

DESERT VOICES

The Newsletter of the Nevada Desert Experience

Volume 8

No. 1

Spring 1995



INTERNATIONAL UPDATE

President Clinton Extends Nuclear Testing Moratorium!

At the opening session of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Geneva on January 31, Robert Earle II, Deputy Director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, told the assembled delegates of President Clinton's three decisions:

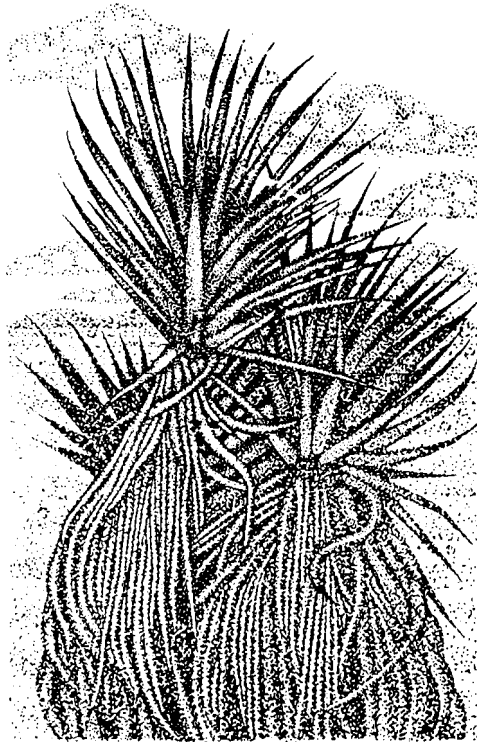
1. To extend the U.S. moratorium on nuclear testing until September 30, 1996, or until a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) enters into force.

2. To drop the so-called "ten year opt out" clause (allowing a party to withdraw from the treaty ten years after it enters into force) to encourage quicker progress on the negotiations.

3. To propose that the CD remain in session until September 1995, if a CTBT is not concluded by April of this year.

It is good news that the U.S. will refrain from testing in Nevada while the negotiations proceed, that we will not hold out for the right to withdraw from the treaty in ten years (so that we can maintain our stockpile by replenishing it with fresh tritium), and that we are prepared to continue the negotiations until we get the treaty.

But it is important to look at the motivation behind these decisions. The week before the CD opened again in Geneva, parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and over 100 citizen groups from around the world met in New York to prepare for the NPT Review and Extension Conference in April. The Non-Nuclear Weapons States (NNWS) and citizen groups are asking the Nuclear Weapons States (NWS) for evidence that they have lived up to their promise in Article VI of the NPT "to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear



arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control."

What can the NWS say? While the U.S. and Russia are beginning the process of dismantling their nuclear weapons under the terms of START I, we still don't have a CTBT or a ratification of START II. The stance of the other NWS is even worse: the UK deploys its Trident submarines, France calls for another 10-20 nuclear tests in the South Pacific because their weapons are "not quite right,...not sufficiently robust," and China wants the right to conduct "peaceful nuclear explosions" and continues to test nuclear weapons at Lop Nor. The NWS will have to go farther than trying to speed up CTBT negotiations if they expect to convince the world that they are living up to their Article VI obligations.

Meanwhile, the U.S. is preparing for life beyond the CTBT by enhancing its ability to develop what Hazel O'Leary has called a "technical proxy for continued testing." In a January 23 speech to NPT

PrepCom delegates and citizens, Secretary O'Leary lauded this capability of the DOE, stating that it would "help us keep the stockpile safe, secure, and reliable." She expressly cited the National Ignition Facility (due to be built at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory), as an "expensive technology that replaces testing." The next day, U.S. Ambassador Thomas Graham stated in a public meeting at the UN: "The Cold War is in the past. The U.S. has no technology that will improve nuclear weapons without nuclear tests. And we will not ever test." Who should we believe?

A CTBT in 1963 would have prevented the massive arms race that we witnessed in the 1970s and 1980s at its inception: the design and testing of weapons. A CTBT in 1995 will prevent further contamination of indigenous lands in Nevada, Muroroa, Lop Nor and Novaya Zemlya, but it will no longer prevent the development of new nuclear weapons. Our technology has become so sophisticated that we no longer need to blow up a bomb in the desert or under a Pacific atoll; we can find out what we need to know in the laboratory, in what is being called the "information environment." In 1991, delegates from countries all over the world met at the UN to try to amend the Limited Test Ban Treaty, and end nuclear weapons testing "in all environments for all time." Our technology has created a new environment that needs to be included in this ban.

Pamela Meidell
NDE Field Director

Pamela has served as NDE Field Director and board member since 1992. In April she leaves NDE to coordinate the Atomic Mirror Pilgrimage. NDE is grateful for Pamela's years of dedicated service and thanks her for her immeasurable contributions. For more information about AMP please call or write her at P.O. Box 220/Pt. Hueneme, CA 93044 (805) 985-5073.

The Journey Continues... NDE's Year of Nonviolence

On January 26, eleven of us gathered early in the morning at the Las Vegas offices of the Department of Energy to depart for an all-day tour of the Nevada Test Site (NTS). For some, it was a new experience. For others, it was just one more opportunity to see the contrast of the beauty of that desert in the midst of all the nuclear paraphernalia. In 44 years, the test site desert has become the most bombed place on the planet.

The next day 100 Bishop Gorman High School students and guests gathered in their chapel to participate in a panel discussion, *50 Years of the Nuclear Age -- A Checkered History*. It was the 44th anniversary of the first nuclear test at the NTS. This anniversary is commemorated by peace groups in Japan as "Nevada Day." Panelists for the event represented the nuclear spectrum: Diana Hirschi, a downwinder from Utah; Larry Johns, a lawyer from Las Vegas who has represented radiation victims in court since 1971; David Laman, a former Nevada Test Site worker; Sr. Rosemary Lynch, a Franciscan peacemaker who first prayed and protested at the NTS in 1977; Mary Manning, a reporter on radiation issues for the *Las Vegas Sun*, since 1965; Ian Zabarte, secretary of the Western Shoshone National Council; and Frank Strabala, a former manager at two nuclear test sites--in the 1950s at the Marshall Islands in the Pacific Ocean and in the '60s at the NTS.

August Desert Witness 1995

*Commemorating
Hiroshima and Nagasaki*

August 4 - 9, 1995
University of Nevada-Las
Vegas &
Nevada Test Site

See enclosed brochure

S. F. Bay Area Supporters!

Every third Friday NDE sponsors a
Vigil at Lawrence Livermore
The next dates are
Mar. 17, Apr. 21 & May 19
Call the NDE N. CA office for more
information: (510) 261-1005

The panel discussion was preceded by a showing of the David Brown video, *Bound by the Wind*. Each panelist was given 5-10 minutes to speak about his or her life and work relating to the nuclear testing program in Nevada. After all the presentations, a discussion ensued from questions asked by the audience. Larry Johns and Mary Manning recalled, while growing up in Las Vegas in the 1950s, seeing the flashes from the above ground tests. Afterward, students had an opportunity to speak individually with the panelists. Many students came up to sign a large butcher paper card of support. It was sent to France, where a group of people is fasting for the success of the NPT PrepCom.

In the afternoon, several car-loads of NDE supporters drove out to Cactus Springs and the Mercury Gate of the NTS. There we broke bread with Sr. Carol Gilbert, O.P., as she ended her 5 day solidarity fast. We concluded Nevada Day with a circle of sharing and prayer.

Since the fall, over 40 housemeeting packets and *Nuclear Age Reflection Guides* have been sent out and reports have begun to come back about the different groups who have gathered to watch *Bound by the Wind* and use the Housemeeting Packet material. If you have hosted a housemeeting, we are anxious to hear from you. Housemeeting Packets can still be ordered through NDE.

From March 1 (Ash Wednesday) through April 16 (Easter Sunday), NDE will be hosting a vigil at the test site. We will be praying for an end to nuclear weapons production and for success in the international efforts to ban nuclear weapons. The day after Easter, April 17, NDE is organizing another DOE sponsored bus tour of the NTS.

Come and Join us for Lenten Desert Experience XIV

*March 1 through April 16, 1995
Ash Wednesday to Easter*

NDE is sponsoring a constant Vigil and presence at the Nevada Test Site during Lent. Come for two days or for two weeks.

Special events for Holy Week and Easter Sunday are being planned.

Call the Las Vegas office at (702) 646-4814 to let us know what dates you plan to join us during this vigil.

From May 7-13, NDE is sponsoring a **Walk for Peace** (see opposite page) from Las Vegas to the NTS's Mercury Gate. The culmination of NDE's Year of Nonviolence will be the 50th Anniversary of Hiroshima & Nagasaki. Please see enclosed brochure for information about **August Desert Witness 1995**. For more information about any of NDE's **Year of Nonviolence** events, please write to NDE/ P.O. Box 4487/ Las Vegas, NV 89127 or call (702) 646-4814.

--David Buer, ofm
NDE Nevada Director

DESERT VOICES

Desert Voices is the quarterly newsletter of NDE. Articles may be reprinted. Your letters, articles, poetry or humorous pieces are welcome. Send them (and a stamped, self-addressed envelope) to: **Desert Voices** P.O. Box 4487, Las Vegas, NV 89127. Phone: (702) 646-4814, Fax: (702) 385-3878. Newsletter staff: David Buer, ofm Anne Symens-Bucher & Jody Hart

A Pilgrimage from Las Vegas to the Nevada Test Site

Nevada Desert Experience's "Walk for Peace" May 7-13, 1995



Join us for this week-long pilgrimage from Las Vegas to the Nevada Test Site, to draw attention to the ~~Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference~~ and the International Citizen's Assembly in New York.

This 80 mile journey will begin at the Las Vegas Office of the Department of Energy and will proceed through Las Vegas into the desert along U.S. Highway 95. The procession of walkers will camp in the desert each night (outside or in support vehicles). Campsites will include Shoshone land at Cactus Springs, the Atomic Veterans 40 acre site and the old Peace Camp across from the Mercury gate of the Nevada Test Site. Walkers are asked to bring their own camping supplies; food will be provided.

The walk will raise funds for NDE's *Year of Nonviolence: A Journey of Witness and Remembrance*. Walkers will be asked to collect pledges from supporters for each mile walked. (For example—10 cents a mile = \$8.00; \$1.00 a mile = \$80.00) Local support people are also needed to provide transportation and fix meals.

NDE's Nevada Director, David Buer, OFM, will be participating in the walk, and is looking for sponsors. David promises to walk no more than 80 miles! To sponsor David, please indicate on the form below.

Yes! I want to sign up for the "Walk for Peace." Enclosed is my \$25 registration fee. Please make check out to "Nevada Desert Experience."

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone + Area Code _____

_____ I would like to sponsor David Buer at \$ _____ per mile.

_____ I cannot walk, but I can be a part of the support team.

Please fill out this form and send to : Nevada Desert Experience
P.O.Box 4487/ Las Vegas, NV 89127.



INTERNATIONAL UPDATE: ISSUES & ACTIONS

ISSUE: The "information environment" is not currently included in the scope of the treaty negotiations in Geneva. If we want a CTBT that will stop the development of new nuclear weapons, we need to ban computer simulated testing.

ACTION: Write to Ambassador Stephen J. Ledogar (Representative of the U.S. to the CD, US Mission, 11, route de Pregny, 1292 Chambesey, Geneve, Switzerland) calling for the inclusion of computer simulated testing in the scope of the treaty.

ISSUE: China is still advocating for "peaceful nuclear explosions" to be exempted from the treaty.

ACTION: Write to Ambassador Hou Zhitong (Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary for Disarmament Affairs, Chinese Mission, 11, Shemin de Surville, 1213 Petit-Lancy, Geneve, Switzerland) calling for China to give up the option of "peaceful explosions," and demand that they stop underground testing and join the moratorium.

Correction: Charles Spencer, SFO, Chairman of the Secular Franciscan Ecology Commission wrote to *Desert Voices* pointing out an error in our last issue. In our article about the Ecological Conference in New York last Sept. we failed to point out that it was the Secular Franciscan Order, U.S.A. who organized and hosted the conference at the Graymoor Friars Christian Unity Center. For more information about the Ecology Commission write to: 107 Jensen Circle/ West Springfield, MA 01089.

ISSUE: Construction of the Dual Axis Radiographic Hydrotest Facility (DARHT) at Los Alamos National Laboratory has been stopped by legal suit filed by the Los Alamos Study Group and the concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety. Although no environmental studies have been done on the site, \$33.3 million has already been spent to build the support laboratory. The DARHT has been called "the premier aboveground nuclear weapons testing facility" by Jackie Cabasso of the Western States Legal Foundation, which acted as an informal advisor in the suit.

ACTION: Write to the DOE, and call for a complete environmental review (an Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Statement, neither of which has been done) of the project. (Secretary Hazel O'Leary, U.S. Department of Energy, Washington, D.C. 20585)

ISSUE: France's Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) and defense ministry want to carry out a one-off series of 10 to 20 nuclear tests, according to Richard Garwain, vice-chairman of the Federation of American Scientists, who met with AEC representatives last November. "They have made preparations for them, and would do them in a single flurry in the lagoon, or under the lagoon, at Muroroa," he said. Jacques Bouchard, the director of CEA, a division of military application, was confident the planned tests would be approved after the French elections in May. Garwain said that the division has a convincing case for a short test program prior to a CTB, and "would likely be approved by Mitterrand's successor," whomever that may be.

NDE has spoken with Clariza Lucas, active in the independence movement in Tahiti and a member of the Society of French Nuclear Test Victims, about the best ways to support Tahitian efforts to prevent these tests and, if they do occur, to condemn them publically. We will remain in touch with her as events unfold.

ACTION: 1) Write to Ambassador Gerard Errera (Representative to the CD, French Mission, 35, route de Pregny, 1292 Chambesey, Geneve, Switzerland) demanding that France renounce testing and move toward a speedy conclusion of a CTBT without further tests. 2) If the tests occur, be prepared to contact or visit your nearest French consulate, to meet with consular officers and condemn the tests as counterproductive to a CTBT.

POETRY CORNER

by Mick Mandeville
"YOU ARE THERE"

Hiroshima, August 6, 1945
Colonel Tibbetts (Pilot of the Enola Gay): "I saw a perfectly outlined city--clear in every detail, coming in. The city was roughly four miles in diameter. By that time we were at our bombing altitude of 32,000 feet. We were so well on the target that the bombardier said: 'I can't do anything. There is nothing to do. It is just sitting there.'"

Note -- does this not sound like a 1940s "Turkey shoot?"

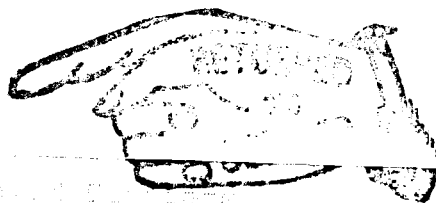
Desert Voices

Nevada Desert Experience
P.O.Box 4487
Las Vegas, NV 89127

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☒ MOVED NOT FORWARDABLE
☐ FORWARDING ORDER EXPIRED
☐ ATTEMPTED, NOT KNOWN



An invitation . . .

AUGUST DESERT WITNESS 1995 is the culminating event of NDE's *A Year of Non-violence: Journey of Witness and Remembrance*. *A Year of Nonviolence* is a campaign to make peace with our past by looking clearly at our nuclear history of the last 50 years, taking responsibility for what we have done, and with the help and guidance of the great spiritual traditions of our planet, healing ourselves and the earth.

During August Desert Witness, we will be standing with the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, humanity's first victims of atomic warfare. We will stand with the people of the Marshall Islands, Muroroa, Kazakhstan, Lop Nur and Novoya Zemlya, all victims and survivors of nuclear weapons testing; with American downwinders, atomic veterans, former test site workers and Native American peoples, who through their work and everyday lives have seen and felt the painful effects of nuclear weapons testing. We will all come together in a spirit of peace, healing and hope to realize the words of Dom Helder Camara, "This is the site of the greatest violence on earth, therefore, it should be the site of the greatest nonviolence on earth."

Join us for a gathering diverse in faith and culture and a program of prayer, reflection, remembrance and healing.

NEVADA DESERT EXPERIENCE is a faith-based organization working to end nuclear weapons testing through a campaign of prayer, dialogue and nonviolent direct action. Inspired by Franciscan spirituality and scriptural values, NDE is an interfaith voice presently engaged in an intensive campaign to bring about a Comprehensive Test Ban.

Nevada Desert Experience
P.O. Box 4487
Las Vegas, Nevada 89127

STAMP

*Nevada Desert Experience
presents*

August Desert Witness

1995

*Commemorating
Hiroshima and Nagasaki*

August 4 - 9, 1995

**University of
Nevada-Las Vegas &
Nevada Test Site**

Please join . . .

Fr. Miguel D'Escoto

Former Nicaraguan Foreign Secretary
Founder, El Madrono Foundation for the
Spirituality of Nonviolence

Terry Tempest Williams

Author, naturalist and downwinder

Arun Gandhi

Founder, M.K. Gandhi Institute
for Nonviolence
Grandson of Mohandas "Mahatma" Gandhi

Richard Rohr, OFM

Founder, Center for Action and
Contemplation

Bishop Leontine Kelly

United Methodist Church

Dr. Arthur Waskow

Director, The Shalom Center
Pathfinder, ALEPH: Alliance for
Jewish Renewal

Dolores Huerta

Co-Founder and First Vice President,
United Farm Workers of America

Bishop C. Dale White

United Methodist Church

Corbin Harney

Spiritual Leader
Western Shoshone Nation

Rabbi Leonard Beerman

Co-Founder, Interfaith Center to
Reverse the Arms Race

Ched Myers

Director of Programs
American Friends Service Committee

Rosemary Lynch, OSF

Co-Founder, Pace e Bene Center

Louis Vitale, OFM

Co-Founder, Nevada Desert Experience

June Casey

Hanford downwinder
Peacelinks Liaison

Claudia Peterson

Downwinder, St. George, Utah

Carla de Sola

Director, Omega West Liturgical
Dance Company

Jesse Manibusan

Singer / Songwriter

Rufino Zaragoza, OFM

Musician / Composer

Anne Symens - Bucher

Chairperson, Nevada Desert Experience

Artwork by Dan Barica, OFM

SCHEDULE

Friday, August 4th

2 - 6:00 pm Registration
Tonopah Residence Hall

7:00 pm OPENING CEREMONIES

Saturday, August 5th

5:00 am Sunrise Ceremony
Breakfast
9:00 am INTERFAITH GATHERING &
LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE
Lunch
1:30 pm Film, Art, Music
Prayer and Reflection
2:00 pm Liturgical Dance Workshop
3:00 pm PANEL DISCUSSION ON
NONVIOLENCE
4:30 pm Nonviolence Process
Dinner
7:00 pm CANDLELIGHT VIGIL

Sunday, August 6th

5:00 am Sunrise Ceremony
8:00 am NEVADA TEST SITE ACTION
2:00 pm Closing/Depart

The program includes a nuclear age film festival, a space for quiet reflection and prayer, a resource room with books and information about numerous topics and organizations, and other features still in the works.

August 7 - 9, 1995 will feature bus tours of the Nevada Test Site, workshops, and an interfaith service at the gates of the test site. Should you choose to participate in this part of the program, please check the box on the return slip and NDE will send you registration information.

Civil Disobedience and the Nonviolent Covenant

All those who wish to take part in civil disobedience are asked to attend a nonviolent process session on Saturday afternoon. This session will include the theory of nonviolence, legal consequences of civil disobedience and exploration of personal fears.

Participants in civil disobedience at the Nevada Test Site are asked to abide by NDE's nonviolent covenant and to strive to act out of love. As part of the spiritual preparation for this witness, please reflect upon the points in this covenant.



Monday, August 7th Test Site Tour

Tuesday, August, 8th Workshops

Wednesday, August 9th
Interfaith Service - Nevada Test Site

1. We will harbor no anger but suffer the anger of the opponent.*
2. We will refuse to return the assaults of the opponents.
3. We will refrain from insults and swearing.
4. We will protect opponents from insults or attack.
5. If arrested, we will not resist. We will not go limp.
6. If arrested, we will behave in an exemplary manner.
7. As members of the nonviolent demonstration, we will follow the directions of the designated coordinators. In the event of a serious disagreement, one should remove oneself from the action.
8. Our attitude as conveyed through words, symbols and actions will be one of openness, friendliness, and respect towards all people we encounter, including police officers and Nevada Test Site workers.
9. We will not damage any property.
10. We will not bring or use any drugs or alcohol.
11. We will not run or use threatening motions.
12. We will carry no weapons.
13. Without making a judgment about its use, we will not engage in symbolic blood pouring.

* The term opponent is borrowed from Gandhi and is meant to indicate one with whom we are in opposition but whom we do not consider to be an enemy.

LOGISTICS

Registration

NDE is offering a package deal that includes food and lodging on the UNLV campus. Rates are less expensive if you register BEFORE JUNE 15TH. A registration fee applies should you wish to take care of your own food and lodging. If you plan on attending the activities for August 7-9, check the box on the return slip and we'll send you registration information. There will be an additional charge for room and board on campus from the evening of August 6th through the evening of August 8th, but no extra registration fee. Contact NDE if you need financial assistance. Please make checks payable to Nevada Desert Experience. Questions? Call NDE at 702-646-4814.

Weather

August temperatures in Las Vegas can reach 110 degrees. Although most of the program will take place in a cool, air-conditioned environment, some events will take place outside, namely the test site action. It is necessary to guard against sunstroke and heat exhaustion. Please wear light, loose fitting clothing. Bring plenty of sunscreen, a hat and a water bottle.

Radiation Concerns

Discussion about radiation exposure at the Nevada Test Site is ongoing, but it is generally agreed that unless there has been a recent (within 72 hours) detonation of an underground nuclear weapon, the danger to your health is minute. The U.S. has maintained a moratorium on underground tests since October 1992. Small children and pregnant women are not advised to go to the Test Site. Specific guidelines will be provided in your registration packet.

Housing

NDE has secured 300 rooms on the UNLV campus. The rates for these rooms are less expensive than most hotels in the area. Two suggestions: 1. Make your reservations early - space is limited. 2. Plan to stay in a double room - it's a better deal! Should you choose to stay in a nearby hotel, call City Wide Reservations at 1-800-733-6644. Ask for space near the UNLV campus.

Food

Meals will be served during the program by the UNLV Dining Service. The Dining Service offers a wide selection of food including an extensive salad bar and other items for those who choose a vegetarian lifestyle. The following meals will be available: Saturday - breakfast, lunch and dinner; Sunday - brunch. Friday dinner is not included, however there are a variety of restaurants next to the UNLV campus.

Transportation

NDE will not be able to provide transportation to and from the airport. Cab fare from the airport is about \$8.00. Ask the driver to drop you off at Tonopah Residence Hall at the end of Brussels Street on the Tropicana Blvd. side of campus. If you are planning your return flight on Sunday, the program will conclude at the test site by mid- to late morning. If you drive to the event, the UNLV campus is about 2-3 miles east of Las Vegas Blvd. on Tropicana Blvd. NDE will provide buses to the Nevada Test Site. Space will be limited on the buses so we urge those who have cars to use them on Sunday.

Please clip and return to:
Nevada Desert Experience
P.O. Box 4487
Las Vegas, NV 89127-0487

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone(s) _____

Sex: M F please circle
(for housing matters)

FOR AUGUST 4 - 6, 1995

- ☐ Enclosed is my pre-registration payment of \$85.00 (Double room occupancy)
- ☐ My roommate will be _____
- ☐ Please assign me a roommate.
- ☐ Enclosed is my pre-registration payment of \$105.00 (Single room occupancy)
- ☐ Enclosed is my pre-registration payment of \$40.00 (NO room and board included)
- PRE-REGISTRATION DEADLINE: JUNE 15**
- ☐ Enclosed is my late registration payment of \$100.00 (Double room occupancy)
- ☐ Enclosed is my late registration payment of \$120.00 (Single room occupancy)
- ☐ Enclosed is my late registration payment of \$55.00 (NO room and board included)

NO REFUNDS AFTER JULY 1ST.

- ☐ I will need a ride to the test site on Sunday.
- Note: Bring \$5 with you to board the bus.
- ☐ I am considering civil disobedience.
- ☐ Please send me info about August 7 - 9.
- ☐ I'd like to take a Test Site tour on the 7th.
- ☐ I'd like to organize a group from my area.

Groups of 20 or more will receive a discount of 10% per person. Call NDE for details.