NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND GENOCIDE NEWSLETTER # 8, April 11, 2011, OMNI Building a Culture of PEACE, Dick Bennett, Editor for Special Issues. (See #1, June 14, 2007; #2, January 8, 2008; #3 May 16, 2008; #4 June 10; 2009, #5 July 23, 2009, ; #6 Sept. 21, 2009; #7 August 29, 2010.) These eight newsletters provide a compendium of information for understanding the history of nuclear weapons as a foundation for abolishing them. Go to: www.omnicenter.org, at bottom of home page click on periodicals. This dire subject deserves a special newsletter editor. Contact Gladys or Dick.

OMNI IN CONTACT WITH THE INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR WEAPONS ABOLITION MOVEMENT

CONTENTS of #7
August 29, International Day Against Nuclear Tests
Petition to Senators to Support the New START Treaty
New Film for Disarmament: Countdown to Zero
Nuclear Weapons Free Zones and Iran
Bush to Obama, Nuclear Weapons Abolition Movement: Larry Wittner
New Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and Nuclear Posture Review
New START Contact Senators
Critique: Jonathan Schell
Abolition, new film “Nuclear Tipping Point”
Actions
Direct Action Protests Past and Present

CONTENTS OF #8
Obama's Prague Speech
Obama's Promises and Nuclear Modernization
Preparation for Nuclear War and Resistance
Resistance: Disarm Now Plough Shares
Abolition of Nuclear Weapons
US Nuclear Contradictions
Books and Articles
OMNI Opposition to Nuclear Weapons

President Obama’s landmark Prague speech!

Susan Shaer of WAND to jbennet
news@wand.org

Two years ago, President Obama delivered a landmark speech in Prague, Czech Republic. The Prague Agenda, delivered on April 5, 2009 outlined the steps needed to move toward a safer world, one without nuclear weapons.

“So today, I state clearly and with conviction America’s commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons.”
In this important speech, the President made specific commitments to achieve the goals of this agenda.

“To reduce our warheads and stockpiles, we will negotiate a new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty with the Russians this year. President Medvedev and I began this process in London, and will seek a new agreement by the end of this year that is legally binding and sufficiently bold.

“To achieve a global ban on nuclear testing, my administration will immediately and aggressively pursue U.S. ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. After more than five decades of talks, it is time for the testing of nuclear weapons to finally be banned.”

Peace and security groups welcomed President Obama’s Prague speech as a signal of progress. Since then, these groups have been working diligently to ensure that the steps of the Prague Agenda can be realized. At WAND we have have used this momentum to move the Prague Agenda forward.

We have had significant victories. On December 23, 2010 The New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) was ratified by the U.S. Senate. This treaty limits the U.S. and Russia to no more than 1,550 deployed strategic warheads and 800 deployed and non-deployed delivery vehicles. The treaty also includes a streamlined and updated system of verification provisions to ensure each side that the other is complying with the treaty stipulations. Ratification followed a year of intense negotiations and heated debate on the Senate Floor.

There is still work to do. The battle for the CTBT has only just begun. Congress is currently making sweeping budget cuts that may affect funding for nuclear non proliferation programs. Proposed spending cuts to the National Nuclear Security Administration for the remainder of this budget year would have a significant impact on the agency's nuclear stockpile and nonproliferation operation, jeopardizing the President's commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons....

Continue to promote a safer world by joining in our April 5th campaign for the Campaign for a Nuclear Weapons Free World.
You help us build a better future!

“Human destiny will be what we make of it. And here in Prague, let us honor our past by reaching for a better future. Let us bridge our divisions, build upon our hopes, accept our responsibility to leave this world more prosperous and more peaceful than we found it. Together we can do it.”

691 Massachusetts Ave. | Arlington, MA 02476 US

Cost and Goals at Center of Arms Treaty Debate  By William J. Broad, The New York Times
20 November 10
The standoff this week over ratification of a new arms control treaty centers on a simple phrase:
nuclear modernization. Those two words conceal a little known, enormously ambitious plan to do nothing less than rebuild the nations atomic complex for the 21st century.

At stake in the stalled negotiations between the White House and Senate Republicans is not only how much money to spend on the project but, more philosophically, what purpose should be served by building new complexes that can pump out more nuclear arms than ever.

In seeking Senate support for the so-called New Start treaty with Russia, the White House agreed to spend $85 billion over the next decade upgrading the nuclear weapons system, only to find itself stymied by resistance from unsatisfied Republicans.

The deal-making puts President Obama in the paradoxical position of investing vast sums in nuclear weapons even as he promises to put the world on a path to eliminating them.

On Dec. 16, 2010, The New York Times published an astonishing article by W. J. Broad, “US Rethinks Strategy for the Unthinkable.” The US government is planning to train the population once again in air raid drills for civil defense. Think of this. After half a century of opposition to the psychological and physical preparation for nuclear war (the only answer to nuclear war is prevention by abolition and preparing for peace), in a stroke our government resumes it. The Catholic Worker was a leader in the opposition and published many articles during the 1950s. These have been compiled into a booklet by Felton Davis and are free for the asking to DavisFelton3@Yahoo.com. Felton Davis, “CW Role in Nuke Resistance,” The Catholic Worker (Jan.-Feb. 2011).

March 29, 2011
Disarm Now Plowshares sentenced - 6 to 15 months, plus one year supervised release From Ground Zero

The Disarm Now Plowshares activists who entered U.S. Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor to symbolically disarm the nuclear weapons stored there were sentenced today at the Tacoma Federal Courthouse, receiving sentences of 6 months to 15 months confinement, plus one year supervised release. About two hundred fifty people gathered at the courthouse to support the Plowshares activists with their presence, song, and prayer. After the sentencing, they sang peace songs and processed out as a group, celebrating the beacon of hope the five activists have been for their community.

Roman Catholic Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, and others testified on behalf of the defendants. Bishop Gumbleton, retired bishop of Detroit and founding president of the peace group Pax Christi, testified that the Catholic Church has spoken out very strongly against nuclear weapons, saying that no use of nuclear weapons can be justified morally. “We must abolish these weapons before the earth is destroyed.” Ramsey Clark, U.S. Attorney General under President Lyndon B. Johnson, testified that never in his life has he encountered such unselfish people as those who participate in the
Plowshares tradition of direct action against nuclear weapons. Regarding their decision to live a life of civil resistance, he said, “Their consciences tell them they have to do it. God will bless them for it and the courts of the United States should too.”

Speaking as part of the Disarm Now Plowshares legal team, Anabel Dwyer and Bill Quigley laid out the broader legal picture of the case. “The problem is that nuclear weapons and the rule of law can’t exist side by side,” Dwyer said. “The other problem is, we cannot disarm nuclear weapons unless through the rule of law. We are in a conundrum here.” Quigley submitted that lawyers are obligated to understand difference between law and justice and to narrow that gap.” He encouraged the judge to look back one hundred years and consider how many of the laws of that time were “legal but manifestly unjust.” Dwyer is a Michigan attorney and Board Member of The Lawyers’ Committee on Nuclear Policy (LCNP), and an expert in humanitarian law and nuclear weapons. Quigley is the Legal Director for the Center for Constitutional Rights in New York and Professor at Loyola New Orleans.

Each of the five co-defendants, Bill “Bix” Bichsel, SJ, Susan Crane, Lynne Greenwald, Steve Kelly, SJ, and Anne Montgomery, RSCJ, read statements in court. They focused on the personal responsibility they feel to disarm nuclear weapons, and their desire to prevent pain, suffering, and death for “those deprived by our wars and military budget of a human way of life.”

Character witnesses spoke to the defendants’ solidarity with Native people, children, working people, and the wider Tacoma community. Rosella Apel, age 11, said in her character witness for Steve Kelly, “I have a clear image that when I grow up I’m going to do the exact same thing that these five have.”

Crane and Kelly have each been sentenced to 15 months prison and one year supervised release. Greenwald has been sentenced to six months prison, one year supervised release, and 60 hrs community service. Bichsel has been sentenced to three months prison, six months electronic home monitoring, and one year supervised release. Montgomery has been sentenced to two months prison, four months electronic home monitoring, and one year supervised release. All have court costs and restitution as well.

Roger Hunko, standby counsel for the Plowshares activists, disagreed with the outcome of the trial but expressed his respect for Judge Settle as a fair man. Dwyer was also impressed by the judge’s civility and his thoughtful attention to the case, but she too disagrees with the judge’s decision. “Every citizen has the right to ensure nonviolent complete nuclear disarmament. Trident is grotesquely illegal and criminal, and Disarm Now Plowshares should not be in prison for pointing that out.”

For more information about all sentencing-related events please see the Disarm Now Plowshares Website at [disarmnowplowshares.wordpress.com](http://disarmnowplowshares.wordpress.com).

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A note recently came to the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation that said: “Are you folks out of your minds? The nuclear genie is out of the bottle and isn’t going back in. Shortly even non-state actors will have nukes! Quit wasting your time on this silly dream.” The author of the note, to his credit, signed his name, and also indicated that he is a retired U.S. Air Force colonel.

The colonel poses a critical question: Are we out of our minds to believe that change is possible and that humans might find a way to cooperate to eliminate the existential threat that nuclear weapons pose to humanity (and other forms of life)? Perhaps we are, but it seems to me that the future of civilization, the human species and other complex forms of life are worth the effort. The Nuclear Age is distinct from the periods that preceded it in having the capacity to end most complex life, including human life, on the planet. Fighting for the elimination of nuclear weapons is also the fight for human survival and for the rights of future generations. I’ve always believed that we have a choice: nuclear weapons or a human future. Along with the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, I believe it is unlikely that both are possible.

Next, the colonel asserts that “[t]he nuclear genie is out of the bottle and isn’t going back in.” I suppose this means that the knowledge of how to create nuclear weapons exists and cannot be erased. Granted, the knowledge now exists. The challenge is whether countries will choose to eliminate nuclear weapons in their common interest, or whether they will be paralyzed by fear into failing to try. Knowledge alone is not sufficient to make nuclear weapons. Scientific and engineering skills are also needed, as are nuclear materials. There may not be a foolproof method
to assure the elimination of nuclear weapons, but there is also no foolproof method to assure that existing nuclear weapons will not be used in a nuclear war that could kill billions of people and destroy civilization.

The question is: which is a safer path for humanity? On the one hand, to seek the phased, verifiable and irreversible elimination of nuclear weapons and effective international safeguards on nuclear materials; or, on the other hand, to continue the status quo of having the world divided into a small but increasing number of nuclear “haves” and a far larger number of nuclear “have-nots”? I would place my bet on working for the elimination of the weapons, the same path chosen by Albert Einstein, Bertrand Russell and Ronald Reagan. According to his wife, Nancy, President Reagan “had many hopes for the future, and none were more important to America and to mankind than the effort to create a world free of nuclear weapons.”

The colonel seems to like the odds of continuing with the status quo, even though he recognizes that “[s]hortly even non-state actors will have nukes!” This is most likely true and it poses an enormous problem for the US and other nuclear armed countries, if we fail to bring nuclear weapons and the materials to make them under strict and effective international control. All of the thousands of nuclear weapons in the US arsenal can’t deter a terrorist organization in possession of a single nuclear weapon. You can’t credibly threaten retaliation against an organization or individuals that you can’t even locate.

“Quit wasting your time,” the colonel admonishes, “on this silly dream.” But all dreams may seem silly before they are realized. Mohandas Gandhi had a dream of an independent India. It must have seemed silly to Winston Churchill and other British leaders at the time. Martin Luther King, Jr. had a dream of racial equality. Perhaps it seemed silly to many. Nelson Mandela dreamed of an end to apartheid in South Africa. During his 27 years in prison, this dream must have seemed silly to the white power structure in South Africa.

There are dreams of justice and equality that must seem silly to many. There are dreams of
alleviating poverty and hunger, and dreams of educational opportunity for all children. There are even dreams of eliminating war. It is not silly to fight for a better future, and certainly not silly to fight to assure the future itself.

For me, a New Year is a new beginning and always brings hope. I will continue to choose hope and to fight for the dream of peace and the elimination of nuclear weapons. Achieving these goals is the great challenge of our time, and on their success depend the realization of all other goals for a more just and decent world.

David Krieger is President of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation (www.wagingpeace.org), and a Councilor on the World Future Council.

DICK ON US NUCLEAR CONTRADICTION

DID YOU SEE THIS ARTICLE IN THE DEM-GAZ? “India and Pakistan Insist on Keeping Nuclear Programs” (September 5, 2005). London, England. “India told a visiting U.S. lawmaker that the Hindu nation was building reactors that could produce material for atomic bombs.” In Islamabad, meanwhile, a Pakistani Foreign Ministry official said “the country will continue uranium reprocessing despite Europe’s threat to refer it to the U.N. Security Council for possible sanctions.” However, the United States declared Indian and Pakistani nuclear weapon developments to be intended for peace and security in S. E. Asia. International attention has been focused on the Indian and Pakistani Uranium Conversion Facilities, where uranium concentrate ore—known as yellowcake—is converted into hexafluoride gas, the feedstock for enrichment. But the U. S. dismissed any threat to the world in these developments, since they did not violate the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. (I’ll bet you remembered the original headline: “N. Korea, Iran Insist on Keeping Nuclear Programs.”)

BOOKS
--Green, Robert. Security Without Nuclear Deterrence. 2010. “One of the best informed and
most searching critiques of the central strategic doctrine of the nuclear age—nuclear deterrence.”

Jonathan Schell


ARTICLES

Mikhail Gorbachev, “Ratifying the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, “*The New York Times*

Mikhail Gorbachev writes: "Universal ratification of the test ban treaty would be a step toward creating a truly global community of nations, in which all share the responsibility for humankind's future."

READ MORE [https://mail.google.com/mail/?hl=en&shva=1#inbox/12d33a4b82411326](https://mail.google.com/mail/?hl=en&shva=1#inbox/12d33a4b82411326)

http://www.readerssupportednews.org/


OMNI HISTORY: OPPOSITION TO NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Our opposition to nuclear weapons began at OMNI’s beginning; here are a few of our recent actions.

NEWSLETTERS

As of April 11, 2011, eight newsletters.

PETITIONS AT FARMER’S MARKET

OMNI PETITION ACTION 2009

Summer Saturdays at Farmer’s Market 2009, OMNI’s petition: de-alert, no first use, no new nuclear
weapons, ban nuclear testing, control nuclear material, Nuclear Weapons Convention eliminating nuclear weapons. Mailed to Senators Pryor and Lincoln.

OMNI PETITION ACTION 2010: SENATORS SIGN NEW START TREATY
Again at Farmer’s Market Summer Saturdays petitioning our senators to sign the new START Treaty as a first step to abolition. Petition mailed to Sens. Lincoln and Pryor 11-20-10.

PETITION TO MEMBERS
August 27, 2010, forwarded petition from COUNTDOWN TO ZERO to members urging them to see the film and sign the petition to senators to vote for new START Treaty.

AUGUST 29, 2010, Newsletter #7, International DAY Against Nuclear Tests

END OF NEWSLETTER #8 ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS