

The Bomb

by: Rabbi Jeremy Rosen

In my youth I marched against “the bomb” in the [annual Easter marches](#) from the [Atomic Weapons Research Establishment](#) at Aldermaston in Berkshire (UK) to Trafalgar Square in London.

We were genuinely worried that the Russians and the Americans would drop atomic bombs on each other and in the ensuing cataclysm we would all be wiped off the face of the earth. Amazing as it may now seem to us, most people thought the Americans were more likely to let go first. [Dr. Strangelove](#) spoke with a foreign accent but his equipment looked more American than Russian. But then, America had been the only one to have actually exploded a nuclear bomb on a human target, even if, to be fair, it did stop the war with Japan, which might have cost far more casualties had it dragged on. Then the [Cuban Missile Crisis](#) of 1962 changed perceptions, when [the Russians seemed willing to provoke a nuclear war](#) by shipping nuclear warheads to Havana.

To us young idealistic Brits, it seemed really ridiculous that what once we called Great Britain should spend millions it desperately needed to upgrade its Victorian infrastructures and reform its medieval social structures, to have a nuclear deterrent of its own (which anyway relied on American technology and support). As if anyone really thought Britain was still a world power even with a “[bombele](#)”. And the French were even more laughable. Having lost two World Wars ignominiously, De Gaulle thought that having a French bomb would mean that people would take them more seriously.

My father would have none of my objections. He argued that the nuclear deterrent would in fact prevent wars, and in one way he was right. There hasn't been another World War since. Though low-grade conventional conflicts have, if anything, spread.

The situation now is different. I suggest it is not a fear worth consideration that the new bully on the block, China, will want to initiate nuclear war. Although in Mao's day he often used to say that China was the only power that could afford a nuclear war because it had so many people spread out over such a wide area that more of its population would survive a cataclysm than any other country.

But now we have proliferation, with India and Pakistan both having the bomb. Pakistan in particular is a failed state, and in parts barbaric. It has already leaked atomic secrets to unsavory clients. North Korea is just self-destructively catatonic. And Russia is like an aging prostitute willing to trade anything to anyone who will give her a drop of pleasure or pride. This is why attempts to curtail the spread of nuclear warfare is so important for all of us.

Once again, like [“The Elephant and the Jewish problem”](#), we come to Israel. Israel, unofficially and without ever admitting to it, seems to have nuclear

bombs. It has steadfastly denied this (despite [Vanunu's](#) self-serving claims) and it has refused to sign the [Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty](#) or to allow inspection of its [Dimona reactor](#). But it has always publicly declared that it would never be the first to use such weapons. It has relied on the mere threat of nuclear retaliation to deter Arabs and Muslims bent on destroying Israel.

Now that Iran virtually has its bomb and the West is patently incapable of stopping either it or North Korea perfecting their nuclear arsenals, the United Nations Security Council, with the approval of the USA, has finally [officially decided to lay into Israel](#) and demand it give up its nuclear weapons. As I have said before, I would not trust the United Nations to clean my backside, let alone give a fig for Israel's survival. And I would no more rely on Obama to protect Israel than I would Hamas or Hezbollah.

However, I do strongly believe that Israel ought to agree to give up nuclear bombs if it has them. Israel should agree to be bound by all international resolutions and laws concerning nuclear arms. But on one simple condition, that the United Nations must publicly reiterate Israel's right to exist, declare unanimously that any state that threatens its existence will be expelled from the United Nations, and that any attempt to delegitimize Israel will be a breach of the United Nations Charter. That is all, no more, no less.

Empty guarantees are not enough. The United Nations cannot even protect Rwanda or Montenegro let alone Israel. No one has ever protected the Jews better than the Jews themselves. Equally, no one has ever done more damage to Jews than Jews, taken over the whole span of Jewish history (though Hitler, Stalin, the Church, and the Cossacks came pretty close).

And lest my left-leaning friends challenge me, I am still strongly of the opinion that Israel needs an independent, unbiased enquiry into the conduct of the Gaza war, but should tell the Human Rights bozos to crawl back into their own unhealthy caves. Even the founder and ex-head of Human Rights Watch [agrees they are a dishonest](#), biased bunch who have betrayed their own original values.