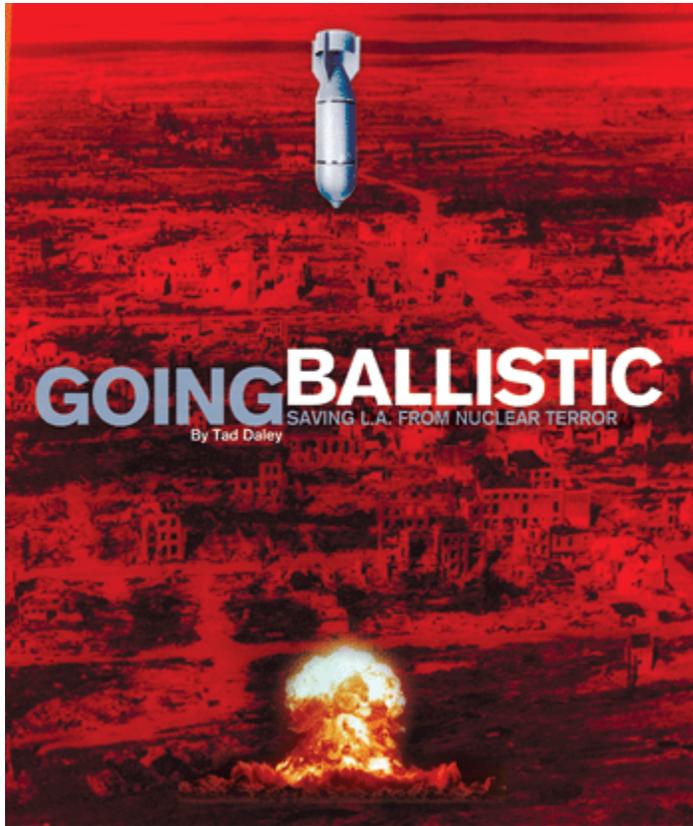


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Going Ballistic

Saving L.A. from nuclear terror

By [Tad Daley](#)

I once asked a journalist friend, who had been chained inside the courtroom every single day of the O.J. Simpson trial, the obvious question. “Did he do it?” Or had the LAPD, instead, planted a boatload full of fake “evidence,” in an effort to frame the famous defendant?

“How do you know,” she replied, “that it wasn’t both?”

These days, working as a policy wonk on nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament, I am sometimes asked whether the danger of nuclear terror is “real” – or whether, instead, certain modern-day Machiavellis are manipulating our most nightmarish fears, to promote their own cynical political agendas.

“How do you know,” I am inclined to reply, “that it isn’t both?”

Nuclear Terror – Mission Impossible?

During the Cold War, it became commonplace to observe that “mutually assured destruction,” or MAD, was surely the most appropriate acronym in human history. But I have always preferred the label given to fun characters like me who study these things, “nuclear use theorists,” whom one can hardly resist acronyming as NUTS.

The NUTS today usually identify four broad scenarios that can loosely be called “nuclear terror.” (This is the framework adopted, for example, by the excellent 2005 book *The Four Faces of Nuclear Terrorism* by Charles D. Ferguson and William C. Potter.)

In one, perpetrators obtain – through theft, bribery, a paramilitary operation, pick your poison – an intact nuclear warhead. There are probably more than 25,000 worldwide. Then, they find a way to transport it to a “high-value target” (e.g., a large American city). Then, they find a way to set it off. The sudden and unexpected vaporization of a major American city, without any warning whatsoever, by your everyday garden-variety nuclear warhead, would kill tens of thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, possibly even more than a million. All in the blink of an eye, the snap of a finger, the single beat of a human heart. Many thousands more would die slow and agonizing deaths from radiation poisoning in the weeks that followed – and all our modern medical marvels will do little even to alleviate their suffering, let alone to save their lives.

It could also plunge the planet into a worldwide depression. It could plunge the U.S. into martial law. It could plunge the nation into military responses – without evidence any state was behind the dastardly deed – that could take us from nuclear terror to nuclear war. In which case, the death and devastation would increase by a factor of 10. Or 100. Or more. (Khrushchev famously observed that after a nuclear exchange, “the survivors will envy the dead.”)

In another scenario, perpetrators obtain – through similar methods – weapons-usable plutonium or highly enriched uranium (HEU). (The latter is far more likely, since HEU is easier to handle, easier to procure, and easier to design a bomb around.) Then they manage to assemble it into a crude nuclear device, transport it to the target (unless they had actually built it in, oh, a warehouse in Culver City), and set it off. If successfully constructed with a large enough yield, such an act could have identical consequences.

In another scenario, perpetrators attack or sabotage a nuclear power plant, causing not a nuclear explosion but a release of radioactivity. Such an act could kill thousands, and contaminate hundreds of square miles for many years to come.

Finally, perpetrators obtain a bit of radioactive material, assemble a conventional explosive around it, and set it off in a concentrated urban area – discharging radioactivity in all directions. That’s the “dirty bomb” you have heard so much about. While such a bomb could kill hundreds, contaminate several

square miles, and impose a widespread psychological shock, its consequences would be nothing like those of an actual nuclear explosion.

Our focus today is on the first two scenarios. They are probably less likely than the last two scenarios. Nevertheless, they are enormously, almost inconceivably, more catastrophic.

In a disturbing article in the November/December 2006 issue of *Foreign Policy* magazine, Peter D. Zimmerman and Jeffrey G. Lewis constructed a chillingly plausible nuclear terror scenario. Zimmerman and Lewis argued that such a project could be undertaken by as few as 19 terrorist operatives, including a few nuclear physicists, a few expert machinists, an experienced metallurgist, perhaps one or two ballistics specialists, and perhaps a couple of electrical engineers. This team, the authors claim, in the space of a year, for a cost of less than \$5.5 million, could easily construct the kind of simple gun-like device that killed more than 100,000 people at Hiroshima.

But only if, first, they had managed to procure the necessary HEU. Is that possible? Let's ask Mohamed ElBaradei, head of the International Atomic Energy Agency and winner of the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize. In a speech in Munich in February, he said that his agency tackles 150 cases of illicit nuclear trafficking every year. Some of the material reported stolen has never been recovered, he said, and "a lot of the material recovered has never been reported stolen."

Right next to *Foreign Policy* on the newsstands that same month, in the November/December 2006 issue of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Nick Schwellenbach and Peter D.H. Stockton presented a terrifying new nuclear nightmare. Suicide terrorists might launch a lightning paramilitary operation on an American nuclear facility, barricade themselves inside, and quickly improvise a nuclear detonation right there. How? Unbelievably, simply by holding 100 pounds of HEU six feet above a similar mass, and letting go – giving disturbing new meaning to the phrase "dropping the atom bomb." Luis Alvarez, Nobel Laureate in Physics, said famously more than two decades ago, "With modern weapons-grade uranium, terrorists, if they have such material, would have a good chance of setting off a high-yield explosion simply by dropping one half of the material onto the other half. Most people seem unaware that if separated U-235 is at hand, it's a trivial job to set off a nuclear explosion."

But surely, the American nuclear laboratories must be among the most extraordinarily secured facilities anywhere on the planet! If there are any American assets that we can guarantee terrorists will never infiltrate, it must be these, right?

Not according to the people responsible for testing such security. In 2004, a U.S. government team of mock terrorists breached the boundaries of Oak Ridge, and managed to "kill" the entire lab security force in 90 seconds. Similar episodes have apparently taken place at Los Alamos as well. Richard Levner, who led several such mock attacks there, says, "In more than 50 percent of our tests ... we got in, captured the plutonium, got out again, and in some cases didn't fire a shot because we didn't encounter any guards." That astonishing revelation suggests the "dropping the bomb" scenario needn't take place in a nuclear lab. It could just as easily be done in that Culver City garage.

Osama bin Laden: Scratching a Nuclear Itch

Osama bin Laden's thirst for the atom bomb dates back at least to 1992, when he reportedly tried to purchase nuclear materials in South Africa. Al Qaeda operatives have apparently sought intact nuclear warheads from both Chechen separatists and Pakistani scientists – the latter most alarmingly in a chilling meeting in Afghanistan just weeks prior to the attacks of September 11, 2001. American troops in Afghanistan discovered drawings of rudimentary nuclear devices in Al Qaeda sanctuaries. The 9/11 Commission concluded, “Al Qaeda has tried to acquire or make nuclear weapons for at least 10 years [...] and continues to pursue its strategic goal of obtaining a nuclear capability.”

After his organization had murdered nearly 3,000 innocent souls on 9/11, Al Qaeda spokesman Sulaiman Abu Ghaith alleged that American policies, over the decades, had killed many more Muslims than that. He then drew what was for him a logical conclusion: “We have not yet reached parity with them. We have the right to kill four million Americans – two million of them children.”

Al Qaeda, of course, has its share of internal dissensions and disagreements. Lawrence Wright, winner of the Pulitzer Prize for his masterful study *The Looming Tower: Al Qaeda and the Road to 9/11*, discussed some of them in the June 2 issue of *The New Yorker*. Wright described an ideological and theological civil war inside the worldwide terrorist organization. He pointed to the transformation of longtime bin Laden colleague Sayyid Imam al-Sharif, known as “Dr. Fadl,” who – writing from an Egyptian prison – now conclusively rejects all Islamic justification for Al Qaeda's terror attacks, and also insists that 9/11 itself was, on balance, “a catastrophe for Muslims.”

However, it scarcely needs saying that complete internal unity and ideological unanimity are hardly essential to pulling off a successful nuclear terror attack on an American city. Zimmerman and Lewis say that no more than 19 individuals could pull it off! Few things could be more fatuous than to read the reports of investigative journalists like Wright and conclude that because some within the jihadist world have foresworn the terrorist road, no one else remains on the march.

MAD World

The United States has immense military capabilities, including thousands of nuclear weapons of unimaginable destructive power. Surely, our massive nuclear arsenal will cause bin Laden, and his acolytes or imitators, to rethink aspirations for nuclear mass murder, and to step back from the atomic abyss. Won't it?

Of course not.

Because our nuclear weapons, and our nuclear doctrines, are all directed at the power of states. And Al Qaeda is not a state. Osama bin Laden does not control any territory. Terrorists are non-state actors. And our vast, bristling nuclear arsenal can do nothing, absolutely nothing, to deter a non-state actor.

There are at least five fundamental reasons why this is so.

First, if the terrorist does not control any territory, then there is no infrastructure, no capital city, no place to threaten to retaliate against. This is the crucial difference between Osama bin Laden and

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. For all the current turmoil about the mere possibility that Iran might someday acquire a few nuclear weapons, it is inconceivable that Ahmadinejad could ever actually use one, without ensuring both personal and national suicide. But bin Laden does not face such a constraint. Mohamed ElBaradei, in his February 2008 speech in Munich, stated this as clearly as anyone. “This, to me, is the most danger we are facing today,” he said. “Because any country, even if they have nuclear weapons, would continue to have a rational approach. They know if they use a nuclear weapon, they will be pulverized. For an extremist group, there is no concept of deterrence. If they have it, they will use it.”

Second, if the terrorists are not traditional “rational actors” wanting to preserve their own lives, then threatening them with nuclear obliteration is no discouragement at all. As we saw on 9/11, and in many horrific terrorist episodes since, many are quite willing to commit suicide to serve their odious aims.

Third, if the terrorist does want to preserve his own life and we seek to deter him by threatening to kill him, we can do that in any conceivable circumstance with conventional weaponry alone.

Fourth, we may not know where the perpetrators are. After all, we still cannot locate bin Laden nearly seven years after the horror of 9/11.

Finally, we may not even know *who* the perpetrators are. Some terror attacks in recent years have been followed by no claims of responsibility at all. Imagine it’s the day after, the month after, the year after the sudden vanishing of an American city, and we never get any idea at all who did it.

The U.S. Army didn’t protect us on 9/11. The U.S. Air Force didn’t protect us on 9/11. The U.S. Navy, with its 11 “aircraft carrier battle groups” (no other country has even one), didn’t protect us on 9/11. And the thing that protected us the least on 9/11 was our swollen atomic stockpile, our so-called “nuclear deterrent,” our arsenal of the apocalypse. More than 10,000 American nuclear warheads, of incomprehensible destructive force. And they failed utterly to deter 19 men armed with box cutters.

Nor will they deter the nuclear terrorists.

What are we going to do, threaten to fire a nuclear cruise missile through the balcony window of their \$750-a-month bachelor apartment in suburban Las Vegas?

“My City Was Gone”

The Los Angeles office of Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR, the American affiliate of my own organization, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, winner of the 1985 Nobel Peace Prize) projected the results of an atomic warhead the size of the Hiroshima bomb – about 15 kilotons – detonating at noon on a weekday in downtown Los Angeles. They concluded that more than 117,000 people would perish instantly, more than 15,000 more would die within a few hours, and more than 96,000 after that would slowly wither away.

Similarly, the RAND Corporation released a study in August 2006 calculating the effects of a 10-kiloton device exploding shortly after unloading onto a pier at the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, the

busiest in the United States. They concluded that 60,000 people would die at once, 150,000 would be directly exposed to hazardous radiation, and 2 to 3 million would have to relocate immediately because their homes would be hopelessly contaminated.

However, many of the city-busting hydrogen bombs produced during the protracted Cold War, and still in service today, are far more potent than 10 or 15 kilotons. Like 170 kilotons. Like the 550 kiloton warhead still quite common in the Russian arsenal. Like the B-83, America's largest warhead today, at 1,200 kilotons (1.2 megatons). That's about 100 times the explosive power of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima.

You can raise those PSR and RAND casualty estimates accordingly.

The aspiring nuclear terrorists are probably not in a hurry. Time is on their side. Everything we have learned since 9/11 about those in the inner circles of terror indicates that they are tough, smart, implacably dedicated, and in it for the long haul. (Recall the enormous flap when television host Bill Maher, immediately after 9/11, asserted that men who rationally chose to slam themselves into concrete buildings could hardly be called cowards.)

That is not to say that a successful nuclear terror attack will be easy for aspiring nuclear terrorists to make happen. Many may try but fall short along the way. But if those who aspire to pull off the necessary sequence of events fail 999 times out of 1,000, but manage just a single time to obtain an atom bomb, or to build an atom bomb, and then to transport it into the heart of a large American city, we lose. "You have to be lucky every single time," the Irish Republican Army used to say. "We have to be lucky just once."

So is there anything we can do to prevent the nightmare of nuclear terror? Indeed. There are answers in the short term, answers in the medium term, and answers – most importantly – in the long term. Because the only long-term solution to the threat of nuclear terror – and to all the other worrisome nuclear scenarios we can conjure – is the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Short Term Fixes

In the short term, we must do everything possible to ensure that no nuclear warheads or materials find their way into the clutches of Al Qaeda or anyone else with similar mass murder ambitions.

Michael Levi's important 2007 book *On Nuclear Terrorism* provides grounds for optimism. The physicist argues that nuclear terror will likely be quite a bit more difficult to pull off than some (often with political motives) have argued. Levi argues that while the "lucky every time/lucky once" framework is not untrue when considered over the course of many plots, each individual plot can be tackled from precisely the opposite perspective. The aspiring nuclear terrorists, he argues, have to succeed at every step of a complex and difficult process. The authorities, on the other hand, only need to nab them once. Consequently, Levi advocates a systematic, interactive, many-layered strategy of prevention, one that integrates "controls over nuclear materials and weapons, military power, diplomacy,

intelligence, covert action, law enforcement, border security, and consequence management,” all seeking to disrupt the aspiring nuclear terrorist at many potential chokepoints along the way.

For all our worries about North Korea, Iran, and the several states that may eventually follow their lead, priority number one in the nuclear terror realm has to be Russia. Russia today has several thousand nuclear weapons, and hundreds of tons of nuclear material, at perhaps as many as 250 sites. “The actual amount of weapon-usable nuclear material in Russia,” says national security expert Joseph Cirincione, “may not even be known by the Russian government.” In 1997, retired Soviet General Alexander Lebed claimed that when the USSR unraveled at the end of 1991, Soviet authorities lost track of more than 100 nuclear weapons roughly the size of a suitcase. Lebed’s widely publicized claim has never been conclusively confirmed or refuted. But what he put forth was hardly an implausible scenario.

The Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, instituted almost immediately after the December 1991 dissolution of the USSR to help secure the late Soviet Union’s enormous nuclear arsenal, has done much to diminish these dangers. So too has the more recent U.S. Global Threat Reduction Initiative, a program established in 2004 to secure dangerous materials of Soviet or other origin which found their way into civilian nuclear programs of other countries. And the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, which George Bush and Vladimir Putin unveiled together at the G-8 summit in St. Petersburg in July 2006, is another promising step. But the pace of all of them has been slow, much remains to be done, and it is difficult to understand why anything should be considered a better investment in national security than programs like these.

Russia is not the only country where we have to worry about loose nuclear weapons and materials. The long history of transfers of nuclear technology and knowledge by the now infamous A.Q. Khan network certainly suggests that Pakistan, or particular Pakistani individuals, could serve as a source for aspiring nuclear terrorists. The martial law declared by President Pervez Musharraf in late 2007, followed soon thereafter by the assassination of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and subsequent electoral setbacks for Musharraf, set off a flurry of commentaries about the worrisome nuclear chaos inside Pakistan that – still – might ensue.

Of course, enhancing port and border safeguards in the United States must remain a perpetually high priority. The Bush administration, commendably, has made considerable progress in this regard since September 11, 2001. Before 9/11, not a single container crossing our border was screened for radioactivity. Today, more than 80 percent are.

Still, the sheer volume of global commerce makes this job almost impossibly big. To find smuggled nuclear materials in the vast sea of consumer goods shipped by container around the world is to seek the proverbial needle in a haystack. An article in the October 2006 issue of *Risk Analysis* magazine reported the results of a rigorous statistical evaluation of U.S. container screening capabilities, and concluded, “The likelihood that the current screening system would detect a shielded nuclear weapon is quite low (around 10 percent).”

So it is beyond naive to imagine that these kinds of short-term steps, no matter how elaborate, can forestall the fateful day forever. Strict controls over all things nuclear may well save us in the short term. But in the medium term, we need to reduce not just the availability of nuclear weapons and materials, but also the motivations for nuclear terror.

Medium Range Ballistic Missions

Western leaders would do well to recall that the very first word in the very first work of Western literature, Homer's *Iliad*, is *menis*.

Anger. Wrath. Rage.

During the Vietnam War, it was often said that every time we killed a Viet Cong guerrilla, we created two more. Isaac Newton's laws of action and reaction do not apply only to billiard balls. The Bush administration has consistently rejected any suggestion that we consider what might motivate impressionable young Muslim men to show up on Al Qaeda's doorstep. White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan blithely dismissed the "truce" that Osama bin Laden floated on January 19, 2006, indicating that President Bush had given it not a nanosecond's consideration. "We do not negotiate with terrorists," he said. "We put them out of business."

But can't we be more in the international arena than a hammer looking for nails? Do Americans have even a clue about the depth of the bitterness, the scale of the humiliations, the extent of the resentments simmering around the planet toward us? George Bush's foreign policies have made us new foreign enemies. George Bush's defense policies have weakened our defenses. George Bush's responses to 9/11 have made future 9/11's – possibly far worse than the original 9/11 – far more likely to occur.

So much for Republicans being "strong on defense."

There are undoubtedly hard-core terror types out there who are determined to attack us no matter what. Obviously, we must do everything we can to prevent them from acting, and to make sure that we get them before they get us.

But thousands more out there are still thinking about it. Thousands of young Muslim men are on the fence. They have perhaps spent their childhoods in *madrasa* Islamic religious schools. Their families have lived in poverty for as long as anyone can remember. They are unemployed and idle. They are looking for some purpose in life, some meaning, perhaps even some cause worth dying for.

The next president must do more than simply threaten these potential perpetrators, if we want to dissuade them from marching down the dead end terrorist road. Perhaps we could talk in a serious way about global economic inequality, about the cultural humiliations arguably at the root of the so-called "clash of civilizations." We might actually seek to dry up some of the swamps of hopelessness, exploitation, and despair around the world. We might offer the dispossessed some rewards for the better choice, some hope and opportunity, some promise of full participation in a prosperous and peaceful global civilization. We might act on the world stage with a little less hubris and a little more humility. We might recall the admonition of Abraham Lincoln as our Civil War wound to its bitter close, when he said, "The only lasting way to eliminate an enemy is to make him your friend."

And he was a Republican.

But even these kinds of steps, important though they are, are unlikely to save us indefinitely from the nightmare of nuclear terror. We need to do more than prevent the bad guys from gaining access to nuclear devices in the short term. We need to do more too than reduce the motivations for seeking access to nuclear devices in the medium term. In the long term, our only real hope for saving ourselves from the nightmare of nuclear terror is to get rid of the nuclear weapons themselves. Every last one.

The Long and Winding Road

Some call it “America’s nuclear hypocrisy,” others the “nuclear double standard,” others still “nuclear narcissism.” Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad often calls it “nuclear apartheid.”

Why is it that some countries can possess thousands of nuclear weapons without a whisper of comment, while when others aspire to even one, it generates a torrent of righteous indignation? What’s the principle? What’s the argument?

It is never said. And it cannot last.

The Reverend William Sloane Coffin, one of the great peace activists of the 20th century, who died in 2006, liked to quote Mahatma Gandhi, who said, “A fat man cannot speak persuasively to a skinny man about the virtues of not overeating.” To much of the rest of the world, the nuclear double standard appears sanctimonious and self-righteous, and based on the notion that some are responsible enough to be “trusted” with these weapons of the apocalypse, while others are not.

President Bush himself, perhaps unwittingly, often manages to let slip this conceit of cultural superiority. “We owe it to our children,” he said in August of 2002, “to free the world from weapons of mass destruction in the hands of those who hate freedom.” “We cannot allow the world’s most dangerous men,” he insisted at the end of 2005, “to get their hands on the world’s most dangerous weapons.”

Here, surely, we have the most candid, unvarnished answer to the \$64,000 nuclear question. Some are rational, sober, righteous ... and hence can be trusted with the nuclear prize. Others are simply too “dangerous,” or not sufficiently “freedom loving,” to be permitted the same.

And who will decide? Who will render subjective, ad hoc, case-by-case verdicts on whether certain leaders or peoples can be trusted with nuclear weapons? Who will serve as prosecutor, judge, jury, and enforcer?

Why the Freedom Lovers, of course, in whose hands nuclear weapons already reside.

The nuclear double standard is militarily unnecessary, morally indefensible, and politically unsustainable. Try to imagine the human community in 2018, or 2045, or 2077, with the same small group of “great powers” still clinging to the nuclear chimera, still insisting that nuclear weapons are vital for their own national security but unnecessary for the national security of others. Then try to imagine all the other states in the world just placidly and permanently acquiescing to that – no bitterness, no

resentment, no aspirations to challenge the nuclear status quo and obtain a few nuclear weapons of their own.

The mere act of performing such a thought experiment demonstrates the wild improbability that such a future history might ever come to pass. If we refuse forever to relinquish our nuclear weapons, then we had better get used to a world not with nine nuclear weapon states, as today, but 18, or 45, or 77. That world will provide that many more opportunities for just one really bad nuclear warhead to find its way into the hands of just one group of really bad guys. And what will that mean for us, for Los Angeles?

It will mean we will simply have to await our fate, our date with our nuclear terror destiny.

A comprehensive nuclear policy agenda, one fully integrating non-proliferation with disarmament, should become the most important immediate foreign policy priority for the new president who takes office on January 20, 2009. Such a policy agenda should contain many of the kinds of short- and medium-term steps described above to diminish the danger of nuclear terror.

But that nuclear policy agenda should also state, unambiguously, that we are committed to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons – ours and everyone else’s. It must describe abolition not as some utopian fantasy, but instead as a concrete political goal. And it should begin to discern the path, and commence negotiations, toward a universal, verifiable, and enforceable Nuclear Weapons Convention requiring the phased dismantling and destruction of every nuclear weapon on Planet Earth, imposing strict worldwide controls with rigorous international inspection provisions over all things nuclear, and legally prohibiting nuclear weapons from ever being constructed again.

Our best shot at dodging the nuclear terror bullet forever is to get serious, now, about moving toward a nuclear-weapon- free world.

An Inconvenient Choice

On January 15, 2008, four lions of the American foreign policy establishment – Sam Nunn, William Perry, George Shultz, and Henry Kissinger – authored a landmark opinion piece in *The Wall Street Journal*, calling not just for greater attention to the nuclear peril, but also for “turning the goal of a world without nuclear weapons into a practical enterprise among nations.” This call to action from such mainstream figures, has, by all accounts, transformed the nuclear policy debate, and in a stroke expanded the parameters of political possibility. “The goal of a world free of nuclear weapons is like the top of a very tall mountain,” said the authors. “From the vantage point of our troubled world today, we can’t even see the top of the mountain, and it is tempting and easy to say we can’t get there from here.”

Yet not only has the top of that mountain been painted in fine detail, but so too has the path we might take to march upward toward the summit. In 2007, a broad coalition of scientists, international lawyers, disarmament experts, and anti-nuclear organizations issued *Securing Our Survival: The Case for a Nuclear Weapons Convention* (available at www.ippnw.org). This extraordinary document contains an actual draft of a model nuclear weapons abolition treaty, with extensive commentary on both the components therein and on alternative processes by which it might come into being. It provides perhaps

the best description yet both of what a nuclear- weapon-free world might actually look like, and how we might actually get from here to there.

The American government can choose to go down something like the path advocated here. If it does not, the American people will probably simply have to await their fate. Walt Kelly's Pogo, in another context, said famously, "We have met the enemy, and he is us." Today, in this context, we might say that we have met the victims of the device that we ourselves unleashed upon the world. And they are us.

We are the ones who devised these weapons in the past. We are the ones contemplating the use of these weapons in the present (several credible news reports have revealed that war planners in the bowels of the Pentagon have considered not just a preemptive military strike on Iran, but a preemptive nuclear strike). We are the ones who vaingloriously insist that we – but not others – must perpetually possess these weapons indefinitely into the future.

And now, in what must surely be one of the greatest ironies in all of human history, we are the ones who may soon feel the *menis* of our own invention. We are the ones who may turn out to be the authors of our own annihilation. We can get it through our thick skulls that the only long-term solution to the threat of nuclear apocalypse is the abolition of nuclear weapons. If we do not, we may well be the ones, in the end, who are devoured by our own creation.

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