

The Courage to Decide for Peace. The Threat of Nuclear Annihilation

By [Christopher Black](#)

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"Competitive armament is not a way to prevent war. Every step in this direction brings us nearer to catastrophe. The armament race is the worst method to prevent open conflict.

On the contrary, real peace cannot be reached without systematic disarmament on a supranational scale. I repeat, armament is no protection against war, but leads inevitably to war."

These words of Dr. Einstein, so clear because they state such a simple fact, are words ignored by all the nations of the world and the results are as he and logic predicted. Today the peoples of the world face the threat of nuclear annihilation not because the disputes between nations are unresolvable through negotiations, because every dispute can be resolved if the will is there, but because the very existence of nuclear weapons creates the political demand that they be used, either directly or through intimidation, to force one nation's will on another.

Bearing Einstein's words in mind, I wonder what would happen if tomorrow the leadership of the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea stated that they have thought about what Einstein said and have decided to eliminate their nuclear weapons without even asking for any reciprocity in return, just to set an example, to do the right thing, to prepare for peace instead of war. Can you imagine the consternation in the capitals of the nuclear powers; in Washington, London, Moscow, Beijing, Paris, Berlin, Rome, Tel Aviv, Islamabad, Delhi, the raised eyebrows, the puzzled looks, turning-hopefully- to smiles in Moscow and Beijing, but disgust in Washington, London and Tel Aviv?

Would any of them follow suit? Would they lift the economic war against the DPRK? Would any of them feel shamed by the noble act of a small nation that has just stood up to the world with the threat of peace instead of the threat of war? Would any of them rush to sign the new Treaty On The Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and then proceed to follow the DPRK's example and begin to eliminate their nuclear arsenals? I think the answer is obvious. They would not. But why not?

There is no rational reason to offer us since the possession and use of these weapons is a war crime. Nuclear weapons are indiscriminate and have catastrophic consequences for all humanity. Instead the irrational reason offered by all the nuclear powers to justify the unjustifiable is that nuclear weapons guarantee national security, the very same reason that is now offered by the DPRK. But only the DPRK is subject to economic warfare and threats of nuclear Armageddon for having and testing these weapons. Yet, the DPRK is the only one of the nuclear powers that in 2016 voted in support of the UN resolution to begin negotiations

on a treaty to ban nuclear weapons. That may surprise the world public to know. Every citizen may well ask their national leaders, "If the DPRK was willing to support the ban on nuclear weapons just a year ago why did you and all the other nuclear powers refuse to support the ban?"

And again they will receive the same circular argument that "they have it so we have to have it", though this argument is not one allowed to the DPRK. Of course the beginning of the circle is the United States of America that first developed, tested, and used these weapons. And it must be remembered that the United States did not use them on military targets but on Japanese civilians, an act of world terror that can never be forgotten. It is this American terror to which the USSR reacted in self-defence and built its nuclear weapons, as did China. Britain and France built theirs to carry some weight in Washington, to retain some domination in the world, and to add to the NATO arsenal aimed at the USSR, now Russia.

Their example encouraged India and Pakistan to build them, to what end no one can determine since they cannot be used on the subcontinent without killing everyone. Israel has them to intimidate the Middle East with the same result. Even European NATO powers have access to nuclear bombs supplied by the US. And on it goes.

If, to carry our thought experiment further, President Trump experienced a miraculous epiphany and tomorrow morning announced that the United States feared no one and was reversing its two centuries old policy of aggression and imperial expansion and therefore was going to destroy all its nuclear weapons, could any of the remaining nuclear powers maintain their arsenals in the face of public opinion that would sweep the globe in support of the American action for peace and disarmament? I think not. The nuclear prison in which we all live can be unlocked but the key to the door of disarmament lies in the pocket of the United States. It only has to act.

But action requires will and desire. The leadership of the United States, bankrupt of any positive and progressive solutions to the economic and social decline of its society can think of only one solution; plundering the planet. It therefore refuses to give up its ambition of world domination and in consequence the militarists insist on maintaining the nuclear threat as the key factor of their foreign policy.

The threat they maintain is so frightening that even Russia and China, which logic would dictate should be supporting the DPRK against US nuclear threats, prefer to set principle aside and to squeeze the people of the DPRK, in order to avoid a general nuclear war, which is what they fear war in Korea will lead to. But this is a path sown with mines that can blow up at any time because American officials, including Trump, and the controlled media, are using the Russian and Chinese support of sanctions against the DPRK as evidence that the US is in the right and justified in its aggression against the DPRK. And, "so it goes," as Billy Pilgrim likes to say in *Slaughterhouse 5*, Kurt Vonnegut Jr.'s account of the mass slaughter of civilians in the firestorm created by Allied bombs in the city of Dresden in 1945.

For Russia and China the expressed central issue on the Korean peninsula is the threat of general nuclear war. But that is not the issue for the United States. That is its propaganda. The primary issue for the United States is that the DPRK insists on the sovereign right of its people to govern themselves howsoever they choose. It refuses to accept the dominance of the United States over Korea. This independence undermines US domination of Japan, South Korea and East Asia generally. The Russians and Chinese know this very well and are trying

earnestly to get the United States to a negotiating position and constantly insist on the application of the obligatory requirement in the UN resolutions that the United States seek a peaceful resolution of all issues. But the Americans never refer to this obligation in their propaganda. In fact, just this first week of October, President Trump attacked his own Foreign Secretary, Rex Tillerson, for merely stating he had contact with officials of the DPRK.

The United States has even managed to insert its inflammatory anti-socialist propaganda in the resolutions. Resolution 2375 of 11 September 2017 contains political language that is very troubling. At sections 24 and 25 under the subheading "Political" the big powers state

"their deep concern at the grave hardship that the people of the DPRK are subjected to, condemns the DPRK for pursuing nuclear weapons and ballistic weapons instead of the welfare of its people while people in the DPRK have great unmet needs, and emphasizes the necessity of the DPRK respecting the welfare and inherent dignity of the people in the DPRK."

This is a clear attack on the DPRK as a socialist state. It is also an attack composed of a series of lies because the DPRK is one of the few countries in the world that actually does concern itself with the welfare of its people, as every neutral observer who has been there has reported time and again.

That the United States could draft such a paragraph when it is the nation that spends more of its peoples taxes on nuclear weapons, missiles and its armed forces than any other and does little for the welfare of its citizens can only be explained by its leaderships' pathological hypocrisy. How Russia and China can support this language when they too make the same expenditures on useless weapons at the expense of the welfare of their people, only they can answer. But, again, I suggest that can be explained by their deep fear of a nuclear war launched by the United States. And "so it goes."

I began with Dr. Einstein and so will close with him. In answer to a question on UN Radio on June 16, 1950, "Can we prevent war?" he replied,

"There is a very simple answer. If we have the courage to decide ourselves for peace, we will have peace. ...We are not engaged in a play but in a condition of utmost danger to existence. If you are not firmly decided to resolve things in a peaceful way, you will never come to a peaceful solution."

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