

of world disarmament that applies equally to all nations. North Korea might be willing to give up its program if the United States stops threatening it with annihilating war and really negotiates permanent peace. Likewise, Iran might agree not to develop such weapons -- [of which there is absolutely no proof she is actually doing so] -- if Israel would begin to reduce its nuclear arsenal pointed at its Middle Eastern neighbors. Nonproliferation is a losing process if it only means stopping our rivals from getting such weapons while we expand ours and hold them to their heads. Universal disarmament must become the center of any meaningful strategy to reduce the danger of nuclear war.

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ACTIONS

1. Join our weekly peace vigil for a few minutes or more on Tuesdays, 8-9 AM, at the Federal Building, Jackson and Dearborn. We have conducted this vigil since September 2001 and distributed over 200,000 informational leaflets.
2. Share and discuss this leaflet with friends, family, coworkers and your faith community.
3. Read and distribute other peace leaflets located at <http://www.8thdaycenter.org/resources/leaflets.html>

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AMERICA'S SCARY NUCLEAR HISTORY

ROSEMARY RUETHER, National Catholic Reporter, 6/8/07

In an April 17, 2006, *New Yorker* article that created shock waves around the world, investigative journalist Seymour Hersh revealed that the Bush administration was contemplating using nuclear weapons against Iranian underground facilities. Like many other readers, I was horrified at what appeared to be a major departure from past U.S. policies of deterrence aimed at the prevention of use of nuclear weapons. The Bush administration seemed ready to engage in a first use of nuclear weapons in an act of preemptive war.



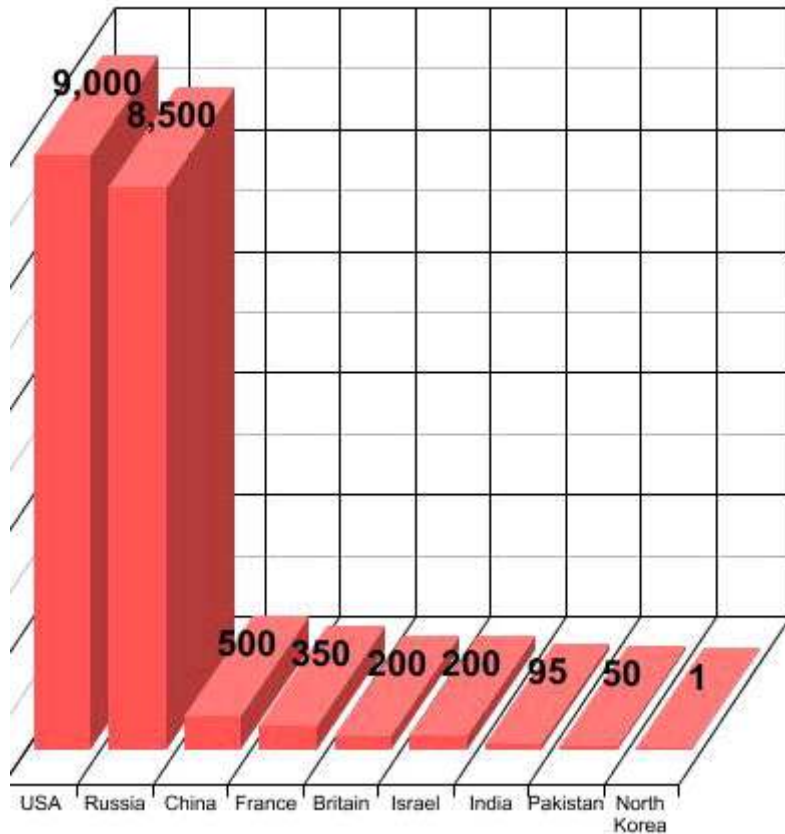
Swords Into Plowshares

However, in my research on American military history since the end of World War II, I have repeatedly encountered instances where the U.S. military contemplated the use of nuclear weapons in situations where the “enemy” not only lacked these weapons, but even lacked major air power. An article on the Peace Web reveals that on 19 occasions after the U.S. bombing of Japan in 1945 and not counting the recent threat to Iran, the United States contemplated the use of nuclear weapons (www.himahima.co.jp/PeaceWeb/Peace/E/pNuclear2_1.html).

Local contact:

Some of the most notable of such occasions were in Korea during the Korean War and thereafter. In December 1950, as Gen. Douglas MacArthur rolled toward the border between North Korea and China, he submitted a list of “retaliation targets” for which he desired 34 atomic weapons. In an interview published posthumously, MacArthur declared,

Nuclear Warheads: Who's Your Daddy?



“I would have dropped between 30 and 50 atomic bombs ... strung along the neck of Manchuria.” This would have created “a belt of radioactive cobalt” from the Sea of Japan to the Yellow Sea. “For at least 60 years there could have been no land invasion of Korea from the North.”

Although President Harry Truman removed MacArthur in April 1951, Truman, too, was ready to use nuclear bombs. In September and October of 1951, the United States simulated atomic bombing runs over North Korea, actually dropping heavy TNT weapons. According to Bruce

Cummings’ *Korea’s Place in the Sun*, in three years of bombing, the United States wiped out every modern building in North Korea. In subsequent years the United States stationed nuclear weapons aimed at North Korea. Most but not all were withdrawn in 1991. Moreover, from the 1970s to the ’90s the United States and the South Korean military jointly carried out “Team Spirit” war exercises that simulated the use of such weapons. Given this continual threat of nuclear weapons use by the United States, is there any surprise that North Korea craves the possession of such weapons to brandish in return?

The use of nuclear weapons was also contemplated in Vietnam. In April 1954, as the French military defeat at Dien Bien Phu was imminent, American aircraft carriers equipped with atomic weapons were ordered into the Gulf of Tonkin. In his book *Hell in a Very Small Place: The Siege of Dien Bien Phu*, author Bernard Fall reports that Secretary of State John Foster Dulles offered his French counterpart, Georges Bidault, atomic bombs to save Dien Bien Phu, but Bidault pointed out that the use of such weapons in a context of close armed conflict would kill the French as well. With the intensification of the war in Vietnam, nuclear weapons were again contemplated several times in 1968 and 1969.

This continual willingness to use nuclear weapons in conflicts where the United States sought “quick solutions” puts the recent threats to use such weapons in Iran in perspective. It makes clear that the United States, from its use of such weapons against Japan in 1945 until today, has continually been the aggressor in the development and expansion of nuclear weapons technology. Moreover, the possession of such weapons cries out for their use in some battle situation, if for no other reason than to test how they function in “real war situations.” One cannot underestimate the extent to which this motivation impelled the United States to use such weapons against Japan in 1945, rather than the purported purpose of “saving American lives” by forcing a quick surrender of the Japanese, since this surrender was already imminent.

The 1970 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty forbids the use of nuclear weapons to threaten nations that do not possess such weapons. It also calls for a process of cessation of the nuclear arms race and “effective measures in the direction of nuclear disarmament.” This means disarmament of both sides, not simply preventing others from getting such weapons while the United States continues to expand its own. This nuclear expansion impels nations such as North Korea and Iran to develop such weapons themselves as deterrents to the American threat.

It is time to put back on the table of international negotiations the agenda