

Ground Zero

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Speaking Truth To Power

Ground Zero Commemorates Mother's Day

By Leonard Eiger

On May 11, Ground Zero activists commemorated the original meaning of Mother's Day by acting for peace and an end to nuclear weapons. Several dozen participants carried signs and banners to the front gate of Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor, the west coast home port for the US nuclear submarine fleet.

For the first time in many years, one nonviolent demonstrator was wrestled to the ground merely for walking across the blue line. Bernie Meyer of Olympia was accosted and handcuffed by Naval military personnel moments after crossing onto federal property. Meyer, 75, was reciting Julia Ward Howe's Mother's Day Proclamation in honor of his mother who had recently passed away. After being forced to the ground and searched, he was escorted to a military van and taken onto the base for processing.

Two protestors were cited by Washington State Patrol for "Pedestrian in the roadway." Bert Sacks and Mona Lee, both of Seattle, carried a banner into NW Luoto Road, which leads to Bangor's main gate.

The actions were part of a day-long rally to bring attention to Bangor's nuclear arsenal. Rosalie Riegle, author of *Doing Time for Peace* and *Crossing the Line*, gave a talk to the 50 people who gathered at the Ground Zero house. "Speak Truth to Power" was the theme, and the activities included a letter-writing campaign, nonviolence training, and education about the Trident nuclear weapons system and the Bangor submarine base.

Leonard Eiger co-chairs the Communications Committee and manages the *Disarm Now Plowshares* blog, at www.disarmnowplowshares.wordpress.org.
Larry Kerschner took the photo of Bernie Meyer above.

Nuclear Weapons: Doing Something About It

By Leonard Eiger

Three nuclear resisters appeared in a Kitsap County District Court to speak out against the immorality and illegality of the continuing threat of nuclear weapons, as well as the tremendous costs, both human and economic, of their continued development and deployment.

Leonard Eiger, Tom Karlin and Cliff Kirchmer requested mitigation hearings after receiving citations for their March 4 nonviolent direct action at the Bangor Trident nuclear submarine base. On May 7 all three appeared before Judge Steven L. Olsen, and each was allowed to read a prepared statement to the court. When they were all finished, the Judge said, "Well done," and reduced each resister's fine to the minimum (\$25).

Cliff Kirchmer went first, stating some of the stark facts about Trident. "Captain Tom Rogers has called the Trident 'a cold war relic' and said that 'the American people could certainly stop it – because it's stupid.' It has been said that the weapons on a single Trident submarine, if used, could destroy the world. Rear Admiral Joseph Tobalo stated that 'a single Trident submarine is the sixth largest nuclear nation in the world by itself.' There are plans to replace the Trident fleet in 2029 with a new class of submarines at an estimated total cost of \$100 billion."

Kirchmer also spoke to the severe budgetary constraints, both military and civilian, that are affected by such massive investment in nuclear weapons. Referring to his time working with the Pan American Health Organization, Kirchmer spoke of the unmet needs that he witnessed. He then spoke to the unmet needs here in the US. "To spend hundreds of billions of dollars on nuclear weapons that can destroy the world when we have so many basic unmet human needs is a crime."

Tom Karlin was next, saying that his "real hope is that our action at Naval Base Kitsap on the morning of March 4, 2013 might in some small way help to mitigate the unconscionable fine that we the people are paying for the presence of the weapons of mass destruction at Bangor." Karlin stressed the illegality of the threat of use of nuclear weapons, the application by the resisters of nonviolent principles in their civil disobedience, and how they have exhausted every other "legal" means of communicating their wishes to the US government.

In speaking to the alleged "deterrent" that these awful weapons present to other nuclear-armed nations, Tom spoke

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Leafleting is Active at Ground Zero!

By Mary Gleysteen

Leafleting at Bangor resumed in earnest as part of the Hiroshima Day remembrance on August, 2012. At 6:30 am, approximately 15 people wearing reflective vests gathered at the Trigger Gate while other non violent resisters were blocking traffic at the main gate.

Karol Schulkin, Marya Barr, Fr. Bill Bichsel, and Jim and Shelley Douglass, among others, handed out more than 100 "Can We Talk?" leaflets, from outside the blue property line in the median between arriving and departing traffic and from the shoulders on both sides of the road. Although the Navy had set out "free speech zone" barricades, and had a heavy presence just inside the blue line, there were many efforts to communicate with the guards and there was no interference from county or state law enforcement.

Back at Ground Zero, we formed a Leafleting Committee of about 15 volunteers and leafleted again at Trigger on Sept 4, but were ordered out of the median by an angry Kitsap County sheriff's deputy, who would cite no authority for his threat of arrest.

We returned to the Trigger Gate on October 2, and at that time Glen Milner and Rodney Brunelle were issued "Pedestrian in the Roadway" citations which they contested in District

Court December 16, before Judge James Riehl. Questioned by Glen Milner, the officer agreed that safety was not an issue since defendants were wearing reflective vests and cars were moving very slowing. The scene was similar to standing next to a parking lot, and base workers are used to slowing outside the gate for ID checks and are unlikely to make crazy maneuvers in a line of traffic going five miles an hour or less. Glen and Rodney were found guilty and their fines reduced to \$25.

On December 17, January 15 and February 19, we again leafleted from the same spot in the median where Rodney and Glen had been arrested, but without incident.

On March 25, 2013, Mary Gleysteen leafleted from the median and had given out about 30 flyers before a Kitsap County sheriff's deputy pulled up in an unmarked car with lights flashing and issued a

"pedestrian in the roadway" ticket. He said that he was on patrol, had not been called by the base, but had orders from the prosecutor to stop people from leafleting in the median whenever he saw that activity. He was surprised to hear that we had



During last year's Hiroshima/Nagasaki action, Anne and Dave Hall passed out leaflets at Trigger Gate. Photo by Leonard Eiger.

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leafleted from the median for three months without incident.

On April 23, we again leafleted from the median. As we were leaving, we were stopped by a sheriff's deputy who said he had been called by base security claiming that we had blocked traffic. We assured him we had not interfered with traffic, that it was slow enough for us to have conversations with drivers and for one to take a couple of pictures of us with his cell phone. He told us that the median was not a safe or legal place to be.

On May 21, we leafleted from the median without contact from the base or other law enforcement.

Documents released in response to Glen Milner's request for public records documents from Kitsap County relating to recent "pedestrian in the roadway" charges disclose that in addition to leafleters there were only two other pedestrian in the roadway citations, but those offenders did not go to traffic court. One was arrested on an outstanding warrant and the other, an intoxicated minor, was release to his parents. The documents also suggest that we have been cited in response to 911 calls from base personnel or drivers entering the base reporting that we are "in the roadway." (It doesn't seem to matter whether we inform the base in advance of leafleting, but we generally do.) The records disclosed also seem to suggest that the Kitsap County Sheriff has been urged by the Washington State Patrol to issue traffic citations at Trigger to be consistent with those issued to demonstrators who block traffic at the main gate.

After Mary Gleysteen's traffic hearing was postponed because Judge Marilyn Paja had defended Ground Zero while in private practice, Mary called Prosecutor Russ Hauge to ask why the county was being so inconsistent in its interference with our first amendment rights to free speech. Hauge (who also represented Ground Zero while in private practice) expressed surprise that we are still being cited, and that while ticketing is discretionary, we present less hazard to traffic than the firemen at intersections with their boots seeking donations. He promised to look into the situation and asked Mary to keep him informed of further contact by sheriff's deputies during leafleting at Trigger. Our June leaflet will be on Free Speech and the Bill of Rights in honor of Independence Day.

Ground Zero Seattle leafleters have also been active both at public events at Town Hall and Benaroya Hall, the Martin Luther King March, and the recent Science Fair, as well as at the Seattle Ferry Terminal and the Federal Building.

To read copies of recent leaflets go to www.gzcenter.org and click on "Leaflets." To find out more or to join us in leafleting, email us at leaflet-ing@gzcenter.org.

Mary Gleysteen lives in Kingston and has been an active member of Ground Zero for many years. She serves on the Stewardship Council.

Blowing the Whistle on War Profiteers

By Leonard Eiger

It was a beautiful, sunny day in Seattle. Thousands of people flocked to the Seattle Science Center to attend what is billed as "the region's largest celebration of science!" Among the exhibitors during the festival's Expo Day were Boeing, Lockheed Martin and Aerojet – a veritable who's who of weapons contractors. Of course, the slick presentations at their booths mentioned nothing of the drones, bombs and missiles that makes these companies filthy rich at the expense of human needs.

Also present at the Expo was a special team of whistle blowers from Veterans for Peace (VFP) Greater Seattle Chapter 92 and Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action. Armed with whistles and leaflets, the team marched through the Expo chanting "*Science for Peace, Not for War!*" The leaflets asked the question, "What happens when scientists create weapons of death and destruction?"



The Seattle Raging Grannies performed anti-drone songs and "planted seeds of peace." *Photo by Leonard Eiger.*

As the leafleters approached the first of the war profiteer's booths, Boeing, one of the leafleters shouted out, "What do we do to war profiteers?" Members of the group responded by blowing their whistles loudly and in unison; this certainly got people's attention. Within the first hour we had blown the whistle on three major war profiteers and handed out 400 leaflets to Expo attendees.

The Seattle Raging Grannies joined the effort, singing some hearty anti-drone songs. All in all, it was a very good day. We planted seeds of peace to counter the insidious indoctrination that is so carefully crafted by multi-billion dollar weapons makers. We carried a clear message that we hope will get through to tomorrow's scientists and engineers – "*Science for Peace, Not for War!*"

Leonard Eiger co-chairs the Communication Committee for the Stewardship Council. His blog, the Nuclear Abolitionist, can be read at <http://nuclearabolitionist.blogspot.com>.

The Earthquake Danger to Hanford and the Columbia Generating Station

By Mary Hanson

Washington State has long been in denial of earthquake dangers, and this continues to have major implications for the Trident nuclear submarine base as well as the Hanford nuclear waste tank farms and the Northwest's only nuclear power plant, the Columbia Generating Station (CGS). Decisions to site these nuclear facilities here were based on mistaken assumptions that earthquakes were a risk to California, but not Washington State.

The decisions to site them here were made before scientists discovered the threats posed by the Cascadian Subduction Zone, the Seattle and South Whidbey Island faults, and the Yakima Folds, to name just a few. We cannot prevent earthquakes, but we can choose to improve storage and/or remove nuclear materials before they become nuclear contaminants. If we listen to the scientists, engineers, and writers who are drawing our attention to our seismic hazards, we may be able to steer our state away from becoming another Fukushima or worse.

According to *Seattle Times* science reporter Sandi Daughton, researchers reported that the Fukushima earthquake (known as 3/11) "was far stronger than Japanese scientists expected, and this area's coast is a 'mirror image' [of Japan's coast]... in Japan the ... seafloor was displaced by 150 feet or more in some places, triggering the massive tsunami (and meltdown). But in the Northwest, it's the land that will be rocked hardest because the Pacific Coast here lies so close to the subduction zone." (Feb. 20, 2012)

"The way the US thought of terrorists after 9/11 is how Japan thinks of earthquakes and tsunamis all the time," scientist Harold Tobin told Daughton, who is now author of the newly-published book *Full Rip 90*. But Japan had an extensive earthquake warning system, and construction codes far more stringent than Washington State.

At Bangor, we have nuclear bombs and highly explosive missile fuel being constantly handled right on the water. While not directly addressing the siting of the Bangor base, Daughton's book describes the shallow but destructive Seattle and South Whidbey Island faults. Earthquakes in Hood Canal, on Bainbridge Island, and near Bremerton have caused land to rise or drop, causing inland tsunamis.

According to Daughton, "scientists predict the biggest earthquake in North America will occur in the Pacific Northwest. She tells the story of geologist Brian Atwater, who

"discovered that the most recent megaquake measured 9.0 ... and was centered off the Washington coast in the year 1700."

In May 2011 edition of *Scientific American*, Oregon State University scientist Chris Goldfinger (also quoted in Daughton's book) warned that "the northern portion of the (Cascadian) Subduction Zone, from the middle of Vancouver Island to the Washington-Oregon border, has a 10 to 15% chance of suffering a magnitude 8.0 or greater quake in the next 50 years."

We need to be funding earthquake warning systems and strengthening critical infrastructure, creating jobs that increase our security, not spending \$750 million to double the missile handling capacity of the Bangor explosives wharf. Nuclear warheads and missiles are most vulnerable while being handled.

Because global warming will make many other regions of the US less able to grow food, we must protect and preserve our environment from "dirty bomb"-type nuclear contamination. A major earthquake affecting the Trident base – only 20 miles from Seattle – could contaminate central Puget Sound. The Trident nuclear submarine base should be closed, its warheads disabled, dismantled and moved to safe storage. Its highly explosive missile motor fuel needs to be rendered safe.

A major earthquake at or near the Hanford nuclear waste storage tanks and CGS could catastrophically contaminate Eastern

Washington farmlands and Columbia River cities to Portland and beyond. Significant evidence of earthquake risks to the Columbia River dams, the Hanford nuclear waste storage tanks and the CGS nuclear power plant was deliberately underplayed for years until 2002, when scientist Bill Bakun and his colleagues concluded that a 6.5-6.8 earthquake had struck near the southern end of Lake Chelan, north of Entiat, on December 14, 1872. It was the biggest historic quake in Hanford's vicinity.

Hanford whistle-blowers are exposing cover-ups of leaking nuclear waste tanks, as well as design and construction issues that are delaying, and perhaps preventing, vitrification of stored nuclear waste. CGS, 12 miles from the tank farms, gets less attention even though it is a General Electric Mark II Boiling Water Reactor, the same design as the failed Fukushima plants. Senior GE engineers resigned their jobs during the 70's, telling Congress that its containment vessel was an unsafe design. Highly radioactive spent fuel rods stored in pools on its roof are vulnerable to accidents and earthquakes if loss of cooling water results in a meltdown.



A quiet threat: The Columbia Generating Station is the same model as Japan's Fukushima plant. *Photo courtesy of The Seattle Times.*

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Grave Lines: Some Poems of Larry Kerschner

Book Review by Tom Shea

With the publication of *Grave Lines*, Larry Kerschner's second book of poems reflects on his Vietnam War experiences. Kerschner joins a growing number of former Vietnam War combatants who use poetry to put perspectives on the horrors of war. Many Vietnam vets were sucked in to the killing fields in their late teens and early twenties. Years later, as Kerschner writes "I developed great anger and sorrow over what I had been forced to do by a society that is for the most part willfully ignorant of the realities of the world."

Other Vietnam vets also use poetry in their search for dealing with their mental and emotional scars from that war. Oregon's Mike Hastie's work, with his own photographs, often appears in the daily editions of "Military Resistance." Vietnam War poet Dennis Serdel, a member of our Veterans For Peace, Chapter 50 in Michigan, published his poems in *Peace Speaks from the Mirror* in 2009.

Vietnam Veterans told me that the writing and reading of their poetry was indeed part of PTSD recovery work. Kerschner himself, quoted in the Ground Zero Newsletter, July 2008, wrote, "I was in the Infantry in Vietnam and I killed a number of people. I was defending myself but I was in the wrong, being an illegal foreign military occupier of another's country. I know the pain that can be involved in just one violent death. The idea of mutely being involved in the support of our country's plans for the violent death of millions of people is enough to literally break one's heart."

Grave Lines captures the deep meaningful work of some recovery from Vietnam. It can help the reader connect and perhaps realize that as civilians we may have had our own role in that war simply by tolerating it.

The "lines" of Kerschner's poetry can be brief, as in "Answering a Question:" "Being a killer forever changes you / ...that part of you is always there / hiding down inside." The longest lines are eleven pages of Kerschner's epic "US Military Diplomacy – From Wounded Knee to Afghanistan." That poem lists by place and year 128 US military "interventions." They appear in bold print broken into clusters by time periods. After each cluster, the poet offers insightful reflections on these US invasions. For example, woven amid a cluster of mid-80's warfare, from the US raid in Bolivia and bombings of Libya and Iran, is Kerschner's simple background verse: "blue gulf / grey sand / black oil / green money / brown skin / red blood." Most of his poetic mirrors to the atrocities of all our wars and interventions are not so brief and gentle. Many are harsh and gruesome insights, not for sissies.

Our brothers and sisters, thrust unwittingly into the blood and guts of battle, offers readers the opportunity to view some shots from the souls of these inductees to mayhem. Experiencing this kind of poetic insight on what's never totally "past" for war time participants, gives civilians and veterans alike, a new opportunity to the real meaning of "support our troops" and "welcome home."

For some war veterans, trying hard as they can, they never truly come home. However, their poetry shares both their grief and the truly heroic paths toward recovery they walk.

Tom Shea co-chairs the Communications Committee for Ground Zero, and organized the Ground Zero 2013 MLK action.

On the Blight of Trident

By Larry Kerschner

Sea-launched nuclear depression
Impressions of midnight dying
Tears streak the skies in your wake

Begone you black-hearted crime!

Mad with fear you react to your demons
Reported, imagined and mythological
Blind from birth blind about life
Missile tubes carry homeless death
To fulfill your boredom you think
Your dance shows guts and manliness
The moxie of the mutated American

You cannot see new possibilities
Beyond the angst of predatory tradition
There is no place for bursts of wonder
There is no place for the soft rhythm

Aboriginal dreams undreamed
Wailing whales can dig Ahab
Sink your ship of never say die
Subtidal beings sing the blues
In the wake of your nuclear game
Of mutual assured destruction

Words are nothing to radioactive you
Nothing renews in your empty space
Morning stars crash lightly against
First-strike hatred you do not recognize
Within the skull of your unquestioned view
Carry urban death crash the farmer's field
Burn all the children you cannot see

Out unto the clear and distant horizon
Deadly melopoeia of Hiroshima and Nagasaki
Screams through our childish history like
The prow of your boat through Puget Sound

Approaching our dreadful simple destiny
Black hour of murder in the moonlight
Detonation creates a bloody environment
Blast, thermal pulse, neutrons, x- and gamma-rays,
Radiation, electromagnetic pulse,
Ionization of the upper atmosphere
Large amounts of dust and radioactive fallout
As the glowing bodies crumple to the floor
Erotic fireballs warm your lunatic heart.

Larry Kerschner in the Infantry in Viet Nam 1967-69 and likes to say that is where his political education began. He is active with Fellowship of Reconciliation, Veterans for Peace., and Ground Zero.

What's Happening These Days at the GZ House

By Connie Mears

When I painted the shipping container last summer with an image of a map of the world, I envisioned a future when people would come from all over to visit the Ground Zero Peace Garden. Since the container is metal, we got some magnets so that people could mark the place where they were born or where they live. What I didn't imagine was that less than a year later, a group of students from all over the world would visit Ground Zero. We now have 38 magnets from 15 countries on five continents! That, in addition to the well-populated Washington State map. If you know anyone from Antarctica, please send them our address.

On May 30, nursing students in the "Hanford, Sustainable Energy and Peace" course, part of the University of Washington Bothell Nursing and Health Studies Program, participated in an activity at Ground Zero. Designed and taught by Karen Bowman, past president of Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility, the innovative course looked at issues of public safety in regards to sustainability, nuclear energy and peace.

The afternoon gathering opened with Quoc Trung Nguyen playing a beautiful ancient Japanese flute piece in honor of those who perished in the Hiroshima/Nagasaki bombs. Students then shared peace poems, followed by teaching assistant David Bauer who shared a letter penned by Martin Luther King while imprisoned for civil disobedience in the '60s.

That provided the perfect segue for me to talk about Ground Zero's three actions each year at the gates of Bangor. Timing for this visit was perfect, since Dave Hall had recently given us a copy of his PowerPoint presentation and Tom Rogers and Matthew Rankin had completed the new AV system. For nursing students, the effects of a nuclear blast – whether planned or by accident – was sobering, particularly how overwhelming the number of burn patients would be to the public health care system in such an emergency.

After watching the brief video on the Peace Garden, we walked the grounds: the expanded veggie garden, the shipping container map, the Stupa, and the back fence, where they tied Peace Cranes. The Navy did not cut them down as they had done after the visit by a youth group led by Fr. Bill Bichsel.

The nursing students had an opportunity to reflect on their relationship with peace and discussed what peace looked like for them, before heading back to the ferry.

"Oh my gosh, Connie, Thursday turned out to be a better success than I had hoped," Bowman wrote after the event. "You and Ground Zero made a profound impact on the students. I've been hearing comments all week. I look forward to many more events with you."

We've stayed busy with other activities as well. Every other month, local activists are invited to a Community Potluck, and these events have been well attended. Last month we had a sign-making party for the March Against Monsanto action in Bremerton, led by young activist Taylor Niemy, who joined us for the MLK action in January. Mary Gleysteen and I created leaflets with information from Ground Zero and distributed about 200 at the march.

We recently screened a video of an interfaith gathering in New York about spiritual activism, entitled "Sacred Earth Community," which was sponsored by YES! Magazine.

If you'd like to experience a peaceful activity at Ground Zero other than our actions, join us for a weekend Yoga retreat led by Kathleen Sheets. Even if you missed the first in the summer series held on June 29-30, the other two, July 13-14 and August 3-4, still have a few spots available. The cost is just \$160 per weekend. To learn more, contact Kathleen at ksheetsyoga@yahoo.com or by calling (360) 621-6842.

Mary Gleysteen and I, along with activists from the group North Kitsap 99%, are launching a documentary film discussion series starting in September. Free Range Films Kitsap will show documentaries (on a variety of social issues) followed by a brief question and answer session with someone knowledgeable of that topic, and then a discussion. It is modeled after the Meaningful Movies program in Wallingford.

Lastly, the Washington Fellowship of Reconciliation will be coming to Ground Zero on July 7 for a brief action at Bangor. Check out our website and calendar to learn more about these and other activities, at www.groundzerocenter.org.

Connie Mears serves as Caretaker of the Ground Zero House, and is a member of the Stewardship Committee.

Peace Walk Begins July 26

By Susan Cundiff

The Annual Interfaith Peace Walk organized by the Nipponzan Myohoji Buddhist Order in Bainbridge Island will start on July 26. All are welcome to join for a few hours, a few days, or to complete the entire 210-mile walk. This year's walk is entitled, "Each Step a Prayer Towards a Nuclear-Free Future."

The walk will wind through northwest cities and countryside, visiting the Hanford Nuclear Reservation. It will end at Ground Zero on August 11 to coincide with the anniversaries of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan. To learn more, contact Senji Kanaeda Shonin at senji@nipponzan.net or (206) 780-6739.



By Betsy Lamb, with Susan Crane and Leonard Eiger

The 14 federal arrestees were: Fr. Bill “Bix” Bichsel (Tacoma), Ted Brackman (Puyallup, WA), Felice Cohen-Joppa (Tucson, AZ); Susan Crane (Redwood City, CA), Ed Ehmke

Jimmie Lee
 Jim Hall
 Jessie C. Hall - 1919
 Amie C. Hall
 Bill Hedges, S.F.
 Jerry Hedges, 1919
 Fred Hedges, 1919

Nuclear Weapons and the Law

By Mona Lee

Bert Sachs and I were arrested at the Bangor submarine base on May 11 for breaking a law I did not know existed. We had planned to knowingly break the law by stretching a long banner across the road to block traffic into the base as Ground Zero has done every Mother's Day for years. The banner would have called for the abolition of nuclear weapons for the preservation of our mother, the Earth. But we were not given time to unfurl the banner. Our plan was thwarted when, the moment I stepped into the street, a State Patrol officer grabbed me by the arm and told me I was under arrest. He handed me a slip of paper informing me that I had been arrested for "stepping into the roadway."

For what? Now, I was raised by very law-abiding parents who never informed me that it was a crime to step into the street. They had always cautioned me severely to look both ways and make sure there were no cars coming, but after that it would be all right to step into the street. So for more than 74 years I have been unknowingly breaking the law.

Knowingly or unknowingly laws are being broken all the time. In fact, Ground Zero exists because we realize the need of citizens to protest our national government's law-breaking behavior on our behalf. As international law professor Richard Falk testified at the trial of protestors who sat on railroad tracks to block a shipment of nuclear weapons into Bangor in 1985, nuclear weapons are against the Geneva accords because they would intentionally cause untold and unthinkable suffering to many human beings.

Some people think it laughable to expect that a big global bully like the United States would be expected to obey international law. The international legal system is totally dysfunctional because bully rogue states like the US knowingly and unthinkingly break such laws as often and casually as I step off sidewalks onto streets. In fact, the reason disaffected states like North Korea and Iran want nuclear weapons is because anyone who has a nuclear weapon is above the law and can bully other states around at will. There is no governmental entity capable of effectively and consistently enforcing international law.

When I met Professor Falk that day and spoke with him briefly in the hallway of the Kitsap County Courthouse, I did not know that he and his protégé, Dr. Andrew Strauss of Weidener University Law School, understood why international law is so ineffective and would soon suggest a way to improve the international system and make its laws more enforceable. They would propose establishing an entirely new interna-

tional parliament directly elected by the people.

According to Falk and Strauss, one reason international laws are not followed is because there is no connection between the people and the international governing bodies. The UN General Assembly represents governments, not people.

The international legal system is akin to that of the United States under the Articles of Confederation wherein the states blatantly disobeyed federal law. For instance, states would simply refuse to pay their taxes to the federal government. What Alexander Hamilton conjectured was that the reason federal law was so ineffective was that there was no direct relationship between the people and the government. That's why they wrote into the new constitution a congress directly elected by the people.

I met Dr. Andrew Strauss at the Hague Appeal for Peace in 1999. I was there promoting my novel, *Alien Child*, which visions toward forming a democratic global government. Andy was there promoting his unique

idea of a how a global parliament could be started by as few as 20 or 30 countries signing onto a treaty. In those days global civil society, a vast network of nongovernmental organizations, was very strong and getting better organized. Following the Hague Conference, global civil society gathered at the Rio De Junero Summits, the Johannesburg World Summit, the Seattle World Trade Organization protests, World Social Forums in Puerto Alegre, Brazil and Mumbai, India, and more.

It was Richard and Andy's notion that the conception of a civil society and popularly elected world parliament would not need the United States. He proposed that, as with the history of the European Parliament, a global parliament could initially be formed by a few countries, perhaps 20 or 30; i.e., the Scandinavian countries, some of the South American countries, some Asian countries, etc. Clearly the United States would not be among the first to join the global parliament. But more than representing interests of nation states, the parliament might become effective in solving regional cross-border disputes. Eventually over a period of time, perhaps decades, the parliament might become a focus of solving international and regional problems peacefully rather than by force.

Richard and Andy point out that, "The mere establishment of a global parliament would be a welcome step giving hope in a dark time. Taking such a step would signal the emergence of a democratic and peace-oriented alternative to achieving na-



Opposition to nukes is everywhere. Activists rally in rural Kansas against a weapons plant. *Photo courtesy of the Cherith Brook Catholic Worker.*

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tional security through domination and recurrent warfare. In a global democratic parliament, delegates would not represent states as they do in the United Nations, but rather the citizenry directly. Thus shifting transnational coalitions seeking the peaceful resolution of international disputes might be able to discourage political leaders and their publics from a reliance on armed conflict and in time this might slowly lead to the withering away of war as a social institution. Likewise, the Global Peoples' Assembly would offer disaffected citizens constructive alternatives to terrorism and other forms of political violence."

Admittedly, these are very high hopes. But they are what encouraged my husband, Dick Burkhardt, and me to "Bike for Global Democracy." Beginning in 2004, over the next few years we rode our tandem bicycle for thousands of miles in the United States, Canada, India, Brazil, and Europe, talking to people, passing out leaflets, then joining Andy to give workshops at the World Social Forums and other global civil society gatherings. But with the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, times got even darker, our hopes deflated, and we began to focus on other concerns.

However, last month Bernie Meyers referenced an article in the online newspaper Truthout that got my attention. The article stated, "A quiet revolution took place in Oslo earlier this month. More than 120 governments, UN agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and civil society gathered to debate the problem of nuclear weapons, not in military and geopolitical terms, as has been done for decades, but through a humanitarian lens." The article goes on to say that the assembly discussed openly the devastating consequences of nuclear weapons to humanity, with the Red Cross warning that there is no national or international capacity to respond effectively to even a single nuclear attack, let alone an exchange of attacks. The thrust of the meeting was to focus on negotiating a treaty to ban nuclear weapons. Many governments and civil society entities have latched onto this idea, and the Mexican government has offered to host the next meeting. (It should also be noted that many parts of the world – effectively the entire southern hemisphere – have via a series of treaties, declared themselves nuclear-free zones forbidding, their governments to acquire nuclear weapons.)

These initiatives illustrates civil society, the neighbors of Mother Earth, functioning somewhat in a way that a global parliament would, getting together and looking for a way around the bully nuclear-armed states and proposing to outlaw their behavior. Even though the Oslo conference participants were self-appointed rather than elected, they represent the people in a far more direct way than does the United Nations. My hope is that a treaty thus evolved would have a strong moral imperative and function as more effective and binding international law.

Admittedly high hopes.

Mona Lee is an activist, an author, and an avid cyclist. She lives in Seattle where she owns and manages the Whistle Stop Co-op Café.

India Trip Offers Chance to Reflect on Struggle of Good Versus Evil

By Bernie Meyer

What is this? What's the symbolism, the meaning? Ultimately, it's basic. Good versus evil. The photo appeared on the front page of a Chandigarh India newspaper last year. The seventh International Youth Peace Festival was being promoted in September. Gandhi, portrayed by Bernie Meyer, and Ravana, portrayed by a local actor, led a "green" bicycle ride through Chandigarh. At the end Ravana was spontaneously led to lift up Gandhi to the delight of news photographers resulting in front page article. The symbol of evil lifting up the symbol of truth and love.

Gandhigiri versus Dadagiri is a take-off on a recent Indian film, *Lago Raho Manna Bhai*, which depicts Gandhi being used by a gang leader.

Gandhigiri means Gandhi's principles rooted in truth and love. Dadagiri means "beat the bullies." The film has re-popularized Gandhi's message of *satyagraha*, although with local humor and sarcasm about bullies.

Ravana represents evil mythologized in Asia with

multiple versions. Ravana is in combat with Ram, the God of goodness. Gandhi died with the word Ram on his lips in the face of his assassin. The myth of Ravana versus Ram remains deep within the Asian cultures. It is fitting that this spontaneous promotional action occurred to highlight a youth peace festival with 25 nations represented, many from Asian countries.

Going further into the meaning of "Gandhigiri versus Dadagiri," we face the meaning of good versus evil. The face-off has nearly lost its meaning in today's culture. Now, we speak of values, which have taken on the qualities of choice and arbitrariness. "Your values versus my values." Thoughtful analysts of language and meaning have shown that there is no negative value, no zero point in values, thereby eliminating sin or evil. As E.G. Ivan Illich wrote, "And this has made it impossible to convey the idea that modern horrors can be fully grasped only by those who understand their sinfulness, their direct contradiction of the new freedom proposed in the Gospel." Robert Jay Lifton quotes Norman Mailer who goes to the heart of the issue: "If we're going to get rid of the word evil, then we should get rid of the word good as well." For me this view has the ultimate meaning of human willingness to destroy "Mother Earth" as an expression of human dominance over nature, by implication over the "good" of creation. The struggle goes on.



Gandhigiri enjoys his unexpected bike ride through Chandigarh, India. Photo courtesy of *The Hindustan Times*.

Bernie Meyer serves on the Stewardship Council. At the upcoming August Ground Zero weekend, Bernie Meyer will portray Gandhi in his six-scene one person play about Gandhi's life changing experiences resulting in his principles for human living.

and Mary Jane Parrine (Menlo Park, CA), Jim Haber (Las Vegas), Ann Havill and Betsy Lamb (Bend, OR), Tensie Hernandez (Santa Monica, CA), Rodney Herold (Seattle), Denny Moore (Bainbridge Island, WA), Louie Vitale (Oakland, CA), and Jerry Zawada (Milwaukee).

Of those 14, seven were summoned to federal court for an arraignment on June 5 on a single charge of "trespass" or "re-entry" (18 USC 1382), depending on whether one chooses to believe oral or written federal sources. This is the first time in many years that peace activists in any way linked to Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action have faced the threat of jail time in a federal court case for these announced, non-violent, line-crossing actions at the Kitsap-Bangor Trident Naval Base.

The seven were told that they needed to have attorneys, since jail time is being requested by the US Attorney for at least some of the defendants. The process that included assigning lawyers and holding a Farretta hearing for those who wanted to defend themselves took a good part of the morning. Magistrate Judge Tsuchida set up a legal team headed by US Attorney Paula Deutsch, who is with the Public Defender's Office, and attorney Blake Kremer, who assisted *pro bono* with the Plowshares defense following the 2009 arrest of five who had accessed the highly secured strategic weapons area deep within the same base.

In the interests of saving money, both for the government and for those traveling long distances to court, defendants asked if they entered a plea of *nolo contendere* ("no contest") what sort of sentence they would be facing. The defendants were met with silence and no answers other than a statement that the US attorney would only accept a plea of guilty or not guilty. All the defendants pled not guilty.

The trial is set for October 21 in the Tacoma Federal Court in Tacoma, Washington. The defendants are: Bill Bichsel, Susan Crane, Ed Ehmke, Betsy Lamb, Denny Moore, Mary Jane Parrine, and Jerry Zawada.

Bichsel, of the Tacoma Catholic Worker community and 2012 Greater Tacoma Peace Prize laureate, commented on the significance of the Pacific Life Community's work. "We refuse to accept nuclear weapons as our security. We owe it to our children and grandchildren to create a nonviolent world. We are the future and the kingdom that we have been waiting for."

The Tacoma Catholic Worker community hosted the defendants for the arraignment. Good company, good conversation, good food. Thanks to them and to all the Zeroistas and others who came to court to accompany us and to support the cause.

Betsy Lamb has been active in the struggle for peace and justice since the 1980s. She lives in Bend, Oregon.

CGS is owned by Energy Northwest, a consortium of 27 Washington public utility districts. CGS's nuclear energy supplies 3.9 percent of our state's electrical energy. With plentiful and safer renewable energy sources like hydro, wind, solar and conservation, it makes sense to close CGS and store its spent fuel in hardened on-site storage casks. Once cooled and stored, similar casks in Japan were safe during the Fukushima earthquake and tsunami.

Woefully underfunded and given low priority, earthquake emergency preparedness here relies on "resilience." Like a trampoline, resilience has its limits. It's our job to lessen the weight. We must prevent irreparable contamination by taking the nuclear factor out of the equation.

We must not be tempted to cower behind the excuse that we don't want to scare people. If being scared can motivate us to minimize nuclear hazards in advance of the next "big one," we will ultimately be more resilient.

Mary Hanson is a member of the Ground Zero Stewardship Council. She lives in Seattle.

eloquently when he said that "[nuclear weapons] deter us from having health care for tens of millions of our people; they deter us from educating our children adequately; they deter us from fixing our crumbling roads, bridges and other infrastructures; they deter us from protecting and healing our planet's environment; they deter us from reaching out in compassion to suffering people around the world; they deter peaceful resolution of conflict the world over."

Leonard Eiger finished by putting the risk of nuclear weapons in sobering perspective. "The longer we deploy nuclear weapons as we do now, the greater the probability of either accidental or intentional nuclear war. Such an event could bring an end to civilization as we know it. According to Stanford Professor Emeritus Martin Hellman, an expert in risk assessment, the risk of a child born today suffering early death due to nuclear war is at least 10 percent. Such a risk is simply unacceptable."

In addition to speaking to the legal aspects, Eiger spoke to the moral issues. "Nuclear weapons are fundamentally immoral in as much as they are indiscriminate killers that, in addition to the instant deaths of upwards of millions of people (including civilians), continue to kill for generations. Beyond that, they could quite likely bring an end to civilization as we know it or even an end to the human race. This makes nuclear weapons absolutely unacceptable instruments for maintaining anything remotely resembling peace in our world."

In speaking to the issue of why nuclear resisters take such actions as these three did, Eiger quoted Catholic Worker activist and author Rosalie Riegle. "In her book 'Doing Time for Peace', Riegle says 'St. Augustine told us that hope has two beautiful daughters, anger and courage. Anger at the way things are and the courage to do something about it.'"

These three resisters continue an enduring tradition of people choosing to do something about nuclear weapons. You can read more details and the complete statements to the court by Eiger, Karlin and Kirchmer at www.pacificlifecommunity.wordpress.com.

Leonard Eiger co-chairs the Communications Committee for Ground Zero. He tirelessly publicizes the work of Ground Zero, the Plowshares movement, and other activists for nuclear abolition.

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

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*“**H**ope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul
And sings the tune without the words
And never stops at all.”*

— Emily Dickinson

The Peace Fleet Will Set Sail — Without the Navy

By Glen Milner

For the twelfth year, local activists will stage a water-based nonviolent demonstration for peace at the Seattle Seafair festival. Other peace activists will meet on land near Pier 66 and at Piers 62/63 on the Seattle waterfront at the same time for a nonviolent demonstration for peace. The water action will take place on Wednesday, July 31, noon, with the land-based action following at 1:00pm.

Peace activists will address the public display of warships and warplanes in our community and protest against the normalcy of modern war. However, this year will be the first year for the event without the US Navy fleet and the Blue Angels.

Ground Zero activist and long-time Peace Fleet sailor Mary Gleysteen stated, “We would prefer to have changed public opinion and stopped the glorification of warships in El-



liott Bay, but if the Navy cannot afford to bring its ships to Seattle, we are okay with that too.”

The US Navy will not be in attendance due to budget cuts through sequestration. A spokesperson for the 3rd Fleet said in April that the round-trip bill for fuel alone for three warships from San Diego to attend the Seattle Seafair festival in 2012 cost \$1.1 million.

The Peace Fleet this year, as in past years, will require no public funds or public resources. We can all afford peace.

For more information, contact Glen Milner at (206) 365-7865 or Mary Gleysteen at (360) 265-1589.

Glen Milner serves on the Ground Zero Stewardship Council and lives in Lake Forest Park. **Leonard Eiger** took the photo above of the Peace Fleet presence in 2010.