

## Book Review

REINER BRAUN and  
DAVID KRIEGER (EDITORS)

**Einstein—peace now! Visions and ideas**

Wiley-VCH, 2005,  
305 pp; price 29.90 euro  
ISBN 3-527-40604-2 (hardcover)

This is a compilation of essays by a selection of leading scientists, journalists and politicians, concerning Einstein's legacy in the fields of nuclear weapons, politics and peace. It will interest anyone concerned about the world and its future. The publication marks the centenary of Einstein's most famous scientific publications and the fiftieth anniversary of both his death and the signing of the Russell–Einstein Manifesto warning of the need to avoid nuclear war. Einstein was a pacifist and one of the few in the German intellectual and cultural elite to sign the 1914 'Appeal to Europeans' opposing the First World War. Ironically in 1939 and 1940 he signed letters to Roosevelt urging the development of nuclear weapons. In this book is an interesting interview with Manhattan Project Physicist Hans Bethe, who stated that Wigner and Szilard wrote the famous letter and got Einstein to sign it to attract Roosevelt's attention. Einstein lived to regret the development of nuclear

weapons and went on to sign the manifesto written largely by Bertram Russell in 1955.

The five major sections of compilation are 'Remembering Einstein', 'Paths to Nuclear Weapon Free World', 'Striving for Peace', 'Finding Peace in the Middle East' and 'The Responsibility of Scientists'. There is a brief opening section with an introductory essay by Mikhail Gorbachev and an appendix that includes the texts of the 'Appeal to Europeans' and the Russell–Einstein Manifesto. Other relevant documents within the appendix includes the objection to a preventive attack on Iraq in the absence of wide international support, signed by 41 American Nobel laureates in science and economics believing that such an attack would ultimately hurt the security and standing of the USA. The contributors are all serious and humane people who demand respect. No essay is dull or unworthy of inclusion, but inevitably some are more interesting than others.

The 'Peace Dividend' from the end of the Cold War has not materialized and the world is becoming increasingly at risk of war and nuclear confrontations, but this book is not uniformly gloomy. Jody Williams looks at the role of grassroots public opinion and Non-government Organisations in the Ottawa Process,

which led to the Mine Ban Treaty. She notes the need to avoid a requirement for consensus and the value of a two-thirds majority being needed to change the text in blocking wrecking amendments. Ex-president Sanchez of Costa Rica, outlining the movement against the arms trade, notes that military expenditure in 2004 was 956 billion dollars; 10% of this would fully fund the Millenium Development Goals according to the World Bank. Ana-Maria Cetto and her husband describe the history of the Treaty of Tlatleco (1967) setting up a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in Latin America and the eventual agreement of all the Nuclear States (bar the USA) not to use nuclear weapons against them.

The book is well produced and, with the breadth of experience of the contributors, contains much that will not be familiar to most readers. A few strange transliterations do not detract. It deserves a place in all libraries and on personal bookshelves, and to would be a commendable present to thoughtful friends.

**Frank Dewhurst**

De Montfort University, Leicester, UK

DOI:10.1002/aoc.1162