

# A SECOND OPEN LETTER TO PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA: ELIMINATING NUCLEAR “WEAPONS” (2)

C. A. Hilgartner, MD

25 January 2010

“Since a politician never believes what he says, he is quite surprised to be taken at his word.”

Attributed to Charles DeGaulle (1890-1970)

Mr. Barack Obama  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington DC 20500

Dear Mr. Obama:

I address this letter to the living human, not to the official (nor to the empty title).

What I must say to you in this letter centers on the construct of **integrity**. Here, I refer to the context of a human assessing what some human (perhaps her/himself) DOES-AND-SAYS. Specifically, this assessing human holds that any human shows *integrity* to the degree to which s/he makes what s/he *says* and what s/he *does* MATCH.

When I consider the aphorism attributed to DeGaulle in light of this sense of *integrity*, I make a pair of inferences: I infer that DeGaulle considered the domain we call **politics**, or the members of that grouping of humans we classify as **politicians**, as showing virtually no *integrity*. That suggests that *politicians* might believe that THEY don't need to live up to the requirements codified in this usage of *integrity*. But in his aphorism, DeGaulle suggests that, against much evidence, constituents still EXPECT those that they vote for to make what they *say* and what they *do* match.

Perhaps a **statesman** differs from a *politician* in that s/he does show *integrity*.

Various commentators, including Marcy Winograd, have attributed the outcome of the recent U.S. Senate election in Massachusetts to the disgust and outrage which a couple of million Democrat voters in that region have felt. Having found that they couldn't tell much difference between the actions and policies of the currently Democratic Congress and the Obama Administration and what they experienced under the Republican Congress and the Bush Administration, they boycotted the polls.

Perhaps you wish to become a *statesman* rather than remaining a *politician*. Perhaps you would like to make your actions more closely match your elegant words.

I state the issue as baldly as I know how. And I offer to support you to implement that kind of change.

I understand that humans often find that to receive, and accept, support turns out uncomfortable. In my long lifespan, I have had the good fortune to receive support—and have

often found the experience uncomfortable. As for the question of whether or not you'll accept what I offer: Your move, Mr. Obama and Mr. President.

On 30 November, I mailed you a letter intended to support you to succeed in eliminating nuclear “devices” from Planet Earth. To date, I have received no acknowledgment, much less a reply that discusses the content of the letter. With this document, I include (append) a copy of that letter.

I believe you need to know that I have placed that document—captioned “An Open Letter to President Barack Obama: Eliminating Nuclear ‘Weapons’”—on my website, on the Index page, at URL <http://www.hilgart.org>.

Also, I believe that you need to understand one further move I shall make—which I discuss at the end of this letter.

Summarizing the previous letter:

1. In my opinion, to detonate a single nuclear “device” harms the entire biosphere of Planet Earth. That intrinsic harm, along with other reasons stated in my letter, leads me to deem doing so a **survival error**.

Detonating thousands (or even larger numbers) of such “devices” could damage the biosphere beyond recovery—could sterilize the planet, magnifying a survival-error into species suicide and pan-biocide.

Since moments after the Trinity Test, in 1945, we humans have had, and have known that we had, the means for doing that—sterilizing Planet Earth, exterminating each and every life-form, including humans.

I consider neither species suicide nor pan-biocide a valid human purpose or goal.

In other words, nuclear “devices” cannot serve any valid human purpose.

2. As Commander in Chief of the U. S. Military, you hold the authority to order your subordinates unilaterally to de-commission ALL the nuclear “devices” possessed by the United States. In my earlier letter, I suggested disassembling them and storing their “parts” or “components” so as to prevent theft and/or re-assembly. But we cannot find a storage location free of the threat of geological upheaval, which would disseminate the stored chemical-and-radioactive poisons. We cannot make any way of guarding a storage facility 100% invulnerable to betrayal or theft. Instead—under highest security, and UN surveillance—you could have the appropriate experts mix the “enriched”, fissionable materials (e.g.  $U^{235}$ ) with so-called “depleted” uranium ( $U^{238}$ ) back to the original concentration (0.7%  $U^{235}$ ); have them oxidize or otherwise convert the metallic uranium to the most suitable chemical form; mix that material with the tailings left from mining the uranium in the first place; and then convert the reconstituted ore back into rock.

Before issuing such orders, I believe you would do well to hold a series of “Fireside Chats”, or Presidential discussions of a form more to your liking, with the citizens of the United

States and of the world. You would need to convince the human race that

- a) Neither HAVING NOT NOT-HAVING an “arsenal” of nuclear devices does anything at all to protect U. S. citizens (or anyone else) from attack via nuclear “devices” (or via any of the other horrors prepared from chemically poisonous and radioactive elements, etc., which we humans have designed).
- b) To use nuclear “devices” to “RETALIATE” against someone who has used nuclear “devices” to attack the United States (or anyone else) does not and cannot UNDO the damage already done by the attack. To “RETALIATE” would only increase the numbers of human dead, and increase the degree of contamination of the biosphere with chemically poisonous and radioactive elements, including fission-products, etc.
- c) If we abandon our nuclear “weapons-system”, some malevolent humans might interpret this as “showing weakness”, and might experience the temptation to attack us in our “weakness”. You might point out that
  - i) WE first used nuclear “devices” on humans during WW II and have never apologized to our fellow-humans for doing so, nor made more useful amends.
  - ii) Perhaps it lies with us to take the risk of precipitating an attack by appearing to “make ourselves weak”.
  - iii) In any case, by eliminating our own nuclear “devices”, we will have made it impossible for US to succumb to the temptation to “retaliate”.
- d) Once you have succeeded in unilaterally eliminating OUR nuclear “devices”, you can go to every Head of State—and to the people—of every country suspected of having an “arsenal” of “nuclear devices”, and persuade them to do likewise.

I recognize the possibility exists that I will receive no acknowledgement of this letter, much less any discussion of its content.

I haven’t enough experience corresponding with High Officials to know what constitutes a reasonable period to wait for response to suggestions I have made. So I’ll make a wild guess. I hereby serve notice that, if I have seen no evidence of actions taken based on my suggestions, and/or have not received acknowledgment and discussion of these suggestions, by three months after the date on which I mail this letter, I shall contact every Head of State of a country suspected of having a nuclear “arsenal”, and shall offer each of them these suggestions—along with any others I have come up with in the meanwhile.

Yours in peace,



C. A. Hilgartner, MD

P.S.: Right after transmitting this letter, I shall place it also on my website, as an Open Letter.  
CAH