

Hiroshima Day Rally Speech

Joseph Gerson

Campaign for Peace, Disarmament and Common Security

U.S.A.

Since we sank a campaign to transform Boston Harbor into a nuclear weapons base 40 years ago, I have had the extraordinary privilege of working with Hibakusha. They have endured and transformed the worst imaginable physical and emotional traumas into the world's most influential force for nuclear weapons abolition. By awarding Nihon Hidankyo the Peace Prize, the Nobel Committee sent the world a powerful message: We are closer to catastrophic nuclear annihilation than ever, and we must eliminate nuclear weapons.

Humanity's survival remains an open question. The new Cold War, three scorpions in a bottle (the U.S. Russia and China,) leaves the world with over 12,000 nuclear weapons. more than enough to bounce the rubble and to bring on nuclear winter.

These weapons are built to be used. The U.S. has repeatedly threatened to initiate nuclear war during wars and international crises. Its nuclear arsenal

has been used the same way that an armed robber uses a gun when pointing it at a victim's head. Whether or not the trigger is pulled, the gun has been used. Presidents have done this most frequently to reinforce U.S. Middle East and Asia-Pacific hegemony. The other nuclear weapons states have also each made such threats and preparations. Thus incidents, accidents, and miscalculations, especially near Taiwan and the South and East China Seas could trigger the end of life as we know it.

The ideological foundation for these omnicidal preparations is deterrence theory, which works until it doesn't. Years ago, a draft Pentagon report explained that "The focus of US deterrence efforts is...to influence adversaries to withhold actions intended to harm US' national interests." That is not only preventing nuclear attacks. It also means securing "our oil under their sand" or preventing others from intervening to protect those Washington is determined to attack. This is what Putin is doing in Ukraine.

The NPT and the TPNW are two sources of hope. Next year's two Review Conferences provide us with opportunities to hold nuclear powers and others to their promises.

Other Nobel Peace Prize recipients have urgently appealed for nuclear weapons abolition. Joseph Rotblat, warned that because no nation will long

tolerate an unjust imbalance of power, if nuclear weapons are not abolished, proliferation and nuclear war will inevitably follow. Mohamed ElBaradei of the IAEA did much the same, as has ICAN.

Friends, these are terrible times in the United States. Masked Trump/MAGA fascists, kidnap thousands of innocent immigrants from our streets and place them in concentration camps and foreign gulags. Truth, our universities, and the press are under assault in the campaign to replace constitutional democracy.

But we are resisting. A million people marched in Boston during our last NO Kings Day. And we build on the legacy Hibakusha are leaving us. In Boston people will gather for our biggest Hiroshima/Nagasaki commemoration, with peace and labor movement leaders and national and local elected officials. Our full-page signature advertisement repeats the Hibakusha' warning: "human beings and nuclear weapons cannot coexist." Young activists were moved by a Nihon Hidankyo photo exhibit. And 27 Congressional representatives initiated legislation calling for complete abolition of nuclear weapons and opposing trillions of dollars being spent to upgrade the nuclear arsenal and its triad of delivery systems.

In the US and here in Hiroshima we take strength from singing the truth that “We shall overcome.: We shall overcome!.

No more Hiroshimas, no more Nagasakis, No more Hibakusha. No more war!