

Bomb Brought Peace

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Wednesday, August 14th, was the 40th anniversary of the day the Japanese accepted surrender terms which ended World War II. It was Victory over Japan--VJ Day.

The first I heard of the anniversary was a two-minute CNN feature that morning.

The week before was the 40th anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings. Newspapers and television brimmed over with anxiety-filled, breast-beating melancholy commentary on the event.

The MacNeil-Lehrer News Hour, a program I respect for its usually in-depth, thoughtful non-sensational journalism, devoted 45 minutes of its Aug. 6 program to discussing the meaning of Hiroshima.

This newspaper ran a photo of a symbolic "nuclear shadow" on its front page. Other "nuclear shadows" were painted and publicized across the country.

Without the bomb, VJ Day almost certainly would not have come so soon. It could have come after a bloody, brutal invasion of Japan in which uncounted numbers of Japanese civilians and American servicemen might have died—many more died in the bombings.

Why would two events so close-

ly connected be treated so differently?

Both of these things happened before I was born. But I have tried to be a student of history, and I see three events that changed Americans' attitudes about themselves and their country.

The first event was the bomb itself.

World War II and the atomic bomb changed the way people think about war. Before World War II and the bomb, wars were horrible for the people in warring countries, but the rest of the world went about its business.

Woodrow Wilson was re-elected on the slogan, "He Kept Us Out of War." World War I was perceived as Europe's war, and the United States stayed out of it until 1917.

But World War II was truly a global war. Armies, tanks, battleships and airplanes went nearly everywhere in the world.

Besides this, the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was so complete and devastating that it raised the specter of destruction of the whole planet. War could now go anywhere and wipe out life everywhere.

After the no-win Korean "War" came the second event: Vietnam.

For the first time in our history, our motives for going into combat

were unclear. Many Americans felt politicians were sending young men to die in a faraway country without explaining why.

College students who would have had to serve protested and rebelled, bitterly outraged. Soldiers who served came home without thanks or acclaim, bitterly disillusioned.

Vietnam wounded the nation as well as the soldiers.

One has only to look at reaction to events in Central America to see that Americans do not want another Vietnam.

The third event was the Watergate scandal.

It appeared that the President of the United States was involved in break-ins, wiretaps, buggings and other "dirty tricks." Nixon told us, "I am not a crook," and later resigned because he could not make us believe it.

We no longer felt we could trust our leaders as fully as we had before. Jimmy Carter spoke sadly of a "crisis of confidence" in his administration, but it did not begin nor end with him.

I feel the reason Hiroshima was emphasized over VJ Day was that many Americans feel disillusioned about themselves and their institutions. We like to see ourselves as "good guys" dedicated to the lofty principles

By The Courtesy Of
Neil Leslie,
We Wish To Share
His Work.

expressed in our founding documents.

The "feel good, make America strong again" psychology got Reagan re-elected by a landslide, but when we fail to keep these high standards and see cruelty and corruption in our system, we are disappointed in ourselves. We are more ready to dwell on the bad we have done than the good.

But we have done good, and that is worth remembering.

In World War II Americans opposed an evil Nazi regime which methodically murdered six million human beings after systematically stripping them of all human dignity.

In World War II Americans opposed a militaristic Japanese government which planned a surprise attack.

I think Americans today are rightly concerned about our nuclear and foreign policy. The ghosts of Hiroshima and Nagasaki haunt us all. But perhaps those ghosts are the very things that have given us 40 years without another mushroom cloud over our heads.

That is peace of a sort, I suppose—a peace that began on VJ Day.

New Advancement For Library Security

Would anyone ever install something that looked like it was working but it actually was only faking? Perhaps the Great Maker would in relation to my mental functioning but usually the answer is no, not in this practical era. This answer also applies to the new electronic book-monitor newly installed in our library. It does work. Sources say its alarm has been triggered even when someone forgets to check out a book and unknowingly begins to walk out with it. The alarm will catch a person attempting to stroll out with a book while holding the volume above his-her head. The system is almost infallible and could be infallible with a little help from students.

As for being cost effective, the four year lease the library has on this 9,635 dollar object will pay for itself in two years, by saving 350 to 370 books a year at a cost of 5,000 to 7,000 dollars annually. Methodist College installed one of these recently and its book losses went from 400 per year to 35. The system is also more convenient than the old way of stopping and having someone peer into your satchel for misplaced library books, on your way out the door.

The Lance also questioned library director, Mrs. Betty Holmes about the reduction in hours newly inplaced this year. She said, "the library wants better service for everybody on campus." With these new hours the library can have staff members available for every hour the library is open. This is also due to the fact that only 2 percent of the student body utilized the library last year after 10 PM. The library now stays open 78 hours a week. This is average for small college libraries.

Mrs. Holmes also made note that the "library is a service to the campus." Students need to offer suggestions to the library staff whenever necessary. This lets them do a more thorough job in helping students. But students also need to help the library staff by remembering to bring their student ID's when they want to check out materials.

Mrs. Holmes would not disclose how the machine works and we are open to interpretations on this subject. Here is one offered by someone who wishes anonymity for fear of reprisal or something to that effect.

The electronic sensor they put

at the library door does not monitor for stolen books, it checks for guilty consciences. But technology is faulty and this box does not know how to monitor just your mind. It is forced to take your whole body into the box and spit it back out right before

By Chip Carnical

you reach the grocery store door, that opens when it feels your presence. I know the machine works this way. I stole a fantasy before leaving and I got caught and was asked to return it.

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