New START: A Hopeful Sign, but will Ratification be Costly?

President Obama and Russian President Medvedev signed a bilateral treaty on April 8, agreeing “on measures for the further reduction and limitation of strategic offensive arms.” This treaty, known as New START (short for Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty), commits both countries to reductions in the numbers of deployed strategic nuclear weapons to 1550, and delivery vehicles to 700. While this is a modest step in the right direction, it leaves the two countries with enough nuclear firepower to ensure mutual destruction many times over.

The New START is a milestone in cooperation and commitment between the two countries. It creates a verification regime and sets a foundation for deeper reductions. In fact, both sides are reportedly pursuing discussions for deeper reductions in the near future.

Tri-Valley CAREs' Staff Attorney, Scott Yundt, noted, “New START is aptly named. It can mark a new beginning in both diplomacy and arms control. And, that makes all of us a little safer.” Yundt added, “My concerns are not with the treaty, they are with the current atmosphere in our nation’s capital and what that could mean for ratification, which should be swift and simple but may prove otherwise.”

The challenges facing implementation could be daunting. The treaty has to achieve ratification in the Russian legislature and in the US Senate. As the partisan political climate in Washington rages unabated, ratification of New START could prove to be extremely difficult.

Last December, 40 Republican Senators and Joe Lieberman, enough to defeat the 2/3rds needed to ratify the treaty, sent a letter to Obama demanding large increases in nuclear weapons spending before they would support New START. Among the list of demands were (1) essentially replacing the whole arsenal with new modified nuclear weapons, and (2) a series of new warhead component production facilities. (See also page 4 to read how this has affected the new NPR.)

Since that letter, Obama has proposed a huge budget increase for nuclear weapons, including money to expand nuclear weapons production capacity and a study to explore significant "upgrades" to the B61 nuclear bomb. And, there is still no indication that the Republicans will support arms control. Recently, Senators Kyl and McCain released a statement

Continued on page 2

Tri-Valley CAREs and the NPT

We have received accreditation to participate as a non-governmental organization (NGO) in the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference, to be held May 3-28 at the UN in New York. The group will be represented by its executive director, Marylia Kelley, and long-time member Joanne Dean-Fremiere.

“We are going to NY to stand with our colleagues in the international community against all nuclear bombs everywhere, to educate the diplomats about the U.S. nuclear weapons complex and arsenal, and to influence the outcome of the Review Conference so that it better holds the U.S. and other nuclear weapons states’ feet to the fire to achieve genuine disarmament,” explained Kelley. “In sum, we are lifting up our voices and using our particular expertise in order to help change the world.”

The NPT is the “cornerstone” of the global nonproliferation regime. Every five years, the states parties that are signatory to the treaty come together to evaluate its progress and obstacles, including toward disarmament.

This will be the first review since the election of Barack Obama, and its outcome may determine how much world pressure, or how little, the U.S. feels to get on with the business of disarmament. Will this conference end in disarray, as happened in 2005? Will half-measures be the lukewarm outcome? Or, will the parties rise to the occasion and undertake substantive movement toward the promise (and obligation) of the NPT, that the “horrible prospect of nuclear war... be avoided” and that nuclear weapons be completely and irreversibly abolished? It is to the latter outcome that your Tri-Valley CAREs team is dedicated.

We will carry the more than 1,000 nuclear abolition petitions that you, our members, signed and sent us. They will be delivered along with the 5 million petitions gathered from around the world.

We will participate in the NGO conference at the Riverside Church before the NPT review. Tri-Valley CAREs and colleagues will conduct a workshop on the paradox of the

Continued on page 2
New Nuclear Posture Review... Cont. from page 4

I fear that the facts on the ground in building new weapons plants, and not the words on paper, will ultimately determine how the world sees this NPR.”

INFRASTRUCTURE & THE NPR: Dating back to the Bush era, the DOE NNSA has been pressing for a new, rebuilt nuclear weapons complex (more accurately called the "Bombplex"). Two prominent features of the proposed "Bombplex" are a new, oversized and wrongly missioned, plutonium complex at Los Alamos Lab in NM, called the CMRR, and a new, oversized, wrongly missioned uranium bomb plant at Y-12 in TN, called the Uranium Processing Facility (UPF).

According to NNSA, the CMRR will enable the production of 50 to 80 new-design plutonium pits per year. Such a capability is only “needed” if the U.S. redesigns its nuclear weapons, which the President says he will not do and the NPR does not sanction. (Note: Present capability at Los Alamos Lab is for production of up to 20 plutonium pits per year for an existing design, which is more than sufficient for maintenance to the standards laid out in the new NPR). NNSA envisions that the UPF would produce 50 to 80 new “secondaries” (the H-bomb part of a modern bomb) each year. Again, this capacity is more than what is needed to maintain the existing nuclear weapons stockpile in line with the new NPR.

THE WEAPONS LABS & THE NPR: The lab directors have expressed a desire to “replace” existing warheads with newly manufactured nuclear components of new and modified design. This strategy would provide the weapons labs with little mission change and abundant weapons funding for the next 20 years or more.

However, the “replacement” option is presently unnecessary and could be scientifically risky, according to the prominent scientists called the JASON, called upon by Congress last year to answer the question of whether the country’s existing methods are sufficient to maintain a safe and reliable nuclear stockpile into the future.

Moreover, the “replacement” option is politically undesirable because it would undermine U.S. efforts to discourage other countries from seeking nuclear weapons and hamper efforts to build support for the nation’s wider nonproliferation goals. Finally, “replacement” options could mean more highly polluting R&D done at Livermore Lab and other sites.

The NPR permits the “replacement option,” but does not embrace it. On page 39, it says, “The full range of LEP [Life Extension Program] approaches will be considered: refurbishment of existing warheads, reuse of components from different warheads, and replacement of nuclear components.” The NPR report goes on to say, “In any decision to proceed to engineering development for warhead LEPs, the United States will give strong preference to options for refurbishment or reuse...”

It is notable, however, that the lab directors issued a statement touting the NPR’s allowance of “replacement” warheads and its support for new, “modern” facilities.

OUR BOTTOM LINE: Tri-Valley CAREs opposes Life Extension Programs that make changes to the nuclear weapons stockpile beyond what is required to maintain the existing safety and reliability of the weapons as they await dismantlement, pursuant to Article 6 of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. We further oppose construction of the CMRR-Nuclear Facility at Los Alamos and the UPF at Y-12. We call on the Obama administration to instead make careful, surgical investments in infrastructure only where needed for actual warhead maintenance, for verifiable, irreversible dismantlement of weapons, and for responsible storage and disposition of nuclear materials. (Get a copy of the NPR at www.trivalleycares.org)
Report Back From Your DC Days Team!

DC DAYS 2010 GOALS

1. Convincing Congress to cut the funds for new nuclear weapons production facilities.
2. Increasing funds available for the cleanup of contamination at nuclear weapons sites around the country (including Livermore Lab).
3. Increasing funds for nuclear weapons dismantlement, and prioritizing worker safety.
4. Supporting the New START treaty and other international disarmament agreements.
5. Opposing the whole idea of making “deals” with the Senate Republicans to try to get their votes for treaty ratification by increasing the funding and capability to make new nuclear weapons (thereby undermining the disarmament value of the treaties).
6. Opposing nuclear power loan guarantees and other subsidies. And, more!

The Tri-Valley CAREs delegation joined forces in DC with activists from fifteen other states who live around Department of Energy nuclear weapons sites. We conducted nearly one hundred scheduled meetings with key Senators and Representatives in Congress, their staff, committee staff and Obama Administration officials. As you may know, we call this annual event “DC Days.”

Tri-Valley CAREs does DC Days in conjunction with the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability (ANA), a national network of three dozen groups. ANA represents communities downwind and downstream from all of the major U.S. nuclear weapons sites.

This year’s DC Days began with an all day training where the veteran activists and the “newbies” met to discuss the issues that will be covered in the 100 meetings, the basics of conducting effective meetings with elected officials, and specific issues that affect each of our individual States.

Following the press conference, our meetings with elected officials took place. Your Tri-Valley CAREs team packed in as many meetings as humanly possible over the next several days!

Just what did we do in meetings? In many meetings, we presented our analysis of the Fiscal Year 2011 budget request for nuclear weapons activities, pointing out the proposed 14% increase - and advocating for deep cuts instead of any increase. In other meetings, we discussed the toxic and radioactive contamination we face every day in Livermore. And, we offered positive alternatives. (See ‘DC Days Goals’ at left for more).

Overall, our meetings proved that there is hope that this Congress and the Obama Administration can shift our priorities from “preparing” for more war, violence and nukes to “prevention,” but it is up to us to keep the pressure on them to do so.

Turn the page to read about our accomplishments and to see President Obama’s first nuclear report card from the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability…
Some Fruits of Our Labor

• After our meetings, Senator Feingold (D-WI) and Rep. Markey (D-MA) wrote a joint letter to President Obama urging an increase in the dismantlement rate of retired nuclear weapons (currently a backlog of thousands).

• Local Congressman Pete Stark (D-Fremont) drafted a letter to the House Appropriations Committee opposing increases in funding for nuclear weapons facilities and calling for an increase in funding for the dismantlement of retired nuclear weapons. Eight other congressmen signed on to his letter. If you live in his district, please call or write him with your thank you.

• Senator Udall (D-NM) and Rep. Perlmutter (D-NM) renewed their efforts to reform the sick worker compensation program since our meetings.

“Our being in DC had a real impact. I was able to offer information and documents to elected officials that ran counter to the propaganda spewing from the nuclear labs. Our being there in DC will help Congress make better decisions.” - Marylia Kelley

“The level of knowledge and insight of the ‘DC Days’ participants both impressed the decision-makers with whom we met and impacted their view. This ability to influence nuclear policy made all the work and effort we put into ‘DC Days’ worthwhile.” - Iti Talwar

On Monday morning, we presented President Obama’s first nuclear report card at a press conference on Capitol Hill.

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<th>Comment</th>
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<td>B</td>
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Obama’s First Nuclear Report Card

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DC Days activists meeting with Senator Bingaman (D-NM). Pictured (L to R): Marylia Kelley, Tri-Valley CAREs; Michelle Boyd, Physicians for Social Responsibility DC; Jay Coghlan, Nuclear Watch New Mexico; Don Hancock, Southwest Research and Information Center; Senator Jeff Bingaman; Paul Kawika Martin, Peace Action DC; Scott Kovac, Nuclear Watch New Mexico.
Right now, the U.S. Congress is considering the budget for next year, and, while it imposes a spending freeze for most domestic programs, somehow there’s money to spare when it comes to nuclear weapons pork. The budget request for nuclear bomb activities next year is $7 billion, which is a 14% increase over last year’s budget for the same programs, and a whopping 40% over the $5 billion (in 2011 dollars) spent on average each year for these activities during the Cold War era.

This is outrageous, unnecessary, dangerous -- and expensive.

Worse, the budget has hundreds of millions in nuclear pork for new bomb plants that would enable the U.S. to increase its capacity to create new nuclear weapons in the future. For example, the budget proposes funding a new plutonium facility in New Mexico to enable a huge increase in the production of plutonium pits, which are the radioactive cores of nuclear weapons. This piece of toxic nuclear pork will cost taxpayers $225 million in the coming year, and about $4 billion by the time construction is complete. Moreover, the costs to non-proliferation and disarmament goals are incalculable.

Further, the budget request includes $252 million for a study in 2011 to upgrade the B61 nuclear bomb, which the U.S. has deployed in Europe. While Congress considers whether to spend our money on plans to “modify” and “life-extend” this nuke, Germany, Poland and others are pressing for its removal from Europe.

You have a crucial role to play because your Senators and Representative will be voting on the nuclear weapons budget. Moreover, Senator Dianne Feinstein sits on the “appropriations” committee, which gives her a unique role in nuclear weapons funding decisions. Also call Senator Barbara Boxer and your Representative. The Capitol Switchboard is (202) 224-3121. Additionally, you may send email via the web at feinstein.senate.gov and boxer.senate.gov. (Check the web for your Rep.)

Be sure to make your voice heard between May 31 and June 4, 2010. This is a national week of action on the nuclear weapons budget, called “Cut the Nuclear Pork.” Your action to stop nuclear weapons will be made even more effective this week by the corresponding actions of your friends, neighbors and colleagues who will also be responding to this alert.

Last year, emails and calls from people like you created the grassroots pressure that successfully eliminated funding for nuclear weapons from the economic stimulus bill. We can do it again and, this time, reduce the 2011 nuclear weapons budget.

Please call or email and ask YOUR elected officials to cut the nuclear weapons budget and to fund other, urgent priorities instead.

Thank you for speaking out and making your voice heard.

For more on nuclear weapons and the proposed budget, go to www.trivalleycares.org, www.peaceactionwest.org, and www.wslfweb.org
Nuclear Abolition Day
Demonstration at Bechtel Headquarters

Where: Bechtel Corporation Headquarters
50 Beale St. (Half a block from Embarcadero BART), San Francisco, CA, 94105

Why: Nuclear Abolition Day, a global day of action for a Nuclear Weapons Convention. Bechtel is one of the top profiteers of the war in Iraq, manages nearly every aspect of the nuclear weapons cycle, and is known by communities worldwide for its habitual violations of indigenous and human rights.

When: JUNE 4th, 2010, Noon-1pm, to mark Nuclear Abolition Day

Save the Date
August 6, 2010

When: Gather at 8 AM
Where: Livermore Laboratory
Corner of Patterson Pass & Vasco Rd., Livermore

• Mark the 65th anniversary of the US atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

• Join us at Livermore Laboratory, one of the two labs responsible for designing and developing every warhead in the US nuclear arsenal.

• Protest the huge increase in nuclear weapons funding in the FY2011 budget.

• Local Contact:
  Tri-Valley CAREs      www.trivalleycares.org     (925) 443-7148
Tuesday, May 18

Hiroshima Action planning meeting
12:30 PM, Peace Action West offices
2201 Broadway, Oakland
(925) 443-7148 for details

The annual Hiroshima/Nagasaki action at Livermore Lab will be held on August 6, 2010 at 8 AM at the corner of Vasco Rd. & Patterson Pass Road. The planning group is working on scenario, speakers, music, logistics and more. Volunteers are needed. Take a stand with the Hibakusha (survivors) for nuclear disarmament everywhere and against bombs anywhere. Contact marylia@trivalleycares.org.

Thursday, May 20

Tri-Valley CAREs meets
7:30 PM, Livermore Main Library
1188 So. Livermore Ave.
(925) 443-7148 for details

Our May meeting will feature a special report from executive director Marylia Kelley, who will be freshly returning from the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in NY. The "week of action for nuclear abolition, May 31 - June 5" will be on the agenda. We will also have updates for you on Livermore Lab and other nuclear weapons sites.

Tri-Valley CAREs meets the third Thursday of the month, except for December (when we have a party instead!). So, circle your calendar now for our June 17 meeting, too. Tri-Valley CAREs meetings are always open to "old-timers" and new members alike. Join us.

May 31 - June 5

Week of Action for Nuclear Abolition
• N-weapons budget “call-in” week
• Bechtel HQ action in SF, June 4

Groups around the world have proclaimed June 5 as an "international day of nuclear disarmament." Here in the Bay Area, we have planned a week of events to abolish nukes. First, Tri-Valley CAREs and dozens of colleague groups are organizing a national “week of action” on the nuclear weapons budget from Monday, May 31 - Friday, June 4. You are asked to participate! This is a great opportunity to amplify your voice by calling on Congress to cut the nuclear weapons budget at the very time your friends and neighbors are urging the same message. See the enclosed insert, and check our website for an in-depth analysis of the weapons budget.

On Friday, June 4 at Noon, plan to join us at Bechtel Headquarters, 50 Beale Street, in downtown SF near the Embarcadero BART station. We will have signs, banners and handouts for the workers on Bechtel’s involvement in nuclear weapons, war profiteering and other human rights abuses. As you may know, Bechtel Corp., along with UC and others, manages the bomb at Livermore Lab in the Bay Area and at the Los Alamos Lab in NM. Bechtel also holds contracts at other nuclear weapons sites across the country.

Saturday, June 12

Livermore Rodeo Parade
10 AM, parade starts
Tri-Valley CAREs' entry number and start location are TBD
PARTICIPANTS ARE NEEDED

Each year, Tri-Valley CAREs has a peace and environmental entry in the Livermore parade, which takes place in downtown Livermore prior to the afternoon rodeo. The parade is a unique experience and a huge opportunity to get our message out “beyond the choir” as it is attended by thousands of area residents.

Our 2010 entry will focus on the dangers of radiation. We will have a pick up truck for kids to ride in, and lots of balloons, signs and banners.

Last year, our kids stole the show, and we won a second place trophy for our entry on a nuclear weapons-free world. While our message is always serious, our parade “floats” are fun and appropriate for all ages. Please call Marylia for details. We will let you know our parade number, etc., as it becomes available. Join us! Bring your friends and family members, too.

July 3 - 5

Resistance for a Nuclear-Free Future
Celebrate at Maryville College, TN
Action at Y-12 N-Weapons Plant
nukewatch.com, nuclearesister.org

The Nuclear Resister and Nukewatch are celebrating 3 decades of non-violent direct action for a nuclear-free future. Our friends at the Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance are hosting the celebration. The event will look back at the role that civil resistance has played in the peace movement and look forward to advancing its role in the coming years.

Carl Anderson, a veteran of the Livermore Lab actions from the early days to the present, will be participating. Check the web for details if you are interested in joining him and other friends there.

July 30 - August 9

Think Outside The Bomb
Disarmament Summer in NM
www.thinkoutsidethebomb.org

This summer, Think Outside the Bomb, the largest youth-led nuclear abolition network in the US, is organizing a global convergence near the Los Alamos Lab. TOB is committed to collective liberation, a sustainable future, and an end to the cycle of nuclear violence.

Disarmament summer is being conducted in partnership with diverse groups in NM whose members are affected by nuclear weapons, uranium mining and other violations to their health and environment. Check the TOB website.
New Nuclear Posture Review Released

A year has passed since President Obama invigorated peace and disarmament advocates around the world by declaring in Prague on April 5, 2009, “clearly and with conviction America’s commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons.”

The administration chose the anniversary of that historic speech to release its long awaited Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), which will serve as a guide for U.S. nuclear weapons policy for the coming decade.

Tri-Valley CAREs’ members, many of whom live near two of the nation’s nuclear weapons facilities, the Livermore Lab and the Sandia, Livermore Site, worked throughout the year to ensure that the “transformational” change enunciated by the President in Prague would become the centerpiece of his administration’s NPR.

While we have made some progress, the “bottom line” is that there is a lot of work left to be done in the coming year(s).

In the build up to the NPR, the administration had been debating over a number of key issues. One of paramount importance is the debate over just how far the Dept. of Energy (DOE) National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) should be allowed to go in changing nuclear warheads in the existing stockpile.

TOP LINE: “First, some cheers,” said Tri-Valley CAREs’ Executive Director, Marylia Kelley. “The Obama NPR is mostly unclassified, while the Bush NPR was shrouded in secrecy. Further, it is notable that the new NPR opens with a quote from Obama’s Prague speech.

Kelley added, “The NPR contains some welcome statements that move the nation toward that goal: It forswears new types of nuclear weapons, endorses further reductions in stockpile numbers, and limits the role of nuclear weapons in the U.S. security posture. In so doing, it moves away from some of the dangerous policies contained in the Bush NPR.”

She continued, “We who live in the shadows of nuclear weapons sites in Calif. applaud these Obama policy initiatives.” However, she cautioned, “We must hold Obama accountable and offer jeers for the NPR’s endorsement of the Bush administration’s initiatives to revitalize and rebuild the nuclear weapons complex, which we and others have dubbed the ‘Bombplex’.”

Scott Yundt, the group’s Staff Attorney, explained, “The NPR tries to justify additional funding and ‘flexibility’ for the weapons labs, including Livermore, to research and develop what will be essentially new warheads. Regardless of how the Obama administration frames this policy, it will be clear to the world that the U.S. is planning to build up its nuclear weapons complex for decades to come. This will inhibit the ability of the U.S. to play a leadership role in moving the world toward the abolition of nuclear weapons.”

Yundt continued, “I am deeply disappointed that the NPR does not do more to constrain the infrastructure to develop new and modified nuclear weapons.

Continued on page 2

On the Inside...

✓ New START full of hope & danger. Page 1
✓ Your “DC Days” report. Insert
✓ Bechtel & U.S. nuclear weapons budget actions. Insert + Page 3
✓ Hiroshima event. Insert + Page 3
✓ Why we will go to the NPT. Page 1
✓ Impacts of the Nuclear Posture Review. Page 4
✓ Be in a Parade, Think Outside the Bomb, and more. Page 3