

No More Bombs



Information and Advocacy for Nuclear Disarmament

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Fall 2021

Greetings Dear Friends of Peace and Love,

Eve of Destruction? Maybe not quite yet, but recent events are nudging us in that direction. We will look into a couple of these in this issue. Illuminating the subject, a powerful book is recommended. And our next meeting, again via zoom, on November 17th, will be previewed. Hoping to see you then, and wishing you all peace and good health,

tracy powell

The **Golden Rule** is back in California waters. The valiant crew arrived in San Francisco Bay in June, and after some well earned maintenance for vessel and crew in Humboldt Bay, happening now, they will sail up and down the coast probably December and January, meeting supporters and giving presentations on their Pacific Islands cruise this past year. For more information, and for making donations, here is the [website](#).

RECA, Radiation Exposure Compensation Act, is in the news again. It is due to expire next year, and many folks are working to make sure it is renewed, as well as improved. Currently, the lists of Downwinders is limited to residents who were affected by fallout from the Nevada Nuclear Test Sites, and some of the miners and transportation workers at certain uranium mines, prior to 1971. One group who have been completely overlooked are those downwind from the very first nuclear test, the Trinity blast, in and around White Sands, New Mexico. The latest bills introduced in Congress in September would address these folks. Senate Bill **S. 2798** and House Bill **HR. 5338** would include Trinity Downwinders and other groups, increase the dollar amounts of most payments, and extend the Act's coverage another 19 years. Among WA members of Congress, Representatives DelBene, Jayapal, and Kilmer have already signed on as cosponsors, and we should thank them, as well as urging Rick Larsen to join them. So far, neither of our Senators have signed on to the Senate bill. Both House and Senate versions of the bill, plus the original RECA law, as adopted in 1990, are available on our [website](#). As Congress debates these bills, it may be possible to finally include the Marshall Islanders in the list of affected people. After all, we did destroy their homelands and poisoned their entire populations for generations since.

Here is a book I heartily recommend: [Banning the Bomb, Smashing the Patriarchy](#), by Ray Acheson, 2021. The author is the disarmament representative for the [Womens' International League for Peace and Freedom](#) to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). While chronicling the development of [ICAN and the Treaty Prohibiting Nuclear Weapons \(TPNW\)](#) now in force through the United Nations, they have also explained how it was necessary to reframe the entire discussion about nuclear deterrence and national security. Humanitarian perspectives had to replace cold calculations of military strategy and threatening behavior. The information and influences this book has had on me will be obvious in the slide show I will present at our November 17 zoom meeting.

Please join us on **Wednesday November 17th, at 7 PM**, on zoom, for our Fall membership meeting. We still hope to resume in person meetings and other activities as soon as public health conditions permit, and we truly appreciate your continued interest in what we are trying to do. This November meeting will feature a slide show presentation "**TPNW - our Last Chance?**" about the ICAN **Treaty Prohibiting Nuclear Weapons**, mentioned above. We will fill in some of the background of this historic international agreement, and provide information we can all make use of in promoting its adoption by our country.



We encourage a lively Q and A after the presentation. There will be posted on our website a zoom link to the meeting, a few days prior to Nov 17, and we will also send the link in a reminder note to our email list then. We hope to see many of you online then, and there will be time in the meeting to share your suggestions too. Please share with anyone you think may be interested.

Here are a couple more items to think about in October.

It was 1962. After the failed Bay of Pigs invasion a year before, the US was secretly planning another attack on Cuba, to overthrow Fidel Castro. At the same time, the Pentagon was installing Jupiter missiles, with nuclear warheads, to US bases in Turkey. The Soviet Union naturally saw this move as a serious threat, so they responded by shipping Russian missiles, also nuclear armed, to Cuba, during the summer of 1962, and started to build launching bases for them, which were spotted by a US spy plane in September. President Kennedy challenged Premier Khrushchev, demanding the halt of construction and return of missiles to the Soviet

Union. On October 1, four Soviet submarines armed with nuclear torpedoes entered the Caribbean, with orders to repel any US Naval vessels. When President Kennedy then declared a quarantine on all waters around Cuba, the submarines were already in place, and their commanders had all been approved to fire their nuclear torpedoes if attacked. This fact was not known to the US at the time. When the US ships dropped several depth charges in the area, and the submarines were out of contact with the Kremlin, any one of the four Russian sub commanders could have started a nuclear war. We still don't know why they didn't. Khrushchev and Kennedy finally resolved the standoff, by secretly agreeing that the US nukes would be removed from Turkey afterward. This story reminds us just how tenuous our confidence should be that an accident, or mistake, or misunderstanding cannot start a war that nobody wants. We have come perilously close to nuclear disaster more times than we know. The stakes are much higher now. Warheads are many times as destructive. There are more layers of control, including cyber networks, with more vulnerabilities and greater chances of mistake and accident. And that is just within the US nuclear arsenal. We don't have any idea how secure all the other nuclear war power structures are. How much longer can we rely on blind luck?

Maybe for good reason, the [UN has designated October 24 - 30 as UN Disarmament Week](#). Many events are planned, including webinars that we can attend. One is being presented on October 28 by **No-First-Use Global Network**, of Prague, Czech Republic, and **Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament**, of London, New York, also Prague, and Basel Switzerland. Titled **The United Nations and the Climate-Nuclear Disarmament Nexus**. This link will explain the webinar and its participants, and provide access to registration: <http://pnnd.org/event/united-nations-and-climate-nuclear-disarmament-nexus> .

These events remind us that the **United Nations** was originally formed in 1946 to deal with the newly created nuclear weapons of the United States. Its First Committee, created by UN Resolution 1, was tasked with the abolition of nuclear weapons. Their job is still the most important mission of the United Nations. Our November 17 meeting will examine the ongoing work of the **UN**, and how the recent **ICAN Treaty to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons** was developed.

Please contact us if you have suggestions, or complaints, or any ideas to share. Our steering committee is:

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"Nuclear disarmament is not an option for governments to take up or ignore. It is a moral duty owed by them to their own citizens, and to humanity as a whole. We must not await another Hiroshima or Nagasaki before finally mustering the political will to banish these weapons from global arsenals."

Archbishop Desmond Tutu

