

# **NEXT GENERATION ANTI-NUKE MOVEMENT CONFRONTS BUSH PLAN TO BUILD NEW BOMBS, DECLARES: “GLOBAL DISARMAMENT STARTS AT HOME!”**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 8, 2003**

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## **HANDS AROUND LIVERMORE NUCLEAR WEAPONS LAB: SUNDAY AUGUST 10**

**When:** Sun. Aug. 10; rally at 1:30 pm; march at 3 pm; spiritual ceremonies and “Hands Around the Lab” at 4:15 pm.

**Where:** Rally at William Payne Park, 5800 Patterson Pass Rd. (at Vasco), Livermore, CA; participants will march to the Lab gates for spiritual ceremonies of different faiths, followed by the encircling of the Lab.

**Photo Op:** At approx. 4:15 pm, following spiritual ceremonies at the Lab gates, participants will encircle the Lab using ribbons decorated with paper hands mailed in by symbolic participants from around the U.S.

**Driving directions:** From I-580 take Vasco Rd. exit, go south 2 miles to Patterson Pass Rd.

**LIVERMORE, CA** -- In a sign of mounting resistance to the Bush administration’s aggressive nuclear weapons policies and its proposed development of new “more usable” nuclear weapons, organizers expect this Sunday’s nonviolent rally and protest march at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory to be the largest event at the nuclear weapons lab in over a decade.

“American troops are dying every day in the name of disarmament, while our taxes are being spent to build new nuclear weapons here in the U.S.,” said **Nathan Britton**, Northern California Political Director of **California Peace Action**. “We need to be clear, U.S. nuclear policy is leading the world in exactly the wrong direction. Global disarmament starts at home.”

“Hands Around the Lab” in Livermore is part of a nationally coordinated series of events to remember the 58<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, August 6 and 9, 1945, and to demand the global elimination of nuclear weapons. Events will be taking place across the nation from August 1-11, at locations including StratCom Headquarters in Omaha, Nebraska, the Nevada Test Site, the Los Alamos National Laboratory, and the Y-12 Nuclear Weapons Complex in Oak Ridge, Tennessee.

“We are witnessing the birth of the next generation of nuclear abolitionists, a movement that spans generations, borders and cultures,” said rally organizer **Tara Dorabji** of **Tri-Valley CAREs** in Livermore. “The movement to abolish nuclear weapons isn’t based on an individual’s fear of these horrific weapons. Rather, we are working to build a global community based on respect and understanding, not domination, fear and control through destruction.”

**Damu Smith**, co-chair and founder of **Black Voices for Peace** in Washington, DC has appealed to the Black community, all communities of color and key sectors of the social justice movement to combine efforts this weekend and beyond. “The anti-war, anti-intervention, anti-racist, nuclear disarmament and human needs movements must join forces to defeat the policies of this dangerous administration which will harm and kill us all if not checked” he said. “This is the most dangerous, war mongering, anti-

people government in the history of the U.S.” Mr. Smith will be a featured speaker at Sunday’s rally in Livermore.

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**Ian Zabarte**, Secretary of State for the **Western Shoshone National Council** will also speak at Sunday’s rally. The Nevada Test Site was created by executive order of President Truman in 1951 on land seized from the Western Shoshone Nation. The proposed Yucca Mountain nuclear waste dump is also located on Western Shoshone land. According to Mr. Zabarte, “The issue is less about useful technology and more about our humanity. It’s a question of how one people treat another people. Will they use WMD? And will they create nuclear waste and dump it on people and destroy their land and their lives?”

The January 2002 Department of Defense Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) expanded the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. national security policy, including the potential use of nuclear weapons against seven named countries including Iraq, Iran and North Korea. The NPR projected indefinite retention of a large, modern and diverse nuclear force, and elevated the nuclear weapons research and development infrastructure, including Livermore Lab, to one leg of a “new strategic triad” intended to support existing and new nuclear and other high-tech weapons systems. The Bush administration has called for the development of “more usable” nuclear weapons and has pushed to overturn a Congressional ban on the development of “mini-nukes.” Livermore Lab has already begun work on a “Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator,” a high-yield bunker buster.

“The U.S. demands that North Korea and Iran refrain from acquiring nuclear weapons in accordance with the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). But the NPT also requires the U.S. to eliminate its own nuclear arsenal through good-faith negotiations,” said **Jacqueline Cabasso**, Executive Director of **Western States Legal Foundation** in Oakland and an organizer of Sunday’s rally. “If the most powerful military force in history – and the only country that has ever used nuclear weapons – reserves for itself the right to threaten a nuclear attack in the name of ‘national security,’ other countries will inevitably follow its example. It’s time to hold the U.S. to the treaty obligations it demands of others.”

Faith leaders will play an important role in the “Hands Around the Lab.” Leaders from Christian, Buddhist and Native American spiritual traditions will lead ceremonies at sites around the Lab. “The lesson of Hiroshima stares back at us,” said **Rev. Alan Senauke**, former International Director of the **Buddhist Peace Fellowship**. “Buddhists and people all faiths must make every effort to insure this will never happen again. This means withdrawing consent from a government that believes in such weapons and encouraging the difficult practice of peace.” Rev. Senauke will speak at Sunday’s rally.

More than 800 people from around the U.S. have mailed in paper cutouts of their hands in order to participate symbolically in the event. Hands from locations ranging from Texas to Vermont and Kansas to Oregon bear the names, ages, and home towns of symbolic participants as well as their wishes for the event. “Save our children’s future,” reads one hand, submitted by Blanche from Birmingham, Alabama.

The Livermore action comes as Congress prepares for a heated fight over the administration’s nuclear policies. House Republicans recently dealt a blow to the administration by cutting \$262 million from its controversial nuclear weapons programs and allocating the funds to nuclear cleanup, setting the stage for a contentious budget battle between the House and Senate when they reconvene in September. **Nathan**

**Britton** concluded: “The fact that Republican committee members broke ranks with a President of their own party to cut funding for these weapons programs should be seen as a strong indication of just how radical the Bush administration’s nuclear weapons policies are.” .

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The Livermore rally will be MC’d by **Miguel Gavilan Molina**, of KPFA Pacifica radio in Berkeley. Speakers not already listed above include: authors **Joanna Macy, Starhawk, and William Rivers Pitt; David Cline and Brian Willson, Veterans for Peace; Kelly Campbell, September 11 Families for Peaceful Tomorrows; David Seaborg, Children of the Manhattan Project, Marylia Kelley, Tri-Valley CAREs; and Michael Coffey, Nuclear Age Peace Foundation. Musicians include: **Clan Dyken, Fariba, and Singers for Peace.** Spiritual/ceremonial leaders include: **Fr. Bill O'Donnell, Parish Priest, St. Joseph the Worker Church, Berkeley; Sister Stella, Dominicans; Sacred Earth, Sacred Space; Pat Buchanan, Bay Area Pax Christi; David Cooper, Kehilla Community Synagogue, Berkeley; Father Louie Vitale, Pastor, St. Boniface Church, San Francisco; Shafi Refai, President United Muslims of America Interfaith Alliance; and Willie Lone Wolf and William Underbaggage,** native American peace activists, as well as **Rev. Alan Senauke, Joanna Macy and Starhawk.****

“Hands Around the Lab” is organized by the August 10<sup>th</sup> Coalition, including Tri-Valley CAREs, Western States Legal Foundation, California Peace Action, Veterans for Peace, the Buddhist Peace Fellowship and the Livermore Conversion Project. It is co-sponsored by more than 50 regional and national peace and religious organizations.

The Livermore action will conclude the national convention of **Veterans for Peace** taking place in San Francisco, August 8 – 10. (Information is available on line at: [www.veteransforpeace.org](http://www.veteransforpeace.org))

A 2-page fact sheet prepared for this event, *Why Livermore Lab? Why Now?*, is available on line at [www.wslfweb.org/docs/llnlfactsheet03.pdf](http://www.wslfweb.org/docs/llnlfactsheet03.pdf)

Comprehensive listings of August 1 – 11 nuclear disarmament events around the country are available on line at [www.ananuclear.org](http://www.ananuclear.org) and [www.unitedforpeace.org](http://www.unitedforpeace.org).

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