

Veterans' Views On Nuclear Weapons

No one speaks for all veterans. Their views are as diverse as other citizens. But many have spoken out for a world free of nuclear weapons. Here are some notable, documented quotations.

“The likelihood of a nuclear catastrophe is greater today than during the cold war, and the public is completely unaware of the danger.”

Former Secretary of Defense William J. Perry

“Every inhabitant of this planet must contemplate the day when this planet may no longer be habitable .. [these] weapons of war must be abolished before they abolish us.” President John F. Kennedy and WW2 Navy combat veteran.

“The way to win an atomic war is to make certain it never starts. And the way to make sure it never starts is to abolish the dangerous, costly nuclear stockpiles which imprison mankind.” General Omar Bradley, WW2 combat veteran speaking on Armistice Day in 1948

“The nuclear weapon is obsolete. I want to get rid of them all.” General Charles A. Horner, USAF (Ret.) Vietnam and Gulf War combat veteran. Former Commander of North American Aerospace Defense Command.

“American leaders have declared that nuclear weapons will remain the cornerstone of US national security indefinitely. In truth...nuclear weapons are the sole military source of our national insecurity. We, and the whole world, would be much safer if nuclear weapons were abolished.” Rear Admiral Eugene J Carroll, USN (Ret.) Korean and Vietnam combat veteran.

“It is my view that there is no sensible military use for nuclear weapons...” Admiral Noel Gayler, USN (Ret.) WW2 combat ace, Commander in Chief of United States Pacific Command.

“These weapons have increased global uncertainty and it is time for the global community to work toward a regime that eliminates their existence and possible use.” General John Sheehan, USMC (Ret.) Gulf War combat veteran and Supreme Commander of NATO.

“... the most egregiously wasteful defense expenditure is the excessive budget for the entire nuclear weapons complex...” Lt. Gen. Robert Gard, Jr. US Army (Ret) Vietnam combat veteran

“...when that number of nuclear weapons is down to zero...the world is a much better place.” Gen. Colin Powell US Army (Ret.) Vietnam and Gulf War combat veteran, former Secretary of State and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

“...these hideous devices unnecessarily prolonged and intensified the Cold War... Deterrence was a formula for disaster. We escaped disaster by the grace of God.” Gen. George Lee Butler, USAF (Ret.) Vietnam combat veteran and former CMR Strategic Air Command (nuclear forces) 1991-94.

“The nuclear bomb is the most useless weapon ever invented. It can be employed to no rational purpose. It is not even an effective defense against itself.” George F. Kennan, U.S. diplomat. Author of communist “containment” policy. WW2 and Cold War veteran of diplomacy but not a military veteran.

“It is a measure of arrogance to assert that a nuclear weapons-free world is impossible. There is no security in nuclear weapons. It is a fool’s game...” Gen George Lee Butler

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