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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Psycho-Spiritual Implications of Nuclear War

by

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A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF Master of Education

IN

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Department of Educational Psychology

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL 1987

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled Psycho-Spiritual Implications of Nuclear War submitted by François Roy in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education in Counselling Psychology.

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Date Sept 7, '87

Abstract

The thesis attempts to clarify psychological and spiritual issues pertaining to nuclear war. It relies on research and theoretical analysis published by psychologists, theologians, and moral philosophers with emphasis on (1) the psychological and spiritual consequences of the nuclear threat; (2) spiritual resources to cope with this threat; and (3) the moral and political implications of spiritual belief in the nuclear age. The psychological consequences of the nuclear threat include the use of defense mechanisms such as denial and dehumanization; and patterns of emotional response characterized by anxiety and psychic numbing. Spiritual consequences include threats to the symbolization of immortality, spiritual belief, worship, and spiritual self-affirmation. Spiritual resources for overcoming the psychological and spiritual consequences of the threat of nuclear holocaust are drawn from the Bible, theology, and religious practice. Biblical images and stories enable us to better comprehend the impending catastrophe while biblical paradigms of human sociality and a comprehensive view of peace provide vision and hope for a nuclear world. Garrison's theology suggests a way of understanding God's involvement with a world poised on the brink of nuclear annihilation. Conversion, prayer, and Christian community assist in our struggle with despair and powerlessness.

Should nuclear weapons be used to defend our lives and values? The tradition of just-war coupled with the right of nations to defend themselves with force has resulted in military policy predicated upon nuclear deterrence. The tradition of Christian pacifism argues that it is immoral to use nuclear weapons against human beings and that defense should consist of non-violent methods. A biblically-based ethic of transforming initiatives may provide a way of transcending this moral dilemma in order to work effectively for the prevention of nuclear war.

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Chapter I

Introduction

The threat of nuclear war holds important consequences for our psychological and spiritual well-being. The possibility of nuclear annihilation has led to the use of defense mechanisms and emotional responses which are detrimental to our mental health. It has also challenged religious belief, symbolism, and practice, and can lead to religious crisis. Yet religion has traditionally been a source of hope, courage, and moral guidance, particularly during life's difficult and painful times. The role of religious belief and practice in helping us cope with the psychological and spiritual consequences of the nuclear threat, and in empowering us to work for the prevention of nuclear holocaust, merits examination.

This thesis attempts to analyze and describe some of the psychological, spiritual, and moral issues pertaining to nuclear war. Specifically, it discusses the emotional/spiritual *consequences* of the nuclear threat, the spiritual *resources* which are available for coping with it, and the *moral and political issues* involved in the prevention of nuclear war. The discussion of spiritual consequences, spiritual resources, and pacifism takes place in the context of the Christian tradition. This introductory chapter is designed to introduce the reader to the overall themes and topics which are the focus of this thesis. In order to accomplish this with a maximum of direction and a minimum of elaboration, a chapter-by-chapter format is employed.

Chapter 2: Physical and Psychological Consequences of Nuclear War

Many people deny the implications of the nuclear threat and suppress their fears, yet the incineration and radiation-related deaths of hundreds of millions of citizens is a genuine possibility. Chapter 2 summarizes the physical consequences of nuclear war both in terms of its physical destruction and in terms of its impact on human communities, especially those of Canada. Although the evaluation of the physical consequences is an important part of Chapter 2, the predominant ambition of the chapter is to describe the *psychological* consequences of the threat of nuclear annihilation. The defense mechanisms which we employ to cope with this threat, for example, denial, psychic numbing, and dehumanization, are discussed as well as the effects that their use has on our thinking and feeling.

Chapter 2 also deals with the emotional consequences of living with the nuclear threat. The focus is on patterns of emotional response which researchers have observed, the fears experienced by adults and children, and the attempt to cope with these fears through "instant gratification". The final section of the chapter discusses the "as if" living which characterizes the behavioral style of so many individuals in modern culture. As well, the negative effects (such as a decrease in general responsiveness and political disempowerment) which result from the suppression of our fear and despair about nuclear holocaust are analyzed and evaluated.

Chapter 3: Spiritual Belief and the Threat of Nuclear War

The defense mechanism of psychic numbing adversely affects the spiritual life by encouraging ambivalence toward the sources of human immortality. As our ability to participate meaningfully in a spiritual life decreases, we become increasingly susceptible to anxiety and despair. Chapter 3 deals with these spiritual consequences of the nuclear threat. The first section summarizes Chernus's (1983) discussion of the effect of psychic numbing on those aspects of our lives which give us a sense of immortality. This is followed by an analysis of the manner in which statements of religious leaders are colored by the defense mechanism of projection, and, as well, the manner in which *self-righteousness* contributes to projection and makes nuclear war more likely.

Chapter 3 also investigates and describes the effect of the nuclear threat on religious symbolism and religious practice. The effect which contemporary imagery of extinction holds on the way we symbolize immortality is discussed, as well as the manner in which certain aspects of Christian symbolism are not helpful in the nuclear age. This analysis of imagery is followed by an examination of the effect of the nuclear threat on spiritual belief, worship, and spiritual self-affirmation.

The final segment of Chapter 3 is concerned with the relationship between certain fundamentalist beliefs and nuclear war. Those beliefs which increase the likelihood of nuclear war are described, as well as the implications of these beliefs for international peacemaking.

Notwithstanding the psychological and spiritual consequences of the nuclear threat, many thinkers hold an optimistic view. Psychiatrist Jerome Frank (1984) points out that religion helps us cope with the threat of nuclear war by sustaining our courage.

In *Despair and Personal Power in the Nuclear Age* Macy (1983) demonstrates that religion provides hope by putting us in touch with our interdependence and interconnectedness with the web of life. The American bishops (1983) contend that we must consider the resources of religion if we are to prevent a nuclear holocaust.

> The threat of nuclear war transcends religious, cultural, and national boundaries. To confront its danger requires all the resources reason and faith can muster.... There is no satisfactory answer to the human problems of the nuclear age which fails to consider the moral and religious dimensions of the questions we face. (*The Challenge of Peace*, Summary, #6).

Chapter 4: Biblical Resources for Coping with the Threat of Nuclear War

A number of biblical resources enable us to better cope with the anxiety and fearfulness which accompany the threat of nuclear annihilation. Biblical images and stories help to counteract images of extinction and facilitate understanding of what it means to live in the nuclear shadow. Resources which can be drawn from the Bible are the subject matter of Chapter 4. The first section focuses on biblical images which are helpful for overcoming psychological consequences such as anxiety and despair, and spiritual consequences such as threats to the symbolization of immortality and to spiritual self-affirmation.

The following segment of Chapter 4 discusses biblical images and stories which sensitize us to the danger of nuclear war, help us clarify our thinking about it, and instill hope. The section on biblical images of God contrasts certain traditional images of God with biblical images which are more appropriate for the nuclear age. This is followed by a discussion of paradigms of human living suggested by the New Testament. These paradigms are contrasted with the models of sociality associated with nuclearism (reliance on nuclear weapons for a sense of immortality and salvation). The last section of Chapter 4 describes the Bible's comprehensive vision of peace (*shalom*), and the biblical approach to peacemaking through *forgiveness*.

Chapter 5: Theological and Practical Resources for Coping with the Threat of Nuclear War

Theological reflection and religious practice help us to grasp God's relationship to a nuclear world and integrate psychologically and spiritually the threat of nuclear annihilation. Chapter 5 is concerned with the contribution of theology to coping with the nuclear threat and with the resources which can be derived from the practice of religion. The two first sections of the chapter summarize Garrison's theology for the nuclear age -a theology which attempts to show how God is intimately involved with a world that has the potential of destroying itself. He suggests a way to understand God's action in human affairs and particularly in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. Garrison's thesis is that the wrath of God manifested at Hiroshima must be integrated into the psyche of individuals. Jungian depth psychology and faith ~~in~~ Christ, he proposes, provide a way of accomplishing this integration.

The final section of Chapter 5 describes resources in religious practice which are useful in the nuclear age. The role of spiritual conversion and belief are discussed as well as the need to trust in the Spirit rather than in nuclear weapons. An attempt is made to show how spiritual belief and prayer lessen the need for psychological defenses against the threat of nuclear war. Authentic worship and the role of Christian community in overcoming hopelessness are also described.

Chapter 6: Moral and Political Implications of Spiritual Belief in the Nuclear Age

Even if we overcome the emotional/spiritual effects of the nuclear threat, important questions remain concerning the appropriate means to prevent a nuclear holocaust. Chapter 6 is concerned with the moral and political implications of spiritual belief in our nuclear era. The major thrust of this chapter is to describe the dilemma posed by the following questions: Should we use lethal force, that is, nuclear deterrence and preparation for limited nuclear war, even though these very policies make a nuclear disaster possible? Or, should we oppose any use of nuclear weapons and risk domination by a repressive regime? Is there a way to escape this dilemma? The chapter begins with a summary and critique of just-war theory. It presents arguments which have been advanced in favor of the use of lethal force. The implications of these arguments are then discussed in terms of nuclear deterrence policies. A moral evaluation of nuclear

deterrence is also presented. This is followed by a summary of the arguments in favor of limited nuclear war and the implications of the acceptance of lethal force for nuclear disarmament.

The focus then shifts to the opposing moral stance, Christian pacifism. An overview of this doctrine is given, with emphasis on its derivation from the New Testament, its spiritual intent, and its radical approaches to conflict resolution. This is followed by a presentation of the criticisms of pacifism and a discussion of its social application.

Chapter 6 also contains the general arguments, drawn mainly from the New Testament, against the use of lethal force in world affairs. There follows a summary of arguments against nuclear deterrence, with a focus on the alleged immorality of intending to use nuclear weapons against human beings, and the psychological consequences of nuclear deterrence policies.

Of special significance are the implications of pacifism for security and defense. The biblical basis of security and defense is discussed as well as the non-violent forms which defense may take. The relationship between pacifism and nuclear disarmament is then analyzed in terms of the condemnation of the arms race by many church bodies, and advocacy of war-tax resistance. Finally, the implications of pacifism for peacemaking are considered, with emphasis on non-violent methods of preventing nuclear war.

The final section of Chapter 6 discusses the dilemma of having to choose between the use or non-use of lethal force in the nuclear age. The basis of the arguments for each position is described as well as the consequences of choosing one position over the other. An ethic which may enable us to transcend this dilemma is presented and the implications of this ethic for a nuclear world are noted.

Chapter 7, the conclusion chapter, summarizes the findings of the thesis with respect to the themes of psychological and spiritual consequences of the threat of nuclear war, spiritual resources for coping with this threat, and the moral and political implications of spiritual belief in a nuclear world. Some of the implications of these findings for helping professionals, psychological health, and non-Christians are also discussed.

Chapter II

Physical and Psychological Consequences of Nuclear War

Splitting the atom resulted in a quantum leap in the human capacity to destroy. During the second World War, a blockbuster bomb could demolish a city block. Modern nuclear weapons can annihilate an entire city, and it is agreed upon by virtually all specialists in military technology that a nuclear war could destroy *every* major city in the world. Because war has accompanied civilization since the beginning of recorded time, and most likely will occur again, it is imperative to consider carefully the probable consequences of a nuclear holocaust.

A. The Physical Consequences of Nuclear War

In this section I will discuss the destructive effects of nuclear weapons, and describe what would occur in a major exchange of nuclear missiles with emphasis on the consequences for Canada and the United States.

The fission bomb detonated over Hiroshima in 1945 instantly blasted or burned to death tens of thousands of people. A firestorm which lasted six hours contributed to the destruction of the city in which two thirds of the buildings were destroyed. An estimated 130,000 people died in the following three months from radiation sickness or other injuries. Fetuses exposed to radiation developed abnormalities such as unusually small heads and retardation. Other illnesses which appeared over the years as a result of the nuclear explosion include leukemia, other types of cancer, and cataracts on the eyes.

The destructive power of current nuclear weapons is considerably greater than it was in 1945. A hydrogen bomb has the destructive power of 1,000 Hiroshima bombs. The world's arsenal of nuclear weapons, estimated at 50,000 by Sivard (1982), has the destructive force of 16,000 million tons of TNT, or 3.5 tons for every living person. Furthermore, the speed of delivery of nuclear weapons has greatly increased to the point that ballistic missiles travelling at 10,000 miles per hour can go from the centre of one continent to the centre of another in 30 minutes.

The destructive force of a nuclear weapon is more severe than that of a conventional bomb in several respects. The temperature of exploding nuclear material is in the millions of degrees and the pressure created exceeds atmospheric pressure by millions of times. The initial radiation (mostly gamma rays) spreads outward, killing

unprotected persons for tens of miles around. This radiation wave is accompanied by an electromagnetic pulse which causes a surge of voltage in all types of conductors, thus knocking out electrical equipment for hundreds of miles in all directions. Following the initial fission and fusion reactions, a fireball forms which radiates energy into the environment in the form of intense heat and blinding light. The expanding thermal pulse is accompanied by a blast wave which severely damages buildings and trees in a radius of several miles. When the bomb is detonated at ground level, debris is sucked into a cloud which settles later as radioactive fallout, contaminating an area of hundreds of square miles.

To grasp the impact of a nuclear explosion it is helpful to analyze the effect of detonating a one megaton[1] nuclear weapon on the city of Edmonton. Such a device yields 70 to 80 times the explosive power of the Hiroshima bomb and is "medium-sized" by today's standards. At the epicentre of the explosion, a crater 1,200 feet wide and 300 feet deep would be created. (The crater would swallow up all buildings in an area extending from 97th to 103rd streets, and from 97th to 103rd avenues.) Everything within a half-mile radius would be swept up in a fireball one mile wide and six miles high. All life within the half-mile radius would be incinerated in ten seconds. (This would include all citizens in offices and apartment buildings in the area encompassed by 106th street, 106th avenue, 94th street, and the river valley). The thermal pulse, moving at the speed of light, would extend to a radius of two miles, killing virtually everyone immediately. Overpressures of up to 100 pounds per square inch would be caused by the accompanying shock wave which would crush all buildings. (All buildings between 124th street, 124th avenue, the Capilano freeway, and 76th avenue would be pulverized. In the circle of destruction extending two or three miles from the epicentre, clothes and trees would spontaneously ignite. Hurricane winds would blow at several hundred miles per hour. Approximately half of the people in the city of Edmonton would be killed outright while a significant percentage of the survivors would eventually die from injuries caused by burns, embedded glass, and radioactive poisoning. In a radius extending three to five miles, intense heat would cause third degree burns to all exposed skin. The firestorm would suck oxygen out of underground stations and shelters, asphyxiating all occupants. People in a radius of five to ten miles from the epicentre would suffer second degree

[1]The equivalent of one million tons of TNT.

burns. An area covering 200 square miles would be scorched.

In a major nuclear exchange, the destruction just described could be multiplied one thousand times. In a 10,000 megaton attack on the United States,[2] the majority of people in targeted areas would be burned, irradiated or crushed. An area of some 600,000 square miles would be subjected to thermal pulses at levels of at least 40 calories per centimetre squared, which chars human beings. Approximately 75 percent of the American land mass would be subjected to a level of heat that causes inflammable material to ignite. The blast waves would pulverize all places of work and habitations within this vast area. The atmosphere would become dark as mushroom clouds joined, blocking out sunlight, and possibly producing a nuclear winter where temperatures could drop to -20° F in summer. A smog of hydrogen cyanide and other burned debris would cover the land. Humans who survived the explosions and radiation would exist in darkness. Since crops couldn't grow survivors would starve.[3] Citizens who managed to avoid starvation would still be subject to the radioactive fallout which would blanket the country.

Bates et al. (1983) claim that Canada would most likely be directly attacked in a nuclear war because it is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and because it has a defense agreement with the United States through the North American Aerospace Defence Command (NORAD). Furthermore, the Soviet Union would not likely allow a country rich in natural resources and agriculture to assist a U.S. recovery from a nuclear attack.

Bates et al. (1983) constructed a map of the radioactive fallout pattern that would extend into Canada from nuclear weapons exploded within 350 miles of our southern border.[4] Areas which would receive lethal doses of radioactive fallout include many of the major population, agricultural and industrial centres of Canada. Because of unpredictable wind changes, no inhabited area within Canada would be completely safe from fallout.

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[2]The yield of existing Soviet warheads is estimated to be 17,000 megatons. (Sivard, 1982).

[3]A recent study of the effects of nuclear war by 300 international scientists concluded: "Rather than reflecting images of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, a modern nuclear war would, for most people of the world, much more resemble current images of Ethiopia and the Sudan" ("Starvation likely biggest killer," 1986)

[4]The authors use conservative estimates of the effects and typical wind patterns in their calculations.

A discussion of the physical consequences of a major nuclear war would not be complete without considering the impact on the planet as a whole. One global effect would be the existence of radioactive fallout that would rise into the stratosphere, circle the globe, then fall slowly back to earth.[5] Another important effect, the cooling of the globe's surface, was mentioned above in the discussion of nuclear winter. A third effect would be the partial destruction of the earth's ozone layer by the oxides of nitrogen produced in the fireball of a nuclear explosion. It has been estimated that the ozone layer would be reduced by as much as 70 percent in the Northern Hemisphere following a ten thousand megaton attack. This would result in an increase of ultraviolet radiation which is harmful to every living organism. Skin cancer and ultraviolet keratoconjunctivitis (snow blindness) would likely increase. At the highest levels of depletion, sunburn would be incapacitating. Most mammals would eventually go blind, then die. Finally, there would be a serious effect on plant life since ultraviolet radiation represses photosynthesis.[6]

In *Twentieth Century Book of the Dead*, Elliot (1972) reflects on the possible meaning of destruction which is so total. He asks:

> Can we escape from the chaos of the idea that is left to us? Total death could mean the obliteration of particular cities or countries or religions; it could mean the collapse of world civilization or the death of the species; or it could mean the total death of the mind within a variety of physical parameters. (p. 99).

In the event of nuclear war there would be *two* losses: 1) the death of the species, and 2) the murder of unborn generations. As Schell (1982) explains, "death cuts off life; extinction cuts off birth. Death dispatches into the nothingness after life each person who has been born; extinction...locks up in the nothingness before life all the people who have not been born" (p. 117). It is difficult to picture extinction because the mind and senses that would be used to understand it are obliterated. Even the notion of "emptiness" is too expressive because it speaks of the experience of emptiness and in extinction there would be no experience. "When extinction is reached, all the spectators have themselves gone to the grave, and only the stones and stars, and whatever algae and mosses may have made it through, are present to witness the end" (Schell, p. 139).

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[5]Some radioactive isotopes emit radiation for millions of years.

[6]The consequences of radiation, even at lower levels, was clearly demonstrated during studies conducted after the Chernobyl accident. In the city of West Berlin, for example, the number of mongoloid babies increased five times compared to the average for the preceding 10 years. ("Children have reason to worry," 1987).

In summary, the explosion of nuclear weapons results in massive annihilation of human beings, the obliteration of cities, and a number of serious consequences for the planet as a whole. A major nuclear war could result in the collapse of civilization and perhaps even the extinction of the human race.

B. Psychological Consequences of the Threat of Nuclear War

Most people are unable to comprehend a threat of this magnitude, therefore they use psychological defense mechanisms in order to protect themselves from its implications. Their fear causes them to push the implications of the threat out of their awareness or deny their feelings about it. Some people cope with their fears by perceiving "the enemy" to be less than human. In this section I will discuss the defense mechanisms of denial, psychic numbing, and dehumanization; and analyze the effects that their use can have on oneself and one's attitudes toward others.

Denial

One mechanism employed to deal with an extremely unpleasant reality is denial. Denial refers to "various degrees of nonperception, nonrecognition, nonunderstanding, or nonacceptance of certain realities in order to cope with otherwise unacceptable intrapsychic conflicts, feelings or memories" (Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry, 1964, p. 241). These authors note that people remain unaware of the destructive power of nuclear bombs despite information that is available through the media or books. Or, they may be intellectually aware, but do not experience any corresponding feelings. The authors point out that an event that is neither imagined nor experienced has no psychological meaning. Denial is a serious problem precisely because nuclear war is possibility.

Macy (1983) describes some of the fears which cause people to avoid their awareness of the nuclear situation. Some individuals, she claims, don't want to think about the consequences of nuclear war for fear of "falling apart" or losing control. Others fear that by talking about nuclear war they will appear morbid and give the impression of lacking optimism, stamina and competence. Some parents avoid discussing the threat of nuclear war with their children because they do not want to cause their loved ones distress or stifle their present happiness. Some people simply don't want to appear

unpatriotic, or give the impression of being too emotional. Others suppose that by talking about nuclear war it will become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Still others fear the guilt of being an accomplice in a nation that has been preparing to annihilate hundreds of millions of fellow human beings. The reasons vary, but the end result is that people repress their awareness of the present danger and avoid expressing concern about what matters to them most.

Psychic Numbing

Lifton (1982) contends that everyone from bomb-maker to ordinary citizen has had to "learn to live with the bomb" (p. 103). He theorizes that a kind of "numbing" has evolved which blocks out the implications of thermonuclear weapons. "Psychic numbing" includes the defense mechanisms of denial and repression discussed above, and others such as projection and reaction formation. It also includes the suppression of painful images and the feelings associated with these images. Through psychic numbing the realities of Nagasaki and Hiroshima are denied, both as events that actually occurred and as warnings for the future. Macy (1983) points out that psychic numbing may take the form of resisting information that is painful. When despair about nuclear weapons is repressed there is a tendency to block out the information that provokes despair. Macy notes that repressing strong feelings may have the additional effect of impairing a person's capacity to think clearly. Scheff (1979) points out that "after emotions are aroused but not discharged the individual's level of perceptual sensitivity is reduced, his or her feeling state is less pleasurable, thoughts are less clear and behavior less creative or more rigid" (p. 203).

The knowlege that thousands of thermonuclear weapons are targeted on us, and that we are daily threatened with the possibility of annihilation, is suppressed from our collective awareness; for many it is "business as usual." According to Gunter Anders, this occurs because "we are incapable of producing a fear commensurate with the H-bomb threat, let alone of constantly maintaining it in the midst of our still seemingly normal everyday life." [7] As a result, people push this knowledge out of their awareness and carry on with their activities even though the world is daily faced with the possibility of annihilation.

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[7]Quoted in R. Rogers, 1980, p. 14.

Macy (1983) notes that psychic numbing can take the form of psychological projection. She points out that living in an emotionally intolerable situation is expressed in anger against others: "We seek scapegoats to blame for our inchoate sense of alarm" (p. 14). (This is what Carl Jung called projecting one's shadow.) Menninger (1983) comments that projection is a way of purging ourselves of negative attitudes or unconscious fears in order that our own behavior and attitudes might be perceived in a positive light while those of the enemy are reconfirmed as evil. He describes this defense mechanism in the following way:

> We perceive [others'] motives and actions as evil and base, motivated only by drives for power and domination, while ours are laudable, honorable and wholly justified. We see ourselves as rational and logical while they only understand force; we are peace-loving but they are treacherous and warlike, even "godless monsters" as a high American official recently suggested. (p. 27).

Thus projection takes the form of demonizing the enemy and results in the tendency to perceive the Soviets in a totally dehumanized manner.

Dehumanization

Dehumanization has been described as a defense mechanism which "protects a person from feelings of guilt about the way he feels about or acts toward other human beings" (Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry, 1964, p. 246). When dehumanization is "object-directed", it tends to view others as "subhumans" and rescues the person from discomfort, guilt, shame, and fear. Dehumanization may also be "self-directed":

> When an individual protects himself from a whole cluster of basically human affects and states of mind -fear, compassion, guilt or shame- he also does something to his self-image. The defense of dehumanization leads him to compartmentalize his emotions and pauperizes his capacity to feel and act like a human being. (p. 247).

The Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry (1964) point out that when dehumanization is directed inward it allows a person to maintain primitive and selfish attitudes and contributes to emotional callousness and disinterest in the suffering of fellow human beings. As a result, the person's self-image becomes increasingly devoid of the qualities that make it "human". This selfishness and callousness is accompanied by a

diminishing sense of personal responsibility. In effect, the "object-directed" and "self-directed" forms of dehumanization begin to reinforce one another in such a way that the more people perceive themselves as powerless, the more they drift into the pattern of dehumanizing others.

In addition to the foregoing, the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry also claims that dehumanization has become a way of coping with life in the nuclear age. Our "psychology" has not kept pace with the rapid advance of modern technology and our capacity to respond has been impaired.

> We are confronted with a *lag in our perceptual and intellectual development* in that the enormity of the new reality, with its potential for destructive and constructive human consequences, becomes blurred in our thinking and feeling. Particularly in relationship to the threat of nuclear war [dehumanization] acts maladaptively by neutralizing the customary psychological barriers that would otherwise be present to the destruction of millions of individual human beings. (1964, p.254).

Overwhelmed by the destructive potential of modern weapons, people become insensitive to the devastation that they would cause, and become less able to respond in a manner that would lessen the danger of nuclear war.

It has been suggested that people use a variety of defense mechanisms to cope with the threat of nuclear war. They may deny that the threat is as serious as it is or they may simply push it out of awareness. Through a process of psychic numbing people suppress painful images and feelings and carry on with their lives as if there was no threat of nuclear holocaust. They may project fear and anger on to others or consider the "enemy" to be evil and treacherous. We have seen that people can avoid the guilt associated with this behavior by dehumanizing the enemy or by compartmentalizing their feelings, but this leads to a diminished capacity to feel and also encourages selfish attitudes.

C. Emotional Consequences of the Threat of Nuclear War

In a study of individuals who attended grade school when air raid drills were practiced, Carey (1982) found that "fear of nuclear weapons would -and can- be embarassing, rendering those who dread the bomb ludicrous if they express their

emotions" (p. 21). Lifton (1982) surmised that many people suppress the shame and guilt of being potential accomplices to mass murder: "This numbed guilt may be static and immobilizing, part of the resigned or cynical stance of "waiting for the bomb" (p. 79). Resignation and hopelessness were two of the themes expressed by students writing on nuclear war in Schneidman's (1973) courses on death at Harvard. Adolescents in workshops conducted by Lifton expressed both hopelessness and anger when discussing the topic "living with the bomb".

Certain characteristic patterns of emotional response tend to emerge as a result of the threat of nuclear war. Lifton (1982) notes that many people go through a process of eventually allowing information about the nuclear peril "in", then feeling anxious because they don't know how to handle the fear that derives from the information. This period of anxiety is followed by a state of resignation or by feelings of cynicism as nuclear war comes to be viewed as inevitable. In a study of young adults born since 1945, Carey (cited in Lifton, 1979) found a sequence of responses that began with anxiety concerning death, and was followed by a sustained form of numbing, then more anxiety. The first phase occurred when subjects were in school and underwent air raid drills. They recalled an awareness of the bomb that was either painful, or distant, or both. When the subjects were young teenagers (second phase), their awareness decreased markedly, although at times they experienced frightening dreams. The third phase occurred when subjects were older teenagers or young adults. Some subjects reported feeling concerned and anxious, others felt obsessed, and some stated that they oscillated between numbness and anxiety.

Liebert (1971) observed a similar pattern in an analysis of term papers written by Columbia University students on the effect of being raised in the nuclear age. The majority of students reported that they experienced a sudden and intense anxiety at a certain point before reaching adolescence (most likely when they became able to conceptualize the destruction of nuclear weapons and the implications for the future). Liebert notes that in the next phase, as young teenagers, the students "attempted to master the anxiety by primarily intellectual means such as reading compulsively about the subject and becoming a factual "expert" on the bomb or writing short stories about it" (p. 239). Once the students had controlled their anxiety, many of them became emotionally numb vis-à-vis nuclear war. Some experienced a change in their view of life and the future and began to focus on "obtaining immediate pleasure and fulfillment while, at the same time, proceeding with preparation for long-term goals, just in case the bomb

might not fall" (p. 240).

Unquestionably, many children and adolescents are fearful about nuclear war. In a study involving 1,151 children from grades five through twelve, Beardslee and Mack (1982) found that the threat of nuclear war caused many children to experience fear, cynicism, bitterness, helplessness and sadness: "Our strongest finding, we feel, is a general unquiet or uneasiness about the future and about the present nature of nuclear weapons and nuclear power" (p. 89). During a seven year study of grade 12 students in 130 schools, Bachman (1976–1982) found that 35 percent of high school seniors believed a nuclear war would occur in their lifetime. Similarly, Berger, Eden, and Gould (cited in Yudkin, 1984) found that 69 percent of respondents in 17 American schools believed a nuclear war would occur; of this 69 percent, 19 percent believed it would happen during their lifetime. Many children have listed the threat of nuclear war as one of their greatest fears. Children from the age of 11 to 19 in the Doctor and Goldenring (1984) study ranked fear of nuclear war as their second most important concern after parental loss. The Goldberg (in press) study of 1995 Western Canadian junior and senior high school students also found that the greatest concern of students, after parental loss, was nuclear war. Finally, a socio-political study (cited in Richter, 1987) of the fears of 3499 children and adolescents in the Federal Republic of Germany revealed that their political fears were even greater than their private fears. Approximately half of these girls and boys (53 percent and 47 percent respectively) believe that their country will experience a nuclear war within 20 years.

One way some children and adolescents cope with their fears of nuclear war is to "live for the moment." Schwebel (1982) notes that "in order to deal with the anxiety, to deal with a life of double jeopardy...they resort to different forms of accomodation. One of them is immediate gratification. If there's no tomorrow they say, let me live for today" (p. 611). Beardslee and Mack (1982) found that adolescents perceive the uncertainty of the future to be related to the folly of adults, who, through ineffectualness, greed, or lust for power, allow the world to drift towards a thermonuclear holocaust. The authors contend that in such a context, "impulsivity, a value system of "get it now" [and] the hyper stimulation of drugs...seem to be natural developments" (p. 90).

Lifton (1979) theorizes that when our sense of symbolic immortality[8] is

[8]Living on through one's descendants, through creative works, through spiritual continuity or through nature.

threatened, we seek more intense feelings and experience:

> The seeking of intense experience has always been an important response to threatened holocaust or profound historical crisis.... When the structure of existence is threatened, people seek to do more with their bodies, to extend the experience of their total organism. (p. 345).

Lifton links modern society's search for "highs" through drugs, rock music, meditation, literature, "sexual revolution", "peak experiences", and certain forms of expressive group therapy, with the threat of annihilation: "These quests have varying creative and intellectual merit, but they all seek an experience of transcendence as an *alternative* to extinction" (1982, p. 76).

It seems clear that living with the threat of nuclear war holds serious emotional consequences for many people. Both adults and children experience emotions such as anxiety, guilt, resignation, cynicism, and hopelessness. Researchers have identified the following pattern: (1) anxiety during childhood; (2) attempts to master the anxiety, followed by numbness during adolescence; and (3) a renewal of the anxiety in adulthood. One way that people cope with these negative emotions and a threatened sense of immortality is through an increased search for immediate gratification and "highs".

D. Behavioral Consequences of the Threat of Nuclear War

Living in the nuclear age means having been "born into a double life" (Lifton). One part of us acknowledges the threat of nuclear war, while another part goes through the motions of everyday living. People "know" at one level that everything they have struggled for could be destroyed in minutes, yet they go on living as if the threat did not exist. Macy (1983) views it this way:

> On one level we maintain a more or less up-beat capacity to carry on as usual -getting up in the morning and remembering which shoe goes on what foot, getting the kids off to school, meeting our appointments, cheering up our friends...and all the while, underneath, there is this inchoate knowledge that our world could go at any moment. (p. 7).

The problem is that many people are unable to respond *emotionally* and *politically* to a threat which they acknowledge *intellectually*. So they live life *as if* it was safe, *as if* it had not become crazy, unmanageable, and threatened with extinction.

One existential cost of living a "double life" is extensive numbing of human affect and a lowering of one's energy level. Lifton (1979) comments that "in order to go about 'business as usual' one has to deaden one's feelings about what one knows" (p. 366). (However, repressing strong feelings about nuclear war has the effect of diminishing our energies and making us vulnerable to exhaustion.)[9]

When people deaden their feelings about nuclear war, a split develops between what they *know* about the danger and what they *feel* about it. As Schwebel (1982) comments, "this split concerns too fundamental a matter to remain restricted to that matter alone, and it begins to influence the rest of life" (p. 152). Therefore, when strong feelings are habitually repressed, general responsiveness tends to decrease. Acceptance of total destruction may then be followed by dulled responsiveness to lesser social evils, such as air pollution because "a society cannot be at the same time asleep and awake, insane and sane, against life and for life" (ibid).

Repressing the pain we feel about the threat of nuclear war has the further effect of diminishing our interconnectedness with others, and encourages political disempowerment (Macy, 1983). According to Kovel (1983), the nuclear state contributes to this disempowerment through its control of the power of nuclear weapons: "Real power is a part of a human relationship; and so our actual disempowerment is what we experience before the state apparatus that controls and uses the bomb" (p. 6). Diminished interconnectedness and disempowerment lead to "nuclear paralysis"; people become convinced that it is irrational and futile to act.

Repressing the despair that is felt in relation to the threat of nuclear war may result in an opposite extreme: violent behavior. Repressed despair may be "expressed outwardly against society in acts of violence and vandalism –acts often so senseless, so pointless, they seem motivated by nothing so much as fury and futility" (Macy, 1983, p. 14).

Schneidman (1973) theorizes that a link exists between concern with death through nuclear annihilation and "our outwardly disdainful attitude toward life itself:

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[9]This seems particularly true of advocates of peace because the knowledge and awareness they have can become a heavy burden and the effort to awaken others to the danger is often frustrating. This may lead to a sense that it is futile to try to change the situation, that really individuals are powerless vis-à-vis the nuclear state and the military-industrial complex. A general attitude of fatalism may set in.

excesssive risk taking, burning out with drugs, daring authority, flaunting tradition, and the many other inimical and destructive forms of behavior toward ourselves and our institutions (p. 224).

The violence may also be directed inward. Schwebel conjectures that since unemployment has been associated with suicide, "that leads us to wonder and investigate the consequences of the sustained threat of nuclear disaster" (1982, p. 612). In a survey of 30,000 people, Schneidman (1973) found that 45 percent of respondents attributed an increase in preoccupation and concern with death to the presence of nuclear weapons.[10] Macy (1983) theorizes that the increase in the use of drugs and teenage suicides is due, in part, to the pervasive despair about nuclear weapons.

In summary, the threat of nuclear war results in a sort of "double life" in which the danger of nuclear war is sensed at one level, but not responded to emotionally, allowing individuals to carry on with their daily lives. However, the split between what is known and what is felt may spread to other areas of life, and result in decreased responsiveness and diminished energy. It may also undermine interconnectedness with other people and contribute to a sense of disempowerment and paralysis. Repressing despair about the nuclear threat may also result in acts of violence such as vandalism, or it may be expressed inwardly through drug use or suicide.

E. Conclusion

A major nuclear war would probably result in the death of hundreds of millions of people, put an end to civilization as we know it, and cause extensive damage to the ecosphere. Yet even if nuclear war does not occur, the *threat* of annihilation holds important human consequences. Psychologically, it has resulted in the repression of awareness and the numbing of painful images and feelings. People project their fear and anger onto designated enemies and dehumanize them. On an emotional level, the threat of nuclear holocaust encourages feelings of guilt, hopelessness, cynicism, and helplessness. It is related to patterns of anxiety/numbness/renewed anxiety, and fears among children that nuclear war will occur in their lifetime. In order to cope with this threat, people deaden their feelings and live "as if" there was no daily threat to their existence. However, the repression of feelings leads to decreased responsiveness, a sense of

[10]Although this is not "hard" scientific data, it may reflect deep-seated fears that people have about nuclear war.

disempowerment, and despair which may be expressed in acts of violence.

This chapter has attempted to describe some of the ways in which the threat of nuclear war holds important psychological, emotional and behavioral consequences. The following chapter will analyze the extent to which the threat of nuclear war influences religious belief. A subsequent chapter will investigate the resources that religious belief can provide in coping with this threat.

Chapter III

Spiritual Belief and the Threat of Nuclear War

The threat of nuclear holocaust has had a significant impact on religious symbolism, belief,[11] and practice. An analysis of this impact will be the subject of this chapter. The threat of nuclear war can affect one's ability to symbolize "immortality" and one's ability to make sense of the threat through the use of religious symbolism. It can also put faith and hope in question, shake one's confidence in the promises of religion,[12] and threaten spiritual self-affirmation. Finally, the nuclear threat has encouraged some individuals within certain fundamentalist Christian churches to associate a nuclear holocaust with the will of God.

In this chapter I will discuss the impact of the use of defense mechanisms (such as psychic numbing and psychological projection) on the spiritual[13] life of the individual believer. This will be followed by an analysis of the manner in which the symbolization of immortality, inherited religious symbols, and "divine revelation" have been affected by the threat of nuclear annihilation. Next I will discuss the impact of this threat on religious belief, worship, and the ability to affirm oneself spiritually. The reasons for certain fundamentalist beliefs which make nuclear war more likely will be explored in a final section.

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[11]Understood as religious belief or faith, that is, "the act or state of wholeheartedly and steadfastly believing in the existence, power, and benevolence of a supreme being, of having confidence in his providential care, and of being loyal to his will as revealed or believed in" (Gove, 1986, p. 816).

[12]Definitions of religion, e.g., "the numinous" (R. Otto), "belief in gods or God", etc., become problematic because what is considered essential in one religion may not be essential in another. A more descriptive approach defines religion as "a particular system, or set of systems, in which doctrine, myths, rituals, sentiments, institutions, and other similar elements are interconnected" (Encyclopedia Britannica, 1985, Vol. 26, p. 548). Tillich defines the essence of religion (or more precisely, faith) as "ultimate concern".

[13]Understood in the general sense as that which pertains to the spirit: "The intelligent and immaterial part of [a person] or the human soul in general, whether united with the body in life or separated from it in death, and especially that aspect of it which is concerned with religious truth and actions and is directly susceptible to Divine influence" (Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, 1983, p. 1300). In this thesis "religious" is considered to be a part of the more general category "spiritual", but the terms are used in a somewhat latitudinous or overlapping manner.

A. Psychic Numbing and the Spiritual Life

Psychic numbing is a defense mechanism by which people block out the implications of nuclear war and carry on living "as if" the threat did not exist. This affects their spiritual life because they must pretend that the things in life which enable them to "go on" (the sources of immortality) will unfailingly continue to exist even though there is rational and as well as empirical evidence to suggest that this may not be so. Chernus[14] (1983) points out that on the one hand people are aware that their future is in doubt, yet on another level they deny this and continue to believe that they will live on through their children, their works, or some other type of immortality. However, this belief is colored by the "as if" mode of living described in Chapter 2.[15] No one can be *totally* confident about the human future. The lethality of nuclear weapons inhibits that confidence. As Chernus (1983) comments:

> Psychic numbing affects us most intensely in those very areas of life which are most meaningful to us. As we face our children, our work and our God -the bearers of continuity that redeem life's meaning despite our mortality- we are touched by a deep ambivalence that we cannot afford to understand or even to recognize. (p. 907):

Ambivalence invades the collective psyche because there can be no "postmortem continuity" in a world which has had its children, its works, and its religious traditions annihilated.

Chernus (1983), points out that the "as if" living which characterizes our meaningful relationships soon spills over into everyday life: "Shutting out parts of reality soon becomes a habit. Having lived an "as if" life in our most significant moments, we find it relatively easy to do so on the more trivial everyday level" (p. 907). As a result, our general responsiveness tends to decrease, as does our sense of being "alive". At worse, we come to know the "death in life" (Lifton) that the Hiroshima survivors experienced. As people experience "death in life" their need for value and meaning becomes greater. Yet it is precisely basic values and meaningful relationships that are distorted and diminished by psychic numbing. Therefore, looking to the sources of this value and meaning (our children, our works, our religious traditions) only plunges people deeper into unreality and deception as they pretend that the future is secure. The more

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[14]Referring to Robert Lifton.

[15]See p. 16.

intensely this unreality is experienced the greater is the need to be redeemed from it. Thus, at its deepest level, psychic numbing is a religious crisis.

It can be hypothesized that the very essence of Christianity is threatened by psychic numbing because Christians rest their hope on a power that has been at work in the world, an omnipotent power that decisively entered world history in a death and resurrection event. Christians believe that the future manifestation of this power will follow the same pattern. In union with this power they believe they have transcended death and begun living eternal life. (The existence of a Savior implies salvation.) Yet, can Christians truly experience salvation when daily life is characterized by ambivalence and decreased responsiveness -in short, "death in life"?

In summary, it can be postulated that psychic numbing negatively affects the spiritual life because "as if" living causes a person to feel ambivalent toward the sources of immortality. Increased searching for meaning leads to greater "unreality" and may result in a religious crisis.

B. Projection and Self-righteousness

The defense mechanism of projection[16] affects the perceptions of religious non-religious people alike. Projection can be encouraged by self-righteous attitudes. In this section I will describe the use of projection by certain religious and political leaders and, as well, analyze the forms which projection takes. This will be followed by a discussion of the relationship between self-righteousness and projection.

Projection in Religious and Political Statements

Projection involves the attribution of evil intentions, motives, and actions to others for the (unconscious) purpose of making one's own intentions and actions appear in a more favorable light. This attribution of evil can focus on the nature of others, on their intentions, or on their behavior. By perceiving others as "evil" I imply that I am "good". By condemning the actions of others as immoral, my actions appear more honorable. The following statement by William Armstrong, member of the United States Senate, illustrates the point:

When President Reagan identified the Soviet Union as an evil regime in his

[16]See Chapter 2, p. 12.

> controversial remarks to the National Association of Evangelicals in Orlando, Florida, he was correct. The Soviet government has killed sixty million people: They have millions of political and religious prisoners in gulags. They are threatening war and exporting revolution around the world. They are ruthlessly repressing the people of Poland and Eastern Europe. They are guilty of atrocities in Cambodia and Afghanistan and elsewhere, and I do not believe that God gave us brains and the capacity for moral judgement to remain indifferent or silent about that kind of evil in the world. (cited in Bernbaum, 1984, p. 215).

When the American president calls the Soviet Union an "evil empire", he implies that America is not only less evil, but also benevolent and good. As Menninger (1983) puts it: "We are peace-loving but they are treacherous and warlike, even "godless monsters" as a high American official recently suggested" (p. 27). Projection appears to be involved here because the Russians are no more *inherently* evil than Americans. When Russians are called "monsters", Americans, by contrast, appear civilized. Similarly, by putting emphasis on the killing, taking of political prisoners, and exporting revolution, Armstrong implies that American actions are justified and ethical.

The tendency to attribute evil intentions to the Russians is exemplified in a 1982 sermon by John Cardinal Krol,[17] arguing against unilateral disarmament:

> Let it be known that we are aware of the Soviet's avowed and never rescinded goal of subjugating the entire world. We know that Kruschev was not joking when he said "We are going to bury you".... We know the tragic record of Soviet expansionism in the world and in our own continent.... (cited in Sider and Brubaker, 1982, p. 8).

David Breese, president of the national evangelistic organization Christian Destiny, also attributes world-dominating intentions to the Russians. At the Pasadena conference,[18] Breese asked participants what are the causes of the present conflicts in our world. His response includes statements such as:

> The towering political reality of our time is the fact that a militant, atheistic, ideology has captured a major segment of our world and is now mobilizing that

[17]Catholic Cardinal Archbishop of Philadelphia.

[18]In 1982, 1400 people, many of them Evangelicals, gathered in Pasadena, California, to study issues related to nuclear weapons.

> segment toward the conquest of the earth. The communist intention to conquer the world is its avowed, openly stated public policy. (Bernbaum, 1984, p. 233).

In these statements, Russian motives are perceived as evil while American motives are perceived as noble. As Menninger (1983) comments, the intentions of the Russians are "evil and base, motivated only by drives for power and domination, while ours are laudable, honorable, and wholly justified" (p. 27). The Russians are accused of having a "never rescinded goal of subjugating the entire world" and of "threatening war and exporting revolution around the world", but no mention is made of American imperialism. Here again, the attribution of evil intentions to the Russians causes American intentions to appear in a more favorable light.

The truthfulness of Soviet intentions to conquer the world is disputed by George Kennan.[19] who argues that "apprehensions for a Russian quest for 'world domination', which have been used for a totally negative, hostile, and militaristic attitude towards the Soviet Union, have little substance behind them" (p. 81). He points out that the Soviet Union has few border regions that constitute "promising" outlets for expansion.[20] Moreover, conquering the world does not constitute the cornerstone of Soviet foreign policy:

> This is an aging, highly experienced, and very steady leadership, itself not given to rash or adventuristic policies. It commands, and is deeply involved with, a structure of power, and particularly a higher bureaucracy, that would not easily lend itself to the implementation of policies of that nature. (Kennan, 1982, p. 100).

On the contrary, the main preocupation of the Soviet leadership is the many internal problems of the country. These problems include the development of economic strength (with a gross national product half that of the United States); the general indifference, spiritlessness and alcoholism among many of the people; dissent by top intellectuals; restlessness in the satellite republics; and (compared to the West) technological backwardness in several areas.

The external situation is equally problematic for the Soviet leadership. Kennan (1982) points out that the Soviet Union faces the simultaneous challenges of Chinese communism from the east, and capitalism from the West. Militarily, American-NATO

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[19]Former ambassador to the Soviet Union and expert in Soviet studies.
[20]Afghanistan is the one notable exception.

defenses since the Korean War have been superior in nuclear strategic power, i.e., in warheads, missile accuracy, strategic bombing, and naval forces.[21] On the international scene, Kennan observes that

> [The Soviet leadership] sees more dangers than inviting opportunities. Its reactions and purposes are therefore much more defensive than aggressive. It has no desire for any major war, least of all for a nuclear one. It fears and respects American military power even as it tries to match it, and hopes to avoid a conflict with it. (p. 100–101).

One sees little correspondence between this assessment of the Soviet Union today, and the "godless monster" rhetoric. Actual circumstances in U.S.S.R. are susceptible to some sort of empirical verification while the rhetoric reflects a projection of negative intentions and an emphasis on evil actions so that those of the Americans might be perceived positively.

Self-righteousness and Projection

Self-righteousness encourages projection because it inclines one to situate evil in others. Coffin points out that "self-righteousness concentrates all attention on the sins of others. [It] fights evil as if evil were something that arose totally outside of oneself" (cited in Sider and Brubaker, 1982, p. 36). Lifton (1979) suggests that viewing oneself or one's nation as ultimately virtuous is a way of coping with death imagery. It is a way of reasserting immortality in the face of images of collective disintegration. However, as Lifton (1979) notes, claims of ultimate virtue often require "a contrasting image -and all too often an embodiment- of absolute evil" (p. 302). And this sets the stage for projection.

Nickelsburg (1984) suggests that self-righteousness involves the following "logic": a) religious people believe that they are the children of God and that divine revelation has been given to them; b) that makes them right and anyone who disagrees with them wrong; c) one's enemies should be destroyed. He cites as historical consequences of this reasoning the burning of heretics and the waging of crusades. In our day, the Soviet Union has become the designated enemy, or in religious terms, the "Antichrist". Nickelsburg (1984) comments:

> The Soviet Union is seen as the latter-day embodiment of the satanic

[21]Kennan acknowledges "ground-force strength in Central Europe" as the only exception.

> Antichrist. Any and all action against that nation or against godless communism is to be applauded and encouraged. One's own attitude and viewpoint are unquestionably right and conform to the will of God. (p. 220).

Frank (1984) provides a secular explanation of this phenomenon: "When two groups with different social systems and world views find themselves in conflict each defines the other as morally evil, if not actually demoniacal, so for each the struggle readily takes on the characteristics of a holy war." (p. 1347). These are dangerous attitudes to hold during a nuclear age precisely because they increase the likelihood of war.

In summary, the psychological defense mechanism of projection can be observed in some religious and political leaders' tendency to attribute excessive "evil" to the Russians and to emphasize their "evil" actions. The claim that the Soviet Union intends to conquer the world has been disputed on the basis that they have little room for expansion and face considerable opposition from American-NATO defenses.

C. Nuclear Threat and Religious Symbolism

In this section I will analyze the effects of the threat of nuclear war on religious symbolism and also discuss how the symbolization of immortality, traditional religious symbolism, and divine revelation have been adversely affected by this threat.

Robert Lifton (1982) discusses the threat to religious symbolism in the context on his theory of symbolic immortality. He theorizes that the individual seeks a "continuous symbolic relationship" with what has preceeded him or her and with what will come after: "Symbolization of immortality is an appropriate symbolization of our biological and historical connectedness" (p. 64). (One of the modes through which symbolic immortality may be expressed, "experiential transcendence", was discussed in Chapter 2.[22]) The biological mode ("living on through or *in* one's sons or daughters"), and the creative mode ("living on in one's work or works"), were alluded to in the previous section in the discussion of psychic numbing. Another mode of symbolic immortality is that of "eternal nature" ("living on in nature itself"). The theological mode is defined by Lifton (1979) as "the idea of transcending death through spiritual attainment, whether or not it includes specific imagery about life after death" (p. 64).

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[22]Pp. 15-16.

Lifton (1979) theorizes that nuclear weapons constitute a psychic threat which affects our symbolization of immortality. He bases his discussion of the threat to the theological mode of immortality on his study of the survivors of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima -the *hibakusha*. Following the bombing of the city, many of the survivors tried to invoke Buddhist or Christian principles, but this led to feelings of resignation and helplessness vis-à-vis the forces of destruction. As Lifton (1979) comments:

> *Hibakusha* consistently reported that their conventional religious imagery was woefully inadequate for their survivor task of giving form or meaning to the experience. Nor could such imagery, for most, contribute significantly to restoring the symbolic world that had been destroyed and help survivors reassert a sense of immortality. (p. 339).

As death imagery approaches extinction, religious symbolism is unable to provide the believer with a way of making sense of the experience.

It has been suggested that current religious symbolism is inadequate for coping with the prospect of nuclear annihilation because traditional Christian belief holds that only God has the power to destroy the world.[23] Interpreting a potential nuclear catastrophe in terms of this belief allows for only two possibilities: either nuclear war is somehow part of God's will (the destruction of humanity in a modern day biblical flood);[24] or, God, as Creator and Savior who has become intimately involved with humanity in Christ, would simply not allow it to happen. These positions assert the sovereignty of God over history, provide basis for hope in the nuclear age, and imply that the proper course of action for humanity is to obey God's will. However, as Kaufman (1982) points out, they fail to take into consideration the unique situation in which we find ourselves, namely:

> What is perhaps the most momentous *change* in the human religious situation since symbolical frames of reference were invented: the possibility that we humans, by ourselves, will utterly destroy not only ourselves but our species, all future generations, thus bringing the entire human project...to an abrupt and final halt. (p. 5).

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[23]This is what Biblical images, particularly apocalyptic ones, suggest.

[24]A position taken by many religious fundamentalists and which will be discussed below.

Faced with a present which may destroy all futures, "traditional religious symbols and frames of orientation do not quite fit" (p. 11). Kaufman concludes that these traditional images have become dangerous because they lull the believer into a false sense of security ("God will take care of everything") and dampen peacemaking efforts.

Nuclear war may hold consequences for God's manner of revealing Godself to the believer (divine revelation).[25] There is no point to a divine movement "from beyond man toward man" and a "sudden in-breaking of the holy presence" if there are no people alive to receive these. As Selby (1984) puts it, "the entire manner of the divine self-disclosure to, and relationship with the universe is placed in jeopardy the moment you consider that it is possible...to bring the entire universe as we have known it, to an end" (pp. 7-8).

D. Nuclear Threat and Religious Practice

The 'yes' of faith requires an "image of meaning, of affirmation and expansion of life beyond impinging threats, but this is rendered inaccessible -or at least extremely difficult to evolve- by prevailing imagery of extinction" (Lifton, 1979, p. 346). Moreover, images of meaning are difficult to maintain in the face of the possible destruction of religious traditions. Religious belief arises in the context of a tradition which nurtures it and sustains it. Thus, to destroy the tradition is to seriously damage the basis of belief.

Is it possible to experience Christianity's promise of redemption in the context of the threat of nuclear annihilation? In Welch's view, for the hope of redemption to have any validity it must be true in the context of the struggle to prevent a nuclear holocaust and achieve social and economic justice. With a spiralling arms race, world expenditure on arms approaching $900 billion per year, and worsening social conditions in many parts of the world, Christianity's promise is severely tested. "If we fail in history", Welch

[25]Macquarrie (1977) describes revelation as follows: "Essential to the idea of revelation is that what we come to know through revelation has a gift-like character. If, in general terms, we say that what is disclosed in revelation is the dimension of the holy, then, in the revelatory experience, it is as if the holy "breaks in" and the movement is from beyond man toward man.... The basic pattern may be summarily analyzed as follows: a mood of meditation or preoccupation, the sudden in-breaking of the holy presence, often symbolized in terms of a shining light, a mood of self-abasement (sometimes terror, sometimes consciousness of sin, sometimes even doubt of the reality of the experience) in the face of the holy, a more definite disclosure of the holy, perhaps the disclosure of a name or of a purpose or a truth of some kind (this element may be called the "content" of the revelation); the sense of being called or commissioned by the holy to a definite task or way of life" (pp. 7-8).

(1985) comments, "Christianity's promise of redemption is either a lie or irrelevant" (p. 42).

Another religious practice seriously challenged by the threat of nuclear war is *worship*. Worship is an act which expresses respect and reverence for the Creator, however, Rumscheidt (1984) maintains that worshiping "under the 'umbrella' of our deterrents as do Christians on the other side under the umbrella of their deterrents" (p. 28) has the effect of turning worshipers into haters and potential murderers.

Schell (1982) argues that nowhere can it be shown in the teachings of Christ that one can seperate the commandment to love God from the commandment to love others, nor can one justify hating others in the name of loving God. Rather, religious belief not expressed in love of others is empty. Schell quotes Matthew 5, 23-24 ("If you bring your gift to the altar and there recall that your brother has anything against you, leave your gift at the altar, go first to be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift")[26] and concludes that "we who have planned out the deaths of hundreds of millions of our brothers plainly have a great deal of work to do before we return to the altar" (p. 132).

Beyond the issue of worshiping while genocidal weapons are pointed at fellow believers lies an additional threat to worship. In many of its public forms, worship depends on the sacramental[27] tradition. Sacramental rites take place in a material world and use material things to mediate the divine presence. As Selby (1984) puts it: "The sacraments mean that the material world mediates that which is beyond itself and which gives material life its significance" (p. 7). For Selby (1984), this implies that the fate of God is fundamentally bound up with the material world and that material things are "essential constituents and ingredients" (ibid) of God's activity in the world. The threat for the sacramental tradition and worship lies in the fact that we are now able to ruin and destroy the material world which is the physical basis of that tradition.

Threats to belief and threats to worship make it difficult for people to affirm themselves spiritually. Tillich (1967) points out that spiritual self-affirmation takes place

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[26]All biblical quotations are from the New American Bible.

[27]Macquarie (1977) defines sacraments as ritual acts by which "Christ makes himself present in his Church.... [In sacramental ritual] the divine presence is focused so as to communicate itself to us with a directness and intensity like that of the incarnation itself" (p. 449). Thus, the function of sacraments is to make-present or mediate the presence of Christ in ritual acts which impinge on the senses, especially sight.

when people participate in the spheres of meaning of their lives. People love themselves as they participate in and love the contents of the spiritual life. In so doing they can experience fulfillment. However, when this participation is put in question, spiritual self-affirmation is threatened.

When spiritual self-affirmation is threatened, the psychological consequence frequently is meaninglessness or emptiness. Tillich (1967) considers these to be forms of anxiety related to "the loss of an ultimate concern; of a meaning which gives meaning to all meanings" (p. 47). It is experienced when a person loses his or her spiritual center (one's answer to the meaning of life). It may be experienced as emptiness when a particular belief is shaken or when participation in one's sphere of meanings is reduced. Or again, it may be experienced when doubt sets in, or when the tradition one believed in loses power to give meaning to life. This loss of meaning may hold serious consequences for a person's emotional life. "Man's being", Tillich (1967) comments, "includes his relation to meanings. He is human only by understanding and shaping reality, both his world and himself, according to meaning and values" (p. 50). As a result, when this spiritual part of a person's being is threatened the person's entire being is threatened.

One may escape the anxiety of meaninglessness, but only at great personal cost. Tillich (1967) notes that in the experience of doubt, we feel ourselves seperated from, and not participating in, reality. A person may try to break out of this isolation by identifying with an organization or group. "He flees from his freedom of asking and answering for himself to a situation in which no further questions can be asked and the answers to previous questions are imposed on him authoritatively" (1967, p. 49). In effect, the anxiety of emptiness and and meaninglessness is avoided by surrendering the self. The person participates in a spiritual life, thus preserving meaning, but sacrifices his or her self in the process.

Therefore, the new spiritual life *may* be characterized by a brand of self-assertiveness that becomes fanatical.

> Fanaticism is the correlate to spiritual self-surrender: it shows the anxiety which it was supposed to conquer, by attacking with disproportionate violence those who disagree and who demonstrate by their disagreement elements in the spiritual life of the fanatic which he must suppress in himself. (Tillich, 1967, pp. 49-50).

Thus, spiritual self-surrender results in a lifestyle which is less spiritual than fanatical.

In summary, the threat of nuclear war affects religious practice in several important ways. Religious belief is threatened by imagery of extinction and the disappearance of the tradition which sustains it. Worship takes place with the disconcerting knowledge that genocidal weapons are pointed at fellow human beings. As meaningful participation in the spiritual life decreases, spiritual self-affirmation is threatened, and the believer becomes vulnerable to the anxiety of meaninglessness. The anxiety can be escaped from, but only at the cost of the surrender of the self. This dynamic appears to be involved in religious fundamentalism to which we now turn.

E. Religious Fundamentalism

Fundamentalism is a conservative sect of American Protestantism which has its roots in 19th century millenarianism.[28] Fundamentalist Christians believe that the Bible is inerrant and to be interpreted literally;[29] they maintain that Christ will come again in a Second Advent;[30] and they believe in the Virgin Birth, Atonement and the Resurrection. Barr (1978) considers the following characteristics of fundamentalists to be the "most pronounced": 1) "a very strong emphasis on the inerrancy of the Bible, the absence from it of any sort of error"; 2) " a strong hostility to modern theology and to the methods, results and implications of the modern critical study of the Bible"; 3) "an assurance that those who do not share this religious viewpoint are not really 'true Christians' at all" (p. 1).

Fundamentalism is part of the broader evangelical[31] movement, but in the 1940s many evangelicals did not wish to be identified with "the strident militancy, rigorous separatism, anti-intellectualism and premillenial primacy identified with fundamentalism"

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[28]Millenarialists believe in a 'millennium' or thousand year reign by the saints. Pre-millenialists hold that these years of blessedness will follow the second advent of Christ while post-millenialists maintain that they will preceed it.

[29]Gordis (1984) notes that "for them the Bible is not a collection of inspired books that reflect the spirit of their authors or speakers.... [Rather] the Bible is an unsystematic anthology of individual verses or short passages that are unrelated to their contexts and to the larger works in which they are imbedded. The Bible is a storehouse of proof texts into which the believer may go when seeking "biblical warrant" for his or her own views on current issues" (p. 1123).

[30]Critics of the sect say that the high emphasis on this doctrine makes fundamentalists indifferent to the nuclear threat and to suffering.

[31]Evangelicals have tended, during the history of Christianity, to separate themselves from Christians they considered to be less faithful to the Gospel.

(Canadian Encyclopedia, 1985, p. 599).[32] Religious revival and fear of communism were major influences on North American fundamentalism during the 1950s. In the 1970s, the "Moral Majority", a fundamentalist organization led by Baptist preacher Jerry Falwell, vigorously supported increases in defense spending and an essentially anti-communist foreign policy.

Lifton (1982) maintains that to understand the causes of fundamentalism[33] "we must first point to the widespread experience of loss of fundamentals as a necessary prelude to their doctrinal embrace" (ibid). He suggests that many people are confused about the way to symbolize religion, life's rituals, education, and authority. The threat of nuclear war adds further confusion and shakes basic convictions. In Lifton's (1982) view, "fundamentalism can be seen as an attempt to reverse that process in its own literalizing fashion. It is among other things, an extreme response to the threat to the theological mode of symbolic immortality" (p. 85). Gordis (1984) points out that on a psychological level, the community of fundamentalists offers an answer to alienation and an impersonal technological society "through the support of a closely knit community marked by a warm sense of fellowhip, family love and mutual responsibility" (p. 1124).

Fundamentalism and Nuclear War

A unique aspect of fundamentalism is its eschatology.[34] Many fundamentalists believe that the second advent or coming of Christ will be the climax of history, "carrying with it the termination of the present stage of God's dealings with the world and the transition to a new and different stage" (Barr, 1978, p. 35). Some fundamentalists take this to mean that Christ's return will occur prior to a nuclear war.[35] They interpret the Book of Revelation as predicting a nuclear holocaust and anticipate an ultimate battle

[32]Barr (1978) calls the attitudes characteristic of fundamentalism "a pathological condition of Christianity" (p. 5).

[33]Lifton (1982) defines fundamentalism as "a form of totalism with a very specific response to the loss of larger human connections. It is a doctrinal restatement of the connections in which literal, immutable words (rather than the original flow of vital images) are rendered sacred and made the center of a quest for collective revitalization" (p. 82).

[34]Doctrine which deals with "the last things", i.e., "the final destiny of the individual soul and mankind in general" (Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, 1983, p. 469).

[35]See David Wilkerson's *21 Amazing Predictions* and Hal Lindsay's *The 1980's Countdown to Armageddon.*

from which they will be miraculously saved. Lifton (1982) warns that these fundamentalists "view nuclear extinction as God's punishment of humankind for its sins. The nuclear event may then be welcomed as necessary or even cleansing" (p. 85).

Kaufman (1982) notes that through such a cataclysm God is perceived to be sovereign over history. The implication of this view is that nuclear war is the expression of a divine purpose. Consequently, to prevent this ultimate culmination of human history is to be guilty of going against the will of God. Schell (1982) calls this a "perversion of religion". He suggests that the falsity of such a claim lies in the fact that it is humankind who destroys humankind in a nuclear war:

> To imagine that God is guiding our hand in this action would quite literally be the ultimate evasion of our responsibility as human beings -a responsibility that is ours because (to stay with the religious interpretation for a moment) we possess a free will that was implanted in us by God. (p. 127).

Barash (1982) calls the attribution of nuclear war to God the "ultimate blasphemy": "Blaming God for nuclear war is not only personally immoral, its grossly sacriligious" (p. 232).

According to Downey (1986), there has been a "growing fascination[36] with what has come to be called 'Armageddon theology'" (p. 78). The idea of participating in God's plan by using nuclear weapons is not limited to fundamentalists. As Valliere (1983) comments:

> The claim occasionally made by [some] right-wing Christians in America that nuclear weapons are God's gift to a nation chosen to do his will...is a way of thinking that may have more appeal throughout the world than many political realists realize. (p. 14).

It is a matter of both psychological and theological significance when apocalyptic visions are applied to nuclear war. Manchester (1983) comments that "there is indeed genuine reason to worry that apocalyptic myth might operate as self-fulfilling prophecy" (p. 290). Sine (1984) warns that "if nuclear destruction of Russia is fore-ordained as in

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[36]The following ad appeared in the *Globe and Mail* on September 20, 1986: To the 12 tribes of Israel!!! Listen!!! Before long the moment shall be there that Jesus returns with many spaceships to gather His people and to take them to a new planet. The remaining life on earth shall be destroyed by a nuclear war. For information write to....

some pre-millenial schemes, might not a fundamentalist politician[37] or general regard his finger on the button as an instrument of God's eternal purpose?" (p. 13).

One danger of Armageddon theology is that it can be perceived as a religiously inspired justification for destroying the world: "For example, the extinction of an "evil" humankind might be regarded as acceptable or pleasing to God -or, at least, as representing the fulfillment of some plan of His (as in the identification by some Christian fundamentalists of a holocaust with Armageddon)" (Schell, 1982, p. 133). Such a viewpoint could lead to an inclination to destroy humanity for God's sake: "When armies take up the banner of God, the absolute sovereignty of each person's individual conscience over his actions is transmuted into a claim of absolute sovereignty over other people" (ibid). As a result, rather than submit to their conscience, people submit to leaders who claim to speak in the name of God. Rather than sacrifice themselves for their neighbor, Christians sacrifice others for the sake of God. In previous centuries such assumptions led to periodic warfare, but in the nuclear age they could result in the decimation of all organized society.

In this chapter, what I have generally defined as the "fundamentalist attitude" appears to be related to what Gordis (1984) calls the "inner-group morality": "This attitude is neither hypocritical nor dishonest, it is the logical consequence of the fundamentalist siege mentality which dictates the principle that "he who is not with us is against us" (p. 1125). Under the influence of "inner group morality" religiosity comes to take precedence over ethical consciousness. Where belief in Christ's saving power is the only concern ethical conduct becomes secondary.

According to Gordis (1984), the consequence of this attitude is that social concern (not the least of which is preventing nuclear war) tends not to be part of the fundamentalist agenda, despite the huge economic and social problems of the day: "There is a striking paradox that Christian fundamentalists who believe in the Prince of

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[37]The fact that the president of the United States addresses fundamentalist groups like the National Association of Evangelicals and that such groups appear to have the president's ear is most worrisome. President Reagan is also reported to have given an autographed Bible to Ali Akbar Hasheim Rafsanjani, speaker of the fundamentalist Islamic parliament of Iran, who was seen showing off the Bible. (A western diplomat has recently said that "politics in this country are beginning to revolve more around Rafsanjani than [the 86 year-old] Khomeini" ("Rafsanjani takes charge in Iran", 1987).

Peace...are notably absent from the various peace and antinuclear movements" (ibid).[38] Pierard (1980) notes that evangelicals have generally not been concerned with international crises: "Apart from crude anti-communism, ethnocentric interest in the locales of foreign missionaries, and sporadic responses to disaster, it is safe to say that most evangelicals have not given consideration to international matters at all" (p. 51).

Inherent to Armageddon theology is a deterministic sense that human society is "declining" and heading for destruction. In this fatalistic view little reason exists to work for peace:

> The millions of Christians who subscribe to this type of end-time theology unwittingly buy into a degenerative view of history and a fatalistic view of the future. Their eschatological determinism makes working for peace at best nonsensical, and at worst a subversion of the destructive designs of God. (pp. 13-14).

We have seen that the *loss* of fundamentals and the *loss* of the ability to symbolize immortality contribute to an increase in fundamentalism. In the age of nuclear weapons, certain versions of fundamentalist eschatology interpret biblical apocalyptic *as predicting a nuclear holocaust.* This interpretation provides some religious justification for the destruction of the world, and according to some thinkers, contributes to a self-fulfilling prophecy which could prove catastrophic.

F. Conclusion

There are many spiritual consequences to the threat of nuclear war. The defense mechanism of psychic numbing affects the sources of immortality by introducing ambivalence into a person's most meaningful relationships. Projection operates in the spiritual life when believers self-righteously situate evil in the Russians and consider themselves to be moral and virtuous. Imagery of extinction threatens the symbolization of immortality while traditional religious symbolism appears to be inadequate for making sense of the nuclear threat. Religious belief is undermined by the uncertainty of the

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[38]The later Billy Graham is a notable exception. Graham (1979) comments: "I...believe Christians today need to work for peace on a larger scale in our troubled world. We live in a frightening (and frightened) world on the very brink of a nuclear holocaust. We cannot remain indifferent to this, and that is one reason I have felt compelled to speak out in recent months on the need for mutual disarmament, especially of nuclear weapons" (p. 48).

continuation of religious traditions and by doubts about the ability of these traditions to prevent a nuclear holocaust. Worship is threatened with the disappearance of the sacramental tradition and is rendered difficult by the realization that weapons of mass destruction are pointed at fellow worshipers.

Faced with such issues, and the perceived loss of basic values, some believers have sought to avoid anxiety by embracing a "fundamentalist attitude". In doing so they adhere to an eschatology that gives a providential ground plan to nuclear war and discourages peacemaking.

This chapter has sought to describe some of the spiritual aspects of the threat of nuclear war. The following chapter will discuss the resources of religion in coping with this threat.

Chapter IV

Biblical Resources for Coping with the Threat of Nuclear War

The Bible contains resources which are helpful for overcoming psychological and spiritual consequences related to the threat of nuclear holocaust. It contains images and stories which can make this threat more comprehensible and a concept of God appropriate for the nuclear age. Paradigms of power and sociality derived from the Bible offer alternatives to paradigms associated with the preparation for nuclear war.

In this chapter I will analyze biblical resources which can counteract denial, psychic numbing, and threats to the symbolization of immortality and spiritual self-affirmation. This will be followed by an examination of the role of biblical images for coping with the nuclear threat, and a discussion of biblical images of God for the nuclear age. In the last sections of the chapter I will contrast paradigms of human living found in the Bible with those that underlie "nuclearism", and discuss the Bible's vision of peace and peacemaking.

A. Resources for Overcoming Psychological and Spiritual Consequences of the Nuclear Threat

We saw in Chapter 2[39] that it is beyond the ability of most people to fully grasp the horror of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. Without resources[40] to facilitate this understanding, painful images such as the destruction of Hiroshima are suppressed and denied. The New Testament provides spiritual resources which may help overcome psychological and emotional consequences of the nuclear threat (such as denial and the suppression of painful images and feelings).

In order to grasp tragedies of such magnitude they must somehow be personalized. The human mind can react to the murder of a single child but, ironically, seems to shut down when required to envision the death of a million children. A means is required by which to focus upon the *individuals* who perish in an atomic blast. The central religious hypothesis of Christianity, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, may provide, (for those who hold the hypothesis to be true) a way to become more conscious of the suffering of individual victims. Downey (1986) points out that theological

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[39]P. 13.

[40]Joanna Macy's *Despair and Personal Power in the Nuclear Age* attempts to provide specific resources for coping with the nuclear threat.

reflection on the death of Christ has led to the belief that in his rejection, crucifixion, and death, Jesus identified himself with *all* victims: "The dead Christ is with the dead sons and daughters, mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, past, present and future. He shares their experience of abandonment, of non-deliverance, of death, of being forgotten -and he is God" (p. 81).

Auckerman (1980) acknowledges how difficult it is to envision the killing of 200 thousand human beings,[41] but points out that "there is, though, the slain One, whose mind, heart, and body in A.D. 30 and A.D. 1945 took that in" (p. 81). By means of the belief that Jesus Christ took in the full extent of that tragedy, people can begin to personalize the horror through the realization that Christ knew every single victim of that holocaust. Now people are even less able to visualize the death of hundreds of millions in a *nuclear holocaust.* However, those who accept the theological interpretation of the death of Christ can begin to comprehend such a horror by realizing that he would know each victim's passion and feel each one's death. Christ's relationship with each victim enables believers to retain a meaningful perspective on this tragedy.

Biblical imagery counteracts imagery of extinction and threats to the symbolization of immortality. The most important resource which the New Testament offers in this regard is the religious hypothesis of the resurrection of Christ. According to Christian belief, in the resurrection God acted decisively to destroy the powers of death and to give immortal life to believers. This imagery of immortality stands against the imagery of extinction which threatens our symbols of immortality (one's works, one's children, nature).

The image of the resurrection also counteracts (to a certain degree) anxiety created by the fear that there may be no human future. Wallis (1981) comments that in the resurrection God is stronger than the powers of death and destruction. "Only in the recognition of something that is more real can we see their authority as unreal" (p. 167). The powers of destruction are defeated by stronger "weapons": the love of God and truth. Belief in the resurrection can thus restore hope that the promise of redemption is true and that religious traditions and beliefs will survive. Furthermore, belief in the resurrection and its victory over the powers of death and destruction restores meaning, thus reducing the threat to spiritual self-affirmation and the anxiety associated with the

[41]The number of citizens who died as a result of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima.

loss of meaning.

Another New Testament tradition which can be seen to inspire hope and offset the despair that many people feel in the nuclear age is God's promise of assistance. In the Gospels, Jesus makes the following statements: "Know that I am with you always, until the end of the world" (Mark 28: 20); and "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes down on you" (Acts 1: 28).

Johnson (1983) suggests that the Spirit's role in the nuclear age is to help people see the signs of the times.[42] The first of these signs is that *"the sovereign God is allowing us to be who we are"* (p. 37). The situation giving rise to this sign is that our society is involved in the preparation for a war that would likely result in the annihilation of hundreds of millions of people. The second sign is that *"the sovereign God is pronouncing judgement in eloquent silence....* Our nuclear dependency or idolatry is proof that we have reached the limits of human power without God's grace" (p. 39). The development of increasingly sophisticated nuclear weapons is an attempt to find ultimate security, a condition which renders trust in God unnecessary. Fortunately, the third sign revealed by the Spirit is that *"in every frustrating effort to ensure our security, we face not only God's judgement, but God's grace"* (p. 40). One way to view God's grace is in terms of divine assistance to see these signs of the times. What the Spirit would then have people do, Johnson suggests, is admit their involvement in "nuclear idolatry" and walk on a path that leads to life. God's help in doing this is assured by the promise "I am with you always till the end of the world."

In summary, the religious hypothesis that Christ, in his death, identified himself with all victims, can help personalize the horror of nuclear annihilation. As the capacity to understand increases, the need for denial and the suppression of painful images and feelings decreases. The hypothesis of the resurrection of Christ counteracts imagery of extinction and its threat to our symbols of immortality. It also instills hope that religious belief and traditions will continue, and encourages personal meaning and spiritual self-affirmation.

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[42]The New Testament states that the Holy Spirit will "guide you to all truth...and will announce to you the things to come" (John, 16: 33).

B. The Role of Biblical Images and Stories

The Scriptures of the Christian religion (the Bible) contain numerous images and stories dealing with painful situations humanity has encountered. I will analyze some of these stories beginning with the Old Testament (that part of the Bible dealing with the origins of humanity, the election of a Chosen People, and the promise of a Messiah) and ending with the New Testament (that part of the Bible dealing with Jesus Christ and the origins of the Christian religion).

Einstein's famous statement[43] asserts that a fundamental change in our thinking is required if we are to avert a nuclear holocaust.[44] Austin (1985) proposes that to change our thinking we need to make greater use of metaphors and images. "Metaphors", he reminds us, "make use of a literal image to make plain the invisible world of ideas" (p. 334). Images and metaphors help us to "see" by giving shape and form to invisible thoughts. Two ideas which require considerable visualization if we are to reduce the risk of nuclear annihilation are (1) the world being destroyed by nuclear war, and (2) a world free of the threat of nuclear war. Chernus (1983) argues that images such as hell and heaven are helpful in visualizing these ideas because "they create their own reality, one which is immensely powerful on both conscious and unconscious levels" (p. 909).

One of the oldest stories in the Bible dealing with catastrophe is the Flood (Genesis 6-8). At the time of Noah, people lived their daily lives unaware of the impending cataclysm. Auckerman (1980) compares their absorption in daily routine prior to the flood to our contemporary situation where "most human beings live out day after day absorbed in consumption, production, commerce, [and] self-gratification. And each such day moves inevitably on -unless there is a human turning around" (p. 12). That people then were unaware of the impending flood resembles the failure of many people to see the 20th century forces[45] which are pushing us closer to nuclear catastrophe. However, Auckerman notes a difference between the "days of Noah" and the "days of

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[43]"Everything has changed save our way of thinking and thus we drift toward unparalleled catastrophe."

[44]Austin (1985) goes further and suggests that we need to reinvent ourselves. This he views as a spiritual task which involves "the urgent necessity to transform the very structures of human consciousness in the face of possible human self-extinction" (p. 324).

[45]Manchester (1983) comments that the true nature of these forces is not recognized and yet they are "living powers...both real among us and not called by their true names" (p. 292).

the Bomb". Although the former are analogous to the time preceeding nuclear war, we, unlike the ancient Israelites, have an awareness "that in the long run, continuation of the nuclear arms race and its vertical and horizontal proliferations will almost certainly bring catastrophe on much or all of the human race" (p. 14).

Despite this awareness, the arms race continues. How are we to explain the fact that governments continue to spend billions on nuclear weaponry when this expenditure may result in a planet devoid of civilization? The biblical notion of "sin"[46] is somewhat instructive in this matter. According to Wallis (1981), the fact that we ever allowed thermonuclear weapons to become part of modern life is indicative of what the Bible calls "hardness of heart". This condition involves not so much deliberate wrong doing as "the loss of the ability to distinguish between good and evil. It is like having deadened nerves that cannot feel. It means having eyes that no longer see and ears that no longer hear" (p. 82). Wallis notes that creating genocidal weapons and electing political leaders who have asserted the willingness to use them requires clouded reason, a closed heart, and insensitivity to human suffering. Bauckham (1985b) suggests that we are short-sighted in our fear and self-interest and that our intentions and reason are powerless to stop a rapidly escalating arms race. He comments that this situation "seems a classic illustration of the Christian analysis of sin as helpless entanglement in a process of evil, even against one's better judgement" (p. 597).

As citizens observe the inability of their governments to reverse the arms race, they experience a sense of powerlessness and helplessness, which in turn paves the way for cynicism and despair. There is a need for something which will restore hope and confidence. The conclusion of the Flood story suggests a basis for hope. Yahweh declares: "Never again will I doom the earth because of man, since the desires of man's heart are evil from the start; nor will I ever again strike down all living beings as I have done" (Genesis 8: 21). Bauckham (1985a) points out that "the real significance of the Flood [is] God's pledge that such a judgement will not happen again" (p. 149). It is not that the inclinations of the human heart are any less evil *after* the Flood but that God makes a commitment to tolerate the evil. "*In spite of* human evil, God resolves never again to destroy humanity" (ibid). Bauckham acknowledges that the biblical authors could not foresee that we might destroy ourselves, and therefore God's promise does not constitute

[46]We will consider "sin" here, not in the narrow sense of particular moral lapses, but in the broader sense of being caught up in a process which is evil.

a guarantee that nuclear war will not occur. Nevertheless, the promise that Yahweh makes to Noah is relevant because "it assures us of God's commitment to human survival on earth" (p. 152). God's commitment to the survival of humankind can be viewed as a reason for hope, even in the nuclear age.

Another set of images relevant to overcoming nuclear despair are contained in the Bible's apocalyptic literature. Biblical apocalyptic dealt with situations perceived to be hopeless, where evil had reached such proportions that only an intervention by God could overcome it. In the Old Testament, apocalyptic visions generally follow a three-part schema: a) there is a rise in wickedness on the earth; b) humankind is judged in a "Day of Yahweh"; c) evil is conquered and an age of peace follows. In the New Testament, evil is epitomized by the Antichrist, who is eventually destroyed in a cosmic battle between the angelic forces and the forces of evil; a reign of peace then follows. In all apocalyptic scenarios, *judgement and destruction are followed by salvation and restoration.* The apocalyptists looked beyond the abyss of their situation and trusted that what God had promised would come to pass. "They asserted their faith in the faithfulness and righteousness of God whose good purpose for human history must in the end succeed" (Bauckham, 1985b, p. 598). In this way they overcame the pessimism and despair of their seemingly inalterable situation.

Downey (1986) suggests that biblical apocalyptic serves the dual purpose of speaking to the consciousness of people -to the sense of catastrophe that they experience vis-à-vis nuclear war; and provides the vision of an age in which evil has been overcome. Those who believe that God is involved in the struggle against evil remain hopeful (despite the threat of nuclear annihilation) by believing "that in the midst of dire adversity, meaninglessness, powerlessness, and futurelessness, God is coming against all odds and will be victorious" (p. 80).

In summary, biblical images and metaphors provide analogies which help us cope with the threat of nuclear war. Some of these stories instill hope which counteracts the cynicism and despair that many people experience as a result of the nuclear threat.

C. Biblical Images of God for the Nuclear Age

We saw in Chapter 3[47] that certain traditional notions of God lead to two

[47] P. 27.

contradictory propositions: (1) God will not allow nuclear war to happen, and (2) Nuclear war is God's will. At issue here is a relevant concept of God for the nuclear age. The Bible provides a meaningful concept of God and how God relates to a nuclear world. In this section I will analyze the inadequacies of certain classical notions of God[48] and contrast these with the biblical view of God.

Lakeland (1984) contends that the classical way of perceiving God is challenged by the threat of nuclear annihilation: "With the creation of nuclear arms human beings seem to have snatched the initiative from God. The almighty has been brought down to earth and is no longer in control" (p. 119). It seems that human beings are now able to decide whether God's creation will have been a success or not. From this perspective, God's omnipotence is in doubt. Lakeland notes that some thinkers have overcome the problems associated with this classical idea of God by means of a "return to the biblical God". The Bible presents a God who does not exercise absolute control over events but allows for the freedom of individuals. Human history is viewed as being "radically open" and not a mere unfolding of a pre-ordained divine plan. As Johnson (1983) comments, "the sovereign God is allowing us to be who we are" (p. 37). The biblical view of God and history is more appropriate for the nuclear age as it takes into account our freedom, a freedom which, ironically, can be used to destroy the world.

Lakeland (1984) argues that the idea of God as "macho power-figure" derives from Greek philosophy whereas in the New Testament God is revealed as compassionate and "non-powerful". Jesus is a figure of compassion who suffers and is killed for being who he is. This is a far cry from the classical notions of divinity as "impassible and omnipotent". In the New Testament, "God is revealed in the world as weakness and dependency and lack of worldly wisdom, both as the poor Christ and as the poor nations who cannot influence the powerful of the world" (Lakeland, 1984, p. 123).

The inherited notions of God as *Summum Bonum* (Greatest Good) and of evil as *privatio boni* (absence of good) have been analyzed by Garrison (1982) and found to be inadequate for helping people cope with the threat of nuclear annihilation. The idea of God as total perfection and goodness emphasizes the transcendent, inaccessible aspects of the divine and suggests that God is far removed from day to day issues such as the threat of nuclear war. It does not adequately reflect the biblical tradition which views

[48]Such as: 'God is all-powerful and impassible' or 'God is total perfection and evil is the absence of good'.

God as intimately involved in human history. In the Bible God saves but also judges, punishes, and destroys. Viewing evil as the absence of good deflects attention from the very real evil that would result from a massive exchange of nuclear missiles. The notion of evil as having no "substantive reality of its own" offers little in helping individuals come to terms with what Kaufman (1982) calls "that very peculiar fact-which-is-not-yet-a-reality, the possibility of our annihilating the entire human future" (p. 13). Garrison maintains that as a result of these deficient notions, "the Church has been unable to help the world make the leap in consciousness necessary to keep pace with the leap in technology which Hiroshima represents" (p. 203). He proposes that a new articulation of the concept of God is needed as well as "a realistic understanding of evil such that Christians can be equipped to deal with the present crisis" (p. 27).[49]

We have seen that the classical notions of God as omnipotent and total perfection are not helpful for making sense of the threat of nuclear war. The biblical image of God as a divine being who is compassionate and who identifies with victims suggests that God is concerned with the fate of human beings. The notion that God respects human freedom to the point of allowing nuclear holocaust is realistic and makes God more believable. These biblical views of God are meaningful in the nuclear age because they suggest that God is "approachable", and involved in human affairs. The following section will deal with biblical paradigms which are useful in the nuclear age.

D. Biblical Paradigms and Nuclearism

Nuclearism is a form of "religion" which raises nuclear weapons to the level of gods and entrusts the preservation of life to them.[50] It is a form of "idolatry" which undermines the trust that believers are to place in God. Chapman (1984) contends that

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[49]This topic will be taken up in the following chapter.

[50]Lifton (1979) theorizes that many people have sought to restore a "sense of immortality" through the religion of nuclearism. He defines nuclearism as a "secular religion, a total ideology in which "grace" and "salvation" -the mastery of death and evil- are achieved through the power of a new technological deity" (p. 369). Death anxiety is overcome by embracing nuclear weapons. "Nuclearism...involves a search for grace and glory in which technical-scientific transcendence, apocalyptic destruction, national power, personal salvation, and committed individual identity all become psychically bound up with the bomb" (p. 376). Lifton calls the religion of nuclearism, this embracing of nuclear weapons as a means of salvation, "the ultimate contemporary deformation" (ibid).

nuclearism constitutes a threat to the identity of believers and to the essence of the Christian religion, and, therefore, it should be declared a "heresy". He suggests that we examine the "primal thought models" which underlie nuclearism and oppose them with biblical paradigms of human living.

Three of the paradigms underlying nuclearism, according to Chapman (1984), include: power as violence, sociality as "zero sum" gaming, and "non-hope" expressed in "worst-case analysis". With respect to the first of these paradigms, 'power as violence', Chapman notes that "the unprecedented energy release of the atom in 1945...reinforced in the public mind, to an unfortunate extent, the inclination to perceive power as physical force and, ultimately, as violence" (p. 260). The view of reality which accompanies this paradigm consists of perceiving life as a power struggle that frequently culminates in war. Chapman maintains that a paradigm shift is necessary if we are to attain the new modes of thinking required to prevent nuclear war. He contrasts the paradigm of violence which reinforces nuclearism, with the New Testament vision of non-violence and "a world reconciled and transformed by the crucified and risen Jesus" (p. 261). He notes that in the New Testament power is used in subtle manner[51] and is expressed in self-giving love (*agape*) which transforms individuals and society. This biblical vision of power constitutes an alternative to the paradigm of power as violence.

The power struggle characteristic of nuclearism is related to an assumption that each individual or nation must obtain whatever it can of the world's finite and diminishing resources. This assumption expresses a paradigm of sociality which Chapman compares to "zero sum gaming". In a zero sum game the players strive to acquire as much as possible of a scarce resource. One player's gain, by definition, means another's loss. The result is an intense competition which may be characterized by ruthless manipulation and acquisition. To the paradigm which envisions human behavior as zero-sum gaming, Chapman (1984) juxtaposes the biblical view of sociality where "life together is seen as a covenantal sharing that anticipates the Kingdom of God" (p. 262). The gifts of the Spirit described in the New Testament[52] point to a Kingdom which is characterized not by a competion for scarce resources, but rather by compassion and the

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[51]This is not always the case in the Old Testament where the wrath of God results in a very different use of power, for example, in the destruction of cities. This issue will be discussed in the following chapter.

[52]"Love, joy, peace, patient endurance, kindness, generosity, faith, mildness...." (Galations 5: 22).

sharing of resources.[53]

The third paradigm analyzed by Chapman (1984) is 'non-hope expressed as worst-case analysis'. He finds that a form of psychological hopelessness underlies nuclearism. A certain despair is manifested in the "worst-case analysis" approach of military planning which overestimates enemy forces in order to be prepared for all imagined enemy moves. This type of "preparedness" results in an ongoing escalation of the arms race because it views the world as a potential boobytrap requiring constant monitoring. "Once the cosmos is perceived as the stage for a never-ending monster movie, moral action is reduced to vigilance or even paranoia, and hope is inverted as non-hope" (p. 263). He contrasts this "non-hope paradigm" with the future as envisioned by the Bible. The notions of Kingdom of God and Messianic banquet, and the promise of a new heaven and new earth, suggest reconciliation and unity, and invite a forgiving attitude which, in theory, could have a mitigating effect on the arms race. In Chapman's view, "this paradigm of reality is the ground of hope -not a worst-case analysis, but (so to speak) a best-case assurance. All enemy images will be dissolved through the promise of a shared future" (p. 264).

In summary, three paradigms underlying nuclearism are 'power as violence', 'sociality as zero sum gaming', and 'non-hope expressed as worst-case analysis'. The paradigm of power as violence has been reinforced since the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and finds expression in the power struggles which occur in many areas of life. The paradigm of sociality undergirding nuclearism is comparable to zero sum gaming which is characterized by a struggle for limited resources. With respect to the paradigm of non-hope, a worst-case scenario approach to military planning, and the vigilance and paranoia that accompany it, reveal a certain hopelessness to be inherent to nuclearism. Chapman (1984) concludes that nuclearism can be countered as a heresy by means of a trusting "embrace of the unknown" (faith) and by opposing it with biblical paradigms such as "power as relational and nonviolent, life together as expansive love upheld by the Spirit's fullness, [and] the future as a shared fulfillment that has already begun in forgiveness" (p. 266).

[53]In Acts 2 the newly formed Christian community put everything in common and arranged for the care of the less fortunate.

E. Biblical View of Peace and Peacemaking

The biblical authors envisioned a comprehensive peace for those who did not put their trust in weapons. Wolff (1985) comments that ancient Israel was not to depend on arms because Yahweh is the destroyer of weapons and the giver of peace.[54] Israel was to have nothing to do with weapons because the Messiah to whom Yahweh will hand over authority is a "Prince of Peace" (Isaiah, 9: 5). The peace promised by Yahweh to those who remain faithful is *shalom*, which means "wholeness" or "well-being". Sider (1982) notes that "shalom refers to wholeness in every area: material abundance, national prosperity, right relationships among persons in society. Leviticus 26: 3-6 paints a glorious picture of this comprehensive *shalom*" (p. 96).[55] Wolff adds that this peace is to eventually encompass the entire world: "The expectation of a Messiah belongs inseparably with the hope for an end to war, the destruction of weapons, and the establishment of peace between nations" (p. 139). This vision of a comprehensive and global peace stands against nuclearism and despair and provides a certain measure of spiritual and psychological hope for those involved in peacemaking.

The Bible suggests a radical approach to peacemaking: *forgiveness*. Sider (1982) points out that forgiveness was a central part of Christ's teaching: "To the horror of the Pharisees, Jesus eagerly forgave even the most notorious offenders -the prostitutes, the woman caught in adultery, and hated tax collectors profiting from collaboration with the foreign oppressors" (p. 104). Shriver (1980) suggests that we consider the "political relevance" of the forgiveness of sins. Political and religious leaders (and others) might begin by attempting to recognize the humanity of those citizens who live within the Soviet Union, and not be so quick to attribute evil intentions to them. A forgiving attitude may be the catalyst which initiates lessened hostility between nuclear-armed nations and may facilitate a climate of increased co-operation.

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[54]Psalm 46, for example, declares: "He has stopped wars to the end of the earth: The bow he breaks; he splinters the spears; he burns the shields with fire."

[55]Verse 6, for example, reads: "I will establish peace in the land, that you may lie down to rest without anxiety. I will...keep the sword of war from sweeping across your land."

F. Conclusion

The Bible is one important resource within the Christian tradition which can strengthen our ability to cope with the nuclear threat. Belief that Christ knows and identifies with each victim of nuclear war provides a means of personalizing the horror of nuclear death and reduces the need for denial and the suppression of painful images and feelings. Belief in the resurrection and in immortality counteracts anxiety about the future, and restores meaning. Biblical images such as heaven and hell, the Flood, and the Apocalypse facilitate thinking about nuclear war and the "working through" of cynicism and despair. Biblical images of God are helpful to believers in the nuclear age because they emphasize that God is compassionate and concerned about the fate of the world. Paradigms of power and sociality derived from the New Testament suggest a vision of human living which can be opposed to nuclearism and the struggle for power and resources. Finally, the biblical vision of peace and peacemaking has the potential to reduce the interpersonal as well as the international hostility which could lead to nuclear war.

This chapter has sought to describe biblical resources for dealing with the threat of nuclear war. The following chapter will be concerned with *theological* and *practical* resources for coping with this threat.

Chapter V

Theological and Practical Resources for Coping with the Threat of Nuclear War

Some aspects of traditional religious symbolism (such as 'divine providence') are confusing to people who seek to understand the threat of nuclear holocaust. The same can be said about certain classical concepts such as 'God is total perfection' and 'God is omnipotent'. Clearly, an appropriate view of God is required to assist the integration of the nuclear threat. Equally required is a way of living which mitigates the psychological and spiritual consequences of the threat of nuclear holocalust.

This chapter will consider resources in theology[56] and religious practice which are helpful in dealing with the threat of nuclear war. I will review some theological attempts to overcome the deficiencies in religious symbolism and certain notions of God by articulating a concept of God more congruent with the nuclear age. This will include an overview of Garrison's ontology (discourse on being) of God and his suggestions for a psycho-theological integration of the nuclear threat. Lastly, I will analyze some aspects of religious practice (such as personal prayer, public worship, and community living) which have the potential to help individuals deal with the threat of nuclear war, and to empower them to work for peace.

A. Garrison's Ontology of God for the Nuclear Age

The biblical view of God (as compassionate and 'non-powerful') appears to be a step in the direction of discovering an appropriate concept of God for the nuclear age, however it does not answer all of the questions about God and nuclear issues. *In which ways*, some ask, is God involved (or not involved) in the fact that humankind has the power to destroy much of the world? Since God is "allowing" an arms race which could result in a nuclear holocaust, does this mean that God will allow a nuclear war to occur? What about God's promise at the end of the Flood story never to destroy the earth again? What sort of God would allow nuclear fire-storms to destroy the earth? How are people to relate to a God who would allow a nuclear holocaust to occur? A systematic articulation of a concept of God for the nuclear age is required in order to answer questions about how God is involved in the threat of nuclear annihilation. Jim Garrison

[56]Macquarrie (1977) defines theology as "the study which, through participation in and reflection upon a religious faith, seeks to express the content of this faith in the clearest and most coherent language available" (p. 1).

attempts to describe such a concept of God and how God relates to a nuclear-armed world.

Garrison (1982) integrates the process thought of Alfred North Whitehead[57] with Charles Hartshorne's theory that God is dipolar[58] to formulate a process panentheistic[59] ontology of God. According to this ontology, God is perceived to contain the dipolarities of abstract/consequent, transcendent/immanent, and cosmic/historical. In terms of God's relationship with the world, Garrison notes that "God and the world co-inhere panentheistically in relational encounter. God is the all-embracing reality within which history takes place" (p. 59). God is not viewed as an omnipotent monarch unaffected by human freedom. Rather, God's creative advances depend on human choices. "Both God and the world are in a process of becoming in which each is vulnerable to the activity of the other" (p. 60). Lakeland (1984) suggests that the process view of God is helpful for our nuclear age because it perceives God as being "in every present moment of decision as the ground of possibility and of the power to choose novelty" (p. 121). He claims that this on-going presence of God enables the believer to choose love over hatred.

Garrison proposes that God's action in the present can be understood in the light of the confessional heritage. Through a "hermeneutic[60] of engagement", God's presence

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[57]The notion of interdependence is fundamental. Reality consists of "actual entities" which "cohere relationally in a milieu of creative synthesis" (p. 37). "God and humanity co-create history together, God instilling within us the divine lure that gives us our subjective aim, we concretizing this lure according to our degree of freedom" (p. 205). Lakeland (1984) adds that "God supplies the occasion of decision, and by this means tries to encourage the choice of what is best in the situation" (p. 121).

[58]"Hartshorne's dipolar theory of the Godhead characterizes God as being on the one hand 'infinite, free, complete, primordial, eternal, actually deficient and unconscious,' and on the other hand as being 'determined, incomplete, consequent, everlasing (meaning incorruptible, all change being gain not loss), fully actual and conscious" (p. 37). Thus God has both a temporal and an eternal aspect. "That God is of complementary aspects...establishes philosophically the principle that polarity is an essential aspect of our experience of God" (Garrison, 1982, p. 39).

[59]Panentheism is the "belief that the Being of God includes and penetrates the whole universe, so that every part of it exists in Him, but (as against Pantheism) that His Being is more than and not exhausted by, the universe" (Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, 1983, p. 1000).

[60]Hermeneutics has to do with interpretation. "Whereas exegesis is usually the act of explaining a text, often in the case of sacred literature according to formally prescribed rules, hermeneutics is the science (or art) by which exegetical procedures are devised. In theology, hermeneutical theory arises out of awareness of the ambiguity of a sacred text and the consequent analysis of the act of understanding" (Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, 1983, p. 641).

can be discerned in new events by means of the "typologically constructed" older patterns where God's hand was discerned before. The Exodus, for example, became part of the confessional heritage of ancient Israel. The historical event of the Hebrews crossing the Red Sea while the pursuing Egyptians were engulfed in water is given the confessional witness: "Sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea" (Exodus 15: 21). Later in its history, Israel's escape from Babylonian captivity is made possible by Cyrus's defeat of Babylon (the historical event). Israel then engages its confessional heritage and views this as a new exodus, led this time by Cyrus rather than Moses. The confessional witness becomes: "The Lord goes forth like a mighty man, like a man of war he stirs up his fury...he shows himself mighty against his foes" (Isaiah 42: 13). By means of the hermeneutic of engagement, "the believing community brings the confessional heritage, through which the community perceives the purposeful movement of God through the historical process, into a living encounter with the contemporary reality" (Garrison, 1982, p. 57). Garrison suggests that the believer can use a similar process to make sense of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima.

Garrison maintains that the hand of God can be seen in the Hiroshima event. That part of the confessional heritage which can help the believer interpret God's role in this decisive event is the apocalyptic literature of the Bible. Garrison first draws attention to the fact that it is the wrath of God which causes the horrible destruction described in biblical apocalyptic. Applying the hermeneutic of engagement (interpreting Hiroshima in the light of biblical apocalyptic) yields the interpretation that it is this same wrath which was at work in the Hiroshima event.

Garrison (1982) points out that the earthquakes, famine, fire, and disruption of the world described in apocalyptic are far worse than anything the Antichrist contrived: "The manifestation of the wrath of God seems to be virtually the same as that of satanic or moral evil" (p. 107). It is this same wrath of God which, at the time of the Exodus, makes Pharaoh's heart obstinate (Exodus 7: 3) so that the latter will not let the Hebrews go with Moses. This causes the Egyptians to experience all ten of the horrible plagues that Yahweh sends (ibid, verse 11). It is Yahweh's wrath which prompts David to take a census of the tribes of Israel (a forbidden act) and then punishes the transgression by sending a pestilence which takes the lives of 70,000 men (2 Samuel 24: 1-17). Garrison claims that vengeance is not a sufficient explanation of this wrath. There seems to be something deeper going on, he suggests, "a certain intention on the part of Yahweh to

give vent to a dark side of the divine even as Yahweh gives vent to a lighter side" (p. 109). Garrison argues that the wrath of God is "integral to the overall personhood of God" (p. 206). Both darkness and light are part of the pleroma of God.[61] However, biblical accounts view the wrath of God as purposeful and as involving the Chosen People whom God has elected. "While the wrath of God plays a fundamental role in the divine pleroma, God finally weaves the strands of divine action, of mercy and of wrath, and of sinful human action into a creative integration which is ultimately salvific" (p.114). This can be seen, for example, in the Book of Revelation where horrific destruction is followed by the new heaven and new earth (Revelation 21-22).[62]

Garrison suggests that the presence of this wrathful side of the divine points to an antinomial or oppositional character in God. He points out that in the Old Testament Yahweh gives the Hebrews a Promised Land, but orders the wholesale slaughter of the indigenous population and their animals to make this possible (Joshua 10-11). Or again, Yahweh the source of all Job's blessings causes him to lose all and be covered with boils. Sitting on a dung heap, Job declares: "I am the prey his wrath assails.... He seized me by the neck and dashed me to pieces.... He pierces me with thrust upon thrust; he attacks me like a warrior" (Job 16: 9, 12, 14). But it is in the crucifixion of Jesus, notes Garrison (1982), that the believer can most clearly see this antinomial character of God. Abandoned by his friends and by God, nailed to a cross, Jesus experiences the sufferings of Job. The difference in Jesus' case is that God is crucifying God. "The torment of his torments is his awareness that he is abandoned by what he most ultimately is" (p. 172). What Jesus fully experiences is that "God is in a perpetual antinomial tension of

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[61]In Isaiah 45: 7, Yahweh declares: "I form the light, and create the darkness; I make well-being, and create woe; I the Lord do all these things." Garrison notes that the Hebrew word translated as 'woe' is *ra*, which means moral wickedness, misery, and evil.

[62]Bauckham (1985b) is critical of Garrison's understanding of evil, claiming that he doesn't take evil seriously: "In the end evil is justified as a necessary expression of the divine nature.... The justification of evil as an internalization of divine wrath is a false step" (p. 592). However, Garrison has not moved the locus of evil from humankind to God. His notion of the wrath of God suggests not that God is intrinsically evil, but that God creates and uses evil ultimately to bring about good. His process panentheism suggests that Hiroshima manifests both the wrath of God in apocalyptic destruction and human evil which constructs and explodes the weapons. As Garrison (1982) comments, "Hiroshima is demonstrating the absolute perversity of the human personality...while simultaneously revealing the wrath of a living God as never before. Thus the paradox of co-creation..." (p. 197).

opposites, even as God is one" (ibid). Finally, in New Testament apocalyptic the Lamb of God who brings salvation to the world also commands the angels of destruction.[63] "What emerges from the Revelation of John", Garrison concludes, "is that there is an overwhelming polarity between the love of God and the wrath of God" (p. 182).

In summary, Garrison's ontology proposes an interdependence between God and the world in which both are in a process of becoming and each is vulnerable to the action of the other. God's action in the present can be understood in terms of the confessional heritage which is used to interpret new events. Hiroshima is the decisive historical event of the 20th century and apocalyptic literature is that part of the confessional heritage most appropriate for interpreting it. Garrison proposes that the wrath of God at work in biblical apocalyptic was also involved in the Hiroshima event, and that this "wrath" points to an antinomial or oppositional character in God.

B. Psycho-Theological Integration of the Threat of Nuclear War

Garrison suggests that the believer's task in the nuclear age is to integrate the antinomial character of God at work in the Hiroshima event. The believer must experience the wrath of God expressed at Hiroshima in order to integrate the divine antinomy which it represents. This integration of the antinomial character of God parallels Christ's full experience of the antinomy of God in the crucifixion and its resolution in the resurrection. Garrison theorizes that this integration must take place in the psyche where religious experience occurs and where contradictions can be synthesized. Secondly, because humankind has "humanized the apocalypse" (usurped God's prerogative to end the world), we are challenged "to go within our psyches to discern the wrath and mercy we formerly attributed to a God outside ourselves" (Garrison, 1982, p. 152).

Garrison finds in Jungian depth psychology a model of the psyche which helps explain the integration of God's antinomy. In Jung's theory, the psyche is dipolar. The conscious,[64] which uses categories such as space and time, interacts with the

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[63]Baker (1983) notes that "the total personality change in Christ, from the Crucified Son of Man in the Passion narratives to the Rider on the White Horse in Revelation 19: 11-16 is not one that any honest person can accept as it stands" (p. 3).

[64]Defined by Jung as the "function or activity which maintains the relation of psychic contents with the ego" (cited in Garrison, 1982, p. 127).

unconscious,[65] which uses images and symbols. These two poles of the psyche are in creative oppositional tension and are integrated by the unifying archetype[66] of the Self.[67] As Garrison comments, "for Jung, the meaning of life is seen in terms of the realization of the Self, that is to say, God. The ultimate meaning in life is therefore to be understood as the realization of the 'divine' within us" (p. 142). This is what Jung calls individuation,[68] the process of becoming one's own unique and homogenous self. It includes integrating one's shadow,[69] which contains repressions, latent archetypes and creative impulses. Garrison notes that "the Self...as the symbol of totality seeks to synthesize the polarities of conscious/unconscious...flesh/spirit, shadow/persona and many others into a complementary whole" (p. 144). Thus, Jung's theory, by distinguishing between conscious and unconscious, offers an explanation of what process panentheism establishes philosophically, that is, that there are dipolarities in God whereby God is both

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[65]The personal unconscious contains "those aspects of an individual's life that are either forgotten, repressed or subliminally perceived", while the collective unconscious "does not include acquisitions particular to individual egos. Whereas the personal unconscious is *post*-birth...the collective unconscious is *pre*-birth, being composed of contents resulting from the inherited possibility of psychical functioning in general" (ibid).

[66]"Archetypes generally refer to the patterns of human life which shape the life of the psyche and therefore influence the direction and character of conscious conduct.... The archetypes remain hidden and are only discernible as they impinge on consciousness through the medium of dreams and images. Archetypal motifs, therefore, like birth, death, love, motherhood, God, the hero, and the wise old man, are knowable but the archetypes themselves, which stand behind the archeypal motifs, producing them, remain unknown" (Garrison, 1982, p. 128).

[67]"The most important archetype is that of the Self, that deepest and most comprehensive symbol of totality that shapes and gives direction to each individual life. The archetype of the Self contains within it all the polarities of psychic life and is...empirically synonomous with God" (Garrison, 1982, pp. 133-134). Theologically speaking, God's action, in terms of the experience of it, appears to originate in the unconscious.

[68]"Jung speaks of the 'passion of the ego'. For in the process of individuation it is the fate of the ego to be confronted by the greater existence of the Self and robbed of its illusion that *it* is the centre of the psyche.... While the Self completely surrounds, sustains and gives life to the ego, therefore, the ego it is that brings the Self out of the darkness of the unconscious 'depth' of being into the light of consciousness. God and the Self are dependent on us for their historical actualization" (Garrison, 1982, pp. 145-146). In process panentheistic terms, the abstract, transcendent and cosmic aspect of God becomes consequent, immanent and historical.

[69]"...that 'other side' of our personality that negatively mirrors our *persona*. Our *persona* is the image of ourselves that we present to the world. The shadow is the inferior personality as it were and is made up of everything that will not fit with the laws and regulation of conscious life or with the *persona* we project to others" (Garrison, 1982, p. 141).

transcendent and immanent, and both infinite and dependent on human choices for creative advances into novelty. Jung offers a psychological explanation of "*how* God is actually relative to us, *how* God is dependent on us and affected by our actions. It as though Jung provides a description of the *inner* experience of which process panentheism describes the *outer* reality" (ibid).

In theological terms, the dipolarity is represented by Christ and Antichrist. Garrison (1982) suggests that the believer is "challenged to integrate Antichrist within a Christ-oriented consciousness" (p. 196). Christ, as symbol of the world being saved, parallels the emergence of the Self, while Hiroshima, as symbol of the world being destroyed, negates Christ and therefore represents the Antichrist. The Antichrist, or shadow side of Christ,[70] is manifested in Hiroshima and in the human depravity which constructs genocidal weapons. The shadow side of Christ, which expresses divine wrath, meshes with human evil to co-create the apocalypse. Garrison proposes that the believer integrate the Antichrist "by first truly integrating the Christ event into [his or her] psychic depths" (p. 198). This requires a recognition that Christ incarnated God's "light side". The person must then undergo a transformation by the saving power of Christ in order to acquire the moral strength to integrate the Antichrist. The Spirit, who instructs the believer in all things (John 15: 26) and leads him or her "to all truth" (John 16: 13), provides divine assistance in grappling with the Antichrist much as the Self integrates unconscious elements in the psyche. The believer moves toward wholeness by responding to the Spirit at work in the depths of the unconscious.

In summary, the integration of the wrath of God at work in the Hiroshima event takes place in the psyche, where religious experience occurs. In Jung's theory, the Self integrates unconscious elements of the psyche such as the shadow. Similarly, the believer is called upon to integrate the Antichrist or shadow side of Christ manifested at Hiroshima into Christ-consciousness. This requires a transformation by Christ's saving power so that the person acquires sufficient moral strength to integrate the Antichrist.

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[70]To speak of a shadow side of Christ is an important departure from classical notions of Christ and Yahweh as total perfection and goodness. Garrison's thesis is that if God and Christ are intimately involved in human affairs, then they are involved with the Hiroshima event and with the forces that move the world toward apocalyptic destruction.

C. Resources in Religious Practice

In this section I will investigate how some of the components of a life of faith can provide an antidote to the psychological and spiritual consequences of living in the nuclear shadow, and, as well, empower people to resist the forces which may eventually lead to nuclear war. I will examine the role played by the spiritual transformation known as *conversion* and the resources provided by the private and public spiritual communication called *prayer*. I will then consider the ways in which worship can be authentic in the nuclear age. The Eucharist, memorial of the death and resurrection of Christ, will be examined for its potential in helping people to deal with some of the emotional consequences of the threat of nuclear war. Finally, I will analyze how community living can empower people in the struggle to overcome this threat.

Wallis (1981) suggests that living according to the biblical paradigms described in Chapter 4[71] may require a radical change in perception and behavior: "God's new order is so radically different from everything we are accustomed to that we must be spiritually remade before we are ready and equipped to participate in it" (p. 1). This is the process of conversion, understood in the Bible as a radical turning around. Wallis points out that it consists of a turning away (repentance) from selfishness and idols (in the nuclear age, the "gods of metal" or "nuclear deities").

Wink (1982) claims that conversion requires only a little faith. He suggests that people use biblical images to visualize the required transformation. For example, a person may use Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones which become covered with sinews and flesh, and become living beings once again (Ezekiel 37: 4–7). According to Wink, a person can, through visualization, move from a status of 'we are as good as dead' or 'we are as though vaporized', to a "recognition that God is a living presence with us, powerful to save" (pp. 235–236). Wallis (1981) proposes that people visualize the victims of Hiroshima: "Only if we can look into their eyes to see the eyes of our children and our neighbors, our enemies and ourselves, will we be converted" (p. 100).

The conversion process becomes complete when the "turning from" nuclear idolatry is followed by a "turning to" a life of faith: "Conversion is from sin to salvation, from idols to God, from slavery to freedom, from injustice to justice, from guilt to forgiveness, from lies to truth, from darkness to light, from self to others, [and] from

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[71]P. 44ff.

death to life" (Wallis, 1981, p. 6). Shriver (1980) notes with regard to nuclear weapons that a person begins to have faith in the Spirit rather than in "certain unholy spirits that haunt history by the megatonful" (pp. 6-7).

Wallis (1981) claims that trusting in the Spirit has the effect of restoring sight, softening the heart, shedding light on what was obscure, and opening the future: "We see, hear, and feel now as never before. We enter the process of being made sensitive to the values of the new age, the kingdom of God" (p. 5). "As if" living[72] decreases as emotions, ideas, and values which had been stored in different compartments of a person's life become united once again.[73] Conversion also changes the way a person relates to others: "The converted experience a change in all their relationships: to God, to their neighbors, to the world...to the violence around them...to the false gods of the state, to their friends and to their enemies" (p. 8).

Prayer plays a central role in the conversion process. Although prayer is offered for others and for the world, it also changes the person who prays. "Motivated by a great evil in the world, prayer first raises the question of our complicity in the evil" (Wallis, 1981, p. 96). Prayer leads to a change in "frame of reference" which enables one to consider the other's (the enemy's) point of view. The enemy no longer remains faceless. In Wallis's view, "prayer...makes enemies into friends.... When we have brought our enemies into our hearts in prayer, it becomes most difficult to maintain the hostility necessary for violence" (ibid).

As hostile feelings decrease, less need exists for the defense mechanism of dehumanization. As we saw in Chapter 2[74] we consider our enemies to be less than human in order to protect ourselves from guilt about hateful and hostile feelings. Reducing the hostility (in this case through prayer) makes dehumanization less necessary. Prayer can also reduce the need for projection because it lessens anger: "With continuing prayer, our anger subsides, our hurts are gradually healed, and we begin to understand the others' anger and hurt" (Wallis, 1981, p. 97). As a result, there is less

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[72]See Chapter 2, p. 16.

[73]Barnet (1983) puts it this way: "When Einstein said at the dawn of the atomic age that everything had changed but our ways of thinking, he was posing an essentially religious challenge. I saw how easily national security managers separated the compartments of their lives, storing their values in one place, their emotions in another, and their ideas somewhere else. Metanoia [conversion] meant bringing the three together in an effort to see the world as God sees it" (p. 18).

[74]P. 12.

need to project our own anger and hurt onto others. Additionally, prayer enables a person to grow in pychological strength. It may restore confidence, or provide a different perspective on the prospect of nuclear war. Grounds (1982) calls prayer "a weapon more powerful than all the guns and bayonets, tanks and planes, battleships and bombs of all the nations in all the world.... There is no imaginable limit to the effectiveness of prayer" (p. 64). From a psychological point of view, the power of prayer lies in (1) increasing one's awareness of the humanity of "enemies"; (2) mitigating negative emotions (which lessens the need for certain defense mechanisms); and (3) increasing psychological strength through greater confidence and perspective.

Worship, if it is to constitute a resource in the nuclear age, must be authentic. Downey (1986) contends that authentic worship must make room for the past and future victims of nuclear war: "Christian worship must take place in full view of the imminence of a second holocaust -the threat of nuclear annihilation" (p. 76). He proposes that worshipers focus on Jesus dead and descending into hell.[75] It is believed that in this event Christ entered into solidarity with all victims. As Downey comments, "the dead Christ is with the dead sons and daughters, mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, past, present, and future. He shares their experience of abandonment, of non-deliverance, of death, of being forgotten -and he is God" (p. 81).[76] This belief provides a way of incorporating past and future nuclear victims to worship. It also suggests an image which may help to deal with the powerless and meaninglessness which accompany the thought of the vaporization of hundreds of thousands of human beings in a nuclear explosion. In Auckerman's (1980) view, worship helps the believer bear the discernment of darkness "because through worship, [Christ's] light shines all the brighter against that darkness" (p. 24). According to Downey, worship enables the believer "to embrace, so as to integrate, the negative" (ibid).

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[75]This is an article of faith from the Creed recited by many Christians on Sunday.

[76]Downey (1986) reports that some churches recall the death and burial of Christ during special Good Friday liturgies. "An ikon of the burial of the dead Christ is taken from the church building. With the ikon or Epitaphion at the head, the congregation processes around the church three times. Upon entering the church, all those in procession pass under the image of the dead, buried Christ which is elevated in bridge-like fashion by its carriers. The significance here is that of going down with the dead Christ, passing under the yoke of the dead Christ and taking it on" (p. 84).

The Eucharist[77] has the potential of helping worshipers overcome emotional consequences of the threat of nuclear war. Wallis (1981) notes that by celebrating symbolically the dying and rising of Christ, worshipers may experience joy and anguish, and let go of pain. Strengthened by the loving presence of Christ, they can allow painful images and feelings (suppressed through psychic numbing)[78] to surface. Seasoltz (1982) points out that the Eucharist is also a place where peace can be experienced because the bread that is broken and the wine that is poured out clearly ritualize the peace that God offers in Christ. The American Bishops (1983) comment that "the Mass...is a unique means of seeking God's help to create the conditions essential for true peace in ourselves and in the world" (*The Challenge of Peace*, #295). Haughey (1983) maintains that "every celebration of the Eucharist is to be an occasion for a further commitment to the cause of peace in our world" (p. 218).

Christian community is a resource in the nuclear age because of its value as a source of change and resistance. Community life based on the Christian ideals of love and service becomes a sign that there is an alternative to the hopelessness and helplessness that many people feel vis-à-vis nuclear war. Taylor (1985) comments that in community, "peace and justice can be glimpsed as alternatives to the ways of living that lead to the holocaust" (p. 81). According to Wallis (1981), community is a source of change because it is a place where God's love can be experienced. People will change (overcome despair, helplessness, etc.) if they experience acceptance, love, and forgiveness. As people overcome a sense of helplessness and despair, they are better able to oppose the forces that lead to nuclear war. Wallis concludes that "the making of community is finally the only thing strong enough to resist the power of the system and to provide an adequate foundation for better and more human ways to live" (p. 124).

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[77]"The title 'Eucharist' (Gk. 'thanksgiving') for the central act of Christian worship is to be explained by the fact that at its institution Christ "gave thanks" (1 Cor. 11: 24, Mt. 26: 27) or by the fact the service is the supreme act of Christian thanksgiving.... That the Eucharist conveyed to the believer the Body and Blood of Christ was universally accepted from the first, and language was very commonly used which referred to the Eucharistic elements [bread and wine] as themselves the Body and Blood" (Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, 1983, p. 475). Macquarrie (1977) adds that the Eucharist "re-presents Christ's saving work, communicates his presence to us, and incorporates us with him" (p. 481).

[78]See Chapter 2, p. 11.

In summary, resources in religious practice which can help counteract the consequences of the nuclear threat include conversion, prayer, authentic worship, the Eucharist, and community living. The spiritual transformation of conversion includes a turning away from "nuclear idolatry" to a life of faith. Prayer alters peoples' frame of reference, enabling them to consider the enemy's point of view. Through prayer the enemy is brought into the heart, which results in a decrease of hostility; as hostility diminishes, dehumanization becomes less necessary. As anger and hurt subside, there is less need to project these feelings onto the enemy. Believers can integrate past and future nuclear victims to their worship through the belief that Christ entered into solidarity with all victims in his death and descent into hell. In the celebration of the Eucharist worshipers can "let go" of pain and suppressed feelings, and renew their commitment to the cause of peacemaking. Finally, in Christian community people can overcome feelings of helplessness and despair, and become better empowered to resist the system which makes nuclear war more likely.

D. Conclusion

Certain classical concepts of divinity are inadequate to make religious sense of the contemporary threat of nuclear war. Jim Garrison's ontology of God for the nuclear age suggests that there is an intimate interaction between God and humanity in which God's creative advances depend on human choices. Garrison uses a "hermeneutic of engagement" to interpret Hiroshima in the light of apocalyptic literature, and suggests that the wrath of God and human depravity coincide to co-create nuclear destruction. The wrathful side of God points to an antinomial or oppositional character in God which must be integrated in the psyche. Garrison proposes a psycho-theological integration of the wrath of God based on Jung's theory of the psyche. Just as the archetype of the Self integrates polarities in the psyche, the Spirit helps the Christian integrate the Antichrist manifested at Hiroshima into Christ-consciousness.

Religious practice contains several resources for coping with the effects of the threat of nuclear war. Conversion and prayer can help oppose psychological and emotional consequences such as "as if" living and defense mechanisms such as dehumanization and projection. Authentic worship integrates past and future victims of nuclear war while the memorial of the death and resurrection of Christ (the Eucharist)

provides a context for letting go of pain and suppressed feelings. Christian community enables participants to overcome the feelings of helplessness and despair and encourages them to resist the forces which they perceive as leading to nu[redacted].

This chapter has attempted to describe theological and [redacted]al resources for dealing with the nuclear threat. The following chapter will be concerned with the *moral* and *political* implications of spiritual belief in the nuclear age.

Chapter VI

Moral and Political Implications of Spiritual Belief in the Nuclear Age

The prevention of nuclear war involves a number of moral and political considerations, one of which is the use of lethal force in world affairs. The primary question which we encounter, in its most elementary form, is: Should force be used to maintain peace? A secondary question, but one which many scholars consider equally relevant: Is the *threatened* use of nuclear weapons justified for defense? Some authors argue that the use of lethal force in world affairs is justified, while others argue that it is not. Both positions have important implications for issues such as nuclear deterrence, nuclear disarmament, and international peacemaking.

In this chapter I will analyze "just-war" theory and examine arguments in favor of the use of lethal force. I will discuss the implications of this position as it relates to the prevention of nuclear war in terms of nuclear deterrence, limited nuclear war, and nuclear disarmament. Next I will analyze Christian pacifism and overview the arguments *against* the use of lethal force, then present the implications of this position for deterrence, security, non-violent methods of defense, disarmament, and peacemaking. In a final section I will consider attempts by some authors to transcend the just-war/pacifism dilemma. This will include a discussion of a proposed new ethic and its implications for the prevention of nuclear war.

A. The Just-War Theory

The doctrine of the just-war was introduced into Christianity by Augustine in the fourth century. Prior to this time Christianity had been largely pacifist. Augustine taught that the use of force is justified to defend the innocent and that order is preferable to chaos. Through the centuries other just-war theorists have argued that human nature is weak, even perverse, and therefore the use of lethal force against enemies is legitimate, and a lesser evil than the consequences which accrue from not defending oneself in this way. From an historical perspective, just-war theory has been a dominant theoretical viewpoint in Christianity since the fourth century.

The theory of just-war begins with a presumption against war.[79] A number of specific conditions must be met before a nation can engage in war. Eight traditional

[79]War can only be engaged in as a last resort.

criteria determine whether a war is just or "rightful". The first four govern the conditions for *becoming involved* in war, while the last four are intended to regulate a nation's conduct *while involved* in war. These criteria, as Ardagh (1984) summarizes them, are:

1. War must be declared before the start of hostilities by a competent, politically legitimate authority.
2. For (comparatively) just cause, not revenge, that is to restore justice and peace
   a. there must have been [be] grave threats by the other party to peace, human rights, or justice;
   b. the means taken must be proportionate to the evil to be redressed;
   c. war must be the last resort, i.e., peaceful alternatives for the resolution of conflict must have been exhausted.
3. There must be a 'right intention'.
4. There must be reasonable hope of success.
5. You may not directly/indirectly kill non-combatants.
6. You may not use means evil in themselves.
7. You must observe agreements regarding prisoners, excluding weapons, ambassadors, etc.
8. You must observe the principal of proportionality in regard to military necessity. (p. 37).

Essentially, the just-war theory is based on the premise that force, in order to be used legitimately, must be *limited*. The two moral principles which guide this limitation are the immunity of non-combatants and the principle that the damage inflicted must not be greater than the loss of that which is being defended (the principle of proportionality). As Hauerwas (1983) points out, "the purpose of just-war thinking is not to determine in a legalistic manner what is or what is not a just war, but rather to make war as nearly just as it can be" (p. 28). Hehir (1980) adds that it is intended as a last resort to defend life and important vaules.

In a summary of criticisms which have been raised against just-war theory, Shannon (1983) notes that a number of the criteria are not helpful for evaluating *modern* war. It is difficult to apply the criterion of declaring war because "there is no disinterested authority to adjudicate among the different nations so that one can know whether a right or interest has been violated" (p. 117). Moreover, the rapidity with which

nuclear weapons can be delivered from one continent to another leaves little time for the legitimate authority to make a decision regarding the declaration of war. The criterion of "reasonable hope of success" has received the most criticism as there can be no victory (in the traditional usage of the word) if much of the world is destroyed in a nuclear exchange. The criterion of "proportionality in regard to military necessity" has come under attack as well in view of the lethal levels of radioactivity released when nuclear weapons are exploded. As Shannon (1980) comments, "there really is no proportionate dose of radioactivity, especially when one takes into account the levels of radioactivity that nuclear weapons will release into the atmosphere" (p. 118). Nor does it make sense to speak of non-combatant immunity when so many people will be poisoned by this radioactivity. In addition, because many military targets are close to urban centers, an unforeseeable number of citizens will inevitably be killed during a nuclear attack. Shannon (1980) concludes that for the majority of critics, the theory of just-war is "exceedingly more difficult to apply" or "utterly useless" (p. 119). Finn (1983) adds that the theory has become irrelevant for "it has failed to establish any vital relation with public policies" (p. 133).

B. Arguments in Favor of the Use of Lethal Force

Many of the arguments advanced in favor of the use of lethal force in world affairs are related to a premise which can be formulated as follows: *Nations have a right and duty to defend their citizens and their values from unjust aggression.* In their pastoral letter *The Challenge of Peace*, the American Catholic bishops (1983) maintain that self-defense is a legitimate right. On the social level, this becomes the right of nations to defend their citizens, and governments are viewed as having the obligation to assume this responsibility. The second Vatican Council (1962-65) supported this position when it declared: "Governments cannot be deprived of the right of lawful self-defense, once all peace efforts have failed. State leaders have the duty to defend the interests of their people" (*Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World*, #79).

Just-war theorists extend this line of reasoning to argue that important values also must be defended, using force when deemed necesary. Meyer (1984) argues that "we are called to work diligently for peace, but we must also recognize that there are values and principles worth defending, even if war is necessary" (p. 80). The American bishops

(1983) contend that the possibility of peace "must be continuously protected and preserved" (*The Challenge of Peace*, #60). Pope John Paul II (1982) focuses on the need to protect freedom: "Christians...have no hesitation in recalling that, in the name of an elementary form of justice, peoples have a right and even a duty to protect their existence and freedom" (p. 478). Lyon (1982) argues that each person has the right to "true and full development" and that nations must defend this right (p. 172). According to Hehir (1980), "our actual moral duty is the need to use force as a last resort in defense of human life and the values which provide life with meaning and dignity" (p. 19). Kirkemo (1984) argues that our moral choices regarding the use of nuclear weapons must be governed primarily by a sense of responsibility to protect important values: "Goals are limited by what is possible, means by what is effective, and consequences by unintended or unexpected developments. The ethic of perfect righteousness must be replaced in world affairs with a morality of responsibility" (p. 122). Kirkemo claims that such a morality will assist in adopting policies which maintain values such as order and co-operation.

Another line of argument for the use of lethal force is based on the following premise: *The international situation, with its system of decentralized nation-states and competition for unequally distributed resources requires the use of lethal force to maintain order.* Vatican II (1962-65) stated that the right of governments to defend their citizens is justified by the ongoing presence of war in the world and by the lack of a "competent and sufficiently powerful authority at the international level" to maintain order (*Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World*, #79). Kirkemo (1984) rightfully points out that we lack a "global mechanism to provide the world with the legislative, judicial, and security services necessary to harmonize actions, promote co-operation, and prevent conflicts" (p. 120). On the contrary, he observes that the international situation is characterized by "the National Factor - armed nations with their own historical pasts, cultural values, and national interests" (ibid). The international situation is also affected by the unequal distribution and control of resources throughout the world. Kirkemo (1984) claims that this "Scarcity Factor" results in competition which is difficult to regulate because of the decentralized nature of decision-making. He argues that in such an international situation peace is maintained only through (1) "a balance of forces" which prevents dominance by any one nation, and (2) "a w[illegible] to enforce agreements when one nation attempts to alter them by thr[illegible]ercion" (p. 121).

In summary, Augustine argued in favor of the use of lethal force to defend the innocent. Just-war theory is concerned with the limitation of force in war and is based on the principles of non-combatant immunity and "proportionality". Some authors criticize just-war theory in our era because nuclear weapons are indiscriminate in their kill ratio and because we presently lack an international authority to determine whether the rights of a particular nation have been violated. Proponents of the use of lethal force in world affairs argue that nations have a right to defend themselves with force against unjust aggression. The argument is extended to include the right to defend values such as peace, freedom, order and co-operation. Other arguments draw attention to the fact that there is no international authority with the power to ensure security.

C. The Use of Lethal Force and Nuclear Issues

The concept of lethal force has led to advocacy of the right to possess nuclear weapons and to utilize defense policies such as mutually assured destruction. In this section I will examine the biblical basis of military deterrence, arguments for and against this doctrine, and arguments in favor of limited nuclear war. I will then present a moral evaluation of the concept of deterrence and of the arms race, and lastly, discuss the view of disarmament and security which follows from the acceptance of lethal force in the prevention of nuclear war.

Nuclear Deterrence

Nuclear deterrence may be defined as 'prevention (of whatever one wants to prevent) by nuclear threat'. Hare (1984) contends that the roots of deterrence theory can be found in the New Testament where Jesus gives instructions to his disciples after the Last Supper. Whereas Jesus had always sent his disciples on mission "without purse or travelling bag" and had consistently resisted violent self-defense, he says in Luke 22: "Now, however, the man who has a purse must carry it; the same with the travelling bag. And the man without a sword must sell his coat and buy one" (verse 36). The disciples respond, "Lord, here are two swords!" Jesus answers: "Enough" (verse 38). According to Hare (1984), these instructions have particular significance "because they mark a transition to a time when the disciples will be (physically) without their master" (p. 146). The reason the disciples are told to buy swords has to do with the time of

persecution they will be entering and the fact that Jesus will not be physically present to protect them. Swords are needed because the disciples' enemies will be carrying swords. The number of swords is limited to two, Hare suggests, because their possession is intended only for deterrence: "It was not [Jesus'] intention that the swords should be used for attack; only, we may guess, for self-defense" (ibid). Hare concludes that this scriptural passage constitutes a basis for the theory of deterrence.

The very existence of nuclear weapons has made deterrence necessary: "It is a hard, cold, unforgiving fact that nuclear weapons are here, that they will be here for some time, and that we must deal with them" (Meyer, 1984, p. 93). Because freedom is worth defending, "we must have a deterrence policy that potential enemies must perceive we would employ if necessary" (ibid). Kirkemo (1984) notes that deterrence has been effective in preventing war: "Nuclear deterrence has prevented a general nuclear war by convincing national leaders that launching an attack will result in their own destruction" (p. 124). He argues that the balance of forces has also inhibited conventional war and contributed to international stability in areas of the globe where nuclear powers have vital interests. Thus, nuclear deterrence has contributed to social order and personal security, and decreased reliance on military solutions to political problems.

Moral Evaluation of Deterrence

In their assessment of deterrence the French bishops (1984) distinguish between the *actual use* of nuclear weapons and their *threatened use*. They acknowledge that the use of nuclear weapons is immoral, but question whether this necessarily makes their threatened use immoral. Hehir (1985) maintains that even if the threat to retaliate is itself a violation of ethics, an unfulfilled threat is a lesser evil than the *actual use* of nuclear weapons.

The American bishops (1983), in their evaluation of the moral implications of deterrence, point to two dilemmas intrinsic to this policy. Firstly, the possession of nuclear weapons increases the probabilty of nuclear war. Secondly, there is a need to defend "the independence and freedom of nations and entire peoples, including the need to protect smaller nations from threats to their independence and security" (*The Challenge of Peace*, #174). Our moral duty, the bishops argue, "is to prevent nuclear war from ever occurring *and* to protect and preserve those key values of justice, freedom and

independence which are necessary for personal dignity and national integrity" (ibid, #175). The bishops conclude that both these dimensions can be safeguarded when nuclear forces are balanced and neither side is in a position of undeniable superiority. They argue for "a strictly conditional moral acceptance of nuclear deterrence" (ibid, #185) characterized by "'sufficiency' to deter" and the inacceptability of proposals which deal with "prolonged periods of repeated nuclear strikes and counter-strikes, or "prevailing" in nuclear war" (ibid, #188). The bishops support nuclear deterrence conditionally while negotiations for nuclear disarmament proceed. They reject the production and deployment of nuclear weapons which increase the ability to fight nuclear war and place adversaries in a relatively inferior position.

Limited Nuclear War

Some authors argue that deterrence must include specific defense policies regarding the use of nuclear weapons. According to Amstutz (1984), the American bishops' opposition to nuclear attacks on population centers and to counterforce policies (which aim at destroying military targets) leaves them with "the conditional affirmation of deterrence but the denial of the strategies designed to maintain such a policy" (p. 173). As O'Brien (1983) puts it: "No one has yet suggested a means of deterring or defending against aggresssion by a nuclear power without some nuclear defense option" (p. 17).

O'Brien (1983) argues that deterrence must include preparation for the limited use of nuclear weapons. He disputes the contention that the limited use of nuclear weapons will automatically result in a major nuclear exchange: "It is not the case that limited nuclear war has been proven conclusively and forever to be impossible, only that few are willing or able to vouch for its feasibility" (p. 16). With regard to the objection that many military targets are in or near urban centers, O'Brien (1983) comments: "It is not established that there are not enough discrete military targets whose destruction, without excessive collateral damage, would constitute unacceptable damage to an aggressor" (p. 24). He argues that deterrence policy must include preparation for limited use of nuclear weapons because limited nuclear war is likely to result from escalation in conventional wars.

> The greatest threats are likely to come in areas sufficiently important to be defended but just sufficiently marginal and inconvenient geopolitically that it

> may be difficult to marshall free world resistance to aggression against them. In such cases the possibilities of misperceptions and accidents may abound and it is there that nuclear war may occur, arising out of a confused and unsuccessful conventional defense. (Henry Kissinger, cited in O'Brien, 1983, p. 26).

Therefore, nations which possess nuclear weapons have a moral obligation "to make effective and feasible a nuclear deterrence/defense posture" (ibid).

Lawyer (1984) argues that it is more ethical to prevent war by the readiness to use battlefield nuclear weapons than to renounce their use and invite attack from a nation which is proficient in the use of such weapons. He maintains that limited nuclear war must be recognized as a legitimate category and option: "If a government's moral and political imagination is confined to two unworkable options, total war or acquiescence in the face of aggression, its foreign policy has already failed, regardless of which alternative is chosen" (p. 104). Therefore, "a far more attractive policy, strategically and morally...is to accept limited nuclear war as a significant element in the contemporary political problem" (p. 105).

Nuclear Disarmament

Proponents of the use of force in world affairs (who also believe in disarmament) generally advocate either bilateral or multilateral disarmament. The American bishops (1983), for example, view disarmament as "a process of verifiable agreements especially between two superpowers" (*The Challenge of Peace*, #204). They do not support unilateral disarmament but point out that reversing the arms race will require that both sides take initiatives. The bishops recommend "immediate, bilateral, verifiable agreements to halt the testing, production, and deployment of new nuclear weapons systems" and "negotiated bilateral deep cuts in the arsenals of both superpowers" (ibid, #190). The pro-armament organization *Securing the peace* argues that unilateral disarmament may actually *make nuclear war more likely*. The organization contends that "weakening one side encourages the other side to engage in aggressive behavior" (Bock, 1984, p. 49). It maintains that security is assured by a balance of military forces, including nuclear weapons. Thus, it is a nation's duty to protect its citizens through a process of bilateral or multilateral disarmament.

We have seen that arguments for deterrence focus on the need to prevent war by balancing nuclear forces. Some authors argue that deterrence safeguards freedom, inhibits both conventional as well as nuclear war, and, therefore, contributes to both order and security. Other authors question whether a nuclear threat is *necessarily* immoral, or, if it is, it certainly is a *lesser* evil than the actual use of nuclear weapons. The American bishops judge nuclear deterrence to be morally acceptable on the condition that every nation retain only a sufficient number of missiles for deterrence. Most advocates of limited nuclear war argue that a deterrence policy requires specific defense options, and that there is no proof that a limited nuclear war would escalate into a massive exchange of missiles. They point out that a limited nuclear war could escalate from a conventional war and that a nation should have policies in place to prepare for this eventuality. To renounce the use of battlefield nuclear weapons is viewed as inviting attack by an adversary who is willing to use these weapons. Finally, the proponents of the use of lethal force reject unilateral disarmament in favor of a balanced reduction in nuclear weapons in order to ensure security.

D. Christian Pacifism

In this section I will overview the origins of Christian pacifism; then discuss some of the criticisms of pacifism, the debate on its social application, and arguments which have been raised against the use of lethal force.

Origin and Philosophy of Christian Pacifism

Pacifism enjoyed a position of considerable influence during the first three centuries of Christianity. It was characterized at that time by a refusal to participate in war. The third century martyr Maximilian, who was beheaded for refusing to serve in the army, gave the following defense: "I cannot serve as a soldier; I cannot do evil, I am a Christian" (Marrin, 1971, p. 88). When the church adopted just-war theory in the fourth century, pacifism was relegated to a position of lesser importance. After the Reformation (1525-90), it took on a rather sectarian character among churches such as the Mennonite and Quaker. At this time pacifists believed that evil should not be resisted and that pacifism should consist of witnessing to Christian love.

Ardagh (1984) notes that it is only since the mid-1960s that pacifism has regained the status of a respectable position in the Christian church. In Roman Catholicism, pope John XXIII's (1963) encyclical *Pacem in Terris* is notable for its lack of an explicit endorsement of self-defense as a right. At about this same time, Vatican II (1962–65) specifically endorsed non-violence and conscientious objection to military service. The American bishops (1983) comment that "non-violent means of resistance to evil deserve much more study and consideration than they have thus far received. There have been significant instances[80] in which people have successfully resisted oppression without recourse to arms" (*The Challenge of Peace*, #122). Deats (1980) points out that some people begin with the witness form of pacifism but soon find it "too inflexible and unresponsive and seek to modify it in the direction of non-violent resistance" (p. 78).

Christian pacifism is rooted in the New Testament and based on a faith relationship with God. According to Zahn (1983), it is based on (1) how God is perceived; (2) how one's relationship to God is perceived; and (3) how one perceives the purpose of that relationship. The Christian pacifist perceives God as loving and forgiving, and it is within this context that other divine characteristics such as authority and power are considered. Zahn notes that the prayer ascribed to St Francis[81] summarizes the manner in which the relationship to God is perceived. The relationship is characterized by surrender, commitment, and dependence on God for successes and failures. Abandonment and confidence in God are bolstered by the hope that God's love and power will prevail no matter how threatening a situation appears to be. Zahn maintains that pacifists find security in this trust and not in policies such as nuclear deterrence. They strive to remain faithful to Jesus Christ whom they believe has overcome sin and death. They are more concerned about being faithful in the relationship than about self-defense.

Christian pacifism is based, in a certain measure, on religious principles derived from the New Testament and this distinguishes it from other varieties of pacifism. Yoder (1972) comments that Christian pacifism places great importance on obedience to God. What is good and right will triumph, Yoder claims, not through being calculating and efficacious, but by being obedient.[82] Jesus Christ, who resisted the temptation to wield

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[80]The bishops mention the Danish and Norwegian resistance to Nazism.

[81]"Lord make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred let me sow love. Where there is injury...pardon. Where there is discord...unity...." (cited in Cunningham, 1972, p. 201).

[82]Yoder (1972) defines obedience as "not keeping verbally enshrined rules but

political power by being made a king or by becoming allied with the Zealots, is an example to the pacifist of the faithfulness which sacrifices efficacy in order to reflect divine love.

Christian pacifism supports the use of non-violence but the emphasis is on witnessing to the Kingdom of God and to truth. Merton (1980) pointed out that non-violence is not always effective politically because its purpose is not to wield power but to manifest truth. He considered it more important to witness to the belief that God's love will prevail than to attempt to prevail oneself. Kibble (1985) argues that Christian pacifists should employ methods which witness to the Kingdom of God as it will be in its final or consummate form: "Since there will be a total absence of violence in the final kingdom, Christians should abandon its use now" (p. 43). Hauerwas (1983a) comments that Christian pacifists do not try "to make history come out right –either through the possession or dispossession of nuclear arms" (p. 14). Rather, they believe that Christ ensures that the world will turn out right, and so they pursue a peace "based on the profound confidence that God has shown us the way he would have the world governed" (ibid, p. 15).

Watts (1985) notes that Christian pacifists renounce habitual ways of resolving conflict in favor of the unique way of trusting God. They consider that God uses methods such as the vulnerability of the cross and choosing someone with a speech defect (Moses) to lead a tribe of slaves to become the Chosen People. They are prepared to set aside the usual ways of doing things in order to depend on God who often uses "abnormal" ways. Christian pacifists adhere to the New Testament teaching that God's power is made perfect in weakness (II Corinthians, 12: 9), and so they resist taking the prevention of nuclear war entirely into their own hands, thus leaving room for God to work. Watts comments that they renounce the "peace through strength" approach because "to speak of trusting God when we pursue a security that is maintained by military might is to empty faith of its authenticity, and to sever its attachment to Jesus Christ" (p. 52).

Egan (1980) considers the task of Christian pacifists to be one of *reconciliation*. She points out that the root meaning of pacifism is "to make peace". Disputes are settled and wrongs righted through non-violent methods which include accepting suffering but never inflicting it. Yoder (1972) adds that obedience to the way of the cross often entails

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[82](cont'd) reflecting the character of the love of God" (p. 245).

suffering because the person strives "to be faithful to that love which puts one at the mercy of one's neighbor [and] which abandons claims to justice for oneself and for one's own in an overriding concern for the reconciliation of the adversary" (p. 243). What sustains pacifists in their acceptance of suffering, Egan notes, is Christ's message that love is to transcend considerations about family, nation, and enemy, and take on a universal character. Christian pacifists keep in mind the Beatitude: "Blest too are the peacemakers", and strive to be "active peacemakers" and "reconcilers of mankind".

In summary, Christian pacifism is a theological and ethical position predicated upon the non-acceptance of lethal force in world affairs. In this it contrasts with just-war theory which, as we saw, does accept the use of force. Christian pacifism is based on biblical teachings and the life of Christ -to its adherents its strength, while to opponents, a source of criticism- and focuses on truth, non-violence, and trusting in God rather than in nuclear weapons.

Criticisms of Pacifism

Pacifists have been criticized for being excessively legalistic, that is, for having all of the answers before the questions to complex issues are asked. Most critics consider it simplistic and naive to assume that a nation can renounce violence. Others have considered it irresponsible for pacifists to remain neutral toward injustice on the international level. Millar (1984) cautions against the social application of pacifism, and in so doing speaks on behalf of many who perceive pacifism as functionally unacceptable.

> Could one admire a mother who does nothing when she sees a snake or a lunatic, about to strike a sleeping child? Who among us has the right to say: I shall rely on prayer, or goodness, or divine power, for my defense, and you who may not have my faith or understanding *must do the same*? Who has the right to say: I am prepared to be killed, or to see my family and friends killed, or raped or assaulted, rather than to go against my conscious [sic] and resort to force; and *you must do the same*? I don't believe that anyone has that right. (p. 34).

The American bishops (1983) acknowledge the legitimacy of choosing non-violent means for the defense of peace but they do not view this as applicable to the nation as a whole: "We are referring to options open to individuals. The council and the popes have stated

clearly that governments threatened by armed, unjust aggression must defend their people. This includes defense by armed force if necessary as a last resort" (*The Challenge of Peace*, #75). Finally, Bennett (1947) argues that pacifism is not adequate as a social strategy for the following reasons: (1) restraining evil is as much a Christian obligation as avoiding violence; (2) there is not always a strategy of non-violence available for each situation that arises; and (3) the practice of non-violence may occasion suffering for non-pacifists as well.

These criticisms notwithstanding, there has been a movement in the Christian church towards greater *social application* of pacifism. Several of the "historical" peace churches are beginning to examine the social responsibility dimension of their witness to peace. In the Roman Catholic tradition, Lammers (1980) notes that there are signs of movement away from just-war theory towards a pacifism not of witness, but of resistance. He points to the increasing reluctance of popes to condone war as a means to achieve justice, and to the concerns of social ethicists regarding the appropriateness of war for maintaining order. According to Lammers, Roman Catholic social ethicists in the United States do not consider the pacifism of witness advocated by the American bishops to be a real option. He suggests that these ethicists will eventually adopt a pacifism characterized by resistance and "a refusal to serve in war based upon a judgement that a particular war [is] unjust" (p. 99).

Upon close examination of the foregoing comments it becomes readily apparent that no uniform attitude is to be found in all Christian communities. Neither is it the intent of this thesis to suggest that there is, or should be. Pacifism, as holds true for its ideological opposite, lethal force, is a concept which has suppporters as well as detractors.

E. Arguments Against the Use of Lethal Force

Zahn (1983) argues that violence is not compatible with the way Christ lived and taught, therefore, those who follow him should reject violence both at the personal and social levels. Hauerwas (1983b) points out that Christian pacifism expresses a conviction that the use of lethal force betrays the believer's relationship with Christ. This betrayal is assumed to occur even if the results of the action are favorable. The American bishops (1983) draw attention to the Gospels' prohibition against killing. Several New Testament

passages teach that enemies are to be loved.[83] (An underlying premise of these passages is that all human beings possess a dignity which is inviolate). Yoder (1972) points out that Christ resisted aims and goals which result in a violation of the dignity of people. For all of the above reasons, some pacifists elect to renounce legitimate goals, such as self-defense, rather than pursue them through means which require violence.

Bearlin's (1984) argument against killing is based on what she calls the "one imperative from which all others follow: *to live in the Spirit*" (p. 28). She defines this as "moving towards being open to those modes of being, thinking, deciding, acting that are empowering from within rather than controlling from without both for ourselves and for our neighbours" (ibid). Peacemaking involves affirming life and wholeness. It could result in one's personal death, but this is chosen over harming others. As Bearlin puts it, "I can do no other: I may die, but this I know too: *I cannot kill*. For to kill would be totally out of harmony with the loving, reconciling power of the Spirit" (p. 27). Baker (1983) adds that there is little point in using force to combat evil because "evil cannot be defeated by the use of coercive power" (p.3). The place where evil is defeated is in the heart of an individual or in a society which does not retaliate and hate, but rather loves and forgives. Zahn (1983) maintains that we are deluded if we think "it is somehow possible to overcome evil by adding to it" (p. 124).

In summary, Christian pacifism is based upon both a faith relationship with God and upon religious principles derived from the New Testament. The faith relationship focuses on the loving and forgiving aspects of the divine nature, and is characterized by surrender, commitment, and dependence on God. Obedience to God is favored over efficacy, and faithfulness over power. Christian pacifists adopt non-violent methods in the context of a witness to the Kingdom of God and to truth. They accept vulnerability because they believe God will defend them. They understand pacifism to mean reconciliation and they accept suffering in attempting to love in a way which transcends human barriers. Pacifism has been criticized for having *a priori* answers to complex questions and for being neutral in regard to international injustice. Some critics argue that it is wrong for pacifists to impose their beliefs on others; they also find pacifism

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[83]For example: "My command to you is: love your enemies, pray for your persecutors" (Matthew 5: 44); and: "Never repay injury with injury.... Beloved, do not avenge yourselves.... But if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink...." (Romans 12: 17, 19, 20).

inadequate as a social strategy because evil, when it is not restrained, tends to grow. Pacifists oppose the use of lethal force because it is contrary to the way Christ lived and taught, and to living "in the Spirit". They argue that evil cannot be defeated with coercive power.

F. Non-use of Lethal Force and Nuclear Issues

In this section I will discuss the implications of the non-use of lethal force for the prevention of nuclear war. I will review some of the arguments against nuclear deterrence, then discuss pacifist views on security, defense, nuclear disarmament, and peacemaking.

Arguments Against Nuclear Deterrence

Some arguments against deterrence focus on the morality of *intending* to use nuclear weapons. The World Council of Churches (1981) contends that "the readiness to do something wrong shares in the wrongness of the action itself" (p. 420). Hehir (1980) argues that an evil intention is as morally wrong as an evil act: "A formal intention to do evil carries the same degree of culpability as the doing of evil. The would-be assassin is morally guilty of murder even if his plan is frustrated" (p. 28.) Similarly, Stegenga (1983) comments that "intending and preparing to do evil are themselves wicked acts" (p. 29). Germain Grisez, a theologian, expresses this argument as a syllogism: "It is always morally wrong to intend, even reluctantly and conditionally, to kill the innocent. But present deterrence [illegible] involves this murderous intent. Therefore, the present deterrent policy is morally wrong" (cited in McCormick, 1983, pp. 169-170). It is widely accepted, even by diverse Christian groups, that a nuclear policy should never (1) threaten to destroy humanity or an entire society; and (2) threaten a merciless attack on civilians. A policy which commits a nation to do either of these must be considered immoral.

There seems to be no question that the policy of Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) violates these conditions. The policy of targeting only military installations appears to violate them as well because even with attacks limited to military targets, the number of civilian deaths in a major war would be almost indistinguishable from what might occur if civilian centers had been deliberately attacked. Pacifists would judge these deterrence policies to be immoral because of their declared (or undeclared) intention to

destroy hundreds of millions of people."

Another line of argument against deterrence focuses on the consequences of this policy. Leaders of the German Confessing Church maintain that "atomic weapons do not enable the state to assure justice and peace but only bring about the destruction of people within the land being protected as well as in other lands" (Bock, 1984, p. 47). It is frequently argued that deterrence policies actually increase the likelihood of nuclear war because the threshold which would trigger a nuclear retaliation is purposefully left ambiguous in order to generate uncertainty and thereby discourage aggression. This intended ambiguity, however, has the effect of confusing an adversary, and therefore *contributes to* rather than reduces the risk of nuclear war.

Other arguments against deterrence emphasize its psychological effects. The Christian World Conference (1983) called nuclear deterrence "essentially dehumanizing [because] it increases fear and hatred, and entrenches confrontation between 'the enemy and us'" (pp. 70–71). Stegenga (1983) suggests that the policy of deterrence increases societal violence: "Individuals in a society whose respectable leaders are openly and calmly ready to incinerate the globe become themselves more inclined to employ violence and threats for their own personal ends. The nuclear deterrent corrupts the society that adopts it" (p. 35). While this statement requires support from research studies, it makes sense that state-sanctioned violence increases the probability of violent incidents among its citizens. Stegenga points out that deterrence policies involve deception on the part of leaders who know that these policies can fail, yet they present a facade of confidence in them: "These soothing reassurances involve improper deception damaging to the delicate bond of trust between the leaders and the citizenry" (p. 31). Military and political leaders would argue that they are not being deceptive, but rather are safeguarding national security. However, deception is involved because citizens are being led to believe that deterrence is the only way to prevent nuclear war, yet it is the very *possession of these weapons* and the *readiness to use them* which make nuclear holocaust a possibility.

The Pacifist View of Security

The Christian pacifist's view of security has a biblical basis and is characterized by trust in God. Several of the Psalms of the Old Testament speak of God as "stronghold" and "refuge". For Auckerman (1981) this means that "the only secure niche

is the place He gives us in His caring, not any territory we stake out for ourselves. And He is the defender of that place" (p. 176). The New Testament urges believers not to be concerned about those who kill[84] because all of creation, and especially mankind, is precious to God.[85] In light of these passages Auckerman comments: "If we trust this Father, we can, with courage face the threat of death at the hands of adversaries" (p. 174). Cosby (1983) cautions that trust in God is not to be compartmentalized so that God is trusted in some areas but not in others: "This trust in the Father's care must exist both in the personal and the public domain, for my personal life is never separate from my life in society; my faith affects how I want society to be organized" (p. 178).

Watts (1985) argues that trust in God for the security of the nation excludes dependence on the military. He maintains that to speak of trusting in God when we pursue security that is guaranteed by military might reduces God's involvement to "a mere supplementary role to a supposedly viable venture" (p. 52). Some authors and church bodies argue that dependence on nuclear weapons for security is, for all practical purposes, foolish. The Dutch Reformed Synod argues against basing the security of the nation on nuclear weapons because of the possible holocaust which may result: "In no way does the defense of our freedom justify basing our security on the possible destruction of everything dear to us and to our opponents and on an assault on the creation" The Christian World Conference (1983) declared that a nation cannot guarantee its security by threatening the adversary with greater military strength: "The security of one nation cannot be achieved by endangerring the security of others" (p. 91). In Erdahl's (1982) view, threatening another nation with greater military strength only decreases security because it tempts the adversary to strike pre-emptively in order to avoid being attacked first.

Pacifism and Defense

Christian pacifists base their view of military defense on the life and teachings of Christ. Auckerman (1981) comments that Christ's refusal to resist arrest and crucifixion was a scandal to his disciples, just as the idea of not defending those one loves is

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[84]Matthew 10: 28 reads: "Do not fear those who deprive the body of life but cannot destroy the soul."

[85]"Not a single sparrow falls to the ground without your Father's consent" (ibid, verse 29).

unacceptable to many contemporary citizens. However, belief in the resurrection of Christ casts a different light on the scandal of his defenselessness because God is perceived to have vindicated the way of vulnerability and trust. As Auckerman puts it, "precisely because [Christ] stood obedient and defenseless against the chaos, madness, and doom of rebelling human beings and institutions, God raised him up as victor over that darkness" (p. 200). Christian pacifists view defense in light of these events and this hope. They see their vulnerability (and that of loved ones) as derivative of Christ's. They refuse to be pitted against fellow human beings who have been designated as enemies.

Defensive methods advocated by pacifists are characterized by non-violence. The American bishops (1983) support non-violence with the following [illegible]. We believe work to develop non-violent means of fending off aggression [illegible] conflict best reflects the ca[illegible] of Jesus both to love [illegible]" (*The Challeng[illegible]ace*, #78). They note that non-violent resistance ma[illegible] form of civil defense: "Citizens would be trained in the techniques of peace[illegible]pliance and non-cooperation as a means of hindering an invading force or a non-[illegible]ratic government from imposing its will (ibid, #223). Erdahl (1982) acknowledges that civilian defense can be costly but views it as "more compatible with the way of suffering love than is the way of violence institutionalized in war" (p. 259). *Non-violence* is not synonomous with passivity. On the contrary, it can demand "tough-minded and pragmatic approaches to change and social action. Lane compares non-violent resistance to the guerilla warfare tactic of creating the unexpected: "In guerilla warfare the structures of expectation that parties generally bring to a confrontation are radically disrupted. Withdrawal can become a strategic action; the avoidance of fixed lines of battle can exhaust and overextend the enemy" (ibid).

The Arms Race and Nuclear Disarmament

Many church bodies oppose the arms race because it increases the danger of nuclear war and because it diverts resources away from the poor of the world. The American bishops (1983) note that the Roman Catholic church has condemned the arms race "as a danger, an act of aggression against the poor, and a folly which does not provide the security it promises" (*The Challenge of Peace*, #128). At the world conference *Religious Workers for Saving the Sacred Gift of Life from Nuclear Catastrophe* Patriarch Pimen of Moscow declared:

> The steady qualitative improvement and unrestrained growth of the quantities of weapons consume on a staggering scale the forces and resources of mankind which it requires for ensuring a worthy life for man.... This waste is utterly immoral, because it represents the stealing of resources that are vitally important for the existence of hundreds of millions of people who do not have even a modest livelihood. (cited in Nechoyer, 1982, p. 50).

The World Council of Churches *Conference on Disarmament* warned that "[the arms race] threatens to turn the whole world into an armed camp; it aids repression and violates human rights; it promotes violence and insecurity in place of the security in whose name it is undertaken" (cited in Howe, 1980, p.34).

Some pacifists advocate war-tax resistance as a non-violent means of opposing and undermining the arms race. Stoner (1983) views this action as a "deceptively simple and painfully obvious Christian response to the world arms race" (p. 235). He argues that is is inconsistent for church leaders to condemn the arms race but not call upon their members to stop supporting it through their taxes. Stoner summarizes thusly: "Call it civil disobedience if you wish but recognize that in reality it is divine obedience. It is a matter of yielding to a higher sovereignty" (p. 238).

Pacifists do not hold a singular view on nuclear disarmament: some support bilateral or multilateral disarmament while others advocate unilateral disarmament. Zahn (1983), whose viewpoint is more radical than most, maintains that disarmament may become "a morally required policy option" if multilateral negotiations fail. In his view, the risks of such a policy pale in comparison to nuclear holocaust.

Pacifism and Peacemaking

The peacemaking activities of Christian pacifists include actions to make people aware of the danger of nuclear war because relying on nuclear weapons for defense can result in disaster. The World Council of Churches adheres to this general point of view, as indicated in the following declaration: "The churches must never cease warning governments of the dangers and they must repudiate absolutely the growing conviction in some quarters that the use of mass destruction weapons has become inevitable" (cited in Howe, 1980, p. 32). King (1983) proposes that citizens declare their refusal to depend on the "gods of metal" by holding worship services on sites where nuclear weapons are

produced or tested: "By worshiping Christ at nuclear installations, Christians can assert their faith in the presence of his most seductive rival. We clearly say whom we will worship and whom we will not worship" (p. 211).

Other peacemaking activities designed to increase public awareness include holding information sessions and study groups, and discussing issues such as nuclear disarmament with pastors and local congregations. Other activities include lobbying for a freeze on the testing and production of nuclear weapons, for a reduction in nuclear arsenals, and for the conversion of military production into consumer-goods production. It has also been suggested by a number of Christian pacifists that unity with Christians and others in the Soviet Union should be encouraged by sending gifts such as farming tools and medicine, *even if this requires breaking the law*. The breaking of civil law is considered justified by the need to take drastic measures to reduce the risk of nuclear war and by biblical teaching which calls for reconciliation with one's enemies.

Peacemaking activities sometimes require *acts of civil disobedience*. The *Christian World Conference* (1983) urged Christians "to explore the possible non-violent use of civil disobedience as an effective means of protesting against nuclear arms" (p. 73). Soelle (1983) reports that a Jesuit priest, Daniel Berrigan, his brother, a nun, and a few others damaged the cones of two nuclear missiles in a plant where they were being assembled, and poured some of their own blood over other equipment and drawings. The "non-violent resistance fighters" declared through their civil disobedience and symbolic actions that they wished to draw attention to the three million dollars of public funds spent daily by General Electric for the production of reentry vehicles which increase first-strike capability. "General Electric", they said, "advances the possible destruction of millions of innocent lives.... We choose to obey God's call of life, rather than a corporate summons to death" (cited in Soelle, 1983, pp. 57-58).

We have seen that Christian pacifism holds important implications for deterrence, security, defense, disarmament, and peacemaking. Nuclear deterrence is judged immoral because of (1) the stated intent to kill innocent people; (2) the consequences of the failure of the policy; and (3) its dehumanizing effects. Christian pacifists base their opposition to security through nuclear weapons on biblical teaching and on their trust in God. Pacifists condemn the arms race because it contributes to social and economic injustice and they advocate war-tax resistance as one way to oppose it. They suggest that unilateral disarmament may be necessary in order to eliminate the danger of nuclear holocaust.

(However, many pacifists believe in bilateral as well as multilateral disarmament.) Finally, the peacemaking activities of Christian pacifists include "consciousness-raising" actions and acts of civil disobedience.

G. The Just-War Pacifist Dilemma

Choosing between the use and non-use of lethal force in world affairs confronts persons involved in the prevention of nuclear war with a formidable decision. The problem is that both options have undesirable consequences. Talbott (1984) illustrates the dilemma with the following example: My family is about to be assaulted by a marauder and I faced with a decision regarding how to defend my loved ones from their attacker. "Should I crush his skull with a wooden club or should I forgo violence and seek instead -by whatever means presents itself- to show love toward him, even if it means watching him destroy my family?" (p. 30). In this example it appears that the marauder must be killed or members of my family may be killed. On the social level it seems that we are forced to choose between deterrence policies that could conceivably result in nuclear war, or, subject ourselves to domination by a totalitarian regime.

With respect to just-war theory and pacifism, there are valid reasons to support either view. Just-war theory is based upon moral principles which consider it justified for a nation to use lethal force to defend human life and important values whereas Christian pacifism is based upon belief in God and adherence to New Testament teachings such as the prohibition against all killing. As Hehir (1980) points out, "the two positions...are grounded in basically different conceptions of moral reasoning" (p. 32). Weigel (1983) maintains that there is no solution to this dilemma because both patterns of reasoning are legitimate. Therefore, the two positions must inevitably remain in a tension which cannot be resolved. Weigel proposes that pacifists remind proponents of military force that values must guide political decisions, while advocates of the use of lethal force remind pacifists of the responsibility which living in the real world entails. This "corrective function" has a certain value, but it does not solve the subjective problem of those faced with choosing between the two ethics.

Stassen (1985) suggests that a new ethic which transcends the just-war/pacifist dilemma is needed. He proposes that the "new ethic" consist of "transforming initiatives". These may be defined as actions which enable a person to transcend habitual modes of

responding and which create new possibilities of interaction because they are motivated solely by the best interest of the other. A number of New Testament teachings illustrate transforming initiatives, for example: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink" (Romans 12: 20). Such actions transcend usual ways of responding, change the rules, and alter expectations. Actions of this nature require that a person "discover that place of peace and love within...that transforms the current moment and creates new possibilities for healing" (Talbott, 1984, p. 32). This is a spiritual mode of responding which might be termed 'acting in the Spirit'. It consists of actions which have God as their reference point and are motivated by Christian love. These actions enable a person to transcend situations in which both options have undesirable consequences because they express only what love incontrovertibly requires in a given moment.

Applying an ethic of transforming initiatives in a nuclear-armed world requires creative thinking and imagination. It means taking new and unexpected initiatives at national and international levels. An example of a transforming initiative at the international level is President Sadat's unprecedented trip to Jerusalem in 1977, which greatly facilitated peaceful relations between Egypt and Israel. Bernbaum (1984) suggests that Western governments take new initiatives to increase understanding of Soviet affairs by making more funding available for Soviet studies and exchange programs.[86] Dahlen (1984) suggests that we will need to develop a "society-oriented ethic", one which is "large enough for the purpose of a new kind of international relations with common responsibility for the whole of humankind" (p. 34). The American bishops (1983) advocate "a more integrated international system" and the "pursuit of international order as the way to banish the scourge of war from human afairs" (*The Challenge of Peace*, #s 235, 239). They suggest that this will require exploring the concept of common security. According to Dahlen (1984) common security is possible only where there is "common responsibility for the well-being of humanity, not just for the citizens in the country where we happen to live.... Common security has to be based on the integrity of all nations" (p. 32).

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[86]Bernbaum (1984) points out that "the Soviet Union has approximately 7,500 specialists on the United States and three major research institutions devoted to the study of America's political, military, and economic structures, [while] only about 200 Americans each year complete their doctorates in a Soviet-related field" (p. 198).

H. Conclusion

Proponents of the use of lethal force in world affairs argue that self-defense is both a civic and a natural right and that individuals as well as nations have a duty to defend themselves, their possessions and their values. They argue that force is justified if it is required to defend life and the values which give life meaning. These proponents also maintain that *nuclear deterrence* must be tolerated because a balance of forces is required to prevent war and safeguard freedom and order.

Christian pacifists argue that New Testament teachings and one's relationship with God preclude the use of lethal force. They consider faithfulness and obedience to God more important than power and efficacy. They accept to be vulnerable, as Christ was, and endeavor to meet adversaries with suffering love because they believe that God will defend them. Christian pacifists consider nuclear deterrence immoral because the *intention* to kill human beings is morally wrong, and because the possession of nuclear weapons, even if only for "defensive" purposes, increases the probability of a nuclear war. They place their belief in God and advocate unilateral disarm[redacted] well as non-violent methods of defense.

Choosing between the use of non-use of lethal force, between a just-war or pacifist ethic, represents a real dilemma because both positions appear to have undesirable consequences. It seems that we must choose between policies which could result in nuclear war or policies which could lead to domination by a repressive regime. This dilemma is made greater by the fact that both positions are based on defensible patterns of moral reasoning. Some authors suggest that the dilemma can be overcome with a new ethic of "transforming initiatives" which consists of spiritually-motivated, imaginative actions geared toward the *prevention* of nuclear war. Motivated solely by the best interest of the other, such actions create new possibilities of interaction between nations and increase hope for a more stable and secure international order.

Chapter VII

Conclusion

The factualness of the precarious balance of life in the nuclear age has become increasingly accepted not only by political and military leaders throughout the world, but also by the ordinary "person in the street". The possibility of unprecedented global disaster has worked its way into mass-consciousness. Of this there seems little doubt. The major thrust of this thesis has been *to elucidate the extent to which the fear (or anticipation) of nuclear war has encouraged a spiritual/emotional crisis among segments of the population.* The main ambition of this thesis has been to describe and define some of the dimensions of this spiritual/emotional phenomenon. The aim of this final chapter is to overview the primary findings contained in the previous chapters, and to provide the reader with my personal evaluation of these findings.

Psychological, Emotional, and Behavioral Implications of the Nuclear Threat

Even if a nuclear holocaust continues to be averted, the *threat* of nuclear war holds important consequences. The primary psychological consequences associated with the fear of an impending nuclear disaster are the use of a variety of defense mechanisms to cope with this threat. One of the most widely recognized responses is *denial*, which is a refusal to acknowledge that death by nuclear incineration is a genuine possibility. In essence, denial is the cornerstone to much of the psycho-spiritual distress discussed in this thesis. Most of the other defense mechanisms (such as psychic numbing, projection, and dehumanization) have as a common ingredient the element of *denial*. Denial of the possibility of nuclear war is encouraged by a variety of fears, most of which are interpersonal rather than psychodynamic. For example, some people do not want to give the impression of being incompetent or too emotional. Others are fearful of appearing unpatriotic or of contributing to a self-fulfilling prophecy. Still others do not want to burden their children with knowledge about potential nuclear disaster.

Psychic numbing is a defense mechanism whereby people block out the negative or painful emotional feelings which tend to occur when they think about nuclear annihilation. In the general usage of the term, it involves the repression of fear as well as the repression of the knowledge which creates the fear. Sometimes, however, psychic numbing has as a by-product the *projection* of our unconscious fears onto our enemies. As

a result, we frequently observe a "demonization" of the enemy which serves to make his motives and actions appear evil and treacherous while at the same time serves to make our own appear moral and honorable. Repressing our fears or projecting them onto the enemy protects us from a threat too great to face. However, psychic numbing also makes us oblivious to the danger of nuclear annihilation. It enables us to cope psychologically with the *threat* of nuclear war, but it also impedes our participation in its *prevention.*

Dehumanization of the enemy is another defense mechanism which protects us from our guilt and hostile feelings toward others. If our enemies are less than human, the thought of annihilating them and their cities can be more readily calculated. However, this defense mechanism requires a compartmentalization of emotions which results simultaneously in a diminished capacity to "feel" and an increase in self-centered preoccupation. The psychological price paid to cope with the threat of nuclear war is reduced sensitivity to the usual barriers against destroying other human beings.

The threat of nuclear holocaust also holds important *emotional* consequences. Among the negative emotions associated with this threat are shame, guilt, embarassment, resignation, hopelessness and anger. Researchers (Liebert, 1971; Carey, 1979) have observed the following response to the danger of nuclear war: (1) There occurs an *initial anxiety* as children first become aware of the potential danger which faces them; (2) psychic numbing begins to take hold during adolescence; and (3) late adolescence and adulthood often see a return of anxiety or an oscillation between numbness and anxiety.

Studies of the emotional responses of children and adolescents to the prospect of nuclear war indicate that some are experiencing fear, cynicism, bitterness, helplessness, and sadness. They are uneasy about the future and many of them believe that a nuclear war will occur in their lifetime. Some of these children cope with their anxiety by living "for the moment". Their pursuit of instant gratification seems to be related to their perception that adults are uncaring or ineffectual, not in the immediate sense, as in loving each family member, but rather in a more global sense, as in creating a world in which it is possible that two or three deranged people, holding the right military authority, could actually initiate a nuclear war.

Many people believe that it is beyond their ability to do anything meaningful about a threat of such magnitude. Consequently, they lead a sort of double life in which they are aware at one level that much of the world could be destroyed in a nuclear

holocaust but go on living "as if" this threat did not exist. The deadening of one's feelings which this double life requires results in diminished energy, vulnerability to exhaustion, and a dulled responsiveness to lesser evils. Repressing one's feelings about nuclear war leads to passivity and political disempowerment. Furthermore, repressed despair encourages the seeking of scapegoats and, to a lesser degree, acting out of violent behavior or vandalism. It has also been hypothesized by Joanna Macy that "as if" living contributes to an increase in suicidal ideation and an increase in drug consumption.

What are the implications of the foregoing? Nuclear weapons threaten the psychological well-being of every living person. Learning to cope with the threat of nuclear war through defense mechanisms such as psychic numbing and dehumanization leads to an impairement of our capacity to think clearly, reduces our sensitivity to social issues, and increases self-centredness. The resulting inclination to compartmentalize our feelings, or deaden them, leads to an emotional double-bind: Awareness of the danger of nuclear annihilation results in anxiety or cynicism, but suppression of this awareness leads to a diminished capacity to "feel" and disempowers us from acting in ways which reduce the threat. The result of all these constraints is a stifling of our inner growth.

The psychological illhealth and feelings of personal impotence which appear to be an inherent by-product of the nuclear threat amount to a form of emotional abuse. Some people argue that nuclear weapons are necessary for defense. But if the quality of life decreases (as when people search for intense experiences or instant gratification and lose touch with more lasting values, or as social conditions worsen while military budgets continue to climb) we have no option but to recognize that part of our emotional and spiritual fabric is been twisted.

Spiritual Consequences of the Threat of Nuclear War

It has been suggested in this thesis that psychic numbing and "as if" living hold very real consequences for our spiritual life. Doubts arise that meaningful relationships will endure, hence some individuals become ambivalent towards the sources of immortality (one's children, one's works, etc.). As psychic numbing affects more and more areas of a person's life, the experience becomes one of "death in life". The need for meaning increases, but looking to the sources of value and meaning only leads to more unreality as these are threatened by nuclear annihilation. This situation can lead to a

religious crisis. It becomes unclear to the individual how salvation can be experienced when life is characterized by "death in life".

It is worthy of special mention that the defense mechanism of projection exerts a particular influence on the spiritual life, not only because of the manner in which it occurs in one's personal mind, but because of how it manifests itself in the political and religious leaders to whom they listen. Some statements by religious and political leaders emphasize the horribleness of Soviet actions and describe their motives as base and evil. Because religious leaders often hold great sway over their followers, what they teach is of vital importance. If their teaching is inflenced by projection, they may perpetuate falsehoods and mislead individual believers. Demonizing the enemy diverts attention away from the real sources of war: human greed, narcissism, pride, etc. It can lead to thinking such as "they deserve to be destroyed (by nuclear weapons) anyway". Self-righteousness contributes to this because it tends to situate evil outside oneself. When we envision ourselves as the children of God and at the same time perceive others as enemies to be destroyed, the probability of war increases.

The threat of nuclear war holds important consequences for religious symbolism. The symbolization of immortality may be expressed biologically (living on in one's children), creatively (living on in one's works), through experiential transcendence (the search for intense experiences), through nature (living on as a part of immortal Nature), or theologically (coping with the idea of death by means of spiritual attainment). Imagery of extinction, which appears to be part of our collective consciousness, threatens these symbolizations.

Some aspects of traditional Christian symbolism are inadequate for making sense of the threat of nuclear war. For instance, certain biblical images suggest that God alone can destroy the world. This leads to the view that a nuclear holocaust is God's will, or, God will not allow nuclear war to occur. This symbolism can be understood as misleading because human beings will initiate and execute a nuclear holocaust. Symbols and images of God relevant to the nuclear age, that is, which take into account human agency in nuclear war, are needed by those seeking to understand God's relationship to a world which may destroy itself with nuclear weapons.

Spiritual belief is adversely affected by imagery of extinction and by the threatened destruction of religious traditions. Believers face disturbing questions about the possibility of experiencing redemption in a world where hundreds of billions of dollars

are spent yearly on armaments while social conditions worsen in many parts of the world.

The authenticity of worship is challenged by the inconsistency of worshiping the Creator of life while preparing to annihilate the inhabitants of the earth. Worship is also threatened by the possible destruction of the sacramental tradition which is believed to mediate the divine presence.

Spiritual self-affirmation is affected by the nuclear threat because meaningful participation in the spiritual life is reduced. The result is an increased sense of meaninglessness, a form of anxiety and despair which occurs when one's spiritual beliefs are shaken or when one's spiritual center is lost. This holds serious consequences for the individual believer: When the spiritual segment of human existence is threatened, the person's entire being (including his or her emotional and psychological stability) is jeapordized.

A healthy spiritual life is a vital resource in a nuclear world. For this reason it is important to consider how the spiritual life is negatively affected by the threat of nuclear holocaust. Firstly, the spiritual life is a source of hope. This virtue forms the basis of efforts to rid the world of nuclear weapons. Secondly, the spiritual life improves general morale. As Frank (1984) points out, the symbolism, creeds, and rituals of religion have the potential "to reduce anxiety, assuage depression, and create hope" (p. 1344). The ability of the spiritual life to improve morale is jeopardized to the extent that religious symbolism is unable to help believers make sense of the nuclear threat, or that religious rituals are threatened by nuclear weapons. Thirdly, the spiritual life offers a conceptual framework which adds meaning to life. Frank notes that this provides believers with "a sense of personal significance" (ibid). However, threats to belief, worship, and spiritual self-affirmation reduce religion's ability to give meaning to life and strengthen those who work for the prevention of nuclear war.

Certain beliefs held by fundamentalist Christians lead to the opposite result, that is, they make nuclear war more likely. A number of these beliefs can be perceived as containing the ideological foundation of nuclear war. For example, certain variations of "extremist" fundamentalist eschatology link the Second Advent of Christ with a nuclear holocaust. God is viewed as sovereign in such a war and as punishing an evil humanity for its sins. This Armageddon theology, which has appeal to others besides fundamentalist Christians, is worrisome because (1) it provides religious justification for

destroying the world; and (2) it may become a self-fulfilling prophecy. In addition, these beliefs impede peacemaking efforts because they imply a degenerative view of history and a fatalistic, unalterable vision of human history and, even more importantly, human destiny.

Biblical Resources for the Nuclear Age

It is relevant to ask: "What is the relationship between spiritual resources and problems of a psychological nature?" Psychological problems range from relatively mild states or behaviors which impede normal functioning and require short-term counselling, for example, irrational beliefs or stress due to job loss, to serious dysfunctional states or behaviors which require long-term therapy, medication, or hospitalization, for example, psychosis, schizophrenia, or manic-depressive illness. Psychologists are able to help individuals overcome many of the problems that occur along this spectrum, including the consequences of the threat of nuclear war. To do so they draw from a varied repertoire of techniques and therapies which can include spiritual resources.

The link between spiritual and psychological matters lies in the impact, positive or negative, that the spiritual life exerts on the psychological well-being of each individual. This impact is positive when, for example, a person's spiritual life provides a framework or perspective for analyzing problems in life or when prayer reduces anxiety or hostility. The impact is negative when, for example, religious crisis leads to depression. A psychologist who understands the relationship between spiritual life and psychological well-being can assist individuals cope with adverse psychological experiences by putting them in touch with spiritual resources which contribute to their mental health. Because the threat of nuclear war encourages religious crisis (in many of the ways described in the foregoing chapters), it is necessary for a helping professional to understand the relationship between these dimensions of human experience.

Some of the spiritual resources which are able to assist in overcoming psychological and spiritual consequences of the nuclear threat are found in the New Testament portion of the Bible. The horror of nuclear war can be grasped more easily if it somehow personalized. The theological interpretation of the death of Christ provides a way of becoming conscious of the suffering of *individuals* in a nuclear war. It is believed that Christ, in his death, identified himself with all victims, past, present, and future.

Because Christ would "know" each victim of a nuclear war, the horror of this tragedy attains a personal perspective which otherwise is extremely difficult to realize.

A number of biblical images counteract the imagery of extinction associated with nuclear war. The religious hypothesis of the resurrection of Christ plays a central role in this regard. In the resurrection God is seen as stronger than the powers of death and destruction, and as a source of immortal life. This image counteracts anxiety about the human future, restores faith in the promise of redemption, and bolsters spiritual self-affirmation. God's promise of assistance in the Gospels instills hope and offsets the despair that many people feel today. The Spirit, for example, helps people see the signs of the times, and assists them in rejecting "nuclear idolatry" and in choosing ways of living that lead to peace.

Biblical images and stories are also useful to individuals experiencing anxiety in the nuclear age because of their concern with inherently painful or overpowering human situations. The Bible contains numerous metaphors which have the potential to help us understand our pre-nuclear war situation. Images such as Heaven and Hell can assist reflection on ideas such as the world destroyed by nuclear war and the world free of nuclear threat. The story of the Flood can shed light on the absorption of people in the affairs of daily life in the face of an imminent danger. The biblical notion of "sin" (the loss of the ability to distinguish between good and evil) can help explain why the arms race continues unabated despite the danger of nuclear war.

The message of biblical stories such as the Flood and the Apocalypse contain within them a basis for hopefulness. God's promise in the Flood story never to destroy the earth again implies a divine commitment to the survival of humankind. The promise of salvation and restoration which follows apocalyptic scenarios in the Bible encourages the vision of an age in human history when evil will be overcome.

Some images of God are helpful for making religious sense of the threat of nuclear holocaust while others are not. Classical ideas which suggest that God is omnipotent and perfect are *not* helpful for understanding the possibility that we may destroy the earth through nuclear war. The Bible, however, suggests that God does not exercise an *absolute* control over events but rather allows for human freedom, including the choice to initiate a nuclear holocaust. The New Testament speaks of a God who is compassionate and "non-powerful", who identifies with humankind to the point of becoming (in Christ) dependent and poor.

The classical idea of God as "Greatest Good" expresses abstract and transcendent aspects of the divinity and does not speak of God's involvement with humanity. The Bible presents God as saving, judging, and destroying, that is, as intimately involved in the day to day affairs of humankind. This image provides a better starting point for a reflection on God's involvement in the threat of nuclear annihilation. Similarly, the classical notion that evil is but the absence of good sheds no light on the forces which push us closer to nuclear war. A theory of evil which helps people understand this danger is clearly needed.

The New Testament suggests models of human living which counteract the paradigms of sociality associated with nuclearism (the embrace of nuclear weapons as a means of salvation). One way to unmask the evil associated with nuclear weapons is to analyze the conceptual underpinnings of nuclearism. "Power as violence" is one the thought models underlying it. This paradigm of human living is opposed by the New Testament where power is used in a subtle manner and expressed as love. A second paradigm which supports nuclearism suggests that life is a zero sum game, that is, a vast competition for diminishing resources. The Bible's view of sociality points to sharing the gifts of the Spirit as well as the resources of the earth. A third thought model of nuclearism is "non-hope expressed as worst-case analysis". Military leaders assume that they must prepare for all eventualities through an unrelenting development of increasingly sophisticated nuclear weapons. A facade of confidence merely masks an underlying hopelessness and despair. Biblical images such as the Kingdom of God and the Messianic Banquet contrast sharply with the paradigm of non-hope because they suggest reconciliation and forgiveness, attitudes which if implemented not only in the arena of international politics, but also in the domain of international relationships, might facilitate a gear-down in our ongoing preparation for nuclear war.

Theological and Practical Resources

Theological reflection should help to clarify the relationship between God and a nuclear-armed world which is only an "authorized" command away from annihilation. Garrison attempts to reconcile this seemingly contradictory situation by integrating Whitehead's process thought and Hartshorne's dipolar view of God into a theology which he claims is appropriate for a nuclear age. His theory suggests that God possesses both

an abstract and a consequent nature, and that God co-inheres in a relational encounter with human beings. God's creative developments are seen to depend on human choices. God's actions in the present can be understood in the light of significant divine interventions in the cofessional heritage. Through a "hermeneutic of engagement" the community of believers perceives God's purposeful movement in the historical process.

That part of the confessional heritage relevant to the threat of nuclear war is the apocalypse. The hermeneutic of engagement suggests that the wrath of God which is portrayed in the apocalyptic writings was also at work in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. This wrath of God is virtually indistinguishable from moral evil. Instances of the wrath of God in the Bible point to a dark side of God, although the manifestation of this wrath is ultimately for a salvific purpose. There appears to be an antinomial or oppositional character in God, with the love of God at one pole and the wrath of God at the other.

Garrison proposes that the believer's task in the nuclear age is to integrate the antinomy of God represented in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. This involves becoming aware of the wrath of God expressed in this holocaust and integrating it in the psyche where contradictions are synthesized. Garrison uses Jung's model of the psyche to explain how this integration takes place. Just as the archetype of the Self integrates the polarities of conscious and unconscious, or shadow and persona, the Spirit helps the believer integrate the Antichrist (represented by Hiroshima, symbol of the world being destroyed) into Christ-consciousness (represented by Christ, symbol of the world being saved). The integration of the Antichrist or shadow side of Christ requires a certain moral strength which the believer can acquire by undergoing a transformation through the saving power of Christ.

The counterpart to theological reflection is religious practice. While the former helps us to understand God's relationship to a nuclear world, the latter provides antidotes to the psychological and spiritual consequences of living in the nuclear shadow. The spiritual transformation of conversion consists of a radical turning away from "nuclear idols" to a life of faith characterized by trust in the Spirit rather than in nuclear weapons. Trusting in the Spirit has the effect of softening the heart and enabling a person to believe and perceive in new ways. It breaks down the compartmentalization which creates barriers between feelings and awareness, and reduces the need to live an "as if" or "double" life.

Prayer likewise holds the potential to change or modify our frame of reference. It enables us to *consider* an enemy's point of view, or to *consider* an adversary as a potential friend. Prayer does not, of course, automatically insure that the humanness of an enemy will become self-evident, nor does it even insure that the individual who prays will undergo any change in perception of an adversary. It does, however, encourage the propensity; and this, at least in this thesis, is understood as as feature which is redeeming in a psychological as well as a spiritual sense.

Authentic worship in the nuclear age must incorporate past and future victims of nuclear weapons because worship which takes no account of the greatest danger facing humanity today becomes, in a certain sense, irrelevant. Christ's identification with all victims in his death and descent into Hell makes possible this incorporation of victims to worship and sugests an image which reduces the hopelessness and meaninglessness associated with the thought of the vaporization of hundreds of millions of people in a nuclear war. During the celebration of the Eucharist, worshipers can allow suppressed painful feelings (the result of psychic numbing) to surface, and let go of the anguish and fear they experience about the future. In Christian community people can experience acceptance and love, which enables them to rise above despair and helplessness, and become empowered to work for peace.

What then is the relevance of these ideas to everyday life? What is their significance in either a practical or theoretical sense? A major thrust of this thesis has been to argue that there are spiritual resources to cope with psychological and spiritual consequences of the threat of nuclear war. Certain biblical images enable us to realize how oblivious we can be to impending catastrophe as well as help us to grasp the magnitude of the suffering which would result from a nuclear holocaust. Garrison's theology for the nuclear age provides a framework for understanding God's involvement with nuclear war. A theological understanding of the nuclear threat helps us to cope with personal anxiety and religious crisis. It affirms that religion remains meaningful in the face of nuclear annihilation. Faith, prayer, and authentic worship provide antidotes to the meaninglessness and hopelessness endemic to our era. They open the heart and make us sensitive to the vital issues of this age. Freed from debilitating psychological defense mechanisms (such as psychic numbing) and anxiety-producing spiritual consequences (such as the loss of spiritual self-affirmation) we can go on to be active peacemakers.

Moral and Political Implications of the Nuclear Threat

Once people have overcome psychological and spiritual consequences of the threat of nuclear war, and have become strengthened through spiritual resources, they face the additional task of having to make the moral choice between the use or non-use of lethal force in the defense of life and values. Just-war theory favors the use of lethal force, but the intent is to limit its use. The theory provides guidelines for the conduct of war such as the principles of non-combatant immunity and proportionality. However, many thinkers have judged the criteria of the just-war to be irrevelant in the nuclear age because (1) there is no disinterested authority which can determine whether a nation's rights have been violated; and (2) it becomes nonsensical to speak of proportionality in a nuclear war in which radioactive fallout would spread over most of the earth and poison an unpredictable number of people.

Many arguments have been advanced in favor of the use of lethal force in world affairs. Proponents base their arguments on the premise that nations have a duty to defend their citizens and values, with force if necessary, against unjust aggression. They argue that the defense of values such as freedom justify the use of force and that a morality of responsibility best assures order and co-operation in a nuclear world. Moreover, there is a lack of a global mechanism to prevent conflict. An international situation characterized by nations which pursue their own interests and compete for limited resources requires a balance of forces and enforced agreements if there is to be peace.

Acceptance of the use of lethal force has always been integral to military theory, and in this part of the 20th century has led to defense policies such as nuclear deterrence. Advocates of these policies argue that maintaining a nuclear arsenal of similar size to that of a nuclear-armed adversary deters that adversary from initiating a nuclear attack. They also claim that nuclear deterrence has prevented *conventional war* (because initiating conventional war automatically incurs the risk of nuclear war) and has thus contributed to stability, security, and peace.

One moral evaluation of nuclear deterrence suggests that the *use* of nuclear weapons (which is immoral) must be distinguished from their *threatened* use (which is not necessarily immoral). Threatened use is considered a lesser evil than actual use.

The American bishops, in their conditional acceptance of nuclear deterrence, endorse "sufficiency to deter" but reject policies which develop nuclear war-fighting

strategies. Some thinkers respond that a nuclear deterrence posture requires a defense policy and must include preparations for the limited use of nuclear weapons. *Not* to deter an enemy with battlefield nuclear weapons, they claim, is to invite attack. The contention that limited nuclear war would escalate into a major nuclear exchange is considered unproven. These authors contend that planning for nuclear war is the only way to avoid the two extremes of total nuclear war and unconditional surrender to a totalitarian regime.

With respect to nuclear disarmament, proponents of the use of lethal force generally favor bilateral or multilateral disarmament. They maintain that unilateral disarmament may actually increase the likelihood of nuclear war because weakness encourages aggression.

Pacifism represents a moral option which opposes the use of lethal force in world affairs. It has traditionally been characterized by a refusal to participate in war. Christian pacifism is based on a faith relationship which emphasizes the loving and forgiving aspects of God, as well as dependence on God. Greater importance is placed on obedience to God and reflecting divine love than on calculating and efficient methods of preventing war, although non-violence is considered to have its place.

The primary intent of Christian pacifism is to witness to religious truths such as the belief that the love of God or the Kingdom of God will, in the end, prevail. The usual ways of resolving conflicts (especially making war) are renounced in favor of accepting to be vulnerable and placing defense and security in God's hands. Christian pacifists imitate Christ's reconciling ways and his acceptance of suffering, in the belief that love can transcend all human barriers. Some thinkers have criticized pacifism for having all the answers before questions are asked and for remaining neutral in the face of international injustice. They maintain that pacifism is valid for individuals only and that it is inadequate as a social strategy because evil must be restrained. Nevertheless, the peace churches are beginning to examine the social implications of their witness. Some social ethicists believe that the pacifism of witness will eventually become a pacifism of resistance.

Arguments against the use of lethal force are generally drawn from the New Testament. The Gospels prohibit killing and urge followers of Christ to love, rather than fight, their enemies. The killing of other human beings is judged to be contrary to "living in the Spirit" which consists of affirming life and reconciling oneself with "enemies". It is

believed that evil is defeated not by coercive power, but rather by forgiveness, love, and the refusal to retaliate.

Pacifists oppose nuclear deterrence on the grounds that it is immoral to *intend* to use weapons of mass destruction against human beings. They contend that the intent to do an evil act shares in the wrongness of the act. Deterrence is considered immoral because it threatens to destroy innocent people and their society. The policy of Mutual Assured Destruction clearly has this intent. Similarly, the policy of targeting only military installations also shares this intention because many of these installations are near, or within, urban areas.

Christian pacifists view security in terms of trust in God. They maintain that depending on God's care gives courage in the face of death. This trust is not compartmentalized, that is, it exists in both personal and public domains. It excludes dependence on the military. Christian pacifists contend that security decreases as military strength increases. They do not believe that the defense of freedom justifies basing security on a possible nuclear holocaust.

The Christian pacifist view of defense is modelled on the scandal of Christ's defenselessness. Christ's non-resistance to arrest and crucifixion appeared scandalous to his disciples but his resurrection from the dead was seen as vindicating the way of non-resistance and obedience to God. For this reason Christian pacifists elect to meet enemies with non-violence and love.

Non-violent methods compatible with pacifism include forms of civil defense which train citizens in the techniques of non-compliance and non-cooperation. Some forms of non-violence can be tough-minded and pragmatic. They have been likened to guerilla warfare which creates the unexpected and radically disrupts the structures of expectation.

Christian pacifists condemn the arms race for increasing the danger of nuclear war and for diverting resources away from poorer nations. They support war-tax resistance as a means of undermining the arms race. Some pacifists support bilateral or multilateral nuclear disarmament while others advocate unilateral disarmament and maintain that the latter may become morally required if the former fails. In this thesis the overall issue of the *practical accuracy* of Christian pacifism has not been addressed. That is, whether in the world of international politics, a policy predicated on the principles of Christian pacifism would actually be workable. The emphasis throughout

this thesis has been to indicate ways in which certain aspects of Christian pacifism serve as an ideological counterbalance to the prevailing modes of militaristic thinking.

The Christian pacifist view of peacemaking consists of consciousness-raising actions such as holding worship services at nuclear installations and warning people of the danger of nuclear war. Other peacemaking efforts include holding information sessions and study groups, and lobbying for a freeze on the testing and production of nuclear weapons. Some pacifists have engaged in acts of civil disobedience, such as damaging nuclear missile nose cones, in order to draw attention to the millions of dollars spent daily on weapons of mass destruction.

Choosing the use or non-use of lethal force poses a personal dilemma because both options have undesirable consequences. It seems that we must choose between nuclear deterrence (which could lead to nuclear war) and pacifism (which could lead to domination by a totalitarian regime). While the right of self-defense is inalienable, the moral issue is whether defense should include weapons of virtually incomprehensible mass destruction. Put another way, is it morally acceptable to risk nuclear holocaust in the name of "defense"? Strong arguments support both sides of this issue and serious consequences result from either position. Yet *not to choose* is to tacitly support the status quo: a world which is rapidly becoming an armed camp on the brink of nuclear disaster.

An ethic of transforming initiatives may indicate a way of transcending the difficult choice between using or not using lethal force in world affairs. Such an ethic would consist of actions which create new possibilities of interaction because they are motivated not only by one's own best interests, but also the best interest of the other. This spiritual mode of responding may enable people to transcend the just-war/pacifist dilemma because only those actions are undertaken which express what love incontrovertibly requires in a given situation. The application of an ethic of transforming initiatives in a nuclear-armed world would require much creative thinking. It would mean taking unexpected initiatives at national and international levels, and developing a system of international relations characterized by common responsibility.

In summary, the threat of nuclear war affects many aspects of our emotional and spiritual life. Psychologically, we must contend with a number of defense mechanisms which negatively impact on our well-being. Emotionally, we must deal with anxiety or the effects of repressing anxiety. Defense mechanisms and repression take a physical toll in the form of diminished energy and dulled responsiveness. Spiritually, we face threats

to belief, worship, and spiritual self-affirmation which can lead to religious crisis. Morally, we must choose between using or not using nuclear weapons to defend our lives.

I have attempted to show that Christianity possesses within its traditions the resources to overcome many of the negative consequences of the nuclear threat. While this thesis may be helpful first and foremost to those of the Christian faith, it may also be applicable to individuals who adhere to other religions which possess their own unique traditions and resources for coping with painful human situations. Worldwide, adherents of various religions number in the hundreds of millions. This means, if the thesis is essentially correct in its basic premises, that millions of individuals the world over can find within religion the resources to overcome detrimental effects of the nuclear threat and become empowered to work for the prevention of nuclear war.

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