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Nuclear Theater in Hollywood

A handful of Hollywood celebs, some highly recognizable including Jane Fonda, Barbra Streisand, Lily Tomlin, Emma Thompson and Michael Douglas, as well as musicians such as Jackson Brown and Graham Nash, just signed their names to a letter published in the *LA Times* urging that we “Make Nukes History”.

Hooray, right? Well, only half hooray.

The Hollywood letter was part of a quickly launched campaign to coincide with the Oscar buzz around the successful feature film, *Oppenheimer*, in order to leverage attention for the need to abolish nuclear weapons. The *Make Nukes History* campaign aims to raise public awareness about the civilization-ending risks posed by today’s nuclear arsenals. It reminds us that while *Oppenheimer* is a history lesson, nuclear weapons are very much still with us, but that we can put an end to what J. Robert Oppenheimer started.

So far, all so good. Far too few of us are thinking about nuclear weapons and the threat they pose, let alone doing something about getting rid of them. It’s an important message that needs reiterating.

Meanwhile, *Oppenheimer* duly swept seven Academy Awards on Sunday. We waited hopefully for one of the winners to say something about the effect of *Oppenheimer*’s bomb down the ages. It came only from Cillian Murphy at the end of his Best Actor acceptance speech. “We made a film about the man who created the atomic bomb and for better or for worse we are all living in *Oppenheimer*’s world so I would really like to dedicate this to the peacemakers, everywhere,” Murphy said.



Ted Turner, founder of the Nuclear Threat Initiative, and Jane Fonda, in 1992. The couple were married for ten years. (Photo: Alan Light/Wikimedia Commons).

The *Make Nukes History* message did not make it to the Oscar stage and the *LA Times* letter was surprisingly skimpy, failing to get at the heart of the two key takeaways missed in the *Oppenheimer* film: the unwilling, unrecognized and still uncompensated victims of Oppenheimer’s original Trinity bomb; and the on-going harm down generations to all peoples whose lands were seized and used for atomic tests.

The letter includes a quote from President John F. Kennedy, then states:

“At a time of great uncertainty, even one nuclear weapon—on land, in the sea, in the air, or in space—is too many. To protect our families, our communities, and our world, we must demand that global leaders work to make nuclear weapons history—and build a brighter future.”

Demand indeed. Some of us have been doing this for decades. And we have a treaty for that. But thank you for waking up.

But what does “build a brighter future” actually mean? That, it turns out, is the slogan of the organization behind the orchestration of the Hollywood letter and Oscar campaign — the Nuclear Threat Initiative.



Make Nukes History is a campaign of the Nuclear Threat Initiative, whose CEO, Ernest Moniz, (below center) will join the IAEA's Rafael Grossi (above left) in Brussels for their March 21st nuclear energy extravaganza that aggressively promotes the means by which additional countries could develop nuclear weapons. (Photo from NTI webinar)

Let's first take a look at who actually signed the letter. With two exceptions, all the signatories are white. There are no Native Americans on there. No US Marshall Islanders. Almost none of the Oppenheimer film cast and crew signed it. The last four signatures belong to the board of NTI.

NTI was the brainchild of Fonda's ex, Ted Turner. NTI's CEO is, yes, Ernest Moniz, the former US Energy Secretary, who is at the forefront of promoting nuclear power to anyone and everyone who wants it. Turner is also a firm supporter of nuclear power (I know because I tried to challenge him on it in person and was quickly deflected by a very large gentleman in possession of an impressive set of muscles.)

Moniz is one of the chief architects behind the pro-nuclear infiltration of the COP28 climate summit and its ridiculous "let's triple global nuclear power capacity by 2050" proclamation. He will be in Brussels later this month, headlining the International Atomic Energy Agency's propaganda-fest, billed as the First Ever Nuclear Energy Summit. So will Charles Oppenheimer, Robert Oppenheimer's grandson and another signatory to the *LA Times* letter.

So here we have a slightly star-studded short-lived campaign to proclaim an end to one kind of nuke, while behind the scenes the same organization is working hard to promote the other kind of nuke, thus ensuring that the door to nuclear weapons development stays firmly open.

So sorry, no two thumbs up for this bit of Hollywood theatre.

This originally appeared in [Beyond Nuclear International](#).

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