

# THE SUNflower



NUCLEAR AGE PEACE FOUNDATION

**Issue #174 - January 2012**

The Sunflower is a monthly e-newsletter providing educational information on nuclear weapons abolition and other issues relating to global security. Help us spread the word and forward this to a friend.

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## Perspectives

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### **Wishes for the New Year**

by David Krieger

May we embrace peace with justice. May we speak for it and stand for it. May we make our voices heard and our presence felt.

May we awaken to the possibilities of our greatness if we stop wasting our resources on war and its preparation.

May we end all war in the new year. Wars always end. May we end them sooner and lessen the toll of death and suffering. May we refrain from initiating new wars.

To read more, [click here](#).

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### **A Nuclear Nightmare in the Making: NATO, Missile Defense and Russian Insecurity**

by David Krieger and Steven Starr

In the aftermath of the Cold War, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), has become increasingly powerful. It was created in 1949 as an alliance of Western military forces to protect against the perceived military threat posed by the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc countries.

With the breakup of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, NATO has expanded by adding former Soviet bloc countries, moving to the borders of Russia. It has also engaged in military actions, notably in the former Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Libya.

To read more, [click here](#).

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## US Nuclear Weapons Policy

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### **U.S. Releases Updated Nuclear Weapons Numbers**

The U.S. State Department has released an updated count of its deployed and reserve strategic nuclear weapons as of September 1, 2011. The State Department fact sheet also includes information on Russian nuclear weapons that has been shared through the New START treaty.

The U.S. has 822 deployed Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs), Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBMs) and heavy bombers, while Russia has 516. The number of nuclear warheads deployed on these platforms total 1,790 for the U.S. and 1,566 for Russia.

[Click here](#) to see the full State Department fact sheet.

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### **Budget Bill Cuts Spending on Nuclear Lab**

A budget bill approved by the House of Representatives has cut funding for the proposed \$6 billion Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Replacement Nuclear Facility at Los Alamos National Laboratory.

The spending bill dedicates \$200 million for the Nuclear Facility for fiscal year 2012, \$100 million less than the Obama administration had requested. It also notes that "no construction activities are funded for the project this year," and calls for a new report on U.S. capability for manufacturing plutonium pits, which are the cores of nuclear weapons.

["Budget Bill Cuts Spending for Los Alamos Lab,"](#) *Associated Press*, December 16, 2011.

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## Nuclear Proliferation

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### North Korea Transitions to New Leadership

North Korean leader Kim Jong-il is reported to have died on December 17 after suffering a heart attack. His son Kim Jong-un appears to be transitioning into power, and there is no indication that North Korea will abandon its nuclear program.

In its first official communication directed at the outside world following the death of Kim Jong-il, the North Korean government said, "On this occasion, we solemnly declare with confidence that foolish politicians around the world, including the puppet forces in South Korea, should not expect any changes from us. The sea of bloody tears by our people and military will chase the rebellious faction until the end, to become the sea of revenge, burning the rebellious faction until nothing is left. The sound of mourning will become the roaring of the sound of the gunfire to collapse the puppets' stronghold."

["North Korea Vows No Change Under Jong-un,"](#) *Democracy Now!*, December 30, 2011.

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## Nuclear Insanity

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### Russia Finally Extinguishes Nuclear Submarine Fire

Fire engulfed a docked Russian nuclear submarine on December 29 while it was undergoing maintenance. The fire, which apparently started on wooden scaffolding and spread to the submarine's outer hull, was not extinguished until the following day when firefighters decided to partially submerge the submarine to isolate the fire.

According to Russian officials, all of the submarine's nuclear missiles had been removed prior to the fire and the nuclear reactor had been shut down. While Norway's Radiation Protection Agency has not reported any increase in radiation levels, the Norwegians have complained about a lack of information from the Russians regarding the incident.

Isachenkov, Vladimir, ["Russia: Nuclear Submarine Fire Finally Out,"](#) *Associated Press*, December 30, 2011.

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### Fracking with Nuclear Weapons

Hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, is a process used by many companies to extract natural gas from deep underground. Fracking has caused a great deal of controversy because of the harmful chemicals injected into the ground. The Colorado Supreme Court is currently considering a case involving the "ultimate frack job" in 1969, Project Rusilon, which used a 43-kiloton atomic bomb 8,000 feet underground to attempt to release natural gas deposits. The test produced natural gas far too radioactive to use.

Recently, oil and gas companies have applied for permits to drill within a three-mile radius of the Project Rusilon explosion, and many local residents are concerned about what might be released into the environment as a result.

Williams, David, "[Legal Fallout from Nuclear Bomb Frack Job Reaches Colorado Supreme Court](#)," Colorado Independent, December 7, 2011.

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## Nuclear Energy and Waste

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### Russian Reprocessing Facility Dumps Radioactive Waste

The environmental group Ecodefense! has obtained an official court ruling that shows the Russian nuclear waste reprocessing facility Mayak dumped radioactive reprocessing waste into the nearby Techa River, contrary to the claims of Russian nuclear authority Rosatom. The facility reprocesses spent nuclear fuel from commercial reactors and nuclear submarines.

According to this article, the court ruling reveals the following shocking facts: "Between 2001 and 2004, around 30 million to 40 million cubic meters of radioactive waste ended in the river Techa, near the reprocessing facility, which 'caused radioactive contamination of the environment with the isotope strontium -90.' The area is home to between 4,000 and 5,000 residents. Measurements taken near the village Muslyumovo showed that the river water – as per guidelines in the Sanitary Rules of Management of Radioactive Waste of 2002 – 'qualified as liquid radioactive waste.'"

Slivyak, Vladimir, "[Russia's Infamous Reprocessing Plant Mayak Never Stopped Illegal Dumping of Radioactive Waste into Nearby River, Poisoning Residents, Newly Disclosed Court Finding Says](#)," *Bellona*, December 24, 2011.

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## War and Peace

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### Working for World Peace

NAPF Peace Leadership Director Paul Chappell was interviewed recently by the *Santa Barbara Independent* about his work for peace around the United States. Paul answers key questions about how and why people can successfully wage peace. Questions that Paul responds to include: "The history of our species seems defined by conflict. How do we rise above that apparently inherent battle for resources to achieve a lasting peace?" and "What are practical steps that each of us can make on the path to peace?"

Connelly, Cole and Kettman, Matt, "[Paul Chappell: Making World Peace Possible](#)," *Santa Barbara Independent*, December 22, 2011.

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## Resources

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### Economic Dimensions of Nuclear Weapons

In recent months the issue of the cost of nuclear weapons has become more salient in nuclear disarmament debates, mainly due to the intensity of the economic crisis, austerity cuts and sharper scrutiny of public budgets. At the same time there is growing interest in the role played by the private sector in the nuclear weapons industry. A new resource list by the International Peace Bureau concentrates mainly on recent materials. It is offered as a toolbox to assist those interested in further researching the economic aspect of this issue.

[Click here](#) to see the full list of resources.

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## **Upsetting the Reset: Russian Concerns Over NATO Missile Defense**

The Federation of American Scientists has published a report by Yousaf Butt and Theodore Postol entitled "Upsetting the Reset: The Technical Basis of Russian Concern Over NATO Missile Defense."

The authors write that the renewed relationship between the U.S. and Russia is at risk because of Russian concerns about the future capability of the planned missile defense system to erode Russia's strategic nuclear weapons system. Their technical assessment shows how the planned system could be geographically reconfigured to engage Russian and Chinese warheads. The authors explain that even though the defense could be defeated by countermeasures, it may still raise concern in the mind of a cautious Russian military planner that the delicate balance of arms agreed to in New START will be upset.

[Click here](#) to read the full report.

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## **Foundation Activities**

### **Speaking Out in the Wall Street Journal**

NAPF President David Krieger's letter to the editor of the *Wall Street Journal* was published on December 28. The letter was a response to an op-ed that argued that all dictatorships must be abolished before the world can consider abolishing nuclear weapons.

In his letter, Dr. Krieger stated, "The very possession of nuclear weapons by any country, including the U.S., actually undermines the very democracy [the authors] claim to hold dear. A small group of political and military elites hold the power to commit national suicide and potentially destroy civilization. The risk of nuclear weapons being used by accident, miscalculation or design is much too high to put off their abolition to some indefinite future time when all dictatorships have been eliminated."

[Click here](#) to read the full letter.

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### **Air Force Plans February 25 Nuclear Missile Test**

The U.S. Air Force has scheduled for February 25 a test launch of a Minuteman III Intercontinental Ballistic Missile from Vandenberg Air Force Base. The test previously scheduled for September 21 (the International Day of Peace) was cancelled after thousands of NAPF Action Alert members wrote to President Obama to protest the provocative launch.

The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation has worked with partner groups, including United for Peace and Justice, Nevada Desert Experience and Western States Legal Foundation, to develop a petition opposing the February 25 launch. [Click here](#) to read the petition and add your signature.

There will also be a protest at the front gate of Vandenberg Air Force Base on the night of February 24. A bus will be taking protestors to Vandenberg from the Bay Area, and rideshares will be available for people coming from Santa Barbara. Simultaneous protests are planned in Los Angeles and Hawaii, where essential tracking stations for the test are located. For more information on the protests, call the NAPF office at 805-965-3443.

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## Daniel Ellsberg to Deliver 11th Annual Kelly Lecture

Daniel Ellsberg, a nuclear strategy expert and whistleblower who leaked the Pentagon Papers in 1971, will deliver the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation's 11th Annual Frank K. Kelly Lecture on Humanity's Future in Santa Barbara on February 23. The lecture is entitled "Nuclear Weapons and Humanity's Future."

It will take place on Thursday, February 23, at 7:00 p.m. at the Lobero Theatre, 33 E. Canon Perdido Street, Santa Barbara. The event is free and open to the public.

Last year's Kelly Lecture, "Breaking Free from Nuclear Deterrence" by Commander Robert Green, is available on [video](#) and as a [pdf download](#).

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## Peace Leadership Workshop: July 22-29

The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation is presenting a seven-day summer workshop on peace leadership at the beautiful La Casa de Maria Retreat Center in Santa Barbara, California, July 22-29, 2012.

The NAPF Peace Leadership Summer Workshop is an intensive course on peace leadership skills for waging peace. Led by NAPF Peace Leadership Director Capt. Paul K. Chappell, participants will be empowered with the understanding and tools that can help them make a positive difference in their lives, communities, and the world.

If you are interested in participating, please apply as soon as possible to secure a place. For more information about the workshop, [click here](#).

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## Speaking of Peace

*Speaking of Peace: Quotations to Inspire Action* is a collection of quotations on peace, war and the human spirit. These quotations were selected by David Krieger, long-time President of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, to encourage thought and inspire action toward a more peaceful and nuclear weapon-free world. The book includes quotations by Albert Camus, Norman Cousins, Albert Einstein, The XIVth Dalai Lama, Helen Keller, John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., Eleanor Roosevelt, Albert Schweitzer, Mother Teresa, Howard Zinn, and many other notable individuals.

[Click here](#) for more information about the book and to order a copy.

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## Quotes

"During the first decade of the twenty-first century US military budgets accounted for nearly half the world's spending on armed forces. Such overwhelming military superiority of one country will make the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons impossible to achieve. Judging by the weapons programs of the United States and a number of other countries, they are setting their sights on a new arms race."

-- **Mikhail Gorbachev**, former President of the Soviet Union, in a recent article in *The Nation* magazine.

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"That idea was nuts, and thankfully Congress appears to see that."

-- **Greg Mello**, Executive Director of the Los Alamos Study Group, referring to the plan to build a \$6 billion plutonium pit facility at the Los Alamos National Laboratory in close proximity to earthquake faults.

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"If NATO improves its defense shield we must unfortunately sharpen our swords."

-- **Dmitry Rogozin**, Russia's ambassador to NATO.

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## Editorial Team

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