

# THE SUNflower



NUCLEAR AGE PEACE FOUNDATION

## Issue #137 - December 2008

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

## President-elect Obama and a World Free of Nuclear Weapons

by David Krieger

The election of Barack Obama as President of the United States is a great moment for America and the world – a time of celebration and tears. The American people have chosen hope over fear, unity over division. In doing so, we have repudiated policies of violence, lawlessness and closed-door rule. We have restored hope and made possible the restoration of America’s credibility in the world.

President-elect Obama has already made many statements about US nuclear policy during his long campaign for the presidency. The one I like best is: “A world without nuclear weapons is profoundly in America’s interest and the world’s interest. It is our responsibility to make the commitment, and to do the hard work to make this vision a reality. That’s what I’ve done as a Senator and a candidate, and that’s what I’ll do as President.”

To read more, visit [www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2008/11/05\\_krieger\\_obama\\_elect.php](http://www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2008/11/05_krieger_obama_elect.php).

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### New Deal on South Asian Nukes?

by J. Sri Raman

Pakistan’s President Asif Ali Zardari came out last Saturday with yet another series of statements to cause more than mere ripples in South Asia. He did so especially with pronouncements on the nuclear weapons issues between India and Pakistan that have made many sections in the subcontinent sit up and take notice.

Do these statements, however, add up to a real promise of a new deal for the region, which has continued to be a dangerous place ever since the two rival nations became nuclear-armed neighbors in May 1998?

To read more, visit [www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2008/11/26\\_raman\\_new\\_deal.php](http://www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2008/11/26_raman_new_deal.php).

## Historical Perspectives

### Cautionary Tales from a Nuclear War Zone

by Barbara Rose Johnston and Holly M. Barker

Early in the morning of March 1, 1954, sometime around five or six o’clock, American planes dropped a hydrogen bomb on Bikini Atoll. Shortly before this happened, I had awakened and stepped out of my house. Once outside, I looked around and saw Billiet Edmond making coffee near his house. I walked up and stood next to him. The two of us talked about going fishing later in the morning. After only a few minutes had passed we saw a light to the west of Rongelap Atoll. When this light reached Rongelap we saw many beautiful colors. I expect the reason people didn’t go inside their houses right away was because the yellow, green, pink, red, and blue colors which they saw were such a beautiful sight before their eyes.

The second thing that happened involved the gust of wind that came from the explosion. The wind was so hot and strong that some people who were outside staggered, including Billiet and I. Even some windows fell as a result of the wind.

To read more, visit [www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2008/11/26\\_johnston\\_barker\\_cautionary.php](http://www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2008/11/26_johnston_barker_cautionary.php).

## Nuclear Proliferation

### Pakistan Hints At No First Use Policy

Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari has announced that he is in favor of adopting a policy of “No First Use” of nuclear

weapons. When asked whether he would support such a policy, Zardari replied, "Most definitely."

Pakistan's rival, India, is one of only two nuclear weapon states with a formal "No First Use" policy. The other country with such a policy is China.

Zardari also encouraged negotiations for a nuclear-free South Asia. He said, "Let's sign a South Asia non-nuclear treaty and I can say this with full confidence - that I'm sure I can get my parliament to agree upon that."

"Pakistan President Says Supports No-First-Use Nuclear Policy," *Agence France Presse*, November 23, 2008.

## Nuclear Insanity

### Air Force Chief of Staff Calls for Modernization of Weapons Inventory Control

US Air Force Chief of Staff Norton Schwartz has called on the Air Force to "modernize" the tracking process of its nuclear weapons. Schwartz was disappointed when he discovered the Air Force still uses paper ledgers to keep track of its nuclear arsenal. "It seems to me there is a more modern way to maintain inventories of weapons and nuclear materials," Schwartz said. He indicated that the Pentagon is looking into such modern techniques as putting bar codes on nuclear warheads.

The Air Force has been embarrassed by a series of mishaps in its handling of nuclear weapons. In August 2007, six warheads were unknowingly loaded onto a B52 bomber and flown from North Dakota to Louisiana. For at least 36 hours, the nuclear warheads were unaccounted for. More recently, the Air Force has repeatedly failed surprise inspections at its nuclear weapons facilities.

Barnes, Julian, "Air Force Chief Wants Better Oversight of Nuclear Arsenal," *Los Angeles Times*, November 26, 2008.

## Missile Defense

### Russia Will Cancel Missile Plan if US Cancels Missile Defense Plan

Russia will abandon its plans to deploy missiles on the doorstep of the European Union if the US scraps its plans to base a part of a missile defense shield in Europe. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said that if the US continues its work to deploy missile defense components in Poland and the Czech Republic, Russia will deploy nuclear-capable Iskander systems in Kaliningrad, near Poland.

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev said the US had sped up its missile-defense plans in reaction to the recent war in Georgia, in which Russia clashed with its southern neighbor over the Moscow-backed breakaway region of South Ossetia.

"Russia Will Abandon Missile Plans if US Cancels Shield," *Agence France Presse*, November 11, 2008.

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### Poland Won't Lobby Obama on Missile Defense

Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski said that his country will wait for the Obama administration before deciding on whether to base US missile defense interceptors in his country. Sikorski said that Poland had agreed "out of friendship" to the Bush administration proposal to establish a US base for 10 interceptor missiles in Poland.

Obama foreign policy adviser Denis McDonough said that Obama "supports deploying a missile defense system when the technology is proved to be workable." However, real tests are not scheduled to take place until 2010.

Sikorski said his government “would like to see the project continue” because it is evidence of US -Polish cooperation. He also said that the presence of US bases in a foreign country creates a bilateral arrangement that “adds sinews” to any defense treaty, noting that Poland has been a member of NATO for almost 10 years and has nothing more than the promise of a conference center.

Pincus, Walter, “Poland Won’t Lobby Obama on Missile Defense,” *Washington Post*, November 20, 2008.

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## **Czech Mayors Ask Obama to Forgo Missile Defense in Europe**

A letter signed by 34 Czech mayors was sent to President-elect Barack Obama, asking him to reconsider the agreement to place a military radar base of the US missile defense system on Czech territory. The mayors note that two thirds of the Czech citizens don’t support the agreement, which has not been voted on by citizens.

The plan to put components of a missile defense system in the heart of Europe has caused tensions between USA and Russia and will lead to expansion of the arms race. The mayors are concerned that Europe will become a battlefield in a potential international conflict, and that the Czech Republic would be the target for a first attack because of the radar.

To read the full letter, visit [www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2008/11/26\\_czech\\_mayors\\_obama.php](http://www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2008/11/26_czech_mayors_obama.php).

## **Nuclear Energy and Waste**

### **Renaissance of the Anti-Nuclear Movement**

Over 15,000 people turned out to disrupt a delivery of nuclear waste across Germany, one of the largest German anti-nuclear protests in years. Activists chained themselves to train tracks and used other disruptive methods to prevent the waste from reaching its destination. Nuclear waste from many German nuclear plants is sent to the French facility at La Hague to be reprocessed and sealed into glass for storage in Germany.

The German governing coalition of Social Democrats and conservative Christian Democrats has approved plans to shut down the last of Germany’s 17 reactors by 2020. However, Chancellor Angela Merkel has indicated that she would be in favor of slowing down that process so that the country could meet its commitments for slashing greenhouse gases.

Public opposition to nuclear power in Germany remains high, as evidenced by the thousands willing to risk arrest to protest the movement of highly radioactive waste.

“The Renaissance of the Anti-Nuclear Movement,” *Der Spiegel*, November 10, 2008.

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### **Bush Administration Abandons Idea of Second Nuclear Waste Dump**

The Bush administration is likely to recommend abandoning the idea of a second nuclear waste dump because of the difficulties in opening the dump at Yucca Mountain in Nevada.

The Yucca Mountain nuclear waste dump was originally scheduled to begin accepting waste in 1998. It is now scheduled to open in 2020 at the earliest and is billions of dollars over budget.

The numerous critics of the Yucca Mountain plan say that it does not meet international standards for a nuclear waste repository because it is in an area of active earthquakes and volcanoes.

Wald, Matthew, “US Decides One Nuclear Dump Is Enough,” *New York Times*, November 6, 2008.

## Resources

### Peace: A History of Movements and Ideas

Veteran scholar and peace activist David Cortright offers a definitive history of the human striving for peace and an analysis of its religious and intellectual roots in his new book *Peace: A History of Movements and Ideas*.

David Cortright is President of the Fourth Freedom Forum and Research Fellow at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame.

The book is available online at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) and [Powell's Books](http://Powell's Books).

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### Securing the Bomb 2008

The world still faces a “very real” risk that terrorists could get a nuclear bomb, and the Obama administration must make reducing that risk a top priority of US security policy and diplomacy, according to *Securing the Bomb 2008*, published by the Belfer Center’s Project on Managing the Atom and the Nuclear Threat Initiative.

To read the full report, visit [www.nti.org/e\\_research/cnwm/overview/cnwm\\_home.asp](http://www.nti.org/e_research/cnwm/overview/cnwm_home.asp).

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### Map of Projected New US Nuclear Power Plants

The US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has released an interactive map of projected sites for new nuclear reactors in the United States. The map shows the location of possible new reactors based on applications they have received.

You can view the map online at [www.nrc.gov/reactors/new-reactors/col/new-reactor-map.html](http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/new-reactors/col/new-reactor-map.html).

## Foundation Activities

### A 100-Day Agenda for President Obama

The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation has published a 100-day nuclear disarmament agenda for President Obama. The document calls on Mr. Obama to place nuclear disarmament high on his agenda and to take bold steps during his first 100 days in office.

Public commitment, bilateral engagement and global action highlight this plan. By adopting this agenda, President Obama would demonstrate US commitment to achieving the goal of zero nuclear weapons, a path rooted in legality, morality and consideration for the security of the people of the United States and all humankind.

To read the 100-day agenda, visit [www.wagingpeace.org/menu/resources/obama100day/index.htm](http://www.wagingpeace.org/menu/resources/obama100day/index.htm).

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### NAPF Celebrates 25th Annual Evening for Peace

On November 22, the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation hosted its 25th Annual Evening for Peace. Nearly 300 people were in attendance, including over 100 students, to honor Rev. George Regas and Stanley Sheinbaum for their lifelong commitment to peace and justice.

To read NAPF President David Krieger’s speech, visit [www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2008/11/25\\_krieger\\_2008\\_efp.php](http://www.wagingpeace.org/articles/2008/11/25_krieger_2008_efp.php).

The 25-page program from the event is available to view online at [www.wagingpeace.org/menu/resources/publications/evening\\_for\\_peace\\_2008.pdf](http://www.wagingpeace.org/menu/resources/publications/evening_for_peace_2008.pdf).

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## Join NAPF's Online Community

The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation is currently reaching out to the public through three social networking websites. If you are a member of any of these sites, please join us!

Click the links to view our profile on [MySpace](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

If you are interested in volunteering to help expand our online presence, please email [rwayman@napf.org](mailto:rwayman@napf.org).

## Quotes

“The perverse logic that leads a poor nation to spend excessive sums on its armies, and not on its people, is exactly the antithesis of human security, and a serious threat to international security.”

-- Costa Rican President **Oscar Arias Sanchez** in a [speech](#) to the UN Security Council encouraging the application of Article 26 of the UN Charter, which advocates international arms control as a means to avoid diverting human and economic resources.

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“We could continue between Europe and Russia to threaten each other with shields, with missiles, with navies. It would do Russia no good, Georgia no good and Europe no good.”

-- French President **Nicolas Sarkozy**, speaking at a summit with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev.

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“The likelihood that nuclear weapons will be used will increase with expanded access to technology and a widening range of options for limited strikes.”

-- A report by the **National Intelligence Council** titled *Global Trends 2025 - a Transformed World*.

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“I think we have not yet arrived at the moment where going to zero [nuclear weapons] will make sense. It underwrites a lot of what we do.”

-- US Air Force Chief of Staff **Norton A. Schwartz**, explaining how the US uses its nuclear weapons arsenal to maintain hegemony.

## Editorial Team

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