

PIE FROM THE SKY

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Since we have every reason to expect a sudden rain of death from the sky sometime in the next few years, as a result of a happy combination of the science of atomics and the art of rocketry, it behooves the Pollyanna Philosopher to add up the advantages to be derived from the blasting of your apartment, row house, or suburban cottage.

It ain't all bad, chum. While you are squatting in front of your cave, trying to roast a rabbit with one hand while scratching your lice-infested hide with the other, there will be many cheerful things to think about, the assets of destruction, rather than torturing your mind with thoughts of the good old, easy days of taxis and tabloids and Charlie's Bar Grill.

There are so many, many things in this so-termed civilization of ours which would be mightily improved by a once over lightly of the Hiroshima treatment. There is that dame upstairs, for instance, the one with the square bowling ball. Never again would she take it out for practice right over your bed at three in the morning. Isn't that some consolation?

No more soap operas. No more six minutes of good old Mom facing things bravely, interspersed with eight minutes of insistent, syrupy plugging for commercial junk you don't want and would be better off without. Never again will you have to wait breathlessly for "same time, same station" to find out what

beautiful Mamie Jukes, that priceless moron, does about her nameless babe. She will be gone, along with the literary prostitute who brought her into being.

No more alarm clocks. No more alarm clocks! No more of the frenzied keeping of schedules, appointments, and deadlines that they imply. You won't have to gulp your coffee to run for the 8:19 commuters' special, nor keep your eye on the clock while you lunch. A few of the handy little plutonium pills dropped from the sky will end the senseless process of running for the bus to go to work to make the money to buy the food to get the strength to run for the bus. You will swap the pressure of minutes for the slow tide of eternity.

But best of all, you will be freed of the plague of the alarm that yanks you from the precious nirvana of sleep and sets you on your weary feet, with every nerve screaming protest. If you are snapped suddenly out of sleep in the Atomic Stone Age, it will be a mountain lion, a wolf, a man, or some other carnivore, not a mechanical monstrosity.

Westbrook Pegler will no longer exhibit to you his latest hate, nor will Lolly Parsons stuff you with her current girlish enthusiasm. (If your pet dislikes among the columnists are not these two, fill in names to suit yourself; none of them will bother you after the fission treatment.)

In fact, all the impact of world-wide troubles will fade away. Divorces, murders, and troubles in China will no longer smite from headline and radio. Your only worries will be your own worries.

No more John L. Lewis.

No more jurisdictional strikes.

No more "Hate-Roosevelt" clubs.

No more "Let's-Hate-Eleanor,-Too" clubs.

No more Pettrillo .

No more damn fools who honk right behind your car while the lights are changing. I'll buy this one at a black market price right now.

No more Gerald L. K. Smith... and, conversely, no more people who think that the persecution of their particular minority is the only evil in the entire world worth talking about, or working to correct.

No more phony "days." You won't have to buy a red carnation to show that Mom is alive nor a white one to show that she's not. (It's even money that you will have lost track of her in the debacle and not know whether she is alive or dead.) No more "Boy's Day" in our city governments with pre-adolescent little stinkers handing out fines and puritanical speeches to tired street walkers while the elected judge smiles blandly for the photographers. No more "Eat More Citrus Fruit" or "Eat More Chocolate Candy" or "Read More Comic Books" weeks thought up by the advertising agents of industries.

While we are on the subject of phony buildups, let's give a cheer for the elimination of debutantes with press agents, for the blotting out of "cafe" society, for the consignment to oblivion of the whole notion of the "coming-out" party. The resumption of the coming out party in the United States, with its attendant, incredibly callous, waste, at the very time that Europe starves, is a scandal to the jay birds. A few atom bombs would be no more than healthy fumigation of this imbecilic evil.

No more toothsome mammals built up by synthetic publicity into movie "stars" before they have played a part in a picture. This is probably a relatively harmless piece of idiocy in our whipped-cream culture, but the end of it, via A-bombs, may stop Sarah Bernhardt from spinning in her grave.

No more over-fed, under-worked, rapacious female tyrants. I won't say "mothers-in-law"; your mother-in-law may be a pretty good Joe. If not, you may have a chance to cut her up for steak.

There is actually nothing to prevent American women from being able, adult, useful citizens, and many of them are. But our society is so rigged that a

worthless female can make a racket of it—but not after a brisk one-two with uranium! The parasites will starve when that day comes, from the cheerful idiots of the Helen Hokinson cartoons to the female dinosaurs who use sacrosanct sex as a club to bullyrag, blackmail, and dominate every man they can reach.

The parasite males will die out, too. Yes, pal, if you can manage to zig while the atomic rockets zag you will find society much changed and in many respects improved.

There are a lot of other minor advantages you should get firmly in mind now, lest you fall prey to a fatal nostalgia after this great, fantastic, incredible, somewhat glorious and very fragile technological culture crashes about your ears. Subway smell, for example. The guy who coughs on the back of your neck in the theater. Men who bawl out waitresses. The woman who crowds in ahead of you at the

counter. The person who asks how much you paid for it. The preacher with the unctuous voice and the cash register heart. The millionairess who wills her money to found a home for orphan guppies. The lunkhead who dials a wrong number (your number) in the middle of the night and then is sore at you for not being the party he wanted. The sportsman who turns his radio up loud so that he can boo the Dodgers while out in his garden. The Dodgers. People who don't curb their dogs. People who spit on sidewalks. People who censor plays and suppress books. Breach-of-promise suits. People who stare at wounded veterans.

A blinding flash, a pillar of radioactive dust, and all this will be gone.

I don't mean to suggest that it will all be fun. Keeping alive after our cities have been smashed and our government disintegrated will be a grim business at best, as the survivors in central Europe could tell you. In spite of the endless list that could be made of the

things we are better off without I don't think it will be very much fun to scabble around in the woods for a bite to eat. For that reason I am thinking of liquidating, in advance, the next character who says to me, "Well, what difference does it make if we are atom bombed — you gotta die sometime!"

I shall shoot him dead, blow through the barrel, and say, "You asked for it, chum."

Conceding that we will all die some day, is that a reason why I should let this grinning ape drag me along toward disaster just because he will take no thought of tomorrow?

Since there are so many of him the chances of us, as a nation, being able to avert disaster are not good. Perhaps some of us could form an association to live through World War III. Call it the League for the Preservation of the Human Race, or the Doom's Day Men, or something like that. Restrict the membership to survivor types, sound in tooth and wind, trained in useful trades or science, reasonably high I.Q.'s and proved fertility. Then set up two or three colonies remote from cities and other military targets.

It might work.

Maybe I will start it myself if I can find an angel to put up the dough for the original promotion. That should get me in as an ex-officio member, I hope. I have looked over my own qualifications and I don't seem to measure up to the standards.

My ancestors got into America by a similar dodge. They got here early, when the immigration restrictions were pretty lax. Maybe I can repeat.

I am sure I shall not resign myself to death simply because Joe Chucklehead points out that atomization is quick and easy. Even if that were good I would not like it. Furthermore, it is not true. Death comes fast at the center of the blast; around the edges is a big area of the fatal burn and the slow death, with plenty of time to reconsider the disadvantages of chucklehead-

ness in the Atomic Age, before your flesh sloughs off and you give up the ghost. No, thank you, I plan to disperse myself to the country.

Of course, if you are so soft that you like innerspring mattresses and clean water and regular meals, despite the numerous advantages of blowing us off the map, but are not too soft to try to do something to avoid the coming debacle, there is something you can do about it, other than forming Survival Leagues or cultivating an attitude of philosophical resignation.

If you really want to hang on to the advantages of our slightly wacky pseudo-civilization, there is just one way to do it, according to the scientists who know the most about the new techniques of war—and that is to form a sovereign world authority to prevent the Atomic War.

Run, do not walk, to the nearest Western Union, and telegraph your congressman to get off the dime and get on with the difficult business of forming an honest-to-goodness world union, with no jokers about Big Five vetoes or national armaments...to get on with it promptly, while there is still time, before Washington, D.C., is reduced to radioactive dust—and he with it, poor devil!