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Building Walls and Shelter, 1961.

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When I was a boy and studied the Pirke Aboth of the Rabbis, I was greatly impressed by a saying of Hillel. His words were doubly imposing, first by what they said and secondly by the ancient and difficult Aramaic in which they were couched --

At the time these words seemed harsh and pitiless. Since then, I have come to understand that the gentle Hillel was ^{only} ~~here~~ recording one of those harsh and ungentle facts about the conduct of human life which men forget too soon and recall too late. Hillel was not angry at ^{the} ~~that~~ poor body which he saw floating upon the water, but he was solemnly and perhaps even sorrowfully reflecting upon the inescapable accountability, the relentless sequence of moral retribution from which evil-doers never escape. He was re-stating ~~the~~ an axiom of the Bible: "They that plough iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same" --

תורה, חלק, וזכר, וזהו.

^{recut}
The fate of Stalin helped me to understand the words of Hillel. Stalin had caused many skulls to float upon the water, in order to keep himself from being drowned. He carried through bloody purges against his opponents. He slew ~~thousands~~ thousands and caused millions of peasants to perish in order to ensure the success of his program of land collectivization. His chief enemy, Trotsky -- himself a ruthless slayer -- he hounded to death. He drove him into exile and contrived his assassination in his place of refuge in Mexico. He erased his name -- the name of the one man who, together with Lenin, was responsible for the triumph of the October ~~Russian~~ Revolution -- ^{he erased it} from all the records and histories of the Revolution. The coming generations of Russians must never know that Trotsky ever lived. When I was in Leningrad last summer, I ^{requested} my guide take me to the Smolney Institute, the former headquarters of Trotsky, from ^{where} ~~which~~ he launched the revolution and directed the capture of the city, which was then Petrograd and the Capital of Russia. There was nothing in or around the Smolney Institute to indicate or even to suggest that Trotsky ever had anything to do with the Revolution -- no tablet, no statue, no ~~monument~~ ^{new building} inscription -- and the communists are very lavish in their commemorative tributes to the heroes of their revolution. Trotsky had been completely erased and obliterated -- sunk like lead in the deep sea. Even his skull ^{no longer} ~~did not~~ float ^{ed} upon the water....

Stalin died while planning for more skulls to float upon the water. Retribution overtook him ^{only} after his death. His party, which he whipped into supine submission and obedience during his life time, repudiated him, denounced and condemned him. His statues, which dotted every town and city ⁱⁿ ~~of~~ Russia, have been pulled down. His name is not mentioned now, except derogatively and in hate. How true now ring the words of Hillel: "because thou drownest others, they have now drowned thee". And how long will it be before the skull of Khrushchev, his

former collaborator and now his detractor, will float upon the water? And how long will it be before "they that will drown him, will themselves be drowned?"...

When I was young, I read a stern prophecy of Isaiah. It was directed against the king of Babylon. I thought ^{at the time} that it was over-wrought, a prophetic hyperbole. This was the prophecy:

"You said in your heart, I will ascend to heaven;
Above the stars of God I will set my throne on high;
But you are brought down to Sheol, to the depths of the Pit.
Those who see you will stare at you, and ponder over you;
Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms...
All the kings of the nations lie in glory, each in his own tomb;
But you are cast out, out of your sepulchre, like an abhorred off-shoot...
like a carcass trodden under foot."...

Because ~~you have~~ ^{you have} destroyed ~~your~~ ^{your} land,
Because ~~you have~~ ^{you have} slain ~~the~~ ^{your} people."



I also read a prophecy of Jeremiah. It was directed against Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, King of Judah. He had done much evil ^{in his day} and had spilled much innocent blood. The prophecy read: "They shall not lament for him, saying 'Ah my brother or 'Ah his majesty! With the burial of an ass he shall be buried, dragged and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem". This prophecy, too, appeared to me at the time, highly colored, ^{exaggerated} a flight of poetic imagination. But, today, when I read in the press how Stalin's body was dragged out of the mausoleum in Moscow's Red Square, where he lay in state alongside of Lenin -- I had seen the two bodies ^{recently} there, lying side by side, embalmed like Egyptian mummies, the objects of awesome tribute and veneration -- how it was dragged out and cast into some unknown grave, and how his name, which once caused millions to tremble, was everywhere erased, his ^{monuments} ~~statues~~ overthrown and dragged into the dust, ^{to day} I am ~~now~~ inclined to take these ancient prophecies quite literally. I realize that Isaiah and Jeremiah spoke

not only to their day, but to ours as well. ^{It is true that} Centuries separate the ^{ancient} kings of Babylon and Judah from the Red despots of the Kremlin, but the law of retribution applied to them all alike. This is true of all moral law. Time and place may change, but not the ~~the~~ inexorable operation ^{of the moral law.}

Thus, the law of the Lord ^{has always been} ~~is~~ against all those who build walls against their fellow-men and cement them with violence and blood. Some build these hostile walls in the name of race, religion or class. They do it for the good of mankind, they assert. They are out to save the world, and in the name of civilization, progress and humanity, they sow hate among men and incite ^{to} bigotry and conflict. They would have you see in their walls bulwarks of justice, ramparts of freedom. But they are none of these. They are walls of cruel separation and estrangement, barbed-wire barriers against human progress and brotherhood.

Men build walls against other men, not out of love, but out of hate or contempt. And nations build walls against other nations because they are afraid. Men who practice and defend segregation on the ground of race and color, either hate their fellow-men whose segregation they seek, or are disdainful of them. Neither hate nor contempt can be the basis of the good society that mankind is striving to build!

We have been reading a great deal in recent months about the wall which the communist East Berliners have erected in the heart of the city of Berlin. A great deal of passion has been aroused by the erection of this wall, and a great deal of propaganda has engulfed our people in consequence of it. We have been made to believe that the entire free world has been endangered by this act, and hot-heads have clamored for military action on our part to force the removal of that wall.

Actually, the erection of this wall by the Soviet-directed East Berliners was a confession of gross weakness on their part, a tacit admission that the Western expansion of communism, for the present time at least, has ended, and its limits definitely reached. If communism were confident of further conquest and expansion in the West in the near future, it would not have built a wall around itself. For some time now, East-Berliners had been escaping in large numbers to the West. Free and prosperous West Berlin was proving too great an attraction to the East-Berliners. It was also a daily reminder to the communists that the gross economic lag and inferiority of East Germany were being advertised to the world. Communism was thus being discredited. It could not endure ~~such~~ an open frontier to the West. It needed a protecting wall to shut itself in.

You will recall that when China built its Great Wall during the Chin Dynasty, the mightiest barrier ever built by man -- the eighth wonder of the world -- it was in the hope, not of any further conquest and expansion on its part, but of protecting itself against invasion from the ^{and the West} North. China was ^{now} content to stay within a protecting wall. That wall was built by a ruthless dictator, Chin Shih Huang Ti, who had turned his back upon the ancient culture and traditions of his country, had burnt the Chinese classics, as well as some five hundred scholars who dared to criticize his regime. His mighty wall, however, for whose construction he had impressed some three hundred thousand troops, did not prove, (after all, effective, ^{he} ~~the~~ wall was breached and China was invaded time and again.

The Romans, too, you will recall, built, in the second century, a seventy-mile long wall across Britain from the Tyne on the North Sea to Solway Firth on the Irish Sea, to keep out the threatening mountaineers from the ^{the highlands} North, from Scotland. This wall ^{too} clearly indicated that the era of further Roman expansion was ended. It marked the definite ^{if true} Northern limit of the Roman world. This is true also of the Berlin wall. It should be borne in mind that this wall was built not by the West, but by the East.

I know that some West-Berliners and West-Germans generally were very unhappy about the erection of this wall. [It must have been an unpleasant and somewhat humiliating experience for them, but then they should have recalled that they, ~~themselves~~, together with their fellow Germans of the East, were energetic wall-builders ^{themselves} not so many years ago. I saw sad pictures in the American press of Germans, especially German women, weeping at the sight of this wall.] I wondered if these same Germans wept over the Warsaw Ghetto Wall which their government -- a government which they overwhelmingly backed and cheered -- had erected, which imprisoned a half-million innocent men, women and children and consigned them to slow starvation and death. I wondered whether these same Germans shed any tears over the barbed-wire fences -- charged electrically so as to kill any one who tried to climb over them -- which were erected by their soldiers around the unspeakable concentration camps where millions of Jews were herded like cattle, degraded in their humanity in cruel and bottomless infamy, beaten and starved, and finally sent to the gas-chambers to be exterminated!

I haven't any tears to shed over these Berliners and over the inconvenience which was caused them by the wall which ^{has been} ~~was~~ built across their city. They are not starving, nor dying, nor doomed, nor facing gas-chambers. Berlin is a gay city today, I am told, prosperous, full of life, abounding in theatres, cabarets and night-clubs. No West-Berliner has lost his ^{basic} human freedom nor have the Western governments been denied access to West Berlin. I would not wish to see the world destroyed by atomic fire in order to give these West Berliners -- what? -- the ~~Tentonic~~ satisfaction of a re-united Berlin, which half of Berlin does not want? Or ~~to~~ give to West-Germans a re-united Germany, which half of Germany does not want? Let these past-masters in the demonic art of building walls around other men now learn the difficult art of removing them from around themselves. ~~They will learn~~ ^{they must} ~~it the hard way.~~ No one will remove their walls for them.

We, here at home, have not been engaged in building walls ^{to} ~~which~~ divide our cities -- but we are being urged to build fall-out shelters as a precaution against nuclear bombs which may rain down upon us in the next war ~~which may be imminent~~ ^{and the resultant deadly atmospheric contamination}. This has become a major preoccupation of our people. This, too, recalls to my mind an ancient prophecy:

For the Lord of hosts has a day
Against all that is proud and lofty,
Against all that is lifted up and high,
Against all the cedars of Lebanon
That are high and lifted up,
And against all the oaks of Bashan;
Against all the high mountains
And against all the lofty hills;
Against every high tower,
And against every fortified wall;
Against all the ships of Tarshish,
And against all beautiful craft,
And the haughtiness of man shall be humbled,
And the pride of man shall be brought low;
And the Lord alone will be exalted in that day.

And the idols shall utterly pass away,
And men shall go into the caves of the rocks,
And the holes of the ground,
From before the terror of the Lord
And from the glory of His majesty,
When He arises to terrify the earth.
In that day men shall cast forth
Their idols of silver, and his idols of gold

Which they made ^{for} themselves to worship
to the moles and to the bats;
To go into the caverns of the rocks,
And the clefts of the cliffs,
From before the terror of the Lord,
And from the glory of His majesty,
When He arises to terrify the earth.

As I look about me and see what is happening to our proud and lofty civilization, how we are being driven under-ground by ~~the~~ fears which have resulted from the evil work of our own hands, I wonder whether the terror and judgment of God has not finally come upon this, ~~our~~ generation. The idols which we have worshiped, the idols of silver and gold, of power and greed, of pride and prestige, of weapons and armaments, are finally driving us, ^{covering, us} ~~cornering~~ into the holes of the earth, like primitive man into his cave.

I have no advice to give on the subject of ^{underground} dugouts, and no blue-prints ^{on how} ~~to construct~~ ^{for} the most comfortable fall-out shelter with the latest improvements. There are already quite a few samples in the market, and there will be many more, as international tensions continue to mount and manufacturers rush in to capitalize ^{of our people.} ~~upon~~ the increasing ~~public~~ apprehension. There will be a ^{growing} ~~growing~~ demand for local, state and national shelter-building programs which ^{may cost} ~~will reach into~~ tens of billions of dollars, and no one will be able to argue successfully against them. After all, Europe built shelters during the Second World War. We did not have to. Our cities were not within the range of enemy bombers, but in the next war our cities too will be within the range of ~~many~~ nuclear missiles, whose destructive force will be a million-^{times} ~~fold~~ that of the bombs which were dropped in the last war.

What alternative, then, is there to the building of shelters? None! It seems logical, too, that if shelters must be built, they should be built for everyone, rich and poor alike. Why should only the more affluent be spared? I see where people are already discussing the pros and cons of hanging up signs on their private shelters -- "Keep Out, Or Else!" -- as a *clear* gesture of neighborly love in the day of the thermonuclear holocaust.

To such a sorry pass has our civilization come! Such is the bankruptcy of the statesmanship and leadership of the powerful men who *have been* directing the affairs of our world.

And let it never be said that the fault is theirs and not ours. It is theirs and ours. Let us not add the sin of self-righteousness and sanctimoniousness to the desperate crisis which engulfs us all, and for which we are all responsible.

as precisely when our government tells us to do it
What must be done, must be done, but need we have come to this pass?

And shall we now be improving the situation one iota by concentrating on a crash shelter-building program and by focusing the attention of our people ~~on it,~~ and on ways of finding security -- a false security in all probability -- in a world which will be incinerated in atomic fires, as our Western world surely will be in another war. Should we not rather ~~rouse~~ *up* the spirits and passionate indignation of our citizens and of people throughout the world, before it is too late, and direct them in one great popular outcry and in an insistent and clamorous demand upon political leaders everywhere to make every reasonable concession and compromise -- *and those who are opposed to compromise favor war* -- not surrender, but compromise ~~and those who~~ *in order to* banish nuclear war? No people on earth wants it and no government should be

allowed to retain the nuclear bomb as a threat, deterrent or diplomatic pawn *against* any other government.

^{IP} Last Tuesday the Political Committee of the United Nations voted overwhelmingly to outlaw the use of nuclear weapons in war. The United States and Great Britain voted against it. Why? Because, they claimed, the threat of Soviet aggression is such that they could not give a blanket pledge never to use atomic weapons. Is that a sufficient reason? And was not another *precious* ~~great~~ opportunity missed right there and then by the free world? The Soviet Union, which had but recently resumed nuclear testing, *in total disregard of the world's entreaties* voted for the resolution. Its cynicism was underscored by the statement of its spokesman that the Soviet Union was ready to deal a crushing blow to any aggressor. Can ~~their~~ vote be taken seriously? Thus, the two major powers, which really control the situation, and which have maintained right along that they must retain the nuclear bomb, not only for their own security, but to protect the world which looks to them for protection, have been told by their ward nations: "No, thank you, we do not want that kind of protection". The whole world wants to banish *the threat of* nuclear war and all the resultant *tensions and* fears which drive men and nations to build underground shelters. Russia and the United States stand in the way, each blaming the other for not doing that which both agree must be done, if the world is to be saved from catastrophe. We seem to have entered an era of calculated semantic befuddlement where both sides say that same thing and agree to the same thing, but neither means a word of what it says.

So, I return to the ancient prophecy of Isaiah. Peace will come, if it comes at all, not through competitive atomic stock-piling, not through unavailing military deterrents, not through burrowing into the earth for refuge and fictitious security. Peace will come to our world only when nations will cast away all the false idols which they have been worshipping, when they will humbly turn to the just ways of reconciliation, and mutual toleration, having learned

finally the greater political realism and the profounder human wisdom which was revealed long ago to a prophet who stood distraught and disheartened at the entrance to a desolate cave: The truth of God is not to be found in the great and strong wind which rends the mountains, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire, but in the still small voice of the heart, in the patient word of friendship, and trust, of good-will and accommodation. "Not by might and not by military power, but by My spirit!"

When will statesmen, who have the fate of mankind in their hands, permit the Spirit of God to take over at their council tables?

Perhaps the next meeting of the chiefs of state and their foreign ministers should be held, not in marble halls, but in a fall-out shelter, somewhere in the bowels of the earth, where they will be kept day and night, and, if necessary, until all food and drink is gone and the air becomes foul, and their confinement stifling and unbearable, *They should be* ~~and~~ not be permitted to leave until a treaty outlawing all nuclear war and the banning of the manufacture and testing of nuclear weapons is finally signed by them, and all existing nuclear bombs are turned over to international control. This is not a serious suggestion — but do you know of a better one?

ABBA HILLEL SILVER

SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE
November 19, 1961

BUILDING WALLS AND SHELTERS

DR. ABRAHAM SILVER

So many have requested a copy of this sermon by Dr. Silver that we are taking advantage of this Bulletin to make it available to all members of The People's family.

I have been thinking much in recent weeks of old proverbs and ancient prophecies. Dramatic world events have stirred the recollection of them in my mind. I could not help thinking how cogent and relevant, how true and applicable those maxims and admonitions of long ago were proving themselves in the events which are transpiring in our day. It seems that only the details in the historic processes of men and nations actually change; the fundamental laws, the moral rhythm and undulations remain fairly constant.

When I was a boy and studied the Pirke Aboth of the Rabbis, I was greatly impressed by a saying of Hillel. His words were doubly imposing, first by what they said and secondly by the ancient and difficult Aramaic in which they were couched. Hillel saw a skull floating on the surface of the water; he said to it: "Because thou drownest them, they have drowned thee, and at last they that doomed thee, shall themselves be drowned."

At the time these words seemed harsh and pitiless. Since then, I have come to understand that the gentle Hillel was only recording one of those harsh and ungentle facts about the conduct of human life which men forget too soon and recall too late. Hillel was not angry at the poor body which he saw floating upon the water; but he was solemnly and perhaps even sorrowfully reflecting upon the inescapable accountability, the relentless sequence of moral retribution from which evil-doers never escape. He was re-stating an axiom of the Bible: "They that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same."

The recent fate of Stalin helped me to understand the words of Hillel. Stalin had caused many skulls to float upon the water, in order to keep himself from being drowned. He carried through bloody purges against his opponents.

He slew thousands and caused millions of peasants to perish in order to ensure the success of his program of land collectivization. His chief enemy, Trotsky, himself a ruthless slayer—he hounded to death. He drove him into exile and contrived his assassination in his place of refuge in Mexico. He erased his name—the name of the one man who, together with Lenin, was responsible for the triumph of the October Revolution—he erased it from all the records and histories of the Revolution. The coming generations of Russians must never know

that Trotsky ever lived. When I was in Leningrad last summer, I requested my guide take me to the Smolney Institute, the former headquarters of Trotsky, from where he launched the revolution and directed the capture of the city, which was then Petrograd and the Capital of Russia. There was nothing in or around the Smolney Institute to indicate or even to suggest that Trotsky ever had anything to do with the Revolution—no tablet, no statue, no inscription—and the communists, remember, are very lavish in their commemorative tributes to the heroes of their revolution. Trotsky had been completely erased and obliterated—sunk like lead in the deep sea. Even his skull no longer floated upon the water.

Stalin died while planning for more skulls to float upon the water. Retribution overtook him only after his death. His party, which he whipped into supine submission and obedience during his life time, repudiated him, denounced and condemned him. His statues, which dotted every town and city in Russia, have been pulled down. His name is not mentioned now, except derogatively and in hate. How true now ring the words of Hillel: "Because thou drownest others, they have now drowned thee." And how long will it be before the skull of Khrushchev, his former collaborator and now his detractor, will float upon the water? And how long will it be before "they that will drown him, will themselves be drowned?"

When I was young, I read a stern prophecy of Isaiah. It was directed against the king of Babylon. I thought, at the time, that it was over-wrought, a prophetic hyperbole. This was the prophecy:

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Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms?

All the kings of the nations be in glory, each in his own tomb;

But you are cast out, out of your sepulchre, like an abhorred offshoot

... like a carcass trodden under foot.

Because you have destroyed your land, Because you have slain your people!"

I also read a prophecy of Jeremiah. It was directed against Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, King of Judah. He had done much evil in his day and had spilled much innocent blood. The prophecy read: "They shall not lament for him, saying 'Ah my brother' or 'Ah his majesty!' With the burial of an ass, he shall be buried, dragged and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem."

This prophecy, too, appeared to me at the time highly colored, an excessive flight of poetic imagination. But, today, when I read in the press how Stalin's body was dragged out of the morgue in Moscow's Red Square, where he lay in state alongside of Lenin—I had seen the two bodies there recently, lying side by side, embalmed like Egyptian mummies, the objects of awe, some tribute and veneration—how it was dragged out and cast into some unknown grave, and how his name, which once caused millions to tremble, was everywhere erased, his monuments overthrown and dragged into the dust, today I am inclined to take these ancient prophecies quite literally. I realize that Isaiah and Jeremiah spoke not only to their day, but to ours, as well. It is true that centuries separate the ancient kings of Babylon and Judah from the Red despots of the Kremlin, but the law of retribution applied to them all alike. This is true of all moral law. Time and place may change, but not the inexorable operation of the moral law.

Thus, the law of the Lord has always been against all those who build walls against their fellow-men and cement them with violence and blood. Some build these hostile walls in the name of race, religion or class. They do it for the good of mankind, they assert. They are out to save the world, and in the name of civilization, progress and humanity, they sow hate among men and incite to bigotry and conflict. They would have you see in their walls bulwarks of justice, ramparts of freedom. But they are none of these. They are walls of cruel separation and estrangement, barbed wire barriers against human progress and brotherhood.

Men build walls against other men, not out of love, but out of hate or contention. And nations build walls against other nations because they are afraid. Men wall, fence and defend segregation on the ground of race and color, either hate their fellow-men whose segregation they defend, or are disdainful of them. Neither hate nor contempt can be the basis of the good society that mankind is striving to build.

We have been reading a great deal in recent months about the wall which the communist East-Berliners have erected in the heart of the city of Berlin. A great deal of passion has been aroused by the erection of this wall, and a great deal of propaganda has engulfed our people in consequence of it. We have been made to believe that the entire free world has been endangered by this act, and hot-heads have clamored for military action on our part to force the removal of that wall.

Actually, the erection of this wall by the Soviet directed East-Berliners was a confession of gross weakness on their part, a tacit admission that the Western expansion of communism, for the present time at least, has ended, and its limits definitely reached. If communism were confident of further conquest and expansion in the West in the near future, it would not have built a wall around itself. For some time now, East-Berliners had been escaping in large numbers to the West. Free and prosperous West Berlin was proving too great an attraction to the East-Berliners. It was also a daily reminder to the communists that the gross economic lag and inferiority of East Germany were being advertised to the world. Communism was thus being discredited. It could not endure an open frontier to the West. It needed a protecting wall to shut itself in.

You will recall that when China built its Great Wall during the Chin Dynasty, the mightiest barrier ever built by man—the eighth wonder of the world—it was in the hope, not of any further conquest and expansion on its part, but of protecting itself against invasion from the North and the West. China was now content to stay within a protecting wall. That wall was built by a ruthless dictator, Chin Shih Huang Ti, who had turned his back upon the ancient culture and traditions of his country, had burnt the Chinese classics, as well as some five hundred scholars who dared to criticize his regime. His mighty wall, however, for whose construction he had impressed some three hundred thousand troops, did not prove effective, after all. The wall was breached and China was invaded time and again.

The Romans, too, you will recall, built, in the second century, a seventy-mile long wall across Britain from the Tyne on the North Sea to Solway Firth on the Irish Sea, to keep out the threatening mountaineers from the north, from the Scot highlands. This wall, too, clearly indicated that the era of further Roman expansion was ended. It marked the definite northern limit of the Roman world.

And this is true also of the Berlin wall. It should be borne in mind that this wall

was built *not* by the West, but by the East. I know that some West-Berliners and West-Germans generally were very unhappy about the erection of this wall. It must have been an unpleasant and somewhat humiliating experience for them, but then they should have recalled that together with their fellow Germans of the East, they were energetic wall-builders themselves not so many years ago. I saw sad pictures in the American press of Germans, especially German women, weeping at the sight of this wall. I wondered whether these same Germans shed any tears over the barbed-wire fences—charged electrically so as to kill any one who tried to climb over them—which were erected by their soldiers around the unspeakable concentration camps where millions of Jews were herded like cattle, degraded in their humanity in cruel and bottomless infamy, beaten and starved, and finally sent to the gas-chambers to be exterminated!

I haven't any tears to shed over these Berliners and over the inconvenience which was caused them by the wall which had been built across their city. They are not starving, nor dying, nor doomed, nor facing gas chambers. Berlin is a gay city today, I am told, prosperous, full of life, abounding in theatres, cabarets, and night-clubs. No West-Berliner has lost his basic human freedoms nor have the Western governments been denied access to West Berlin. I would not wish to see the world destroyed by atomic fire in order to give these West-Berliners—what?—the satisfaction of a re-united Berlin, which half of Berlin does not want? Or give to West-Germans a re-united Germany, which half of Germany does not want? Let these past-masters in the demonic art of building walls around other men now learn the difficult art of removing them from around themselves. No one will remove their walls for them.

We, here at home, have not been engaged in building walls to divide our cities—but we are being urged to build fall-out shelters as a precaution against nuclear bombs which may rain down upon us in the next war and the resultant deadly atmospheric contamination. This has become a major preoccupation of our people. This, too, recalls to my mind an ancient prophecy:

For the Lord of hosts has a day
Against all that is proud and lofty,
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Against every high tower,
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Against all the ships of Tarshish,
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And the haughtiness of man shall be humbled,
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And the Lord alone will be exalted in that day.
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As I look about me and see what is happening to our proud and lofty civilization, how we are being driven underground by fears which have resulted from the evil work of our own hands, I wonder whether the terror and judgment of God has not finally come upon this generation. The idols which we have worshiped, the idols of silver and gold, of power and greed, of pride and prestige, of weapons and armaments, are finally driving us, cowering, into the holes of the earth, like primitive man into his cave.

I have no advice to give on the subject of underground dugouts, and no blueprints on how to construct the most comfortable fall-out shelter with the latest improvements. There are already quite a few samples in the market, and there will be many more, as international tensions continue to mount and manufacturers rush in to capitalize on the increasing apprehension of our people. There will be a steadily growing demand for local, state and national shelter-building programs which may cost tens of billions of dollars, and no one will be able to argue successfully against them. After all, Europe built shelters during the Second World War. *We* did not have to. Our cities were not within the range of enemy bombers, but in the next war our cities, too, will be within the range of nuclear missiles, whose destructive force will be a million times that of the bombs which were dropped in the last war.

What alternative, then, is there to the building of shelters? *None!* It seems logical, too, that if shelters must be built, they should be built for everyone, rich and poor alike. Why should only the more affluent be spared? I see where people are already discussing the pros and cons of hanging up signs on their private shelters—"Keep Out, Or Else!"—as a clear gesture of neighborly love in the day of the thermonuclear holocaust.

To such a sorry pass has our civilization come! Such is the bankruptcy of the statesmanship and leadership of the powerful men who have been directing the affairs of our world.

And let it never be said that the fault is *theirs* and not *ours*. It is *theirs and ours*. Let us not add the sin of self-righteousness and sanctimoniousness to the desperate crisis which engulfs us all, and for which we are *all* responsible.

What must be done, especially when our government tells us to do it, must be done, but need we have come to this pass? And shall we now be improving the situation one iota by concentrating on a crash shelter-building program and by focusing the attention of our people on ways of finding security—a false security in all probability—in a world which will be incinerated in atomic fires, as our Western world surely will be in another war. Should we not rather rouse the spirits and passionate indignation of our citizens and of people throughout the world, before it is too late, and direct them in one great popular outcry and in an insistent and clamorous demand upon political leaders everywhere to make every reasonable concession and compromise—not surrender, but compromise—and those who are opposed to compromise favor war—in order to banish nuclear war? No people on earth wants it and no government should be allowed to retain

the nuclear bomb as a threat, deterrent or diplomatic pawn against any other government.

Last Tuesday the Political Committee of the United Nations voted overwhelmingly to outlaw the use of nuclear weapons in war. The United States and Great Britain voted against it. Why? Because, they claimed, the threat of Soviet aggression is such that they could not give a blanket pledge never to use atomic weapons. Is that a sufficient reason? And was not another precious opportunity missed right there and then by the free world? The Soviet Union, which had but recently resumed nuclear testing, in total disregard of the world's entreaties, voted *for* the resolution. Its cynicism was underscored by the statement of its spokesman that the Soviet Union was ready to deal a crushing blow to any aggressor. Can their vote be taken seriously? Thus, the two major powers, which really control the situation, and which have maintained right along that they must retain the nuclear bomb, not only for their own security but to protect the world which looks to them for protection, have been told by their ward nations: "No, thank you, we do not want that kind of protection." The whole world wants to banish the threat of nuclear war and all the resultant tensions and fears which drive men and nations to build underground shelters. Russia and the United States stand in the way, each blaming the other for not doing that which both agree must be done, if the world is to be saved from catastrophe. We seem to have entered an era of calculated semantic betwixtling where both sides say that same thing and agree to the same thing, but neither means a word of what it says.

So, I return to the ancient prophecy of Isaiah. Peace will come, if it comes at all,

not through competitive atomic stock-piling, not through unavailing military deterrents, not through burrowing into the earth for refuge and fictitious security. Peace will come to our world only when nations will cast away all the false idols which they have been worshipping, when they will humbly turn to the just ways of reconciliation, and mutual toleration, having learned finally the greater political realism and the profounder human wisdom which was revealed long ago to a prophet who stood distraught and disheartened at the entrance to a desolate cave: The truth of God is not to be found in the great and strong wind which rends the mountains, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire, but in the still small voice of the heart, in the patient word of friendship, and trust, of goodwill and accommodation. "Not by might and not by military power, but by My spirit!"

When will statesmen, who have the fate of mankind in their hands, permit the Spirit of God to take over at their council tables?

Perhaps the next meeting of the chiefs of state and their foreign ministers should be held, not in marble halls, but in a fall-out shelter, somewhere in the bowels of the earth, where they will be kept day and night, and, if necessary, until all food and drink is gone and the air becomes foul, and their confinement stifling and unbearable. They should not be permitted to leave until a treaty outlawing all nuclear war and the banning of the manufacture and testing of nuclear weapons is finally signed by them, and all existing nuclear bombs are turned over to international control. This is not a serious suggestion but do you know of a better one?

November 19, 1961

THE TEMPLE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL JUNIOR HIGH BOWLING PARTY

6th - 7th - 8th Grade

Wednesday, December 27th

12:30 to 3:00 P.M. Northfield Lanes

Lunch Bowling Surprise Treat

THE TEMPLE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Midweek Special Hebrew, Pre-Confirmation, and Confirmation class sessions will not be held during the week of December 26th to 29th. These classes will resume on Tuesday, January 2nd. Saturday and Sunday sessions will be held as usual.

THE MR. AND MRS. CLUB

ANNUAL SHOW TRYOUTS

for

"MALES AND FEMALES"

The new musical comedy

Luntz Auditorium

Tues. Jan. 9th

Wed. Jan. 10th

8:00 P.M.

Co-Directors

Dr. Jerome Litt

Natalie Epstein