THE WORLD OF THE ROOSEVELTS

Eleanor Roosevelt and the Anti-Nuclear Movement

The Voice of Conscience

Dario Fazzi

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To Michael and Laura

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incredible teachers: in particular, they taught me how to correctly assess the ups and downs of a lifetime. Charles did so in an admirable scholarly way, while Michael added to it the carefulness of a beloved mother. That's why this book is dedicated to her. And to Laura as well, whose patience and love keep me alive every day.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

She was a supreme liberator, a liberator first of herself, then of her sex, of her country, of the abused and the injured around the planet. She stood above all for the rebirth of individual responsibility.

Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.[1]

Writing a book on Eleanor Roosevelt is, *per se*, a daunting task. The amount of available primary sources is epic. During her lifetime, she managed to write hundreds of thousands of letters, hundreds of articles in dozens of different newspapers, journals, and magazines, thousands of columns, the most prominent of which appeared under the title of *My Day* and *If You Ask Me*, and 28 different books spanning a wide range of topics and genres, from women's rights to the United Nations, from political analyses to autobiographical accounts. Moreover, Mrs. Roosevelt's presence in the media of her era was continual. She not only hosted three radio shows and a TV series on her own, but she was also invited dozens of times to some of the most popular programs of her era. She gave countless interviews and comments on a number of varied issues, not to mention all of the speeches and talks that she delivered at universities, public meetings, or other official events.

A bulk of over 200 academic works represents the most relevant secondary literature on Eleanor Roosevelt. Practically almost any aspect of her life has been scrutinized, historically contextualized, politically criticized, or intellectually assessed. Encyclopedias and companions keep offering entries on her, a number of children's books recount the story of her life

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and her most significant achievements, a dozen documentaries deal with her persona, and two plays are based on her character. More than 20 Web sites contain interesting materials on her, including her correspondence with US presidents, political leaders, and intellectuals, and the George Washington University has recently launched an impressive online database aimed to collect and publish most of her papers.[2]

From such an abundance of sources stems the challenge to disentangle facts from fiction, relevant particulars from trivial details, and reliable stances from irrelevant opinions. So many have been the causes that Eleanor Roosevelt has endorsed, so varied the arguments that she has used to promote them, and so wide has been the breadth of her interests that, through her eyes, one could read the entire story of five crucial decades, from the roaring 1920s to the launch of the *New Frontier* in the 1960s. However, in order to assess her broader impact on American politics and society, one has to narrow the field of inquiry too.

My research fleshes out historian Allida Black's invitation to use the former first lady as "a prism through which to examine the issues of human rights, containment, and nuclear disarmament." In fact, while historians and biographers have already—and extensively—reconstructed Eleanor Roosevelt's most important public and private achievements as well as her career as a "consummate liberal power broker," my intention here is to explore which ideals have inspired her activism on nuclear disarmament and which effects have her pronouncements on nuclear weapons produced on the domestic debate on nuclear fallout.[3]

Eleanor Roosevelt played a peculiar role in the transnational struggle against the nuclear weapons that emerged worldwide between the mid-1940s and the early 1960s. She was an integral part of a massive campaign mounted by eminent members of the international scientific community, several national and transnational organizations, and many influential individuals who were committed to mold public opinion's understanding of nuclear weapons. She was well informed about the technical details of nuclear policymaking and remained politically well connected and influential even after her husband's death in 1945. Accordingly, she was in the best position to lobby for nuclear disarmament. But she did more than this. Her main goal was indeed to educate the public and help common people to grasp the real hazards of the nuclear arms race. Her acute rhetoric, filled with stirring appeals and widely understandable metaphors, contributed to the opening of the nuclear fallout debate and gradually transformed her into a prominent

anti-nuclear mass educator, to the point of becoming for many, as this book argues, a reliable *voice of conscience*.

Once nuclear deterrence became the linchpin of American foreign and national security policies, Mrs. Roosevelt's nuclear criticism soared. She warned against the risks connected to the nuclear arms race and deplored the attempt to discredit internal nuclear opposition. In line with her lifelong commitment to pacifism and her long-standing humanitarianism, she condemned these new means of mass destruction because of the unbearable threat that they posed to mankind, because of the diversion of resources from welfare to warfare that they implied, and because of the mutual mistrust that they fostered at international level. In defense of the innermost values of American democracy and as a part of her campaign to promote human security, throughout the early Cold War, she constantly invited the American public to develop an independent and objective idea about the different positions that characterized the debate on nuclear weapons and testing. As a consequence, in contrast to Joan Hoff's idea that Eleanor Roosevelt's thinking on foreign policy had a somewhat protean nature, the historical analysis of a particular aspect of her stances on international affairs such as her anti-nuclear dissent reveals instead the continuity of her dedication to world peace and human rights, and this book will try to make this continuity emerging.[4]

The idea that Mrs. Roosevelt's most important contribution to the development of the first anti-nuclear campaign of the Cold War was mainly an educational one also drove the primary research in which this book is grounded. Therefore, rather than collecting and analyzing her private correspondence, I preferred to focus on her public exchanges with the principal anti-nuclear actors of her era, including political figures, social reformers, peace activists, intellectuals, and scientists. I have placed a particular emphasis on her public statements against nuclear weapons and tests—were they either broadcasted by radio and TV or published and circulated through journals, books, and newspapers—principally because of their immediacy. Moreover, such an approach fits those new methodological trends—chiefly, the so-called cultural and linguistic turn—that are broadening the traditional analyses of the Cold War by including a growing number of actors and cultural references to its description and explanation.[5] Recently declassified sources, for instance, as well as a growing body of literature, reveal how intense the public debate on nuclear fallout was and how harsh the struggle for

public opinion's consensus was among scientists, political elites, and private organizations.

Hence, my research represents the first attempt to evaluate the totality of Eleanor Roosevelt's influence over the anti-nuclear protests of the Cold War, not only with respect to her promotion of postwar liberalism but also with reference to her plea for a new global humanitarianism. Such an analysis is divided into six chapters, which follow, chronologically, the development of her interest in nuclear disarmament as part of her constant drive toward international peace and social justice.

Chapter 1 shows that Mrs. Roosevelt was as much an American realist as an American pacifist. It mostly focuses on the interwar years, which represented the years of her intellectual formation and first political accomplishments, and it describes how, although being fully engaged in sustaining her husband's political ascension, she was also able to build a public image and set up a political agenda on her own. The chapter stresses that, of all the many causes that she decided to endorse, she placed a particular emphasis on international cooperation and peace. Drawing on a well-established and varied pacifist tradition in the USA, she challenged the rampant isolationist mood of the 1920s by identifying the League of Nations and the US participation in the World Court with the best chances to secure a lasting world peace. In the same period, she joined several women's peace organizations, endorsed the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, hosted peace conferences at her private residence in Hyde Park, wrote numerous articles on peace-related issues, and helped organize a peace prize to bolster, domestically, the idea of international cooperation. Most importantly, Eleanor Roosevelt framed such a promotion of pacifist ideals as a necessary quest for social justice. It was in these years, indeed, that she started developing the idea that peace could only stem from equal opportunities for all and that it was strongly related to people's living conditions.

However, as the chapter highlights, Eleanor Roosevelt was not an absolute idealist. In the light of the rise of international tensions and the urgency to confront dictatorships, she understood the necessity for military preparedness and conscription. Her pacifist stances reckoned with the need to resist the emergence of totalitarianism. She pragmatically defended the idea that the USA had to wage another war to defend its ideal of freedom and contribute to the launching of a new era of progress and opportunities. Accordingly, the chapter concludes that her prominent social activism, her pragmatism, and her unmatched ability to cope with

the mass media of her era transformed her not only into a reliable political leader but also into the perfect intercessor between the political elites and the American pacifist leaders.

Chapter 2 describes Eleanor Roosevelt's reaction to and reflection on the advent of the atomic era. Mrs. Roosevelt's criticism of the atomic weapons, indeed, came out publicly as soon as the dire effects of the atomic bombing of Japan came into the public domain. She mostly condemned the fact that these new means of indiscriminate destruction seemed to be driving and inspiring the whole American foreign and security policy. In line with the opinions of several scientists and liberal intellectuals who opposed this scheme, Eleanor Roosevelt immediately recognized the intimate post-Clausewitzian nature of the atomic weapons, to the point of defining the traditional discussion on national defense a "pure nonsense."[6] In other words, she challenged the idea that nuclear weapons could be used as an instrument of national security or foreign policy because their destructive power had ultimately reshuffled the very meaning of war: since it could spell the extinction of the whole mankind, war could no longer be considered a mere continuation of policy by other means. Accordingly, in her view, setting up an effective international control of the atomic arsenals was a precondition for the achievement of human security. While stigmatizing the atomic weapons, Eleanor Roosevelt was therefore attacking Truman's doctrine's most relevant assumptions and instruments, to a point that it is difficult to include her, even with major qualifications, in the number of the so-called cold warriors.

Chapter 3 illustrates how Eleanor Roosevelt responded to the mystification of nuclear deterrence and the qualitative upgrading of the atomic weapons into dreadful thermonuclear devices. The most difficult challenge to her was to fight against the broad consensus that such a policy and these new weapons were able to coagulate. For this reasons she strove for providing the opponents of nuclear deterrence with a forum for expressing their own views, by using her columns, her radio and TV shows as occasions to help the public to understand the real dangers connected to the nuclear arms race. Against what she defined as a policy of fear, Mrs. Roosevelt argued for the strengthening of the UN machinery, as the only guarantee of world peace and stability. Fighting against a growing sense of distrust of multilateral institutions, she praised dialogue and mutual understanding, thus gaining the approval of different anti-nuclear groups, including women's organizations, world federalists, internationalists, moderate and even radical pacifists. Shocked by the accident that occurred

at the Bikini atoll in 1954, when a US nuclear test contaminated a wide area of the Pacific Ocean along with the crew of a Japanese boat and further impressed by the harmful consequences of an overexposure to nuclear radiation that the scientists at the Oak Ridge Institute of Nuclear Studies had showed her during a visit that she had paid at their laboratories, Mrs. Roosevelt decided to outspokenly endorse the anti-nuclear campaign. The main reason for such an endorsement was related to an educational purpose: since the administration was often preventing people from gaining a real understanding of the consequences of its nuclear experiments, Mrs. Roosevelt believed that educating people about the real consequences of nuclear fallout was a matter that, in the end, concerned with the very *sanity* of society and the core of American democracy at the same time.

Chapter 4 further explores the broader implications of Eleanor Roosevelt's participation in the debate on nuclear fallout and her direct involvement in the anti-nuclear campaign. In the mid- and late 1950s, indeed, fear of nuclear contamination soared and produced an unprecedented wave of popular demonstrations. While many administration officials and scientists kept defending the strategic value of nuclear testing, many other scientists, not only in the USA, overtly denounced it and its harmful consequences. Between 1955 and 1956, these alarming messages led 74 percent of Americans to back an international agreement banning the first use of nuclear weapons, and 67 percent to favor a multilateral reduction in nuclear armaments. In addition, almost 50 percent of American people supported a ban on US nuclear testing.[7] Seizing the day and in order to coordinate their efforts, different anti-nuclear groups in the USA decided to launch a nationwide campaign, led by the National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE), whose numerous pleas for nuclear disarmament quickly attracted large sections of US society. In order to foster its public prominence, SANE organizers asked many leading Americans to sponsor its campaign, and Eleanor Roosevelt was among the first to join the dissident chorus. She took part in the test-ban campaign by providing liberal scientists and nuclear opponents in general with fora for expressing their concerns and demands, and by rendering the terms of nuclear debate understandable for common citizens, mostly through her articles and public speeches.

Chapter 5 looks in a more in-depth way at Eleanor Roosevelt's agenda for nuclear disarmament. In countless occasions, she explained why nuclear disarmament mattered and to what extent such technical issues as

the number of international inspections or the setting up of an effective system of control could be considered just as minor trifles unjustly hindering nuclear negotiations. She used her personal influence to lobby for disarmament, so as to make American political elites aware of the urgency and momentousness of a nuclear agreement. Her celebrity status and her pervasive presence in the mass media helped her to popularize the anti-nuclear campaign among the American middle class. Furthermore, her insistence on the supposed objective role of science and her fight against government's secrecy and deception gave the American anti-nuclear movements new arguments and slogans against the administration's nuclear policy.

Chapter 6, finally, draws on Mrs. Roosevelt's anti-nuclear educational effort and describes how she kept promoting anti-nuclear messages throughout the Kennedy presidency until the end of her life. She remained critical of a major focus on national security, which was, in her opinion, nurturing the nuclear arms race. She favored a treaty that could ban nuclear testing not only because it was crucial to stop spreading harmful radiation into the environment but also because it could represent a fundamental first step toward nuclear disarmament. More relevantly, she broadcasted such anti-nuclear stances through a TV series that she hosted in the last years of her life and that she decided to devote to the analysis of foreign affairs and security issues, among which nuclear disarmament and test ban received particular attention. In discussing these issues with scientists, policymakers, pundits, and journalists, Mrs. Roosevelt spared no effort to stigmatize the ominous effects of the nuclear arms race and, at the same time, promote the benefits of any possible nuclear agreement. Accordingly, her endorsement of the so-called *Turn Toward Peace* political platform represented her last attempt to uphold a coherent and comprehensive foreign policy agenda that could allay international tensions and simultaneously focus on human needs.

On the whole, this analysis is intended to show that Eleanor Roosevelt's participation in the anti-nuclear campaign of the early Cold War was just another building block in the tower that she erected to defend American liberalism in the postwar years. That tower did not only help her to overcome the ideological boundaries of her era and successfully champion the universal protection of human rights, but it also gave her the right perspective from which to raise the issue of the very morality of possessing nuclear weapons. An issue that is compelling to this day.

Notes

1. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., "The Enduring Vision of Eleanor Roosevelt," public address marking the centennial of her birth given in occasion of The Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedom Awards ceremony, Middelburg, June 23, 1984.
2. The scholars working at the *Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project* have provided a well-detailed account of the production on Eleanor Roosevelt. See http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers/abouteleanor/.
3. The most important biographical works on Eleanor Roosevelt are the ones by Joseph Lash, *Eleanor: The Years Alone* and by Blanche Wiesen Cook, *Eleanor Roosevelt Vol. 1: 1884–1933* and *Vol. 2: 1933–1938* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1992). Doris Kearns Goodwin's *No Ordinary Time. Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt: The Home Front in World War II* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994) and Maurine H. Beasley's *Eleanor Roosevelt: Transformative First Lady* represent the reference point for analyses dealing with Eleanor Roosevelt during her White House years. *Without Precedent*: *The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), edited by Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman, to a certain extent Richard Henry's *Eleanor Roosevelt and Adlai Stevenson* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), and, of course, Allida Black's seminal work, *Casting Her Own Shadow*, and the primary sources collection that she is editing and that has so far produced two volumes on the so-called human rights years—*The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers, Vol. 1: The Human Rights Years, 1945–1948* (Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2007) and *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers, Vol. 2: The Human Rights Years, 1949–1953* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012)—can be considered as the most important scholarly works on Eleanor Roosevelt's autonomous political role, as well as on her humanitarian activism. However, the only works specifically focused on Eleanor Roosevelt's ideas about foreign and security policy are the chapter that Blanche Wiesen Cook contributed in Joan Hoff-Wilson's and Marjorie Lightman's edited volume, which is titled *Turn Toward Peace*, and Jason Berger's *A New Deal for the World: Eleanor Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981). The quotation is from Allida Black, *Casting Her Own Shadow*, 3.
4. See Joan Hoff, "Foreign Policy," in Maurine H. Beasley, Holly C. Shulman, and Henry R. Beasley (eds.), *The Eleanor Roosevelt Encyclopedia*, 195.
5. I can only mention briefly here some of the most interesting analyses concerning the intimate connection between American culture and nuclear weapons. For instance, see Robert A. Divine, *Blowing on the Wind: The Nuclear Test Ban Debate, 1954–1960* (New York: Oxford

University Press, 1978); Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light: American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985); Ira Chernus, *Dr. Strangegod: On the Symbolic Meaning of Nuclear Weapons* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1986), Richard Rhodes, *The Making of the Atomic Bomb* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987); Paul Brians, *Nuclear Holocausts: Atomic War in Fiction, 1895–1984* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1987); Spencer R. Weart, *Nuclear Fear: A History of Images* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988); H. Bruce Franklin, *War Stars: The Superweapon and the American Imagination* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); Jeff Smith, *Unthinking the Unthinkable: Nuclear Weapons and Western Culture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989); Edward T. Lilienthal, *Symbolic Defense: The Cultural Significance of the Strategic Defense Initiative* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989); Alan Nadel, *Containment Culture: American Narratives, Postmodernism, and the Atomic Age* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995); Laura Hein and Mark Selden (eds.), *Living with the Bomb: American and Japanese Cultural Conflicts in the Nuclear Age* (Armon: M.E. Sharpe, 1997); Margot A. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Alison M. Scott and Christopher D. Geist (eds.), *The Writing on the Cloud: American Culture Confronts the Atomic Bomb* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1997); Peter Bacon Hales, *Atomic Spaces: Living on the Manhattan Project* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997); Joyce A. Evans, *Celluloid Mushroom Clouds: Hollywood and the Atomic Bomb* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998); Allan M. Winkler, *Life Under a Cloud: American Anxiety About the Atom* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999); John Canaday, *The Nuclear Muse: Literature, Physics, and the First Atomic Bombs* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2000); Brooke Kamin Rapaport and Kevin Stayton (eds.), *Vital Forms: American Art and Design in the Atomic Age, 1940–1960* (New York: Brooklyn Museum of Art, 2001); Jerome F. Shapiro, *Atomic Bomb Cinema: The Apocalyptic Imagination on Film* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001). At a more general level, see John Fousek, *To Lead the Free World: American Nationalism and the Cultural Roots of the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Elaine Tyler May, "Gimme Shelter: Do-It-Yourself Defense and the Politics of Fear," in James W. Cook, Lawrence Glickman and Michael O'Malley (eds.), *The Cultural Turn in U.S. History: Past, Present, & Future* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 217–242; and Jessica Gienow-Hecht, "Shame on U.S.?

Academics, Cultural Transfer, and the Cold War: A Critical Review," in *Diplomatic History*, vol. 24, no. 3 (2000): 465–494 and Id., "Always Blame the Americans: Anti-Americanism in Europe in the Twentieth Century," in *The American Historical Review*, vol. 11, no. 4 (2006): 1067–1091.

6. See Eleanor Roosevelt, *My Day*, October 6, 1945, in http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers/myday/displaydoc.cfm?_y=1945&_f=md000149.
7. See Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb. Resisting the Bomb. A History of the World Disarmament Movement 1954–1970*, Volume 2 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 13.

CHAPTER 2

An Exceptional Pacifist

Eleanor Roosevelt and Her Interwar Pacifism

In the early and mid-1930s, Eleanor Roosevelt repeatedly defined herself as a "realistic pacifist." But, what did she imply with that definition? Which kind of pacifism was she referring to? And why did she need to qualify her pacifism by describing it as a realistic one?

By that time, the American First Lady had already been involved in a number of political and social campaigns for world peace and social justice, was integral part of the Establishment, and perfectly knew that excessive naïveté could be easy prey for a wide range of political opponents. For these reasons, her stance on pacifism was nothing casual or heedless, but it entailed instead a serious political claim that simultaneously reckoned with her commitment to world peace and the compelling need to resist the rise of totalitarianism.

To fully understand such a claim, however, one has to look at the inmost characteristics of a long tradition of peace activism that, both with religious and secular nuances, has characterized a great part of the history of the USA. This tradition, indeed, has constituted a fruitful soil for the development of both global pacifism and domestic liberalism. It has also represented one of the most interesting aspects of American socio-political thought and one of the most intriguing features of US culture. From the late nineteenth century to the early 1930s, in particular, US pacifist organizations have been able to bring to the political foreground such pivotal

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issues as anti-militarism, non-violence, and democratic internationalism.[1] American pacifist women, for their part, have also played a major role in further spreading pacifist ideals and merging them with the promotion of social reforms and human rights.

Accordingly, Mrs. Roosevelt self-definition was not happening in a vacuum. On the contrary, she was embodying the feelings of many American peace campaigners who were trying to promote neutrality, disarmament, internationalism, and non-violence at the same time and in a variety of ways. In the interwar years, indeed, a number of organizations were protesting in the USA against war and militarism. These organizations encompassed both women's movements and religious and ethical pacifist associations, whose most urgent goal was to mobilize people against war and avoid another immense catastrophe.

The roots of such a pacifist mobilization originated with the Spanish-American War and the US colonial rule in the Philippines. American late-century interventionism had merged the various groupings of American pacifism and had eventually given rise to the emergence of the US Anti-Imperialist League. This was the first peace group to become "a national movement with a mass constituency," counting more than 30,000 members and representing "the largest anti-war organization" ever emerged in the USA. In its original design, the league was intended to defend ideals that were considered part of the traditional American political milieu such as "political unilateralism, military independence and exemplary moral conduct." In particular, the league's members and leaders emphasized how American imperialism was an extraneous element that ran counter to the underlying principles of American constitutional republicanism.[2]

When World War I broke out in Europe and a renewed call to arms to defend democracy started to mushroom in the American public debate, a new kind of organization emerged. It aimed at unifying the fragmented American peace movement and connecting it with workers, whose lack of involvement had been one of the main limits of the Anti-Imperialist League. The new organization was named People's Council of America. It was a radical organization whose primary purpose was to denounce war as intrinsically unequal, economically dangerous—especially for the lower classes who did not receive adequate wages—and in utter contrast to professed American democratic values.

These slightly pro-socialist ideals immediately came under the lens of the administration, which was already deeply engaged in the preparations for

war. From that point onward, the allegations that the US peace movements were simultaneously promoting socialist propaganda and undermining the national interest became an extremely powerful political and rhetorical instrument. The widespread paranoia of the global Red-Scare that pervaded the USA in the early 1920s further contributed to the marginalization of the People's Council to the edges of the public landscape, and many other peace organizations suffered the same fate. Only religious movements were partly acquitted of this allegation and had therefore to bear the burden of keeping the pacifist spirit of reform alive almost on their own.

This was the case with the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), a Quaker organization founded in 1917 by members of the Religious Society of Friends in the USA. The AFSC was very active in the promotion of conscientious objection throughout the country. Its members were moved by the religious idea of an "inner light" existing in every human being. This spark of God existing in every man—according to Quaker views—should be enough to "take away the occasion for all wars," almost by itself. Quakers, along with Mennonites, Amish, and Anabaptists, soon became the best-known religious pacifist bodies, or peace churches in the USA, and they were among the most active groups in affirming the right to refuse military conscription on grounds of conscience and moral revulsion.[3]

Slowly, however, other national organizations claiming for themselves a secular image within the American pacifist landscape surfaced. The first one of this sort was the War Resisters League. Founded in 1921, it defined itself as a pacifist organization with no religious base or values and campaigned for the promotion of liberal internationalism. War Resisters believed that international cooperation was the key to the abolition of war. They held that international and supra-national institutions should help states settle their disputes, regulate their behaviors, and thus avoid the outbreak of other destructive wars. Although much of their rhetoric still had religious or moralistic overtones, War Resisters progressively relied more on arguments associated with rationalist pacifism and universalism than non-violence and Christianity. International treaties, as well as negotiation, arbitration, and diplomacy, thus, came to represent some of the main pacifist demands in the USA.

Within this process of institutionalization, women's role deserves a special mention. It was due to women's activities, indeed, that the various American peace movements gained political relevance and could be efficiently organized. Women were among the most active members of

the principal American peace organizations. The struggle for peace for American women also meant the opportunity to enhance the conditions of their lives and to express a concerned motherhood, by refusing to support war. Leaders of the women's campaign, such as Emily Balch, Lillian Wald, and Jane Addams, promoted liberal ideals, workers' rights, international disarmament and global institutions at the same time. Carrie Chapman Catt, for instance, organized the National Conferences on the Cause and Cure of War, which aimed at educating the American public, and especially women, to work for peace. Dorothy Detzer coordinated the activities of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), which stressed the importance of international disarmament and peace. Jeannette Rankin and Frederick Libby launched the National Council for the Prevention of War, which was organized to press for neutrality legislation and multilateral disarmament.

In spite of its intrinsically neutral and democratic nature, however, anti-communist agitators often targeted women's social and peace activism. Female activists, as well as their fellow male pacifists, were accused of being communists, branded as radicals, and practically banned from the public sphere and political discourse. It took a great deal of political courage for them to keep pushing for social reforms and international peace, and only a few decided to stay the course. A determined and passionate Eleanor Roosevelt was among them.

Mrs. Roosevelt's biographers and other historians have written on her social activism during the interwar period. Many have stressed the influence those years had on her political and intellectual formation. Others have connected the roots of her political vision with the social and cultural activities that she carried out between the two World Wars. All of the historical analyses, however, agree on the fact that the Great War had a deep impact on her. It boosted her social involvement and made her public attitude gradually more assertive.

As her biographer and friend, Joseph Lash, later recognized, "the War gave her a reason acceptable to her conscience to free herself of the social duties that she hated, to concentrate less on her household, and to plunge into work that fitted her aptitude."[4] Eventually, the war pushed her into political activism and social reforms and transformed her into "an accomplished, widely known, and admired public figure in her own right," one who was able to set her own agenda and fight for her own social and political priorities.[5] In doing so, she developed many of the qualities of the "transformative first lady," which Maurine Beasley has so well described.[6]

In the early 1920s, Eleanor Roosevelt's increasing political interests found a bold channel of expression in the New York League of Women Voters. She was active in this organization and maintained contacts with its leaders for the rest of her life. The league, as Maurine Beasley has noted, played an important role in Mrs. Roosevelt's political education, in making her a conscious citizen, and in improving her social skills.[7] While working for the league, she started to give public presentations, discuss social issues, and campaign in favor of social legislation and other broad political objectives.

But the league and its focus on women's rights did not exhaust the breadth of Eleanor Roosevelt's political interests. She was very vocal in promoting arbitration, internationalism, and many other pacifist principles at the same time. During an interview for her husband's 1920 vice-presidential campaign, for instance, she stressed the relevance of the League of Nations and the necessity for the USA to take part in it, even if she knew that such a criticism of American isolationism was not particularly advantageous to her husband's electoral campaign.[8] Without agreeing with the most radical features of the many American pacifist organizations, she nevertheless found the rationale of their arguments fully comprehensible and acceptable. She participated in anti-war rallies, attended pacifist meetings and conventions, and wrote articles and pamphlets on peace issues and about the activities of peace groups. She also endorsed the WILPF and hosted a women's peace movement conference at Hyde Park, with prominent pacifist leader Carrie Chapman Catt as the keynote speaker.[9]

In 1923 and 1924, Mrs. Roosevelt also helped organize the Bok Peace Prize competition; the award was intended to galvanize and promote the American peace movement as a whole. The $100,000 prize was reserved for "the best practicable plan by which the United States may cooperate with other nations to achieve and preserve the peace of the world." Esther Lape, a college professor, a publicist with a strong interest in international affairs, an activist of the New York League of Women Voters, and, above all, a close friend of Eleanor Roosevelt's, was appointed as the contest director. Mrs. Roosevelt worked hard in order to promote the competition. To this end she wrote an article for the October 1923 *Ladies' Home Journal*, where, in spite of the criticism from the isolationist elites, she confirmed her commitment to the peace movement's ideals and upheld international and multilateral cooperation.[10] In 1924, when questioned whether war could ever be morally justified, she showed her deep

conviction to the necessity for world peace and admitted her own inability to see "why there should be any such thing as a righteous war."[11]

To be sure, Eleanor Roosevelt's pacifist activities were part of her broader involvement in social issues. In fact, she devoted a great part of her time to promote social justice through "public appearances, which included giving paid and unpaid speeches throughout the nation as well as visiting countless sites of innumerable federally funded relief projects."[12] Social reforms, peace, and equal rights were also the topics of many informal discussions that she had at her Val-Kill cottage with such friends as Nancy Cook, Marion Dickerman and Caroline O'Day. The Val-Kill experience was crucial in sharpening Mrs. Roosevelt's and her colleagues' political and organizational skills and in strengthening their ability to cultivate key-political relationships. If, on the one hand, much of their work consisted of supporting Democratic candidates and causes, on the other, the innovative aspect of that work was its tactics. The women adopted "new techniques to mobilize supporters, which included the use of radio broadcasts, newsletters, and magazines, in addition to such well-tested methods as public debates, speeches, fundraisers, and community events."[13] This new, modern repertoire of political and social engagement was so powerful that Mrs. Roosevelt would never abandon it for the rest of her life.

As a consequence, Mrs. Roosevelt slowly acquired the fundamental tool kit for a modern politician and public figure. She took the responsibility for promoting campaigns. She managed fund-raising projects, and she constantly maintained contact with common people. The ability to pay attention to both the individual needs and the general conditions of the society became a cornerstone of her political mindset, along with her advocacy for the oppressed and the poorest.[14] This was evident, for instance, in the case of the Arthurdale project.[15] That experience was very important—first, because it contributed to the strengthening of her public charitable image, and second, because it multiplied her pacifist contacts. She had the opportunity to work side by side with the AFSC executive secretary, Clarence Pickett, who had coordinated a child-feeding program in the coal mining areas of Pennsylvania and West Virginia. When, in late 1932, Pickett was invited to the Roosevelt home in Hyde Park, Eleanor immediately showed interest in the project and in the future of the miners' community. She was particularly aware of the educational aspects of the project and decided to make substantial private contributions to it. But Mrs. Roosevelt's involvement went beyond mere financial support. Along with Pickett, she paid many visits to Arthurdale and other similar

areas, openly acknowledging the way in which the Quaker organization had put their faith into action with good deeds, rather than focusing on theological disputes. She strongly believed that peace and progress could be obtained only by providing equal opportunity for all.[16]

Naturally, Eleanor Roosevelt's ideas developed over the years and changed as external conditions changed. In the late 1930s, for instance, she gradually shifted toward a more assertive position for US military policy. As the clouds of the war gathered, she was still "passionately committed to peace," even as she became everything but an absolute pacifist. She preferred to be defined as a "realistic" pacifist, meaning that she believed in world cooperation as the only possible solution to war and the only viable road for international peace and security, but that at the same time she understood the necessity for military preparedness and conscription. She needed to qualify her pacifism because of her fear of fascist expansionism, the rise of international tensions, and the urgency to confront dictatorships. She also needed to be politically cautious and pragmatic because of all of her husband's electoral campaigns. She was, as Blanche Wiesen Cook reminds us, "a practical idealist; an American internationalist, specifically an internationalist whose values were profoundly American."[17]

The quintessential element of her pacifism, however, was a strong faith in the multilateral solution to the international controversies, a feature that remained a centerpiece of American pacifism in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Eleanor Roosevelt stressed many times that the USA had to participate in the League of Nations and favor international cooperation. In 1935, for example, when a pro-isolationist Senate had to vote for the World Court treaty, she delivered a radio address in which she fiercely called for the ratification of that treaty even if she knew that her appeal would very probably not receive the necessary legislative support. She believed that nations had to find a civilized, rapid way to settle their disputes and was convinced that nations had to come together "not in fear, but in trust" in order to achieve international stability and peace.[18]

The Eleanor Revolution at the White House

When Eleanor Roosevelt entered the White House, in March 1933, she was 48 years old and she had already become an exceptional figure in her own right. In an era when only one out of four women worked outside the home, she had led many local and national campaigns, organized events, managed businesses, established important social and

political relationships, became a respected lobbyist and a skilled politician, raised a family, and, finally, acquired great skills in coping with the press. Mrs. Roosevelt brought all of her peculiarities with her to her new office. The White House was a familiar place for her and she knew exactly what had to be changed there to keep playing a relevant socio-political role.

Historians recognize her ability to use her new position instrumentally or, as Allida Black says, "adroitly." This was one of the most intriguing aspects of Eleanor Roosevelt's life at the White House.[19] Thanks to her activism and the breadth of her interests, Mrs. Roosevelt used her political position "to advocate for both individuals and causes in which she believed." In doing so, "she emerged as the conscience of the administration, […] she transformed her personal need to be active and useful into a potent political force within [the] administration." Such a transformation altered the image and the perception of the US First Lady forever and made Eleanor Roosevelt "one of the strongest and most popular voices in Washington, in spite of critics who derided her nontraditional activism and alleged meddling in political matters."[20]

The *Eleanor Revolution* at the White House was a comprehensive one. It encompassed protocol, since Mrs. Roosevelt introduced many new—and often very crowded—official events. It also included several bureaucratic procedures. For instance, the Social Office, which now had to face a massive increase in correspondence, had to set up entirely new guidelines. Furthermore, Mrs. Roosevelt completely altered the public's perception of the First Lady and, to that extent, she devoted much of her energies to establishing and strengthening direct channels of communication with her fellow citizens.

The reasons for such non-conventional activism were many. First of all, when FDR was elected, Eleanor Roosevelt feared that she would be confined to a marginal position, "a schedule of teas and receptions" that she absolutely wanted to avoid. Second, she felt lonely. She missed her friends in New York and her daily activities in Val-Kill cottage. She needed to remain active for the sake of her mental well-being and, as she wrote to Lorena Hickok in 1933, she had to escape from a deep sense of frustration. Third, there was a clear political design behind her transformation of the role of First Lady. As Allida Black vividly reminds us, she believed that Americans had to "accept the responsibility of living in a democracy," if they wanted the nation to flourish. This meant that US citizens had to be informed about the issues dominating the domestic and international political landscape, and that they had to develop their own independent

opinions. This knowledge, fostered by a continuous exchange of information, was to be the fuel of democracy, or ignorance would condemn it to immobility. For their part, policymakers, social leaders, and public figures in general, including the First Lady, had the crucial mission of educating citizens to "imagine a better life" for themselves, as she stated in 1930. In this sense, Eleanor Roosevelt believed she had a mission to accomplish and she deployed her newfound power in order to achieve her broad educational objectives.

She preferred, however, to use a personal rather than paternalist approach. She traveled throughout the country and directly met citizens and common people living with the consequences of the Great Depression, racial discrimination, starvation, and poverty.[21] In doing so, she deliberately devoted most of her time to what historians have defined as her own *New Deal*.

First of all, she worked for the unemployed youth, who were overwhelmed by the rapid and unprecedented collapse in the labor market. Mrs. Roosevelt's 1935 article "In Defense of Curiosity," was partly intended to remind the administration of the central role of youth education in the democracy-building process. A "lack of curiosity" resulting from a lack of education would also mean for young people the "complete inability to visualize any life but their own." The risk was that young people "could not recognize their responsibility."[22] Mrs. Roosevelt's articles and utterances and, above all, her continuous pressure on the administration gave millions of young Americans the opportunity to follow their vocational and educational aspirations.[23] As a consequence, Eleanor Roosevelt became both the inspirational voice and the principal promoter of the National Youth Administration.[24]

Second, she championed the establishment of the "Federal One" project, the program that allocated federal funds to the promotion of every genre of American arts. For the first time in American history, the government recognized a primary public interest in the arts and invested federal resources in cultural development. Eleanor Roosevelt spoke about this in 1934, before the 25th annual convention of the American Federation of Artists. She considered public interest in the development of the artistic expression as the most viable way out of the barren years of the economic depression.[25] Much of her powerful rhetoric pervaded FDR's words when the president stated that "a democratic system of competition which gives to all American artists an equal opportunity […] is work in keeping with our highest democratic ideals."[26] Mrs. Roosevelt was conscious

that a program with such a socialist nuance would receive criticism, but she proudly defended her ideas by remarking that projects like this might primarily "serve as instruments" of civilization.[27]

Apart from youth and the arts, Eleanor Roosevelt represented an influential voice in the fight against racial segregation. She believed that discrimination was not consistent with American democratic values and it was a matter of the utmost immorality. Mrs. Roosevelt showed "courage in her commitment to civil rights, in her personal convictions about the importance of human dignity, in her involvement with civil rights organizations fighting for minority opportunities" to such an extent that many historians have regarded civil rights as her main object of interest during the White House years.[28]

She expressed the core of her beliefs when she addressed a speech to the National Urban League in January 1936. According to Mrs. Roosevelt, black people had to understand the social and economic changes of their era and this would be possible only with a decent education. Without any improvement in education and working conditions, it was impossible to remove the obstacles that handicapped black people in the USA. She knew that the problem was mainly an economic one and that improving living conditions was the number one priority. But she was also convinced that the government had to give black Americans "education, understanding, and training" before it could expect them to take up their full responsibility. She believed that destroying any kind of racial segregation was the key both for social development and human progress: "There is no reason why all of the races in this country should not live together each of them giving from their particular gift something to the other, and contributing an example to the world of peace on earth, good will toward men."[29]

But the ways in which she pressed for an end to racial segregation were even more impressive than her pronouncements. She busied herself in organizing events, attending meetings, and lobbying Congress. This caused a motley crew of discontents within the administration. FDR himself, who looked at civil rights in political rather than in moral terms, was many times very critical. Given the relative weight of the southern democrats in his New Deal coalition, he was aware that he had to be extremely cautious.[30] However, in spite of these limitations and pressures, Mrs. Roosevelt succeeded in giving racial segregation and the civil rights movement ample publicity. Liberal, radical, progressive, and conservative news outlets gave her actions nationwide coverage. Her visits to black neighborhoods, her firsthand experience with the poor and neglected

made news across the USA. Her physical presence and her published thoughts acted as persuasive moral levers to promote civil rights in the US political landscape.[31]

In order to push for such a bold social reform agenda, Eleanor Roosevelt decided to continue to be active within the Democratic Party. Since joining the women's division of the New York State Democratic Party in 1924, she had always been interested in promoting social justice. In this regard, she had tried to extend "the feeling of responsibility for the misfortune of neighbors to others than the ones who happened to live in her geographical neighborhood."[32] Her fierce defense of women's rights and civil rights had transformed her into the Republicans' preferred target, and it had also attracted criticism from the ranks of those moderates who disliked her liberalism.[33] Within FDR's cabinet, for instance, Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins was uncomfortable with her involvement in civil rights and employment policies. Secretary of Interior Harold Ickes publicly criticized her support for the Arthurdale project. Still Mrs. Roosevelt was able to maintain a powerful political presence—mainly derived from her evocative rhetoric—that allowed her to gain a broad political consensus.

The 1940 electoral campaign well illustrates to what extent Eleanor Roosevelt's voice had become influential among American Democrats. Hoping to secure Henry Wallace's nomination as the vice presidential running mate, FDR asked his wife to address the fragmented Democratic national convention. Mrs. Roosevelt's admiration of Wallace stemmed from the fact that he was the most liberal member of FDR's administration.[34] But she also believed that Wallace was "a very fine person" and other Democrats would "soon find in him much to admire and love."[35] When she arrived in Chicago in July 1940, she succeeded in reconstituting her party's unity by appealing to the delegates' sense of responsibility. It was the first time in history that an American First Lady had addressed a national convention, but nobody seemed to pay attention to that. Her appearance "ignited a passionate, spontaneous demonstration in her honor."[36] She reminded delegates that they had "a heavy responsibility at home for domestic policies, and a heavy responsibility to shape a policy to guide this nation in the peaceful way that our people desire in the troubled world of today."[37] Her performance was so persuasive that delegates nominated Wallace at the very first ballot.

However, what rendered Eleanor Roosevelt's years at the White House truly revolutionary, even more than her social and political commitment, was her capacity to cope with the press and the media.[38] As Maurine

Beasley recalls, "Eleanor had a motivation for public communication beyond the purely political: she wanted to prove to herself that she could do something with a role that she initially feared would curtail her own self-development." When she arrived at the White House, she had no apparent power. What she did have since the very beginning was instead access to the news media, and she was determined to use those means to publicize her efforts for social welfare and justice. She gained "celebrity status" and her public visibility rose to an extreme level when she started publishing the *My Day* columns in December 1935.

The widely syndicated columns helped Eleanor Roosevelt to strengthen her image as "both a superwoman who flew around the country and was attentive to family, friends, and worthy causes and a genuine individual who spoke the language of ordinary people." The articles transformed her into a widely known political commentator and an authoritative voice within the political elite. According to *The New York Times* columnist Arthur Krock, the *My Day* columns became "required political reading for those seeking insight into administration policy."[39] Her attitude toward the mass media made her into a "public person of enormous influence through communicating her mission and message." Gentle in manner, she spoke extensively on varied political issues. She was creative, clear, and able "to communicate from her heart," with the sincerity and passion that Robin Gerber describes very well.[40]

Being a committed social reformer and a prolific mass communicator was not enough for the First Lady. She was also deeply involved in defending peace ideals and values. In particular, she supported peace both as a value and as a political objective and worked hard to promote it. Her personal beliefs induced her to host an official reception at the White House to celebrate the WILPF's 20th anniversary, only a few weeks before Jane Addams' death in May 1935. Moreover, when the National Council for the Prevention of War invited her to broadcast a radio message, she delivered a stirring speech explaining the reasons why women should prefer peace to war.[41]

Mrs. Roosevelt reiterated the theme of the concerned motherhood many times after that, as for instance in 1940, when she clearly stated that women did not wish to see their sons go to war again.[42] In a 1935 pamphlet titled "Why Wars Must Cease," she also explained why she believed that war in the modern era was obsolete: "an idea is obsolete if, when applied, it does not work. […] There is no further use for war in business, or war between labor and capital or war between the rich and the poor.

The time for unbridled competition, or war, is at an end, we must cooperate for our mutual good."[43] In "This Troubled World," she advocated for brotherly love as a way of living instead of a pure doctrine, and in the columns *If You Ask Me*, she championed the search for a common understanding in contrast to the rise of individualism.[44] "The basic thing," Eleanor Roosevelt stated, "is that individuals should want peace, should care about other human beings all over the world regardless of race, creed, or color, and should be determined that they will not seek for purely personal advantage, but will seek for mutual advantage."[45]

Following her personal inclinations, Eleanor Roosevelt continued to back pacifist organizations like the AFSC, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, and the War Resisters League. However, she fiercely opposed the idea of unilateral disarmament that animated some of these groups. She maintained that an adequate defense was necessary "as long as we cannot have simultaneous disarmament." This position separated her from the most radical elements of the American peace movement. She tried to explain that she could differ with the pacifist organizations but still cooperate with them in a general drive for peace. "[T]he peace drive is a coming together of all organizations interested in peace to promote the spirit in this country. All those who speak and work for peace do not agree exactly as to the way in which peace shall be obtained. I happen to believe that adequate armament for defense is necessary. Others may not; but I can join in any demonstration, at least, which has as its object the will for peace."

Such a moderate attitude was a peculiar element of Eleanor Roosevelt's approach to peace. This view placed great emphasis on the need for multilateral cooperation and added a political significance to Eleanor Roosevelt's appeals. In a letter of 1936, the First Lady confessed to believing that "all armaments cause distrust between nations, but that disarmament must be international so that no one country leaves itself open to attack or invasion from another." In a speech that *The New York Times* reported on February 15, 1938, she added: "It is unfortunately true that we still live in a world where force is the only voice that carries conviction and weight with certain groups. I wish it was not so. I wish we lived in a world where reason and patience prevailed and that the money could be spent on other things. But now, today, it is undoubtedly necessary for us to have better equipment for self-defense."[46] By merging moralism and pragmatism, Eleanor Roosevelt made a point of supporting multilateral disarmament. At the same time, she was defending the argument that would, in 1939, persuade FDR to finance the Manhattan Project.

Many tried to define the ambivalent approach that Eleanor Roosevelt had to peace issues during the late 1930s. Frances Perkins described her "as near pacifist as one can be and still be a realist." A correspondent of hers, Mrs. Oliphant called her "the number one pacifist in the land." Her friend and biographer, Joseph Lash, defined her positions as both pacifist and anti-fascist. However, Eleanor Roosevelt had a precise idea of what her commitment to peace was. In June 1937, she argued that "being a pacifist means that you do not see a fight, that you use every means in your power to prevent a fight […] But if war comes to your own country, then even pacifists, it seems to me, must stand up and fight for their beliefs."[47]

As soon as external conditions forced her to realize that unilateral disarmament and neutrality legislation, two of the main pacifists' demands, would not prevent war and could potentially threaten the American interests, she stressed even more the need for a pragmatic approach. The failure of the League of Nations, the neutralization of all of the efforts to reach an international ban on war or to find forms of effective disarmament, and, eventually, the victory of power politics and rearmament, convinced Eleanor Roosevelt to keep her distance from the idealistic faction of the peace movement.[48] Confronting the rising of Nazi-Fascism, she came to dislike the calls for unilateral disarmament that permeated many pacifist organizations and began to consider these claims dangerous and fruitless.

By 1939, she was persuaded that her country would have to fight, "because fascism threatened the future of civilization."[49] When her personal views occasionally "ran contrary to official U.S. policy of neutrality toward conflict in Europe," she always maintained that her opinions were merely personal with no relationship to official policy.[50] Amid a pivotal political struggle over the Lend-Lease proposal to Britain, she eventually spoke in favor of the American action and said that it was time the USA started "thinking about giving something."[51] By that time, however, America was already at war.

War Concerns and World Peace

"We know what we have to face and we know that we are ready to face it." With these few words Eleanor Roosevelt counseled Americans in the aftermath of the attack on Pearl Harbor.[52] It was her voice that announced to the nation that the war had come home. Due to FDR's physical condition, she had to embody the administration's war efforts

throughout the country. Her presence had to inspire Americans and convince them that democracy would triumph over dictatorship. In this regard, the assistance she gave to the director of the nation's civilian defense program was remarkable. On countless occasions, Americans soldiers all over the world had the opportunity to see her as a tangible sign of the White House presence. She paid many visits to hospitals where she copied the names and addresses of the wounded she encountered, so that she could write letters to their relatives once she returned home. The First Lady thus became a symbol of national unity. During the war, her popularity definitely soared.

The war, however, not only gave Mrs. Roosevelt's personality and evocative rhetoric great prominence, but it also accentuated her distinctive pragmatic pacifism. Amid increasingly belligerent tones and pro-war campaigns, she was able to make the difficult trade-off between her public role and personal beliefs and pacifist stands. As Allida Black argues, Eleanor Roosevelt understood "the complex relationships between war and peace," and always tried to explain the rationale behind the necessity of fighting dictatorships.[53] Already in 1939, when the war had just erupted in Europe, she noted that the world situation would inevitably affect US domestic affairs and she warned her fellow citizens about the tensions and the psychological effects that the new conflict would generate at home.[54] She pragmatically defended the idea that the main goal for the USA in this war was to ensure an independent nation for American children.[55] She expressed the desire to continue to live in an independent country based on individual freedom and equal opportunities.[56] She also advocated women's active participation in war mobilization, an element that she considered crucial in avoiding further negative consequences.

The First Lady, indeed, fiercely promoted the deterrent value of pre-emptive mobilization: "Our only hope of keeping the peace which we so prize, is to prove before there is any involvement in war, that we are a unified nation for defense."[57] She believed that the participation of the whole population in what she defined as a "people's war" would be the key to defeat Nazism and Fascism. What she was supporting was, in essence, a people's democratic revolution against tyranny.[58] In a radio address in October 1941, she commended even the conscientious objectors for the dogged service they were providing in medical facilities.[59] She asked every American to do the most efficient possible job in order to "shorten the horrible period" of war.[60] She reminded young people and ordinary

citizens that the ultimate ends for which they were fighting were freedom and "a different and better future world."[61] Exquisitely realist as well as purely *exceptionalist*, the core of Eleanor Roosevelt's message was that the sooner the USA faced up to the fact that this war was its own war, the sooner American citizens would do the job, which other men and women were doing all over the world. [62] That job, according to the First Lady, was nothing less than defending democracy.[63]

Given her pragmatic pacifism and political realism, Eleanor Roosevelt existed in a quandary in which "the peace movement wanted her to be its voice within the administration and the administration expected her to defend its position with its anti-war critics."[64] Since she did not want to gainsay FDR's pro-war stance, she decided, on the one hand, to defend practical causes such as conscientious objection and, on the other hand, to promote the general idea of world peace.[65] This last attitude occasionally rendered Eleanor Roosevelt a lone voice in the wilderness. But, as she later recalled, it was not enough for her to talk about peace, since "one must work at it."[66] During the war, the cause of world peace became therefore so central to Mrs. Roosevelt's public efforts that many historians use the expression "apparent incongruity" to describe her internal conflict between the necessity of fighting the war and at the same time promoting world peace.[67] That incongruity epitomized instead the search for a delicate equilibrium between Eleanor Roosevelt's pragmatism and idealism.[68] She accepted World War II as a route to the achievement of a stable international peace.

The First Lady envisioned a better world after the war, a world centered on the role of people. This bottom-up approach slowly became her preferred perspective from which to imagine and design the postwar order. She defended citizens' right to hope and asserted that the future belonged to "those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."[69] Against the rise of arrogance and egotism, she proposed, and backed, an "enlightened self-interest" through which people of the world could understand that wars are detrimental to the whole of civilization.[70] According to her opinion, there would be no victory without removing the "armed camps" in people's minds—those cultural barriers which kept individuals from mutual understanding.[71] She believed that the establishment of a universal language, as part of a universal understanding, would be a preliminary step and a "prelude to world peace."[72] Replying to a boy who was looking forward "to the time when the conflict will cease and the real problems of the world can be met by thought and brains," Mrs. Roosevelt remarked that

American citizens had to keep themselves from hate, "and act with cool heads but warms hearts, both with our allies and with our enemies at the close of the war."[73] Finally, she placed great emphasis on the role of education, saying that it was one of the most vigorous boosters for peace.[74]

With the same passionate rhetoric she used to promote world peace, Eleanor Roosevelt addressed one of the most problematic foreign policy issues of the early 1940s—the problem of the postwar cooperation. According to the First Lady, the USA had to realize that it was "no longer an isolated nation, but part of a family of nations" that needed to be restored to normal life.[75] On a number of occasions, she praised the importance of winning peace. In March 1943, for example, she attended a meeting in Philadelphia and listened to the governor of Minnesota Harold Stassen's speech with great interest. Stassen strongly advocated a "definite United Nations government" and a worldwide vision of winning what he called an enduring people's peace.[76] Although Mrs. Roosevelt confessed to having no particular formula for the way international cooperation should function after the war, she endorsed the idea of establishing a working United Nations Organizations, which would be a "solid foundation for world peace."[77]

Such an idea, far from being purely idealistic, took into account the differences that persisted among the nations, and particularly those differences affecting the relations between the USA and the Soviet Russia. She clearly stated that any plan for the future world order would have to include Russia, China, and all those nations that wanted to wholeheartedly subscribe to the notion of cooperation. When New York congressman Arthur Klein introduced a plan that included the establishment of "closer cooperation between all nations" as an "extension of the good neighbor policy to all the world" along with measures for "social and economic improvement," she immediately endorsed it.[78]

She used both her political channels and her connections with social movements to promote international cooperation. As a senior member of the women's division of the Democratic National Committee, Eleanor Roosevelt asked her party to join the efforts of the League of Women Voters and those of several churches to discuss and formulate a proposal on world peace before the San Francisco conference.[79] The day before the convening of the conference, she also stressed the significance of setting up an organization that would be a forum for discussion, and a place where future generations would have the opportunity to build a peaceful world.[80]

Eleanor Roosevelt's pacifism and humanitarianism converged in the shape of her ideas for what the United Nations (UN) should be. She considered "food, or relief, or even aviation" as matters that had direct bearing on the establishment of a lasting peace.[81] To preserve peace, the new organization had to encompass a vast range of subjects, including rehabilitation, world labor problems, and world educational problems.[82] Her main interest was to build an organization that would be as efficient as possible. "[W]hen questions reach the Security Council, we must have an organization to enforce its decisions," the First Lady liked to say.[83]

Hence, her internationalism was grounded in a pragmatic mutual recognition of interests. Eleanor Roosevelt believed that the mutuality of interests, especially in practical fields, favored international agreements. She expressed this idea in a heartfelt speech against the word tolerance, which, according to the First Lady's views, could hide fear and restrain nations from cooperating.[84] To her, the many agencies of the UN were intended to produce mutual advantages such as increasing the health standards in all nations or improving the global educational level.[85] Accordingly, the very international defense of human rights had to be considered instrumental in achieving superior, mutual gains.

This particular attitude toward the promotion and the safeguard of human rights not only characterized Mrs. Roosevelt liberalism, but it also helped Harry Truman solve one of his first dilemmas as US president. In 1945, indeed, he confided to Secretary of State James Byrnes that he needed the support of two important liberals for the purpose of improving the public image of his administration, specifically Henry Wallace and Eleanor Roosevelt. The area of international affairs seemed a natural destination for such an outstanding and trustworthy figure as Eleanor Roosevelt. That was why Byrnes placed her name at the top of the list of delegates to the upcoming London conference of the UN.[86] In December 1945, Truman appointed her as one of the US representatives to the first session of the General Assembly, which was scheduled for Westminster Central Hall the following January. She decided to write of her gratitude in the pages of her *My Day* column where she confirmed her desire to learn, understand, and work on the problems of the world in order to build a lasting peace. Mrs. Roosevelt felt a great responsibility in being the only woman delegate from the USA and promised to keep in mind the enormous sacrifices of the youth who had fought in war. After all, she was going to London fully convinced that the world had become, as Wendell Willkie said, "one

world" and that only by recognizing this interdependence would it be possible to secure future generations from war.[87]

Eleanor Roosevelt immediately gained an independent and respected role within the Third Committee of the U.N. Conference, which was the committee dealing with social, cultural, and humanitarian issues. She was a resolute delegate and a fearless defender of human rights, who clashed many times with Soviet delegate Andrey Vyshinsky on crucial issues such as a refugee's right to repatriate. Due to the Soviet denial of the principle that no displaced persons should be forcibly required to return home, as the draft report of the Third Committee stated, she came out against any ideological stance and stubbornly defended the necessity of considering these people as human beings before the 30 plenary sessions of the General Assembly.[88] Quite piqued, she later admitted: "there is very little possibility that countries with differing conceptions of democracy can live together without friction in the same world."[89]

Although she had to work hard in order to find a common ground in discussions with the Soviets, Eleanor Roosevelt easily won large internal support in the USA for the UN and its mission to protect human rights. Many American peace movements immediately praised her appointment. A quick survey of Eleanor Roosevelt's incoming correspondence in the aftermath of her nomination shows the contentment that many of the American peace activists found in her holding that position. Representatives of the American Association for the United Nations, labor movement spokespersons, and women's and religious organizations sent Eleanor Roosevelt letters of congratulations, suggestions, and memoranda.[90] One admirer called her "The Queen of Peace—Champion of the Common People—The First Lady of America." The press defined her nomination a "splendid choice" because of her ability to both represent common people and to understand the urgency of building a lasting peace.[91] In his comment, *The Washington Post* columnist, Thomas L. Stokes said that the people had gained a real spokesman, and that Eleanor Roosevelt would be more than a mere representative of the women of America. Although she would fulfill that role excellently, Stokes felt that she represented "better than perhaps any other person, […] the little people of this country and, indeed, of the world." She knew the common people's yearning for peace and security. She had promoted peace even when she had realized it was necessary to fight. Accordingly, she understood perfectly why it was of the utmost importance to prevent another war.[92] Sitting at the UN in 1946, she was, quintessentially, the right woman in the right place.

Notes

1. For a comprehensive analysis of this point, see Charles De Benedetti, *The Peace Reform in American History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980); Peter Brock, *Twentieth Century Pacifism* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1970); John W. Chambers II (ed.), *The Eagle and the Dove. The American Peace Movement and United States Foreign Policy 1900–1922* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1991); Charles Chatfield, *The American Peace Movements. Ideals and Activism* (New York: Twayne, 1992).
2. See Charles De Benedetti, *The Peace Reform in American History*, 3.
3. Many Protestant denominations, such as Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Universalists and Unitarians, as well as many other secular organizations, influenced American Christian pacifism during the early twentieth century. See Michael True, "Christian Pacifism in the United States: A History and Development since the 17th Century," and Id., "The American Tradition of Nonviolence" in *Les Mouvements Pacifistes Américains et Francais, Hier et Aujourd'hui: Actes du Colloque des 5, 6 et 7 Avril 2007 à l'Université de Savoie* (Chambéry: Université de Savoie, Laboratoire langages, littératures, sociétés, 2007); Id., *An Energy Field More Intense Than War: The Nonviolent Tradition and American Literature* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1995); and Adin Ballou, *Christian Non-Resistance* (Providence: Blackstone, 2003).
4. See William H. Chafe, "Biographical Sketch," in *Without Precedent. The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt*, eds. Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 6.
5. "By 1928, Eleanor Roosevelt had clearly become a political leader in her own right. Once just a 'political wife,' she gradually extended that role and used it as a vehicle for asserting her own personality and agenda," see William H. Chafe, "Biographical Sketch," in *Without Precedent. The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt*, eds. Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman, 8. See also Elisabeth Israels Perry, "Training for Public Life: ER and Women's Political Networks in the 1920s," in *Without Precedent. The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt*, eds. Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman, 44.
6. In the interwar period, Eleanor Roosevelt gradually became "a consummate practitioner of politics," see Maurine H. Beasley, *Eleanor Roosevelt. Transformative First Lady* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2010), 3.
7. See Maurine Hoffman Beasley, Holly Cowan Shulman, Henry R. Beasley (eds.), *The Eleanor Roosevelt Encyclopedia* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2001), 313.
8. See Jason Berger, *A New Deal for the World: Eleanor Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 2.
9. See Maurine H. Beasley, *Eleanor Roosevelt. Transformative First Lady*, 170.

10. Maurine H. Beasley, *Eleanor Roosevelt. Transformative First Lady*, 32–33 and Maurine Hoffman Beasley, Holly Cowan Shulman, Henry R. Beasley (eds.), *The Eleanor Roosevelt Encyclopedia*, 67.
11. See Jason Berger, *A New Deal for the World: Eleanor Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy*, 4.
12. See Maurine H. Beasley, *Eleanor Roosevelt. Transformative First Lady*, 77.
13. The work with Nancy Cook, Caroline O'Day, and Marion Dickerman during the 1920s helped Eleanor Roosevelt to develop many of her political skills and eventually convinced her that the Democratic Party was her political home. As she wrote in 1923, "on the whole, the Democratic Party seems to have been more concerned with welfare and interests of the people at large, and less with the growth of big business interests [than the Republican Party]," see Maurine H. Beasley, *Eleanor Roosevelt. Transformative First Lady*, 35.
14. See Dan Eshet, *Fundamental Freedoms. Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (Brookline: Facing History and Ourselves National Foundation, 2010).
15. For a detailed account of the Arthurdale project and Eleanor Roosevelt's role in it, see Nancy Hoffman, *Eleanor Roosevelt and the Arthurdale Experiment* (North Haven: Linnet Books, 2001). See also Allan W. Austin, *Quaker Brotherhood: Interracial Activism and the American Friends Service Committee, 1917–1950* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2012).
16. "Visiting the poverty-stricken countryside of West Virginia and hearing about the struggle of Appalachian farmers to reclaim land, she became a champion of the Arthurdale Resettlement Administration Project, devoting her lecture fees as well as influence to help the community regain autonomy," see William H. Chafe, "Biographical Sketch," in *Without Precedent. The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt*, eds. Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman, 18. Moreover, "Arthurdale represented the first effort by a president's wife to become intimately involved in a tax-supported effort for social betterment, although critics ridiculed the attempt. Eleanor's interest in social condition placed her in the forefront of liberals," see Maurine H. Beasley, *Eleanor Roosevelt. Transformative First Lady*, 138.
17. See Blanche Wiesen Cook, "Turn Toward Peace: ER and Foreign Affairs," in *Without Precedent. The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt*, eds. Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman, 109.
18. See Jason Berger, *A New Deal for the World: Eleanor Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy*, 4.
19. See Allida M. Black (ed.), *Courage in a Dangerous World. The Political Writings of Eleanor Roosevelt* (New York: Columbia university Press, 1999), 31. As many historians tend to recognize, Eleanor Roosevelt was a sort of extension of the presidency. She moved in directions where it was politically or practically inconvenient for the president to operate. Thus, she became

an advisor, an assistant, and sometimes a completely autonomous actor supporting and implementing New Deal policies. In this regard, see Mildred W. Abramowitz, *Eleanor Roosevelt and Federal Responsibility and Responsiveness to Youth, the Negro, and Others in Time of Depression* (New York: New York University, Ph.D. dissertation, 1970), 183.

20. See Maurine H. Beasley, *Eleanor Roosevelt. Transformative First Lady*, 80 and 163.
21. See Allida M. Black, *Casting Her Own Shadow. Eleanor Roosevelt and the Shaping of Postwar Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 23–28.
22. See Allida M. Black (ed.), *Courage in a Dangerous World*, 33.
23. See Mildred W. Abramowitz, *Eleanor Roosevelt and Federal Responsibility and Responsiveness to Youth, the Negro, and Others in Time of Depression*, 24–140.
24. See Winifred D. Wandersee, "ER and American Youth: Politics and Personality in a Bureaucratic Age," in *Without Precedent. The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt*, eds. Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman, 65 and Allida M. Black, *Casting Her Own Shadow*, 30–32. See also Joseph P. Lash, *Eleanor and Franklin: The Story of Their Relationship Based on Eleanor Roosevelt's Private Papers* (New York: Norton, 1971), 340–357; Mildred W. Abramowitz, "Eleanor Roosevelt and the National Youth Administration 1935–1943: An Extension of the Presidency," in *Presidential Studies Quarterly* vol. 14, no. 4 (1984): 558–569.
25. One of the key figures in the "Federal One" project was Edward Bruce, who was the chair of the Public Works of Arts Project, a branch of the Treasury Department, and then director of the governmental Section of Fine Arts. He corresponded with Eleanor Roosevelt and the president frequently from 1934 onward. In 1940, he defined Mrs. Roosevelt as a "guardian saint" in the government-backed art project, as you can see in a letter from Edward Bruce to Eleanor Roosevelt dated February 22, 1940, in Roosevelt Study Center (hereby after RSC), Presidential Collection and Administrations, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt 1933–1945 (hereby after ER Papers 1933–1945), Reel 3, 00454.
26. See a letter written by Franklin D. Roosevelt and quoted in a document titled "Address by the Honorable Robert M. La Follette, United States Senator from Wisconsin, on the Occasion of the Opening of the Exhibition of the Section of Fine Arts, at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, November 2, 1939, Introduced by Dr. Edward Bruce, Chief of the Section of Fine Arts," in RSC, ER Papers 1933–1945, Reel 3, 00429. Eleanor Roosevelt believed in a social and peaceful role of the fine arts. Indeed, when Europe was already at war, she wrote that "arts should be a reminder that there are still possibilities of unity among us," see Eleanor Roosevelt, *My Day*, May 21, 1940 (all of the references and quotations from the *My Day* columns

have been taken from *My Day: A Comprehensive, Electronic Edition of Eleanor Roosevelt's "My Day" Newspapers Columns*, prepared by the Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project of the George Washington University and available online at http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers/myday/; hereby after the columns will be simply referred as *My Day*, then followed by the date).

27. *My Day*, June 20, 1939.
28. See Joanna Schneider Zangrando and Robert Zangrando, "ER and Black Civil Rights," in *Without Precedent. The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt*, eds. Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman, 88.
29. See Eleanor Roosevelt, "The Negro and Social Change," in *Courage in a Dangerous World*, ed. Allida M. Black, 34–37. See also Mildred W. Abramowitz, *Eleanor Roosevelt and Federal Responsibility and Responsiveness to Youth, the Negro, and Others in Time of Depression*, 141–183.
30. See Allida M. Black, *Casting Her Own Shadow*, 40. See also Eleanor Roosevelt's speech at the Southern Conference on Human Welfare, Birmingham, Alabama, November 1938, in *Courage in a Dangerous World*, ed. Allida M. Black, 41.
31. See, Allida M. Black, "A Reluctant but Persistent Warrior: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Early Civil Rights Agenda," in *Women in the Civil Rights Movement: Trailblazers and Torchbearers, 1941–1965* (New York: Carlson Publishing, 1990), eds. Vicki L. Crawford, Jacqueline Anne Rouse, and Barbara Woods; see also Nancy J. Weiss, *Farewell to the Party of Lincoln: Black Politics in the Age of FDR* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978).
32. See Dorothy Canfield Fisher, "Speeches at Dinner for Mrs. FDR," in *The Nation*, May 18, 1940, reported by Eleanor J. Bilsborrow, *The Philosophy of Social Reform in the Speeches of Eleanor Roosevelt* (Denver: University of Denver, Ph.D. Dissertation, 1957).
33. Women and social justice were two of the main Eleanor Roosevelt's political interests. These themes were so interconnected that, while assessing the role of American women in politics more than 20 years after they gained the right to vote, Eleanor Roosevelt eventually credited to the women "the government's attitude of concern for the welfare of human beings," see Eleanor Roosevelt, "Women in Politics," in *Good Housekeeping*, January, March, April 1940, in *Courage in a Dangerous World*, ed. Allida M. Black, 65.
34. Later in 1944, Eleanor Roosevelt defined Wallace a realist, because he had "recognized that he could not embark on the realization of his own theory of abundance until he had cleared away the wreckage left by the past, and changed the political and economic philosophy which had preceded him." She believed that Wallace was a defender of individual responsibility and his work was oriented to the strengthening of American democracy, see Eleanor Roosevelt, "Henry Wallace's Democracy Reborn," in *The New Republic*, August 7, 1944, in *Courage in a Dangerous World*, ed. Allida M. Black, 144–147.

35. *My Day*, July 20, 1940.
36. See Allida M. Black, *Casting Her Own Shadow*, 45–47.
37. When FDR made his bid for a third term as president, Eleanor Roosevelt supported the nomination of Henry A. Wallace, an idealistic internationalist, as vice-president. She gave a speech at the Democratic National convention in 1940, where she talked about "no ordinary times" and secured the appointment of Wallace as vice-presidential running-mate in 1940 presidential electoral campaign, see Maurine H. Beasley, *Eleanor Roosevelt. Transformative First Lady*, 178. See also *My Day*, 19 July 1940.
38. Eleanor Roosevelt actually was "the first media first lady," see Abigail Q. McCarthy, "ER as First Lady," in *Without Precedent. The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt*, eds. Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman, 218.
39. Maurine H. Beasley, *Eleanor Roosevelt. Transformative First Lady*, 113–119.
40. For in-depth analyses on the relationships between Eleanor Roosevelt and the media, see Maurine H. Beasley, *Eleanor Roosevelt and the Media: A Public Quest for a Self-Fulfillment* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1987) and Robin Gerber, *Leadership the Eleanor Roosevelt Way: Timeless Strategy for the First Lady of Courage* (New York: Penguin, 2002), 150.
41. See Allida M. Black, *Casting Her Own Shadow*, 138.
42. *My Day*, August 29, 1940. This article came under FBI investigation because the newspaper that had published it, *The Guild Reporter*, was alleged of Communism and accused to foment "subversive movement," see RSC, Presidential Collections and Administrations, FBI-Files on Eleanor Roosevelt, 1934–1965, Report, File No. 100/70332, 10-23-1945: 7. Eleanor Roosevelt explained her ideas on the relationships between women and peace also in 1947, in an interview with Eleanor Roberts for the *Boston Sunday*, see Allida M. Black (ed.), *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers: Vol. 1. The Human Rights Years, 1945–1948* (Farmington Hills: Thomson Gale, 2007), 658–662. That theme was so persistent in her rhetoric that she used it again amid the 1952 electoral campaign, when she tried to secure women's vote for Democratic candidate Adlai Stevenson, see *My Day*, October 22, 1952.
43. See Eleanor J. Bilsborrow, *The Philosophy of Social Reform in the Speeches of Eleanor Roosevelt*, 44.
44. See William H. Chafe, "Biographical Sketch," in *Without Precedent. The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt*, eds. Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman, 7. "Eleanor expressed her changing views on pacifism in 'This Trouble World,' a forty-seven-page book that she published in 1938. It addressed issues of war and peace in a simple style easily understood by readers. A call for people to band together and work for peace, the slender volume broadened the discussion of pacifism to include international

efforts by nations to settle disputes among countries through united actions such as the imposition of economic boycotts and, if necessary, military forces against aggressor." However and questionable enough, according to Maurine Beasley, this attitude was more "a repudiation of isolationism" than an "endorsement of American intervention," see Maurine H. Beasley, *Eleanor Roosevelt. Transformative First Lady*, 171 and 179.

45. See Eleanor Roosevelt, *If You Ask Me* (New York: Appleton-Century, 1938), quoted in Eleanor J. Bilsborrow, *The Philosophy of Social Reform in the Speeches of Eleanor Roosevelt*, 43.
46. According to Blanche Wiesen Cook, Eleanor Roosevelt was "a practical idealist; an American internationalist, specifically an internationalist whose values were profoundly American. She was committed to the precepts of America as codified in the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights," see Blanche Wiesen Cook, "Turn Toward Peace: ER and Foreign Affairs," in *Without Precedent. The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt*, eds. Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman, 109 and 113. See also Jason Berger, *A New Deal for the World: Eleanor Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy*, 12–13.
47. See *My Day*, June 19, 1937, and Jason Berger, *A New Deal for the World: Eleanor Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy*, 14.
48. As Blanche Wiesen Cook argues in "Turn Toward Peace: ER and Foreign Affairs," in *Without Precedent. The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt*, eds. Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman, 108–109.
49. See Blanche Wiesen Cook, "Turn Toward Peace: ER and Foreign Affairs," in *Without Precedent. The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt*, eds. Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman, 114.
50. See Blanche Wiesen Cook, "Turn Toward Peace: ER and Foreign Affairs," in *Without Precedent. The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt*, eds. Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman, 115.
51. See Mildred W. Abramowitz, *Eleanor Roosevelt and Federal Responsibility and Responsiveness to Youth, the Negro, and Others in Time of Depression*, 190.
52. See Maurine H. Beasley, *Eleanor Roosevelt. Transformative First Lady*, 186.
53. See Allida M. Black, *Casting Her Own Shadow*, 138.
54. *My Day*, September 13, 1939.
55. Eleanor Roosevelt stated, "We have always been a proud and independent people. As a woman, I pray for peace not only now, but in the future. But I think we must look a little beyond next week if we expect to ensure an independent U.S.A. to our children. There is such a thing, too, as the moral values of a situation, and I do not think we are a nation that has given up considerations for right and wrong as we see it," see *My Day*, June 28, 1941.
56. *My Day*, July 3, 1940 and *My Day*, June 28, 1941.
57. *My Day*, July 18, 1940.

58. *My Day*, April 18, 1941.
59. A few years later, Eleanor Roosevelt stated that the conscientious objectors were doing "heroic deeds" and were "fine people," see Allida M. Black, *Casting Her Own Shadow*, 141. See also *My Day*, June 21, 1944. "In political terms, Eleanor's years at the White House showed how she put her own sense of morality into action," see Maurine H. Beasley, *Eleanor Roosevelt. Transformative First Lady*, 241.
60. *My Day*, January 28, 1942.
61. *My Day*, January 28, 1942. Eleanor Roosevelt also stressed many times the importance of renewing the democracy at home in order to make the fight for democracy abroad worthwhile. She strove to give the war positive meaning, which was to preserve the freedoms of democracy abroad as well as to make democracy work at home, see Doris K. Goodwin, *No Ordinary Time. Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt: The Home Front in World War II* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 30. These political demands are among the most peculiar elements of Eleanor Roosevelt's war and postwar liberalism.
62. Eleanor Roosevelt was part of the American *exceptionalist* rhetoric to the utmost level. She believed that the USA had to pursue its destiny to bring freedom to the world: "Being a strong nation and having the greatest physical, mental and spiritual strength today gives us a tremendous responsibility. We can not use our strength to coerce, but if we are big enough, I think we can lead, but it will require great vision and understanding of our part," see Eleanor Roosevelt's letter to Harry Truman, November 20, 1945, cited in Jason Berger, *A New Deal for the World: Eleanor Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy*, 48 and in Steve Neal (ed.), *Eleanor and Harry: The Correspondence of Eleanor Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman* (New York: Lisa Drew Book, 2002), 45.
63. See William H. Chafe, "Biographical Sketch," in *Without Precedent. The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt*, eds. Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman, 23. See also Eleanor Roosevelt, "Keepers of Democracy," in *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, no. 4 (1939), in *Courage in a Dangerous World*, ed. Allida M. Black, 117–120. Eleanor Roosevelt's tireless commitment to democracy made 67 percent of Americans, according to a Gallup poll taken in spring 1940, well disposed toward First Lady's activities, see Doris K. Goodwin, *No Ordinary Time*, 19.
64. See Allida M. Black, *Casting Her Own Shadow*, 139–140.
65. As regards conscientious objection, see also Eleanor Roosevelt's letters to President Truman, dated December 2, 1946, and May 13, 1948, and the subsequent Truman's replies on December 6, 1946, and May 17, 1948, in *Eleanor and Harry*, ed. Steve Neal, 84 and 143. On FDR's policy on war, peace, and foreign affairs in general, see David B. Woolner, Warren F. Kimball, David Reynolds, *FDR's World: War, Peace, and Legacies* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

66. See the November 11, 1951, radio broadcast on the work of the UN that Eleanor Roosevelt delivered from the program "Voice of America," in Blanche Wiesen Cook, "Turn Toward Peace: ER and Foreign Affairs," in *Without Precedent. The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt*, eds. Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman, 210.
67. See William H. Chafe, "Biographical Sketch," in *Without Precedent. The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt*, eds. Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman, 23.
68. See Maurine Hoffman Beasley, Holly Cowan Shulman, Henry R. Beasley (eds.), *The Eleanor Roosevelt Encyclopedia*, 195. Talking about women's participation in pacifist organizations, Eleanor Roosevelt wrote: "They are still talking of world peace and what we can do to bring about peace in this world, in the hope that it can be accomplished at the present time and in the same way that peace groups have worked for many years. This is discouraging to me, for I feel that our situation in the world is so completely changed that old methods and old approaches must be changed in order to meet it," see *My Day*, July 12, 1940.
69. See Leonard C. Schlup and Donald W. Whisenhunt (eds.), *It Seems to Me: Selected Letters of Eleanor Roosevelt* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2001), 2.
70. *My Day*, December 13, 1943.
71. See Eleanor Roosevelt, "Must We Hate to Fight?," in *The Saturday Review*, July 4, 1942, in *Courage in a Dangerous World*, ed. Allida M. Black, 136.
72. *My Day*, November 18, 1940.
73. *My Day*, June 4, 1943.
74. *My Day*, May 23, 1944.
75. *My Day*, January 1, 1943.
76. See Harold E. Stassen, "A Proposal of a Definite United Nations Government," speech delivered at a joint session of the Minneapolis and St. Paul Branches of the Foreign Policy Association, January 7, 1943, in *Vital Speeches of the Day*, vol. IX, no. 10 (1943): 318–320.
77. *My Day*, March 13, 1943.
78. *My Day*, October 21, 1943.
79. *My Day*, February 22 1945.
80. See Jason Berger, *A New Deal for the World: Eleanor Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy*, 45, and *My Day*, April 25, 1945.
81. *My Day*, May 23, 1944.
82. *My Day*, April 25, 1945. In the same occasion, Eleanor Roosevelt asserted: "For a long time we have been building points of contact where the United Nations could work on some specific thing in unison. The organization of food for the world, the organization of rehabilitation and relief, world labor problems, world educational problems—all these have been stepping stones." See also *My Day*, December 18, 1945.

83. *My Day*, September 20, 1946.
84. See Eleanor Roosevelt, "Tolerance Is an Ugly Word," in *Coronet*, July 19, 1945, in *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers: Vol. 1. The Human Rights Years, 1945–1948*, ed. Allida M. Black, 56.
85. Eleanor Roosevelt clearly stated: "There would be no real reason for supporting the World Health Organization unless that support was going to increase the health standards of all nations. And there would be no real reason for all nations to take part in UNESCO unless each one was going to benefit eventually from the experience of the others in all the fields covered by UNESCO," see *My Day*, November 22, 1946.
86. See Jason Berger, *A New Deal for the World: Eleanor Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy*, 48–49 and Joseph P. Lash, *Eleanor: The Years Alone* (New York: Norton, 1972), 36. The decision to appoint Eleanor Roosevelt as one of the US delegates to the UN General Assembly shows that the administration took into serious consideration her influence on public opinion, her reliability, and her ability to shape electoral preferences. See also "Eleanor Roosevelt Accepts Appointment to the United Nations," in *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers: Vol. 1. The Human Rights Years, 1945–1948*, ed. Allida M. Black, 158.
87. *My Day*, December 22, 1945.
88. See Andrey Vyshinsky's *Speech before UN General Assembly 29th Plenary Session*, February 12, 1946, in *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers: Vol. 1. The Human Rights Years, 1945–1948*, ed. Allida M. Black, 244–246 and Eleanor Roosevelt's *Speech before UN General Assembly 30th Plenary Session*, February 12, 1946, in *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers: Vol. 1. The Human Rights Years, 1945–1948*, ed. Allida M. Black, 246–248.
89. See Jason Berger, *A New Deal for the World: Eleanor Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy*, 53. Eleanor Roosevelt knew that dealing with Russians would not be so easy, but she didn't refuse to do it, as the suggestions of the famous Kennan's telegram later seemed to recommend, see the editorial of *The New York Times*, November 9, 1946.
90. See a letter from Clark M. Eichelberger, representing the American Association for the United Nations (formerly known as the League of Nations Associations)—Commission to Study the Organization of Peace, to Eleanor Roosevelt, December 28, 1945, in RSC, Presidential Collection and Administrations, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt, 1945–1962, part 1, United Nations Correspondence and Publications (hereby after ER Papers, 1945–1962, part 1) Reel 1, 001, November-December 1945. See also a telegram from Dorothy Bellanca to Eleanor Roosevelt, dated December 21, 1945. The writer says: "Your nomination to General Assembly United Nations Organization is guarantee that American delegation will fight hard for principles of universal peace and amity among nations. It will go far to

eliminate mutual suspicions which keep nations apart," in RSC, ER Papers, 1945–1962, part 1, Reel 1, 001, November-December 1945, where it is also possible to find a letter from The Church Peace Union central committee to Eleanor Roosevelt, dated December 27, 1945. See a letter from William Dick Sporborg of the General Federation of Women's Club, sent on December 28, 1945, where the author writes that he is "very glad on behalf of over two and a half million members to comply with your expressed desire to have the people of our nation let you, as one of the representative of the U.S. delegation to the General Assembly, know what the organized public opinion of our group, already articulated in its recorded stand for international cooperation through the U.N.O., hope may come out of the first meeting of the General Assembly in London," in RSC, ER Papers, 1945–1962, part 1, Reel 1, 001, November-December 1945.

91. See Clarence Gray to Eleanor Roosevelt, December 29, 1945, in RSC, ER Papers, 1945–1962, part 1, Reel 1, 001, November-December 1945; here, Eleanor Roosevelt is defined "The Queen of Peace – Champion of the Common People – The First Lady of America." Thomas L. Stokes also wrote in the *Atlanta Sunday* on December 23, 1945, that Eleanor Roosevelt was "a splendid choice" for the administration and concluded: "she, better than perhaps any other person, can represent the little people of this country and, indeed, of the world. She has been their champion. She has spoken for them when it took courage. Better than most, she has a feeling for them and their problems, despite the different strata from which she comes. She has their confidence. She knows of their need and longing for peace and security in their lives and homes, and knows what happens to them in depressions and wars, which it is the purpose of the UNO to eliminate. […] She loved peace and was active in promoting it." See RSC, ER Papers, 1945–1962, part 1, Reel 1, 001, November-December 1945.
92. The article is in RSC, ER Papers, 1945–1962, part 1, Reel 1, 0923, L, January 1946. Here is a newspaper clipping, probably coming from the *Washington Post* and reporting an article by columnist Thomas L. Stokes, who states that with Eleanor Roosevelt's appointment at the United Nations, "The People Gain a Real Spokesman."

CHAPTER 3

Entering the Atomic Era

Shared Concerns and Growing Anxiety

In 1945, Eleanor Roosevelt's life dramatically changed. FDR did not survive the end of the war, and with his death a long era of American history came to a sudden conclusion. As she wrote to her confidants, she now felt incredibly alone at the White House. She just wanted to leave, thus eluding a growing feeling of desolation and uselessness.[1] In spite of her personal melancholy, however, in the immediate aftermath of her husband's death, Eleanor Roosevelt managed her widow's duties impeccably. With her typical composure, she organized and led the funeral procession, replied to a myriad of letters of condolence, and oversaw Roosevelts' exit from the White House. Following her closest friends' suggestions, she decided to move back to New York, where she started taking care of the family business almost on her own.[2]

After an unprecedented and uninterrupted 13-year rule, FDR's death had left most of the nation bewildered. As a consequence, many US citizens found in Eleanor Roosevelt's public image the reassuring face of continuity. Because of her popularity, many tried to persuade her to accept a public office, but she refused, preferring to devote most of her time to her columns and articles.[3] She actually found solace in writing them and, for the first time, she felt that she could freely express herself, without the limitations that being the First Lady had imposed on her.[4]

D. Fazzi, *Eleanor Roosevelt and the Anti-Nuclear Movement*,
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This reluctance notwithstanding, growing public pressures, along with the strong ones coming from the Truman administration, eventually persuaded Mrs. Roosevelt to accept becoming a part of the US delegation to the newly established Organization of the United Nations. She believed that role could allow her to be helpful in building a lasting peace. Hence, after her husband's death, Eleanor Roosevelt did everything but leave the public sphere. She continued to exert her influence on the US political landscape and on public debate. She remained widely known, trusted, and politically influential. From the mid-1940s onward, Mrs. Roosevelt was still an authoritative voice, which was especially heeded by many Democrats, most of America's liberals, and the masses of common people.

Keeping the core of her husband's New Deal alive was one of her most urgent political and social goals.[5] To this end, Eleanor Roosevelt started a wide-ranging correspondence with President Truman, thus trying to induce the new administration to support civil rights, maintain the cornerstones of FDR's social policy, and set up a postwar world order based on the mutual acknowledgement of interests, international agreements, negotiations, and peace.[6] In a revealing letter addressed to Truman, she confessed to being "deeply concerned" about the developing internal and international situation. She urged the president to immediately confront important issues such as the future of war refugees, conditions of life in Palestine, the Chinese Civil War, and the future of European reconstruction.[7] The breadth of her interests encompassed global questions as well as everyday life matters. This attitude gained her such wide support that, in December 1945, many Americans saw Mrs. Roosevelt as a potential presidential candidate and preferred her to well-known individuals and respected figures such as Henry Ford and Bernard Baruch.[8]

At the end of 1945, however, several new issues were rising to the top of the US domestic and foreign policy agenda. Internally, the reconversion of the wartime economy engaged the administration's main interest. Internationally, in the wake of the ruinous bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which had revealed the tremendous power of the atom bomb and introduced the world to a completely new era, the Rooseveltian dream of a cooperative postwar order ultimately collapsed.[9] In this regard, the Cold War and atomic weapons were immediately and inextricably bound together. As a result, those means of mass destruction shaped the architecture of US domestic and foreign policy for decades. Eleanor Roosevelt did not remain silent about this stunning change and her contribution to the development and criticism of the so-called nuclear culture was deep.

First, she was among the few people who knew something about the spectacular investment that the USA had made in the Manhattan Project, what the project's role was during the war, and what it meant for both the future of the collective democracy and for the individual conscience of some of the scientists working on the project itself. At least initially, indeed, a moral revulsion against atomic weapons had soared within a part of the scientific community that had contributed to the development of the A-bomb.[10]

Well before the bombing of Hiroshima, there was considerable friction between, on the one hand, those scientists who believed that there was a moral and political responsibility with atomic power that transcended a scientist's usual role in society, and those, on the other hand, who wanted to pursue further atomic developments for the military in order to more rapidly end the war. For this reason, in the early spring of 1945, one of the leading scientists working on the production of the bomb, Hungarian physicist Leo Szilárd, had tried to contact FDR to discuss his anxiety over the consequences of the military use of radioactive uranium. Albert Einstein had recommended him to the president and to Mrs. Roosevelt, who had finally convinced her husband to meet the scientist on May 8 of that year. Unfortunately, the president died before the meeting could be held, and the First Lady did not meet Szilárd on that day.[11] Although she agreed with Truman's justification for the use of the bomb, which she believed was intended primarily to save American soldiers' lives, Eleanor Roosevelt also sympathized with Szilárd's and other scientists' growing angst.[12] She knew that both American and British scientists had worked hard to discover the secrets of atomic power before the Germans, but when the A-bomb revealed its enormous power, she immediately expressed increasing apprehension and unease.

Second, being well informed about the technical details of the atomic chain reaction, Eleanor Roosevelt was among the first civilians to publicly explain that the power of an atomic weapon could be "multiplied indefinitely, so that not only whole cities but large areas" could be "destroyed at one fell swoop." More importantly, she worried that, due to the enormous power of this new weapon, "in the next war whole peoples" might be destroyed.[13] While Hiroshima's soil and air were still burning, she wrote that the discovery of atomic power had to spell the end of the idea of war indefinitely and it had to lead to the achievement of something entirely new in the world, the acknowledgement of a non-escapable situation. Echoing Robert Oppenheimer's evocative allusion to apocalypse and death,

Mrs. Roosevelt emphatically concluded her first observations about the A-bomb as follows: "We have only two alternative choices: destruction and death—or construction and life! If we desire our civilization to survive, then we must accept the responsibility of constructive work and of the wise use of a knowledge greater than any ever achieved by man before."[14]

In her first remarks on the atomic weapons, Mrs. Roosevelt proved to be aware of the fact that with the emergence of these new devices the world was entering a new era, a point she defined as an "atomic world." A few weeks after Hiroshima, she wrote: "The day we found the secret of the atomic bomb, we closed one phase of civilization and entered upon another."[15] Science had given mankind the ultimate power over its own destiny, which was both a great step forward and, according to the former first lady, "somewhat awe-inspiring."[16]

Third, Eleanor Roosevelt realized early on the geopolitical relevance of the new weapons and the potentially destructive effects that they could have in terms of global stability. As Blanche Wiesen Cook argues, she was among the first who felt the responsibility toward the new and urgent need for international arms control and disarmament. "The day the atomic bomb was dropped," Mrs. Roosevelt said in October 1945, "we came into a new world – a world in which we had to learn to live in friendship with our neighbors of every race and creed and color, or face the fact that we might be wiped off the face of the earth."[17] According to her, the USA could not indefinitely hope to keep secret the process that had led to the construction of the bomb. She knew that scientists working in other countries would soon discover the fundamental working principles of atomic weapons. Thus, an "educational undertaking in every country in the world" was imperative. Populations had to be made aware of the fact that annihilation would soon face them, "unless they learn to live in a peaceful world and to allow the policing of the world to be done by an international security agency."[18] Foreseeing the risk of a large-scale atomic confrontation, Eleanor Roosevelt stated that the renunciation of part of national sovereignty was not too high a price to pay for the preservation of human civilization. Was the world ready to live in constant dread? That was the most urgent dilemma facing human beings. Under the global atomic threat, indeed, "no one could go to bed at night with any sense of security."[19]

These three growing concerns made her forthright in speaking out against the atomic bombs. But they did not indicate, by themselves, that Eleanor Roosevelt was adopting a utopian approach to atomic weapons and national security. Nor did they mean that she overlooked how rapidly

the international balance of power was changing. On the contrary, she clearly recognized Soviet Russia as one of the most alarming elements of the new atomic era. She absolutely disliked Stalin's approach to the building of the new world order. But, at the same time, she did not think that an antagonistic approach was either useful or necessary. To save the world from annihilation, it seemed clear to her that the USA and the USSR, as well as the United Nations as a whole, had to find a way to constrain these new means of destruction under international law. One of the first steps toward the achievement of international peace, as she pointed out, was to share "the secret information regarding the manufacture of the bomb with Russia."[20] Right after the bombing of Nagasaki, Mrs. Roosevelt publicly declared that a war with the Soviet Union, under the new circumstances, would very likely lead to human annihilation. Against the arguments of those "irresponsible people" who believed that the Soviet Union had purposely delayed the entrance into the Pacific War until the last minute so that it could enjoy the benefits of the American war effort without sharing the costs, she posited evidence of Soviet loyalty in the European front and recalled that Russia had never shirked its military commitments "[n]or had ever broken her word."[21]

It was true that the effectiveness of American pressure on Russia depended, to an important extent, on the US monopoly on atomic weapons. But many peace advocates and prominent individuals, including Eleanor Roosevelt, opposed such an assertive posture and recommended the rejection of a policy of military buildup that could eventually result in an out-of-control atomic arms race.[22] To make things even clearer and to stress the intimate post-Clausewitzian nature of atomic weapons, Mrs. Roosevelt also stated that talking about "national defense as we did in the past" was "pure nonsense," and she added: "Armies, navies, air forces, compulsory military service, all of these things have to be reconsidered in the light of a new era. It is comforting to read about doing things in the old way. It gives us a sense of familiarity with the world we live in, which had a rather severe shock when we first heard about the atomic bomb. But we had better not be lulled to sleep by any comfort of this kind, since it has no foundation in fact." In other words, she rejected the idea that atomic weapons could be used as instruments of national security or foreign policy, because their destructive power had ultimately reshuffled the very meaning of war: since it could spell the extinction of the whole mankind, war could no longer be considered a mere continuation of policy by other means.

Amid the emerging debate on the future of international negotiations on atomic weapons and the civilian control of atomic power, Mrs. Roosevelt invited both the Congress and the president to recognize the fact that the temporary monopoly on these devices had allowed the U.S. to just barely win the race, but that scientific achievements in other nations could not be stopped indefinitely. For these reasons, there was only one way to "be safe in the world of tomorrow," and that was "by universal education in the great art of friendship, and the universal conviction that living together in a peaceful world is to our mutual advantage throughout the world." Being committed to the cause of multilateralism and internationalism, the former first lady predicted that "failures in understanding among nations and in goodwill" would not be "accepted in the future," since they would be "tantamount to self-destruction."[23]

The former first lady thus became part of a wave of moral disgust and political dissent that permeated American (counter)-culture in the immediate aftermath of the Hiroshima catastrophe. Since the atomic discovery had changed "the whole aspect of the world in which we live," she argued that mankind needed a completely new approach to the questions of war and peace. The destructive force of the atom could serve the cause of global peace and contribute to the overcoming of national egotism, but only if nations or other interest groups would not profit "by something so great." So vast were the consequences of the atomic revolution that the development and control of this source of energy could be placed only under international auspices. Eventually, mankind should take its "greatest opportunity," which was to recognize that the world had become just "one world," which was inhabited by only "one people."[24]

Mrs. Roosevelt's concerns intensified in the fall of 1945. That October, she warned both political elites and common people that under the present conditions of atomic threat, no human being would be able "to sit back comfortably and look to the future generations to solve the problems of the world." By recalling apocalyptic nightmares, she used her columns to remind her fellow citizens that the atomic bomb moved so fast that "unless we remove any reason for its destructive use, there may be no future generations!" She directly appealed to the individual conscience: Citizens had to grasp the future of the world in their own hands because "in the long run the world cannot be run only by the men at the top." She understood the horrible consequences that an irrational individual choice could produce in the atomic era and encouraged citizens to play their part in the decision making process. That was the only way in which

a modern democracy could work properly. The atomic age had given citizens of the world new and gigantic responsibilities that they had to accept. This meant that they had to be informed and strive to keep themselves informed. The innovative aspect of the atomic era stemmed from the fact that peace was "no longer a question of something we hope to attain in the future." Instead, it was "an absolutely vital necessity to the continuation of our civilization on earth."[25]

Mrs. Roosevelt's emotional appeals were particularly timely. According to a study commissioned by the Department of State, indeed, at the end of November 1945, atomic bombs were already one of the most important elements of concern among the American people.[26] In spite of the consolidation of a dominant atomic culture, which has been well described by authors and scholars such as Richard Rhodes and Paul Boyer, and in spite of the message behind the launch of so-called nuclear diplomacy, the number of critics of a new postwar order based on atomic bombs multiplied across the country.[27] Discontent was so widespread that several private organizations decided to merge together to establish the National Committee on Atomic Information (NCAI), publicly aimed at mediating "between the activities of scientists and the pressures of associations and organizations" toward the goal of abolishing atomic weapons.[28] The NCAI's main task was to inform the public about the dangerous effects of atomic bombs. Throughout 1946, another umbrella organization, the National Council for the Prevention of War, subscribed and circulated a comprehensive *Plan for Peace*, largely stressing the significance of disarmament and the necessity of establishing civilian control of atomic power.[29] Moreover, groups like the World Federalists, the American Federation of Labor, and the Young Women's Christian Association outspokenly recommended the "rejection of a policy of military interventionism that would have enlarged the risk of exacerbation of the atomic arms race."[30] According to these reinvigorated pacifist stands, atomic weapons, far from being an element of international security and stability, were to be considered instead as the "last expression of human stupidity."[31]

By articulating the growing anxiety about what was becoming the apparently inexorable arms race, American pacifist organizations expanded their social basis and shifted their ideologies from a radical viewpoint to a more general and widely shared apprehension.[32] As historians have recognized, while the early Cold War was "stimulating super-patriotism and militarism, the shadow of a nuclear war provided pacifist organizations with new reasons to be heard."[33] For many, the idea of a foreign policy based

on these armaments was simply irrational and morally hard to defend. Indeed, a September 1945 Gallup poll showed how 83 percent of the American population was well aware of the risks related to an atomic war. The same poll reported that 63 percent of those questioned still hoped that such a war would never happen. Even though the administration tried to promote the notion that atomic weapons were standing the country in good stead, pacifist organizations were gaining "increasing attention from public opinion," which could inevitably have an effect on the making of a national security policy based on the development of atomic arsenals.[34]

But Eleanor Roosevelt's pronouncements, mostly due to their conspicuous and persuasive educational vocation, also induced many individuals and organizations to use her views to backup any anti-nuclear pressure they wanted to apply. She therefore received a number of letters urging her into action against further atomic developments. Such was the case of Miss Anna Lord Strauss, president of the National League of Women Voters, who late in December 1945 fervently pled for the control of the atomic bomb. According to Miss Strauss, atomic weapons presented the country "with the necessity for making a momentous decision." She asked whether the USA was ready to foster "an armament race in atomic energy which will result in the destruction of civilization," or if instead it was disposed to accept "the challenge of leadership toward world peace." The League of Women Voters strongly supported world cooperation "to prevent world chaos." In particular, the league advocated "the immediate necessity for the formulation of a domestic policy for the control of the production and development of atomic energy in the public welfare" and held that such a national policy should "be consistent with international agreements for control of the use of atomic energy in the interest of the world peace." In accordance with the sense of urgency that Eleanor Roosevelt had already publicly adopted, the league believed that the USA should not "use this temporary period of supremacy to reestablish an outdated pattern of nationalistic defense." If it did it would "lead in the future as in the past to suspicion, arms races, and ultimate war." On the contrary, the nation had to consider atomic energy as a "world's problem" and therefore accept responsibility, "at this crucial point in world history, to take leadership in helping the world to solve it."[35]

A few weeks later, the league sent Eleanor Roosevelt another letter regarding the US participation in the United Nations Organization. The league was in favor of an increase in "the authority and effectiveness of the United Nations Organization as an agency for international cooperation"

and it clearly considered the "delegation of armament control including atomic weapons to the United Nations on the basis of a multilateral agreement covering all necessary regulations" as one of the most important measures to be adopted. Moreover, the national board of the league wanted the UN Security Council to be the responsible authority for the supervision "of the production and use of atomic power," with the ability to control "weapons derived from atomic energy as part of an international program of arms control."[36]

The Women's Action Committee for a Victory and Lasting Peace, an organization chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt's close, long-time friend Carrie Chapman Catt, asked the former first lady to place in her hands a program which included the "control of Atomic energy to be exercised by the United Nations Organization."[37] Her trusted confident Esther Lape confessed to be "terribly afraid" about the terms of the debate on the atomic bombs.[38] The central committee of the National Grange conveyed to her the growing concern of the American working class. "The control of the atomic energy is essential to any system of international collaboration for the maintenance of world peace," the leaders of the national organization argued, and they also recommended that "the control of atomic energy, including the atomic bomb, be placed under international trusteeship […] and that a control committee representing all [of the U.N.] member nations be empowered to ascertain that atomic energy [would] not [be] developed for war purposes."[39]

Thus, at the dawn of the atomic era, Eleanor Roosevelt positioned herself as a convenient, respectable, and sympathetic channel through which to express personal as well as collective opposition to the atomic arms race, at the highest level of American politics and public debate.

Conceiving Human Security, Begetting Human Rights

By January 1946, Eleanor Roosevelt started her new adventure as one of the American delegates to the General Assembly of the United Nations. She was among the few women within a delegation which was composed of administration officials, ranking members of congressional committees, and high-level politicians coming from Washington, DC.[40] Diplomatic attaches and foreign affairs aides completed the American staff aboard the *Queen Elizabeth*, the luxury liner that sailed to London early that January. She was proud to be there. Thinking of the responsibility that lay before

the delegates, she said that the "preservation and continuance" of human civilization depended on the building of the UN. In order to be free from the fear of war, destruction, and want, and therefore to keep the world at peace, mankind should "find new ways for self-preservation." The establishment of such an international organization, thus, primarily stemmed from the widespread need to prevent another war. Mrs. Roosevelt stated when departing from the USA, "if the atomic bomb did nothing more, it scared people to the point where they realized that either they do something about it or chances were there would be a morning when they would not wake up."[41] She also knew perfectly well, however, that the American delegation could easily split over the atomic issue because of its internal ideological and political differences.[42]

In striking contrast to her passionate appeals, her fellow delegates' behavior toward the atomic issue was all but linear. She soon noticed her colleagues' sensitivity to the issue of the international control of atomic energy. While the ship carrying the US delegation was approaching London, Mrs. Roosevelt regarded Republican senator Arthur Vandenberg as a "difficult" element. She considered his approach to the crucial subject of the sharing of atomic secrets unfriendly and hostile, even capable of creating suspicion. In a secret memo circulated among American delegates, Vandenberg had clarified his opposition to Secretary of State James Byrnes' approach to atomic policy. He disliked Byrnes' soft attitude toward the Soviets and maintained that it was a great mistake to share atomic secrets with foreign nations, even under an adequate international inspection system. Byrnes consequently succumbed to the pressures that both President Truman, who shared many of Vandenberg's concerns, and the Senate were exerting on him and reassessed his atomic policy just a few days before the opening of the London conference.[43]

Fearing that the popularity of her appeals could threaten the delicate balance between protecting the atomic monopoly and negotiating the international control of atomic weapons, American delegates decided, without consulting her, to assign Eleanor Roosevelt a non-political role.[44] They created a position that would fit Mrs. Roosevelt's past public role and personal attitude, and simultaneously keep her far from the tricky terrain of atomic policy. Nobody, however, could envision that the appointment to Committee Three of the General Assembly, which had to cope with humanitarian, cultural, and social affairs, would become the perfect forum to launch a campaign aiming at radically altering the foundations of the international relations and setting a new pattern for the promotion of human rights, including a platform against nuclear weapons.

Working at that committee, as Maurine Beasley has argued, Eleanor Roosevelt soon became "a shrewd and skillful diplomat."[45] She did not refuse the clash with Soviet delegates or withdraw from the debates as they became harsh.[46] Countering Soviet insistence on forcing war refugees' repatriation, she memorably defended the right of self-determination, so that peoples could go back to their normal lives after the catastrophe of the war. Above all, she defended people's right to autonomously decide where to live and their inalienable right to live in peace.[47]

Due to Mrs. Roosevelt's widely recognized individual merits in the promotion of human development, and her abiding commitment to the defense of human dignity, she was named to head both the preliminary and the permanent commission on human rights. She famously led the UN commission to approve the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* in December 1948.[48] Human rights became the cornerstone of her activity at the UN and one of the most important topics of her public statements.[49] She supervised debates over the philosophical definition of human rights and tried to negotiate a common framework, which would be valid worldwide. She puzzled out the ideological wrangles over the legal status of the declaration. She persuaded American and Western delegates to include socio-economic principles in the final document and, at the same time, she boldly rejected Soviets allegations of warmongering.[50] Finally, she exalted her humanitarian reputation by delivering an inspiring speech in French at the Sorbonne University, at the peak of the Berlin blockade on September 28, 1948.[51]

According to the former first lady, preserving human freedom was the quintessential element of the San Francisco Charter and it was of utmost importance in France, where the ideal of human freedom had its roots, and in Europe, where that ideal had recently and grievously vanquished tyranny. She explained both the rationale behind the establishment of the UN—the need for world peace—and the general scope of that organization, which was designed to foster international cooperation. But none of these goals could be fully satisfied or achieved, she said, without upholding the "universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion." She also clarified the difference between the declaration, whose main characteristic was its "great moral force," and the covenant, the international treaty to be ratified by the nations of the world in order to implement and reinforce the declaration itself. To the "fundamental difference in the conception of human rights" existing between Western powers and Eastern countries, Eleanor Roosevelt countered with the univocal meaning of individual freedom, as her husband

had already defined it in 1941. On social rights issues, she stressed the importance of supporting free trade unions as well as the right to collective bargaining. Saying that the struggle for democracy and freedom was part of America's duty to preserve international peace and security, Mrs. Roosevelt reaffirmed her exceptionalist posture. But, at the same time, she defended the role of the UN, which had become the primary forum for states to "discuss the issue of human rights." She concluded her speech with an impressive definition of human rights, which were seen as "a fundamental object of law and government in a just society," thus confirming a principle that is compelling to this day.[52]

Eleanor Roosevelt's interest in human rights, however, was aimed not only to prevent human suffering but also to foster a broader human security. To that end, she invited the US administration, as well as the American public opinion, to "distinguish between the people and their governments in countries which are not our type of democracies."[53] She also endorsed several practical issues that were meant to help common people to recover from the war, such as the proposal to establish a UN sub-commission on the status of the women or an agency to defend war refugees' right to international protection.[54]

For the same reason, nothing worried her more than the apparently inescapable rise of international tensions. After the former British prime minister Winston Churchill notoriously lectured in Missouri on the shadowy future of Europe, Mrs. Roosevelt defended the broad mission of the UN once more and argued that "instead of running an armament race against each other, […] we the nations of the world should […] use the forum of the United Nations to discuss our difficulties and our grievances." She deprecated the increasing militarization of postwar US foreign policy and disagreed with the building of an intrusive state that, in the name of national security, could eventually undermine American democracy.[55] At the same time, she strongly criticized Russia's hypocritical and assertive international posture, which often constituted a critical curb on the workings of the UN.[56] Paraphrasing President Woodrow Wilson, Mrs. Roosevelt's ultimate target was thus to make the world safe for diplomacy. The main instrument that she found at the UN to implement such an idea was the promotion of human rights. That was the practical field in which the USA and the USSR could "work together, grow together, get to know each other better," and try to overcome those "basic differences of thought in certain areas" that prevented the two powers from understanding each other.[57]

Accordingly, no field was more connected to the promotion of this idea of human security than the search for an effective international regulation of atomic energy. Eleanor Roosevelt played her role within a complex and multifaceted internal political debate on the international control of atomic energy. In the USA, voices promoting an international agreement between the great powers to prevent the launch of a nuclear arms race mushroomed. Fostered by John Hersey's evocative account of the bombing of Hiroshima, criticism of the American atomic posture called for a radical change of action and many went to favor the establishment of a civilian authority, which would be responsible for the management, production, and development of atomic power.[58] At the international level, critics of atomic weapons promoted the creation of an organization that would have to ensure the dissemination of technical secrets for civilian purposes and, at the same time, prohibit the proliferation of atomic arsenals.

These domestic and international battles marked the period between the summer of 1945 and the beginning of 1946 and both of them constituted the first attempts to awaken both public attention and governments' interest to the risks of spreading atomic weapons.[59] All these pressures were also converging on the US delegation at the UN, trying to influence its positions on atomic energy. An editorial of an influential scientific journal, the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, clearly stated that international control of atomic energy was "the only hope of preventing a nuclear war."[60] Many scientists also endorsed the well-known Acheson-Lilienthal report, which was the first official American proposal for setting up a system of international control of atomic energy.[61] The report was a long document compiled between January and March 1946 for the secretary of state's committee on atomic energy. In more than 60 pages, the final document analyzed all aspects related to the international control of atomic energy. It stressed "the great advantages of an international agency with affirmative powers and functions coupled with powers of inspection and supervision, in contrast to an agency with merely police-like powers attempting to cope with national agencies otherwise restrained only by a commitment to 'outlaw' the use of atomic energy for war."[62] American scientists believed that the latter type of organization would offer no hope of achieving security and safeguards.

For her part, Eleanor Roosevelt, who later publicly defended Lilienthal's appointment as head of the US Atomic Energy Commission, tried to mediate between the positions of these scientists and the ones of her long-time friend Bernard Baruch, freshly designated delegate to the UN Atomic Energy Commission.[63] Baruch, in fact, was about to submit

a more modest plan to control atomic power than the one outlined in the Acheson-Lilienthal report. The so-called Baruch Plan, which became the formal US proposal for international control of atomic energy, subverted the intent of the previous report and focused exclusively on the protection of the US atomic monopoly.[64] This approach was questioned, among the others, by Truman's Secretary of Commerce Henry Wallace, whose liberal ideals had long assured him of Mrs. Roosevelt's support. Wallace publicly complained about the bomb and advocated an immediate sharing of atomic secrets with Russia. The press revealed the breadth of the rift between Wallace and Truman on foreign and atomic policy.[65] Eleanor Roosevelt, thus, called Baruch to seek a compromise between the two positions. Baruch replied that he considered Wallace misinformed and his statements "not based on facts." Under pressure from Eleanor Roosevelt, Wallace agreed to meet Baruch, but the two did not reach any agreement.[66] Wallace resigned on September 20, 1946. In the ensuing press conference, Baruch stated that Wallace's interpretation of his plan was a "complete distortion," while Wallace labeled Baruch "stern and inflexible."[67]

Hence, the US final decisions on atomic energy came as a bitter blow to Eleanor Roosevelt. Shortly after Baruch presented his plan, she stressed the transitory nature of the American atomic monopoly and warned against the risk of atomic proliferation. "There is only one thing to do," the former first lady argued, "that is to wipe out the use of this weapon in war." If freedom from fear was among the UNs' first purposes, then, she said, the cost of giving up some part of national sovereignty was fully acceptable to ensure global security.[68] Although she believed that the Soviets played a major role in preventing an international agreement on atomic energy, she bewailed the fact that the USA also was not pursuing that goal with adequate motivation. Posing a question laced with irony, she asked readers of her columns if they really believed "that we hold the secret of the atomic bomb simply because we do not want anyone to have the power to use it again." She believed that assuming everyone could understand the US background and good intentions was naïve. The atomic arsenal could protect neither national security nor international peace. "In the modern atomic world no future war can ever draw" the line of distinction between fighting men and civilians. Accordingly, the safety of future generations depended on the reaching of an international agreement.[69]

Eleanor Roosevelt was even more explicit in denouncing the risk of opening an atomic arms race. She said, "just because this country has the atom bomb does not mean that other nations are not developing other weapons."

While praising Baruch for having designed a plan including the right of inspections and mutual control, she highlighted the importance of avoiding using the veto power at the UN to stalemate negotiations on atomic weapons.[70] Finally, she appraised civilian control of atomic power saying, "if you are developing atomic energy for the good of humanity in civilian affairs, you certainly do not want the commission controlling it to be a military one." Thus she criticized the ideas promoted by Republican senator Robert Taft as extremely dangerous, who wanted the recently established US Atomic Energy Commission under the control of the army. In former first lady's opinion, Taft's proposals, along with the deadlock in atomic energy control negotiations, were the shortest path to another war.[71]

A Pragmatic Cold War Dissenter

Within a few years of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, atomic weapons became both a powerful political instrument and an object of cultural imagination.

The political implications of the atomic weapons were immediately clear to governments and society. Political elites, in particular, started looking at them as a means of power rather than trying to assess the broad cultural transformations they implied. Quite early, Secretary of State James Byrnes recognized that the atomic bomb had given the USA a "great power" perhaps not intended to shape the postwar world order and diplomacy, but that without any doubt enhanced the international power of the USA and gave it "ability to elicit concessions from the Soviets."[72] Since America was—and, above all, perceived itself as—the strongest promoter and defender of individual rights and freedoms against the rise of dictatorship and socialism, its atomic monopoly quickly came to symbolize the ultimate guarantee against oppression in the international arena. This instrumental vision contributed to producing and fostering a wide consensus on atomic weapons, well before any kind of cultural criticism against the hazardousness and insanity of these weapons could had time to consolidate in public opinion.

Although the USA built up its atomic arsenal slowly at first, the urgency to enlarge it intensified as relations with the Soviets deteriorated.[73] American policymakers were determined to maintain their strategic advantage as long as possible, but they also knew that it would be difficult. In September 1945, Jacob Viner, an economist from the University of Chicago, pointed out that, as soon as both the USA and the USSR

had the atomic bombs, a large-scale psychological warfare would begin. That situation would create a "deterrent effect," which would affect the international system.[74] But Truman's administration was not interested in evaluating the systemic consequences of a possible atomic arms race, at least not at that time. It focused, instead, on the tactical value of atomic warheads and regarded them simply as instruments to counterbalance Soviet military preponderance in Eastern Europe.[75] Such an approach, ignoring the timid voices of those recommending rejection of military buildup to an out-of-control atomic arms race, prevented the USA from seriously upholding an early international ban on atomic weapons.[76] The ideological distance between the USA and the USSR was already so vast as to make any effort toward the international control of atomic energy purposeless. As the chief American negotiator at the UN, Bernard Baruch recognized there was actually "no possibility of reconciling" the US and Soviet positions on this point.[77]

The problem, however, was not just a question of mutual distrust. The US strategists knew that the Soviets would soon reach their own atomic capability. Hence, the only way to avoid direct confrontation between the two countries and, at the same time, contain Soviet expansionism was to improve and enlarge the American atomic arsenal. The US administration thus started thinking, *de facto*, in terms of atomic deterrence. Though gradual, the advent of the Truman doctrine eventually endorsed this approach both politically and militarily.[78] In 1948, after the coup in Czechoslovakia and the first crisis over the status of Berlin, Soviet intentions became unequivocal. In September of that year, a document issued by the newly established National Security Council drafted the *United States Policy on Atomic Warfare* and stated clearly that the USA would "utilize promptly and effectively all appropriate means available, including atomic weapons, in the interest of national security."[79] The World War II cooperation was a remote memory and President Truman was ready to order a substantial increase in atomic weapons production.

From a cultural point of view, things stood a bit differently. Atomic weapons were becoming the cornerstone of a new foreign policy approach, the broad strokes of which exempted those weapons from popular criticism and helped isolate internal opponents. Political exigencies kept atomic weapons from the realm of public debate and provided them with an aura of sanctity, which stemmed both from arguments of national security and from the ostensible objectivity of nuclear physics. Although the administration could not prevent the rise of popular concern and anxiety, it tried to reassure public opinion by aseptically

depicting atomic weapons as instruments of a complex game where no compromise between peace and security was possible. As the Cold War consensus gained momentum, atomic weapons gained wider acceptance. The emerging voices of dissent were usually characterized as naïve at best, or traitor and Communist at worst. The opening of the Cold War and the launch of the Truman doctrine crystallized this broad consensus into an official foreign policy strategy.

This does not mean, however, that cultural criticism of atomic weapons did not exist. Internal opposition placed its disapproval under a more general critique of modernity. Many commentators started looking at atomic weapons as a product of modern society, which was led and even dominated by uncontrollable and incontrovertible scientific progress.[80] Public intellectuals such as Norman Cousins said that atomic weapons affected "every aspect of man's activities" and were able to subvert the values regulating human relationships. British writer George Orwell deplored the development of atomic arsenals, which could ultimately exploit people's power to revolt and governments' ability to negotiate.[81] Among its many cultural effects, the atomic bomb forced a rethinking of the relationships between science and politics. As English chemist and novelist Charles Percy Snow noted, "physicists became, almost overnight, the most important military resources a nation-state could call upon."[82] A few weeks after the bombing of Hiroshima, several atomic scientists who worked at the Manhattan Project, such as Hans Bethe, Linus Pauling, and Samuel K. Allison, openly expressed their sadness and distress, while at the University of Chicago, Eugene Rabinowitch explicitly spoke about the new moral responsibility visited upon atomic scientists; under the atomic cloud, they had to keep the public informed and aware of the tremendous consequences of atomic explosions.[83]

Although scientific developments did not create the Cold War, as historian Odd Arne Westad argues, they "helped shape it into a distinctive conflict, and into one that was more dangerous and harder to end than other great-power rivalries in history."[84] Atomic weapons represented the quintessential element of the technological advancement of modern society, a feature that, along with economic production, was an underlying element of the cultural confrontation of the Cold War.[85] Culturally, then, atomic weapons posed new challenges both to politics and society that needed time to be fully understood by the general public. That was why, at the dawn of the Cold War, the main effort of public figures and scientists promoting awareness of the hazard of the atomic arms race was above all, an educational one.

Given her international role and popularity, Eleanor Roosevelt played her part in the early cultural debate on the atomic bomb and contributed to expanding and supporting educational efforts. She analyzed the new degree of influence that science and scientists had in modern society and explained the consequences of this change to the people. She wondered whether or not scientists "should have a responsibility for social developments which would prevent the misuse of scientific findings." After all, the scientific method had "led to greater and more accurate scientific knowledge". The risk to avoid was regarding science as an objective value. Mrs. Roosevelt maintained that "the courage to experiment and the willingness to accept criticism should be one of the cornerstones on which" modern society built its approach to social issues.[86] Moreover, she emphasized the risks for democracy in the new atomic era. To her, the American idea of democracy had to be superior to these risks. Democracy had to prove "its worth with an equal belief in itself and a deeper sacrificial devotion to its standards, in order to attain the moral and spiritual and intellectual leadership," which, according to Mrs. Roosevelt, was "the only hope of salvation."[87] One of the biggest problems of democracy—which was also deeply related to the emergence of the atomic era—was fear. In a column she wrote: "I do not know why we are so prone to fears at the present time. Some people are so afraid of Russia that they are suggesting that perhaps, since we cannot hope always to be the only nation possessing the atom bomb, we should use it fairly soon to wipe out all opposition. That sounds ludicrous, but it has actually been said to me by some people." Fear and lack of trust were stalemating the role of the UN and preventing the world from achieving a stable peace.[88] Furthermore, fear was detracting the USA from its main mission: not to "destroy but to save civilization."[89]

As regards the political implications of the atomic weapons, Mrs. Roosevelt criticized, both publicly and privately, any strategy that could not take into adequate account citizens' priorities. National security exigencies, according to the former first lady, should not hide people's needs. She opposed the passive acceptance of a policy based on the role of atomic weapons and remembered that although "the foreign policy of the United States must be formulated by the State Department and the Secretary of State, […] people of the country have a right to understand it and to express themselves." Without a certain degree of opposition, indeed, it would be impossible to "think calmly of what policy will bring the best chances for peace."[90] Her arguments against the professed and widely accepted deterrent value of atomic weapons touched on the core of the problem and directly

denounced the false myth of the advantage of keeping atomic secrets. The US monopoly on atomic weapons did not render the USA more secure. On the contrary, it posed new risks and challenges because "as long as the atom bomb is in our possession alone, and is not controlled by the United Nations, it is perhaps natural that other nations should be hesitant to trust our motives." The discovery of atomic energy had given the USA "fearful responsibilities, […] the responsibility of what happens in the world."[91] It was due to this sense of responsibility that Mrs. Roosevelt confessed to being "surprised and somewhat shocked to find how casually certain groups of people seem to take it for granted that another war is inevitable." There was no other solution than to outlaw the use of the atom bomb as a means of collective destruction: "As long as it is not outlawed, and as long as all other methods of waging war against one's neighbors are not kept under joint control, to be used only against an aggressor, none of us will ever be really secure […] If we choose not to face the facts of a new scientific and physical world, we can drift to our own destruction; but we will do it because of stupidity and lack of courage."[92]

Another important implication of atomic deterrence was that it left no space for mutual exploration of interests and it hindered international negotiations. That approach was particularly dangerous in the atomic era, when recourse to war automatically meant self-destruction. In Mrs. Roosevelt's opinion, nations of the world had to "accept the fact that all problems must be negotiated and that solutions must be found," otherwise it would be very likely that "the big nations" would enter into an armament race that would lead to war. Secretary Henry Wallace, in a letter to Truman endorsed by Eleanor Roosevelt, had pointed out that same concept.[93] According to the former first lady, Soviet requests for a discussion of general disarmament were not only legitimate, but also entirely realistic: "Since the atom bomb is part of our armament – and one of the only weapons which will help us to persuade the world to disarm – they realize that we will not do anything until we are sure all the nations are going to do it at the same time." Thus, the United States had "to agree on an overall picture of control," which could be the only effective guarantee against mutual destruction.

Historians have interpreted Eleanor Roosevelt's role in the shaping of the early Cold War. The scholars working at the "Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project" of the George Washington University, for instance, remind us that for Eleanor Roosevelt being a member of the US delegation to the UN meant that she was not absolutely free to speak about foreign policy

and strategy.[94] Her public role made her simultaneously influential and influenceable. As a result, she welcomed some of Truman's international moves, especially when they could effectively improve the conditions of people's lives, but, at the same time, she opposed any attempt to minimize the role of the UN and any policy that exacerbated international tensions.[95] While warning against the threats coming from the Soviet bloc, she reaffirmed the contradictions of American democracy.

Such an apparently ambivalent attitude has forced historians and biographers to struggle to find a suitable definition for Eleanor Roosevelt's approach to the Cold War. Her close friend Joseph Lash said that by 1948 she had become a "reluctant cold warrior," meaning that she wanted to promote the positive elements of American democracy instead of simply fighting Communism. It is also true, as Mary Welek Atwell has recognized, that Eleanor Roosevelt, and many American liberals with her, accepted elements of the US Cold War foreign policy while rejecting others. The definition that Welek Atwell suggests, "non communist liberal," has been amplified by Jason Berger, who explained to what extent the former first lady was able to be a "liberal cold warrior," simultaneously defending containment and rejecting McCarthyism. According to that notion, the search for a balance between an anti-Communist diplomacy abroad and the safeguard and promotion of civil liberties at home became Mrs. Roosevelt's most important contribution to the shaping of the early Cold War.

The problem with these definitions, however, is that they tend to underestimate how intense and vitriolic were the attacks that Eleanor Roosevelt reserved for the Democratic administration in the crucial years, 1946-1947. In those years, while the Cold War was coming into focus, she attacked the Truman doctrine's most intimate assumptions. According to Mrs. Roosevelt, containment denied the Soviets the right to have legitimate strategic interests or even follow their own economic needs. It violated the basic principles of international cooperation, thus ultimately depriving the UN of meaning. Right after Truman's speech to the Congress in March 1947, Eleanor Roosevelt publicly and violently attacked the administration, through the pages of her columns, and criticized the policy toward Greece and Turkey, which was the first act of global containment.[96]

Due to her popularity, the administration sought a compromise, since it still needed her political support.[97] But the conflict of views between Eleanor Roosevelt and the Department of State on this point was so vast

and harsh as to make any compromise impossible. She also decided to offer her resignation from her post as US delegate to the UN. Writing to James P. Hendrick, who was the associate chief of the Division of International Organization Affairs at the Department of State, she said that she wanted "the Department to feel entirely free to name another person," and added, "If the Department finds it more satisfactory, I shall be glad to resign so a permanent person can be named in my place."[98] She summed up her deep uneasiness with the new US foreign policy approach in her correspondence with Dean Acheson. Talking about the moves in the Aegean Sea and the Dardanelles, she confessed to the undersecretary that she could "understand the whole position in the State Department" and also that she was afraid that Russia "could of course, go into Greece, claiming she is doing exactly what we are doing and we have given her an excuse." She still hoped that some understanding could be achieved at the top levels between the USA and the Soviet Union. Above all, she hoped that American citizens would "be told exactly what policy means and what we are really doing and what we intend to do which will strengthen the U.N." She was very upset about the fact that the action was taken without consulting with the UN Secretary General or the US permanent member on the Security Council. "It all seems to me," Eleanor Roosevelt sadly admitted, "a most unfortunate way to do things. I hope very much that at least the Foreign Affairs Committees of the House and of the Senate are fully familiar with the whole situation because you will need them to lead this fight. I do not think the people of this country are going to like granting money for military purposes."[99] Acheson simply replied by enclosing his testimony before the congressional committee and adding one of the most erroneous prediction an American statesman ever made: "I do not believe that any reasonable contention could be made that such aid as we may give to Greece and Turkey could possibly be construed by the Soviet Union as a threat to its security."[100] And then, to further reassure Mrs. Roosevelt and not risk completely alienating her support, the undersecretary specified that the UN should remain the cornerstone of the US foreign policy and emphatically stated that the USA would never "sacrifice humanity in order to carry out any policy."[101]

Accommodation, however, was not enough to placate Eleanor Roosevelt's discontent with the basic elements of the new strategy of containment. "I am frank to say," she confessed to a friend in June 1947, "that I have asked the State Department many questions and ended

by telling them that I was not satisfied with the answers." What the US strategists and foreign policymakers would not understand, according to Mrs. Roosevelt's opinions, was that the USA had to "find ways of getting on with Russia," simply because it could "not have another war." An escalation of violence, under the new circumstances, was not a viable option. President Truman needed "some really astute and liberal politicians around him" to help him grasp this argument.[102]

In substance, if we look at Eleanor Roosevelt's attitude toward the making of the US foreign policy at the dawn of the Cold War and we take into consideration the most important elements of her approach, we can easily realize that what she was doing was trying to give voice to that minority of American citizens who contested the roots of the US Cold War policies. She was deeply critical of containment, the domino theory, and atomic deterrence and fiercely defended democracy and human rights, both at home and abroad. From this point of view, at least until 1948, she was a pragmatic critic of the Cold War but definitely not a cold warrior.

On the Marshall Plan and NATO, Eleanor Roosevelt's attitudes were different, although they can hardly indicate a resolute endorsement to the US Cold War policies. As regards the former, she supported it principally because of its practical consequences and secondarily because it did not contradict the principle of international cooperation.[103] Economic recovery, according to the former first lady, had to precede political peace and the UN had to be involved in the program.[104] As regards the latter, two events contributed to influencing Eleanor Roosevelt's ideas in 1949, the triumph of the socialist revolution in China and the first successful atomic test in the USSR. On the one hand, she believed that the USA and China could maintain a friendly relationship, "on the supposition that the new Communist Chinese leader, Mao Tse-tung, really means to deliver to the Chinese people certain things that will improve their way of life."[105] On the other hand, she received the news of the first Soviet atomic explosion with growing concern that it was one of the truly momentous events in world history. In the USA, the press, radio, Congress, and other public fora reacted, revealing an extensive debate on the implications the Soviet achievement would have on the future of international relations. Many commentators pointed out that eventual Russian mastery of the atom was to be expected and that it did not necessarily make war any more likely. But there was also a considerable degree of anxiety about the prospect of an atomic arms race.

Consequently, a new sense of urgency developed in favor of an effective and enforceable system of international control of atomic power. While the majority of commentators believed that a reliable system of international control would depend mainly on the Soviet Union, Eleanor Roosevelt stressed instead the importance of the role played by the UN—and the USA as an integral player within that organization.[106] She was not, however, among those who called for renewed efforts to gain Russian acceptance of the plan the USA had submitted to the UN in 1948. She insisted instead, that the USA modify its original proposal, the Baruch plan, on the grounds that it was based on an American monopoly which no longer existed. Thus, Eleanor Roosevelt joined the chorus of those who proposed the outlawing of atomic weapons as a means of aggression, who wanted abolition of the veto power in atomic control matters, and who pushed for the control of other weapons of mass destruction.[107] Given all of these developments, Eleanor Roosevelt looked at the launch of NATO simply as a move that could protect the US-European allies from Soviet threats. Since Russia had, "while professing a desire for peace, actually shown by its action that it intended to control as many nations as possible by imposing on them Communist ideas," Western European countries needed to be defended in certain ways. But it was clear to her that the scope of the Atlantic Pact must be merely to "prevent aggression and to give democracies […] a sense of security."[108] Eleanor Roosevelt agreed with this assumption especially because of the defensive nature of the alliance, and she warned against the risk of instilling a sense of fear in both the Soviet elites and the Russian people.[109]

From that point onward, the Cold War acquired another dimension.[110] It was no longer an ideological battle, which diplomatic attachés could wage in the buildings of the United Nations. It had revealed its violence, its dreadful potential, in sum, its darkest side. The eruption of the atomic arms race, as Mrs. Roosevelt had argued many times before, was a threat to the very survival of mankind. Consequently, the promotion of the core values of democracy, both at home and abroad, in spite of all of the structural changes brought about by the Cold War, became Eleanor Roosevelt's most important objective. By appealing to common sense, she tried to overcome the ideological boundaries that characterized the military and political dimension of the Cold War and to promote inter-bloc dialogue and negotiation. This would not prove an easy task and would come to present Mrs. Roosevelt with quite a few problems.

Notes

1. See Eleanor Roosevelt's letters to Joseph Lash (April 19, 1945) and Lorena Hickok (April 19, 1945), which are quoted by Allida M. Black, *Casting Her Own Shadow. Eleanor Roosevelt and the Shaping of Postwar Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 51–52.
2. See Maurine H. Beasley, *Eleanor Roosevelt. Transformative First Lady* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2010), 214.
3. The level of the pressure was so high that the press stated: "Mrs. Roosevelt Will Continue Column; Seeks No Office Now," see *The Evening Standard*, April 19, 1945, quoted by Allida M. Black, *Casting Her Own Shadow*, 52.
4. In the late 1940s, Democrats in New York City and throughout the country courted Eleanor Roosevelt for political office. "At first I was surprised that anyone should think that I would want to run for office, or that I was fitted to hold office. Then I realized that some people felt that I must have learned something from my husband in all the years that he was in public life! They also knew that I had stressed the fact that women should accept responsibility as citizens. I heard that I was being offered the nomination for governor or for the United States Senate in my own state, and even for Vice President. And some particularly humorous souls wrote in and suggested that I run as the first woman President of the United States! The simple truth is that I have had my fill of public life of the more or less stereotyped kind," see Joseph P. Lash, *Eleanor: The Years Alone* (New York: Norton, 1972), 156–165. On the same argument, see also *My Day*, April 19, 1945. She resumed her columns four days after FDR's funeral and wrote about the similarity between Lincoln's, Wilson's and her husband's death, since these presidents had all died in a time of crisis and before they could fully complete their main tasks. See Tamara K. Hareven, *Eleanor Roosevelt. An American Conscience* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books), 187.
5. See Elizabeth Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World: America's Vision for Human Rights* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005).
6. See William H. Chafe, "Biographical Sketch," in *Without Precedent. The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt*, eds. Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 22. See also *My Day*, August 31, 1945. Eleanor Roosevelt's efforts to sustain FDR's social policies are also observable throughout the correspondence she had with President Truman in those years. See Steve Neal (ed.), *Eleanor and Harry: The Correspondence of Eleanor Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman* (New York: Lisa Drew Book, 2002). On the same theme, see Allida M. Black, *Casting Her Own Shadow*.

7. See "Eleanor Roosevelt to Harry S. Truman, November 20, 1945," in *Eleanor and Harry: The Correspondence of Eleanor Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman*, ed. Steve Neal, a joint project of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, http://www.trumanlibrary.org/eleanor/1945.html.
8. See Maurine H. Beasley, *Eleanor Roosevelt. Transformative First Lady*, 214.
9. Many scholars have highlighted the weight that the Soviet issue had in the U.S. choice to bomb Japan and they have also compared it to the sheer necessity of protecting human lives. In this regard, see Gar Alperovitz, *Atomic Diplomacy. Hiroshima and Potsdam. The Use of the Atomic Bomb and the American Confrontation with Soviet Power* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1985); Robert J. Maddox, *Weapons for Victory. The Hiroshima Decision Fifty Years Later* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1995); Id., "Gar Alperovitz. Godfather of Hiroshima Revisionism," in Id. (ed.), *Hiroshima in History. The Myths of Revisionism*, (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2007), 9; Gwyn Prins, "Book Review: Gar Alperovitz, Atomic Diplomacy: Hiroshima and Potsdam, the Use of the Atomic Bomb and the American Confrontation with Soviet Power, 2nd ed.," in *Millennium-Journal of International Studies*, vol. 15, no. 1 (1986): 108–111; Burleigh C. Taylor, "Hiroshima in History. The Myths of Revisionism (Review)," in *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, vol. 11, no. 4 (2008): 678–682; Martin J. Sherwin, *A World Destroyed. Hiroshima and the Origins of the Arms Race* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004). Far more complex and comprehensive is the interpretation given by a recent study by Andrew J. Rotter, *Hiroshima. The World's Bomb* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). J. Samuel Walker has tried to reconstruct this debate in his "The Decision to Use the Bomb: A Historiographical Update," in *Diplomatic History*, vol. 14, no. 1 (1990): 97–114. Finally, see *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb: Gar Alperovitz and the H-Net Debate* in http://www.doug-long.com/debate.htm. I here follow a midway interpretation, which is endorsed by scholars as David Holloway in his "Nuclear Weapons and the Escalation of the Cold War, 1945–1962," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume I, Origins*, eds. Melvyn P. Leffler, Odd Arne Westad, 376 and Barton Bernstein, "The Atomic Bombings Reconsidered," *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 1995, 135–152.
10. See Lawrence S. Wittner, *Rebels Against War. The American Peace Movement 1941–1960* (New York/London: Columbia University Press, 1969); Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light. American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994) and Id., *Fallout. A Historian Reflects on America's Half-Century Encounter with Nuclear Weapons* (Columbus: Ohio State

University Press, 1998); Allan M. Winkler, *Life Under a Cloud. American Anxiety about the Atom*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999).

11. See Richard Rhodes, *The Making of the Atomic Bomb* (New York: Simon and Schuster 1986), 636. On May 25, 1945, Leo Szilárd, who was introduced by Albert Einstein, visited the White House to persuade Truman to not use the bombs against Japan. In a following meeting with Byrnes, Szilárd tried to convince him that a demonstration of the bomb's power, rather than its use, would be enough to force Japanese surrender. Szilárd summarized his arguments in a petition that he submitted, along with 155 American scientists, to President Truman. Writing to a colleague of him, Szilárd explained his ideas: "I personally feel it would be a matter of importance if a large number of scientists who have worked in this field went clearly and unmistakably on record as to their opposition on moral grounds to the use of these bombs in the present phase of the war." For a detailed account of the Szilárd petition, see http://www.nuclearfiles.org/menu/timeline/timeline_page.php?year=1945.
12. In time of war, atomic weapons development was regarded as "essentially a fact already did," but, as Glenn T. Seaborg, a scientist whose studies contributed to the building of the bomb, argued, "the main elements relating to the release of nuclear energy and its immense destructive power should be public, and should mark the public opinion in this country and in the rest of the world as soon as possible." Seaborg was asking the scientists who were engaged in the construction of the weapon to publish their results and, simultaneously, the whole scientific community to publicly describe "the destructive potential of a self-sustaining chain reaction of heavy isotopes, together with some non-technical figures of the results obtained in the manufacture of fissile material." This first step could clarify the real power of the atom. Then, scientists had to draw their attention to the "prevention of any possible future use of the weapon without prior notice to Japan." A demonstration on some uninhabited island, at the presence of representatives of all the powers of the world, including Japan, would have deeply enhanced "the moral position of the country." See Glenn T. Seaborg, Letter to Ernest O. Lawrence, June 13, 1945, *Letter on the Future of Nuclear Weapons.* Seaborg and other scientists joined the so-called Franck Committee on the Social and Political Implications of the Atomic Bomb, which produced a report describing the long-term effects of an atomic attack in Japan. "If we consider an international agreement on total prevention of nuclear war as our main objective, this kind of introduction to the world of nuclear weapons could easily destroy all our chances of success" and this "will mean the way for an unlimited arms race." Unfortunately, the very day after the scientists

presented the Franck report, the Joint War Plans Committee, an advisory committee of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, estimated that about 40,000 American soldiers would risk their lives in a hypothetical conventional attack on Japan. Prominent figures such as Fermi, Oppenheimer, Compton, and Lawrence sadly concluded that it was impossible to propose any "technical demonstration that could end the war" and that there was no "acceptable alternative to the direct military use of the bomb," see Michael B. Stoff, Jonathan F. Fanton, and R. Hal Williams, eds., *The Manhattan Project: A Documentary Introduction to the Atomic Age* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1991), 140–147. Many of the primary sources are available at the U.S. National Archives Records Administration (NARA), Record Group (Rg) 77, Manhattan Engineer District Records, Harrison-Bundy File, Folder 76.

13. See *My Day*, August 8, 1945.
14. Talking about the scientists and their reaction to the discovery of the power of the A-bomb, Oppenheimer said, "I remembered the line from the Hindu Scripture the Bhagavad-Gita. Vishnu is trying to persuade the prince that he should do his duty and to impress him takes on his multi-armed form and says, Now I am become death, the destroyer of worlds. I suppose we all thought that one way or another." See Priscilla J. McMillan, *The Ruin of J. Robert Oppenheimer and the Birth of the Modern Arms Race* (New York, Viking Press, 2005) and Kai Bird and Martin J. Sherwin, *American Prometheus: The Triumph and Tragedy of J. Robert Oppenheimer* (New York: Knopf, 2005). As regards Eleanor Roosevelt's ideas, see *My Day*, August 8, 1945. On the role of the so-called Doomsday rhetoric, see, among the others, Nina Tannenwald, *The Nuclear Taboo: The United States and the Non-Use of Nuclear Weapons* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Patrick Mannix, *The Rhetoric of Antinuclear Fiction. Persuasive Strategies in Novels and Films* (Cranbury: Associated University Presses, 1992).
15. See *My Day*, September 25, 1945.
16. *My Day*, August 10, 1945.
17. See Blanche Wiesen Cook, "Turn Toward Peace: ER and Foreign Affairs," in *Without Precedent. The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt*, eds. Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 118.
18. *My Day*, September 25, 1945.
19. *My Day*, September 25, 1945.
20. See Jason Berger, *A New Deal for the World: Eleanor Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 47.
21. See *My Day*, August 11, 1945.

22. Several reports of the State Department confirm these indications. These documents are available at the NARA, Record Group 59, General Records of the Department of State, Records of the Division of Public Studies (Rdps), *Reports on Public Attitudes Toward Foreign Policy 1943–1965*, Box 14, "Opinions and Activities of American Private Organizations and Groups" (Oaapog).
23. According to the former first lady, the risk of losing mutual trust was exacerbated by atomic weapons. Moreover, American monopoly was just a temporary illusion. See *My Day*, October 6, 1945, where Eleanor Roosevelt said, "We can feel safe in controlling the secret of the atomic bomb until, somewhere else in the world, someone makes the same discoveries that we have made. The minute that happens—and there is no reason it should not happen, since the theoretical principles are known to all scientists—we will realize that we only won a race. We didn't stop all scientific achievements for the future."
24. See *My Day*, August 15, 1945. The expression "One World" first came out with Wendell Willkie's account of his war journeys in 1943. It quickly became a major plea for international cooperation and then a widely used anti-nuclear slogan. See Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light*, 5 and Allida M. Black (ed.), *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers: Vol. 1. The Human Rights Years, 1945–1948* (Farmington Hills: Thomson Gale, 2007), 163.
25. See *My Day*, October 3, 1945.
26. The American Association for the United Nations, the American Legion, the National League of Women Voters, the Women International League for Peace and Freedom, and several Baptist, Methodist, Missionaries and Hebrew groups were among the most vociferous anti-atomic organizations, See NARA, Rg 59, Rdps, Box 14, Oaapog, November 23, 1945.
27. See Richard Rhodes, *The Making of the Atomic Bomb* and Id., *Arsenals of Folly: The Making of the Nuclear Arms Race* (New York: Knopf, 2007); Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light* and Id., *Fallout*.
    As regards the concept of "nuclear diplomacy," see John Lewis Gaddis, Philip H. Gordon, Ernest R. May, and Jonathan Rosenberg (eds.), *Cold War Statesmen Confront the Bomb: Nuclear Diplomacy since 1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).
28. See NARA, Rg 59, Rdps, Box 14, Oaapog, December 18, 1945. As senior defense analyst of the Science Application International Corporation Michael Wheeler argues, at the end of 1945 "there were very few people that actually understood atomic bombs" and what they represented after the bombing of Japan, see *U.S. Strategic Nuclear Policy: A Video History, 1945–2004*, Sandia Labs Historical Video Documents History of U.S. Strategic Nuclear Policy, an oral history project of the National Security Archives released on October 11, 2011, and available at http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/

ebb361/index.htm. Within the scientific circles, however, "everyone understood that the atomic bomb was a weapon of extraordinary devastation," as Lynn Eden, senior researcher at the Center for the International Security and Cooperation of the Stanford University, states in the same interviews.

29. See NARA, Rg 59, Rdps, Box 14, Oaapog, February, 1946.
30. See NARA, Rg 59, Rdps, Box 14, Oaapog, March, 1947.
31. See NARA, Rg 59, Rdps, Box 14, Oaapog, October 27, 1945. On the role of other organizations such as the World Government Movement, in the USA and abroad, see Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb. Volume 1. One World or None: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement Through 1953* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), 44–45. Notably, Wittner defines the works of Herbert G. Wells, Wendell Willkie, and Emery Reves as crucial to the construction of the World Government idea.
32. See Richard Taylor, *Against the Bomb. The British Peace Movement 1958–1965* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 1.
33. See, for instance, Joseph R. Conlin, *American Anti-War Movements* (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1968), 10.
34. Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb*, vol. 1, 78–79.
35. See Roosevelt Study Center (hereby after RSC), Presidential Collection and Administrations, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt 1945–1962, Part 1: United Nations Correspondence and Publications (hereby after ER Papers 1945–1962, Part 1), Reel 1, 00298.
36. RSC, ER Papers 1945–1962, Part 1, Reel 1, 00186. The letter is dated December 28, 1945.
37. RSC, ER Papers 1945–1962, Part 1, Reel 1, 00436.
38. See RSC, ER Papers 1945–1962, Part 1, Reel 1, 00926.
39. RSC, ER Papers 1945–1962, Part 1, Reel 1, 00182. Letter dated December 28, 1945.
40. See the letter that President Truman sent to Eleanor Roosevelt on December 21, 1945, in *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers: Vol. 1. The Human Rights Years, 1945-1948*, ed. Allida M. Black, 158 and 163. Truman's letter of appointment and Eleanor Roosevelt's first reaction are also quoted by Steve Neal (ed.), *Eleanor and Harry*, 50–51.
41. "For the first time in my life," Eleanor Roosevelt notoriously affirmed off the record, "I can say just what I want. For your information it is wonderful to feel free," in *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers: Vol. 1. The Human Rights Years, 1945–1948*, ed. Allida M. Black, 184–185. As regards being the only woman within the US delegation, Mrs. Roosevelt described it in a NBC radio broadcast as "a pity because I think that men and women working together must eventually build this organization." Moreover, the pressure upon her increased because, as she admitted later, "if I failed

to be a useful member, it would not be considered merely that I as an individual had failed, but that all women had failed, and there would be a little chance for others to serve in the near future," see Jason Berger, *A New Deal for the World*, 49 and Eleanor Roosevelt, *On My Own* (New York: Harper, 1958), 377.

42. As it happened in the case of the very first US delegation's press conference in London, when Republican delegates Senator Vandenberg and John Foster Dulles, who said that they were still waiting for instruction about America's policy on atomic energy, were absent. The press immediately reported it, see James B. Reston, "Our UNO Delegates Divided Over Plans," *The New York Times*, 8 January 1946, 1, reported in *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers: Vol. 1. The Human Rights Years, 1945–1948*, ed. Allida M. Black, 199.
43. See Allida M. Black (ed.), *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers: Vol. 1*, 198, note 21.
44. Eleanor Roosevelt later imagined what the American delegates could have said about her appointment: "We can't put Mrs. Roosevelt on the political committee. What could she do in the budget committee? Does she know anything about legal questions? Ah, here's the safe spot for her—Committee 3. She can't do much harm there," see Eleanor Roosevelt, *On My Own*, 42 and Tamara K. Hareven, *Eleanor Roosevelt. An American Conscience*, 231.
45. See Maurine H. Beasley, *Eleanor Roosevelt. Transformative First Lady*, 219.
46. The case of Eleanor Roosevelt's dialectic struggle with Soviet representative Andrey Vyshinsky is emblematic. See, for example, Eleanor Roosevelt's speeches on, January 28, 1946, February 12, 1946, and November 8, 1946, in *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers: Vol. 1. The Human Rights Years, 1945–1948*, ed. Allida M. Black, 230–233, 244–248, and 396–401.
47. See also Maurine H. Beasley, *Eleanor Roosevelt. Transformative First Lady*, 220; Mary Ann Glendon, *A World Made New: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (New York, Random House, 2002), 29–30; Allida M. Black (ed.), *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers: Vol. 1. The Human Rights Years, 1945–1948*, 230–233, 244–247.
48. The original version of the declaration is available on the UN web page at the following address: http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml.
49. See Maurine H. Beasley, *Eleanor Roosevelt. Transformative First Lady*, 220.
50. A complex and detailed account of the Declaration and its enormous impact is given by Mary Ann Glendon, *A World Made New. Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (New York: Random House, 2001).

51. Jason Berger, *A New Deal for the World*, 67–72 and Tamara K. Hareven, *Eleanor Roosevelt. An American Conscience*, 235–242. See also Allida M. Black (ed.), *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers: Vol. 1. The Human Rights Years, 1945–1948*, 298.
52. See Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, "The Struggle for Human Rights" (also known as, "The Struggle for the Rights of Man"), Paris, Sorbonne, 28 September 1948 (publication released February 1949), in *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers: Vol. 1. The Human Rights Years, 1945–1948*, ed. Allida M. Black, 900.
53. On the foreign aid issue, see *My Day*, August 23, 1946.
54. See, for instance, *My Day*, June 1, 1946, and November 11 and 25, 1946. On the Palestinian refugees, see *My Day*, June 14 and 22, 1946, and September 5, 1946.
55. As regards Eleanor Roosevelt's utterances against the building of a national security state and in defense of democracy, see Allida M. Black, *Casting Her Own Shadow*, 131–170 and Id. (ed.), *Courage in a Dangerous World. The Political Writings of Eleanor Roosevelt* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 221–309.
56. See William H. Chafe, "Biographical Sketch," in *Without Precedent. The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt*, eds. Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman, 23–24.
57. See a quotation by Eleanor Roosevelt as it was reported by *The New York Times* on February 18, 1947, 16.
58. In *Pearl Harbor, Hiroshima and Beyond* (Clarksville: Trafford, 2005), Arch B. Taylor states that Paul Boyer has not apparently taken into adequate account the extraordinary impact that John Hersey's seminal work, *Hiroshima*, which first appeared in *The New Yorker* in 1946, had on US public opinion. On the contrary, Boyer's reconstruction of Hersey's writings and their relationship with the emerging atomic culture is still highly valuable. In this regard, see also Robert Jay Lifton and Greg Mitchell, *Hiroshima in America: A Half Century of Denial* (New York: Avon Books, 1995) and Michael J. Yavenditti, "John Hersey and the American Conscience: The Reception of 'Hiroshima,' " in *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 43, no. 1 (February 1974): 24–49. The full text of John Hersey's *Hiroshima* (first published in New York by Penguin Books) is available online at www.archive.org.
59. As regards the civilian control of atomic power, these protests succeeded in the adoption of a favorable legislation. In October 1945, yielding to the pressure coming from the military groups and from the Department of State, Truman presented to the Congress the May-Johnson bill, a bill that was intended to extend military control over atomic energy. The Federation of American Scientists organized a massive lobbying campaign in the press

and Congress, which led to the signing of the Atomic Energy Act. The Act created the US Atomic Energy Commission (AEC), consisting of five members appointed by the president with the advice and consent of the Senate, which had control on the American arsenal and atomic testing. See http://www.nuclearfiles.org/menu/library/treaties/atomic-energy-act/trty_atomic-energy-act_1945-12-20.htm. It was not by accident, in those months, that the leading organization of American atomic scientists, the Federation of Atomic Scientists (later the Federation of American Scientists), was one of the most active groups in publishing material on atomic energy. At the same time, Eugene Rabinowitch, with a group of colleagues of him working at the University of Chicago, launched the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*. Throughout the Cold War, that journal established a leading scientific forum for discussion on nuclear weapons. A graphic that first appeared on the *Bulletin* cover page in 1947, the "Doomsday Clock," soon became the symbol of the scientists' campaign. The clock figuratively indicated how close the international system was to the outbreak of a nuclear war. That image epitomized the risks associated with atomic proliferation and nuclear testing. As Rabinowitch argued, it was used to represent those "fundamental changes in the level of continuous danger in which mankind lives during the nuclear age." The "Doomsday Clock," which originally was intended to indicate the status of the arms control, soon became a symbol of the entire cause of the *Bulletin* itself. Designed by Martyl Langsdorf, wife of Alexander Langsdorf, a physicist who participated in the Manhattan Project, the clock, symbolically evoking the apocalypse, was physically linked to contemporary developments in the tensions of the international arena. A detailed account of the birth of the *Bulletin* is available in Michael Grodzins and Eugene Rabinowitch, *The Atomic Age. Scientists in World Affairs* (New York: Basic Books, 1963), 17–21. See also Allan M. Winkler, *Life Under a Cloud*, 40.

60. Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb*, vol. 1, 63.
61. In their opinion, "the second type of organization offered little hope to achieve security and peace that the U.S. was looking for." See *The Acheson-Lilienthal Report, a Report on the International Control of Atomic Energy Prepared for the Secretary of State's Committee on Atomic Energy*, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, March 16, 1946, available at http://www.learnworld.com/ZNW/LWText.Acheson .
62. *Ibid*.
63. Eleanor Roosevelt had appreciated David Lilienthal's work as former director of the Tennessee Valley Authority, which was one of the most important FDR's political achievements. See the correspondence between her and David Lilienthal in RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt, 1945–1952 (hereby after ER Papers 1945–1952), Part 1, General

Correspondence, 1945–1947, Reel 2, 00591. See also *My Day*, February 19, 1947. As regards Baruch's influence on Eleanor Roosevelt, see Allida M. Black (ed.), *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers: Vol. 1. The Human Rights Years, 1945–1948*, 988.

64. The "Baruch Plan," the proposal of formal agreement that the USA submitted to the UN, changed these indications and focused exclusively on the protection of the US atomic monopoly. See the text of the Baruch Plan as it was presented to the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission on June 14, 1946 in http://www.atomicarchive.com/Docs/Deterrence/BaruchPlan.shtml. As regards Eleanor Roosevelt's reaction to the submission of the plan, see *My Day*, June 17, 1946.
65. See Andrew Russell Preston, "Text of Secretary Wallace's Letter to President Truman on U.S. Foreign Policy," *The New York Times*, September 18, 1946, 2, in *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers: Vol. 1. The Human Rights Years, 1945–1948*, ed. Allida M. Black, 383.
66. Jason Berger gives us a detailed account of Eleanor Roosevelt's role in the Baruch-Wallace controversy: "Because of her confidence in the UN, Eleanor Roosevelt supported Baruch. She felt certain that the UN would be able to enforce disarmament through inspection. Following Wallace's ouster from the cabinet, Eleanor Roosevelt suggested that Wallace discuss his opposition to the plan with Baruch. They met on September 27. Baruch believed that he had obtained Wallace's endorsement. When he arranged for them to issue a joint statement announcing this agreement, Wallace suddenly refused. Baruch called a press conference to condemn Wallace for reneging." According to Berger, Henry Wallace interpreted the meeting differently: "Baruch wanted to get in touch with me so that he could knife me, which he did very effectively. I thought I owed it to Mrs. Roosevelt to carry out her wishes. It didn't work out well because it enabled Baruch to cut my throat in the public press and enabled him to help build up this concept of me being pro-Russia." Wallace added that Baruch's "extraordinary influence" on Mrs. Roosevelt forced her to follow "the most reactionary elements in the democratic party. He believed Baruch's alleged secret financial help to Mrs. Roosevelt and her sons influenced her politics." However, Berger recognizes that "Wallace's opposition to Baruch Plan distressed her because she believed that the Russians, not the Americans, had prevented nuclear disarmament," see Jason Berger, *A New Deal for the World*, 58–63. See also Margaret L. Coit, *Mr. Baruch* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1957), 600; Joseph P. Lash, *Eleanor: The Years Alone*, 89; *The Reminiscences of Henry Wallace*, Columbia University Oral History Project, 3671–3673.
67. See Allida M. Black (ed.), *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers: Vol. 1. The Human Rights Years, 1945–1948*, 382.

68. *My Day*, May 17, 1946.
69. *My Day*, August 12, 1946.
70. *My Day*, October 11, 1946.
71. *My Day*, April 5, 1947.
72. See Melvyn P. Leffler, "The Emergence of an American Grand Strategy," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume I, Origins*, eds. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 70.
73. See David Holloway, "Nuclear Weapons and the Escalation of the Cold War, 1945–1962," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume I, Origins*, eds. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, 378.
74. See Richard Rhodes, *The Making of the Atomic Bomb*, 753.
75. The National Security Council document number 30 (NSC 30), which was titled *United States Policy on Atomic Warfare*, set up the bases of the early US nuclear policy. The NSC 30 considered nuclear weapons as instruments to counterbalance Soviet military preponderance in Eastern Europe. Among the other indications, that document also stated that "in event of hostilities, the National Military Establishment must be ready to utilize promptly and effectively all appropriate means available, including atomic weapons, in the interest of national security," see David A. Rosenberg, "Constraining Overkill. Contending Approaches to Nuclear Strategy, 1955–1965," in http://www.history.navy.mil/colloquia/cch9b and Id., "American Atomic Strategy and the Hydrogen Bomb Decision," in *The Journal of American History*, vol. 66, no. 1 (June 1979): 62–87. See Nina Tannenwald, *The Nuclear Taboo: The United States and the Non-Use of Nuclear Weapons* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 112. See also Philip L. Cantelon, Richard G. Hewlett, and Robert C. Williams (eds.), *The American Atom: A Documentary History of Nuclear Policies from the Discovery of Fission to the Present* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992). The text of another fundamental National Security Council nuclear paper, the NSC 20/4, *U.S. Objectives with Respect to the USSR to Counter Soviet Threats to U.S. Security*, 23 November 1948, is available at http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/coldwar/nsc20-4.htm. See Edwards E. Spalding, *The First Cold Warrior: Harry Truman, Containment, and the Remaking of Liberal Internationalism* (Lexington, University Press of Kentucky, 2006), 163–168.
76. See NARA, Rg 59, Rdps, Box 14, Oaapog, March 1947.
77. See Campbell Craig and Sergey Radchenko, *The Atomic Bomb and the Origins of the Cold War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 124.
78. The Truman Library Web site hosts an interesting reconstruction of the Truman doctrine adoption, see http://goo.gl/tFaAu.

79. See David Holloway, "Nuclear Weapons and the Escalation of the Cold War, 1945–1962," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume I, Origins*, eds. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, 378. The document is the NSC 30, see note 79.
80. See for example Dwight Macdonald, "Editorial," *Politics*, August 1945, 2, quoted in James J. Farrell, "American Atomic Culture," in *American Quarterly*, vol. 434, no.1 (March 1991): 157.
81. See Odd Arne Westad, "The Cold War and the International History of the Twentieth Century," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume I, Origins*, eds. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, 3.
82. See Richard Rhodes, *The Making of the Atomic Bomb*, 751.
83. See Glenn T. Seaborg, *The Plutonium Story. The Journals of Professor Glenn T. Seaborg, 1939–1946* (Columbus: Battelle Press, 1994), 117 and Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light*, 50.
84. See Odd Arne Westad, "The Cold War and the International History of the Twentieth Century," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume I, Origins*, eds. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, 11.
85. See Jessica C.E. Gienow-Hecht, "Culture and the Cold War in Europe," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume I, Origins*, eds. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, 398 and ss.
86. *My Day*, April 30, 1948.
87. *My Day*, January 21, 1947.
88. *My Day*, March 27, 1947.
89. *My Day*, January 26, 1946.
90. *My Day*, September 17, 1946.
91. *My Day*, September 18, 1946.
92. *My Day*, September 30, 1946.
93. *My Day*, September 20, 1946.
94. See "Eleanor Roosevelt and the Cold War," in *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project*, on http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers/teachinger/lesson-plans/notes-er-and-cold-war.cfm and Anna Kasten Nelson and Sara E. Wilson, "Cold War," in *The Eleanor Roosevelt Encyclopedia*, eds. Maurine Hoffman Beasley, Holly Cowan Shulman, and Henry R. Beasley (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2001), 102.
95. To exemplify such a practical approach, see the case of the "One Day's Pay" campaign, a project which was funded by the UN and aimed at circulating a "special world-wide appeal for non-governmental voluntary contributions to meet emergency relief needs of children, adolescents, expectant and nursing mothers," see Eleanor Roosevelt's letter dated October 9, 1947, in RSC, ER Papers, 1945–1962, part 2, Reel 1, 00357.
96. As regards Eleanor Roosevelt's opposition to the Truman doctrine, see Richard S. Kirkendall, "ER and the Issue of FDR's Successor," in *Without*

Precedent. The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt, eds. Joan Hoff-Wilson and Marjorie Lightman (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984) and Id., "Truman, Harry S," in *The Eleanor Roosevelt Encyclopedia*, eds. Maurine Hoffman Beasley, Holly Cowan Shulman, and Henry R. Beasley, 526–527; Allida M. Black, *Casting Her Own Shadow*, 147–148; and Maurine H. Beasley, *Eleanor Roosevelt. Transformative First Lady*, 221.

97. See Francis Russell to Dean Acheson, March 27, 1947, in United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1947. Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union, Volume IV* (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1947), 547.
98. See Eleanor Roosevelt's letter to Mr. James P. Hendrick, May 22, 1947, in RSC, ER Papers, 1945–1962, part 2, Reel 1, 00288.
99. See Mrs. Roosevelt's letter to Dean Acheson, March 26, 1947, in RSC, ER Papers 1945-1952, Part 1: General Correspondence, 1945-1947, Reel 9, 0772-0773.
100. See RSC, ER Papers 1945-1952, Part 1: General Correspondence, 1945-1947, Reel 9, 00782.
101. The letter is dated May 7, 1947, in RSC, ER Papers 1945-1952, Part 1: General Correspondence, 1945–1947, Reel 9, 00782. The contrast between the administration and Eleanor Roosevelt on the Truman doctrine continued. In May 1947, the former first lady wrote to Truman to express him her growing uneasiness. "I do not think your advisers have looked far enough ahead," she confessed to the president and reminded him that if the USA did not want to fight Russia, then it has to be "both honest and firm with her," see Allida M. Black (ed.), *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers: Vol. 1. The Human Rights Years, 1945–1948*, 534.
102. Eleanor Roosevelt confessed this idea in June 1947, see Eleanor Roosevelt to Mr. Pauley, June 13, 1947. In RSC, ER Papers 1945–1952, Part 1: General Correspondence, 1945-1947, Reel 16, 00509-00510.
103. Eleanor Roosevelt defined the Marshall plan as "bolder and broader" than the "first Truman plan for aid to Greece and Turkey," see Allida M. Black (ed.), *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers: Vol. 1. The Human Rights Years, 1945–1948*, 590.
104. Eleanor Roosevelt repeated that US actions had always to be "in accord with U.N. interests," see *My Day*, July 12, 1947. See also Eleanor Roosevelt's letter to George Marshall, in *The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers: Vol. 1. The Human Rights Years, 1945–1948*, ed. Allida M. Black, 597. She variously confirmed and publicly showed her support for the plan more than a dozen times between 1947. See Tamara K. Hareven, *Eleanor Roosevelt. An American Conscience*, 215–230.

105. *My Day*, December 29, 1950. Eleanor Roosevelt deeply criticized Chinese nationalists, because they had not provided Chinese people with any moderate alternative to civil war. She also believed that Mao's revolutionary forces would need some forms of foreign aid anyhow, see *My Day*, January 7, 1949; August 1, 1949; September 10, 1949; January 14, 1949; March 30, 1950; and August 8, 1950. See also Jason Berger, *A New Deal for the World*, 76. "I feel the influence of the United States, through diplomatic channels, should be exerted to protect China from interference from without as far as possible," see *My Day*, September 10, 1949.
106. Eleanor Roosevelt's letter to Paul B. Taylor and Philip M. Burnett, October 17, 1949, in RSC, ER Papers 1945–1962, Part 1, Reel 23, 00310.
107. See "Monthly Survey of American Public Opinion on International Affairs," Survey No. 101, *Developments of September 1949*, 1–4, in RSC, ER Papers 1945–1962, Part 1, Reel 23, 00663.
108. *My Day*, April 9, 1949.
109. As regards the Atlantic pact, Dean Acheson wanted Eleanor Roosevelt to know that he was working hard so that "its proposed terms [would] be known in time for public discussion before signature." Then, the undersecretary wrote the former first lady and said, "I am sure that when you see the actual terms you will feel much better about it. I will send you a copy as soon as it is released and would be delighted to discuss it with you at any time." See Dean Acheson's letter to Eleanor Roosevelt, March 15, 1949, and the rest of the correspondence in RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt, 1945–1952, , Part 2, General Correspondence 1948–1949, Reel 12, 00223, 00493, Reel 14, 00965, Reel 18, 00433, Reel 20, 00669, and Reel 25, 00257.
110. Contemporary historiography of the Cold War had largely debated this issue and dramatic turning point. According to Samuel Wells, the fall of China and the U.S.S.R.'s achievement of an atomic capacity were the main forces driving the development of the new US assertive policy, which was clarified in the 1950 National Security Document No. 68 (NSC/68), see Samuel F. Wells Jr., "Sounding the Tocsin: NSC 68 and the Soviet Threat," in *International Security*, vol. 4, no. 119, (Fall 1979): 126–127. See also Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1992). Different authors state that since no references are mentioned in documents preceding the discussion of the NSC-68, as for example the NSC 52/2, neither the Soviet atomic threat nor Chinese developments had a significant impact on the definition of the US national security policy. See, for example, Benjamin O. Fordham, *Building the Cold War Consensus: The Political Economy of*

U.S. National Security Policy, 1949–1951 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998). However, the discovery that Washington had lost its nuclear monopoly would have a decisive impact on US diplomacy and military policy, and it was one of the stimuli for the NSC-68, which called for massive military expenses to offset the political and military impact of Stalin's bomb. This is also confirmed by several recently disclosed sources: see, for example, *General S. E. Anderson, Director, Plans and Operations, memo to Director of Intelligence, "Implications of Soviet Atomic Explosion," 5 October 1949*, attached to a memorandum from *General C. P. Cabell, U.S. Air Force Director of Intelligence to Director Plans and Operations, "Implication of Soviet Atomic Explosion," 6 October 1949, Top Secret*, in NARA, Rg 341, Records of Headquarters, United States Air Force (Air Staff), Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Directorate of Intelligence, Top Secret Control & Cables Section Jul 1945-Dec 1954, box 46, 9300 to 9399, available at http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb286/.

CHAPTER 4

Demystifying Nuclear Deterrence

The Nuclear Debate

By the late 1940s, nuclear arms molded the relationships between the Soviet Union and the USA. While the former was testing its first fission bomb late in August 1949, the latter had already stockpiled in its arsenals more than 200 atomic warheads. But for many Americans this was not enough. With the Communist takeover in China and the outbreak of the Korean War, the US administration decided to launch new programs for the upgrading of long-range bombers and guided missiles, with the specific aim to improve America's atomic efficiency and military capability.[1] These developments were the quintessential element of a widely accepted doctrine that came to be known as nuclear deterrence: the USA had to retain "the best, the biggest and the most" atomic weapons in order to efficiently dissuade the Soviet Union from being aggressive.[2] The core tenet of this strategy did not imply just the mere maintenance of the US atomic supremacy—in quantitative terms—but also the qualitative upgrading of American nuclear weaponry, which had to include new and more powerful devices able of countering the global Communist epidemic once and for all.[3]

In accordance with this doctrine, in 1950, President Truman authorized the production of the first American thermonuclear weapons, the so-called H-bombs, which were thousands of times more powerful than the fission bombs that the USA had used against Japan.[4] After having

D. Fazzi, *Eleanor Roosevelt and the Anti-Nuclear Movement*,
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comprehensively reviewed US nuclear strategy, the presidential policy planning staff provided the administration with the most important boost to the production of these new devices by highlighting the strategic need for a bolder nuclear policy. In one of the most renowned and influential strategic papers of the Cold War, the NSC-68, Truman's advisers argued that since "a new fanatic faith" animated Soviets' intentions—a creed that was opposite to every single American value—the USA had to use any means at its disposal, including nuclear weapons, to counter it.[5] The White House officials maintained that the best course of action for the USA was to respond with a massive buildup of its weaponry so as to inhibit Soviets' increasing hostility. Only with the USA reaching an "overwhelming atomic superiority" and therefore obtaining "command of the air," the document concluded, could the USSR be "deterred from employing its atomic weapons."[6]

As a consequence of this strategic turn, the USA was increasingly relying on its scientific superiority to achieve a stable equilibrium in the Cold War and it was gradually transforming its nuclear arsenal into the cornerstone of its national security and defense.[7] Such a reliance on technological developments generated an intense debate within the national scientific community and, in particular, two divergent standpoints emerged rapidly.

On the one hand, a few scientists working at the US Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) agreed with the policy planners and pushed for further nuclear developments too. Within this chorus, Admiral Lewis Strauss called for "an intensive effort" to build a so-called super-bomb, arguing that only "a superior weapon" would retire an atomic one. Well-known atomic scientists, such as Edward Teller, Ernest Lawrence, and Karl Compton joined Strauss' appeal to build new weapons which would be "critically useful against a large enemy force both as a weapon of offense and as a defensive measure."[8] Teller, in particular, argued that a new, more powerful weapon would eventually be able to interrupt the arms race itself. International control of atomic energy, according to him, was a false myth, a naïve and dangerous attempt to crystallize the international balance of power. The renowned political scientist, Hans J. Morgenthau, also upheld the claim that nuclear deterrence was the way forward. He stigmatized nuclear disarmament as "a by-product of political settlement."[9] In sum, Communism, which was seen as a Moscow-orchestrated conspiracy intent on dominating the world, had to be destroyed by any means necessary, with no limits or control.[10, 11]

On the other hand, a few dissenting voices questioned such a yearning for nuclear buildup. These dissenters championed another form of security and argued that nuclear deterrence could not preserve international stability and peace because it could not eliminate the risk of nuclear war.[12] The AEC General Advisory Committee, which was chaired by J. Robert Oppenheimer and composed of many prominent scientists such as James B. Conant, Enrico Fermi, Cyril Smith, Lee DuBridge, and Isador I. Rabi, brought these voices together.[13] These scientists knew that the hypothetical use of the new thermonuclear weapons "would bring about the destruction of innumerable human lives." Due to the tremendous power of the H-bomb, its use would carry "much further than the atomic bomb itself the policy of exterminating civilian populations." For this reason, the "super-bomb" represented an intolerable "threat to the future of the human race," and its use, which would be an "inhuman application of force," would be neither strategically justified nor ethically countenanced. The release of radioactivity would provoke "very great natural catastrophes," a genocide at the end. Furthermore, the scientists argued, the retaliatory power of the US atomic stockpile was already adequate and the country's technological advantage made the super-bomb program superfluous.[14]

Although the AEC director, David Lilienthal, had agreed with these positions and believed that the H-bomb should not be the linchpin of the US foreign policy, Strauss' and Teller's line eventually prevailed and Lilienthal was forced into early retirement.[15] The administration opted for new thermonuclear weapons principally because it would be a "foolhardy altruism" to do otherwise and secondarily because no dissent hindered its choice in any effective way.[16] Three factors, in particular, helped the administration keep the momentum on its side. First, Mao's successful revolution and the eruption of the Korean War fostered fear of a possible Communist global epidemic and propped up the Cold War consensus, eroding public support for early anti-nuclear stances.[17] Second, the scarcity of technical details and the secrecy and complexity of the matter confined the early nuclear debate to military and scientific circles, where liberal scientists' moral appeals were easily dismissed as quixotic.[18] Finally, McCarthyism started labeling internal opponents as international enemies and contributed to the isolation of many American liberals, including Eleanor Roosevelt.

After she was confirmed as US representative to the UN General Assembly at the end of 1949, Mrs. Roosevelt tried to dutifully serve the administration. At the same time, however, she deplored unauthorized

congressional intrusion into private citizens' lives, which was being done under the auspices of the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC).[19] She considered HUAC's work and research methods as incompetent, unreliable, misleading, unwise, and unjust; as something akin to methods that had been used by Fascists and potentially subversive.[20] To Mrs. Roosevelt, the HUAC epitomized how "hysterical and foolish" the USA had become—a country permeated by an "atmosphere of a police state,"—in striking contrast to the idea of democracy that the former first lady believed the USA had to represent and protect.[21]

Mrs. Roosevelt publicly denounced Senator Joseph McCarthy as "the greatest menace to freedom" in the USA and ridiculed many of his charges and "ill informed" methods.[22] When the allegation of being soft on Communism reached organizations which she belonged to, such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), she answered by serving as their chairperson.[23] She disdained the provocative and anti-democratic red-baiting campaign because it stimulated what she called, "the politics of fear" and conflicted with the very ideal of individual freedom that she had always protected.[24] It was precisely to defend American scientists' individual freedom of speech from attacks hurled at them because of their positions on the nuclear debate that she decided to become their active voice.

When Eleanor Roosevelt launched a new weekly TV series, in February 1950, she purposely decided to gather a coterie of prominent scientists and let them freely explore nuclear matters. For her, "running a modern salon" was an unparalleled ability. She welcomed scientists, along with senators, academicians, and businessmen in a comfortable room at the Park Sheraton Hotel in New York City.[25] For five long weeks, her son Elliot and his colleague, former NBC executive producer Martin Jones, had worked to contact and convince all of the invited guests to take part in the show. In the end, they succeeded in providing scientists with a safe haven to talk about H-bombs and atomic energy. In the former first lady's opinion, these were the most important issues of the time, because they directly affected human life and future generations.

Mrs. Roosevelt placed her effort to promote an open nuclear debate on a continuum along with her husband's dream of peaceful international cooperation. "My husband believed that the people of this country would always have the courage to face reality […] It is my belief today that we as citizens of the United States can be the leaders in the search for a peace-

ful world." According to Mrs. Roosevelt, the people of the country had to face the gravity, urgency, and seriousness of nuclear matters, and the scientists had to be free to direct their appeals against the development of nuclear weapons.[26]

Questioned by Eleanor Roosevelt about the public role of science, her first guest, the outgoing AEC chairman, David Lilienthal, said that scientists' chief responsibility resided "in the fostering of knowledge generally, the basic knowledge of farmers," meaning it would be fundamental to inform the people about the forces of nature, which included the brightest as well as the darkest sides of nuclear power. Robert Oppenheimer, former codirector of the Manhattan Project, added that the growth of science was "a pre-condition to the health of our civilization." According to him, this inextricable relation made an issue that touched "the very basis of our morality" out of "the decision to seek or not to seek international control of atomic energy." The man who had supervised the scientific production of the first atomic bombs condemned the fact that such crucial decisions were taken on the basis of secrets. Oppenheimer considered it a grave danger "not because those who contributed to the decisions or make them are lacking in wisdom, [but] because wisdom itself cannot flourish and even the truth not be established, without the give and take of debate and criticism." He believed that, if guided by fear, the USA would fail to accomplish any of its missions: "The answer to fear can't always lie in the dissipation of its cause, but sometimes it lies in courage," he icily concluded.[27]

By Oppenheimer, at that time president of the Princeton Institute for Advanced Studies, privately confessed to Mrs. Roosevelt that "even a group of scientists is not proof against the errors of suggestion and hysteria" and that scientists' accounts are "fallible and subject to error." But since reaching a consensus, especially on nuclear matters, was such a troublesome and difficult task, dialogue, and free exchange of opinions had to be granted and promoted.[28] Amused by Oppenheimer's magisterial pronouncement in defense of scientists' freedom of thought, Eleanor Roosevelt passed the matter to Albert Einstein, who was introduced as "the dean of all scientists today." She asked him whether the USA, being pushed by fear of Communism and increasingly dwelling on national security, was creating something it might not be able to control.

A grim-voiced Einstein, in his first public TV appearance, warned of possible global annihilation. Within days, his speech appeared in the pages of a number of European, Russian, Australian, Japanese, and, of course,

American newspapers.[29] Einstein said that planning to achieve security through national armaments, in a nuclear era, was "a disastrous illusion." The security-through-military scheme had an unbearable cost and it undermined the core values of American democracy. "Concentration of tremendous power in the hands of the military," Einstein explained, along with "intimidation of people of independent political thinking, certain indoctrination of the public by radio, press, and schools" prevented people from clearly understanding the meaning and consequences of America's national security strategies. In the end, the armament race, which was originally intended as a preventive measure, had assumed instead a "hysterical character" that permeated both the public debate and the political agenda. Influenced by the assertion that arms prevented confrontation, US strategists and policy planners were about to build new and more powerful bombs, specifically hydrogen bombs, which "brought in the range of technical possibility" the radioactive poisoning of the atmosphere and annihilation of any life on Earth. Due to the catastrophic environmental consequences that dropping a thermonuclear bomb might have, Einstein invited American and Soviet leaders to realize that no peace could ever be achieved under such a hostile scheme. Peaceful international coexistence and even cooperation among nations were possible only by moving away from fear and mutual threats.

In line with Mrs. Roosevelt's long-standing internationalism, Einstein was forthright in speaking out against building, developing, and possessing means of indiscriminate mass destruction. He stressed the importance of empowering supra-national organizations in order to make a renunciation of nuclear weapons possible and efficient. He saw the dismantling of the elements of tension and the removal of the major obstacles to mutual understanding as the first and most important steps toward international peace. After all, as Einstein said concluding his intervention with his usual taste for aphorisms, "every kind of peaceful cooperation among men is primarily based on mutual trust, and only secondly on institutions."[30]

A visible look of approval crossed Hans Bethe's face at the conclusion of Einstein's recorded speech. A physicist who had worked at the Los Alamos nuclear laboratories to provide the USA with the first atomic bombs, Hans Bethe was the head of the Nuclear Studies Department at Cornell University at that time. Together with 11 colleagues of his, Bethe had drafted and signed a public appeal expressing utmost concern about the production of the H-bomb. While the A-bomb was introduced under the strain of war he explained, looking into Mrs. Roosevelt's eyes, the

H-bomb was being introduced in a time of peace. The problem, according to Bethe, was thus to understand what this step would imply and, above all, what the USA was ready to do with that weapon. This was not a rhetorical question, since "cities of the size of New York" could potentially "be obliterated by a single hydrogen bomb." The difference between an atomic bomb and a thermonuclear one, as Bethe clarified, was that while the former could still be applied to military targets, the hydrogen bomb could only produce "a wholesale destruction of civilian population" and therefore it did not have any military value. Bethe reiterated this contradiction and connected it to the idea of American values as a whole: "We dislike the Russian system because of the means it uses. It is a dictatorship; it suppresses human liberty; it disregards human dignity and human life. We believe in these values. Shall we defend these values by obliterating all Russians cities and their population"? Notwithstanding the strategic argument informing the deterrence theory, which justified both US possession of the H-bomb and its threat of retaliatory use, Bethe suggested that the USA officially declare it would never be the first to use the H-bomb. Such a unilateral action on the US side would not require "frustrating negotiations" with Russians that had undermined and weakened the UN's role and efficiency. On the contrary, Bethe believed that moves like that would represent important steps away from a war of apocalyptic consequences.[31]

The theme of outlawing the first use of the bomb recurred in Eleanor Roosevelt's speeches and articles many times that year. "I have always hoped that neither the atom nor hydrogen bomb would ever be used against any people," she wrote in her column in July. The use of those weapons "would start such a chain of fear and hate throughout the world that [they] might well end our civilization."[32] Later, she confessed to having heard people say, "If we wait for the children to grow up, perhaps we will all be destroyed by the atom bomb," and pointed out that that could happen "if we are idiots enough to use it." Her deepest hope was that the USA would never use its atomic bomb nor would it ever feel that it had to use it: "I hope, too, that we are worthy enough to have it so that we can use it to keep the peace. But we have to be a very strong and sure people with great confidence in ourselves to have something and not use it except to keep the peace."[33]

During one of her famous radio shows, she encouraged a professor from Columbia University to debunk a few popular misconceptions about the atomic and nuclear bombs. By hearing about the differences between the bombs in terms of the blast, the heat, and the radioactive effects of

an atomic explosion, people were instructed in the effects of an hypothetical nuclear bombing: in a snap, the power of 1000 suns would push the temperature up to 1 million degrees, thus making living conditions impossible for decades.[34] People had to realize that the use of this kind of bombs was a universal issue, "a problem which no one can escape." Any use of the bomb, according to the former first lady, would be a tragedy, a failure for mankind.

Objection to use of the bomb, however, was only one of the first issues concerning nuclear weapons that Eleanor Roosevelt publicly raised. To her, indeed, nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrence jeopardized some of the core principles of American democracy. First, she criticized the enormous waste of money that the arms race had generated and concurred with Senator Brian McMahon, a Democrat chairing the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy, in decrying the yearly investment of billions of dollars for weaponry. This element was of a particular significance, because it easily bracketed the nuclear debate with that "sense of the responsibility that each individual citizen carries," which Eleanor Roosevelt strongly promoted through her speeches and articles. Second, she deplored the secrecy surrounding nuclear policy, because she believed that only well-informed citizens would be able to fully understand the moral issues related to the spending of public money in the making of nuclear bombs. "The more facts we can gather about these weapons," she argued, "the better able we will be to make our decisions about the advisability" of their use and their effectiveness.[35] Third, Mrs. Roosevelt rebuked Truman and Acheson for promoting a negative image of the USA as a belligerent nation. Instead, she emphasized the need for international control and verification of nuclear armaments so as to improve the international reputation of the USA. Finally, she warned the administration against deceiving public opinion "by attaching the greatest importance to the proposed ends and only a secondary importance to the means by which we might attain these ends."[36] This criticism was directly addressed to Acheson, who had backed quite a vague three-power joint resolution at the UN and declared that it would set forth the prohibition of atomic weapons. Eleanor Roosevelt thought the USA would be able "to glimpse practical solutions" to nuclear problems, but she also wanted to remind the secretary of state that "in a world charged as ours is with suspicious and dangers," American people were striving for some kind of actual safeguards.[37]

She therefore pressed the administration to avoid bombastic announcements and to work hard to find realistic solutions to the nuclear arms race. She used one of her many metaphors to further stress this point: "Like most Americans, I have a garden. I know that nothing can really grow if the soil has not been cultivated, ploughed, and fertilized. Nothing grows in a poor soil. After the war, Europe's soil was poor. We knew then that a lasting peace could not grow from the arid soil of human misery, among the shambles of war, in the cold shade of despair. Today nothing is perfect. But we are firmly convinced that an agreement [on nuclear weapons] is possible if all nations will approach this task with good faith and a will to peace."[38]

In sum, Eleanor Roosevelt was a disenchanted analyst of the strategic value of nuclear weapons. She was also terrified of the possibility of starting an incontrollable nuclear war, which would, beyond any shadow of a doubt, "destroy civilization on earth." Unfortunately, the former first lady, along with many other public intellectuals and scientists, had to come to grips with just how difficult it was to persuade both public opinion and the politicians that "that [was] the truth…"[39]

Promoting the United Nations and Paying the Price

On December 17, 1951, Eleanor Roosevelt addressed the UN General Assembly. Her theme was "Freedoms We Do Not Want to Lose" and she reminded her fellow international delegates that the people of the world wanted them "to translate promises into performance." Due to the deteriorating international situation, that reminder immediately sounded like an invitation to put under international control all kinds of weapons, including nuclear ones, so that warfare could be effectively outlawed. There would not be any "peace-time usage" of atomic energy, nor would it be possible to reach any stable peace, unless the UN directly controlled the production of fissionable material. Mrs. Roosevelt explained this idea very clearly, with another one of her widely understood metaphors: "Suppose I held in my right hand a small block of Uranium 235 […] I am going to call it 'the stuff that explodes.' This stuff is what people the world over want to have put under international control so it cannot be used in weapons. Suppose I held in my left hand a piece of paper on which I had written those words: 'Cross my heart, I promise never to use the explosive stuff in a bomb if you will agree to let me keep it and use it as I please.' Now I ask you: do you want signatures of foreign ministers on this piece of paper, or do you want to have the United Nations control this stuff?"[40]

With that speech, Eleanor Roosevelt brought to the foreground the momentousness of international control of atomic energy and the urgency of nuclear disarmament. Both control and disarmament were necessary to give substance to the UN Charter and consequently lessen people's mounting apprehension. "Somehow it seems to me that the people of the world today want peace and in some curious way we cannot arrange to sit down around the table and do the discussing before we've killed the lot of our young people in the different nations, instead of afterwards," she had acknowledged during a radio show at the beginning of 1950.[41] Almost two years later, however, she seemed to be a bit more optimistic.

This was due to a change evident in Truman and his administration. They had begun to pursue the course of international dialogue and had decided to back new multilateral talks at the UN. In a radio commentary, Eleanor Roosevelt avowed that the president was earnestly interested in seeking new prospects for a disarmament conference. She reported that even if Truman were not expecting miracles, "he wanted to be sure that sincere and constant efforts were being made towards that goal." She remarked pragmatically that a few things, "slow progresses to be sure," had been done in the right direction and that the UN delegates "were not going to let anything or anyone discourage" them from achieving their aims. Secretary of State Dean Acheson and many Congressmen reiterated the same requests and showed the same desire to see the UN settle the disarmament problem. According to Mrs. Roosevelt, discussions of disarmament had to be connected to the establishment of a system of collective security, which would make it possible not to be intimidated by international threats or aggression. "It will be logical to speak with confidence of disarmament once we have defined the attitude of nations and peoples toward the aggressor. Our aim, therefore, is to outlaw both the aggressor and the aggressive spirit."[42]

As a consequence, Eleanor Roosevelt looked at the establishment of the UN Disarmament Commission as a "great step forward" and the best opportunity for banning atomic and nuclear weapons.[43] Closing the weekly radio series that she broadcast in French from Paris, Eleanor Roosevelt outspokenly appealed to people of the world to uphold the broader UN humanitarian mission, which included the pursuit of nuclear disarmament: "It is very difficult indeed, to clasp hands through barbed wire […] Nevertheless, we must not allow ourselves to be too discouraged by those difficulties. We must persevere. We must accomplish the aims set by the disarmament commission and by the other commissions with

humanitarian, social and economic objectives. This is the animating spirit of the United Nations."[44] The former first lady believed that, although many of the UN agencies were achieving important results in their specific fields—as was the case of the World Health Organization or UNESCO—the most urgent duty of the UN remained establishing international control of atomic power and the renewal of serious disarmament efforts.

One of Mrs. Roosevelt's main interests was to make people aware of the insanity hidden behind the arms race and to do this in layman's language so that people themselves could call upon the authorities to do what was needed: "In each possible area we must build knowledge in our people – not fear, – knowledge – and we must build courage, and we must build faith in the future. This can be developed if we have patience and strength and courage. If we do, I think we really contribute to the leadership of the world."[45] In Mrs. Roosevelt's opinion, the gathering together of a pool of experts was the only way to reach "nothing short of absolute control" of fissionable materials. She assumed that these experts' work would be "of much greater value than the signature of many foreign ministers affixed to pieces of paper." Due to the dangerous international situation, she trusted the work of a commission of experts more than she did a mere declaration of principles. Disarmament and international control of atomic energy, indeed, had to be absolute or they could not be at all. "Even if there is some interference [in the internal affairs of sovereign states]," she used to reply to the critics of the international control of atomic energy, "it is a small price to pay for the elimination of a menace which hangs over us all."[46]

Throughout the 1950s, it was precisely this kind of public appeal that made Eleanor Roosevelt one of the most admired women in the world.[47] She was considered among the smartest diplomats and the most skilled politicians in the USA.[48] *Time* magazine, after having deemed her "the best known woman in the world," chose to put her on its cover, as a tribute to the "jet plane with a fringe on top" that was shaping world diplomacy with her trips and speeches.[49] Many national and international newspapers stressed the valuable results of Mrs. Roosevelt's diplomatic activity, characterized both by international visits—in 1952, for instance, she traveled through Asia, the Middle East, and Europe—but first and foremost, by her personal promotion of and commitment to the UN.

Of course, the issuing of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* in 1948 had played a major role in binding her name together with the UN's. That achievement, however, had not exhausted her efforts toward

international cooperation and peace, which she considered crucial to the full deployment of human rights. By the early 1950s, the promotion of the idea, the role, and the significance of the UN became the most important part of Mrs. Roosevelt's job as public commentator. She felt it was of the utmost importance to explain the broader mission of the UN, so that the people of the world would be able to understand the value and benefits of multilateral diplomacy. Talking to a conference in November 1952, she called for people's active mobilization and told them not to expect the UN to work by itself. Instead, they had to be involved in its procedures and to support it practically: "One thing which I feel very strongly about is the necessity to have the United Nations understood and to support it. We should feel a responsibility in our own communities, as individuals, and as groups, to live up to the ideals of democracy, remembering that we have become a symbol of democracy to the whole world. Probably the best thing we can do to back up the United Nations is to show that a democracy can mobilize its people to live up to its highest ideals."[50]

She believed that people should acquaint themselves with the work of UN agencies and spread information about them all over the world. As she explained it to her readers in a thorough article in May 1952, promoting UN agencies concretely implied backing the UN covenant on human rights, a sort of "International Bill of Human Rights" that Eleanor Roosevelt and her fellow delegates to the UN Human Rights Commission had prepared.[51] That document—or set of documents, as the Commission had proposed two covenants, one on civil and the other on social and economic rights—would implement the provisions of the Declaration and, above all, it would be legally binding for states that ratified it.[52]

Eleanor Roosevelt knew, however, that ratification in the USA was not an easy mission to accomplish. It was a political struggle, one of particular difficulty. It faced the traditional isolationist wings of Congress and a mounting Republican dissatisfaction with any step toward the relaxation of international tension. Ultimately, the result of this struggle contributed to isolating Eleanor Roosevelt and many other American liberals along with her. A sign of this trend was the Senate's refusal to ratify the UN convention on genocide, thus making it clear that the Senate would not accept any attempt to limit US national sovereignty on internationally relevant matters such as human rights. Moreover, Republican senator John Bricker formally asked the president to withdraw from UN negotiations, "with respect to the Covenant on Human Rights," arguing that it would be unconstitutional and it would undermine the rights of US citizens.[53]

Deeply disappointed, Eleanor Roosevelt replied that the covenant did not imply any kind of renunciation of national sovereignty nor did it advocate values that might be regarded as anti-American, like Communism, Socialism, or statism.[54] According to the former first lady, American democracy had the opportunity to show its greatest value and moral superiority, especially in the humanitarian field, but the refusal to sign and ratify the covenant was risking putting the USA "in the same position as is the U.S.S.R."[55] In her column she warned that without supporting "great humanitarian treaties […] we are going to be classed in the category of backward countries."[56]

The failure to bind the nation together with an international treaty safeguarding human rights was due to several factors. A mix of misconceptions and ideological biases prevented the UN's work on human rights from gaining widespread acceptance. In the 1950s America, only 24 percent of the people believed that the supra-national organization was effectively protecting human rights.[57] Furthermore, the press, politicians of every stripe, and commentators contributed to the spread of a sense of distrust of multilateral institutions. Eleanor Roosevelt could not accept the UN being ridiculed in political debate and kept up her hard work to dismiss the fallacies that were undermining the reputation of the UN in her own country.

For instance, she deemed the Republican attacks led by Senator Pat McCarran, who proposed to rout out Communists countries from the UN, as deeply anti-democratic and wrung her hands over Republicans' dismissal of multilateral diplomacy.[58] This controversy gave shape to many of her political speeches and also marked her address to the pivotal Democratic National Convention during the presidential election of 1952. On that occasion, the former first lady stressed the international significance of the United Nations (UN) and placed the work of that organization in continuity with her husband's vision of international politics. Without the UN, the USA would be "ruled by fear instead of confidence and hope." The USA should not forget FDR's recommendation that civilization survived only through the cultivation of human relationships, and it was the UN that put that recommendation into practice internationally.[59] "To achieve peace," Mrs. Roosevelt told the democratic delegates, "we must recognize the historic truth that we can no longer live apart from the rest of the world. We must also recognize the fact that peace, like freedom, is not won once and for all. It is fought for daily, in many small acts, and is the result of many individual efforts […] We should remember

that the United Nations is not a cure-all. It is only an instrument capable of effective action when its members have a will to make it work."[60]

The main consequence of these public remarks in favor of the UN, amid an unsuccessful electoral campaign for her party, was that Eleanor Roosevelt's official role as US delegate to the UN became a political issue. Many Republicans questioned it and, after General Dwight D. Eisenhower's victory, it soon came to an abrupt end.[61] Her yearlong struggle for the promotion of international cooperation, human rights, multilateral diplomacy, disarmament, and peace was suddenly overshadowed by the new administration's posture on foreign policy.

As regards the international role of the UN and its disarmament mission, both Eisenhower and his new secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, had been muscular in their public utterances. Dulles, on the one hand, emphasized the significance of the intervention in Korea, which he considered a precedent in defense of collective security—the main goal of the UN, according to him. Eisenhower, on the other hand, stressed that "in a disarmed world – should it be attained – there must be an effective United Nations, with a police power universally recognized and strong enough to earn universal respect." Only through the UN's legitimate use of force, in the former general's opinion, could individual nations efficiently use their power "for policing the continents and the seas against *international* lawlessness."[62]

Such a "policy of boldness," as it came to be known, and the doctrine of "massive retaliation" that Eisenhower and Dulles were willing to pursue, magnified the significance of nuclear weapons. More specifically, the US nuclear arsenal became the only means that would effectively prevent a surprise attack from the Soviet bloc.[63] Eisenhower accepted many of Truman's national security policy basics and eventually incorporated them in the strong belief that the "U.S. security in the Cold War required the establishment of a preponderance of American power."[64] That preponderance of power was defined, of course, mainly in nuclear terms. Moreover, the decision to further invest in nuclear armaments was consistent with traditional Republican budget demands, meshing as it did with the claim that nuclear weapons would allow drastic cuts in conventional armaments. Accordingly, US nuclear weapons would serve a twofold purpose: to press the Soviets and to force a reassessment of the internal defense budget. The epitome of this new approach was the National Security Council paper number 162/2, a document that set forth the broad outline of the Eisenhower administration's *New Look* defense strategy.[65]

Document 162/2 depicted nuclear weapons as the most reliable deterrent to Soviet expansion. They were regarded as instruments of offensive power, "as available for use as other munitions" in the event of hostilities, and also as essential substitutes for ruinous spending on larger conventional forces. The strategy paper stated, "the major deterrent to [Soviet] aggression" was "the manifest determination of the United States to use its atomic capability and massive retaliatory striking power."[66] By adopting the recommendations of the NSC 162/2, the USA had decided that the mere possession of a nuclear arsenal would not sufficiently deter the Soviet Union from being aggressive. Instead, the credible inclination to use nuclear weapons and the consequent menace of an all-out war—so called "massive retaliation"—would be the cheapest and most effective way to maintain US security.[67] As historian David Holloway has pointed out, with the appearance of the NSC 162/2 nuclear deterrence definitely became "the organizing principle of the U.S. national security policy."[68]

This strategic turn deeply affected the US's behavior at the UN. On the surface, as Eisenhower stated in his message to the opening of the ninth session of the Human Rights Commission in May 1953, the US confirmed its commitment to safeguarding human rights and fundamental freedoms through the UN. When Oswald B. Lord took his office on the Human Rights Commission to replace Eleanor Roosevelt, he pompously defended the Universal Declaration and defined it as "the greatest single achievement of the United Nations in the promotion of human freedom." As well, Lord recognized the work that had been done in the drafting of the covenants on Human Rights, which represented an "arduous effort to translate the moral precepts of the Universal Declaration" into legal prescripts. The real intent of the US administration, however, was the dismissal of any multilateral negotiations for a treaty that would safeguard human rights internationally. Instead the USA proposed establishing national advisory committees, limited in scope to assisting governments in preparing annual reports on human rights.[69]

Piqued by this new approach, Eleanor Roosevelt did not hide her discontent and widely publicized it through her columns. "I had heard rumors that this abandonment of the human rights covenants was to be the position of the State Department and the Administration, but it was hard to believe that it would be done in quite the way it has been done," was her first complaint. To her, the claim that that treaty would change American social customs or legal practices was "an utterly strange position to take." She was irritated enough to write that, if the administration

had asked her to continue with her appointment at the Human Rights Commission, she would be "in the unpleasant position of having to resign in the face of the Administration's attitude toward these covenants." The USA was losing the opportunity to help "vast numbers of people" gain the same rights that every American citizen normally enjoyed. In Mrs. Roosevelt's biting words, by renouncing the ratification of the covenants, the USA was selling out to the "Brickers and McCarthys." She recognized with sadness that it was "a sorry day for the honor and good faith" of the American administration, "in relation to our interest in the human rights and freedoms of people throughout the world."[70]

The very day after this article appeared, Eleanor Roosevelt wrote a column in which she added fuel to flames. She accused President Eisenhower of making empty proclamations, without any clear indication of how the people of the world could attain their peace and freedom. She amply ridiculed Dulles' idea that "no legal instrument capable of wide ratification in the world today would have any value" and that it was impossible "to codify standards of human rights as binding legal obligations." Their attitudes, she added, were in contrast to the long-standing American promotion of human rights and they risked alienating support from US allies, who would feel "lost and perhaps a little contemptuous of our fears." This was such a monumental mistake, according to the former first lady, that "the Administration and our statesmen should feel somewhat embarrassed" by it.[71]

Even more importantly, Eleanor Roosevelt's struggle against the hard-liners, the opponents of an international agreement on human rights or disarmament, captivated different layers of the population as well as several organizations and pressure groups that supported moderation in nuclear policies and demanded progress in nuclear disarmament and human rights negotiations. They sought to use the grievances she articulated so well to back up their own demands.[72] Groups like the League of Women Voters asked Mrs. Roosevelt to help them "prevent growing apathy toward the U.N." and "stimulate greater confidence, faith, and patience toward it." A number of women's groups lamented that a great "confusion about the U.N." informed American public debate. The Committee for World Development and World Disarmament, a subcommission of the New York chapter of the WILPF funded by the Jane Addams Peace Association, joined Eleanor Roosevelt in advocating a bold program for total disarmament under the supervision of the UN.[73] The Women's National Organizations, an umbrella organization chaired by

Mrs. Williams Barclay Parsons, asked Eleanor Roosevelt to declare that the UN was the only hope for disarmament and peace in the future. Such an appeal from Eleanor Roosevelt would reassure at least the 26,000,000 women that the organization claimed to represent and would represent a contrast to the mounting mistrust of the UN.[74]

More than 20 organizations asked Mrs. Roosevelt to submit a declaration to the US ambassador to the UN, stating that American women welcomed the establishment of the Disarmament Commission and wished it "every success in its long and difficult task of developing comprehensive, coordinate plans, under international control, 'for the regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments, for the elimination of all major weapons adoptable to mass destruction and for the effective international control of atomic energy to ensure the prohibition of atomic weapons and the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes only.'" According to these women's organizations, Eleanor Roosevelt shared with them the same compelling desire "for a radical limitation and reduction of all armed forces and armaments" and was therefore the perfect channel through which international disarmament should be promoted.[75]

In order to boost their anti-nuclear message and spread their pacifist stance, radical groups like the National Council Against Conscription also contacted Eleanor Roosevelt. The director of the National Council Against Conscription and future national secretary of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, John M. Swomley, Jr. asked her to embrace the dichotomy of "total disarmament or total war."[76] Religious organizations such as the Church Peace Union proposed that she publicly emphasize the importance of disarmament and peace, since "international society has gone from spears and arrows to battleships and bombs, from tribal wars to world wars, from attacks upon armed warriors to attacks upon helpless men, women and children, and finally to the destruction of all life and all sources of life for years to come."[77]

The executive director of the American Association for the UN (AAUN), Clark Eichelberger, looked for Eleanor Roosevelt's help too, and asked her to keep informing citizens, since "the daily press carries practically no information on the events there, and our ignorance of what is confronting the U.N. is really abysmal."[78] In a letter he wrote to Eleanor Roosevelt, Eichelberger complained that "the attack upon human rights programs has reached fantastic proportions" and groaned about the presence of "some very definite reactionary self-interest groups" behind it.[79]

Neither this varied pressure nor Eleanor Roosevelt's stinging pen, however, was enough to erode the widespread Cold War consensus permeating 1950s American public opinion. Instead, it increasingly supported Eisenhower and his officers and their assertive nuclear postures. Those who accused both superpowers of promoting war through their nuclear arms race, and those who regarded nuclear deterrence as "a vaccine that poses greater risks than the disease," were often trivialized and labeled as radicals or blamed for supporting Communist propaganda.[80] With few exceptions, no pacifist organization efficiently campaigned against Eisenhower's boastful program giving atomic energy a positive image.[81] By spreading nuclear secrets among Western allies—the so-called Nuclear Sharing program—and promoting the *Atoms for Peace* campaign, the Eisenhower administration succeeded in depicting nuclear arsenals as inevitable and fairly innocuous elements of American security and foreign policy.[82]

On the whole, these moves strengthened the idea that nuclear weapons were contributing to national prosperity as well as to international stability and peace.[83] Thus, when in December 1953, Eisenhower submitted a plan on atomic energy at the UN, which did not signal any agreement on nuclear weapons, nevertheless, Eleanor Roosevelt welcomed it as the sign that neither the president or the secretary of state *a priori* refused to discuss with the Soviets. She promptly defined the plan as "a step forward," adding that "everyone must congratulate the President." The harshness of her criticism, however, had been shelved only momentarily.

A Turning Point

Triumphalism was not appropriate in a period of nuclear confrontation. The hopes raised by the Korean armistice and Stalin's death in 1953 were short lived, dulled by news of the first successful Soviet thermonuclear test, in mid-August of that year. This event exacerbated Western fears and induced American strategists to push ahead with an unruly arms race, of which nuclear testing became the quintessential element.[84] The Atomic Energy Commission's (AEC) new, unyielding director, Admiral Lewis Strauss—who was one of Robert Oppenheimer's most obstinate foes—was a fierce supporter of the doctrine of deterrence and allowed nuclear testing to intensify. In 1953 and 1954, Strauss supervised operations *Upshot-Knothole* and *Castle*, which consisted of a series of 17 nuclear tests carried out in the desert of Nevada and on the Pacific atoll of Bikini, in the Marshall Islands. There, in March 1954, a 15 megatons bomb called

Shrimp obliterated an entire island and produced a series of unexpected consequences that troubled the Eisenhower administration, which at that time was also paradoxically committed to the promotion of a positive image of atomic power.[85]

Within a quarter of an hour *Shrimp*'s two-stage thermonuclear reaction released a dramatic amount of radiations into the atmosphere. The radiation level detected by American analysts at the control base of Eneu began to rise rapidly, due to the strong wind carrying the mushroom cloud over the ocean. An hour after the explosion, the radioactive level had reached 40 roentgens per hour (R/hr).[86] The supervisory personnel of the test were evacuated from the control room and moved 11 hours away into a safe underground bunker. Nuclear dust reached and contaminated a US Navy vessel, about 30 miles away from Bikini atoll, and the crew was ordered to withdraw immediately. The day after the test, 28 people were evacuated from the weather station at Rongerik, about 133 miles from the test site. Furthermore, on the morning of March 3, the second day after the test, 236 Marshallese inhabitants, who lived just 100 miles from the explosion, were forced to evacuate their homes.[87] There was the contamination of a Japanese fishing boat as well, the *Daigo Fukuryū Maru*, or *Lucky Dragon V*, whose 23 crew members were exposed to nuclear radiation at a phenomenally high level of about 300 R/hr.[88]

The entire Bikini atoll was contaminated up to a radius of 280 miles from the site of the explosion.[89] The fallout generated by the test impressed the experts, further shook the scientific community, and embarrassed the Eisenhower administration. After the *Lucky Dragon* accident, fear of contamination became a vivid, global issue. The debate over the dangerous health effects of high exposure to ionizing radiation could no longer be restricted to the narrow circles of military and scientific elites. The radioactive cloud had made many scientists' long-standing concerns immediately and dramatically visible to the general public. Even Secretary of State John F. Dulles had to warn Strauss of "the dire consequences" that these tests produced on global public opinion. According to the secretary, "the general impression around the world is that Americans are appropriating a vast part of the ocean for their own use," and therefore something had to be done in order to "moderate the wave of hysteria unleashed by the reactions to the testing results."[90] The accident had publicly shown and scientifically clarified how uncontrolled radioactive fallout could be. The official analyses of the test results confirmed that a bomb like *Shrimp* could "be expected to deposit radiological fall-out over areas of about 5,000 square miles or more" in unpredictable intensities.[91]

Due to these developments, liberal scientists went to the barricades to denounce the insanity of nuclear testing. In September 1953, right after the explosion of the first Soviet H-bomb, the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* moved its "Doomsday Clock" two minutes closer to midnight. An increasing number of scientists wanted to make the public aware of the risks from nuclear fallout. Harshly criticizing Dulles' *New Look* strategy and its retaliatory assumption, the *Bulletin* editor, Eugene Rabinowitch, wrote that the alarming news from the Pacific had given only a "frightening foretaste" of what massive retaliation could really mean. According to Rabinowitch, "only frank and thorough presentation of all the facts can give the people of America and of the world an understanding of the far-reaching military, economic, and political decisions, made imperative by the advent of atomic and thermonuclear weapons, and without which they will continue drifting toward disaster."[92] Hans Bethe gloomily added that, in the field of atomic weapons, the USA had "called the tune since the end of the war, both in quality and in quantity" and therefore the USSR had no choice but to follow "or be a second-class power." Reiterating such a pattern through continuous thermonuclear testing was nothing but "a calamity."[93]

Accordingly, as historians Lawrence Wittner, Paul Boyer, Robert Divine, and Spencer Weart have already elaborately shown, right after the Bikini test, assessing the effects of radioactive fallout on human health became a hot issue among scientists and administration officials, and an element of increasing alarm for common people.[94] By the end of March 1954, Strauss had declared that the increase in the level of harmful radiation produced by the tests was minimal.[95] AEC members, Willard Libby, Shields Warren, and Austin Brues, downplayed the hazardous nature of nuclear fallout and affirmed that a safe threshold actually did exist.[96] On the other side, California Institute of Technology professors, Hermann Muller and Alfred H. Sturtevant were far less optimistic than their colleagues. For example, while addressing the Pacific division of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Sturtevant discussed evidence that proved the dangerous effects that radioactive fallout had on human health, which included severe genetic mutations. [97] He ridiculed the idea of a safe threshold as "highly improbable" and implied that multiple exposures had a cumulative effect. [98] Linus Pauling, quoting this and many other researches that attested to the direct relationship between nuclear radiation and harmful genetic mutations, asked Libby what argument he could possibly have "to show that there is no danger."[99] Nuclear physicist and

founding member of the Federation of American Scientists, David Inglis, whose articles in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, *Saturday Review*, and the *New Republic* had been highly influential in raising public awareness of the dire implications of radioactive fallout, wrote in *The Washington Post* that due to the newest technological advances, the entire architecture of the US arms control policy was obsolete and the discussion of nuclear disarmament needed a dramatic fresh start.[100]

Due to her personality and her humanitarian interests, Eleanor Roosevelt could not resist taking part in such a kaleidoscopic debate and she eventually shared many of the national and international scientific community's concerns. A month after the US test in Bikini, she confessed to having "carefully read the explanation given about the H-bomb" and coming to the conclusion that, since scientists were not able to know beforehand the exact results of nuclear testing, the USA should give "ample warming" to other nations before launching any new test. It also had to be ready "to negotiate within the United Nations for the control of these great and destructive forces."[101]

A passionate appeal followed a few days later. Mrs. Roosevelt invited people to pay attention to the socio-economic consequences of nuclear fallout and to their impact on the international public image of the USA. "Whether we should continue the experiments is something I think our government should seriously consider," the former first lady remarked.[102] Telling her readers how concerned Japanese people were about the fate of the contaminated fishermen, "who are slowly dying as a result of injuries incurred," Eleanor Roosevelt invited Americans to empathize with "everyone injured in connection with one of our experiments."[103] In a radio interview on *Meet the Press*, she also worried about the enormous expenditures and the huge investment in civil defense that these new devices implied and again pressed for further multilateral negotiations.[104]

It was under these circumstances, with a growing public interest in nuclear tests and policies that Eleanor Roosevelt decided to pay a visit to the American Museum of Atomic Energy, an institution that was established in 1949 at the Oak Ridge Institute of Nuclear Studies, near Knoxville, Tennessee. She listened to the Institute director, Dr. William G. Pollard's accurate explanation of nuclear reaction and was lectured about the release of ionizing radiation. With careful attention, Mrs. Roosevelt examined an advanced Geiger counter, the fundamental device used to measure the level of radiation in the atmosphere and therefore help populations avoid lethal irradiation. She was fascinated by all of the medical discoveries

that would help dissipate any doubts about the real risk of nuclear fallout. Recounting the experience to her readers, she admitted of having been "particularly interested" in a study "of the breeding records of cattle accidentally exposed to radiation effects following the test explosion of the first atomic bomb at Alamogordo." The significance of that experiment, indeed, was the data it would provide, which might add new insights into "the possible effects on human beings exposed to radiation."[105]

The visit to Oak Ridge Institute marked a deep change in Mrs. Roosevelt's attitude toward nuclear matters. The ways in which nuclear testing affected citizens' lives, threatened future generations, and destroyed human environments distressed her even more than the ideological discussions over the strategic impact of keeping an arsenal of such apocalyptic weapons. Her tone and approach became increasingly moralistic. In this, she was influenced by a number of public commentators and prominent figures who were outspokenly and bitterly criticizing the new nuclear developments. With the hope of awakening people's conscience, her messages and public statements followed the path many intellectuals had set out in those years. Among those intellectuals, probably no singular individual nurtured the growing anti-nuclear demands more than the British mathematician and philosopher, Bertrand Russell.[106]

In the wake of the Bikini accident, Russell became one of the fiercest and most active opponents of nuclear testing. He insisted that, to make the world safe from nuclear annihilation, all fissionable raw material be placed under the control of an international authority. His first plea appeared in the pages of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, where he described the H-bomb as the gravest danger to mankind.[107] Second, he spoke on the BBC program *The Listener* and appealed to the leaders of the world, "as a human being to human beings," to remember their "humanity and forget the rest" and let a ban on nuclear experimentations become a reality. Finally, Russell gathered together a group of the world's most distinguished scientists, including Albert Einstein, Niels Bohr, Otto Hahn, Harold Urey, Max Born, Frederic Joliot-Curie, and Cecil F. Powel, to prepare a public statement that would make it clear, beyond any doubt, that the new technological achievements had transformed the meaning of war into the potential "extinction of life on this planet."[108] Russell's draft document received an impressive number of endorsements and was presented to the public in London by a young British scientist named Joseph Rotblat, who was the only scientist to have left the Manhattan Project while it was still a work in progress. The document, known as the *Russell-Einstein Manifesto,* circulated widely and soon became very influential.[109]

In line with Russell's concerns, many other intellectuals decided to enter the arena of nuclear debate. *The New York Times*, for instance, published a letter from the American humanist Lewis Mumford, who asked for an end to the testing of these "horrifying means of destruction."[110] The 1952 Nobel Peace Prize winner, Dr. Albert Schweitzer, who was one of the world's best-known humanitarian activists and at that time still worked as physician and missionary in a remote hospital in the jungle of the French Equatorial Africa, sent a letter of alarm to the London *Daily Herald*, inviting the people of the world to listen to every scientist's word about nuclear weapons. Scientists, indeed, were the only ones who could have a real and deep understanding of the risks that were connected to the development of nuclear weapons. People needed the knowledge of the scientists to reject further nuclear developments. According to Schweitzer, scientists had a special responsibility to talk to the world and tell mankind the truth about nuclear fallout.[111] He also stressed this point in his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, symbolically titled *The Problems of Peace*, when he stated that "even large-scale tests could unleash catastrophes threatening the very existence of the human race."[112]

Many voices criticized the idea that nuclear weapons were legitimate and of strategic value on both sides of the Atlantic. An unprecedented opposition to nuclear testing emerged, and various anti-nuclear demands became part of the popular consensus.[113] Indeed, in July 1955, a Gallup poll reported that 74 percent of Americans favored an international agreement to outlaw the first use of nuclear weapons. Moreover, 67 percent of respondents supported a multilateral agreement to reduce nuclear armaments. Only 44 percent of those interviewed agreed with the use of American nuclear devices in case of a Soviet invasion of Western Europe and the same percentage favored a unilateral suspension of nuclear testing.[114] These figures notwithstanding, a highly structured and convincing propaganda campaign paved the way for the Eisenhower administration to continue pursuing its assertive nuclear policy.[115]

Accordingly, to fight for the public's attention in an effective way, the intellectual opposition needed some kind of professional structure and coordination. Even efforts of organizations like the World Council of Churches, which in 1955 formally asked the US administration to prohibit nuclear weapons and continue multilateral negotiations, were neither enough to produce any substantial change in nuclear policies nor galvanize people into action.[116] Eleanor Roosevelt understood the need and, mostly through her rhetoric and political influence, she helped anti-nuclear protesters and leaders enter a new phase, in which people took to the streets to defend their future and the *sanity* of their societies.

Notes

1. See Gregg Herken, *The Winning Weapon: The Atomic Bomb in the Cold War, 1945–1950* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 46.
2. See Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light. American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 102.
3. This is well described by Shane J. Maddock, *Nuclear Apartheid*: *The Quest for American Atomic Supremacy from World War II to the Present* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).
4. See Joseph Cirincione, *Bomb Scare: The History and Future of Nuclear Weapons* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 21.
5. See Melvyn P. Leffler, "The Emergence of an American Grand Strategy, 1945-1952," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume 1*, eds. Melvyn P. Leffler, Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 83–84.
6. See Campbell Craig, Sergey Radchenko, *The Atomic Bomb and the Origins of the Cold War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 111.
7. See Melvyn P. Leffler in *The Specter of Communism: The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1917-1953* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994), where the author well explains how the Cold War took shape when ideological rivalry merged with fear of Soviet expansion.
8. See Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb. Volume 1. One World or None: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement Through 1953* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), 257.
9. Hans J. Morgenthau, "The H-Bomb and After," in *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, vol. VI, no. 1 (March 1950): 76-77.
10. See Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light*, 101.
11. See, for example, Daniel Yergin, *Shattered Peace: The Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977); Malvin P. Leffler in *The Specter of Communism: The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1917-1953* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994) well explains how the Cold War took shape when ideological rivalry merged with fear of Soviet expansion; finally, see Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light*.
12. See Thomas R. Rochon, *Mobilizing for Peace: The Antinuclear Movements in Western Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 55.
13. See Paul P. Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light*, 103.
14. And invite, simultaneously, "the nations of the world to join us in a solemn pledge not to proceed in the development or construction of weapons of this category." See "General Advisory Committee's Majority and Minority Reports on Building the H-Bomb, October 30, 1949." It's possible to find the document on the PBS-American Experience website,

http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/bomb/filmmore/reference/primary/extractsofgeneral.html. Moreover, talking about the effects of these new weapons, Hans Bethe clearly included total "annihilation" in the number of possibilities, see Lawrence S. Wittner, *Rebels Against War: The American Peace Movement, 1933-1983* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984), 200. With a few colleagues of him, Linus Pauling also wrote an "Open Letter to President Truman," in which the scientists argued that "the decision to manufacture the hydrogen bomb has thrown a shadow of horror across the homes and minds of all Americans." Grimly, they added: "In the full belief that we speak for millions of ordinary men and women throughout our country and the world over whom this horror hangs, we insist that there can and must be an alternative path which leads to peace, rather than the path to certain global catastrophe imminent in a H-bomb. We urge, Mr. President, that you immediately instruct the American delegation to the United Nations to present positive proposals through appropriate channels for an agreement whereby the use of atomic weapons, whether A-bombs, H-bombs, or other machines of mass destruction will be banned […] so that the threat of atomic catastrophe can be lifted from the peoples of the world." See "Open Letter to President Truman, February 9, 1950," Linus Pauling and the International Peace Movement, web archive, at http://osulibrary.oregonstate.edu/specialcollections/coll/pauling/peace/corr/peace6.007.3.html.

15. See McGeorge Bundy, *Danger and Survival: Choices about the Bomb in the First Fifty Years* (New York: Random House), 1988, 176-184. Eleanor Roosevelt regretted Lilienthal's forced resignation and publicly sympathized with him: "Mr. Lilienthal, on behalf of all of us who are citizens of this country and as sign of our appreciation for your many years of public service, I would like to present you this token of our gratitude," the former first lady said by presenting him a silver plate after having hosted him in a radio show. "We regret your resignation from the post of chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission […] I think I couldn't tell you how much I regret you are going," she concluded. See Franklyn D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum, Recorded Speeches and Utterances by Eleanor Roosevelt, 1933-1962, February 12, 1950, *Today with Mrs. Roosevelt: "Atomic Energy and the H-Bomb,"* 75-78: 23.
16. See Richard Rhodes, Dark Sun: the Making of the Hydrogen Bomb (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995), 406. See also Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb. Volume 1*, 258 and Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light*, 105.
17. See U.S. National Archives Records Administration (NARA), Record Group (Rg) 59, General Records of the Department of State, Records of the Division of Public Studies (Rdps), *Reports on Public Attitudes Toward Foreign Policy 1943-1965*, Box 16, "Opinions and Activities of American

Private Organizations and Groups" (Oaapog), January 1951-December 1952. During these months there are no references on issues as *Atomic Energy* or *H-Bombs*. According to the American nuclear scientist Edward Teller, "thermonuclear weapons made deterrence much stronger," see Teller's interview at "U.S. Strategic Nuclear Policy: A Video History, 1945-2004. Sandia Labs Historical Video Documents History of U.S. Strategic Nuclear Policy. Interviewees Include Robert McNamara, Brent Scowcroft, James Schlesinger and Last Strategic Air Commander-in-Chief Lee Butler. Includes Revelations on 'Out of Control' Nuclear Targeting During the 1980s. National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 36. Posted October 11, 2011," on http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb361/index.htm.

18. According to the American nuclear scientist Edward Teller, "thermonuclear weapons made deterrence much stronger," see Teller's interview at "U.S. Strategic Nuclear Policy: A Video History, 1945-2004. Sandia Labs Historical Video Documents History of U.S. Strategic Nuclear Policy. Interviewees Include Robert McNamara, Brent Scowcroft, James Schlesinger and Last Strategic Air Commander-in-Chief Lee Butler. Includes Revelations on 'Out of Control' Nuclear Targeting During the 1980s. National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 36. Posted October 11, 2011," on http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb361/index.htm. That was, eventually, the message that influenced the public the most.
19. Jason Berger, *A New Deal for the World: Eleanor Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 77. As regards Eleanor Roosevelt's support for Truman's foreign policy and the intervention in Korea in particular, see Eleanor Roosevelt's "Speech at the Ceremony Honoring Representatives of the United Nations Forces in Korea, December 1, 1951," in Roosevelt Study Center (hereby after RSC), Presidential Collection and Administrations, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt 1945-1962, Part 1, United Nations Correspondence and Publications, Reel 25, 00446. Through that speech she said that after the Soviet invasion of the South, "within hours after the attack, resolutions were transformed into actions. The mutual promise of collective security was fulfilled. […] Fifty-three nations gave immediate support to the Charter. Without plan or preparation, the idea of collective security to repel aggression and restore peace began to take form."
20. *My Day*, April 29, 1948 and *My Day*, March 9, 1948.
21. *My Day*, October 29, 1947.
22. *My Day*, March 11, 1950; *My Day*, March 22, 1950; and *My Day*, October 22, 1951.

23. Addressing the ADA Convention in 1950, Eleanor Roosevelt ironically admitted of being "afraid to sit down with people I do not know because five years from now someone will say that five of those people were Communists and therefore, you are a Communist – that will be a bad day." Instead, she wanted "to be able to sit down with anyone who may have a new idea and not be afraid of contamination by association. In a democracy you must be able to meet with people and argue your point of view—[with] people you have not screened before hand. That must be part of the freedom of people in the United States." See FDR Library, Recorded Speeches and Utterances by Eleanor Roosevelt, 1933-1962, April 1, 1950, "Mrs. Roosevelt speaks at Americans for Democratic Action Third Annual Convention. Washington, DC (CBS) (6 min)," 68-3 and "Highlights from 'Americans for Democratic Action.' Five tracks," 63-3.
24. On October 1950, Eleanor Roosevelt endorsed an appeal promoted by the American for Democratic Action, which was titled "The Truth about ADA." The document stated that, since Republicans ought to smear democratic candidates, they accused the ADA to be soft on Communism. But the ADA, instead, "had supported positive programs to defeat communism," as in the case of the aids to Greece and Turkey, the Marshall Plan, the North Atlantic Pact, or Korea. "Misrepresentation of republican leaders about ADA are a deliberate part of the attack on forward-looking candidates," and if these tactics succeed "the future of democracy is dark indeed." See RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt, 1945-1952, Part 3: General Correspondence, 1950, Reel 2, 0001, ADA, 1950-1952, October 30, 1950.
25. See the report on "Newsweek," February 27, 1950, which is also quoted by Helen Jane Wamboldt, *A Descriptive and Analytical Study of the Speaking Career of Anna Eleanor Roosevelt* (PhD Dissertation: The University of Southern California, June 1952), 307.
26. See FDR Library, Recorded Speeches and Utterances by Eleanor Roosevelt, 1933-1962, February 12, 1950, *Today with Mrs. Roosevelt.*
27. See Library of Congress, J. Robert Oppenheimer Papers, Speech, Lecture, and Writing File, 1926-1966, Roosevelt, Eleanor, NBC program, 1950, Folder 1 and 2.
28. See Robert Oppenheimer singed letter to Eleanor Roosevelt, May 19, 1950, in Library of Congress, J. Robert Oppenheimer Papers, General Case File, 1799-1967, Roosevelt, Eleanor (1884-1962), 1950-1965.
29. As regards the newspapers clipping related to Einstein's pronouncement, see Library of Congress, J. Robert Oppenheimer Papers, Speech, Lecture, and Writing File, 1926-1966, Roosevelt, Eleanor, NBC program, 1950, Folder 2. See also "Albert Einstein Warns of Dangers in Nuclear Arms Race," NBC News, New York: NBC Universal, 02/12/1950, https://archives.nbclearn.com/portal/site/k-12/browse/?cuecard=39895.

30. See FDR Library, Recorded Speeches and Utterances by Eleanor Roosevelt, 1933-1962, February 12, 1950, *Today with Mrs. Roosevelt*, TV show.
31. *Ibid*.
32. *My Day*, July 3, 1950, and August 22, 1950.
33. See RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt 1945-1962, Part 1, Reel 27, 00670, "United States Delegation to the General Assembly of the United Nations, Press Release No. 14193, February 1, 1952, Text of the Weekly Commentary by Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, in French, broadcast at 8 P.M. (Paris time), Sunday, February 3, on the Programme Parisien of the Radio-Diffusion Francaise."
34. RSC, Eleanor Roosevelt Radio Programs, 1950-1951, December 3, 1950, "From transcription disk, NBC TV presents 'Mrs. Roosevelt Meets the Public.' Discussion: Should we use the Atom Bomb now? (WNBT Channel 4)." The guest was Dr. Theodore Benjamin.
35. RSC, Eleanor Roosevelt Radio Programs, 1950-1951, January 31, 1950.
36. In November 1951, Mrs. Roosevelt initiated a series of weekly talks to be broadcasted in French by her over the French National Network. The commentaries, reordered in Paris and broadcasted in Belgium, Switzerland, Eastern Europe, and North Africa, through the facilities of *Voice of America*, touched upon a wide range of issues. See RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt 1945-1962, Part 1, Reel 26, 00514, "Weekly ER radio broadcasts," December 7, 1951.
37. See RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt 1945-1962, Part 1, Reel 26, 00514, "Weekly ER radio broadcasts," November 29, 1951.
38. RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt 1945-1962, Part 1, Reel 26, 00514, "Weekly ER radio broadcasts," November 16, 1951. She was very critical of Acheson's proposal, which she regarded as "signally silent" on the prohibition of the atomic weapon. She said that, while the draft did refer to the international control of the atomic weapons, it did not actually prohibit them. "With a commission of control which does not yet exist there can be no prohibition. […] Let us leave this pseudological argumentation to the logician and sophists," she concluded. See RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt 1945-1962, Part 1, Reel 26, 00149, "US Delegation to the 6th GA, Verbatim text of the statement by the representative of the USSR in the 453rd meeting of Committee 1, November 24, 1951."
39. RSC, Eleanor Roosevelt Radio Programs, 1950-1951, December 14, 1950.
40. See Eleanor Roosevelt Address to the U.N. General Assembly, "Freedoms We Do Not Want to Lose," December 17, 1951, RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt 1945-1962, Part 2, United Nations Human Rights Commission Correspondence and Publications, Reel 2, 0496, General Correspondence and Materials, 1948-1953. [January-December 1951].

41. See RSC, Eleanor Roosevelt Radio Programs, 1950-1951, January 31, 1950. She also said she would love to have "something which would oblige us to sit down around the table first instead of second," and remarked that this could not be the H-bomb.
42. See RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt 1945-1962, Part1, Reel 27, 00663, "United States Delegation to the General Assembly of the United Nations, Press Release No. 1369, January 4, 1952, Text of the Weekly Commentary by Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, in French, broadcast at 8 P.M. (Paris time), Sunday, January 6, on the Programme Parisien of the Radio-Diffusion Francaise."
43. "The work of the Sixth General Assembly is drawing to a close. But this doesn't mean that when they take they leave of each other the delegates lose all interest in the triple task which they have assigned to themselves: to ensure maintenance of the peace; to apply a plan of disarmament with concrete measures for control, to build a strong wall against aggression. By creating the Disarmament Commission we have taken a great step forward. If this Commission can function without too much obstruction, any of the hopes of all people will be in their way toward realization." RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt 1945-1962, Part1, Reel 27, 00663, "United States Delegation to the General Assembly of the United Nations, Press Release No. 1403, January 24, 1952, Text of the Weekly Commentary by Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, in French, broadcast at 8 P.M. (Paris time), Sunday, January 27, on the Programme Parisien of the Radio-Diffusion Francaise."
44. See RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt 1945-1962, Part 1, Reel 27, 00670, "United States Delegation to the General Assembly of the United Nations, Press Release No. 14193, February 1, 1952, Text of the Weekly Commentary by Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, in French, broadcast at 8 P.M. (Paris time), Sunday, February 3, on the Programme Parisien of the Radio-Diffusion Francaise."
45. *Ibid*.
46. *Ibid*.
47. See Maurine Hoffman Beasley, Holly Cowan Shulman, Henry R. Beasley (eds.), *The Eleanor Roosevelt Encyclopedia*, 391. See also "Gen. Ike, Mrs. Roosevelt Named As Greatest Living Americans," *The Daily Times Herald*, January 3, 1951, in RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt, 1945-1952, Part 4: General Correspondence, 1951-1952, Reel 1, 000897.
48. Dean Acheson had appreciated the work she had done at the United Nations. In a letter he sent to Truman and the president forwarded her, Acheson said that Eleanor Roosevelt was successful "in persuading the Assembly to reverse a previous decision and to instruct the Human Rights

Commission to draft two separate covenants, one confined to civil and political rights and the other dealing with economic and social rights. This separation has been advocated consistently by this Government, and it is a credit to her effectiveness as a negotiator that she was able finally to persuade a majority of governments to support it." See Harry Truman to Eleanor Roosevelt, April 11, 1952 (attached Acheson to Truman), in ed. Steve Neal, *Eleanor and Harry: The Correspondence of Eleanor Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman* (New York: Lisa Drew Book, 2002), 212.

49. See Maurine H. Beasley, *Eleanor Roosevelt and the Media: A Public Quest for Self-Fulfillment* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 177. See also Raffaella Baritono, "'We Must Have Eagle Eyes:' Eleanor Roosevelt, the United Nations and the World Trips of the 1950s," in *Beyond the Nation: Pushing the Boundaries of U.S. History from a Transatlantic Perspective*, eds. Ferdinando Fasce, Maurizio Vaudagna, and Raffaella Baritono (Turin: Otto, 2013), 61-90.
50. See Eleanor Roosevelt, *Why the United Nations Is Unpopular – And What We Can Do About It*, Speech before the Citizens Conference on International Economic Union, at the Town Hall Club, November 19, 1952 (New York: 1952).
51. She explained the difference between the declaration and the covenant many times, as, for instance, she did when she addressed the United Nations News for Women Broadcasters celebration of the Human Rights Day, on December 10, 1952. There, she hoped that "the Universal Declaration of Human Rights will someday stand as a flag which was a turning point in history to all the people of the world." See RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt 1945-1962, Part 1, Reel 27, 00675, "United Nations News for Women Broadcasters, Editor Dorothy Lewis, Coordinator U.S. Station Relations United Nations Radio, December 1952."
52. *My Day*, May 28, 1952.
53. See Tamara K. Hareven, *Eleanor Roosevelt. An American Conscience* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books), 244. Senator Bricker signed, along with other 56 senators, a resolution calling for a Constitutional amendment which, if adopted, would make US membership at the UN untenable. That amendment provided that the Senate could not ratify a treaty that conferred upon an international organization the authority vested in the president, Congress, or the Judiciary, see Clark M. Eichelberger letter to Eleanor Roosevelt, April 4, 1952, in RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt, 1945-1952, Part 4: General Correspondence, 1951-1952, Reel 1, 000384. The *Washington Post* defined such attack as "Bricker's Folly" and reported that "Bricker amendment would throw our foreign policy into a tailspin of confusion," see "Bricker's Folly," *Washington Post*, June 2, 1952, in RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt, 1945-1952,

Part 4: General Correspondence, 1951-1952, Reel 1, 000412. Previously in 1951, talking to the American Association for the United Nations AAUN, Eleanor Roosevelt had defended the covenant by saying that every American should study it: "We must try to be ready to act on it as far as is constitutionally possible, and thus set an example for others," see RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt, 1945-1952, Part 4: General Correspondence, 1951-1952, Reel 1, 000432, "Attachment to a letter from Clark M. Eichelberger to Eleanor Roosevelt, July 7, 1952."

54. Eleanor Roosevelt, "Progress Toward Completion of Human Rights Covenants," *in U.S. Department of State Bulletin*, XXVI, June 30, 1952, 1025-1026, quoted by Tamara K. Hareven, *Eleanor Roosevelt. An American Conscience*, 246.
55. *My Day*, April 14, 1952.
56. *My Day*, April 15, 1952.
57. See "Correspondence: 1952," Commentary by Steve Neal, in *Eleanor & Harry. The Correspondence of Eleanor Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman*, ed. Steve Neal, on http://www.trumanlibrary.org/eleanor/1952.html.
58. *Ibid*.
59. See Tamara K. Hareven, *Eleanor Roosevelt. An American Conscience*, 246.
60. See Eleanor Roosevelt, *Speech to the Democratic National Convention Urging Support for the United Nations, 22 July 1952, Democratic National Convention, Chicago, Illinois*, Recording from the Anna Eleanor Roosevelt Papers, Franklin Delano Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York, on http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers/documents/displaydoc.cfm?_t=speeches&_docid=spc041708.
61. Eleanor Roosevelt argued many times, throughout the 1950s, that the Democratic Party had to be more receptive to change; see, for example, Allida M. Black, *Casting Her Own Shadow. Eleanor Roosevelt and the Shaping of Postwar Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 171. Two weeks after the elections, Eleanor Roosevelt received a letter from the Department of State, in which it was suggested her to tender a "letter of resignation on or before December 15, 1952, addressing it to President Dwight D. Eisenhower and postdating it January 20, 1953." See RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt, 1945-1952, Part 4: General Correspondence, 1951-1952, Reel 6, 0446. When she received the request, she said that her appointment as a delegate to the General Assembly would expire automatically at the close of the Assembly itself and that as for her appointment as United States Representative on the Human Rights Commission the custom that all presidential appointees shall automatically resign upon a change of administration applied. She also added that she did not know the plans of the incoming administration but she would, of course, "continue to work for the advancement of

human rights and the other objectives of the United Nations." See Statement by Mrs. Roosevelt, undated, in RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt 1945-1962, Part 1, Reel 27, 00650.

She wrote at least four different revised version of the resignation letter between December 4 and 8. At the end, she issued the letter on December 15, but she did not renounce to stress the importance of the human rights discussions at the UN and she hoped they would continue under new president's auspices. Eisenhower accepted her resignation on December 30, 1952, when he was not president yet.

When she resigned from the UN, her fellow delegates donated to her a Venezuelan jewel for a present, and the Venezuelan ambassador to the UN thanked her as follows: "All that there is in this small token is the fruit of patience and time and love. It could therefore symbolize the effort which millions of human beings of good will make to accomplish their ideal of a better living. You, Mrs. Roosevelt, have dedicated your life to the same ideal. It is therefore a fitting tribute to a great lady, to one who has worked tirelessly with the United Nations from the beginning to achieve the ideals of this Organization." See RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt 1945-1962, Part 1, Reel 27, 00651.

62. See Edgar Scott and Ward Wheelock, "What Every Person Should Know About the United Nations," in *United Nations Week* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia World Affairs Council, 1952), in RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt 1945-1962, Part 1, Reel 28, 00006.
63. See John L. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar National Security* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 147; T.V. Paul, *The Tradition of Non-Use of Nuclear Weapons* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 142. See also Appu K. Soman, *Double-Edged Sword. Nuclear Diplomacy in Unequal Conflicts: The United States and China, 1950-1958* (Westport: Praeger, 2000), 37.
64. See Robert J. McMahon, "U.S. National Security Policy from Eisenhower to Kennedy," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume I*, eds. Melvyn P. Leffler, Odd Arne Westad, 289.
65. The full text of the NSC 162/2 is available on line, see Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952–1954, Volume II, Part 1, National Security Affairs, Document 100, "S/S–NSC files, lot 63 D 351, NSC 162. Report to the National Security Council by the Executive Secretary," on http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v02p1/d100.
66. See Robert R. Bowie, Richard H. Immerman, *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 146. See also Ira Chernus, *Apocalypse Management: Eisenhower and the Discourse of National Insecurity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 67-68.

67. See Robert J. McMahon, "U.S. National Security Policy from Eisenhower to Kennedy," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume 1*, eds. Melvyn P. Leffler, Odd Arne Westad, 293.
68. See David Holloway, "Nuclear Weapons and the Escalation of the Cold War, 1945–1962," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume 1*, eds. Melvyn P. Leffler, Odd Arne Westad, 385.
69. See "Speech by Oswald B. Lord at the Ninth Commission of Human Rights, Geneva, 18 May 1953," in RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt 1945-1962, Part 1, Reel 28, 00469.
70. *My Day*, April 9, 1953.
71. *My Day*, April 10, 1953.
72. See Charles D. Rogers to Eleanor Roosevelt, September 9, 1952, in RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt, 1945-1952, Part 4: General Correspondence, 1951-1952, Reel 10, 000836. In October, Rogers thanked Eleanor Roosevelt for her participation in a conference organized by the League of Women Voters, which "did stimulate greater interests and support of the U.N. although it is regrettable that misunderstanding and isolationism cause much apathy and antagonism." See Charles D. Rogers to Eleanor Roosevelt, October 2, 1952, in RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt, 1945-1952, Part 4: General Correspondence, 1951-1952, Reel 10, 000839. The U.S. leaders of the World Federation of United Nations Association asked her to make it widely known that "at this critical moment, the American people cannot permit their support of the United Nations to be weakened or diluted." They invited her to a conference on the theme "America's Responsibility for World Leadership" (which in 1952 became "United States Responsibility for World Leadership"), claiming that the support of the United Nations was "a duty to ourselves, to our children, and to all humanity." See William Emerson and Clark M. Eichelberger, respectively president and director of the Commission to Study the Organization of Peace, member of the WFUNA, to Eleanor Roosevelt, February 8, 1952, in RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt, 1945-1952, Part 4: General Correspondence, 1951-1952, Reel 10, 000834.
73. A Special Committee for World Reconstruction and World Disarmament was organized in 1950 to do research, offer publications, and conduct widespread community meetings, conferences, and workshops on these issues. Papers of that committee are among the Swarthmore College Peace Collection, see http://www.swarthmore.edu/library/peace/DG051-099/dg069cwdwd.htm and http://www.swarthmore.edu/library/peace/DG026-050/dg043wilpf/index.htm. In 1952, the name of the committee was changed to the Committee for World Development and World Disarmament. The New York office of the

WILPF served as headquarter of this committee. See "Pioneers for Peace and Freedom. A Short History of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom," WILPF, 1952, in RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt, 1945-1952, Part 4: General Correspondence, 1951-1952, Reel 20, 00773 and http://www.swarthmore.edu/library/peace/DG026-050/dg043wilpf/history.htm.

74. See Williams Barclay Parsons to Eleanor Roosevelt, July 14, 1952, in RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt, 1945-1952, Part 4: General Correspondence, 1951-1952, Reel 14, 000534.
75. Twenty organizations submitted a declaration to US ambassador at the UN, on June 21, 1952, see Press Release No. 1503, in RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt, 1945-1952, Part 4: General Correspondence, 1951-1952, Reel 14, 000536.
76. See RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt, 1945-1952, Part 4: General Correspondence, 1951-1952, Reel 14, 1038.
77. See RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt, 1945-1952, Part 4: General Correspondence, 1951-1952, Reel 15, 000954.
78. On January 1952, the WFUNA leaders asked her, to report some news from the General Assembly. Philip Coleman, president of the Beverly Hills chapter of the AAUN, confessed that they felt "so remote from all that is happening in the UN domain, and it is surely difficult to interest the general public when the facts are so hard to come by" and added: "the daily press carries practically no information on the events there, and our ignorance of what is confronting the UN is really abysmal." In 1952, the AAUN adopted such a statement policy: "If the threat of the atomic bomb is worldwide, man can develop worldwide institutions to meet it […] We believe that the system of collective security must be worldwide", "The human rights obligation of the United Nations Charter should be implemented […] We deplore the fact that the United States has not yet ratified the convention outlawing genocide." See Confidential Draft Statement Revised—April 6, 1952, in RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt, 1945-1952, Part 4: General Correspondence, 1951-1952, Reel 1, 00374.
79. See Clark M. Eichelberger to Eleanor Roosevelt, April 4, 1952, in RSC, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt, 1945-1952, Part 4: General Correspondence, 1951-1952, Reel 1, 000384. After her official appointment at the UN ended, Eleanor Roosevelt often used her popularity and media savviness to both encourage people to join the AAUN and to inform citizen of the role and activities of the United Nations, see FDR Library, Recorded Speeches and Utterances by Eleanor Roosevelt, 1933-1962, September 22, 1953, "Mrs. Roosevelt discusses the AAUN in a radio interview in New York," January 5, 1955,

"Address to AAUN and the International Relations Council at the University of Missouri, Kansas City."

80. See Thomas R. Rochon, *Mobilizing for Peace*, 58-73.
81. See Robert Kleidman, *Organizing for Peace: Neutrality, the Test Ban, and the Freeze* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1993), 23.
82. See NARA, Rg 59, Rdps, Box 17, Oaapog, May 1954, January 1955, and February 1955.
83. But the reality was slightly different. Indeed, as many official documents show, the administration still had a policy of "free use of nuclear weapons" in utter contrast with administration's public moves. See, for example, "Use of United Kingdom Bases and Consultation with the United Kingdom on the Use of Atomic Weapons, Memorandum of Conversation, 6 March 1953, Top Secret;" "Memorandum for the President from Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, *The Eden Visit: Use of Atomic Weapons*, 7 March 1953, Top Secret;" and "Memorandum for Mr. Gordon Arneson from Under Secretary of State Walter B. Smith, 12 March 1953, Top Secret," in NARA, Rg 59, Decimal Files 1950-1954, 711.5611, various dates, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) release.
84. See David Holloway, "Nuclear Weapons and the Escalation of the Cold War, 1945–1962," in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume 1*, eds. Melvyn P. Leffler, Odd Arne Westad, 383 and David G. Coleman, "Eisenhower and the Berlin Problem, 1953–1954," in *Journal of Cold War Studies*, vol. 2, no.1, Winter 2000, 3–34.
85. See "U.S. Strategic Nuclear Policy: A Video History, 1945-2004," on http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb361/index.htm.
86. The roentgen (R) is a unit that measure the ionizing radiation; the maximum tolerable by human beings before serious problems or relevant genetic modifications can appear is about 1 R/hr.
87. On March 11, the AEC announced that 236 inhabitants of the Marshall Islands and 28 Americans were evacuated from the area of test because they "had unexpectedly become the subject of some radiation during a nuclear test routinely conducted at the Marshall Islands," see Mary M. Simpson, "Atomic Weapons at Home and Abroad," in *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, vol. 10, no. 4 (April 1954): 141.
88. For further details on the *Lucky Dragon* accident see Mark D. Merlin, Ricardo M. Gonzalez, "Environmental Impacts of Nuclear Testing in Remote Oceania, 1946–1996," in eds. John R. McNeill, Corinna R. Unger, *Environmental Histories of the Cold War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 167-202.
89. For technical data related to this test, see The Nuclear Weapon Archive, "Operation Castle 1954—Pacific Proving Ground," on http://nuclearweaponarchive.org/Usa/Tests/Castle.html.

90. The conversation is reported by Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb, Volume 2, Resisting the Bomb: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement, 1954-1970* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 128-129.
91. See Armed Forces Special Weapons Project, "Technical Analysis: Radioactive Fall-Out Hazards from Surface Bursts or Very High Yield Nuclear Weapons," May 1954, Excised Copy, U.S. Department of Energy, FOIA release, on line at http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB94/tb01.pdf.
92. See "Editor's Note," in *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, vol. 9, no. 7 (September 1953): 235 and Eugene Rabinowitch, "Hydrogen Bomb and the Great Unsolved Problems," in *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, vol. 10, no. 5 (May 1954): 146.
93. See Hans Bethe, "1954," in *Los Alamos Science*, Fall 1982, 43-53.
94. See Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb, Volume 2*; Paul Boyer, *Fallout. A Historian Reflects on America's Half-Century Encounter with Nuclear Weapons* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998); and Robert Divine, *Blowing on the Wind. The Nuclear Test Ban Debate, 1954–1960* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978). See also Barton C. Hacker, *Elements of Controversy: The Atomic Energy Commission and Radiation Safety in Nuclear Weapons Testing, 1947-1974* (Berkeley: University of California Press), 181-182, 198, 222-230; Peter Eisler, "Fallout Likely Caused 15,000 Deaths," *USA Today*, February 28, 2002; James Glanz, "Almost All in the U.S. Have Been Exposed to Fallout, Study Finds," in *The New York Times*, March 1, 2002. Finally, see Spencer R. Weart, *The Rise of Nuclear Fear* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012).
95. Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb, Volume 2*, 2. On Strauss, see U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, *Letter from the Chairman and Members of the United States Atomic Energy Commission*, Washington U.S. Government Printing Office, 1954, 41.
96. See Paul Boyer, *Fallout*, 82.
97. See Robert A. Divine, *Blowing on the Wind*, 78; see also Howard D. Lipshitz (ed.), *Genes, Development and Cancer. The Life and Work of Edward B. Lewis* (San Francisco: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2004); Richard L. Miller, *Under the Cloud. The Decades of Nuclear Testing* (London, Two-Sixty Press, 1986); Jennifer Caron, "Edward Lewis and Radioactive Fallout. The Impact of Caltech Biologists on the Debate over Nuclear Weapons Testing in the 1950s and 1960s," in *Biology and the Bomb*, Id. (Pasadena: California Institute of Technology, 2003); Ralph W. Dexter, "The Crisis Between Science and Society. A Modern Paradox," in *The Ohio Journal of Science*, vol. 58, no. 1 (January 1958).

98. See Alfred H. Sturtevant, "The Genetic Effects of High Energy Irradiation of Human Populations," in engineering and Science, vol. XVIII, January, 1955.
99. Linus Pauling to Williard Libby, March 30, 1955, in http://scarc.library.oregonstate.edu/coll/pauling/peace/corr/corr217.2-lp-libby-19550330.html.
100. See David R. Inglis, "Comments on Atomic Energy Control and Disarmament," *Washington Post*, January 18, 1953, in NARA, Rg 59, Rdps, Box 17, Oaapog, January, 1953.
101. *My Day*, April 5, 1954.
102. *My Day*, April 13, 1954.
103. *My Day*, September 15, 1954.
104. See FDR Library, Recorded Speeches and Utterances by Eleanor Roosevelt, 1933-1962, April 11, 1954, "Mrs. Roosevelt interviewed on Meet the Press: On the Army, McCarthy Hearing. (NBC), " 75-78: 32.
105. *My Day*, February 21, 1955.
106. "It's hard to imagine any other public figure of the last century that has contributed more than Bertrand Russell to defend individual liberties against the demands of organized society. [...] He was able to transmit the logic of philosophy to the contemporary needs." See Peter Mayer (ed.), *The Pacifist Conscience* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966), 317. Although his moderate anti-Communist, Russell never liked the idea that atomic weapons could be regarded as defensive systems or that they worked well in preventing war. In November 1945, while addressing the House of Lords, he had instead warned against the fact that those weapons were about to revolutionize the way in which states were used to wage wars and predicted their fast and ominous development, see Douglas P. Lackey, "Russell's Contribution to the Study of Nuclear Weapons Policy," in *The Journal of Bertrand Russell Studies*, vol. 4, no. 2 (1984): 244.
107. See Bertrand Russell, "The Danger to Mankind," in *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, vol. 10, no. 1 (January 1954): 8-9.
108. See Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb, Volume 2*, 5-6.
109. See also Andrew G. Bone (ed.), *Man's Peril, 1954-55/B. Russell* (London-New York: Routledge, 2003), 81; Bertrand Russell, *The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell: Man's Peril, 1954-55* (London: Routledge, 1967); David E. Rowe, Robert Schulmann (eds.), *Einstein on Politics. His Private Thoughts and Public Stands on Nationalism, Zionism, War, Peace, and the Bomb* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 501. The presentation of the *Manifesto* was followed by an international conference attended by more than 2,500 scientists, whose aim was to find new forms of control of atomic energy and analyse scientists' social responsibility in

the nuclear age. See U.K. National Archives, Foreign Office, Folder 371, General Correspondence, Box 117392, (For 371/117392), 1955. As regards the public reaction, see "Lifting Nuclear War Shadow From Mankind," *Times*, August 4, 1955, in U.K. National Archives, For 371/117388, 1955.

110. Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle against the Bomb, Volume 2*, 10.
111. See Albert Schweitzer, *Peace or Atomic War?* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1958); Norman Cousins, *Albert Schweitzer's mission. Healing and peace* (New York: Norton, 1985); Albert Schweitzer, Homer A. Jack, *On Nuclear War and Peace* (Elgin: Brethren Press, 1988).
112. See Robert Jungk, *Das Leben eines guten Menschen* (München, Kindler 1955). Albert Schweitzer, "The Problem of Peace," Nobel Lecture, November 4, 1954, in http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1952/schweitzer-lecture-e.html. Finally, see Robert A. Divine, *Blowing on the Wind*, 122 and Frederick Haberman (ed.), *Nobel Lectures, Peace 1951-1970, Volume 3* (Amsterdam: Elsevier Publishing Company, 1972).
113. See Allan M. Winkler, *Life Under a Cloud: American Anxiety about the Atom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 72-74 and Matthew Evangelista, *Unarmed Forces. The Transnational Movement to End the Cold War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1999).
114. Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb, Volume 2*, 12, and 27.
115. As historians like William Burr and Hector Montford recognize, "Eisenhower was personally interested in halting nuclear tests but his administration was divided. Top advisors, such as Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Lewis Strauss fervently supported testing and downplayed the fallout problem. Strauss along with senior Pentagon officials agreed that testing was necessary to maintain the U.S.'s superiority over the Soviets in nuclear weapons technology," see William Burr, Hector L. Montford (eds.), *The Making of the Limited Test Ban Treaty, 1958-1963*, on http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB94/#7. In July 1955, Eisenhower launched in Geneva the *Open skies* proposal to relax international tension, see Chalmers M. Roberts, *The Nuclear Years. The Arms Race and Arms Control, 1945-1970* (New York, Praeger Publishers, 1970), 34 and Robert R. Bowie, Richard H. Immerman, *Waging Peace. How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 56.
116. See NARA, Rg 59, Rdps, Box 17, Oaapog, May 1955, and July 1955.

CHAPTER 5

Personal Commitment and Direct Involvement

Popularizing the Nuclear Issue

With regard to nuclear policy, Eisenhower's second term started with the same contradictions that had characterized his first.

On the one hand, nuclear weapons were still the main instrument of America's national security and their development was meant to be the linchpin of U.S. foreign policy. In June 1957, the National Security Council stated very clearly that nuclear weapons were "conventional weapons from a military point of view" and the achievement of national objectives was conceivably a reason for using them.[1] Between 1957 and 1958, the Atomic Energy Commission ran more than a hundred nuclear tests, exploding extremely powerful thermonuclear bombs in the Nevada desert and in the Pacific Ocean, thus confirming the U.S. nuclear threat.[2] Plans for possible nuclear war included the improvement of a defensive U.S. missile system, which was to prevent—and react to—a surprise nuclear attack from the Soviet bloc.[3] In 1957, four different programs were active in developing intercontinental and intermediate-range ballistic missiles. Scientists like Edward Teller were working on the smallest and lightest possible warheads, so that the new *Polaris* missiles could more easily carry them.[4] Surfing a wave of widespread fear, generated by the so-called—and far from real—"missile gap," Eisenhower's top officials gave nuclear programs a sense of political urgency.[5] Moreover, after the Soviets successfully launched *Sputnik I* and its American counterpart, the *Vanguard*, blew up on TV, that sense of

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urgency reached its peak. James R. Killian, the President's science advisor, warned against underestimating Soviet technological ability. The Office of Defense Mobilization Science Advisory Committee assessed U.S. nuclear deterrence as inadequate. The CIA produced alarming reports on the U.S.S.R. supposed advantage in the ballistics field.[6] All in all, nuclear weapons became both strategically and politically welcomed and accepted, due mostly to necessity and fear.[7]

On the other hand, and partly for the same reasons, Eisenhower tried to give atomic energy a positive image. He depicted the nuclear arsenals as instruments of his national security policy, simultaneously inevitable and innocuous.[8] Promoting the spread of nuclear knowledge and secrets among the Western allies through the *Nuclear Sharing* program was part of this strategy. Through a campaign that was meant to ally people's fear, called *Atoms for Peace*, the administration embraced the idea that nuclear weapons contributed to national security and prosperity as well as to international stability and peace.[9] Eisenhower also eluded the call for a greater involvement in disarmament negotiations by sponsoring the establishment of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which was created to promote peaceful use of atomic power among nations.[10] Vested with little authority during the first years of its activity, the IAEA witnessed a hastening of the nuclear arms race. But the epitome of this policy of reassuring the public of a peaceful nuclear future was the appointment in 1956 of Harold Stassen, as special advisor to the President on disarmament, a position presented to the press as the "Secretary of Peace." This appointment gained the seal of approval of many pacifist organizations genuinely hoping for substantial progress in the nuclear field.[11]

Despite these contradictory attempts to deal with nuclear weapons, the emotional impact of the Bikini accident persisted in people's minds and the debate on nuclear fallout contributed to fueling the public's uneasiness about nuclear weapons. When the relationship between nuclear tests and damage to human health was scientifically proven, the protests against nuclear fallout united the various anti-nuclear stances cropping up around the country, and the first anti-nuclear wave of the cold war activism emerged with great strength.[12] All of these pressures induced Eisenhower to recognize that, since science had conferred upon human beings, "as its final gift, the power to erase human life from this planet," nuclear disarmament had to be one of the main U.S. foreign policy goals.[13] The President slowly came to realize that "a moratorium on nuclear testing leading to a comprehensive test ban" would improve the U.S. image abroad and allow

for a chance to pursue and reach the country's "peaceful objectives."[14] But the process that led to that conclusion was not a linear one. Rather it was characterized by the many pressures coming from a number of different actors. Among them were many liberal scientists who provided the anti-nuclear protesters with a strong intellectual framework. And there were the anti-nuclear leaders who, by coordinating the activities of several groups and movements nationwide, mobilized public opinion and, ultimately, affected official policy on nuclear testing.

The unceasing testing of thermonuclear weapons and the subsequent release of radiation into the atmosphere induced an increasing number of scientists to speak out against nuclear fallout. A large part of the American and international scientific community decided to direct an appeal to the human conscience, thus following the example of the *Russell-Einstein Manifesto.* [15] In the nights of April 23 and 24, 1957, Radio Oslo, in Norway, broadcast a speech by the popular humanitarian and medical missionary, Albert Schweitzer. In his *Declaration of Conscience*, the Nobel Peace Prize laureate gave a thorough description of the harmful effects that radioactivity has on the human body and he pointed out that further atomic explosions would increase the risk of contamination "to an alarming extent."

Schweitzer explained how small radioactive particles decayed differently taking different periods of time, ranging from seconds to ages, and how clouds could carry and spread these radioactive particles through rain, snow, mist, and dew. Contaminated water, the doctor remarked, "has proved to be so radioactive that it was unfit for drinking." Accordingly, the assurance given by official and unofficial sources, stating that the increase in radioactivity in the air did not exceed the tolerable amount, was "just evading the issue." Human health was indirectly and negatively affected by what "has fallen down, is falling down, and will fall down." Several serious blood diseases could be directly linked to fallout exposure. World public opinion had to know this relationship and to realize how great the risk was: "When public opinion has been created in the countries concerned and among all nations – an opinion informed of the dangers involved in going on with the tests and led by the reason which this information imposes–, then the statesmen may reach an agreement to stop the experiments," Schweitzer concluded.

On May 18, 1957, the *Saturday Review* published in the U.S. the text of the *Declaration of Conscience* in its entirety. Eventually, the *Declaration* had more than 75,000 reprints but, initially, the U.S. press

largely ignored it.[16] When the New York *Daily News* openly attacked Schweitzer's argument and accused the doctor of supporting Communist propaganda, the question emerged vigorously into the public arena.[17] The *Daily News* editorial was titled "Pull in Your Horns, Doc" and it stated that Schweitzer had "flouted the assurances of most nuclear scientists that fall-out from test explosions at the current rate is not dangerous at all." Scientists serving the administration roundly criticized Schweitzer too. In an open letter addressed to the Alsatian doctor and published by *The New York Times* as an official Atomic Energy Commission press release on April 25, 1957, Willard Libby lamented that Schweitzer's opinion was not based "on the most recent information" but only on perceptions of risk.[18] According to AEC director, Lewis Strauss, the risk of contracting cancer from radioactive fallout was actually lower than the one posed by wearing a luminous watch dial.[19]

This criticism prompted Schweitzer's colleagues to react and to emulate him. Right after the *Declaration* was issued, another Nobel laureate, Linus Pauling, fueled the debate, marking one of the central moments in the scientific opposition to nuclear arms and testing.[20] Pauling, a "Rooseveltian Democrat" whose active anti-nuclear dissent dated back to 1946, had helped launch the *Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists* to promote the understanding of the effects of an atomic blast. He and the Committee had proven scientifically that nuclear tests were responsible for severe genetic mutations due to the increased level of Carbon-14 that they released. More than 500,000 abortions, 50,000 physical or mental birth defects, and a significant increase in the rate of leukemia and bone cancer could be directly linked to nuclear tests. Now he had a threefold aim: to influence the administration's policy making, to inform public opinion, and to reach an international agreement to halt nuclear testing. Pauling's work, thus, had set the stage for a formal request by those American scientists who favored an international agreement to ban nuclear testing.[21]

Helped by his wife, Ava Helen Miller, and his colleagues, Edward Condon and Barry Commoner, Pauling presented the *Appeal of American Scientists* to the press. The *Appeal* stated that any further nuclear testing would spread "an added burden of radioactive elements over every part of the world" and therefore cause severe "damage to the health of human beings." Since only three powers possessed nuclear weapons at that time, an international agreement to avoid the "outbreak of a cataclysmic nuclear war" was realistically considered achievable. Moreover, the *Appeal* looked

to an international agreement to stop nuclear testing as a first and crucial "step toward a more general disarmament and the ultimate effective abolition of nuclear weapons."[22]

The publication of the *Appeal* immediately provoked a piqued reaction from Eisenhower, and a series of personal attacks on Pauling. The President spoke about scientists seeming "to be out of their own field of competence" and science moving dangerously to overlap politics.[23] The House Un-American Activities Committee tried to persecute Pauling because he had "evinced a general readiness to collaborate with the Communists." The conservative press branded him "a traitor, a collaborator with subversive foreign and alien elements […] engaged in subversive Communist activities" and a "moral nihilist."[24] But, in spite of this string of invective, Pauling continued to collect the approval of many prominent scientists, especially geneticists and physicists, who were dismayed by the effects that nuclear fallout had on human health.

In September 1957, indeed, a study promoted by the Federation of American Scientists (FAS) and the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy endorsed Pauling's thesis and confirmed the indisputable relationship between nuclear fallout and human disease.[25] The study convinced Hermann Muller, a Nobel laureate in physiology, and Laurence Snyder, head of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, to sign Pauling's petition. Many of the FAS members adhered to it individually. Although the *Appeal* was originally addressed only to the American scientists, it very soon attracted a wide foreign audience, to the point that, when it was issued as a petition to the U.N. Secretary-General on January 13, 1958, it eventually included the signatures of 9,235 scientists from 46 different countries. A supplementary list was sent that July and the total figure topped 11,000 individuals from 49 nations, including 37 Nobel laureates, a hundred members of the British Royal Society, two hundred Soviet National Academy of Science affiliates and more than two thousand members of the U.S. Academy of Science.[26]

Through his appeal, Pauling had taken hold of the scientist's special responsibility to inform and educate world's citizens about the danger of nuclear fallout. Soon several members of the British Atomic Scientists' Association endorsed this idea. A group of scientists, led by Joseph Rotblat and Cecil Powell, decided to organize a world meeting of nuclear experts so to provide scientists with a forum in which to freely express their dissent. Cyrus Eaton, a Canadian tycoon who had been positively impressed by the *Russell-Einstein Manifesto*, covered the conference expenses and

put his new conference center in Pugwash, Nova Scotia at the scientists' disposal. Between July 6 and 10, 1957, scientists gathered in Canada from ten different countries to take part in the first Conference on Science and World Affairs.[27] All of them were animated by the basic idea that war had to be abolished to avoid indiscriminate destruction, but the first step to be taken had to be the immediate suspension of nuclear tests. According to the most optimistic estimates, by 1963, further nuclear experimentation would be responsible for more than one hundred-thousand new leukemia and cancer cases worldwide.[28] Moreover, the testing of nuclear weapons in the atmosphere would keep contaminating the environment for more than thirty years. Scientists' highest ambition, thus, was to "inform the world's people of the 'great dilemma' of our times and […] serve to a greater extent in the formation of national policies."[29]

The first Pugwash conference generated enthusiastic reactions. Eugene Rabinowitch reported the event as very pleasant and emphasized that "all scientists – including those from the other side of the Iron Curtain" had spoken a common language in which they had fruitfully discussed even controversial political matters.[30] The U.S. State Department's official reaction was "not wholly disappointed" by the results of the conference and the British Foreign Office highlighted the significance of the meeting. According to Her Majesty's government, Pugwash was such an important forum of discussion that, if another conference were to take place, "some of those who participate in it ought to be adequately briefed to argue the Western viewpoint."[31] Encouraged by the success of the meeting, Russell, Powell, Rotblat, Rabinowitch and the Soviet physicist Dmitri Skobeltzyn decided to establish a permanent committee whose main function was to deal with the organization of similar events in the future.

By the opening of the second of these conferences, held in Lac Beauport, Quebec, from March 31 to April 11, 1958, public interest had increased impressively around the world. The Canadian press presented the Pugwash movement as an attempt "to erect the essential bridges between men which lead to better understanding." In Great Britain, the press pointed to the risks of what the scientists in Pugwash had defined as "H-dust," a by-product of the nuclear tests that could contaminate the atmosphere with the highly radioactive element Stronzium-90. The *Scotsman* devoted a series of six articles to the issue titled, "Peace and the Bomb," and depicted the extension of the cooperative Pugwash approach as the only reasonable hope for the whole of mankind. In the U.S., *The New York Times* focused on the scientists' efforts to remove many of the causes of

mutual mistrust between East and West, and praised those scientists who were "returning to their countries to report to their governments on their discussions and conclusions," because a "special responsibility and special competence to promote informed opinion" lay with them. [32]

Fearing it would lose public support because of this mounting pressure, the Atomic Energy Commission sponsored and circulated two studies, "The Atom in Our Foreign Policy" and "Radioactive Fallout and Test Suspension." In the former, Willard Libby, author of both of the reports, pointed out once more that military deterrence was the first and most important guarantee of world peace, and that one of the top U.S. foreign policy priorities was still to assist countries to assess their needs in the development of peaceful uses of atomic energy through exchanging technical information, training, and education. "Our continued testing is for the sake of the Free World's defense and general well-being," maintained Libby, who also hoped that U.S. foreign policy would remain "truly atomic." [33] In the latter report, Libby argued that the U.S., as a democracy, had to defend itself from the rise of totalitarianism and therefore its weapons had to be more advanced than those of its main opponent. "We are just at the beginning of development of defensive atomic weaponry," and, to further stress the importance of nuclear tests, Libby added: "I believe defensive value of nuclear tests outweighs the hazard of radioactive fallout." Trying to counter Pauling's arguments and studies on nuclear fallout, Libby finally remarked that, although the effects of fallout radiation were "in all probability deleterious both for the health and genetically," such a relationship could not "be said to have been scientifically proven."[34]

Libby's conservative nuclear optimism notwithstanding, the *Russell-Einstein Manifesto*, the Declaration of Mainau, Doctor Schweitzer's and Linus Pauling's appeals to mankind and, finally, the establishment of the Pugwash conferences elicited great public interest.[35] An increasing part of the American public opinion started asking for more detailed information about nuclear fallout and showing its anxiety about the course of official nuclear policies. To trigger a governmental reaction, however, such growing public interest needed to be structured, organized and, eventually, mobilized.[36] The qualitative and quantitative upgrading of the anti-nuclear protests eventually came from a few but very influential organizations. Some of them were well-established pacifist associations that changed their traditional stances, while others were completely new groups that represented, along with the scientists, the other wave of dissent.

In the spring of 1956, the WILPF sponsored an advertisement in *The New York Times* inviting Eisenhower "to modify [his] decision to test some H-bombs in the Pacific Ocean."[37] That same year, the American Veterans Committee proposed the creation of a Senate Subcommittee on Disarmament and simultaneously asked for the interruption of nuclear testing and the reduction of fissile material production.[38] But, when organizations like the WILPF, the War Resisters' League, or the Fellowship of Reconciliation spoke out against nuclear weapons, cold war hardliners, uncompromising nuclear strategists and many conservatives accused them of constituting "a potential threat to the national security."[39] The AFSC secretary emeritus, Clarence Pickett, reacted vigorously to these allegations, and his words were eventually able to stir pacifist leaders' imaginations throughout the country: "These are times when, not only the morality, but the very sanity of society is brought into question, […] we are relying on means of defense which threaten to defend nothing and destroy everything," Pickett argued.[40] The AFSC and the WILFP started petitioning the White House to stop nuclear tests and halt the nuclear arms race. Many other pacifist groups soon followed their example. As historian Lawrence Wittner has shown, by the beginning of 1958, all of these organizations had successfully "put into circulation more than 150,000 petitions calling for the cancellation" of U.S. nuclear testing in the Pacific.[41]

Seizing the day and riding this feeling of public distress, Lawrence Scott, the Chicago secretary of the AFSC, Norman Cousins, the editor-in-chief of the *Saturday Review* who had been outspoken in his criticism of the bombing of Japan, and Clarence Pickett, organized a meeting of the principal American pacifist groups opposing the nuclear arms race. Their main task was to launch a steering committee, which promoted nationwide the immediate cessation of nuclear experimentation. In the spring of 1957, polls reported that almost two-thirds of American people favored a multilateral solution to halt nuclear tests. Norman Cousins defined the situation as a "wonderful moment" and strove to give the mounting dissent more structure. Thus, welcoming his friend, Homer Jack's suggestion, Cousins established a Committee to Stop H-Bomb Tests and invited Eisenhower to a meeting in which several scientists would explain to him the evidence supporting the hazardous nature of nuclear fallout.[42]

Although the President liked the idea personally, the Atomic Energy Committee director Lewis Strauss strongly opposed it, and persuaded him to refuse the invitation. Such a powerful resistance notwithstanding,

Cousins kept on with his work and organized a press conference. At the prestigious Overseas Press Club in New York, he introduced the Provisional Committee to Stop Nuclear Tests. Cousins and his fellow campaigners clearly stated that their principal goal was to push for an immediate suspension of nuclear testing as a first, fundamental step toward global disarmament and international peace. [43] Moreover, since all of the anti-nuclear protests were converging around the point made by Erich Fromm—that one of the main human needs was to "broaden the voice of sanity among the people"—the group led by Cousins decided to adopt as its official name the National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, known simply as SANE.[44]

From the very beginning, SANE's declared objective was to support a fresh start in U.S. nuclear policy. But, as with every young organization, SANE needed publicity in order to gain people's necessary support and therefore its first move was to buy an advertisement in *The New York Times*.[45] Cousins drafted the full-page ad and forty-eight prominent Americans—including Eleanor Roosevelt—signed it. The article declared that, due to the uncontrolled spread of the nuclear arsenals, the U.S. was "facing a danger unlike any danger that has ever existed."[46] For the first time in their history, human beings were experiencing the threat of global annihilation and nuclear testing increased that threat exponentially through the emission of radioactive fallout. To allay widespread fear, the SANE leaders urged the President to discuss a suspension of nuclear testing at the United Nations. The establishment of a system of multilateral control over nuclear weapons was indeed crucial to avoiding extremely dangerous nuclear proliferation.[47]

SANE's battlefield had two fronts, influencing and informing public opinion and directly exerting pressure on political circles. Thus, while continuing to sponsor widely circulated advertisements declaring that "nuclear weapons could destroy the entire life in case of war" or that there would be "no contamination without representation," SANE's leaders tried to make the administration "increasingly sensitive to the expression of public opinion in these vital issues" and sent the President more than 5,000 letters urging nuclear disarmament and a ban on nuclear testing.[48]

Thanks to its innovative mobilization methods, derived largely from its parallel organization, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, which was launched in London in 1958 and was famous for providing anti-nuclear protesters with the cruciform "peace symbol," SANE embodied the modern aspirations of the varied American peace movements. Its new

tactics included placing a strong emphasis on the role of the U.N. in controlling and monitoring both nuclear warheads and ballistic missiles. In spite of its pronounced multilateralism, however, SANE did not escape the false allegation of supporting Communist propaganda. Its most conspicuous opponent was Senator Thomas Dodd, who charged the organization with Communist infiltration and asserted that it was working against the national interest. SANE's leaders denounced that attack as an intolerable invasion of citizens' freedom and replied that SANE was first and foremost interested in the promotion "of a mutuality of interest in survival above ideological and power rivalries."[49]

Popular response to SANE's campaign confirmed SANE's liberal *bona fides*. Its first advertisement in *The New York Times* was republished by more than twenty national newspapers. The SANE organizers received more than two thousands letters of support and opened one hundred and thirty local sections throughout the country. Through their meetings and petitions and through the continuous distribution of literature and the active participation of twenty-five thousands members, the SANE campaigners made a major contribution to improving the general understanding of nuclear issues among American citizens. With a very active Hollywood-based group that included stars the caliber of Janet Leigh, Tony Curtis, Anthony Quinn, Gregory Peck, and Marlon Brando, SANE's leaders succeeded in popularizing the nuclear debate and dismantling the aura of secrecy and technicality that had characterized it during the first decade of the nuclear era.[50]

Surfing the First Anti-nuclear Wave

All of these developments enthralled Eleanor Roosevelt, who continued to publicly define a ban on nuclear testing as a "good idea" and "a courageous thing to do" at the same time.[51] Due to her constant anti-nuclear pronouncements, Cousins and Pickett thought that her involvement in SANE's campaign could be logical and immediate. While preparing the list of those prominent Americans who, according to them, might be interested in nuclear disarmament and test ban, the two pacifist leaders reported exactly what Eleanor Roosevelt had written on May 28, 1957 about the momentousness of a test ban campaign: "There…seems to be a real interest in putting a limit on atomic arms. This, it seems to me, would include limiting, or at least reducing, tests of atomic bombs. Such restrictions certainly would relieve the minds of a great many people."[52]

Hence, Cousins and Pickett invited the former first lady to attend a "small private meeting of national leaders" in order "to consider questions of paramount importance relating to American nuclear policy" already in June 1957, well before the official launching of SANE.[53] The anti-nuclear leaders wanted her on board because they knew that, within the struggle against nuclear weapons and tests, she could play a multifaceted role. Through her articles, speeches, radio and TV shows, she could keep supporting liberal scientists' concerns and demands, popularizing the issue of the danger of nuclear fallout, and rendering the terms of the nuclear debate understandable to common citizens. In this regard, she could be a facilitator for the anti-nuclear campaign.[54] Secondly, she knew how to encourage citizens' active participation, promote mutual understanding, and cultivate shared responsibility so that, in the end, she could connect the various anti-nuclear demands to large sections of American society. Finally, she was not afraid to speak out against the policy of nuclear build-up and relentlessly pressed the administration to negotiate an international ban on nuclear testing with the Soviets, thus strengthening the political significance and efficacy of the anti-nuclear movement as a whole.

Mrs. Roosevelt fully lived up to these expectations. The founding element of her criticism of nuclear weapons was in line with SANE's pacifism and multilateralism: the recognition of the futility of war in the nuclear era. If war could bring "dread disaster" to mankind then disarmament was a major necessity. "As a matter of fact," she recognized in 1958, "I think we know quite well that we can only actually use war if we are prepared to face annihilation."[55] Furthermore, she argued that "national military establishment and armaments tend to war rather than peace" and military and economic policies are usually based upon national interests, in conflict with increasing levels of global interdependence. Accordingly, only the U.N. had the authority and power to deconstruct the dangerous relationship between national particularism and nuclear weapons, and only that organization could substantially and constructively contribute to the achievement of a stable peace. It was up to the U.N. to define the peacetime uses of atomic energy, so that the whole world could benefit from "a fearless and genuine exchange of nuclear information," and so that no nation could gain any relative advantage in this field.[56]

But Eleanor Roosevelt also knew that, to make this happen, world public opinion needed to be educated and adequately informed, and therefore she used her column regularly to reach that goal.[57] For instance, while recounting to her readers the significance of the book *Hiroshima Diary*,

authored by a Japanese physician wounded by the atomic blast in that city, she invited people "to fight for a better understanding and a removal of possibility of war." Only well-informed and educated citizens, aware of the tremendous threat posed by the nuclear weapons, could show "more willingness to strengthen, rather than to throw away, the machinery created in the U.N." and effectively push for a greater involvement in nuclear disarmament discussions and agreements.[58]

In addition, electoral campaigns represented for Mrs. Roosevelt the perfect stage on which to keep pushing for nuclear negotiations. She confessed to being "very much confused by the fact that the President and most of the Republican speakers" had not talked about the H-bomb tests during their 1956 presidential campaign, and it was only the Democratic candidate, Adlai Stevenson, who approached the matter into a serious way.[59] To her, the Eisenhower administration kept saying to its citizens a rather inconsequential thing: that its efforts had "been patient and persistent in striving to reach an agreement" on nuclear weapons, but that the problem of inspection and control had continued to overwhelm these efforts.[60]

Speaking truth to power, Eleanor Roosevelt lamented the lack of progress in the disarmament program and accused Secretary of State Dulles of underestimating the Soviets' willingness to negotiate.[61] "On top of this," she added, "we know that many countries in the world that cannot afford a war are gradually feeling, regardless of what we say, that the Soviets keep proposing a ban on nuclear weapons and that we keep refusing [it]." The general feeling around the world was that the U.S. was dragging its feet and undermining collective security. Even the improvement of its missile system was part of a dangerous policy that continued to show a lack of "creative thinking" within the administration. "We are still behaving as if old ideas and old ways are all we need when actually what we need is something entirely new."[62] This general feeling needed to be cast off, and Mrs. Roosevelt looked at Stevenson's proposal to stop H-bomb testing as the right thing to do to accomplish that mission. As many scientists had proven and shown on several occasions, nuclear tests were generating and releasing into the atmosphere a vast amount of extremely dangerous radiation—she called them "material"—to the point that the first accounts of contaminated milk were already circulating throughout the country. Therefore, Governor Stevenson's proposal to outlaw nuclear testing was not only extremely timely and urgent, but it was also in line with the increasing and legitimate desire for human self-preservation. Stevenson's

plan, according to Eleanor Roosevelt, represented a hope for the rest of the world and provided U.S. citizens with gains that were "greater than the possible risks."[63]

Even when Eisenhower won by a landslide, Eleanor Roosevelt did not mitigate the bitterness of her criticism. Far from considering agreement on nuclear armaments a utopian goal, she still believed it would be of mutual advantage to both superpowers. If the main goal of the U.S. was to avoid nuclear war, it had to "come to an agreement to stop the tests of nuclear bombs."[64] According to her, there was "enough knowledge in the Soviet Union about the dangers" of nuclear fallout that the Soviets might be "considering it wise to cease these tests in their own interest." If not, a U.S. proposal to ban nuclear tests would be "at least one thing in the foreign field that we have found we could take a risk on."[65]

To defend the test ban, Eleanor Roosevelt had to counter many pro-nuclear arguments. If the administration argued that stopping the nuclear test would put American military and scientists at a disadvantage, Mrs. Roosevelt maintained that it would only take a couple of years for the U.S. to catch the Soviets again (in case they hadn't adhered to the test ban). She rejected the assertion that the tests were necessary for the development of an effective defense system when they were posed against the danger of nuclear fallout itself, because people "have been told very little up to now of any discoveries that have been made to prevent these bad effects."[66] To those cold war scientists such as Edward Teller, who maintained that it was possible to produce a "clean" H-bomb with comparatively little fallout, she replied that unless it had the undisputed agreement of the entire scientific community, no reassurance on the safety of nuclear testing could be given to the public. "I feel encouraged when the scientists start to work to allay the fears of ordinary people. That means they really know that the people are concerned," she wrote in her columns. But, she also added, before scientists' hope could become reality, nothing could replace the "stopping of the tests altogether."[67]

In the former first lady's view, the U.S. had to capitalize on any positive step the Soviet Union might take toward a test ban. For this reason, in her column she was particularly glad to report on the "cautious optimism" that had pervaded the 1957 London conference of the U.N. Disarmament Subcommittee: "I always have felt strongly that we should stop nuclear tests altogether. And, of course, if we stop the tests, the next step is to come to an agreement on doing away with nuclear weapons."[68] The U.N. General Assembly could provide the two

superpowers with the international tools to come to that agreement through a pro-disarmament resolution calling "for immediate suspension of the testing of nuclear weapons under international control." This resolution could stop "the production of fissionable materials for military purposes and reduce the stock of nuclear weapons."[69] It could also reduce the armed forces and establish efficient ground and aerial inspection systems. Moreover, Eleanor Roosevelt argued, a resolution of this kind was not so different from the many counter-proposals that the Soviets had already submitted to the U.N., thus proving that "some compromises" could be reached.[70]

All in all, Mrs. Roosevelt believed that the outlawing of nuclear testing internationally was absolutely necessary because "radioactive fallout […] really endangers the human race."[71] By increasingly relying on "nuclear weapons and a reduction in our conventional weapons and our manpower," the U.S. was travelling a dangerous road: "Yet we are putting ourselves into the position where it is going to be almost impossible for us to meet our military commitments except with nuclear weapons."[72] Nuclear deterrence was in fact threatening the very efficacy of American national defense. To arrest this process, Eleanor Roosevelt suggested the U.S. administration stop "wasting our human material" and start investing in medical care and education. "These are two essentials to a really satisfactory security for the United States" and, in the long run, this investment would cost the country "less than the present haphazard" plan of national defense, "which gives no such security."[73]

Considering what she wrote in her columns, Eleanor Roosevelt's participation in SANE's first activities really seemed perfectly consistent with her long-standing humanitarianism, multilateralism, international pacifism, and liberalism. She was therefore among those petitioners who, through SANE, urged the administration to negotiate a satisfactory international test ban agreement and asked U.S. citizens to actively support it, because to "stand pat on this issue," as SANE's first announcement stated, was "the easiest way […] to a moral disaster." Along with Martin Luther King Jr., Bertrand Russell, and Albert Schweitzer, whose *Declaration of Conscience* according to Eleanor Roosevelt rightly had "a considerable impact on many people in many parts of the world," she asked for "the permanent internationally inspected ending of nuclear weapons test."[74] If the two superpowers did not want "to wipe each other off the map," they had to "begin peaceful negotiations, or at least get a start on the road to peace."[75]

Of course, Eleanor Roosevelt's personal bond with anti-nuclear activists and long-time friends such as Clark Eichelberger, Clarence Pickett, Harry Emerson Fosdick, and Paul Tillich—all of whom signed the first appeal by the SANE—played a significant role in engendering her commitment to the anti-nuclear cause.[76] Once she came on board the campaign, however, her public opposition to the nuclear weapons and tests had a peculiar trait. She proved to be particularly sensitive to the appeals for clarity and transparency in nuclear policy and defined as reprehensible the fact that the government had tried "to play down the danger of radioactive fallout" without telling its citizens the truth about the health hazards. On this attempt to conceal the nuclear danger, Eleanor Roosevelt's position was crystal clear: "What basis have we for making any decisions as to the types of defense we need if we are not kept fully informed as to the dangers? I still feel that negotiations on these questions could be carried out with greater success within the United Nations, and unless our government really contemplates the possibilities of war, these negotiations with the Soviet government must begin soon and develop some kind of satisfactory decisions."[77] Moreover, she kept criticizing U.S. uncompromising militarist attitudes. If it did not provide the U.N. and people of the world with assurances that no preparations for nuclear war were underway, according to the former first lady, the U.S. would eventually pay the price of international isolation.[78] If the American administration did not engage in a series of compelling talks on nuclear disarmament and therefore reverse its nuclear posture, it would go against "the self-interest of everyone." Under these circumstances, Mrs. Roosevelt asked her readers, "…is it essential to training for our planes to carry nuclear bombs? That is a question I would like to have answered."[79]

An Ephemeral Success

From the second half of the 1950s onward, the U.S. administration struggled with people's increasing revulsion at nuclear testing. Public reaction was far more discomfiting than it had been in the past and administration officials hardly managed to suppress the panic spreading through the country. Usually, the administration had countered the arguments of individuals like Eleanor Roosevelt or Robert Oppenheimer, those who proposed and fiercely defended transparency in the field of nuclear policy, by saying that the American public was not ready to fully understand the real consequences of the nuclear tests or, worse, of a nuclear war.

According to the AEC Director Lewis Strauss, absolute openness could cause, "on the one hand, panic among our people, and, on the other, terrific pressure." Apart from scaring "the public to death," clarity on nuclear matters could also make people able to influence governmental decision-making. Eisenhower himself had argued that the consequence of informing people about the human effects of nuclear weapons and tests was to "create hysteria," alienate consensus and, eventually, undermine the firmness of the U.S. nuclear posture.[80] Secrecy and deception, however, did not work well anymore.

Within the administration, the President's special assistant for disarmament, Harold Stassen, was among the few advisers who understood that this attempt to allay popular anxiety by obscuring the terms of the nuclear debate was neither a winning nor a viable strategy. Hence, he pushed for a greater U.S. involvement in disarmament negotiations, with the result being his isolation by the hardliners and, eventually, being forced from his post in early 1958.

Eleanor Roosevelt, who had admired Stassen's patience, his "effort to come to an agreement [with the Soviets] on banning nuclear weapon tests" and his ability to make acceptable to them the Western proposal "that an internationally controlled system be established to assure observance of an agreement to suspend nuclear tests," grimly condemned the administration's attitude toward Stassen and toward the nuclear negotiations in general.[81] Dulles, in particular, was considered to be the main one responsible for the failure of the nuclear talks. "Obviously," the former first lady argued, "the State Department has not been in sympathy" with the points advanced by Stassen. By not taking these proposals into serious consideration, Dulles had hindered nuclear negotiations by introducing minor trifles. Moreover, if Stassen had shown solid experience in multilateral negotiations and realized the process needed to be slow in order to gain Soviets' concessions, Dulles was proven not to be able to carry on "the kind of day-to-day, patient argument" that negotiators needed "to reach any point of contact and understanding."[82]

To further tarnish the U.S. administration's public image, on March 27, 1958, the Soviet Union unilaterally announced that it would stop its nuclear experimentation, after having just completed a series of megaton-yield tests, and right before a widely publicized American test series was to begin. From a propagandistic point of view, the announcement, though strategically irrelevant, was a great success for the Soviets and enhanced their international reputation. More cynical than genuine, the Soviet

proposal passed the baton to the United States. Khrushchev even declared that the U.S.S.R. was ready to suspend its nuclear testing indefinitely if the U.S. would do likewise.

Immediately after the Soviet announcement, a wide chorus of criticism emerged in the United States. And Eleanor Roosevelt was an integral part of that chorus. She highlighted the risk of international isolation that the U.S. was facing. In her column, she recognized that "the Soviet Union's announcement […] was, of course, a diplomatic triumph" that could "advance the Soviet states in the eyes of the uncommitted nations who dread war and want to see steps taken to prevent it."[83] For the U.S. to follow an uncompromising nuclear policy, thus, could mean it would very soon lose international support.

In Eleanor Roosevelt's opinion, the reason behind America's decision to not bring nuclear testing to a conclusion well before its main international counterpart did was "a mystery." She could not accept the justification that no system existed that worked well enough to verify whether or not the Soviets were living up to their promises, because "the peoples of the free world" wanted their governments "to work out some system of verification, if not to improve the machinery for detection" at any cost. According to Mrs. Roosevelt, the real problem was to recognize that "the temper of the people of the world, as a whole, favors a start toward doing away with the possibility of war." At the international level, the former first lady saw no enthusiasm for the U.S. announcement about a so-called "clean" bomb, which had been the linchpin and the ultimate target of the whole U.S. nuclear testing program. Even the Soviet Foreign, Minister Andrei Gromyko, as Mrs. Roosevelt recounted, ridiculed the idea that there could be such a thing as a "clean" nuclear bomb. Therefore, the sooner the U.S. realized that interest around the world was not focused on the production of more advanced weapons with less radioactive fallout but on the complete suspension of tests, the better its international reputation would be.

The only unmistakable truth, according to the former first lady, was that the people of the world wanted to be rid of nuclear bombs: "The governments of the Western world had better begin to recognize the fact that their people are anxious to see results leading toward disarmament. On the whole, I think, they would like to see the steps taken within the United Nations. They feel more confident when the whole world is included in these negotiations, but they want to see progress made and the Soviets have taken the initiative away from us. I am sorry that our government has

allowed this to happen. This Administration has been meeting emergency situations when they arise, but it has been shortsighted in preventing emergencies from arising and in beating the Soviets to the punch with actions appealing to the people of the world."[84]

Having surrendered to many of the pro-nuclear demands, the Eisenhower administration's nuclear policy had been a failure as far as Eleanor Roosevelt was concerned. It had increased the risk of global annihilation, fuelled the armaments race, and undermined the effectiveness of multilateral negotiations. Furthermore, it had proven to be a disaster for the U.S. public image internationally. The Secretary of State himself had to recognize that if not a ban, then at least a suspension of nuclear testing was inescapable. By declaring that a test suspension would give new hope to the world's people and that "it was simply intolerable to remain in a position wherein the United States, seeking peace, and giving loyal partnership to our allies, is unable to achieve an advantageous impact on world opinion," Eisenhower stood along the same line. Although the President did not consider nuclear testing evil *per se*, the very fact that "people have been brought to believe that it is" had to provoke a deep change in the nuclear posture of the U.S. A halt in nuclear experimentation, under specific conditions, could not be delayed, and it had to be accepted even by Strauss, the Pentagon officials, and all of the other hardliners filling different governmental positions.[85]

Slowly, Eisenhower came to acknowledge the value of what many critics of his nuclear policy had recommended to him: Test suspension had to be one of the administration's priorities and it had to be separated from the production of nuclear bombs and from any other technical matters concerning general disarmament. Instead of considering nuclear testing as the best road to the production of a clean bomb, the President endorsed the argument that many anti-nuclear campaigners had upheld for long time, which was that a test ban was necessary to allay international tensions and fears. To achieve that goal, Eisenhower proposed an international conference of experts aimed at verifying the technical feasibility of a test ban and, above all, at assessing the possibility that such a ban could be monitored in an effective way.

To Dulles, who recognized that the U.S. was under "appreciable" pressure to suspend nuclear testing, a test ban would serve to challenge the growing international perception that the U.S. was a "militaristic nation" and would help the country regain popular trust and consensus. The military advantages that could derive from the test series, the Secretary of

State admitted, would be "outweighed by the political losses, which may well culminate in the moral isolation of the United States." In spite of Strauss' attempt to resist this change, which he considered a phony issue that had been whipped up by the Soviets "with the assistance of some disingenuous people in our country," Eisenhower and Dulles eventually decided to proceed with a moratorium on nuclear tests.[86] When, in August 1958, the President met both Edward Teller and the AEC director to explain the reasons behind his choice, he clearly stated that, even if the new thermonuclear weapons were tremendously powerful, they were "not as powerful as the world public opinion in expecting the United States to follow certain policies."[87] A U.S. nuclear explosion occurred in November of that year, and then Eisenhower publicly launched the moratorium, which entered into force immediately. Paradoxically, contrary to what Stevenson had called for during his electoral campaign, the moratorium affected not only the largest atmospheric tests, but also the underground ones.[88]

Eisenhower's decision to suspend nuclear testing, thus, testified to the extent to which the nuclear fallout debate had shaped American public opinion and influenced the political elite. The warm reaction of anti-nuclear supporters throughout the country strengthened the arguments supporting the moratorium. The Federation of American Scientists (FAS), which had mounted great pressure in favor of the test interruption, considered it as an important step toward the mitigation of the nuclear arms race.[89] Seizing the day, the FAS also supported an agreement on nuclear test suspension guaranteed by United Nations inspections and prepared a complete package of concrete proposals concerning nuclear disarmament.[90] In the scientists' view, the suspension of nuclear tests had to be definitive and bring nuclear weapons under international control once and for all.[91]

Though partial and incomplete, Eisenhower's choice was warmly welcomed by SANE. The committee defined the President's decision as a "wise and courageous action," able to allay international apprehension.[92] SANE looked at the moratorium as a significant step toward global peace and its leadership decided to publicly express its support for what it saw as an entirely new political course. Taking the opportunity provided by the trilateral talks held by the nuclear powers in Geneva, the SANE leadership issued an appeal, which was directly addressed to the chief negotiators, titled "To the Men at Geneva." SANE pushed for "the permanent internationally inspected ending of nuclear weapons

tests" as "an important beginning" to solve the extremely complicated but vital "problem of world peace."

An impressive list of supporters and sponsors rendered the appeal authoritative, and both morally and intellectually binding. Eleanor Roosevelt's name, between the names: Bertrand Russell and the Swedish intellectual Gunnar Myrdal helped give the appeal the kind of public resonance that it definitely deserved.[93]

Notes

1. See the document NSC no. 5707/8, quoted by Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle against the Bomb, Volume 2, Resisting the Bomb: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement, 1954–1970* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 126.
2. On nuclear testing and its dangerous effects on human health see the debate on http://nuclearweaponarchive.org/Usa/Tests/.
3. See the so-called Killian report, which was issued on February 1955 and titled "Meeting the Threat of Surprise Attack," in Saki Dockrill, *Eisenhower's New Look. National Security Policy, 1953–61* (London: Macmillan, 1996), 135.
4. McGeorge Bundy, *Danger and Survival: Choices about the Bomb in the First Fifty Years* (New York: Random House, 1988), 328.
5. See Saki Dockrill, *Eisenhower's New Look*, 210.
6. See McGeorge Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, 334. See also James R. Killian, *Memorandum to President Eisenhower, Progress Report Regarding Missile and Satellite Programs, December 28, 1957*, in Dwight D. Eisenhower's Papers as President, Administration Series, Box 23, James R. Killian, 1957, on line at http://www.eisenhower.archives.gov/Research/Digital_Documents/NASA/NASA.html.
7. According to a January 1958 Gallup poll, at that time 79 percent of American people was worried about a supposed Soviet technological advantage, see Ryan Boyle, "A Red Moon over the Mall: The Sputnik Panic and Domestic America," in *The Journal of American Culture* 31 (2008); Andrew Kohut, "What Americans Want," in *Foreign Policy* 70 (1988), 150; and Paul Dickson, *Sputnik. The Shock of the Century* (Washington, DC: Walker, 2001).
8. See U.S. National Archives Records Administration (NARA), Record Group (Rg) 59, General Records of the Department of State, Records of the Division of Public Studies (Rdps), *Reports on Public Attitudes Toward Foreign Policy 1943–1965*, Box 16, "Opinions and Activities of American Private Organizations and Groups" (Oaapog), Box 17, Oaapog, May

1954, January 1955, and February 1955. See also Robert Kleidman, *Organizing for Peace: Neutrality, the Test Ban, and the Freeze* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1993), 23.

9. As many official documents show, the administration still followed a policy of "free use of nuclear weapons." See, for example, the Memorandum of Conversation, "Use of United Kingdom Bases and Consultation with the United Kingdom on the Use of Atomic Weapons, 6 March 1953, Top Secret;" see also the Memorandum for the President from Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, "The Eden Visit: Use of Atomic Weapons, 7 March 1953, Top Secret;" and the Memorandum for Mr. Gordon Arneson from Under Secretary of State Walter B. Smith, 12 March 1953, Top Secret. All of them are in NARA, Rg 59, Decimal Files 1950–1954, 711.5611, various dates, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) release.
10. See Joseph Cirincione, *Bomb Scare. The History and Future of Nuclear Weapons* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 24.
11. The WILPF, for instance, defined this move as "extremely opportune" and "able to assure a continuative effort through peace," see NARA, Rg 59, Rdps, Box 17, Oaapog, June, 1954.
12. The Atomic Energy Commission tried to deny the dangerous effects of atmospheric testing on human health, but, at the same time, it promoted several studies on fallout contamination, especially on the impact of Strontium-90 (the so-called radio-strontium) on food supply. During the 1960s, the AEC scientists and advisers looked closely at the impact of radioiodine on the thyroid. Although the public and scientific debate about the impact of low doses of radioactivity is still open, a study completed in 2001 by the National Cancer Institute-Center for Disease Control concluded that exposure to fallout from nuclear tests during the 1950s was associated with an increase in cancer mortalities in the U.S.; according to this study, fallout exposure may have caused more than 11,000 deaths, see http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB94/#6bcnxz; see also Barton C. Hacker, *Elements of Controversy: The Atomic Energy Commission and Radiation Safety in Nuclear Weapons Testing, 1947–1974* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1994) 181–182, 198, 222–230; Peter Eisler, "Fallout Likely Caused 15,000 Deaths," in *USA Today*, 28 February 2002; James Glanz, "Almost All in the U.S. Have Been Exposed to Fallout, Study Finds," in *The New York Times*, March 1, 2002.
13. See David Holloway, *Nuclear weapons and the escalation of the Cold War, 1945–1962*, in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume 1*, eds. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 383. Eisenhower's quotation is from his second inauguration address, which is available online at http://www.american-rhetoric.com/speeches/dwightdeisenhowerfarewell.html.

14. See William Burr and Hector L. Montford, "The Making of the Limited Test Ban Treaty, 1958–1963," http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB94/.
15. As Peter Mayer argues, "It's hard to imagine any other public figure of the last century that has contributed more than Bertrand Russell to defend individual liberties against the demands of organized society. […] He was able to transmit the logic of philosophy to the contemporary needs," see Peter Mayer, *The Pacifist Conscience* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966), 317.
16. Initially, only a few articles talking about the *Declaration* appeared. *The New York Times* published its first editorial on that on April 24, 1957, but it was quite isolated. See NARA, RG 59, RRD, box 233, April 1957.
17. See Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb*, *Volume 2*, 31–32. During the NBC program *Meet the Press* on May 26, 1957, Schweitzer was deeply criticized. See Edward B. Lewis and Howard D. Lipshitz, *Genes, Development and Cancer: The Life and Work of Edward B. Lewis* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2007), 396. See also NARA, RG 59, RRD, box 233, April 1957.
18. See Michael Egan, *Barry Commoner and the Science of Survival. The Remaking of American Environmentalism* (Boston: MIT Press, 2009), 38–39.
19. See Larry S. Wittner, "Blacklisting Schweitzer," in *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, vol. 51, no. 3, 1995, 55–61. See also Robert Divine, *Blowing in the Wind*, 140 and Jeffrey W. Knopf *Domestic Society and International Cooperation: The Impact of Protest on US Arms Control Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
20. On Linus Pauling, see Sandra Ionno Butcher, "The Origins of Russell-Einstein Manifesto," in *Pugwash History Series* 1 (2005); D. Krieger, *Linus Pauling and the Spirit of Peace. A Tale of Two Petitions*, September 1998 in http://www.wagingpeace.org/articles/1998/09/00_krieger_pauling.htm; Michael Egan, *Barry Commoner and The Science of Survival*. See also http://library.oregonstate.edu/specialcollections/coll/pauling/peace/narrative/page27.html and http://library.oregonstate.edu/specialcollections/coll/pauling/peace/newsclips/peace5.007.22.html.
21. See Michael Egan, *Barry Commoner and The Science of Survival*, 60.
22. See Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb*, *Volume 2*, 37–39; Helen C. Allison, "Outspoken Scientist," in *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, vol. 16, no. 12, 1960, 390; Robert Divine, *Blowing on the Wind*, 182–186; Samuel U. Newtan, *Nuclear War I and Other Major Nuclear Disasters of the 20th Century* (Bloomington, Authorhouse, 2007). On Teller, see Edward Teller and Judith Schoolery, *Memoirs. A Twentieth-Century Journey in Science and Politics* (Cambridge, Perseus Book, 2002) and Peter Goodchild, *Edward Teller, the Real Dr. Strangelove* (London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2004). Finally, see Linus Pauling's letter to president

Eisenhower, February 19, 1958 in http://osulibrary.oregonstate.edu/specialcollections/coll/pauling/peace/corr/corr108.1-lp-eisenhower-19580219.html and Richard G. Hewlett and Jack M. Holl, *Atoms for Peace and War, 1953–1961: Eisenhower and the Atomic Energy Commission* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).

23. See NARA, RG 59, RRD 1949–1962, Box 149, Official Correspondence and John L. Gaddis, *The Long Peace: Inquiries into the History of the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 59–60. The quotation by Eisenhower is available on http://osulibrary.oregonstate.edu/specialcollections/coll/pauling/peace/narrative/page27.html.
24. See http://paulingblog.files.wordpress.com/2013/01/bio6-008-407.jpg.
25. The complete report is on NARA, RG 59, RRD, 1949-1962, Box 62, Inspection and Control.
26. The text of the appeal is online at http://osulibrary.oregonstate.edu/specialcollections/coll/pauling/peace/newsclips/peace5.007.22.html.
27. Among the participants there were the Australian scientist Marc Oliphant, the Austrian Hans Thirring, the British Cecil Powell and Joseph Rotblat, the Japanese Hideki Yukawa, the American Hermann Muller, Rabinowitch, Szilard, and Victor Weisskopf and, finally, the Soviet Topchiev, Kuzin, and Skobeltzyn. See U.K. National Archive (NA), Foreign Office (FO), General Correspondence (371), Box 135529, 1958, Atomic Energy.
28. See Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb*, *Volume 2*, 34–35.
29. On NA, FO, 371/135529, 1958, Atomic Energy.
30. See Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb*, *Volume 2*, 35.
31. On NA, FO, 371/135527, 1958, Atomic Energy.
32. See the reports on Pugwash on the *Evenemont Journal*, April 2, 1958, the *Scotsman*, May 15, 1958 and, May 7, 1958, and the *News Chronicle*, April 10, 1958 in in NA, FO, 371/135529 and 135530, Atomic Energy. See also, *The New York Times*, April 14, 1958.
33. See *The New York Times*, April 14, 1958 in NA, FO, 371/135532, 1958 and NA, FO, 371/135528, 1958.
34. See NA, FO, 371/ 135530, 1958 and NARA, Rg 59, Rdps, Box 17, Oaapog, September 1958.
35. The *Russell-Einstein Manifesto* was one of the best-known documents of the scientific campaign against the nuclear weapons. It was presented in London in July 1955. The full text is available on http://www.pugwash.org/about/manifesto.htm. The following international conference was attended by 2,500 scientists and it aimed to make international control of atomic energy possible. See NA, FO, 371/117392, 1955. As regards the public reaction to the appeal, see "Lifting Nuclear War Shadow From Mankind," in *Times*, August 4, 1955, in NA, FO, 371/117388, 1955. See Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb*, *Volume 2*, 7.

36. See Thomas W. Graham, *The Pattern and Importance of Public Knowledge in the Nuclear Age* (Sage Publications, 1988); William G. Mayer, *The Changing American Mind: How and Why American Public Opinion Changed between 1960 and 1988* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 107; Tom W. Smith, "The Polls – A Report. Nuclear Anxiety," in *Public Opinion Quarterly*, vol. 52, 1988, 557. See also NA, FO 371/117395, 1955.
37. See NARA, Rg 59, Rdps, Box 17, Oaapog, April 1956.
38. The American Veterans Committee presented its requests through its main publication, the *AVC Bulletin*, in June 1956; see NARA, Rg 59, Rdps, Box 18, Oaapog, June 1956.
39. See Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb*, *Volume 2*,140–141.
40. Clarence Pickett to Linus Pauling , March 27, 1958, quoted in Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb*, *Volume 2*, 51.
41. *Ibidem*.
42. See Milton S. Katz, *Ban the Bomb. A History of SANE, the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, 1957–1985* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1986), 21 and Robert A. Divine, *Blowing on the Wind*, 129–137. See also Swarthmore College Peace Collection (SCPC), National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE), Inc. (DG 58), Records, 1957–1987, Series A, Records of the National Office of SANE, New York, NY, Administrative Records, 1957–1970, Box 4, Minutes, resolutions, etc., 1957–1970, *Letter from Clarence Pickett to Norman Cousins*, November 18, 1956.
43. See Milton S. Katz, *Ban the Bomb*, cit., p. 25. See also SCPC, DG 58, Series A, Records of the National Office of SANE, New York, NY, Administrative Records, 1957–1970, Box 4, Minutes and Resolutions, 1958–1968.
44. See Erich Fromm, *The Sane Society* (London: Routledge, 1955).
45. See SCPC, DG 58, Series A, Records of the National Office of SANE, New York, NY, Administrative Records, 1957–1970, Box 1, Material about Sane, 1958–1968, and SCPC, DG 58, Series A, Records of the National Office of SANE, New York, NY, Administrative Records, 1957–1970, Box 4, Minutes and Resolutions, 1958–1968. November 15, 1957.
46. See NARA, Rg 59, Rdps, Box 18, Oaapog, November 1957.
47. NARA, Rg 59, RDPS, Box 18, OAAPOG, November 1957.
48. See SCPC, DG 58, Series A, Records of the National Office of SANE, New York, NY, Administrative Records, 1957–1970, Box 4, Minutes and Resolutions, 1958–1968. See also the "Follow-up memo" that the SANE executive secretary Trevor Thomas sent to the local sections on February 7, 1958, in SCPC, DG 58, Series A, Records of the National Office of SANE, New York, NY, Administrative Records, 1957–1970, Box 4,

Minutes and Resolutions, 1958–1968. The announcement, published on the *Herald Tribune* on March 28, was titled "No Contamination without Representation." A third announcement was published by *The New York Times* on April 11. See also Milton S. Katz, *Ban the Bomb*, 32. See also SCPC, DG 58, Series A, Records of the National Office of SANE, New York, NY, Administrative Records, 1957–1970, Box 18, Sane Actions, 1957–1965.

49. See SCPC, DG 58, Series B-4; Box 22, Gottlieb, Sanford: General correspondence, Memos, 1959–1960.
50. See Milton S. Katz, *Ban the Bomb*, 31.
51. See Eleanor Roosevelt interview, "Statements of Organizations on H-Bombs Test Ban, in *McCalls Magazine*, October 1956, 4, in SCPC, DG 58, Subseries B2, Correspondence, Box 6.
52. See Norman Cousins and Clarence Pickett, "American Citizens Respond to Continued Nuclear Bomb Tests" in SCPC, DG 58, Subseries B2 Correspondence, Box 6.
53. See telegram from Norman Cousins and Clarence Pickett to Eleanor Roosevelt, June 11, 1957, in Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum, Papers of Anna Eleanor Roosevelt, 1884–1964, Eleanor Roosevelt Papers, Container 1791. The meeting was supposed to be held privately on June 21, 1957 at, according to the first plan, the home of Mary Lasker, in New York. It was moved to the Overseas Press Club at a later stage. Mrs. Roosevelt replied to the invitation by saying that she could not attend the meeting due to previously planned affairs in Virginia, but she sent her good wishes to the participants. See telegram from Eleanor Roosevelt to Clarence Pickett, June 11, 1957 in SCPC, DG 58, Subseries B2 Correspondence Box 6. Cousins invited the former first lady again in December, but her schedule was already filled. She sent again her best wishes "for a most successful meeting," see Eleanor Roosevelt to Norman Cousins, November 27, 1957, in SCPC, DG 58 Subseries B2 Correspondence Box 6. In return of such a courtesy, Eleanor Roosevelt coauthored with Norman Cousins an article for the *Denver Post*, on December 2, 1957, where the two stated that there was "no hope for the satisfied man" for those who agreed with the U.S. nuclear policy, see SCPC, DG 58 Subseries B2 Correspondence Box 6.
54. See Sam Kaner, Michael Doyle, Lenny Lind and Catherine Toldi, *Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making* (London: Wiley, 2007), 32.
55. *My Day*, March 11, 1958.
56. *My Day*, November 4, 1959.
57. *My Day*, November 18, 1955.
58. *My Day*, June 18, 1955.

59. See Jason Berger, *A New Deal for the World: Eleanor Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981).
60. *My Day*, November 5, 1956.
61. *My Day*, March 13, 1958.
62. *My Day*, December 9, 1957.
63. *My Day*, November 5, 1956.
64. *My Day*, July 23, 1957.
65. *My Day*, November 4, 1959.
66. *My Day*, November 5, 1956.
67. *My Day*, July 3, 1957.
68. *My Day*, May 18, 1957.
69. See the text of the General Assembly resolution on http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/1150(XII)&Lang=E&Area=RESOLUTION.
70. *My Day*, November 1, 1957.
71. *My Day*, August 16, 1958.
72. *My Day*, July 22, 1957.
73. *My Day*, July 23, 1957.
74. See Jason Berger, *A New Deal for the World*, 126.
75. April 7, 1958.
76. See Jason Berger, *A New Deal for the World*, 125. See also Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum, Papers of Anna Eleanor Roosevelt 1884-1964, Eleanor Roosevelt Papers, Container 1881, Correspondence 1957–1962, SANE, where the correspondence between Eleanor Roosevelt and the most prominent leaders of the SANE, including Pickett, Cousins and Homer Jack is retained, revealing how close these leaders where to her.
77. *My Day*, April 7, 1958.
78. *My Day*, August 14, 1958.
79. *My Day*, April 24, 1958. In November 4, 1959, Eleanor Roosevelt defended and promoted the SANE. She complimented the organization's very active Hollywood branch that was coordinated by Steve Allen. She explained the intention of this group of artists, which was to let Eisenhower know that people wanted a ban on nuclear testing. "It is good to have artists lead, and I think they will find a considerable following in the country" she concluded. See *My Day*, November 4, 1959.
80. See Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb, Volume 2*, 149. "Eisenhower was personally interested in halting nuclear tests but his administration was divided. Top advisors, such as Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Lewis Strauss fervently supported testing and downplayed the fallout problem. Strauss along with senior Pentagon officials agreed that testing was necessary to maintain the U.S.'s superiority over the Soviets in

nuclear weapons technology," see William Burr and Hector L. Montford, "The Making of the Limited Test Ban Treaty, 1958–1963," on line at http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB94/#7.

81. *My Day*, June 18 and June 20, 1957.
82. *My Day*, March 13, 1958.
83. *My Day*, April 3, 1958.
84. *My Day*, April 3, 1958.
85. See McGeorge Bundy, *Danger and Survival*, 331–332.
86. See Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb, Volume 2*, 181.
87. See Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light*, 101.
88. See Richard Henry, *Eleanor Roosevelt and Adlai Stevenson* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).
89. See NARA, Rg 59, Rdps, Box 14, Oaapog, May 1958.
90. See the FAS proposals on the *Washington Post*, May 5, 1958, in NARA, RG 59, Rdps, Box 17, Oaapog, May 1958.
91. See NARA, Rg 59, Rdps, Box 17, Oaapog, June 1958.
92. See SCPC, DG 58, Series B, Records of the National Office of SANE, New York, NY, Correspondence, 1957–1966, Sub-Series B-3, Correspondence and Related Papers, 1957–1958, Box 13, New Elements in Fallout, 1958.
93. The appeal, titled "To the Men at Geneva," appeared in *The New York Times* on October 31, 1958. Norman Cousins sent Eleanor Roosevelt a letter enclosing a copy of it. She replied on November 20, saying that she was "happy about the very encouraging response" to the appeal and that she hoped that "this visible evidence of concern over the absence of nuclear controls" would help "influence the negotiations at Geneva," see the correspondence exchange in SCPC, DG 58, Subseries B2, Correspondence Box 6. The text of the appeal is available on-line at http://triptych.brynmawr.edu/cdm/singleitem/collection/SC_Ephemera/id/1588/rec/52.

CHAPTER 6

An Agenda for Disarmament

Nuclear Disarmament Matters

The one-year moratorium on nuclear testing that was announced in the summer of 1958 seemed to slow the pace of the nuclear arms race, at least momentarily. The initiative created high and legitimate expectations, but it took a few more years before the two superpowers could reach an effective agreement in the nuclear field. Taking advantage of an increasingly supportive public—the Gallup poll reported in 1959 that 77 percent of Americans favored an agreement to stop nuclear testing—President Eisenhower proposed a meeting in Geneva where the leaders of the nuclear powers would engage in a round of talks aimed at extending the moratorium and possibly outlawing indefinitely any future nuclear testing. The test ban negotiations started late in October 1958 and lasted until early 1962, although technical problems—such as the arrangement of an effective system of control, inspection, and verification—substantially weakened their chances of success.[1]

Domestically, pro-nuclear hard-liners were confronted not only with growing popular uneasiness but also with rising anti-nuclear sentiment within the administration. Presidential advisors like John McCone and Robert Lovett, who looked at the nuclear test ban as "a fatal error," faced the increasing influence of such counselors as John J. McCloy and Livingston Merchant, who believed instead that prohibiting nuclear testing would be a first, crucial step toward complete disarmament, whose

D. Fazzi, *Eleanor Roosevelt and the Anti-Nuclear Movement*,
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only alternative was "total destruction." McCloy and Merchant praised an extension of the moratorium on nuclear testing because "much can happen during the period which it covers." They regarded the moratorium as a window of opportunity that the administration had to keep open. Even Secretary of State John Foster Dulles changed his mind and backed a test ban agreement. Dulles recognized that in spite of his "doubts on the grounds of national security," the Geneva talks were extremely useful on political grounds because of the increasingly supportive "attitude of the Congress and of the American public towards signing an agreement with the Russians." Dulles' successor at the State Department, Christian Herter, held a similar stance and stated that notwithstanding the "varying degrees of skepticism about" nuclear disarmament, "a very real fear of the continuation of the present arms race" made an agreement on nuclear testing inescapable.[2]

Fear of nuclear fallout and a widespread anxiety about nuclear contamination were the major causes for the shift in Americans' common attitude toward nuclear testing.[3] In 1959, the news of contaminated milk circulated widely. The Public Health Service began issuing periodic summary reports on food contamination, where they listed and publicized the threshold level of radioactive elements (Maximum Permissible Concentration) that food could contain and still be considered safe.[4] Scientists provided the public with evidence of the harmful effects of nuclear radiation and continued to criticize the efficacy of civil defense. According to prominent nuclear physicist Ralph Lapp, civil defense offered "little hope that the primary effects of thermonuclear weapons [could] be minimized to any significant degree."[5] Lapp and many other liberal scientists, intellectuals, and anti-nuclear organizations produced a "full-blown fallout scare [that] gripped the nation" and eventually convinced people to support nuclear negotiations.[6] Anti-nuclear activists had reason to be satisfied with the initial results of their educational campaign. The public understood to a sufficient degree the health hazards posed by nuclear contamination. When Western and Eastern leaders met in Geneva, roughly two-thirds of American people favored an agreement banning nuclear tests, and SANE leaders widely publicized this news.[7] Enthralled by these developments, SANE's cofounder Norman Cousins came to consider his organization a potential game changer in US diplomacy. He proposed renaming SANE the "national committee for a sane foreign policy."[8] Such a favorable climate—*The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* captured the mood by stating the "good old days when the Atomic Energy Commission felt free to test

as it pleased" were over—led SANE leaders to sponsor several anti-nuclear rallies throughout the country, mirroring the popular Easter marches that the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) organized in Great Britain. As SANE executive secretary Donald Keys reported in a late 1958 action memo, the more than 5000 letters that SANE local chapters had sent to the White House had played a major role in making the US government "increasingly sensitive" to public opinion on nuclear issues.[9] Less than one year later, when the Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev paid a historic visit to the USA, SANE launched a "nationwide appeal campaign in the form of an open letter to the premier and the president," asking them to "remove the few remaining obstacles to a permanent end to nuclear weapons tests under inspection and control." SANE was at the peak of popularity: it soon opened its 150th local chapter, spent more than $50,000 to sponsor nationwide anti-nuclear campaigns, continued to publish advertisements in *The New York Times* and received more than $100,000 in donations for its activities.[10]

For her part, Eleanor Roosevelt contributed to SANE's increasingly popular pleas for nuclear disarmament and a test ban. Her signature appeared, along with other prominent world leaders, in the appeal that SANE addressed "To the Men at Geneva" in October 1958. Perhaps more importantly, she continued to promote nuclear disarmament and the cessation of nuclear testing through the pages of her widely syndicated column, her books, letters, and interviews. She blamed nuclear fallout for alimenting fear, creating international tension, and escalating the "chance of danger to the human race."[11] When she met Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev in Yalta, as she recalled in her popular 1958 autobiography *On My Own*, her first question to the Russian leader was about disarmament. More specifically, she asked how the Soviet Union could expect the USA "to agree to disarmament without" a safe system of inspection and control. According to the former first lady, nuclear disarmament was the litmus test of international peaceful coexistence, because it needed mutual trust to work in an efficient way. "Misunderstandings," she argued, "have grown between our countries and there is fear on both sides. We will have to do things to create confidence," especially since "we both know […] that the bombs can annihilate the world."[12] Privately, she praised Senator Lyndon Johnson's defense of international control of nuclear power and urged him toward "the establishment of a peace agency." She wrote to former President Harry Truman reiterating her wish to "come to an agreement for stopping the whole use of atomic

energy for military purposes" and "to protect the human race from fallout." She asked California Governor Edmund Brown to endorse a hypothetical Stevenson–Kennedy Democratic ticket for the 1960 presidential elections due to Stevenson's experience in foreign affairs and diplomatic negotiations, which she considered crucial for coping with the problems of the nuclear age.[13] But, it was through her *My Day* column that Mrs. Roosevelt provided the most compelling reasons why disarmament and a test ban should be upheld and promoted.

First, nuclear disarmament negotiations and test ban talks could be used to improve USA's relative position in the Cold War. Eleanor Roosevelt knew that, on ideological grounds, the Cold War would not be over any time soon; democracy and totalitarianism were substantially inconsistent with one another. But nuclear disarmament, or at least a ban on nuclear testing, was such an urgent issue that the two superpowers could not postpone facing it until their ideological divide had narrowed. She believed that, especially from the American point of view, disarmament and peaceful coexistence would remain a mirage unless "the Communists give up their avowed intention of achieving a Communist world without regard to the methods used." According to the former first lady, if the Communists would "give full assurance that they will strive to spread communism only through example and open propaganda," the USA could capitalize on such a breakthrough and exploit the chances for disarmament as a crucial step toward peaceful coexistence. To make this happen, Mrs. Roosevelt suggested, "why not say to them quite openly that we are willing to meet them in fair competition that does not involve military action or subversion in an underhanded way of any weaker countries?" In this way, Mrs. Roosevelt thought that substantial progress toward disarmament and world peace could be achieved and people's fear would be allayed in the process.[14]

Second, an agreement on nuclear disarmament could help the two superpowers find mutual solutions to many of the problems produced and aggravated by the Cold War, such as the situation of German armaments and the status of Berlin. Although a reunified and unarmed Germany might ease international tension, Mrs. Roosevelt protested that this kind of solution was considered too dangerous and disadvantageous from a military point of view. She reminded her readers that, in the aftermath of the World War II, Germany "did not want to rearm and was willing to be a neutral power." Hence, if the superpowers' common goal was a disarmed world, "there should be some negotiations possible on this whole

question which would not leave either the East or the West in the position of strength they really seek but which might be, in the end, a step towards a full plan of disarmament and peace for the world." Notwithstanding the ultimate utopianism of such a stance, which was recognized by Eleanor Roosevelt herself, the former first lady advocated "some permanent move leading to ultimate disarmament and peace" because this was "the longing of the peoples of the world." In her words, world leaders had to seriously take into account "the known dangers of a nuclear war and realize that if we are going to free ourselves from the dangers of arms production, we must change the whole atmosphere of thought."[15]

Third, nuclear disarmament could help overcome the structural limits of the strategy of containment. "Unless we believe that war is inevitable and, therefore, have made up our minds to go on and on with our old theories of competitive armament,"—which the opening of the nuclear era should already have deprived of any strategic value—in Eleanor Roosevelt's opinion the search for nuclear disarmament was "vitally important to every nation in the world." If the necessity for disarmament were to be rebuffed, that would imply the continuation of "policies started under former Secretary of State Dean Acheson and former President Harry Truman for containment of the Soviet Union and communism." These policies might have worked in the aftermath of the World War II, and they could perhaps be considered inevitable, "but years have passed since that time, and there have been great changes in the world." The Truman/Acheson policies, according to Mrs. Roosevelt, were no longer "comprehensive enough."[16] A new and comprehensive foreign policy approach should tackle the problems in the near and Far East as well as in Europe, so as to "envision a really peaceful world in which total disarmament" would be possible. Long-term objectives and diplomacy should shape the approach, based on the model that Eleanor Roosevelt had followed during the negotiations over the human rights declaration. Settling the "big questions" affecting the international arena in order to reach the "ultimate objective of disarmament," according to the former first lady, was "not a day-to-day matter" but instead, "a matter of trying to gauge what will happen 10 or 15 or 20 years ahead as a result of present-day policies."[17]

Fourth, negotiating nuclear disarmament could eventually strengthen the international prominence of the UN. The threat of nuclear weapons would induce statesmen to make use of "all the skill and techniques available in the U.N." For this reason, when the world leaders decided to take over from the UN's official disarmament commission and hold a round

of multilateral negotiations involving ten different countries, Eleanor Roosevelt did not hide her dissent and confessed to be "considerably disturbed" by the news. The main problem with holding these meetings outside the UN framework, according to Mrs. Roosevelt, was related to the lack of transparency and democratic control. There was no guarantee that these informal talks would be more successful than the procedure followed by the UN, while the risk of hindering the negotiations was considerably higher. "Almost without its being discussed in Congress, and certainly without the knowledge of our people as a whole," the former first lady warned, "we are giving much of this know-how to many small nations on the side of the West. And we may be sure that the Russians are giving it to all their allies, also." By doing this, the USA was putting itself at a disadvantage because the Soviets were able to exert direct pressures over their satellites and ultimately control them, while this was not true for America with its allies. As a result, a "small group of supposedly powerful nations" would have "the right to arrogate to itself the decisions of what shall be done in the one field that promises the possibility of survival." Accordingly, the talks outside the UN were, at best, "a waste of time"; at worst, they represented an outdated attempt "to have a balance of power," which denied that nuclear disarmament was "of concern to every nation, no matter how small" or how powerful it may be.[18]

Fifth, and finally, in Eleanor Roosevelt's opinion, there was convincing evidence that nuclear disarmament was worthwhile even from an economic standpoint. Before President Eisenhower embarked on his worldwide goodwill tour in the winter of 1959, a move that according to Eisenhower was supposed to "bring better understanding of America in the other nations of the world" and perhaps represent a fresh "start on mutual disarmament," the former first lady asked two very specific questions linking together the US economy and disarmament. She asked whether the American economic structure might collapse if the president effectively brought about the kind of peaceful coexistence that he promised to champion by means of his trip: "What have you done as yet to prepare your economy to meet this change?" she pointedly asked Eisenhower. Then Mrs. Roosevelt asked an even more explicit question critical of some of the most controversial features of US society: "Mr. President, is it true that in your country you pay to keep land out of production? Many of our people go to bed hungry every night." Eleanor Roosevelt was convinced that a genuine effort toward disarmament would have implied a deep "changeover of industry" along with the reshuffling of the whole relationship between government and industry itself. "But how many people in our government are really bent on bringing

about disarmament in the world and economic stability?" Showing her grasp of Washington politics, Mrs. Roosevelt sadly admitted that, to her knowledge, "there were just six people" within the administration who were actually concerned with the economic implications of disarmament. Even more gravely, the USA was not asking the UN, the body with the needed expertise, for more information about this changeover that would make it easier for American companies. In a functioning peaceful and disarmed world, the USA "would have to improve, with the help of the U.N., the health of people in underdeveloped areas," and then "help them develop their natural resources in order that they may be able to buy our goods." By sustaining a nuclear arms race, the USA had instead been, according to Eleanor Roosevelt, morally despicable and lazy. Americans had no plan for the worldwide distribution of food and had not focused on their real strategic advantage, which was the great variety of their natural products. Unfortunately, the "thought and intelligence" needed for the production and distribution of those goods had instead been diverted into the false promise of modernity and progress represented by nuclear weapons.[19]

In light of all of these major reasons for upholding nuclear disarmament and the test ban, Eleanor Roosevelt regarded the issues of establishing an effective system of inspection and control as mere trifles. Inspections, which could not be absolutely "foolproof," were a secondary problem, while the most important issue was to find a way in which the people of the world could "live together with different ideologies and not go to war or have any fear of force." Tearing down the wall of mutual mistrust had to precede disarmament talks. Only by doing so, would it be possible to "settle the question of Germany in Europe and Communist China in Asia," to transform the Middle East into "a place where neighbors live together peacefully and international waterways are free to all," to allow hope where there was hunger, and to spread human rights where they were disregarded. Without adequately fulfilling these preconditions, in Eleanor Roosevelt's mind, there could be "no peace or disarmament" at all.[20]

Lobbying for Disarmament

Eleanor Roosevelt's late 1950s commitment to the anti-nuclear and test ban campaign was deeply rooted in her humanitarian wish to educate people about what she considered the most important issues of her era. To use Mrs. Roosevelt's own words, the US citizens had to meet a world in "constant flux" and realize that, since an increasing number of nations knew how to produce, stockpile, and possibly use nuclear weapons, the

need for disarmament had become "imperative." For this reason, when she was asked by a group of young mothers how to educate their children, she replied that they should give the highest consideration to education for peace. Children had to "learn about the world as a whole," meaning that they had to recognize not only all of the differences in customs and habits among the peoples of the world but also the many different socio-economic conditions characterizing modern nation-states. More importantly, children had to understand that "these conditions could change and they will change more quickly when we really work together for peace instead of keeping the struggle going to keep the peace by a balance of arms." Mothers who wanted the future generations to live in a better world had therefore to impress upon their children both "the dangers of war and the need for peace."[21] When Norman Cousins asked Mrs. Roosevelt to deliver a supportive message at a meeting of the newly established National Student Council for a SANE Nuclear Policy, he couldn't hope for a better endorsement of peace education than he would get from the former first lady.[22]

But Eleanor Roosevelt and her fellow anti-nuclear activists were well aware of the fact that people's education was just one side of the coin. It might be instrumental in generating public support of nuclear disarmament and a test ban, but it was not sufficient to provoke the kind of change they were seeking in the field of nuclear policy. To that end, they had to convince the political elites of the advisability of nuclear disarmament and the wisdom of a ban on nuclear testing.

The SANE executive secretary, Trevor Thomas, was among the first ones to grasp the need for stouter political lobbying. On Capitol Hill in December 1957, he had launched a vast congressional campaign to introduce a resolution in favor of nuclear disarmament and arms control. Through this resolution, he had hoped to expose Congress to the question of nuclear disarmament and pave the way for a substantial revision of US nuclear policy as a whole.[23] Seizing on his efforts, many politicians had jumped on the anti-nuclear bandwagon. A liberal representative from Oregon, Charles Porter, introduced bills "to prohibit further testing by explosion of nuclear devices" and "to provide for research, study, prevention, and treatment of effects of atomic and nuclear radiation on human health." Democratic Senator Hubert Humphrey submitted a resolution asking for a serious effort to negotiate a test ban treaty. The Senate unanimously passed it. Replying to a congressional opinion poll circulated by SANE on June 10, 1958, more than half of the Congress favored a test

ban treaty.[24] Given this fortuitous set of circumstances, from 1959 onward, SANE leaders decided to multiply their political efforts. In August of that year, SANE's National Committee publicly asked for a revision of the *nuclear sharing* proposal. At the same time, SANE launched a widespread political campaign, the *1960 Electoral Campaign for Disarmament*, which consisted of hundreds of letters sent to local and national press outlets, condemning the nuclear arms race and the threat of contamination posed by nuclear tests. Through this campaign, the anti-nuclear activists wanted the incoming president to recognize that "national security [would] depend on a world security and on the creation of some forms of international peace force," which, according to SANE, could lead only to multilateral nuclear disarmament.[25]

The imminent presidential elections gave SANE leaders a golden opportunity to affect the course of American nuclear policy but only if they could exert political pressure on both Congress and the White House. According to Donald Keys, "national lobbying [had to] be the most crucial aspect of SANE's political action," but it had to focus first on the president and on those federal agencies working on nuclear policy—the State Department, the Atomic Energy Commission, and the Pentagon. Only when that was done could SANE turn its attention to non-governmental agencies and associations.[26] In sum, Keys was seeking to transform SANE from a flexible, lightly structured educational campaign into a more complex socio-political movement, with a strong ability to lobby political elites. More specifically, SANE leadership realized that they needed to establish a national office—a physical presence on Capitol Hill. The New York-based clearinghouse was no longer enough to affect national policies and exert any direct pressure on policymakers. The new office had to be established in Washington, D.C., so as to "maintain contact with Representatives and Senators" and strengthen cooperation and coordination with the European sister organizations working in the anti-nuclear field. The new office had to work both as an international contact point and as a coordinating center for the domestic activities. Such an office was finally opened in January 1960, with Sanford Gottlieb the first official SANE political action director.[27]

Gottlieb was proven to have exceptional communication and managerial skills. He had coordinated SANE's successful 1960 Electoral Campaign for Disarmament. Furthermore, Gottlieb could rely on the many powerful contacts he had cultivated within the Capitol. He had been one of Senator Hubert Humphrey's closest advisors and had helped him

in his struggle against John McCone's appointment as chairman of the US Atomic Energy Commission. Gottlieb had worked with the staff of other senators "supplying useful information and valuable counsel in the area of nuclear policy for use as speech material."[28] As he entered his new position, however, he faced a new and particularly daunting task. The year 1960 was a crucial electoral year and pro-nuclear lobbies were sparing no effort to defend and promote their interests among presidential candidates and political committees. Writing to SANE cofounder Homer Jack, Gottlieb confessed to a fear that influential individuals like Paul Nitze or John McCloy could potentially make nuclear deterrence "a hard policy to overcome."[29] In order to counter their powerful influence, Gottlieb needed to establish "contacts with the office of Senators Humphrey, Kennedy, Symington, Morse, Johnson and Nixon" so as to "clarify the SANE position on a test ban treaty to all of the presidential candidates."[30] To Gottlieb, there existed the grave risk of having a president with minimal awareness of nuclear disarmament or the urgency of a ban on nuclear testing, and this would inevitably and irremediably compromise the success of his office and activity.

For this reason, Eleanor Roosevelt's involvement in the anti-nuclear campaign was particularly momentous. From a political point of view, the former first lady was convinced that emphasis on nuclear disarmament and a test ban would help the Democratic candidates to win the 1960 presidential race and overcome the Republicans' attempt to portray themselves as on "the side of peace." In Mrs. Roosevelt's mind, Democratic leaders needed to take a determined stand on nuclear disarmament. For instance, she thought they needed to denounce the attempt to bypass the UN disarmament commission through the establishment of informal multilateral talks.[31] In Mrs. Roosevelt's view, Democratic presidential candidates should also avoid bombastic announcements of "immediate" disarmament, which she saw as politically indefensible and utterly utopian. Instead she believed they should instead focus on strengthening international cooperation and mutual understanding.[32] "I think we are in a real emergency," Mrs. Roosevelt wrote to a friend in 1958, "and the Democratic Party must have someone who will look at the world as it is and begin to meet its problems in new ways."[33]

The Democratic Party was in desperate need of new leadership and, as historian Allida Black has argued, this presented a dilemma to Eleanor Roosevelt. While on the one hand she recognized that her party required youthful and energetic leadership, on the other hand she believed that all

the young leaders lacked the necessary courage to tackle the most important issues of world affairs, including nuclear disarmament.[34] Initially, she looked at John Kennedy's future foreign policy advisor and her long-standing friend, Chester Bowles, as one of the competent individuals she could imagine "negotiating with Khrushchev."[35] But she also thought that Senator Hubert Humphrey, who had helped SANE "lay the ground for a strong [anti-nuclear] resolution in the Senate and House," had the "spark of greatness" that the next president would need.[36] In line with Mrs. Roosevelt's ideas, in an inspiring four-hour speech on "United States Foreign Policy and Disarmament," Humphrey had highlighted the importance of mutual understanding for success in the disarmament negotiations, and he stressed the necessity of suspending nuclear testing as a first step toward nuclear disarmament.[37] Humphrey's criticism of Eisenhower's rigid position, his suggestion that the USA "negotiate separately on a ban on nuclear weapons tests," and his proposal to establish a National Peace Agency along the lines that Gottlieb and SANE had envisioned, had captured Eleanor Roosevelt's imagination and won her approval.[38] She praised Humphrey for having publicly acknowledged that the USSR did not want to risk a nuclear "showdown," and that mutual confidence was as "essential to profitable tasks" as were nuclear negotiations.[39] Even when Humphrey withdrew from the presidential race, she maintained that his influence and prestige would help the Democrats find their best candidate and win over the Republican opponent.[40]

Nevertheless, the most appealing candidate for Mrs. Roosevelt remained Adlai Stevenson. She considered Stevenson's views on foreign policy "a new, broad outlook on world affairs," and the best remedy for what Washington politics was lacking at that time: "imagination and breadth of world vision."[41] As the former first lady remarked in her column, Stevenson's experience and wisdom made him a particularly suitable candidate for the presidency. His name, Mrs. Roosevelt wrote, was the favorite among some of the most prominent Americans "in publishing, letters, industry, religion, education, science and the arts." Stevenson was considered to be the right man to work out "a peaceable settlement with Russia" and to quickly take up "the growing economic and social troubles in our own country and the world."[42] The major hurdle was that Stevenson did not want to run for third time, and he had made that explicit many times. Convinced that, "whether he is nominated or not," Stevenson was still "the only one of all the candidates who forces the knowledge upon you that he has entered a room even before he speaks," Eleanor Roosevelt

delivered a stirring speech at the Democratic convention in Los Angeles to support the former governor of Illinois.[43] Despite all of her efforts, however, the Democratic delegates rejected her pleas for a Stevenson-Kennedy ticket and nominated JFK for the top of the ticket on the very first ballot.

In a speech at the University of California in November 1959, Kennedy had stated that he favored a "comprehensive and effective test ban."[44] Sensing an opportunity, Gottlieb tried to further sensitize the young senator to the issue of nuclear disarmament. Writing to JFK's main speechwriter Ted Sorensen, Gottlieb suggested that the senator give a speech on the test ban negotiations so as to capture the imagination of a wide, sympathetic, and growing anti-nuclear electorate.[45] But Mrs. Roosevelt was far less conciliatory and much more skeptical about the possibilities and capacities of the young senator. According to the former first lady, "one of the primary duties of the President" was "to be the educator of the public on national problems," and JFK seemed to her inadequate to fulfill such a delicate duty. Kennedy had also been a zealous anti-Communist, to the point of having been portrayed as a mild supporter of the House Committee on Un-American Activities' methods, something that disappointed Eleanor Roosevelt to the utmost degree.[46] To her, JFK had been too "evasive" on McCarthy. Moreover, she considered the young senator to be too much under the influence of his father, who, according to the former first lady, had been spending "oodles of money all over the country" in his son's behalf and probably had already "paid representatives in every state" to sponsor his son's candidature.[47] When the primaries in West Virginia were over and had shown that JFK had the support of his party, Eleanor Roosevelt endorsed him only reluctantly and then only as Stevenson's running mate. In light of the famous U-2 incident and the failure of the subsequent Paris summit, which sparked an escalation of international tension, she professed to upholding a Stevenson–Kennedy ticket because "it would combine age and youth, wisdom and heroism," two features that were absolutely necessary to cope with the contemporary situation in world affairs.[48]

Only by the end of the summer, after having hosted Kennedy on a TV show and receiving him at her cottage in Val-Kill, did Eleanor Roosevelt change her mind and decide to endorse JFK's candidacy. Writing to a friend, she said that she liked the senator "better than I ever had before because he seemed so little cocksure, and I think he has a mind that is open to new ideas." Perhaps more importantly, Mrs. Roosevelt recognized that JFK was, in her words, genuinely "interested in helping the

people of his own country and mankind in general."[49] In order to secure this crucial endorsement of his campaign, JFK had had to reassure the former first lady that he would work "in close association with Adlai and Chester Bowles."[50] From that point onward, she was ready to embark toward the "new frontier," the one that would be her last.

Fighting Unbearable Heedlessness

Right in the middle of the presidential campaign, in mid-May 1960, SANE organized one of its biggest and most successful anti-nuclear events. It was a rally in New York City held in Madison Square Garden where a coterie of prominent Americans including Alf Landon, Harry Belafonte, Elaine May, Philip Randolph, Norman Thomas, Walter Reuther, Clarence Pickett, and Eleanor Roosevelt addressed some 20,000 people on the foolishness of the nuclear arms race.[51] After the event, 5000 people joined Norman Thomas in a march through Times Square to the UN building, where they gathered to urge the world leaders to reach an agreement and bring nuclear tests to a halt.[52] The rally coincided with a US-USSR bilateral meeting in Paris that Eleanor Roosevelt had warmly welcomed, as evidence of a new "attitude of sanity and reasonableness" from which there was "everything to be gained and nothing to be lost."[53] Unfortunately for the former first lady and the many anti-nuclear protesters in Manhattan, the downing of the American U-2 spy plane in Russia wiped out any hope for a fruitful negotiation. As a result, international tension soared again.

In Eleanor Roosevelt's opinion, the U-2 incident ultimately proved that only a UN-led process could be "reassuring enough to create the sense of security from which may come that confidence between nations without which there is no hope for real disarmament." The UN machinery could help the two superpowers build up mutual understanding without renouncing their national security. She thought that this confidence-building process might need time to be fully executed, and the first agreements might not be "entirely satisfactory." Nevertheless, Mrs. Roosevelt insisted that the world powers had the duty and moral obligation "to continue the Geneva meetings on ending nuclear tests and on disarmament," since these remained the most important and urgent issues on the table.[54] Mrs. Roosevelt felt indeed that people all over the world, and in the USA in particular, were longing for nuclear disarmament. Referring to the many activities that SANE and other anti-nuclear groups were sponsoring, she praised the "innumerable communications [that] have gone from citizens

in this country to our President, asking for action on preventing nuclear tests and begging for a beginning on disarmament." Under these circumstances, she believed that the president should "pay some heed" to the warnings coming from these anti-nuclear groups and, at the same time, be confident that they represented "a sufficient number" of Americans who were sick of uncompromising nuclear policies.[55]

However, the chorus of the pro-nuclear hard-liners, those who fiercely clashed with any proposal for nuclear disarmament and test ban, was anything but silent. On the contrary, these voices tried to discredit the anti-nuclear campaign by alleging that it was actively supporting Communist propaganda. A revamped shadow of McCarthyism was cast the very night before SANE opened its event in Manhattan. The main protagonist of the renewed red-baiting campaign was the Democratic Senator Thomas Dodd, who officially demanded that SANE leaders "purge their ranks ruthlessly" of Communists. Dodd was the temporary chairman of the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee and, while conceding that SANE's national leadership was working in good faith, he asserted that, at the local level, the Communists had seriously infiltrated the organizations and therefore threatened its independence and trustworthiness. Dodd's hearings affected many SANE members, most prominently Nobel laureate Linus Pauling, thus provoking the piqued reaction of several of SANE's national leaders.[56] Norman Cousins launched an internal investigation to try to preserve SANE's public image as a group without Communist ties. To stop any further doubt from spreading, Sanford Gottlieb, who had stigmatized the sub-committee's methods as an intolerable invasion of citizens' freedom, invited Dodd to recognize SANE's principal objective as the promotion of "a mutuality of interest in survival," which went far beyond any "ideological and power rivalries."[57]

The issue flashed into the limelight. Facing this sudden resurgence of McCarthyism, SANE activists urged the most prominent presidential candidates, JFK and vice-president Nixon, to clarify whether or not they approved of Dodd's committee's activities and methods.[58] Mrs. Roosevelt, who had confronted Kennedy quite directly on this issue before, condemned such a "constant return to McCarthy tactics," and denounced the attempt to subvert the real meaning of SANE's anti-nuclear messages, which were intended to promote multilateralism, dialogue, and mutual understanding at the international level.[59] One of the worst consequences of this attempt to obfuscate SANE's mission was that it prevented people from gaining a real understanding of the nuclear

weapons question. Eleanor Roosevelt also noticed that the Republican presidential candidate, Richard Nixon, and New York's Governor Nelson Rockefeller's electoral campaign both engaged in clouding the issue. On many occasions, Rockefeller suggested that nuclear tests, especially underground ones, could be conducted with absolutely no harm to citizens. The question, according to the former first lady, was one of principle: "I am not enough of a scientist to know whether this is possible," she admitted, "but, as I understand it, the governor is thinking primarily of tests for military purposes." She believed instead that these tests should and "could be eliminated and the emphasis could be put on peacetime objectives with the stipulation that the whole world profit by information, which would remove fear among nations."[60]

As election season progressed, Mrs. Roosevelt found the Republican approach toward nuclear disarmament and test ban unbearable and thus, in spite of her initial skepticism, she drew closer to Kennedy's views. She explicitly criticized the Republican standard-bearer's stance on nuclear disarmament, and warned against the risk of prevaricating on such a delicate issue. She ridiculed Nixon's idea that a negotiated agreement to stop nuclear testing would be—as he had defined it—"treasonable nonsense." More specifically, she criticized Nixon's selfish attempt to jump on the anti-nuclear bandwagon once it was clear that most of the American people wanted their government to get rid of nuclear testing. She warned the readers of her column that "with his usual facility," Nixon would easily "forget that he ever opposed" nuclear disarmament and test ban. Such inconsistent behavior was particularly dangerous given the tense international situation. The future president, according to the former first lady, must have wisdom and foresight, while Nixon never had "anything but hindsight."[61] This characteristic, in conjunction with the fact that Nixon usually liked "to talk quite a lengthy time in order that no one would notice that he had said nothing," made him unsuitable to unlock the nuclear negotiations with the Soviets.[62] For these reasons, when commenting on the first TV debate ever held between two presidential candidates, Mrs. Roosevelt remarked that she felt "honesty in Mr. Kennedy and distrustfulness in Mr. Nixon."[63]

Of course, this did not make Eleanor Roosevelt a wholehearted supporter of JFK. Her admiration for him grew slowly, and she maintained throughout that disarmament was his Achilles' heel. However, although condemning the fact that Kennedy had endorsed the stockpiling of arms and the continuation of the nuclear arms race, she acknowledged

the senator's defense and promotion of "a greater amount of research" as part of a new and comprehensive approach to nuclear disarmament. JFK's views, according to Mrs. Roosevelt, were consistent with the "new concepts of education" leading to—and inspired by—disarmament and peace.[64] In her widely circulated campaign ads endorsing Kennedy, Eleanor Roosevelt urged citizens to vote for the young senator because she believed that "as a president, he will have the strength and the moral courage to provide the leadership for human rights we need in this time of crisis." Her ads declared that he was "a man with a sense of history."[65] In her view, the "new frontier" had to lay the foundation of a new peaceful coexistence. The recipe for it was clear and deeply intertwined with Mrs. Roosevelt's liberal vision of world affairs:

> our only assurance of preservation in the future is to begin on disarmament and to continue step by step until we have a disarmed world. This, however, means the settlement of many difficult situations around the world, and we are dealing with people who believe in their convictions just as firmly as we believe in ours. We have to give and take, we have to try and understand and talk with each other. That is the only way to gain in understanding and to gain in the kind of personal relationships which will bridge the many difficulties that are bound to arise before settlement of political situations are reached.

Being open to debate and fostering mutual understanding was not appeasement nor was it a signal of weakness, she said. Instead, it was the quintessential feature of American democracy "and a reaffirmation that we are striving at home to put into action our beliefs so that we can point to the actual gains in human happiness which can be made under our own system."[66]

Notes

1. See Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb. Resisting the Bomb. A History of the World Disarmament Movement 1954–1970*, Volume 2 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 261–262. See also Robert A. Divine, *Eisenhower and the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981) 123–130. In 1958, opinion polls reported a growing opposition to nuclear testing. In the USA, 63 percent of the population favored a nuclear test ban, see Lawrence S. Wittner, "Why Today's Peace Activists Should Not Be Discouraged: An Example from 1958," in http://www.

lewrockwell.com/wittner/wittner33.html. See also Eugene J. Rosi, "Mass and Attentive Opinion on Nuclear Weapons Tests and Fallout, 1954–1963," in *Public Opinion Quarterly*, vol. 29, no. 2 (1965): 280–297, and John MacDougall "Disarmament, Citizen Activism, or What? Beliefs and Values of the Nuclear Test Ban Movement of 1957–63," in *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol. 17, no. 2 (1988): 74–81.

2. See "Memorandum with attachments," from Livingston T. Marchant to Christian Herter, June 24, 1959, in Nancy Beck Young (ed.), *Documentary History of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidency, Volume 17, The Berlin Crisis: Part 2: Geneva and Its Aftermath* (Bethesda: UPA/Pro Quest, 2012), 118. See also "Department of State: Memorandum of Conversation. Subject: Meeting of the Secretary's Disarmament Advisers," November 5, 1959, in http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB94/tb19.pdf and "United States Atomic Commission: Record of Cabinet Meeting, 11 December 1959. Consideration of Test Moratorium Negotiations," December 14, 1959, in http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB94/tb20.pdf.
3. See Paul Boyer, *Fallout. A Historian Reflects on America's Half-Century Encounter with Nuclear Weapons* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998).
4. See "Ralph Lapp Fallout Hearings: Second Round," in *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, vol. 15, no. 7 (September 1959): 303.
5. See Ralph Lapp, "Fallout and Home Defense," in *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, vol. 15, no. 5 (May 1959): 89.
6. See Paul Boyer, "From Activism to Apathy: America and the Nuclear Issue, 1963–1980," in *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, vol. 40, no. 7 (August 1984): 14.
7. See Ronald J. Terchek, *The Making of the Test Ban Treaty* (The Hague: Martinus Nijnhoff, 1970), 115.
8. See Swarthmore College Peace Collection (SCPC), Sane, Inc., DG 58, Records, 1957–1987, Series A, Records of the National Office of SANE, New York, NY, Administrative Records, 1957–1970, Box 4, Norman Cousins, Meeting Executive Committee SANE, August 22, 1958.
9. See "Sane Action Memo," November 26, 1958, in SCPC, DG 58, Series A, Box 18, SANE Action 1965.
10. See "600 Rally in City for Atomic Peace: Thomas and Muste Address a Student Demonstration Against War Steps," *in The New York Times*, March 29, 1959. See also Milton S. Katz, *Ban the Bomb. A History of SANE, the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, 1957–1985* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1986), 38.
11. See *My Day*, January 29, 1959, and April 23, 1959.
12. See Eleanor Roosevelt, *On My Own* (New York: Harper, 1958), 216–230.

13. See "ER to Johnson, January 31, 1958," "ER to Johnson, January 23, 1960," "ER to Truman, August 12, 1959," "ER to Edmund G. Brown June 10, 1960," in Leonard C. Schlup and Donald W. Whisenhunt (eds.), *It Seems to Me: Selected Letters of Eleanor Roosevelt* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2002), 228, 239, 238, 244. Eleanor Roosevelt also wrote Queen Juliana of the Netherlands explaining her how she considered international cooperation somehow inescapable due to the frightening face of the nuclear arms race, see Joseph Lash, *Eleanor: The Years Alone* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1972), 272.
14. See "ER to Johnson, January 31, 1958," "ER to Johnson, January 23, 1960," "ER to Truman, August 12, 1959," "ER to Edmund G. Brown June 10, 1960," in Leonard C. Schlup and Donald W. Whisenhunt (eds.), *It Seems to Me: Selected Letters of Eleanor Roosevelt* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2002), 228, 239, 238, 244. Eleanor Roosevelt also wrote Queen Juliana of the Netherlands explaining her how she considered international cooperation somehow inescapable due to the frightening face of the nuclear arms race, see Joseph Lash, *Eleanor: The Years Alone* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1972), 272.
15. *My Day*, May 28, 1959.
16. *My Day*, September 12, 1959.
17. *My Day*, October 23, 1959.
18. *My Day*, August 14, 1959, and September 12, 1959.
19. *My Day*, December 7, 1959.
20. *My Day*, October 3, 1959.
21. *My Day*, May 26, 1959.
22. See Norman Cousins to Eleanor Roosevelt, August 29, 1958, in SCPC, DG 58, Subseries B-1, Correspondence of Norman Cousins, Box 5, Correspondence of Norman Cousins, 1958.
23. See SCPC, DG 58, Series A, Records of the National Office of SANE (New York, NY), Administrative Records, 1957-1970, Box 8, General Correspondence, 1957–1958.
24. See the so-called Porter bill, (H.R. 8269, June 20, 1957) and Humphrey's H.R. 4820, February 14, 1957, both of them available on SCPC, DG 58, Subseries B-1, Correspondence of Norman Cousins, Box 5, and SCPC, Subseries B-1, Box 13, New elements in fallout. The latter box also contains the Congressional Opinion Poll circulated by SANE's leaders in June 1958.
25. See SCPC, DG 58, Series B: Records of the National Office of SANE (New York, NY), Correspondence; Sub-Series B-4: Correspondence and Related Papers, 1959–1960, Box 28, Radiation and Fallout.
26. See "Letter from Donald Keys to Trevor Thomas," January 5, 1960, in SCPC, DG 58, Series A; Box 1, Material about SANE, 1958–1968.

27. See "Reports on the 5th Banquet of the National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, New York," November 15, 1962, in SCPC, DG 58, Series A; Box 1, Material about SANE, 1958–1968.
28. See "Letter from Donald Keys to Trevor Thomas," January 5, 1960, in SCPC, DG 58, Series A; Box 1, Material about SANE, 1958–1968.
29. See SCPC, DG 58, Sub-Series B-4; Box 22, Gottlieb, Sanford: General correspondence, memos, 1959–1960.
30. See "Gottlieb to the Executive Committee of SANE," April 4, 1960, in SCPC, DG 58, Sub-Series B-4; Box 22, Gottlieb, Sanford: General correspondence, memos, 1959–1960.
31. See *My Day*, August 14, 1959, and August 22, 1959.
32. See *My Day*, April 1, 1960.
33. See Eleanor Roosevelt's letter to Chester Bowles, February 14, 1958, quoted in Joseph Lash, *Eleanor: The Years Alone*, 278.
34. See Allida M. Black, *Casting Her Own Shadow. Eleanor Roosevelt and the Shaping of Postwar Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 171.
35. See Roosevelt Study Center (RSC), Eleanor Roosevelt Oral History Transcripts, Interview with Dorothy Stebbins Bowles, by Emily Williams, May 9, 1979, for Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, 8–12.
36. Joseph Lash, *Eleanor: The Years Alone*, 279. In February 1958, SANE sent a letter to Senator Humphrey to back an anti-nuclear resolution. See SCPC, DG 58, Series A, Box 1, Material about SANE, 1958–1968.
37. See "United States Foreign Policy and Disarmament, Speech of Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, February 4, 1958," 17, online at http://www2.mnhs.org/library/findaids/00442/pdfa/00442-00684.pdf.
38. In January 1960, Sanford Gottlieb suggested Senator Humphrey the idea of establishing a National Peace Agency, a governmental branch that Gottlieb described as "an excellent opportunity for the Democrats to seize hold of the peace issue in a practical way." Less than a month later, Humphrey introduced the Senate Bill 2989, a piece of legislation that included most of Gottlieb's ideas. See SCPC, DG 58, Sub-Series B-4; Box 22, Gottlieb, Sanford: General correspondence, memos, 1959–1960. See also Hubert Humphrey's letter to President Eisenhower, November 4, 1957, quoted in "United States Foreign Policy and Disarmament, Speech of Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, February 4, 1958," 28.
39. See *My Day*, December 6, 1958 and May 7, 1959.
40. *My Day*, May 14, 1960.
41. *My Day*, June 4, 1959.
42. *My Day*, December 19, 1959.

43. *My Day*, July 5, 1960. See also "ER to Agnes Meyer," June 6, 1960, in in Leonard C. Schlup and Donald W. Whisenhunt (eds.), *It Seems to Me: Selected Letters of Eleanor Roosevelt*.
44. Glenn T. Seaborg, *Kennedy, Khrushchev and the Test Ban* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1981), 32.
45. See Sanford Gottlieb to Ted Sorensen, August 31, 1960, in SCPC, DG 58, Sub-Series B-4, Box 22, Gottlieb, Sanford: General correspondence, memos, 1959–1960.
46. Allida M. Black, *Casting Her Own Shadow*, 177.
47. See Eleanor Roosevelt, "Of Stevenson, Truman and Kennedy," in *Saturday Evening Post*, March 18, 1958, quoted in Joseph Lash, *Eleanor: The Years Alone*, 280.
48. See Joseph Lash, *Eleanor: The Years Alone*, 289 and 293.
49. See Eleanor Roosevelt to Mary Lasker, August 15, 1960, in http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers/mep/displaydoc.cfm?docid=jfk10.
50. See John F. Kennedy to Eleanor Roosevelt, August 26, 1960, in http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers/mep/displaydoc.cfm?docid=jfk13.
51. In January 1960, Clarence Pickett invited Eleanor Roosevelt to serve as honorary chairman at the SANE public meeting planned for that spring at Madison Square Garden. "Nothing could please me more" and "I cannot tell you how much I hope you can join us" where the words that Pickett used to convince her to take part in the event, and she did it. See Clarence Pickett to Eleanor Roosevelt, January 19, 1960, in SCPC, DG 58, Subseries B4, Correspondence and related papers Box 28.
52. See "5,000 March Here After Atom Rally: Go Through Times Square to U.N. to Pray for Peace," in *The New York Times*, May 20, 1960.
53. See *My Day*, May 28, 1960.
54. *My Day*, May 23, 1960.
55. *My Day*, May 17, 1960.
56. See Milton S. Katz, *Ban the Bomb*, 46.
57. See SCPC, DG 58, Sub-Series B-4; Box 22, Gottlieb, Sanford: General correspondence, memos, 1959–1960. See also SCPC, DG 58, Series B, Records of the National Office of SANE, New York, NY, Correspondence, 1957–1966, Sub-Series B-4, Correspondence and Related Papers, 1969–1960, Box 20, Dodd's Committee vs. Sane. Finally, see Joseph R. Conlin, *American Anti-War Movements* (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1968), 51.
58. SANE sent an open letter to both JFK and Nixon asking whether they approved the activities of the Dodd's committee or not, see "Survival" from SANE, NY, vol. 2, no. 1 (October 10, 1960), in See SCPC, DG 58, Sub-Series B-4; Box 20.
59. Allida M. Black, *Casting Her Own Shadow*, 175–176, and *My Day*, May 27, 1960.

60. *My Day*, November 4, 1959.
61. *My Day*, February 1, 1960.
62. *My Day*, October 17, 1960.
63. *My Day*, September 28, 1960.
64. *My Day*, October 12, 1960.
65. See "Eleanor Roosevelt, JFK Campaign Ad," in http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers/mep/displaydoc.cfm?docid=jfk56.
66. *My Day*, October 14, 1960.

CHAPTER 7

Knowledge Is the Power, Education Is the Key

The Wish and the Necessity

Nuclear disarmament and the test ban were hot issues in the 1960 presidential campaign. During the fourth TV debate, both Kennedy and Nixon clearly supported nuclear negotiations.[1] While openly blaming the Soviets for any missed opportunity in the nuclear field, the Republican candidate presented himself in a widely circulated electoral brochure, as a leader who wanted to "continue every effort to arrive at disarmament with inspection."[2] The Democratic standard-bearer was even more vocal in his support of nuclear negotiations. "Should the American people choose me as their President," Kennedy wrote in a letter addressed to former member of the US Atomic Energy Commission, Thomas Murray, and published by *The New York Times* (October 9, 1960), "I would want to exhaust all reasonable opportunities to conclude an effective international agreement banning all tests." He vowed that under his presidency, the USA would not be the first to resume nuclear testing and committed himself to "earnestly seek an overall disarmament agreement, of which limitations upon nuclear weapons test, weapons grade fissionable material, biological and chemical warfare agents will be an essential and integral part."[3]

Of course Kennedy was running his presidential race with all means at his disposal, including running propaganda that the USA had to fill a supposed missile gap with the Soviet Union. But for many different reasons, he seemed genuinely interested in supporting nuclear disarmament and a test ban.

D. Fazzi, *Eleanor Roosevelt and the Anti-Nuclear Movement*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-32182-0_7

First of all, he was well aware of the fact that the general public was very sensitive to the issue of nuclear fallout. Many authoritative scientists had done a thorough job of informing both domestic and global public opinion about the harmful effects of exposure to nuclear radiation.[4] Nuclear accidents had shocked world public opinion and had convinced people of the danger of further nuclear experiments. Hence, the achievement of a "comprehensive and effective" test ban treaty was crucial not only to capture a wide swath of sympathetic voters but also to allay an increasing uneasiness with unbounded nuclear testing to, as British Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd stated in 1961, win the minds and hearts of global public opinion.[5]

Second, Kennedy feared further nuclear proliferation even more than he did unrestrained nuclear testing. "If we are to secure peace, if we are to ever hope to negotiate for an effective arms control agreement," he argued in an electoral speech in Milwaukee, "we must act immediately, for as each year passes the control of increasingly complex, mobile and hidden modern armaments becomes more difficult." Even though, as Kennedy maintained, the USA and the USSR were already in "a position to exterminate all human life seven times over," a world with an even greater number of nuclear powers would have represented an unbearable threat to human security and international stability. Accordingly, Kennedy believed that no problem was more vital and immediate than the setting up of an effective system of international control over the spread of nuclear arms.[6]

Third, Kennedy feared the unpredictable outcome of mismanagement of nuclear weaponry, which could result in an accidental and catastrophic nuclear war. As he repeated while addressing the UN General Assembly on September 25, 1961, human beings were living "under a nuclear sword of Damocles, hanging by the slenderest of threads, capable of being cut at any moment by accident or miscalculation or by madness." The only way to escape from such a dangerous situation was to realize that, as Kennedy evocatively argued, "the weapons of war must be abolished before they abolish us."[7]

To live up to these ambitious promises, once elected Kennedy set up a new agency, with ample power to deal with both disarmament and arms control. Taking his cue from the US Disarmament Administration, a body created as part of the State Department in 1960, late in Eisenhower's presidency, Kennedy proposed the creation of the new Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA). It was formally launched on September 26, 1961.[8] The ACDA soon became the organization responsible for

paving the way for international negotiations on nuclear matters. Through the work of this agency, the president also hoped to emphasize the importance of disarmament as part of a new American foreign policy, which was to be reoriented so as to achieve a world free from nuclear armaments.[9]

Kennedy's evocative rhetoric and his first steps toward disarmament notwithstanding, America's Cold War strategy in the early 1960s was still deeply rooted in the logic of nuclear deterrence. This underlying approach contributed to a speeding up of the arms race and an exacerbation of international tensions. The so-called flexible response, conceived originally as a strategy to switch the focus from nuclear arsenals to conventional weapons and therefore enlarge the breadth of military options in the hands of American officials, actually increased the risk of "limited" wars in Europe and elsewhere. Moreover, it spurred an unprecedented military buildup in the USA: the Strategic Air Command, for instance, gained more power and function and the Pentagon developed new ballistic missiles such as the *Polaris* and *Minuteman*, thus producing a 68 percent increase in the total number of American rockets. In general, between 1961 and 1964, the total number of US nuclear warheads went from 3012 to 5007.[10]

In reaction to this, Moscow adopted an increasingly confrontational approach that not only caused international tensions to peak but also sank what chance existed for fruitful cooperation in the nuclear field. At the end of summer 1961, while challenging the US supremacy in Asia, the Caribbean, and even in Europe, and threatening to sign a separate peace treaty with the German Democratic Republic that would have cut off free access to West Berlin, Khrushchev decided to unilaterally break the moratorium on nuclear testing in force since 1958 and let his scientists explode a megaton device effectively deadlocking any further talks on nuclear matters.

Responding to this overt provocation was a daunting task for an administration aware of the fact that the attitude of both domestic and international public opinion toward nuclear fallout was generally "very adverse" and that further nuclear explosions could not be scientifically justified.[11] As a consequence, Kennedy's countermoves had to be cautiously planned, amply discussed, and carefully weighed. Initially, the president decided to recall Arthur Dean from the ongoing disarmament negotiations in Geneva. In Kennedy's words, the Soviet decision was "a threat to the entire world" that increased "the danger of a thermonuclear holocaust" to an unprecedented extent.[12] Along with British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, Kennedy released a joint proposal to ban atmospheric

nuclear testing to "protect mankind from radioactive fallout and to reduce international tensions."[13] Politically, these steps were meant to regain the initiative and force the Soviets back to the negotiating table, where it was felt they could not refuse to sign an agreement. Kennedy also tried to delay the resumption of any American nuclear test, thus keeping the door open to a possible diplomatic solution to the crisis.

After the Soviets resumed their nuclear experimentation, the need for a nuclear treaty, one that would ban "forever, that is, for all time in the future, the testing of all nuclear weapons in all environments under effective international inspection and control," became the US administration's number one priority.[14] Suddenly the claims of those liberal scientists who had supported nuclear disarmament and a test ban for more than a decade, as well as the viewpoint of those intellectuals and activists who had mounted vigorous anti-nuclear campaigns throughout the country, matched the interest of the political elites.

The editor of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Eugene Rabinowitch, welcomed the fact that a nuclear test ban had finally become "a matter of fundamental importance" in US political debate. Veteran atomic scientist Hans Bethe and physicist Ralph Lapp praised the efforts toward a ban on nuclear testing as crucial steps toward comprehensive nuclear disarmament. Dramatically, Nobel laureate Linus Pauling encouraged public support of a test ban agreement by comparing the moral effects of the atmospheric nuclear tests to the moral bankruptcy of Nazi gas chambers.[15] Similarly, anti-nuclear campaigners staked out a role for themselves as influential political forces promoting the test ban treaty. On the occasion of their fourth annual meeting in October 1961, SANE members invited Kennedy to engage in "a peace race instead of an arms race," in order to challenge the Soviet Union both at ideological and economic level.[16] To support such a stance, SANE sponsored an advertisement in *The New York Times*, titled "Open Letter to the Russian People." In it the committee urged Russian citizens to protest against Soviet tests by quoting chairman Khrushchev's own words: "the first nation to resume nuclear tests [would] cover itself with shame [and would] be branded by all the people of the world."[17] SANE harshly defined the resumption of nuclear tests as "a crime against humanity," and SANE's political action director Sanford Gottlieb formally submitted a petition to the White House for a definitive ban on all nuclear tests.[18]

The main problem with this mounting campaign mixing nuclear disarmament and test ban, from Eleanor Roosevelt's point of view, was the

definition of disarmament itself. Writing to SANE leaders, she explained why she intended to temporarily abstain from signing any plea on disarmament. "I do not feel sure that you realize the difficulties of disarmament," the former first lady confessed, but she added that she would have no problem to "sign the petition on nuclear tests." SANE executive director Donald Keys replied that he recognized her difficulties "as being so great that they vex us in every waking hour and cause us to wonder about the future of human effort." But he also stressed that SANE's position on disarmament was straightforward and it had been made public through the pages of *The Washington Post*, which had published "a rather complete outline of what we feel to be the necessary requirement of a workable disarmament arrangement, closely and briefly argued." By relying on Mrs. Roosevelt's prominent interest in peace education, he wanted to persuade her that SANE was, first and foremost, "struggling to provide some useful thinking on this difficult subject – which as you know has received so little official attention." Eleanor Roosevelt replied by thanking Keys for his clarification, but, at the same time, she fiercely defended her own view of how nuclear disarmament should be achieved. To her, before the world powers could possibly have disarmament, there should be "universal membership in the UN" along with "political settlement of the sore spots in the world – Germany, the Far East, etc." SANE associate director Edward Meyerding replied to her by conceding that even if SANE was an organization "deliberately set up with a restricted sphere of work" and its "original impetus was concern over the dangers connected with atomic testing, it soon became obvious that this meant international agreements on testing and that this was meaningless without a concern for international disarmament." SANE leadership was therefore aligning itself with Eleanor Roosevelt's ideas: "there has been a realization all along of what you are suggesting," Meyerding admitted "that before we can have disarmament there must be universal membership in the U.N. and that disarmament cannot be unrelated to 'political settlement of the sore spots of the world…'"[19]

Mrs. Roosevelt greatly appreciated the clarification and therefore kept endorsing the SANE's campaign. Although her new official role as chair of the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women prevented her from personally taking part in many of the SANE-sponsored events, or being included in the list of sponsors of SANE-paid advertisements, she continued to support the test ban campaign and promote its core anti-nuclear beliefs with all of her energy.

One of her main concerns was that national interests were hindering multilateral negotiations, thus making the nuclear talks in Geneva a meaningless diplomatic exercise and undermining the role of the UN. On the one hand, she blamed the Russian representative in Geneva, Semyon Tsarapkin, for repeatedly rejecting any acceptable nuclear proposals, while on the other hand she criticized the US administration for having nurtured international tension and fear.[20] When the American delegation in Geneva threatened to cut off bilateral negotiations with the Soviets, Mrs. Roosevelt warned that by doing so, Americans would come to an "inability to reach any future agreements" and therefore irremediably increase the gap between the two blocs in the Cold War.[21] In Eleanor Roosevelt's opinion, an agreement against the use of nuclear weapons was only attainable through the UN because the UN was the only body that could "bring together for negotiation the parties to disputes that now are threatening the peace in so many parts of the world."[22] Hence, she promoted the necessity of establishing a workable system of international control for nuclear weapons led by the UN. Perhaps even more importantly, she considered the UN the forum where the world would be able to find solutions to the problem not only of nuclear testing but also of nuclear proliferation. "As more countries develop the power to develop and use nuclear weapons," she wrote in July 1961, "the more dangerous they will become unless strictly controlled by the U.N." Multilateral supervision and control of nuclear arms and testing was, according to the former first lady, the only possible "solution to the impasse" that Soviet and American negotiators had reached in Geneva and which they were destined to face in the future, unless forced to negotiate by a superior and multilateral organization.[23]

Second, Mrs. Roosevelt thought that a treaty banning nuclear experimentation was not only a first step toward nuclear disarmament but also the key to the success of the whole process of relaxation of international tensions. "It is true that a test-ban agreement might not remove all risks," Mrs. Roosevelt admitted in her column, "but there is very little that we can do today that will be without some risks," she was quick to add. Moreover, she emphasized people's urgent need for a certain "sense of satisfaction" that could derive even from a "slight step toward the disarmament" such as a treaty banning nuclear testing. Of course, only general and complete disarmament would have represented the "real assurance that we can ever have a peaceful world," but such a high aspiration should not automatically imply a refusal to negotiate a less ambitious agreement.

For this reason, she also criticized partisan politics when it challenged the general need for nuclear disarmament. In her view, both Republicans and Democrats had to realize that "there are people who feel the urgency of disarmament sufficiently."[24] Drawing on a growing domestic consensus, U.S. political elites could lead at an international level, toward a process of reaching nuclear disarmament. But, to induce politicians to embark on serious nuclear negotiations, people's awareness of the risks connected to nuclear testing was central. Mrs. Roosevelt understood this and therefore engaged herself in a massive educational campaign to promote this enlightened view.

In April 1961, for instance, when 3500 people, the majority teens and college students, gathered near the UN building in New York to ask for a ban on nuclear tests, Mrs. Roosevelt sent a warm message to one of the event's organizers, her friend, Clarence Pickett. He read the missive to the young people, praising their "vital effort" for global peace. Less than one year later, in February 1962, Eleanor Roosevelt sponsored a peace demonstration in Washington, D.C., with more than 1400 students from all over the country. They rallied to support multilateral disarmament, to criticize possible resumption of nuclear testing, and to provide a counterbalance to the political pressures that many pro-nuclear groups were putting on Kennedy "to get into the arms race even more deeply."[25]

Always pursuing her broader educational goal, Mrs. Roosevelt began lecturing on International Relations at Brandeis University, a college in the Boston area. As the students of that university recalled, she was able—in a "gracious, buoyant, indefatigable" way, as students defined it—to hold "her restless young audience spellbound" by talking about the relevance of the UN and the seemingly ambiguous US attitude toward nuclear disarmament and test ban. In these occasions, Mrs. Roosevelt presented and discussed nuclear negotiations "with comprehension and compassion," without building the impression "of inaccessible heads of state, but of troubled people, confronting staggering problems and defending heartfelt principles."[26] On a campus where SANE and many other anti-nuclear students' groups, from *Tocsin* to the Students' Peace Union, were growing fast and the anti-nuclear dissent was gathering momentum, her words not only sounded familiar, but they had the definitive authoritativeness and substance that many young anti-nuclear activists were earnestly seeking.[27]

Furthermore, Brandeis University became the location for Mrs. Roosevelt's ultimate mass communication effort. There, she hosted a popular TV show that was entirely focused on international affairs. "Prospects

of Mankind," the title of the series, was born out of an idea of Eleanor Roosevelt's close friend, Henry Morgenthau III, who also produced the show and arranged the guest list in coordination with Mrs. Roosevelt. But it was Mrs. Roosevelt who eventually gave the program its distinctive imprint. The show created an informal atmosphere in which both the live audience and the people watching at home could feel comfortable devoting all their attention to the topics of debate. The program tackled problems in international affairs with an aim to educating the public. Given this educational intent, when Eleanor Roosevelt had to decide which issue to discuss first, her choice fell squarely on nuclear disarmament and the test ban. These issues topped her agenda.

Prospects of Mankind

Eleanor Roosevelt's presence on TV was not unusual for the American public. She had been appearing on their screens since the late 1940s, when just a hundred broadcasting companies were actively operating in the country. She had hosted her own live TV program, *Mrs. Roosevelt Meets the Public*, on the National Broadcasting Company and had taken part in several other shows with some of the most prominent anchormen of her era, from Edward Murrow to Bob Hope, Frank Sinatra, and Ned Brooks. Murrow, in particular, who moderated the popular show *Meet the Press*, hosted Mrs. Roosevelt on a regular basis from 1954 to 1958.[28] Mrs. Roosevelt considered TV a powerful social and cultural media, through which young citizens could be informed and the elderly could be engaged and feel connected. Moreover, she thought that at her age, the TV would give her a better chance to reach the general public than speaking engagements, which were becoming too difficult for her to manage. "I think I'm going to have to rely more on television to reach the people that I want to reach," she confessed to a friend while preparing her new TV program.[29] Hence, when the son of her long-standing friends Henry and Elinor Morgenthau asked her to cooperate in the production of a documentary series for the National Education Television, she was ready. She had already developed all of the necessary skills to run the 29 planned roundtables, and she wholeheartedly accepted the offer.

The very first episode of "Prospects of Mankind" was recorded during the week of her 75th birthday, in October 1959. Morgenthau, who originated the show, managed to gather some of the most prominent politicians, intellectuals, journalists, and pundits in the field of international affairs to

converse with Mrs. Roosevelt about the issues she believed to be crucial to an understanding of the global challenges of the era. As Morgenthau himself later recalled in an oral interview, the program was to be something "that really expressed her interests [...] with people she was interested in." Mrs. Roosevelt invited the guests personally and, even though it was not standard for a TV host to express personal views, she constantly strove to make her ideas explicit. "We tried to do programs with people and things that she knew a good deal about," confessed Morgenthau. Beyond that the programs were rather free-form. Morgenthau and Mrs. Roosevelt usually drafted a broad outline of the shows and then she decided on the subjects that she wanted to talk about. This was, according to Morgenthau, "her program" to an absolute extent, and "when she talked, what she said was what was on her mind."[30]

The impressive guest list included names such as Henry Kissinger, Adlai Stevenson, John F. Kennedy, Bertrand Russell, Dean Rusk, Allen Dulles, Reinhold Niebuhr, Raymond Aron, Paul Tillich, and many others. The ultimate schedule foresaw debates on international coexistence, foreign aid, and the international economy. There were plans to discuss the projection of America's image on an international scale, the prospect of global democracy, and the challenges that existed for both American capitalism and the UN. But Eleanor Roosevelt wanted to place particular emphasis on international stability and peace, and therefore she gave the nuclear question special prominence. It was, according to her, the most urgent issue in the field of foreign affairs.

The discussion of nuclear testing and disarmament was a part of the exchange of views and opinions between Mrs. Roosevelt and her guests throughout the series. In addition, she and her staff devoted three complete programs to an analysis of nuclear policies. The first one was the second episode of the series, broadcast in November 1959, and titled "What Hope for Disarmament?" On that occasion, the former first lady interviewed Jules Moch, France's leading disarmament expert and the French representative to the UN General Assembly, Trevor Gardner, former assistant secretary of the Air Force and Head of Highcon, a private contractor providing the Pentagon with guided missiles components, and Saville Davis, managing editor of *The Christian Science Monitor* who acted as cohost of the program.

Mrs. Roosevelt's guests began by debating the proposal for disarmament that the Soviets had issued to the UN General Assembly a few months before. The Soviet Union had proposed that all states disarm

within four years, in a general and complete way, destroying all existing A- and H-bombs and terminating their production. Addressing the assembly, the Soviet chairman had also proposed the creation of an international body for the control of the fissionable material, which was to be used exclusively to peaceful ends.

The former first lady acknowledged on the program that such a proposal might sound attractive, but that it was indeed "very controversial" and implied an oversimplified approach to the issue of general and complete disarmament. "There are problems in the world which will have to be settled […] before we can really hope to have total disarmament," Mrs. Roosevelt noted pragmatically. Then, she asked her guests to explore those problems in further detail. The French diplomat, Moch, recognized that the Russian plan did contemplate some useful partial steps toward disarmament that the Western powers had to seriously take into account. In Moch's opinion, however, total disarmament was impossible to reach without a general political agreement between the two blocs of the Cold War. By highlighting the possible benefits of a gradual approach, Moch concurred with Mrs. Roosevelt, who thought that all of the necessary "political settlements" had to "go along, almost step by step, with disarmament."

Davis added to this discussion by bringing up the genetic mutations provoked by unbounded nuclear testing. According to the journalist, the risks of nuclear fallout provided a crucial incentive for those hoping to set up an effective system of arms control and reach an agreement on nuclear disarmament. Mrs. Roosevelt agreed about the hazards of nuclear testing in general but argued that the constant talk of nuclear weapons and testing was also having another deep, mostly traumatic effect, especially on the younger generation. In this regard, with her usual taste for anecdotes, she told her guests and audience the story of a young schoolgirl who had asked her father during evening playtime to "play disaster" with her. Questioned by the man what she meant, the girl replied, "Oh, we've learned it at school! You get your coat and then you go downstairs to the cellar and you put your coat over your head and lie flat on the ground and wait for disaster." In the former first lady's view, that story exemplified one of the direst consequences of concentrating on a nuclear scare; it was affecting not only the US national and foreign policy but also American citizens' private lives and habits.

In addition, as the program continued and as she had done many times in her articles and speeches, Mrs. Roosevelt attacked the enormous cost of nuclear experiments. "How can you justify morally and economi-

cally the fact that you pay to keep your land out of production when two thirds of our people go to bed hungry every night," she asked. This was especially egregious, she said, because it was done while simultaneously diverting public money into nuclear testing. Davis, who had been advocating nuclear disarmament throughout the program, agreed with his host and complained that the US administration continued wasting money testing new devices that nobody wanted to use, while not seriously investing in arms control.

Toward the end of the program, it became clear that Mrs. Roosevelt thought the problem of arms control was not a purely national one. To her, the most important thing to do was to "develop a system of law under which nations must live, and at the same time a system of enforcement of law under the egis of the U.N." Only under such a multilateral schema could nations establish an efficient system of control of nuclear weapons and undertake the necessary steps to enforce nuclear disarmament. A gradual approach to these key issues was also crucial in order to generate what the former first lady defined as a "psychological acceptance" by the people of the fact that disarmament transcended national boundaries and sovereignties. It was the very breadth of the contemporary threats that made disarmament a universal need. The risk of nuclear war had generated a situation in which Mrs. Roosevelt saw no possibility for human security outside the authority of the UN. By following national priorities and exigencies, she remarked, nation-states were only trying "to make partial security more secure." She added: "It seems to me that we had much better say to our people generally, you will never have security," so long as nuclear war existed in the range of possibilities. For this reason, while thanking her guests and her audience for their attention, Mrs. Roosevelt addressed her fellow citizens with the hope that the discussion had contributed positively to "awakening the people of our country" and to convincing them of the necessity to "put all of our defense efforts and money into ways of working for peace." In her words, the entire TV series was meant to help spur "thinking in the United States."[31]

Nuclear policy was the main topic of another program, broadcast in December 1960, and focused on "The Scientists and World Politics." Guests this time were British physicist and author Sir Charles Snow, Massachusetts Institute of Technology professor Jerome Wiesner, a member of the president's Scientific Advisory Committee and President-elect Kennedy's principal scientific advisor, and two journalists, Saville Davis and Max Lerner, a columnist and professor of American Civilization at Brandeis University.

Given the relevance of the theme, Eleanor Roosevelt started the program by mentioning what she considered to be the most important encounter she had had with science in her life. She mentioned the letter that Albert Einstein wrote to her husband in 1939, warning him about the fundamental developments in atomic studies that promised a major breakthrough in wartime. She told her audience that the letter prompted an invitation to the White House, and it was on the occasion of their meeting that Einstein convinced FDR, after a long discussion, about the importance of funding what would become the Manhattan Project. To her, these developments led the world into an entirely new era, which opened on the day that Truman ordered the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. That move, according to the former first lady, was unavoidable. She admitted very honestly that "some of the scientists who developed the bomb tried to advise [Truman] to use" the bomb "only as a demonstration of power," but, according to her, "no direct communication was established and the attempt failed." For Mrs. Roosevelt, this proved that in a nuclear era having the right communication between science and politics was crucial. "In the dizzy pace of the scientific revolution," as she put it, "it is central for us to develop a better communication between the scientists and democratic governments, because the question of survival is involved."

One of Mrs. Roosevelt's guests, Max Lerner, following her line of thought emphasized that nuclear weapons were indeed "undercutting the whole basis of classical power politics," in a way in which "national power can no longer be relied upon as a way of organizing international order." In Mrs. Roosevelt's opinion, scientists were among the few who could understand the extent of the revolution that had occurred, "and the extent of destruction that can occur," she added. "What we haven't done is to really assess what has become useless to us in the modern world," she remarked "[W]e haven't accepted the fact that even in the realm of military things there are many things that are obsolete today, and we don't accept it." In contrast, Mrs. Roosevelt thought that the Soviet Union seemed to have understood the new era and was launching programs of research and development aimed at solving these profound contradictions. The elites in Moscow, according to the former first lady, agreed on the fact that "if you have an objective and you don't want to destroy your world by war, then you must get across your objective through both cultural methods and economic methods … And they are—under compulsion—training people to use those methods, and when they go out into the world they send people who are trained to use those methods. We have to get this across

to our young people and to our older people voluntarily. Are we doing it? No," Mrs. Roosevelt icily concluded.[32]

Her disappointment in the ambivalence of American nuclear and foreign policy was even more pronounced on the occasion of her third show devoted to nuclear issues. It was broadcast in May 1961, and titled "Nuclear Test Ban: First Step to Arms Control." US representative Chester Holifield, chair of the Joint Congressional Atomic Energy Committee, British Labour MP, John Strachey, Harvard professor and author Henry Kissinger, and Laurence Martin, a political scientist from the MIT made up the panel. Martin also served as cohost for the show.

The program started with an impressive image of a nuclear explosion, supplemented by a voice-over accounting of all of the nuclear tests that had occurred since 1945. There had been 274 nuclear tests, releasing the equivalent of 175 millions of tons of TNT. The USSR had been responsible for 55 of these tests, the USA had exploded 159 devices, the UK 21, and France 3. The voice-over continued: the nuclear powers had launched a series of nuclear talks that had included 237 meetings but had reached no formal agreement; the two problems hindering the negotiations were a lack of agreement on inspection and system of detection. Given the state of test ban talks, Eleanor Roosevelt asked her guests whether they really considered a test ban a viable first step toward a greater agreement on nuclear disarmament and arms control. Kissinger replied positively and highlighted the role that nuclear fallout had played in triggering the discussion on a test ban. But it was the British MP who attracted Mrs. Roosevelt's greatest interest and approval, by unveiling the underlying relationship between a test ban agreement and the necessity to prevent further nuclear proliferation. "We think that the spread of nuclear weapons to the *nth* country – as it is usually called – through the world is so disastrous a thing that we hardly like contemplating it even," Strachey said, "and we do think that the test ban treaty, though certainly not a hard barrier against it, is a considerable barrier against it." He was upholding the gradual approach that Mrs. Roosevelt and many anti-nuclear activists in her country had always promoted. According to her, the problem of nuclear proliferation lay in a lack of education and information in those countries that were pursuing nuclear experimentation. People in the USA ostensibly knew that tests in the atmosphere were dangerous and could provoke harmful effects, "but other people who not yet acquired the same knowledge, for reasons of prestige, are going to want to be on a level with [the U.S. and the Soviet Union]."

Accordingly, she stressed the relevance and the urgency of getting an agreement. In her opinion, the risk of ongoing nuclear testing was greater than having no agreement and no inspection at all. Imperfect as a detection system may be, any system was more desirable than the uncertainty resulting from living with unbounded nuclear testing. Strachey offered Mrs. Roosevelt a very powerful argument to uphold this position. He said that Americans were far too optimistic that even without an agreement there would likely be no resumption of atmospheric tests. "Sooner or later one country or the other, or a third country, would begin testing in the atmosphere because the arms race will still be on," the British politician remarked and added: "We should fear that if there is no treaty the testing of big stuff in the atmosphere would begin again, and this would create great despair in the world." Following up on such a comment, Eleanor Roosevelt remarked that it was "for the mutual interest of the world not to begin atmospheric testing again." She warned that if no agreement were reached, any nation could arrogate to itself the right to test freely, thus posing an unbearable threat to mankind. As the former first lady said while greeting her audience, the test ban treaty was an extremely important objective that could unlock negotiations on other crucial points in the nuclear field: "We really have to have a risk and we have to recognize it, and that we don't yet know that we're playing for time."[33]

The Last Turn Toward Peace

The discussions she had with her guests during her TV program so impressed Mrs. Roosevelt that at times she did not wait for the broadcast of the show and instead preferred to share the most interesting details of the conversation with readers of her column. Concerning the test ban, for instance, she confessed to having been intrigued by some of the ideas stemming from the TV debate, which "should be much more widely known in order that we may better understand some of the difficulties involved in coming to an agreement with the Soviet Union and other nations." Her guests did not always agree on the best way to set up an efficient system of inspection and control, nor could they set a threshold that would adequately secure a treaty banning underground tests. Mrs. Roosevelt pointed out that at least one thing was beyond any doubt: "if no agreement is reached we might find ourselves with a renewal of atmospheric tests which would create great despair in the world."[34]

What people hoped would be an unrealistic prediction became a sad reality late in the summer of 1961. The Soviet provocation and the uncompromising stand on the US side to react by testing its own bomb generated a spiral of escalation that led the world to the most dangerous months of the entire Cold War.[35]

This renewal of the arms race and the threat of further nuclear explosions sparked vigorous protests. The activists urged the superpowers "to leave the folly and face reality," to use Dr. Albert Schweitzer's stirring words.[36] The long-standing socialist leader Norman Thomas and the long-standing friend of Eleanor Roosevelt, the Quaker Clarence Pickett took the lead in these protests and, in order to better coordinate them, proposed the establishment of an umbrella organization named the "Turn Toward Peace." This expression had been circulating in Washington, D.C., since early spring of that year and stood as an invitation to radically reorient American foreign and nuclear policy. As Pickett argued, "Turn Toward Peace" was intended to seek alternatives to the "threat of war as the central thrust of American foreign policy."[37] At a more practical level, Thomas and Pickett were trying to harmonize all of the different voices coming from the many anti-nuclear groups operating in the USA. For the very first time, moderate anti-nuclear organizations like SANE, banded together with well-established associations like the American Veterans Committee, the Americans for Democratic Action, and a number of American trade unions. Seeking even wider circles of unity, "Turn Toward Peace" included the pacifist American Friends Service Committee, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, as well as internationalist associations like the American Association for the United Nation, and student groups like the Students' Peace Union. The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and the Women Strike for Peace joined forces to criticize the course of American foreign policy. In its leaders' view, "Turn Toward Peace" had to look for cooperation with all of the American "Non-Soviet-apologist peace groups." They had to focus as much on nuclear disarmament and a test ban as they did on other urgent international issues like the status of Berlin and West Germany, the strengthening of the UN, and the search for non-military responses to Communist expansion.[38]

Deeply encouraged by these developments, Mrs. Roosevelt enlisted in this renewed and comprehensive quest for peace. She signed the "Declaration of Conscience and Responsibility" that Clarence Pickett had circulated widely through the American Friends Service Committee, and wrote a letter to Kennedy, inviting the president to resist "the usual

pressures being put on the government by certain scientists, by the Pentagon," and by other uncompromising nuclear hard-liners.[39] Once again, she conveyed her uneasiness with the course of the nuclear arms race through the pages of her widely syndicated column. On November 5, 1961, she wrote a particularly inspiring article in which she fully endorsed Thomas' and Pickett's proposal. Calling for a popular, widespread movement that she hoped would lead to nuclear disarmament, one with a shared awareness of the risks of nuclear testing and the ominous effects of the nuclear arms race, she stated her longing for a dramatic change in the US foreign policy. She explicitly asked for a "Turn Toward Peace." Here she meant that the Kennedy administration had to realize the inescapable need for a genuine reconfiguration of its foreign policy priorities. The very concepts of freedom and democracy, according to Mrs. Roosevelt, were put at risk by the acceleration of the nuclear arms race. The US officials had therefore to come to the conclusion that humanity could not survive if the possibility of nuclear war were seen as a viable alternative. To make this change in policy, the former first lady believed that a strong popular opposition movement was indeed vital.[40]

Above all, Mrs. Roosevelt thought that to goad such a dramatic change in American nuclear policymaking, what all of the organizations needed was what Mrs. Roosevelt had already been suggesting for a long time: a comprehensive educational strategy—and they needed this whether they were advocating nuclear disarmament, multinational arms control, a ban on nuclear testing, or just the relaxation of international tensions. Anti-nuclear groups had to convince people of the advisability of nuclear disarmament she said. Providing the public with the right information, capturing its attention through the publication of shocking advertisements, and establishing clearinghouses for local campaigns was crucial to nurturing the growing internal dissent so that it could have impact on moderate nuclear policymakers' and strategists' choices. Once they realized the significance of such a strategy, SANE played a major role in implementing it and went far in popularizing the anti-nuclear message.

In February 1962, SANE started publishing *Sane World*, a biweekly magazine that was distributed at every SANE-sponsored event. The national press printed a number of disquieting SANE-paid advertisements that vividly displayed the harmful effects of nuclear testing on human health. One of these ads had a particularly great impact on the American public. It showed a picture of the most prominent American pediatrician, Doctor Benjamin Spock. According to its headline, Dr. Spock was

extremely worried about children's health, which was put at risk by the spreading and continuation of unbounded nuclear tests. Dr. Spock endorsed SANE's anti-nuclear campaign with the hope that his backing of the organization would convince others to urge the government to ban nuclear tests.[41] Hundreds of national newspapers republished the ad and thousands of reprints circulated as individual copies. Both *Time* and *Newsweek* carried a story on the advertisement and both came across as highly sympathetic to the anti-nuclear campaign.[42]

Gathering momentum, SANE intensified its opposition to high-altitude tests, publicly defining them as "roulette in space." The anti-nuclear organization also secured a statement from 11 leading American scientists, which received wide coverage in major national and local newspapers. Finally, SANE sponsored the publication of *Current Hazards of Fallout to Human Health*, a 27-page handbook in which several experts denounced the hazards of radioactive fallout, the possible contamination of milk and crops resulting from nuclear testing, and the alarming spread of diseases connected to exposure to nuclear radiation.[43]

As a result of this campaign, people's general stance on nuclear weapons changed dramatically. For the first time, the opponents of a resumption of nuclear testing outnumbered those who were in favor.[44] As Norman Cousins put it in a letter that he addressed to President Kennedy in the spring of 1962, anti-nuclear leaders, sympathizers, and groups had been able to amass a "prodigious amount of public-opinion capital" on which Kennedy could draw in order to lead the American nuclear policy to an entirely new phase.[45]

Before actually entering such a new phase, however, the American administration, and the whole world along with it, would have to come very close to the brink of nuclear holocaust. In October 1962, when the Cuban missile crisis broke out, a sudden upsurge of fear and anxiety forced governments to accept many of the anti-nuclear demands. The crisis alarmed the public to an unprecedented degree and eventually convinced the majority of people to adopt a critical view of nuclear weapons and testing. To capture and use this discontent and to show its political weight at the same time, SANE leaders planned a tight schedule of events and demonstrations to be held throughout the country. On the evening of October 22, at the very peak of the crisis, SANE's national committee urged the president to take extremely seriously the implications of a nuclear war and to make every effort to avoid it. SANE leaders then dispatched a declaration to the press as a *Memo on Cuba*, which proposed

a concurrent suspension of US naval blockade and of Soviet warhead transport to Cuba. SANE also urged the USA to close its missile bases in Turkey in return for Soviet renunciation of Cuban bases. Finally, while organizing marches in the streets of Washington, D.C., SANE leaders met with the Soviet ambassador in the USA and appealed publicly and directly to both Kennedy and Khrushchev, asking them to find a peaceful solution to the crisis in order to ease the unbearable international tension.[46]

As with her fellow Americans, the unpredictable outcome of the Cuban missile crisis horrified Mrs. Roosevelt. Nevertheless, she considered the Cuban situation carefully and calmly, and provided the American people with the sense of reassurance that they had come to expect from her. In a column dated September 17, 1962, she first acknowledged Kennedy's political and diplomatic skills, because "in these days of world uncertainty," as she put it, the president had been able to "keep steady control of himself in spite of the hotheads in the Congress and in the Pentagon." According to the former first lady, "Kennedy's assurances that we have no intention of going to war over Cuba" along with his ability to not respond irrationally to Soviet provocations showed "admirable restraint," and people could rely on this.

Then, after blaming Khrushchev for being deceitful and irresponsible, she invited her readers to think of the crisis as the epitome of the paradoxes that the nuclear arms race generated. Enormous amount of public money were wasted to produce armaments that kept people around the world holding their breath in fear, while nobody seemed to wonder, for instance, about people's life in Cuba…whether they had enough food or not, or whether their clothing, housing, and other basic necessities were being met. If asked, Mrs. Roosevelt argued, perhaps the Cuban people would have preferred "food and goodwill among their neighbors which would lead to trade, rather than the build-up of military protection and control from a country almost the other side of the world."[47] A few days later she wrote another column in praise of a properly working democracy, saying that nuclear armaments and recurrent crises were putting at risk the very "sacredness and importance of the individual human being."[48]

Just as the Cuban crisis reached at its apex, Eleanor Roosevelt was hospitalized due to a worsening of her health. Still, she kept asking her doctor and her relatives for the latest developments in the crisis and kept criticizing the ominous state of world affairs.[49] She knew that she was leaving the world amid one of the most dangerous periods of its entire history. But, as she reiterated in her last book, *Tomorrow Is Now*, published posthumously

in 1963, she also knew that mankind held the right instruments to overcome the dangers. According to Mrs. Roosevelt, with "proper education […] a strong sense of responsibility for our own actions, with a clear awareness that our future is linked with the welfare of the world as a whole, we may justly anticipate that the life of the next generation will be richer, more peaceful, more rewarding than any we have ever known."[50]

Eleanor Roosevelt died at her home in New York City on November 7, 1962, at the age of 78. She was expected to chair SANE's fifth anniversary dinner a week later. SANE leaders did not cancel the event but, to honor her memory and her contribution to the organization, they decided to name a special peace medal after her, thus presenting what came to be known as the Eleanor Roosevelt Peace Award to their yearly dinner's guest of honor.[51] Her funeral, instead, was private affair, held in Hyde Park. In respect, four US presidents attended the funeral to salute the "first lady of the world," as Truman notably defined her. Among the dozens of private groups and organizations that mourned her loss, both SANE and the American Association for the United Nations decided to pay public respect to Mrs. Roosevelt, a devoted member of their boards. In their judgment, she had been a constant source of inspiration and had represented for them, and the world, a genuine and indefatigable voice of conscience.[52]

Notes

1. The transcripts of the TV debate are available online at http://www.debates.org/index.php?page=october-21-1960-debate-transcript.
2. Nixon's brochure is online at http://www.4president.org/brochures/nixon1960brochure.htm.
3. See "Text of Kennedy's Letter Giving Stand on Resumption of Nuclear Testing," in *The New York Times*, October 10, 1960. See also Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb. Resisting the Bomb. A History of the World Disarmament Movement 1954-1970*, Volume 2 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 262-263. During his electoral campaign, Kennedy also proposed the establishment of a national agency for disarmament, see http://www.4president.org/brochures/jfk1960brochure.htm.
4. As prominent American physician Sidney D. Drell later recalled in his memoirs, "by 1960, an active and vigorous public constituency around the world had become concerned about this radioactive fallout and its effects on the health of their families and friends. They joined many scientists who understood the weapons in detail to protest continued testing. Scientists could bring a highly informed judgment to bear on the question of how

the cessation of nuclear tests in the atmosphere would affect our national security. This was the first important issue of nuclear weapons in which the public in the United States played a major role. […] In the Western world, concerned citizens by the hundreds of thousands applied strong political leverage, while the technical case in support of an atmospheric test ban treaty was presented by concerned scientists. These forces inside and outside of government enhanced one another. Working together, they helped accomplish what may well have been beyond the power of either alone: the Limited Test Ban Treaty signed in 1963 by President Kennedy and General Secretary Khrushchev." See, Sidney D. Drell, *Nuclear Weapons, Scientists, and the Post-Cold War Challenge. Selected Papers on Arms Control* (London: World Scientific Publishing, 2007), 47.

5. In 1956, 83 percent of American people favored nuclear testing, see US National Archives Records Administration (NARA), Record Group (RG) 59, General Records of the Department of State, Records Relating to Disarmament (RRD), 1949–1962, box 212, Public Opinion and Information. In November 1959, 77 percent favored an agreement to stop all nuclear tests, see Paul Boyer, *Fallout. A Historian Reflects on America's Half-Century Encounter with Nuclear Weapons* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998), 109. Writing to the British embassy in Washington, D.C., Selwyn Lloyd pointed out that the battle between the West and the East over public opinion's consensus would be fought around the theme of nuclear disarmament, see U.K. National Archives (NA), Foreign Office (FO), General Correspondence (371), Press Interest in Disarmament, 1960 (149382).
6. See *Speech of Senator John F. Kennedy*, Milwaukee, WI, October 23, 1960, in http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=74184. See also Glenn T. Seaborg, *Kennedy, Khrushchev and the Test Ban* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1981), 34.
7. See "Address by President John F. Kennedy to the UN General Assembly," September 25, 1961, in http://www.state.gov/p/io/potusunga/207241.htm. Kennedy's speech is also quoted in "President Kennedy Writes to the Progressive on the Struggle Against Racial Segregation," in *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, vol. 19, no. 4 (April 1963): 45. See also Robert Divine, *Foreign Policy and U.S. Presidential Elections, 1952–1960* (New York: New Viewpoints, 1974), 255.
8. The former USDA was established by the "Department of State Circular No. 370," October 12, 1960, in Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library, President's Office Files, USDA, 1960. With a strong support from within the Congress, President Kennedy signed the H.R. 9118, creating the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA). As enacted, H.R. 9118 was Public Law 87-297 (85 Stat. 631), see United States

Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States* (FRUS), *1961–1963, Volume XXV, Organizations of Foreign Policy: Information Policy; United Nations; Scientific Matters* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2001), 135. The same day, the US representative at the UN, Adlai Stevenson released a statement where he stressed "the urgent need for a treaty to ban nuclear weapons tests under effective international control," see NARA, RG 59, RRD 1949–1962, box 63, Nuclear Weapons and Test Ban, August 10, 1961, to December 14, 1961. This position was the result of a joint declaration of principles that the US issued along with the British government, see NA, FO, 953/2016, Disarmament, The search continues, 1961, The Search II.

9. See John F. Kennedy, "remarks in New York City Upon Signing Bill Establishing the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency," September 26, 1961, in John F. Kennedy, *John F. Kennedy: 1961. Containing the Public Messages, Speeches, and Statements of the President, January 20 to December 31, 1961* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Library, 2005), 626–627, in http://quod.lib.umich.edu/p/ppotpus/4730886.1961.001/684?rgn=full+text;view=image. See also NARA, RG 59, Information Policy, United Nations, Scientific Matters Released by the Office of the Historian Documents, Boxes 69–77. Both the Congress and the press reacted very positively to the establishment of the new agency. See Congressional Records, July 7, 1961, 11193, in NARA, RG 59, Records of the Division of Public Studies (RDPS), *Reports on Public Attitudes Toward Foreign Policy 1943–1965*, Box 19, "Opinions and Activities of American Private Organizations and Groups" (OAAPOG), July 1961, and *The Washington Star*, March 1, 1961, in NARA, RG 59, RDPS, Box 19, OAAPOG, March 1961.
10. On the role of the nuclear weapons within the "flexible response" doctrine see the classical, and very popular at that time, study of Henry Kissinger, *Nuclear Weapons* and *Foreign Policy* (New York: Harper, 1957). Among the many interesting analyses on this strategy, see John L. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment. A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); Philip Nash, "Bear Any Burden? John F. Kennedy and Nuclear Weapons," in John L. Gaddis, Philip Gordon, Ernest May, and Jonathan Rosenberg (eds.), *Cold War Statesmen Confronting the Bomb. Nuclear Diplomacy since 1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 122; and Mario Del Pero, *The Eccentric Realist. Henry Kissinger and the Shaping of American Foreign Policy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009).
11. Kennedy ordered a study on the technical issues associated with the resumption of nuclear testing, which confirmed a general anti-nuclear predisposition. During the summer of 1961, in the wake of an unfolding crisis

over the status of Berlin and amid an unproductive nuclear summit in Vienna, Kennedy asked his science advisers to explore the possibility to resume nuclear testing. The team, chaired by physicist Wolfgang Panofsky, did not see any necessity to resume nuclear experimentations from a scientific point of view and argued that "the U.S. would retain a degree of technological superiority in nuclear weapons for some time," see Glenn T. Seaborg, *Journals of Glenn T. Seaborg*, Volume 1, February 1, 1961–June 30, 1961 (Berkeley: Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory, 1989), in http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB94/. See also McGeorge Bundy, *Memorandum of decision, July 27, 1961: Test ban scenario*, July 28, 1961, in NARA, RG 59, decimal files 1960–1963, 600.0012/7/2859, also published in FRUS, *1961–1963, Volume VII, Arms Control and Disarmament* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1995), 114–115, in http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB94/.

12. See *Kennedy's note*, August 31, 1961, in NARA, RG 59, RRD 1942–1962, Box 63, Nuclear Weapons Test Ban. Just a few weeks earlier, the US and the UK had presented to the UN a petition that urged the "need for a treaty to ban nuclear weapons tests under effective international control", see NARA, RG 59, RRD 1942–1962, Box 63, Nuclear weapons test ban, *Proposal for an US-UK Joint Resolution*, August 1961.
13. See *Proposal for a US-UK Joint Resolution*, August 1961, in NARA, RG 59, RRD 1942–1962, Box 63, Nuclear Weapons Test Ban. See also Glenn T. Seaborg, *Kennedy, Khrushchev, and the Test Ban*, 86. In the aftermath of the Soviet Union's announcement that it had resumed atomic testing, Kennedy wrote to British prime minister Macmillan. He said, "I remain most reluctant to take a firm decision to resume testing; the stakes are high and the consequences not easily predicted." Then, he sadly added: "If we do resume, it will be underground," see "Letter from President Kennedy to Prime Minister Macmillan," September 1, 1961, in FRUS, *1961–1963, Volume VII, Arms Control and Disarmament,* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1995).
14. See Arthur Dean's letter to Dean Rusk, September 27, 1961, in NARA, RG 59, RRD, 1942–1962, Box 63, Nuclear Weapons Test Ban, Along with Dean and other U.S. top-officials, Glenn Seaborg suggested that Kennedy approve atmospheric tests while the Soviets were conducting their own experimentations, otherwise "reaction and pressure against" tests would be "much more severe," see Glenn T. Seaborg, *Kennedy, Khrushchev, and the Test Ban*, 102. See also John F. Kennedy Library, National Security Files, Box 267, *Letter from Atomic Energy Commission AEC Chairman Glenn Seaborg to President Kennedy*, October 19, 1961, also available online at http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB94/.

15. As regards the scientific protests against the nuclear arms race in general see Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light. American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994) and Id., *Fallout. A Historian Reflects on America's Half-Century Encounter with Nuclear Weapons* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1998). See also Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb. Resisting the Bomb. A History of the World Disarmament Movement 1954–1970*, Volume 2 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997); Gregg Herken, *Brotherhood of the Bomb: The Tangled Lives and Loyalties of Robert Oppenheimer, Ernest Lawrence, and Edward Teller* (New York: Henry Holt, 2002); Id., *Cardinal Choices: Presidential Science Advising from the Atomic Bomb to SDI* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Brian VanDeMark, *Pandora's Keepers: Nine Men and the Atomic Bomb* (New York: Back Bay Books, 2005); Paul Rubinson, " 'Crucified on a Cross of Atoms:' Scientists, Politics, and the Test Ban Treaty," in *Diplomatic History*, vol. 35, no. 2 (April 2011): 283–319.
16. For a comprehensive history of the US National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE) see Milton S. Katz, *Ban the Bomb: A History of SANE, the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy* (New York: Praeger, 1987) and Robert Kleidman, *Organizing for Peace: Neutrality, the Test Ban, and the Freeze* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1993).
17. See *The New York Times*, November 17, 1961, in Swarthmore College Peace collection (SCPC), Sane, Inc., DG 58, Records, 1957–1987, Series A, Records of the National Office of SANE, New York, NY, Administrative Records, 1957–1970, Box 1, Material about SANE, 1958–1968, *Chronology*.
18. Sanford Gottlieb believed that SANE's main role was to balance the pro-nuclear pressures of individuals like Teller, who continuously asked for further nuclear developments. "Since Teller was the scientist that former Atomic Energy Commission chairman Lewis Strauss brought to the White House to convince President Eisenhower that it was necessary to continue nuclear testing in order to perfect a "clean" H-bomb", Gottlieb said, "it was not a surprise that Teller himself would always continue to oppose a test ban." See SCPC, DG 58, Records, 1957–1987, Series A, Records of the National Office of SANE, New York, NY, Administrative Records, 1957–1970, Box 5, Reports, Speeches, Articles, 1957–1970, *Sanford Gottlieb on Peace Report*, November 1963.
19. It is possible to reconstruct this interesting exchange by making use of the papers held by the Swarthmore College Peace Collections. See Eleanor Roosevelt to Thomas, May 5, 1960; Donald Keys to Eleanor Roosevelt June 22, 1960; Eleanor Roosevelt to Donald Keys, June 28, 1960; Edward Meyerding to Eleanor Roosevelt, July 19, 1960; and Eleanor Roosevelt to Edward Meyerding, August 8, 1960. See SCPC, DG 58, Subseries B4, Correspondence and related papers Box 28.

20. See *My Day*, March 24, 1961.
21. See *My Day*, July 16, 1960.
22. *Ibid*.
23. See *My Day*, July 7, 1961.
24. See *My Day*, March 24, 1961.
25. See Alfred E. Clark, "3,500 Picket U.N.; Seek A-Bomb Ban," in *The New York Times*, April 2, 1961, and "1,400 College Students Converge on Washington to Picket for Peace," *The New York Times*, February 17, 1962.
26. See Brandeis University, *Brandeis University Bulletin* (London: Forgotten Books, 2013), 92.
27. See Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam Books, 1987), 93.
28. See Douglas Gomery, "Television," in *The Eleanor Roosevelt Encyclopedia*, eds. Maurine Hoffman Beasley, Holly Cowan Shulman, Henry R. Beasley (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2001), 509–512.
29. See Roosevelt Study Center (RSC), Eleanor Roosevelt Oral History Transcripts, IV, Harriman, W. Averell—Morgenthau, Henry III, Interview with Henry Morgenthau III, by Emily Williams on August 30, 1978, for Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, 30.
30. See RSC, Eleanor Roosevelt Oral History Transcripts, IV, Harriman, W. Averell—Morgenthau, Henry III, Interview with Henry Morgenthau III, by Emily Williams on August 30, 1978, for Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, 10–38.
31. See Eleanor Roosevelt's *Prospect of Mankind*, DVD collections, RSC, Program no. 3.18, *What Hopes for Disarmament* (November 1959).
32. See Eleanor Roosevelt's *Prospect of Mankind*, DVD collections, RSC, Program no. 3.29, *The Scientist and World Politics* (December 1960).
33. See Eleanor Roosevelt's *Prospect of Mankind*, DVD collections, RSC, Program no. 3.44, *Nuclear Test Ban: The First Step to Arms Control* (May 1961).
34. See *My Day*, February 10, 1961.
35. The internal debate about test resumption within the American administration was very tense, see *Memorandum of Conversation of a Sub-Committee meeting of the NSC Committee on Atmospheric Testing*, registered on December 12, 1961, in NARA, RG 59, RRD, 1942–1962, Box 30, 1961–1962. See also William Burr (ed.), *The Test Ban Challenge: Nuclear Nonproliferation and the Quest for a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty*, posted August 11, 2010, on http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nukevault/ebb323/index.htm.
36. See Lawrence S. Wittner, "Blacklisting Schweitzer," in *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, May/June 1995 vol. 51, no. 3: 55, online at https://books.google.nl/books?id=PgwAAAAAMBAJ.
37. See "Alternatives to War," in *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 1961 vol. 17, no. 2: 40.

38. See and "'Turn Toward Peace' Is Set Up to Seek Solutions to Tensions," in *The New York Times*, December 6, 1961.
39. See Joseph Lash, *Eleanor: The Years Alone* (New York W. W. Norton & Company, 1972), 319.
40. See *My Day*, November 5, 1961. She called "for a popular movement to lead to disarmament," see Blanche Wiesen Cook, "Turn Toward Peace," in Joan Hoff-Wilson, Marjorie Lightman (eds.), *Without a Precedent: The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 120–121.
41. See Glen H. Stassen, Lawrence S. Wittner (eds.), *Peace Action: Past, Present, and Future* (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2007), 20. Doctor Spock's picture and the related advertisement were published by *The New York Times* on April 16, 1962.
42. See SCPC, DG 58, Records, 1957–1958, Series A, Records of the National Office of SANE, New York, NY, Administrative Records, 1957–1970, Box 1, Material about Sane, 1958–1968, *Chronology*.
43. See SCPC, DG 58, Records, 1957–1958, Series A, Records of the National Office of SANE, New York, NY, Administrative Records, 1957–1970, Box 1, Material about Sane, 1958–1968, *Chronology*. See also Oregon State University Libraries Special Collections, Ava Helen and Linus Pauling Papers, 1873–2011, Series 12, Peace. 1945–1994, Box 7.005, Materials re: Nuclear Fallout; Radiation Hazards, 1962–1963, Folder 5.6, *The Current Hazards of Fallout to Human Health*, National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, June 6, 1962.
44. See Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb*, Volume 2, 61.
45. See Norman Cousin's letter to John F. Kennedy, April 12, 1962, SCPC, DG 58, Subseries B-5, Correspondence and Related Papers, 1961–1962, Box 36.
46. See Series A, Records of the National Office of SANE, New York, NY, Administrative Records, 1957–1970, Box 1, Material about Sane, 1958–1968, *Chronology*; see also the "Memo on Cuba," in *The New York Times*, October 25, 1962, on SCPC, DG 58, Series A, Records of the National Office of SANE, New York, NY, Administrative Records, 1957–1970, Box 1, Material about Sane, 1958–1968.
47. See *My Day*, September 12, 1962.
48. See *My Day*, September 21, 1962.
49. See Joseph Lash, *Eleanor: The Years Alone*, 330.
50. Quoted in Blanche Wiesen Cook, "Turn Toward Peace," in Joan Hoff-Wilson, Marjorie Lightman (eds.), *Without a Precedent*, 121.
51. See SCPC, DG 58, Series F Eleanor Roosevelt Peace Award, Box 1.
52. See "Obituary 7," *The New York Times*, November 9, 1962.

CHAPTER 8

Conclusion

The principal aim of this book is to offer a comprehensive description of the motives, the goals, the means, and the effects of Mrs. Roosevelt's anti-nuclear activism. This book argues that Eleanor Roosevelt's direct involvement in the so-called struggle against the bomb was not just a naïve pastime.[1] It epitomized instead a very specific view of the international affairs and the Cold War relations, as well as an enduring yearning for world peace and social justice.

Either by arguing in favor of the US participation in the World Court in the interwar years, by sponsoring relief programs for miners' communities in the 1930s, or by publicly defending the necessity of nuclear disarmament in the late 1950s, throughout her life, Eleanor Roosevelt kept hammering a drive to a more equal, just, and therefore peaceful society into American consciousness. Her innermost belief was that human beings needed, first and foremost, to be safe. For this reason, she saw racism, inequality, and frequent attacks to individual freedom as the threatening marks of the cold war at home. While in her opinion another by-product of the Cold War, the nuclear arms race, was undermining human security on a global scale. Accordingly, she thought that it was her duty to fight what she called "the politics of fear," an underlying and widespread feeling of mistrust that prevented mutual understanding and hindered human development, and that was emblematically symbolized, during the Cold War, by nuclear weapons and testing.[2]

D. Fazzi, *Eleanor Roosevelt and the Anti-Nuclear Movement*,
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Her disagreement on nuclear deterrence, however, was not only deeply rooted in a feeling of moral revulsion and disgust, but it was also related to the idea that nuclear weapons put the very meaning and function of democracy at risk. In Mrs. Roosevelt's own words, a properly working democracy should have better renounced possessing and testing nuclear weapons if it wanted to prove "its worth with an equal belief in itself and a deeper sacrificial devotion to its standards," and therefore "attain the moral and spiritual and intellectual leadership" that it fully deserved.[3] On several occasions, she condemned the enormous diversion of public money from social programs, which in a democratic regime were supposed to improve citizens' life conditions and foster equality to nuclear testing, which only served the false myth of nuclear security.

Moreover, from a strategic point of view, Eleanor Roosevelt did not believe that nuclear deterrence could work effectively to contain the spread of Communism. To her, it had quite the opposite effect instead. Nuclear deterrence only generated tensions, frustrated any possibility of recognizing mutual interests and global interdependence, and stimulated nuclear proliferation. She fully endorsed the principle that nuclear deterrence could not be considered an appropriate military strategy, but it represented instead a political and cultural instrument of hegemony, which contradicted the basic values of American democracy, namely civil liberties and freedom, and did not strengthen either USA's international reputation or its national security.[4]

Eleanor Roosevelt's moral revulsion and political contempt mirrored the anxiety and criticism characterizing the growing anti-nuclear mobilization of the early Cold War. But she knew that, in order to translate these anxiety and criticism into actual policy change, people needed a thorough understanding of all the facts relating to nuclear policy. Therefore, she thought that influential public figures like her had the responsibility to clear up the popular misconceptions about nuclear weapons and adequately inform citizens of the real dangers of nuclear warfare and testing. She believed that, once aware of the real implications of the nuclear arms race, people would naturally reject the idea of putting themselves and the future generations at stake. Hence, when she embarked on the anti-nuclear campaign her ultimate goal was to educate her fellow citizens.

Given the breadth of such an educational vocation, the anti-nuclear messages that Eleanor Roosevelt sent through the press, her radio and TV shows, and her participation in public events or talks had to be straightforward. Addressing American citizens through an understandable and colloquial language was instrumental to demystify the terms of the nuclear debate. Her plain and emphatic rhetoric was meant to foster a thorough

exchange of information and stimulate individual reflection. By doing so, she hoped that her messages could stir collective imagination and leave an imprint on American people.

But the consequences of Eleanor Roosevelt's involvement in the anti-nuclear campaign have gone far beyond the contribution that she paid to the opening of the nuclear debate to the general public. She helped anti-nuclear leaders and organizations to frame their opposition as a broader defense of human rights and security. Her pronounced anti-nuclear dissent kept the progressive spirit of reform alive and defended the value of multilateralism and diplomacy. She proposed a valid and credible counternarrative of the Cold War, something that American people and political elites partly adopted only after her death with the launch of détente. From this point of view, the achievement of the first agreement in the nuclear field, namely the signature of the Limited Test Ban Treaty in 1963, marked a significant shift in the US nuclear policy that went along some of the lines that Mrs. Roosevelt had previously and for long time indicated.

As a woman, a very active member of the Democratic Party, a prominent US First Lady, and a skilled and respected diplomat, Eleanor Roosevelt raised the bar for American politics. With her anti-nuclear pronouncements, she brought such crucial issues as world peace, human rights, and environmental safeguard to the foreground, and strove to place them at the top of the political agenda and public debate. Accordingly, the general expectations for those politicians who claim to follow her example should be very high, not only for what concerns social justice—something that Eleanor Roosevelt is usually referred to as a role model—but also for what relates to foreign and security policy.

Notes

1. See Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb, Volume One, One World or None: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement Through 1953* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993).
2. See Eleanor Roosevelt "The Truth about ADA." In Roosevelt Study Center, The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt, 1945–1952, Part 3: General Correspondence, 1950, Reel 2, 0001, ADA, 1950–1952, October 30, 1950.
3. See *My Day*, March 27, 1947.
4. See Eleanor Roosevelt, "Address to the Chicago Civil Liberties Committee," March 14, 1940, online at http://voicesofdemocracy.umd.edu/eleanor-roosevelt-address-by-mrs-frankin-d-roosevelt-the-chicago-civil-liberties-committee-4-march-1950/.

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[1] Note: Page numbers with "n" denote notes.

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