We are here in remembrance of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We are here in recognition that the future of humankind is in peril. We are here in our belief that the "national security" state thinking - which has its latests manifestation in the planned deployment of Euromissles - is intolerable. And we are here to assert that our voices are to be heard. And there's the rub.

For 38 years the national security state has framed the nuclear issue with the acquiescence of that great engine of a free society, a press protected by the First Ammendment. The consequence has been a passive electorate, a despairing electorate, and an uninformed electorate, leaving to the self-proclaimed elite of a national security state the management of this inhuman collosus - the nuclear issue - which is leading us to

aster beyond history.'

On Tuesday, August 7, 1945 for the first time the New York Times headlined "First Atomic Bomb Dropped on Japan." Three months before the bomb was dropped the science reporter of the Times had been selected by the Manhattan Project to write press releases on the bomb.

In those early weeks after the bombing two distinct viewpoints or sensibilities were expressed. One, basically statist in orientation, accepted the White House and War Department leadership, and dominated the paper. Consequently, reports of radiation sickness from Hiroshima and Nagasaki were repeatedly dismissed in the Times on the basis of official assurances that they were "Japanese propaganda."

The second viewpoint in its recourse to moral authority, in its respect for individual opinion, was basically a civil voice.

ample, on August 8th, the Times reported that an English minister telegraphed the President that the Bomb's "unparalleled terrorism disgraces the United Nations." So, for a few weeks the paper was awash with British Bishops, worried scientists, and earnest educators addressing their conscience and the future of the world.

However, by September 15th, the national security problem of keeping "the secret" and controlling its use had moved to center stage. Truman announced the creation of the Atomic Energy Commission. Coupled with this announcement was an account by the same reporter who had been detached for service to the War Department. "One stands before" nuclear power, he said, "as though beholding . . . a vision . . . Michelangelo might have had of a world yet to be, as indescribible as the Grand Canyon,

eethoven's Ninth Symphony."

The brief moment after the attack on Japan when the Times had stood open to shock, concern and doubt was past. Quandries and dilemmas had been put aside.

One might assume that in the 38 years of nuclear weapons buildup since Hiroshima, when our nuclear capacity has increased 6000-fold, that U.S. press coverage would have evolved into being something more than an appendage to the national security state. But we see today that the meager coverage of the freeze referenda and the American Catholic Bishops' pastoral letter on peace are once again framed by statist assumptions.

"The Bishop's letter represents an eruption of inspired moral discourse in the midst of American politics. It subordinates patriotism to universalism, state soverignty to moral order, and calls for a national debate of several years duration on

ost fundamental assumptions of American foreign and strategic policy. The letter calls in fact for national repentance over the atomic bombing of Japan. Yet it was reported in the terms the press has most clearly mastered: PRESIDENT'S NUCLEAR HAWKS VS. THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS, CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFRONT REAGAN ON NUCLEAR ISSUES.

No wonder the names of Greenham Common in the United Kingdom, Comiso in Sicily, and Senneca Falls in upstate New York are not household words. Here are women on the front line in opposition to the escalating arms race. Here is an outpouring of public protest against the planned Euromissle deployment. Here is the outcry for survival voiced against the steady and unyielding movement toward mutually assurred destruction. And the response of the "free" press has been distortion and silence.

Nowhere has this been more evident to me than in the distorted and non-reporting of events in Comiso, Sicily where 112 Cruise missles are scheduled for installation in December, 1983.

I visited Comiso in November and again in March. In three months I witnessed its transformation from a serene traditional community into a boomtown whose landscape is pockmarked with cranes, condominiums, high rises and swimming pools.

On my second visit, on March 8th, International Women's Day, I marched with American churchwomen Rosemary Lynch and Elizabeth Scott in a peaceful procession of several thousand women through the winding streets of Comiso. The next morning we arrived at the entrance of the proposed missle base where fifteen women from the nearby Peace Camp sat at the gate, their arms locked together.

Without warning, and without provocation, the women were attacked by plainclothes and state police. As she tried to photograph the violent encounter, Rosemary's camera was jerked from her neck.

I turned to admonish an officer twisting a woman's arm - it was too late. Her arm was broken. The assault continued. Grabbing whatever they could - arms, legs, clothes, hair - the police dragged the women 25 feet down the road.

We assurred them we would do whatever we could to convey information of their experience when we returned to Rome and the U.S. Upon our return to Rome, we wrote the U.S. Ambassador protesting the treatment. There was no response. We held a press conference, but there was only minimal coverage in Italy, and none in the U.S. Two days later the women from the Peace Camp were arrested and deported.

30,000 people demonstrated in Comiso against deployment in October, 1981 and another 100,000 as preparations to clear the base began in April. In June a year ago one million Sicilians - including 80% of the voters of Comiso - signed a petition of protest sent to the Italian capital.

Yet the New York Times' assesment of the situation is epitomized by their recent headline: MISSLES SET OFF MILD DEBATE IN SICILY. Tens of thousands have demonstrated. Women have been mauled, arrested, and deported. And the Times reports that, "In Italy, protest has been perfunctory and seems devoid of a strong base of popular support or even interest."

Where is there even mention in our "free" press of how democracy has been overidden in the struggle to stop deployment? The local representatives of the people of Comiso were never even consulted about the proposed base. This is obviously

another non-event the national security elite is gratified to see non-reported, just as they do not wish us to know that the coming installation will violate the Paris Peace Treaty of 1947 which explicity forbids the use of Sicily for any military purpose.

Nor does the self-proclaimed elite wish the American public to know about the lies that have been told to the people of Comiso. They were told that the new base would bring a boom to their economy and an end to unemployment. But after eight months of work, only 60 workers of the 5000 without jobs have been employed at the base. And not one of the contracts recently awarded has been to local or Sicilian firms, as promised.

It is not the populace, but the mafia that stands to profit from the lucrative construction contracts being awarded through ghost companies and kickbacks. Not the people, but organized crime will grow rich from the drugs and prostitution

are ready to supply the 3000 to 5000 personnel expected. As with countless other events in Comiso, this scandalous situation has gone unreported by the statist-oriented American press.

Whatever the widely publicized official verbage about deterring a Soviet attack, the fact is that these missles' range is only 1500 miles. They are incapable of reaching either Moscow or Lenningrad. They are, however, capable of reaching two unpublicized targets -- Libya and the Middle East. In effect, Sicily is being transformed into a nuclear offensive launching pad.

There are those who will charge us here today with bringing emotion to the issue of nuclear war. The question is, what kind of emotional reaction is appropriate on August 7, 1983?

A sense of false pride in our unequivocable victory over Japan or a sense of true repentance over our incomprehensible

struction of its people? An irrational macho belief that if we are not superior, we are inferior, or a common sense philosophy of nurturance which takes as its priority the preservation of life on this planet? A fervent and blind faith in technology or a determined and visionary opposition to the pending destruction of humanity?

It is not emotion, but a question of values which divides us. The press will continue to give full covereage to the quiet and calloused calculations of a few men in Washington, while the voices of millions, proclaiming the value of life itself, will continue to go unacknowledged, unreported, and thus unheard and unknown to those who would join us.

But we will continue to demand that our voice be heard - the voice of repentance, the voice of conscience, the voice of a true moral majority.

In less than six months, the Euromissles will be deployed. Unless the press breaks a precedent of 38 years to acknowledge and report the voices expressed here and elsewhere today, there may be no headline of tomorrow.