

Evolution and the Anthropocene: Does the existence of nuclear weapons impede our spiritual development?

This video was recorded at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History on May 22, 2016

Rev. Peter F. Ryan: 00:24

I think it's wrong to be prepared to use a nuclear weapon. It seems to me that the deterrent that we have built up in this country and in other countries, which are, nuclear weapons aimed at population centers, or at least that's the way it used to be. I haven't really studied exactly how the thing is working now. If you're keeping the peace precisely by being prepared to wipe out large population centers, I think that's got to be wrong. Now somebody might say, if you don't do that, then you're going to end up having all kinds of problems. Well that may be, but I don't know if you can justify being prepared to do what you would need to do to keep the deterrent operated on that basis. There's a book written by John Finnis, Joseph Boyle and Germaine Grisez titled Nuclear Deterrence, Morality, and Realism, which I would recommend you look at on this topic.

Mary Evelyn Tucker: 01:38

I just want to add to this very important question. It was announced in September, right after the climate march in New York, the New York times lead article was we are about to spend a trillion dollars to update our nuclear arsenal. A trillion dollars. I think it's probably more than clear to everyone in this room that the Soviet Union went under because of this kind of behavior, and that our military budget is so inflated as to be probably unable to keep up on our infrastructure or education or social welfare, et cetera. (02:17) So I testified for Meagan Rice who did an action in Oak Ridge against nuclear weapons, she's an 84-year-old nun, along with two others of the Catholic worker movement, and it was terrifying, absolutely terrifying because you are in the heart of the military-industrial complex and in a courtroom with this kind of thing. So I think there's a very strong anti-nuclear and anti-war movement in this country that is below the radar screen, but very heroic people trying to call action around these issues. I'm sure you know many of them, Dan

Berrigan just passed away and he was one of the greats of this movement.

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