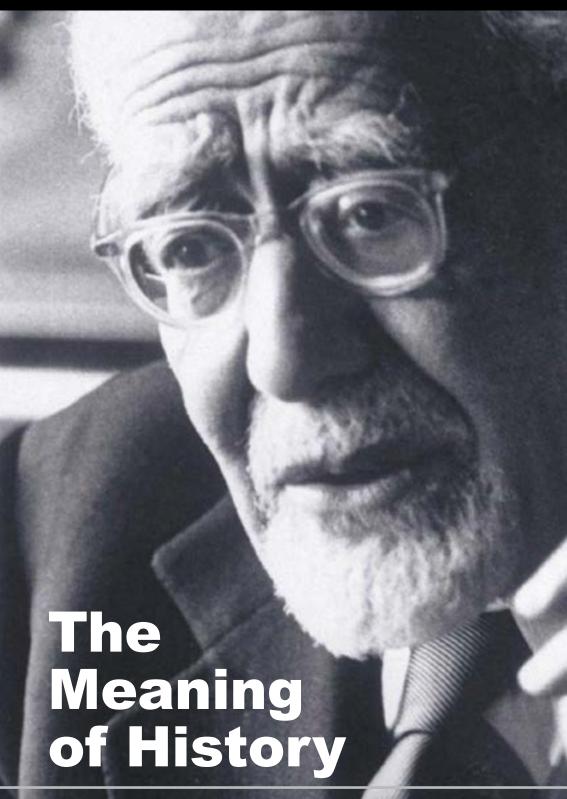
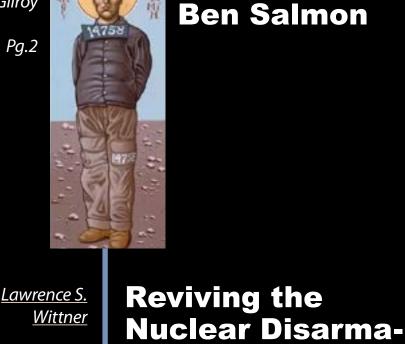
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New Translation of a Major Work by Rabbi Leo Baeck. Pg. 4

Gilroy Pg.2

Jack



Ben Salmon

No War Is Just:

Pg. 10

ment Movement: A **Practical Proposal** Although a widespread movement has developed to fight climate change, no counterpart has emerged to take on the rising danger of nuclear disaster—yet.

Conscientious Resisters

No War Is Just: **Ben Salmon**

Jack Gilroy

ne hundred years ago, February 1919, two American socialists, Eugene Debs and Benjamin Salmon, were in federal prison. Both had captured the front pages of American newspapers for their refusal to cooperate with the decision of President Woodrow Wilson and Congress to send American troops to the European war—the Great War, World War I. In 1918, Debs made an anti-war speech in Canton, Ohio. He was arrested under the Espionage Act of 1917, tried, convicted, and sentenced to serve ten years in prison. Eugene Debs would run for the fifth time for President of the United States but this time from prison. The election of 1920 gave him his largest percentage of the vote (3.4%) ever (993,000) while he was still in prison. Debs became ill in prison, was

pardoned in 1922, and died just four

his political/economic belief of socialism. He was a devout Catholic who refused to

years later from health issues resulting from his incarceration. Ben Salmon of Denver, Colorado was in federal prison for reasons beyond

train to kill. Arrested in 1918, Salmon was charged with desertion, even though he was never enlisted in the military. He was sentenced to 25 years in federal prison. Salmon's only break at his military trial was the decision of the judge to deny the prosecutor's call for the death penalty. Wilson said our entry into the European conflict would be a "war to end all wars." To Catholic Church leaders, such as Cardinal James Gibbons of Baltimore, it was a "just war." Gibbons

was the most esteemed Catholic leader of the largest religious sect in the nation. Few Catholics had the courage to dispute Cardinal Gibbons. Ben Salmon would become the most famous of only a dozen documented Catholics who refused to be in the military. He stood by the command of Jewish Scripture not to kill and the nonviolent teachings of Jesus Christ. Ben Salmon was born of Irish/American parents in 1888. Curiously, his baptismal certificate has a sidebar with a con-

fusing handwritten note: "Father said he's a Jew." Was this a reference to Ben's actual father, noted by the Catholic priest who signed the baptismal certificate? One niece of Ben Salmon believes her grandfather was a

When he became a union organizer in 1909, he was fired. Salmon had a number of clerical jobs after his dismissal from Colorado & Southern but an event in 1914 seemed to solidify his objection to corporate-

Jew. In fact, she converted to Judaism many years ago. Ben Salmon finished 8th grade and then spent years working in clerical jobs for Colorado & Southern railroad.

political power. The Ludlow Massacre of April 1914 was a slaughter of miners and family members in the mining village of Ludlow, Colorado. Miners were striking for better wages and fewer hours as well as safety and health concerns. The Colorado National Guard and Rockefeller mining police torched tents of families already evicted from coal company houses. Historian Howard Zinn said the event was "the culminating act in perhaps the most violent struggle between corporate power and laboring men in American history." The same year of the Ludlow Massacre, 1914, Salmon became State Secretary of the Colorado Single Tax Association. He edited and published a small weekly paper entitled Single Tax, the contents of which dealt chiefly

with a discussion of sociological and economic problems. In one issue of this little paper in the month of July, 1914 he published an article under the headline THOU SHALT NOT KILL, and in the body of the article he quoted Jack London's "Soldier," which begins: "Young man, the lowest aim in your life is to become a soldier." The Ludlow Massacre made such an impact on Salmon that he references it in his letter to the Denver Draft Board in January of 1918 and noted: War is incompatible with my conception of Christianity. Let those that believe in wholesale violation of the

commandment "Thou shalt not kill" make a profession of their faith by joining the army of war. I am in the army of

Peace, and in this army I intend to live and die. For being a In May of 1918, now under the custody of the conscientious

en any military oath), Ben Salmon prepared to begin his journey through the United States military prison system. The Denver Post on May 20, 1918, read: "Salmon refuses to leave in the draft." On the same page is a story noting: "Cheering crowds bid farewell to 437 men in the draft." Other editions of The Denver Post referred to Salmon as "a man with a yellow streak down his spine as broad as a country highway." The Denver Knights of Columbus ejected him as one of their members.

United States military (al-

though never having tak-

was often paraded in chains and kept in tight solitary confinement quarters, including over a sewer with crawling rats. Salmon was sent to seven different military prisons during his trip of mistreatment. Often paraded in chains and kept in tight solitary confinement quarters, including over a sewer with crawling rats, he refused to

objector, Salmon

cave in to offers for military jobs. His physical condition deteriorated as he went on a hunger strike to protest his conditions. For 135 days, prison staff shoved a pipe down his throat, pouring in liquids to keep him alive. The military feared bad publicity and did not want him to die. In prison, he asked for a priest and confession. He was refused. He asked for Communion

and was refused. He was a traitor to his country and did not deserve the sacraments. New York Catholic Cardinal John Farley, said in 1918, "Criticism of the government irritates me. I consider it little short of treason. ... Every citizen of this nation, no matter what his private opinion or his political leanings, should support the presi-

dent and his advisers to the limit of his ability." World War I ended on Nov. 11, 1918. Two years later Salmon wrote from Fort Douglas, Utah prison to Newton Baker, U.S. Secretary of War: "I have been illegally imprisoned because I refused to kill or help to kill." Salmon wrote at the start of his 135-day Liberty or Death hunger strike: "Because I am opposed to militarism wholesale *Continued on next page*



enlisted in the military.

even though he was never

SHALOM

Published by the Jewish Peace Fellowship • Box 271 • Nyack, N.Y. 10960 • (845) 358-4601 HONORARY PRESIDENT Rabbi Philip J. Bentley •

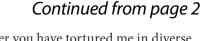
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CHAIR Stefan Merken • VICE PRESIDENT Rabbi Leonard Beerman z" **EDITORS** Murray Polner & Richard Middleton-Kaplan



Liberty or Death Hunger Strike. Under observation at St. Elizabeth's Hospital for the Insane.



murder you have tortured me in diverse ways for twenty-six months. ... I have missed my meals for four days, and I will continue to starve until released by a discharge from prison or by death."

Salmon went on to lecture Baker that the war had produced "17,000 new millionaires in America, but these citizens suffered the influx of gold on behalf of the dear soldiers who were being paid \$50 a month to spill their blood on foreign soil." He ended his letter: "My life,

my family, everything is now in the hands of God. His will be done." The government decided that

Salmon's determination to follow his faith, mind, and heart not to cooperate with his government was a sign of mental illness. Catholics did not oppose war once war was declared. Salmon was considered insane. He was transported by train (with

four guards alongside his frail body) from a federal prison in Utah to Washington, D.C., and placed in a United States federal hospital for the insane, St. Elizabeth's.

However, life at St.

Elizabeth's was not harsh. Salmon requested and received a typewriter. He wrote his story in 260 single-spaced pages, typing up to 5,000 words per day. St. Elizabeth psy-

chiatrists closely evaluated Ben and ruled him "not insane." In 1920, the American Civil Liberties Union was

inaugurated in Washington, D.C. Through the work of the ACLU and Fr. John Ryan, a professor at The Catholic University of America,

Colorado. He firmly believed the death threats he had received from his hometown. He went to Chicago and

found employment. A year later, his wife and son Charles joined him. Over the course of several years, three more children were born to Ben and Elizabeth Salmon. However, Ben Salmon's health, weakened by his prison treatment, was wavering and he died in Chicago in 1932. After Ben's death, his widow, Elizabeth, and four children, Charles, Margaret, Geraldine, and John Paul, returned to Denver. They kept a low profile. Ben Salmon

any recollection of a photo of their grandfather in their grandmother's house. Family photos were on the piano and tables but none of Ben Salmon. Asked why this was so, two nieces said their grandfather was "an embarrassment." Grandchildren did have high praise for their uncle Charles Salmon who became a Catholic priest in the Denver Diocese and their aunt, Geraldine, who became a Maryknoll sister with the new name Elizabeth Salmon. Sister Elizabeth Salmon is quick to point out that her mother's lack of focus on her deceased husband, Ben Salmon, was to protect her children from the acrimony of the Denver culture. Sister Elizabeth did not know about her father until she first read a story about him written by

Sister Elizabeth Salmon believes the story of her father's faith and courage has taken 100 years to be appreciated by Catholics who embraced the Just War Theory. "I believe my father was a Saint," said Sister Elizabeth, now 94 years old and living in a Maryknoll Sisters retirement house in Ossining, NY. "My father Ben Salmon's

Dorothy Day, founder of the Catholic Worker movement.

all war is unjust." Catholic interest to disavow the Just War belief seems to be growing. A 2018 publication, Choosing Peace: The Catholic Church

Returns to Gospel Nonviolence (Orbis Press)

said the Germans were

his brothers and he would kill no one, for

by Marie Dennis may raise the importance of Ben Salmon's struggle to teach Christian nonviolence. Dennis is co-President of the international Catholic peace organization, Pax Christi.

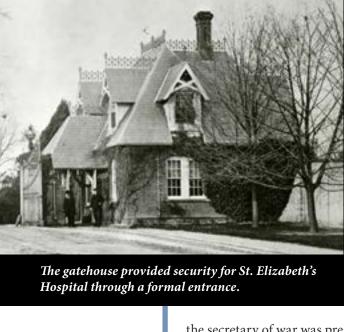
Catholics and make an important contribution to advancing the peace mission of the church." —Robert Ellsberg A movement is developing in the Denver Catholic Diocese to promote Ben Salmon to Sainthood. (See www. bensalmon.org.) People of any faith background or those without religious convictions but with admiration for following one's conscience are invited to visit the website and to consider signing onto the support letter to

"beatification

American

would enlighten

Denver Archbishop Samuel Aquila. Among the signers is Robert Ellsberg, author of All Saints, Daily Reflection on Saints, Prophets, and Witnesses for Our Time that includes non-Catholics among those revered as saints in his book. Ellsberg, in commenting on Ben Salmon, writes: "Ben Salmon was one of the great witnesses to the Gospel message of nonviolence. Far in advance of official Catholic teaching, he anticipated the teaching of Vatican II on the right of conscientious objection, and prepared the way for such voices as Blessed Franz Jag-The Challenge of Shalom: The Jewish Tradition of Peace and Justice



the secretary of war was pressured to release Salmon. On Thanksgiving Day, 1920, Salmon was freed. Ben Salmon feared going back home to Denver, was mentioned only in evening prayer. In a visit to Denver to research Ben Salmon, I found no grandchildren with

focus on young men who refused government orders to train to kill. (Much of the story presented here can be found in Ben Salmon's own words and the report of psychiatrists at St Elizabeth's Insane Asylum in

Washington DC., 1920, Go

to www.bensalmon.org)

JACK GILROY

of Veterans for

Peace Chapter 90, Broome County,

NY. His coming of

age novels and plays

is President





erstatter, Servant of God Dorothy Day, Thomas Merton, and Pope Francis. His beatification would enlighten American Catholics and make an important contribution to advancing the peace mission of the church." ❖

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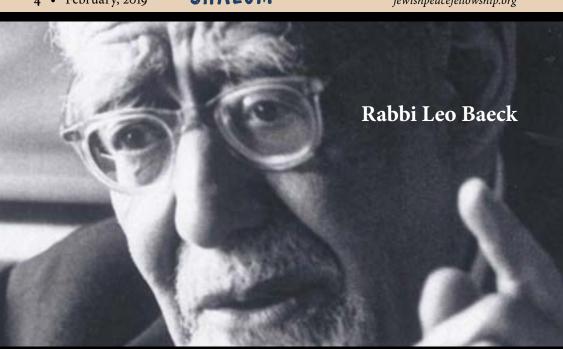
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New Translation of a Major Work

The Meaning of History Three 1946 Addresses on the British

Broadcasting Corporation German Language Program by Leo Baeck

Translators' Introduction

Padawer, ScD, Dr. Bernard H. Mehlman, DHL

Dr. Gabriel E.

of the Reform (Liberal) Jewish community of Berlin (Germany), and a former member of the Jewish Peace Fellowship, was invited by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC hereafter), London, to deliver three radio addresses in the German language for broadcast to Germany. These talks, beamed on May 5, 12, and 19, 1946, were titled *Der Sinn* der Geschichte (The Meaning of History). Later that year, the text of these addresses was published by the German Language Service of the BBC, and again in a volume of Baeck's Collected Works, in German with an introduction by Albert H. Friedlander and Bertold Klappert as editors. Our translation is the first attempt to present this, one of Baeck's significant and insightful discussions—in

eo Baeck (1873–1956), the historian and Rabbi

the English language. In our introduction, we also have tried to place it within the context of its historical time and place, and to relate some of the background history that led up to it, in order to find a purpose, and a possible motivation, for Leo Baeck to have composed this work. Leo Baeck entered the The Jewish Theological Seminary in Breslau (now Wrocław, Poland) in 1891 and left to study at the Lehranstalt in Berlin in 1894. Baeck was

semester of 1896-1897." Following his ordination, he served as a pulpit rabbi first in Oppeln (1897-1907), subsequently in Düsseldorf (1907-1912), and Berlin (1912–1942) where he became the leader of the Liberal Jewish community. By the 1930s, he had earned a worldwide reputation as a Jewish thinker and theologian. Baeck deployed the written word as the strongest tool to

ordained at the Lehranstalt "in the winter

> always prevails. —Leo Baeck

True justice

teach and enlighten the Jews in his Berlin community: Leo Baeck's chief weapon in the struggle to renew the Jews' interest in their religion—more significant than his sermons, his leadership role, his teaching, and his many other activities—was his writing. During the 1920s he produced a steady stream of essays and articles. More im-

portant, in the decade he revised *The Essence of Judaism*. In 1933, the Jews of Germany formed the Reichsvertretung der Deutschen Juden (The Representative Body of the Jews in Germany) with Leo as president. As a result, the

Gestapo (German Secret State Police) drew him into the role of spokesperson for the Jewish Community of Berlin when the German National Socialist Government (the "Nazis") began to harass and persecute the Jews in the mid-1930s. Eventually, in 1942, he was forcibly deported to the concentration camp Theresienstadt (Terezin). Here again, he fell into the role of general spokesman and negotiator on behalf of all the camp inmates when having to deal with the German Camp Administration. Despite the overcrowding, pervasive disease, malnutrition, and frequent transports of groups of prisoners to extermination camps further east, Baeck somehow survived until the Soviet Army liberated Theresienstadt on May 7-8, 1945. Continued on next page





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Leo Baeck immediately was confronted with a moral dilemma. Russian Army officials turned over the remaining German Nazi guards in Theresienstadt to the survivors, allowing them to do with them as they wished. Baeck argued forcefully with the Jewish survivors not to murder the German Nazi guards, but rather to treat them as prisoners of war. Baeck's moral plea prevailed. Despite several attempts to evacuate him to a friendlier environment, he insisted upon remaining in the camp to care for those suffering from typhus, and fulfilled rabbinical duties for the dead and the dying, until the last of the original inmates had been cleared out. Finally, on July 1, 1945, he left Theresienstadt and was flown to Paris on an American plane. On July 5, he was flown to London to be reunited with his family. The war in Europe officially ended on May 7, 1945,

Faced with ally to the Allies. The demise of the Nazi the moral German state led to a number of profound dilemma of changes to how the

world had been ordered: the dissolution of strategic alliances and the formation of new international pacts; the geographic displacements of millions of surviving victims (primarily of Slavic or Balkan descent) of the Nazi slave labor program; the creation of new nation-

when Germany surrendered uncondition-

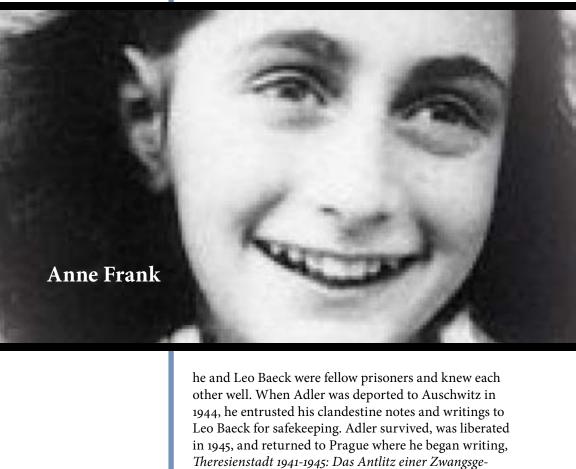
alities and the drawing of new national boundaries; the holding of war

how to treat German Nazi guards after the war, Baeck argued for treating them as prisoners of war. crimes trials; and the formation of the United Nations. These upheavals also included a proliferation of extensive,

new literary, theological, and philosophical writings. One genre in the new literary output was what often is referred to as "Holocaust Literature." In the main,

these were autobiographical, literary descriptions of the experiences of individual Jews under the Nazi regime. The earliest example that will be most familiar to the general reading public is The Diary of Anne Frank, written by Anne (1929–1945), a Dutch girl in her adolescence who—together with her own parents and sister and with another family—lived hidden in a secret attic in Amsterdam, from 1942 to 1944. Their hiding place, however, was betrayed and all were deported to the Bergen-Belsen extermination camp. There, Anne succumbed to typhus, but her father survived and returned to Amsterdam after the war's end and was able to recover her diary from the annex. It was first published in Dutch in 1947 and, later, in numerous other languages. Another well-known example is the work of Primo Levi (1919–1987), an Italian chemist from Turin. He began writing Se questo è un uomo (If This Is a Man), completed

it in December 1946, and published it in January 1947. A third example is the autobiographical account of H. G. Adler (1910-1988), a Czech Jew who was incarcerated in Theresienstadt from 1942 to 1944. While there,



erced Community). It soon became a foundational work in Holocaust Studies. When Adler's book was finally published, the foreword was penned by Leo Baeck. After Baeck's safe return to London in 1945, he was immediately drawn into conversation and dialogue about the meaning of the Shoah. His response came with the three BBC-sponsored radio addresses, titled, "The Meaning of History." Baeck certainly grappled with the Shoah, but it is evident that his response, as presented in this work, differed categorically in character from the more general body of published autobiographical Holocaust Literature, of which there must be scores, if not hundreds, of

meinschaft (Theresienstadt 1941-1945: The Face of a Co-

examples. What was different is that, in his Der Sinn der Geschichte, Baeck made no mention of the wrack and ruin that Nazism bequeathed to the world. Instead, his characterization of history here was framed in the more general terms of power and its misuses, technology, justice, spirit, soul, progress, and faith, with no specific mention made of the political, military, and social events triggered by the rise of Nazism in Germany. Baeck referenced neither the factual details nor the inhuman cruelty and suffering they unleashed. The casual reader might think that Baeck took the long, more distant view of history, seen as a broad canvass stretching from the most ancient historical traditions to today's times, as if the happenings of the Third Reich had been a mere blip in the continuity. Albert Friedlander and Bertold Klappert, in their editorial introduction to Baeck's Werke, seem to have had a similar interpretation. They described Baeck's philosophical view of history as expressed in the 1946 essays to be not much different from his earlier, pre-Shoah writing that pertained to the theme

The main theme "Theology and History," except of Baeck's essay that now, they believed, he sounded is that history somewhat "more pessimistic." Our own interpretation on is shaped Baeck's motivation and intent for writing as he did is quite different, if not entirely contrarian. As we read Baeck, he did not espouse that pessimistic view; in fact, he

dismissed that Jeremianic sentiment with, "Surely, that sentiment is not the answer...." Baeck's discussion is directly, if implicitly, informed by the events of the Adolph Hitler regime, 1933 to 1945. Please consider that the pervading theme of his essay is that history is never shaped by centers of power whose main interest is their own maintenance and propagation, and do so by means of

the exercise—and often abuse—of their "raw power," at the expense of the general welfare of the population. Instead, Baeck says, history is the result of the contributions of individual members of the common population, one by one, who will pursue and defend the principles of ethics and justice. If they fail in this, then, When a people has repudiated the ethical spirit,

then it pours all its available energy into its

misdeeds and defects, to make them greater.... To us, this appeared to be Baeck's somewhat veiled, but nevertheless clear and unambiguous criticism of the

by common individuals who pursue and defend ethics and justice, not by centers of power.

rather than admitting their complicity in the doings of the Third Reich—instead persisted in their pretense that they, too, had been victims of the National Socialist regime. It is as if the "Nazis" had been alien invaders from outer space who had come to victimize the "innocent and well-meaning" German people against their will.

Next, we entertain a differing interpretation of the curious fact that Baeck explicitly mentioned neither the German government nor the Nazi Party as having had a decisive influence on the history of the war years in Europe, 1939 to 1945. Why was he will-

The third message we read in Baeck's text is that redemption, renewal, and rebirth are possible—even for the German people

ing to, so to speak, "leave them off the hook"? Our feeling is that, reading the text correctly, one can see that Baeck actually was stating a subtly implied, but nevertheless specific and intentionally severe, indictment of the world's governments, at large. Certainly, the unspeakable cruelties perpetrated by the Nazis against their victims were much greater in magnitude than those of any other nation in the world. What we hear Baeck saying, however, is that—in principle—they were all the same. By not singling out the Germans or the Nazis for their extreme misdeeds—and thus, by implication, making everybody

else look good—Baeck, we think, clearly accuses all the governments of the world, with only a few exceptions, of complicity in the raw exercise of power, intent only on furthering their individual desires for control and dominance. Consider the tragic story of the ocean liner the S.S. St. Louis. In May 1939, over 900 Jews boarded this ship in the port of Hamburg, Germany, with legal visas for Cuba. Upon arrival at the port of Havana, however, the Cuban government had "changed its mind" and refused them entry. The captain of the ship then tried to find some refuge for his passengers in several port cities in the United States and an additional effort was made to allow them to disembark in Halifax in Canada. All these attempts ended in failure. Eventually, the S.S. St. Louis had to return to Hamburg, Germany, where according to a study conducted by Sarah A. Ogilvie and Scott Miller, 254 of its passengers disembarked only to face certain deportation and, for many, death in the gas chambers. The third message we read in Baeck's text is that re-

demption, renewal, and rebirth are possible—even for the German people. But such a change can come only through the rededication of individual members of the population, one by one, to the principles of justice and ethics: A people will reawaken to a new life...only when it will find its way again to the ethical ideal, the

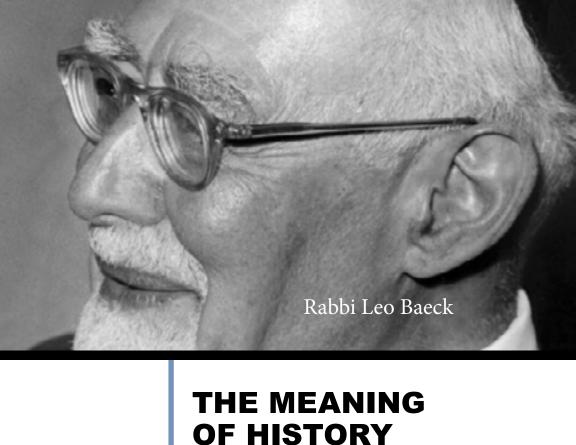
way of culture. A new epoch in its history begins. That is to say, all the efforts by the post-war German government to make restitution efforts through the Wiedergutmachung Programm were earnest and laudable, but ultimately authentic and effective change will occur only if the German people, as individuals, will be ready to adapt to an ethical and just culture. Perhaps we, as translators, read more into Leo Baeck's text than he had intended to say. We

leave it to you, the reader of "The Meaning of History", to find your own interpretation.

Dr. Bernard H. Mehlman, DHL

Dr. Gabriel E.

Padawer, ScD,



Three 1946 Addresses on the British **Broadcasting Corporation German** Language Program by Leo Baeck

I. The Meaning of History hen the present is uncomfortable or depressing, there is a tendency to

> have described history as backwards prophecy: that is, its task was to give meaning to what has gone before. However, that implies that history can tell what it was that people could or should have envisioned. It implies, as well, the hopeful desire that such recognition could be directed forward, so that we might discover and declare the rule and direction of what is to come. The longing of many is to allow the past to inform the future.

That which was then should clarify what is now. History should give an answer to the question of the day. Some

cast a backward glance to what has been, and how that past has become what now stands or lies before us.

The task of history really seems to be to recognize what was, to understand what is, and to grasp what will be. What was?—That is the question from which everything flows. To make this question both more general and more specific we could ask: What has remained for us and our descendants from what has been before? And what has remained from everything for which people have wrestled, or for which nations have stood with or against one another? We are familiar with several centuries

It is possible of human history and to take a culture. The excavations of archeologists continue pessimistic to lead us into earlier regions and earlier view of history days. Newly uncovered sites and epochs give that sees evidence for what was. the world in And how much more may yet be discovered gloomy light, by this research? And how much more might or worse,

remain buried for eons

submerges it in or forever and thus remain unknown to darkness. us forever or for eons? Plato tells about the Isle of Atlantis, a land of wondrous learning and marvelous skills, which was submerged in the ocean with all its people and all their achievements, leaving no trace. Yet we are willing to see

some truth in it. For archeological remains, however, the questions: What has remained from all that was? What has endured? become all the more real and certain. It is possible to take a pessimistic view of history that sees the world in gloomy light, or worse, submerges it in

darkness. It is based on the more general pessimistic view

in which everything that exists and lives, existed and Continued on next page

lived for no other purpose than to someday die and pass away. The answers and proofs for this particular pessimistic view of history are easy to find. Consider, what does the eye of the historian, directed back in time, see before him? Wherever he looks there is destruction after destruction, whether caused by the human hand or by the hand of destiny. Fields of graves and ruins lie before him. Nothing but the great debris of history, rubble upon rubble indicate what once were the great powers who had achieved heights and expanded their far reaching circle of influence. Concerning many realms, the sad words of the ancient poet apply: "et perire ruinae" ("even the ruins have vanished"). To give such pessimism a certain justification one needs only to think of the portentous and powerful realms of early antiquity, the empires of Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Asia Minor, realms that seem to have been founded to

endure. Now, they exist only in the wreckage salvaged from mounds and caves. Once there were nations and states that were alive and had their place, now we only know their names or even the names have been lost. This pessimistic view

is quite persuasive. It leads us to understand why the results derived by historians are often woeful. One only needs to think of the two greats of antiquity, the Greek Thucydides and the Roman Tacitus, or another great of modern times, the Englishman Gibbon. Even with historians who had a living faith in the ever upward

In every case raw power, time and time again, has led to ruin, was time and time again rebuilt, and time again destroyed once more.

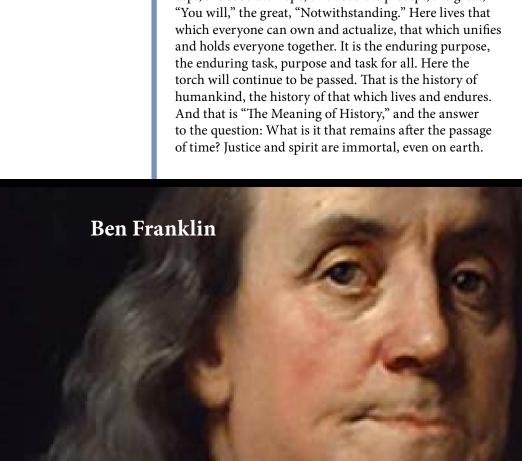
rising path [of history] like Ranke or Macaulay, we can sometimes discern a dark undertone. Thus one can understand that the pessimistic view of history creates its own philosophy, and its own system. To name only one example, think of the book—rich in ideas—by Oswald Spengler, written in the first part of this century [20th], entitled, The Decline of the West. Spengler sees the pessimistic view of history to be a pessimistic view of culture. He avers that cultures have their lives just as humans live their lives. After childhood, adolescence, and maturity decline, fatigue and senescence begin, until death arrives. The question concerning what persists then becomes the question of what the meaning of it all may be. It seems that the answer must be other than the one contained in a verse in the book of the prophet Jeremiah: "...Peoples shall labor for naught, and the nations for smoke, and fade away." Surely, that sentiment is not the answer, or at least not the whole answer. Let us look more closely: What really is

it that has collapsed, that has turned to rubble? It is only that which desired to be nothing other than raw power, that which sought nothing other than to exercise and to preserve that power. In every case that raw power, time and time again, has led to ruin, was time and time again rebuilt, and time again destroyed once more. It is the essence of power that seeks to be nothing other than raw power, and that it must wield its power over others, that it always must turn against others. As a result, the others more and more will resist. Force creates counterforce, power whose purpose is only to have power over others, to rule them and to oppress them, is not constructive. It can only be destructive. The principle of destruction is self-contained and thus basically it destroys itself. As soon as it is built up the sound of cracks in the walls presage its destruction. Whoever views history to be nothing but the record of the coming and going of such powers will see nothing but the expanse of rubble, history's detritus. This is a discouraging way of looking at it. But, at the same time, does it not give rise to a feeling of great confidence? It is clear: power can never endure if it wishes to be only raw power. Always arrayed against it was justice,

will never become subservient to might, because it derives its legitimacy not from raw power but from something that is higher. Any power that was opposed to justice was destroyed. It was obliterated and the law of justice endured. History helps us to recognize this march of justice. It has always been a slow journey, a difficult journey, full of obstacle and interruptions, a journey of struggle and of martyrdom. But it was and remains a journey that had a purpose and always the same purpose. And that is the intrinsic, the incisive journey of history. The history of humankind is the history of true justice. Therefore, the history of humankind is the history of great hope, a hope that is enduring, that is inspiring, that is absolute. In addition there is something beyond, a something that yet is basically the same. The earth brought forth creative peoples, peoples from whom creative individuals emerged. These individuals gave new ideas to humankind or gave new form to old ideas. They let shine a new light of the human spirit. After all, the history of

and justice, true justice, always must prevail. True justice

humankind is primarily the history of those great ideas and their thinkers, a history of great perceptions and precepts. Frequently over time the attempt was made to extinguish that light, whether old or new. And often it was the powers that wanted to be nothing but raw powers that made the attempt. Many times, periods of darkness threatened to invade the earth, but the light of the spirit, the light of the soul, is indestructible. The light endures, and some day will break forth again. A people that connect to a true idea, a true task, a true precept therefore will retain the strength to survive. Raw power fades but this strength endures. Again: that is true history, a history of the spirit, a history of real strength, of real life. Here we can find birth and rebirth—birth and rebirth towards true life. Here also exists the great hope, the great precept, the absolute hope, this absolute precept, the great,



II. Civilization and the individual

urely, the difference between humans and the animal world is recognized by many. That difference is that humans are the life form that makes tools [for itself]. That definition originated with Benjamin Franklin, himself a maker of tools and devices, the inventor of the lightning rod, and a lover of freedom. But even he knew that something ex-

ists that ranks higher than the art and power of the tool. Indeed, it is tool making that has shaped what is commonly called civilization. However, when using

by Zivilisation in the German language, in English and in French is known as "Culture." Conversely, the German word Kultur is translated as "Civilization" in English and French. Many misunderstandings have been caused by this [linguistic] discrepancy. Humans have risen above the station of the animal

world, owing to their tool making ability. Tools have essentially extended their reach beyond their physical bodies. The range of their physical skills has continually increased whereas animals were limited to the domain of their innate bodies. Animals are also fixed in time; they can only replicate themselves. In contrast, humans have bequeathed their tools from generation to generation, and in time these become improved and refined. Tools have a history, and it is the history of civilization. People like to praise it as the history of human progress. Indeed, human life in its prosaic form has made

tremendous progress. In contrast, the animal constantly remains in the realm of its natural existence. Only when humans draw the animal into their circle will its behavior be changed, whether by breaking or by training. The animal does not know the self-initiated progress that is civilization. The form of its dwelling, the nature of its nourishment, has always remained the same. Now consider the way that humankind has come during that period from the Stone Age to our present age of the machine! It was the way of the tool and its technology. The epochs of this history vary. There were centuries

of slower and centuries of more rapid development. There have been epochs of stasis or even regression. But looking at the whole picture, we see that the way to civilization has been ascendant and unstoppable. Civi-Humans have risen lization has reached everywhere and

above the station of the animal world, owing to their tool making ability. Tools have essentially extended their reach. the beginning of the era of the tool in the middle of the

seemingly has been adopted overnight, even in places where the current forms of existence only yesterday resembled those of an earlier millennium. Civilization today dominates the earth. The question has often been posed whether this development has been a blessing—or perhaps to the contrary-

a misfortune for humanity (considering

its rapidity and reach). This question has become especially cogent since

18th century. From Rousseau to Tolstoy and more recently in our days the question continues to be asked, whether in spite of civilization, or perhaps owing to it, suffering and evil have increased for humanity? Civilization has alienated humans from nature and from their own inner selves. Civilization has forced us to see only the tool and its performance to the end that humans themselves are seen to be tools. Humans, created equal by God, are separated by civilization into masters or slaves of the tool. Civilization has robbed human life of its simplicity and peace of mind. Civilization continually has complicated the life of humans so they no longer have time for themselves nor for their fellow humans, not for their souls or for God. Humans believe that they control the tools, but it is the tools that control them. Humans think to subjugate nature but instead themselves are enslaved. Is this a valid question, or—to limit the scope of inquiry—what part of it is valid? To begin with, there can be no doubt that there has been a feeling of discomfort,

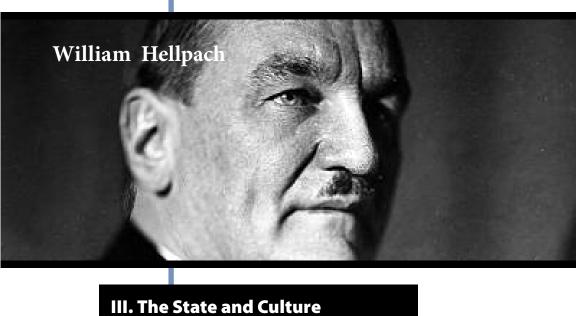
a feeling of being on the wrong path in countries from whence civilization has spread as well as those where civilization has newly arrived. The explanation for this is easily seen. In the last century and a half, we have been led ever more rapidly through a revolution which has captured our civilization. That revolution is characterized by a completely changed concept of distance, that is, the overcoming of separation. From earliest history, whether known or conjectured, until the beginning of the 19th century, during all these millennia the way people have dealt with distances has remained essentially the same. The participants in the great French Revolution had at their disposal the same rate of motion—or as some condescendingly might say, the same plodding slowness—as did the Pharaohs of Egypt in the earliest millennia. All of these, human and animal, could use only the power of their feet on land, and the rudder and sail on the sea. In our present time we are astounded and sometimes stunned by the way that the acoustic and optical technologies have conquered space. How humans today relate to borders and barriers has become entirely new. Every nation is now a closer neighbor to the next. There is no longer any fallback position on earth: people can no longer avoid one another. It has become necessary to learn how to live side by side. But humans have not yet gotten used to the idea and thus feel much discomfort and insecurity. However, the basis for this agonizing tension that seems to tear at humanity lies deeper still. After all, the tool is only the tool of its wielder. What is important, therefore, is the human who masters it. That is evidenced primarily in situations where the tool leads people together and seeks to hold them together. One may distin-

It is an indicator of the current age of the machine that tools more and more have become of the social type. It is no longer the tool of one individual but of a group of people. Now much depends on humans, on the standard by which they measure themselves and others; on the moral regard that they have for themselves, for their fellow humans, and for their purpose in life. Much depends on the spirit, the moral spirit of civilization, or—to introduce this word—culture. In this context, humanity has much to finally learn and to catch up with. Development in technology has overtaken moral development, almost suppressing it. That is the real basis for that certain inner imbalance, that feeling of discomfort and being on the wrong path. The tool has come to serve not humanity but the drive for power. Humans have been relegated to the background—if not completely forgotten. Thus, technical civilization in many ways has become the doom of humanity. The tool was placed into the hand of the human, and it now depends on the human whether it will be a blessing or a curse, whether it will bring life or death. The fate of the world, especially of the West, is determined thereby. Now that physical distance is no longer a barrier and there is no more place for isolation, and people are brought more closely into contact with one another, they all need moral strength and the will for human dignity. Different nationalities resemble children in a family who must live together, like it or not. Primitive hordes that

guish between the individual and the social type of tool.

could roam without contact with others perhaps needed less moral spirit for their existence. In contrast, nations who everywhere and ever again meet one another as they pursue their desires and their hopes cannot continue to live without the moral spirit, without the moral power. The intoxication of technical civilization has made us forget that the most powerful reality on earth still is humanity with its souls and lives—not the tool with its technology and its success. It is our task now to turn to our fellow humans. It may require much catching up,

but it will be our salvation and the way to the future.



enjamin Franklin gave his well-known definition for humans: "the tool-making life form." A variant to this was preferred by Hellpach who said that the human is that [unique] life form

on earth that knows about its grandparents.

The latter definition emphasizes an important human characteristic. For animals, the normal relationship between generations is that the mother recognizes her young she has carried and birthed, and reciprocally the offspring its mother. Today it is generally well understood that the relationship between the offspring and the male who sired it is not even remotely the same. Only humans, perhaps sometime during their evolution, have attained the ability to be aware of their grandparents and vice versa, the grandparents their grandchildren. The knowledge of earlier days thus could be transmitted to later times by means of the spoken word and eventually through writing.

develop. In that sense, it differs from the social structure of animals that always remains the same. The notion of human family differs from that of animals. Human families became clans, which differ in kind from herds. Clans became tribes, which again differ from species. One significant stage of the history of human life and human society was marked when the activity of roaming tribes of hunters and herdsmen changed over to orderly

This created a uniquely human form of socialization having the essential characteristic that it can change and

to a certain piece of land, a certain territory. Their dwellings became settlements. The tent was replaced by the house, the encampment became a town, and eventually a city. The time of the roaming of the tribes had ended, and they knew where on earth they belonged.

Thereby, the tribe and

agriculture. Agriculture

and the associated need to settle led the tribe to bind

> reality on earth still is humanity with its souls and lives.

The most

powerful

its clans, families and individuals, learned something of importance. They learned to draw boundaries and to acknowledge them. They learned further to make and preserve laws. The earliest laws surely concerned borders. A border is not merely a mark of place and ownership; it is also a barrier against trespass and violence. The barrier against trespass and violence was established by law. Ever since then, humans dwelling together, human society, and also intergenerational relations have been built on recognizing and respecting borders and barriers. All these relationships stand and fall with the law that sets the boundary against desire and demand. Lack of barriers leads to the destruction of community. Two things could have developed on this basis. The first is the state. In simple terms, the state had its origins in the fortified town together with its surrounding

farmlands and villages. Many languages use the same word for city and state [in German: Stadt und Staat] but essentially from the very beginning the state has been the locus of the law. In that sense, the state has the potential for development. The development of the law became the development of the state. With stronger laws the state could grow and advance, but weaker and meaningless laws or laws that have become tools of capriciousness lead to its decline. At the same time that the state is established, an awareness of history is established. It is an awareness of a great commonality of memories, experiences, and hopes: an awareness of enduring connection between those who were and those who will be. In some people that awareness gained strength and scope; in others, it remained weak and narrow. It will be observed that wherever appreciation of the law is alive, the awareness of history is also alive and growing. The second thing that was able to develop from the basis provided by a durable society is culture. Here that word culture has the meaning assigned to it in the German language. Culture suffuses society with a spirit, with

history. This ethical idea can guide the way for law and for history so society is defined not only by its territory and its destiny but also by a shared true spirit. By this means, people and state gain inner worth and dignity of self. Individual humans become personalities—that is to say—are able to evolve their own emotional, spiritual, and ethical being and make it their own. Everything that they do, that they think and speak, that they hope for and desire, now becomes an expression of their inner domain. They have significance not only—and perhaps not even most importantly—for what they accomplish, but primarily by what they are, by their personhood. They, too, may possess an ethical and spiritual culture—which alone is a true culture—and In a nation there can already contribute to humanity by their mere presence. be no more truth, Every people is governed by its ethical obligation, the great justice, uprightness, obligation of culture. The importance and the place of a people

the consequence that an ethical idea governs both law and

goodness, and ethical courage, than the number of individuals of truth, justice, uprightness, goodness, and ethical courage in it. to it—only after it becomes self-aware and returns, only when it will find its way again to the ethical ideal, the

in humanity at large depends upon whether it comprehends this. The great idea, the general

law is one thing but the way to it is manifold. Every people may find its own way and attain its future by following it. Whenever a people will live its life away from this way of ethical commandment, it loses itself. A people is lost when it departs from this way; a people deceives itself when it follows pseudo-ideas and erroneous thoughts. A people is threatened to extinction when its will to live by moral ideals has died or was stifled. When a people has repudiated the ethical spirit then it pours all its available energies into its misdeeds and defects, to make them greater. A people will reawaken to a new life—the power granted

way of culture. A new epoch in its history begins. However, culture as well as the form of government do not hover like clouds overhead, but exhibit themselves in humans, become reality in humans. All culture was created by human individuals. Likewise, the culture of nations depends upon truly cultured people who are part of it, who live in it, and are able to strive in it. A nation declines when its individuals of spirit have become submerged and became untrue to themselves, or when the nation has expelled them. In a nation there can be no more truth, justice, uprightness, goodness, and ethical courage, than the number of individuals of truth, justice, uprightness, goodness, and ethical courage in it. Only as long as such people have remained or have reawakened in a nation that lost its way, then a way to rebirth and the future will become apparent. It depends upon every single biblical tale of the city that can be saved for the sake of ten righteous people in it. A society gains its power and digni-

individual. There is deep historical meaning in the old ty through genuine humans who are in it. In the opposite case, where the humans derive their sense of self-worth only from the group, from the class, from the nation, superficiality and dissoluteness take the place of culture. Then, fanaticism, arrogance, and chauvinism lead the battle against the spirit. History speaks clearly about this. Humans are part of history. They are granted the ability to recognize those from whom they descended and think about those who follow them. They are part of the destiny of generations. They are part of the people and of the state, sharing destiny and creating destiny. Nations are placed alongside nations, states alongside

states, all with their own boundaries and with their own

laws. Taken together, they constitute humanity. Every

nation, every state has its uniqueness, its characteristic

traits, the distinction of its culture. Working together,

they shall create the culture for all humanity.

peared in the Journal of Reform Judaism. —Translated by Dr. Gabriel E. Padawer and Dr. Bernard H. Mehlman.

This first ap-

Strategy in Stages

Reviving the Nuclear Disarmament Movement: A **Practical Proposal**

developed to fight climate change, no counterpart has emerged to take on the rising danger of nuclear disaster—yet.

Although a widespread movement has

Lawrence S. Wittner

"humanity faces two imminent existential threats: environmental catastrophe and nuclear war." Curiously, although a widespread environmental movement has developed to save the planet from accelerating climate change, no counterpart has emerged to take on the rising danger of nuclear disaster. Indeed, this danger exemplified by the collapse of arms control and disarmament agreements, vast nuclear "modernization" programs by the United States and other nuclear powers, and reckless threats of nuclear war has stirred remarkably little public protest and even less public debate during the recent U.S. midterm elections. Of course, there are peace and disarmament organizations that challenge the nuclear menace. But

n late November 2018, Noam Chomsky, the world-

renowned public intellectual, remarked that

they are fairly small and pursue their own, separate antinuclear campaigns. Such campaigns ranging from cutting funding for a new nuclear weapon, to opposing the Trump administration's destruction of yet another disarmament treaty, to condemning its threats of nuclear war are certainly

> a massive public uprising against the overarching danger of nuclear annihilation. In these circumstances, what is missing is a strategy that peace organizations and activists can rally around to rouse the public from its torpor and shift the agenda of the nuclear powers from nuclear confron-

tation to a nuclear weapons-free world.

praiseworthy. But they have not galvanized

The Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, launched decades ago in another time of nuclear crisis, suggests one possible strategy. Developed at the end of the 1970s by defense analyst Randy Forsberg, the Freeze (as it became known) focused on a rather simple, straightforward goal: a Soviet-American agreement to stop the testing, production, and deployment of nuclear weapons. As Forsberg predicted, this proposal to

72 percent) and sparked an enormous grassroots campaign. The Reagan administration, horrified by this resistance to its plans for a nuclear buildup and victory

halt the nuclear arms race had great popu-

in a nuclear war, fought ferociously against it. But to no avail. The Freeze triumphed in virtually every state and local referendum on the ballot captured the official support of the Democratic Party, and sailed through the House of Representatives by an overwhelming majority. Although the Reaganites managed to derail it in the Senate, the administration was on the defensive and, soon, on the run. Joined by massive antinuclear campaigns in Europe, Asia, and other parts

of the world, the Freeze campaign forced a reversal of administration priorities and policies, leading to previously unthinkable Soviet-American nuclear disarmament treaties and an end to the Cold War. How might a comparable strategy be implemented The campaign goal might be a halt to the nuclear arms race, exemplified by an agreement among the nuclear powers to scrap their ambitious nuclear "modern-

An alternative, more ambitious goal one that would probably also elicit widespread public approval would be the ratification by the nuclear powers of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. This UN-brokered treaty, signed in July 2017 by the vast majority of the world's nations and scorned by the governments of the United States and other nucleararmed countries, prohibits nations from developing,

ization" plans. Although the Trump administration would undoubtedly rail against this policy, the vast majority of Americans would find it thoroughly acceptable.

The second stage of a current campaign strategy, as it was in the strategy of the Freeze, is to get as many peace groups as possible to endorse the campaign and put their human and financial resources behind it. Despite some possible qualms among their modern counterparts about losing their unique identity and independence, working together in a joint effort seems feasible today. Some of the largest of the current organizations

such as the American Friends Service Committee, Peace Action, Physicians for Social Responsibility, and Veterans for Peace are thoroughly committed to building a

testing, producing, acquiring, possessing, stockpiling, using, or threatening to use nuclear weapons.

nuclear weapons-free world and, therefore, might well be willing to embark on this kind of coalition venture. The third stage of an effective strategy is winning the battle for public opinion. In the case of the Freeze, this entailed not only holding lots of gatherings in people's living rooms, but introducing Freeze resolutions at conventions of religious denominations, unions, professional associations, and the vast panoply of voluntary organizations, where they almost invariably passed. Having a concrete, common-sense proposal to

lot activists engaged in a widespread conversation on a key political issue with friends, neighbors, and members of mainstream organizations. It's the kind of grassroots educational opportunity that peace and disarmament advocates should welcome today. A final stage involves turning the objective into government policy. The Freeze campaign found that many politicians were delighted to adopt its program in some cases even a bit too eager, bringing it to Congress before full public mobilization. Similarly, at present, some key Democrats—including the chair of the incom-

support one coming up at a church conclave, in a town meeting, at a union assembly, or on the bal-

ing House Armed Services Committee and likely Democratic presidential candidates—are already gearing up an attack upon the Trump administration's nuclear "modernization" program, its withdrawal from disarmament treaties, and its eagerness to launch a nuclear war. Consequently, if a major public campaign gets rolling substantial changes in public policy are within reach. To be fully effective, such a campaign requires international solidarity—not only to bring domestic pressure to bear on diverse nations, but overseas pressure as

well. The Freeze movement worked closely with nuclear disarmament movements around the world, and this international coalition produced striking results. The power of the antinuclear movement within nations allied with the U.S. government led to their governments constantly pressing the Reagan administration to temper its bellicose ambitions and accept nuclear disarmament. Similarly, Eastern Bloc officials found themselves forced to scramble for the support of other governments

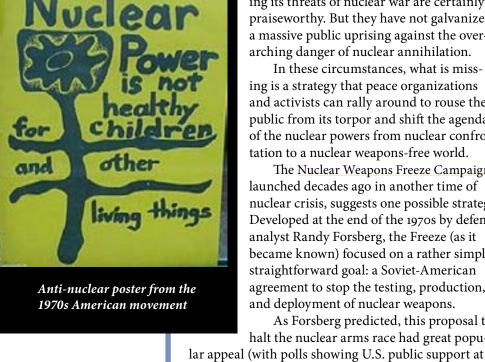
and, even worse, forced to deal with protest campaigns erupting within their own countries. These kinds of international pressures, enhanced by the current strong dissatisfaction of non-nuclear nations with the escalation of the nuclear arms race and the related dangers of nuclear war, could play an important role today. Of course, this proposal suggests only one of numerous possible ways to develop a broad anti-nuclear

campaign. Even so, there should be little doubt about

the necessity for organizing that campaign. The alter-

native is allowing the world to continue its slide to-

ward nuclear catastrophe.



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> > a-practical-proposal/

A Short History of