

# THE SUNflower



NUCLEAR AGE PEACE FOUNDATION

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## Perspectives

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### **Building the Morale of Missileers**

by David Krieger

A recent news story in the *Global Security Newswire* stated, "Top U.S. military leaders are personally reaching out to missileers at the Montana base that has become ground zero for an Air Force probe into exam cheating." It went on, "Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel on Saturday called six launch officers during their shifts at underground launch control centers, according to a Pentagon press story. Speaking on the phone calls for roughly an hour, the defense chief voiced his assurance that the launch officers were up to the task of carrying out the U.S. nuclear mission, said Pentagon officials." (Hagel, Air Force Brass Reach Out to Montana Missile Officers, [GSN](#), February 4, 2014)

One can only imagine what was said in those morale building talks.

Hagel: Howdy, missileer, this is Chuck. How's everything down in your bunker?

Missile Launch Officer: Just fine, sir, lit up like a shopping mall. Chuck who?

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

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### **Bravo: 60 Years of Suffering, Cover-Ups, Injustice**

by Beverly Deepe Kever

Sixty years ago on March 1 in the heart of the Pacific Ocean, the United States detonated the most powerful nuclear weapon in its history.

For these islanders, Bravo also ushered in 60 years of sufferings and a chain reaction of U.S. cover-ups and injustices, as detailed below. Over the decades, their pleas for just and adequate compensation and U.S. constitutional rights they had been promised were rejected by the U.S. courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court, by Congress and by executive-branch administrations headed by presidents of either party.

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

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## US Nuclear Weapons Policy

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### **U.S. Begins Study on New Nuclear Cruise Missile**

This July, the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) will begin its formal study of the two potential warheads to be paired with new nuclear cruise missiles. The Air Force is currently working alongside the NNSA to determine if the W80 warhead, which is currently used in Air-Launched Cruise Missiles, or the W84 warhead, which was formerly used in Ground-Launched Cruise Missiles, is the best warhead for the new Long-Range Standoff Missile (LRSO). Either warhead would require a life-extension and improvement program to achieve the design and capability sought by the Pentagon.

The Air Force and NNSA are expected to conclude the study by the summer of 2015, after which the LRSO program would award one or several technology development contracts to a prominent defense company, such as Lockheed Martin or Boeing. The goal of the formal study is to determine which warhead would undergo a life-extension program to modify and maintain the warheads for the new LRSO. This is to fulfill the desire that the new LRSOs are operational by the mid 2020s.

"Air Force and NNSA To Select Nuclear Cruise Missile Warhead in Mid-2015," *Inside the Air Force*, February 28, 2014.

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## **Members of Congress Introduce Legislation to Cut Nuclear Expenditures**

Senators Edward J. Markey (D-MA) and Jeff Merkley (D-OR) introduced a bill that would cut \$100 billion from the current nuclear weapons budget over the next decade. The Smarter Approach to Nuclear Expenditures (SANE) Act would decrease the number of deployed strategic submarines from 14 to 8, reduce the purchase of replacement submarines from 12 to 8, cut warhead life extension programs, remove the nuclear mission from F-35s, and cancel nuclear weapon making facilities and missile defense programs. The authors of the bill believe that the U.S. must stop wasting money on outdated nuclear programs and prioritize the nation's future by investing in things like education.

While the SANE Act was proposed in the Senate, Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) proposed the Reduce Expenditures in Nuclear Investments Now (REIN-IN) Act in the House of Representatives. Rep. Blumenauer argues that the bill is necessary because the United States cannot afford, nor does it need, such expensive weapons systems.

"[Markey and Merkley Introduce Legislation to Cut Bloated Nuclear Weapons Budget](#)," *Office of Sen. Ed Markey*, February 28, 2014.

## **Nuclear Disarmament**

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### **Ukraine Gave up Its Soviet Nuclear Weapons in 1990s**

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the signing of the Trilateral Statement, the agreement that set the terms for eliminating the strategic nuclear weapons left on the territory of Ukraine when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. In return for giving up the world's third largest nuclear arsenal (1,900 nuclear weapons) to Russia for dismantlement, Ukraine received:

Security assurances. The United States, Russia and Britain would afford security assurances to Ukraine (i.e.: respect its independence and to abstain from economic intimidation).

Compensation for highly-enriched uranium (HEU). "Russia agreed to provide fuel rods for Ukrainian nuclear reactors containing low enriched uranium equivalent to the HEU removed from the nuclear warheads transferred from Ukraine to Russia for dismantlement."

Elimination assistance. The United States would make accessible Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction assistance to cover the costs of eliminating the ICBMs and other nuclear infrastructure in Ukraine.

Steven Pifer, "[Getting Rid of Nukes: The Trilateral Statement at 20 Years](#)," *The Brookings Institution*, January 13, 2014.

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### **Conference on Humanitarian Impacts of Nuclear Weapons Marks Progress**

The Second Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, hosted by the Foreign Ministry of Mexico, concluded on February 14 with a plea for action to outlaw nuclear weapons ahead of the 70th anniversary in 2015 of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Representatives of over 140 countries attended the conference, as well as many civil society groups, including three representatives from the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation. Issues discussed at the conference included the mounting danger of nuclear weapons use globally because of their "proliferation and vulnerability to cyberattacks, human error and potential access to nuclear arsenals by terrorist groups." The conference reiterated that a nuclear weapon detonation would have effects not constrained by national borders, most severely affecting the poor and vulnerable. Atomic bomb survivors also attended to share their stories and speak against the continued existence of nuclear weapons.

["Confab Calls for Action to Outlaw Nukes before 70th Anniversary of Bombings,"](#) *Japan Times*, February 16, 2014.

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## Nuclear Insanity

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### ICBM Caucus Opposes Land-Based Missile Cuts

A group of lawmakers from states that host land-based strategic nuclear missiles (Montana, North Dakota and Wyoming) are concerned the Pentagon could be studying closing down some of the weapon silos. Multiple letters from both chambers of Congress have been directed to U.S. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, demanding to know whether his department is conducting environmental studies relating to Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs).

Opponents of the possible reduction of the ICBM silos claim that the missiles are "vital to promoting peace and keeping our country and allies safe from current and emerging threats." They included in their letter to the Pentagon that, "We are also concerned that beginning an ICBM environmental assessment could significantly damage the morale of airmen working on this crucial mission."

This defense of land-based nuclear missiles comes at a time when at least 92 out of 500 missile officers are being investigated in a cheating scandal, and many officers report feeling "burned out."

Rachel Oswald, "[Lawmakers from Missile States Worry Pentagon Is Studying Closing Silos,](#)" *Global Security Newswire*, February 21, 2014.

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### Peace Protestors Sentenced to Prison for Sabotage

Sister Megan Rice, an 84-year-old nun, has been sentenced to nearly three years in prison for breaking into the Y-12 National Security Complex in Oak Ridge, previously known as the "Fort Knox of uranium." The ability of Rice and two other activists, Greg Boertje-Obed and Michael Walli, to break into the plant raised serious questions about security, as the facility holds the nation's primary supply of bomb-grade uranium. Greg Boertje-Obed and Michael Walli were each sentenced to 62 months in prison for their nonviolent action.

In her closing statement, Rice told the judge, "Please have no leniency with me. To remain in prison for the rest of my life would be the greatest gift you could give me." For Rice, prison was preferable to living in a country where the government spends too much on the military and weapons.

Commenting on the sentencing, NAPF President David Krieger said, "Rather than receiving jail sentences, Sister Megan and her colleagues should be honored not only for their exceptional courage, but for exposing the inadequate state of the security of the U.S. nuclear weapons complex. The government has to stop acting as though it is all right to threaten the mass murder of innocent people as a means of bolstering U.S. security. It doesn't work and makes all humanity, and the future of complex life, less secure."

["84 Year Old Nun Gets Prison in Nuclear Weapons Break-In," Fayetteville Observer](#), February 18, 2014.

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## **Russia Tests Nuclear Missile Amidst Ukraine Crisis**

The Russian military reportedly test fired a Topol RS-12M Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) on March 4, as the crisis in Ukraine continues to grow. The Topol RS-12M missile is a delivery vehicle for Russia's nuclear warheads. The U.S. said that it was notified of the ICBM test beforehand, as required by arms control treaties.

This provocative test is reminiscent of a U.S. test of a Minuteman III ICBM at the height of the U.S.-North Korea crisis in 2013.

["Russia Reports Ballistic Missile Test Amid Crimea Tension," BBC News](#), March 4, 2014.

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## **Nuclear Waste**

### **U.S. Nuclear Waste Workers Receive Internal Radiation Dose in Leak**

The U.S. Department of Energy reported that 13 workers in New Mexico were exposed to radiation from a leak at the Waste Isolation Pilot Project (WIPP), the only deep underground nuclear waste dump facility in the U.S. WIPP is the only facility in the U.S. that can store plutonium-contaminated clothing and tools from nuclear building and testing sites. After the leak occurred on February 14, employees were checked for external contamination and had biological samples taken to check for possible exposure from inhaling radioactive particulates. The 13 workers who tested positive have been notified and will undergo additional testing to determine the magnitude of the exposure.

This is the first reported release of radiation from the plant in the 15 years that it has been storing plutonium-contaminated waste from nuclear bomb building sites. From the analysis of air samples around the plant, officials are able to tell that a container of waste leaked, but haven't been able to get underground to find out what caused it. While elevated radiation levels have been detected around the plant, officials report the readings are too low to constitute a public health threat.

Jeri Clausing, ["13 Workers Exposed to Radiation at New Mexico Nuclear Dump," Associated Press](#), February 26, 2014.

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## **Resources**

### **This Month in Nuclear Threat History**

History chronicles many instances when humans have been threatened by nuclear weapons. In this article, Jeffrey Mason outlines some of the most serious threats that have taken place in the month of March, including the Castle Bravo nuclear test (March 1, 1954) and President Reagan's announcement of his "Star Wars" plan (March 23, 1983).

To read Mason's full article, [click here](#).

For more information on the history of the Nuclear Age, visit NAPF's [Nuclear Files](#) website.

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## **Nuremberg Prosecutor on Creating a Humane, Peaceful World**

Ben Ferencz, the only living prosecutor from the Nuremberg Trials, has issued a 3-minute video statement about how he thinks we can go about creating a humane and peaceful world under international law.

To watch the video, [click here](#).

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## **A Ban on Nuclear Weapons: What's in it for NATO?**

The International Law and Policy Institute has published a new paper entitled "A Ban on Nuclear Weapons: What's in it for NATO?"

The proposal that nuclear weapons should be banned through the early adoption of a legally binding instrument is gaining traction. A topic of increasingly serious discussion, it is making its way up the international agenda – from being an idea with no real prospect of successful adoption, to a proposal to be reckoned with. Arguing that a process to ban nuclear weapons could become a political reality in the foreseeable future, this paper considers the implications of such an instrument for NATO member states. The paper finds that as a matter of international law, there is no barrier to member states' adherence to such a treaty. Likewise, concerns about the political implications for NATO ignore historical variations in member state military policy and underestimate the value of a ban on nuclear weapons for promoting NATO's ultimate aim: the security of its member states.

To read the full paper, [click here](#).

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## **Foundation Activities**

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### **Help Us Expose the Truth About Nuclear Weapons**

73% of Americans think that nukes are nuts. Isn't it time to wage all-out peace?

Help NAPF launch a movement that exposes the truth about nuclear weapons. [Click here](#) for more information.

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### **Native Ideals to Spark a New Peaceful Revolution**

NAPF Peace Leadership Director Paul Chappell spoke on the principles of nonviolence at the second workshop on Building Nonviolent Indigenous Rights Movements on February 15, 2014 in Nova Scotia, Canada. Held at the Tatamagouche Retreat Center outside Halifax, and sponsored by the Wabanaki Confederacy and the Land Peace Foundation, this workshop also included special interactions from the Native community.

"The inclusion of more traditional and ceremonial elements into the Nova Scotia workshop, such as talking circles that were facilitated by prayer and ceremony, enabled us to deepen our dialogue with participants. By including more traditional elements, we were able to connect with each other in a more meaningful way," said co-trainer Sherri Mitchell, Indigenous lawyer and Executive Director of the Land Peace Foundation.

To read more about the training in Nova Scotia, [click here](#).

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To learn more about the Peace Leadership Program, including our 2014 Peace Leadership Summer Course, [click here](#).

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## Noam Chomsky Delivers NAPF Lecture

Professor Noam Chomsky delivered the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation's 13th Annual Frank K. Kelly Lecture on Humanity's Future on February 28 in Santa Barbara, California. Speaking to a sold-out theater of over 600 people, Professor Chomsky discussed "Security and State Policy." He ended his lecture stating that continuing with a world that contains nuclear weapons amounts to collective suicide; we must not allow this situation to go on any longer.

A transcript of Prof. Chomsky's speech is available now on the [NAPF website](#). Photos, video and the audio podcast will be posted on [wagingpeace.org](#) as soon as they are available.

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## Nukes Are Nuts Video Contest - Deadline April 1

The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation's annual Swackhamer Disarmament Video Contest is now underway. The theme of this year's contest is "Nukes Are Nuts." Contestants will make videos of 30 seconds or less describing why they think nuclear weapons are crazy and must be eliminated.

We have already received some excellent entries, which can be viewed on the contest's [Facebook page](#).

For more information about the contest, including a full list of rules and instructions on how to enter, [click here](#). The deadline for entries is April 1.

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## Quotes

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"Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race **at an early date** and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control."

-- **Article VI of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty**, which entered into force on March 5, 1970. Emphasis is ours.

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"Sunflowers instead of missiles in the soil would ensure peace for future generations."

-- U.S. Defense Secretary **William Perry**, speaking at a ceremony in Ukraine in 1996 marking their new status as a nuclear weapon-free nation. This quote is featured in the book [Speaking of Peace: Quotations to Inspire Action](#), edited by NAPF President David Krieger.

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## Editorial Team

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