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October 27, 1947

Mr. Marriner S. Eccles, Chairman  
 Federal Reserve Board  
 Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Eccles:

I feel that the citizens of this country are greatly indebted to you for recent statements in which you have called attention to the tremendous expenditures being made by the United States for military purposes and the much smaller amounts expended for various forms of foreign aid. It is distressing that practically no other public official emphasizes the bearing of these huge military expenditures on inflationary developments, or points out that it is hardly possible to do an adequate job of relief and economic reconstruction, and at the same time maintain a swollen budget for military expenditures.

It seemed to me that the lead editorial in the September, 1947, issue of the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists posed the same problem, though from a very different angle. I thought, therefore, that you might be interested in the enclosed quotation from that editorial.

Sincerely yours,

*A. J. Muste*  
 A. J. Muste

AJM:MC  
 oeiu/153

2929 Broadway  
New York 25, N. Y.

The lead editorial in the September issue of the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists by one of the editors, Eugene Rabinowitch, represents what I consider an epoch-making advance in the thinking of atomic scientists about war. By all means try to get hold of a copy and read the whole article. After pointing out that there are legitimate criticisms to be made of the Russian attitude toward the problem of atomic weapons, as well as of our own, Rabinowitch for one thing states that the hope that many scientists had a couple of years ago that the "blinding flash of Hiroshima would frighten mankind onto the paths of peace" is all but gone. Secondly, he says that the trouble with all of our proposals, such as the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, Baruch Plan, etc., is that our basic political philosophy remains that of regarding our own security and prosperity as the legitimate basis of policy. Then he concludes:

"Since even the most humanitarian policies are supposed to derive their validity from their subordination to the paramount criterion of selfish national advantage, they are inevitably reduced to the role of new, untried, and therefore unreliable weapons in an arsenal full of reliable stand-bys: big armies, navies and air forces; fortresses and naval bases; loans with political strings attached. And equally inevitably, they are acknowledged by the other nations of the world for what we ourselves proclaim them to be - measures intended primarily to serve the interests of the United States of America.

"It would not be enough if we were to start pretending that whatever we do in the world is for the benefit of mankind as a whole; we should really make this benefit our paramount objective. The world is tired of hearing every nation assert that her own strength is the best guarantee of world peace. We must convince ourselves, before we can convince others. Not until we ourselves believe that equal concern with the well-being and peace of all mankind is the only possible moral basis for world leadership, will we stand a chance of acquiring this leadership and breaking the vicious circle of power politics."

AJM:MC  
oeiu/153

A. J. Muste

November 3, 1947.

Dear Mr. Muste:

This is to thank you for your letter of October 27 commenting on my recent address and for the extract from the editorial taken from the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists. I had not seen this editorial and was very much interested to read it. I appreciate your comment and thoughtfulness in sending it to me.

Sincerely yours,

M. S. Eccles,  
Chairman.

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ET:ra