

It has often been argued that against any new weapon a defense is ultimately developed. The question of defense against atomic bombs is, however, a scientific problem, not to be argued in terms of commonplaces. Effective defenses which would preclude bombing by airplanes or rockets have not been developed in this war. In the present instance, defense is even more difficult, because a single plane or rocket is sufficient.

The atomic bomb, therefore, changes the security position of this country. The possession of military and naval bases, however numerous and far-outlying, cannot protect this country against devastating attacks. We may endeavor to maintain our present scientific and technological superiority in the future development of this weapon. All we could insure by this, however, would be a greater destruction of the enemy; not a lesser destruction of our own country.

The only visible way of minimizing the destructive effects of the bomb and of preserving a war potential if attacked is a radical dispersal. This means abandonment of all our cities and reconstruction of our industries, either in very small or in deep underground units. Even if such a complete change of our ways of life were undertaken, it might fail to provide protection; the destructiveness of the first crude atomic bomb models cannot be regarded as a measure of future possibilities. At present, in our own country, there is such a high concentration of industry and population as to make it particularly vulnerable.

In view of this situation, we believe that every attempt

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must be made immediately to arrange for the control of this weapon by a world authority. This means an effective international control of the production of the vital materials and of the manufacture of atomic weapons in all countries. This control is technically feasible because of the large scale and novel industrial character of the production processes. In order adequately to control this weapon, the world authority would have to be given supervision over certain of the economic aspects of national life. This involves, for all nations, a departure from cherished political concepts.

The decisive step, however, is not still before us; it has been taken with the invention of the atomic bomb. Radical technological changes bring about profound changes in our way of life in one way or another. The choice that remains to us is the choice that we have described: the destructive and ineffective abandonment of our cities as a prelude to war; or the immediate achievement of an effective world authority. It is our concerted scientific judgment that there is no third alternative.

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