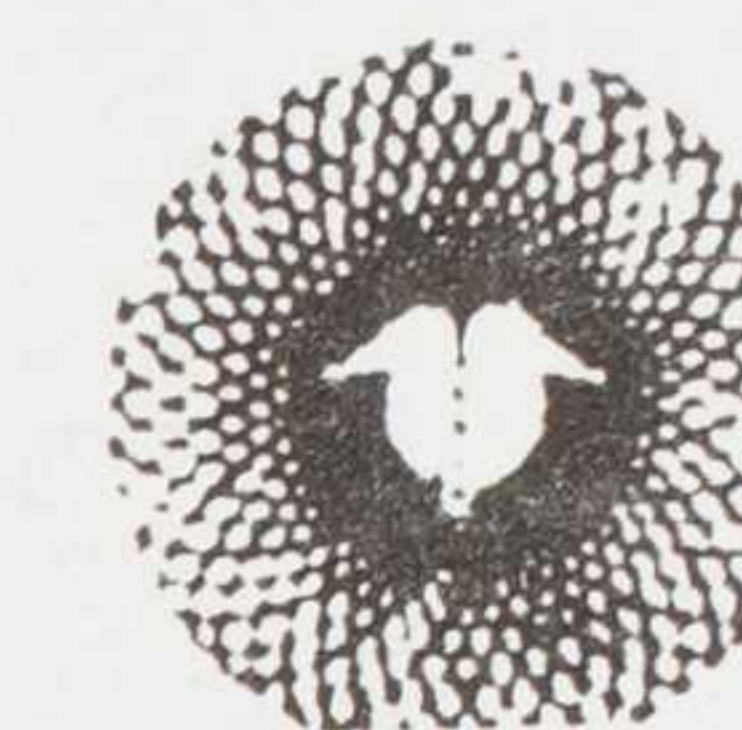


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Danger — Nuclear War



As physicians, scientists, and concerned citizens, alarmed by an international climate that increasingly presents nuclear war as a "rational" possibility, we are impelled to renew a warning, based on medical and scientific analyses, that:

- 1. Nuclear war, even a "limited" one, would result in death, injury, and disease on a scale that has no precedent in the history of human existence.*
- 2. Medical "disaster planning" for nuclear war is meaningless. There is no possible effective medical response. Most hospitals would be destroyed, most medical personnel dead or injured, most supplies unavailable. Most "survivors" would die.*
- 3. There is no effective civil defense. The blast, thermal and radiation effects would kill even those in shelters, and the fallout would reach those who had been evacuated.*
- 4. Recovery from nuclear war would be impossible. The economic, ecologic, and social fabric on which human life depends would be destroyed in the U.S., the U.S.S.R., and much of the rest of the world.*
- 5. In sum, there can be no winners in a nuclear war. Worldwide fallout would contaminate much of the globe for generations and atmospheric effects would severely damage all living things.*

Therefore, in the interests of protecting human

life, we appeal to you to:

- 1. Defuse the current tensions between our countries.*
- 2. Ban the use of all nuclear weapons.*
- 3. Recognize the threat posed by the very existence of our enormous nuclear arsenals, and begin dismantling them.*

We urge you to meet with us to discuss the medical consequences of nuclear war.

We urge all physicians in the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. to join us in this appeal.

This letter derives from our understanding of the destructive potential of nuclear explosions that would result should a nuclear war occur. To share with you our perspective on this possibility, we ask you to consider the following:

- The bomb dropped on Hiroshima had the explosive force of approximately 15,000 tons(15 kilotons) of TNT. Today, the U.S. has over 30,000 nuclear bombs and Russia has 20,000. Nuclear weapons in present day arsenals range in size from one kiloton to 20 megatons(20 million tons of TNT). All the bombs dropped during the eight and a half years the U.S. fought in Vietnam were equivalent to four million tons of TNT(4 megatons).*
- A 20 megaton thermonuclear bomb exploded on a clear day at ground level on a large east-coast city would create a fire-ball one and a half miles in diameter.*

• Survivors of the fires would be exposed to lethal or sublethal doses of radiation from short-term fallout. Even mild winds of 20 miles per hour would carry fallout as far as 150 miles where everyone exposed could receive a lethal dose within 24 hours. This would cause acute radiation sickness, with decreased resistance to infection, and death within one to two weeks. Sublethal doses would produce an increased incidence of stillbirths, fetal malformations, leukemia, and cancer. In subsequent generations genetic damage would probably appear.

• Hospitals would be destroyed and most medical personnel would be among the dead and injured. There would be millions of corpses. Food, air, and water would be contaminated. Survivors would die from starvation, dehydration, radiation sickness and infections.

• In an all-out nuclear exchange, all major population and industrial centers would be hit, both in the U.S. and U.S.S.R.. Such an exchange could be complete in one hour, and could destroy most life in the northern hemisphere. World-wide fallout would result, with possible destruction of the ozone layer, changes in the earth's temperature and mutation of crops. It would be a different world afterwards, colder, harsher, and contaminated by radiation for thousands of years. The number of deaths would break scales of comparison.

We must act now to prevent World War III.