

# THE SUNflower



NUCLEAR AGE PEACE FOUNDATION

**Issue #172 - November 2011**

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## Perspectives

**The High Costs of Nuclear Arsenals**  
by David Krieger

Nuclear weapons are costly in many ways. They change our relationship to other nations, to the earth, to the future and to ourselves.

In the mid-1990s a group of researchers at the Brookings Institution did a study of US expenditures on nuclear weapons. They found that the US had spent \$5.8 trillion between 1940 and 1996 (in constant 1996 dollars).

This figure was informally updated in 2005 to \$7.5 trillion from 1940 to 2005 (in constant 2005 dollars). Today the figure is approaching \$8 trillion, and that amount is for the US alone.

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

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### **Nonchalance at the Nevada Test Site**

by Rick Wayman

The Nevada Test Site tour was an eye-opening endeavor in many ways. Seeing the remnants of our nuclear testing regime was shocking, and I will get to some details of particular aspects of the tour in subsequent posts. What struck me over and over from the moment we left Las Vegas on the bus early in the morning was the "ho-hum" attitude of our tour guides, the nonchalance with which they presented a selected set of facts and other statements about the test site and the long-term effects of radiation and nuclear waste.

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

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### **The Bloated Nuclear Weapons Budget**

(This is an editorial from the October 30 edition of the *New York Times*.)

The country does not need to maintain this large an arsenal. It should not be spending so much to do it, especially when Congress is considering deep cuts in vital domestic programs.

A war with Russia is now unthinkable, conventional weapons are increasingly capable, and the main nuclear threat comes from Iran and North Korea. To have the credibility to try to contain their ambitions, the United States needs to be weaning itself from its reliance on nuclear weapons. Reducing the number of weapons, scaling back unnecessary modernization programs, and delaying or scrapping plans to replace some delivery systems will save billions and help make the world safer.

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

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## **US Nuclear Weapons Policy**

### **New US Plutonium Facility Moves Ahead**

The National Nuclear Security Administration has released a notice describing their plan to replace a 60 year-old building that is located on a major fault line in Los Alamos, New Mexico. The Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Replacement Nuclear Facility, which would quadruple US capacity to produce plutonium pits for nuclear weapons, is supposed to meet the requirements set forth by the National Environmental Policy Act, but critics already have doubts about its safety. In addition, escalating costs due to redesigns in engineering have at least quadrupled the estimated price from three years ago, which has drawn even more scrutiny to the project.

Fleck, John, "[Officials Confirm LANL Plutonium Lab Plan](#)," *Albuquerque Journal*, October 14, 2011.

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### **Congress Argues Over Nuclear Weapons Funding**

Rep. Michael Turner (R-OH), Chair of the House Armed Services Strategic Forces Subcommittee, has claimed that the Senate is attempting to redirect \$8.3 billion away from the maintenance fund for the US nuclear arsenal. He suggested that at least part of this money has been used in water-related projects such as dams and canals.

Senate staffers have denied the claim, asserting that "there's no way to take money from water to weapons or vice versa under the Budget Control Act. There is a hard wall between those two pots of money."

"[Senate Aides Dismiss House Criticism on Nuclear Weapons Funding](#)," *Global Security Newswire*, October 19, 2011.

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### **Panetta Opposes Any Cuts to Nuclear Weapons Budget**

US Defense Secretary Leon Panetta testified before Congress on October 13 that he opposes any cuts to the US nuclear weapons budget. Panetta said, "This is too important. We have always been at the cutting edge of this technology and we have to stay there."

Panetta added, "If we aren't staying ahead of it, we jeopardize the security of this country. So, for that reason, I certainly would oppose any reductions with regards to the funding for weaponization."

"[Panetta Opposes 'Any Reductions' to Nuclear Complex Modernization Budget](#)," *Global Security Newswire*, October 13, 2011.

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### **Is a Nuclear Dyad a Possibility?**

Air Force Gen. C. Robert Kehler, head of US Strategic Command, discussed the future of the US nuclear "triad," which includes land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarines and bomber aircraft. The US nuclear triad includes 450 land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles, strategic missiles deliverable by 76 Air Force B-52s and 20 B-2s, and 18 Navy Ohio-class submarines carrying ballistic or cruise missiles.

"I continue to stand by the need for a triad; certainly in the near term, I believe that we can sustain a triad," Kehler said. "I think there are going to be interesting questions about both the scope and pace of modernization as we go forward."

"Can we, in fact, as we look to modernize...afford to spend the resources to modernize the entire triad? Those are not all questions for today," the general said.

Parrish, Karen, "[Stratcom Chief Discusses U.S. Nuclear Triad](#)," *American Forces Press Service*, October 19, 2011.

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## **Nuclear Disarmament**

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### **Finland to Host Conference on Nuclear-Free Middle East**

At the 2010 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference, the idea of creating a nuclear weapon-free Middle East was given formal backing. The United Nations has selected Finland to host a conference to discuss making the Middle East free of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction.

Anne Penketh of the British American Security Information Council said that the low-key announcement "reflects the political sensitivities in organizing this hugely important conference, which aims to bring Israel and Iran to the table for discussions on their mutual security for the first time." A Finnish envoy has been appointed the task of convincing arch-rivals Iran and Israel to attend the meeting; so far Israel (which is not a member of the NPT) has refused to attend on the grounds that it does not want to be involved in an "Israel-bashing event," while Iran has refused to state its position.

["Finland to Host Mideast Nuclear Weapons Conference,"](#) *Agence France Presse*, October 14, 2011.

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## **UN General Assembly Resolution on Nuclear Abolition**

For the 18th consecutive year, the UN General Assembly's First Committee passed a resolution calling for the eradication of nuclear arms. The resolution, submitted by Japan, received support from 156 nations as well as 97 co-sponsors, an increase of seven sponsors from a similar resolution last year. The focus of the resolution is to encourage holdout states to join the Non-Proliferation Treaty and urge nations with nuclear weapons to severely cut back their stockpiles. North Korea was the only country to vote against the resolution.

The full UN General Assembly is expected to vote on the measure in December.

["U.N. Nuke Abolition Resolution Passes,"](#) *Kyodo News*, October 28, 2011.

## **Nuclear Proliferation**

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### **Misconduct in Laser Enrichment Development**

In its attempt to commercially develop laser-based atomic fuel enrichment technology, GE-Hitachi was accused of "deliberate misconduct" by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission earlier this year. Under the Freedom of Information Act, reporters have recently acquired the letter sent in May outlining the findings, although it was heavily censored. GE-Hitachi was fined a total of \$45,500 for "very significant" violations and a "Security Level III contravention." Specifics of the violations have been blocked out of the letter. This is not the first time GE-Hitachi's Global Nuclear Fuels effort was criticized; in 2010 the NRC found reason to believe there were significant problems with their "integrated safety analysis methodology."

Many people believe that the development of this technology could increase proliferation around the world because it would significantly reduce the complexity of enriching nuclear fuel.

Grossman, Elaine, ["GE-Hitachi Fined for 'Significant' Security Breaches in Nuclear Fuel Effort,"](#) *Global Security Newswire*, October 20, 2011.

## **War and Peace**

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### **Computer Virus Hits US Drone Fleet**

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, also known as drones, have been used increasingly by the American military and the CIA in countries around the world. They have been deployed repeatedly in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq,

Yemen and Libya. To reduce the likelihood of viruses infecting drone software, the remote cockpits of the drones use a classified internet system and are not connected to the public internet. Yet in late September, the military's Host Based Security System discovered a virus affecting the computers at the Creech Air Force Base in Nevada. Although the virus has not prevented the base from using its drones, several attempts to eradicate the presence of the virus have failed.

This is not the first time a virus has infected the ground control stations (GCSs) of the drones. In 2008, hundreds of thousands of Defense Department computers were infected by the .btz worm. Three years later, technicians are still trying to clear it up. Other problems include the failure of the Reaper and Predator drones to encrypt the video they send to American ground troops. Footage was discovered on the laptops of Iraqi insurgents in 2009.

Scachtman, Noah, "[Exclusive: Computer Virus Hits U.S. Drone Fleet](#)," *Wired*, October 7, 2011.

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## Resources

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### **Does Unmanned Make Unacceptable?**

Drones and robots are an emerging military technology that has a growing impact on today's warfare. The use of this type of military machinery raises strategic, ethical and legal questions. This report from IKV Pax Christi gives an overview of the types of drones and robots currently being used, who uses them, and the ethical and legal questions that come along with the increased use of these machines.

[Click here](#) to download the report.

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### **Nuclear Abolition Forum**

The World Future Council, along with the Albert Schweitzer Institute, the Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy, the Global Security Institute, the Middle Powers Initiative and other international organizations have launched the Nuclear Abolition Forum.

The forum consists of a dedicated website for posting articles and discussing key nuclear abolition aspects and initiatives, along with a periodical that focuses on specific issues for achieving and sustaining a world free of nuclear weapons.

The theme of the inaugural issue of the magazine is the application of International Humanitarian Law to nuclear weapons, and is comprised of articles from a range of experts. While this topic is complex and multidimensional, the Forum is designed to offer a variety of perspectives rather than advocating any particular approach to achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.

[Click here](#) to visit the Nuclear Abolition Forum.

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### **Trends in Nuclear Armed States**

The British American Security Information Council (BASIC) has published a new report entitled *Beyond the United Kingdom: Trends in the Other Nuclear Armed States*. The report says that the US will spend \$700 billion on the nuclear weapons industry over the next 10 years, while Russia will spend at least \$70 billion on nuclear weapon delivery systems.

The report also says that Russia, Pakistan, Israel and France are assigning roles to nuclear weapons that go

well beyond the theory of nuclear deterrence. In particular, the report highlights that Russia and Pakistan are assigning nuclear weapons "war-fighting roles in military planning."

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

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## Foundation Activities

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### Speaking of Peace Now Available

*Speaking of Peace: Quotations to Inspire Action*, a collection of quotations on peace, war and the human spirit, has just been published by the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation. These quotations were selected by David Krieger, long-time President of NAPF, to encourage thought and inspire action toward a more peaceful and nuclear weapon-free world.

The book is divided into ten chapters: Lessons of History; War; Peace; Nuclear Weapons / Nuclear War; Earth Citizenship; Human Spirit; Commitment to Life; Individual Power; Individual Responsibility; and Hope. The book includes quotes 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 and to purchase a copy.

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### Peace Leadership Program Update

Paul Chappell, NAPF Peace Leadership Program Director, has been traveling extensively for the past several months giving lectures and workshops on peace leadership. [Click here](#) for a video of Paul's lecture in Tacoma, Washington, where he discusses whether world peace is possible and whether human beings are naturally violent or peaceful.

Paul also recently wrote some thoughts on the Occupy Movement. [The article](#) discusses strategy, the power of waging peace, why he has hope, and something that a lot of people don't want to talk about - the potential for this movement to become violent. Read Paul's article to understand how violence can be prevented.

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### Shirin Ebadi Joins NAPF Advisory Council

Shirin Ebadi, an Iranian human rights activist and winner of the 2003 Nobel Peace Prize, has joined the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation's Advisory Council. She joins a [distinguished group](#) of valued advisors, including four other Nobel Laureates.

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## Quotes

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"America needs a new nuclear weapon as much as Lady Gaga needs another new outfit."

-- **Rep. Ed Markey** (D-MA).

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"I don't think Japan needs to possess nuclear weapons, but it's important to maintain our commercial reactors because it would allow us to produce a nuclear warhead in a short amount of time."

-- **Shigeru Ishiba**, former Defense Minister of Japan.

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"There are for the first time in human history real threats to peace and survival of the species...One has been hanging around since 1945 and it's a miracle we've escaped it. That's the threat of nuclear war, nuclear weapons. And though it isn't being much discussed, that threat is in fact being escalated by policies of this administration and its allies. And something has to be done about that or we are in real trouble."

-- **Noam Chomsky**, speaking to a group at Occupy Boston.

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## Editorial Team

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