

Editorial

A better New Year

In a recent article which appeared in *Fidelio* magazine, Lyndon LaRouche wrote, regarding the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, "See in your mind's eye a B-29 bomber aircraft, called the 'Enola Gay,' flying to its hellish appointment, that horror-stricken summer's day in 1945." With these words he recalled the mature realization of many Americans—veterans like himself—of the brutality with which the Second World War came to an end.

As LaRouche pointed out in his article, "How Bertrand Russell Became an Evil Man," not only was the use of atomic weapons unnecessary in order to bring the war to a speedy conclusion, because the Japanese had indicated willingness to negotiate a surrender; but the grouping around Russell intended the use of the bomb as a tool in their drive to impose a world federalist government under British control.

Today, many Americans look back upon the period in which they fought a war to free the world from the evil of Nazism as a high point in their lives, a time when they rose above the daily concerns of private life to make their mark upon history, along with a generation of other, similarly dedicated young men and women. It was a brave but fearsome time. Naturally they and the rest of us then alive, welcomed peace at last.

The Second World War instituted the practice of what was called carpet bombing—the indiscriminate destruction of major population centers. Used by all sides, this was an ugly departure from past norms in which every effort was made to protect the lives of civilians, invalid soldiers, and prisoners of war. The use of atomic weapons, as we all know, was particularly devastating. This is hardly what we would wish to commemorate 50 years after the conclusion of the Second World War? Yet, the U.S. Postal Service was planning to issue a stamp next September, as part of a series of commemorative stamps, which was to have shown bombs exploding over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, with the caption: "Atomic bombs hasten war's end, August 1945."

Reasonably, Japanese Foreign Minister Yohei

Kono has protested this. Nagasaki Mayor Hitoshi Motoshima called issuance of the stamp "heartless," and pointed out that "under the mushroom cloud, hundreds of thousands of non-military people, including children and women, died or were hurt in just one moment."

The announcement by the U.S. Postal Service came at a time when the Smithsonian Institution had backed down, in the face of a campaign led by veterans group and supported in Congress, and revised its plans to give a relatively unbiased account of the ending of the war in the Pacific, which included the views of most historians and military experts that the war was winding to a close before the bombings.

The main exhibit at the Smithsonian (scheduled to open next spring) will feature the renovated front part of the fuselage of the *Enola Gay*. In the exhibit as first planned, the military estimate was cited that there would have been only 30,000 to 50,000 casualties expected in the first 30 days of an invasion of Japan. A vigorous lobbying effort was mounted through veterans' groups and various congressional figures to demand that the exhibit be changed to conform to then-Secretary of War Henry Stimson's big lie that there would have been 1 million casualties. The text accompanying the photographs for the exhibit has been altered in accordance with these demands. It is now planned to read that casualties could have numbered up to 1 million.

The truth is that the Japanese had indicated their desire to begin negotiations to end the war at least six months earlier. At the center of these negotiations were Pope Pius XII and his top delegates, including Monsignor Montini, who later became pope himself.

We are pleased to learn that plans to issue the stamp have been cancelled after intervention by President Clinton. The atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was wrong. It does no honor to the men and women who fought in the Second World War to evade this truth; rather it dishonors the commitment they held to create a world in which the Goebbels principle of the big lie was defeated, once and for all.