

# How to Reduce the Risk Of Nuclear War

Leonard Greene

**W**hen the first nuclear bomb was exploded at the White Sands Proving Grounds in 1945, I was asked by "The Inquiring Reporter" columnist at a New York city daily for my opinion on its significance. I replied that the long-term effects of the atomic bomb were unknown to mankind...as much so as the ravages of a forest fire would be to children playing with matches in the middle of a dry forest. Today, the final "fallout" from this first nuclear bomb is still unknown.

At first, we hoped to keep secret our knowledge of how to produce the bomb. But when the Soviet Union developed similar capability, we responded by placing our emphasis on numerical superiority. The USSR, of course, followed suit. Result: the "Arms Race."

**B**y the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis, it was apparent that there were more than enough missiles to destroy everything on earth, and President Kennedy warned Chairman Khrushchev that continuation

of the Cuban threat would result in mutual destruction.

While the US and the USSR were the two primary nuclear powers, the policy of Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) established under Kennedy was an effective deterrent to nuclear aggression. The situation is very different today. The number of nations with nuclear weapons has increased. A nuclear war could rapidly expand to a world war.

**T**o avert this disaster, the five largest nuclear powers—the US, Russia, China, the UK, and France—should join in a commitment to act together to deter nuclear aggression. This could take the form of a treaty that promises immediate retribution to any country that starts a nuclear war. Such a treaty would provide a strong deterrent to the deployment of nuclear missiles.

If North Korea represents a nuclear threat to Japan or South Korea, the existence of such a treaty amongst the large nuclear powers would greatly lessen this danger.

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