

## **The Church and The Ideology of National Security**

**Chaplain, Major General, Stuart E. Barstad, USAF**

Whenever religious leaders speak or write on subjects of national security or national policy, there are those who question the propriety of the Church's voice; and at another level, those who blatantly criticize what the church has to say. Providing a particularly caustic example of this criticism, Pulitzer prize-winner editorialist, Edwin M. Yoder, Jr., commenting on the Roman Catholic American bishop's pastoral letter, "The Challenge of Peace," wrote in an editorial for the Washington Post, "The opinion of Bishops on the fine points of nuclear deterrence is approximately as valuable as the opinion of Generals on the finepoints of transubstantiation." Roman Catholic writer Michael Novak, arguing against the thinking of the American bishop's pastoral letter said, "You don't qualify as a peacemaker just because you speak words of peace." Lutheran church historian, Martin Marty took a different tack when he suggested the first role of the Church should not be to provide answers to global questions but to challenge the answers being given by society and government regarding our welfare and the welfare of the world in which we live.

Many of us have been embarrassed by church leaders and church assemblies making pronouncements when they knew little or nothing about the subject. On one side, the Church has been

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Chaplain, Major General, Stuart Barstad is the Chief of Chaplains, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C. Chaplain Barstad, endorsed by the American Lutheran Church, has served in England, Thailand, Germany, and at numerous bases in the United States. His Military decorations and awards include the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters and the Air Force Commendation Medal.

sometimes critical of national policy without having the facts. On the other side, government and political figures have made critical statements about the Church and its leaders, not because they were misinformed or ignorant, but because they were speaking out quite legitimately and authoritatively on issues, decisions, and national policy as these issues and decisions related to the moral and spiritual dimensions of human life itself.

This article represents the voice of one who stands in both the religious and secular worlds and of one who is deeply committed to the business of peacekeeping and peacemaking. The article attempts to do more than provide balance and insight to this problem; it attempts to encourage and to contribute to a healthier dialogue between these two points of view, between these two camps.

The Church, defined in the broadest sense as the One, Holy, Universal, and Apostolic Church, consisting of all those in every age who have been united with Jesus Christ through faith, baptism, and fellowship, speaks through its individual members, and also as a corporate body. Since the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century, the various divisions of the Protestant Church, like the Roman Catholic Church, have sought a clearer understanding of themselves and of their relationship to the civil communities within which they exist. Most reformation churches have adjusted to the various governmental systems, retaining varying degrees of freedom for themselves for matters of faith and worship, while granting the state some control over ecclesiastical affairs. Other churches, although they have often sought to influence the state to act in accordance with the faith of the Church, have prided themselves on their freedom from state influence.<sup>1</sup>

Out of this tension between the Church and the state, three types of relationships have emerged. In the first, the Church is dominated by the state; in the second, the state is dominated by the Church; and in the third, there is an accepted and legal separation of the Church and state. As an American Lutheran, the tradition out of which I come is that of the separation of the Church and state. However, in 1787 when the United States Constitution was framed, the prevailing arrangement in Europe was the domination of the Church by the state. Nowhere had the principle of mutual independence of religion and government been adopted as the basis of the Church-state relationship. The ideals of the 18th century enlightenment, and the heterogeneous religious situation in the emerging state, combined to produce the first amendment to our Constitution which declares that Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. It is in this context

<sup>1</sup> Bodensieck, Julius. *The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church*, Vol. I, (Minneapolis, Augsburg Publishing House, 1965), p. 491.

that the Church's relationship to American national security must be discussed.<sup>2</sup>

Ideology is a system of ideas, beliefs, assumptions, ethical concepts and opinions which form and interpret the social ethos. It is the body of doctrine of an institution. Further defined, it is a political belief system that provides its followers with a world view, an interpretation of the present and a view of a desired future. An ideology is oriented toward the masses and presented in motivational terms. The anticipated future is invariably portrayed as materially better than the present and attainable within a lifetime. The ideology dominates the thinking of the people under its influence. In the light of this definition, I consider the use of ideology as too strong a term for describing our national security policy. In American terms, the ideology is democracy with its goals of peace, freedom, justice and human rights; and the national security policy is the means for securing the preservation of these goals. This subordination of national security concerns to the democratic and larger ideological concerns in the United States is easily demonstrated.

As a nation, the United States has never allowed national security concerns to dominate its thinking or its actions. Free citizens would rather spend themselves, their time, and their money on other things. After every major military conflict, there has been a dismantling of our armed forces and a quick transition to a civilian mentality of business as usual. It was not until after the Korean war that the United States began to maintain a strong military posture, and only then because the ideology of democracy was in world wide conflict with the Marxist-Leninist ideology of communism.

The following quotation from Air Force doctrine succinctly describes the objectives of the United States' national security policies and also articulates the role of the armed forces in support of those objectives and goals.

The primary national security objective of the United States is to preserve the freedom of the nation with its fundamental institutions and values intact. The military is the instrument of national power for preserving the peace and security and providing for the defense of the United States, the territories, commonwealths, and possessions in any areas occupied by the United States; supporting the national policies; implementing the national objectives; and overcoming any nations responsible for aggressive acts that imperil the peace and security of the United States.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, page 493.

The decision to commit U.S. Military Forces in conduct of war must consider the desired objectives, the capabilities of our forces and the will of the people. The fabric of our society and the character of our national values suggest that the decision to employ U.S. military forces depends on a clear declaration of objectives and the support of the American people. In every sense, United States armed forces belong to the people, and the ultimate success in committing these armed forces to achieve an objective will rely on the support of the people. To ignore this relationship is to invite defeat.

Our national security policy is the broad course of action adopted by the U.S. government in pursuit of our national security objectives. National policy is implemented through the use of the major instruments of national power; economic, political, psychosocial, technological, and military. Our laws provide our national leadership with the authority to determine how these instruments can best contribute to attaining national security objectives. The instruments of national power reinforce one another and are used in a coordinated, integrated effort. The use of U.S. armed forces is integrated with the other instruments of national power to attain national security objectives.

U.S. military forces must be capable of achieving our national military objectives. To meet this goal the Department of Defense creates and sustains military forces which can conduct warfare and achieve victory at all levels of conflict. Specifically our national military objectives are to deter an attack against the United States, our allies, and against the vital U. S. interest worldwide, including sources of essential materials, energy, and associated lines of communication, prevent an enemy from politically coercing the United States, its allies and friends, and if deterrence fails, fight at the levels of intensity and duration necessary to attain U. S. political objectives. A potential enemy must perceive that the United States has the military capability to exert an unacceptable counter to aggression and that we also have the will to use the capability. This is the essence of deterrence, and it applies to the entire spectrum of warfare.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force*, Air Force Manual

1-1, 1984, page 1-1, 2.

In an editorial in the Washington Post of 24 June 1984, Michael Getler reminds us that national security involves more than what is supported annually from the defense budget. He suggests a broader understanding of national security. National security has to do with the quality of leadership, strategy, tactics, planning, and how we carry out the military operations we undertake. It depends on the perception of our skill by potential enemies, on the quality of our alliances, moral leadership, economic strength and a confident understanding of what our national interests are and what is worth fighting for.<sup>4</sup>

Although this definition of national security is wider than the commonplace understanding, there are yet other important factors for assessing national security and our strength as a nation. A brief look at a few areas will help to emphasize their importance.

*Decision making.* How do we make decisions? Which decisions result from careful analysis and evaluation, and which are the product of personal feelings? Are we looking out for the larger national interest or are decisions based on provincial interest; individual military service, congressional influence, political bipartisanship, and civilian power blocks.

*Strategy.* We had a strategy in the 1950's and 1960's that was supposed to enable us to fight two and a half wars at once: in Europe, in Asia, and a contingency someplace else. Do we have the resources to do that now. The time has come for a precise study of American national interests in order to determine what size forces we need to defend them and to determine how much of the global burden should be carried by the United States.

*Economics.* Our nation's economy is linked to our national security. How much defense can we afford? The large national deficit adds another dimension to this question. The answer involves economic recovery at home, as well as the economies of the third world, where financial instability or stagnation can easily embroil us economically and militarily.

*Arms control.* Every effort must be made to move forward in the area of arms control. We need the best possible negotiators in this new and important area of international exchange and communication. How are we seen by other nations regarding our desire for arms control? National security is closely related to our participation in arms reduction and control.

<sup>4</sup> Getler, Michael. "Splugging on Arms Doesn't Make Us Safe," *The Washington Post*, 24 June 1984, page 1331.

*Morality.* The strength and security of the nation is related to its morality. Can we be trusted? Are our actions based on responsible and sound decisions.

*Secrecy.* We are an open society. If we want the critical support of the public for national security policy, the public must be informed and encouraged to participate in decisions and actions.

*Leadership.* We must continue to test the quality of our leaders. Leadership deserves the same scrutiny that we give to the weapons we deploy. The people who make national decisions, who develop national strategies and who implement these policies, are the greatest asset we have.

*Execution.* Our national security is related to how well we execute our policies. We need a record of success to develop credibility and trust.

*Allies.* Who are our friends? Do they add to our security? Can they be counted on to carry their share of the defense burden? Will their friendship enhance security at the global level?

In 1959, the National Lutheran Council, representing about two-thirds of American Lutheranism, issued a document entitled "Toward a Statement of National Policy." This document was placed in the Congressional Record as an authoritative expression of the general position of American Protestantism. It stated that the day of unilateral national action based on the jungle law which says might makes right and to the victor belongs the spoils, cannot be extended without catapulting a horrifying, if not final, tragedy on all mankind. Our nation's interests, responsibilities, and welfare are interrelated and interdependent with those of her sister nations throughout the world. Our nation's policy, domestic as well as foreign, should be designed to further purposes consistent with the well-being of the whole family of peoples and nations.

In the long view, the national interest is best served by advancing international interest, the common well-being of the whole community of nations. The divine purpose of a life is as expressed by Jesus, "Not to be served, but to serve." There is no reason to except a nation from obedience to this principle of life. No nation can possess freedom without responsibility. No nation will long prosper that lives for itself alone. The greater the blessings God showers upon a nation, the greater the responsibility to become a blessing in the neighborhood of nations.<sup>5</sup>

This emphasis on the community of nations and the willingness to take on a larger responsibility beyond national interests is

<sup>5</sup> Bodensiek, Julius. *The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church*, Vol. III, page 1703.

expressed in the national security policy of the United States. In his annual report to the United States Congress, covering the fiscal year of 1985 and the defense programs for 1985-1989, Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger quoted President Reagan who said, "A safer world will not be realized simply through honorable intentions and good will. No, the pursuit of the fundamental goals our nations seeks in world affairs, peace, human rights, economic progress, national independence and international stability requires a dedicated effort to support our friends and defend our interests. Our commitment as peacemaker is focused on those goals."

Secretary Weinberger went on to say, "For the United States, military strength will never be an end in itself, nor will military strength alone give us the means to achieve our ends. The freedom and prosperity we seek for ourselves, our allies, and our friends cannot be created or imposed by force. Just as American military strength could not itself produce economic recovery or restore democracy in postwar Europe, so American military strength alone, cannot create national unity in Lebanon or raise living standards in the Caribbean basin. But it is well to remember that without military strength, Europe would have been enslaved. Military strength gave Western Europe and Japan the necessary freedom to emerge, aided by American economic strength, as strong and free allies of the United States."<sup>6</sup>

Toward the end of the previous decade, serious doubts arose regarding both the will and the capability of the United States to maintain its commitment as peacemaker and leader in a changing world. Tensions within our alliances, rising levels of conflict in the Third World, and most significantly, an ominous military buildup by the Soviet Union, all posed serious new challenges to American defense policy as well as to American defense capability.

Our present defense program, is designed to meet these challenges and to preserve peace with freedom. Our commitment to collective defense has not diminished. As the Soviets have expanded their capabilities and the global reach of their armed forces, the need for greater defense efforts by all members of the Western alliance has increased, subjecting the alliance to new stresses and challenge.

Moreover the very success of deterrence through collective defense has opened itself to question from those who have known nearly forty years of peace between the great powers. Has it been military strength that has prevented war, or has it been some other factor such as economic interdependence, peaceful intentions on the part of the Soviet Union, or something as vague as the spirit of detente?

<sup>6</sup> The Secretary of Defense's Annual Report to the Congress of the United States, (Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1984), page 1A.

Paradoxically, the freedom the Western nations unite to preserve produces a diversity of public opinion which some interpret as disarray. The events of the most recent past, however, serve to contradict this interpretation. Despite pressure from an increasingly active disarmament movement, NATO has stood by its 1979 decision to deploy Pershing II and ground-launched Cruise missiles in Europe in the absence of a negotiated solution to the threat posed by the Soviet monopoly of longer range and intermediate range nuclear forces. In Asia, Prime Minister Nakasone of Japan has reaffirmed his nation's intention to defend its territory, the surrounding seas and skies, and sea lanes out to one thousand miles. Outside the formal alliance structure, we have also improved relations with our friends in those nations that support our mutual interests. Our security was strengthened by restored good relations with Grenada, and our Caribbean basin initiative holds promise for that vital region. We have continued to expand our security relationships with the Middle Eastern and Southwest Asian states. In addition, we have developed a more substantive relationship with the People's Republic of China.<sup>7</sup>

Both an expansion of U.S. interests in the Third World and an increase in Third World conflicts have forced the United States to focus more attention there. About thirty percent of United States exports now go to the Third World. This figure represents an increase of twenty percent since 1976. In addition, we depend heavily on these nations for strategic minerals and energy resources. Our economy and the economies of our allies are therefore especially susceptible to disruption from conflict far from our own borders. In 1982, for example, oil worth 106 billion dollars traveled Pacific and Indian Ocean sea lanes from the Persian Gulf, and almost half of all our overseas foreign trade tonnage passed through the Panama Canal and the Caribbean. Causes of instability and conflict in these areas are many: ethnic and religious cleavages, irredentism and territorial disputes, rivalries for regional power and domination, and economic fluctuations and grievances.

Recent events have highlighted how Soviet activity in these areas can threaten United States' interests. The caches of Soviet-made weapons and equipment captured by U.S. and Eastern Caribbean forces on Grenada, as well as the documents outlining Soviet-Grenadian cooperation, graphically demonstrate the danger of heightened Soviet involvement in this hemisphere. Fear that the Soviets may directly or indirectly exploit the vulnerabilities of developing nations has made many regimes in the Third World sensitive to the cost of opposing Soviet interests or of supporting ours. This increases the importance of our own security assistance and military training programs which help these nations meet the threat to their security. It

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, page 18.

also points to the need for the defense of our citizens and interests in this area of the world.<sup>8</sup>

The expansion of Soviet military power and increasing evidence of the Soviets' willingness to use that power has forced the United States to reevaluate its defense posture. A simple comparison of military investment, (the procurement, military construction, and research and development programs that create long lasting stocks of military assets) shows how the United States' advantage of the 1950s and 1960s was reversed by the developments of the 1970s. Soviet military research and development continues to grow rapidly, and a number of advanced weapon systems appear to be nearing deployment. Heavy Soviet investment in military research and development, coupled with the purchase and theft of Western high technology, is most disturbing because it has eroded the qualitative advantage that the West needs to maintain the military balance.<sup>9</sup>

The Soviet military buildup, both qualitative and quantitative, has produced a major shift in the nuclear and conventional balance; the Soviet military posture has become increasingly offensive in orientation, and the Soviets have significantly expanded the global reach of their military forces enhancing their ability to project influence and power especially in the Third World. The Soviet drive towards superiority has been particularly pronounced in the realm of strategic nuclear forces. During the 1970s the United States made a decision to restrict its strategic force development, hoping to encourage similar restraint by the Soviets. Instead the Soviets stepped up their strategic program. Since the United States deployed the Minute Man III in 1970, the Soviet Union has deployed at least three, perhaps four, new classes of ICBMs and introduced seven major modifications to these systems. During that same time, the United States carried out only one significant ICBM upgrade (involving only about one-half of the Minuteman III force) and deployed no new types of ICBMs. More importantly, the newest Soviet ICBMs are accurate and powerful enough and deployed in sufficient numbers to destroy most of our ICBM force in its underground silos. Between 1967 and 1980, the Soviets built and deployed some 70 new ballistic missile submarines carrying more than nine hundred new missiles. In the same period, the United States also deployed new missiles, but on 1960s vintage Poseidon submarines. By 1982, when we launched the modern Trident submarine, the Soviets had already introduced their new Typhoon SSBN.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, page 9.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, page 20.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, page 21.

This buildup of Soviet strategic nuclear forces shows no signs of slowing. Two new land based ICBMs, two sea launched ballistic missiles, a new strategic bomber, and new ground, air, and sea launched Cruise missiles are in advanced stages of development or deployment. The Soviets are also building new versions of the Bear Bomber to carry air-launched Cruise missiles, while continuing to add Backfire bombers to their inventory at the rate of about 30 per year. The dangerous trend in Soviet strategic nuclear forces is compounded by similar trends in non-strategic nuclear forces. The Soviets have already deployed 378 mobile and highly accurate SS-20 missiles, the SS-21, SS-22 and SS-23 that impose an increasing threat to NATO air bases, seaports, command and control centers, and communication posts, as well as key nuclear and conventional forces.

The buildup in Soviet strategic nuclear forces and the improvement in Soviet Strategic defense systems threaten the credibility of our deterrent posture, which rests on the assumption that our ability to retaliate will cause the Soviets to perceive that the costs of aggression would be far higher than any possible benefit. Likewise, the growing imbalance in non-strategic nuclear capabilities could potentially lead the Soviets to conclude that we would be deterred from fulfilling our commitment to defend NATO against attack. It is against this background that we must form and negotiate our arms reduction proposals, for these reasons we must secure agreements on reductions to equal levels that are fully verifiable. That is also why it is so misleading and dangerous to urge agreement no matter what it provides, or to argue that the United States is being stubborn when insisting on equality. The American national security policy must always be developed in the light of the threat to America by outside forces.<sup>11</sup>

During the period of unquestioned United States nuclear superiority from 1945 through the mid 1970s, the world experienced the greatest decolonization in its history. When the United States became the world's leading power, there were forty-nine independent nations. Today there are more than 150.

After World War II the United States disarmed, but the Soviets took control of nation after nation in Central Europe. It was at this time that the leaders of the West judged a military balance through nuclear superiority to be the most moral course. But in 1968, under Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, the United States changed its policy. It no longer sought nuclear superiority. It placed a freeze on the level of ICBMs, which have since remained constant at just over one thousand. It placed a freeze on the building of new bombers and through attrition the operational bomber fleet has been reduced from about thirteen hundred to just over three hundred. We began to deploy our newest ICBMs fourteen years ago, and the B-52s

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, page 22-23.

are older than the young men who fly them. Moreover, the United States has substantially reduced the number of nuclear warheads since 1967.

It also needs to be noted that warheads are not weapons; warheads are ammunition only. They must be delivered to target by delivery systems to be weapons. The United States has three types of delivery systems: the missiles and bombers mentioned earlier and the missile-carrying nuclear submarines. Since 1968 the Soviets have moved to essential parity and kept going. They are still building new ICBMs, new bombers and submarines.

Today vast numbers of nuclear weapons exist with very little likelihood that they will ever again cease to exist. Even if the United States and the Soviet Union disarm, other nations would still possess nuclear weapons. Moreover, the technology is sufficiently simple to allow graduate students working for bandits or extortioners to assemble them. A nation determined, as our own is, not to use nuclear weapons still faces the problem of how to deter their use by others.<sup>12</sup>

The United States does not seek new territory and uses its military force only in response to threats to peace and stability. We pursue this policy knowing that our defense posture grants several military advantages to a potential aggressor. The aggressor can choose when, where, and how to attack. He can formulate a detailed plan for his operations to maximize his strengths and exploit our vulnerabilities. He can also mask his pre-attack mobilization efforts under the guise of training exercises or diplomatic crisis so that we are faced with ambiguous advance warning. To compensate, the United States works to improve intelligence capabilities and to increase the efficiency of command and control and communications. The United States' policy is to strengthen our reserve component forces, while making our military force more flexible and mobile by tailoring the strike forces and by increasing air and sealift capabilities.

In the meantime, the United States stands firmly by deterrence and a defensive orientation as the first two principles of defense policy precisely because it does not seek to achieve its national objectives by the use of force. As President Reagan said in a speech before the United Nations, "Nuclear war cannot be won, and must never be fought." Under the present strategic defensive initiative, we are examining the potential contribution to deterrence of the most sophisticated system of defenses; and we are making an unwavering commitment to reduce the dangers of nuclear war through effective arms reductions.

How much defense is enough? In answering that question, General John W. Vessey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff,

<sup>12</sup> Noval, Michael. "Nuclear Morality," *America*, June 1982, pages 1700-27.

said, "That's the wrong question. The real question we need to ask ourselves is: What must we do to provide for our security and for that of our posterity. We start to answer that question," he said, "by recognizing we're committed to the defensive use of force. Our strategy is to prevent war, not start war. We and our allies want to protect our peace and liberty, and our way of life. We want to prevent war by having everyone know that we have the strength to stop our potential enemies from achieving their objectives by force. If that's understood and if we have that strength, we have a good chance of not having a war. By being strong we also encourage the Soviets to negotiate seriously. Otherwise, we give them no incentive to meet us halfway, and they are content to wait out our political processes."<sup>13</sup>

In commenting on the costs and benefits of an adequate defense, Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger pointed to the paradoxical nature of the investment. "The costs of maintaining a strong defense are easily measured," he said, "but the benefits are not. When we spend our savings on a new car or a new home, we have acquired a tangible good. When we spend tax dollars on food stamps or federal highways, we have created a tangible result for all to see. Although we can count our missiles or our tanks, or our men and women in uniform, we can never really measure how much aggression we have deterred or how much peace we have preserved. These are intangibles until they are lost. Indeed, it is a paradox of deterrence that the longer it succeeds, the less necessary it appears."

It is generally agreed that a sovereign nation has a right and duty to defend itself against aggression or oppression by another nation. This right and duty also provides the support for a strong military defense, to include an arsenal of nuclear weapons and military parity or superiority in relation to a potential aggressor. Since the founding of this nation, the major religious bodies in the United States have supported the nation's readiness to engage in war and have never challenged the need for an adequate defense or the basic defense policies of the nation. The recent nuclear arms debate has proved an exception. Past support was usually based on the doctrine of the just war, which states that the restraint of evil and the protection of the good might under certain circumstances be morally justified. The doctrine sets out seven criteria for a war to be considered just.

1. The war must be declared by a competent authority; *e.g.*, the President.

<sup>13</sup> Vessey, John W. "How Much for Defense and Are We Building the Right Kind?" *The Nuclear Security Newsletter* of the Reserve Officer's Association, July 1984, page 5.

2. The war must be fought for a just cause; *e.g.*, self-defense, or the protection of freedom and peace.

3. Right intention/pursuit of legitimate goals; *e.g.*, pursuit of peace and reconciliation.

4. Last resort; *e.g.*, after all attempts at mediation have failed.

5. Probability of success.

6. Proportionality; *i.e.*, the resort to arms should be proportional to the threat.

7. Discrimination; *i.e.*; hostile actions should not be undertaken against civilian populations or non-combatants.

The nuclear arms race has increasingly placed the last three criteria in question and has brought the churches into the center of the arms debate.

At the beginning of this decade, in a "Mandate for Peacemaking," the American Lutheran Church stated,

Our ultimate security is in God, "You alone, O Lord, keep me perfectly safe." (Psalm 4:8) Such faith does not lead us to neglect or deny the legitimate security interests of the nations. Rather, such faith frees us to see such security interests in their proper perspective. Our faith in the ultimate security which only God gives is our source of energy and hope for seeking earthly peace, here and now. Thus the security which all human beings desire, we also seek, as part of the shalom (peace and justice) which God promises for all.

We are distressed by the increasing sense of insecurity and peril to which our world is being led by escalation and nuclear weaponry. We know that nuclear technology makes possible, even through miscalculation, the annihilation of humankind. We see that our nation is locked with the Soviet Union in an arms race which both countries find almost impossible to stop.

We reject the argument that we must maintain a capacity to destroy enemy targets many times over and view such an overkill mentality as thwarting any progress towards arms reduction by either side. There is no national security without global security.

There can be no global security without serious progress against poverty and economic injustice. We know the impact which the massive use of the planet's resources for armaments has on the lives of those who are hungry

and oppressed. We believe the Creator intended that such scarce resources be used to feed, clothe, educate and bring health to human beings. Diverting them from such life sustaining uses intensifies economic injustice and invites divine judgment upon our foolish stewardship of the creation.

Thus, "national security" must not be invoked to stifle discussion of issues related to the arms race. National security includes far more than military preparedness. We concur with the U.S. Presidential Commission on World Hunger which said in 1980: Promoting economic development in general, and overcoming hunger in particular, are tasks far more critical to the U.S. national security than most policy makers acknowledge or even believe. Since the advent of nuclear weapons most Americans have been conditioned to equate national security with the strength of strategic military forces. The commission considers this prevailing belief to be a simplistic allusion. Armed might represents merely the physical aspect of national security. Military force is ultimately useless in the absence of the global security that only coordinated international progress towards social justice can bring.<sup>14</sup>

Into this discussion, the Lutheran Church also brings the traditional doctrine of the "Two Kingdoms" requiring that in discussing issues of war and peace we not confuse the roles of Church and state. "The gospel cannot legislate for the civil state." Rather, God seeks to rule through both the civil and the ecclesiastical realms in order to accomplish his gracious purposes and to thwart the evil powers. The Church's task is to proclaim the whole counsel of God, tell of his mighty acts, denounce sin and evil, offer his reconciliation, and assist in counteracting the causes of war both in persons and among nations.

Martin Luther put it well when he said:

A man who would venture to govern an entire country or the world with the Gospel would be like a shepherd who should place in one fold wolves, lions, eagles, and sheep together and let them freely mingle with one another and say, 'Help yourselves, and be good and peaceful among yourselves; the fold is open, there is plenty of food; have no fear of dogs and clubs. The sheep, forsooth, would keep the peace and would allow themselves to be fed and

<sup>14</sup> "Mandate for Peace Making," A Statement of the American Lutheran Church, (Augsburg Publishing House, 1982), pages 3-4.

governed in peace, but they would not live long; nor would any beast keep from molesting another . . . For this reason these two kingdoms must be sharply distinguished, and both be permitted to remain; the one to produce piety, the other to bring about external peace and prevent evil deeds; neither is sufficient in the world without the other.

This doctrine legitimizes the role of the state and asserts that God uses the state in dealing with evil in the world.

The faith of the Christian should manifest itself in words and deeds of love, both in personal piety and in community obligations. The Holy Spirit guides the believer to the decisions he must make on issues of war, peace, and freedom, as in other civic affairs. God thus would rule in the hearts and lives of his people, who dwell as Christians in both kingdoms. The issues of national security are not easy and the Church needs to act with knowledge, understanding, judgment and assurance. As citizens, all have an obligation to bring about a world where justice, righteousness, freedom, peace, truth, and love prevail and increase.

Making the right decision on specific issues is often an agonizing task. In making those decisions the Christian strives for the greater good, knowing that whatever course chosen will not be free from sin. The goal of peace with justice is a priority for both the nation and the Church, but the course which is to lead to that goal is not always clear, and the one often appears contradictory to the other. As pointed out in the pastoral letter of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, "People may agree in abhorring an injustice, yet sincerely disagree as to what practical approach will achieve justice." Anyone can suggest less dangerous and more peaceful world orders. But as it has been repeatedly demonstrated: the problem is not imagining better worlds, but getting from here to there. We may not agree on what people and governments should do, even though we share with all of our strength the conviction that nuclear war must be avoided.

Dr. David W. Preus, bishop of the American Lutheran Church, pointed out the responsibilities of all church members on the issues of nuclear weapons and morality: "Informed and morally based public opinion is imperative in a nuclear age. The setting of policy should not be the work of government leaders and nuclear experts alone. We are all involved, and it is important that the churches contribute their best thinking and that church people get deeply engaged in the public debate that determines nuclear weapons policy." To that I would add, the Church must do it in a way that is credible and reflects an understanding of the issues from all points of view.

A former United States senator, Eugene J. McCarthy, has written regarding rational and moral judgment in political action:

Faith is, of course, no full and automatic substitute for knowledge and intelligence, although the truths of faith should, when applied to contemporary problems, have some bearing upon the solution of human problems. The religious character of a people should be reflected in its social and political institutions and actions.

Knowledge of the Bible, the Koran, and Ten Commandments, or of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy does not give the religious man in politics a ready answer to all problems. Politics is a part of the real world. In politics the simple choice between that which is wholly right and that which is wholly wrong is seldom given; the ideal is not often realized and in some cases cannot even be advocated. The choice involved is not one of the lesser of two evils, really, but the choice of that course which has some good in it, or promise of good, no matter how limited. Prudence may require the toleration of a measure of evil in order to prevent something worse, or to save a limited good.<sup>15</sup>

There is not a simple Christian or secular answer to the difficult problems that confront us, but there are Christians and secularists who struggle on both sides of the issues, and they must continue to raise the questions and search for answers and solutions.

Dr. James Crumley, Jr., of New York, Bishop of the Lutheran Church of America, declared, "I am not sure that our branding of nuclear weapons as immoral — as true as that is — will help us in our approach to governments." Bishop Eduard Lohse, Chairman of the EKD (German Lutheran Church) Council said, "We are all aware of the complexity of the problems of peace, we have to mistrust those who have simple answers." He suggested that church proposals and efforts for peace must be related to political reality "in the soberness of love," and added, "many of the leaders of our government belong to our churches. We need to listen to them and learn how difficult it is to have political leadership in our day."<sup>16</sup>

These statements reflect an understanding of the difficulty faced by nations in the pursuit of peace. It is imperative for all of us to remain politically astute, evaluating national goals and policies in

<sup>15</sup> Spaeth, Robert L., *No Easy Answers - Christians Debate Nuclear Arms*, (Minneapolis, Winston Press, 1983), pages 7 and 8.

<sup>16</sup> "United States and German Churches Explore Peace Role," *The Lutheran Standard*, 18 March 1983, pages 18 and 19.

the light of the deepest values cherished by the Christian Community: peace, justice, and security for the entire human family. The Church should call its members and the public to scrutinize concrete policies in light of these values. In national politics and international conflict, the Church must avoid simplistic and unrealistic solutions. It must not undermine negotiations, thwart the strategy or weaken the efforts for peace. The Church must also challenge the nations to go beyond the peace that is the mere absence of war to a world of social and economic justice, a world where people can live in freedom.

Peace must be seen as harmony between the members of the whole human race. Work for peace is then the unceasing effort to find an integrated way of relieving economic need, of defending and developing justice and freedom, and of the minimization of violence in all relationships.

Dr. Alan Geyer, Executive Director of the Churches' Center for Theology and Public Policy, in Washington, D.C., in an address to Air Force chaplains asked the question, "How then do we fit security — national security — into a faithful understanding of politics? We can't be religiously faithful," he said, "and have the kind of protection for our country that we want." Dr. Geyer went on to say, "Security, far from being a contradiction of the Scriptures, is a vital part of God's covenant with us, with our life for one another, which God has worked into his very creation." Dr. Geyer referenced the report from the Vancouver Assembly of the World Council of Churches titled "Common Security," which said, "Human beings have a right to live in security. It is legitimate for each nation to seek its own security and protection from outside attack, but without endangering the security of other nations."

Security is part of God's promise of liberation. Yet Dr. Geyer also reminded us of the finite limits of security, "In any place, in any historical moment there's no guarantee of absolute security in a political or physical or geographical sense. Distressing as it may be to us, nations themselves are rather temporary and provisional actors in the dramas of history. They rise and fall before the one Lord who is sovereign over every people. We have no continuing place, no lasting city, no immortal state in which to find our total security. We must, therefore, seek the city, the kingdom which is to come."<sup>17</sup>

Nothing in this life is entirely good or entirely bad. A very important function of the Church is to keep society from naively believing that either good or evil is total. This reminder by George Kennan in his book, *Russia and the West Under Lenin and Stalin*, makes this point.

<sup>17</sup> Geyer, Alan. "Chaplains As Peace-makers," An address given at the United States Air Force Chaplains Conference at Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, in October of 1983.

Let us beware in the future of wholly condemning an entire people and wholly exculpating others. Let us remember that the great moral issues, on which civilization is going to stand or fall, cut across all military and ideological borders, across peoples, classes and regimes, across, in fact, the makeup of the human individual himself. No other people as a whole is entirely our enemy. No people at all, not even ourselves, is entirely our friend.<sup>18</sup>

We must keep alive the awareness that our adversaries are human beings and that the communist leadership is only a small part of the population of the Soviet Union. There are more members of the Russian Orthodox Church in Russia than all the membered communions of the National Council of Churches in this country, and there are millions of other faithful people there as well: Baptists, Lutherans, Jews, and Muslims. The religious vitality of that officially atheistic country is one of the miracles of modern history.

True security comes only when there is shalom. *Shalom* is that wonderful Hebrew word for which there is no adequate English equivalent. It means harmony, wholeness, peace in the community because justice and love are real, palpable, and shared by everyone. True security, in the sense of shalom, will come only with the achievement of peace, and peace comes as a result of justice. It is the perverse tendency of too many governments, of too many of us, too much of the time, to postpone peace for the sake of what we think is security, and to postpone justice for the sake of what we think is peace. The only hope for our security must be in the covenant of justice and peace.<sup>19</sup>

National security policy is not a series of arbitrary decisions made by military leaders, but a reflection of the will of the American people as developed by the elected civilian leadership whose decisions are always under the scrutiny of the public eye. The Church, in this context, affirms allegiance to the nation (Caesar), but also to God. It is the task of the Church to raise the issues affecting the priorities of life, and to remind us that ultimate security rests only with God. The Church speaks to those issues that prevent us from seeking security on a limited national level, and affirms a requirement for global security by addressing the evils of poverty, economic injustice, and the absence of human rights. As the people of God we are called to be responsible citizens in a dangerous and vulnerable world, but also called by One who promises to be with us to the end of the age. It is

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

this hope that transcends the world that enables us to take seriously our role as peacekeepers, but more than that to become informed and responsible peacemakers at every level as well.