



YOUTH ACTION PEACE AND DISARMAMENT



On Saturday, May 2, 2015, the next generation takes over.

Most people living on the earth now have lived their entire lives in the nuclear age. Seventy years ago the world was introduced to the Bomb when the United States destroyed the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Since then, we have known.

Since then, we have lived under the shadow of the threat of nuclear annihilation—first it was city by city, but by 1960, the threat was global.

Today the United States has 5,000 thermonuclear warheads in our stockpile; 1,500 deployed on hair-trigger alert. Russia's numbers look the same; the other nuclear weapons states likely have 1,000 between them.

The generations born since the Hiroshima have learned, however uneasily, to live with the Bomb. Some of us have actively worked to abolish nuclear weapons, but our efforts have not yet achieved that

lofty goal. Go to almost any gathering of anti-nuclear activists in the United States and you'll be struck by the grayness of the room—almost every head.

Youth Stepping Up

The young people of OREPA aim to change that. "Now that we know, we have a responsibility," said Carmella Cole of the youth action planning committee. "Especially since we're right here."

The planning committee is developing plans for an event in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, home of the Y12 Nuclear Weapons Complex, where the United States continues to produce thermonuclear cores for warheads and bombs. The event is billed as an action for peace and the earth. It will begin at 12:30pm on Saturday, May 2 at Alvin K. Bissell Park, located on the Oak Ridge Turnpike.

The day will start with a bring-your-own-pic-

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nic! lunch and socializing, then a program that will include music, spoken word, food, poetry, and finally a march from the park to the Y12 Nuclear Weapons Complex.

"I hope people will become more aware of the wrong that Y12 does," said Evora Kreis, "and will be more mobilized in fighting the harm that our world is faced with."

Adults, too

The action for peace and the earth is not just for young people, it's for everyone. Those of us who only fondly remember our own youthful days should be determined to stand with this generation of peacemakers as they lay claim to a future free of nuclear weapons.

The words of Emma McLeod are appropriate for all ages: "I do it because

it's important to stand up for myself and important for me to stop what I know is wrong."

The youth action planning committee started their work by educating themselves about what is happening at Y12. They quickly concluded that they not only have a right to a different future, they have a responsibility to create it.

"I hope older adults will support what we are doing," said Kayce Collins. "I hear adults all the time saying they can't believe how far this world has gone downhill. Sometimes, when I hear people say how it was better in the old days, I think, 'You made the bomb.'"

In the honesty of our young people lies the truth that should lift us out of apathy and hopelessness. We have a responsibility to future generations.

New Bomb Plant? No!

"I think the idea of a cleaner bomb plant is an oxymoron," said Will Collins, referring to the Uranium Processing Facility, the multi-billion dollar bomb plant the government wants to build at Y12 to produce bombs for another century.

"The UPF is killing our future," said Carmella.

"We should be building schools, not bombs," said Emma.

The first step in being empowered to change the world is finding one's voice; the second step is using it. OREPA's youth action planning committee is taking the next step—standing to speak in public. Their message is clear. It is a call to each of us, the essence of hope in action: "Now that we know, it's our responsibility."

To the United Nations

Nonproliferation Treaty Review: Plans for a Convergence in New York City

BY THE TIME this newsletter finds its way into your hands, the convergence will have begun. From across the country and around the globe, people will be making their way to New York City for the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty Review conference at the United Nations; the conference begins Monday, April 27; it will be preceded by two days of activities by nuclear abolition and climate change activists in New York.

For us in East Tennessee, the journey begins March 30 at 8:00am at the Y12 Nuclear Weapons Complex in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and it will end twenty-six days and seven hundred thirty miles later at the United Nations.

More than two dozen walkers/runners/bikers are expected to set out for New York City. The expedition is sponsored by Footprints for Peace, and you can get detailed information about the trek from their web site. They welcome anyone who wants to join.

The Tennessee to NYC travelers will meet up with walks that have already begun—one in San Francisco and the other in New England, and eventually, by the time we march from Union Square North to Dag Hammarskjold Plaza on Sunday,

April 26, we will be tens of thousands strong.

In the run-up to the NPT Review, non-governmental organizations are gathering for a conference on nuclear disarmament and global warming called "Peace & the Planet." You can find information about the conference and how to register if you are interested in going (space is limited, so don't delay) on the website peaceandplanet.org.

If you can't make it to New York City, you can participate in a Global Wave which will happen on Sunday, April 6, beginning in New York City at 1:00pm Eastern time and traveling around the globe, moving through each time zone.

Groups around the world are encouraged to hold their own global wave event, livestreamed if possible. Information is available at the globalwave2015 facebook page, or you can email info@globalwave2015.org.

OREPA members will be traveling to New York City for the conclusion of the walk/bike/run, and OREPA coordinator Ralph Hutchison will be joining colleagues from the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability to conduct workshops during the NPT Review at the United Nations.



The newsletter of the Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance is published at least four times a year and mailed from Knoxville, Tennessee. Permission to reprint articles is granted as long as credit is given to OREPA.

Additional information about OREPA activities is available at www.orepa.org. A listserv provides information via email: to be added to the listserv, send your request to orep@earthlink.net and please put "listserv" in the subject line.

Find OREPA on facebook!

Join us each week for Sunday vigils at the gates of the Y12 Nuclear Weapons Complex at the intersection of Scarboro and East Bear Creek Road. 5:00pm, rain or shine, every week for more than 15 years.

You can receive OREPA's bi-monthly Reflections for Nonviolent Community (it's free!) by request to OREPA at orep@earthlink.net. It contains daily readings that reflect the struggle to live nonviolently in a culture of violence.

Donations to OREPA are tax deductible and may be sent to:

OREPA
P O Box 5743
Oak Ridge, TN 37931

More money and less to show: The UPF saga continues

One year and three hundred million dollars after the “Red Team” delivered its new plan for the UPF bomb plant to the National Nuclear Security Administration, no plan for the new bomb plant exists. At least that’s the official word. Anyone foolish enough to believe it is probably also ruing the day they sent their life savings to the daughter of a prince in Africa in order to get a share of her inheritance.

There is a plan. In a recent interview with Frank Munger, Congressman Church Fleischmann said the UPF is on a “completely different approach than the original strategy, and that approach has been universally accepted.” One problem with Congressman Fleischmann’s assessment, of course, is that his idea of the universe doesn’t, apparently, include the public.

Congressman Fleischmann and the public have different views on pork. Show him a bag and tell him there’s a pig inside, and he’s a happy man. Tell him it’s worth billions for his district, and his pleasure is universal. The public—the ones actually ponying up the money for Fleischmann’s pig—is more subdued, recalling cautionary tales about a pig in a poke that were apparently not part of the Congressman’s upbringing.

Lots of Money, No Plan Yet

Recent reports have pegged the design for the UPF bomb plant at 50% complete with no end in sight. That puts the pricetag so far—still no approved plan—at almost *\$1.5 billion*. President Obama has requested 430 million more dollars for next year, and projects spending at a rate of half a billion dollars a year for the next five years.

It’s all part of the plan to modernize the US nuclear weapons stockpile and production infrastructure, a plan estimated to cost more than *\$1 trillion* over the next thirty years.

Some information about the current unannounced “plan” for the UPF has dribbled out and it has drawn concern not only from OREPA and other watchdog groups, but also from the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, a semi-autonomous federal agency charged with assessing safety at nuclear weapons facilities.

Under the original UPF plan, several aging

facilities were to be scrapped and their operations were to be moved into the UPF. Under the new plan, only the weapons production activities will be moved into the UPF. Other operations, including nuclear operations, will continue in older buildings—that are in advanced stages of deterioration and have been deemed unsafe by the Safety Board—for twenty-five years or more.

Next step to stop the UPF

The next immediate step to stopping the UPF is to require NNSA to comply with the law which requires federal agencies to re-evaluate environmental impacts anytime their plan changes significantly.

There is no doubt the new UPF plan looks nothing like the old one, and the decision to continue to use unsound facilities for twenty-five more years, coupled with new US Geological Survey earthquake hazard maps showing an increased risk in Oak Ridge, means there are environmental concerns that were not analyzed in the original Environmental Impact Statement.

So OREPA is pushing for NNSA to begin the process of preparing a Supplemental EIS immediately. NNSA has declined to respond to our letters, though, and has indicated it does not intend to prepare a new EIS. That’s okay for now—the longer they wait to start, the longer it will take them to complete the EIS, and the higher the pricetag for the UPF will go, and that’s what doomed the first two UPF plans—cost and schedule.

Eventually, they will have to prepare a new EIS, even if we have to spend the money to take them to court. OREPA’s Board of Directors decided in January to begin to lay the groundwork for that legal challenge, and we have been working with our friends at Nuclear Watch New Mexico and elsewhere to do that.

Why is the UPF doomed?

Well, for starters, there is no actual need for a massive new production facility to produce 80 thermonuclear cores and cases a year. That’s why the UPF will continue to have trouble getting the funding necessary to build it, even with Tennessee Senator Lamar Alexander chairing the purse-strings committee.

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NNSA’s failure to prepare a new environmental analysis for their new plan shows us one thing: they failed to learn the fundamental lesson from their space/fit fiasco: *follow your own rules!*

When OREPA and Nuclear Watch New Mexico filed a Freedom of Information Act request for the Supplemental Analysis they are required to prepare before deciding whether or not a new EIS is necessary, NNSA’s weak response was they were “in the process” of preparing the SA. No doubt the very early stages.

We asked for the Supplement Analysis because we had already heard NNSA had made the decision not to prepare an S-EIS, a decision they can only legally make *after* they complete the Supplement Analysis.

WHERE TO WRITE

NNSA Administrator
Mr. Frank Klotz
National Nuclear Security
Administration
1000 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20585-1000

It's fastest and easiest to
write your Congressman
and Senators via the "Con-
tact" page on their web site. If
you want to use snail mail:

Your Representative
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Your Senator
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Secondly, the plans currently in development face a remarkable hurdle—they are designing a building to house technology that does not yet exist, or is at least has not reached the stage of development that designers can count on.

Thirdly, management has not been held accountable for past screw ups—the half billion dollars space/fit fiasco, for instance, drew a stern "Tsk, tsk!" from Senator Lamar Alexander, but no hearings and no personnel reassignments. So, no incentive to change anything.

Fourthly, the new Environmental Impact Statement will reveal information that makes the currently plan highly suspect—a main reason they don't want to subject their new plan to additional environmental review.

Fifthly, the UPF bomb plant project is being overseen by a federal agency, the NNSA, that is the poster child for failed projects—the bigger the project, the bigger the failure, according to the Government Accountability Office's High Risk List.

So far, the UPF has been nothing more or less than a manifestation of this culture of incompetence.

What to do now?

Support OREPA's efforts to challenge the UPF.

Write to your own Representative and Senators challenging the wisdom of putting \$430 million dollars in the budget for a bomb plant that has already spent a billion and a half and still has no plan to show for it. "No plan, no money" is a reasonable request.

Demand a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the new plan. Write to the Department of Energy and to your elected officials. Ask why the NNSA is not putting its plan out there for public review.

And tell other people. Tell them what's going on and tell them why you are concerned and ask them to join you. That simple bit of organizing is what we need to turn the tide and assure the demise of the UPF bomb plant.

Sabotage or protest?

Sixth circuit hears Transform Now Plowshares appeal

In 2012, the United States government's prosecution of Greg Boertje-Obed, Michael Walli and Megan Rice for the Transform Now Plowshares action at the Y-12 Nuclear Weapons Complex took a wrong turn on the road to justice when the District Attorney, apparently piqued when the peace activists turned down a plea-bargain deal, decided to charge the nonviolent trio with sabotage.

Federal judge Amul Thapar expressed misgivings about the charge during the trial, but he allowed the case to move forward, and the compliant East Tennessee jury deliberated only a couple of hours before returning a guilty verdict in May 2013. Since then, Megan, Greg and Michael have been incarcerated, first in county jails and now in federal prisons.

On March 12, 2015, lawyers for the TNP three presented oral arguments in the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati, arguing before the three judge panel that the sabotage charge was an overreach. The judges appeared to agree.

When Assistant prosecutor Jeff Theodore began offering his side of the argument, describing what Megan, Greg and Michael had done, one judge interrupted: "That sounds more like a protest

than sabotage." And later, when Theodore attempted once again to assert the action injured the national defense of the United States, the judge was almost incredulous. "With banners? And a loaf of bread?"

Nearly three dozen supporters packed the courtroom in Cincinnati, where cases are usually argued in an echo chamber with only attorneys and judges present. Marc Shapiro argued for Michael, Greg and Megan; Shapiro works for the law firm Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe, assisted by Bill Quigley and Anna Lise Lellilid-Douffet who were part of the original defense team.

In the end, it is impossible to predict what the outcome of the appeal will be or when the judges will hand down their decision. A decision in favor of the appellants should lead to a re-sentencing and, if it happens before November, might lead to an earlier than scheduled release for Megan Rice.

A detailed report on the hearing can be found on OREPA's web site or on the web site of the Transform Now Plowshares action.

You can also find addresses to write to Megan, Greg or Michael at the Transform Now Plowshares site: look under the green Write the Prisoners button.



Message left on July 28, 2012 at the Y12 Nuclear Weapons Complex in Oak Ridge, TN by Transform Now Plowshares

Celebrations in Knoxville and Atlanta honor peacemaking and peacemakers

March was a month for celebrating peace, and OREPA was on the giving and receiving end of Peacemaker Awards!

The month opened with the annual celebration of East Tennessee Peacemakers sponsored by OREPA. More than a hundred people packed the hall at St. James Episcopal Church in Knoxville for a celebration titled “Until Justice and Peace Embrace,” where we honored Renee Kesler, Carol Nickle and John Stewart, three amazing peacemakers whose lives have spanned almost every conceivable peace and justice issue over the last five decades or more.

The Emancipators provided music, and Erik Johnson created yet another marvelous backdrop for our celebration; Cindy Collins set the tables, Jim Harb and Libby Johnson managed the food, and dozens contributed to the evening which doubles as a fundraiser for OREPA.

“I am truly blessed,” said Renee Kesler, director of the Beck Cultural Exchange Center and Chairperson of the Greater Knoxville Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Commission for the past decade. John Stewart recalled his days working as legislative director for Senator Hubert Humphrey and the challenges of shepherding the Civil Rights Act of 1964 through the Senate. Carol Nickle, whose pursuit of justice has taken into courtrooms and around the globe, thanked OREPA for the award expressing a mixture of delight and embarrassment at being honored.

It sounds strange to say someone “earned” a Peacemaker award, but it is the simple truth with this year’s honorees. All three have worked, relentlessly and undaunted by long odds, in a climate that is not always respectful of people who seek

peace and justice.

OREPA was pleased to honor John, Carol and Renee. “If we tried to list everything they do, we would be here all night and probably for a few nights after that,” said OREPA coordinator Ralph Hutchison as he made the presentation of awards. Instead of a list, we threw a party.

OREPA honored with award

Two weeks later the tables were turned as OREPA and its coordinator, Ralph Hutchison, were honored by the Buddhists of Nipponzan Myohoji with the 2015 Corrigan Peacemaker Award, presented at the Flower Festival in Atlanta, Georgia on March 21. Glenn Carroll and Nuclear Watch South were co-recipients of the award with OREPA.

The celebration was framed by stunningly gorgeous weather, and after the awards presentation, we gathered on the back porch of the temple for a feast and a nice, long chat with friends old and new. Thanks to an enduring commitment to nonviolence, people were able to negotiate the cuddling of three adorable triplets who joined us for the day without undue rancor.

Eight OREPA members traveled from Knoxville for the occasion and were joined by supporters in Atlanta. Utsumi Shonin offered reflections on their recent walk from Selma to Montgomery, an anniversary they have marked for a decade that this year brought eighty thousand people to the small Alabama city.

Receiving the Peacemaker Award in grand company, from our Nipponzan Myohoji friends, was a lovely and humbling experience. It is a milestone on the long journey to peace that we travel together.

below: Carol Nickle, John Stewart and Renee Kesler receive OREPA’s 2015 Peacemaker Awards



right: OREPA was honored with the 2015 Corrigan Peacemaker Award at the Flower Festival at the Atlanta Dojo



August 8 action in Oak Ridge

No new bomb plant; no more bombs

IN AUGUST OF THIS YEAR, seventy years since Hiroshima, Japan was destroyed by the Little Boy bomb, the eyes of the world will be on Oak Ridge, Tennessee, home of the Y12 Nuclear Weapons Complex, where the highly enriched uranium for Little Boy was produced, and where workers are producing H-Bomb parts today.

This milestone commemoration may be the last one in which *hibakusha*—survivors of the atomic bombings in Japan—are able to raise their voices to call on the world to abolish nuclear weapons. Our events will join with these courageous people who have set their eyes on a future free of nuclear weapons and have dedicated their lives to raising awareness about the devastating power of nuclear weapons to enlist the world in the cause of disarmament.

OREPA has a number of events on the drawing board for August; if you live in East Tennessee or can be with us for the week, we will welcome your participation; if you live farther afield, we are asking

you to come to join us on Saturday, August 8, for a demonstration for peace and against the ongoing production of weapons in Oak Ridge and the plan to build a new, multibillion bomb plant to continue building bombs.

Many voices, one goal

The events being planned for August will provide a platform for many voices to be raised. Organizers are planning a weeklong fast for nuclear disarmament; we are working with local leaders of faith communities to release a statement about the moral depravity of weapons of mass destruction. We hope to enlist artists and others in events to raise awareness about the need for disarmament. We are planning an evening with a history scholar to talk about the mythology surrounding the decision to use the bomb—and to present the historical record to dispel the myth.

On Thursday, August 6, we will hold our annual Names and Remembrance Ceremony at the gates of the Y12 Nuclear Weapons Complex. On Saturday, August 8, we will host a mass gathering for nuclear abolition in Oak Ridge. On Sunday, August 9, we will have our annual Peace Lantern ceremony in Knoxville to remember Nagasaki.

Detailed information about the week's plans will be posted on OREPA's web site, www.orepa.org, as plans are firmed up.

Eyes on Oak Ridge

Oak Ridge in this anniversary year is more critical than ever. The plan to build the new Uranium Processing Facility bomb plant to manufacture thermonuclear cores—at a rate of 80 a year!—can not be reconciled with a commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons.

The modernization of the US nuclear stockpile and the production infrastructure sends a powerful and perilous message to the rest of the world: Nuclear weapons will be currency of power for generations to come. It is no exaggeration to say the Y12 complex in Oak Ridge is Ground Zero for the new nuclear arms race that is sweeping across the globe.

Powerful people and huge corporations want to build the new bomb plant—not because there is a military need for new nuclear weapons, but because there is a lot of money at stake. Stopping the bomb plant will require the political power that only comes from an active, informed, mobilized public. We have to show our strength on August 8 in Oak Ridge.

