

# July 2023 Newsletter



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## COUNTERING DISINFORMATION WITH FACTS - RUSSIAN INVASION OF UKRAINE

This Government of Canada website provides facts about the ongoing war in Ukraine, based on reliable intelligence sources, to counter disinformation and propaganda spread by the Kremlin. [Click here](#) to learn more.

## CALGARY PEACE MUSEUM UPDATE

Our Peace Museum initiative is evolving. There is a strong possibility for a Peace Bus! Materials developed for the August 2023 "Building a Culture of Peace" exhibit at the Calgary Central Public Library would be included, giving them added exposure. More on this exciting development soon!

Contact Us:



# THE G7 VISION ON NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT DISAPPOINTS

By Cesar Jaramillo

Published in *The Ploughshares Monitor* Volume 44 Issue 2  
 Summer 2023

Summarized by Haylie Smith

On August 6, 1945, Hiroshima was hit by an atomic bomb. This decision was made on July 31, 1945, at a meeting of the Manhattan Project's Target Committee – a group of scientists and military officials established to select potential Japanese targets for the atomic bomb. The reasoning behind the committee's decision on Hiroshima as a primary target was because of their military and industrial significance. By the end of 1945, an estimated 140,000 people in Hiroshima died as a result of this bombing.

This year from May 19-21, the Hiroshima Peace Memorial was the site for the 2023 Summit of the G7 group of countries.

Japanese Prime Minister, Fumio Kishida, calls Hiroshima home. He is seen as a strong supporter of nuclear disarmament and reportedly insisted on this site for this year's G7 Summit. For the first time ever, the G7 issued a standalone statement on nuclear weapons. The G7 leaders reaffirmed their “commitment to achieving a world without nuclear weapons with undiminished security for all.” Although this statement may appear appealing, the emphasis on undiminished security as a prerequisite for nuclear disarmament is fundamentally flawed and in the end, the statement didn't say anything new.

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) stated that the G7 statement “falls far short of providing any meaningful outcomes for nuclear disarmament. After months of preparation and amid high expectations, the leaders are missing the moment to make the world safer from nuclear weapons.”

The G7 statement brought up concerns regarding nuclear security and the escalating risk of nuclear use. However, the G7 countries acknowledged no responsibility for their own nuclear weapons.. The statement also brought up concerns regarding China's nuclear weapons program while conveniently forgetting to mention that its three nuclear-armed members spend billions of dollars annually to modernize their own nuclear arsenals.

To read more, click [here](#).



# TOWARDS A DELIBERATELY BUILT PEACE: THE INEVITABLE NEGOTIATIONS ON UKRAINE

Opinion by Ernie Regher

The Hill Times

June 22, 2023

Summarized by Haylie Smith

Although many of us would like to “silence the guns” we have to understand that a ceasefire could launch a settlement process that would reward Russia’s aggression and ignore Ukraine’s sovereign rights. The fear of that settlement process defines the central challenge facing advocates of an early ceasefire. For those who are arguing for the “whatever-is-needed-for-as-long-as-it-takes” route, they have to acknowledge the prospects of more damage to homes and infrastructure, the loss of thousands of more lives, and a deferred recovery. There is also a risk of the war spreading to neighbouring countries and escalation of aggression resulting in nuclear war.

The likelihood of Russia or Ukraine being in a position to dictate settlement terms is low, which now means they would need to move towards a negotiation. Countries like Canada and Brazil (who have been supportive of Ukraine) should be proactively exploring routes to create the groundwork on a peace process for when Russia and Ukraine reach that point. The United States and NATO should be appointing peace envoys with mandates to investigate the ceasefire whilst continuing to support Ukraine. Consultants could already be looking into the warring parties' openness to beginning a dialogue and exploring settlement options.

Even if Ukraine won on the battlefield, it does not give insight into how they may navigate their position on the fault line between Russia and NATO. There would be a need to redefine and restructure the relationship between Russia and Ukraine as well as understanding that there would need to be a change in operations among the United States, NATO, Russia, and ultimately China.

The Western states' response so far has involved sending weapons to the battlefield and then sitting back to watch what the war brings. However, it is not too late for the support of Ukraine to expand to include the exploration of a just and durable peace.



## NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY 2023

### The History of National Indigenous Peoples Day

#### What is National Indigenous Peoples Day?

June 21st was National Indigenous Peoples Day, a day for all Canadians to recognize the incredible and unique cultures, traditions and heritage of the Métis, First Nations and Inuit people.

National Indigenous Peoples Day, was announced in 1996 by then Governor General of Canada, Roméo LeBlanc, through the "Proclamation Declaring June 21st of Each Year as National Indigenous Peoples Day."

#### History of National Indigenous Peoples Day

- In 1982, the National Indian Brotherhood, now the Assembly of First Nations, called for the creation of National Aboriginal Solidarity Day
- In 1995, the Sacred Assembly, a national conference of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people chaired by Elijah Harper, called for a national holiday to celebrate the contributions of Indigenous Peoples
- Also in 1995, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples recommended the designation of a National First Peoples Day

#### Why Observe & Celebrate National Indigenous Peoples Day?

National Indigenous Peoples Day offers every Canadian an opportunity to deepen their understanding and awareness of the unique adversities and struggles that Indigenous Peoples face and have overcome. It is also an opportunity to learn more about Truth & Reconciliation.

Calgarians had the opportunity to attend the 14th annual Walk for Reconciliation starting at the Harry Hays building and ended at Fort Calgary, going along the riverfront and underneath the Reconciliation Bridge. More than 400 people registered for this year's walk, twice as many as last year.





# DANIEL ELLSBERG'S MESSAGE TO US, AND TO FUTURE GENERATIONS

By Martin E. Hellman  
June 16, 2023

Summarized by Haylie Smith

Daniel Ellsberg changed history by leaking the Pentagon Papers in his efforts to end the Vietnam War. Ellsberg was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer earlier this year and passed away on June 16th. Martin Hellman had met with Ellsberg prior to his diagnoses this year for an interview, here are some wise messages Ellsberg left before he passed.

## What you would like to say to future generations—or people right now even?

"Right now, that there is, and has been for 70 years, a very significant danger of the end of civilization: the death of most humans on Earth within a year by the effects of nuclear winter and nuclear fallout. And that almost nothing has succeeded in lowering that probability, although there are many things that could be done and should have been done. But perhaps it is not too late to accomplish those things now.

We are living, as John F. Kennedy put it, "under a sword of Damocles, hanging by the slenderest of threads." And that thread has not been strengthened in the slightest over the years."

## The risk of a nuclear war?

"My guess is that there is not a high likelihood of nuclear war in the current stalemate in Ukraine, so long as Putin is not confronted with losing Crimea or all of the Donbas. But if American troops or Polish troops or German troops were to maintain those tanks and planes that are being given to Ukraine by the West, or to man them, that would be a very significant change, because it could confront Russia with actually losing the Donbas or Crimea. And I think, in those circumstances, Putin would be strongly tempted, as we would be in similar circumstances, to break through that with "small" nuclear weapons in an effort to bring people to their senses and say, "This can't go on. You've got to negotiate at our terms." Putin's use of nuclear weapons in that kind of scenario could succeed, but probably would not."



## DANIEL ELLSBERG'S MESSAGE TO US, AND TO FUTURE GENERATIONS

"...men in power are willing to risk world annihilation rather than to accept a short-term loss. And it's not a question of realism or unrealism, it's a willingness to gamble. They know it's not likely to succeed, but that doesn't mean they won't do it, because there is a chance that it may succeed, which is enough to get them to gamble the world."

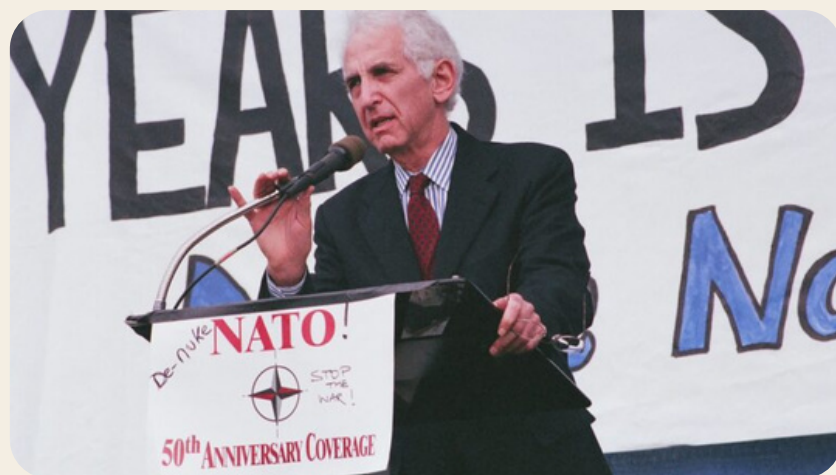
### The need for action: a fool's errand?

"People just don't realize how big this is. What do they do? They don't do anything one way or the other. The death of humanity is not something that moves them to vote. They act as if there is no chance to make any difference. As if it's impossible to change things.

Yet, we all thought the Berlin Wall coming down was impossible. Nelson Mandela becoming president of South Africa without a violent revolution seemed impossible.

In the same way, I currently cannot see any chance of getting rid of ICBMs (Intercontinental Ballistic Missile), or of no-first-use. But miracles do happen. I choose to act as if it makes a difference. And it's just a choice. I can't defend that. It's just a better way to live. It's the way I choose to live. We can work to prevent the cataclysm."

To read the full interview, click [here](#).



Daniel Ellsberg

Photo Credits: Elvert Xavier Barnes



**EVENTS**

- On Saturday, July 15th, **Team CIBC for Tour Alberta for Cancer** will be hosting a Stampede BBQ Fundraiser to Raise funds for **Tour Alberta for Cancer** and the **Alberta Cancer Foundation**. The barbecue will start at 3:00 PM at The Ranchmen's Club. The event is family friendly and will include great food, live music by **The Virago Trio**, a bouncy castle, lawn games, and a silent auction with some cool items! Tickets are \$30.00 and available on eventbrite.ca.
  
- On Monday, July 17th, **Calgary Alpha House Society & Carya** will be hosting a workshop called **Engaging Vulnerable Persons: Understanding Homelessness & Addiction** from 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM at Carya Village Commons. The workshop will focus on:
  - Understanding factors that lead to homelessness & addiction
  - Challenging the stigmas associated with homelessness & addiction
  - Learning about philosophies of care including Housing First and Harm Reduction
  - Recognizing how & when to navigate interactions with our unhoused neighbours
  - Learning about free resources available to community & when to utilize them

Tickets are free and are available on eventbrite.ca.

- On Saturday, July 29th, **JLA (Just Love Animals) Society** will be hosting **Yoga With Adoptable Puppies**. The event starts at 10:00am down in Eau Claire. This event boasts a 100% adoption rate! Please bring your own yoga mat. Tickets are \$22.63 and available on eventbrite.ca.





**GOOD NEWS**

- Four Indigenous children, aged 13, 9, 4 and 11 months, survived 40 days in the rainforest in Columbia after a plane crash in which their mother and other adults were killed. The oldest, Lesley, carried the baby. (National Public Radio, U.S., June 17, 2023.) The children were found by Nicolas Ordonez, a member of the Indigenous Guard. That is a group founded to protect Indigenous territory from violence and environmental destruction. Ordonez was once a child soldier, having joined a guerrilla group at the age of 14, due to economic need. He abandoned the ways of violence and said it is now “my war” to rescue children. (New York Times June 27, 2023).
- On Saturday, July 1st, Forty-eight people celebrated their first Canada Day as new Canadians. The ceremony was held at Heritage Park and aimed to showcase unity and belonging. The officiating officer, Irene Pfeiffer, stated that many of the people who attended Saturday’s ceremony have waited 10 to 12 years to get their citizenship. Francis Morales, who received his citizenship on Saturday said “It’s wonderful. It’s great. It feels like I’m being adopted into a great family”. (Global News, July 1st, 2023).
- Texas is fast becoming a leader in solar power. The amount of solar energy generated in Texas has doubled since the start of last year. And it is set to roughly double again by the end of next year, according to data from the Electric Reliability Council of Texas. So far this year, about 7 percent of the electric power used in Texas has come from solar, and 31 percent from wind. (NY Times June 27, 2023)



Photo Credits:  
Nitashia Johnson for The New York Times





**GOOD NEWS**

- On Monday, June 26th, **The Blackfoot Nation** released 30 wild bison back onto their land, a project 9 years in the making. The bison arrived from Alberta, in 2016 and were placed in a special grazing enclosure to test for disease. Over the years, the herd grew until they were loaded up into trailers and moved to the release site near Glacier National Park in Montana. At their new home near Chief Mountain, the bison will roam free, something which almost no bison herd in the country can do. Blackfoot Councilman Lauren Monroe Jr. was really excited, imagining what his ancestors would think, say, and feel if they knew that land, bison, language, and culture would come back one day.(Good News Network, July 3rd, 2023).
- EWE Talk, a new kind of animal therapy using Sheep, was launched by Emma Redman and Pippa Ashton last year after Emma was given the opportunity to buy a unique breed of sheep called a Valias Blacknose. This breed of sheep is known for having a dog-like like temperament that makes them perfect for providing emotional support. The pair (from the UK) now has a flock of seven sheep and two goats to help those that are finding life challenging. Studies have shown that animal therapy can have both psychological and physiological benefits. While their goal is to visit schools and educational settings with their fluffy friends, currently they only host children on their farm. (Good News Network, June 6th, 2023).



Photo Credits: Good News Network





## AGM & LETTER TO GOVERNMENT

On Wednesday, June 14th, we held our Annual General Meeting in-person at Parkdale United Church and virtually via Zoom. After the AGM we viewed excerpts from a two hour video recording of an April 27, 2023 Zoom meeting sponsored by the Canadian Pugwash Group (CPG), entitled “The Peace Table for Ukraine and Russia.”. After viewing this video, we held small group discussions regarding the content of the video and created recommendations that could help peace building. We are currently in the process of drafting a letter to the government that will contain these recommendations. This letter will be shared with our members soon.



## FLOATING LANTERNS, CENTRAL LIBRARY EXHIBIT AND NEW INITIATIVE

- The Annual Floating Lanterns Peace Festival will be taking place on Saturday, August 5th from 5:30pm-9:00pm at Olympic Plaza.
- New additions have been added to the Calgary Central Library exhibit that initiated last year by our **Calgary Floating Lanterns** subcommittee in part of the **Building A Culture Of Peace Month**. One of the new additions to the exhibit are panels on **Peace Heroes** which include: Daisaku Ikeda, Lester B. Pearson & Mikhail Gorbachev.
- A new initiative from Ploughshares Calgary Society is an interactive and educational walk we are dubbing "**Ploughshares Pathway to Peace**". This walk is planned to be a part of the **Building A Culture Of Peace Month** which was established last year by our subcommittee, **Calgary Floating Lanterns**. This walk will start at the Calgary Central Library and end at The Calgary Peace Pole with five interactive stops from start to finish. More information to come soon. If you are interested in helping create and/or participate in this new project, please contact the office. We would love to have you!

