



**E. R. ZUMWALT, JR.**  
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Mr. Herman J. Obermayer  
Editor and Publisher  
Northern Virginia Sun  
1227 N. Ivy Street  
P.O. Box 149  
Arlington, Virginia 22210

Dear Herman:

I thought I'd try something a little different this time.  
I hope it works for you.

Sincerely,

E. R. Zumwalt, Jr.

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Attachment

### HIGH SCHOOL WISDOM

Although the nuclear freeze movement has had some of its wind taken out of its sails with the recent deployment, as scheduled, of US Pershing missiles in Europe to offset Soviet nuclear capabilities in the region, some local community and interest groups remain dedicated in their efforts to push for a nuclear arms freeze.

Recently, in the small town of Columbus, Indiana, supporters of the nuclear freeze submitted petitions with over 1500 signatures to the local city council, demanding a vote on a nuclear freeze resolution that had been brought before the council earlier. Prominent representatives of that community, including members of the clergy, the town's bank president, a doctor and a state representative, all spoke at the council meeting in favor of the resolution. The only organized opposition to the resolution was presented by three local high school students.

Resolution supporters emphasized the emotional side of the issue--stressing that a continued battle for superiority with the Soviets is "an unending nightmare", that there will be no winners in a nuclear confrontation and that a resolution such as the one before the council was necessary for the US to take the first step in an effort to achieve peace.

Taking a more scholarly approach to the issue, the high school students opposing the resolution set aside the emotional considerations and focused exclusively on the historical facts surrounding the issue of a nuclear freeze. Their research indicated the US has taken "the first step" by virtue of a self-imposed unilateral freeze which has effectively stifled the development of its nuclear weapons arsenal for the past two decades. As a result of that unilateral self-imposed freeze--which most freeze supporters

have for some reason failed to acknowledge--the US has not deployed a new generation land based intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) nor has it increased the number of re-entry vehicles (which, in turn, could increase the number of Soviet targets the US could strike) it has in its arsenal. During that same time period, however, the Soviet Union has embarked upon the most extensive nuclear arms build-up the world has ever known. While US production lines stood still, the Soviets deployed several new ICBM systems and greatly increased the numbers of their re-entry vehicles. As one young opponent perceptively put it, "Be assured that the Soviets are not content with attaining strategic force parity, for they had achieved that objective long ago. Rather, the Soviets are intent upon maintaining strategic weapons superiority forcing the United States to acquiesce to Soviet expansionistic aims. A freeze is a cheap form of appeasement, which would create a false peace and spawn further conflict."

After listening to the arguments presented by both sides, the city council voted by a margin of 4-3 to oppose the resolution.

What happened in Columbus, Indiana is typical of the controversy that has surrounded one of the most critical issues in the history of mankind. But the events there bear out a lesson that other towns and cities across the Nation should well heed--it is imperative in addressing the issue of a nuclear arms freeze to divorce oneself from the emotional arguments and focus more on factual realities. Neither those who support nor those who oppose the freeze have any desire that this country get into a nuclear war. But disagreement ensues as one group views the issue from an emotional standpoint while the other views it from a practical one.

The reality of the matter is that the perceived "nuclear arms race" has been a one-sided contest by virtue of self-imposed US constraints. Rather than accept the unilateral freeze as a sign of US commitment to curb nuclear weapons production,

Moscow has chosen to view it as a sign of weakness, and taken advantage of the opportunity to drastically increase its nuclear arsenal.

The reality of the matter is that the Soviet Union and its allies are and proclaim to be an "offensive alliance" dedicated to political, economic and military hegemony over the globe. Those who doubt such Soviet designs need only ask the people of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Czechoslovakia, East Germany and Afghanistan.

The reality of the matter is that only by demonstrating a firm American resolve to maintain parity and deny Moscow its coveted strategic superiority is there any hope of convincing the Kremlin leadership that it is in the best interests of both countries to pursue a bilateral nuclear arms freeze.

Those three high school students in Columbus have made a practical contribution to peace by removing the nuclear freeze issue from its emotional wrappings.

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