For more than fifty years, the courageous voices of the hibakusha, survivors of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, have called the world to abolish nuclear weapons. Sixty-six years after the destruction of Hiroshima, you can add your voice to theirs at the place the bomb was born—the Y12 nuclear weapons complex in Oak Ridge, Tennessee.

The nuclear nightmare that began in Hiroshima is not over. Today, the Y12 Plant, where the uranium for the Little Boy bomb was enriched, is still actively producing nuclear weapons components—and if the government is not stopped, a new $6.5 billion bomb plant will be built at Y12.

The Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance will mark Hiroshima Day with three events on August 6, 2011. The events will provide an opportunity to demonstrate solidarity with the hibakusha whose numbers are dwindling, but whose witness to the atrocity of the bomb remains strong.

continued next page
Events begin at 6:00 am on August 6, with the solemn Names and Remembrance Ceremony that has become a tradition in Oak Ridge. At 10:30 am, we will gather at Alvin K. Bissell Park in Oak Ridge for a March for Nuclear Abolition; we will leave the park just before 11:00 am to walk to the Y12 Nuclear Weapons Complex. At noon, we will convene at the Y12 plant for Never Again! A Call for Nuclear Abolition.

Names and Remembrance
The Names and Remembrance Ceremony, from 6:00 - 9:00 am, presents a witness to workers going into the bomb plant and marks the time of the bombing of Hiroshima. The Ceremony includes the reading of names of the victims of the atomic bombing along with contemporaneous accounts of the horrors of the days that followed, poetry by survivors, and readings about the bombs effects. The peace bell is tolled for each victim, and peace cranes are tied to the fence.

March for Abolition
The March for Abolition will begin at Alvin K. Bissell Park in Oak Ridge at 10:30 am and move to the Y12 Nuclear Weapons Complex. We are still finalizing plans, but it is likely the march will incorporate multiple 2-mile routes, raising the issue of on-going nuclear weapons production for the entire community to consider. The marchers will come together for the final leg of the march to the bomb plant.

Never Again! A Call for Nuclear Abolition
Each year the hibakusha, and the mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, issue a call for the abolition of nuclear weapons. We will join our voices with theirs in an action at the Y12 Weapons Complex after the marchers arrive at Y12 (shortly after noon, we estimate). Peace cranes will be tied to the fence and we will issue a public call for the abolition of nuclear weapons and the cessation of weapons production at Y12. We will also call for the government to abandon plans for the new $6.5 billion Uranium Processing Facility in favor of a dedicated dismantlement facility at Y12.

Other events

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 5** • Peace Lantern making.
All are welcome to join in the creating of peace lanterns—assembly and decoration. No skills are required and all ages can help. The “party” starts at 6:00 am at the Riverside community house, 4627 Martin Mill Pike in south Knoxville.

**JULY 31 – AUGUST 6** • Bikes not Bombs.
Footprints for peace sponsors a carbon-free caravan from Cincinnati, Ohio to Oak Ridge, Tennessee. It’s a carry-your-own pack expedition; more information at http://footprintsforpeace.tripod.com.

**AUGUST 6 – 9** • Fast for an End to Nuclear Weapons. The Buddhists of Nipponzan Myohoji will observe a spiritual Fast, offering chants and prayers for an end to nuclear weapons at the gates of the Y12 Nuclear Weapons Complex in Oak Ridge, TN. You are welcome to join in the vigil. For more information, contact sister Denise at 404 627 8948.

**AUGUST 6 – 9** • Bike Circus. Traveling to visit towns within 25 miles of Oak Ridge to focus on the cost of nuclear weapons through comedy, puppets and circus with shows in public places. Contact Lissa or Jake if you are interested in joining or if you have suggestions for performance venues. No experience necessary. 203 843 7444 or 865 776 8249 or lmcleod1@gmail.com for info.

**AUGUST 9** • Peace Lantern Ceremony/Shadow Puppets. OREPA’s annual commemoration of Nagasaki Day at Sequoyah Hills Park in Knoxville. We gather at 8:00 pm at the west end of the park on Cherokee Drive (follow Cherokee almost as far as you can to the west and park in the parking lot there; we’re in the open field). In addition to traditional peace lanterns, we will have a shadow-puppet presentation; this is a particularly family-friendly event.
Nuclear danger increasing
Even though people are disinclined to contemplate the possibility of a nuclear exchange, experts—and warhorses like Henry Kissinger and George Shultz—tell us the nuclear danger is increasing.

Brady Lyele says, “Total destruction is imminent. It could happen at any moment.” The continuing catastrophe in Fukushima, Japan is a reminder that the improbable is not impossible—over time, the likelihood increases until it is nearly inevitable.

In fact, the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation has documented more than 20 incidents since 1956 when the world has stood at the edge of the nuclear abyss. Some—the Cuban missile crisis—we heard of; others we didn’t hear about, they were as simple as a breakdown in communications leading to a mis-reading of a weather satellite launch which led to the first-ever activation of the Russian nuclear launch codes in 1995. The clocked ticked down to four minutes one January day before Russia decided not to launch.

In court in March, Dr. Charles Moylex explained the US has publicly threatened to use its nuclear weapons five times since the end of the Cold War. Today, the US has more than 1,500 thermonuclear weapons on hair-trigger alert.

Y12’s key role
The Y12 Nuclear Weapons Complex is central to the US plans to “modernize” the nuclear weapons complex. The planned $6.5 billion Uranium Processing Facility is in the final stages of approval—all that will stop it is political pressure from an “informed and aroused public,” as Bernard Lown once said.

The UPF’s primary purpose will be to produce thermonuclear secondaries for the Life Extension Program—and eventually for new nuclear weapons. Although the government says it can meet its mission requirements with a facility that has a throughput capacity of less than 20 warheads/year, the new bomb plant is sized to produce 80 warheads/year.

The Y12 Nuclear Weapons Complex is central to the US plans to “modernize” the nuclear weapons complex.

Nonproliferation Begins at Home
The US is adamant about limiting the proliferation of nuclear weapons, but our self-contradictory policy severely undermines our position—which is crucial when moral suasion is the main tool we have. President “Nuclear Free World” Obama has asked Congress for $85 billion to modernize the US weapons complex and perform Life Extension Upgrades on the entire US stockpile. Some of the “upgrades” actually result in new weapon capabilities (“wider performance capacity” in weaponeer parlance)—the W76 is now being transformed into the W76-Modification 1 as part of the life extension program.

Modernization is just one example of US doublespeak—our insistence that Iran not enrich uranium while the US continues to upgrade our entire nuclear stockpile is another example.

The rest of the world understands the hypocrisy of the US double standard, but there is little they can do about it. It is up to us to hold our country accountable for its actions.

In 1969, the US signed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty in which we promised to “pursue in good faith negotiations leading to the cessation of the arms race at an early date,” a promise US arms control ambassador Thomas Graham says the US has yet to keep.

The promise, Article 6 of the NPT, was half of a deal—non-weapons states would not pursue nuclear capabilities and nuclear weapons states promised to disarm “at an early date”—more than 40 years ago.

States that kept their part of the deal, by not pursuing nuclear capabilities, are now re-thinking. It is understandable that they question the sincerity of the US and Russia. Even arms reduction agreements seem structured to assure the permanence of nuclear arsenals rather than a state of disarmament.

It’s up to us
We have a responsibility to the world and to the future, and it is a responsibility we can not defer or leave to others.

Joanna Rogers Macy speaks of a day when we will be asked by a child, “Was there really a time when the whole world was at risk of being destroyed by nuclear weapons? What did you do?”

Since 1980, nearly every mainstream religious body in the United States has recognized nuclear weapons are immoral.

In 1996, the World Court ruled the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is a violation of common humanitarian law and, as such, illegal under international law.

In 2009, four conservative elder statesmen—Henry Kissinger, George Shultz, Sam Nunn and William Perry—called for the US to take concrete steps to abolish its nuclear arsenal because our policy of deterrence was “decreasingly effective and increasingly hazardous.”

Which brings us full circle.

The continuing expenditure of billions of dollars on nuclear weapons by our government is something we must take personally.

Consider the child’s question: What did you do? You can put one thing on your list now—plan to come to Oak Ridge in August to say “Never Again!”
Here’s how it was supposed to go. The judge granted the District Attorney’s motion to limit testimony in the trial of the Y12 Resisters so the jury would hear nothing about nuclear weapons, nuclear policy, faith, religion or any good motive of the defendants. The jury would also hear nothing about international law, the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, or Nuremberg. It would be quick and simple.

Except it wasn’t. From the opening witness—the prosecution’s witness, Ted Sherry, manager of the Y12 Nuclear Weapons Complex in Oak Ridge, TN—nuclear policy was on the table. Sherry delivered the standard public relations line about Y12 being an essential part of the nation’s nuclear deterrent...

It unraveled rapidly. With Father Bill Bichsel on the witness stand the Assistant District Attorney, Melissa Millican, asked him if he was familiar with a Bible verse about beating swords into plowshares. “Can you quote the verse?” she asked. Given that the prosecution had originally asked the judge to deny any mention of faith or religion, it was understandable that the question provoked a little courtroom chit chat. At the end of it the judge leaned forward, resting his chin on his intertwined fingers and fixed Millican with a stare. “It’s. Your. Question. Counselor,” he said, jaw clenched. “Would you like to repeat it or will you withdraw it?” She declined to withdraw the question and we were halfway through Bix’s homily before anyone got another word in.

Peace crane flags and stilt walkers accompanied defendants and supporters as they processed to court through downtown Knoxville on the opening day of the trial.

If the trial was marked by anything, it was the moments of clarity, beauty and truth from the defendants who were able to testify. Even though we knew the jury was disengaged utterly and completely (you’d have had to be there during questioning to believe it), and even though we knew the deck was stacked against us, and even though we knew the outcome was preordained, the power of the witness transcended the moment.

Steve Baggarly, representing himself, followed up on a mention of the origami cranes tied to the fence at Y12 by telling the court the story of Sadako Sasaki, her leukemia, her dream of folding a thousand cranes, and the worldwide symbol of peace the paper crane has become. Ted Sherry refused to give Brad Lyttle a direct answer when asked if nuclear weapons are absolutely 100% safe. “They’re incredibly safe,” he said. Mary Dennis Lentsch referenced her vow to renounce evil, and when she was asked if she knew she was breaking the law when she crossed the bomb plant boundary, she said, “I was obeying a higher law.”

There was a brief moment of levity when Mary Dennis was asked if she had discussed her plans with anyone else—ten defense attorneys rose as one to object. Judge Bruce Guyton sustained the objection and said, “I thought for a second someone had called a recess.”

Brad Lyttle was stymied by the judge when he tried to admit his papers as evidence, but on cross examination he got his main message in. The prosecutor asked him if he thought the weapons in Y12 were dangerous. “That’s an understatement!” Brad declared. “They’re catastrophically dangerous!” Then, argued the DA, we have to keep them secure. “Get rid of them!” Brad suggested with relish, “and then we’ll really be...
Support the Y12 Resisters

Following the trial, seven of the Resisters renounced the conditions of their pretrial release and were taken into custody. Bill Bichsel was already in jail from his plowshares action. After two miserable weeks in Blount County Jail, the seven were transferred to Ocilla, GA.

Some have completed their pre-sentencing interviews and sentencing is being scheduled for September on scattered dates.

As the OREPA newsletter goes to press, four resisters remain on pre-trial release. And David Corcoran continues to await his August 22 trial.

You can write to those in jail. Use the name and ID number, along with the address, for those in the Irwin County Detention Center in Ocilla:

Carol Gilbert, ID 8959
Ardeth Platte, ID 8961
Jackie Hudson, ID 8958
Bonnie Urfer, ID 8957
Michael Walli, ID 4444
Jean Gump, ID 8956
Steve Baggarly, ID 8955

Irwin County Detention Center
132 Cotton Dr.
Ocilla, GA 31774

Bill Bichsel receives mail at:
William Bichsel IDN 1155703
Unit 2B
Knox County Sheriff’s Detention Facility
5001 Maloneyville Rd
Knoxville, TN 37918

You can track the latest information about the resisters at the Nuclear Resister’s web site:
www.nukeresister.org

Contributions to allay expenses for the defendants, checks should be sent to Sue Ablao, with a note referencing the Y12 Resisters.

Sue Ablao
Ground Zero Center For Nonviolent Action
16159 Clear Creek Road NW
Poulsbo, WA 98370.
WORLD COURT READING

OREPA marks the fifteenth anniversary of the World Court’s opinion on nuclear weapons. Join us on **Sunday, July 10 from 1:00-4:00pm** on the lawn of the University of Tennessee School of Law, corner of Cumberland Avenue and James Agee, for our sixth annual **public reading** of the court’s opinion.

OREPA DEPENDS ON YOU

Like many nonprofits in this economic climate, OREPA is always struggling to pay the bills. Our funding comes from our members—with your help, OREPA will end the fiscal year (June 30) in the black, even making up the shortfall from last year’s deficit. Of course, every month there are new bills to pay.

Your tax-deductible contribution can help us pay for the printing and mailing of this newsletter and move forward with confidence. Send your gift to OREPA, P O Box 5743, Oak Ridge, TN 37831 or donate on-line at www.orepa.org.

SUNDAY VIGILS AT 5:00

Tai Chi anyone? How about a discussion on water conservation, or a quiz on nonviolence? These are just a few of the subjects of recent Sunday vigils. There is a different leader every week as we gather at 5:00pm at the gates of the Y12 Nuclear Weapons Complex in Oak Ridge to witness to life and hope in the face of the facility that plans and prepares for the destruction of the planet and all that lives on it.

Everyone is welcome, rain or shine, we’ll be there.