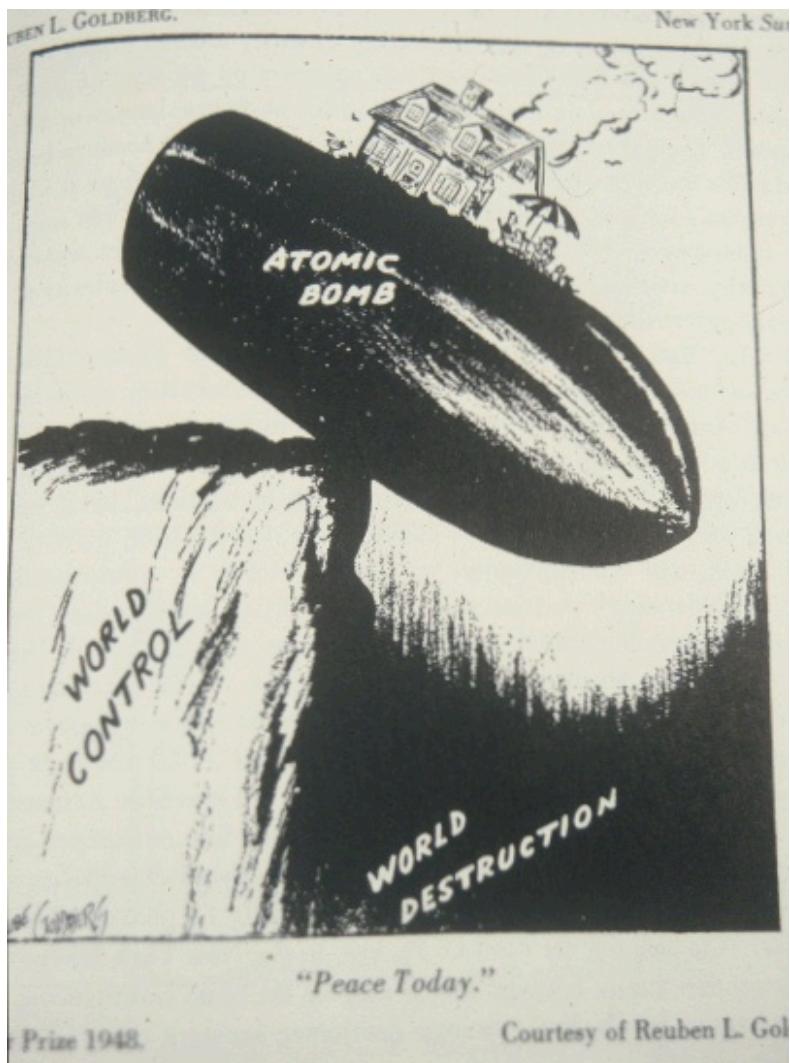


Cliffhanger Notes

THE NUCLEAR MYSTIQUE

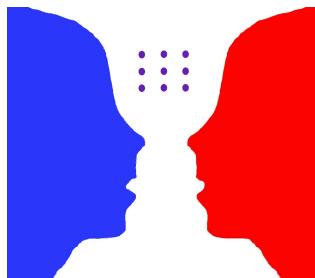
By Diane Perlman, PhD



IN HONOR OF THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
US ATOMIC BOMBINGS OF
HIROSHIMA & NAGASAKI

The Nuclear Mystique

Diane Perlman, PhD



Paragon Institute For Enduring Security

www.ConsciousPolitics.org

www.HumanChainReaction.org

EnduringSecurity@gmail.com

202 775 0777

Table of Contents

Introduction

Psychological Dimensions of Nuclear Policies and Proliferation, Handout prepared for the UN Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty Preparatory Committee conference, April, 2003

The Fear of Disarmament, UN Disarmament Times, Summer 2001

And now for something completely different **The Psychology of Proliferation**, by Diane Perlman, Ph.D. with Xanthe Hall Part of panel of NGO Presentations to the delegates of the UN 2005 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty Review Conference, May 11. 2005, New York City

Nuclear Theater of the Absurd by Diane Perlman, PsySR USA with Xanthe Hall, IPPNW Germany

Letter to Joe Cirincione on the RRW

The Ridiculously Redundant Warhead is also a Relentlessly Radicalizing Warhead

Outside the Deterrence Box, for the 2010 UN Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty Review Conference, May, 2010

The Nuclear Power TRAP, after the 2010 UN Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty Review Conference, May, 2010

I Am the Enemy Exercise, ©1984

Cartoons

INTRODUCTION

My nuclear awakening occurred in 1981 at a Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) symposium on Medical Consequences of Nuclear War at the University of Pennsylvania. I was shocked to discover that we had the equivalent of four tons of TNT for every man, woman and child on Earth. This seemed completely insane, as trillions have been spent on developing, building and justifying nuclear weapons as a matter of security.

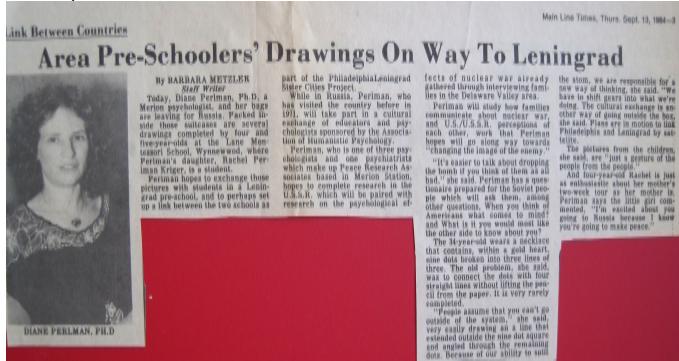
PSR physicians explained the medical effects of nuclear weapons production and use. Using a map of Philadelphia with a red circle on Ground Zero, they described vaporization of everyone in the center, blast, burn, and radiation, effects at further distances, the fireball that would ignite, the lack of doctors, hospitals and medical supplies and how the living would envy the dead. PSR's motto is "No Cure, Only Prevention," a statement of medical ethics.

I am one of many inspired by PSR's Dr. Helen Caldicott, an Australian physician who revived PSR after the nuclear reactor accident at Three Mile Island in 1979. At the symposium, Dr. Caldicott pointed to her head and said, "It's all here, in the human psyche." As PSR worked out the medical aspects. I wondered what psychology had to contribute and began my journey into nuclear psychology.

As an adolescent I learned about the Nazi holocaust. Beyond my horror, I was intrigued that human beings could do such a thing, and that society allowed it. I asked my mother how they let this happen. She said, "We didn't know." I committed myself to the need to know and the sin of silence. I was motivated to study psychology to understand the psyche of the perpetrator, conditions that allow violence and psychological manipulation of the public.

In 1982 I attended a PSR's speaker training, to have more intelligent conversations. I had no intention of speaking, as I was too shy. Vicki March, a Penn medical student PSR leader, did a slide show. I figured I could do slide shows to make it easier to speak. In 1983 I chose to put aside my shyness and became a speaker for PSR on the psychological aspects of the nuclear arms race. I spoke on my first PSR panel in April 11, 1983, three days before the birth of my second child.

In 1983, I created Peace Research Associates (PRA) with three other family therapists, Rob Garfield, Wendy Forman and David Greenwald. We interviewed families about children's fears of nuclear war, and parents' feelings of not being able to protect their children. In 1984 I went to the USSR as a citizen diplomat with the Association of Humanistic Psychology to visit our professional counterparts. I created my first booklet, "Changing the Image of the Enemy" which ended up in the hands of the KGB, but that's another story.



In 1986, PSR asked PRA to do a workshop on "the Image of the Enemy" with Jerome Frank, M.D., Ph.D., PSR founding member. I did my first slide show. My gratitude to the late political cartoonist Tony Auth, from the Philadelphia Inquirer, who allowed me to go through his files periodically, and whose work brilliantly captures psychological meanings. This book is a collection of my explorations into nuclear psychology, and efforts to bring new thinking and deeper insights to the public.

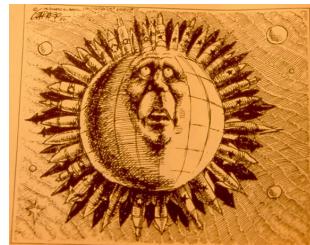
I sometimes feel like I am trying to warn Romeo and Juliet not to take the poison. I play this holocaust mind game – if people knew what was going to happen, could they have prevented it? Can we make events not inevitable? Sadly, with the evolving climate chaos, we are witnessing some of the forces that interfere with wise actions. With threatening enemy images, it becomes challenging in a different way.

Many efforts to rid the world of nuclear weapons and public discourse focus on eliminating the weapons themselves. Weapons are a symbol and a symptom of something deeper. To "prevent the inevitable," it is essential to address the underlying forces that drive the desire to acquire, maintain and develop nuclear arsenals and their illusion of security.



NUCLEAR QUESTIONS

In the 1960's there were five nuclear weapons states - the US, USSR, England, France, and China. It became apparent that this number could grow to 25 or more within years unless something was done. Thus the UN Nuclear Nonproliferation (NPT) came into force in 1970, to halt the uncontrolled spread of nuclear weapons.



The NPT is based on a bargain between the five nuclear weapons states and all others. If all countries party to the treaty agree to never acquire nuclear weapons, in exchange, the five states possessing nuclear weapons agree to make an "unequivocal commitment" to "negotiate in good faith" towards total elimination of nuclear weapons.

45 years later, nuclear weapons states (NWSs) have not kept their part of the bargain, a few more have joined the club, while others, may feel threatened into finding security by developing their own "nuclear deterrent," which has become a source of pride and prestige. How do US nuclear programs with names like "stockpile stewardship," "reliable replacement warheads," and long term plans for "modernization" increase security of countries to keep their part of the bargain?

How is it that we now have thousands nuclear weapons in the including many on hair trigger alert, ready to launch in minutes, targeting cities of innocent civilians?

How is it that a US delegate to the UN Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference in New York in May, 2010, said it costs more to dismantle nuclear weapons than to build them, and that it is more difficult to guard a nuclear arsenal of 311 weapons the Pentagon deemed enough for our national defense than guarding thousands?

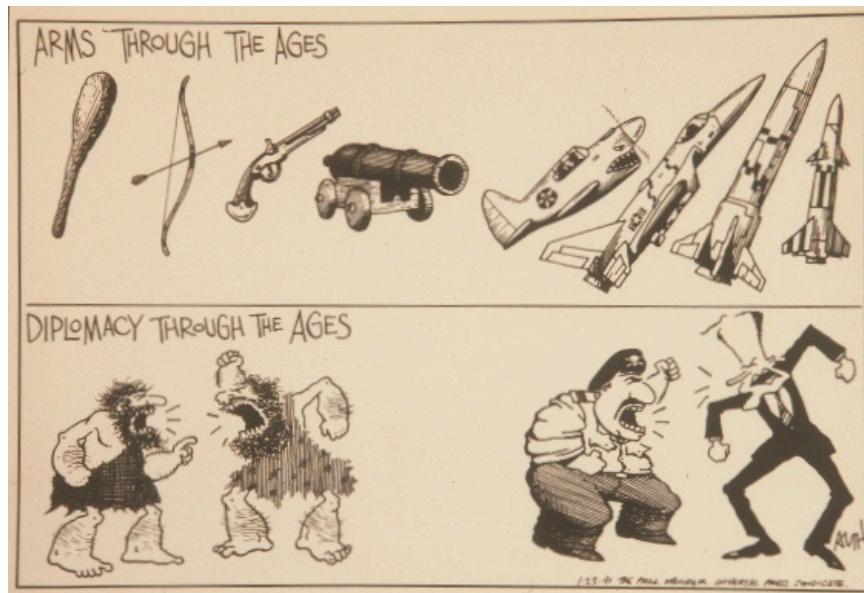
How do nuclear weapons states expect to maintain stability in an asymmetric world of nuclear apartheid with nuclear haves and have-nots?

How is it that the vast majority of the people of the world, including US citizens, desire to eliminate these devices of mass terror, yet seem helpless in the face of the powers that be?

How are we led to believe that the most destructive force ever known is making us more secure?¹

PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS OF NUCLEAR POLICIES AND PROLIFERATION

The splitting of the atom has changed everything except the way we think. Thus we drift toward unparalleled catastrophe. We shall require a substantially new manner of thinking if mankind is to survive. Albert Einstein



There's been a quantum leap technologically in our age, but unless there's another quantum leap in human relations, unless we learn to live in a new way towards one another, there will be a catastrophe. Albert Einstein

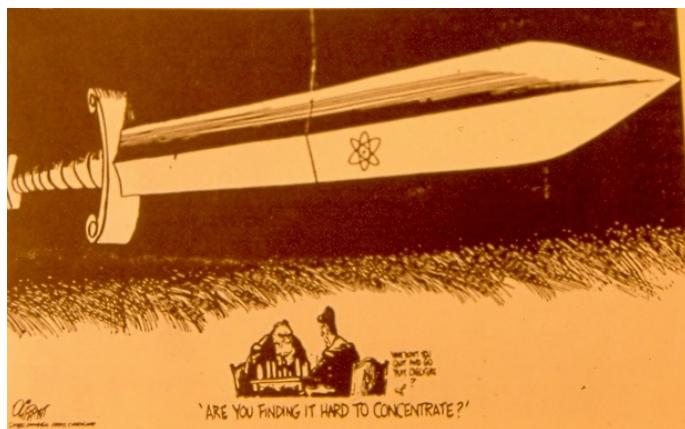
Let's be aware of *how* we think about weapons of mass destruction and be conscious of our psychology, the psychology of our enemies, and the dynamics of our interactions, lest we make psychological mistakes with irreversible consequences.

Living Under the Nuclear Threat

Ethics in a State of Emergency

"The hottest places in Hell are reserved for those who, in a time of great moral crisis, maintain their neutrality." Dante, quoted by President Kennedy.

According to professional ethical codes, psychotherapists have a "duty to warn" when someone is in danger. Silence, and so-called neutrality in the face of danger are forms of collusion with dangers. We each have an ethical responsibility to do everything in our power to avert a catastrophe. Our reactions are not adaptive or appropriate to the threat we face.



Beyond Psychology

Psychiatrist Robert Jay Lifton states that nuclear weapons are "beyond psychology." They alter our relationship to life and death. They impair "our capacity to confront the bomb" and "issues vital to our survival." We have a limited capacity to "imagine the real."



"The presence of these mass-killing devices in the world, creates staggering new problems for us and at the same time distorts our thinking and blunts our feeling about precisely these problems."

Psychic Numbing

Lifton coined the term "psychic numbing" - "a form of desensitization ... an incapacity to feel or confront certain kinds of experience, due to the blocking or absence of inner forms or imagery that can connect with such experience."

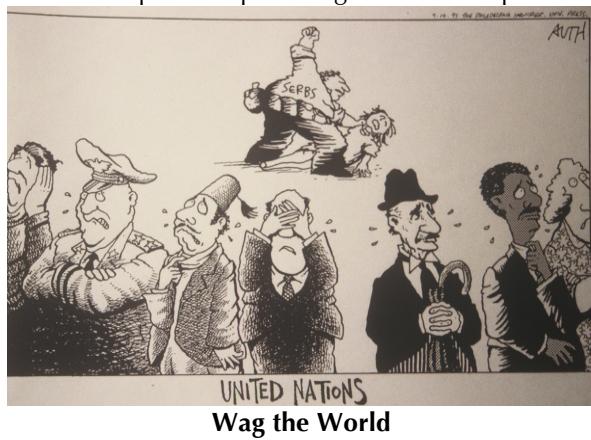
If one is in a horrific inescapable situation, psychic numbing is a protective survival mechanism. But in a situation that one can change, psychic numbing is maladaptive and threatens survival.

Denial

The dictionary defines denial as " disavowal of the truth ...an attempt to disavow the existence of unpleasant reality." People feel overwhelmed and helpless in the face of massive threats. Denial is an attempt to avoid despair, while paradoxically increases the causes for despair. Since knowledge implies responsibility, denial, an attempt to avoid knowledge, also avoids the responsibility that, paradoxically can reduce the threat that is being denied.

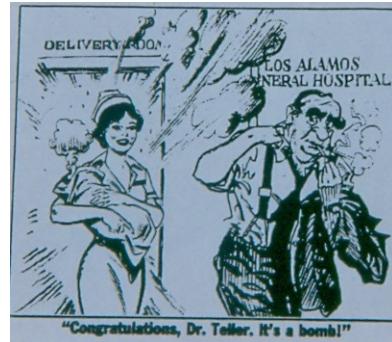
Colluding with Danger

Our state of collective denial, ignorance, psychic numbing, and silence allows danger to escalate. As in the beginnings of the Holocaust, the Rwandan genocide, the Balkan massacres, the post-election and massacre in East Timor, now Syria and countless others, warnings, cries for help and attempts to raise awareness and intervene were denied, ignored and dismissed. Or they were met with calls for superficial military interventions and air strikes which have the opposite effect of escalating cycles of violence. A shift in consciousness is required to prevent global catastrophe.



Nuclearism

"Nuclearism" defined by Lifton, is "the psychological, political, and military dependence on nuclear weapons, the embrace of weapons as a solution to a wide variety of human dilemmas, most ironically that of "security."



Nuclearism, or nuclear fundamentalism is an extension of military fundamentalism, a hegemonic belief that the best and only way to solve is through violent military action. Most are unfamiliar with bodies of knowledge in the social sciences - political psychology, conflict analysis, violence prevention, tension reduction and conflict transformation. Media and public discourse offer a narrow, simplistic, dualistic, superficial range of options that often provoke escalation.

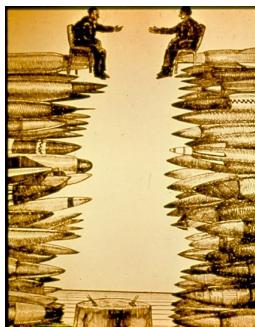
Mega Mission Creep

Nuclear weapons were originally developed out of fear that the Nazis would get them first. They were used on the Japanese with the questionable rationale that they would end World War II and save many lives. They were further developed during the Cold War in an intense arms race with the Soviets.

The highly charged image of the Evil Empire has been replaced by Rogue States and now the Axis of Evil, and is now Islamic Terrorism, Violent Extremism, the current politically useful enemy. These archetypal images are used in identical ways to provoke and create fear, justify abrogation of treaties, development of "missile defenses," new weapons systems, and escalatory policies.

The US now has a gigantic military-industrial-congressional-media infrastructure complex with interconnected national and international institutions, financial investments, and emotional-psychological investments in research and development, and a scientific imperative, organized around nuclear weapon and systems, with plans for development to the year 2080.

Nukes seem to have a life of their own, finding reasons, policies and enemies to justify their existence. We are mystified by them.



Mystification

Why would the public allow spending trillions to develop an enormous arsenal capable of destroying the world many times over?

In President Eisenhower's 1960 farewell speech, he warned US citizens about the "military industrial complex." Following the development of the huge infrastructure and networks that developed during World War II, Eisenhower predicted the momentum to expand this enormous, powerful, profitable system to guarantee the use of US power and influence in the world.

After being drawn into several wars and hopefully learning from history, we often discover that we believed one thing was going on, while in fact something entirely different was happening, hidden below the surface. This occurs in our personal

lives as well. The true story may interfere with plans, military spending, and threaten the status quo and the powers that be.

The concept of mystification, the seduction into believing in the need for nuclear weapons is described in a chapter I read while studying family therapy in 1975. I was deeply impressed by R.D.Laing's "Mystification, Confusion & Conflict" in Intensive Family Therapy. Decades later, in exploring the strange psychological phenomena surrounding nuclear policies, I reread the chapter and found it right "on target."

Laing studied communication patterns in families of schizophrenics, characterized by confusing, contradictory messages. He observed how families use mystification to deal with contradictions. Laing begins with:

You can fool some of the people some of the time . . .

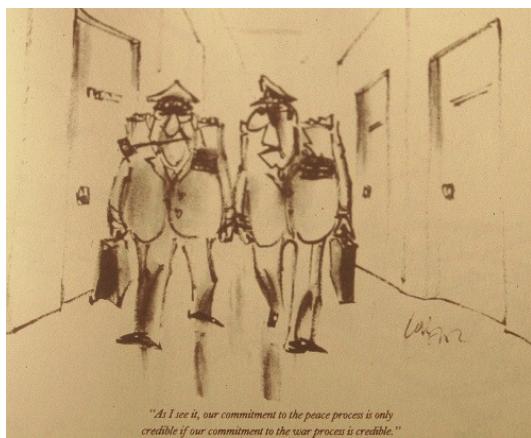
Marx used the concept of mystification to mean a plausible misrepresentation of what is going on (process) or what is being done (praxis) in the service of the interests of one socioeconomic class (the exploiters) over or against another class (the exploited). By representing forms of exploitation as forms of benevolence, the exploiters bemuse the exploited into feeling at one with their exploiters, or into feeling gratitude for what (unrealized by them) is their exploitation, and, not least, into feeling bad or mad even to think of rebellion.

To mystify, in the active sense, is to befuddle, cloud, obscure, mask whatever is going on, whether this be experience, action, or process, or whatever is "the issue." It induces confusion in the sense that there is failure to see what is "really" being experienced, or being done, or going on, and failure to distinguish or discriminate the actual issues. This entails the substitution of false for true constructions of what is being experienced, being done (praxis), or going on (process), and the substitution of false issues for the actual issues.

Some functions of mystification include:

- Maintaining the status quo
- Avoiding authentic conflict
- Masking, clouding over what the conflict is about.
- Maintaining stereotyped roles

When one begins to perceive their mystification, it can be "further enhanced by mystifying the perception of mystification and turned into an issue that it is bad or mad to do so."



"As I see it, our commitment to the peace process is only credible if our commitment to the war process is credible."

Mystification is particularly potent when ... one person appears to have the *right* to determine the experience of another, or, complementarily, when one person is under an *obligation* to the other(s) to experience, or not to experience, himself, them, his world or any aspect of it, in a particular way.

"The therapist's task is to help such a person to become *demystified*. The first phase of therapy, in such a case, consists largely in efforts at demystification, of untangling the knot that he or she is tied in, or raising issues that may never have been questioned or even thought ...'

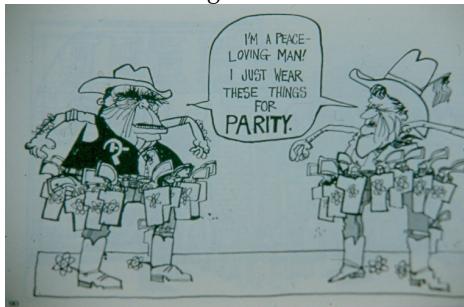
As long as enough people, and those with political power are mystified by flawed rationales for nukes, the usual strategies of protest, petitions, all kinds of usual efforts to get rid of the weapons will be fiercely resisted.

"Implicit in Marx's formulation is that before enlightened action can be taken, the issues have to be demystified."

Irrational Thinking and Cognitive Distortion

Conventionalization

We apply old concepts, logic, and strategies of conventional weapons to nuclear weapons. Peter Weiss, President of the Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy elaborates that "... the latest Nuclear Posture Review (2003) is making nukes 'just another weapon in our arsenal', thereby extinguishing the line between 'conventional' weapons and *sui generis* nuclear weapons." It is like treating cancer with antibiotics while ignoring effective treatments and prevention.



Irrationality and the Paradox of Security

We act as though it is rational to spend trillions to build weapons that can destroy the world many times over. We say we build these weapons so that we won't have to use them. Former Royal Commander, Rob Green says in The Naked Nuclear Emperor, "Nuclear deterrence is a scheme for making nuclear war less probable by making it more probable."

There are some historical cases in which deterrence theory appears to have worked as in WWII, though it can never be proven. It is believed that deterrence worked during the 50 years of the Cold War, but there were several times when it almost broke down. Former Defense Secretary Robert MacNamara believed it was a matter of "dumb luck" that we avoided war. There are other historical examples, like WWI, where deterrence broke down and demonstrated evidence of spiral theory of mutually provocative escalation.

Deterrence theory may be valid in some situations, unreliable in others. Social psychologist Ralph K. White and other social scientists state that deterrence must be accompanied by drastic tension reduction. By focusing purely on deterrence, we fail to use more effective, de-escalatory strategies, security assurances, face-saving ways out, positive inducements and above all, addressing, resolving and transforming underlying conflicts. Paradoxically, the way to be more secure is to make your enemy more secure.

National Security is an Oxymoron

There is only Universal Security or universal insecurity. Actions we take in the name of "National Security" generate fear, hatred, envy, resentment, and a desire to imitate. Attempts to prevent proliferation may provoke escalation and proliferation, rendering ourselves and the planet more vulnerable. We have provoked a new arms race, have entered a second nuclear age, and may now be promoting a third nuclear age, characterized by nuclear anarchy, weaponization of space, and terrorism. Nuclear weapons states that might prefer to get rid of their nuclear weapons may instead be motivated to increase their nuclear programs because of US policies. Non-nuclear weapons states that prefer not to acquire nuclear weapons may feel a need to develop them. Today, National Security is an oxymoron.



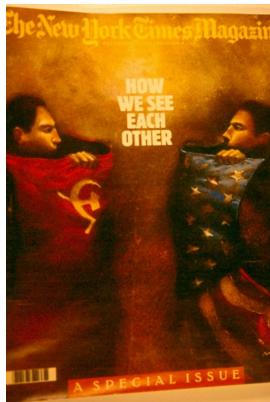
The Image of the Enemy

"To lose a friend is a tragedy. To lose an enemy is a catastrophe."

The image of the enemy is deliberately exaggerated and distorted to instill fear and provide justifications and pretexts for provocative arms buildup and missile defense. Paradoxically, this increases tension and fear and can lead to a "self-fulfilling paranoia" as we act out of fear, we justify the other's fear of us.



Visiting the USSR in the 1950s, social psychologist Uri Bronfenbrenner observed that according to "**the mirror image of the enemy**" each side perceives its own motives as noble, just, peace-loving, and necessary, while the enemy's motives are perceived as cruel, hostile and aggressive



After the Cold War, the Evil Empire (USSR) was replaced by "Rogue States", then the Axis of Evil, now Islamic terrorists, Violent Extremists – all using similar language, concepts and emotional tone. Images have been used to promote missile defense to protect us from evil.



Making the "**ultimate attribution error**" each side explains their own behavior as motivated by environmental factors (we are peace-loving but have to build arms because of them), while the enemy's behavior is genetic – because of who they are.

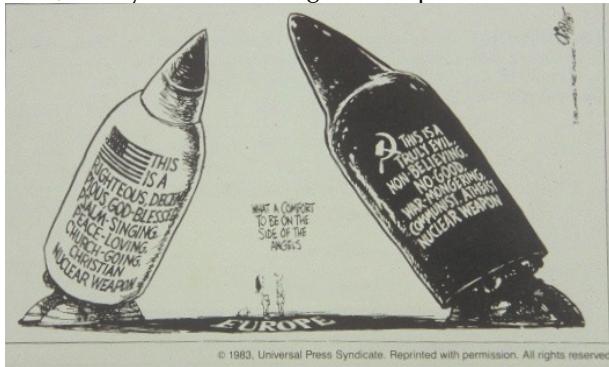


The image of the enemy is a “homogenized”, undifferentiated “They.” The image of the enemy is so powerful that it overrides all reason, and is a moral justification for use of violence, even when it makes the situation worse.

Concrete, Black- and-White Thinking and Psychological Ignorance

We assume that enemies are eternally hovering out there, independent of our actions, just waiting to get us. We do not see how our actions, especially coercive, threatening, punitive policies provoke fear, humiliation, moral outrage, and desperation. Our actions magnify hatred, fear and aggression which will find routes of expression.

When afraid, people regress to more primitive psychological states in which concrete, black and white thinking supplants higher-level cognitive functions, restraint, ability to think through consequences.



Enemies and the Political “Heisenberg Insecurity Principle™”

In physics, the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle states that one cannot observe a phenomenon without taking into account the effect of the observer. Whether we observe light as a particle or a wave depends on how the experiment is set up. This is also recognized in social science.

We tend to focus on our enemy's behavior without recognizing ways in which we might have provoked fear, insecurity, humiliation, insult or backed them into a corner. We ignore ways that we can reduce and transform enmity. Some refuse to understand the psychological causes of violence and terrorism as a matter of principle, as if it were rewarding them. We may not consider strategies that include understanding causes, reducing tensions, addressing basic needs, legitimate political goals, just grievances and causes of suffering that have much more promise in making us safer.

The Axis of Futility

Much of the discourse for justifying dangerous strategies focuses on the right-wrong axis. Much dialogue focuses on how evil they are and how good we are. Even if we can make a case that we are right and good and they are wrong and evil, and that our actions are justified, so do they. We can always be right and justified, but functioning on the right-wrong axis will not make us safer.

The question is not who is right, but what will increase mutual security. Humility and self-reflection will go a long way in enhancing our security. People who raise questions and call for self-examination about some of our actions that might have provoked resentment against us are dismissed as “anti-American” and their patriotism is called into question, thus blocking thoughtful dialogue on issues that are vital to our security. Transforming our role in the world and reviewing the ways in which we use our great power and goodness on the world stage, from provocative to reassuring, from disparity to equality (like the Marshall plan), from unilateralism to joining the world community, will do far more to increase universal security than the most sophisticated weapons systems.

“Blowback”, the Law of Unintended Consequences and Predictability

Strategies, actions and policies employed for a specific purpose create new unanticipated problems (such as our empowerment of bin Laden and Sadaam Hussein). In a world with weapons of mass destruction, blowback can be catastrophic. History is filled with military blunders. From a psychological perspective, much blowback is predictable and preventable. Taking the perspective of the other, empathy, following consequences through time, avoiding humiliation, addressing suffering, despair, poverty, culture, and designing win-win strategies, using language, policies and interventions that give hope and reduce tension go a long way in reducing violence.

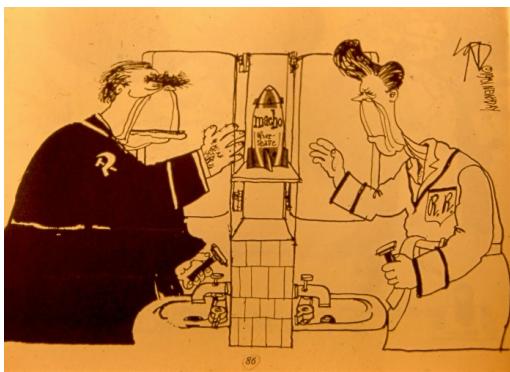
Poor Reality Testing and Psychological Incorrectness

We are often gripped by tightly held beliefs, based on emotion and socialization, even when contradicted by facts. Some believe so intensely they assume their beliefs are real.

Hypotheses are best revised when reality doesn't conform with beliefs and desires. "Reality testing" is defined as "A fundamental ego function which consists of the objective evaluation and judgment of the world outside the ego or self." "Poor Reality Testing" is when emotions and desires interfere with evaluation of objective reality, and failure to adjust to new facts and information, as in "My mind is made up, don't confuse me with the facts."

The Masculine Mystique

One powerful example is the Masculine Mystique, as described by Myriam Miedzan in Boys Will Be Boys. It is a false belief that we must show strength, and if we show weakness they will attack us. There is an understandable assumption that if we dominate the enemy, they will back down. This may have been true in the schoolyard but sometimes those bullied come back later for revenge, as we have seen in Columbine. With asymmetrical warfare, weapons of mass destruction, and a cultural value and willingness to die standing up to a dominant power, this belief may prove false. Similarly there is a belief that we must have a "credible deterrent". We cannot appear weak, etc. The saying that you create what you resist applies here.



Nuclear Addiction

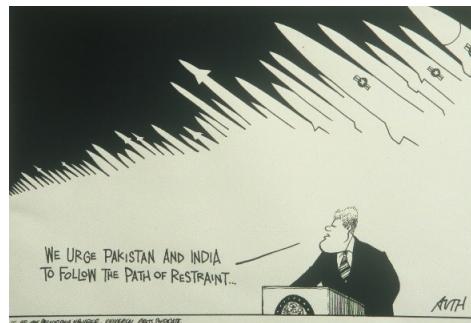
Our system is deeply organized around nuclear weapons - psychologically, economically, institutionally, and politically. It is a challenge to extricate our system from a deadly dependence on and worship of the weapons. There is a profound psychological resistance to disarmament, because it is experienced as taking away a necessary defense without offering a replacement. We need to go through a gradual process of withdrawal, economic and technological conversion, and replacement with more effective strategies.



The Double Standard and Nuclear Provocation

Being absorbed in one's own security needs, engaging in "justified" self-protective, conventional activities around weapons policies and treaties, provokes fear, hatred, and resentment globally. Actions considered self-protective are perceived by others as indications of aggressive intentions and plans to attack.

States naturally claim that if one country reserves the right to "protect its sovereignty" with weapons of mass destruction, so do they. Then we condemn them for being hostile and aggressive for wanting what we claim a right to and a need for. The double standard is demoralizing. Other states too feel a need for and right to similar self-protection.



Weapons of mass destruction take on a psychological and symbolic meaning and status, creating a desire to join the nuclear weapons club. Military buildup and posturing inspire the development of countermeasures and terrorism which are far less expensive (1/100 – 1/1000 the cost) and require far less technology than the systems they can overcome. Because the nuclear weapons states have not lived up to their 1970 agreement in the Nuclear Nonproliferation treaty to negotiate toward disarmament, other countries increasingly desire to acquire nuclear weapons. How could it be otherwise?



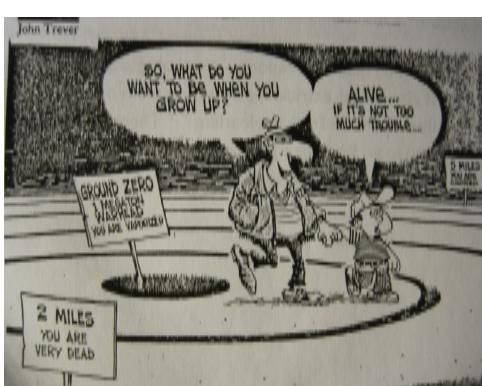
Flawed rationales and thought-stopping dismissals

Psychological techniques induce people to accept the absurd as rational. The use of an exaggerated, distorted image of the enemy, disinformation, misinformation, and censorship use fear to justify foreign and domestic policies. This keeps people ignorant and interferes with balanced, complex thinking about less dangerous strategies.

A monofocus on military strategies precludes safer, more effective strategies like South Korea's "Sunshine policy." Flawed concepts and dismissals such as the need to maintain a "credible threat," "the only language they understand is force," and flawed deterrence theory mystify us into believing that these are proven concepts and the best we have to offer. False beliefs such as there are no effective alternatives to military solutions, we have no choice, they will attack us if we are perceived as weak, we must show resolve, divert us from enlightened action.

Illusions about effectiveness and necessity are promulgated to elicit support. **Structural Absurdities** Lifton & Falk, Indefensible Weapons

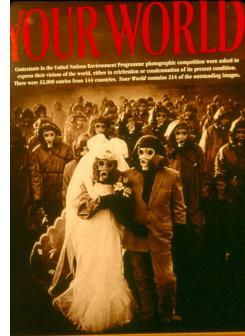
We live in a state of absurdity that the mind perceives but suppresses. Lifton and Falk point out structural absurdities. A "sense of **futurelessness**"



"Certain forms of collective behavior such as widespread **fundamentalism** on the one hand, and living a **double life**,



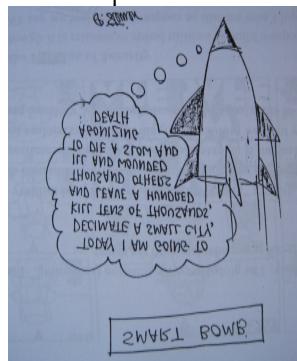
Going on with business as usual, while knowing that at any moment everything we love and hold dear can be destroyed."



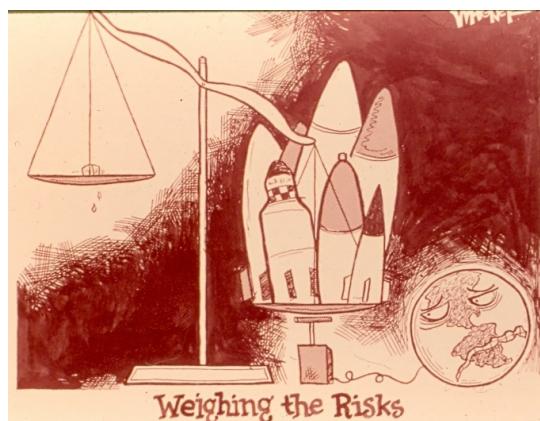
"We are poised to destroy all in the name of destroying one another."



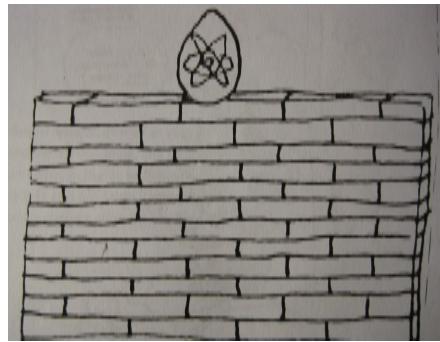
There is an **Absurd disparity** between threat and response.



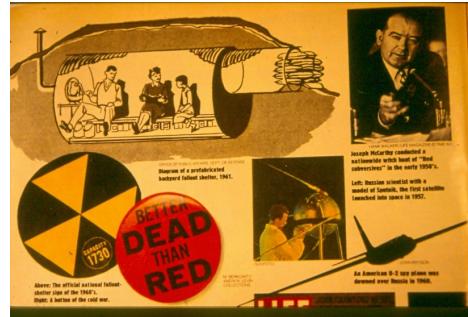
We are using all resources to make it happen and little effort to prevent it from happening.



The nuclear solution is worse than any problem it is intended to solve



We are willing to risk the lives of millions of innocents, including our own, to punish their leaders. (DP)



Nuclear Myths and Illusions Lifton & Falk, Indefensible Weapons

The Illusion of Safety



The Illusion they provide security



The Illusion of a Defensive Shield



The Illusion of Preparedness

Family in fallout shelter



Absurd evacuation plans, air raid drills, etc



The Illusion of Victory (DP)



DANGEROUS EMOTIONS, ATTITUDES AND POSTURING

Fear

There is a belief that if others are afraid of our power they will submit to our demands and we will be safer. This may work under specific conditions, but not others, and is risky with weapons of mass destruction. It is a psychological fact that people are most dangerous when they are afraid, even more than when they are angry. We, too, are more dangerous when we are afraid. Strategies should be designed to reduce fear and provide assurances.

"The Madness that is carrying the world closer and closer to nuclear war has at its core a psychological explanation: **Each side, though fundamentally afraid, misperceives the nature f the danger it faces. Each side imagines that it faces an inherently, implacably aggressive enemy, when it actually faces an enemy as fearful as itself - an enemy driven mainly by fear, to do the things that lead to war.** It follows then that if we, the human race, want to avoid a nuclear catastrophe, our most urgent task is to promote realistic empathy, on each side of the East - West conflict, with fear on the other side. Social psychologist Ralph K. White, author of Fearful Warriors

Envy and Humiliation

Envy and humiliation are highly associated with violence and the breakdown of deterrence. Many cruel leaders and dictators have suffered severe humiliation in their youth, and many murders occur after rejection and humiliation. According to Jewish ethics it is forbidden to humiliate a person as it is like killing their soul. Much violence emerges from conditions of great economic and social disparity. For a fraction of what the world spends on weapons and death, we could correct these disparities. We should be careful about the humiliating rhetoric and coercive strategies that we commonly use. In the Cuban Missile crisis, the Kennedy's were acutely aware of the need to allow the Soviets a way to save face, which was key to averting catastrophe. Saving face, even of our enemies, should be high in our consciousness.

Arrogance, Disregard - US unilateralism

US unilateralism and disregard of global treaties (the Kyoto Environmental Protocols, the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, the Treaty to Ban Landmines, the Biological Weapons Convention, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Biodiversity Treaty) is causing a range of problematic emotional reactions around the world, including resentment, fear, hatred, anxiety, terror, dread, envy, humiliation, intimidation, anger, rage, insult, and a healthy desire for a respectful responsiveness which,

if not met will naturally drive others, in desperation, towards a desire for revenge. This endangers US citizens. We are losing some of the admiration and good will that we have had in the past.

Egocentrism

Policies, strategies, language organized around one's own security needs and sense of rightness with no consciousness about how these are experienced and received by other actors. Making incorrect assumptions about the psychology of the other, i.e., assuming deterrence will work. Imposing demands and ultimata is counterproductive in culture where defiance to greater power is valued.

Psychology of Domination, Defeat and Asymmetrical Warfare

Terrorism is a form of asymmetrical warfare. Nuclear proliferation is a response to asymmetrical nuclear capability. Power imbalances are inherently unstable in the long term. Domination, oppression, humiliation, and suffering provoke the desire to even the scales as we see in universal myths like David and Goliath, and in the Mujaheddin rejoicing over their defeat of the Soviet Union superpower. As 9/11 shows, there is no amount of power that cannot be turned against us. Equality is a stabilizing force. Psychologically, domination is analogous to bullying in a Global Columbine, provoking explosive reactions such as 9/11. We teach our children not to bully without realizing that our actions are experienced by others in a humiliating way. Such actions in the name of our own security are likely to increase the possibility of terrorism.

GLOBAL SYSTEMS DYNAMICS

The Non-Proliferation Treaty and General Systems Theory

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), signed in 1968 in order to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, states that the non nuclear weapons states will agree not to acquire nuclear weapons. In exchange, the nuclear weapons states will agree to negotiate in good faith to work toward the total elimination of nuclear weapons (otherwise, why would they agree not to acquire them?). Nuclear weapons states have not lived up to their agreement, and we are on the verge of provoking a new nuclear arms race. Since 1968, the NPT has had limited success maintaining a homeostatic balance, with only Israel, India and Pakistan joining the nuclear weapons club. According to General Systems Theory, the NPT is likely to go from a homeostatic-maintaining, negative feedback loop, into a positive feedback spiral, which reinforces change – in one direction or another. If the NPT breaks down, we will spin into the unconscious positive feedback spiral of provocative proliferation (also called "deviation amplifying mutual causal process"). 60 more countries can acquire nukes, leading to nuclear anarchy and a certainty of accidents, terrorism, or deliberate use. A psychologically sound, mature, intelligent, wise positive feedback spiral would break out of the NPT by thoughtfully negotiating reductions towards elimination. *The NPT is necessary, but not sufficient, for maintaining global security.*

We must simultaneously build new kinds of political relationships and institutions, change our posture in the world, and develop nonmilitary methods of addressing conflict and enmity. For a fraction of what the world spends on armaments, we could invest in social scientists and develop violence prevention, "de-enmification" strategies, economic development and peace-building measures - in a "reverse Manhattan project" that will be far more effective in creating Universal Security.

"We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount. Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants. We know more about war than we do about peace; more about killing than we do about living." General Omar Bradley

The problems that we have created as a result of the level of thinking that we have done thus far cannot be solved at the same level of thinking at which we created them. Albert Einstein

CONSCIOUS NUCLEAR POLITICS

We Get What We Pay For

We now spend almost \$400 billion (written in 2003) a year on the military, approximately \$1 billion on the State Department, and \$12 million on the US Institute of Peace. What if we made a similar investment in the social sciences, committing money, research (we already have enough knowledge to prevent violence and transform conflict), developing training, education, personnel, and deployment towards violence prevention and collective healing from trauma. We request a significant investment in promising, proven effective methods in tension reduction, fear reduction, and "de-enmification" and the development of institutions and structures that employ bloodless forms of force, and strategies that address root causes.

We currently have bodies of knowledge regarding use of negotiations, violence prevention, tension reduction, and nonviolent forms of force (Richard Wendell Fogg), including economic, political, psychological, physical, social, educational, moral, and spiritual forms of force, used in complex combinations. If programs such as the proposed Global Nonviolent Peace Force www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org and Congressman Dennis Kucinich's proposed Department of Peace <http://www.house.gov/kucinich/action/peace.ht> received the funding, interest, government support and training that the

military received we would be able to make the paradigm shift necessary to transcend violence in the 21st century. We could begin the process of making a gradual transition to a post-military paradigm. Randall Forsberg's Global Action to Prevent War www.globalactionpw.org provides a thoughtful strategy to gradually "wean" us off of our military dependence as we move towards a sustainable paradigm. We need a transitional period during which we build the new paradigm and phase out the old, perhaps holding the use of force as a back up while wholeheartedly employing violence preventing strategies.

PARADIGM SHIFT

If we are to survive, we must make a quantum leap into the next, post-military paradigm. We need a profound transformation to a new way of thinking and conducting international relationships. It should be obvious by now that the dualistic, right-wrong, us-them, good-bad military force paradigm is making us infinitely less secure. The peace and anti-war movements have not effectively articulated plausible alternatives to violence and inaction. Rich bodies of knowledge about political psychology, violence prevention, peace and conflict studies are virtually absent in the media and politics. The challenge now is to raise consciousness, build new institutions, and integrate proven methods informed by social science.

METAFORCE: Replacing War

Richard Wendell Fogg, director of the Center for the Study of Conflict, says that we don't need to abolish war. We need to replace war. Fogg says that we must use force – political force, economic force, social force, psychological, educational, physical, moral, intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and aesthetic forms of force – in combinations forming complex, systematic strategies. They include reducing the opponent's fear, avoiding cornering the opponent, avoiding retaliating, satisfying just grievances, understanding the meaning of their attack, removing pressures, using mediators, working the enemy's allies, designing win-win solutions, etc., including some harsher nonviolent approaches when the more positive ones don't work. Since we don't have a concept to describe bloodless forms of force, I have coined the term "Metaforce" which is not passive, and similar to the Indian terms ahimsa and satyagraha.

Global Nonviolent Peace Force

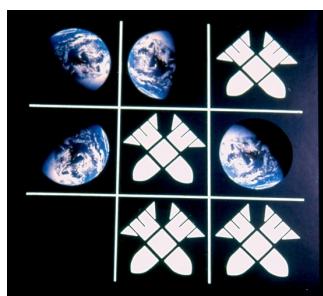
A Global Nonviolent Peace Force , is being developed to reduce tension and prevent violence so other strategies can be used to solve problems. It is based on a body of literature about the success of nonviolent accompaniment and other strategies that have prevented violence around the world.

Graduated Reciprocated Initiatives in Tension Reduction (GRIT)

GRIT is an example of a strategy, a conscious, creative positive feedback spiral is described by Charles Osgood of "Graduated and Reciprocated Initiatives in Tension-Reduction", known as GRIT in "Disarmament Demands GRIT." It is "aimed to reduce and control international tension levels and to create an atmosphere of mutual trust within which negotiations on critical military and political issues can have a better chance of succeeding." There have been some historical cases where this has been applied successfully as part of a complex strategy in tension reduction and violence prevention.

History, despite its wrenching pain
cannot be unlived, but if faced
With Courage, need not be lived again.

Maya Angelou, Inaugural poem



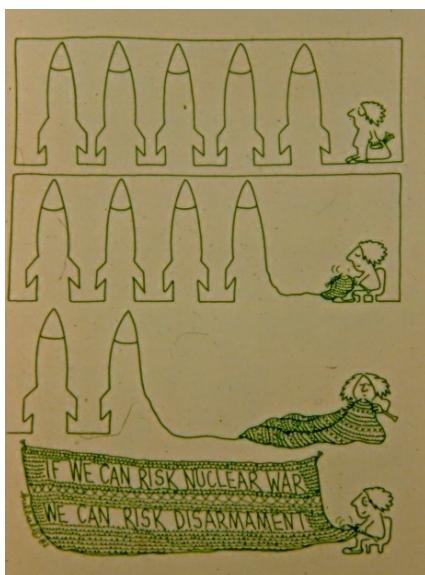
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The Fear of Disarmament by Diane Perlman UN Disarmament Times, Summer 2001

The debate on disarmament is highly polarized. Advocates of militarism and disarmament endlessly repeat their own arguments and dismiss the others, without impact. To escape this fruitless exchange we must have a better understanding of the structure and dynamics of the debate.



Rational arguments for Disarmament are met with powerful negative reactions. There are two main sources of opposition to the idea of Disarmament. The first stems from an economic-institutional-structural system which promotes Militarism, or what I call Military Fundamentalism, and its extension, Nuclear Fundamentalism, a belief in the threat or use of violent force as the only way to address conflict.

The second source of opposition is an emotional-psychological response to the removal of defenses which, from a militaristic viewpoint renders us vulnerable to enemies, and offers no alternative. Both are perceived as taking away something valuable without offering a satisfactory replacement. If advocates of Disarmament could reframe our case in a way that addresses these fundamental concerns, we might have a more constructive dialogue

1) The first source of opposition to Disarmament is shaped by the interests of an interconnected web of systems including the military, the multi-billion dollar defense industry, politicians and the mass media, with multilayered systems of identities and power relations. The system is committed to its own survival, and is fueled by a world view focused on the existence of enemies, the second source of opposition, which will be addressed in more depth. Briefly, perhaps the most enlightened way to address these vested economic systemic interests would be to explore conversion of technology, perhaps to space tourism (thanks to Dennis Tito) and environmental technologies as described in a recent paper by the Institute for Policy Studies.

2) The preoccupation of the image of the enemy has been used deliberately, and very effectively, to fuel the arms race and a militaristic worldview. The world is seen in terms of Us and Them, Black and White, Strong and Weak, Victors and Vanquished. Weapons and the threat or use of force are unquestioned as the only dependable foundation for national security, which maintains and endless spiral of military buildup and escalation, increasing our vulnerability in the name of assuring our security.

Military fundamentalists invoke the image of dangerous dehumanized enemies, first the Evil Empire, now replaced by the Rogue States entirely unlike ourselves. We are good, they are bad. Our motives are noble and defensive, theirs are hostile and aggressive. To confront such enemies we have to be strong and militarily prepared, even if the strength of the enemy is negligible. When our enemies react with hostility to rhetoric and threats which they see as humiliating and intimidating, it feeds a system of self-fulfilling paranoia, provoking and magnifying fear on all sides. It is a psychological fact that people are most dangerous when they are afraid, so acting out of "common sense" tends to make things worse. The way to be more secure is to make your enemy more secure. In our Global culture, "National Security" is now an oxymoron. There is universal security or no security.

The idea of Disarmament elicits responses like "What about Iraq? What about North Korea? " because it does not answer the question of how to deal with enemies (real, imagined, or provoked). Our usual arguments that armaments cost too much, that we could better spend the money on education and health care are irrelevant in the face of a terrifying enemy. Likewise, the case for illegality and immorality of nuclear weapons have not been successful enough, because they don't address vulnerability and the fear of being defenseless. People will do things that are immoral and illegal if they thought it would save lives.

The whole disarmament approach needs to be rethought if we are to have an impact. Disarmament itself does not answer this question. Disarmament is a natural consequence of the answer. In psychological terms, Disarmament is experienced as a process of giving up something we have: armaments and the security they are supposed to provide. Everyone naturally resists the idea of giving up something, especially if it is linked to security. Disarmament will not be acceptable to most people unless we answer the question of how to deal with existing threats to our security. To move towards disarmament we need to provide a new paradigm. Disarmament is about ending the old paradigm. To gain wider appeal, we need to articulate the new paradigm in a way that better answers the questions of real security.

At present, public discourse recognizes only two categories of response to external threat: doing nothing, or military action. We need a third way. We do not have a concept of nonmilitary ways to solve problems, although there is a well developed body of research and observation in tension reduction, fear reduction and conflict transformation. Currently the US spends about \$340 billion on the military, \$1 billion on the State department, and \$12 million on the US Institute of Peace.

Violence prevention methods do not exist as policy options. Yet, as Richard Wendell Fogg, Director of the Center for the Study of Conflict, says in his booklet, Peacemaking, nonviolent uses of force including combinations of political, economic, psychological, moral, spiritual, intellectual and educational forms of force can be far more powerful in stopping violence even after it has started, in solving problems and improving conflict situations in the long term than use of violence and

domination, which causes great harm and often creates more problems. Fogg says the message of "Replacing War" is more powerful than that of "abolishing war", which it does, in effect.

David Hartsough and Mel Duncan have proposed a Global Nonviolent Peace Force, which would train people to go into areas of conflict to help reduce tensions, negotiate nonviolent solutions and bring peace. Unlike disarmament, such an option would be broadly attractive, especially as it has the potential to call forth heroic and powerful leaders.

Such approaches have received little attention from governments or civil society in terms of funding, organization, training, and support. Perhaps disarmament activists should concentrate more on emphasizing "a better game than war."

Diane Perlman co-chairs the Committee for Militarism, Disarmament and Conversion of the American Psychological Association and is a research associate at the Center on Violence and Human Survival.

And now for something completely different

The Psychology of Proliferation, by Diane Perlman, Ph.D. with Xanthe Hall

Part of panel of NGO Presentations to the delegates of the UN 2005 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty Review Conference, May 11. New York City. This was the first time the psychological aspects were ever presented at the NPT. I worked hard to get this in.

Have you ever, for a moment, thought to yourself: All this is totally absurd? If you have, it is because you have an awareness rising to the surface of the paradoxical nature of nuclear weapons.

Psychiatrist Robert Jay Lifton states that nuclear weapons are beyond psychology. The unprecedented power of nuclear weapons alters our relationship to life and death. It creates "staggering new problems for us and at the same time distorts our thinking and blunts our feeling about precisely these problems." It allows us to co-exist with the constant threat of annihilation while at the same time believing they somehow make us more safe.

The magnitude of the danger induces psychic numbing, denial, and fear. These, in combination with overconfidence and illusions of control, all interfere with optimal thought and action.

While deliberating about nuclear weapons it is essential to be aware of our own psychology, the psychology of our enemies, and the dynamics of our interactions, lest we make psychological mistakes with irreversible unintended consequences. Nuclear weapons are not a necessary evil. They are an unnecessary evil.

There have been times in history when false assumptions, misperceptions, miscalculations, and exaggerated threats triggered undesired violence, or even brought us to the brink of annihilation, as in the Cuban missile crisis. There have also been times when courageous, imaginative people averted catastrophes, also in the Cuban Missile crisis. If we act consciously, aware of our own assumptions and of our enemies' assumptions we can reduce conflict and increase creative problem-solving.

The magnitude of the danger we face can understandably limit our responses in several ways.

1 - We may act impulsively, focusing on the immediacy of real or imagined threats thereby ignoring long-term consequences that were not originally intended or desirable. The worst case of this is the situation of high alert, where the reaction to a perceived attack has to be so rapid and under such stress, conducive to poor judgement that could easily result in the launch of a full-scale and mistaken response.

2 - Absorbed by our own security needs, we may overlook the way that our actions provoke an opposite response. If we ignore the psychological meaning of our actions for others, we may play into their fears and fantasies. For instance: Some respond to US policies with fear, humiliation, and or by feeling inferior in some way. Some think: "If Israel and Pakistan have nukes, why can't we?" Some take US or NATO's refusal to renounce first use literally, believing that signals plans for attack. However much it is insisted that nuclear weapons are a political weapon, a high level of credibility in deterrence has to be retained by having real plans for attack. The declared targets therefore surmise that with their own nukes, they might prevent the US from threatening them. In this way, nuclear weapons states are providing incentives for other nations to develop weapons to deter a perceived threat of attack.

3 - We may limit our responses to using threats or even violence and coercion. We may discount or ignore effective nonviolent strategies of conflict transformation, believing "the only thing they understand is force", or "we can't negotiate with those kind of people" thus generating self-fulfilling prophecies. The policy of "carrots and sticks" suggests we are dealing with a donkey, not a sovereign state with a long history and developed culture. In its very nature it contradicts itself by building trust and undermining it at the same time, making the recipient mistrustful of the negotiation.

4 -The desire for nuclear weapons is a symptom of something deeper. Focusing on getting rid of the symptom, we ignore the cause. Efforts to physically stop proliferation without addressing the underlying psychological meaning cannot succeed. The relationship between the possession of nuclear weapons and power is inextricable. Some perceive that possession of the greatest means of destruction in the world means that you will be taken seriously.

This can provoke weaker actors into military action. Today that includes nuclear terrorism, an asymmetrical response to asymmetrical power. While we must focus on the supply side of terrorism, by safeguarding fissile materials, we must simultaneously address the demand side of terrorism. Threatening, humiliating and backing one into a corner can increase paranoia and make others more dangerous, as well as increasing recruitment to terrorism and arousing popular support for nuclear weapons. The way to be secure is to make your enemy more secure.

Military superiority, national security, nuclear deterrence are old concepts that have become new oxymorons that need to be replaced by "mutually assured survival."

After 35 years of waiting, the NPT is in crisis. Failure to disarm creates an atmosphere of bad faith, demoralization, intimidation, humiliation & resentment. But the treaty is not an end in itself. The end is elimination of the threat of Armageddon, and a replacement of war with more effective methods of tension reduction, violence prevention and conflict transformation. We need to strengthen and evolve the NPT in order to prevent a spiral ending in nuclear anarchy. We need to deliberately create conditions for enduring security so future generations can live without fear of annihilation.

Our choice is between universal security and universal insecurity

Nuclear Theater of the Absurd

by Diane Perlman, PsySR USA with Xanthe Hall, IPPNW Germany

This piece was written at the end of the failed 2005 NPT Review Conference. An edited version was included in the final News In Review book done at the end of the conference.

"The world that we have made as a result of the level of thinking that we have done thus far creates problems we cannot solve at the same level we created them." Einstein

Thought experiment:

Imagine you were responsible to a world in which there were several nuclear weapons states, several more eager to join the nuclear club, and about 40 more that were capable of joining. And let's say that these developments have already caused and threaten to cause more intolerable suffering, affecting the quality and of life on earth and even its very existence. What if you were in charge of designing, from scratch, an international process to address this crisis? How would you design a successful process? Would it look anything at all like what the 2005 NPT Review Conference Delegates experienced in May 2005?

Appropriate Design

If I ruled the world, I would bring everyone out to a beautiful retreat center with panoramic views of nature, exercise, hot tubs, massages, good food and plenty of free time and entertainment. I would invite loved ones and provide relevant activities, including a camp for the kids. Following UN resolution 1325, 50% of the attendees would be women, and 50% thoughtful men who were secure enough in themselves not to feel the need to dominate.

I would include world experts who have devoted their lives to studying all aspects of nuclearism – from the fields of medicine, economics, law, political psychology, conflict studies, political science, history, anthropology, and other social sciences, business, military analysis, disarmament, the environment, non-toxic energy, and so on. These experts would join heads of state in decision-making. Decisions would be based on sound knowledge of what can work, including creative outside-the-box thinking. There would be training in dialogue, listening, learning creative responses to conflict, and the history and examples of non-violent conflict transformation. Consensus would emerge from deep understanding, inspired by sound knowledge and a "non zero sum" intention.

The first week would be spent teaching each other and learning about every angle of the issue. There would be dialogue, testimonies, artistic expression, and an overview of history to give perspective on issues such as the emergence of states and where we are in the process of globalism.

More than likely, we would find ourselves redefining and transcending the meaning of states, exploring visions of a post nuclear future. Much time would be spent building new infrastructures for non-toxic sustainable energy and for non-violent conflict transformation as superior strategies. This would render nuclear energy and weapons obsolete. We would start to perceive them as unnecessarily dangerous, even as silly as the use of leeches in medical treatment. Everyone would feel the weight of the world that is in fact on their shoulders, and our own denial and numbing would be addressed.

There would be tons of media coverage, and simultaneous access through livestreaming and video conferences, so people around the world - the real stakeholders - could follow closely and be in communication with the process.

Working Against Nature

What delegates are trying to do while wearing the traditional diplomatic straitjacket won't work. It is impossible. This archaic system – one that is formally institutional, ritualistic and environmentally negative – has grown over decades. With it a detached universe has been created that is internally self-fulfilling in its consistency, while not at all conducive to solving the problem it is charged with.

Delegates, mostly men in suits, sit in a windowless basement and listen for days on end to more than 180 repetitive monologues in different languages through a plastic earpiece. Other than in a conference like this, there may never have been a time in all of human evolution when people were confined underground to listen to interminable speeches.

Our brains were not designed for that kind of experience. Research shows that people in hospitals recover faster with a window view. Long working hours, lack of fresh air and sunlight, in a building with poor air quality has deleterious effects on concentration and the ability to think creatively.

The diplomatic process is rife with "groupthink" which creates its own alternate self-reinforcing reality and rejects information and perspectives that do not fit their frame.

One delegate said that the experience was like beginning smoking. At first you feel ill because you are at the initial stages of asphyxiation, then you get used to it and feel like it is something important. Then you get addicted to it and feel like you are being initiated into some kind of arcane priesthood. But humans adapt to unnatural situations at a cost.

In this negative environment, decisions that affect all present and future generations of innocents and the environment, are being made by parties delegated to represent the interests of individual states. Added to this is the political dynamic: political considerations outweigh true positions. For example, representatives who want a seat on the security council are afraid to lose support from dominant powers, or rewards and punishments influence positions against the interests of humanity.

Whereas delegates to NPT conferences have been assigned this work, and have mostly not chosen to spend their lives devoted to this issue, the people who have devoted their lives to studying aspects of Nuclearism, and who are the most knowledgeable on the subject, are hereby restricted to a role of observation. They are prevented from participating and have no formal power.

Even when the delegates are convinced that a nuclear free world is right and attainable, they are often powerless to achieve this because they are receiving instructions from their governments. This frequently leads to a high level of frustration that has to be kept hidden from view and is considered by the group as a whole as out of place. As a replacement for a true expression of this frustration, less time is spent on substance than procedural arguing about agendas and footnotes. Parallel monologues predominate, there is no real dialogue or true engagement.

Nonproliferation and the Asymmetrical World

Embedded in this unnatural environment are thought patterns and belief systems that are fraught with contradictions. Old ways of thinking cannot handle new realities. They use only "first order change" approaches, trying to get rid of the symptom, which cannot resolve the problem. What is required is "second order change" transforming the system of international relationships and addressing root causes.

The focus on controlling the weapons themselves is necessary but not sufficient. The relationship between the haves and

have-nots, between non-proliferation and disarmament, sets up an impossible tension that is not sustainable, has no endgame and provokes proliferation in the name of preventing it. One side says that control is more important than disarmament and the other says it is the other way around. This double standard renders counter-proliferation an oxymoron. Nonproliferation means "We can have nukes, you can't." This "Nuclear Narcissism" provokes fear, humiliation and envy and magnifies the desire for nukes.

It is essential to also address the underlying conflicts, political relations, asymmetrical power and other root causes that fuel the desire and felt need for the weapons. Nuclear weapons are not just weapons, they are symbols of power and are bound up with world order and our perceptions of what the world should look like. For some, they are a way of redressing the balance. They are the ultimate blackmailer and hostage taker.

In order to address, say, the relevance of nuclear deterrence, one must embrace the changed circumstances of our security in a world where people are willing to commit suicide and kill innocent people in order to draw attention to their cause. The asymmetry of nuclear weapons versus carpet knives clearly shows how absurd the situation has become.

The spirit of consensus is misused and misnamed in the diplomatic process of negotiation. The wishes of the overwhelming majority of citizens and leaders can be sabotaged by a very few, not acting in good faith. This is not a conflict between multilateralism and unilateralism, but between cooperation and domination.

In a contest to rename the NPT a British youth proposed the phrase "Neanderthals Providing Terror", thus showing how big the divide between the public perception and the internal process actually is.

Response to The Project on Nuclear Issues Debate on the **"Reliable Replacement Warhead"**

Letter to Joe Cirincione on the RRW

The Ridiculously Redundant Warhead is also a Relentlessly Radicalizing Warhead

On Thursday evening, February 12, 2009, The Project on Nuclear Issues (PONI) sponsored a debate between Clark Murdock and Joe Cirincione on the so-called "Reliable Replacement Warhead", which Joe calls "The Ridiculously Redundant Warhead." Joe effectively challenged the RRW on the grounds of science, history and cost. Below are my reflections.

Dear Joe,

Thanks for your arguments on the RRW at the debate on February 12. I would add that the Ridiculously Redundant Warhead is also a Relentlessly Radicalizing Warhead. More generally, I think that the psychological dimensions implicit in your analysis can discredit flawed arguments even more effectively when made explicit.

US nuclear policies have been challenged on the grounds of being illegal, immoral, environmentally devastating, costly, harming health, scientifically flawed, and unnecessary. But nukes are rarely challenged for being irrational, absurd, and sociopathological. Here are ten key psychological points worthy of consideration (a partial list)

1. Deterrence Theory vs. Spiral Theory - The nuclear debate mindlessly relies on "deterrence" and a belief in control through domination and submission. Deterrence is a strategy that works well only when accompanied by drastic tension reduction. Otherwise, it can break down with increasing pressure and provoke asymmetric dynamics becoming a destructive spiral. Why base nuclear policy only on a flawed theory?



This is best stated by my friend Robert Green in The Naked Nuclear Emperor - " ... the crazy reality that nuclear deterrence is a scheme for making nuclear war less probable by making it more probable."

2. Nuclear Provocation - Policies promoted to prevent proliferation often provoke proliferation as in the "Law of Opposites."

3. Nuclear Narcissism - We are preoccupied with our own security needs, oblivious to how we affect others. Our nukes are good -- theirs are bad (as you have been pointing out). We can have nukes, they can't. This narcissism can provoke envy, humiliation, fear, and a felt need to deter us.

4. Fear, "Self-fulfilling Paranoia" and Escalation - There is a false belief that if we make others afraid of us, they will back down. People are actually more dangerous when afraid and insecure. Our threats validate their fears, making them more dangerous. Acting out of fear, each side confirms the fears of the other and counterproductively provokes a compulsion to act in self-defense or "preemptively."

5. Nuclear Heisenberg Principle - We cannot observe any actor's nuclear behavior without considering the effects of our behavior, policies, and rhetoric on them – perhaps a "Nuclear Heisenberg Insecurity Principle."

6. Hidden Agenda, Politics and Profit Motive – You mentioned the cost of our nuclear program - maybe too polite to mention who profits. Defense contractors and some Congress members (among others) benefit from nuclear weapons contracts. According to cognitive dissonance theory, people who are profiting from something are likely to persuade themselves into really believing in its value.

7. Nuclear Oxymorons - In the nuclear age, we have new oxymorons, since Einstein said "Everything has changed except the way we think." Thus we apply conventional thinking to ultimate weapons. Some new oxymorons – terms that have changed meaning in our 21st Century Security paradigm include:

Nuclear deterrent - as possession to deter actually provokes proliferation

Military, or nuclear superiority provokes asymmetric responses, instability, and warfare of the weak.

Self defense – Many actions in the name self defense provoke fear and increase volatility and escalation. What is allegedly done by our leaders in the name of self defense, often makes us more vulnerable.

National Security has lost it's meaning. In today's world of globalization, technology and communications, we have only universal security or universal insecurity.

8. Nuclear Double Bind and the Fear of Disarmament – We are in an absurd situation. We can't live with nukes and we believe we can't live without them. We believe nukes are protecting us, while they make us more vulnerable. Some fear giving them up. They provide an illusion of security.

9. Enmity – Nuclear weapons are a symptom of our fear and reflect a concrete worldview of "good guys" and "evil guys." A more mature worldview appreciates the dynamics and conditions that increase and decrease hostility, extremism, and cycles of violence. We can deliberately reduce tensions, insure security, and transform conflictual relationships.

10. Mutually Assured Survival - The way to be secure is to make your enemy more secure. As long as we have nukes, others will want them. As long as we threaten others, they will want their own "nuclear deterrent." There is no endgame this way.

My only disagreement with you, Joe, in your otherwise brilliant and charming performance, was your only agreement with Clark - "As long as nuclear weapons exist, we need a safe, reliable deterrent." Perhaps as long as we have a "nuclear deterrent" nukes will continue to exist.

Our Last Best Chance

Just because we have a new president who is mature and speaks of respect, we are not out of the woods. If President Obama follows fear-based political pressures and the almost universally accepted ultimatum that "we must not let Iran get nuclear weapons," there is a danger that we will provoke defiance and trip off escalation to violence. If by "negotiation" he means coercion and threats while acting nice, it may be perceived as humiliating and threatening, and may back Iranian leaders into a corner.

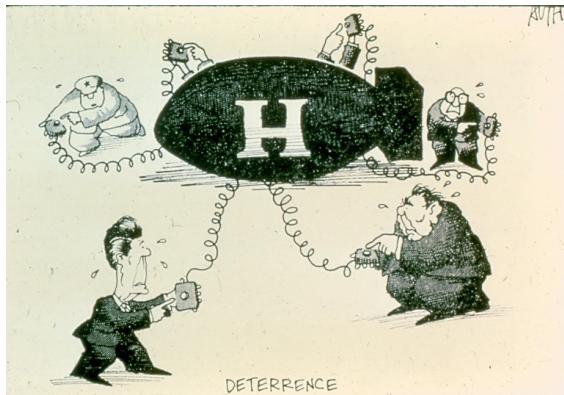
However, if President Obama acts wisely and accepts guidance regarding "second order change" and outside-the-box thinking on nonviolent conflict transformation, he will be able to carry out the "Grand Bargain," renegotiate, and heal our

fragile, troubled relationship with Iran. There is much evidence President Obama can successfully eliminate the Iranian threat by transforming our relationship with Iran. The more we pressure them to stop enrichment, the more they will want to enrich. Paradoxically if Iran no longer experiences us as a threat, they may have less desire to enrich – but it won't matter if we don't see them as a threat. We must create an atmosphere of mutually assured survival.

Thank you again Joe for your significant contribution as being among the clearest, most compelling and understandable speakers in the think tank circles, congress and the media. The time might be ripe for the paradigm shift we have been cultivating for decades. Explicit psychological dimensions might strengthen arguments and raise consciousness to push the tipping point. I welcome the opportunity to discuss these ideas with you and to collaborate in any way you think might be helpful.

Sincerely, Diane

OUTSIDE THE DETERRENCE BOX By Diane Perlman, PhD



There is a heated debate over whether nuclear deterrence works. The stakes are too high to get this wrong. This should not be a matter of opinion, emotion, beliefs, or politics – but impartial social science and research.

THE ONE AND ONLY THEORY Deterrence has not only been the dominant theory for nuclear policy – but the only theory that has captured the political imagination for decades. We even call them "nuclear deterrents" – not weapons.

Deterrence is designed to use threats of overwhelming violence to control a state's behavior. We believe we must be tough, strong and show resolve, to make the Other afraid. We dread weakness or "appeasement," fearing our own vulnerability. Giving up our "nuclear deterrent" feels like letting down our guard. Fear of giving up nukes is greater than of building more.

Deterrence has great appeal as the best way to prevent nuclear war. Based on deductive logic, it is impossible to prove deterrence is *the* reason for preventing aggression in any case. There may be other factors. Deterrence seems to work under some conditions and break down in others. It may humiliate and coerce actors into short-term submission only to blow up later like a political Columbine. We cannot prove whether it worked during the Cold War or whether it was "dumb luck" as Robert MacNamara claimed. It almost broke down several times.

To work, one has to have perfect knowledge of how the Other thinks and feels, and precisely what will deter them rather than provoke defiance or an impulsive reaction out of fear. With psychological ignorance of the Other's motives, intentions and attitudes, policy makers may misinterpret adversaries according to their own beliefs, which may bear no relationship to reality.

Even if we could claim that deterrence "worked" in a particular case – 1 – Deterrence does not address or correct underlying conflicts or improve relationships. 2 - It misses the chance to resolve conflicts, and spoils opportunities for exploring mutual interests and creative solutions, 3 –It may seem to work in the short-term, but produce humiliation, defiance, instability, increase the popularity of hardliners, harm moderates and motivate asymmetric responses, and 4 –Another approach might have worked better and improved relations.

Furthermore deterrence works against disarmament. The mindless mantra, "As long as nuclear weapons exist, we will maintain a safe, reliable deterrent" uses circular logic. As long as we "maintain a safe, reliable 'deterrent'" others will feel the need to have their own "deterrent" against us. There is no endgame.

If we believe deterrence is the only strategy to suppress an enemy's aggression, the thought of giving it up is frightening. We might cling to its illusory promise of security.

DEBATING THE WRONG QUESTION In "Deterrence Reconsidered: The Challenge of Research," Richard Ned Lebow notes that states don't always act according to theory. They may act either more cautiously or more risky than predicted. Critics of deterrence observe that "... it can provoke the very behavior it seeks to prevent."

Instead of fighting over whether deterrence works, let's ask *when* it might work, under what conditions, for how long, and when it might have the opposite effect of provoking an attack. Does deterrence work - *compared to what?* Are there better ways?

THE SECURITY DILEMMA AND THE SPIRAL MODEL Deterrence leads to policies that increase tension, fear and insecurity in the Other. In "Preventing Armageddon," Morton Deutsch describes how "If one party in a conflict attempts to increase its security without regard for the security of the other party, the attempt readily becomes self-defeating, a situation that is potentially catastrophic when the stakes involve nuclear war. If military inferiority is dangerous, so is superiority. It is dangerous for either side in a conflict to feel tempted or frightened into action, or to have grounds to believe that its antagonist might be so tempted or frightened. According to this analysis, our security and that of an adversary can only be obtained through our *mutual security*."

Pressure creates conditions where deterrence can break down and trigger dynamics that provoke what Deutsch calls a "malignant spiral of hostile interaction." In "Deterrence, the Spiral Model, and Intentions of the Adversary," Robert Jervis says, "Spiral and deterrence theories contradict each other at every point... Each claiming to be true, give opposite answers on strategy. ..deters worry that aggressors will underestimate .. their resolve, " "while the spiral theorists believe that each side will overestimate the hostility of the other." Advocates of each theory fail to describe the conditions under which their favored approach does not apply.

CONDITIONS FOR DETERRENCE OR SPIRAL Jervis observes deterrence works best when the Other sees its costs for standing firm as too high and costs of retreating as low, if their central values, issues, and commitments are not involved, if goals are seen as limited, deriving from a desire for security, if means and goals are proper for equal actors, and if there is no humiliation, gratuitous punishment, illegitimate demands for something of greater value to the Other, and if there is no fear that a retreat will lead to further demands. Ralph K. White says deterrence works best when accompanied by drastic tension reduction.

At base are the assumptions about the adversary's "values, strength and resolve." When one side acts overly hostile, and demands are seen as illegitimate, giving in will feel intolerable. Psychiatrist Vamik Volkan, said that some would rather die physically than psychologically. Intolerable pressures may cause people choose defiance and death than back down as in "Give me liberty or give me death" and "Better Dead than Red"?

Deutsch describes characteristics of unintended escalation into a malignant spiral process. A *win-or-lose orientation* intensifies misperceptions, misjudgments, cognitive rigidity, stereotypes, misinformation, errors, suspiciousness, and sensitivity to difference and threats. Zero sum thinking promotes a belief in the need to use superior force or to outwit the Other. People are more dangerous when afraid and insecure. Acting out of fear, parties behave in ways that justify the Other's fears – provoking a mutual process of "self-fulfilling paranoia."

Drawn into unwitting commitments, parties create vicious escalating spirals. A gamesmanship orientation shifts from real issues to "an abstract conflict over images of power." Each becomes locked into their positions, acting in ways that perpetuate the conflict. A blaming attitude makes it impossible to explore mediation, problem solving, win-win strategies, common interests, and mutually desirable policies and programs.

A country under threat and pressures feels backed into a corner and fears being attacked. With few options, they wish to discourage an expected attack – say sending up a missile to signal "Please don't attack us because if you do we can retaliate." Others misinterpret and believe they are signaling an attack – so they escalate their rhetoric and pressure.

SOUND POLICY Jervis advises that we shouldn't base policy on how we think the Other would respond if our assumptions are correct, but explore how they might respond if our assumptions and perceptions about their intentions and perceptions of us are not what we think.

If we assume crippling sanctions may cause another to back down – they may have the opposite effect and provoke defiance, especially if demands are perceived as illegitimate, unfair, and unequal. In our pursuit of security, we may provoke humiliation, intimidation, insecurity, moral outrage– all of which can provoke violence.

Jervis describes when states cooperate everybody wins, and when they conflict everybody loses. During the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, we did not avert catastrophe by deterrence –but by quiet negotiations, creatively and intelligently reducing tension and offering a face-saving way out for both parties, and resisting pressures for military escalation. However, the underlying conflict was not addressed, so the Cold War and arms racearms race continued for decades. It seems best to lead with tension-reducing measures, positive inducements, security assurances, and face-saving ways out, quietly keeping knowledge of potential negative consequences in the background.

Jervis cautions us not to be concerned only about the “fog of battle” but also the “fog of foreign policy making.”

We have explored deterrence and spiral theory here. There are two better and deeper strategies to be described in part 2 – Osgood’s GRIT – Graduated Reciprocated Initiatives in Tension Reduction and mediation, conflict resolution and conflict transformation – which creatively consider basic human needs and legitimate goals and design outside the box approaches capable of producing enduring security.

The Nuclear Power TRAP by Diane Perlman, PhD

On the 40th year of the UN Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), delegates from the states parties to the treaty met at UN headquarters in New York from May 3 – 28, 2010, for the eighth five year NPT Review Conference.

Representing Civil Society at the NPT

Active members of nongovernmental organizations, NGOs, from many countries, came to the “NPT RevCon” to represent the interests of civil society. Among them were participants in the Abolition Caucus, a group of knowledgeable NGOs devoted to the elimination of nuclear weapons.

NGOs participate by observing open official meetings, conducting informal meetings with delegates, presenting information to each other and delegates at side events, and inviting delegates for off-the-record briefings. Many activities are organized by Reaching Critical Will, RCW, <http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org>, who produce a daily newsletter, News in Review, a rich source of communication eagerly read by many delegates and NGOs.

At each NPT, the NGOs are given three hours to present to the delegates on a wide range of subjects communicating the urgency and feasibility of eliminating nuclear weapons. Presentations, organized by RCW, included Nobel Prize laureate Jody Williams, a Hibakusha, Nagasaki bomb survivor, youth representatives from Ban All Nukes Generation (BANG), plus statements on the illegality of nuclear weapons, challenges to deterrence theory, the dangers of nuclear power and more.

Article IV and the IAEA

The NPT was organized around a significant role for the International Atomic Energy Association, the IAEA, which promotes nuclear energy. Article IV of the NPT claims an “inalienable right” to “peaceful uses” of nuclear energy. It is called the “third pillar” (language not in the actual treaty) of the NPT, along with the nonproliferation and disarmament. These phrases are uttered incessantly throughout speeches and discussions.

On May 20, the Abolition Caucus delivered a statement to the NPT delegates stating serious concerns about the May 14 Report of Main Committee III, the body assigned to address nuclear energy, the “third pillar,” which made “glowing” claims about nuclear power’s benefits for energy, the environment, health, the economy, and Millennium Development Goals.

NGOS vs. Delegates – Parallel Universes?

Abolition Caucus NGOs are alarmed at the dangers and proliferation risks in the face of delegates’ overwhelming enthusiasm and promotion of nuclear power. Why the huge discrepancy?

Most NPT delegates automatically repeat the mantras –the “inalienable right” to “peaceful uses” of nuclear energy as “the third pillar” throughout most speeches. The belief in nuclear power is so deeply and widely held that it may seem outrageous to even question it.

Delegates, though skillful in diplomacy and consensus building, are not natural scientists. Their opinions on nuclear energy are largely informed by the IAEA, with its contradictory role in both promoting and regulating atomic power, and by vested

interests, such as Areva, a French multinational nuclear power conglomerate and others who spend fortunes on deceptive propaganda promoting nuclear power. The industry spent \$665 million in the US on rebranding nuclear energy as clean, green, and an answer to the climate crisis, and on congressional campaigns, including to President Obama, who approved loan guarantees to build new nuclear reactors for our “nuclear renaissance.”

NPT Groupthink

The NPT bubble is a perfect environment for “groupthink” defined by Yale psychologist Irving Janis as: “A mode of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive in-group, when the members’ strivings for unanimity override their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action.” Despite disagreements within the NPT on disarmament and nonproliferation, the dialogue is dominated by unquestioned acceptance of nuclear energy. Few dare challenge this mindset.

In a “groupthink” environment, pressures for consensus implicitly or explicitly discourage independent thinking, creativity, and expression of doubts. Overconfidence and failure to consider alternative views, facts and bodies of knowledge impairs sound decision-making processes, often leading to irrational, flawed and hasty decisions.

NGOs, who have devoted their lives to studying various aspects in depth, have an open process characterized by freedom of thinking, eagerness for information, and independence from vested interests. Scientific information is valued, brought in by groups like The International Network of Engineers and Scientists Against Proliferation, (<http://www.inesap.org>), The Institute for Energy and Environmental Research, (<http://www.ieer>), Physicians for Social Responsibility (<http://www.psr.org>), and others.

Frozen Accidents

The NPT culture has been driven by political and economic influences. Our global nuclear power system - including institutions, infrastructures - has evolved from what Nobel physicist Murray Gell-Mann calls a Frozen Accident, which begins with an event, say the NPT organized around a central role for the IAEA. It then generates widespread, diverse consequences, bifurcations, deviations and path-dependent processes that are reinforced through positive feedback and result in a “frozen lock-in state” which can dominate an entire system and shape history. The way a path develops is not inevitable and could have turned out differently.

The Nuclear Power TRAP – Toxic RadioActive Proliferator

The NPT, tightly organized around nuclear power, is a TRAP –a Toxic RadioActive Proliferator. NPT Groupthink is still driven by archaic ideas, beliefs, interests, language, symbols and images that are frozen in consciousness and eclipse deeper understanding and constrain wiser actions. As the “third pillar” of nuclear energy keeps knocking down the other two pillars - nonproliferation and disarmament, might the entire system paradoxically provoke proliferation?



Whether we can collectively break out of these traps is a matter of consciousness and demystifying ourselves from nuclear myths and illusions. To free ourselves, we must recognize the ways in which we are trapped. Here is a partial list of TRAPS.

* Old Ways of Thinking TRAP –The world has changed in 40 years. We know things now that we didn’t know then. We have experienced Three Mile Island, Chernobyl and other accidents. We have hundreds of thousands of tons of waste that did not exist in 1970. We know about climate chaos and renewable energy – for which nuclear energy is a problem –not the solution. It is time to upgrade our global operating system to reflect hard science and 21st century realities.

* Manipulative, Orwellian Language and Framing TRAP – Language is crafted to create thought forms with emotional charges that motivate opinion and policy. People mindlessly repeat “atoms for peace” and “peaceful uses” of nuclear

energy. We don't say "water molecules for peace," or "peaceful uses of electricity." Why not just say "non-military uses"? Who could be against a "Nuclear Renaissance"? How ironic - the rebirth of death! The image of the cherished "third pillar" of the NPT seems essential to hold up the whole structure.

* The Inalienable Rights Frame Mind TRAP- Nuclear power is NOT an inalienable right - by definition - a right that "no earthly power can rightfully deny" and that "can only be transferred with the consent of the person possessing those rights." Furthermore, nations do not have rights, only individuals. It is astonishing that intelligent people repeat this perverse, misleading and fake use of language. What all life forms do in fact have an inalienable right to is clean air, water and safe, non-toxic, renewable energy.

* The Prestige TRAP – Framing nuclear energy as a right creates an artificial value and right to demand it. It manipulates desire and seduces many leaders and citizens into a dangerous lifestyle, devoting precious resources to creating an infrastructure harmful to their financial, political, security, health, and environmental interests.

* The Political Double Bind TRAP – Article IV creates a political TRAP, inviting conflicts that would not otherwise exist. Denying membership in the "nuclear club" to certain parties is discriminatory, and can be experienced as a humiliating insult. Claiming their "NPT given" "inalienable right," some states are drawn into preventable political conflicts that compromise their security and political relationships. Denying another's "inalienable right" creates a *double-bind* - damned if we allow it and damned if we deny it. The conflict with Iran would not exist without Article IV of the NPT. It is a conflict-generating artifice in which states can be treated in a provocative way, triggering a chain of reactions and counter reactions, and unwittingly escalating tensions within and between states. How many more unexpected conflicts might arise in the next 40 years?

* The Denial and Overconfidence TRAP – When enthusiastically promoting a vested interest, there is a tendency to exaggerate the potential for success and safety and to minimize potentials for accidents and failure. This is natural and common, especially in males and especially in leading up to war. Accidents, overruns and problems are inevitable, and can be catastrophic. Can we learn from the Deep Horizon oil catastrophe that the unexpected is inevitable eventually?

* The Proliferation TRAP – Nuclear plants are bomb factories. Countries with reactors can develop nuclear weapons. As political sands shift, as new threats and conflicts arise, countries may suddenly feel provoked into a need to "deter" dominating powers. As long as nuclear energy is promoted, the elimination of nuclear weapons will be impossible.

* The Terrorism TRAP – Nuclear power plants are vulnerable to theft of fissile materials that can be used to make dirty bombs, and are ideal targets for terrorist attacks.

* The Health and Human Rights TRAP - Both uranium mining and living close to nuclear reactors cause devastating health and environmental damage and great suffering to individuals, families, and whole communities, including cancer and birth defects. This denies innocent people, animals, and habitats their true inalienable right to health and safety.

* The Radioactive Waste TRAP – Radioactive waste remains dangerous for 240,000 years. With 63,000 tons of nuclear waste in the US alone, and no good solutions for storage, the NPT is encouraging more. There are problems with disposal, transportation, storage, theft and accidents. We trap our descendants for eons.

* The Money TRAP – Nuclear power is the most expensive form of energy. Estimated costs don't account for accidents, (which in the US will be borne by the taxpayers) earthquakes, predictable overruns, transportation, storage, and so on.

Consciousness and Courage

Given the overwhelming downside to everything nuclear, and the immediate feasibility of efficiency, conservation, and all forms of safe, clean, nontoxic, renewable, sustainable energy, let's consider weaning ourselves off of toxic radioactive proliferating poison power.

Fortunate countries without a nuclear infrastructure can leapfrog right over this toxic trouble to rely on clean, safe, renewable energy that will create more jobs and improve their security. Countries burdened with a nuclear infrastructure can improve efficiency, reduce wasteful practices, and phase in renewable energy with IRENA – The International Renewable Energy Association (www.irena.org), which now has 144 countries signed on. IRENA can supplant the IAEA as we phase out our nuclear infrastructure.

We are responsible to the rising Millennial generation, all future generations, and all species of life. It would be unconscionable to condemn them because we are TRAPped. The first step in liberating ourselves is recognition. Next comes

courage. Perhaps the many countries not seduced, and wisely choosing not to take the toxic route can raise their voices, and not collude with the Groupthink. Austria was the only country to pierce through groupthink to verbally renounce nuclear energy in the final speeches at the NPT on May 28, 2010 after adopting the new consensus treaty.

The structures that imprison us are very powerful. The stakes are as high as can be. Can we liberate ourselves from the scourge of war *and* of poisoning the Earth? It would be miraculous if NGOs and delegates could collaborate to test the limits of what might yet be possible.

Diane Perlman, PhD dianeperlman@gmail.com 202 775 0777 202 365 2104

Psychologists for Social Responsibility <http://www.psysr.org/>

Mediators Beyond Borders <http://www.mediatorsbeyondborders.org/>

Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University <http://icar.gmu.edu/>

Transcend <http://www.transcend.org/>

I AM THE ENEMY EXERCISE Diane Perlman, PhD, 1984

(Think of the following and ask yourself these questions. Depending on the group composition, people can do this in same sex, same religious or ethnic groups, and then discuss with members of an Other group afterwards.)

For some individual person, family, religious or ethnic group, gender group, organization, culture, or country on this planet I AM THE ENEMY.

What is it like to think of myself as the Enemy? How do I feel about being someone's Enemy?

To whom am I the enemy? In what ways do they perceive me as a threat?

Am I really a threat to them? How?

What have I, or my group done to earn the designation of Enemy?

If I were in their shoes, what would I think about me (us)? How would I feel about me (us)?

If I were in their shoes, how would I respond to my (groups') words and actions?

Are my (groups') words and actions successful in bringing about the results I (we) want?

What are the real and potential consequences of our traditional ways of interacting with each other?

Can I imagine any other way of approaching them?

What is it that they don't understand about me (us)?

What do I most want them to know about me or my group?

What don't I know about them? What might I possibly learn about them that would allow me to see them in a new light?

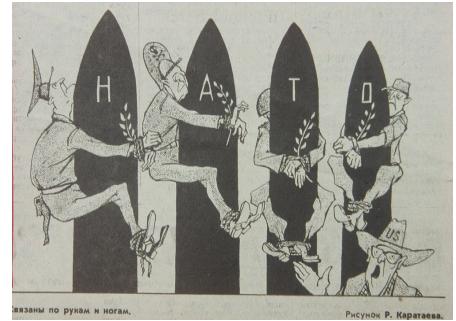
Am I willing to reevaluate my beliefs and concepts?

What would it take for me to be less of a threat? What might I have to give up? What might I gain?

What are the potential consequences of increased communication and understanding?

Imagine a time in five years from now, that you have transformed your relationship, and it is as good as it can possibly be. What does it look like? How has each side changed? What has each side gained? What steps led to an optimal outcome?

In 1984 I went to the Soviet Union as a citizen diplomat during the height of the nuclear arms race and the image of the Evil Empire. The following cartoons show images of the US from the Soviet perspective

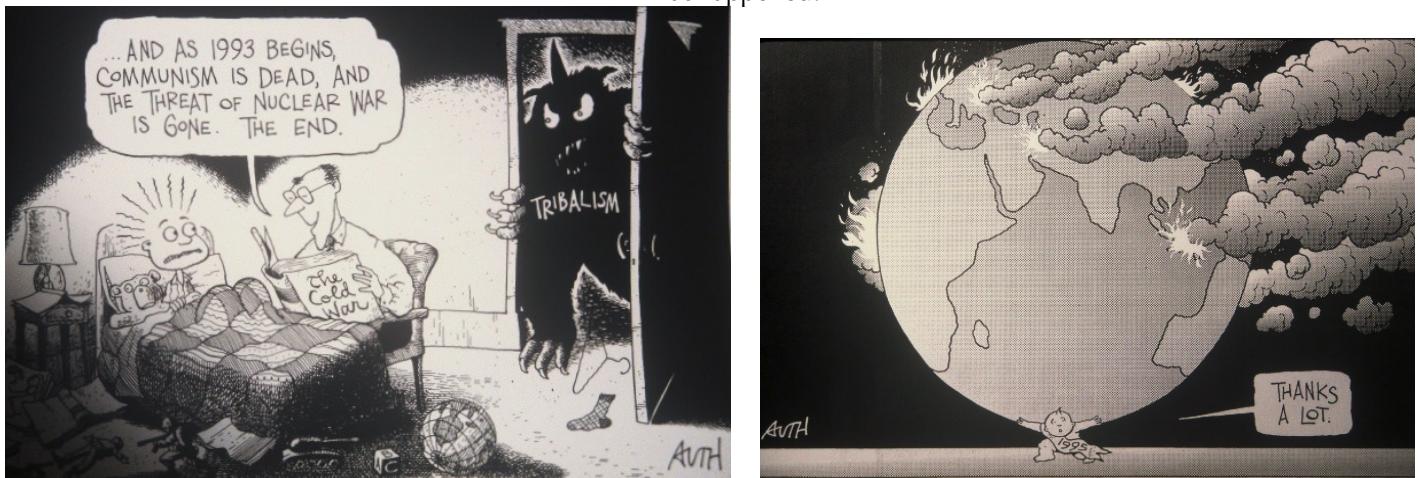


On June 12, 1982, one million people gathered in Central Park in New York City to call for an end to the nuclear arms race.





What happened?



".....before enlightened action can be taken, the issues have to be demystified." R.D.Laing



It is up to us to lift the burden from future generations.