

## NUCLEAR MYTH

### **Nuclear weapons make a country safer.**

FALSE: By threatening massive retaliation, the argument goes; nuclear weapons prevent an attacker from starting a war. There are many ways, however, in which deterrence could fail, including misunderstandings, faulty communications, irrational leaders, miscalculations and accidents.

## NUCLEAR FACT

The number of accidents, false alarms, and malfunctions involving U.S. nuclear weapons before 1980 according to the U.S. government: 32. Several of these have put us on the brink of accidental nuclear war.

Source: Center for Defense Information <http://www.cdi.org/issues/nukeaccidents/accidents.htm>

## WHY NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT?

The very existence of nuclear weapons leaves open the possibility that a nuclear exchange might take place. This could happen intentionally, inadvertently (as in the Cuban Missile Crisis when the US and USSR almost blundered into nuclear war), or by an accidental launch. In the absence of total nuclear disarmament, terrorists might acquire nuclear weapons. Such a scenario has become more probable since the USSR dissolved. There have been many reports of attempts to smuggle weapons-grade plutonium from Russia. The fewer nuclear weapons there are in the world, the fewer there are for terrorists to steal. Every step toward the abolition of nuclear weapons would increase our security. Without abolition, there is always the danger that nuclear weapons will proliferate – that more and more countries will obtain them. It is ultimately unrealistic to expect that in a world in which some nations rely upon nuclear weapons, other nations will not seek to attain them. A world where there are many nuclear-armed countries would be even more dangerous.

## REFLECTION

Can we go along with the intent to use nuclear weapons? What it is wrong to do, it is wrong to *intend* to do. If it is wrong for me to kill you, it is wrong for me to plan to do it...Likewise, if I intended to use nuclear weapons in massive retaliation; I have already committed massive murder in my heart.

-- Richard T. McSorley, SJ

## 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](http://www.ClintonFranciscans.com)

