

Citizen's Watch



You, Congress and Trump's "More Usable" Warhead

This May and June, Congress debated and voted on measures to restrict the Trump Administration's proposed low-yield, more usable submarine-launched warhead, dubbed the W76-2. This new nuclear weapon is a product of the Nuclear Posture Review released earlier this year. It is being pushed forward rapidly, rushing the regular budget and congressional oversight processes. (*See Spring 2018 Citizen's Watch.*)

While the congressional debate has been constructive, and we can see a growing number of members rise to oppose this dangerous and destabilizing new weapon, public action is crucial now. If we are to build sufficient opposition to stop this new nuke, it is imperative that additional members of Congress better understand its dangers. It is especially important for them to hear opposition to the W76-2 from constituents.

Tri-Valley CAREs and colleagues highlighted this weapon during our DC Days visits in May. In particular we pointed out that U.S. development of a new low-yield warhead (about 5 kilotons) designed to be more militarily usable in conflict would make nuclear war more, not less, likely. Your voice now will increase the momentum and make a real difference in the campaign to stop this nuke! Here is the "state of play" on Trump's proposed W76-2 to inform your activism.

Key House Votes

On May 9, the House Armed Services Committee considered the annual National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). The Ranking Member of the Committee, Rep. Adam Smith (D-WA-9), offered an amendment to eliminate the authorization for this low-yield warhead. The amendment was defeated 28-33 with all committee Democrats supporting the amendment.

When the NDAA was considered by the entire House on May 23, Reps. John Garamendi (D-CA-3) and Earl Blumenauer (D-OR-3) offered an amendment to fence money for the warhead pending a report from the Dept. of Defense assessing its impacts on strategic stability. This amendment lost 188-226.

During committee consideration of the House Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act (Energy and Water), Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA-13) initiated debate on the W76-2 with an amendment that was offered and withdrawn in committee to cut its funding. Then, on June 7, with Energy and Water on the Floor, the full House voted on Lee's amendment to shift all low-yield warhead spending in the National Nuclear Security

Warning. Speak Out! Urgente. Di Algo!



Livermore Lab's Site 300 high explosives testing range is poised to detonate huge toxic bomb blasts, lofting 121 hazardous contaminants high into the open air including beryllium, phosphine, hydrogen cyanide, vinyl chloride and dioxin.

What regulatory agency would let that happen?

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) has issued its preliminary decision to give Site 300 near Tracy, CA a permit to increase the size and weight of toxic bomb detonations on a 7,057 square-foot outdoor firing table. The daily limit will rise from 100-pounds of high explosives to 1,000-pounds per day. The annual limit will rise from 1,000-pounds to 7,500-pounds per year.

These open-air blasts will be allowed to happen with no/zero/zilch/nada air pollution control, although the technology exists to move the explosions into a containment chamber, according to the air district.

Moreover, the air district **EXEMPTED** Site 300 from all provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This means that the detailed analysis one might expect prior to issuance of a permit will simply not be done.

We the people have one opportunity to speak up and protect our air quality. The SJVAPCD will accept written comments until August 7, 2018. After that date, the air district will issue its final decision.

Tri-Valley CAREs has drafted a comment letter, addressed to the air district, for you to download, sign and send. Or, use it to inspire your letter. Go to:

www.trivalleycares.org/SJVAPCDcomment.pdf

You may also submit comments by email to:

publicnotices@valleyair.org

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1st birthday

On July 7, 2017, 122 governments voted at the UN to adopt the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). The TPNW expressly outlaws nuclear weapons development, testing, possession, use, transfer or assistance in any prohibited activity. It will enter into force after 50 countries sign and ratify, each according to its process.

How is the TPNW doing on its first Birthday?

- Its adoption has revitalized the anti-nuclear movement, culminating in the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to ICAN and its member groups.
- 59 states parties have formally signed the TPNW and 11 have completed ratification. This is a remarkable rate of progress, exceeding that of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and other similar measures. (See icanw.org)
- More states are moving forward. Switzerland recently completed a first step in its signatory process, and countries in Africa, Latin America, Southeast Asia and the Pacific (incl. New Zealand) are securing ratification.
- During DC Days, Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton became the first U.S. member of Congress to sign the ICAN Parliamentary Pledge to promote the TPNW within the government of a nuclear weapon state presently boycotting the treaty.

There is much to celebrate! And, much to do!

Plutonium: It's the Pits

In keeping with the Trump Nuclear Posture Review and a legislative requirement to produce 80 plutonium pits (bomb cores) per year by 2030, NNSA announced plans in May to expand pit production at not one, but two sites.

The new plan would "repurpose" the Mixed Oxide Fuel (MOX) Fabrication Facility at Savannah River Site (SRS) in South Carolina to produce at least 50 pits per year, and "maximize" the Los Alamos Lab in New Mexico to produce at least 30 pits/year.

What is the need for this massive pit production? Consider that:

- (1) There has been no production of plutonium pits for the **existing** stockpile scheduled since 2011, and none is scheduled for the future.
- (2) In 2006 independent experts found that pits last at least a century and the current average age of existing pits is now 40 years.
- (3) There is a large inventory of "excess" pits at Pantex, Texas.

Present pit production limits are set at 20 per year at Los Alamos. This capability was instituted some 20 years ago; and the stockpile has never required as many as 20/year. Clearly expanded production is not for the **existing** stockpile!

In fact, the driver for massive pit production is new nuclear weapons development, particularly the proposed interoperable warhead IW-1/ W78 (for which Livermore is "lead lab"). The new IW-1/W78 pits are slated to have different characteristics than existing pits. Further, their novel design will give rise to uncertainties that could provoke resumption of nuclear explosive testing in Nevada.

Tri-Valley CAREs is determined to curtail industrial-scale plutonium pit production. The MOX facility at SRS can be repurposed to a non-toxic activity. Pit production capacity at Los Alamos should not increase. We note that the Senate Energy and Water Appropriations bill for fiscal 2019 requires a report on alternatives before proceeding with conceptual design of the facility at SRS. This is a step in the right direction! We will also push for new environmental review and public hearings. **Stay tuned!**

Tri-Valley CAREs at DC Days

Tri-Valley CAREs recently returned from Washington, DC, where we participated with the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability in the network's 30th annual DC Days.

Our team of five, including two young people, joined scores of ANA activists who, like us, are impacted by the Dept. of Energy (DOE) nuclear weapons complex. Together, we conducted 100 meetings over the course of three days with members of Congress, key staff and senior administration officials.

Our TVC team was able to participate in 50 DC Days meetings. We focused on decision makers with authority over nuclear weapons policy and environmental cleanup; two issues of grave concern nationally, and, in particular, to our communities around Livermore Lab and its Site 300 high explosives testing range.

On Tuesday evening, we participated in the ANA reception, where awards were given to members of Congress and grassroots activists for their courage and noteworthy achievements toward a nuclear free future. A high point occurred when our staff attorney, Scott Yundt, introduced and presented a special award to Rep. Barbara Lee. (*pictured*) Scott spoke eloquently of how she had inspired him to activism, and Rep. Lee gave an electrifying speech that called everyone to action!



Trump's Nukes... *Cont. from Page 1*

Administration's budget (\$65 million) to NNSA nonproliferation programs. The vote on this amendment also failed.

Key Senate Votes

When the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) considered the NDAA, on May 21-23 (in closed committee), Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) offered an amendment to fence (restrict) money for deployment of the W76-2 pending a Dept. of Defense report on its cost, schedule, and program implications. This amendment failed 11-16 with two Democrat Sens. Bill Nelson (D-FL) and Claire McCaskill (D-MO) joining all SASC Republicans in voting against it. An amendment offered by Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX) to weaken congressional oversight of the research and development process for low-yield nuclear weapons was approved on a 14-13 party line vote. (All Democrats voted against the Cruz amendment.)

When the full Senate considered the NDAA beginning on June 13, Sens. Jack Reed (D-RI, Ranking Senator on SASC) and Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) offered an amendment requiring Congress to authorize any work to develop new types of nuclear weapons (low-yield or other). A vote on a motion to table, i.e. reject, the amendment failed 47-51, with all Democrats and three Republican Senators, Susan Collins (R-ME), Rand Paul (R-KY) and Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), voting the right way. However, the amendment lost in further procedural blockages.

On June 18, Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) voted against the entire NDAA (which passed 85-10), stating, "While I support our troops and the many key provisions in the defense bill, I voted against it because of the dangerous provisions authorizing a new low-yield nuclear weapon and removing congressional oversight."

At the May 24 Senate Appropriations Committee consideration of the Energy and Water Appropriations bill, Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR) offered an amendment to move all funding for the W76-2 to fund Dept. of Energy infrastructure instead. The amendment failed 12-19, with three Appropriations Committee Democrats, Sens. Jean Shaheen (D-NH), Joe Manchin (D-WV), and Jon Tester (D-MT), voting with all committee Republicans in opposing the amendment. On June 21-25, when the full Senate considered the Energy and Water Appropriations bill, amendments proposed by Sens. Feinstein, Reed, Merkley and Ed Markey (D-MA) to curtail the W76-2 were procedurally blocked from getting a vote.

In the June 28 Appropriations Committee consideration of the Defense Appropriations bill, Sen. Merkley's amendment fencing (restricting) money for deployment of the low-yield warhead until the Dept. of Defense produces a report on implications of deployment **passed** on a voice vote - reportedly garnering support of all Democrats and Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK).

Conference on the House and Senate versions of the NDAA and Energy and Water Appropriations bills is beginning now. The full Senate is expected to take up consideration of the Defense Appropriations later this month (July) while the House has completed its Defense Appropriations consideration, without any amendments on the low-yield weapon.

As you can see, there is growing congressional opposition to the W76-2, but it is not yet sufficient to stop this new nuke. Now is the crucial moment for your members of Congress to hear **your** opposition to this new dangerous low-yield weapon. Further, please offer thanks and encouragement to key champions like CA Sen. Dianne Feinstein and NorCal Reps. John Garamendi and Barbara Lee.

The capitol switchboard is 202.224.3121. In addition to stating your opposition, be sure to say you would like to be informed of future action taken by your member of Congress.

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◆ Alerts 4 U ◆

Monday, August 6

Rally, March & Action outside Livermore Lab for Nuclear Abolition and Global Survival

8 AM, Vasco Rd at Patterson Pass Rd, Livermore

(925) 443-7148 for details

We will honor the victims of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and act to create a nuclear weapons free world for our children and all creation. Peace camp, vanpools, rally speakers, music and other info on the enclosed flyer.



Thursday, August 16

Tri-Valley CAREs meeting

7:30 – 8:30 PM, TVC Office

4049 1st St. Suite 139A, Livermore

(925) 443-7148 for details

Tri-Valley CAREs' monthly meeting is a chance to get issue updates, celebrate our progress and successes, meet new friends, and discuss upcoming events. We will meet in the First Floor Conference Room. Snacks and refreshments served.

Thursday, September 6

Letter to the Editor writing party

5:30 PM – 7 PM, Tri-Valley CAREs

4049 1st St. Suite 139A, Livermore

(925) 443-7148 for details



Join us for our monthly Letter to the Editor writing party. Come and write a letter to the editor of your favorite newspaper in a friendly and supportive environment.

We will offer a short briefing and handouts to get you started. Snacks and refreshments served.

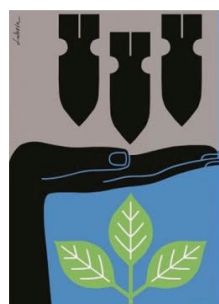
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MARCH FOR NUCLEAR ABOLITION & GLOBAL SURVIVAL

No Nukes! No Walls! No Wars! No Warming!

Mark your calendar for this major **Rally, March and Nonviolent Direct Action at 8am** on Monday, August 6th. Join us to commemorate the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan at the site where new nuclear weapons are being developed for use today.

We will gather at Livermore Lab to stop the creation of novel, "more usable" nuclear warheads that the Trump Administration proposed in its Nuclear Posture Review and fiscal 2019 budget, both released earlier this year. We will join millions of peace advocates around the country and the world on this memorable day to say "never again" to the use of nuclear weapons – and to call for their global abolition.

The rally's keynote speaker will be **Daniel Ellsberg**, perhaps best known as the whistleblower who released "The Pentagon Papers" to hasten an end to the war in Vietnam. He has been an analyst at RAND Corp. and a consultant to the Defense Dept., specializing in problems of command

and control of nuclear weapons, war plans and crisis decision-making. Ellsberg recently released his critically acclaimed memoirs, *The Doomsday Machine: Confessions of a Nuclear War Planner*.

We will hear from special guest speaker **Rev. Nobuaki Hanaoka**. He was an infant when the atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki on August 9, 1945. His mother and sister died from illnesses linked to radiation poisoning and his brother died at age 39 from premature aging associated with fallout from the bomb. Hanaoka is a retired minister in the United Methodist Church, who came to the U.S. following seminary training in Japan. He has settled in the Bay Area where he speaks, writes and teaches on topics of peace and human rights.

Prof. Christine Hong will also be featured. She is an assistant professor at UC Santa Cruz specializing in transnational Asian American, Korean diaspora, and critical Pacific Rim studies. Hong is co-editor of the Critical Asian Studies special edition

on North Korean Human Rights. She is a member of the National Campaign to End the Korean War, the Alliance of Scholars Concerned about Korea, and the Working Group on Peace and Demilitarization in Asia and the Pacific.

See the enclosed flyer for details, including event cosponsors, Peace Camp, vanpool rides and more.

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