

CAMBRIDGE CONGRESS STATEMENT

**IPPNW 2nd WORLD CONGRESS, CAMBRIDGE, UNITED KINGDOM
1982**

Dear Colleagues:

The multiplying stockpiles of nuclear weapons of ever increasing destructiveness threaten mankind with an unimaginable catastrophe. The peoples of the world are being held hostage by the accelerating arms race. A war without winners endangers not only human survival but the fragile ecology of the planet.

Since our First Congress in Airlie, Virginia, in March 1981, public apprehension about the danger of nuclear war has been increasing, as witnessed by a number of opinion polls in the United States, Great Britain and elsewhere. At the same time several other professional groups have voiced their strong opposition to the continued escalation of the existing nuclear arsenals and to the possible spread of these weapons to other countries. The conclusions reached at the First Congress, which received wide publicity in the USA and the USSR, and to a lesser extent in Europe, may have contributed to this awareness.

At this Second Congress of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, 196 physicians, other experts and observers from 31 countries took part in discussions lasting four days. The plenary session on the first day was attended by some 500 persons. The main theme of this Congress was to consider from the point of view of physicians the consequences of nuclear war in Europe. For it is on this continent that opposing forces of East and West confront one another with nuclear weapons already in position and the threat that many more may soon be deployed. The participants, who included physicians and medical scientists from most of the countries of Europe on both sides of the East-West border, reached unanimous conclusions about the threat to civilization in Europe, and indeed to civilized life on this planet, which is posed by nuclear war.

We gathered at Cambridge because we do not accept the inevitability of nuclear conflict. We do not believe that differences between political systems can be resolved, or indeed that any social, political or ideological objectives can be achieved by the use of nuclear weapons. We share the hope and belief that human beings can control what they have created. We reject the utilization of technology for nuclear weapons rather than for improving the quality of life.

Our aim is to alert physicians throughout the world to this major peril to the public health.

Our hope is that physicians will help to educate their communities, for only an aroused and informed public opinion can change the course of events.

Jack Fielding, M.D.
Chairman, Cambridge Conference Organising Committee

Bernard Lown, M.D.
President, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War