

THE SUNflower



NUCLEAR AGE PEACE FOUNDATION

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Perspectives

Admiral Noel Gayler: Dispelling Nuclear Illusions

by David Krieger

Adm. Noel Gayler, a World War II Navy pilot who later rose to the rank of four-star admiral and served as Commander-in-Chief of the US Pacific Command in the 1970s, died on July 14 at the age of 96. Adm. Gayler was one of the most prominent US military leaders to publicly call for the abolition of nuclear weapons and put forward a proposal to achieve this goal.

Adm. Gayler's proposal, published in December 2000 by the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, presents a sober assessment of the dangers that nuclear weapons pose to humanity and calls for the total elimination of these weapons. His assessment was influenced by viewing Hiroshima from the air only six days after its devastation on August 6, 1945 by a US nuclear weapon. He also witnessed the atmospheric testing of thermonuclear weapons in the Marshall Islands in the 1960s.

To read more, including the proposal from Admiral Gayler, [click here](#).

Launch-Ready Nuclear Weapons: A Threat to All Nations and Peoples

by Steven Starr

Although US and Russian Presidents have jointly declared that relations between their nations have been "reset," and that nuclear war between them is now "unthinkable," this is hardly true. US and Russian strategic war plans still contain large nuclear strike options with hundreds of preplanned targets, which clearly include cities and urban areas in each other's nation.

Furthermore, the American and Russian Presidents both have the power to authorize and initiate a nuclear attack in a matter of a few seconds. They are constantly accompanied by a military officer who carries a "nuclear briefcase," a special communication device that allows either President to almost instantly order the launch of their nuclear forces. This launch order requires only a few minutes to carry out, because the US and Russia each still keep more than 800 ballistic missiles armed with at least 1,739 strategic nuclear warheads at high-alert, always ready to fire.

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

US Nuclear Weapons Policy

US May Pull Tactical Nuclear Weapons Out of Europe

A Japanese newspaper reports that the United States and NATO are currently discussing the removal of US tactical nuclear weapons from Europe in an effort to cut costs and move toward a nuclear weapon-free world. Supporters of the talks believe that complete nuclear weapons abolition in Europe could initiate further US-Russia nuclear disarmament talks.

The report states, "Japan is the only country to have been attacked with nuclear weapons, in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. Post-war Japan has strongly pushed nuclear non-proliferation efforts, a topic that is closely followed by Japanese media." Discussions are planned to continue over the coming months as part of NATO's Defense and Deterrence Posture Review.

"US May Pull Tactical Nukes Out of Europe: Report," [DefenseNews](#), July 15, 2011.

Nuclear Disarmament

German Citizen Sues for Removal of US Nuclear Weapons

A court in Cologne, Germany has begun hearing a case regarding US nuclear warheads being stored at a military base in Germany. The suit was brought by Elke Koller, a retired pharmacist who claims that despite US ownership, the stored warheads violate Germany's laws against the use of "atomic, biological and chemical weapons in situations of armed conflict."

According to the article, "Between 10 and 20 US B61 nuclear warheads, which have an explosive force up to 13 times that of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima, are believed to be stored in highly protected underground vaults at the Büchel military base located in the low mountainous Eifel region just east of the Belgian border." Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle asserts that the removal of nuclear weapons would be one of Germany's key contributions to global nuclear non-proliferation.

"Activist Takes Germany to Court Over Nuclear Warheads," [Deutsche Welle](#), July 7, 2011.

North Korea Assumes Presidency of UN Conference on Disarmament

North Korean ambassador So Se Pyong assumed the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament based in Geneva. Although North Korea faces several UN Security Council sanctions over its weapons programs, the Conference's 32 year old rules say that the presidency seat will rotate among all 65 member states in alphabetical order.

Critics argue that the rules should be changed since the nuclear disarmament body will now be led by a country with a history of nuclear secrecy.

"North Korea Conference on Disarmament Presidency Causes Controversy," [Huffington Post](#), July 2, 2011.

Nuclear Insanity

National Park to Glorify Atomic Bombs

Secretary of the Interior, Ken Salazar, recently requested the creation of a national historical park to commemorate the work of the Manhattan Project, the top-secret effort during World War II to create an atomic bomb. If approved by Congress and President Obama, the park would be made up of sites and facilities located in Washington State, New Mexico and Tennessee, and be operated by both the Department of Energy and the National Park Service.

Many anti-nuclear advocates worry that the proposed project would not only harm the National Park system as a whole, but it would also glorify the making of the atomic bomb. Michael Mariotte, executive director of the Maryland-based Nuclear Information Resource Service writes, "National parks are national treasures, and glorifying a weapon of mass destruction is certainly not among the purposes of a national park."

McArdle, John, "Anti-Nuclear Groups Protest Proposed Manhattan Project Park," [The New York Times](#), July 19, 2011.

Air Force Uses Bible to Justify Morality of Launching Nuclear Weapons

The United States Air Force has been training young missile officers about the morals and ethics of launching nuclear weapons by citing passages from the New Testament and commentary from a former member of the Nazi Party, according to newly-released documents.

The mandatory training, called Nuclear Ethics and Nuclear Warfare, takes place during missile officers' first week of training at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California.

The article cited below links to a PowerPoint presentation and over 500 pages of documents related to missile officer training.

After the article was published, the Air Force removed the course from its curriculum and will study it to "make sure it reflected views of modern society," according to David Smith, chief of the Air Force's Air Education and Training Command.

Leopold, Jason, "Air Force Cites New Testament, Ex-Nazi, to Train Officers on Ethics of Launching Nuclear Weapons," [Truthout](#), July 27, 2011.

Nuclear Labs

Contamination from Rain Likely After New Mexico Fires

Los Alamos National Laboratory crews have been working to avert nuclear contamination after the massive wildfire at the beginning of July. Flood barriers have been put into place to divert water and remove contaminants from being washed downstream. Lab officials disclose that recent flood preparations are one of many projects since the 2000 Cerro Grande fire, which had also threatened the lab.

Kevin Smith, National Nuclear Security Administration's Los Alamos Site Office Manager, remains adamant that clean-up is currently the main concern; however it is likely that some contamination will occur. Dave McNroy, program director for the Lab's flood and erosion control efforts said, "There is little doubt that we will see ash in the water reaching the Rio Grande. This is what you'd expect after any fire in New Mexico. We're working to minimize the transport of any contaminants that have attached to sediments in the canyon bottoms."

"Los Alamos Lab in New Mexico Prepares For Flooding After Fire," [Huffington Post](#), July 12, 2011.

Nuclear Testing

US Minuteman Nuclear Missile Fails Test

On July 27, a US Minuteman III nuclear missile was launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California. Before the missile arrived at its target 4,200 miles away in the Kwajalein Atoll, the missile experienced an unspecified "anomaly" and was remotely destroyed by Air Force operators.

This is the second problem the Air Force has experienced with a Minuteman III test launch in as many efforts in 2011. The first test of the year, on June 22, experienced significant communications problems during the launch itself.

Robbins, Rebecca, "Vandenberg Destroys Test Missile Over the Pacific," [Santa Barbara Independent](#), July 28, 2011.

Half-Hearted Nuclear Cleanup at Nevada Test Site

Nevada National Security Site officials released a 1,576-page draft Site-Wide Environmental Impact Statement to cover the next ten years. The report addresses the program that tracks radioactive contamination

from below-ground nuclear weapons tests prior to 1992 and outlines the site's role in counterterrorism programs.

In the past, federal scientists estimated it would cost \$15 billion to pump contaminated water from detonation cavities and up to \$7.3 trillion to mine and properly dispose of contaminated materials at or near groundwater layers. The Department of Energy decided this was too expensive and impractical to pursue.

The National Nuclear Security Administration will accept public comments on the draft Environmental Impact Statement through October 27th before issuing a final Impact Statement.

Rogers, Keith, "Draft Analyzes Options for Nevada National Security Site," [Las Vegas Review Journal](#), July 26, 2011.

Nuclear Energy and Waste

Operation Sunflowers to Help Decontaminate Japanese Farmland

In an effort to remove radioactive cesium from the ground, scientists in Japan have launched Operation Sunflowers. Masamichi Yamashita, a space agriculture professor at the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), planted sunflower seeds on three different farms near the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. Because the sunflower's root structure is so strong, it is able to extract heavy metals and radioactive elements out of the ground. The project aims to restore the land so that local rice farmers can return home.

This is not the first time sunflowers have been used to absorb radiation. An experiment similar to Operation Sunflowers was conducted in February 1996 when researchers from Phytotech Inc., a US biotechnology company, discovered that sunflowers grown near the Chernobyl nuclear power plant absorbed radioactive cesium and strontium through their roots.

Sunflowers are also the international symbol of a world free of nuclear weapons.

"Scientists Launch 'Operation Sunflowers' to Decontaminate Farmland Near Nuclear Plant," [The Mainichi Daily News](#), July 10, 2011.

War and Peace

Protestors Continue to Resist US Base Construction on Jeju Island

A proposed US military base on Jeju Island in South Korea continues to meet determined resistance from local residents who wish to preserve the natural beauty of their homeland. The proposed base is in Gangjeong Village, which is surrounded by three UNESCO World Heritage sites.

Since plans for the base were announced five years ago, Jeju residents have used every democratic means to block its construction, including filing a lawsuit against the South Korean Defense Minister and holding a recall vote to oust a local governor who had consented to the plan. The hugely unpopular project has prompted 95% of the island's population to vote against it.

Local residents have sacrificed a great deal to nonviolently resist construction of the base. They have faced arrest, intimidation, physical violence and financial penalties for their ongoing protest activities.

For more information and to find out what you can do to help, [click here](#).

"South Korean Undercover Police Crack Down on Peaceful Resistance to Jeju Island Naval Base Construction," [Ground Report](#), July 17, 2011.

Resources

Chernobyl: Crime Without Punishment

Long before the tragedy of the 2011 nuclear disasters in Japan, the nuclear reactor at Chernobyl experienced an explosion, meltdown, fire, and massive release of radioactivity. Twenty-five years later, we still know very little about the event and its aftermath. Few of the professional papers describing the aftereffects of the disaster have been translated from Russian into English or distributed in the West. This is now remedied, with the publication of this definitive volume, based on original sources, and originally published in Russian.

Alla A. Yaroshinskaya describes the human side of the disaster, with firsthand accounts by those who lived through the world's worst public health crisis. [Chernobyl: Crime without Punishment](#) is a unique account of events by a reporter and former member of the Russian Duma who defied the Soviet bureaucracy. The author presents an accurate historical record, with quotations from all the major players in the Chernobyl drama.

Yaroshinskaya describes actions after the disaster: how authorities built a new city for Chernobyl residents but placed it in a highly polluted area. She also details the actions of the nuclear lobby inside and outside the former Soviet Union.

Bringing the book into the 21st century, the author reviews the latest independent investigations of the medical condition of people from the affected countries, and states why there has been no trial of top officials who covered up Chernobyl and its disastrous consequences.

NAPF President David Krieger has written, "With admirable courage and heroic persistence, the author overcomes strong barriers of government secrecy, lies and cover-ups to bring to light a story of official arrogance and incompetence, resulting in tragic suffering and death from the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. A brilliant book and an essential read for anyone who cares about humanity's future."

For more information and to purchase a copy of the book, [click here](#).

Russia's Nuclear Forces

A new [Proliferation Paper](#) by Pavel Podvig has been published by the Institut Francais des Relations Internationales. Nuclear weapons have traditionally occupied an important place in Russia's national security strategy. As Russia and the United States have been reducing their nuclear arsenals since the end of the Cold War, their relationship has undergone a complex transformation. Russia, however, still considers strategic balance with the United States to be an important element of national security.

After an overview of the current status of the Russian strategic nuclear forces and the strategic modernization program undertaken by Russia, this Proliferation Paper considers the role that missile defense and tactical nuclear weapons could play during the next round of nuclear arms control negotiations. Each of these problems presents a serious challenge. Nevertheless, this analysis suggests that recent progress in nuclear disarmament and the willingness of both countries to engage in a dialogue give the two countries an opportunity to reduce the importance of nuclear weapons in their relationship.

To download the article, [click here](#).

Foundation Activities

Sadako Peace Day - August 9 in Santa Barbara

The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation and La Casa de Maria invite you to join us for the 17th Annual Sadako Peace Day commemoration on August 9, 2011.

Please come to remember the US atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and 9, 1945, and to be inspired by Sadako Sasaki's message: "I will write peace on your wings, and you will fly all over the world."

This year's featured speaker is Dr. Jimmy Hara, Vice President of Physicians for Social Responsibility - Los Angeles. Music will be performed by local musicians Carol Ann Manzi, Tom Heck and Bob Nyosui Sedivy. NAPF intern Sara Monteabaro will offer a short workshop to those interested in learning how to fold paper cranes, and noted local poets Perie Longo, David Starkey and Amy Michelson will offer their visions of peace.

For more information, contact the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation at (805) 965-3443.

From Hiroshima to Hope

The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation will hold its 28th Annual Evening for Peace on Sunday, October 9, 2011. The event, entitled "From Hiroshima to Hope," will honor **Tadatoshi Akiba**, former Mayor of Hiroshima and past President of Mayors for Peace, and **Shigeko Sasamori**, a survivor of the Hiroshima atomic bombing, who will accept an award on behalf of all *hibakusha* of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Please join us for an inspiring night to honor two courageous leaders for peace. For more information or to reserve tickets, please call (805) 965-3443.

Peace Leadership Program Workshops Continue this Fall

NAPF Peace Leadership Director Paul Chappell has a number of lectures and workshops scheduled around the United States this fall. If you see your city listed below, please [contact Paul](#) to find out how you can get involved; many of the events are open to the public.

Ventura, CA; Berkeley, CA; Redlands, CA; Claremont, CA; Lynchburg, VA; Charlottesville, VA; Tonasket, WA; Bellevue, WA; Vashon, WA; Portland, OR; Indianapolis, IN.

Quotes

"If biological weapons, chemical weapons, and now landmines can be done away with, so too can nuclear weapons. No weapon so threatens the longed-for peace of the 21st century as the nuclear. Let not the immensity of this task dissuade us from the efforts needed to free humanity from such a scourge."

-- **Archbishop Francis Chullikatt**, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations.

"The military budget is not *on* the table. The military budget is *at* the table, and it is eating everybody else's lunch."

-- **Rep. Barney Frank** (D-MA), advocating a significant reduction in the US Defense Department's \$649 billion budget for 2012.

"[Drones] could reduce the threshold for going to war. One of the great inhibitors of war is the body bag count, but that is undermined by the idea of riskless war."

-- **Noel Sharkey**, professor of artificial intelligence and robotics at the University of Sheffield.

Editorial Team

Cara Gregoire
David Krieger
Carol Warner
Rick Wayman

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