

BACK TO THE FUTURE

The Nightmare Scenario

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For those of us who were adults in the 1960s, the threat of nuclear war brings back frightening memories. There was training in grade schools whereby children crouched under their desks, and governments recommended in-home air-raid shelters. As I recall, there was even an exposition on shelters held in Vancouver, BC. I certainly thought about getting one and studied the plans for installation, along with doing a review of the provisions one would need.

By this time, the old-fashioned atomic bombs used on Japan were obsolete and replaced by the hydrogen bomb—commonly called the H-bomb.

The main scientists whose work resulted in the atomic, and later hydrogen bomb were Albert Einstein (d. 1955), J. Robert Oppenheimer (d. 1967), and Otto Hahn (d. 1968). Oppenheimer was strongly against the use of the atomic bomb on Japan because he reasoned (very



correctly) that once rogue nations would see of its actuality, they would never stop in their quest to obtain one. As all three men likely knew each other, I am sure

they were all of the same opinion. Indeed, Hahn became a passionate campaigner against the use of nuclear energy as a weapon. One source states that he joined the Masonic Order in 1938.

Most of us don't sort of get into the subject of nuclear weapons, other than being inundated with Iran's determination to obtain such, and now North Korea's claim that it has detonated a hydrogen bomb. The fear being that this country will now refine the bomb so that it can be used on a missile.

The major difference between an atomic bomb and a hydrogen bomb is size of the explosion. The Soviet Union exploded their 58-megaton H-bomb in 1961 in the Arctic. It was about 3,000 times more powerful than the Hiroshima atomic bomb. The photographs seen on the opening page is of this bomb. Hydrogen bombs, however, can be designed to regulate the size of the blast.

Although the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes has always been promoted, its use for destruction has become paramount with certain ideologies. Indeed, we can be thankful that the science and technology were "not quite there yet" when Adolf Hitler was in power.

The main concern and "nightmare" concerning nuclear weapons is first the physical extent of the destruction, and second the effects of radiation (fall-out). Such weapons just "keep on giving." Most of us are totally dependent on a highly structured and complex society. If



we are stripped of what we have come to depend on as the "basics," we will not last very long. There are people who can, and do, live in the wilderness; and these hardy souls would likely be the only long-term survivors of a major nuclear confrontation.

Nuclear weapons are what are termed, "state of the art." During the time of our very early Masonic brethren, weaponry was nowhere near as sophisticated. Nevertheless, there was still a major concern with human conflict. Our Order was created to have men associate without divisions based on class, race, personal opinions and religious beliefs. Essentially, without such, "we are all in the same boat." We call it "meeting on the level."

Certainly, since God created man, or vice-versa if you are so inclined, the need for this type of understanding has been the same—nothing has changed. For one to believe that he can conquer the world based on things "outside the boat" is beyond foolhardy. We can only hope that a nuclear war is not necessary to prove this. CLM

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