Nuclear Weapons and the Peace Movement

This is a more thorough version of what I’m saying at a speaking engagement
on Wed. Nov. 30, 2022, at Panorama’s Auditorium

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See more information on the Nuclear Weapons part of my blog,
 [**https://parallaxperspectives.org/category/nuclear-weapons**](https://parallaxperspectives.org/category/nuclear-weapons)

**This document fleshes out the 6 points I made in a recent speaking engagement about strengthening the grassroots peace movement to abolish nuclear weapons:**

1. **The U.S. has been provoking nuclear weapons since 1945.**
2. **Nuclear weapons exist in the overall context of U.S. foreign policy.**We must de-militarize our foreign policy overall as well as abolish nuclear weapons.
3. **The problems came from the top down, so solutions must come from the bottom up. Only a nonviolent GRASSROOTS MOVEMENT** can change our foreign policy
and abolish nuclear weapons.
4. **We must change public policies in several ways.**
5. **We can apply economic pressures in several ways**.
6. **I end with some closing encouragement.**

**The U.S. has been provoking nuclear weapons since 1945:**

Ever since 1945, the vast majority of Americans believed what the government said about nuclear weapons. Not only did the politicians tell us what to believe, but – as always – the mainstream news media reinforced the official government messages.

**Here are some crucial steps in how the U.S. trapped the world in nuclear weapons:**

#1. Since the 1940s, the U.S. government – and mainstream news media – have been telling us that our nuclear weapons are a “deterrent” that prevent nations from attacking us. Actually, the U.S. military could repel any attempted invasion without using nuclear weapons. We could prevent nuclear attack by abolishing nuclear weapons worldwide.

#2. The government and mainstream news media have fooled most Americans into thinking that the U.S.’s nuclear weapons are for retaliation only. But actually, the U.S. policy has ALWAYS been a willingness to START a nuclear war. In 1945 the U.S. escalated a conventional war by dropping 2 atomic bombs on innocent civilians in two cities in Japan. Also, since the late 1960s, the U.S. has been designing, building, and deploying nuclear weapons that are **designed specifically to be used first** – for a ”first strike” against another nation’s missile silos before the other nation could lunch their missiles. The U.S. has NEVER had a “no-first-use” policy, even though the peace movement has been urging a “no-first-use” policy. The public does not realize that for decades the U.S. policies – and the weapons we have designed and built – are not so much intended to defensively react to an attack, but are specifically designed to launch a first nuclear strike and aggressively start a nuclear war. The U.S.’s “first-strike” nuclear weapons were designed to fly thousands of miles and hit targets with pinpoint accuracy to destroy another nation’s missiles while those are still in their silos. We would not need that kind of accuracy – which is very expensive to engineer – if we merely wanted to retaliate defensively.

#3. While the nuclear arms race with the Soviet Union had been escalating since the early 1950s, **the U.S. has PROVOKED EACH ESCALATION** with dangerous new weapons technology, so the Soviet Union – fearing for their own “national security” – felt the need to match the U.S.’s escalations.

#4. Although most Americans believe the U.S. “won” the Cold War because the Soviet Union fell apart, actually BOTH nations LOST it because BOTH nations’ mania for military spending took trillions of dollars away from their ability to provide health care, housing, education, environmental clean-up, and other domestic needs. People in BOTH Russia and the U.S. have been suffering badly as a result, with horrible poverty, low life expectancy, and other problems that could have been solved if we had invested in peace instead of war.

#5. When the Cold War ended more than 30 years ago, almost all Americans stopped paying attention to nuclear weapons. **Actually, after the Cold War, the U.S. has CONTINUED THE SAME POLICIES and has CONTINUED ESCALATING NUCLEAR WEAPONS in dangerous ways.** Although two treaties actually eliminated thousands of nuclear weapons, both the U.S. and Russia still have THOUSANDS – and they are still on “hair-trigger” alert!

#6. And **right now the U.S. is building and deploying some NEW nuclear weapons that are SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED to make it EASIER TO BEGIN a nuclear war.** For decades the gigantically destructive nuclear weapons were so horrible that no nation has actually launched them against another nation. Recently the U.S. government made it easier to start a nuclear war by creating new so-called “low-yield” nuclear weapons (somewhat smaller than the Hiroshima bomb) that will cause the Pentagon and the President to think they’re only taking a modestly destructive action against another nation. However, if the U.S. attacks Russia with one of these, do you think Russia would simply tolerate the damage, or – in order to protect their own “national security” – would they retaliate with their own big nuclear weapons? These so-called “low-yield” nuclear weapons would very likely escalate into a nuclear war that would kill hundreds of millions – or billions – of people and destroy the U.S., Russia, and most of the world.

#7. **The American people generally don’t know these things**, but the rest of the world does. Our government doesn’t tell us the truth, and our news media don’t tell us the truth. But the rest of the world knows – and they are sick and tired of being held hostage by the nine nations that have nuclear weapons (U.S., Russia, China, the UK, France, Israel, India, Pakistan, and North Korea). This is why 122 nations passed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons through the United Nations General Assembly in July 2017 – and 68 nations had already ratified this bold new treaty by mid-November 2022.

#8. This extreme madness is possible because U.S. foreign policy – and U.S. policies about nuclear weapons – and Congress’s vigorous funding for more military violence – are all SOLIDLY BI-PARTISAN! With only minor variations, it does not matter very much which political party has the presidency or which political party runs Congress. Political campaigns are funded significantly by giant business corporations, including those that make military weapons and nuclear weapons.

#9. The peace movement in the U.S. and worldwide must organize a bigger, more strategically savvy grassroots movement to stop the global suicide that the U.S. government has been provoking since the 1940s.

**Nuclear weapons exist in the overall context of U.S. foreign policy. The peace movement must devise smart strategies:**

After the U.S. dropped atomic bombs on two Japanese civilian cities in August 1945, Albert Einstein famously said that “the unleashed power of the atom has changed everything [except how we think, so we are drifting] toward unparalleled catastrophe.” **Since 1945, the peace movement has been helping Americans change their thinking to avoid that catastrophe.**

**People have been condemning nuclear weapons ever since the US dropped atomic bombs on Japan.** About a decade ago, Olympia’s peace organizers brought to Olympia for a speaking engagement an historian named Lawrence Wittner. His book is titled, ***Confronting the Bomb: A Short History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement***. His research proved that that when people protested against nuclear weapons, we made progress, but during times when the public failed to speak out and act boldly, nuclear weapons increased. The peace movement has achieved powerful results.

The context that allows nuclear weapons to exist – and to escalate – is the U.S.’s mistaken belief that military violence – and threats – can bring peace. The peace movement urges us to replace militarism with a foreign policy that promotes fairness, economic justice, a sustainable environment and climate, and peace worldwide. These – the **opposite** of our current foreign policy – would provide REAL “national security” –for the U.S. and also for other nations too.

The U.S. is long overdue for a serious conversation and re-evaluation of our foreign policy. We are on a path to nuclear suicide if we don’t have a thoughtful, ethical, practical conversation that is **not** dominated by the weapons manufacturers and the politicians they bribe through election campaign contributions.

**Yes, Einstein was correct: we really do need to change our thinking – and our consciousness and our national culture** – in order to change our foreign policy, so we can move toward abolishing nuclear weapons.

I like what the World Social Forum affirmed two decades ago: “Another world is possible!”

I truly believe that deep down, most Americans actually would prefer values that are humane, compassionate, peaceful, fair to everyone, and environmentally sustainable.

**These compelling reasons argue AGAINST nuclear weapons (and the U.S.’s militaristic foreign policy overall):**

#1. Nuclear weapons could easily kill hundreds of millions – or billions – of people and turn Planet Earth into a radioactive wasteland of ashes.

#2. This could happen easily! All it would take would be one impulsive man with his finger on the button – or one accident – or one miscalculation – or one computer error.

#3. The U.S.’s nuclear weapons (and Russia’s) are antagonizing world opinion against us.

#4. Nuclear weapons – and military spending overall – take money away from spending on solutions that would really make us more secure, such as ending poverty, providing high quality health care for everyone, protecting the environment, developing “green” energy, and so forth.

#5. A militaristic foreign policy deceives the public into thinking that violence solves problems. The government is a bad role model that creates a nationwide culture of violence and sets an example for ordinary people throughout our nation to shoot people with guns. But none of the organizations working to reduce gun violence recognize this “elephant in the room” – the fact that our militarized foreign policy promotes gun violence in the U.S. The peace movement must make this connection.

Go on to the next page.

**The problems came from the top down, so the solutions must come from the bottom up. Let’s strengthen the nonviolent GRASSROOTS PEACE MOVEMENT to change our foreign
policy overall – and also to abolish nuclear weapons.**

**Since the 1940s, the U.S. has been stuck deeper and deeper in a militaristic foreign policy for several reasons:**

1. We are stuck in the myth that the U.S. must be the #1 nation in the world with the world’s biggest military – including nuclear weapons.

2. We are stuck in that myth because we have been pushed into that by our national self-image, our politicians, our mainstream media, the way schools teach history, and so forth.

3. Giant business corporations that make military weapons keep funding candidates for Congress and President.

4. Congress and the Supreme Court keep allowing “Big Money” to corrupt election campaigns.

**Because the economic and political elites keep us stuck in a militaristic foreign policy, ONLY a GRASSROOTS MOVEMENT for PEACE can solve the problems.**

**Years ago, people in the Olympia WA area organized two successes:**

* From December 1981 to the November 1982 election, we organized the Thurston County Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign. A campaign lasting eleven months succeeded in winning a landslide of more than 62% of the vote in a county-wide ballot initiative calling for an immediate, absolute stop – a “freeze” – in the production, testing and deployment of nuclear weapons. This kind of action occurred all across the nation when people reacted in horror to President Ronald Reagan’s reckless escalation of the nuclear arms race and his glib willingness to start a nuclear war.
* Also, some local folks will remember that in 2005 Olympia area people organized “Beyond Hiroshima” events and succeeded in getting the Olympia City Council to unanimously pass an anti-nuclear resolution in February 2005 as part of a nationwide organizing effort of city mayors as part of a nationwide campaign by Mayors for Peace. In 2020 the U.S. Conference of Mayors opposed nuclear weapons.

**We must significantly change public policies:**

**Wars do NOT solve problems!** Politicians and mainstream news media talk about “the use of force,” but that is a very dishonest euphemism for “violence” or “war.” I think of “the use of force” when I really need to apply muscle to open a pickle jar. That’s very different from bombing innocent civilians in other countries. The government is deliberately trying to deceive us when they advocate “the use of force.” That’s not honest! We must not let them get away with this deception.

We must replace violence with honest diplomacy, cooperation and collaborative problem-solving.

If your only tool is a hammer, you will treat every problem as if it is a nail. For many decades the U.S. has relied so much on militarism that we have neglected honest diplomacy and nonviolent ways of solving international problems.

Some people think the U.S. has not used nuclear weapons since 1945. Actually the U.S. **has** **used them CONTINUOUSLY** by always keeping them on hair-trigger alert, and also by **repeatedly threatening** to launch them. This is “using” nuclear weapons in the same way that a robber stealing your wallet at gunpoint is guilty of Armed Robbery even if he never shoots. In criminal law, threatening with a weapon **is** “using” it. **During an international crisis when a president says “all options are on the table,” this is an explicit threat to use nuclear weapons!**

The U.S. cannot achieve our “national security” by making other nations insecure. **I recommend three principles:**

#1. Recognize our common humanity.

#2. Refuse to let people make you afraid of “the other” (other nations, other races, other religions, other sexual orientations, and so forth).

#3. Promote positive values worldwide, such as love, compassion, nonviolence, human rights, egalitarianism, and a sustainable environment.

**The President could take 5 smart, straightforward actions to take us “BACK FROM THE BRINK” of nuclear war.** He could take these 5 actions on his own authority without asking Congress. These 5 actions are:

#1. Renounce the option of using nuclear weapons first

#2. End the sole, unchecked authority of any U.S. president to launch a nuclear attack

#3. Take U.S. nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert

#4. Cancel the plan to replace its entire nuclear arsenal with enhanced weapons

#5. Actively pursue a verifiable agreement among nuclear-armed states to eliminate their nuclear arsenals

These 5 changes have also been introduced as legislation, but presidents and Congress keep failing to take action.

See more about the “BACK FROM THE BRINK” campaign at [**www.preventnuclearwar.org**](http://www.preventnuclearwar.org)

These 5 steps would reduce the likelihood of nuclear war, but they are only a beginning. The REAL SOLUTION to the problem is to ABOLISH nuclear weapons altogether! We must ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). The peace movement supports it vigorously. See [**www.icanw.org**](http://www.icanw.org)

It really is possible to abolish nuclear weapons worldwide! International treaties through the United Nations and/or other bodies have outlawed several kinds of “weapons of mass destruction.” Examples:

* 1972: Biological weapons were banned under the Biological Weapons Convention.
* 1993: Chemical weapons were banned under the Chemical Weapons Convention.
* 1997: Land mines were banned under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty.
* 2008: Cluster munitions were banned under the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

These historical precedents prove that the world community can indeed ban horrible “Weapons of Mass Destruction” (WMDs). We have banned other WMDs. Now we must ban nuclear weapons too – the worst WMD of all – through the worldwide treaty, the TPNW.

Smart legislation keeps getting introduced into Congress, but it almost never moves toward passage. Good nationwide organizations track and promote these bills.

**The U.S.’s militarism is deeply bi-partisan, so merely replacing Republicans with Democrats – or vice versa – will NOT solve the underlying problem.**

**Instead, let’s take positive steps toward peace. Smart steps include:**

* Close all of the U.S.’s 800 military bases in 80 other nations. (China, whom we are told to fear, has only one foreign military base, while the U.S. has nearly 800.)
* Support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. By mid-November 2022, 68 nations have ratified it. See [**www.icanw.org**](http://www.icanw.org)
* Teach nonviolent conflict resolution throughout our society – and also in all schools from the K-12 level on up through college, and in adult education courses. If people can learn how to resolve inter-personal conflicts nonviolently, they will be better able to do this internationally too.
* Let’s reduce the military budget significantly – and use the financial savings to help people become even more secure by ending poverty, providing everyone with education, safe drinking water, good health care, a sustainable environment, and a safe climate. De-militarizing would help EVERYONE be safe and secure.
* The huge problems cause some people to feel overwhelmed and defeated. Let’s replace cynicism and despair with empowerment and hope! Read what I wrote about this and posted to my blog: [**http://parallaxperspectives.org/we-can-replace-cynicism-and-despair-with-empowerment-and-hope**](http://parallaxperspectives.org/we-can-replace-cynicism-and-despair-with-empowerment-and-hope)
* Develop your knowledge and skills and tools for nonviolent grassroots organizing for peace and other important issues. Several times every year I conduct a FREE ONLINE series of six workshops on “Nonviolent Grass-roots Organizing” that will strengthen your ability to organize nonviolent grassroots movements for social and political change. Contact me at (360) 491-9093 or **glenanderson@integra.net**
* See relevant parts of my blog [**www.parallaxperspectives.org**](http://www.parallaxperspectives.org), such as the categories for “Peace” and “International” and “Nuclear Weapons” and “Nonviolence.”
* Consider the bold, wise proposals produced by World BEYOND War ([**https://worldbeyondwar.org**](https://worldbeyondwar.org)). They produce smart information and readable resources and online advocacy. I appreciate their substantive document titled, **“A Global Security System: An Alternative to War.”** I encourage people to read it or download it at [**https://worldbeyondwar.org/alternative/**](https://worldbeyondwar.org/alternative/)

**We need to seriously re-think the concept of “national security” in a context much wiser than the narrow military assumptions.**

**Politicians keep promising to protect our “national security.” Their glib rhetoric is really just a euphemism for escalating a bigger military and more military weapons.**

The “national security” slogan is so simplistic and false that it actually interferes with smart thinking. Therefore, it also prevents us from devising public policies that would be ethical and would make us TRULY SECURE. See the bold, creative alternative foreign policy I posted to this part of my blog: [**https://parallaxperspectives.org/how-to-achieve-peace-and-true-security**](https://parallaxperspectives.org/how-to-achieve-peace-and-true-security) AND ALSO the visual display at [**https://parallaxperspectives.org/replace-the-national-security-scheme-with-true-security**](https://parallaxperspectives.org/replace-the-national-security-scheme-with-true-security)

Security is NOT a “zero-sum” game in which one nation makes itself secure by making other nations insecure. No nation can make itself TRULY secure without ALSO supporting the TRUE security of all other nations. We can achieve TRUE security ONLY IF we treat all other nations fairly and help ALL nations become truly secure. Of course, TRUE security is far more multi-dimensional than militarism. Militarism actually undermines TRUE security.

People want security, but we can’t gain TRUE security by fighting wars, sacrificing our civil liberties, and diverting the funds we need for health and education and other valid needs. TRUE security can be achieved only by promoting peace, social and economic justice, a sustainable environment, a vibrant democracy, civil liberties for everyone, and many other progressive values. This concept (linked two paragraphs above) can also unite the broad American public across many social and political categories (age, religion, race, class, occupation, political spectrum, etc.) into an electoral majority. Current policies threaten everyone’s security, but progressive alternatives offer TRUE security for the American people.

Let’s help the American people see that the familiar policies of militarism, dominance and greed are a sham being foisted upon us. Let’s help Americans understand what would REALLY would make us “secure.” Then we can redefine TRUE security, promote progressive alternatives, take the moral and political high ground, and win the public over to the peace movement’s side! **See BOTH blog posts I linked three paragraphs above.**

**We can organize nonviolent grassroots movement from the bottom up (see page 4) to help us gain many kinds of security, including (but not limited to):**

* Economic security: Job security, living wages, job safety, cures for poverty, help during hard times, protection from dangerous working conditions, secure retirement income, etc.
* Food security: Safe and nutritious food for everybody, so we can end hunger and support small local farmers and locally owned retailers.
* Health security: Access to high quality, affordable health care for everybody in our nation, respectful treatment, focus on preventing diseases, strong public health services, etc.
* Environmental security: Sustainable ecosystems, enough clean water, clean air, healthy forests, land use planning for sustainability, protecting all people and environments from toxics, protecting us all from climate disruptions, etc.
* Personal security and human rights: Thoughtful and sensitive policies and services regarding child abuse, domestic violence, gender issues, human dignity for every kind of person, safety from substance abuse, etc.
* Community and cultural security: Respect for all cultures and languages, freedom to practice any religion or no religion, protections from big businesses’ power, accountability when big businesses abuse us, removing the underlying causes of crime, comfort in walking anywhere at any time, ways to heal and reconcile when someone hurts another person, etc.

**Public opinion polls keep showing that – on issue after issue – the public wants stronger, more progressive public policies than our governments produce:**

* The public wants to protect the environment and climate vigorously, but governments either do nothing or take only small, timid actions.
* The public wants to cut the military budget and use the savings to meet human needs, but Congress keeps failing to do that. Congress keeps escalating the military budget and refusing to fund the non-military programs that we really need.
* The public wants to get “Big Money” out of political election campaigns, but governments keep refusing to do that.
* The public wants high quality health care for every person, but governments keep failing to do that.

**On a great many issues, the public is far, far ahead of what governments are willing to do. Let’s consider and act upon these points:**

* We grow up in a political culture that shows us only a VERY LIMITED range of choices. Most people choose from this VERY LIMITED range, so our political culture remains stuck. We can make progress only if we CREATE A MUCH WIDER RANGE of choices – and then use our best values and our best thinking to choose the wisest, most compassionate solutions – and also ENCOURAGE AND EMPOWER OTHER PEOPLE also to explore wider possibilities push for bold solutions.
* We need to recognize and debunk the common-place baloney that keeps us trapped in unjust political and economic systems.
* **We need to CHANGE OUR CULTURE** in a variety of ways in order to make it more likely that we can change specific public policies.
* Instead of merely asking governments to solve problems, **“We the People” must empower ourselves and take action.** We can figure out the good solutions and how to implement them with-out asking or waiting for governments.
* Glen has previously written, “The Power of the People is more Powerful than the People in Power.” This is a key point for the essay you are reading now.
* “Dictators are never as strong as they tell you they are.” AND “People are never as weak as they think they are.” (Gene Sharp said these wise, empowering things. He was the world’s best researcher on the power of nonviolence and how to use nonviolence to achieve political and social goals. See resource information at his non-profit organization [**www.aeinstein.org**](http://www.aeinstein.org))

Our problems – nuclear weapons, political corruption, the environment and climate, and so forth – are gigantic problems, so they require gigantic solutions. Therefore, we must organize to accomplish SOLUTIONS THAT ARE VERY BOLD. Timid solutions will not be enough to solve gigantic problems! Besides pushing to change some aspects of the U.S.’s policies about nuclear weapons, we must also organize from the grassroots to ABOLISH them altogether!

In the U.S., liberals ask what is “politically feasible” and ask for small changes that fit within the current mind-set and ideology of the political and economic elites. They limit themselves to timid reforms that the political parties and giant corporations could be persuaded to grant us. But, for a long time in Latin America, people have been demanding BOLD reforms and AGITATING BOLDLY. In the U.S., our modest reforms are watered down and deferred. He said he believes that if we want real progress, we must be more assertive like the Latin Americans have been, and BOLDLY assert BOLD goals and agitate nonviolently to push for those. Instead of limiting ourselves to what the elites tell us is “politically feasible,” we need to CHANGE OUR VISION of what is “politically feasible! We need to MOVE THE GOALPOSTS!

**One powerful example the boldness we need is the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).** The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons ([**www.icanw.org**](http://www.icanw.org)) developed the TPNW and successfully got the United Nations General Assembly to pass it overwhelmingly (122 of 193 nations) in July 2017.

Then the Treaty went out to the world’s nations for ratification. It became international law in January 2021. By mid-November 2022, 68 nations have ratified it. It became international law on January 22, 2021.

The TPNW’s wording is very strong. Its many active verbs prevent any and all kinds of support for any and all activities supporting nuclear weapons. This also prohibits business activities for nuclear weapons in the various countries that have ratified the TPNW

You can see more about the TPNW and nuclear weapons at my blog’s category about nuclear weapons: [**https://parallaxperspectives.org/category/nuclear-weapons**](https://parallaxperspectives.org/category/nuclear-weapons)

**A bold, but practical alternative to nuclear weapons
– and militarism itself – is Nonviolent National Defense:**

Johann Galtung, historian and author who wrote extensively about the perils of empire, wrote: “By peace we mean the capacity to transform conflicts with empathy, without violence, and creatively – a never ending process.”

Martin Luther King Jr, wrote this in his book, ***The Trumpet of Conscience***: “And the leaders of the world today talk eloquently about peace. . . . They talk about peace as a distant goal, as an end we seek, but one day we must come to see that peace is not merely a distant goal we seek, but that it is a means by which we arrive at that goal. In the final analysis, means and ends must cohere because the end is pre-existent in the means, and ultimately destructive means cannot bring about constructive ends.” I agree. Instead of leaving “peace” as a vague platitude for some possible future date, let’s start organizing now to replace the U.S.’s violent foreign policy with a truly peaceful one!

The U.S.’s perpetual foreign policy led to President Reagan’s Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger staking out the global turf for the U.S. to militarize. He stated, “There is no corner of the world so remote, no nation so insignificant, that it does not represent a vital interest of the United States.” Ironically, this claim for the U.S.’s unilateral right to dominate the world came from the Reagan Administration, which said it opposed “Big Government”! Actually, they wanted the biggest governmental agency of all to oppress the entire world!

**One nation dominating the world is NOT the way to peace! It is NOT sustainable! We need to recognize that military “solutions” only make problems worse! We must BOLDLY replace the war system with a peace system – nonviolent ways to support international fairness, human rights, and sustainability!**

Again – as I said on page 5 – I strongly recommend the wise proposal produced by World BEYOND War ([**https://worldbeyondwar.org**](https://worldbeyondwar.org)). Please read and/or download their substantive document titled, **“A Global Security System: An Alternative to War.”**  Their website provides it at this link [**https://worldbeyondwar.org/alternative/**](https://worldbeyondwar.org/alternative/)

**Furthermore, for decades I have been promoting another VERY BOLD ALTERNATIVE solution that would actually make us more secure: NONVIOLENT NATIONAL DEFENSE instead of militarism.**

Nonviolent National Defense (Nonviolent Civilian-Based Resistance) is the kind of BOLD alternative we need to replace the status quo of military violence.

The May 2022 episode of “Glen’s Parallax Perspectives” TV series provides powerful information and inspiration to significantly improve the U.S.’s “national security” by – ironically — de-militarizing our “national defense.” Instead of military violence, we could defend our nation better through carefully planned strategies of nonviolent resistance against any nation that would invade us. Besides eliminating the danger of nuclear war, a nonviolent national defense would also provide better security without all of the downsides (including economic waste and environmental damage) that violent militarism causes.

This May 2022 TV program explains how nonviolent national defense could actually work effectively if we are open-minded, bold and creative. That TV program is one hour long. The article I wrote explains it more thoroughly and shares several practical examples of other nations’ successful nonviolent resistance to repel invaders and topple dictators, so I recommend READING THE ARTICLE even if you also watch the TV video. Both the TV video and the more thorough article are at this link: [**https://parallaxperspectives.org/nonviolent-national-defense-a-practical-way-to-be-more-secure**](https://parallaxperspectives.org/nonviolent-national-defense-a-practical-way-to-be-more-secure)

**All of us can apply economic pressures:**

Strategies for abolishing nuclear weapons include boycotting companies that make consumer products in addition to nuclear weapons. Decades ago, General Electric used to make nuclear weapons, but – after the first “Plowshares” action in 1980 publicized that – a worldwide boycott of GE’s consumer products forced GE to stop making nuclear weapons.

On September 9, 1980, some religious peace activists known as the Plowshares Eight were arrested for nonviolently breaking into the GE nuclear warhead factory in the city of King of Prussia, Pennsylvania. They slightly damaged some nuclear warhead nose cones, poured their blood on several documents, and prayed for peace.

This inspired the larger Plowshares Movement, which included many other nonviolent actions in following years. See [**https://www.kophistory.org/plowshares-eight/**](https://www.kophistory.org/plowshares-eight/) and [**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kUph8GWFupE**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kUph8GWFupE)[**https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plowshares\_movement**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plowshares_movement)

This 1980 Plowshares action inspired a worldwide movement of people boycotting GE products. This boycott by consumers forced GE to stop making nuclear weapons because GE realized that the consumer boycott would cost them more income than they were earning by making nuclear weapons.

Now people are calling for consumer boycotts of Honeywell and other nuclear weapons manufacturers that also make products that consumers could boycott.

You can find out whether any of your **investments** include nuclear weapons. This website can show you whether you are invested in companies that make nuclear weapons: [**https://www.theworldismycountry.com/endorse**](https://www.theworldismycountry.com/endorse) Another website can help you see whether your bank is financing nuclear weapons: [**www.dontbankonthebomb.com**](http://www.dontbankonthebomb.com).

**Here are my closing encouragements:**

Thousands of years ago – in Proverbs 29:18 – it was written: **“Where there is no vision, the people perish.”** I believe that humanity will indeed perish if we do not ABOLISH nuclear weapons. **We need the vision of a nuclear-free world** – and we need bold nonviolent organizing to abolish them – so humanity will not perish.

We are suffering many extremely serious problems including a violent foreign policy, nuclear weapons, the climate crisis, political corruption, and many more.

With so many serious problems, it’s easy for people to feel hopeless, powerless and cynical. But that would prevent us from taking the positive actions necessary to solve the problems. Among the signs I hold at our weekly peace vigils downtown , one affirms, “We can solve the problems.” Another sign encourages people to “Choose a bold, humane future.”

* Decades ago, Senator Robert Kennedy famously said: “Some men see things as they are and say, ‘Why?’ I dream things that never were and say, ‘Why not?’”
* The philosopher Schopenhauer and other people have said: “All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident.”
* Beatrice Fihn (Director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, www.icanw.org) said this when she accepted ICAN’s 2017 Nobel Peace Prize: “Those who say a future without nuclear weapons is impossible need to get out of the way of those who are making it a reality.”

**I’m happy to e-mail anyone this document. Simply e-mail your request to me at** **glenanderson@integra.net** **and I’ll send this document to your e-mail address.**

**I’m also posting this to the “Nuclear Weapons” category and the “Peace” category of my blog,** [**www.parallaxperspectives.org**](http://www.parallaxperspectives.org)**, so you can invite your friends to see the link. Here it is:** [**https://parallaxperspectives.org/nuclear-weapons-and-the-peace-movement**](https://parallaxperspectives.org/nuclear-weapons-and-the-peace-movement)

**Please feel free to share this by e-mail, posting to blogs, and so forth.**