“There are no right hands for wrong weapons” pronounced United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. Though we may be living through arguably the most peaceful era in the history of our species, violence has far from ceased to exist and that is unlikely to change. Technology has advanced to allow for the least amount of energy and resources utilized for the greatest results in multiple areas of human life; weapons have proven to be no exception. They can cause catastrophic damage with relatively little human effort; they are efficient. Nuclear weapons have an extremely high risk factor, are not worth the exceedingly high costs of production, and not to mention pose a threat to the intentional destruction of entire societies.

On January 13th, 2018, Hawaiian citizens froze in fear. The emergency alert continued to blink on their phones as they struggled to understand what was happening. In reality, nothing was going on, but a false message indicating a nuclear attack was the cause of mass hysteria. Luckily, military personnel did not immediately fire a counterattack, but the prospect of a nuclear war was certainly feasible. Systems are faulty, technology testing is sensitive, and human error is common. Although many have argued that society is too rational to impose nuclear warfare, this does not account for the likely possibility of a mistake. Especially as nuclear technology is expanding, states with no experience in nuclear power are beginning their own attempts at building the weapons. This widens the gap for miscalculation, and inaccuracies would decimate an entire region.

Globally, more than $1000 billion was budgeted towards nuclear weapons in the last decade. $1000 billion could transform education, healthcare, the climate crisis, or any number of issues facing humanity. In essence, we could apply this funding towards bettering society instead of butchering it. Additionally, the time and energy expended by the nuclear technicians would be valuable in other areas of science, expanding technology in positive projects. We only have this one planet with limited resources, therefore it matters how we use our time, money, and assets. Abolishing nuclear weapons is the first step in putting the preservation of human life first.

“The aftermath in Nagasaki was a nightmare. Major hospitals had been flattened, and care for the injured was impossible. Schools, churches, and homes had disappeared... For

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2 Bret Stetka. “Steven Pinker: This is History’s Most Peaceful Time—New Study ‘Not So Fast.’” Last Modified November 9, 2017. https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/steven-pinker-this-is-historys-most-peaceful-time-new-study-not-so-fast/


decades abnormally high amounts of cancer, birth defects, and tumors haunted victims." 75 years ago, terror was imposed on the citizens of two Japanese cities. As the tally of lives lost rose, hearts sunk. Is this what humanity has resorted to? Will we create the circumstances of our own demise? These questions weigh heavily on scholars, the military, political leaders, and citizens alike. In our contemporary state, the bombing would likely have been met with backlash, and with nine states in possession of nuclear weapons, the consequences would likely be unfathomable. Some scholars have argued that mutually assured destruction will keep lasting peace between nuclear states, but by revisiting historical conflicts, it is easy to see that in the majority of violent encounters, the violence only tends to escalate as time progresses. Before World War I, strategists believed that strong military alliances would deter enemies from starting a war they would not win. The strategy failed. It would be foolish to believe that all states would allow weapons of mass destruction to sit there and collect dust, even in the face of a conflict they would not win. In fact, it has already been proven wrong.

Nuclear weapon abolition will not bring about eternal peace, that is not being debated. However, it will preserve humanity. Common sense reasons that if we wish to preserve world peace, allowing strong states the power to obliterate populations is not the answer. Without nuclear weapons, war will no doubt continue, but the overall loss will be substantially less. Abolition protects against vast casualties, both intentional and unintentional. Furthermore, the fiscal burden placed on countries with nuclear weapons will be raised allowing for advancement in other areas, working towards solving humanitarian crises. The proliferation of nuclear weapons will ultimately create a situation of human crisis, even worse than it already has. The only answer is an international ban. That is how we save our world.

Word Count: exactly 800 words

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Bibliography


