

should not be allowed to serve as a "red herring" desensitizing our awareness of the overriding issue involved: our national nuclear policies.

Considering the deplorable fact that our President and his recent predecessors, with the consent of the Congress, have committed this nation to unprecedented expenditures of energy to maintain and improve our nuclear capabilities, it follows that nuclear warfare and preparedness for the possibility — the subject plan, its "assumptions" and scenario — are to them calculated, necessary and acceptable costs to be borne by the American people as the price of "freedom." Crisis Relocation Planning, then, is a logical extension of illogical premises: that nuclear war is not only "thinkable" but winnable, that there can be meaningful survival of such a war, that "first-strike" capability enhances deterrence and the degree or quality of survival of a retaliatory strike, that there will be "probable" warning of a nuclear attack, and that waging nuclear war, offensively if thought necessary, is justified if it preserves the capitalistic system and our form of government.

The plan itself, in our opinion, is the reduction absurdum of the premise of nuclear war as a solution to international dispute. Paradoxically, it is the single most comprehensive self-indictment of nuclear weaponry and their use in warfare yet articulated by any governmental source. Most damning are not those explicit references to huge population displacement, immense logistic and medical demands or fallout and radiation exposure, but rather the implicit indications that the planners and those who establish the policies that necessitate the consideration of such plans are out of touch with the realities of nuclear explosions and their aftermath. It may be said such individuals are ignorant of such consequences, choose to ignore them or are tragically mistaken as to their magnitude.

Evidence in support of this opinion is found in the following excerpts from the "Mini-Nuclear Civil Protection Plan for Oregon Host Counties." Attachment 4-4 of the plan, entitled "How to Protect Yourself from Nuclear Blast and Fallout," advises us if attacked enroute to a host area to "protect oneself from the initial effects of the nuclear explosion by not looking at the flash" and in the "possible five to fifteen seconds we might have to act to stop our car, get out, take cover and, if we forget everything else, stay in a safe place at five minutes." It also advises us that "with small to medium doses (of radiation from fallout) one's body will repair itself and we will recover," and that "fallout particles can be swept, brushed or washed off." Attachment 4-1, entitled "Relocation Instructions for Residents of the State of Oregon," admonishes us to "pull all window shades (as) this will lessen the chance of heat and blast damage to property inside your home." Attachment 3-3 indicates "telephone service will be available during the emergency" while Annex K, Appendix Two declares that "Major food processors and wholesalers in the state will continue to operate."

Such simplistic and grossly optimistic, if not misleading, statements as quoted establish the tenor of incredibility which pervades the plan from its introductory "assumptions" to concluding "plans for expedient fallout shelters."



Marion Kennedy

All too clearly they remind one of Sydney Harris' lucid observation that "The real danger is not that computers will begin to think like men, but that men will begin to think like computers." Perhaps one might even be tempted to comment, in the computer vernacular of course, "Garbage in, garbage out."

The consequences of nuclear war would be and, in the cases of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, have been so devastating to the biosphere and its inhabitants as to preclude any justification of nuclear warfare as a means to "defend" or perpetuate any form of government or economic system. If we as a nation have forgotten the lessons of Hiroshima and Nagasaki or have forsaken our sensitivity to the continuing trauma of the survivors of that holocaust, the reason must be found in the minds of those who lead this country and those who support them who value more what is tangible, can be seen, touched and quantified, what effects the stock market or alters the prices of commodities and rates of exchange than the lives of their brothers and sisters of the flesh whom they fail to recognize as such.

If we are to reign the self-destructive rush toward the ominous corollary to this sterile brand of materialism, we must provide our leaders with an unmistakable consensus that becomes indelibly imprinted upon their consciousness: that we will no longer support the policies of fratricide promulgated by the present or any future administration; that we have perceived, even though faintly, the prospect and necessity of peaceful coexistence through untried national nonviolent alternatives, such as a nuclear arms "freeze" and subsequent nuclear disarmament, repudiation of "first-strike" capability, the outlawing of nuclear weapons by the United Nations, or the Gandhian course of Satya (truth) and ahinsa (nonviolence).

To those who are persuaded that these or other nonviolent courses are tantamount to surrender to communism or other such administration bugbears, we reply that we should, indeed, "surrender" — not our freedom but our national ego that is robbing us of that very

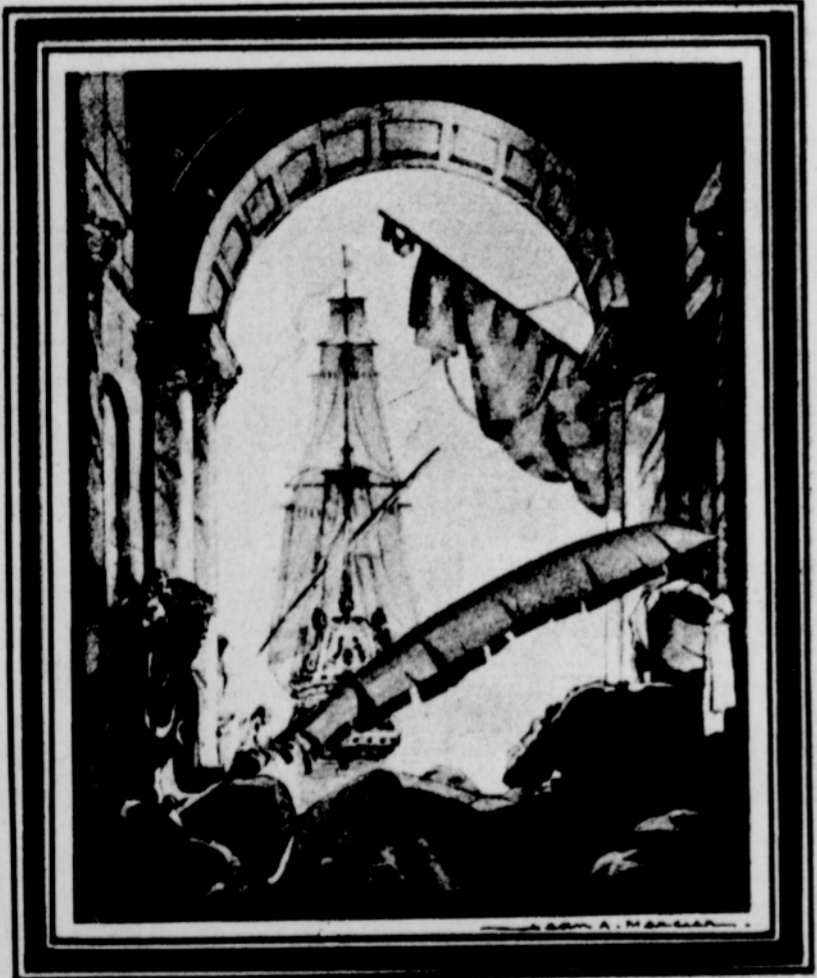
freedom we hold so dear. We should fear our own intolerance, delusions of grandeur and ideological obsessions than the suspected strategy of our "enemies."

If we as a nation have been "chosen" for a higher calling, then when, pray, are we to exhibit the example to the world proving us worthy? Is our present course morally, intellectually and spiritually superior to that of our competitors? Are we not really the same as any other national power possessing nuclear capabilities, since we all are perfecting the techniques of nuclear warfare and apparently would utilize them if the "necessity" (real or imaginary) arose? Is that reason superior which led us so far into the labyrinth of the unimaginable as to assign the moral responsibility for our actions to amoral computers and systems already proven somewhat less than "fail-safe"?

Evidently it is a traumatic and momentous undertaking for a democratic people to break away from the patterns of thought and action that have, from the inception of our country, served the narrow interests of the political, military and economic elite and resulted in the spilling — over and over again — of our precious sons' and daughters' blood. But it is time — the age to express our consciousness of the necessity of change, individual by individual, until the leaven of our new vision transforms the national voice that speaks to our brothers and sisters abroad. That voice must announce our national intention to initiate at least the first steps toward true peace in the world.

Through the coming election we have the opportunity to so express ourselves. Let us not fail to speak with a loving heart rather than with a fearful mind. Let us truly begin the healing of our world with joyful expectation, not grim determination, with clear, well-defined images of love and success, not hate and despair. For the sake of our precious children — Let us begin!

Chuck and Barbara McLaughlin live in Cannon Beach, which is in Clatsop County.




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