

## PRIORITIES FOR PEACE - 1969

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The ringing words, “We came in peace for all mankind,” are inscribed on the plaque left on the moon by Astronauts Neil A. Armstrong, Michael Collins and Edwin E. Aldrin, Jr. It is a fortunate reality that contemporary man and his technology—contributed to by the geniuses of many countries—make it possible to achieve the exploration of the universe. But, in order for peace for all mankind to become a literal fact and for all men, whether in the United States or elsewhere, to enjoy the fruits of an advancing society, it is of prime importance for the developed nations and especially the United States to re-order national priorities.

The greatest challenge today to the future of man, even beyond the excitement of space, is to control and reverse the escalation of armaments and the nuclear arms race which threatens to reach the point of no return. We applaud the agreements to extend the original 18 nation Disarmament Committee of the United Nations to a possible membership of 26 nations, even as we express the deep hope that the wisdom of the political and scientific leadership of the world, as well as the aspirations and prayers of all people, will lead to further control and reduction in armaments, including the elimination of chemical and biologic weaponry.

Mindful that the ordering of national priorities may be a reflection of a people’s religious conscience and sensitivities, we are especially aware of the debate in the United States on the effectiveness and the vast costs of armaments such as the ABM, the anti-ballistic missile system, or MIRV, the multiple independent re-entry vehicle. The resolution of urgent domestic issues requires rethinking and restructuring of goals and primary objectives. Therefore, the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods in Convention assembled in Miami Beach, Florida, in October, 1969:

1. Reaffirms the prior decisions which it has taken throughout many decades committing itself to peaceful international cooperation; support of the United Nations; arms limitation and control; containment, de-escalation, new initiatives if necessary and prompt termination by all parties of the war in Vietnam; the development of economic and technical resources for the achievement of human welfare.
2. Appeals to all peoples, and particularly to the Congress of the United States, to reduce military expenditures so that more funds can be made promptly available for the fulfillment of essential human needs, both at home and abroad.
3. Urges a cessation in the development and deployment of war—deadlier weapons and systems, whether these be chemical or biological or such as the ABM or MIRV, which escalate the international arms race and accelerate the dangers to mankind. We urgently ask the United States to invite the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to join in a moratorium on the production of both offensive and defensive weapons systems pending a good faith effort by both nations to negotiate effective and realistic arms control agreements to which, hopefully—through the United Nations—other powers will adhere. Thus, there shall be reduced for all men the crushing burden and cataclysmic dangers of a continuing arms race.
4. Applauds the successful negotiations of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968 and its ratification by the U.S. Senate. We look forward, hopefully, to its ratification by those signatory nations which have not yet acted upon it and earnestly hope that it will receive early acceptance by all the nations of the world.

Furthermore, it is the confirmed view of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods that the resources of affluent nations should be used on many fronts simultaneously, whether these be exploration of space or the

amelioration of the grievous ills of our society, rather than disproportionately upon provocative military armaments. Above and beyond the funds needed for limited, intelligently planned defense, monies are urgently required for human necessities. While the following subjects will in large measure be applicable to the United States, they are also of concern in varying degrees in other nations as well:

**Housing**—In the United States, the commitment to volume production of lower-income housing contained in the 1968 Housing and Urban Development Act will not be realized unless full funding is appropriated. The congested, decadent conditions of urban slum areas breed disease and crime. Middle-income families, unable to find housing at prices they can afford to pay, move from urban areas. They leave behind them inner cities inhabited almost entirely by the disadvantaged, ringed by a more prosperous, middle-class, generally white suburbia, thereby establishing conditions which often lead to added racial frustrations and tensions.

**Education**—Neither higher education nor elementary and secondary education has had adequate funding; appropriations have often fallen short even of the amounts authorized. Unless more Federal and State money is added to local funds for schools, equipment, special studies, remedial programs, teachers' training and salaries, as well as student aid, education in the United States cannot meet the needs of these closing decades of the 20th century, in which the under-educated are irreparably handicapped.

**Welfare Reform**—The Welfare System in the United States, as now constituted, is costly, inequitable, cumbersome and often destructive of human dignity. It saps local treasuries; penalizes job seekers when a too high amount is deducted from every welfare check for money earned in the job market; tends to disrupt families because many states still refuse payments if unemployed fathers are in the household, thus encouraging husbands to leave home in order to qualify their wives and children for benefits; permits too wide disparities between the payments made by rural and industrial states. We call upon our members to study with objectivity the many proposals for welfare reform, whether from the President's Commission or other sources, including a possible maintenance of adequate income for essentials so that no man, woman or child shall live in degradation in the midst of an affluent society.

**Cooperation**—Even persons of good will and of relative security suffer greatly today from a sense of frustration as they seek to face the challenges and complexities of contemporary society. It is essential for all men and women, of whatever color, race, creed or economic condition to continue with unyielding resolve their efforts to cooperate one with another in meeting and overcoming the grave issues which confront us. A nation and a mankind that can place men upon the moon can likewise resolve the ills of their civilization. Therefore, Sisterhood women—wherever they reside—shall continue their efforts with their neighbors and in active programs, to build the better world all men seek.

Finally, The National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods calls upon its affiliated groups and District Federations, as well as individual members, to study these grave issues of priorities for peace including the problems of the population explosion—with open mindedness and, as citizens, to make their convictions known to Governmental authorities and to their legislators. Thus shall we, both organizationally and individually, make our contribution—however great the complexities—toward a world of orderly development for all men.