



Los Alamos Study Group

Nuclear Disarmament • Environmental Protection • Social Justice • Economic Sustainability

December 16, 2024

Dear friend of the Study Group,

You've already gotten fundraising Bulletins 352 and 353 (at <https://lasg.org/ActionAlerts/action.htm>), but we wanted to write you again by postal mail, lest those emails become lost in the daily deluge.

First of all, *thank you* for your support, without which our work would be impossible. For some of you, that support stretches back over years and has been the financial backbone of our work in recent years. We are proud of what we have been able to accomplish with you and we are ambitious to do more.

Despite the evident dangers and obstacles, we are truly excited about the opportunities at hand, which are more abundant than may at first appear. We hope you will join our work, help sustain it, and help it grow over the coming year.

As you may have noticed, these are no longer “normal” times – or rather, the “new normal” is all-too-rapidly becoming one of growing global instability and war. Here in the propaganda-addled U.S., we need to wake others up, not just to the dangers blowing back on our country from our actions abroad, but also to the reality of a voracious national security state that creates and feeds on these dangers.

This morning musician Roger Waters was quoted as follows, regarding recent events in the Levant:

The mask is off. We, the West, behave with unbearable brutality towards oppressed peoples all over the world...[However] We, the people, hate it. We hate the brutality of our governments...[This is] an existential battle for the soul of the human race... We [the West] are a gang of powerful gangsters here, and we are going to steal everything that there is in the world that is worth stealing.

In this battle, which is very much an inner battle as well as an outer one, it is precisely the greedy, stupid, and tyrannical nature of the national security state which creates the conditions for its defeat. There is now a real, growing hunger in every part of this land for real peace, not more war. For that hunger to be manifest and powerful we need to see past superficial political divisions and let go of the distractions that have been engineered to steal our lives. With Goethe we can say, “Let all that’s inane/Be swept away as vain.”

To win this battle we need more than performative gestures toward peace, or mere opinion. We need, as Einstein said, “active participation in the fight against war and everything that leads to it.”

That “we” is not somebody else. It’s ourselves. *We* need active participation in the fight against war. Our communities need it and we need it personally to stop the war culture from stupefying and victimizing us. The war culture doesn’t just want your tax dollars. It wants your passive acceptance. It wants your soul.

With our active participation against war – and against the inherently genocidal weapons the U.S. needs northern New Mexico to help make – something fresh and new comes into being. With our engagement, we and our friends embody, immediately, *a culture of resistance and renewal*. From that fresh vantage point, which changes *us*, the “new normal” that seemed so frightening a moment ago is suddenly revealed to be rich with unparalleled opportunities. It is certainly unparalleled *for us*. It is the only moment we have, the only moment in which there *could* be opportunity, the only moment in which we can be free. It’s the “church of what’s happening now,” and we’re all in it.

The darker the situation, the more powerfully even a small light can shine. We, especially we in New Mexico with our uniquely powerful location at the center of the U.S. nuclear warhead complex, can be that light. In the fight against nuclear weapons and war, we have the power and the privilege of proximity.

Since 1989 the Los Alamos Study Group community – our staff and board, volunteers, interns, and supporters – has consistently provided leadership on nuclear weapons issues in New Mexico and in some ways nationally. Our work includes research, scholarship, and writing, education and lobbying of nuclear decision makers in Washington, providing an information clearinghouse for journalists, local organizing, litigating, and advertising. In these difficult times, when entrenched forces in favor of aggression and militarism are dominant in government, we also provide an informed anti-war, pro-peace voice here in New Mexico, and beyond. You can read more about us at <https://lasg.org/who.htm>.

We've been effective in stopping nuclear warhead infrastructure plans several times, and in the 1990s in delaying – alas temporarily – a new bomb (now in production under another name). Our successful work to downscale and delay plutonium warhead core (“pit”) production for about three decades so far has had a profound effect on plans for further new warheads, as internal documents we recently obtained via the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) underscore. Our most important “win” in this regard was against a big plutonium facility planned for LANL. It was the nation’s highest warhead construction priority at the time (see https://lasg.org/CMRR/open_page.htm). Our lobbying and litigation drove that project to utter failure. For complicated reasons, it is unclear whether U.S. warhead plans can ever fully recover.

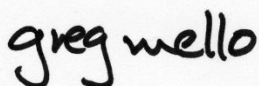
In the coming year – and with your financial support we hope – we will leverage our location and our long-standing relations among other nuclear experts to address the rock-bottom state of U.S.-Russian relations directly, with virtual public discussions in Los Alamos involving Russian and American commentators.

We will also continue our in-depth work on nuclear policy here in New Mexico, in other states, and in Washington DC, including but not confined to working on further delaying pit production. We will continue organizing and education, and we will cost-effectively advertise. We have just won two lawsuits over information and transparency, one federal and one under state law. We may want or need to litigate regarding pit production at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) if resources are available. With your help, we will reach receptive eyes and ears in the new administration as we have in previous ones, train volunteers and interns, help guide journalists, and write for local and national audiences. We've got a great foundation from which to work and grow.

We would very much like to work with you (for how, see <https://lasg.org/what.htm>) but meanwhile, and especially at this time of year, funding is also essential.

There are many ways to donate listed on our “[Contribute](https://lasg.org/contribute.htm)” page (<https://lasg.org/contribute.htm>) and in Bulletin 353. You can **write and mail a check** to the Study Group at the address on the first page, or **make a no-fee donation instantly via PayPal Giving Fund**. You can **become a monthly donor** (either directly with us or through PayPal, which charges a small fee). You can **donate stock** (thus avoiding capital gains tax), or **donate property** (cars, real estate, etc.). You can include us in your **estate planning**, or **direct a tax-exempt distribution from an IRA** to the Study Group. Some people send **donations via their brokerage**. *Again, thank you.*

Morally speaking, even the smallest donations mean a lot to us. From the business perspective, larger donations obviously matter most.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "greg mello". The signature is written in a cursive, lowercase style.

Greg Mello, for the Los Alamos Study Group