

Shundahai Network, People for Peace and Justice of Utah, Desert Greens - Green Party of Utah,
PomPomsnotBombBombs, Blue Sky Institute Joint Press Release – May 10, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Utah Peace and Social Justice Organizations Announce Joining International Coalition to Protest
Divine Strake Detonation

This Mother's Day we honor our Mother Earth, we grieve with the mothers who have lost children to war, and we stand with mothers everywhere who want to protect their children from the fear, the violence and the insidious health effects of weapons testing.

Shundahai Network, People for Peace and Justice of Utah, The Green Party of Utah – Desert Greens, PomPomsnotBombBombs, and the Blue Sky Institute have joined the Stop Divine Strake Coalition, to pressure the Defense Threat Reduction Agency and the Nuclear National Security Agency to cancel the Divine Strake detonation currently still scheduled for June 2. (There are conflicting reports of a delay until June 23)

While, as individual organizations we work toward diverse causes, we are united in our opposition to this test. We will be joining the coalition on May 28 at the Nevada Test Site to stand with dozens of other organizations to protest the planned test, and to attempt to influence policy makers to cancel the test in the face of massive public opposition. A copy of the original press release by the Western Shoshone Defense Project and Shundahai Network protesting the test may be found at: http://www.shundahai.org/pr_4-4-06_wsdp_shun_divine_strake.htm Information concerning the May 28 protest, as well as exhaustive media coverage of the planned detonation may be found at http://www.shundahai.org/divine_strake.htm

According to Eileen McCabe-Olsen of Shundahai Network, "The very presence of the Nevada Test Site is an affront to the Western Shoshone people. This land was taken from them in violation of the Treaty of Ruby Valley of 1863. The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination has recently ruled that the United States must "freeze," "desist" and "stop" its encroachment on Western Shoshone lands, and cease its military activities. The announcement of this test was made barely a month later, in an obvious show of defiance."

Annette Rose, a member of People for Peace and Justice of Utah, who recently published a piece in the St. George Spectrum noted "Divine Strake is a major explosive event using a weapon of terrorists (just ask the victims of the Oklahoma City Federal Building bombing). Why are they giving such a holy name to such an unholy device? Any naturally occurring quartz or asbestos (like materials at Yucca Mountain) in the pulverized soil can be considered respiratory carcinogens. If this dirty test is not to pave the way for renewed nuclear testing, then what is it for? I am convinced it is intended to get the public used to seeing tests at the Nevada Test Site again, to prepare them for renewed nuclear testing in the near future. If we want to promote non-proliferation on this planet, this is not the way to do it. The hypocrisy of our leadership is palpable."

Deanna Taylor, Co-Coordinator of the Desert Greens Green Party of Utah and candidate for Salt Lake County Council says "The Desert Greens stand in solidarity with the Western Shoshone to protect the land that is inherently theirs. The Divine Strake Test is a threat to the ecological health of our planet and violates the sanctity of life."

Michelle Badger, a Salt Lake City Radical Cheerleader, is concerned about the escalation this test represents, and its effects on our already stretched military. "Having close friends and family members serving in the military, during both the Vietnam and Iraq war, I have seen first hand the devastation these weapons and both wars have caused. Our soldiers and their families are emotionally exhausted with the time they have already served in Iraq. With the testing of this particular weapon, the intent is clear for its use on Iran, which is a war the soldiers I know, oppose and would not emotionally be ready to fight. My uncle, who served during Vietnam, is now dealing with the paralyzing complications from the "nerve gas" he encountered during his service in the military. He has applied for his retirement benefits and the government has denied him, leaving him without a dependable income. Anyone with a conscience would not allow putting innocent citizens in harms way, which is exactly what the testing of this weapon will do."

"The need for innovative education is rendered painfully obvious by this planned test", states Tom King, Co-Founder of Blue Sky Institute. The people of this Country need to be taught that at least three International Treaties would be violated by the intent of this test. The NPT, the NTBT, and the Treaty of Ruby Valley. When citizens know that this test would constitute a violation of three International Treaties (which the Constitution of the US defines as "the Highest law of the land") they will demand that such flagrant violations of International Treaties stop immediately."

Representatives of these organizations will be available for press inquiries and interviews at the weekly peace vigil at 5:00 on Thursday May 11 in front of the Salt Lake City Federal Building.

For more information, please contact:

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