

## EDITOR'S NOTE

As we go to press we find that the issues addressed in this month's edition of *Worldview* have been thrust to the very center of national attention. Rhetoric and heated debates abound—about a nuclear weapons “freeze,” the revival of ‘50s-style civil defense programs, U.S. responses to various challenges in Central America—and rational discourse is all but lost in the din.

With mounting sentiment both here and abroad for some form of nuclear freeze, we present here a report by Representative Jonathan Bingham (D-N.Y.), a sponsor of the now well-publicized congressional initiative for a nuclear freeze at current weapons levels. Representative Bingham's proposal, which was simultaneously introduced in the Senate by Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Mark Hatfield (R-Ore.), received a cool response from the administration but clearly struck a sensitive nerve.

So strong is the popular movement for a freeze that Republicans and conservative Democrats have urged the president to acknowledge the importance of the issue in this an election year. Consequently, Senators Henry Jackson (D-Wash.) and John Warner (R-Va.) have introduced an “alternative” freeze proposal designed to give the administration something popular it can support. As the *New York Times* reported on March 31: “The Warner-Jackson proposal is more in keeping with the Administration's approach because it would not block President Reagan's plans to deploy new strategic bombers, missiles and submarines pending a Soviet-American accord on arms reduction.” Indeed, the president prefaced his press conference of that evening with a statement of support for just such a qualified freeze.

U.S. Representative Edward Markey (D-Mass.), another sponsor of the immediate-freeze proposal, described the Warner-Jackson initiative in somewhat sharper terms. Said Markey, the resolution enables those not genuinely committed to arms control to “jump on any resolution that contains the word ‘freeze.’”

With the press for a nuclear buildup has come a new call for a civil defense program to ensure an “increased survival potential.” To this call—and its concomitant budget request of more than \$4 billion—Professor Louis René Beres of Purdue University responds in these pages. In describing the government's program to provide for the calm and orderly evacuation of major metropolitan areas, Professor Beres asks: Has anyone mentioned this to a *New Yorker*?

In the wake of ambiguous election results in El Salvador, Princeton political scientist Paul Sigmund brings us three extraordinary candid conversations from Central America. Among those who discuss developments in and hopes for this region of seemingly endless turmoil are Costa Rica's dynamic former president, “Pepe” Figueres, and Tomás Borge, a member of Nicaragua's ruling Sandinista National Liberation Front. Here again arises the question of what role

human rights considerations will play in determining U.S. foreign policy; and addressing that question in this issue is the Reverend Dr. J. Bryan Hehir of the U.S. Catholic Conference's Department of Justice and Peace.

We invite our readers to join us in discussing these problems, and we look forward to hearing from you in the days ahead.

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