

Rec. 14/5/82
REGISTRY SECTION
MAR 25 1983

May 14, 1982

PO 130 P1 (A/INF)

Ms. Silvana Silva Leahy
Political Affairs Officer
Centre for Disarmament
The United Nations
New York City, New York

Dear Ms. Leahy:

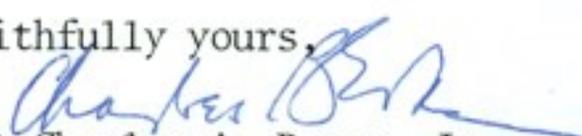
As per our recent telephone conversation, I have enclosed herein a copy of the letter addressed to the President of the United States sent by myself and five other ministers.

It was this letter that was quoted by the Vestry of St. John's Church in their Resolution of April 14, 1982.

We send this in order that it might be included within the Preparatory material for the Second Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted for the study of Disarmament.

Thank you very much. Would you please have your office send me a copy of the Preparatory material. I will want it, if possible, for the archives of St. John's Church.

Faithfully yours,


(The Rev.) Charles A. Bevan, Jr.
RECTOR

MAR 25 1983

**ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

SALISBURY, CONNECTICUT 06068-0391

(203) 435-9290

THE REV. CHARLES A. BEVAN, JR., RECTOR

THE REV. JAMES W. HYDE, RECTOR EMERITUS

February 24, 1982

The President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

Since you took office, you have affirmed your commitment to peace on many occasions. We write to express our support for that professed commitment and to call on you to undertake further labors in the direction of peace. Specifically, we urge you to initiate action to halt the nuclear arms race and to begin the steps that might bring about a reduction of nuclear arsenals, our own and the Soviet Union's.

As Christians, we, of course, recognize that peace - the shalom for which we pray - is more than the absence of violence or the dismantling of missiles and bombs. But we recognize a further truth. Peace is impossible without a reversal of the superpowers' current competition to add ever more powerful weapons and delivery systems to their stockpiles of arms.

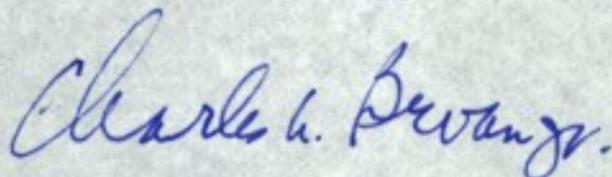
The one we acknowledge as Lord called on all who would follow him to be peacemakers. In faithfulness to that vocation, we must challenge the belief that our nation's security is strengthened by the possession of increasing numbers of nuclear warheads. No one's security can be enhanced by adding to the stores of arms whose very existence makes their use a likelihood. As persons engaged in Christian ministry, we have a special obligation to declare that the use of nuclear weapons, under any circumstances, would be a denial of the Lordship of Jesus Christ, who gave his life that others might live. Countless human beings - our neighbors, whatever their nationality or ideology - will die in any nuclear exchange, even such as might begin with the employment of only "tactical" weapons. The circumstances of nuclear combat - the magnitude of the weaponry and its inability to distinguish between combatants and civilians - make all traditional justifications of "just" warfare inapplicable and irrelevant.

We believe our nation's calling on this issue is clear. The United States government must pursue, with the greatest urgency and good faith, arms limitation negotiations with the government of the Soviet Union. The mandate for such negotiations is unconditional. They may not be made dependent on the Soviet Union's conduct in other areas of international affairs, however reprehensible that conduct might be. Of course, we cannot afford to be naive about Soviet policy or intentions. But neither can we avoid the judgment which the present

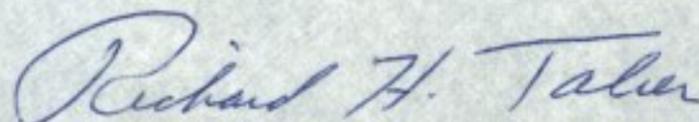
nuclear competition places on us by the awesome danger and awful wrong it threatens. Our Lord told us, "I will warn you whom to fear," and his meaning was unequivocal. Beyond any earthly powers, we are to fear God and his judgment upon our failure to live up to our calling.

We write to you in hope, not despair. There is time and opportunity to take action on behalf of peace, and we look for your leadership in furthering that cause.

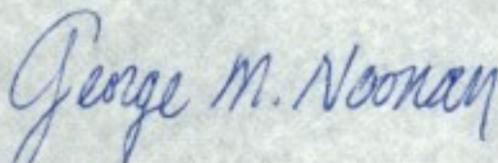
Sincerely yours,



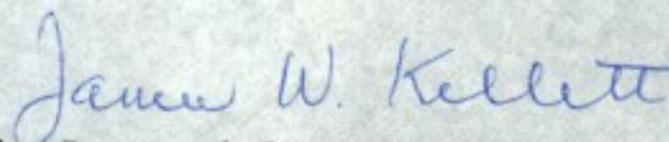
The Reverend Charles A. Bevan, Jr.
Rector, St. John's Episcopal Church
Salisbury, Connecticut 06068



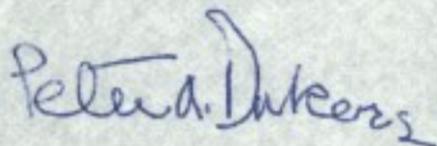
The Reverend Richard H. Taber
Pastor, Salisbury Congregational Church
Salisbury, Connecticut 06068



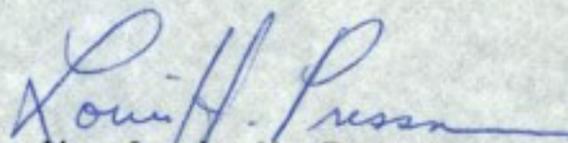
Mr. George M. Noonan
Office of Youth Ministry (Roman Catholic)
West Cornwall, Connecticut 06796



The Reverend James W. Kellett
Chaplain, Salisbury School
Salisbury, Connecticut 06068



The Reverend Peter A. Dakers
Pastor, North Canaan Congregational Church
North Canaan, Connecticut 06018



Mr. Louis H. Pressman
Chaplain, The Hotchkiss School
Lakeville, Connecticut 06039

(titles and addresses are given for identification purposes)