THREE NATIONS CURRENTLY TESTING NUCLEAR WEAPONS:

as the U.S., India and Pakistan are a fitting punctuation point as we come to the end of the millennium and the century that marked the open

ned by John LaForge

ternal observers to verify whether they were truly sub-critical.

oan Hennacy of the Catholic Worker Movement, it picked up on some initial efforts by Franciscans and others in Nevada and carried on protests at the Nevada Test Site over the past two decades.

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we will end

be well poised to move to the elimination of all

viction Increased with the dramatic transformation
of their nuclear testsites as well. It seemed

lar group emerged in the Sowet Union to shut down
nuclear weapons. We were delighted when a simi-

diminished If the two Superpowers
ged each other with their nuclear missiles, and
were in the process of reducing their numbers,
perhaps the genie might indeed be put back into the
bottle.

France interrupted this hopeful scenario

world protests, but perhaps more accurately placed them

be players in the Second Atomic Age.

ATOMIC AGE II

The signing of a Comprehensive Test
Ban Treaty seemed to mark the end of the nuclear
arms race. But the denial that continues to set us

as no longer threatened by the specter of nuclear
war was severely jolted by the new tests in India
followed by the response to the challenge in Paki-
stan. India did not sign the treaty. It was pointless
to respond to testing nuclear weapons as long as the
major powers, notably the US., refused to set a

date for the dismantling of their nuclear arsenal
(aged on in Article VI of the Nuclear Non-prolifi-
tation Treaty). If trying into the global power

armed nuclear weapons as opening cards,

the Indian subcontinent intended to buy in. Indeed,
following their recent tests, India made a bid for a

seat on the U.N. Security Council.

It is not just a case of expanding the

number of countries in the Atomic Club. We have

entered a new era. Threatened is not world safety

but the posture of the two nuclear Superpowers,
there was at least some stability in their mutual

awareness of the madness of attack. Despite the

many signatures (168 nations) to the Non-Prolifi-
tation Treaty, there is a rapid proliferation of nu-
clear powers. Added to this is the weakening on the

continents of the vast Soviet arsenal, now in the

hands of numerous powers, and open to the market

to the highest bidder. The fragility of nuclear stabil-
ity has been exposed. Many consider this new

atomic age more perilous than the Nuclear Winter

recent decades, makes the specter of a hot nuclear
war very real. The U.S. and the U.S.S.R. have
never engaged in an actual war. The atomic target-
ning has been basically by threat. The races

even aimed to intimidate, in the name of deterrence,
while recognizing that this is indeed Mutual As-

ured Destruction (MADness) if ever carried out.

Now armies such as that of India and Pakistan, and
the other new nuclear states, wish to pack those
weapons into their arsenals for potential use in

military disputes. In which they have been en-
gaged through the years. This is indeed a differ-
ent script. It now is simply a question of which army

put out of the quiver for the next attack. Yet, a

uclear exchange in South Asia could result in 100

million casualties.

The long standing "major powers" are

very critical, even punitive towards the new testing

in the Asian subcontinent, and we ponder what we

should be. But there is hypocrisy here. The new Atomic

Age notes wider nuclear proliferation, and the weak-

ening of controls on those already armed. Further,
it is characterized by much more sophistication in

nuclear weapons development. The U.S. has not

stopped testing. New weapons development
continues. Designs are changed (the B-61-11 "the

earth penetrometer") and a new bomb results. Under
the pretenses of an Atomic Age, stewardship and Man-
gement more money is spent each year on nuclear

weapons development than during the Cold War
($4.5 billion vs. $3.5 billion). New undertakings
such as the National Ignition Facility at Livermore
and the Sub-critical tests in Nevada (called sub-
critical because they stop short of a chain reaction)
are coupled to the new super-computers to con-
tinue the development of new weapons.

The United States re-commits itself to

first tests and retaliation with nuclear weapons
(legislative decision, directive, 1997). President
Clinton has directed that we have to be ready to test
again, but that means to preserve our "best re-
source", our nuclear bomb developers. And how do
we preserve them? By enabling them to continue
to create nuclear weapons.

ABOLITION 2000

Is there hope in sight? Can we change?

Holy Week Walk participants vig
May 4, 1998 (right) outside Bechtel/
Department of Energy Headquarters in
Las Vegas before walking (above) 65 miles
to the Nevada Test Site.

(Photographed by Steve Carroll)
Can we get the Genie back into the bottle? The nuclear nightmare we are continuing to promote seems almost impossible to overcome. Many governments now reason that they need nuclear weapons (as well as such defense mechanisms as ‘Star Wars’) to protect themselves. But we know that only places us in greater danger. Meanwhile, as in India and Pakistan, it robs the poor of desperately needed economic resources. Seeing this, some nations, such as South Africa, Brazil, Argentina and some of the former members of the Soviet Union have disarmed themselves of nuclear weapons. Even India has long been an advocate of nuclear abolition and still insists it will sign on when the existing nuclear powers set a definite schedule of elimination of nuclear weapons. Meanwhile, as in India and Pakistan, it robs the poor of desperately needed economic resources. Seeing this, some nations, such as South Africa, Brazil, Argentina and some of the former members of the Soviet Union have disarmed themselves of nuclear weapons. Even India has long been an advocate of nuclear abolition and still insists it will sign on when the existing nuclear powers set a definite schedule of elimination of nuclear weapons. It is the number one mandate of all nations, and especially the remaining ‘Superpower’ to make that number one on our agenda.

We must take very seriously the calls for abolition. A number of generals and admirals, as well as world leaders have vowed to work towards the elimination of all nuclear weapons. Spokespersons such as General Lee Butler, who headed all strategic nuclear forces under George Bush, insist that we were caught up in madness. He insists that the likely consequences of nuclear war have not politically, militarily or morally acceptable justification. And therefore, that the threat to use nuclear weapons is indefensible. These experienced folk have been joined by ex-nuke designers such as Dr. Ted Taylor and many people of good will to call for nuclear weapons in the year 2000. This would mean for the U.S. to work very closely with the U.S.S.R. to exercise the ‘zero’ option. It would mean truly ending nuclear weapons development. It would mean cutting off all nations to give up nuclear weapons after they see that we really match our words with our actions. In this way perhaps we can put the genie back in the bottle. It is not easy, but it is our only hope in order to save this beautiful planet and all the wonderful creatures who inhabit it.

Nevada Desert Experience is composed of people of hope, hope born of action. We invite you to join us in this commitment to work for the total abolition of nuclear weapons. We will be sponsoring ‘Millennium 2000: Walking the Ways of Peace’ processing onto the Nevada Test Site as the clock strikes the new millennium 00:01 AM January 1, 2000. Join us in this symbolic action and so on right, but even more, join us in a pledge to do all we can in the year 2000 to bring about the elimination of all weapons. In the spirit of St. Francis, may we all be ‘Instruments of Peace’.

**NEVADA DESERT EXPERIENCE PRESENTS:**

**Millennium 2000: Walking the Ways of Peace**

**DECEMBER 28, 1999 – JANUARY 1, 2000**

Mark your calendars and join Nevada Desert Experience in the event of the century! Share in special days of reflection, presentation and action, including a midnight candlelit procession onto the Test Site on the eve of the millennium.

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Phone(s) __________________________

I am interested in Millennium 2000: Walking the Ways of Peace
Enclosed is a contribution to help with the event.
Suggestions (speakers, workshops, etc.): __________________________
**DIRECTOR NEEDED**

Nevada Desert Experience is seeking an Executive Director. Salary negotiable, position open until filled. For job description or information, contact Anne Symens-Bucher, 1500 34th Ave., Oakland, CA 94601, (510) 536-3772, fax (510) 261-1006, e-mail: sbjpic@aol.com

**REACHING OUT TO SO. CALIF. UNIVERSITIES**

In mid-October, Cindy Pile, Education Director of Nevada Desert Experience, will be doing a second speaking/preaching tour in Southern California, focused specifically on universitities. Twelve Universitities are already on the itinerary. If your school is interested, please call Cindy at (510) 261-6120.

(continued from front page)

And while U.S. nuclear arms are always said to be "defensive", dire warnings are made about the dangers of similar weapons in South Asia. President Clinton asked others "not to follow down the path of a dangerous arms race." Not only does he still have control of over 9,000 deployed nuclear warheads, but "the U.S. is hard at work on new or modified designs for nuclear arms." (New York Times, August 18, 1997).

Last November Clinton okayed the threatened use of U.S. nuclear weapons against non-nuclear, Third World countries. Then in February the President refused to rule out the use of U.S. nuclear attacks against Iraqi territory. This nuclearism is considered last for the goose but not the gander.

"The American position is hypocritical," said K.R. Malani, a spokesperson for the Hindu party that governs India. "They are sitting on a mountain of nuclear arms and they are pontificating to India and the world."

Official U.S. condemnation of nuclear tests is like a long addicted chain smoker, his mouth full of cigarettes, fit and fouling the air, who shouts at children caught behind the garage with a pack of smokes they got from the house. The depth of this analogy is unfortunate. Everybody's nuclear weapons tests are self-destructive since they poison the atmosphere—politically and environmentally.

reprinted from the AlArwach Pathfinder
In commemoration of all who died in the violence of nuclear weapons detonated on the peoples of Hiroshima and Nagasaki 53 years ago; we deepen and re-commit ourselves to make nonviolence a viable political force in our day. We continue to strengthen our understanding through reflection and action.
Sub-critical nuclear weapon explosions continue to be detonated in the earth at the Nevada Test Site. Despite the rhetoric of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the reality remains; through the Stockpile Stewardship and Management program, the Department of Energy is constructing new...
aimed at ceasing the current government program to proliferate a new generation of nuclear weapons.

We at Nevada Desert Experience invite you to

Violence to Wholeness is a ten-part program in ten sessions by Ken Butigan in collaboration with Patricia Bruce. Nonviolence Center.

ARTWORK BY MEINRAD CRAIGHEAD

SCHEDULE:

Friday, August 7, St. James Catholic Church
4-7 p.m.: Registration
7-9:30 p.m.: Beginning our Journey

Saturday, August 8, St. James Catholic Church
8:30-10 a.m.: The Experience and Dynamics of Violence
10:15-12:15 Nonviolent Social Transformation
12:15-1:30 Lunch
1:30-3:30 Experimenting with Nonviolence: Organizing a Group Activity
5:00 p.m.: Dinner
6:30-8:30 p.m.: Creating Communities of Nonviolence

Sunday, August 9, Nevada Nuclear Weapons Test Site
8:00 a.m.: Prayer Service and optional Nonviolent Direct Action

Nevada Desert Experience
P.O. Box 4487, Las Vegas, NV 89127
is constructing new facilities to continue the work of the last 53 years—developing nuclear weapons.

Please join us in challenging this momentum. From the spirituality and practice of nonviolence written by St. Francis of Assisi, O.P. as a project of Pace e Bene Franciscan Peace Center.

(Clip & Mail to address below)

Name: 
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Address: 
City: 
State: Zip: 

Enclosed is $40 registration ($30 if before July 9)

Please send hotel info

I would like sleeping bag space or housing (we must know by July 25)

Send From Violence to Wholeness workbook ($20)

Special needs: 

(Saturday lunch and dinner included)

Contact Experience 7, (702) 646-4814, nde@igc.apc.org.