

## MESSAGE FROM NOAM CHOMSKY

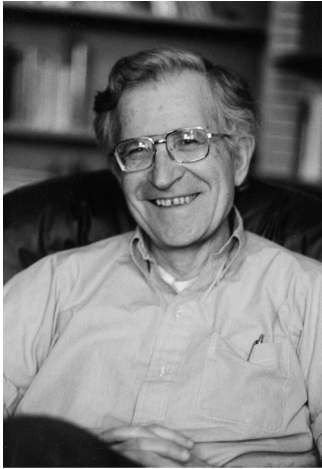


Photo by DONNA COVENEY/MIT

In July 1955, Bertrand Russell and Alfred Einstein issued an extraordinary appeal to the people of the world, asking them to face a choice that is "stark and dreadful and inescapable: Shall we put an end to the human race; or shall mankind renounce war?" Half a century later, that challenge has not been met, and the threats are becoming worse. Robert McNamara warns of "apocalypse soon" if the US and its allies continue on their current course. Leading strategic analysts, writing in the most prestigious journals, warn that these policies carry "an appreciable risk of ultimate doom." Intelligence agencies and independent specialists predicted that the invasion of Iraq would increase nuclear proliferation and the threat of terror. They now agree that the predictions were verified. The US National Intelligence Council now foresees that the invasion "could provide recruitment, training grounds, technical skills and language proficiency for a new class of terrorists who are 'professionalized' and for whom political violence becomes an end in itself," spreading elsewhere in a "globalized" network of "diffuse Islamic extremist groups," initially organized, armed and trained by the US and its allies in the 1980s -- not for the defense of Afghanistan, but for ugly and conventional "reasons of state." The London bombings may prove to be another in the long list of verifications of these predictions. Furthermore, US aggressive militarism has, as predicted, driven potential adversaries to respond in a similar way. This action-reaction cycle greatly increases the risk of terminal nuclear war if only by accident, with response systems on hair trigger alert, and also the risk of nuclear terror, with consequences that could be awesome. These are only a fraction of the dangers that are being escalated by current policies.

The Russell-Einstein appeal was addressed to the people of the world, not their governments. That was the correct decision. It is only an aroused public that can put an end to this race to disaster and create a world that is more peaceful and more just. Popular reactions have to begin with local actions, then moving on to a larger stage. The initiative to create zones of peace is a very important step, which could grow into the kind of mass popular movement that may have prevented a nuclear war in the 1980s. For obvious reasons, there is no more appropriate or important place for these efforts to take root than Japan. It is fair to say that the two great 20th century figures who issued their call half a century ago would have been deeply gratified to learn of the initiatives now being undertaken to declare non-defended localities in Japan.

July 9, 2005

Noam Chomsky



非戦のまち・くにたちの会  
無防備地域宣言運動全国ネットワーク