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MS-630: Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler Digital Collection, 1953-1996.
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Clergy and Laity Concerned, 1985.

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Clergy And Laity Concerned

198 Broadway, NY, NY 10038
(212) 964-6730

[Handwritten signature]

2/20/86

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AMS
Shane
sign*

Mr. Vorspan,

Enclosed is a religious leaders' letter to President Reagan regarding the nuclear testing issue. Also, you will find a cover letter enclosed.

We hope that you or Rabbi Schindler will be able to sign on to both the letter to Reagan and the cover letter to other religious leaders.

If at all possible, we would like to send the letters out to over 100 clergy tomorrow. If you could call us on Friday morning with your decision, we would appreciate it.

Thank you for your consideration,
Roger Powers



CLERGY AND LAITY CONCERNED

1965

20TH ANNIVERSARY

1985

PEOPLE OF FAITH WORKING FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE

Dear Colleague,

Recent developments in U.S.-Soviet relations offer new hope that the nuclear arms race can be stopped. The July-December Soviet moratorium on nuclear explosion tests and its recent three-month extension is a far more significant action than has yet been recognized in this country. A positive response by the United States will result in an immediate slowing of the arms race and could open the door to far-reaching agreements.

In order to present this opportunity more forcefully to the American people and encourage a positive response by our government, we invite you to join with us in signing the enclosed statement calling for a U.S. halt to nuclear explosion tests. It will be issued at a press conference planned for mid-March. In addition, we are hoping to have the letter delivered to the White House by a delegation of religious leaders.

The circulation of the letter and the press conference are being coordinated by Clergy and Laity Concerned together with the American Friends Service Committee.

Please phone in your response to (212) 964-6730 today, or use the response slip enclosed. (Phone responses are requested in the interest of time.) Please give your name with correct spelling, and title. Organizational affiliations will be listed for identification purposes only and will be so noted.

We believe this to be an important statement. It will have impact to the extent that it is widely subscribed. Please let us hear from you today.

Sincerely,

Dear Mr. President:

There are moments when decisive action can change the course of history. One such moment occurred at the end of World War II, when the US and USSR might have found a way to prevent the beginning of the nuclear arms race. They failed, and we live under the darkening nuclear shadow today because of that failure.

Another moment occurred in 1963, when President John F. Kennedy announced that the US would suspend nuclear tests in the atmosphere for as long as other nations did the same. The Soviets responded positively to Kennedy's call and within a short time the Limited Test Ban Treaty was signed, saving future generations around the globe from ever increasing levels of radioactive fallout.

Today, Mr. President, we stand at another such moment, and you are the leader with the chance to take an action which can turn the world toward peace. As you know, last July Secretary Gorbachev announced a 5-month moratorium on nuclear testing and asked the United States to do the same, an initiative not unlike President Kennedy's in 1963. The Soviets did observe the five-month moratorium, despite the fact that we used that time to continue tests of new weapons. In January, Mr. Gorbachev announced a three-month extension of the moratorium, to the end of March 1986.

The Soviet moratorium may or may not mean that they are open to a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, but we will never know unless we take the next step.

We urge you to take that next essential step: immediately call a halt to nuclear explosion tests until the Summit meeting and indicate your openness to a further extension if the Soviets do not resume testing.

Your action will not endanger national security. A nuclear testing moratorium is verifiable. Seismic monitoring facilities can detect underground nuclear explosions with high reliability. Your action can also test the Soviet statement that they are willing to discuss on site inspection. This has always been a goal of US policy, and we urge you to explore this opening fully.

As religious leaders in a nation which places great reliance on religious values, we are deeply troubled by our nation's growing reliance on weapons of mass destruction as our source of security. Throughout the scriptures, nations are warned not to trust in weapons and warriors for security, but in God. To do otherwise, scripture teaches, is to invite destruction, and history is littered with the remains of those who ignored this warning.

We seriously question the morality and the wisdom of the endless stockpiling of nuclear weapons capable of ending all life on earth, and of military budgets which call for spending \$2000 per year for every man, woman and child in this nation. These weapons exact a terrible toll on all the peoples of the world, even if they are never used in battle. Resources spent on weapons leave the hungry without food, the homeless without shelter, the sick without care, and the unemployed without jobs.

We stand at a crossroads. One way leads to the dead end of nuclear Armageddon. The other leads to a future of peace and prosperity without nuclear weapons, and with life in abundance for all the world's people. You have the power to start the world down the second way. As people of faith, to a person of faith, we urge you, Mr. President, to choose life in this historic moment and announce that the United States will halt the testing of nuclear weapons.