**Nuclear armageddon**

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 “When militarism is addressed as a psychosocial disease, the absurd irrationality of its symptoms is clearly exposed.”

These words are from a 1992 essay by N. Arther Coulter published in a journal called Medicine and War. Who would have guessed? They're as relevant now as they were three decades ago.

God bless Armageddon.

As war wreaks hell in Ukraine – and the threat of a nuclear confrontation between superpowers continues to intensify – Nato is in the process of prepping for the end of the world. It’s an annual two-week training event called Steadfast Noon – a nuclear practice run that gives European flight crews a chance to practice loading and dropping “non-strategic” nuclear bombs. Russia is expected to conduct its own annual nuclear drill, known as Grom (that is, Thunder), soon as well.

I can’t read about this without summoning what I call “the big why?” from deep within. Endless resources are devoted annually to nuclear deterrence, a.k.a., the big bluff: “If you mess with me, you’re gonna get it.” The point, allegedly, is to prevent war, which is absolutely paradoxical in a global political system based on the psychosocial disease of militarism, i.e., the pursuit of national interest and the maintenance of safety primarily via force and violence.

No matter that this is the nuclear age, that force and violence could – oh so easily – go too far and wreak horror on everyone. The preparation for nuclear war continues unabated, while the voices of opposition remain merely cries from the political margins. There's no actual “debate” here, just a lot of powerless anguish, or so it seems.

For instance, two years ago an open letter, signed by 56 former political leaders (including former prime ministers) of 20 NATO countries, as well as Japan and South Korea, was released to the world, pleading to current NATO countries – to all the nuclear-armed nations – to sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which the U.N. passed in 2017 by a vote of 122-1. The nations represented by the letter's signatories have, of course, totally ignored the treaty, which was ratified last year, making nuclear weapons technically “illegal,” which seems to mean nothing at all.

The letter concludes thus: “With close to 14,000 nuclear weapons located at dozens of sites across the globe and on submarines patrolling the oceans at all times, the capacity for destruction is beyond our imagination. All responsible leaders must act now to ensure that the horrors of 1945 are never repeated. Sooner or later, our luck will run out – unless we act. The nuclear weapon ban treaty provides the foundation for a more secure world, free from this ultimate menace. We must embrace it now and work to bring others on board. There is no cure for a nuclear war. Prevention is our only option.”

Stunning words! They were signed by former leaders of the following countries: Albania, Belgium, Canada, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain and Turkey.

They also wrote: “. . .we appeal to current leaders to advance disarmament before it is too late.”

“We appeal . . .?” And suddenly the whole letter crawled back into the political margins. These were former prime ministers, former defense ministers, speaking the deepest possible political truth, but seemingly they had no more power to bring about the change – global nuclear disarmament – than I do.

Behind the formal language was a simple plea:” Come on, guys. Nuclear militarism doesn't work. You know it as well as we do.” But nothing has changed. Perhaps only when you're no longer in power do you become free of the psychosocial disease of militarism.

Excerpted: ‘15 Seconds Until Nuclear

Armageddon’.

Courtesy: Commondreams.org