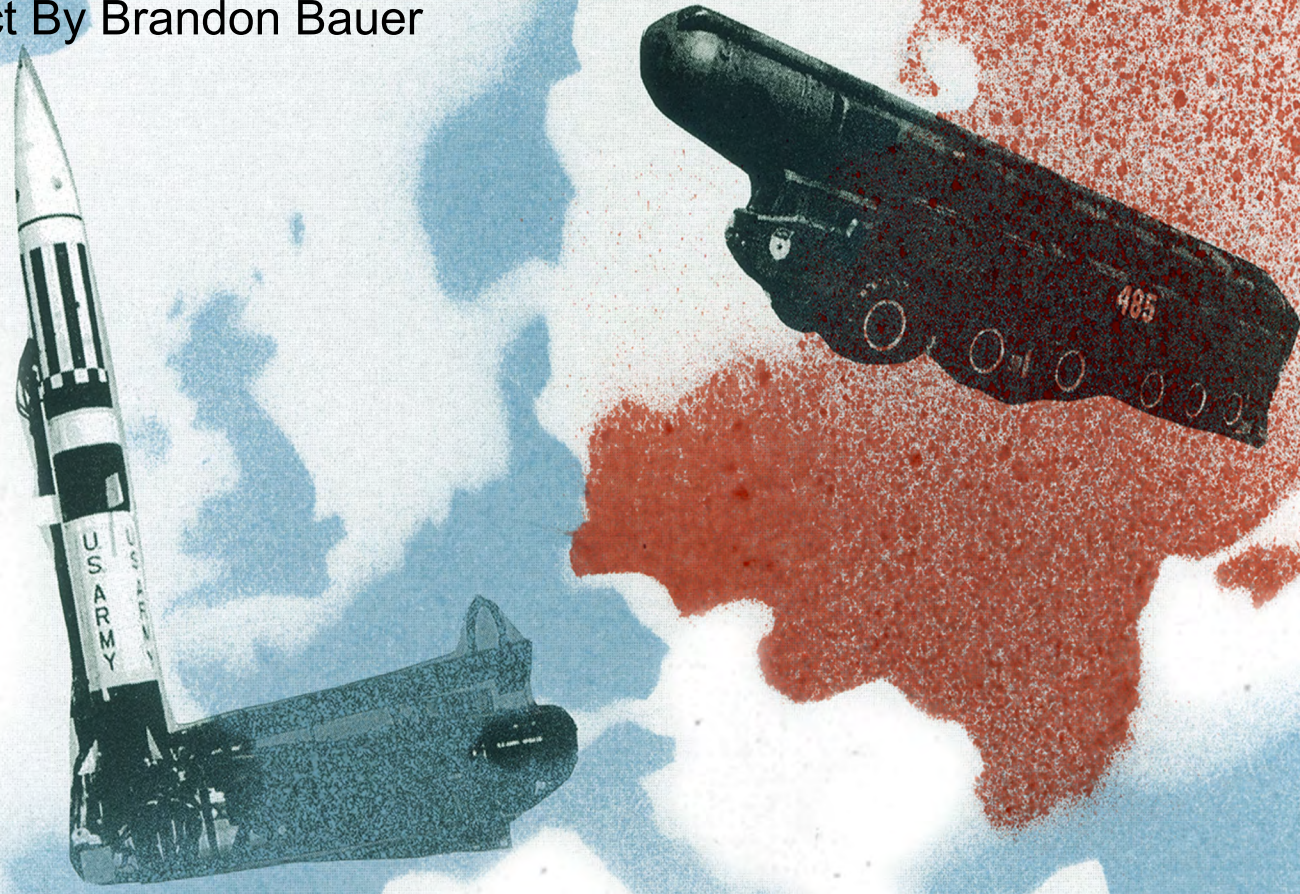


A CALL TO HALT

A Project By Brandon Bauer



Today, the Cold War has disappeared but thousands of those weapons have not. In a strange turn of history, the threat of global nuclear war has gone down, but the risk of a nuclear attack has gone up. More nations have acquired these weapons. Testing has continued. Black market trade in nuclear secrets and nuclear materials abound. The technology to build a bomb has spread. Terrorists are determined to buy, build, or steal one.

-President Barack Obama in Prague, Czech Republic, April 2009

A CALL TO HALT

The installation *A Call To Halt* functions as a historical narrative of the Euromissiles Crisis and the nuclear abolition movement that arose in response. The nuclear abolition movement in the 1980s, a movement that inspired the largest single-issue political demonstration in American history, is often overlooked in the history of social movements. It is an inspiring story of ordinary people confronting the prospect of annihilation. As a Gallup Poll conducted in September of 1981 found, 70% of American people felt nuclear war between the US and Russia was a real possibility, and the remaining 30% of those polled were split between those who felt the prospect of nuclear confrontation was either “good” or “certain”*. This sheds light on the outlook of the time. No one polled discounted the possibility of nuclear war. The nuclear abolition movement brought the issue of arms control to the forefront of the political agenda within a contentious period dominated by national leadership focused upon the opposite, and actively engaged in a renewed

arms race between the US and Russia. This movement set into motion the treaties and reductions in nuclear weapon stockpiles that brought the number of stockpiled weapons in the US from 24,104 in 1980 to a reduced total of 4,650** today. The installation references cultural, political, and activist events of the era, and serves as an allegory of citizen involvement, as well as the power of everyday people within the political process.

Within the *A Call To Halt* installation is a re-enactment of the 1982 Nuclear Freeze Referenda. This places the viewer in the roll of participant within this history, and illuminates the very basic form of power in a democracy- the vote. The citizen’s referendum is in itself a unique form of direct democracy in our otherwise representative system. In re-staging the Nuclear Freeze vote, it urges one to consider the issue again in our era. Today, as President Barak Obama and many others have stated, the danger nuclear weapons pose is still present. The nature of this danger is different today than it was thirty years ago. Yet, this history, and the activism of the 1980s nuclear abolition movement is a reminder that ordinary people can turn the tide on what may seem inevitable. The actions and activism of ordinary people in the face of seemingly intractable problems can be an inspiration for all of the challenges we face today. Whether it is the continued fight for the abolition of nuclear weapons, or citizens confronting any looming crisis in our present or on the near horizon, this history is a reminder that small acts by many people toward a single goal can change the course of history.

INSTALLATION DESCRIPTION

A Call To Halt: A multimedia installation and critical timeline of the Euromissiles Crisis, and of the nuclear abolition movement in the United States from 1977-1987. The installation includes a participatory reenactment of the 1982 Nuclear Freeze Referenda, in which Wisconsin was the first in the nation to put multilateral nuclear disarmament policy to a popular vote.

Nuclear Weapons Referenda

Shall the Secretary of State of Wisconsin inform the President and Congress of the United States that it is the desire of the people of Wisconsin to have the government of the United States work vigorously to negotiate a mutual nuclear weapons moratorium and reduction, with appropriate verification, with Russia and other nations?

YES ☒

NO ☐

Feel free to comment upon this proposal:

I am 67 years old. I expected to die during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. No nukes please.



A sample ballot cast (November 2013)

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Brandon Bauer is a multi-disciplinary artist based in Wisconsin. His work explores themes of social justice, democracy and war, as well as critical histories embedded in cultural ephemera. Brandon has exhibited his work nationally and internationally.

SPECIAL THANKS

I would like to thank Phil Runkel, Special Collections Librarian at the Raynor Memorial Library at Marquette University, Joshua Ranger, Archivist at the Forrest Polk Library Area Research Center at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, and Richard Pifer, Director of Reference and Public Services at the Wisconsin Historical Society for their generous assistance with archival research for this project. I would also like to thank the Frank Juarez Gallery for hosting the first exhibition of this work in November of 2013, and the Office of Faculty Development at St. Norbert College for fiscal sponsorship of this project through their Summer Grants Program.

*David Cortright, *Peace: A History of Movements and Ideas* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 140

**Hans M. Kristensen and Robert S. Norris, “Global Nuclear Weapons Inventories, 1945-2013”, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists 69 (5) (2013): 78



1977 - West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt calls for new tactical nuclear weapons in Western Europe to counterbalance the installation of new Soviet intermediate range missiles carrying three warheads, and based on mobile launching platforms, making the missiles nearly impossible for NATO to target.



December 1979 - Randall Forsberg begins drafting the "Call to Halt the Nuclear Arms Race". The document circulates widely among U.S. Peace activists.



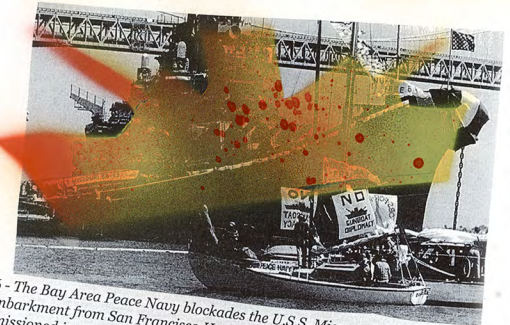
1980 - The Circle Jerks, a Los Angeles based punk band, record the song "Live Fast Die Young" which includes the opening lines: "I don't wanna live to be thirty-four - I don't wanna die in a nuclear war!"



The March for Disarmament
On June 12, 1982, one million people demonstrated in New York City against nuclear weapons and for an end to the arms race. It is the largest single issue political demonstration in American history.



1985 - No Business As Usual (NBAU) was a national coalition formed to protest and prevent nuclear war. Their first coordinated national action on April 29th, 1985 sprung up simultaneously in several cities across the United States. The actions included die-ins, blockades of traffic, and occupations of corporate and political offices. NBAU sought to break out of the permitted confines of "protest as usual". As a NBAU slogan stated: "They won't listen to reason, they won't be bound by votes, the governments must be stopped from launching World War III no matter what it takes!"



1986 - The Bay Area Peace Navy blockades the U.S.S. Missouri, preventing disembarkment from San Francisco Harbor. The U.S.S. Missouri, originally commissioned in 1944, was the ship on which the Japanese Instrument of Surrender was officially signed at the end of World War II. The Reagan Administration reactivated the ship arming it with Tomahawk Missiles carrying thermonuclear warheads.

THE EUROMISSILES CRISIS

1977

1979

1980

1981

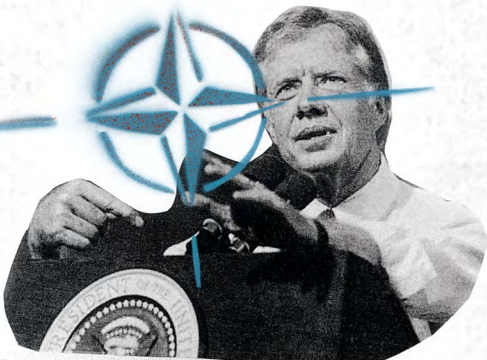
1982

1984

1985

1986

1987



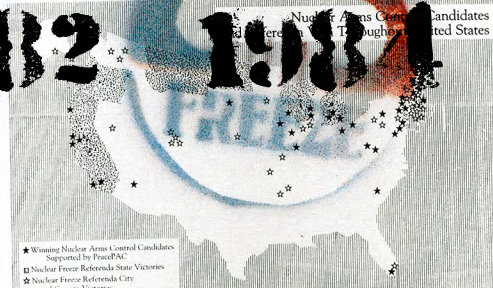
On December 12, 1979, NATO defense and foreign ministers made a landmark decision to deploy 572 mobile American intermediate range missiles in Western Europe to rebuild a state of Mutual Assured Destruction in light of Soviet deployment of intermediate range missiles. The Carter Administration, initially hesitant about the deployments helped to shape a consensus in NATO for a policy that integrated weapon deployments and arms control.



1980 - European Nuclear Disarmament (END) is formed. END was the heart of the massive antinuclear campaign that rose up across Europe. In the United States, Ronald Reagan is elected President arguing for "peace through strength" as a centerpiece of his agenda.



1981 - Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig in testimony before a Senate committee discusses a NATO contingency war plan that calls for the explosion of a nuclear warhead as a "demonstration" to deter Soviet incursions in Western Europe



1982 Freeze Referenda
Nuclear Freeze initiatives were on the ballot in ten states and thirty-seven cities and counties. The referenda called for a mutual halt, between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, to the production, testing, and deployment of nuclear weapons. It won nine out of ten states and thirty-four of thirty-seven cities and counties



1984 - Dr. Seuss publishes "The Butter Battle Book", a rhyming parable about the nuclear arms race and the military doctrine of mutually assured destruction. The Butter Battle Book was a New York Times Notable Book of the Year.



1986 - The Great Peace March for Global Nuclear Disarmament was a cross-country event aimed at raising awareness of the growing danger of nuclear proliferation and to advocate for complete elimination of nuclear weapons. The March left Los Angeles on March 1, 1986 and arrived in Washington, D.C. on November 15, 1986, a journey of about 3,700 miles.



1987 - The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) is signed in Washington, D.C. by U.S. President Ronald Reagan and General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev on December 8, 1987. The treaty calls for the elimination of nuclear and conventional ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles, the kinds of weapons that gave rise to the Euromissile Crisis.



On September 9, 1980, Daniel and Philip Berrigan, both Jesuit priests, and six other people trespassed into the General Electric Nuclear Missile facility in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania. The eight damaged nuclear warhead nose cones and poured blood onto documents and files. The group took inspiration from a line in the Biblical book of Isaiah: "and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." With this action the international Plowshares Movement was born.