

‘No New Nuclear Bombs!’ Six Arrested at Kansas City H-bomb Factory

By Brian Terrell

Twenty-three activists gathered at dawn May 19 outside the so-called Kansas City “National Security Campus” to protest its nuclear weapons production.

The group greeted workers arriving for the early shift at the KCNSC, a government facility operated by Honeywell which makes 80 percent of the electrical and mechanical parts for the U.S. military’s nuclear weapons arsenal.

At present, the KCNSC is participating in seven “modernization programs” for land-based, air-dropped, and sea-launched nuclear weapons, including the newly accelerated production of the B61-13 gravity bomb which is to be 25 times more powerful than the atomic bomb the U.S. Army Air Corps dropped on Hiroshima. It is said to be more “precise” than earlier versions of the B61 — as if a 300-kiloton thermonuclear bomb needs precision. The U.S. Hiroshima bomb incinerated 4.4 square miles immediately killing between 70,000 and 140,000 people with fire, blast, and radiation.* Twenty-five of these new H-bombs could incinerate 110 square miles.

Even with over 7,000 employees, the KCNSC is undergoing an expansion that will double its size. A banner on the gate of the vast construction site reads “Safe, efficient and timely delivery of KC next critical infrastructure,” celebrating several contractors’ contributions to the government’s mad rush to produce more powerful and easier to use nuclear bombs.

In anticipation of the protest, the “campus” security closed the main gate, directing workers to another entrance. After the morning rush, six activists — Ann Suellentrop of Kansas City, Kansas; Jane and Henry Stoeve of Overland Park, Kansas; Mike Miles of Luck, Wisc.; Brother Louis Rodemann of Kansas City, Missouri; and myself — took the

Think about nuclear weapons

— continued from page 1

with my hands behind my back in metal handcuffs. While parties to the TPNW were meeting inside the United Nations, protesters convened by the Atlantic Life Community, Nukewatch, and War Resisters League were standing outside, calling on a recalcitrant United States to send someone from the U.S. Mission to attend.

The goal was to block traffic in front of the United Nations, ostensibly making it easier for the U.S. delegation to get to the meeting. As we prepared to block traffic, I grabbed onto the banner imploring the U.S. to join the treaty. It was 40 feet long, made of taped strips of paper, and extremely fragile and slippery. Holding onto it in the late winter wind took so much concentration that I forgot to be fearful as I stepped into traffic. A block away, another team carried a banner saying “Ban nuclear weapons which are illegal and immoral.”

It was a moment of genuine happiness. In the end, 17 of us were arrested. Although we didn’t convince the U.S. to send anyone to the treaty meeting, we did make a pretty big stink — and a team from our group wheatpasted the text of the related Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty onto the ground in front of the U.S. Mission.

So, going back to that person who commented “pretty far from the pulse” on the photo of my arrest, I’ll say this: The pulse is the resistance — and it is inside the resister. It gets bigger when we resist together, it helps us overcome fear and stay connected. In actions large or small, individual acts or mass movements, photographed or unnoticed, the pulse is there in the resistance. We couldn’t be closer to the pulse, because it is inside of us!

— *Frida Berrigan is an author and columnist with Waging Nonviolence. This article, originally published at wagingnonviolence.org, was shortened for space.*

protest onto the KCNSC. We were placed under arrest by officers of the Federal Protection Force who turned us over to the Kansas City Police Department who cited us for alleged violations of local ordinances. We were released with orders to appear in court in late June.

— *Brian Terrell is a long-time member of the Strangers and Guests Catholic Worker in Maloy, Iowa.*

**Whole World on Fire*, by Lynn Eden, Cornell Univ. Press 2004, p.20.



At the entrance to the nuclear weapons assembly complex in Kansas City, Kansas May 19, nuclear weapons abolitionists joined a protest and six were arrested. Photo: Jim Hannah.

Nukewatch Joins the Global Majority at UN Conference on Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty

“The truth cannot be forgotten forever. As we’ve passed more than 80 years we’re starting to come together. Because we never thought ... that our world would be a global village where everybody can come in the same room and discuss a major problem concerning our humanity. So, this is the time for all of us from different countries to sit and think together and to see the danger of nuclear.”

— *Isaiha Mongombe Mombilo, Coordinator of The Missing Link of Hiroshima and Nagasaki: Remembering Shinkolobwe, Chairperson of the Congolese Civil Society of South Africa.*

Commentary by Kelly Lundeen

In 2021 the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons went into force in 50 nations after it was ratified by Honduras. As a 46-year-old organization dedicated to the abolition of nuclear weapons, Nukewatch naturally joined the movement to pressure the United States and all nuclear-armed nations to sign, ratify, and implement the Treaty. This March, for the third time, we were able to attend the United Nations meetings discussing worldwide progress toward this goal. In Nukewatch style, we made our presence heard inside the United Nations headquarters, on the streets of New York, and inside the cell of a New York City jail.

Over four months of preparation and dozens of meetings we had the great honor of working closely alongside campaigners fighting for nuclear justice from Affected Communities and Allies Working Group (ACAWG), Atlantic Life Community, Catholic Workers, Students for Nuclear Disarmament-University of Montana, and many more. Nukewatch headed a delegation of eight members attending the United Nations meetings. We built trust and relationships leaving us all with hearts bigger than when we had started.

ACAWG is a group of which I am an active member made up of participants from several nuclear-impacted and allied organizations. Thanks to a grant from Utah Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons and others, the group had a large presence at the official U.N. conference, including submitting two working papers, organizing a civil society event, presenting to the Scientific Advisory Group, and making a formal statement during the meetings of U.N. representatives. In October 2024, ACAWG began preparing their first letters of support for those seeking visas to join the U.N. meetings from South Africa.

“Beyond Uranium Mining: Global Roots of Nuclear Injustice” was a standing-room-only United Nations civil society event organized by ACAWG, collaborating with ICAN Germany. Speakers from Turtle Island (North America) and Africa, including Indigenous leaders and representatives of affected communities, shed light on the history of the Belgian Congo’s uranium mining, which creat-

ed the world’s first nuclear victims and the fissile material for the Trinity, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki bombs. This part of Congolese history has been kept in the dark while nuclear victims in the region remain silent out of fear of retaliation. We then examined the global reality of affected communities in the sacrifice zone of nuclear-armed states and the truth about the connection between the genocide of Indigenous Peoples and current nuclear development and restarting of uranium mining (see “Uranium Mining, Milling, and Ablation, Oh My!” on page 1).

Nukewatch’s collaboration with Atlantic Life Community resulted in a rally outside of the U.S. Mission to the United Nations calling on the United States to sign the TPNW, ending in my arrest with 16 others. On March 5, I found myself inside a jail cell with Frida Berrigan, author of “Who Has Time to Think about Nuclear Weapons?” (see page 1 and 3). As citizens of the United States, it is our duty to demonstrate our opposition to our own government’s use of and constant threat to use nuclear weapons, and the ongoing radioactive violence that will affect countless generations. A few members of our group brought copies of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty to the U.S. Mission to remind our government of the commitment it made exactly 55 years ago to “pursue negotiations in good faith ... at an early date...on general and complete [nuclear] disarmament.” We glued the treaty to the sidewalk where it would be trampled on, the way the U.S. does.

Over the megaphone at the United States Mission to the United Nations the day of the arrests, Annie Jacobsen’s book *Nuclear War: A Scenario* was quoted as Homeland Security, the New York City Police, U.S. Mission guards, and hundreds of onlookers listened in:

“A 1-megaton thermonuclear weapon detonation begins with a flash of light and heat of 180 million degrees, more than 4 times that at the center of the sun, creating a massive fireball that expands at millions of miles per hour. Within a few seconds, the fireball increases to a diameter of a little more than a mile, its light and heat so intense that concrete surfaces explode, metal objects melt or evaporate, stone shatters, and human beings are carbonized. Not a single thing in the fireball remains. The people incinerated are spared the horror that begins to be inflicted on millions of more gravely injured people not yet dead...”

This is what we hope to prevent. In so many ways — in meetings, rallies, at nuclear facilities in court or in jail — Nukewatch will always join the people around the world who continue to struggle for a future in which this scenario is impossible.

— *You can watch clips of “Beyond Uranium Mining: Global Roots of Nuclear Injustice” at www.acawg.org.*