

NUCLEAR MYTH

Nuclear threats have gone away since the end of the Cold War.

FALSE: The reality is that in the aftermath of the Cold War, a variety of new nuclear threats have emerged. Among these are the following dangers:

- Increased chances of nuclear weapons falling into the hands of terrorists willing to use them;
- Policies of the US government to make nuclear weapons smaller and more usable;
- Use of nuclear weapons by accident, particularly because of decaying Russian infrastructure; and
- Spread of nuclear weapons to other states that may perceive them to be an “equalizer” against a more powerful state.

NUCLEAR FACT

There are still some 26,000 nuclear warheads in the world, enough to destroy civilization many times over and destroy most life on earth. More than 4,500 warheads remain on hair trigger alert. Nuclear weapons are known to exist in the U.S., Russia, China, U.K. France, India, Israel, Pakistan, and quite possibly North Korea. Number of countries capable of developing nuclear weapons: 44. Nuclear weapons make humans an endangered species.

Source: http://www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2009/09/facts_myths.pdf

WHY NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT?

The failure of nuclear weapons states to act to eliminate their nuclear arsenals will likely result in the proliferation of nuclear weapons to other nations. If nuclear weapons states continue to maintain the position that nuclear weapons preserve their security, it is only reasonable that other nations with less powerful military forces, such as North Korea, will decide that their security should also be maintained by nuclear arsenals.

REFLECTION

Remembering our particular vocation as Franciscans to be messengers of peace in this world, let us encourage and stimulate the gift of being prophets of a new style of co-existence based on love and familiarity and, therefore, on non-violence, justice and the integral care of our mother earth (*cf CantC*); let us defend the right to life on all levels and the possibility of access to the essential resources for all; in a particular way we should suffer with and wish to be close to the innumerable victims of this world. On the basis of this prophetic dimension of our vocation we raise our voice in favor of disarmament on all levels (*cf. The Compendium of the social doctrine of the Church, n. 508s*).

Instruments of Peace

*Letter of the Conference of the Franciscan Family
on the occasion of Pentecost 2005*

CORPORATE STAND OF THE CLINTON FRANCISCANS

We, the Sisters of St. Francis of Clinton, Iowa, Associates and Sojourners, oppose the continued maintenance, research, development, and threatened use of the United States arsenal of nuclear weapons. We call on our government to fulfill our commitments to nuclear disarmament as agreed to in the Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1970 and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty of 1996.

For more information about nuclear disarmament,
Please visit www.ClintonFranciscans.com

