

No More Bombs



Information and Advocacy for Nuclear Disarmament

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Welcome to our discussion for the fall season,

Browsing some of our previous issues, I was struck by how prominent the bad news stories are. We deal with continual negative developments in the nuclear weapons field, and it seems sometimes that we in the disarmament community are losing ground. So, let's see what we can find to counter that assessment. Let's find **some positive news**.

We will start in our own local community, with our two latest successful meetings, and our current re-energized plans for the next year. Then we will review some of the great peace work being done by the other groups we are affiliated with, and beyond to the level of international organizing for Peace in general and Nuclear Disarmament in particular. Read on. thank you all, tracy powell

Our latest meeting was Monday November 4. Bud Anderson started us out with a short course on A-bomb design, and then showed a couple of powerful videos, that got us all thinking about the seriousness of our challenge. This meeting was video recorded by Isabella Butler, filling in for her brother Zain, who did the previous meeting in September, and their interest and willingness to work reminds us just how important the participation of **all generations**, young and old, will be in the work we need to do. We are very grateful for their help. These videos, and all others we do, are on our [youtube channel](#) for you to watch anytime.

As you know, we are a member of the **Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility's** [Washington Coalition Against Nuclear Weapons](#). This organization didn't exist until a couple years ago, and it was put together by a few dedicated folks like Bruce Amundson and others at WPSR, and the brilliant organizer they hired, Lilly Adams. Lilly traveled all over the state, meeting with dozens of small groups, just like us, who were brought together to form the coalition, in which we share information and coordinate activities. Lilly has since moved on, to the national headquarters of the Union of Concerned Scientists, to continue the work of nuclear disarmament on a broader scale, and the work she began here is now being carried out very ably by Carly Brook. Their efforts have enabled all the member groups to enhance our effectiveness by sharing resources. We are in constant contact as a group, and if you want to connect with this statewide organization, Carly is ready to add your name to the notification list for all their activities.

One of the **most active peace groups** in our state is [Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action](#), in Poulsbo, right next door to the Trident submarine base. We will be learning more about these wonderful folks in the months to come, but I do want to share some of their recent good news. On August 5th, they blocked access to the Trident base with a flash mob performance of "War". Several demonstrators were cited and detained, and later released. They also got the attention of several news outlets, spreading their message. On August 24, the Nipponzan Myohoji Buddhist Order held a ground purification ceremony for the new Peace Pagoda they will build on the Ground Zero property. Construction will begin soon.

On the world stage, there is growing awareness of the global existential threat of nuclear war, and along with that awareness is growing support for the many processes already active in the work to prevent such catastrophe.

[The Nuclear Weapons Prohibition Treaty](#) that ICAN (the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons) introduced to the United Nations in 2017, has continued to be signed and ratified by more countries this year, and as of November 1, 79 have signed it, and 33 have ratified. When it is ratified by 50 nations, it becomes international law. This process may have seemed slow and incremental, but it has moved faster already than the previous treaties that successfully banned chemical and biological weapons, land mines, and cluster bombs.

Also new, the UN First Committee has issued a unanimous statement urging all the nations who have initially signed the ICAN Treaty to ratify it, and those who did not participate in its original signing to do so now. In addition, the Vatican's Permanent Observer to the UN has recently issued a similar statement to two UN committees, expressing Pope Francis' full support for enactment of the ICAN Treaty.

As was the case several decades ago, when the struggles to **ban those other weapons of mass destruction** were gaining ground, the international recognition of the inhumanity of nuclear weapons is just one part of the work that needs to be done. Taking a lesson from a similar global movement that eventually ended Apartheid in South Africa, there is now a campaign to financially stifle the production of those weapons, by enacting a global strategy of divestment. Exposing the companies who profit by their manufacture and distribution, and then convincing the investors behind them to stop the flow of money into those producers, will be critical to finally eliminating these devices.

This divestment movement is accelerating worldwide. One of the most energetic and effective organizations leading the way is [Don't Bank on the Bomb](#). Their analysts dig deep into the investment and manufacturing processes of companies around the globe, and their annual reports grade them on their humanity. The recent issue has named 36 financial institutions that do not fund nuclear weapons, a substantial increase over last year, and 41 that are moving in that direction, but quite clean yet. And there are now two US investment firms now in the first list, doubling that number. Bravo!

Another group has also taken on this issue, [Code Pink](#). Their efforts in this country are focused on US companies that invest in nuclear weapons, as well as other nefarious activities, and they have chapters all over the country working on discovering which companies are profiting from manufacturing and distributing nuclear weapons, and all the parts that go into them, and then developing ways to defund them. If you want to learn more, I'll send you a link to the Seattle chapter.

This is an issue that we can get into on our own level, and I would like to form a working group of like minded individuals to study it. Whether we know it or not, anyone who has money in a bank, or stocks or bonds or pension funds, or anywhere else, is in some way funding all kinds of businesses, whether or not we believe in what they do. This applies to individuals, trust funds, credit unions, local governments, unions, and any group that invests. If this is an issue that interests you, and you have some time and skills to share, please let me know.

I also think its helpful to remind ourselves to peer over the layer of gloom once in awhile, take stock of where we are and where we have been, and see what other people are doing, and have done in the past, that can encourage us in our work. Many ordinary people have made extraordinary contributions to Peace.



One such person is **Setsuko Thurlow**, shown here with Beatrice Finn, accepting the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize. She is one of the diminishing number of hibakusha, survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. During ICAN's recent development of the Ban Treaty, she went all over the world, speaking to many people about her experiences, and those of her family and fellow survivors, with a clarity and dignity that was overwhelming. [Here is a recent example.](#) [Her speech to the UN in 2017](#) She is a shining inspiration to us all. Not only for what she has suffered, but more importantly for her openness and willingness to forgive. Her example teaches us to move beyond complaining and blaming, and to work with others for the common good.



The **Golden Rule** is once again sailing for Peace in the Pacific. Veterans For Peace has taken on the voyage aboard the newly restored sailboat that first sailed in 1958 with a Quaker crew to challenge the US nuclear weapons testing in the Marshall Islands. The Golden Rule left California in July of this year, and is now visiting several Hawaiian ports, holding meetings about the cause of nuclear disarmament and reparations for the Marshallese, and will head for the Marshall Islands in the spring. They intend to arrive in Hiroshima, Japan, by August 6, the 75th anniversary of the first nuclear attack. [Here is a link to their story in a video.](#)

All of you who have attended our meetings, or donated to the Peace Groups we have recommended, or reached out to friends and family to share the messages of Nuclear Disarmament, Thank you! All of you who have just become aware of the issue, Please join us! We all have the same stake in this struggle: the future livability of planet earth, for ourselves, our children and grandchildren, and all the other beings with whom we share this world. Our next meeting is most likely in February, and we will announce the date and agenda in the next newsletter. Stay in touch. Thank You!

Please contact any of us if you have ideas, complaints, or suggestions. Julia Hurd julia@gsoup.net, Bud Anderson, budathome2012@hotmail.com, Wim Houppermans wh5314b@gmail.com, Lyndon Greene anacomaritimectr@msn.com, or me tracy@nomorebombs.org or call or text me at 360-840-3826.

"You can't shake hands with a clenched fist."

Indira Gandhi

