

United States Pacifist Party

Copy of a letter

Bradford Lyttle
Presidential
Candidate

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President Ronald Reagan
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Ronald Reagan:

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In considering a number of the remarks about the peace movement that you made to the American Legion convention August 23, I receive the impression that you have a serious misunderstanding of the relationship that military force has to peace. Essentially, you seem to believe that superior military force can guarantee peace. Putting the matter another way, you believe that "deterrence" can be made stable, and forever prevent an "enemy" attack. This view is scientifically unsound. Mathematical probability analysis can demonstrate that deterrence is inherently unstable, and that efforts to maintain peace through a "balance of power" will tend to fail.

In a separate envelope, I'm sending you a booklet, The Flaw in Deterrence, which develops the mathematical probability analysis of deterrence in considerable detail. In addition to showing why deterrence is inherently unstable, the booklet explains dangerous errors in the thinking of a number of deterrence strategists, and suggests nonmilitary approaches to ending the arms race and securing peace.

I've sent copies of the booklet to Yuri Andropov, and the Soviet Peace Committee, as well as to a number of U.S. deterrence strategists. I believe the worldwide understanding of the probability equations that demonstrate that deterrence is inherently unstable is necessary if civilization and the human species is to survive. If national leaders continue to believe that balances of power and deterrence offer reliable foundations for security, catastrophic nuclear war can be expected.

The probability equations also show why installing the MX, Pershing II, and cruise missiles will decrease rather than increase U.S. security. Consequently, I hope you'll announce that the U.S. will not install these missiles, and invite the Soviet Union to join the U.S. in a disarmament race, and efforts to establish a democratic world government dedicated to abolishing competitive national armaments, and to securing political justice and economic sufficiency for all.

Sincerely,

Bradford Lyttle

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