toward political and military policies.

I do not wish to leave the impression that I favor unilateral disarmament or some equally foolish action. It seems clear that the fear of nuclear weapons is largely responsible for the tenuous peace we have endured since World War II. Although disarmament should be our goal, the nations of the world must disarm carefully if we are to avoid the war that no one wants. The strategy for achieving disarmament is not clear and will undoubtedly be difficult to find. Perhaps the mutual fear of destruction will keep the peace a little longer while we seek a solution.

NOTES

James L. Farmer is an associate professor of zoology at Brigham Young University.

¹The standard source for data on nuclear explosions is Samuel Glasstone and Philip J. Dolan, eds., *The Effects of Nuclear Weapons*, 3d ed., Document Col. D 1.2:N88/2 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of

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²Glasstone and Dolan, *The Effects of Nuclear Weapons*, 299–300.

³*Ibid.*, 387–460.

⁴Paul R. Ehrlich, Carl Sagan, Donald Kennedy, and Walter Orr Roberts, *The Cold and the Dark: The World after Nuclear War* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1984). The major part of this book is the transcript of the Conference on the Long-Term Worldwide Biological Consequences of Nuclear War, Washington, D.C., 31 October–1 November 1983. The two major research papers on this topic are reprinted as appendices. They are R. P. Turco, O. B. Toon, T. P. Ackerman, J. B. Pollack, and Carl Sagan, "Nuclear Winter: Global Consequences of Multiple Nuclear Explosions," *Science* 222 (23 December 1983): 1283–92; and Paul R. Ehrlich, John Harte, Mark A. Harwell, Peter H. Raven, Carl Sagan, George M. Woodwell, Joseph Berry, Edward S. Ayensu, Anne H. Ehrlich, Thomas Eisner, Stephen J. Gould, Herbert D. Grover, Rafael Herrera, Robert M. May, Ernst Mayr, Christopher P. McKay, Harold A. Mooney, Norman Myers, David Pimentel, and John M. Teal, "Long-Term Biological Consequences of Nuclear War," *Science* 222 (23 December 1983): 1293–1300. Independent analyses, whose conclusions differ in some important respects from the above, may be found in more recent publications, such as the following: National Research Council, *The Effects on the Atmosphere of a Major Nuclear Exchange* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1985); and Starley L. Thompson and Stephen H. Schneider, "Nuclear Winter Reappraised," *Foreign Affairs* 64.5 (Summer 1986): 981–1005.

⁵It has now been about twenty-five years since the last nuclear explosion on the Bikini Atoll. In spite of the millions of dollars spent to clean up the atoll, the natives still cannot return because the food grown there would be too radioactive for them to eat.

Nuclear Winter

The myrtle falls across the wall,
And the evening's darkness, like a shawl,
 Wraps the light and holds it in,
After the firewinds of Fall.

Though sun will come, it withers fast,
Crumbling leaves as if the past
 Had not been, and did not teem,
As if it was not meant to last

Beyond an image in the holy mind,
As if not meant to shape the wind
 To wend around the rosy sun
Of flowering, nor quietly to find

A place of evergreen to flourish in.
The newer winter has come to spin
 The sun around, and never warm.
The air is dry, and human skin

Crisps in nitrogen.

—Clinton F. Larson



Wartime by Hagen G. Haltern

Hagen G. Haltern is an assistant professor of art at Brigham Young University.

The Past Has Made the Present Tense: The Influence of Russian History on the Contemporary Soviet Union

Douglas F. Tobler

In a recent book of essays entitled *Knowing One's Enemies*, a noted political scientist recounts an apocryphal story ascribed to a retired British Foreign Office professional. Through more than half of the twentieth century, year in and year out, so the reminiscence goes, this diplomat assured Foreign Secretaries that there would be no major European war. In all that time, he boasted, he had been “wrong only twice.”¹ What some may consider a banality bears repeating: now more than ever we must know our “enemies,” not, as in the past, in order to win wars, but to avoid them. In a sober search for understanding of those who can destroy us, we must not only ask the right questions and give the right answers but also make certain that we do not get “little things right and big things wrong.”²

Our own experiences in Vietnam, Iran, and the Middle East during the past two decades suggest a great need to know more about the history, culture, and beliefs of those who, in war and terrorist encounters, have shed American blood and consumed American treasure. We have too often judged our “enemies” principally against the background of *our* history, political institutions, and values. Although it is true that all people everywhere share yearnings for security, happiness, human rights, and freedom, these universals must be seen as they are, in the context of each people’s history, time, and experience.

The importance of full and accurate information about the world can hardly be overstated.³ Americans need to know more about the Soviet Union, and Russians need to know more—much more—about America. Perhaps on both sides it is as the humorist Josh Billings said over a century ago: “The trouble with people is not that they don’t know, but that they know so much that ain’t so.” Arkady Shevchenko—a former high-ranking Soviet diplomat and Gromyko protégé who

became so disillusioned with his government and his own duplicitous life within it that he defected to the West, leaving behind family, homeland, and security—offers this advice about today's Russia:

The USSR cannot be erased from the earth or removed from its position at the center of power in the modern world. The survival of mankind may depend upon temperate relations between the Soviet Union and the United States. . . . Each [country] measures the other's intentions largely in terms of its own . . . assumptions and outlook; and the misunderstandings that, not surprisingly, arise could result in disastrous confrontation. Thus, it is vitally important for the West to know as accurately and as completely as possible the thinking and attitudes of those who make policy in the Kremlin.⁴

But why have we not probed the Russian psyche more deeply? Stephen Cohen suggests that we have been so mesmerized and even paralyzed by the power of Winston Churchill's famous metaphor of Russia "as a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma" that we have ceased trying to penetrate what this twentieth-century giant could not understand.⁵ Churchill's words may have become a self-fulfilling prophecy and a comfortable rationale for intellectual indolence.

Most Americans are well aware of the role Marxist–Leninist ideology has played in the formation of Soviet policies and intentions. The marriage of the vocabulary of "world revolution" from the early days of Soviet history with "totalitarianism" from the Stalin era has over the years created a powerful and malevolent specter in the American consciousness. And although some scholars in recent years have discounted ideology in favor of traditional power politics and self-interest of the ruling elite as keys for understanding Kremlin motives, Shevchenko rightly offers this caution:

Neither do I believe that the Soviet challenge to the free world is ideologically now less threatening, or that it has simply turned into a "fairly conventional geopolitical challenge," as some analysts suggest. They exaggerate the loss of ideological faith among the population and underestimate Soviet ideological appeal in Central and Latin America, Africa, Asia and other parts of the world.⁶

Having made this point, however, Shevchenko is more direct as he levels a devastating criticism at his former colleagues:

Many features of the Soviet system are well known. But I finally realized that the divinity before which the Kremlin rulers bowed was their own power and the maximal satisfaction of their personal requirements and those of the privileged upper class. These requirements had no limit, from the acquisition of foreign automobiles to whole nations outside the Soviet bloc.⁷

So much for the imminent appearance of the Marxist–Leninist classless society!

Without wishing to downplay the impact of either ideology or power politics on the Soviet mind, I would suggest that we need to give more serious consideration to a third motive: the Russian historical experience. I am by no means alone in this view. Such statesmen as former German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, scholars such as Stephen Cohen and Seweryn Bialer, and respected journalists such as Hedrick Smith, David Shipler, and Elizabeth Pond have been struck by the continuities of Russian history in the policies of today's USSR.

In a long, front-page article in the German weekly *Die Zeit*, Schmidt offered a distillation of insights gained in over two decades of close contact and discussion with Kremlin leaders. One should look to Russian history and geography, he counseled, for an understanding of the sources of "Russian security and inferiority complexes." Soviet behavior since Helsinki, according to Schmidt, has much less to do with Marxism–Leninism than with "the Soviet reactions to the concrete experiences of the last few decades—and the trends of continuity in Russian history." ("Dies [the invasion of Afghanistan and the stationing of SS–20 rockets in East Central Europe] alles hat weniger mit der bolschewistischen Spielart von Marxismus oder mit Leninismus zu tun als vielmehr mit der sowjetische Reaktion auf konkrete Erfahrungen der letzten Jahrzehnte—und mit kontinuierlichen Trends der russischen Geschichte.") Similarly, Schmidt interprets Soviet expansionism as largely a carryover from a powerful early Russian tradition and not primarily a product of communism.⁸ For Schmidt, then, history is the key which helps unlock the psychological world of Soviet inferiority, insecurity, and paranoia.

How history, together with ideology and perceived security needs, fits into a complex web of motivations on an issue such as Soviet expansionism in the world is explained in Elizabeth Pond's respected book, *From the Yaroslavsky Station*:

The mandate of the self-proclaimed revolutionary is obvious. The urge to expand the Soviet Union's international influence is untempered by any vigorous domestic political restraints. The drive is strong on triple grounds: history (harking back to the tsars), ideology (heralding the messianic triumph of Communism), and paranoia (involving a definition of Soviet security so total as to demand on occasion the total insecurity of the USSR's neighbors). It is exacerbated on the one hand by an inferiority complex towards the West, and on the other by a pride in the USSR's new global power. It is manifested in the Soviet refusal to endorse anything short of the total world victory of Soviet-led socialism.⁹

David Shipler argues that not only has history played a powerful role in Russian life, but as contemporary Russians lose faith in the validity and promises of Communist ideology, they tend to retreat into and “idealize an irretrievable past rooted in rural simplicity and moral purity, a search for Russianness.”¹⁰

It is not unreasonable for disillusioned Russians to harken back to their past. Continuity is as much the essence of their society as change is of our own. In spite of revolution and the propaganda of revolution, change has come very slowly to the Soviet Union. Timetables for the ultimate victory of communism and its promised utopian society must be steadily revised forward. Conversely, we Americans must constantly and consciously reclaim our roots and our historic past, as in the Bicentennial celebration, as we pass through one “revolution” after another at near breakneck speed.

What, then, are the major historic experiences which have fashioned the Russian psyche? I will confine my discussion in this essay to four:

1. The history of Russia has been one of invasions or threats of invasion by foreigners exploiting a vulnerable geography. In modern times these have come primarily from Western would-be conquerors lusting after the Eurasian heartland. This historic fact has, more than anything else, fed a preoccupation, even paranoia, with security. Security, however, becomes ever more elusive as Soviet actions make their neighbors and the rest of the world feel insecure and hostile. (For a discussion of freedom and security in the contemporary context, see Gary Browning’s article in this issue of *BYU Studies*.)

The Russian desire for security has bred a sustained expansion in every possible direction in quest of ever-larger buffer zones which, in turn, have produced an insularity and isolationism virtually unparalleled in the world. Historically, Russians have been a provincial people *par excellence*—while pursuing an empire. For these reasons, the Russians have had a difficult time adjusting to an age of possible nuclear annihilation, an age wherein absolute security has become a fiction. Americans have similar anxieties about security, but they come from an opposite direction. Geographical separation from Europe and Asia, isolationism, great power status, and wealth have given us

near absolute security in the past. But that privileged status is over. We, too, must behave as part of the global village in a nuclear age.

2. Russians have a history of government by a strong, centralized authoritarian state. The tsar was the Holy Father, God's viceroy on earth; he ruled by divine right, an attitude preserved by the Romanovs and respected by most of the Russian people until well into the twentieth century. The vastness of the empire and the historical imperative for security produced and legitimized a state where power and authority were not shared. Consequently, the Russians have few traditions of freedom, individualism, self-government (except in the peasant villages), or direct representation.

3. Russians have long had a keen sense of their unique national identity and culture; they have taken great pride in a civilization different from the West. This has fostered an affection for Mother Russia, an attachment to Orthodoxy, culture, the language, and the countryside. Exiles, especially poets and the literati, have found it difficult to live and work productively outside their unique Russian atmosphere.

4. Russians have wrestled throughout their modern history with a sense of economic and technological inferiority vis-à-vis the West. At least since the time of Peter the Great's "Great Embassy" to the West in 1697–98, they have stood in awe of what the West has produced, while at the same time craving recognition commensurate with their size, power, and culture—a recognition which has been forthcoming only since 1945. Much of the contemporary parading of military paraphernalia on holidays is not only a "guarantee" of security now and in the future but also a demonstration of having arrived as a force in a world dominated by industrial, technological, and scientific achievement. The same is true for Russian participation in world sporting events such as the Olympics. Most importantly, however, both the Russian leadership and people seek worldwide recognition as a modern, powerful state which is producing a more just, secure, and progressive society in a hostile world. They are thus genuinely offended when referred to as gangsters or criminals, especially because they live in a society that tends to regard propaganda more seriously than we do.

Each of these historic forces requires some explication. Since the beginning of history, the vast Russian plain has been a magnetic attraction to invaders. From the Mongol Horde of the thirteenth century through the successive incursions by Poland, Sweden, France, and Germany, Russians have been forced to defend themselves or endure subjugation at the hands of foreigners. The Bolsheviks were particularly offended and made permanently suspicious by the crude attempts of the Western Allies (including the U.S.A.) to intervene on the side of the Whites in the early years of the Civil War.¹¹

All of these wars were fought on Russian soil by the Russians themselves. All were devastating, reaching proportions nearly incomprehensible to the West in World War II (to Russians, the “Great Patriotic War”), when they withstood the best and the most that Hitler could marshal against them. Most Americans do not know that when Hitler launched Operation Barbarossa against the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941, he lined up over three million men, many with fighting experience, in 153 divisions, 3580 tanks and 2740 airplanes against a Russian army that was larger in number but technologically inferior.¹² Moreover, Stalin’s recent purges had decimated the Soviet army leadership corps; their replacements were untested and inexperienced.

But what Americans may have forgotten, Russians know only too well. As Stephen Cohen has written:

More than any other event, including the Revolution, the War shaped the Soviet Union as it exists today, as a political system, society and world power. Its legacy endures among citizens because it was an experience of inseparable—and colossal—tragedy and triumph.¹³

This is, however, not all.

After four years of savage fighting from Moscow to Berlin, it culminated in twenty million Soviet deaths, about equally divided between soldiers and civilians. That often cited but little understood statistic means that virtually every family lost one member or more. And it does not include the millions of survivors who were maimed for life.¹⁴

Visitors to the Soviet Union today see many monuments to the war. Nor is the war’s memory confined to the “war generations.” The younger generation of Russians takes pride in the role their parents and grandparents played in ridding the world of Hitler and in helping establish their country as a world power. Westerners are often astonished by Soviet expressions of spontaneous patriotism. For example, David Shipler recounts an experience with a teacher who “was blindly loyal to her country and her system, a deep patriot so

warm-hearted that her countrymen felt like family to her. Every saccharine short story about Soviet suffering and heroism in World War II . . . brought tears to her eyes.’’¹⁵

Americans have sometimes found it difficult to understand and appreciate evidences of Russian patriotism while taking our own for granted. Here again the selectivity of what we have learned—from our impressions of Communist tyranny, from the comments of dissidents, and from our tendency to believe what we want to believe—has led us to apply a somewhat different standard to the Russians than we might to ourselves. The Russians are, for example, still grateful for American Lend–Lease during the war but point out that it represented only 4 percent of Soviet gross production at the time, a fact difficult to find in American history books.

The Russian experience in World War II—and against other invaders—teaches a further lesson: these people have a long history of coping successfully with all forms of adversity. *Nine Hundred Days*, Harrison Salisbury’s monumental story of the siege of Leningrad, portrays vividly the Russian capacity for “hunkering down” and enduring immense deprivation to defend their homeland. But such resistance was common throughout Russia. Shevchenko has described this trait of his countrymen well:

There is no doubt that the USSR is experiencing serious domestic and other difficulties. But it has overcome worse troubles in the past. It has both tremendous natural wealth and vast human resources. In their ability to withstand centuries—not decades—of hardship and privation and yet persevere, the Soviet people are unmatched by any nation on earth, with the possible exception of the Chinese.¹⁶

The Russian preoccupation with defense, coupled with the size of their expanding empire, has given them little experience with the larger world. Their participation in the expansion of Europe in the age of discovery was belated and tangential; they had a full agenda to settle their own trackless territory. Russian history is thus not only a history of insecurity but of insularity, both deeply ingrained in the people as well as the present-day leaders.

One of the major achievements in the whole panorama of human history is the rise of political freedom and democracy in the West. There was a time in the nineteenth century when virtually everyone in Western civilization viewed democracy as the inexorable “wave of the future.” It was, therefore, no accident that the war that ended that age of optimism, World War I, carried the slogan to “make the world safe for democracy.” Americans can be forgiven for taking democracy for

granted and assuming that all people everywhere should want what we have. Given our history, we can hardly conceive of anything less. But the Russians have had no such historic experience. Their earliest ties were with Byzantium, the Eastern Roman Empire, before the Mongols came. First Kiev, then Muscovy arose without adequately incorporating the civilizing ideas and institutions of Greece and Rome or the medieval traditions which produced the Magna Carta. Nor did the Russians fully experience the Renaissance, the Reformation, or the scientific revolution, all of which played such a powerful role in the growth of individualism, the dignity of man, and the rise of independent thought in the West.

Russia knew no Locke and had no Glorious Revolution; the eighteenth-century Enlightenment only flickered in St. Petersburg, failing to register any appreciable permanent impact on the Russian polity or social institutions. Their best candidate among the few enlightened despots, Catherine the Great, was clearly more despotic than enlightened. Her use of the language of the Western philosophies constituted a kind of verbal "Potemkin village," designed to camouflage the expansion of serfdom and the absence of political reform.

Reform was simply not part of the Russian administrative impulse. This accounts, in part, for the later mushroom-like sprouting of Russian revolutionary movements in the nineteenth century. Where there is no possibility of reform, revolution is the only hope for change.

What reform there was came largely from the top down, from Peter's importation of Western technology (but nothing else)¹⁷ to Alexander II's emancipation of the serfs under the influence of the higher bureaucracy and for the benefit of the state. Where genuine attempts at change were begun—like the Speransky reforms under Alexander I or the establishment of representative *dumas* under Nicholas II after the Revolution of 1905—they were generally half-hearted at best and often retracted once the original impetus was gone.

From the time when Muscovy first laid claim to the honors of the Third Rome (after Rome and Byzantium) in the fifteenth century, Russians have had a curious love-hate, attraction-repulsion relationship with the West. This erupted in the nineteenth century when pro-Western literati—Westernizers—embarrassed over Russian backwardness, pressed for the introduction of Western civilization, with its rationalism, science, material well-being, socialism, basic human freedoms, and secularism, into their benighted homeland. Their

opponents, the Slavophiles, also wanted “progress” but preferred to preserve at the same time the unique and wholesome Russian institutions and virtues: religiosity, spirituality, the healthy communal Russian village (*mir*). These were considered infinitely superior to the superficiality and hollow materialism of the West. This pride in things Russian, in the depths of Russian “soul,” has been probed and celebrated by the great Russian novelists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries from Turgenev to Solzhenitsyn. It is this national pride, this Russian identity, which Hitler offended so deeply, not only with his invasion of their territory and brutalization of the people, but especially with his doctrine that Slavs were subhuman, so that even anti-Stalinist Russians fought valiantly for Mother Russia against the foreign devil. It was this same national pride to which Stalin appealed in the darkest days of the war to rally the people against the aggressor.

Despite this national pride, however, Russians have historically had a kind of inferiority complex about their country’s backwardness. They are unsure of their place in the world. Even more than Germany in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Russia has all the attributes of a *parvenu*. Russia’s industrial revolution began in the last years of the tsars and was carried forward by Stalin with ruthless speed at enormous human cost. The emergence of the Soviet Union as a world superpower brandishing military might and nuclear capability signifies an attempt to overcome a longstanding inferiority in a world that especially respects industrial, military, and nuclear power. Nor have consumer goods been entirely neglected in this leap into the modern world. It is true that the Russians do not have the material goods and standard of living enjoyed in the West, but they have more than they have ever known. No ordinary Russian in history has lived this well.

While Americans, as I have suggested in this essay, would do well to learn more Russian history, it is equally important for Russians, from top to bottom, to come to know America. Shevchenko himself marvels how in spite of institutes, studies, and English classes, Soviet leaders find it difficult to take the pulse of America, to understand American values, thought processes, and institutions.¹⁸

The purpose of all historical study is understanding: understanding of each people’s development, understanding of the human condition, understanding for responsible citizenship in the world. A study of Russian history can facilitate all of these as we come to know our “enemies” better. It is not a foolproof tool, but it is far better than ignorance.

In a tribute to American democracy, Walt Whitman casts this refrain:

Sail, sail thy best, ship of Democracy!
Of value is thy freight—tis not the Present
Only
The Past is also stored in thee!¹⁹

The past is also stored in the Soviet Union. Historically, it is a fundamentally different past from our own, but it, too, requires our careful attention.

NOTES

Douglas F. Tobler is a professor of history at Brigham Young University.

¹Ernest May, ed., *Knowing One's Enemies* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984), 503.

²Ibid., 504.

³An example of the costs of misunderstanding an enemy can be found in the writings of Count Bernstorff, German ambassador to the United States in 1917, who vigorously warned his government against an unrestricted submarine war that would bring the United States into World War I. Reflecting on the tragedy somewhat later, he observed: "In my opinion, the underestimation and lack of knowledge of America . . . was a major factor in the decision. When the climax of the tragedy was reached, it was not believed that the U.S. would enter the war with its full political, military and economic power" (quoted by Dr. Jürgen Kalkbrenner, consul-general of the Federal Republic of Germany, in a speech at Boston University, October 1985, in *Statements and Speeches* 3 [8 November 1985], 7).

⁴Arkady Shevchenko, *Breaking with Moscow* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1985), vii.

⁵Stephen Cohen, *Sovieticus: American Perceptions and Soviet Realities* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1985), 12.

⁶Shevchenko, *Breaking with Moscow*, 368.

⁷Ibid., 20.

⁸Helmut Schmidt, "Mit den Russen leben," *Die Zeit*, 24 June 1983, 4.

⁹Elizabeth Pond, *From the Yaroslavsky Station: Russia Perceived* (New York: Universe Books, 1981), 168.

¹⁰David Shipler, *Russia: Broken Idols, Solemn Dreams* (New York: Times Books, 1983), 5.

¹¹Elizabeth Pond cites a revealing insight gained by George Kennan on the Allied intervention:

"The Allied intervention only helped to further compromise the Whites and turn the population toward the Reds," concluded diplomat-historian, George Kennan. "The whole affair," he wrote, "was a 'fantastic brew' of misunderstandings, war hysteria, coincidences and mistakes." In a personal note he added: "Until I read the accounts of what transpired during these episodes, I never fully realized the reasons for the contempt and resentments borne by the early Bolsheviks towards the Western powers. Never, surely, have countries contrived to show themselves so much at their worst as did the Allies in Russia from 1917 to 1920." (Pond, *From the Yaroslavsky Station*, 163)

¹²Lothar Gruchmann, *Der Zweite Weltkrieg* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1967), 120–21.

¹³Cohen, *Sovieticus*, 112.

¹⁴Ibid.; Pond lists the following statistics: "In 1945 the Soviet Union was devastated, after a foreign occupation of half a million square miles of its territory and the destruction of 1700 towns, 70,000 villages, and the homes of some 25 million people" (Pond, *From the Yaroslavsky Station*, 165).

¹⁵Shipler, *Russia*, 6.

¹⁶Shevchenko, *Breaking with Moscow*, 368.

¹⁷In Robert K. Massie's massive biography, *Peter the Great*, there is a masterful summary not only of how Peter viewed Western Europe but also of an attitude which has largely prevailed throughout Russian history since then:

[Peter] had travelled to the West in order to learn how to build ships, and this he accomplished. But his curiosity had carried him into a wide range of new fields. He had probed into

everything that caught his eye—had studied microscopes, barometers, wind dials, coins, cadavers and dental pliers, as well as ship construction and artillery. What he saw in the thriving cities and harbors of the West, what he learned from the scientists, inventors, merchants, tradesmen, engineers, printers, soldiers and sailors confirmed his early belief . . . that his Russians were technologically backward—decades, perhaps centuries, behind the West.

Asking himself how this had happened and what could be done about it, Peter came to understand that the roots of Western technological achievement lay in the freeing of men's minds. He grasped that it had been the Renaissance and the Reformation, neither of which had ever come to Russia, which had broken the bonds of the medieval Church and created an environment where independent philosophical and scientific inquiry as well as wide-ranging commercial enterprise could flourish. . . .

But, curiously, Peter did not grasp—perhaps he did not wish to grasp—the political implications of this new view of man. He had not gone to the West to study “the art of government.” Although in Protestant Europe he was surrounded by evidence of the new civil and political rights of individual men embodied in constitutions, bills of rights and parliaments, he did not return to Russia determined to share power with his people. On the contrary, he returned not only determined to change his country, but also convinced that if Russia was to be transformed, it was he who must provide both the direction and motive force. He would try to lead; but where education and persuasion were not enough, he would drive—if necessary, flog—the backward nation forward.” (Robert K. Massie, *Peter the Great: His Life and World* [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980], 232–33)

¹⁸Shevchenko, *Breaking with Moscow*, 230–31.

¹⁹Walt Whitman, “Thou Mother with Thy Equal Brood,” in *Leaves of Grass* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1965), 457–58.

Glass Blossom

In the grade school garden
where we were innocently waiting
for each new life lust,
and all went single file to Stephen's house,
whose parents' snowy television showed us images
of the cloud-swelling fear, the fireball fiend,
the shock that tore the roofs off barracks
like light paper planes blown off a shelf
by an opened door,

Glass blossom of my time,
window of the third grade upper story
bursting inward like some film-slowed flower,
flowering into this room,
blooming in each inch of us
huddled under the desks of even the second floor—
this crystal-sharded blossom
of the third grade window bursting inward,
filling my mind, lacing all these faces
with a glassy wind to burst us at the roots,

I have no comprehension of the authors
of this crime, this mime of death,
this mime of life, this last mime
of my own embryo curling,
with hands and arms covering my eyes and innocence—
only my own child, who has blue eyes,
kneeling on the couch beside me now.
Am I to wipe out, too, this face
with the pain of a glance,
the pain of a midday, white-hot moment,
burning out these all-too-innocent
and unaffected eyes?

—Dennis Smith



Andrew
2-82 Dennis Smith,

Andrew by Dennis Smith

Company Commander at An Trach II

They came out of the smoke;
The shells and the bombs
and the napalm had done their work.

The grandmother was burned black,
her hair gone, her skin in shreds;
She would probably die.

The mother brought me her son,
Then sank to her knees
and unhooked her long black hair
and began to sway side to side
and wail the wail of death.

The son was young and sweet
and he died as I held him,
his lovely brown eyes glazing.

The daughter, also young but much older now,
beat her fists upon my chest.

—Howard A. Christy

American and Russian Perceptions of Freedom and Security

Gary L. Browning

Winston Churchill's characterization of Russia as "a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma" applied reasonably well to the USSR during Stalin's quarter of a century in power. But today, reliable published information¹ and travel to the Soviet Union are accessible to almost anyone willing to confront the "mystery." No one can ever completely "know" a nation, but one need not feel that the task of adequately understanding the principal features of a people is beyond reasonable expectation.

Any society, however, will encompass a broad diversity. In temperament, some people will be jovial and kind; others, stern and even mean-spirited. A small percentage will be exceptionally creative, intelligent, and well educated; most others, less so. Some will have acquired wisdom through long years of careful observation and personal experience, while many more will either be less experienced or simply less perceptive.

In the Soviet Union, as elsewhere, one must also carefully consider demographics. Many who reached age twenty during the years 1917–36 (from the Bolshevik Revolution to the Stalinist Purges) still yearn for the fiery and idealistic values of young communism—equality, justice, brotherhood. More are alive from the next group that matured from 1937–55 (the harshest Stalinist years and the Second World War). They suffered as much as a people possibly can. Many tend to regard with clenched teeth all attempts to change that to which they sacrificed so much of their lives and, not infrequently, their integrity. The very large group that reached maturity during the years 1956–73 (from Khrushchev's speech denouncing the excesses of Stalin through *détente*) today includes many disillusioned idealists who placed their hopes for a better society in a liberalization of the regime. And the younger group that has turned twenty from 1974–85 tends to be quite cynical about ideology and more materialistic, much like their counterparts in the West. These young Russians are aware of the higher standard of

living not only in the West but even in the other Eastern European countries and recognize that their systems of management, distribution, and worker incentives require fundamental revision. Of course, in all groups, those who live in metropolitan areas (over 60 percent) tend to be somewhat more liberal, while the more conservative values persist in most of rural Russia. Further, education and occupation are also very significant. By far the largest group, the laboring class (factory, construction, menial service workers, and "peasant" farmers), is considerably more traditional than are the relatively fewer skilled white collar workers in science and technology. Another large group is beholden to the system and includes party and government leaders, the military, security forces, teachers, media representatives, lawyers, and managers of factories and other institutions. This group is much more conservative than the smaller but articulate group of creative intelligentsia (writers, dramatists, artists, filmmakers, philosophers, musicians, and careful thinkers in general). And various special interest groups (Ukrainian, Armenian, Baltic and other nationalists, conservationists, and devout believers) create even more ambiguity and stress for the system.

Acknowledging a welter of diversity in the USSR, I will nevertheless present the following perceptions on the thought and behavior of the "average" Russian, that is, of the Russian masses or *narod*. These do not take into account the USSR's more than one hundred other nationalities that speak over 130 additional languages. By concentrating on Russians, I will therefore necessarily and regrettably slight citizens of the other fourteen Soviet "republics." Nor will I refer to Marxist theory as a foundation or gauge, for I believe that Russians, like others, live less according to ideological principles than according to individual human concerns and the traditional mores that supersede present political configurations.

I will argue that most Russians are in most respects very much like people in the West, even though in one very significant ideal they are far more distinct from us than we Americans recognize. Our misperceptions in this regard lead us into several serious errors, among them a false premise about how to "deal with" the Russians.

Although most Russians and Americans are more alike than either side realizes, this point is obscured by the persistent stereotypes that each country maintains about the other. The Russians tend to see the average American as apathetic, permissive, and narcissistic; as intellectually undisciplined, shallow, and irreverent toward important human values and his own cultural heritage. The "American" is

fascinated by an amoral or immoral technology, easily contented with the trivial and tawdry in the arts, and uncritically swayed by charisma and rhetoric in politics. Further, the relatively few wealthy Capitalist masters ruthlessly exploit the American workers. These “bosses” are irredeemably evil (“class enemies”) and are often the developers and suppliers of weaponry for the military. Finally, the American government tends to be proud, even arrogant, uncompromising, insensitive, self-righteous, hypocritical (demanding a higher standard of behavior from the USSR than it is willing to abide by), condescending, shortsighted and unsuited to maintaining a clear and unwavering course over a long period.

We recognize much exaggeration in this prejudiced perspective, but do we understand that our stereotype of the Russians is similarly deficient? We generally consider the average Russian, and especially but not only his government leaders,² to be of a somewhat different (lower or inferior?) human form: ill-mannered and swaggering; bellicose and militaristic; dishonest, deceitful, and atheistic. We believe that he tramples on spiritual values and on all that is humane: on regard for the individual, on toleration for diverging views, on compassion for the suffering. We view him as somewhat dense, clumsy, and brutish, like a bear, and feel that he responds only to strength, and even then with belligerent reluctance.

While both views contain elements of truth that apply in some instances to the behavior of some of the people, they are far less accurate and complete when applied to most of the citizens of either nation. Fortunately, many misperceptions disappear with careful study and person-to-person contact. For example, most of us have heard a common observation from Americans returning from the Soviet Union: “I was astonished. I liked them very much! In many ways the Russians seem just like us.” This latter perception is largely (although, as I will suggest later, not entirely) true.

Indeed, in most respects Russians and Americans are very similar. We both spend by far the greater part of our lives confronting nearly identical human needs. Most mature Russians and Americans direct the bulk of their waking thoughts and energy not to world ideology and national aspirations but to problems related to their families: meeting the immediate and basic requirements of oneself, spouse and children, including acquiring adequate food and shelter and arranging for desirable education, employment, health care, transportation, and leisure-time activities.

As in the U.S.A., most Russians actually engage in very few voluntary political activities. However, on the level of national perception, both peoples do nourish deep and competing “messianic” visions of world responsibility. This burden of a global calling distinguishes our two nations from the 165 or so other countries on this planet. Our respective visions differ markedly, but the psychology of the “elect,” of the bearer and promulgator of truth, is similar in both peoples.

Specifically, we Yankees view our nation as exemplar to the world and are puzzled that relatively few others have adopted our constitution and political and economic systems. The Russians, on the other hand, generally tend to believe that socialism (purged of the currently pervasive corruption and extensive pockets of privilege, and endowed with the discipline and vision of a Lenin, Bukharin, or even a Stalin) best represents mankind’s future. Americans and Russians are both committed to their respective “grand ideas” and to the obligations they entail, including, for instance, that each maintain a superpower military status. And in both countries today a cautious mentality is ascendant: bedrock values must be defended against an “aggressive” enemy and against dissenters within, who threaten to deny the people their highest traditions and aspirations.³

However, most Russians and Americans prefer, all things being equal, to be polite, cooperative, honest, tolerant, compassionate, and peaceloving. Both peoples definitely prefer to be treated with courtesy, respect, and fairness. Both resent any effort on the part of the other to constrain behavior. “Negotiating from strength” cannot mean forcing the other side to accept conditions it considers unreasonable, for then the “weaker” side feels offended or threatened and is more likely to revert to a lower-level survival strategy that is intentionally offensive and frightening.

Despite significant and continuing efforts by the Communists to discourage religious faith, a relatively high percentage of Russians maintain faith in God. Estimates vary, but most suggest that from a total Soviet population of 275 million, approximately 50 million Russians claim allegiance to the Russian Orthodox church.⁴ Roughly that same number of Soviets are Muslims, not to mention millions of Old Believers and smaller numbers of Jews, Catholics, Lutherans, Baptists, Seventh-day Adventists, and others. Although a higher percentage of Americans are regular churchgoers, apparently more Russians attend church services than do Western Europeans. The proportion of Soviet believers to nonbelievers may not be much

different from an average of the corresponding ratios for us and our allies. Therefore, it hardly seems fair to characterize the Russians as godless. Even in the extent of their faith in God, the Russians are much more like us than we might expect.

To conclude, Russians and Americans share with all peoples an identical human and divine heritage that is so massive and enduring that most other differences must seem, from a distance and with greater intelligence, insignificant by comparison.

However, Russians and Americans are essentially dissimilar in ways that are inadequately understood. Underlying these differences is an allegiance to two contrasting and fundamental values, from which many related ideals arise. These values undergird two distinct but tenable answers to a central human concern: what social environment best promotes happiness?

Above all, Americans prefer a society in which freedom flourishes. We generally accept personal responsibility for our lives, the opportunity to rise according to our own choices, and open competition in a free enterprise economic system. We in the West place a very great emphasis on human rights or freedoms of speech, the press, assembly, worship, and others—all of which protect the conscience and person of the individual against the majority or the otherwise powerful.

For many reasons, Russians have enshrined precisely the opposite (but at certain stages and in its best form also positive) value—security and its related components: patriotism and a strong national defense, greater material equality and protection from whims of circumstance, a higher priority on community (collective) needs than on any individual's claims, continuity and predictability, and domestic cooperation (rather than competition). Instead of placing primary emphasis on human rights that protect freedoms for the one, Russians focus on what they term civil rights: guaranteed employment, free health care and education, low-cost housing, public transportation, basic foods, and similar benefits for all citizens—at least in ideal, if not in practice.⁵

Much of the conditioning toward these respective values has arisen from history, ancient and recent, and from geography. Early Americans fled from oppressive rulers to a new land in search of freedom. Many, suffering at the hands of state authorities, eventually sought to restrain the power of their leaders. And America was favorably situated to provide for national defense: an ocean separated the colonists from powerful European foes, while populations to the north and south were relatively sparse and generally incapable of mounting, to say nothing

of sustaining, an invasion of either the British colonies or later the United States.

For centuries, the Russian experience has been starkly different. Time and again the Russian people have been attacked from the east and the west (of course they too have done their share of attacking or antagonizing others). Nor is their geography fortuitous. Vast and essentially flat stretches of land provide few natural barriers to invading armies from any direction. Large, hostile forces have always been situated on both the eastern and western borders.⁶ One wave from the East, the Golden (or Tatar) Horde, conquered and ruled old Russia for nearly two-and-a-half centuries (1240–1480). From the West, Napoleon invaded Russia and occupied Moscow, her capital city. In our century the Germans have twice declared war on Russia and exacted an extremely heavy price in human life and property.

The Russian experience is that, imperfect as it might be, a Russian government is at least “one’s own,” not foreign. And patriotism and national unity offer the best, perhaps the only, hope for security and peace. Hence not “rugged individualism” but unswerving and unquestioning allegiance to a strong central government prevails. Not only the leaders but also most other Russians feel that those who dissent, who cause schisms and deprive the people of their confidence in the government, are dangerous.⁷ The dissenters may even be right, but that is irrelevant. What, Russians ask themselves, would happen if their nation were divided by internal strife? Would the ensuing instability not invite yet another, even more powerful, invader?

Of course the peoples of both countries would prefer to be both free and secure, but the more one is committed to either of the two values, the less possible it is to partake as fully of the other. Although unrestrained freedom may degenerate into anarchy, and excessive security quickly becomes tyranny, both freedom and security are, in their most ideal form, highly desirable. However, like many other natural and timeless dichotomies (nature/civilization, the individual/the collective, movement/stasis, competition/cooperation, spirit/intellect, broad knowledge/specialization), they are, in their extremes, mutually exclusive. Perhaps this example will help illustrate my point. Suppose that a pitcher holding one quart of water and two quart-size bottles are standing on a table. One can pour the water in any proportion into the two receptacles, but if more is placed in the one, less will remain for the other.

In terms of public security, Russians prefer a strong, steady leadership that is prepared to exert force if necessary to maintain the

cohesiveness and security of the state for all citizens. They willingly entrust many important decisions to those in power, that is, to those with the prestige of superior training, experience, or, simply, position. They want to believe in their leaders and readily give them the benefit of the doubt. Perhaps they are less confident in their own ability to provide solutions, partially because the centuries have shown that survival depends on obedience to authority and on unity, rather than on individual and diverse initiative.

As is clearer with each passing year, the American (Western) democratic system based on freedom has the greater overall advantage, especially for those within a society who are gifted, highly skilled, energetic, and otherwise strong. Certainly the principle of free agency bears divine sanction. Greater freedom provides more opportunity for growth through individual responsibility. It promotes the sharing of truth through a free press. It tolerates a broad diversity of opinion, including, importantly, differing religious beliefs. And within the marketplace it frees forces that generate abundance.

Surprising to Americans, most Russians are not entirely oblivious to these advantages of greater freedom, but neither are they fully enough informed to make a careful choice. Russians do know much more about the disadvantages of our system, and they generally conclude that, everything considered, they would prefer their alternative, even with its acknowledged deficiencies. They are frightened by the prospects of unemployment, labor strikes and violence, widespread ownership of guns, political assassinations (the Kennedy brothers and Martin Luther King, and the quite recent attempt on President Reagan's life), a perceived higher crime rate, an exaggerated concern for the rights of criminals, pornography, drug abuse, media that emphasize the sensational (horrors, violence, sex) rather than matters of substance, the high cost of medical care, housing, education, and public transportation, and other related and tenacious perils of a "free" society. In the Russian view, most of our problems are becoming worse, rather than better. To avoid the undesirable features of a Western society, most Russians unhesitatingly forfeit much of their freedom in order to insure their security.

This is not to say that Americans take no thought for their own security or that Russians are opposed to all freedom. Nor is it to say that Americans do not enjoy an important degree of security or that Russians have no freedom at all⁸ (or, for that matter, that Russians would not like to have more freedom, especially of greater access to information and increased opportunity for foreign travel). But I do

emphasize that Americans are prepared to tolerate more of the disadvantages of freedom in order to enjoy its greater benefits, while Russians, knowing little about the best sides of freedom, have resigned themselves to fewer personal freedoms and even to a lower general standard of living in order to possess greater security. To the enduring question, "Can most people use freedom well, that is, in a manner that promotes desirable individual growth and societal progress?" the Russians answer, "No," and the Americans, "Yes."

One must spend a great deal of time in the Soviet Union and long hours talking with Russians, preferably in their own language, to discover how deeply most of them feel about the preeminence of security over freedom. As *New York Times* correspondent David Shipler concluded after four years in the USSR:

This [preference for the Russian "way" over the American] is a hard discovery for Americans, one we often resist, for its implications corrode our creed that freedom is man's natural state, that all other conditions are abnormal, that the innate reflex of human beings is to strive against their bonds. After a time in Russia we become embarrassed at the nakedness of our naiveté. And on some level, perhaps, we hate the Russians for giving the lie to our innermost assumptions about mankind.⁹

However, as we in the West acknowledge this perspective, a number of problems become easier to understand, although they remain difficult to confront. I list several of these issues below, together with a brief comment on each:

1. *Why do Russians not rise up in rebellion against their rulers?* Because they and their rulers share many essential ideals, most importantly, the value of security. Generally the Russians do not hate their leaders or even sharply disagree with them (at least in foreign affairs), but support them, even in such instances as the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 and of Afghanistan in 1979, and the shooting down of the KAL 007 "spy plane" in 1982. These terrible events are rationalized on the basis of national security demands.¹⁰ Today Russians generally appear willing to support the energetic, plain-spoken, unpretentious, and determined General Secretary Gorbachev in his attempts to revitalize Soviet socialism.

2. *Then are we correct in making a distinction between most Russians and the government?* In the majority of cases, no. It is no more appropriate to distinguish between them

than it is for the Russians to condemn our government while professing a high regard for the American people. In both societies citizens complain about inadequacies while, in the main, supporting their leaders, especially against their respective adversaries. Since both groups often strongly disapprove of the actions of the other's government, we tend to imagine a schism between the people and their leaders.¹¹ By so doing, we can continue to feel warmly disposed toward the people we have met, while preserving our disdain for the leaders we do not know.

3. *But what about the dissidents or refuseniks who do hate their government?* The dissidents, in general, are those who espouse our Western values to a greater degree than do their compatriots. They want to significantly alter the balance between security and freedom. Since we in the West mainly hear about the plight of the dissidents (just as the Soviet media principally report on American unemployment, poverty, drugs, and violence), we mistakenly believe that the majority of Soviet citizens are dissidents or that if more Russians would learn about America and our values, they would inevitably become dissidents. In fact, most Russians, the very ones we enjoy meeting when we travel to the USSR, heartily approve of the government's harsh treatment of dissidents.¹²

4. *If a free referendum were held in the Soviet Union, would the majority of Russians prefer socialism or capitalism?* Most analysts agree that Russians want improvements in the way socialism operates but that they are not yet so dissatisfied with their system that they would vote to replace it with capitalism.¹³ Part of the reason is that Russians know both too little (of the good) and too much (of the bad) about capitalism. However, unless economic reforms are soon introduced that improve the performance of the currently sluggish Soviet economy, confidence in Soviet socialism may well diminish to very dangerous levels.

5. *If the Soviet borders were completely opened, would many choose to leave the Soviet Union?* I would estimate that, except for several hundred thousand, perhaps even a few million (out of 275 million), relatively few would leave. And if the borders remained open, many of those who left would

eventually return. Most Russians are inveterate romantics, sentimental, self-sacrificing, and patriotic. Love for one's family and the motherland (and her rich cultural heritage and traditions) is so strong that most Russians would remain or return.¹⁴

6. *Why do the Soviets then not open their borders and let whoever wishes depart?* That is exactly what many Westerners wish they would do. The problem is that among those leaving would be many of the most capable and best trained Russians—those who completed their education in the best Soviet schools. They are the ones who could live much better in the West. The Soviet Union knows that it cannot have an internationally competitive and domestically viable economy and culture if its strongest citizens continually emigrate. The “best and the brightest” tend to prefer a free society where the professional and monetary opportunities are greater, while the less endowed and accomplished typically opt for greater security.

7. *How can we in the West best promote greater freedom and more human rights in the Soviet Union?* Recent history suggests that the USSR generally allows its dissidents and “satellite” countries more freedom when it feels itself most secure and that conditions worsen as the Russians feel more threatened.¹⁵ It is no more likely that we in the West could coerce the Soviet government into allowing its people greater freedom than the Russians could compel us in America to guarantee every citizen a job or free medical care. Excessive external pressure may actually make the resolution of internal problems more difficult. Ironically, the more hostile and threatening America may appear, the more fully most Russians rally around their leaders in opposition to dissidents at home and harmful Western “propaganda” from abroad.

In Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, Ivan recites his “Legend of the Grand Inquisitor” set in sixteenth-century Catholic Spain. He characterizes the Spaniard's ecclesiastically dominated society as follows: “At last they have vanquished freedom and have done so to make men happy. . . . Freedom and bread enough for all are inconceivable together.”¹⁶ In turn, the British novelist D. H. Lawrence provides a sobering commentary on the “Legend,” specifically on the reason the community had forfeited Christ's truth of free agency for the Grand Inquisitor's comforting deception of security:

The inadequacy of Jesus lies in the fact that Christianity [freedom] is too difficult for men, the vast mass of men. It could only be realized by the few “saints” or heroes. For the rest, man is like a horse harnessed to a load he cannot possibly pull. . . . Christianity, then, is the ideal, but it is impossible. It is impossible because it makes demands greater than the nature of man can bear. . . . Jesus loved mankind for what it ought to be, free and limitless. The Grand Inquisitor loves it for what it is, with all its limitations. And he contends his is the kinder love.¹⁷

Freedom is at times more difficult to bear than security. But security beyond real need lessens our ability to act responsibly, courageously, and creatively. Clearly each of us needs to move from the relative dependence of security to the maturity of freedom, but we must do so gradually and carefully, through a growing confidence in our abilities and a belief in the fairness and goodwill of others. We should encourage this development through both example and precept. As we continue to address and solve or at least lessen the problems inherent in freedom, and as we manifest integrity and sensitivity in foreign relations, our model will attract many—perhaps, over time, even the Russians.

Meanwhile, we should carefully reexamine the common perception that “the only thing a Russian understands is force” (or that “the only thing a Russian respects is strength”). On the human relations level, this attitude is far too simplistic and demeaning. As human beings, Russians have the same range of feelings and rational responses as do Americans or anyone else. They react to compulsion just as other humans do: with a sense of deep humiliation and resentment. On the foreign relations level Russians consider America’s determination to negotiate from strength (superiority) a fearsome threat to their national security. Under these circumstances they may well unite behind hawkish leaders and forego other important priorities in order to rise to the challenge of maintaining what they consider security through military equivalence or parity. And the arms race will continue to escalate.¹⁸

Fortunately, Russians in general (excepting someone like a mentally deranged Stalin) also respond to intelligent, frank, firm, just, decent, and sensitive discussion, as do we all.¹⁹ One may still hope that men and women of goodwill and integrity might recognize their respective myths about each other, abandon hatred and fear, “renounce war and declare peace,” and reunite father and son (all mankind) while there is still time: “If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his [the Messiah’s] coming” (D&C 98:16; D&C 2:2–3).²⁰

NOTES

Gary L. Browning is a professor of Russian at Brigham Young University.

¹Some of the best recent books on the subject are James Cracraft, ed., *The Soviet Union Today: An Interpretive Guide* (Chicago: Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, 1983); Hedrick Smith, *The Russians*, 2d ed. (New York: New York Times Books Co., 1984); Robert G. Kaiser, *Russia: The People and the Power* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1976; 2d ed., 1984); Elizabeth Pond, *From the Yaroslavsky Station: Russia Perceived* (New York: Universe Books, 1981); and David K. Shipler, *Russia: Broken Idols, Solemn Dreams* (New York: The New York Times Books Co., 1983).

²If we really sympathized with the Russian masses and disliked only the relatively few in the government, would we prepare for massive nuclear attacks or retaliation, knowing that in the Soviet Union, as in the U.S.A., the people (whom we claim to like) would perish, while the leaders would more likely survive the initial blast in their "secure" and well-provisioned shelters?

³Compare Kaiser, *Russia: The People and the Power*, 226: "A sort of hard-hat mentality dominates the Soviet system and Russian society. Hostility toward non-conformists, intolerance of the frivolous or the avant-garde, fierce public puritanism (often accompanied by private licentiousness) and rigid patriotism all seem typical of the USSR. These attitudes infect even the intellectual dissidents, some of whom—Solzhenitsyn is an obvious example—are nearly as intolerant of liberal democracy as are the country's leaders."

⁴For example, see Paul A. Lucey, "Religion," in *The Soviet Union Today*, 295.

⁵Compare Stephen F. Cohen, *Rethinking the Soviet Experience: Politics and History Since 1917* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 151: "The Western view that most Soviet citizens are utterly cynical about the official ideology is wrong, partly because it confuses that ideology with the millennial tenets of original Marxism. The real meaning of Soviet Communism at home, as it has evolved in modern times, involves five more earthly appeals, or ideological promises, to Soviet citizens. Those official promises are vigilant national security—the country will never again be defenseless, as it was in 1941; state-sponsored nationalism of some popular variety; law-and-order safeguards against the internal "anarchy" that so many Russians fear; cradle-to-grave state welfarism; and a better material, or consumer, life for each generation." See also Smith, *The Russians*, 251: "Russians prize order and security as much as Americans prize freedom."

⁶At times, threats also came from the north (Swedes) and the south (Turkic tribes and Byzantine Empire).

⁷See Joshua Rubenstein, "Dissent," *The Soviet Union Today*, 65–80: "The conservative, authoritarian streak in traditional Russian nationalism has a broader appeal in the Soviet Union today than does the human rights movement." See also Cohen, *Rethinking the Soviet Experience*, 146: "Indeed, public opinion polls in recent years suggest that ordinary Soviet citizens—or at least the Slavic majority—are even more conservative than some segments of the ruling elite."

⁸Compare Shipler, *Russia: Broken Idols, Solemn Dreams*, 4: "As the illusions and images are peeled away one by one, Soviet society reveals itself as having grown more complex than it appears from outside. The variety of political thought is more extensive, the literature and theater and film more creative and truthful, the press more critical than many Americans imagine."

⁹Shipler, *Russia: Broken Idols, Solemn Dreams*, 349. See also, Kaiser, *Russia: The People and the Power*, 297: "Russian submissiveness to arbitrary authority frustrates an American inclined to be optimistic about humanity. We have convinced ourselves that it is in man's nature to strive for the kind of freedom we cherish, to honor the fruits of pure reason and the benefits of justice. The Russian people defy that theory; they probably even disprove it."

¹⁰Compare Smith, *The Russians*, 704: "Russians, for all their carping, accept Soviet ideology unquestioningly the way a Western schoolchild accepts Euclidean geometry. For them, that is the way the world works"; and Kaiser, *Russia: The People and the Power*, 288: "The most important fact is that the Soviet regime succeeds. Nearly all Russians accept its leadership. . . . Only a tiny fraction of the population ever dreams of living in a different kind of society, under a different kind of regime."

¹¹Compare the statements of two human rights advocates who relatively recently left the Soviet Union: Alexander Zinoviev, "The West Sees the Russia It Wants to See," *Christian Science Monitor*, 7 January 1983, 23: "The Soviet regime is not a political body forced upon the population from above. The people themselves constitute and uphold the regime"; and Valery Chalidze, "Solzhenitsyn's Authoritarian Russian Nationalism," *Russia*, no. 3 (1981): 14: "Do the People Hate the Soviet Regime? This is another myth: no such hatred exists. Discontent, on the other hand, may be found in almost all sectors of the society; and it is expressed more or less openly, which is a sign of the regime's stability." See also Pond, *From the Yaroslavsky Station*, 56: "Zinoviev's final damning judgment is that 'The Soviet system is eminently suitable for the Soviet people.'" And Zinoviev again: "They say that the Russians are slaves. That is true. But they are slaves that love their chains" (*Novoe russkoe slovo*, 27 January 1985, 3).

¹²Compare Smith, *The Russians*, 309: "This positive heroic devotion to country, however, has its negative McCarthyite side in rigid intolerance and persecution of mavericks and dissenters whom the clan regards as

unpardonable renegades." See also Zinoviev: "The overwhelming majority of Soviet citizens despise the dissidents" (*Novoe russkoe slovo*, 27 January 1985, 3).

¹³Compare Kaiser, *Russia: The People and the Power*, 307: "I think Amalrik was probably right—that if an election were held, the majority of Soviet citizens would align themselves with the hard-hats." See also Zinoviev: "If free elections were held in the USSR, the overwhelming majority would cast their ballots for the Communist party" (*Novoe russkoe slovo*, 27 January 1985, 3).

¹⁴Compare Smith, *The Russians*, 307: "If emigration were suddenly totally free, I am confident that very few Russians, as distinct from Jews and some other minorities, would leave their country permanently."

¹⁵For only one example, see Joshua Rubenstein, "Dissent," *The Soviet Union Today*, 71, wherein he discusses "the emigration of more than a quarter million Soviet Jews since 1970." Virtually all of this emigration occurred during the years of détente. Since relations have dramatically worsened between the US and the USSR, only a few hundred Jews have been allowed to leave the country each year (in 1984, fewer than 900).

¹⁶Fyodor M. Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, ed. Ralph E. Matlaw (New York: Norton, 1976), 232, 234.

¹⁷D. H. Lawrence, "Preface to Dostoevsky's 'The Grand Inquisitor,'" in *Twentieth-Century Views*, ed. Rene Wellek (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1962), 91–92.

¹⁸Compare Cohen, *Rethinking the Soviet Experience*, 157: "The lesson is that cold-war relations abet conservative and even neo-Stalinist forces in Soviet officialdom and that Soviet reformers stand a chance only in conditions of East–West détente. Our own cold warriors have always insisted that détente must await the reform of the Soviet system. But that ill-conceived policy serves only to undermine the reformist cause in the Soviet Union."

¹⁹Emphatically, we should not forget Russia's terrible recent past or pretend that no serious problems exist in the present, but neither should we exaggerate her failings. And we should acknowledge improvements where they have occurred and, where possible, facilitate even more change.

²⁰I have brought the two scriptures together because they both emphasize the necessity of turning the hearts of the children to their fathers and of the fathers to the children. In addition to a central message about genealogy and ordinances, these verses speak about an imperative to peace rather than to war and, by implication, about the grim consequences of disregarding the responsibility to bond mankind through love.



The Window by Wulf E. Barsch

What Time Is It?

Emma Lou Thayne

During twenty-one days in Russia, we never knew what time it was. Our inner timepieces were confounded by crisscrossing nine of the eleven time zones in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Too, it was June when nights at latitudes 75 percent above ours at home were a third as long as we were used to. Most of all, centuries were confused—1984 could have been 1894 or 1734: abacus adding in Uzbekistan; log-cabin living around Lake Baikal; immaculate traveling in a subway of mahogany and chandeliers in Moscow; back to the revolution in Leningrad because I forgot to turn my watch three hours ahead, a lone encounter with the KGB, one of my only two times of being afraid in the entire three weeks.

Time was of the essence. A different kind of essence.

In the Hermitage in Leningrad, art museum next in stature only to the Louvre in Paris, is a glass case longer, higher, wider than I am tall. It is a clock of gold and brass commissioned by Catherine the Great: a huge peacock in a tree, birds, animals, snowy grounds, the tree leaved and dazzling. Once a year it strikes and everything is set in motion. But no one can predict when, what time it is. For three weeks as if I were part of that clock, time held me, has since, in the insistent hope that it would not run out, not before we had a chance, those Russians, we Americans, to find each other.

My time with Russia had begun in the summer of 1983 when David Freed, recently retired cellist with the Utah Symphony, called me about a joint evening of Bach and poems to celebrate “kinship among nations,” sponsored by the Utah Arts Council. I liked the idea, began to think if we don’t work for this, why work for anything else?

But mine was a generation that had responded very differently to the dropping of the bomb four decades before. We wanted the war ended, with the loss, of course, of as few of our own as possible. Now, forty years later, I wanted nothing to do with that bomb or the

proliferation of its progeny. But why? When the change? I needed to write the poems "to explain me to myself."

In six "considerations," I wrote about high school biology and watching matter turn to ash in a petri dish, about how jubilant I felt when the bomb dropped on Hiroshima would bring my loved ones home, about what I later learned from college freshmen in my classes concerning the morality of that bombing, about the birth of a grandchild, the right to grow old like an aunt, how Dachau taught a naive American woman not only "Never Again!" but *Never*. Across the decades, what to consider? What to celebrate? And in this moment, How Much for the Earth?

Written to be read aloud, in the next year they were published by Utahns United in a limited edition—a chapbook—and by *Dialogue* in a special issue on war and peace. They were translated at Dartmouth by Walter Arndt and Lev Losev into German and Russian, as our program took the poems and Bach across the state.

As I inscribed a book for Dr. Gary Browning, at a reading in Provo in 1984 as part of BYU's Peace among Nations Week, he said, "You should take your poems to the Soviet Union, Emma Lou. Poetry is a second language there. Poets are heroes. And peace is on their minds in a different way than it's on ours."

Two months later, by every kind of coincidence and good fortune, I left for the USSR with thirty-six others—architect, Spanish teacher, artist, counselors, sheep rancher, fish farmer, homemakers—on an education exchange tour under the guidance of Drs. Kent Robson and Lynn Eliason, professors of philosophy and languages at Utah State University, six-time visitors to the Soviet Union and fluent in its language and history.

My poems went with me in both English and Russian. It was like having a second visa, one that people read aloud from, nodded and smiled at. They eased me through customs in Moscow, were handled and read by scarfed women in a packed church, were part of a reading in a dining car as we spent four-and-a-half days and nights on the Trans-Siberian Railway zooming through the surprising beauties of Siberia and its collectives tucked among the Ural Mountains, the Taiga Forest, the lush fields and meadows along the Volga. They were yet to introduce me to people of various ages and occupations in modern Tashkent near Mongolia, in ancient Samarkand on the border of Afghanistan, and to that woman my own age in a memorial in Leningrad who, like the others, would alter forever my conception of war and allegiance to peace.

I had not known what to expect. My knowledge of Russia was “Peter and the Wolf” and *Dr. Zhivago* naive, the names and fates of emigrés and dissidents gleaned from newspapers and hearsay. Everything had been as surprising as that beauty in Siberia, or seeing only one gas station in Moscow, a city of seven million, a line-up for it like the queuing in the butcher shop for narrow veins of lean in great slabs of fat. We had brushed our teeth in mineral water and Pepsi. We had heard Verdi in the Kremlin. We had breakfasted on reindeer, cucumbers, and caviar. Nothing about the trip had been ordinary. Especially those people I had gone there to meet, did meet, without limit or surveillance, with the group and on my own.

But my most surprising adventure with a Soviet, the poems, and the idea of peace came in Irkutsk, Siberia, a college town of six hundred thousand. Not quite two weeks gone of our three, we sat in a vast mahogany room draped with flags in the city’s House of Friendship. We were going to learn about education. The Soviets had been obviously proud of their system. In Moscow University, thirty thousand, typical of huge complexes of institutes, universities, schools in every city and republic that have turned the 3 percent literacy before the revolution in 1917 to less than 3 percent illiteracy in the 1980s. Our instructor was a member of the Communist party, one of a 5 percent ruling minority, and we were prepared for the party line, something we’d not been given anywhere along the way.

Then Valentina—Valya to her friends—appeared. Stylish in a summer print, poised on slim high heels, she had the bearing of a model, was blonde-coiffed and vibrant. In her late thirties, she spoke with a clipped British accent and an ingenuous warmth that disarmed and surprised us.

She introduced herself as a teacher in the Academy of Sciences. She taught English to scientists, businessmen, artists, government leaders. In 1978 she had been in the United States for two months as an exchange teacher in Baltimore on the AFS (American Field Service) program and afterwards had traveled extensively within the Soviet Union lecturing on her American experience. Had anyone here been associated with the AFS? I said that we’d had a daughter study in Haddonfield, New Jersey, her junior year in high school, had all been enriched by it. Valentina’s time had been anything but enriching—to her or to the Soviets who had heard in the years since of how the family she stayed with were cold, talked always of what they owned, paid children for the least effort, never asked her a question about her life or reasons for being there.

She told of teaching in the high school in Baltimore about the Russian people. But someone had complained that she was teaching communism, and her subject was changed. For the rest of her time as an exchange teacher, she taught the American Constitution and the American Civil War out of American textbooks to American children! Whose loss? During the next two hours, we asked our questions. Pinned her to the wall with some, like what about the shooting down of the Korean airliner? Why can't Soviet citizens travel as we're doing now? How would an exchange teacher from the United States be treated in the Soviet Union? Why don't we have exchanges?

Valentina remained informative, charming except when asked "Can you people criticize your government?" She answered, "Yes, in letters in the paper, to get government answers on TV." And then in a voice from which the warmth had disappeared, "But let's face it, we do not like criticism."

Then when we asked again about education, she responded as if a page had been turned. Winning and obviously wanting to talk about what she was so good at, she described teaching by games. "You know Russian roulette?" she asked, grinning. "We play it with phrases."

She told too of growing up in a home where her mother was Christian, her father Communist.

"Who won out?" we asked.

"You see here the mixture," she said, pointing to herself. She told of how hard it is to get into the party, how much work it takes to stay there, that religion is never taught in school, only in homes where an older generation might still have a Bible.

"What about peace? Do you have any ways of working for peace?"

She told of committees who met in that very House of Friendship, of children's groups started by similar groups in San Francisco who were influencing thinking between generations. Suddenly she said, "If I had three wishes, you know what the first would be?" She held up one finger, her voice softening. "For peace."

"And the other two wishes?"

She put her other two fingers up one at a time. "For peace. For peace." No one spoke for a moment.

Many other questions were asked, answered. With the bus waiting to take us to our hotel and lunch and then to our plane for Tashkent, I talked to Valentina, told of peace groups I was part of as a nonpolitical person: Utahns United against the Nuclear Arms Race, Women Concerned about Nuclear War, of people at home who felt exactly as she did about wishes one, two, and three.

By now everyone was in the bus, as usual, I'm afraid, waiting for me. Was there a way she could come to our hotel for lunch, to talk further? No, but why didn't I ride with her in her car? Valentina slid into the black state car, took hold of the top of the steering wheel with both hands, flung her head down on it and said, "I was *so* nervous!"

We laughed. "I have done this only twice," she confided, "answered these questions by non-Soviets. I am a teacher of English."

We laughed again. An hour-and-a-half later we were still talking. About the party, yes, and about our governments, nuclear arming, the Olympics. But more about our daughters, my five, her two.

"What does your husband do?" she asked.

"He's a real estate broker," I tried, then laughed again trying to explain the exchange of land and property for a fee—as impossible as a credit card or an aisleful of frozen TV dinners.

She invited me to dinner across the river in her apartment. Was it better than it might have been because she was a Communist party official? No, she smiled.

Out of my journal fell a picture of my whole family—all seventeen of us—at our last daughter's wedding. "All yours?" she asked, astonished. I nodded, pointed out daughters and husbands, grandchildren. "Do they all dress alike?" she asked.

"Only for that night—the wedding party, you know," I explained, then, embarrassed at the apparent extravagance, "These two daughters—they sewed the dresses. They will wear them again."

She looked long at the picture, then asked, "Could I keep it?"

"Of course," I said. "The family will be yours in America."

We exchanged addresses, hers in my journal in her exotic hand with a dozen others, backwards we would say: USSR, republic, city, street, her phone number, fifteen digits long; mine in the book I inscribed to her, along with a tape of the poems in English and the Russian version, an article on Russia by Gary Browning from *BYU Today* that I had stashed in my suitcase and circulated among our group.

By now others had come into the lobby from lunch. Could she come to Utah under the sponsorship of a university and be our exchange? She might but would need a formal invitation. We promised to write. One of the group gave her *Utah* in gorgeous color, another a copy of *Network* about women in business in Utah, all buzzing with camaraderie and the same sense of life that had erupted when Valentina had first walked into the House of Friendship.

The group trickled toward the bus. Valentina pulled my little stuffed roller bag through the lobby, across the asphalt parking, seeming

as reluctant as I was to let go. At the door of the bus we hugged familial as old friends longing for time, kissed cheeks like sisters.

In my seat I thought, "This has to be what I came for. This hope."

A retired chemical engineer leaned toward where I sat. In the Bolshoi ten days before, he had lent me his opera glasses, and asked during the reading on the train, "Why don't poems rhyme anymore?" All along he had been a man on whom nothing was lost, a man going home to report to his high priests' quorum what he had seen. He said, "Isn't she amazing? But so much like us in the Church—unique and genuine until we start spouting the party line."

I knew he was right. She had changed dramatically when we had asked questions she had only secondhand answers for. I knew too that we Americans had the right to be different, could use our God-given agency, protected by a constitution and tradition that said so. But I thought too how we limit ourselves, victimized by the same stereotyping, acquiescence to conformity, suspicion of difference.

That encounter with Valentina and her country convinced me that the possibility for peace among any of us—within our cozy Utah boundaries or across the skitterish globe—is in ourselves. Our being determined that it is not only the top priority of our tenuous time, but a distinct possibility. *If* we work at making it happen.

Since coming home full of time after time with the Valentinas and the Sergeis of the Soviet Union, I have heard over and over, "But you can't trust your experience. The people are not the government."

I know. But they are. Just as we are. And every even small exchange can make a difference. And however we can find to exercise our agency and free ourselves of cliché either in speech or expectation through personal enlightenment, the closer we can come to freeing the world from suspicion and ultimate destruction.

Back home over four months, by Halloween I had wondered why I had not heard from Valentina. Three of us had written to her, asked if she could come, had even set dates as the USIA had suggested we do. Had there been reprisals for her being so friendly with us?

I decided to call her in her Irkutsk, Siberia, where my attempt at an outgoing call had been aborted, no, had not even placed for want of an operator that Sunday morning 145 days before. The phone number she gave me went through Moscow, would involve a delay of three to four hours. I left three phone numbers where I might be reached. "That's not bad," said the overseas operator in Pittsburgh, later placing my call; "it's usually fourteen to fifteen hours."

Three times the operator called me back, trying, each time at a different number. By then we were friends, him determined. "Siberia! We'll get her." Then, "Hey, we've got Valentina on the line!"

She sounded no farther away than Provo. "Are you really calling from Utah? What a treat! What a surprise!"

I had an echo, could ask questions only slowly without overlapping what she was saying. "Did you get my letter? I wrote August seventh. Can you come? I even talked to the people in Washington in charge of exchanges, the USIA, through my senator, found out how to ask."

"No letter yet. But I did hear from two others at the university."

"Well, mine was bigger than normal, in a manila envelope with other things, like the letter I wrote to our senators about reinstating exchanges—and the introduction to my book—some about you."

"I have been on vacation, then up to my eyebrows in work."

Between every remark, "Such a treat! Such a surprise—from Utah!"

"But I start a new class November 15. And you must know—every student reads your poems aloud in English. Then I tell them to hear the tape to see how they should sound."

My poems? Read by those businessmen, government officials, artists, scientists—people who just might have a say about something?

"And your family," she said, "tell them I love them. That they are seen everywhere."

Of course I loved her, loved what she was telling me, felt my conceptions totally validated. "Has it changed what you say about America, Americans, as you travel around speaking and teaching, having met all of us?" I asked. "You can't imagine how meeting you has changed everything for me—for all of us on our tour."

"Oh, yes," she said. "In fact, I'm so glad you called today. Did you have Halloween yesterday?"

"No," I said. "It's today."

"What time is it there?" She was smiling across the thousands of miles.

"Twenty to one in the afternoon."

She laughed. "It's twenty minutes before four in the morning here."

"I will tell all my students, my family of your call," she said. "You would be happy to know that on your Halloween I took a program about America to my fifteen-year-old daughter's class. I carved a jack-o-lantern from a pumpkin and told them all about all of you. Could you come again?"

We talked for eighteen minutes—thirty-seven dollars on my AT&T bill a month later. What value in Russian–United States currency that connection? I hung up aglow.

Yes, I'll continue to write my Congress people, talk to my family and friends, join where I can to hold hands with others of hope and more than intention. I will encourage exchange, formal and otherwise, root for the reinstigation of programs cancelled by unwitting political punishment of the wrong people.

I will declare my certainty that human beings deserve more credit than we give ourselves. That only through hope and the willingness to find out about each other can the earth and all it is worth be saved.

I will love my country as I never could have, its buoyancy, brashness, entrepreneuring. I will get teary at the "Star Spangled Banner" and do what I can to let my grandchildren know why. Better because I have been to the Soviet Union, seen its repression, its lines, its burial places, its adoration of Mother Russia.

Beyond any of what I will *do*, I will cherish in a grateful heart having been forever altered, enriched, blessed by that twenty-one days of wondering "What time is it?"

For the Earth

To ashes, simply No.

—Emma Lou Thayne, *How Much for the Earth?*

I

We walked Third South on a springtime sabbath,
Watched the restless wash of sandbags
Man to man to perhaps a woman
To man, watched the flow of earth-
Rich water from Slate Canyon, tan,
Now contained by canyon walls
Of sandbags neatly stacked in haste

The work was mostly done, more people
Promenading than relaying sand.

But we admired the ordered relay
That tamed disorder; the irony
In floods that wash to people trouble
But wash them together in their trouble.

II

She's a strange earth these winters, sun
Buried above unflowing fog,
Bess's shrubs shrouded, buried
By snow that almost covers air-
Withered stalks of corn I failed
To bury last fall, snow that piles
Ever higher above the Squaw Peak
Trail where Rock and Maple and Slate
Fade out and up to smooth slope,
Withered by wind to ragged ridge.

The earth washed to drown Thistle,
 Drive rails through Billie's Mountain,
 Shift highways, scare Spanish Fork.
 Smaller Wasatch flows buried
 Or carried houses, streets, and people.
 But last year was not the last year.

A quirky earth we've come to know.
 Not firm as the mountains around us had seemed.
 Temperamental, a fractious mother,
 Live and sometimes even menacing.

Unwonted tears down the Wasatch
 Wash, out of control, even hers.
 St. Helens' burping and less modest
 Belches from El Chichon, the twitchings
 Of San Andreas' skin, quavers
 Along the Wasatch—as if in simple
 Runes she must remind us
 That for destruction steam or shrugs
 Are also great, and would suffice—

That she can think of suicide
 As we—eternal ice from fire:
 A dozen or so St. Helens in chain
 Reaction south along the spine
 Of continents, incontinent.
 Her twitching skin could really wrinkle,
 Move us in hours back to matter
 Unorganized, her hibernation.

III

This morning I plucked again my berries,
 Boysen, tartly sweet when dull,
 Bright Heritage, red, raspy, firm.
 Sometimes I fancy I really earn them:
 Planting, staking, pruning, chasing
 Manure, leaves and bluegrass clippings,
 Composting, spreading, running tubes
 To drip when roots are dry. Picking.

Heritage: let the name catch all,
All it will to tell me all
I really earn. Those berries come
In joyous chain from generous mother.
We echo then return in chain-
Reaction megatons.

So let her drip and belch and twitch.
We chain ourselves to outrage measured
In megas. Unless these waters can wash
Us all together we'll come to know
At last who wins—unless we really come
To know her: whose earth she is
And whose the fulness thereof.

—Marden J. Clark

Between Wars

Incendiary firestorms
before the half-century,
left church shells,
the organs silent.

Ossuaries of a million bones
satisfied the curious,
until the fields of flags
faded in the summer sun.

In another quarter-century
Through defoliated forests,
tank-tracked rice fields
and empty villages,

The scream of the monsoon winds
could not cover the cries
of dying cultures.
But who listened?

Now
used arms and fighter planes
are carelessly sold
half a world away;
cities bulge above the ashes
and green shoots
cover the mass graves.

Peace
—the time
called “permanent pre-hostility”
—the time
when we ask
Who is the new enemy?

Poppies and rice grass
have always made
a transient floral
spray.

—Sally T. Taylor

Fasting and Food, Not Weapons: A Mormon Response to Conflict

Eugene England

Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday:

And the Lord shall guide thee continually, . . . and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.

. . . thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.

(Isa. 58:6–7, 10–12)

I wish to share with you two ideas, two proposals, and two images. First the images. On 13 May 1981, in St. Peter's Square in Rome, I was reaching over a barrier to touch Pope John Paul II's outstretched hand as he circled through the crowd in his Jeep-like "Popemobile" at the beginning of his weekly public audience, when I saw the bullets hit him, one squarely in the front below the heart.

The second image comes from Christmastime, 1983. That same pope, making his yearly visit to Rome's Rebibbia Prison, turned aside to the cell of Mehmet Ali Agca, the man who had shot those bullets, and visited with him alone in a corner of that bare, white-walled room for twenty minutes. He held Agca's hand, whispered to him, seemed almost to be receiving his confession, reached out to take his arm. As he left, Agca lifted the pope's hand to his forehead in the Muslim gesture of respect. The pope later said that he had told Agca he forgave him for the shooting, that he fully accepted him as a brother.

A cynic might claim that such a well-publicized "gesture" (television crews and photographers present) was expected and merely political

in intent. But the cynic would be wrong. The gesture in fact surprised us all, and it has no larger political meaning, unless we give it one (as we should) by recognizing that the affairs of groups and nations—terrorism, war, and starvation, along with all other evils and their solutions—finally come down to the individual heart and to personal gestures of mercy.

My thesis in this essay is quite simple. It is that fasting regularly and giving the food saved to the hungry, especially our enemies, is the surest route to world peace as well as world health.

Impelled by universal human emotions in the face of hunger, especially in a crisis, we have shown we can unite in ways we seem unable to do in other matters, even in something so basic as arms reduction. Participating in the first major fast for Ethiopia, 10 November 1984 (as well as the National Fast for Poland, 24 February 1982), were people with a wide range of beliefs: Jews, evangelical and liberal Christians, Mormon Christians, Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims. There were, as well, people with no specific *religious* belief, not believers in a personal God but merely believers in life and human responsibility, people trying to make sense of life and trying to be ethically disciplined in response to that sense. This immensely diverse group of people was able to unite in both empathizing with the hungry by going without food and in giving the savings to stop the hunger.

Is there a rational basis for such unity? I believe there is: the position of morally serious but nonbelieving people, which might best be called Stoic Existentialism, is a viable, often very attractive alternative to religious faith, and it has grown especially attractive in the twentieth century. One reason is that traditional theistic religions have neither prevented nor given persuasive explanations for the terrible atrocities of this century: concentration camps, liquidation, hundreds of wars, official torture, the nuclear threat, and now widespread drought and disease and starvation, apparently man-abetted, in Africa, a condition some are beginning to call the greatest disaster in human history next to Hitler's holocaust, Stalin's and Mao's purges, and Cambodia's recent nightmare.

The case for Stoic Existentialism was perhaps best made by Albert Camus in his novel *The Plague*. A Catholic priest and a nonbelieving doctor confront an epidemic that suddenly strikes a northern Africa town. The plague becomes symbolic of all that mysteriously attacks and kills us, all that inexplicably dooms human endeavor. The priest, Paneloux, at first tries to explain the plague as God's punishment on the wicked town; his ideas are opposed by the

Stoic, Dr. Rieux, who nevertheless respects the efforts of the priest, and of other Christians, to help those who have the disease. Rieux states his position in these terms:

Every country priest who . . . has heard a man gasping . . . on his deathbed thinks as I do. He'd try to relieve human suffering before trying to point out its excellence. . . . Since the order of the world is shaped by death, mightn't it be better for God if we refuse to believe in Him and struggle with all our might against death, without raising our eyes toward the heaven where He sits in silence.¹

That is the Stoic ethic: to fight, without taking comfort in explanations. And Camus shows the Christian priest, after he witnesses the horrible death of a child, coming around to a position similar to Rieux's: It no longer makes sense to call the plague punishment when it kills innocent children. After they struggle together to save the child and suffer through his death, there is a very moving exchange between this representative believer and representative nonbeliever. It would be good for all of us, since all of us can identify with at least one or the other—perhaps even both—to listen well. When Rieux reacts bitterly to the child's death, Paneloux says, " 'I understand. . . . That sort of thing is revolting because it passes our human understanding. But perhaps we should love what we cannot understand.' " Rieux replies, " 'No, Father. I've a very different idea of love. And until my dying I shall refuse to love a scheme of things in which children are put to torture.' "

A shade of disquietude crossed the priest's face. "Ah, doctor," he said sadly, "I've just realized what is meant by 'grace.' "

Rieux had sunk back again on the bench. His lassitude had returned and from its depths he spoke, more gently:

"It's something I haven't got; that I know. But I'd rather not discuss that with you. We're working side by side for something that unites us—beyond blasphemy and prayers. And it's the only thing that matters."

When Paneloux declares, " 'You, too, are working for man's salvation,' " Rieux replies, " 'Salvation's much too big a word for me. I don't aim so high. I'm concerned with man's health; and for me his health comes first.' " ²

Certainly, all mankind cannot agree on what "salvation" is or how to attain it—or perhaps even on what means can save us from nuclear war, since every proposal immediately raises political questions that divide us. But nearly all of us can come, I believe, to agree with Rieux's position—and with Paneloux's actual behavior—in seeing present death and disease as our chief and universal human enemy.

And all of us, believers and nonbelievers, have prophets who have taught us well the simple and essential ideas upon which a common effort to fight death and disease, and to end starvation, can be built. The first of these is that we are all sinners and all equally responsible, not in the sense of being to blame but in being *able* to do something—to act for ill, or good. We are all capable of acting contrary to what we know is right—and we often do not even *know* what is right. None of us, therefore, can hold self-righteously aloof. Not only the Old Testament prophets and Christ taught this clearly, but so did Augustine, Luther, Freud, Marx, Dostoevsky, Camus, T. S. Eliot, Bellow, and most other great writers and thinkers, whether Stoic nonbeliever or theist believer.

For those of us who accepted Spencer W. Kimball as a prophet, this was his judgment on Americans, particularly his fellow Mormons, at the time of our self-congratulation at our bicentennial in 1976:

We are, on the whole, an idolatrous people—a condition most repugnant to the Lord. . . .

We are a warlike people, easily distracted from our assignment of preparing for the coming of the Lord. When enemies rise up, we commit vast resources to the fabrication of gods of stone and steel—ships, planes, missiles, fortifications—and depend on them for protection and deliverance. When threatened, we become antienemy instead of pro-kingdom of God; we train a man in the art of war and call him a patriot, thus, in the manner of Satan's counterfeit of true patriotism, perverting the Savior's teaching [that we love our enemies]. . . .

We forget that if we are righteous the Lord will either not suffer our enemies to come upon us . . . or he will fight our battles for us.³

But few of us listen to our prophets when they point to our universal sinfulness. Perhaps we could listen better to their universally consistent *solution* to that sinfulness. In every great religious and philosophical tradition, the principle for stopping human evil has been central and repeated: helpfulness and mercy instead of rejection and vengeance; humble, sacrificial love instead of pride and selfishness. The Old Testament prophet Micah says it this way: "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:8).

The New Testament is even more challenging. Just before he was crucified, Christ taught his Apostles the *one basic criterion* of acceptance by him—the one that would separate his acceptable sheep from the goats when he came again in glory:

For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

. . . Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

(Matt. 25:35–36, 40)

In teaching this same fundamental principle, the Book of Mormon prophet Benjamin emphasizes two ideas that I believe would particularly help us in finding a solution to world hunger: first, that mercy cannot be in any sense judgmental or reserved or even discriminating, and, second, that mercy is essential for the well-being of the *giver* as well as the receiver. Benjamin instructs a group of newly converted Christians:

And also, ye yourselves will succor those that stand in need of your succor; ye will administer of your substance unto him that standeth in need; and ye will not suffer that the beggar putteth up his petition to you in vain, and turn him out to perish.

Perhaps thou shalt say: The man has brought upon himself his misery; therefore I will stay my hand, and will not give unto him of my food, nor impart unto him of my substance that he may not suffer, for his punishments are just—

But I say unto you, O man, whosoever doeth this the same hath great cause to repent; and except he repenteth of that which he hath done he perisheth forever, and hath no interest in the kingdom of God.

For behold, are we not all beggars? Do we not all depend upon the same Being, even God, for all the substance which we have, for both food and raiment, and for gold, and for silver, and for all the riches which we have of every kind?

And if ye judge the man who putteth up his petition to you for your substance that he perish not, and condemn him, how much more just will be your condemnation for withholding your substance, which doth not belong to you but to God.

(Mosiah 4:16–19, 22)

This point—that we must give without judgment—is precisely relevant to the current crisis in Ethiopia, where the Communist regime has apparently, through centralized economic planning and imposed land reform, brought on at least some of the problem and is responding in ways that look politically motivated. Should we stay our hand, as many in our country have demanded, because their punishments are just? Were we right, in response to the imposition of martial law in Poland in December 1981 (by a government which seemed to be bringing

on the suffering and economic chaos of its people through socialist planning and subservience to Russia), to make reprisals by cutting off all our government aid and cooperation of various kinds? I think not.

And what do our acts of mercy towards others—feeding the starving, aiding the sick who do not deserve it—have to do with *our own salvation*? According to Benjamin,

For the sake of retaining a remission of *your sins* from day to day, that ye may walk guiltless before God—I would that ye should impart of your substance to the poor, every man according to that which he hath, such as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and administering to their relief, both spiritually and temporally, according to their wants.

(Mosiah 4:26; emphasis added)

That same wisdom echoes through all great literature and all revered examples of ideal human response: Shakespeare's Portia reminds us that "In the course of justice, none of us should see salvation" and that mercy "blesseth him that gives and him that takes."⁴ Mother Teresa of Calcutta, who persists against incredible odds to help the starving and dying in that city's streets, has been called inefficient, not able to begin to keep up with the increasing misery around her as the population increases. Her critics claim that what is needed is a massive, rational government program. But she continues to define poverty not as a lack of resources but as a lack of love and does not feel her work futile if she can do no more than offer a few dying people the chance to die, as she puts it, "within sight of a loving face." Seeing that mercy is more important than efficiency, both for the receiver and for the giver, she achieves the greatest efficiency that exists in Calcutta because she is doing *something*.

Mother Teresa teaches her helpers that prayer and meditation are important preparation, but that finally they must renounce personal luxury and give themselves to uncalculating giving. She knows what John taught:

But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

(1 John 3:17-18)

She knows what was well understood by Brigham Young. When he heard, during the October 1856 LDS Church conference in Salt Lake City, of the Willie and Martin handcart companies' plight in the snow

of Wyoming, he dismissed the conference to go to their aid by saying, "Prayer is good, but when baked potatoes and milk are needed, prayer will not supply their place."⁵ A central part of the dream Martin Luther King called us to share was that prayer and pious hopes are not enough to bring social justice without adding direct action, but on the other hand social justice as a shared goal can help bring spiritual salvation to both blacks and whites.

If all our various religious and nonreligious philosophical traditions teach us *what* to do about human need and human conflict and *why*, the remaining question is *how* to do it. There are some examples before us. Oxfam, one of the main sponsors for the November 1984 Fast for Ethiopia, was founded at Oxford University in 1942. It slowly grew and expanded, a branch coming to America in 1970. In 1983, Oxfam America raised about \$5.6 million—which is a pittance compared to the need, but *something*. So perhaps we should think a few minutes about the scale of need and the resources available. Robert A. Evans has made hauntingly specific the image of a "global village" that has become popular in recent decades:

If the world were a village of one hundred persons, one-third would be rich or of moderate income, and two-thirds would be poor. About thirty-five would suffer from hunger and malnutrition. At least half would be homeless or living in inadequate housing. In the village, forty-seven would be unable to read and write, and only one would have a college education. Six of the one hundred would be Americans and would have over one-third of the Village's entire income whereas the other ninety-four would subsist on the remaining two-thirds. The Americans would produce sixteen percent of the village's food supply and consume most of it themselves, except what they would store for future use or even destroy to raise its value in the village market. Over half of the remaining ninety-four would be hungry most of the time and would consider the six to be enormously wealthy, disproportionately well fed, with three of them on a diet. Of the ninety-four, forty-two would eventually die of diseases such as malaria, or cholera. Another fifteen would die of starvation within a year; ten of these would be children.⁶

Perhaps the central implication of this image is that those of us (probably all who will read this essay) who are among the most privileged five or six percent in the world village should try to imagine how our suffering and dying neighbors, the desperate parents of diseased and hungry children, might perceive us if we really were their immediate neighbors in a village. We could thus understand the judgments of the world upon us. Distance and borders cannot provide moral immunity, especially if we believe, as Mormons do, that we made

specific covenants in the great councils before we came to this world, promising that if we turned out to be among the more fortunate in the mortal probation of chance and agency we would give our maximum effort to bring salvation to the less fortunate—whether through missionary work, temple work for the dead, or “feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick” and imprisoned (Mosiah 4:26). But if we merely believe in simple human brotherhood—that all men and women are of one family, with filial obligations as deep as our genetic makeup—we will find a way to share our good fortune, most of it undeserved, and to reduce the pain and hatred and danger that differences naturally cause.

As a specific and personal answer to the question of *how*, let me share some of my experiences with Food for Poland. In the summer of 1981, after I returned from Europe to BYU, I found myself increasingly obsessed with Poland and the remarkable razor-edge persistence of the independent labor union, Solidarity, and its struggle for greater freedom. Because of my close witness to the miracle of the pope’s survival and my resulting sensitivity to the other miracles that seemed to protect and bless Solidarity, I found myself lying awake at night, wondering and worrying about the many dangers still threatening that wonderful human effort and then about what I could do to help Poland. Finally, I felt I had to act. I called a friend, the lay Catholic theologian Michael Novak, who is of Polish descent and who I suspected had some contacts with Solidarity leaders. It turned out he had just returned from meeting with a group of them in Rome, and he told me how to reach them in Poland. I phoned Bronislaw Geremek, a medievalist who was chief advisor to Solidarity. He and his wife reviewed Poland’s immediate needs—milk for the children and aged, medicine for the epidemic of life-threatening diarrhea that hunger was producing, and detergents to help deal with the diarrhea and other sanitation problems—and asked us to help right away.

Impelled by that request, we organized a nonprofit foundation, with a national advisory board headed by Novak, which included a range of compassionate and distinguished people, from industrial and political leaders like George Romney to writers like Isaac Bashevis Singer. The work of actual fund-raising and arranging for commodity donation and shipment centered naturally in Utah, especially at BYU, and at a few centers developed by friends around the country, particularly among the many Polish Americans in Chicago. We had a planeload of milk donated and ready to be shipped when martial law was declared on 13 December, and all flights were grounded. We hesitated a bit

until we could be certain supplies were getting through, and after verification through our contacts in the Catholic church in Poland, we made our first shipment, by truck and then Polish ship, in January.

We followed up with many fund-raising activities, including sponsoring a National Fast for Poland in February, and we were able to airlift a large shipment of detergents and medicines and help the Polish National Alliance and other groups with a cooperative convoy of food and clothing from the western states, a convoy that totaled over seven million dollars in value and included a large contribution from the LDS church. We sent our managers on two separate trips to Poland to supervise distribution and report to our contributors. The climax of our effort in the summer of 1982 was to help sponsor the visit to Provo of the former Polish ambassador to the United States, who had resigned when martial law was imposed and who spoke at the Fourth of July Freedom Festival and helped us with a major fund-raising effort.

To that point I had learned, at significant cost, some important things. Using government surplus milk, we could translate a one dollar donation into twenty gallons of milk delivered in Poland, enough to feed ten children for a week. In good conscience, I could tell students that foregoing a ten-dollar movie date (and attending instead the free International Films at BYU, for instance) meant milk for one hundred children for a week. A similar claim could be made right now about other places in the world. Furthermore, such things as slightly outdated but still perfectly good medical supplies, clothes, books, and current medical journals (without which the western-based Polish medical profession was quickly losing ground) could do immense good if we could spend a little effort and get them to the right place.

I learned that if one absent-minded and inefficient professor of English could make a pitifully small, but real, contribution, so could many others. I talked to people almost every day who could give thousands of dollars, even millions, and never miss it, but would not. I got letters from families who fasted regularly and sent us their savings, to the penny—and some who sent donations for a while and then stopped when publicity stopped.

I learned how governments can help and hinder. In the summer of 1982, just after we had received our largest total of cash contributions, we found ourselves cut off from the purchase of further surplus milk by the expiration of the earlier government allotment. The current administration had formed its main response to Poland around the reprisals imposed by President Reagan in response to Jaruzelski's martial

law. We worked with the Department of Agriculture, aided by Utah Senators Garn and Hatch, to initiate new allotments of surplus milk, and finally, after much effort, received permission for a million pound shipment in 1984.

In the process of this experience, I became convinced that our little effort did more to promote peace than all the government's reprisals. In fact, I believe that if our government in 1980–81 had had the courage and fundamental sense of Christian logic to *give* Poland a billion dollars in a well-designed Marshall Plan type of rebuilding program (with no political strings attached that could have aroused the Soviets), that action just might have made the survival of Solidarity possible.

Instead, our government cut off almost that much in loans and commodities, including feed for the huge chicken industry we had encouraged and now helped destroy. Perhaps this policy can be justified by the logic of retaliation which governs world power politics. But if I may quote again from *The Merchant of Venice*, "In the course of justice, none of us should see salvation." Withdrawing help, using food as a weapon of retribution, will not bring peace or freedom or stability to Poland. That can be done only by mercy and sacrifice, a willingness to live with and help a basically socialist system that probably would remain so under a fully democratic system—and that *must* remain unthreatening to Russia in its foreign policy. We could still achieve great benefits if we could move our government to massive, politically neutral technical and material help now that relations between our countries are thawing a bit. But that requires public support for giving to, even loving, an enemy, something we must still learn to *do*, even if we *say*, as Christians, we believe in it. That is why I believe in a goal of solving world hunger, which would require cooperating with our avowed enemies—just as we are now being asked to do in Ethiopia. If we cannot do that, then I see no way we can eventually solve the much more touchy problem of arms control with those same enemies.

Let me make two simple, if rather dramatic, proposals. But first I will make one that is too dramatic, probably impossible: Get the United States and Russia each to give half their arms budget to meet the Third World's basic needs. It has been calculated that the *nearly one-half trillion dollars* per year thus made available would provide resources for *all* the needs—food, health, education, even housing—of the poorer countries. If we would join our power and resources to these ends, we would learn to be friends—and might also learn that we could do just fine without the other half of our arms.

Most of us tend to object that we would do it if “they” would, but “they” can’t be trusted. All right, if we’re unwilling to risk unilateral action because we really don’t believe Christ and the modern prophets that loving our enemies would bring response, then let me suggest, as my first serious proposal, a perfectly safe move. Our finest experts cannot agree within 10–20 percent about just what arms budget is really “necessary” to our national security. There would certainly be no risk if we dedicated a *mere 5 percent* of that budget to peace. With that 5 percent, at least sixteen billion, even if the Russians would not respond in kind (though I believe they would), we could provide enough funds to send *each year one million* of our young students and young professionals to live and study in Russia, to learn their language and to understand and appreciate their culture and their political and moral perspective. And, with that 5 percent, we could *also* pay for one million of *their* young people to live in America and learn the same things. In twenty years, 10 percent of our respective populations would know each other as something other than the dangerous propaganda caricatures we are to each other now. (If nothing else, the presence of a million of our best young minds in Russia and of theirs here might help deter both sides from nuclear attack.)

We constantly use our immense resources instead for the more direct, the “easy” solution of force—which usually doesn’t work at all and never provides a lasting solution. For instance, our government recently approved spending another \$130 million to make our embassies in Asia more “secure” after all the terrorist bombings. But we have great trouble allocating that kind of money to solve the problems of poverty and homelessness that produce the terrorism. We strike at the branches of evil but never at the roots.

There are many things I don’t know with certainty. I don’t know if a nuclear freeze would work, if it would make peace more rather than less secure. I’m not absolutely certain spending 5 percent of our arms budget for exchange of students would build love (perhaps it would merely confirm our suspicions and hatred of each other). I’m not even completely sure that joining together to feed the poor, especially those who are our enemies, would allay the antagonisms and suspicions that preserve the arms race. But I firmly believe these are our best chances and deserve a try. We have tried the other ways—recriminations, reprisals, name-calling, infantile line-in-the-sand braggadocio, all the machinations of “justice” and vengeance—none of which are endorsed by Christ or any of the great religious or secular prophets and thinkers of history. And *none* of them has worked.

On the other hand, the Marshall Plan, which gave our resources to rebuild the nations of former enemies and thus was the *only* major international effort in our century that could be defended as mainly consistent with Christian principles, has worked magnificently. And yet, even as Latter-day Saints, we resist the scriptures and the clear counsel of one of our modern prophets, President Kimball, who demanded of us in 1976:

What are we to fear when the Lord is with us? Can we not take the Lord at his word and exercise a particle of faith in him? Our assignment is affirmative: to forsake the things of the world as ends in themselves; to leave off idolatry and press forward in faith; to carry the gospel to our enemies, that they might no longer be our enemies.⁷

The logic is rationally and historically irresistible. The only way to permanently do away with enemies (defeating, suppressing, even killing them has never succeeded) is to turn them into friends through Christ's gospel—that is, through the natural laws of merciful *giving and forgiving*. Just as surely as revenge and violent justice only make us become more like our enemies, as brutal and finally as evil, so mercy and generosity have the *greatest chance* to make our enemies become more like us, as good and peaceful.

Our Church leaders have set the example, and it is for us, using our agency, to do what they, given their specific stewardship, cannot do or direct us to do: to initiate, organize, create the mechanisms for solving world hunger and for leading our government into paths of thought and action that will support that goal and *may* move our enemies (whether they do it through shame in the face of world opinion or genuine human response) to join with us. Despite the feeling, and public allegation, of some Utahns that we founders of Food for Poland were traitors (giving aid to an enemy in time of war), the Church gave over one hundred thousand dollars in welfare supplies for Polish aid in 1982 and has continued such aid to the present. Despite the claim of some Utahns that the Ethiopian Communists deserve their fate, the Church called for a day of fasting in the United States and Canada on 27 January 1985 and joined in the National Day of Fasting in November 1985, giving the proceeds, over ten million dollars, to Ethiopian and other short-term relief as well as long-term preventive measures. Church leaders in England and elsewhere around the world followed up with very successful fasts in their areas. And the Church provides continuing opportunities for both members and nonmembers to contribute directly to such famine-relief

efforts, without any administrative costs, either by sending contributions directly to the Church or through local wards.⁸

“Conservatives,” who have emphasized obedience, can now show their sincerity by being obedient in following an example they might not readily have chosen. “Liberals,” who have called for more direct Church action in social needs, can now put their money where their mouths have been. But all of us, in order to direct and sustain our efforts in the areas of individual creativity that will solve the problem, must come to believe, with emotional conviction, what our scriptures remind us is true: “[God] hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth” (Acts 17:26). Whether we believe the prophets or the biologists, we are one blood. The withered, fetus-like child staring out its last minutes of life in a Red Cross camp in northern Ethiopia and her desperate parents who walked a hundred miles to bring her there for help have their claim on us, no matter what terrible things their political leaders are doing.

Finally, I believe that the most immediate way to *feel* that unity of blood and some of the shared pain that might move us to do something is to *fast*, to go without food and water ourselves until we genuinely sense how close we all are to death if our sustenance were cut off. And regular fasting—and, in the Mormon tradition, giving the money saved to feed others—seems to me the most direct and practical way both of solving world hunger and of building human empathy to the point of solving other problems. Suppose that once a week the one hundred million Americans who are *overfed*, for whom diets and reducing would improve their health (many of whom are spending money in an attempt to lose weight), would simply fast for two meals and give ten dollars to famine relief. That one billion dollars per week, used with only average intelligence and effectiveness, could solve *all* the major problems of starvation in the world. And if we could get others, beginning in Europe, then Russia, then the fortunate in the needy countries themselves, to follow our example (which is the one motivating force that would work), we could move on to long-term economic improvement and the solution of other problems such as health and housing and education. Fasting has an intrinsic power that can expand our vision and action into other areas, into dealing with political oppression and competition—even, I believe, into confronting the fearsomely competitive arms races of the world.

Listen, again, to Isaiah, who spoke the Lord’s condemnation of ceremonial, long-faced fasting and his description of the only fasting that is acceptable:

Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

(Isa. 58:6-7)

I believe this last line refers not only to our tendency to hide from the immediate families in which we live but also to cut ourselves off from the larger human family, from the one blood and flesh we are all part of, according to Paul and the biologists.

We need to fast so starvation can end in Ethiopia and all over the world. We need to fast so we can develop the empathy and motivation to become one flesh with others, even with Ethiopian—and Polish and Russian—Communists, so that there can be some genuine basis for the trust necessary to end the arms race. We need to fast so that we can retain a remission of our own sins as King Benjamin taught, by learning mercy and by changing ourselves so that we do not add to the world's evil through seeking mere justice, demanding retribution, or merely ignoring human needs. The Lord is clear in his promises about what will follow a true fasting of the kind he has called for. He describes our late twentieth-century plight and a way through it:

Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward.

Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity;

And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday:

. . . thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.

(Isa. 58:8-10, 12)

The Lord has, in these verses, drawn a straight line from fasting for the hungry to becoming a "repairer of the breach" between us and Russia—to preserving peace that will "raise up the foundations of many generations" instead of dooming those generations to nuclear destruction. The Lord is describing, with the extra power of poetic language, a precise and inexorable moral law: mercy begets and

multiplies mercy; sacrificial giving will beget and multiply kindness, understanding, patience, brotherhood—even between enemies. We have all seen and can understand a corollary moral law—that force and vengeance and destruction beget force and vengeance and destruction. There is a straight line from the 1969 My Lai massacre, where frightened, exasperated, battle-weary American soldiers killed Vietnamese women and children, to the wholesale slaughter of Cambodian educated and urban classes by Pol Pot's rural Communist revolutionaries in 1975 and the slaughter of those revolutionaries in turn by Vietnamese invaders in 1979. That kind of line goes from the blitz of London in 1940 to the destruction of Berlin in 1944, from the vicious bombing of Coventry's civilians and cathedral to the even more vicious and unnecessary destruction of Dresden, of 130,000 of its people and all its churches, from Pearl Harbor to Hiroshima to enduring, peace-threatening fear in the Russians and Chinese that we might drop nuclear bombs on them at any time.

We have seen again and again the Lord's promise fulfilled, that they that sow the wind shall reap the whirlwind (see Hosea 8:7). Can we not exercise a particle of faith in his equally infallible promise that they that cast their bread upon the waters will find it after many days (see Eccl. 11:1). That promise, and the associated penalty, were pronounced again in these latter days. In the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord makes absolutely clear that he has provided a way for us to do away with hunger and want, but that it must be done in his own way, which is "that the poor shall be exalted, in that the rich are made low"—not by taxation or force but through our own irresistible moral convictions: "For the earth is full, and there is enough and to spare; yea, I prepared all things, and have given unto the children of men to be agents unto themselves" (D&C 104:17).

NOTES

Eugene England is a professor of English at Brigham Young University. An early version of this essay was given as the keynote speech for the University of Utah rally in support of the National Fast Day for Ethiopia, 10 November 1984.

¹Albert Camus, *The Plague*, trans. Stuart Gilbert (New York: Modern Library, 1948), 116–18.

²*Ibid.*, 196–97.

³Spencer W. Kimball, "The False Gods We Worship," *Ensign* 6 (June 1976): 6.

⁴*The Merchant of Venice*, 4.1.199–200, 187.

⁵*Deseret News*, 10 December 1856, cited in Eugene England, *Brother Brigham* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980), 175.

⁶Robert A. Evans, "From Reflection to Action," in *Human Rights: A Dialogue between the First and Third Worlds* (New York: Orbis, 1983), 242.

⁷Kimball, "The False Gods We Worship," 6.

⁸Eugene England, "Keeping Christmas," *BYU Today* 40 (February 1986): 16.



Dark Continent by Alex B. Darais



This painting, produced several years after a poem by the same title, personifies the universal and ceaseless conflict between the forces of good and evil. Although the good, pathetically outnumbered, appears to be losing another battle, man still stubbornly and hopefully believes that truth will ultimately win the war. This struggle is indeed a sad and frightening spectacle, but when right is ruthlessly killed, as it often is, in a noble effort to do good (as in this particular instance in which William McChesney, "a 'heart of Africa' missionary affiliated with the worldwide evangelization crusade at Washington," meets a horrendous death with 206 others), it indeed becomes a tragedy that repeats once again the demise of the Savior.



Resurrection Series: "And on the Third Day He Shall Rise" by Robert L. Marshall

Robert L. Marshall is an associate professor of art at Brigham Young University.

Love at Home and Peace Abroad: A Breakfast Conversation between Frieda and Craig

Richard H. Cracroft

A review of the "Special Issue on Peace." *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*. Edited by Linda King Newell and L. Jackson Newell. Vol. 17, no. 4. Winter 1984. 159 pp. \$7.00.

(Setting: It is late spring. Frieda and Craig are seated at the breakfast table on their posh patio at the rear of a posh home somewhere near unposh Ensign Peak, in Salt Lake City.)

Craig: (Stirring Nutra Sweet into his lukewarm Pero [no hot drinks in Craig's tummy]) . . . I'm still tired because I stayed up until 2:00 A.M. reading the peace issue of *Dialogue*, just as you told me to.

Frieda: And you always do what I tell you to. And . . . ?

Craig: And it's just as I told you at dinner, Dovey—the Lord said in D&C 87 that after the Civil War broke out in South Carolina, war is going to be "poured out upon all nations." And it's happened; war is inevitable—it's in the cards, and no amount of rhetoric by any number of people is gonna change that one jot or tittle. Pass the fiber-packed breakfast cereal, kiddo.

Frieda: Why eat that foul-tasting cereal, Schatzlein? You'll die when your time comes—it's in the cards. And no amount of exercise, and certainly no number of bowls of Ickki-Bits is gonna change that one iota.

Craig: Ummmpph! (grimacing—whether at the comment or the breakfast cereal is uncertain). I get your drift.

Frieda: Is that really all you have to say about *Dialogue's* excellent war and peace issue? You're the family poet—didn't you like Michael R. Collings's "Southern Idaho Summer"?

Craig: (Calming) The one about rural life in Idaho, punctuated by passing references to . . .

Frieda: . . . the various wars and rumors of wars from Korea to Sputnik to Vietnam and the space race? Yeah. I liked that, though I was moved even more by the Kathy Evans poem about tulips, red skies, white light and sky—a poetic depiction of the destruction of children in an atomic holocaust.

Craig: “. . . the windows are red./The light of our blood falls through the walls./All of us touch the sky./The children are blooming in the window,/ and the tulips are in flames on the ledge of the world.” The poem moved me, too—and so did Emma Lou Thayne's "How Much for the Earth? A Suite of Poems: About a Time for Considering"—you remember, the several poems, or "considerations" about her life which launch her into more considerations about the impact of nuclear war on children and the elderly, on all of us. Toward the end, thinking about a visit to Dachau and its signs proclaiming "Never Again," she transforms the ovens of Dachau into mushroom clouds and cries, "More than NEVER AGAIN—/NEVER!"

Frieda: And she ends it lyrically, too. (Reads)

It's time. It's time we said together
Yes to life. To ashes, simply No.

(Closing *Dialogue*) I think the whole issue is tastefully and thoughtfully done. I liked the hymn, by Charles S. Wain and Frank Wright, "Renounce War, Proclaim Peace," but it is probably too blatant in proclaiming an idea that hasn't really been widely accepted in the Church, so I don't think we'll be singing it at stake conference. (Handing him a warm, buttered English muffin) I liked the art, too—the cover by Gary E. Smith, called "Fire Dance," is moving. Look (she holds up the issue)—he evokes the Mormon sense of eternality and family, dancing in a circle, holding hands in a setting in the desert West—but in the background, there, is the ominous mushrooming cloud burgeoning into the heavens. Powerful.

Craig: Frightening. (Pauses) I liked the other art, too. My favorite was Linda Murray Anderson's "Amazons," and I liked the work by Marilyn Miller and Royden Card and Trevor Southey, but I leave it to you to understand the geometric sketches of Allen Bishop. You're right, though—the art adds a great deal to the effectiveness of the whole issue.

Frieda: You're evading the issue, though. Did you like the articles? Did they help you to understand the Church's position on war? Do you really think that there is nothing we can do about war—that Satan has unleashed a fury and it's our destiny to suffer from the horror of war?

Craig: I don't know how to answer that. I mean, Kent E. Robson, of Utah State University, makes "The Magnitude of the Nuclear Arms Race" frighteningly clear and makes me feel that the old bugaboo Soviet Union is less culpable than I had thought and that the United States' own skirts—I'm sorry about that feminist image—own jeans—are not as clean as we would like. But Pierre Blais, in his article, "The Enduring Paradox: Mormon Attitudes toward War and Peace," not only makes a very helpful review of recent articles in which LDS authors such as Steven Hildreth, Gary Browning, Edwin B. Firmage, Eugene England, Ronald W. Walker, and Stephen L. Tanner discuss war and peace and LDS theology, but goes on to assert, and demonstrate, to my discomfort this morning at one o'clock, that our most cherished ideas as Mormons on war and peace "are misleading and even dangerous." He takes on a number of standard Mormon views, from authority and obedience to patriotism, Capitalism, Cleon Skousen, and the Republican Party and concludes that "the distortion of Mormon beliefs into attitudes supporting nationalism and the use of force are a form of self-deception and intellectual laziness"—pretty strong words—and I don't think I'll quote him in high priest group meeting—or at our study group, if you don't mind. Actually, his is a pretty standard liberal attack on traditional Mormon positions, but he handles it very well.

Frieda: (Looking at him with surprise) You've come a long way for a boy who voted for Richard Nixon both times and cried when they didn't run him again after Watergate. (Pauses) But I agree that Blais's article, while discomfiting, is a thought-provoker. But so is D. Michael Quinn's article on "The Mormon Church and the Spanish-American War: An End to Selective Pacifism."

Craig: Yeah, I think that his survey of the history of the Church's record on war is, well, surprising. He points out . . . pass the marmalade . . . that despite the frequent and very notable examples of militarism in the early Church, the "renounce war and proclaim peace" pronouncement by the Prophet Joseph provided at least as many notable examples of what he calls "selective pacifism," from Joseph Smith to Brigham Young to leaders at the turn-of-the-century. Quinn asserts that his "pacifistic tradition of Mormonism," or at least the ambivalence between pacifism and militarism, came into final focus with the Spanish–American War. The war was, Quinn insists, "a crucial event in [the Mormon] tradition of selective pacifism," and after the attempts by such Apostles as Brigham Young, Jr., to dissuade the Church from supporting the war (only to be chastened by President Wilford Woodruff, who saw the opportunity to prove Mormon loyalty), there was an instant erosion of "the political kingdom of God," in order that the Church might enjoy "greater security in a previously hostile world." After 1898, the individual Mormon might opt for pacifism or war, but the Church had recognized the supremacy of national authority and had, in effect, given up "the right to determine when and where Mormons would fight and die."

Frieda: (Assuming her *Fascinating Womanhood* look) Oh, Schatzi, I so admire how you can quote things after only one reading.

Craig: You'd be able to, Dovey, if you were a high priest.

Frieda: (Musing, over the English muffin) For me the Mormon-oriented pieces were very interesting, and I knew they would be for you, history buff that you are, but I thought the most provocative essays were the several which focused on non-Mormon (we don't say *Gentile*, anymore, do we?) interests. Somehow, the essay by Ira Chernus, "Mythology and Nuclear Strategy" . . .

Craig: . . . You mean the one that talks about "psychic numbing" and "myths" as ways we adopt of dealing with the enormity of nuclear devastation? . . .

Frieda: Yes—showing that numbing and mythologizing cause political paralysis, and calling for a breaking of the vicious cycle, while pointing out how the whole problem is so new that no one has found a new mythology to deal with it. Fascinating. But even more thought-provoking, for me at least . . .

Craig: I note the becoming and submissive—and unusual—humility, which means you're insecure about what you are about to say. . . .

Frieda: (Throwing a half-eaten muffin at him) Stop that! I was going to say, humbly, that the John F. Kane article on the Peace Pastoral of the American Catholic Bishops and Paul Bock's article, "The Ethics of Deterrence," were intriguing; they work so well together. Kane analyzes the Bishops' Pastoral and Vatican II, and the "privitization" of religion in America so that I, who have never really understood any of this, can get a hold on it, and then he shows how important this is to all of us, especially to those who believe. And then Bock took me into deeper—and very interesting—waters to show how the German and Dutch Protestant churches have been swimming through the same issues and compares their efforts with those of the American Catholic Bishops and discusses the tension between two directions—between those who say Christians can no longer work for peace and endorse possession, by any state, of nuclear weaponry and those who say that such deterrence is a continuing, though uncomfortable necessity.

Craig: (Talking through his muffin) That was a mouthful, Dovey! Those two articles were harder-going for me (the hour was late) than the very personal essays, which focused the whole argument for me in a very meaningful way.

Frieda: You mean the one by the German soldier and the other by the American Ph.D. student (and grandmother) who spent four months in Ireland?

Craig: Yes. The first is, you recall, Uwe Drews's "Thoughts of a Modern Centurion," about the LDS career soldier and his confusion (and the confusion of other German Latter-day Saints) about the Bishops' pastoral letter in West Germany and the stand, or nonstand, of the LDS church on the issue. Drews wrestles with the question of pacifism, concluding that it is "a moral and political imperative" for a nation to keep the peace, and insists that "a government threatened by armed aggression, whether just or unjust, *must* defend its people." But, he concludes, "the arms race is a dangerous act of aggression which does not provide the security it promises" and as a strategy is justifiable only in tandem with a determination "to pursue arms control and disarmament." It seems to me that nuclear warfare has added a dimension to war which takes us beyond Book of Mormon politics. (He pauses,

stirs his Pero, and continues.) The second essay you mention is “Making Sense of the Senseless: An Irish Education,” by Claudia W. Harris, an account by an Emory University Ph.D. candidate who, during her four months’ stay, manages despite the pain of a broken ankle, to interview over one hundred Irishmen and see sixty plays—but, more importantly, she comes to understand the tragedy of Ireland firsthand, in the north and the south. “What for me might have begun as an academic interest and a delight in cultural diversity, for these people is a life and death struggle,” she writes. “It could never be less than that for me now. . . . There are really no villains here,” she adds, “although the society is so polarized that people are convinced there are.”

But you failed, Dovey, to mention the other two personal essays. Don’t forget Glen Willett Clark’s fragmented but interesting essay in which he traces the changing attitudes of Americans and Mormons towards war, as reflected in the life of his father, Walter Edward Clark, born in 1889 (and still living). Clark, *fi!s* (you admire my use of French, don’t you?), discusses Swarthmore College, which renounced greatness on the football field (the Fighting Quakers) and a “frenetic social life” in sororities and fraternities to find “its Inner Light as it sought merely to educate,” and urges that the Latter-day Saints follow a similar path from bellicose attitudes towards repentance and a shunning of violence.

Frieda: Did you notice throughout the issue that, despite the Quinn article’s suggesting a tradition of pacifism in the earlier Church, most of the writers agree that the middle-class American position of “might makes right” and “Manifest Destiny justifies” seems to prevail among the Latter-day Saints?

Craig: The whole thing made me feel like a Latter-day Jingoist.

Frieda: Me too. Oh, the other essay you referred to a minute ago is “Where Everyone Builds Bombs,” by Benita Brown—about how it is to live in Richland, Washington, where everyone builds nuclear weaponry—or at least makes the plutonium for the people in Los Alamos and Rocky Flats. She raises the questions which most people in town avoid—but really answers none of them.

Craig: How could she? There are no answers—we build bombs because it provides a good living, is an accepted part of the system of

deterrence, and because most of us manage to avoid confronting these matters. . . .

Frieda: Until *Dialogue*, in an excellent issue, brings its readers face-to-face with some uncomfortable facts.

Craig: Exactly—truths that strike at the very core of our complacency. Truths that urge us to do something—until we ask, “What?” and realize that our very faith, our very way of life conspire together to return us to complacency and to . . . pass the cream, will you? . . . to be content with saying, like a Calvinist, “Well, it’s in the hands of the Lord, and I can’t do anything about it.”

Frieda: Well, I think that reading the issue brought about some deep-down changes in my thinking. But whether I’ll *do* something about the issues remains to be seen. In the meantime, how about a little more orange juice, Schatzlein?

Craig: And, in the meantime, how about turning to more substantive issues—like, when are *Dialogue* and its sister journals *ever* going to get caught up to date?

Frieda: I think it’s a ploy to delay the Second Coming. The Lord wouldn’t dare come when his Church-oriented magazines were still owing subscribers. . . . (Drifting again) I just hope that being burnt as stubble isn’t a metaphorical expression for a nuclear ashheap.

Craig: Dear, dear, cease and desist. If you keep up this kind of intensive interest in such issues, even *BYU Studies* will be forced to come up with a Peace issue.

Frieda: That’ll be the day—probably the day *they* get their issues up to date. Then I’ll take out Second-Coming Insurance. With Beneficial, of course.

Craig: Another glass of juice?

Peace, Be Still

Lewd voices clamor in rude succession,
Peddling their venial wares in a wanton world.

Doom cryers wail the world's wounds . . .

While statesmen tender temporary respite,
Computers list statistical catastrophe
In ordered columns:

Overpopulation Venereal Calamity Hunger Disease

Mars rolls rocks over Lebanese hills,
Erecting monuments of rubble and wreckage.

Who can hear, in all the din,
The whisper that still floats
Through the same rudimentary air,
Over the same range of hills,
Where a new star once passed?
Who can hear "Come unto me"?

Where is the "All is well"?

Lambs feed on those hillsides.
One shakes his head,
Snorting in annoyance
As he hears the drone of war engines,
Then goes back to grazing.
His shepherd looks fearfully
Into the sky
And takes refuge near a rock,
His staff across his knees.

Who can hear the whisper?

"My peace I leave with you,
Not as the world giveth . . ."

"There is enough, and to spare."

—Harold K. Moon

War, Peace, and Arms Control: A Review Essay

W. Ladd Hollist

GEORGE F. KENNAN. *The Nuclear Delusion: Soviet-American Relations in the Atomic Age*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1982. xxx; 208 pp. \$4.95 paperback.

STROBE TALBOTT. *Deadly Gambits: The Reagan Administration and the Stalemate in Nuclear Arms Control*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984. xiv; 380 pp. \$17.95 hardback. \$7.95 paperback.

McGEORGE BUNDY, GEORGE F. KENNAN, ROBERT S. McNAMARA, and GERARD SMITH. "The President's Choice: Star Wars or Arms Control." *Foreign Affairs* 63 (Winter 1984-85): 264-68.

Reviewed by W. Ladd Hollist, professor of political science and director of graduate studies for the David M. Kennedy Center for International and Area Studies at Brigham Young University.

OVERVIEW

In the 1960s and into the 1970s, arms control was considered essential to our national security and the prospect of enduring world peace. Restraining development and deployment of nuclear weapons was on the "short list" of policy preferences endorsed by most political leaders and citizens alike. We welcomed the Test Ban Treaty, the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty as important restraints on nuclear weapons and significant first steps toward peace. These agreements, we reasoned, lessened the probability of nuclear war.

With the Reagan presidency the notion of peace through negotiation, or the spirit of *détente*, has lost favor. In its place a commitment to war avoidance through political-military (nuclear) strength has assumed center stage in our nation's security policy. Consistent with this commitment, the United States since 1980 has augmented its armaments,¹ emphasizing development and deployment of nuclear weapons, more rapidly than during any previous time in its peacetime history.

The flurry of anti-Soviet rhetoric, pride in a "stronger" America, and criticism of past arms control agreements have muffled voices favoring restraint of nuclear weapons through negotiation.² On the

premise that deemphasizing the arms control process is contrary to both our national security and world peace, I here review two books and one major article that applaud negotiations in general and arms control in particular. Each work builds upon the premise that the prospect of nuclear war is imminently greater in the absence of arms negotiations than when reasonable, give-and-take bargaining is actively enjoined.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS: A NATIONAL SECURITY DELUSION

In 1945, George F. Kennan, the second-ranking civilian diplomat in the American embassy in Moscow, was appalled that the Soviet Union's westward extension of its boundaries "had been permitted, with scarcely a murmur of protest from the Western side."³ Disturbed almost to the point of despair, Kennan sent to Washington the so-called "long telegram" of February 1946, detailing his view that Moscow's territorial advances must not go unchecked. His ideas were soon widely circulated in an article which he published in *Foreign Affairs* (1947) and which he signed "X," choosing not to identify himself as author. He there wrote: "In these circumstances it is clear that the main element of any United States policy toward the Soviet Union must be that of a long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies."⁴

While standing firm in his conviction that countering Soviet expansion ought to be a major *end* of American foreign policy, Kennan opposed the *means* chosen to secure that end. In his recent book, *The Nuclear Delusion: Soviet-American Relations in the Atomic Age*, Kennan notes that in 1948 he hoped that negotiations would soon begin to remove peacefully "the essentially dangerous division of the European continent."⁵ But negotiations were not to be; the Allies chose another course:

It was decided that the main thrust of Western policy must now be the creation of a military alliance directed against the Soviet Union. . . . Gone, now, was all serious thought of a *negotiated* political solution to the problems of the continent. . . . Instead of having to pursue complicated political solutions, we could now comfortably revert to the familiar patterns of old-fashioned military rivalry, only trying this time to be better prepared than we had been on the earlier occasions to confront this supposedly aggressive opponent.⁶

That the United States would eschew negotiations in favor of a military alliance against the Soviet Union troubled Kennan because

nuclear weapons were to be the core of our military strength. As early as 1949, Kennan wrote that he “considered the device [nuclear weapons] one we ought never again to use, or even to plan to use.”⁷ When in response to the Soviet detonation of a nuclear device the United States hastened research and development of the hydrogen bomb, Kennan forcefully argued (1950) that America should “deplore the existence and abhor the use of these weapons; that we have no intention of initiating their use against anyone.”⁸

Secretary of State Dean Acheson rejected Kennan’s attempt to “persuade our government to pause at this particular brink [the hydrogen bomb].”⁹ Soon thereafter, Kennan departed government service.

Kennan’s endorsement of negotiation and opposition to nuclear weapons spans nearly forty years. For him, basing America’s national security on nuclear strength is both unsound and morally offensive. In an essay entitled “A Christian’s View of the Arms Race,” written in 1982 and published as the concluding chapter of *The Nuclear Delusion*, Kennan denounces nuclear weapons use:

Readiness to use nuclear weapons against other human beings—against people whom we do not know, whom we have never seen, and whose guilt or innocence it is not for us to establish—and, in doing so, to place in jeopardy the natural structure upon which all civilization rests, as though the safety and the perceived interests of our own generation were more important than everything that has ever taken place or could take place in civilization: this is nothing less than a presumption, a blasphemy, an indignity—an indignity of monstrous dimensions—offered to God!¹⁰

Kennan believes that we are deluded in the belief that nuclear weapons contribute to civilization’s security and future.¹¹ Nuclear weapons are not instruments of peace but instruments of unconscionable destruction. We ought not to countenance even risk of their use, a risk heightened by failure to negotiate their restraint and possible elimination.

Still, perhaps because we have avoided nuclear holocaust for nearly forty years,¹² and perhaps because we have come to believe that nuclear strength is our surest defense against Soviet aggression, we are deaf to moral arguments that should move us to vigilantly and patiently pursue meaningful arms control negotiations. We have become weary of negotiations; we perceive détente as but a vehicle used by the Soviet Union to “advance its view of a desired international order, one dominated by Moscow.”¹³ Believing as we do, we justify our expanding arsenal of nuclear devices.

The contention that nuclear weapons do not ensure against nuclear war within acceptable bounds of risk, uncertainty, and error cannot be readily dismissed. Our reliance upon a strategy of peace through nuclear strength is inadequately complemented by the serious pursuit of negotiated, verifiable restraint in the further development and deployment of ever more sophisticated and destructive nuclear devices. Moreover, who can deny Kennan's characterization of the use of nuclear weapons as morally offensive? We ought to be able to secure our interests through more justifiable means.

CURRENT STALEMATE

In *Deadly Gambits: The Reagan Administration and the Stalemate in Nuclear Arms Control*, Strobe Talbott reveals that the 1983 breakdown in nuclear arms negotiations was not entirely, nor even principally, a product of Soviet intransigence. The Reagan Administration was as much to blame for the interruption in negotiations as were the Russians.

Talbott documents that those in the first term of the Reagan Administration who assumed responsibility for arms control were extremely critical of the whole enterprise. These officials set about to "revolutionize" arms control discussions with the Soviets: henceforth the U.S. stance would be that of a tough negotiator unwilling to alter its arms control demands. If the Soviets wanted agreement, then they would have to assent to the U.S. position.

Nowhere was this hard-line posture more evident than in the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) talks. At issue was the deployment by the United States of cruise and Pershing II missiles in Europe as a counterbalance to the Soviet Union's already deployed SS-20 missiles. In intriguing detail Talbott recounts how in private conversations in the woods, in the botanical garden across from the site of formal negotiations, and in restaurants, Paul Nitze, the United States' chief negotiator, and his Soviet counterpart, Yuli Kvitsinsky, fashioned a deal that each agreed to represent as the proposal of the other but which actually they jointly shaped.¹⁴ Kvitsinsky, consulting with his superiors, allowed that the Soviets might reduce the number of SS-20 missiles targeted at Europe by two-thirds if the United States would not deploy any Pershing II missiles. Deployment of American cruise missiles was to be allowed.¹⁵

Thus informally derived, the proposed agreement was hand delivered by the two negotiators to their governments. Describing the

turmoil with which the proposal was received in Washington, Talbott notes that the outcome of the “bureaucratic guerilla warfare” enjoined over this issue within the Reagan Administration was the rejection of the deal. Senior officials in the Department of State thought the deal promising, demurring only briefly to admit that it was outside the negotiating instructions that Nitze had originally received. From the outset, Caspar Weinberger, joined by Richard Perle, the Administration’s strongest opponent of arms control, fought against the agreement. Repeatedly Weinberger and Perle reasserted the original negotiating instructions given to Nitze: either the Soviet Union agrees to the option of “zero arms” in Europe or we deploy cruise and Pershing II missiles as scheduled.¹⁶

Had the Soviets agreed to the “zero arms” proposal, Talbott demonstrates, the USSR would have found herself without nuclear missiles to counter French and British land-based nuclear weapons that the original U.S. proposal would have left untouched. To agree was to give the United States a one-sided arms control victory. Predictably, the Soviets did not accept the original U.S. position, and soon they too disavowed interest in the Nitze/Kvitsinsky deal.

Similar evidence attests to Talbott’s conclusion that the Reagan Administration was only slightly less obstructionist in the Strategic Arms Reductions Talks (START). As with INF talks, the apparent intention of the Administration, orchestrated by the Department of Defense, was to buy time for rearmament, eschewing any serious negotiation of arms control agreements until the United States raised its military strength. Talbott concludes:

In both negotiations, the Administration’s principal concern was to keep military programs on track—the Pershing II and Tomahawk missiles in INF and an ambitious “strategic modernization” program in START. That meant the Administration had to be pushed to the bargaining table by political forces.¹⁷

The evidence Talbott provides in support of his position—that the United States deliberately slowed the INF and START arms control process—leaves little doubt that during its first term the Reagan Administration courted the public image of a serious negotiator but rejected potentially beneficial arms agreements in the interest of augmenting its weapons supply. The costs of such action, in Talbott’s opinion, have been unacceptably high:

The Administration’s conduct of the INF talks and START brought about an unprecedented crisis in the already strained quarter-century-old arms-control process. And the crisis in arms control contributed to three

others: in the alliance between the U.S. and Western Europe; in the partnership between the executive and legislative branches of the U.S. government; and in the Soviet–American relationship.¹⁸

STAR WARS AND ARMS CONTROL

After fifteen months the United States and the Soviet Union have returned to Geneva, presumably to negotiate arms restraint. However, it remains unlikely that they will readily set aside their differences. Recent negotiation failures, incriminations declared by each against the other, the notably strained Soviet–American relationship, and ongoing, ever more rapid arms buildup surely complicate the prospect of future meaningful negotiations. Yet as great as these obstacles to successful negotiations are, our refusal to negotiate “Star Wars” poses the greatest impediment to furthering the arms control process.

In an important article in *Foreign Affairs*, McGeorge Bundy, George F. Kennan, Robert S. McNamara, and Gerard Smith compellingly demonstrate that the President may choose Star Wars or arms control, but not both. They further assert that if we pursue Star Wars we have little guarantee that it will accomplish what is hoped. And even if it were successful in its stated mission, numerous other means are available to the Soviets to deliver nuclear weapons against the United States.

Star Wars “cannot be achieved,” they contend. To this point, they argue, there is “no prospect for a leak-proof defense against strategic ballistic missiles alone, and it entirely excludes from its range any effort to limit the effectiveness of other systems—bomber aircraft, cruise missiles, and smuggled warheads.”¹⁹ While the probability of “success” is very low, the likelihood that the Soviets can build upon already existing capabilities to penetrate such a defense is very high.

As troubling as this concern is, their most compelling argument is that “precisely because the weapons are so terrible neither of the two superpowers can tolerate the notion of ‘impotence’ in the face of the arsenal of the opponent.” Consequently, any serious development of Star Wars will “stimulate the most energetic Soviet efforts to ensure the continued ability of Soviet warheads to get through.” The authors firmly conclude that “it is fanciful in the extreme to suppose that the prospect of any new American deployment which could undermine the effectiveness of Soviet missile forces will not be met by a most determined and sustained response.”²⁰ Obviously, the Soviets

will not agree to limit their offensive nuclear weapons in the face of our commitment to Star Wars. Indeed, the Strategic Defense Initiative, or Star Wars, will likely prove as obstructionist to present arms control bargaining as was the "zero arms" option to the Intermediate Nuclear Forces talks.

Still, some contend, if Star Wars can be developed, we may be able to defend against a significant portion of the Soviet nuclear arsenal. However, even if Star Wars could achieve part of this objective, to commit ourselves to such a defense is fraught with extraordinary risk. Bundy, Kennan, McNamara, and Smith assert that a Star Wars defense "must work perfectly the very first time, since it can never be tested in advance as a full system."²¹ Moreover, it "must be triggered almost instantly, because the crucial boost phase of Soviet missiles lasts less than five minutes from the moment of launch." In that period "there must be detection, decision, aim, attack and kill."²² Given the nature of such a system, they conclude, "It is hard to imagine a scheme further removed from the kind of tested reliability and clear presidential control that we have hitherto required of systems involving nuclear danger."²³

They summarily conclude that the "President's program offers no promise of effective defense against anything but ballistic missiles," and since this leaves numerous other nuclear capabilities undefended, the risk of nuclear crisis will persist despite the heavy costs of Star Wars. Therefore, "the inescapable reality is that there is literally no hope that Star Wars can make nuclear weapons obsolete."²⁴ Moreover, Star Wars "will destroy the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, our most important arms control agreement; it will directly stimulate both offensive and defensive systems on the Soviet side; and as long as it continues it will darken the prospect for significant improvement in the currently frigid relations between Moscow and Washington. It will thus sharpen the very anxieties the President wants to reduce."²⁵

CONCLUSION

Together, these authors convincingly advance the case for arms negotiations as a means to furthering our national security and promoting world peace. A policy of negotiating in the hope of securing world peace, beginning with nuclear arms restraint, by itself likely will not secure our national interest or assure world peace. But neither should it be dismissed in favor of the uncertain, morally questionable "security" that we believe nuclear weapons provide. At the very least, we ought

to listen to the "case for arms control" before we consent to the case against it. These books by George F. Kennan and Strobe Talbott and the article in *Foreign Affairs* deserve our careful study.

NOTES

¹Since 1980, defense spending has taken an increasing share of the federal budget while the percentage going to social programs has declined. For fiscal year 1986, defense spending accounted for nearly 26 percent of total government spending, compared to 23 percent in 1980. During that same period, entitlements (including social security, Medicare, and other assistance programs) dropped from 47 percent to 43 percent. In constant dollars, defense spending has increased 31 percent during the past six years while social spending has gone up only 11 percent (see U.S. Office of Management and Budget, *The United States Budget in Brief, 1987* [Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1986]; also see U.S. Congress, House, *Report on the Subdivision of Budget Totals for Fiscal Year 1986*, 99th Cong., 1st sess., 1985, H. Rept. 333).

²See Seymour Weiss, "The Case against Arms Control," *Commentary* 78 (November 1984): 27.

³George F. Kennan, *The Nuclear Delusion: Soviet-American Relations in the Atomic Age* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982), x.

⁴Kennan's statement is cited in Charles W. Kegley, Jr., and Eugene R. Wittkopf, *American Foreign Policy: Pattern and Process*, 2d ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982), 60.

⁵Kennan, *Nuclear Delusion*, xiv.

⁶*Ibid.*, xiii; italics added.

⁷*Ibid.*, xv.

⁸*Ibid.*, xvi.

⁹*Ibid.*, xvii.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 206-7.

¹¹In an address entitled, "Let Us Have Peace," reported in the *Deseret News* on 30 August 1945, J. Reuben Clark said, "We are being generously dosed with that sovereign narcotic . . . that to ensure peace we must maintain a great army and gigantic armaments. But this ignores, indeed conceals, the unvarying historical fact that big armies have always brought, not peace, but wars. . . . Armament does not spell peace." (J. Reuben Clark's statement is also cited in Edwin Brown Firmage and Christopher L. Blakesley, "J. Reuben Clark, Jr., Law and International Order," *Brigham Young University Studies* 13 [Spring 1973]: 334. The sentence "Armament does not spell peace" is not in the *BYU Studies* article.) Admittedly, President Clark was not speaking specifically of nuclear weapons, but the sentiment is very similar to that expressed by Kennan.

¹²While we have avoided nuclear holocaust to this point, we have on occasion been on the brink of that possibility.

¹³Weiss, "The Case against Arms Control," 21.

¹⁴According to Talbott, Nitze admitted that the written proposal was 80 percent his and 20 percent Kvitinsky's (Strobe Talbott, *Deadly Gambits: The Reagan Administration and the Stalemate in Nuclear Arms Control* [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984]).

¹⁵There were other aspects of the proposed agreement, but this was the heart of it.

¹⁶Talbott's evidence suggests that some in the Administration, specifically Richard Perle, reasoned that the "zero arms" option would not be acceptable to the Soviet Union, that the Soviets would reject the deal, that the United States would appear more interested in arms control than the Soviets, thereby overcoming political opposition to its policies, and that as a consequence the U.S.A. could continue its rearmament without significant dissent. Talbott quotes Walter Slocombe, Perle's predecessor in the Pentagon: "There's a school in this Administration that hopes the proposal [zero arms] is so brilliant that the Soviets will never accept it and that rather than advancing the negotiations, it will stop them" (see Talbott, *Deadly Gambits*, 80).

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 209.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, xii.

¹⁹McGeorge Bundy et al., "The President's Choice: Star Wars or Arms Control," *Foreign Affairs* 63 (Winter 1984-85): 265.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 267.

²¹*Ibid.*

²²*Ibid.*, 267-68.

²³*Ibid.*, 268.

²⁴*Ibid.*, 269.

²⁵*Ibid.*, 269-70.

Book Reviews

NICHOLAS RIASANOVSKY. *A History of Russia*. 2d ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1984. xx; 695 pp. \$39.95 hardback. \$24.95 paperback.

W. BRUCE LINCOLN. *The Romanovs: Autocrats of All the Russias*. New York: Doubleday, 1983. 864 pp. \$14.95.

DONALD W. TREADGOLD. *Twentieth Century Russia*. 5th ed. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1981. xiii; 555 pp. \$22.50.

M. K. DZIEWANOWSKI. *A History of Soviet Russia*. 2d ed. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1985. x; 406 pp. \$23.95.

LOUIS FISCHER. *The Life of Lenin*. New York: Harper & Row, 1964. viii; 703 pp. Out of Print.

BERTRAM D. WOLFE. *Three Who Made a Revolution*. New York: Stein & Day, 1984. 676 pp. \$24.95 hardback. \$12.95 paperback.

NINA TUMARKIN. *Lenin Lives!: The Lenin Cult in Soviet Russia*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983. xiii; 315 pp. \$20.00.

ROBERT C. TUCKER. *Stalin As Revolutionary, 1879-1929: A Study in History and Personality*. New York: Norton and Co., 1973. xx; 519 pp. \$12.95 hardback. \$10.95 paperback.

ALEXANDER SOLZHENITSYN. *Gulag Archipelago 1918-1956: An Experiment in Literary Investigation*. 3 vols. Translated by Thomas P. Whitney. New York: Harper & Row, 1974-75. \$14.95.

ROY MEDVEDEV. *Let History Judge: The Origins and Consequences of Stalinism*. Edited by David Joravsky and George Haupt. Translated by Colleen Taylor. New York: Random, 1973. xxxiv; 566; xviii pp. \$12.50.

Reviewed by Rodney D. Bohac, assistant professor of history at Brigham Young University.

Recent developments in Soviet–American relations have heightened popular interest in Russian and Soviet history. Those curious about this topic find it difficult to decide which of the recently published histories will be valuable. Observant readers will quickly recognize that many of these publications single out violent and grotesque aspects of Russian history or simply gossip about the personal lives of the tsars. There are, however, well-written studies of the Russian and Soviet society that provide a more balanced view of the Russian past.

One of the best introductions to the history of prerevolutionary Russia is a textbook, Nicholas Riasanovsky's *A History of Russia*, which scholars have used in their classrooms for over twenty years. The textbook's popularity stems from its clear, concise style, judicious blend of interpretation and narrative, and insightful treatment of numerous spheres of Russian history.

Unlike many popular histories, Riasanovsky's work confronts historical issues. The author describes the differing positions of historians on important issues, analyzes the strengths of their arguments, and offers his own conclusions. The textbook never addresses any issue without providing the narrative detail that gives meaning to abstract analysis. When discussing the fourteenth-century unification of central Russia under Moscow's leadership, for instance, Riasanovsky does not simply list the factors responsible for Moscow's success; he also describes the actual methods employed to acquire new territory.

The book treats not only political history but also investigates cultural, economic, and diplomatic history. In *A History of Russia*, one learns about the origins of the unique style of early Russian church architecture and the factors that led to Russia's victory over Napoleon. The book, however, fails to discuss the family and community life of Russia's social classes and instead concentrates on the legal status of these groups.

The treatment of a wide diversity of topics sometimes leads to a frustratingly limited amount of information on some subjects and to a few paragraphs in which every sentence introduces a new name. Specialists may also contest some of Riasanovsky's interpretations. He exaggerates, for instance, the vitality of democratic institutions in ancient Novgorod and the Byzantine influence on the development of Russian autocracy. The sections on Marxism, the Russian Revolution, and the early Soviet period, furthermore, do not incorporate the contributions of recent research.

These minor deficiencies do not detract from the book's value as an introduction to the field and as a reference. The narrative, furthermore, is supplemented by thirty maps, as well as appendices charting the genealogy of the ruling families. A lengthy bibliography aids the reader in pursuing subjects of special interest.

A second work, written for a more general audience, also provides a balanced and entertaining introduction to Russian history. Written by historian Bruce Lincoln, *The Romanovs: Autocrats of All the Russias* examines the royal family that ruled the Russian Empire from 1613 to the fall of the autocracy in 1917. The prologue also briefly recounts significant events from the history of previous dynasties.

Lincoln's book devotes at least a third of its pages to the personal lives of the tsars and their families, but it also examines their political activities. *The Romanovs*, for instance, describes the marriage and love affairs of Catherine the Great, as do many popular histories. Lincoln, however, does not simply accept the stories and pass them on to the reader; he assesses their authenticity and analyzes the incidents' impact on Russian history. He then proceeds to discuss Catherine's foreign and domestic policies and cultural life under her rule. Several pages are devoted to the life and accomplishments of the eighteenth-century intellectual Mikhail Lomonosov.

The last fifth of the book focuses on the drama and tragedy of the reign of the last Romanovs, Nicholas II and his wife Alexandra. Lincoln draws heavily on the royal couple's letters and diaries to depict their aspirations, fears, and weaknesses; and again he does not resort to sensationalism. His analysis indicates the limits of using the evil influence of the monk Rasputin to explain the collapse of the monarchy. The book, instead, relates the broader political and socio-economic problems that led to the February Revolution. In this section, as elsewhere, Lincoln blends personal biography with analysis of broader political and social trends.

Well-written books with broad coverage are more difficult to find for the Soviet period. The standard textbook is Donald W. Treadgold's *Twentieth Century Russia*. Treadgold's amazingly detailed account emphasizes the growth of governmental and party institutions, the treatment of ethnic minorities and the development of foreign policy. The concentration on detail, however, also makes it difficult for the novice in Soviet history to follow the broad trends of historical development. In addition, Treadgold often focuses disproportionately on the actions of the political leadership, neglecting the contributions and influences of workers, peasants, and lower-level bureaucrats.

A more recent textbook, M. K. Dziewanowski's *A History of Soviet Russia*, perhaps better conveys the general outlines of Soviet history, while also incorporating new findings concerning the history of the Soviet society and the Communist party. Dziewanowski, for instance, notes the popularity of some of Stalin's views among party members and other segments of the population when he explains Stalin's victory over Trotsky. The text also describes the increasing social mobility of the sons of workers and peasants during the industrialization drive and purges of the 1930s. Dziewanowski treats most aspects of Soviet history and includes bibliographies at the end of each chapter, referring readers to more specialized studies.

Biographies serve as another vehicle for gaining insight into the development of the Soviet state. Lenin is treated in numerous works including the acclaimed classics of Louis Fischer (*The Life of Lenin*) and Bertram Wolfe (*Three Who Made a Revolution*). A fascinating recent work, Nina Tumarkin's *Lenin Lives!: The Lenin Cult in Soviet Russia*, analyzes the element of myth in Lenin's biography and investigates the decision to embalm Lenin's body. Treating these and other topics, the book tells us much about the early political development of the Communist party. Biographies of Stalin also dominate historical works concerning the Soviet period. A recent portrait of Stalin written by Robert C. Tucker (*Stalin As Revolutionary, 1879-1929*) excels in its portrayal of Stalin's personality.

For a description of the 1930s many readers turn to Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago*, a marvelous experiment in literary history. Valuable insights can also be garnered from Roy Medvedev's *Let History Judge*. Medvedev, a Soviet dissident, challenges the views of Solzhenitsyn by shifting blame for the excesses of the Soviet regime from Lenin to Stalin.

These biographies, as well as the other textbooks, provide balanced and readable introductions to Russian and Soviet history and insight into contemporary Soviet policies.

ROBERT G. KAISER. *Russia: The People and the Power*. 2d ed. New York: Washington Square Press, 1984. 576 pp. \$5.95 paperback.

ELIZABETH POND. *From the Yaroslavsky Station: Russia Perceived*. Rev. ed. New York: Universe Books, 1984. 277 pp. Bibliography. \$16.50 hardback. \$8.95 paperback.

DAVID K. SHIPLER. *Russia: Broken Idols, Solemn Dreams*. New York: New York Times Book Co., 1983. 404 pp. \$17.95 hardback. \$7.95 paperback.

HEDRICK SMITH. *The Russians*. 2d ed. New York: New York Times Book Co., 1984. 580 pp. \$24.95 hardback. \$4.95 paperback.

The Soviet Union Today: An Interpretive Guide. Ed. James Cracraft. Chicago: Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, 1983. ix; 349 pp. \$9.95 paperback.

Reviewed by Gary L. Browning, professor of Russian, Brigham Young University.

Four distinguished journalists (Smith and Shipler with the *New York Times*, Kaiser with the *Washington Post*, and Pond with the *Christian Science Monitor*) and, in the case of the Cracraft book, twenty-six scholars have provided the West with invaluable insights into the Soviet people and the everyday operation of the major Communist society. These correspondents and scholars contribute to a major strength of our system: free access to information. However, our disinclination to read such important books results in little difference in understanding within the Soviets' restricted society and our free society, for in the West far too many have unencumbered or, worse, closed minds.

Smith and Kaiser served in the USSR for three years each, Pond for two, and Shipler for four. All of them are extraordinarily perceptive and thorough, and one may read any of these works with confidence and great benefit. From this group, Smith and Kaiser were the first (in 1976) to give a detailed picture of contemporary Soviet life. Their work was a groundbreaking achievement. Both books are good, but Smith's is probably the more adequate of the two. He has provided his revised 1984 edition with a strong sixty-three-page postscript treating the last years of Brezhnev's life, Andropov's one-year tenure, and Chernenko's rule.

Pond concocts an ingenious frame for her book—a 5,800-mile Siberian Express train ride from the Yaroslavsky Station in Moscow to Vladivostok in the Far East. With her in the train compartment for seven days are three other women, a Russian grandmother, mother, and daughter—three generations of Russian "Everywomen" representing converging but also, at times, three distinct points of view. Pond not only describes the conversations and behavior of her train-mates but

also the areas through which they pass and a host of related features from Soviet life. The author manages to encompass essentially all that her colleagues cover in their books. She is more statistical (and her figures are more current) and treats some aspects that Smith and Kaiser do not discuss in detail; for instance, the new Soviet Constitution of 1977, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, and recent developments in arms competition between the superpowers. Hers is also the only of the four correspondents' books with an adequate bibliography.

Shipler elegantly restates many of his colleagues' insights and makes his greatest contribution in a discussion of themes, values, attitudes, and culture in Soviet life. His treatment of a resurgent Christianity, of bedrock patriotism, of a longing for a strong leader who could bring the order, efficiency, vision, and charisma of Stalin, and of a renewed and powerful Russian nationalism is especially informative. But his best section is the book's last chapter, "Beyond the Walls," in which he attempts with considerable success to place his sheltered and confident Western reader in Russian boots. In one particularly memorable section Shipler reports on a talk delivered by a Soviet journalist to his comrades after he returned from a visit to the U.S., and we see several reasons Soviets tolerate or even prefer their system over ours.

All four authors explain the importance of the Russian terms *pokazukha*, *nomenklatura*, *blat*, *na levo*, and *samizdat*, essential to an appreciation of life in the Soviet sphere. They speak of current membership in the Communist party (Smith: 14 million; Kaiser: 15; Pond: 17; and Shipler: 16) and of the number of believers (Smith: 30 million Russian Orthodox; Kaiser: 30–50 million; Pond: 55–82 million Christians and, presumably, Muslims). Also, Smith, Kaiser, and Pond each have somewhat different statistics for how much more food is produced on the "private plots" than in the giant collective and state farms. But the common conclusion is that the incentives of the marketplace bring vastly more agricultural success than do the incentives of the collective.

In addition to treating many of the same topics in much the same way, the four authors are uniquely strong. Smith is both lively and analytical. His account is most encyclopedic. Kaiser's anecdotes are exceptionally rich and revealing (to the question of why the Russians treated Solzhenitsyn so harshly, a Soviet spokesman replied that "Solzhenitsyn had slandered his homeland and even its founder, Lenin. What would happen, he asked, if a writer in America wrote a book

slandering Lincoln or Jefferson?"). His creative exuberance leads him to several original and perceptive formulations, for example, on the typical "Party line" and ways the Soviets are not like Americans. At times (only a few), however, he may be too willing to accept the colorful example at the cost of accuracy or proportion. Elizabeth Pond is, in some ways, the most rigorous and disciplined of the four. Beyond her frame arises a collection of tight and spare essays on major issues. For example, her treatment of Soviet intellectuals is brilliant and definitive. Shipler's work is the most "poetic," eloquent, and philosophical. This is not to suggest that he ignores the mundane but revealing details noted by his colleagues, but that his finest pages concern broad themes and values.

James Cracraft's excellent book originates from a series of articles published in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* between January 1982 and the fall of 1983. It includes twenty-six chapters written by experts (many of whom were "associated at one time or another with the Russian Research Center at Harvard, where much of this book was planned—indeed, written" [viii]) in history, politics, the armed forces, the physical context, the economy, science and technology, culture, and society.

Professor Cracraft is the first to fill the critical need for a "book on the Soviet Union written by experts but addressed to the general reader" (vii). It is, he continues, not a textbook but an interpretive guide "concerned less with 'covering the subject' than with responding to the questions most commonly asked of experts" (vii). Judged on these criteria, *The Soviet Union Today* admirably achieves its goals. Smith, Kaiser, Pond, and Shipler have provided enlightening books written from the perspective of intelligent, fair-minded, energetic, and resourceful correspondents. But Cracraft's work has the advantage of twenty-six individual authors, most of whom are leading experts on the topics they address. And the younger scholars also write with exceptional perceptiveness and authority.

Each of Cracraft's chapters has endnotes, while a set of briefly annotated "Further Reading Suggestions" of the leading textbooks and monographs in each area follows the concluding chapter. All of this makes *The Soviet Union Today* an especially important resource for the more serious student of Russia.

Even after having read one or more of these generally good books on the Soviet Union, the Western traveler to the Soviet Union will be surprised by much of what he or she experiences. However, short of studying the culture in depth and visiting the country, one can

become better informed and prepared to deal realistically with the Russians of today through reading these books than in any other expeditious way I know of. Parenthetically, I wish there were even a single book about America in Russian bookstores that compared in quality and integrity with any one of these five books so conveniently available to us.

LEON WIESELTIER. *Nuclear War, Nuclear Peace*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1983. xii; 109 pp. \$2.95.

FREEMAN DYSON. *Weapons and Hope*. New York: Harper and Row, 1984. 340 pp. \$17.95 hardback. New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1984. 340 pp. \$6.95 paperback.

Reviewed by William E. Evenson, associate academic vice-president and professor of physics at Brigham Young University.

Leon Wieseltier's little book, *Nuclear War, Nuclear Peace*, "is an expanded and slightly altered version of an essay published in *The New Republic* magazine" (publisher's note) in January 1983. A historian of medieval Jewish history, Wieseltier has tried to understand the nuclear debate and to argue for a reasonable nuclear policy. His very thoughtful essay combines a realistic view of the Soviet threat with a profound sense of our moral responsibility to avoid nuclear destruction. He follows no ideology but tries to make sense of the arguments from both the right and the left to find a middle ground consistent with careful thought and a high sense of ethics. He argues that "there is no contradiction between anti-communism rightly considered and arms control rightly considered." He attempts to discuss what such "right considerations" must be, dealing with the "relationship of national security policy to foreign policy, of the military strategy of the United States to its moral and political ends" (x).

Wieseltier begins, after a short introduction, by discussing the peace movement in the United States and Europe. His exposition of the philosophical weaknesses of its extreme positions is especially lucid and cogent. He argues that "the hatred of all things military is finally a sign that you do not believe in what you are, that you do not believe that you have something to lose" (27). "To be antinuclear, then, is not to be antimilitary. Nor is it to be anti-American" (28).

He continues with a chapter entitled “The Party of War,” in which he discusses Soviet and American military doctrines. He argues that there is no such thing as nuclear superiority “because the losses on either side will be too much to bear if only a single missile gets through, and more than a single missile will” (38). Wieseltier goes on to argue that the “hawks” have come to admire a great deal of Soviet strategic thinking to the extent that over the last few years there has been a “Sovietization of American strategy” (39); that is, U.S. policy-makers have been moving ever closer to Soviet positions on civil defense, counterforce as a nuclear strategy, and the possibility of prolonged nuclear war. This shift began well before President Reagan took office. Wieseltier contends that one of the serious problems of the defense community is its attention to winning a nuclear war, or “prevailing,” as they choose to say, rather than to ending it, and ending it as quickly as possible. He argues strongly against the notion of counterforce, which has crept into our current nuclear policy and corrupted the concept of deterrence. Counterforce is especially dangerous because, in practice, there is no way to aim nuclear weapons at purely military targets without killing large numbers of civilians. Counterforce as a policy simply becomes a way of ignoring the terrible impact of a nuclear strike on civilian populations.

Wieseltier next discusses Europe and the nuclear weapons policy of NATO. He gives much attention to the current argument of whether the U.S. should renounce first use of nuclear weapons. (Dyson, in the other book discussed in this review, distinguishes between the concepts of “first use” and “first strike” quite clearly. “First use” refers to the introduction of tactical nuclear weapons in an ongoing conventional war. “First strike” refers to the use of strategic nuclear weapons in a direct attack.) A policy of no first use of nuclear weapons by the United States or the NATO alliance would require increased defense spending in Western Europe. This would strengthen Europe’s conventional forces sufficiently to provide security against conventional warfare with the Warsaw Pact nations. Unfortunately, Europeans have seriously resisted this extra spending for defense. As Wieseltier puts it, “They prefer the nuclear peril to higher taxes” (69). He concludes, nevertheless, that a policy of “no first use” would undermine the U.S. commitment to Europe and, hence, undermine deterrence of nuclear war. He argues finally that “nuclear weapons can be put out of play in only two ways—deterrence and disarmament. No first use cripples deterrence but offers nothing in the way of disarmament. And it encourages the delusion that words will do away with the nuclear danger, when only deeds will” (71).

Wieseltier concludes by strongly defending deterrence. Acknowledging the weaknesses of deterrence, he nevertheless argues that it is essential to disarmament and to progress in the current nuclear dilemma. However, he determines from the shortcomings of deterrence "that deterrence is not enough" (76). Rather, there is a symmetry between deterrence and disarmament, each supporting the other. Deterrence needs disarmament since the huge weapons supplies acquired in the name of deterrence increase our danger and demand controls. Only mutual disarmament, that is, symmetrical disarmament between the superpowers and symmetrical verification of disarmament, reduces our danger. But Wieseltier also argues that disarmament needs deterrence to regulate arms control and maintain the strategic balance so that stability is preserved in the course of arms reduction. Disarmament may therefore be pursued only within a doctrine of deterrence.

The relationship between deterrence and disarmament suggests that nuclear weaponry is not needed beyond the requirements of mutual assured destruction. Wieseltier concludes that minimal deterrence, while we are striving for mutual arms reduction, is our best hope.

The clarity and openness of Wieseltier's thinking are refreshing. While trying to make sense of some very complicated issues, he doesn't side with either the "hawks" or "doves." The only significant weakness of his approach is that he sometimes represents a position by its most extreme proponent and hence argues against an easy target. Nevertheless, this method helps elucidate the weaknesses of the arguments of both "hawks" and "doves" and shows the logical conclusions of such arguments. One may not agree with all of Wieseltier's conclusions, but the essay is well worth reading; it will cause any serious reader to reevaluate some of his own assumptions about the realities and the ideals of nuclear policy in today's world.

Freeman Dyson's book, *Weapons and Hope*, is much longer and more comprehensive than Wieseltier's. While not requiring technical background of its readers, it nevertheless deals with more of the technical aspects of nuclear weapons problems. Beginning in World War II, Dyson has made important contributions to physics and to technical military questions. He has consulted with the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and has become very familiar with arms control issues. He has firsthand acquaintance with Soviet scientists and is widely read in Soviet, Western European, and American literature dealing with defense and nuclear weapons.

Dyson's book is also characterized by very deep moral concerns. The analysis of the ethical features of various approaches to disarmament

looms large in his writing and in his judgment. Having worked closely with both the military personnel and those in the peace movement, he has tried to write a book which speaks to both groups to help them see the other's arguments. He fears that much of the debate has seen these two groups talking past one another.

Weapons and Hope is written in four parts—"Questions," "Tools," "People," and "Concepts." "Questions" discusses the basic issues. Dyson relies a great deal on historical analogy in his book, especially reaching back to World Wars I and II. As he explains at the beginning of the book, "central to my approach is a belief that human cultural patterns are more durable than either the technology of weapons or the political arrangements in which weapons have become embedded" (3).

In Dyson's view, the nuclear arms race between the U.S. and the Soviet Union is partly a result of their different assumptions about nuclear war. The U.S. assumes that nuclear war can be prevented only by "deterrence," that is, nuclear threats, while the Soviet Union is obsessed, after a long history of invasion and slaughter in her own homeland, with the concept of sheer survival. This leads to incompatible nuclear policies: The U.S. insists that whatever else happens in a nuclear war, Russia will be destroyed, while the Soviet Union insists that, come what may, Russia will survive. This difference in point of view has made it difficult for the two sides to reach arms agreements.

"Tools" deals with the technologies both of nuclear weapons and defense against them. Dyson discusses the evolution to large and then to smaller nuclear weapons, the change in emphasis from more explosive warheads to more accurate delivery systems, and the possibility of nonnuclear precision-guided munitions (PGM). He argues that the political will to nuclear disarmament might be "powerfully helped by a technological development deliberately aimed toward making nuclear weapons unattractive" (49). He hopes that precision-guided munitions might provide that incentive. In addition, he hopes that precision-guided munitions and computers might favor defensive rather than offensive weapons. "The fundamental reason why the computer revolution favors defense is that in a battle of information, the defenders fighting in their own territory can see what is happening better than the attackers fighting in exposed vehicles" (52).

Dyson discusses the problems of weapons production in a chapter entitled "Technical Follies." He makes a strong argument against the MX missile program, based in part on historical analogy to a "technical folly" pursued during World War II.

Dyson takes a fresh look at many issues, trying to see all sides. With the insight he brings, he elucidates difficult questions in an unusual way. In his chapter on "Star Wars," he considers three possible futures: The "arms controllers' future," which would ban weapons from both earth and space; the "technical-follies future," "which makes space a battleground and does nothing to help resolve problems on earth"; and the "defense-dominated future," in which nuclear weapons are banned from earth and space and nonnuclear technology is used both on earth and in space to help make the ban effective (69–71). Dyson concludes that we would best keep space disarmed as far as possible, as long as we maintain such overkill in our weaponry on earth. Nevertheless, he qualifies that by saying, "But if we can ever achieve such drastic disarmament on earth, a deployment of appropriately designed space weaponry may help us to push the negotiated reduction of nuclear arsenals all the way to zero" (71). This passage is typical of the open mind Dyson keeps on weapons questions and of his sincere attempts to explore alternatives which will reduce dangers to the world at large.

"People" is full of insight about the relationship of people to weaponry and war and about the role of individual points of view in determining policy. One chapter, "Amateurs at War," compellingly describes the World War I experiences of Dyson's father and uncle. Particularly interesting is its portrayal of the excitement of the war and the way the challenges it presented gave meaning and purpose to some lives. The chapter "Education of a Warrior," about Dyson himself in World War II, is an equally insightful and compelling portrayal of the way the momentum of day-to-day events can catch one up, making it nearly impossible to deal with and react to the moral questions.

The other chapters on "People" are also of significant interest and insight. The chapter on "Russians" is especially helpful in elucidating the Russian response to nuclear threat. Here again, Dyson uses anecdotes and personal experiences, as well as making significant references to Russian history. He tries to understand the Soviet Union, without accepting or sympathizing with the totalitarian Soviet government.

The last part of the book, entitled "Concepts," deals with alternative nuclear doctrines. Both in this section and in the earlier chapter on the "Russians," Dyson draws heavily on George Kennan, his colleague at the Institute for Advanced Study. Dyson considers seven strategic concepts—assured destruction, limited nuclear war, counterforce, nonviolent resistance, nonnuclear resistance, defense unlimited,

and live-and-let-live. He analyzes arguments for and against each of these concepts, giving particular weight to moral arguments. He concludes that there is one concept that might “satisfy simultaneously the demands of military realism and human decency” (272). Citing Donald Brennan, he terms this “live-and-let-live”: “We maintain the ability to damage you as badly as you can damage us, but we prefer our own protection to your destruction” (274). Dyson believes, as does Wieseltier, that our weapons may allow disarmament by negotiation instead of unilaterally, preserving symmetry of disarmament and of verification.

Dyson is an original and penetrating thinker who explores a wide range of issues in his book, seeking practical ways to make our world more secure, more stable, more decent.

Both Dyson’s and Wieseltier’s books are well worth reading. Wieseltier’s is a relatively short essay, Dyson’s a book of many dimensions. I hope they will be read widely and contribute significantly to the nuclear debate as both combine political realism with a strong sense of moral responsibility. Neither is caught in a straitjacket of ideology. These two books provide a clear-sighted view of a very difficult problem—the most serious problem our world faces today.

Stele

- I. Mute by the count of sunsets
on its heat-glossed surface,
it speaks a language
with no sound, no voice—
only silence: words
carved in stone and frozen there
like fossils baked in the heat
of centuries flaring, cooling
in the slow and scraping rape
of sun and moon.

Peasants work around it,
their backs intent
on the work ahead,
on the bread that is made
by the sweat in their eyes
and the wheat that will grow
young and green in today's sun.

The only history here
is in tomorrow's prayer for rain.

- II. Once, there lived a queen
who did the unspeakable:
she was never said again—
became unspoken, unwritten.

Vanished.

It remains her sentence in history.
And generations after,
though their blood
runs more solid
than her vanished memory,
still hold allegiance

to whatever standard rises
to feed them
in their own dark fields,

academes, perhaps, in the wrong schools.

- III. So skeletons
have passed to dust
without the cry of clay.

Soundless words
are empty—
there are no names
without date,
without history.

- IV. Years ago, man sent to space
a capsule.
Etched on it were some shapes:
one man
one woman
nine planets and a sun
and some writings

with no sound,
no voice—
no interpretation
nor existence that is immanent.

What would be left?
What voices, written
in stone, gold, or parchment?

- V. Iraqis plow the land
around the steles,
capsules of days too foreign to speak.

Dirty children play
who cannot read their own speech,
who ring with running feet
the tongues of their ancestors,

and each are grounded
by their silence.

Around the children,
 the wheat grows
 they celebrate it,
 the oxen plow
 they take care for their path,
 the flies buzz
 and water is scarce
 and over their heads
 fly the birds of many nations,

in steel mostly,
 and speaking of wars
 that are foreign,

that vanish
 their dwellings
 to unbeing—

razing the words
 and the lives
 that made them.

How many times has the world
 passed away?

VI. In the fields,
 alone in the passage of wind
 and the sway of wheat
 and the dust of two thousand
 eight hundred years
 and children, ever children,
 the stele of Sumer stands.

Perhaps to be unwritten
 is to be told more truly.
 When it was first done
 it was done
 with living hands.

What is unwritten
 speaks the warning.

—Virginia E. Baker



Resurrection Series: "Why Seek Ye the Living among the Dead?" by Robert L. Marshall

Robert L. Marshall is an associate professor of art at Brigham Young University.

Call for Papers: Special Issue on British Isles

BYU Studies is pleased to announce a forthcoming special issue devoted to the LDS church in the British Isles. The issue will be published in 1987 in conjunction with the Sesquicentennial of the Church in Britain. Dr. James R. Moss of the Church History Department at Brigham Young University has been appointed guest editor.

Those interested in submitting articles for publication in this issue should send them to Dr. James R. Moss, 136 JSB, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT 84602.

Articles may be on any aspect of LDS church history in the British Isles from the beginning to the present or may focus on current issues of concern to the Church and its members in Britain. Deadline for submission of articles is 31 December 1986.

This special issue will be one of many activities planned by the Church, Brigham Young University, and other organizations to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Church in the British Isles. We encourage your participation in these events and hope many of you will submit articles for publication.

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