THE ATOM AND HUMANITY

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Alfred Nobel, whose birthday we celebrate to-day, was the inventor of dynamite and of smokeless propellant powders. At the same time that he engaged in this scientific research he was very much interested in bringing lasting peace to the world. In a conversation with his friends he remarked that his explosives would bring peace more quickly than peace societies. After some fifty years we now realize that Nobel was wrong in his conclusion, and we find that the peace societies were also unsuccessful.

To-day we are faced with far more powerful explosives than any that Nobel dreamed of, and we are still discussing wars and means of bringing peace to this planet. It is my purpose to discuss the relationship of this newest weapon, the atomic bomb, to the problem of world peace. May I say that this discussion has no relationship to any atomic bomb legislation or any diplomatic moves of the United States Government. It is intended to bring the urgency of the problem before you and to discuss some long-time views relative to enduring peace.

First of all I wish to show that the progress of every weapon that has been invented by man proceeds through the stages of crude invention to successful improvements, and the development of counter measures against it. The position of weapons of this kind as we know them to-day, is that they are in use by major combatants; that they produce a great deal of destruction in modern war, and that no completely decisive defense against them has ever been secured.

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