

WESTERN STATES LEGAL FOUNDATION

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(1956 - 2017)

*“The United States should implement a pronounced shift in approach toward Russia. No political advantage, real or imagined, could possibly compensate for the consequences if even a fraction of US and Russian arsenals were to be utilized in a thermonuclear exchange.” – Open Letter signed by Daniel Ellsberg, Noam Chomsky, Alice Waters and other voices of reason, The Nation, July 11, 2018**

July 23, 2018

Dear Western States Legal Foundation (WSLF) supporter,

Make no mistake. Donald Trump is a dangerous unhinged megalomaniac, unfit for office, who is taking a wrecking ball to the domestic and international orders – to the detriment of millions of ordinary people. Yet, the hysteria following his meeting with Vladimir Putin in Helsinki is truly frightening. Media pundits and Congressional leaders from both parties would apparently rather remain poised for nuclear war than risk talking with “the enemy”. ***This kind of binary thinking is not adequate to address the complexities of the current moment.***

In an unprecedented fog of propaganda and “alternative facts”, WSLF digs deep to understand complex realities and strives to serve as a fact-based voice of reason as we speak truth to power. **You understand the existential dangers posed by nuclear weapons in an increasingly unstable world. Every opportunity must be taken to lower the risks of nuclear war.** WSLF depends on regular financial support from individual donors like you to sustain our principled research, advocacy and organizing for peace and justice in a nuclear free world. ***Please renew your support now.***

While media coverage of the Trump-Putin Summit focused almost exclusively on Trump’s handling of allegations of Russian interference in the 2016 Presidential election, it was barely noted that tensions between the U.S. and Russia have risen to levels not seen since the Cold War, with the two nuclear giants confronting each other in Ukraine, Eastern Europe, and Syria and an accelerated tempo of military exercises and war games, both conventional and nuclear, on both sides. Risky close encounters between Russian and U.S./NATO forces have increased dramatically in the Baltic region and Syria. **The need for talks has never been greater!**

The Trump Administration’s aggressive Nuclear Posture Review, released in February, and Russia’s alarming nuclear weapons modernization plan, outlined in a March speech by Vladimir Putin, underscore both countries’ commitments to massive expenditures to maintain and “improve” their nuclear arsenals for the foreseeable future.

For the most part, media and Congressional responses to the Trump-Kim Summit in June were similarly dismissive of prospects for diplomacy on the Korean Peninsula. Characterizing the Summit as a contest “won” by Kim Jong-un completely overlooked the very significant facts on the ground - that North Korea has ceased tests of its nuclear warheads and missiles. It was *great* news that the U.S. suspended planned large-scale military exercises, which Donald Trump correctly characterized

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*Read the Open Letter and add your name at www.thenation.com/article/common-ground-for-secure-elections-and-true-national-security



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as “war games.” Let’s not forgot that just a few months earlier, U.S. and North Korean officials were exchanging ominous and illegal threats and counter-threats of pre-emptive military strikes, bringing the world closer to nuclear war than perhaps at any time since the Cuban Missile Crisis.

► **Watch my interview, “*Bonkers! Trump’s New Nuke Policy*”** at www.peaceandjustice.org/video-bonkers-trumps-new-nuke-policy ► **Read “*U.S.-Russia Nuclear Arms Racing: Still Crazy After All These Years*”**, by WSLF Senior Research Analyst Andrew Lichterman and John Burroughs, Executive Director of the Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy and WSLF Board member at www.truthdig.com/articles/u-s-russia-nuclear-arms-racing-still-crazy-after-all-these-years ► **Read the latest Mayors for Peace resolution** adopted by the US Conference of Mayors at wslfweb.org/docs/6-11-18-USCMpressrelease.pdf

WSLF is active with the Korea Peace Network, which has been organizing locally, nationally and internationally. In March, I released an Open Letter to President Trump, President Moon and Chairman Kim, at a well-attended international press conference at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The Open Letter, signed by more than 100 U.S. peace, faith-based, professional, and Korean-American organizations, including the American Federation of Teachers, declared: “[W]e wish to convey our deepest gratitude for the groundbreaking steps you have taken to begin the essential dialogue and diplomacy that must be undertaken if we are to prevent a war that would likely result in an unthinkable disaster for the Korean Peninsula, the United States and the world.” It also noted: “*Ultimately, the United States must also address a course of denuclearization if the promise of peace is to be realized.*”

Fortunately, due largely to the skillful leadership of South Korean President Moon Jae-in, with strong grassroots support from the Candlelight Revolution, diplomacy is being kept on track. Everyone should hope that the North-South and U.S.-North Korea Summits will in the long-term lead to a diplomatic resolution of the 68-year crisis on the Korean Peninsula, including denuclearization (on both sides). **But the path ahead is very unsure and we need to keep up the pressure.**

In my role as North American Coordinator for Mayors for Peace, I worked with our lead U.S. mayor, Frank Cownie of Des Moines, Iowa, to get the US Conference of Mayors (USCM) to adopt a sweeping Mayors for Peace resolution, “*Calling on the Administration and Congress to Step Back from the Brink and Exercise Global Leadership in Preventing Nuclear War*”. The resolution, adopted unanimously by the USCM on the eve of the Trump-Kim Summit, “welcomes the dramatic diplomatic opening between the U.S. and North Korea and urges President Trump to patiently and diligently work with North and South Korea for a formal resolution of the Korean War and normalized relations with a denuclearized Korean peninsula.” The USCM, the nonpartisan association of 1,408 American cities with populations over 30,000, has unanimously adopted Mayors for Peace resolutions for 13 consecutive years!

WSLF continues to play leadership roles in the Abolition 2000 Global Network to Eliminate Nuclear Weapons and United for Peace and Justice. Abolition 2000 held its 23rd Annual General Meeting in Geneva in April, during the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty Preparatory Committee Meeting for the 2020 Review Conference. With United for Peace and Justice we are promoting and participating in the Poor People’s Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival, the Korea Peace Network, the Divest From the War Machine Campaign, and the No Foreign Bases Campaign. Locally, WSLF is on the planning Committee for this year’s Hiroshima anniversary action at the Livermore Nuclear Weapons Lab. **Please join us on August 6, with keynote speaker Daniel Ellsberg.** (See flier at <https://tinyurl.com/LivermoreAug6>)

We’re in uncharted waters. But this is no time to give up! ***If you value WSLF’s unique and sustained contributions to local, national and international efforts for peace and justice in a nuclear free world, please give as generously as you can. Your donation is tax-deductible.***



Jacqueline Cabasso, Executive Director

P.S. You can donate securely on line at www.wslfweb.org. Or, send a check made out to Western States Legal Foundation to the address on the letterhead. **We can’t thank you enough!!**