

August 6, 2020 – Livermore Nuclear Weapons Lab

“From Hiroshima to a Healthy Tomorrow: Embracing Our Common Humanity”

Call to Action: Jackie Cabasso, Executive Director, Western States Legal Foundation

Today’s commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the US atomic bombing of Hiroshima is taking place at an incredible, unprecedented time. One year ago, who could have imagined a global pandemic, economic collapse, and massive racial justice uprisings. Our virtual call to action in August 2020 looks very different from our in-person calls to action in previous years. We live in a brave new world. Changes, both bad and good, are happening incredibly fast and there is a new openness to critically examining the U.S. history of racism and violence. Now is a good time to take a critical look at the official U.S. justification that the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were necessary to end the war and save American lives. In this time of national reckoning, we are called to examine the implications of the U.S. decision to use atomic bombs in 1945. In an out-of-control pandemic, as we confront escalating police violence and the imposition of federal troops in our cities, it is imperative for us to question the nature of state violence and national priorities, past and present.

As we approach the 75th anniversaries of the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6th and 9th, let us be aware that today, nearly 14,000 nuclear weapons, most an order of magnitude more powerful than the bombs that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki - over 90% of them in the hands of the U.S. and Russia - continue to pose an intolerable threat to humanity, and the dangers of wars among nuclear-armed states are growing. The U.S. is poised to spend nearly 2 trillion dollars over the next 3 decades to maintain and upgrade its nuclear arsenal. All the nuclear-armed states are engaged in nuclear weapons “modernization” programs. And an alarming, but often overlooked trend is the increased scale and tempo of war games by nuclear-armed States and their allies, including nuclear drills. Ongoing missile tests, and frequent close encounters between military forces of nuclear-armed states including the U.S. and Russia, the U.S. and China, and India and Pakistan exacerbate nuclear dangers. The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists has moved the hands of its iconic “Doomsday Clock” to 100 seconds to midnight – *the closest it’s ever been* – citing the twin existential threats of nuclear war and climate change.

It is our responsibility to share our knowledge of the ever-present and growing dangers of nuclear war with others. Let us work together to understand the common causes of our current multi-faceted crisis as we work with the Poor People’s Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival and others to build the massive multi-generational, multi-racial, *moral fusion* movement we will need to overcome systemic state violence and build a peaceful, just, sustainable and inclusive world.

We will now watch video from last year’s procession from the rally site to the West Gate of the Livermore Lab. Before that, Chizu Hamada will explain the significance of the traditional Japanese Bon dance we will see, where we invited our ancestors, including the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, to join us. Following the dance, sirens sounded in remembrance of the victims of the atomic bombs dropped by the United States on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, on August 6th and 9th, 1945. The sirens signaled a die-in. Those who so chose lay down and were outlined in chalk. Some people chose to get up and leave their outline when the order was given

to disperse. Others chose to stay in position and risk arrest. Some chose to risk arrest by standing in the gate area in front of the prone bodies and outlines. Those who chose not to risk arrest bore witness. **The chalk outlines we briefly left behind were a solemn reminder of the shadows of human beings vaporized by atomic bombs 75 years ago that still haunt the walls and sidewalks of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.**

On this 75th anniversary, **we are #still here**. We gather virtually at the Livermore Lab to say “never again” to the use of nuclear weapons, to demand a halt to their “modernization,” to call for their global abolition, and to demand redirection of human and financial resources to healthcare, racial and economic equality, environmental protection, and peace. We are here to visualize moving “From Hiroshima to a Healthy Tomorrow: Embracing Our Common Humanity”. We are pleased to be kicking off two days of virtual programming, all day August 6 and 9, organized by more than 160 organizations working together through the Hiroshima-Nagasaki 75 collaboration, and we encourage you to stay tuned in!