

Issue Update and Planning Meeting, Santa Fe

Greg Mello, 10/19/16

"If there must be trouble, let it be in my day, that my child may have peace."

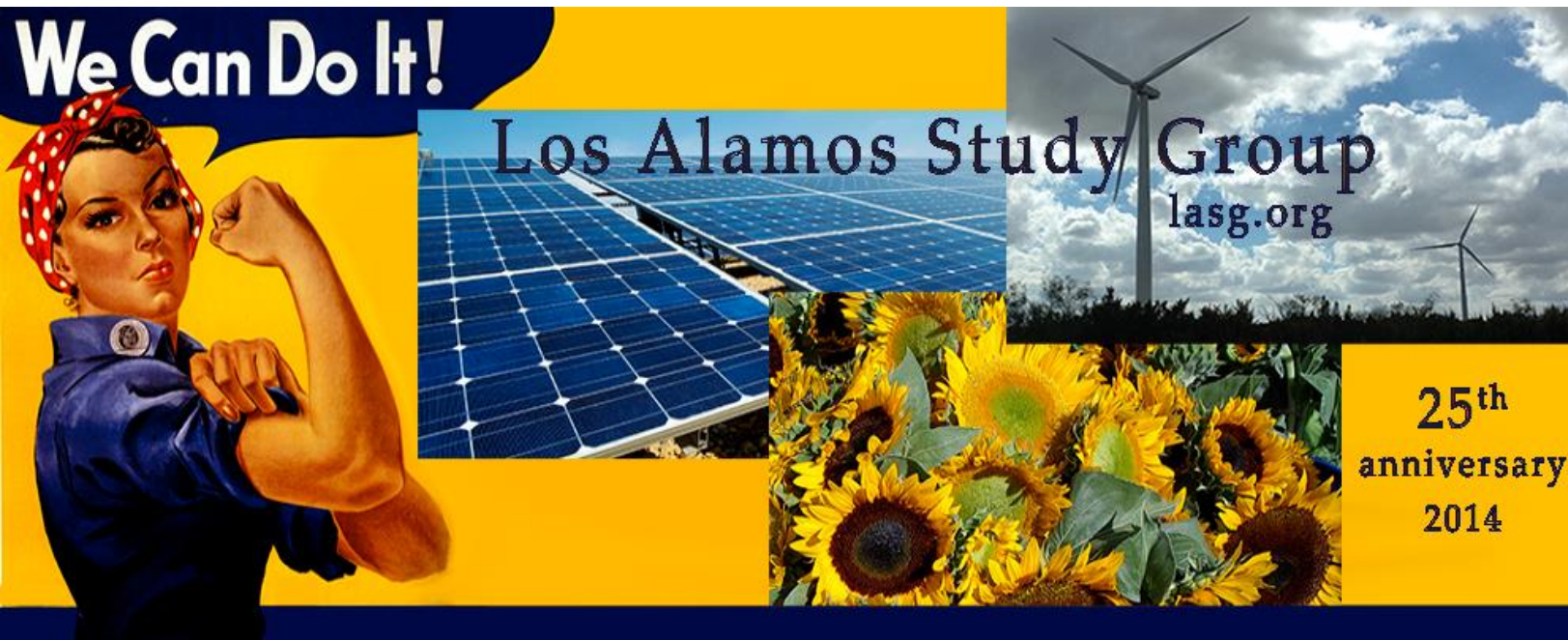
Thomas Paine

"Save as many as you can."

(Line from the movie, "The Day After Tomorrow")

"Come, come, whoever you are. Wanderer, worshiper, lover of leaving. It doesn't matter. Ours is not a caravan of despair."

Rumi



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Agenda

☐ THANK YOU

- ☐ Three short issue updates (20 minutes, including Q&A after each)
- ☐ Gravity of the situation: some key messages (10 minutes)
- ☐ Some core aspects of the crisis (10 minutes)
- ☐ Fundraising and related work (10 minutes)
(See also [2015 funding appeal](#); on-line giving [here](#). Internship program described [here](#).)
- ☐ What we are doing, and trying to do, in and from the Study Group office (10 minutes)
- ☐ What we can do together, and what you can do independently (60 minutes)
(Please see also [“Crawl Out Through the Fallout Baby,” 7/10/16](#) and [“The Crisis at Hand, the Emergency Mode, & the Need for Full-Scale Mobilization”](#), 6/27/16)

□ Short Issue Updates

- *Progress toward a treaty banning development, possession, and use of nuclear weapons*
 - ✓ What such a treaty would be (and would not be)
 - ✓ How such a treaty would work
 - ✓ Status and prospect
 - ✓ How this development can integrate with regional initiatives
 - ✓ How to help
- *Plutonium pit production*
 - ✓ Requirements; relation to Interoperable Warhead One (IW-1): status
 - ✓ Infrastructure: underground production “modules;” nuclear laboratory upgrade (NLUOB); other facilities: status
 - ✓ The political situation as it stands today
 - ✓ Actors; prospects; strategies
- *Nuclear weapons modernization overall: systems and policies potentially in play*
 - ✓ Aspects of nuclear posture: no first use; reserve warheads; ?
 - ✓ Long-range stand off (LRSO) nuclear cruise missile
 - ✓ IW-1
 - ✓ Pit requirements and infrastructure
 - ✓ Other major infrastructure issues: uranium and lithium; vacant facilities; neglected maintenance; MOX; more
 - ✓ Delays and downsizings, various, NNSA and DoD

□ Gravity of the situation: some key messages “we” are not absorbing

- “Abandon [*passive*] optimism” (Dr. Matt Kelly, Santa Fe), aka *denial* (cf. [Bright-sided: How Positive Thinking Is Undermining America](#), Barbara Ehrenreich)
- *Our agency*: We are potentially quite powerful, especially given the leadership vacuum. “Does the individual know that he is the makeweight that tips the scales?” (Jung)
- *Imminence* of the crisis. It has well begun but is unequally distributed.
- *Inevitability* of major impacts. The unavoidable/avoidable boundary is unknowable.
- The huge *scale* and pervasive *scope* of the crisis, affecting our frames of perception.
- Related to this, the *lack of any possible personal or family refuge*
- The *inadequacy*, not to say futility, *of purely personal responses* (the resource you refrain from using will be used or wasted by others; governance and questions of justice are inescapable)
- Skilled *public action* in the broad sense (Arendt) *is now the hallmark of a mature humanity* for those who are able – and who among us is entirely *not able*?

□ Some core aspects of the crisis; the timing of which is now (1 of 2):

■ Energy and debt

- ✓ Cheap oil is necessary, insufficient, limiting, and now declining; there is no substitute
- ✓ Debt increasingly unpayable overall in a non-growth economy; an instrument of political control and expropriation (foreign and domestic) as well as business
- ✓ Debt bombs primed to detonate across world and our own society, starting soon
- ✓ Jevons Paradox: efficiency and clean energy not enough; “bads” must be taxed down fast, meaning decline/collapse of First-World prosperity (by design or accident)
- ✓ Like all the rest on this slide, these are issues of class; justice must lead the way

■ Climate

- ✓ No more carbon/methane/other GHG budget left; must stop fossil fuel use ASAP, which will crash economy (skillfully and meaningfully, with justice, or otherwise)
- ✓ Must remove CO₂ from atmosphere, probably primarily with new trees, soil
- ✓ Must prevent runaway positive feedbacks at all costs, e.g. from loss of Arctic albedo; radiation management may be necessary, limited experiments needed

□ Some core aspects of the crisis; the timing of which is now (2 of 2):

- Ecological overshoot
 - ✓ Millions of species on brink of extinction; must protect habitats and keystone species (with expeditious force, accompanied by significant wealth transfers to affected populations from the First World, or mass migrations to it)
 - ✓ Collapse of much oceanic life is near, from rising acidity & warmth, overfishing
- Empire, and War
 - ✓ Inevitability of increasing wars to maintain empire, begging “come-to-Jesus” conversion to post-imperial, multi-polar realities; nuclear war risk rising fast
 - ✓ Increasing intensity of U.S.-caused multifaceted hybrid war between major powers,
 - ✓ Imperial geopolitics undercuts and marginalizes arms control at home and abroad
 - ✓ Changing nature of war, now continuous, “liquid”
 - Color revolutions, hybrid wars now the norm (informational, proxy, cyber, economic, political, military), led by U.S. and allies primarily
 - Destruction of societies (chaos) as means and the usual end, *in part desired*
- Domestic unrest, govmnt legitimacy crisis, panopticons, prisons, propaganda, penury

□ Fundraising and related work ([letter](#); donate/direct others [here](#), among other ways to give)

- **THANK YOU**: without you nothing is possible
- Fundraising for LASG is part of **changing the mindset in our communities** –
 - ✓ To something broader than the paradigm of “progressive” or “liberal” reform within accepted consumer/faux-democratic/exceptionalist/technosalvationist paradigms, within which we must and do work but which we know are wrong and insufficient.
 - ✓ Toward better elite understanding of, and action based on, the key messages in the previous slide, which comprise little or no part of progressive or mainstream discourse. “Business-as-usual” (BAU) is at an end, for better *and* for worse.
- **Nothing** useful or effective **can happen without money**. Money leverages the treasures we have painstakingly amassed over decades – treasures of knowledge, skills, networks, access, prestige.
- **Most foundation philanthropy is geared toward protecting BAU** and marginalizing threats to it (e.g. us).
- **Funds are required for, and massively leveraged by, interns, fellows, and volunteers**, in a “virtuous cycle.”
- **All donors are important. Major donors are essential** for efficiency and effectiveness.
- LASG has **two NM corporate partnerships** benefitting customers, LASG, society, and the environment.
 - ✓ **[Positive Energy/Sunpower](#)**: high-efficiency, long-life solar installations. \$ 100 to LASG for any consultation (please mention us); an additional \$ 400 with system installation.
 - ✓ **[McCune Solar Works/One World Co-op](#)**: high-end PV modules, systems tailored for renters, high-end battery systems, emergency backups, more. \$ 500 to LASG with system purchase; other deals.

Study Group Work Themes

Where	When: Time-frame of Impact			
	Near-term (one year)	Mid-term	Long-term	Intergenerational
Regional	<p>Pit production cuts; weapons program cuts; climate, energy, economy, with justice; cross-issue movement-building, nonviolent resistance; media clearinghouse; fundraising; internship and volunteer program</p>	<p>Ban treaty (application to cultural, economic, political change); plus everything from near-term agenda to left</p>	<p>“In the long run, we are all dead.” (Keynes)</p> <p>Seriously: the long run is unpredictable, so among other morals we had better found all our work on values which are as universal as possible, transmitted as wisely as possible.</p>	<p>We will do whatever it takes to augment our staff; to attract, train, and effectively manage volunteers; and to attract and train younger leaders, in whom we must all sooner or later entrust the whole future of life on earth, our cultural legacy, and our community</p>
National	<p>Pit production cuts; weapons program cuts; media; fundraising; helping prevent more wars</p>	<p>Ban treaty: application to domestic nuclear policy; plus everything from near-term agenda to left</p>		
International	<p>Starting and supporting Ban treaty negotiations</p>	<p>Helping get more Ban treaty signatures; helping prevent more wars</p>		

□ What we can do together, and what you can do independently (1 of 2)

- Don't imagine you can act successfully alone. "The most important thing an individual can do is not be an individual... Job one is to organize [--] and [also] jobs two and three." (Bill McKibben, [here](#))
- For this reason and others we have emphasized the importance of building upon and within existing communities (e.g. [here](#) and subsequent [letters](#)).
- Don't automatically look for easy, simple things to do. Such actions have little effect, especially if they are done by isolated individuals, or if do not enter the public realm (i.e. lack publicity) (e.g. private calls and letters to congresspersons).
- One important criterion of influence – necessary, but not sufficient – is how much a given action or commitment costs us personally. Gandhi emphasized this in stronger terms.
- Most people think BAU will endure for many years. Forget that! The crisis (and [kairos](#)) is now.
- The actions you take and commitments you make will occur in the first grammatical person (I, WE). They will be communicated most intimately in the second person (YOU). Forget the generalized, abstract public, and the "voters," which are and will remain mostly misinformed and paralyzed. Act. Lead. Organize.
- Political change means you won't get along with everybody. Get used to it.
- "Setting a good example" is fine but of distinctly limited value. Our primary job is to halt destructive acts, which now include not just, say, preparations for war but also producing the fossil fuels which are the current basis of industrial civilization. We must protect the vulnerable, not signal our own virtue.

□ What we can do together, and what you can do independently (2 of 2)

- Many people think *desired reforms* (e.g. nuclear disarmament, climate protection) can be brought by methods which are actually ineffective, obsolete, impractical, and/or would require vast sums of money. They underestimate costs and difficulties. Many are conceptually stuck in the '70s, '80s, or '90s, or are simply inexperienced. *To gain experience, jump in – all the way in, and stay there!*
- Due to funding limitations and the absence of committed volunteers, LASG can only lead in a few narrow areas (e.g. nuclear policies, disarmament; others as time and occasion allow/require), which leverage our expertise and experience. In other important issues (climate, energy) we can offer knowledge and perspective but YOU must help lead, with others.
- We are in a serious struggle, with lives on the line, not least our own. *Loyalty matters greatly.*
- *Involvement with LASG can take many forms.* Examples:
 - ✓ You can help us raise money, so our operation will be stable and we can offer support to promising people, especially young people.
 - ✓ You can host an event, inviting your friends and contacts.
 - ✓ You can be an ambassador for us, via your networks
 - ✓ You can do highly-committed, skilled work for us (e.g. research, web site, media relations)
 - ✓ You can help us find and recruit new talent
 - ✓ You can organize demonstrations and other actions