

Appeal to Navy Personnel

Brothers and Sisters in the Navy: "Refuse to engage in nuclear annihilation!"

Peace activists in the Puget Sound region have worked to stop the threat of nuclear weapons since the [1970s](#). We have learned that we share a common concern with members of the armed forces—that the use of nuclear weapons would lead to unimaginable destruction to innocent populations and to our planet.

While the danger of [nuclear war](#) is as great as ever, little is being done to curb this [threat](#). One person in our country, our [President](#) acting as [Commander in Chief](#), may alone order the launch of nuclear weapons. No single person should have the power to end life on the planet.

We, the undersigned, are convinced that nuclear weapons are the greatest evil on Earth. We believe that humankind created these weapons, and that only humankind can prevent their use.

We bring our plea to you, sisters and brothers, in the armed forces:

Resist illegal orders.

Refuse to kill innocent civilians.

Refuse the order to use nuclear weapons.

We know your resistance will be difficult and require great courage. But please reflect on what it means to violate your conscience and to destroy all hope for future generations.

International decisions have ruled that the use of nuclear weapons is illegal, including decisions at the [International Court of Justice in 1996](#); the [1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#); the [1949 Geneva Convention](#); and the [1977 Geneva Convention protocol](#). The [Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons](#) will enter into legal force on January 22, 2021.

The [Uniform Code of Military Justice \(UCMJ\)](#) makes it clear that military personnel have an obligation and a duty to only obey lawful orders and indeed have an obligation to [disobey unlawful orders](#), including orders by the president that do not comply with the UCMJ. The moral and legal obligation is to the U.S. Constitution and not to those who might issue unlawful orders, especially if those orders are in direct violation of the Constitution and the UCMJ.

Knowing that submarines from Bangor are ready to immediately launch as many as 270 nuclear warheads, an order to launch nuclear weapons would signify the final failure of nuclear deterrence and bring about unprecedented destruction. Do not obey an illegal order. Instead, choose to protect all of creation.

Contact [Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action](#), at 360-930-8697, or info@gzcenter.org for more information.

We make this plea to you knowing that federal agencies may see this appeal as a violation of [18 U.S. Code § 2387](#) and possibly other federal statutes. If you choose to oppose [nuclear war](#) please know that our hearts and homes are open to you. We will do what we can to support your decision.

SIGNATURES

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[18 U.S. Code § 2387](#) - Activities affecting armed forces generally

(a) Whoever, with intent to interfere with, impair, or influence the loyalty, morale, or discipline of the [military or naval forces of the United States](#):

(1) advises, counsels, urges, or in any manner causes or attempts to cause insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, or refusal of duty by any member of the [military or naval forces of the United States](#); or

(2) distributes or attempts to distribute any written or printed matter which advises, counsels, or urges insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, or refusal of duty by any member of the [military or naval forces of the United States](#)—

Shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than ten years, or both, and shall be ineligible for employment by the [United States](#) or any [department](#) or [agency](#) thereof, for the five years next following his conviction.

(b) For the purposes of this section, the term "[military or naval forces of the United States](#)" includes the Army of the [United States](#), the Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Navy Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, and Coast Guard Reserve of the [United States](#); and, when any merchant vessel is commissioned in the Navy or is in the service of the Army or the Navy, includes the master, officers, and crew of such vessel.

June 18, 2019

(updated December 21, 2020)