

Nuclear Weapons

Student's Name

Institution

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The fact of possessing nuclear weapons by humanity generates a paradoxical situation: nuclear weapons exist, they are developing, improving, supported by a state of combat readiness, but on the other hand, humanity recognized and stated that it should never be used, since its use will be the last human (extremely inhuman) act. At the same time, it is clear that the widespread and immediate abolition of nuclear weapons is impossible at the moment. There are many varying points of view on nuclear weapons - from its complete rejection, expressed in demands of immediate ban on the research and development of its new kinds, and the destruction of all existing stocks and research laboratories, to uphold the infinite wisdom of further building of so-called “nuclear muscles”.

Hanging over the world’s nuclear threat is recorded and discussed not only in science, art, science fiction, nonfiction works, but also in official government documents. It is repeatedly stated that the atom must be peaceful and that nuclear war means the extinction of human civilization. It is also stated that nuclear weapon could be used to protect the world peace, but only in the worst-case scenario, when there are really no other ways. However, hundreds and thousands of conferences, symposiums, meetings, and negotiations were held, dozens of agreements were signed, including the destruction of the nuclear weapon, but humanity still has the ability of self-destruction. Thus, the problem of nuclear weapon existence and usage becomes a moral issue to be solved.

The middle of the 20th century was marked by the “Cold War” and the “arms race” between the two country titans - the Soviet Union and the United States. In those years, the world literally stood on the brink of the start of World War III, which would have been nuclear and probably literally could have become the humanity’s last war (Shultz, Perry, Kissinger & Nunn, 2007). However, in the 1990s the delicate balance was restored. Numerous conferences held by scientists around the world after the events in Hiroshima and

Nagasaki, were addressed to governments around the world and aimed at the idea of mankind self-destruction prevention.

If today there were no bombs, it would be better if it were not invented. Let us assume we casted mind back to 1939, when the country were arguing and states were debating whether the United states should develop the nuclear bomb or not. Perhaps they would have voted in favor of the fact that nuclear weapon should not be developed or produced. However, in case the authorities were familiar with Hitler's Germany plan to invent it, then, perhaps, they would have agreed on Franklin Roosevelt's proposition to develop it earlier than Nazis (Gregory, 2004). It was all about the arms race and victory in the War. As we can see, the very decision was made. Unfortunately, one cannot return the time. Even in case all countries settle for disarmament, some might be negative to this idea and keep the nuclear potential. The authoritarian states with little transparency are most likely to be in the list of successful cheaters. After all, North Korea says it had developed and tested nuclear arms, despite the signing of Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (Shultz, Perry, Kissinger & Nunn, 2007).

Assuming that the attention to consequences is paid, the countries would probably accept the morality of unequal spread of fission weapons. For example, there is an argument that weapons should be designed, but only for self-defense. States, having nuclear weapons, should strive to decrease the likelihood of its use. They say arms should be used to help save the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries, and steps should be taken to reduce nuclear potential, as political conditions allow (O'Brien, 2010). However, most states are committed to the nuclear weapon usage viewpoint, since they believe that their security would be let down if more states obtained nuclear weapons.

Some people argue that the risk of nuclear proliferation is reduced. In the real world, events happen in such a way that the higher usage of nuclear weapons is a high probability

that in the end, it is accidentally used, less handling of the nuclear crisis and the extra difficulties in the attempts to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in world politics. Finally, the last argument is totally against this issue. Followers of this viewpoint argue the nuclear weapon should never be invented. They say the nuclear weapon is a great temptation, since the governments are always struggling for power and authority and from their point of view is too good weapon not to use it in this struggle (O'Brien, 2010).

Scriptural arguments in defense of a nuclear weapon consider war as a last resort to restore or protect peace. National leaders must (if managed properly) keep order and punish the perpetrators. God says it is right for them, as it is written in Romans 13:1-7 and 1 Pet. 2:14 (English Standard Version). Despite the fact that the war cannot be pleasant, and the lives of innocent people are endangered, the Christian tradition openly acknowledges the real danger of human egocentrism and sinfulness, because of which it is necessary to use force to stop the spread of evil and violence.

On the contrary to conventional wisdom words of Jesus about turning the other cheek after one hit the right imply a personal affront, in no way connected with the act of physical violence. In other words, Jesus was referring to the following: "If you are offended, be ready to re-insult." When one considers that people during Jesus' time were mostly right-handed, hit on the right cheek was a slap in the face and even now in the Middle East, and it is perceived as a particularly humiliating insult. In Lamentations 3:30 there is the question just about such insult: "Substituting the cheeks to the beater is filled full with reproach" (English Standard Version). This offense is just as humiliating, as if the man spat into one's face.

Jesus does not say "Do not defend yourself when you are attacked." He also says "Do not plead for the woman when she was raped" or "Do not defend your country, when it is attacked by the enemy." Jesus did not deny the legal principle of "an eye for an eye and a

tooth for a tooth.” He railed against the misuse of this principle in order to justify violence or revenge.

The consideration of the morality of nuclear weapon issue is not new for the Church. For about 45 years ago, “total war” and the notion of “mass destruction weapon” were condemned by the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council and Vatican Council II. In addition, they had stated: “Any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities or extensive areas along with their population is a crime against God and the man himself. It merits unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation” (O’Brien, 2010).

The Christian teaching on nuclear weapons and its morality has deep roots in the history of religion. It is based on the deep willing to protect human life and freedom. This commitment grows out of the Jesus teaching, which states, “I am the way and the truth and the life.” Jesus’ mission was to confirm that humanity “might have life and have it more abundantly.” This moral issue is initially based on the fifth commandment: “You shall not kill.” The religion and Church has the aim to defend life and reputation of every individual, especially unborn child, poor, physically disabled, orphans – all socially unprotected stats. World religions do not deny the possibility of the use of weapons, both in relation to other religions, and in relation to the brothers in faith. The moral commitment of weapon use is initially to protect human life and world peace. As a result, the war teaching appeared. It makes war, as it was said earlier, the last resort and the measure to be taken only in case other measure is impossible. In addition, this teaching places strict limits of military force use.

To my mind, nuclear weapon is not the admissible way to protect the world peace. I strongly believe everything can be done without using force. In case the world peace is achieved using a nuclear weapon or any other kind of mass destruction weapons, it would not really be peace, but a fear to start a new war, knowing the consequences and victim of preceding one. In addition, as it was said earlier, all weapons, especially such powerful as

nuclear ones, are a great temptation. Having the weapon and not using it is a challenge for the modern governments, since they always want to draw country's boundaries. Nuclear weapon is a good and quick way to achieve this goal. In addition, officials sometimes think first of the countries' interests, not the world ones. Thus, careless use of these weapons may lead to the world destruction.

In order to conclude, it should be noted that the continuous threat of nuclear weapons remains an important and serious problem, but the pace of work in this direction these days does not match the scale of threats and their relevance. The use of nuclear weapons may be justified from the religious viewpoint. However, this issue will be discussed for years, perhaps even decades, until something horrible will happen and the necessity to make some decisions would be inevitable. The consequences of inaction could be catastrophic, and we must continue to seek an answer to the question: how citizens would react to the chaos and suffering from a nuclear attack?