

Ground Zero

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A Joyful Protest Leads to a Powerful Court Experience

By Mary Gleysteen

Susie Delaney and Elizabeth Murray, two of those arrested at the Bangor Trident Base Main Gate on August 8th during Ground Zero's vigil, flash dance and nonviolent direct action, appeared in Kitsap County District Court before Judge Pro Tem Susan Caulkins on October 25. Susan was the choreographer of fantastic dance that preceded the direct action.

In an unusual turn of events, the judge, upon reviewing their traffic court cases and accepting Susie and Elizabeth's written statements and a copy of the Ground Zero Newsletter, said, "This is a ticket I don't see everyday. I am dismissing it because there is no officer's report."

When Delaney asked if the judge wanted to hear her testimony, the judge questioned whether Susie wanted to risk the fine just for the judge's entertainment. Susie accepted the challenge and at the conclusion of her faith-

based testimony the judge said, "I respect your exercise of the right of free speech and applaud your willingness to come tell us. The matter is dismissed."

Elizabeth spoke next. Just before she testified a young woman in uniform entered the courtroom and took a seat behind Ground Zero supporters. She looked stricken at the conclusion of Elizabeth's presentation, and thanked her for her testimony. Others in the courtroom were also visibly moved.

The judge dismissed Elizabeth's charges as well, saying, "Thank you for coming. Go forth and have a great day."

On the courthouse steps we encountered the uniformed woman who said that she is in Navy intelligence.

Court experience... continued on page 2

Her name is Sarah, and she agreed to have her picture taken with Susie and Elizabeth. You can read the defendants' written testimonies (as presented to the judge) below.

Elizabeth Murray's testimony:

Good afternoon, Your Honor.

My name is Elizabeth Murray. I spent 27 years in the CIA as a political and media analyst, and was Deputy National Intelligence Officer for the Near East in the National Intelligence Council. I have chosen peace work as the most meaningful way to spend my remaining years.

I would like to acknowledge the presence of three fellow Ground Zero colleagues in the courtroom today. Thank you for your support and solidarity.

So as I stand before you, Judge Caulkins, we face a time of unprecedented nuclear tension between the United States and Russia. Our friends and neighbors at Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor are no doubt in a state of high alert after Russian officials yesterday announced they had evidence that Ukraine has completed a dirty nuclear bomb which could be used in a false-flag operation — something that could potentially trigger World War III.

"Sometimes a higher moral law outweighs what is, under the circumstances, a lesser law."

"In the thermonuclear age, any misjudgment on either side about the intentions of the other could rain more devastation in several hours than has been wrought in all the wars of humanity." (Report to the American People on the Berlin Crisis, July 25, 1961)

And at the height of the Cuban Missile Crisis, President Kennedy showed courage in daring to speak of peace in his Report to the American People on the Soviet Arms Buildup in Cuba, October 22, 1962:



Elizabeth Murray, left, and Susan Delaney, right, stand on either side of Navy Officer Sarah. The newsletter editor has obscured Sarah's face to protect her from any repercussions. Photo by Mary Gleysteen.

"I speak of peace because of the new face of war. Total war makes no sense in an age when great powers can maintain large and relatively invulnerable nuclear forces and refuse to surrender without resort to those forces. It makes no sense in an age when a single nuclear weapon contains almost ten times the explosive force delivered by all the allied air forces in the Second World War. It makes no sense in an age when the deadly poisons produced by a nuclear exchange would be carried by wind and water and soil and seed to the far corners of the globe and to generations yet unborn."

With Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor a likely target in any nuclear confrontation with Russia, members of our community here in Kitsap County want to know what they can do to stop this dangerous game of brinkmanship and say "no" to war. And that is where we at the Ground Zero Center come in.

For nearly 50 years the Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action has sought the reduction and destruction of nuclear weapons. With the UN's adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in 2017, that goal is no longer

just a dream—it is a reachable destination and a practical matter of life or death. Nuclear weapons are illegal and nuclear states must disarm. The risks inherent in nuclear disarmament pale in comparison with the risks inherent in an all-out nuclear war. As all of us here know, such a war would yield no winners. We all stand to lose.

So turning back to the matter before the Court today, sometimes an injured party has to step into the roadway to draw attention to a grievous moral harm, Your Honor. Sometimes a higher moral law outweighs what is, under the circumstances, a lesser law.

We at Ground Zero believe that no change can occur in our country's present first-strike nuclear policy without first drawing the public's attention to a dire situation that rightly should provoke profound alarm in all of us.

Your Honor, I have done nothing less than stand against the criminal existence of nuclear weapons and the ever-present threat of their use against not only our adversaries, but anyone and anything within their range — whether they be mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, our

ecosystems on land and at sea, or perhaps even just a tiny, newly hatched baby bird.

In closing, I would like to recall the words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German theologian executed by the Gestapo for taking a stand against Hitler and fascism:

“Silence in the face of evil is itself evil.
God will not hold us guiltless.
Not to speak is to speak.
Not to act is to act.”

Thank you, Your Honor.

Susan Delaney’s testimony:

I am here to give testimony as to my reasons for the infraction of blocking the road at the entrance to the Bangor submarine base on August 8, 2022.

I am a practicing Catholic who takes Pope Francis seriously when he says that the manufacture, possession and of course, use of nuclear weapons is immoral and sinful.

The Archbishop of Seattle, Paul Etienne, has directed Catholics in our area to take immediate action to avert nuclear disaster.

Archbishop John Wester of Santa Fe says we must start a public conversation to find a new path toward nu-

clear disarmament before it is too late.

These leaders are all correct. Nuclear weapons are immoral and we need a conversation and a new path now. This requires making people aware of the dangers that we all face. Raising local awareness has been my motivation for organizing and participating in the peaceful, non-violent dancing-musical blockade at the entrance to Bangor. There has been no formal news coverage of our actions at the Bangor gate for years and so we are now filming ourselves and posting our actions on-line.

Your honor, I invite you to view our dance video by checking out the Ground Zero website and to consider our musical peace work as one small step to get people talking about this critical issue.

Thank you for your consideration.



Mary Gleysteen lives in Kingston where she volunteers serving homeless residents. She has worked for nuclear disarmament for over 40 years. **Glen Milner** filmed the flash mob dance on August 8, which the photo on the front page is taken from.

Join Ground Zero for Martin Luther King, Jr. Action!

By Michael “Firefly” Siptroth

Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action will host a Vigil at Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor on Friday, January 13th from 1 to 2 pm in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Bangor Trident submarine base and nuclear weapons storage depot – the largest operational concentration of nuclear warheads in the US arsenal – is a most appropriate venue for our vigil honoring Dr. King’s non-violent legacy.

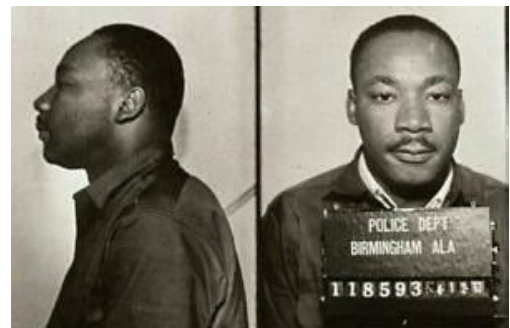
We call out the triple evils identified by Martin Luther King, Jr — poverty, racism and militarism — that are still deeply entrenched and compounded by a mounting ecological crisis. We apply nonviolent action in our work as we seek to eliminate the underlying factors supporting the funding, construction, maintenance and continuing threat of use of nuclear weapons that threaten all life on Earth. We call on the United States to join with the vast majority of nations in support of the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and lead the way to global nuclear disarmament.

The January 13th vigil (and possible nonviolent direct action) will take place at the base’s Main Gate. Banners and signs will be provided. Bring your nonviolent spirit.

Participants will walk from Ground Zero Center to the Main Gate (a 10-15 minute walk) for the vigil. Transportation will be available for anyone needing assistance getting to the gate.

Participants are invited to join the Ground Zero Stewardship Council’s monthly meeting, which starts at 10 am at Ground Zero Center, with a potluck lunch at noon.

Information on the event is posted on the Events Page at gzcenter.org.



Michael “Firefly” Siptroth lives in Belfair where he manages an organic farm. Booking photo of Martin Luther King, Jr., courtesy of www.history.com.

There is no military solution to the crisis in Ukraine

Know Where You Stand!

By Leonard Eiger

Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action reacted strongly to the news that the Congressional Progressive Caucus had withdrawn its letter, signed by 30 House members and sent to the White House on October 24th, urging President Biden to negotiate directly with Russia to bring an end to the war in Ukraine. On October 25th Ground Zero issued a statement, which was sent to Representative Pramila Jayapal, chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, calling on the Caucus to reaffirm its original call for a ceasefire and diplomacy.

According to the Washington Post, the Caucus' letter "triggered fierce pushback from many Democrats, as well as from Ukrainian officials, who argued that it was unrealistic to negotiate with Russian President Vladimir Putin," and "could create more pressure on Biden as he tries to sustain domestic support for the war effort, at a time when the region is heading into a potentially difficult winter and Republicans are threatening to cut aid to Ukraine if they retake Congress."

Some analysts estimate the true figure for military assistance to Ukraine so far at nearly \$40 billion, and that figure will continue to increase, much to the glee of US weapons makers. Although there have been almost constant announcements of continued military funding for Ukraine in what is obviously a US proxy war with Russia, there has been near silence from Washington, D.C. when it comes to efforts to achieve a negotiated settlement to the hostilities.

Without intense diplomatic efforts, the continuous funneling of weapons to Ukraine will only serve to perpetuate the destruction, suffering and death being endured by the Ukrainian people. And, as the conflict rages on, there is the continuous threat of a nuclear conflict between the US and Russia that would likely mean the end of civilization as we know it.

According to the Washington Post article, Rep. Sara Jacobs (D-Calif.), one of the letter's signatories, tweeted, "Timing in diplomacy is everything," Jacobs said, "I signed this letter on June 30, but a lot has changed since then. I wouldn't sign it today. We have to continue supporting Ukraine economically and militarily to give them the leverage they need to end this war."

Representative Jayapal, chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, quickly backtracking on the letter, said that, "Diplomacy is an important tool that can save

lives — but it is just one tool." Jayapal and the rest of the Progressive Caucus should understand that "diplomacy" is the only tool that can save lives. Continuing to support the armed conflict is like pouring gasoline onto a fire.

The letter from the Congressional Progressive Caucus is emblematic of the inability of our elected officials, even those who call themselves "progressive", to stand firmly against the drumbeats of war and lead the way to a peaceful solution to a crisis that holds all of humanity at threat (and from threats far more existential than high food and gas prices). There is never a bad time to practice diplomacy.

President Biden has warned that we've never been closer to nuclear war since the Cuban Missile Crisis. Yet he refuses to meet with Russia's President Vladimir Putin, continues to call for more weapons shipments, and had the US participating in NATO's recent mock nuclear war exercises in Europe.

There is NO military solution to the conflict in Ukraine; the continuing stream of weapons to Ukraine only serves to fan the flames of war and increase the risk of nuclear omnicide. It doesn't matter who started the war; diplomacy is the only way to end it. People's lives are at stake!



The world wants peace. Activists rallied in Vienna earlier this year for an end to the war. Photo courtesy of www.thelocal.at.

The Congressional Progressive Caucus should have been leading the call for diplomacy from the beginning of this crisis (if not long before). That being said, it is not too late to do the right thing, and the members of the caucus should not be afraid to stand against the "pushback" and accusations intended to make them withdraw from their position [in their letter to President Biden].

The late Jesuit priest and peacemaker Fr. Daniel Berrigan once said, "Know where you stand and stand there." He was

speaking to those with the conscience to understand that violence, war and nuclear weapons are absolutely wrong. It takes courage to stand up and do what is right in the midst of seemingly overwhelming opposition. Let us hope that the members of the Congressional Progressive Caucus will one day (hopefully sooner than later) come to know where they stand and stand there.

Leonard Eiger chairs the Communication and Outreach Committee, and sends out press releases and information on behalf of Ground Zero.

Nuclear Resisters Prepare for Federal Trial

By Leonard Eiger

“Christmas came early this year,” to quote one of two nuclear resisters who crossed the blue line onto the Bangor Trident nuclear submarine base in Silverdale, Washington.

Macknight “Mack” Johnson of Silverdale; and Victor White of Oceanside, California crossed onto the base early Monday morning on August 8th in a nonviolent direct action to remember the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki 77 years ago and to call for the abolition of nuclear weapons. The two were detained by Naval security personnel, cited for Trespassing, and released.

Both resisters received notices in November ordering them to appear by video on December 7th for arraignment on the Trespassing charge. Both pleaded “Not Guilty” to the charge at their arraignment, and had their trial date set for March 1, 2023 at 1:30pm in US District Court, Tacoma, Washington. They will appear before a Magistrate Judge on that date.

Attorney Blake Kremer, who has assisted so many nuclear resisters over the years, is helping Johnson and White prepare their defense, but cannot represent both of them at trial. The magistrate judge at arraignment felt it could be a potential conflict of interest for Kremer to represent both defendants.

During the “discovery” phase the Navy prosecutor will supply evidence related to the Trespassing charge. Pre-trial motions will determine whether the defendants will be able to mount a reasonable defense. In nearly all previous Federal trials of nuclear resisters judges have precluded essentially every reasonable defense; including the Necessity Defense, International Humanitarian Law, the Nuremberg Principles, and any discussion of nuclear weapons.

If convicted, Johnson and White face penalties of up to 6 months imprisonment and \$5000 in fines. Kremer said, regarding the lengthy potential prison time, that “One of the crazy things about federal court charges

is that a charge of a simple misdemeanor like this [Trespassing] can result in six months imprisonment, and still the defendant is not entitled to counsel at public expense nor a jury trial.”

For those interested in the upcoming trial, we will have it posted on the Ground Zero Events page.



After being cited by Naval security, Mack (left) and Vic (right) shared a message of solidarity. Photo by Karol Milner.

Leonard Eiger chairs the Communication and Outreach Committee, and updates content for the Ground Zero website.



Ground Zero Member-in-Residence Kathy Railsback took this ethereal photo of the Peace Pagoda under construction in early December.

Julian Assange and Political Whistleblowers Need Our Support

By Leonard Eiger

Ground Zero continues to circulate the following statement released on November 28, 2022 in support of Julian Assange and whistleblowers. In this precarious time for press freedom - a critical element of our democracy - we are called to defend the Constitution and those who serve it's intent. After you read our statement, we invite you to write a Letter to the Editor and/or a message to your elected officials in Washington, D.C.

[Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action](#) supports [Julian Assange](#) for exposing war crimes committed by the United States Government, and we demand that (at very least) he not be extradited to the United States and that he be provided safe haven in another nation.



A victim of the world's most powerful empire. Julian Assange is held in a high-security U.K. prison facing extradition to the U.S. on espionage charges for which he faces a potential sentence of 175 years. *Photo courtesy of the Associated Press.*

Rather than being persecuted by the US Government – the judicial process having been subverted by the State's desire to maintain the secrecy of its war crimes and divert attention to those who expose the truth – Assange should be praised for shining a light on our government's crimes against humanity.

Assange has been charged with multiple violations under the [Espionage Act of 1917](#), an archaic law that has been misused by our government since its enactment. If convicted, Assange faces up to 175 years in jail in what would be the first prosecution of a publisher under the U.S. Espionage Act. In a functioning democracy, journalists can reveal war crimes and cases of torture and abuse without being punished. If our government can use espionage laws against journalists and publishers, they are deprived of their most important and traditional defense – of acting in the interest of the public's right to know.

[Speaking for the Committee to Protect Journalists](#) (CPJ) in 2019, CPJ North America Program Coordinator Alexandra Ellerbeck said, "It is a reckless assault on the First Amendment that crosses a line... and threatens to

criminalize the most basic practices of reporting."

In our constitutional democracy, We The People have the need and the right to know what our government is doing in our name. When such information is kept secret we cannot fully take part in the democratic process, and therefore do not have a functioning democracy.

The erosion of democracy and [First Amendment](#) press freedoms hinders the dissemination of truth and allows the responsible parties to skirt responsibility and repercussions for their criminal actions. There have been no prosecutions resulting from the evidence published by Wikileaks clearly showing war crimes being committed.

We recognize both freedom of the press and the public's right to know – recognized in both the United Nations [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) and the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. These cherished freedoms are in danger and need protection.

Julian Assange's so-called crime was to publish records of war crimes leaked to him from whistleblowers who shone a spotlight on US operations and the realities of the endless "[war on terror](#)." The most infamous of these was the "[collateral murder](#)" video footage of US helicopter attacks in Baghdad that killed 11 civilians including two Reuters journalists. [Chelsea Manning](#) disclosed the footage to [Wikileaks](#) along with nearly 750,000 classified and/or sensitive military and diplomatic documents, and was court-martialed in 2013 for violations of the Espionage Act and other offenses.

Our government has demonstrated that it is more concerned with covering up its war crimes around the world than upholding the Constitution, in the name of [national security](#). The crimes exposed with such shocking clarity and lack of repercussions to those involved demonstrate that the disregard for human life extends from the very highest levels of government all the way to the lowest levels of the military chain of command.

As Assange said in a [December 20, 2012 statement](#), "The power of people speaking up and resisting together terrifies corrupt and undemocratic power. So much so that ordinary people here in the West are now the enemy of governments, an enemy to be watched, an enemy to be controlled and to be impoverished." Ground Zero has a deep understanding and appreciation for this statement in as much as our members, and many of our colleagues in the anti-nuclear movement, have worked for decades to speak out about and resist the undemocratic power represented by our nation's nuclear arsenal and our government's continuing threat of use of nuclear weapons, and many have been imprisoned as a result.

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UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and Inhumane Treatment, Nils Melzer, accompanied by a medical doctor and a psychiatrist, visited Assange in 2019 to examine and interview him. [His report on this inspection](#) stated that he believed Assange showed clear symptoms of having been psychologically tortured. Mr. Assange should, therefore, be viewed as a victim of psychological torture, and his extradition should therefore be illegal under international human rights law. Melzer also said that, "While the US Government prosecutes Mr. Assange for publishing information about serious human rights violations, including torture and murder, the officials responsible for these crimes continue to enjoy impunity."

Whereas the charges against Julian Assange are false accusations:

We demand that the US Government drop all charges against Julian Assange that relate to his publishing activities in his work with Wikileaks. The US government's unrelenting pursuit of Assange for having published disclosed documents that included probable war crimes committed by the US military is nothing short of a full-scale assault on the right to freedom of expression.

We condemn the reported mistreatment of Julian Assange by the UK Government during his incarceration, and demand that the government of the United Kingdom take immediate action to protect him from further mistreatment and extradition to the United States.

We urge the US Congress to conduct an impartial investigation into the process by which Assange was indicted as well as the US government's role in coercing other governments

(particularly Ecuador and United Kingdom) into cooperating with the US in extraditing Assange.

We also call on those members of Congress who believe in the inviolability of the United States Constitution to speak out on behalf of Julian Assange and his rights under the First Amendment.

Furthermore, we support all whistleblowers and the journalists who bring their evidence of state-sponsored crimes to the public sphere, thereby keeping democracy alive.

We agree with the statement made by the Walkley Foundation in Australia in June 2022 that, "...by designing and constructing a means to encourage whistleblowers, WikiLeaks and its editor-in-chief Julian Assange took a brave, determined, and independent stand for freedom of speech and transparency that has empowered people all over the world. And in the process, they have triggered a robust debate inside and outside the media about official secrecy, the public's right to know and the future of journalism."

Assange's extradition would send a chilling message to journalists and others gathering evidence to investigate war crimes, ultimately threatening initiatives seeking justice for civilians caught up in wars and violent conflicts.

In summation, we call on all journalists and peace activists who cherish freedom of speech and expression to stand up strongly with Julian Assange and demand his immediate release. We continue to uphold all journalists who speak truth to power and support their sources - including whistleblowers - who risk everything to make this possible.

Leonard Eiger chairs the Communication and Outreach Committee.

Let Us Be Midwives! An untold story of the atomic bombing

Poem by Sadako Kurihara

Night in the basement of a concrete structure now in ruins.
Victims of the atomic bomb jammed the room;
It was dark—not even a single candle.
The smell of fresh blood, the stench of death,
The closeness of sweaty people, the moans.
From out of all that, lo and behold, a voice:
"The baby's coming!"
In that hellish basement,
At that very moment, a young woman had gone into labor.
In the dark, without a single match, what to do?
People forgot their own pains, worried about her.
And then: "I'm a midwife. I'll help with the birth."
The speaker, seriously injured herself, had been moaning
only moments before.
And so new life was born in the dark of that pit of hell.
And so the midwife died before dawn, still bathed in blood.
Let us be midwives!
Let us be midwives!
Even if we lay down our own lives to do so.



Sadako Kurihara (1913–2005) was a poet, writer and peace activist who survived the Hiroshima bombing. "Let Us Be Midwives" was based on her experience in a shelter in the aftermath of the bombing. In the photo above, a woman rests in a shelter in Hiroshima after the bombing.

Tom Rogers' Journey

From nuclear sub commander to nuclear weapons abolitionist

By Patrick Mazza

At various points of his career as a U.S. Navy submarine officer, he oversaw safety and security of nuclear weapons on board, conducted disaster drills, and was part of the team that would authenticate orders to use them. Rising to captain of a sub, he was responsible for the whole picture.

Later in his career, Rogers began to raise his voice against what he saw as a national security strategy flawed by its reliance on weapons that would cause a global holocaust. After he retired, he became an advocate for nuclear weapons abolition, and has been arrested at least 10 times blocking the gates at the Trident submarine base in Bangor, Washington, site of the largest concentration of deployed U.S. nuclear weapons.

There is no such thing as a limited nuclear war, Rogers says. "It's a fallacy if to think you can control a nuclear war. It's use them or lose them. That's the fallacy of relying on nuclear weapons."

"It's only a matter of time until by miscalculation or accident a nuclear weapon gets used. Because of the way the strategy is written, you don't shoot just one nuclear weapon. You don't see just three coming over the horizon. You see 3,000. The only way to prevent that carnage is to get rid of them."

In 1966, Rogers received his draft notice. Looking for an alternative to an Army tour in Vietnam, he stopped by a Navy recruiting office and signed up. With a couple of years studying engineering in college, he opted for training to run submarine nuclear power plants. Doing well at that, he was selected for officer training. Completing his engineering degree and training, Rogers was commissioned and went back to the sub fleet.

Over the next 26 years, he would serve on four nuclear subs, including one ballistic missile submarine and three attack vessels. All were armed with nuclear weapons. Attack subs could launch nuclear-tipped rockets from their torpedo tubes before nukes were taken off all Navy ships, except the ballistic missile subs, after the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union. Rogers rose through the ranks to captain the USS Pogy from 1988-91, and then became a staff officer stationed at Pearl Harbor, working on what he can only describe as "sensitive submarine operations in the Pacific."

"That was where I really questioned where we were going with strategic plans," Rogers says. With the Cold War over, "I would ask admirals, why we are building up when we should be building down? They would answer that regardless of the Russians' intentions we have to be mindful of their capabilities so we can't afford to reduce our capabilities below theirs. That was bullshit in that what I believed and still believe is that the national security strategy is written by defense contractors and

high ranking officers that are going to go to work for defense contractors and lobbyists. It is the military-industrial congressional complex that determines the national security strategy. Every weapons system that is eliminated is a loss of revenues."



"Why are we building up?" Tom Rogers came to question the US's nuclear strategy after the end of the Cold War. *Photo courtesy of James Kimber.*

Over the last three years before he retired in 1998, Rogers was stationed to San Diego as part of an elite team teaching admiral-level battle group commanders prior to their deployment. "In that role I had a lot of access to a lot of people. I spoke out about using nuclear weapons as primary national security strategy. I spoke out in the Navy, never publicly. I never would make admiral, but they couldn't get rid of me."

After retirement, Rogers was enraged by a prime example of that military-industrial-congressional complex at work. Eighteen Trident ballistic missile submarines had been built, but the first eight were obsolete. The Navy planned to decommission the subs. "Congress wouldn't let them," and forced a costly overhaul of four of the subs to carry more advanced nuclear missiles, and another four to carry conventionally-armed cruise missiles. "That's what got me to Ground Zero, out of my idyllic retirement. I've been an activist since 2002."

Rogers is referring to the Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action located in Poulsbo, Washington, near where the 75-year-old currently lives. It is within what would be the blast radius if a nuclear weapon were to strike the nearby Trident base. "That's why we call it Ground Zero," he says.

Ground Zero stages three nonviolent actions at the Trident base each year, in January commemorating Martin Luther King's birthday, in May on Mother's Day, and in August to remember the nuclear bombings at Hiroshi-

Tom Rogers... continued on page 9

ma and Nagasaki. This past August, 40 people blocked the gates at the sub base and 13 were arrested to note the 77th anniversary of the bombings.

"I've been arrested at least 10 times. I haven't kept track," Rogers says. "It's an opportunity to use the court as a public forum. I've done mitigation hearings explaining why I did what I did, asking the judge to throw out the citation." He has been successful in that several times, and when fined it has always been reduced "to a pittance."

"What have we accomplished? That's what people ask," Rogers adds. "Why are you wasting your time? But that's all we can do, being that small voice. You get enough small voices. Our government has to listen." Trident and its dangers

Nuclear war would be a global disaster, immediately killing many millions by blast and radiation, and over subsequent years bringing death to billions as black soot spewed into the stratosphere by nuclear fires crashed agricultural production and caused global famine. In recent years, studies have shown that the small arsenals held by countries such as India and Pakistan could cause a nuclear winter, let alone the massive stockpiles held by the U.S. and Russia.

Rogers estimates that the Trident fleet at Bangor carries around 135,000 kilotons, or 135 megatons, of nuclear weaponry. In other words, each sub carries well over 1,000 times the nuclear firepower of the 15-kiloton bomb that destroyed Hiroshima. If recent nuclear winter studies based on computer climate modeling are correct, each Trident has over 10 times the weapons needed to set off a nuclear winter. Altogether, an estimated 1,300 nuclear warheads are situated at Bangor either in submarines or in reserve in an underground bunker. That is more than the 1,000 warheads held by all 7 nuclear states beyond the U.S. and Russia. It is the largest concentration of active U.S. nuclear warheads anywhere in the world.

The START treaty, first negotiated in 1991 and re-upped in 2021 for 5 years, limits the U.S. and Russia to 1,550 deployed warheads each. But it sets no limits on reserves. The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists estimates the U.S. holds nearly 2,000. Rogers points to the danger in that. START is only scheduled to run through 2026, after which reserves could quickly be brought out of storage. Those additional tubes on submarines could be filled, and more warheads added to each missile. At the same time, reserve warheads could be added to ground-based ICBMs and mounted on bombers.

"That could happen very quickly," Rogers says, emphasizing that the next START agreement must reduce reserve as well as deployed forces. Rogers has developed a pathway to nuclear abolition, in which both the U.S. and Russia would reduce total stockpiles to 500 weapons each, which he describes as a "minimum viable deterrent." Because ICBMs are the most vulnerable, forcing a rapid "use it or lose it" response, those should be elimi-

nated along with most of the bomber fleet, leaving most weapons in the harder to detect subs.

But that would only be a step toward total abolition by the U.S. and the other nuclear powers, China, France, Britain, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea. Once the two major nuclear powers together holding over 90% of the world's nuclear weapons agree to rid themselves of theirs, other powers would readily eliminate their stockpiles, Rogers believes.

The U.S. movement against nuclear weapons is "lily-white 1960s people who are now grayheads," he said. "Reaching out and finding allies in all of the younger demographics is something I spend a lot of time thinking about. We at Ground Zero are trying to reach out on social media. We don't get much interest from younger people or people of color. At Cal Anderson, there were one or two people of color in the demonstration. I don't know the answer to that."

I shared a bit of my personal experience as a long-time participant in a movement to stem that other great threat of global immolation, albeit slower moving, climate disruption. To my mind, climate chaos and nuclear war are the two towering challenges facing humanity. If we don't overcome those, not much else will matter. In the early days in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the climate movement was largely composed of middle age and older white professionals, with limited traction among youth and people of color. In recent years, that has profoundly changed. Young people and diverse faces are at the leading edge of the climate movement. With nuclear war dangers coming to the foreground in ways not seen in decades, the nuclear weapons abolition movement certainly has a similar potential.

At a deeper level, I wonder if we can overcome the many critical challenges confronting us without a broad movement that addresses them together, targeting their common basis in who holds power in society. Tom provided a key clue when he told me we will not dislodge that military-industrial-congressional complex that perpetuates the arms race without campaign finance reform. A parallel is the fossil-industrial-congressional complex that holds back action sufficient to address the climate crisis. The control of our political and governmental processes by powerful interests is at the root of all our major challenges. It will take a broad movement spanning much of the political spectrum to overcome them.

In the meanwhile, we must dramatically elevate the call for abolition of the world's nuclear arsenals. As Rogers says, if we don't rid ourselves of them, they will inevitably be used. As he says, "Imagine the total elimination of nuclear weapons! Peace is possible."

Patrick Mazza is a veteran journalist and activist who has worked on a range of issues in peace, justice and environment. You can find his work at *The Raven* (theraven.substack.com), where this article was originally published on October 7, 2022.

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

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U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Silverdale WA
Permit 111

“As long as there are
nuclear weapons, we are
all hostage to those few
individuals who can order their
launch.”

— Medea Benjamin

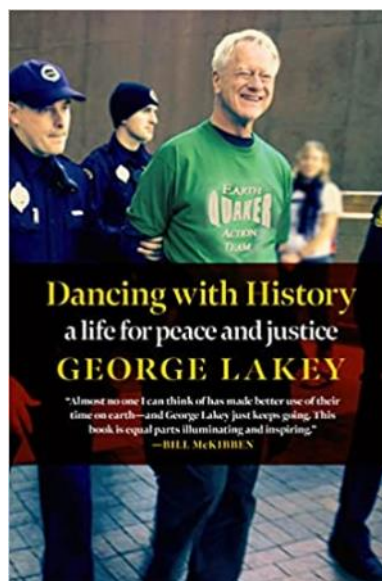
Author and Activist George Lakey to Visit Ground Zero

By Caroline Wildflower

I am excited to announce that George Lakey will be coming to Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action on his book tour in promotion of his new memoir *Dancing with History: A Life for Peace and Justice*.

From his first arrest in the Civil Rights era to his most recent during a climate justice march at the age of 83, George Lakey has committed his life to a mission of building a better world through movements for justice. In his memoir *Dancing With History*, Lakey draws readers into the center of history-making events, telling often serious stories with funfulness and intimacy.

Lakey will visit Ground Zero on Wednesday February 8. We will hear about his book, have the opportunity to buy his memoir and also his book *How We Win: A Guide to Nonviolent Direct Action Campaigning*. We hope to do some talking about strategy. We are also inviting him to



join us in a vigil at the main gate in the afternoon.

Here is what I know of his schedule in the Pacific Northwest:

- February 7, Eagle Harbor Books on Bainbridge Island (walking distance from the ferry) at 6:30pm
- February 8, Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action, includes a vigil at the submarine base gate, check our website for exact times.
- February 8, 6:30pm, book tour meeting Port Townsend Friends Meetinghouse
- February 9, 7:00pm, Elliott Bay Bookstore in Seattle
- TBD, a bookstore in Olympia

Caroline Wildflower was one of the co-founders of Ground Zero in the mid-1970s. She has served as a Catholic Worker and member of the Pacific Life Community. She lives in Port Townsend.