

Ground Zero

January 2011

Volume 16 Issue 1



Speaking Truth to Power

The Trial of the Disarm Now Plowshares

Compiled from trial coverage by Leonard Eiger and Bill Quigley

"What I learned in the trial: No one on the Trident Base will confirm the presence of nuclear weapons, suggesting we should just go home and be nice. We sure have a lot of work to do, and now have a larger community to share the load. Thank you, wonderful supporters."

— Lynne Greenwald

"Our legal system 'protects' with useless fences nonexistent, classified 'property' belonging to US, 'missioned' for genocide, from a Sister, two Fathers and two Grandmas who walk with and in love and beauty."

— Anabel Dwyer

"All five of the defendants are people of immense integrity, courage, and clarity of vision regarding the threat posed by nuclear weapons, and they have acted at great personal expense on behalf of all of us."

— Dr. Dave Hall

The trial of the Disarm Now Plowshares five, who entered the US Navy's Strategic Weapons Facility Pacific (SWFPAC) on November 2, 2009, began on December 7 in US District Court. Fr. Bill Bichsel, Susan Crane, Fr. Steve Kelly, Sr. Anne Montgomery, and Lynne Greenwald (pictured above, left to right, outside the courthouse) represented themselves, with lawyers as standby counsel. Attorneys Anabel Dwyer and Bill Quigley also assisted the defendants.

DAY ONE

Animated discussion filled the courtroom during the morning's jury selection. Susan Crane started her *voir dire* questions to the possible jurors by asking, "Would you have convicted Rosa Parks?" One prospective juror answered that she was not asked to judge the integrity of the law. Another

Speaking Truth to Power... continued on page 2

answered, "I totally respect the rule of law, but some laws are meant to be broken, and that is how laws are changed... It is written, 'Thou shalt not kill,' and it doesn't say there are some conditions under which you would be able to kill." Another prospective juror answered, "There are things in our society that are just wrong. It would be very difficult for me."



Hooded and handcuffed, the Disarm Now Plowshares members were made to lie face down on the ground for three hours after their arrest. The US attorneys provided this photo to the defense. *Photo courtesy of the US Navy.*

The prosecutor asked if considerations of the defendants' health and age, or the fact that they might be priest or nuns, would hamper their ability to render an impartial judgment.

Opening statements began after the lunch recess. US Attorney Arlen Storm set the tone for the government's case with his first words: "This is a case about trespass and damaging government property."

Susan, in her opening statement, explained the three central pillars of the Plowshares activists' defense: the nuclear weapons at Strategic Weapons Facility-Pacific are horrendous; they are illegal; and it is our duty as citizens to resist them. In his opening statement, Father Bix's voice shook with emotion as he described his experience in Japan hearing the stories of survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. He said the greatest gift he brought back from his visit was the commission to "please get rid of these nuclear weapons."

DAY TWO

On the second day of the trial, the prosecution presented their evidence. Prosecutors said the government would neither admit nor deny the existence of nuclear weapons at the base and argued that "whether or not there are nuclear weapons there or not is irrelevant." They would only acknowledge that Bangor has the capability to *service* nuclear missiles. Prosecutors successfully objected to and excluded most

of the defense evidence about the horrific effects of nuclear weapons, the illegality of nuclear weapons under US treaty agreements and humanitarian law, and the right of citizens to try to stop war crimes by their government.

The peace activists tried to present evidence about nuclear weapons despite repeated objections. At one point, Sr. Anne challenged the prosecutors and the court, "Why are we so afraid to discuss the fact that there are nuclear weapons?"

The government's witnesses included an officer from the Navy NW Regional Police Department, a funding and facilities manager at Bangor, a Marine who was part of the security detail on the day of the Plowshares action, a member of the Navy security response team, and an investigator with the Naval Criminal Investigation Service Counterterrorism Unit. The prosecution was very concerned with the width and height of the opening cut in the outer fence, as well as the use of twist ties to close the opening. The government testified that it took about five hours to patch the holes in the fences and most of the day to replace the alarm system around the nuclear weapons storage area.

In her cross examination of Naval Petty Officer Austin Wilchek, Sr. Anne asked, "In any of your training were you given military regulations that prohibit the indiscriminate killing of civilians?" The prosecution objected that the question was irrelevant, to which Montgomery responded, "Well, it was very important to us."

DAY THREE

In a packed courtroom, the trial of the Disarm Now Plowshares went into its third day with the prosecution resting and the defense making its case.

The trial brought peace activists from around the world to challenge the US use of the Trident nuclear weapons.

Angie Zelter, internationally known author and activist from the UK, testified about the resistance to Trident weapons in Europe. In

response to the question of whether she and the defendants share a sense of urgency about nuclear weapons, she answered, "Yes. We have had conversations about the number of accidents and how nuclear weapons are proliferating. The US and UK expect others to not have nuclear weapons and are still relying on them themselves. Yes, it felt very urgent."

Stephen Leeper, Chair of the Peace Culture Foundation

A demonstration in London was held in front of the US Embassy to show solidarity with the defendants. *Photo by Dan Viesnik.*



in Hiroshima, told the jury “the world is facing a critical moment” because of the existence and proliferation of nuclear weapons. Though prohibited from testifying about the details of the death, destruction, and genetic damage to civilians from the US nuclear attack on Hiroshima, he testified defendants “have a tremendous amount of support in Hiroshima.” When asked if he had encouraged the Disarm Now Plowshares defendants in any way he said, “Yes, I told them, ‘Yes, do anything you possibly can to bring this to the consciousness of the world, because Americans more than any other people in the



Community support was amply demonstrated before and throughout the trial. This walk to the courthouse took place before the arraignment in October. *Photo by Leonard Eiger.*

world are unconscious of what's going on.' ”

Retired US Navy Captain Thomas Rogers, 31 years in the Navy, including several years as Commander of a nuclear submarine, told the court he thought the US possession of nuclear weapons after the Cold War was illegal and immoral. When asked how these weapons would impact civilians, he responded “it is really hard to detonate a 475 kiloton nuclear device without killing civilians.” He said that if he as commander was ever ordered to launch strategic nuclear missiles, this would be contrary to what he knows of the laws of armed conflict, which state that a commander is responsible for following the rules of humanitarian law. “That commanding officer is powerless, and that's an awful feeling.”

Dr. David Hall, the former president Physicians for Social Responsibility, testified about the humanitarian core beliefs of the defendants. When asked about his understanding of the defendants' core beliefs, he answered, “Life is sacred... above all else, do no harm.” And Professor and author Michael Honey told the jury about the importance of nonviolent direct action in bringing about social change. He reminded them, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. You must speak out. The whole history of social justice is built on that.”

DAY FOUR

The five defendants made powerful closing statements

to the jury. They had admitted from the start that they cut through the chain link fence surrounding the Navy base during the night of All Souls, November 2, 2009. They then walked undetected for hours nearly four miles inside the base to their target, the Strategic Weapons Facility-Pacific. This top security area is where hundreds of nuclear missiles are stored in bunkers. There they cut through two more barbed wire fences and went inside. They put up two big banners which said “Disarm Now Plowshares: Trident Illegal and Immoral,” scattered sunflower seeds, and prayed until they were arrested at dawn. Once arrested, the five were cuffed and hooded with sand bags because the marine in charge testified “when we secure prisoners anywhere in Iraq or Afghanistan we hood them...so we did it to them.”

On Friday, the twelve-person jury reported it was unable to reach a unanimous verdict on all counts and the judge sent them home for the weekend.

The extensive peace community gathered at the courthouse supported the defendants and rejoiced that the jury was taking the defendants and the charges seriously. Supporters promised to continue to protest against the Trident and its weapons of mass destruction.

THE VERDICT

The federal criminal trial of five veteran peace activists ended Monday, December 13, after the jury found them guilty on all counts. Each defendant faces possible sentences of up to ten years in prison.

There were many indications that the jury found it difficult to convict the Disarm Now Plowshares defendants. Jury questions, facial expressions, body language and post-trial conversations all gave this impression. One of the jurors said that from what he could tell, no one was ready to convict right away.

Dave Hall commented after the verdict, “I think that the jury was impressed with the character of the defendants and now understands much more fully the nature and difficulties surrounding nuclear weapons. However, the jury instructions were quite clear...” The jury was to consider only the evidence presented in the courtroom. All considerations of a higher law, be it international, humanitarian, our treaty obligations under the US Constitution, or a spiritual truth greater than that laid down by the US Navy, were to be put aside.

After the verdict was read and the Judge Settle was about to dismiss the jury, Steve Kelly stood and announced that the defendants would like to bless the jury. Steve and all of his co-defendants stood with their hands raised in blessing as he said, “May you go in peace and have a safe, happy holiday.”

Sentencing is scheduled for March 28, 2011 at 9:00 am.

Leonard Eiger co-chairs the Media and Outreach Committee, and covered the trial each day, issuing press releases from which much of this article is drawn. **Bill Quigley** is Legal Director of the Center for Constitutional Rights and a professor of law at Loyola University New Orleans. Bill was part of the legal team assisting the peace activists in their trial.

Hope in Hard Times

By Tom Shea

"Today's despair is a poor chisel to carve out tomorrow's justice." — Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., 1967

Dr. Martin Luther King kept hope alive in hard times. From his 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott, when his home was bombed, King faced death threats, attacks by media, politicians, church leaders. When supporters left him because of his speech against the Vietnam War, King kept moving on. In and out of jails, on the streets, in the pulpits, King spoke out for hope: "Everything that is done in the world is done by hope."

How do you think he kept hope alive? How do *you* keep hope alive during your own hard times? Before reading further, take a moment to reflect on how you keep hope alive in hard times.



Here's how our Disarm Now Plowshares friends answered the question: "How do you keep hope alive while serving hard time in jail?"

Sr. Anne Montgomery said: "For many people it's difficult to find hope today. People feel they have no control over the imperial actions of our government. As a result there's so much apathy.

"We feel hope because we see there's something we can do on the grassroots level. Even if it doesn't seem very effective; even if it seems very foolish at times, we know we must expose the danger of nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons pose a threat to our country and to the world and to the people on our streets. This military budget is destroying our economy. We need to expose these dangers to people who really don't know, even in this area near the Trident base, they don't know what's going on there.

"Secrecy is a weapon of our country to keep people from understanding and then reacting. So little by little by forming small groups, working with other small groups, we hope to change how people think and act about the threat of nuclear weapons. Working together in small groups is the only way change happens."

Fr. Bill "Bix" Bichsel, reflected: "Making connections with the people around me, inmates and guards. Keeping connected in word and spirit with the communities of support outside the walls, with people around the world, especially those also suffering hard times, is how I keep hope alive. Our own early Christian history, as reported in the Acts of Apostles, mainly began in prisons."

Susan Crane said, "We carry on the same spirit in the action, the trial, and the prison. We try to form community just like we did outside. Engaging people wherever we are in non-violent love. That's how we keep hope alive in hard times"

Fr. Steve Kelly wrote: "A good cause, Ground Zero, that's a hope, right there. When Phil Berrigan was asked, once, I believe, he replied, '...I got so much hope I can't stand it.' I think, like in so many of these causes and cases, that one, prompted by the spirit into terrifying freedom, acts on that prompting. They become and/or embody the hope they are seeking. My hope in acting was not about press/media, or the Pentagon. Like the abolition movement of old that woke up the sleeping giant, we need to wake the faith sector. My hope is that folks of faith will see the necessity of the economic, political, and moral conversion."

Lynn Greenwald responded: "I think we are at critical turning point. We're at a real point of choosing life or death. The talk is about disarmament. The reality is the US is planning for a second generation of nuclear weapons. As someone who lived in Kitsap County for 27 years, I saw the increase from two to eight trident nuclear submarines. The whole economy of Kitsap County is built on the nuclear weapons system. The world is not a safer place right now. It is more unstable place. It's time for people to stand up and take back control of their lives, time to let go of their fear, the fear that keeps us paralyzed from stopping these deadly nuclear weapons.

"However, social change requires many people doing many different things towards the same goal. Together we will abolish nuclear weapons."

Tom Shea co-chairs the Media and Outreach Committee. Both Montgomery's and Greenwald's statements were from interviews by Todd Boyle at a reception sponsored by the Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility.

Ground Zero Needs More Chairs!

The first chair drive was a terrific success... but we need fifty more to make sure everyone has a comfortable place to sit at our next gathering for MLK day. Can you help by donating a chair or two? Just \$20 will purchase a chair and we can put your name, or the name of

someone you wish to honor, on the back. Use the enclosed donation envelope and indicate how many chairs you wish to donate. Your gift will be well utilized by many Ground Zero attendees in years to come!



Father Bix Awarded WSPR's Highest Honor

By Dave Hall

On November 14, 2010, Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility honored Father William "Bix" Bichsel, Jesuit peace activist from Tacoma, with WPSR's Paul B. Beeson Peace Award for 2010. Present with Bix for the presentation were his five fellow Plowshares activists.

This award has been given annually since the late 1980's in honor of Dr. Paul Beeson, Montana-born physician, who was Chief of Medicine at both Yale and Oxford, co-author of the Beeson and Beeson textbook of medicine, and in 1974 a Seattle VA professor emeritus of medicine. He joined WPSR in the early 1980's when the US and the USSR were faced off in the death threats of Mutual Assured Destruction. He was an indefatigable medical voice calling attention to the devastating medical consequences of a nuclear war.



Father Bix holds the Beeson Peace Award aloft. *Photo by Dave Hall.*

Fr. Bix has dedicated more than 30 years to civil resistance to the Navy's Trident nuclear weapons system on Hood Canal. He was first arrested at the Bangor base in the 1970s when the Navy was expanding the Bangor base to accommodate the Trident submarines. He was there when the first Trident submarine sailed into Hood Canal. And he has been arrested multiple times since then during regular vigils at the base gates.

In August 2009 Fr. Bix led a "Journey of repentance" delegation to Hiroshima and Nagasaki to join in the Japanese ceremonies of remembrance.

Then on November 2, 2009 Fr. Bix, in the company of Lynne Greenwald, Susan Crane, Sr. Anne Montgomery, and Fr. Steve Kelly escalated his nonviolent civil resistance by entering Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor and joined in cutting through several fences to gain entrance to the nuclear weapons storage area. The five were arrested at gunpoint. Their statement: "The manufacture and deployment of [nuclear-armed] Trident II missiles, weapons of mass destruction, is immoral and criminal under International Law and, therefore, under United States law. As US citizens we are responsible under the Nuremberg Principles for this threat of first-strike terrorism hanging over

the community of nations, rich and poor." They are now charged with Conspiracy, Trespass, Destruction of Property on a Naval Installation and Depredation of Government Property. The major consequences for each of the individual charges range from five to 10 years in prison, from \$50,000 to \$250,000 in fines, up to three years of supervised release, and/or five years probation.

In Tacoma Fr. Bix has been at the heart of the Catholic Worker Community with its longstanding outreach program for homeless and other marginalized people. Their seven-house compound is a nuclear-weapons free zone in the heart of Tacoma.

Just to give you an idea of what a beloved figure Bix is in Tacoma, imagine his 80th birthday party needing a huge church social hall to accommodate the 300 people who wanted to celebrate with him. And what did he ask in the way of a present from them? To come out to Bangor and join him in a vigil at the gates of the Trident Navy base.

The plaque Bix was presented with read:

Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility
Proudly presents our 2010
Paul B. Beeson Peace Award
To

William 'Bix' Bichsel, SJ
In recognition of extraordinary service to
humankind through your exemplary actions to
create a healthier, peaceful and sustainable world.
November 14, 2010

Fr. Bix and his fellow Plowshares activists received a prolonged standing ovation from the audience.

Dave Hall serves on the Ground Zero Stewardship Council and is the past president of the Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility.



Billions for Life, Not Billions for Death!

Ground Zero is planning a day of activities on Saturday, January 15, in honor of MLK, Jr. Day. Join us for music, shared meals, a vigil in Silverdale, and planning for a nonviolent action at the gates of Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor, home to the US's greatest cache of nuclear weapons. See the enclosed flyer for full details. See you there!

Report on Annual Meeting

By Rev. Anne Hall

Twenty-five dedicated friends of Ground Zero gathered on November 13 for Ground Zero's annual meeting, at our beautiful, newly completed house. Together they elected the 2011 Stewardship Council, reviewed accomplishments of the past year, and planned for the future.

Those elected to the 2011 Stewardship Council, Ground Zero's guiding body, are: Michael Hill (co-chair), Sue Ablao (interim co-chair), Mary Gleysteen (secretary), Rev. Anne Hall (treasurer), Alice Zillah (newsletter), Leonard Eiger and Tom Shea (media/outreach), Tom Rogers (grounds/building), Dave Hall (website), and (at large) Lynne Greenwald, Senji Kanaeda, Gilberto Perez, Jackie Hudson, Denny Moore, Rodney Brunelle, Rosy Betz-Zall, Laurie Rostholder, Fr. Bill Bichsel, and Peggy Love. The Council meets on the second Saturday of each month, alternating between Ground Zero and Seattle. All meetings are open, and more members are welcome!

The group brainstormed an impressive list of accomplishments for the past year, including ongoing civil resistance to Bangor's nuclear weapons, which led to 30 arrests, a major march in Seattle to highlight the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty Review, the hosting of 48 visitors from Japan, continued resistance to the presence of Navy ships at Seafair, the US Supreme Court's hearing of Glen Milner's Indian Island FOIA suit, and much, much more.

Those present identified four priorities for the coming year. These were: 1) Continue to host three annual nuclear resistance events at Bangor; 2) Work to stop the construction of a second explosive handling wharf at Bangor; 3) Meet with the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation to coordinate efforts toward disarmament; 4) Enhance connections with other resistance communities, such as the Pacific Life Community, nuclear abolitionists in New Zealand and Australia, and groups resisting nuclear weapons at Faslane, Scotland, and Vandenberg Air Force Base in California.

The community rejoiced in a \$1,000 gift from Barbara Berger in memory of Jerry George, her long time partner and part time webmaster of Ground Zero. The decision was made to use these funds to enhance the website. Matt Rankin and Mickey Molnaire volunteered to join Dave Hall and others from the Ground Zero community in this project.

Treasurer Anne Hall reported that the general fund has a small positive balance for the year, and that the house is paid for, but that the building project has depleted the reserves. Many fundraising ideas came forward, with strong support for a "Bike to the Bombs" cycling event, a "bucket auction," and a fall garage sale/cider pressing with the neighbors.

At the close of the meeting, the group signed the 2010 fundraising letter and prepared it for mailing. 1,020 copies went out by mail, and 57 by email.

Rev. Anne Hall serves as Treasurer for the Ground Zero Stewardship Council. She has worked for the abolition of nuclear weapons since the 1970s.

The Petersen Farm Faces a New Threat— Can it be Saved Again?

By Mary Gleysteen

The second half of this article was inadvertently omitted in the October newsletter. Your newsletter editor apologizes for the error. The article is reprinted here in full.

As anyone knows who has ever heard Tom Rawson sing, Ground Zero has a close connection to Petersens' Farm in Silverdale, which the Great Peninsula Conservancy is currently seeking to preserve as a working farm.

In 1979, Gerry and Dorothy Petersen's farm was soon to be divided by the Highway 3 interchange to the Trident Submarine Base at Bangor. Declaring that in a hungry world it's a sin to pave farmland, the Petersens



Saved once already by peace activists: The 167-acre Petersen farm features a barn that is over a century old. *Photo courtesy of Scott Hall.*

opened their farm to thousands of campers participating in Ground Zero and Live Without Trident's demonstrations and civil resistance actions during May 21-23.

During the weekend, an estimated 4,000 people rallied and camped at the farm, listening to speakers and music, and preparing for acts of civil resistance. 300 people entered the base to bring attention to the dangers posed by the presence of nuclear weapons in our community and our world. The majority of those released with ban and bar letters then re-entered the base, and over 200 were tried for trespass or re-entry.

The June 1979 issue of Ballast (a monthly report on the resistance to Trident and nuclear power) thanked the Petersens for sharing their spirit and space. The article recounted that they spoke to the crowd about their battle against the proposed highway through their farm, and that it was easy to sense their love of the land.

The Petersens wrote the planning coalition a thank-you note for the contributions they received for their legal fight. Their letter stated: "The past week was an entirely new experience and we can truly say that we enjoyed it. We talked to many interesting folks. You are all so sincere and dedicated and your organization is great. We certainly appreciated your cooperation in leaving our pastures clean. We haven't found one pull-tab... We wish you luck in your future efforts."

Later in the summer Trident resisters and supporters of the Petersens' efforts to promote sustainability and preserve

Saving Petersen's Farm... continued on page 10

August, 2010 events garner positive media coverage

Peace Fleet Floats Message Against Militarism

By Glen Milner

On August 4, about 55 demonstrators on the shore and five Peace Fleet sailors met the US Navy fleet at Seafair. Demonstrators at Pier 63 were joined by members of the Interfaith Peace Walk, walking from the Hanford nuclear reservation. The Raging Grannies were on the rooftop of Pier 66 trading songs with the Navy Band. Mixed between the piers were members of Women in Black, Veterans for Peace, Lake Forest Park for Peace and Ground Zero with peace flags, signs, and leaflets.



Hardy sailors Sigrid Salo, Rodney Brunelle, Brenda McMillan, Mary Gleysteen, and Glen Milner took their call for peace to the waters of Puget Sound. *Photo by Karol Milner.*

The Peace Fleet had a lot of media attention this year with an article in the Seattle Weekly on the Coast Guard's heavy-handed tactics at Seafair, announcements in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer (PI) newspaper with the photo of Richard Newton and the peace flag, front page coverage and photos on the Seattle PI website on the day of the event, Linda Newton and Karol Milner interviewed on KIRO TV, and Leonard Eiger's one-hour discussion on the KVI radio station.

There was much discussion this year of the Coast Guard's proposed rule for a "safety," or no-protest zone, extending 100 yards out from Pier 66 during the fleet arrival. Twenty-one comments were posted on the rule-making website, with only the Coast Guard's comment supporting the proposed rule. Statements against the proposal included one from Lincoln Cushing of the Bay Area Peace Navy and the ACLU of Washington. Senator Patty Murray made an inquiry to the Coast Guard on the purpose of the zone. The Coast Guard eventually gave up its plan and issued a temporary regulation for the day.

Our peaceful presence and good will was juxtaposed by one of Seafair's biggest displays of militarism in years, with

four US Navy warships and three Canadian vessels. One Arleigh Burke destroyer was docked in the middle of the downtown waterfront, at Pier 66, for five days. According to GlobalSecurity.org, an Arleigh Burke destroyer costs approximately \$2.2 billion to build in 2009 dollars and approximately \$25 million per year to operate. Each Arleigh Burke destroyer is armed with 56 Tomahawk cruise missiles.

The next scheduled Peace Fleet is August 3, 2011.

Glen Milner organizes the annual Peace Fleet events. His challenge to the Navy's use of the "High 2 Exemption" to deny FOIA requests was heard by the US Supreme Court in early December. Look for an article in the April newsletter on the case.

You're Invited to the MLK Day Celebration in Seattle

By Rodney Brunelle

Join Ground Zero on Monday, January 17, at Seattle's annual celebration of Martin Luther King's life and message. Seattle will hold "Many Voices United to Build the Beloved Community," the 29th annual region-wide celebration of MLK. It starts at 9:30am with workshops at Garfield High School, followed by a rally at 11:00am and a march at noon.

The Ground Zero Trident II D-5 inflatable missile will be deployed in the Seattle MLK rally/march from Garfield High School to the Federal Building. Lake Forest Park for Peace will take primary responsibility for missile deployment. However, many hands make light work. Ten to twelve handlers are needed to safely carry the 44 foot-long missile through the streets, especially in inclement weather. Anyone interested in helping with the missile and/or leafleting or carrying banners is welcome. Please contact me for full details at rodney.brunelle@gmail.com or (425)485-7030.



Rodney Brunelle recently joined the Ground Zero Stewardship Council. He lives in Lake Forest Park.

News and Updates from Around the World

Compiled by Alice Zillah

New multi-million dollar fence to protect Bangor nukes from intruding peacemakers

A company in Hawaii has won a \$51.9 million dollar contract to build a two mile-long security fence around parts of Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor. The fence will include two chain-link fences with a gravel zone between them and grassy clear zones on the outside, totaling 90 feet wide. The fence also will have lighting, sensors, cameras, a patrol road and entry control points. No word on what will happen to the existing chain-link fence topped with barbed wire – perhaps another company will win a multi-million dollar contract to dismantle it.

Clinton lost the nuclear launch codes — twice

Former President Clinton twice misplaced the card containing the key phrases required for ordering a nuclear strike, once in 1998 and once in 2000. Retired Gen. Hugh Shelton, the former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, writes in his new autobiography that, “At one point... the codes were actually missing for months.”

The first time it happened, according to retired Lt. Col. Robert Patterson, was the morning after the allegations of Clinton’s affair with Monica Lewinsky went public. After a search of the White House, Clinton “finally confessed that he in fact misplaced them. He couldn’t recall when he had last seen them,” said Lt. Col. Patterson.

ICBMs go offline in Wyoming

Fifty intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) went “offline” and were incommunicado for an undisclosed period of time in late October, 2010. President Obama was briefed on the incident, which took place at F.E. Warren Air Force Base in Wyoming. On October 27, a squadron of ICBMs suddenly entered “LF Down” status, meaning that they could not be contacted remotely by the missileers. The security systems for the ICBMs were also inoperable, including the intrusion alarms and warhead separation alarms.

Commanders at the Air Force Base did not know what caused the disruption, but they doubted that the systems were hacked.

United Nations calls attention to Depleted Uranium

The United Nations First Committee voted by an overwhelming margin to call on countries using depleted uranium (DU) weapons to tell the governments of countries affected by those weapons where they were used.

136 states voted in favor of a resolution calling on users of these dangerous weapons to release quantitative and geographical data to the governments of affected states. The resolution is nonbinding, but sends an important message to the world community about the need for information related to the use of DU, known to cause severe human and environmental health damages. The US has used extensive DU weapons in Iraq, and cancer rates are already soaring in Fallujah and other hard-hit areas.

The resolution was opposed by only four countries: the US, UK, France and Israel. These were the same countries voting against previous resolutions accepting that DU has the potential to damage human health (2007) and calling for more research in affected countries (2008).

Warheads transported by intoxicated truck drivers

A new report from the US Energy Department acknowledges that drivers of trucks used to carry nuclear weapons and parts were occasionally drunk while carrying out their duties. In one instance in 2009, police stopped and briefly handcuffed two drivers from one convoy near a bar. There were no fewer than 16 drinking incidents involving Secure Transportation Office personnel between 2007 and 2009, the report says.

“Of the 16 incidents, two were of the greatest concern because they occurred during secure transportation missions while the agents were in Rest Overnight Status, which occurs during extended missions where convoy vehicles are placed in a safe harbor and agents check into local area hotels,” according to the report.

The federal government employs close to 600 people for transporting nuclear weapons, parts and materials around the country, according to the Associated Press.



Alice Zillah edits the Ground Zero newsletter. She lives in Olympia.

The START Conundrum

The Obama Administration is Committing New Billions for Nukes

By Alice Zillah

The Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) between the US and Russia was initially signed in 1991 and expired on December 5, 2009. A renewed agreement was signed by President Obama and Russian President Dmitri Medvedev on April 8, 2010. At the time of this newsletter's publication, the new treaty was close to being ratified by both the House of Representatives and the Senate. But the big question is: At what cost?

START clearly has significant benefits which should not be understated. According to the Friends Committee on National Legislation, the treaty will:

- Reduce tensions between the two largest nuclear powers in the world by allowing both countries to inspect the other country's nuclear arsenal. Inspections and verifications stopped over a year ago when the initial treaty lapsed.
- Reduce the number of deployed strategic nuclear weapons in both of our countries, from 2,200 to 1,550 each.
- Improve the odds for the ratification of future arms reduction treaties.

Trident Warheads Being "Modernized" in Texas

By Alice Zillah

The *Kitsap Sun* newspaper recently broke the news that hundreds of W76 nuclear warheads are being secretly trucked between Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor and the Plantex Plant in Texas. The 100-kiloton warheads are between 23 and 32 years old and are now being retrofitted, *at a total cost of \$4 billion*, so they can continue to endanger the world for another 30 years.

At Plantex, the warheads will get refurbished arming, firing, fusing, and gas transfer systems. The new fuse will allow more flexibility in setting the height of the nuclear blast. Under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the US has committed to dismantling our nuclear stockpiles... not investing billions of dollars to "improve" their deadly accuracy.

Approximately 900 to 1,000 warheads from Bangor will be transported to Texas on unmarked trucks, in a project slated to continue for the next eight years. According to the *Kitsap Sun*, officials from the Washington State Patrol, Department of Ecology, Department of Transportation and the National Guard said they weren't notified of the increased shipments and never know when they're made.

Clearly, passage of New START would be a positive step towards nuclear abolition. But the treaty comes with a steep price tag: the Obama administration has recently promised congressional Republicans an additional \$4 billion over the next five years for the US nuclear weapons complex, in exchange for votes on START.

The \$4 billion would be in addition \$85 billion that Obama has already committed towards modernization of nuclear weapons over the next decade. And that does not include an additional \$100 billion over the same time period to upgrade the weapons' delivery systems.

That's \$189 billion dollars for weapons of mass destruction..... money that could go to housing our homeless, protecting our most vulnerable, feeding our hungry, and taking care of our children.

A factsheet on the White House website spells out the president's priorities. Published on November 17, 2010, it is entitled, "An Enduring Commitment to the US Nuclear Deterrent." The first paragraph reads:

President Obama has made an extraordinary commitment to ensure the modernization of our nuclear infrastructure, which had been neglected for years before he took office. Today, the Administration once again demonstrates that commitment with the release of its plans to invest more than \$85 billion over the next decade to modernize the US nuclear weapons complex that supports our deterrent... This level of funding is unprecedented since the end of the Cold War.

Sadly, Obama's actions have been at odds with his expressed desire for a world free of nuclear weapons. His administration's budget request for fiscal year 2011 included \$7 billion for the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) which oversees the US nuclear stockpile and production complex. According to the Arms Control Association, this request was about 10 percent higher than the previous year's budget. The ACA quotes Linton Brooks, the former NNSA administrator in the George W. Bush administration, as saying, "I'd have killed for that budget and that much high-level attention in the administration."

So where does this leave us with START? It's a good and necessary treaty, but we have to get out the word that it's in no way a solution to the continued arms race that the US is waging with any other country that chooses to compete with us (or decides it needs nuclear weapons as a defensive posture). Our high hopes for a president willing to take on the nuclear weapons complex have not been realized. Once again, it's up to us to answer the call to rid our world of the horror of nuclear weapons.

Alice Zillah has been a member of Ground Zero since 2003.

farmlands blocked bulldozers as they began construction of the highway. Seven were arrested and convicted of pulling up survey stakes.

The future of Petersen's Farm, the largest farm in Central Kitsap County, was in question at the end of 2009, with the passing of longtime owner Gerald Petersen in September at the age of 94. Speculation about the 167 acres of farm and forest he worked with his wife Dorothy, who passed away many years ago, started to spread. The land likely could sprout houses, stores, and office buildings due to its prime location just outside of Silverdale.

However, Mr. Petersen expressed a strong desire throughout his life and in his will for the land to remain as a working farm. As a result, the Great Peninsula Conservancy is now leading a partnership with the Petersen Estate, farm interests, and community organizations to raise funds to purchase a conservation easement on the farm. This protection will allow generations of farmers to continue to produce livestock and crops for the local community for years to come. Conservation of the Petersen Farm, with its history, size, and central location, is vital to sustaining Kitsap County's re-surging local farm economy.

It seems appropriate for Ground Zero and all of the folks who participated in the early demonstrations at the base to help preserve Petersen's Farm, as well as the connection between the farm and resistance to Trident. There are several ways this can be done and we'd love to have your additional ideas:

- Individuals can contribute to the Petersen Farm fund at the Great Peninsula Conservancy, at www.greatpeninsula.org.
- Ground Zero and like minded folks could contribute a display or memorial to the Petersens and their connection to Trident resistance to be placed at the interpretive center at the farm when it is developed.
- We can encourage the Great Peninsula Conservancy to consider a trail connecting the farm to Ground Zero.
- Please let people you know who were at the farm in 1978, and know of the Great Peninsula Conservancy's efforts to preserve Petersen's Farm.

Please send your stories and reminiscences of those days to Ground Zero for a future article.

Mary Gleysteen lives in Kitsap County and has been an active member of Ground Zero since the 1970s.

The Hiroshima Declaration on the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons

Issued in Hiroshima at the World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates, November 15, 2010

The undersigned Nobel Peace Laureates and representatives of Nobel Peace Prize organizations, gathered in Hiroshima during in mid-November, 2010, after listening to the testimonies of the Hibakusha, have no doubt that the use of nuclear weapons against any people must be regarded as a crime against humanity and should henceforth be prohibited.

We pay tribute to the courage and suffering of the Hibakusha who survived the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 and honor those that have dedicated their lives to teaching the world about the horrors of nuclear war. Like them, we pledge ourselves to work for a future committed to peace, justice and security without nuclear weapons and war.

Twenty-five years ago in Geneva, the leaders of the two largest nuclear powers declared that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought." There has been some substantive progress since then. The agreements on intermediate range nuclear forces (INF); strategic arms reductions (START); and unilateral and bilateral initiatives on tactical nuclear weapons, have eliminated tens of thousands of nuclear weapons. We welcome the signing by the United States and Russia of the New START treaty and the consensus Nuclear Disarmament Action Plan that was adopted by the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference.

Nevertheless, there are still enough nuclear weapons to destroy life on Earth many times over. The proliferation of nuclear weapons and the possibility of their use for acts of terrorism are additional causes for deep concern. The threats posed by nuclear weapons did not disappear with the ending of the Cold War.

Nuclear weapons cannot be disinvented, but they can and must be outlawed, just as chemical and biological weapons, landmines and cluster munitions have been declared illegal. Nuclear weapons, the most inhumane threat of all, should likewise be outlawed in keeping with the 2010 NPT Review Conference final document, which reaffirmed "the need for all States at all times to comply with applicable international law, including international humanitarian law."

Efforts to rid the world of nuclear weapons must proceed along with measures to strengthen international law, demilitarize international relations and political thinking and to address human and security needs. Nuclear deterrence, power projection and national prestige as arguments to justify acquiring and retaining nuclear weapons are totally outdated and must be rejected.

We support the UN Secretary General's five point proposal on nuclear disarmament and proposals by others to undertake work on a universal treaty to prohibit the use, development, production, stockpiling or transfer of nuclear weapons and nuclear weapon technologies and components and to provide for their complete and verified elimination.

We call on nations to negotiate a universal treaty to abolish nuclear weapons, in partnership with civil society.

To ensure that the horrors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki never reoccur and to build a world based on cooperation and peace, we issue this call of conscience. We must all work together to achieve a common good that is practical, moral, legal and necessary – the abolition of nuclear weapons.

The World Summit of Noble Peace Laureates meets annually. The Dalai Lama, Jody Williams, Mohamed ElBaradei, and Frederik Willem de Klerk were some of those in attendance; President Barack Obama did not attend.

POSTCARDS, FILMS, T-SHIRTS, and BUMPERSTICKERS

DVDs and CDs

"CONVICTION" a documentary about three Dominican nuns, including Sr. Jackie Hudson, sentenced to Federal Prison for their nonviolent protest at a Minuteman III missile site in Northern Colorado. DVD. Item # F-1; \$25 for personal use, \$40 for public performance showings

"WALKING FOR PEACE" This 29-minute film documents the spiritual and physical journey of a 300 mile walk, from the Hanford Nuclear Reservation to Bangor Submarine Base. DVD. Item # F-2; \$10

"FREE WORLD" A documentary with original music on the "Journey of Repentance" in which 18 people traveled to Japan to atone for the atomic bombings. DVD. Item # F-3; \$15

"GENIE OUT OF THE BOTTLE—UNLEASHED" An examination of how nuclear weapons came to be, made by two 14 year-old boys from Chicago. DVD. Item # F-4; \$10

"ONE BOMB AWAY—CITIZEN EMPOWERMENT FOR NUCLEAR AWARENESS" Previously a book, it is now available on CD and a great primer for those both new and veteran in the abolition movement. CD. Item # F-5; \$10

BUMPERSTICKERS

**NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT
BEGINS AT HOME**
ABOLISH NUCLEAR WEAPONS—RESIST TRIDENT
Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action www.gzcenter.org

BUMPERSTICKER 3x12"

White and red on blue.
Item # S-1
\$.50 ea. 1-10; \$.50 ea. 11-100; \$.25 ea. 101+

Sunflower Bumpersticker

5.5 inches diameter. Gorgeous! Brilliant full-color sunflower and yellow text on bright blue background. Item # S-2; \$1.00 ea. 1-10; \$.75 ea. 11-100; \$.50 ea. 101+



RESIST TRIDENT...

Abolish Nuclear Weapons

Striking t-shirt shows a sunflower growing through a disarmed nuclear weapon. Brick red or sage green shirt.

Item # SH-3

S, M, L, XL, 2XL, 3XL

\$17 each or 2 for \$32



WE FOUND THEM!

Weapons of Mass Destruction...they're closer to home than you think! Map shows dozens of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons sites across the US, with a full list on the back.

Sage green shirt.

Item # SH-1

S, M, L, XL, 2XL, 3XL

\$17 each or

2 for \$32



"War No More" with Peace Dove and Globe

White, yellow, blue and green design on black shirt. Ground Zero logo on sleeve. Item # SH-2

Adult sizes S, M, L, XL, 2XL, 3XL

Children's sizes S, M, L, XL

Short sleeve: \$17 each or 2 for \$32

Long sleeve, and sizes 2XL and 3XL:

\$20 or 2 for \$38 (long sleeve not available in 2XL or 3XL)

Item #	Quantity	Size for shirts	Description	Price Each	TOTAL
Shipping: please add \$3.50 per shirt or film and/or \$1.50 per 10 bumper stickers or postcards				SHIPPING =	
We request <u>US funds</u> from all our supporters. <i>This helps save bank charges.</i>				TOTAL =	

____ Enclosed is my contribution to Ground Zero: \$ _____

(Please check one or more) For the: General Fund ____ Ground Zero House Fund ____ Legal Fund ____ Chair Fund (\$20) ____

____ Please call me; I want to start leafleting at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard ____ or downtown Seattle ____.

____ Please contact me about having a Ground Zero speaker come to speak to my group, church, school or union.

Name: _____

Address: _____ City _____

State/Prov: _____ Zip/Postal Code: _____

Phone: (____) _____ E-mail: _____

Mail orders and donations in US funds to Ground Zero at 16159 Clear Creek Rd. NW, Poulsbo, WA 98370

Phone: 360-930-8697 E-mail: info@gzcenter.org Website: www.gzcenter.org

The Challenge of Our Times

By Shelley and Jim Douglass

All of us live in a world that is at constant risk of destruction. We humans have created weapons of an unimaginable magnitude, and we find the making of peace to be unimaginable as well. Our current administration talks about nuclear disarmament while planning and building new weapons production facilities. We expect other, smaller nations to forgo nuclear weapons while we continue to build them. This situation cannot continue indefinitely. As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "Our choice is not between violence and nonviolence. Our choice is between nonviolence and non-existence." It is only a matter of time before someone uses a nuclear weapon, setting off a global nuclear exchange that could end life as we know it. How are we to live in such a world?

In such a world people of conscience are called to step outside normal boundaries. It is necessary to awaken the public and to focus our attention on the question of nuclear weapons. Only if we are aware of the problem can we begin to think of the solution. In such a world Christians are called to act on the most radical teachings of the Gospels: "Love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you." In such a world, to be human is to create new ways of speaking truth to those in

power. We are grateful to the Disarm Now Plowshares for their creative action at the Naval Submarine Base Bangor, which remains one of the most heavily armed sites on the planet. By stepping inside the boundaries of SWFPAC, they have risked their freedom and their lives to remind us of our responsibilities. Ultimately the choice – survival or destruction – rests with us. In supporting their action we are challenged to find our own ways of acting to end nuclear weapons. We must all take responsibility, just as the Disarm Now Plowshares continue to do. How will we act for peace?



Children in India angle for attention. Photo from www.tear.org.au.

Shelley and Jim Douglass were two of the original founders of the Ground Zero community. They live in Birmingham, Alabama.

GROUND ZERO

**GROUND ZERO CENTER
FOR NONVIOLENT ACTION**
16159 Clear Creek Road NW
Poulsbo, WA 98370

Phone: 360-930-8697
Website: www.gzcenter.org
E-mail: info@gzcenter.org

Address Service Requested

“The problem of racism, the problem of economic exploitation, and the problem of war are all tied together. These are the triple evils that are interrelated.”

— Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Send us your change of address before the post office does and it saves Ground Zero money!

If you no longer want to receive our newsletter, just let us know and we'll take you off our mailing list.

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. Postage Paid
SILVERDALE WA
98383
Permit # 111
