



September 2020

Golden Rule Challenges Huge Naval War Exercises



On August 16 Golden Rule sailed near Waikiki Beach in Honolulu, in coordination with the 80-car caravan organized by the Cancel RIMPAC Coalition.

The banners on Golden Rule read, “DeMilitarize the Pacific” and “Cancel RIMPAC”.

Captain Kate Thompson took pictures from her boat.

RIMPAC, or Rim of the Pacific, is the largest Naval war practice in the world. From August 17 - 31, Hawaii's skies were filled with rockets, mortars, missiles, and drones. Warships, fighter jets, destroyers, and submarines maneuvered and sank a decommissioned ship, which releases toxic chemicals. And they used sonar which deafens and kills sea mammals.

There has long been opposition to RIMPAC from Native Hawaiians and peace and environmental activists. “Every two years, RIMPAC has destroyed our island resources while naturalizing the imperial violence” said activist Kyle Kajihiro.

Activists called on the military to cancel RIMPAC this year due to coronavirus. It was cut from 6 weeks to 2 weeks and the number of countries participating decreased from 26 to 10. Up until days before the war practice started, military members and families came to Hawai'i without obeying the mandatory quarantine orders, and had no restriction of movement whatsoever!



Cancel RIMPAC Coalition said, “O'ahu really showed up! 80+ vehicles joined our convoy from Sand Island to Pearl Harbor to Waikiki. “Today marks the beginning of RIMPAC 2020. Today we hold space in our hearts for Kanaloa (God of the Ocean), being bombed and blasted in this year's “at-sea-only” exercises. Today, we mourn for the people who have been sacrificed for war and imperialism. Today we dream of a sovereign, independent Hawai'i. Today we honor sacred 'āina that has been scarred for the sake of the US military. Today we fight for our women who have been harmed by gendered violence at the hands of the military. Today, and every single day, we say NO to US imperialism, NO to the militarization of Moana Nui, and NO to RIMPAC!

“Thanks to those who dropped banners and placed signs all over O'ahu!”

Seventy-five Years Ago the Nuclear Age Began!

It's time to bring it to an end!

Commemorating 75 years since U.S. dropped a nuclear bomb on the civilian population of Nagasaki



by Barbara Cooney

On O'ahu, all events observing the nuclear bombings in Japan were canceled due to Covid19. Undeterred, Golden Rule Project held an alternative event in compliance with all Covid19 mandates. Nine masked people gathered on rural sacred land at the future La'i Peace Center, a project of Sakyadhita Hawai'i. Seated six feet apart in the shade of Silver Oaks and gentle cooling trade winds, attendees talked story about nuclear weapons and peace in a circle of sharing.



Katsumi Takemoto, a second-generation Nagasaki hibakusha (A-bomb survivor) blew the conch and created an ethereal atmosphere, playing her shakuhachi and giving Hawaiian blessings.

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Nagasaki Commemoration

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Venerable Karma Lekshe Tsomo led a soothing Tibetan meditation. Helen Jaccard, Gerry Condon, Pete Doktor, Bok Dong and Suzanne Yoon represented Veterans For Peace. Matiullah Joyia, Imam of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community Hawai'i, who had been posted in the Marshall Islands for many years, and Barbara Leigh Cooney, Golden Rule volunteer and former Peace Studies professor in Japan, were also present.

Attending in spirit and sending blessings were Koko Kondo, peace activist hibakusha and daughter of Rev. Tanimoto of the Hiroshima Maidens and John Hersey's book Hiroshima; Maya Soetoro, local peace leader with the Obama Foundation; and Gary Omori, instructor at the Daihonzan Chozen-ji temple. All very much enjoyed the meaningful gathering, ceremony, silence, and sharing, including a discussion about the myths surrounding the end of World War II.

Veterans For Peace National e-Convention

"Human Rights over Nuclear Might"

The VFP convention was a opportunity to educate VFP members about the impacts of the nuclear age and militarization in the Pacific and around the world!

Being online, this year also saw more international and indigenous speakers than ever before - lifting their messages in their own voices to new audiences.

The Golden Rule Project brought in voices of those who have lived through nuclear disaster and militarism. Here are some of the highlights of how VFP and the Golden Rule Project accomplished these goals during the convention.

Opening Plenary: "The nuclear weapons industry – creating victims – more than 75 years and counting" Helen Jaccard, Golden Rule Project Manager, updated VFP members on the Golden Rule Project and introduced the Plenary. The Plenary covered all aspects of harm - Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings, uranium mining / processing and nuclear bomb tests.

"Resisting Nuclear War and Militarism in the Pacific" Gerry Condon, president of the Golden Rule Committee, hosted the workshop, featuring presentations from Pacific Islanders where the Golden Rule will sail to on her way to Japan. Panelists addressed how U.S. militarization, colonization and nuclear testing impacts indigenous people and the environment in Hawai'i, the Marshall Islands, Guam and Okinawa.



Participants in this powerful workshop were

- Melaika Andrike, Marshallese Student, Intern with the Republic of the Marshall Islands National Nuclear Commission
- Hideki Yoshikawa, Resistance to U.S. Militarism in Okinawa
- Kyle Kajihira, Hawai'i Peace & Justice, countering militarism in the Pacific and worldwide
- Maria Hernandez, Anti-Colonization Activist, Guahan (Guam)
- Ariana Tibon, Public Education & Awareness Director, Republic of the Marshall Islands National Nuclear Commission

Another great workshop, **"Ea mai ke kai mai: Protecting Kanaloa, Stopping RIMPAC"**, featured the Cancel RIMPAC Coalition. They discussed the threat of the U.S. Navy's RIMPAC exercises to the lands and peoples of Hawai'i and ka Moana Nui/Oceania.

VFP Convention Resolutions

Cancel RIMPAC - VFP Honolulu members Pete Doktor and Ann Wright submitted a resolution in favor of canceling RIMPAC and demilitarization of Hawai'i and throughout the Pacific Rim.

Red Hill - Pete Doktor also submitted a resolution in favor of closing the military's Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility and relocating the 78-year-old tanks away from the Southern O'ahu Basal Aquifer, the principal source of water for much of Honolulu. Over 200,000 gallons of fuel have already leaked into the ground above the aquifer. Yet the military, contrary to Hawai'i Department of Health recommendations and overwhelming public opposition, will do nothing about these tanks until at least 2045.

The nuclear abolition theme continued with many meaningful workshops

- The Two Faces of Nuclear: From Hiroshima to Fukushima
- Voices from the North: Building Momentum for an Arctic Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone
- Livestream: Hiroshima and Nagasaki Remembered
- Closing Plenary: VFP Japan
- Film Screening: Hibakusha: Our Life to Live
- One hour online commemoration, 75th anniversary of Hiroshima

Introducing Captain Kiko Johnston-Kitazawa



Captain Kiko has ancestors from Hawai'i and Guam and is a forth-generation boat builder.

He owned his first sailboat at age 14 and got his first captain's license at age 18. At 14, he sailed on a 40-foot catamaran from Hawai'i to Victoria, British Columbia. He has since sailed from Hawai'i to Canada and California (against the trade winds) four times!

Kiko has built and sailed traditional Hawaiian canoes in Hawai'i for more than 30 years. He teaches sailing and navigation on his canoes to many school children, classroom most often in Hilo Bay. He also teaches Hawaiian boat building. Over the years, many people have stopped by his canoe at many community events for his expert instruction and hands-on experience in building boats and lashing canoes.

Captain Milosz Interviewed about Quarantine on Golden Rule

Lee Cataluna wrote a great article in Hawaii's most-read newspaper, the StarAdvertiser, based on an interview with Captain Milosz Kaczorowski.



"People did bold things on this very boat," Kaczorowski said. Last year Kaczorowski sailed the *Golden Rule* from San Diego to ... Hawaii island. Kaczorowski flew from Poland to the U.S. to prepare for a cross-Pacific sail from Hawaii to Japan. He was in California with the project manager of the *Golden Rule* when the Covid-19 pandemic escalated. Guam, one of the planned stopping points in the journey, closed its borders. The Marshall Islands had closed its borders even earlier due to the measles outbreak. The Japan trip had to be postponed.'

Thanks to Barbara Cooney for arranging the interview!

Note: Milosz has a problem with his Visa and will not be able to continue as our captain. Thank you for all of your hard work, Milosz! We miss you!

Hawaiians sailed Golden Rule from Kaua'i to O'ahu



Captain Kiko Johnston-Kitazawa, Vicky Southwell, Zoe Byrd, Albert Smith from Molokai and James Akau (right) on *The Golden Rule*, after sailing her from Kaua'i to Honolulu January 1-2, 2020

"KA'Ū CREW MEMBERS SAILED ON THE GOLDEN RULE from Kaua'i to O'ahu in under 18 hours, leaving Nawiliwili on New Year's Day and arriving at Ala Wai Boat Harbor on Jan. 2. Fourth generation canoe builder Kiko Johnston-Kitazawa of Honu'apo, captained the voyage, joined by Pāhala waterman James Akau.

"The 30-foot wooden sailboat is on a short break from its anti-nuclear warfare mission. The vessel and a varied crew sailed throughout the Hawaiian Islands in recent months, spreading the anti-nuclear message of The Golden Rule Project, a mission of national organization Veterans For Peace."

In September 2019, Akau sailed *The Golden Rule* from Hilo to Maui, where the crew was greeted by grateful Marshall Islanders whose home islands were desecrated by nuclear weapons testing generations ago.

Golden Rule, Cancel RIMPAC Coalition on TV

Kewana Philips, Laurel Mei-Singh, Helen Jaccard and Captain Kiko Johnston-Kitazawa were interviewed on Hawaii News Now TV on August 16, the day before RIMPAC started.

The Golden Rule Project is doing great work! Please keep the wind in our sails!

The Golden Rule Project gave over 100 presentations during the year that we've been in Hawaii and taken dozens of people sailing, where they fall in love with the boat and the Project. But we need your support more than ever. Covid-19 has made it impossible to give presentations, which is one way we raise money. Our expenses, although reduced to a minimum, have not stopped.

Please, if you can afford it, make a generous donation. Here's how:

Our website has a Donate button, vfpgoldenrule.org

Mail a check to VFP Golden Rule Project, PO Box 87, Samoa, CA 95562

Call Helen Jaccard at 206-992-6364 to give a donation by credit card

Teach the Truth About the End of World War II

Justifying the nuclear bombing of civilian populations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki threatens the world today. It is critical that the U.S. face the truth about the atomic bomb.

We in the nuclear abolition and peace movements need to be great at educating about why nuclear weapons must be globally eliminated, starting with the myths of their use to end WWII.

Proponents of nuclear weapons would like to see them used - the former US National Security Adviser John Bolton advocated for a preventive war against North Korea and wrote that "Truman acted decisively and properly to end the war" by dropping the bomb.

President Trump threatened North Korea with a nuclear first strike in August 2017, saying, "They will be met with fire and fury like the world has never seen".

Many people believe that the nuclear bombs ended the war, saving a million lives had the U.S. invaded mainland Japan. But let's take a deeper look.

Japan was already defeated and the US leadership knew it. In the spring of 1945, oil shipments (its only source of fuel) were blocked into Japan and food was in short supply. The U.S. firebombed 66 Japanese cities, killing the civilians who lived there. In Tokyo alone, 1,665 tons of bombs killed over 100,000 people.

The US and British had broken the secret Japanese communication codes early in the war - they knew that Japan wanted to surrender and end the war. Retention of the Emperor, as General MacArthur noted, was the main stumbling block to surrender. Truman referred to an intercepted July 18 cable as the "telegram from the Jap emperor asking for peace."

Were a million US lives saved by avoiding a land invasion? The US Joint War Plans Committee predicted in June 1945 that the planned invasion would result in 40,000 deaths.

McGeorge Bundy confessed that he made up a number in order to justify the

bombings in a 1947 Harper's magazine essay he had ghostwritten for Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson.

Hiroshima and Nagasaki were not military targets. Over 95% of the 140,000 killed were noncombatants. Killing large numbers of civilians was the primary purpose of targeting Hiroshima. US war planners agreed that destruction of the selected target should succeed in "obtaining the greatest psychological effect against Japan". The few military-related facilities in or near Hiroshima were left largely unscathed.

WHY were the bombs dropped?

1. The US wanted to show the world what a powerful new weapon they had developed.

2. The US wanted Japan to surrender to the US and not to the USSR - thus allowing Japan to keep part of its territory and allowing the US more control over the spoils of World War II.

3. The second bomb was made of plutonium instead of uranium, and the civilians of Nagasaki died in a grotesque scientific experiment.

Japan surrendered when the USSR entered the war, not because of the nuclear bombs. War with the Soviets would mean that Japan would have to fight millions more soldiers, and on a second front. In 1943 Stalin promised that the USSR would enter into World War II's Pacific Theater within three months of the end of the war in Europe (which happened May 8, 1945). The Soviet invasion of Manchuria and other Japanese colonies began on August 8.

On August 10, Prime Minister Suzuki explained, "Japan must surrender immediately or the Soviet Union will take not only Manchuria, Korea, and Karafuto, but also Hokkaido. This would destroy the foundation of Japan. We must end the war when we can deal with the United States."

Read "The Decision to Bomb Hiroshima" by Gar Alperovitz for more information.

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Ban Nuclear Weapons

If even one hundred modern nuclear weapons were used, the blast and fires would throw so much soot into the upper atmosphere that it would reduce sunlight hitting the planet. This would result in crop failures several years, and the starvation of two billion people.

This analysis lead the United Nations to pass the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), which is expected to be international law within the next year.

Our leaders need to understand why nuclear weapons must never be used and should have not been used in 1945.

TAKE ACTION!



Veterans For Peace and the Golden Rule Project are members of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). The ICAN Cities Campaign is for cities to urge the federal government to ratify the TPNW. Work with your local city and state representatives for passage. We can send you the resolution we helped the Honolulu City and County Council to adopt.

Help us Come Back from the Brink of Nuclear War



Let your federal representatives that you support these Congressional initiatives:

- Renounce the option of using nuclear weapons first.
- End the sole, unchecked authority of any President to launch a nuclear attack.
- Take US weapons off of hair-trigger alert.
- Cancel the plan to upgrade the entire US nuclear arsenal
- Actively pursue a verifiable agreement among nuclear-armed states to eliminate nuclear weapons.

For more information on Back From The Brink, visit preventnuclearwar.org.

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