

NUKEWATCH

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PATHFINDER

The Progressive Foundation, P.O. Box 649, Luck, WI 54853, (715) 472-4185, <nukewtch@win.bright.net>



In 1988, "The Missouri Peace Planters" entered nuclear missile silos in MO and planted sunflowers in a symbolic act of disarmament. The activists received prison sentences ranging from 6 to 19 months. A June, 1996 *New York Times* photo, ironically similar to those taken at the "Peace Planting," depicted then Defense Secretary Wm. Perry & a

Ukrainian & Russian defense minister planting sunflowers on a former missile silo in the Ukraine. They received applause, smiles and handshakes.

The sunflower has been adopted by the peace and anti-nuclear movement as a symbol for a nuclear-free world. Plant sunflowers near you as a symbol of disarmament.

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Fallout Worse than Admitted

Radiation Doses Were
More than 100 Times
Cold War Government Claims

By John LaForge

Above-ground nuclear bomb blasts in Nevada spread "more than 100 times" the radioactive iodine across the United States than the Government acknowledged when it was conducting the "tests." The bombing exposed nearly all 160 million U.S. citizens—especially children—to large radiation doses, according to a suppressed 100,000 page National Cancer Institute (NCI) study. The report will not be formally released until October.

In headlines heralded worldwide on July 29 and Aug. 2, the bomb "tests" are reported to have spewed an enormous amount of deadly radiation "at least ten times larger than that caused by the 1986 explosion at Chernobyl." However, because estimates of the radiation released by the Chernobyl disaster vary so widely, the comparison raises more questions than it answers. Expert opinion of the amount of Chernobyl contamination ranges, in curies, from "one billion or more" (*Time*, Nov. 13, 1989), to seven billion (Union of Concerned Scientists).

At a minimum, the NCI's comparison to Chernobyl means that only 90 above-ground bomb blasts [out of a total 518 done around the world between 1945 and 1980] released between 10 billion and 70 billion curies of carcinogenic radiation.

The NCI studied 90 of the United States' 203 above-ground nuclear weapons "tests" conducted from 1951 to 1963 by the Atomic Energy Commission, predecessor to today's Department of Energy. The NCI estimated only the effects on the U.S. population of radioactive iodine-131.

Radio-iodine is only one of dozens of deadly, cancer-causing radioactive poisons spread by above- and underground nuclear weapons "tests." Missing from the NCI study was consideration of other isotopes, such as strontium-90 and cesium-137, both of which are known to be even more dangerous than the iodine-131. Furthermore, atmospheric H-bomb fallout is dominated not by iodine-131, but by cesium-137, a gamma radiation emitter, which makes up 40 percent of the total. Together, cesium-137, zirconium-95, carbon-14 and strontium-90 will deliver 76 percent of the total radiation dose to the world's population from fallout in this century.

The NCI estimated that between 25,000 and 75,000 cases of thyroid cancer could be caused by the radiation in the fallout, "of which 2,500 [about 10 percent] would be expected to be fatal." According to the NCI study, these cancers will strike people now in their 40s and 50s—giving a whole new meaning to the phrase "baby boom generation."

"This is especially tragic, because it could have been avoided," Arjun Makahijani told the *New York Times*. Dr. Makahijani, president of the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research, which specializes in nuclear reactors and

weapons, said, "They knew when the tests were [being done], and chose not to warn the population, and they located the test site in the West, knowing there would be fallout over the whole country."

For 14 years, the NCI focused on estimating how much radioactive iodine-131 from H-bomb fallout fell on each of 3,070 counties in the U.S. The NCI narrowed its study to iodine-131 because it is both intensely radioactive and because it is absorbed so readily by children through the drinking of contaminated milk. The body delivers the radiation to the thyroid where it can cause cancers that may appear 30 or 40 years later.

In areas of the country that were contaminated the heaviest—Colorado, Idaho, Montana, South Dakota and Utah—adults received as much as five to 16 "rads." However, children aged three months to five years at the time of exposure (which occurred mainly in 1952, 1953, 1955 and 1957), received radiation doses at least 10 times higher than the adults—50 to 160 rads. This is because children, whose thyroid glands are small, consume larger quantities of milk, so the same amount of radioactive iodine, "would deliver more energy per kilogram of tissue."

Today, Federal law for nuclear reactor accidents requires protective actions when radiation doses to human thyroids reach 15 rads. For example, the rules require moving cows to shelter and dumping poisoned milk. None of these precautions were taken at the time of the 1950s bombings.

Although the NCI study was completed in 1994, its political and legal implications have kept it secret since then. "What we don't want to have happen is mass hysteria about this," said Stanley Feld, formerly of the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists. Thyroid cancer incidence has risen steeply in the U.S., from 2.4 to 5.4 cases per 100,000 between 1947 and 1994. The NCI's study was kept secret while it was undergoing extensive "revision and rewriting," presumably to prevent "hysteria"—or a backlash against the nuclear industry. Segments of the report were leaked to the press in late July, forcing the NCI to acknowledge some of its staggering conclusions.

"I'm quite upset that they had a draft of it three years ago, and it seemed like nothing was done," said Sen. Tom Harkin, (D-IA). "Three years can mean a lot in getting people monitored and taking action." Sen. Harkin said that all Americans in their 40s or 50s should have their thyroids checked, and that the Government should pay the cost for people without health insurance.

The NCI would not say whether the rapid increase in the number of thyroid cancers in the U.S. was caused by the radioactive fallout it studied. But Dr. Robert Spengler, at the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Register, a part of the National Health Service, said, "There's a reasonable association" between radioactive iodine exposure and cancer.

In areas hardest hit by the Chernobyl fallout, thyroid cancer rates are ten times higher than the increase any scientist

had anticipated. The U.N. has said that the number of thyroid cancers among children in Belarus—where 70 percent of Chernobyl's fallout landed—is 285 times pre-Chernobyl levels. The *British Medical Journal* reported in 1995 that the rate of thyroid cancer in the region north of Chernobyl—Ukraine and Belarus—is 200 times higher than normal, and the (British) Imperial Cancer Research Fund found a 500 percent increase in thyroid cancers among Ukrainian children between 1986 and 1993.

Radio-iodine exposure is codified in law as the cause of thyroid cancers on the Marshall Islands, which were also nuked by the U.S. during the 1950's bomb testing craze. Peter Crane, an administrative law judge in the Marshalls said, "I don't think you would find any scientist who would not say excess thyroid illness is related to radiation."

NASA Mishaps Soar: Cassini Launch May Be Delayed

While NASA whistle-blowers speak out against the plutonium-laden Cassini Space Probe to Saturn, malfunctions have blown holes in the agency's otherwise impregnable shield of public relations Teflon. An Oct. 6 launch is now dubious.

On Aug. 7, liquid hydrogen fuel leaked from the upper stage of Cassini's Titan 4B rocket during a countdown test. (In 1989 liquid hydrogen fuel blew up the space shuttle Challenger, killing the crew and spreading burning debris across the Cape.) On Aug. 29, a failed air-conditioning unit tore insulation used to cool the 72 lbs of plutonium onboard. The plutonium is so thermally hot that it heats its graphite jacket to F 500°. The craft will be taken off the launch tower for repairs.

Meanwhile, NASA insiders continue to call for canceling Cassini. On June 24, Dr. Alan Kohn, who spent 30 years with NASA as head of emergency preparedness, accused it of covering-up and lying about the dangers of rocket launches and of faking emergency response readiness. And Dr. Horst Poehler, with 22 years of work with NASA contractors, has said the shielding for the plutonium on Cassini is "fingernail thin. It's a joke."

DOE scientist Beverly Cook dared to tell the press Sept. 3, that a plutonium accident might cause only "120 cancer deaths over a 50-year period...which would be virtually unnoticed among the millions of other cancer deaths."

Physicist and Cassini critic Dr. Michio Kaku replied that this is like saying no one need worry about drive-by shootings in LA because the city already has a lot of murders.

Several in Congress have heard the plea for a debate and Rep.'s Ron Dellums & Lynn Woolsey (Ds-CA) and Bernard Sanders (Socialist-VT) have called for Congressional hearings.—*JL*

Demand the cancellation of Cassini and Congressional hearings on the need for and dangers of the project. See enclosed Cassini fact sheet and contact the Florida Coalition for Peace and Justice, PO Box 2486, Orlando, FL 32802, Phone: (510) 443-7148.

Israeli Whistle Blower Championed Downunder

By Sam Day

Seven American peace activists will gather with others from England, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand in Israel Sept. 23 for a week-long vigil calling for the release of Mordechai Vanunu, who is serving an 18-year prison term for blowing the whistle on Israel's secret nuclear weapons program, where he once worked as a technician.

The vigilers will demonstrate at Ashkelon Prison, where Vanunu is nearing the end of his 11th year in solitary confinement; at Dimona, site of the under-ground bomb factory; and at governmental offices that have repeatedly refused pleas for clemency.

Taking part in the vigil will be youngsters from an Israeli kibbutz who have formed a group called "No More Hiroshima" and are demanding that the factory be opened to international inspection. The American vigilers are Felice Cohen-Joppa, Tucson, Arizona; Hattie Nestle, Leverett, Mass.; Jean and Joe Gump, Bloomingdale, Michigan; Barry Roth, Brookline, Mass.; Arthur Laffin, Washington, DC, and Scott Schaeffer-Duffy, Worcester, Mass.

September 30 marks the anniversary of Vanunu's abduction by Israeli agents after telling his story to a British newspaper. The date will also be marked by demonstrations at Israeli embassies in Washington, London, Wellington and Canberra.

Australian and New Zealand support for the international campaign to free Vanunu picked up after a month-long tour of the two countries by Sam Day of Madison, WI, coordinator of the U.S. campaign.

From The Daily News of New Plymouth, New Zealand, June 19, 1997:

Activist nearly blind, but not to the danger of nukes

By Brendan Cole

Peace activist Sam Day's strong convictions have landed him in jail, but he says it's a small price to pay for his dream of a nuclear-free world.

The award-winning American journalist was in New Plymouth yesterday to address an audience about Israeli prisoner of conscience Mordechai Vanunu, whom he wants freed.

In 1986, Vanunu told the English newspaper the *Sunday Times* about the nuclear weapons factory where he worked for about a decade. As a result, he was abducted by the Israeli Government and subsequently convicted of treason and espionage. He has since served more than 10 years in solitary confinement, with another eight years of his sentence to go.

Mr. Day can relate to the man he is trying to get freed, because he spent time in jail himself for protesting against the Gulf War in 1991. The following year he was awarded the Martin Luther King Peace Award of the U.S. Fellowship of Reconciliation.

"As a journalist, I have always enjoyed muckraking," Mr. Day said. "I like the process of being the underdog, it suits my personality and helps me write better. Most reporters never go to jail unless they drink too much. I don't like jail but I find

it educationally valuable—plus it gets me away from boring meetings."

Mr. Day, who is 70 and nearly blind because of a stroke he had in prison, sees New Zealand as the ideal place to drum up support for his cause to release Vanunu, given its track record in opposing nuclear weapons.

"It's now or never in getting Vanunu out of prison with his mind intact. He is showing signs of mental breakdown. The Israeli government wants him to turn into a blithering idiot so he would have no credibility.

"I don't dispute that he should be punished for violating his security oath, but 10 years in solitary is inappropriate."

Vanunu was an inspiration to activism and was looked upon as a hero to the anti-nuclear movement, Mr. Day said.

"I think that most people have not grasped the extraordinary capabilities of nuclear weapons."

The bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945 was 1,200 times more powerful than any other used during World War II, and today there are more than 25,000 such bombs, all much more powerful, in the United States.

"It's the public perception that we are getting rid of nuclear weapons. The reality is we just have lower numbers. They are not destroying warheads, they are just going into reserve and they could be refurbished for use." Mr. Day wants to stir people to pressure the New Zealand Government to call for Vanunu's release on humanitarian grounds.

Sam Day, a Nukewatch board member, is the director of the U.S. Campaign to Free Mordechai Vanunu, 2206 Fox Ave. Madison, WI 53711, (608) 257-4764.

Tromp Trident Trek: A Journal

Barbara Hoffman, local organizer of the Neenah, WI chapter of Fellowship of Reconciliation, walked the 52-miles of the Tromp Trident Trek. She was nearly always the first person to get up from rest stops and with a big smile start trekking. You could say she's a movement person. We are very happy that she kept notes during the Trek and was willing to share them with The Pathfinder.

By Barbara Hoffman

August 5

I drive north and pick up Jesse Bacon, a college student who had gotten my number from one of the Nukewatch organizers and had asked for a ride. We are both enthused about the upcoming journey and our mood is upbeat as we travel, listening to old union songs on the tape player and singing along.

We detour west to visit the Howard-Hastingses (they are on house arrest for dismantling an ELF antenna) and we find Donna at home. We ask how she's doing and she responds that it is a sad time of year—the days between August 6 and 9 are for her a time of mourning and she will fast in remembrance of the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

She tells us about her interview with Japanese reporters from a newspaper with a circulation wider than the *New York Times*. How she had felt overwhelmed at the opportunity she was given to address the Japanese people, a chance to speak for many Americans who feel so deeply ashamed of the actions of our government. There are tears in her eyes as she conveys her intense emotional connection to cause which resulted in her imprisonment.

She asks about my Fellowship of Reconciliation chapter at home in conservative, wealthy Neenah, WI. It feels like such an uphill battle to me, so small a group trying to awaken such a huge and comfortable populace. Donna reminds me of a story about A.J. Muste standing alone in a candlelight vigil at the U.N., determined that while he may not be able to change the world, he would at least not let the world change him.

Feeling now much more solemn, humble, and in awe of the level of commitment this woman shows for the cause of peace, we drive on to meet our fellow walkers in Ashland.

August 6

We gather at the Ashland County Courthouse, hoping to create a visible presence by hanging the large "ELF is a Crime Wave" banner high enough for car traffic to notice. We form a circle for a moment of silence for Hiroshima, read aloud the



Deputy Sheriff Dale Smith draws his police accessories on his shadow, commemorating the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

handout we will carry with us to share along the way, and then begin the walk. We're disappointed that there is no media present to record the event.

There are 13 of us walking, two bicyclists, one pulling a cart with water, a first aid kit, and a few snacks to replenish our energy as we walk the 17 miles to the farmhouse of the Louma family, our hosts for the first night. Along the way we are joined by Carrie Derwood, a 12-year-old, who is dropped off by her parents with instructions to call whenever she wants to come home.

August 7

While camped at the farmhouse, we make several new signs to express the purpose of our walk. Several members of the Louma family join us for part of the day, so we are a larger group now, more visible. A few passersby heckle us with such ridiculous phrases as "Get a job!" But many people



August 7, trekkers break for lunch along State Hwy 13. A support van was regularly driven ahead of the group to prepare lunch in a shady spot. Nancy Gradan, slicing cheese, was chef and support-person for three days.

honk and give us a peace sign or even a raised fist salute. One comes back later with a 12-pack of cold sparkling water.

Another 10 miles later we welcome a swim and set up in a state park campground. Carrie's parents visit and bring raspberries and ice cream.

August 8

Six of the walkers, four of whom had come all the way from Ohio, have left us now. We are surprised and honored that Carrie is still with us, even though the only other walker her age has left. She has her own tent and now intends to go the whole way. Nine-year-old Marcus Louma has begged his parents to let him continue the walk and they are back again today. The presence of the children feels comforting and inspiring, a sign of hope for the future.

We do 15 miles today and are now extremely tired by the time we reach the national forest campground. One of the neighboring campers brings us beer as a goodwill gesture and warns us that he overheard talk about how some hostile locals had "fixed" our campsite.

August 9

We share a moment of silence in remembrance of the bombing of Nagasaki and then continue our walk. In Clam Lake we are relieved to encounter no open hostility. The walk to the ELF site is through a gorgeous national forest, interrupted by the ominous site of the ELF antenna.

It is the last ten miles of the walk. Several walkers have taken turns driving the support vehicle. I'm



Barbara Hoffman led the way through Mellen, Wisconsin, where the Tromp Trident Trek made a mild impression. Behind her (r. to l.) are Marcus Louma, Marcia Dorheim-Devis and John LaForge.

grateful that others volunteered to drive, as I am now obsessed with walking the whole 52 miles. I'm ashamed to realize that it is for the benefit of my own ego, as though there is something noble about being strong enough to do this. Our group is now like a loving family of brothers and sisters—I'm deeply grateful to be a part of it and don't want to let anyone down.

We arrive at the ELF site and are amused to discover a garbage bag of fish guts has been left for us by the local defenders of the status quo.

August 10

The next morning there is serious discussion about civil disobedience. This will be the 30th such action against ELF—some 40 people so far have been fined or jailed. John LaForge and Bonnie Urfer, Nukewatch organizers of the walk, explain that it is only the civil disobedience that has drawn any media attention to this issue.

We discuss who will actually "cross the line," trespassing on Navy property, and what is the role of the supporters. We plan a simple ceremony to perform in front of the gate. Those supporting will give symbols to those doing the action to carry in: ashes and wildflowers (Hiroshima and Nagasaki), bread and water (food and human resources, not bombs), and twisted limbs and branches (a symbol of the damages).

We are joined by Lee Schaal, a 79-year-old veteran of many peace and justice campaigns, several carloads of people from the Duluth area, and Bob Cornet who bicycled from Northland College. The children have decorated the pavement outside the gate with chalk peace symbols and body outlines to represent the victims. Two of the three police officers on duty even lie down to become models to be traced around. They are friendly, but we are warned that they take their jobs seriously and can react with hostility when demonstrators are uncooperative.

The actual ceremony is solemn and beautiful. Four of our "family" pick up the symbols and cross under the gate while the rest of us sing in support.

In the end, I have chosen a support role this time, but I have a clearer understanding of the role of civil disobedience and may some day play that part as well. I have been one more body in an attempt to draw attention to a terrible wrong, a misuse of taxpayer money, a threat to the world. It's impossible to know to what extent my presence has helped that cause. But I do know this: Conversations with my fellow peacemakers throughout the walk have helped me clarify my own priorities for peace and have given me new ideas about achieving them.

I'm already picturing a walk next year in my community on Sunday, August 9, Nagasaki Day. I'm beginning to make some concrete plans for war tax resistance. I've decided to put a tablecloth over my TV set and place a plant on it. I am ready to return to my community feeling considerably stronger, and like A.J. Muste, less likely to be compromised by it. For this new strength I am deeply grateful.



Carrie Derwood, 12, of Washburn, WI, convinced her parents, Grace Helsteh and Bruce Derwood, that she could go the distance, and she did. She collected symbols of Hiroshima & Nagasaki. Flowers bloomed in mass in the devastated cities a year after the A-bombs were dropped from seed pods thought to have burst open from the heat.

Interview with Stephen Hancock

Stephen Hancock is a Plowshares activist and a co-editor of both Peace News, a monthly international pacifist paper, and The Daily Hammer, the newsletter of the European Plowshares Support Network. In July he visited disarmament communities in the U.S. with stops in Minnesota and Wisconsin including the Nukewatch office.

Q. How has the Plowshares movement in Europe been received by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) and the rest of the peace movement generally?

S.H. While in the early and mid-eighties there was massive nonviolent resistance to Cruise missiles, the Polaris and Trident systems and to the massive U.S. military presence (England as America's "Unsinkable Aircraft Carrier"), Plowshares actions, for whatever reasons, didn't catch on.

Still, property damage wasn't rare. Miles of perimeter fences were cut down, especially at Greenham Common. Cruise missile convoys were often painted. There was even occasional, minor sabotage—but no hammering as such. While many had heard of the vicious sentences received by U.S. Plowshares activists such as Helen Woodson and Fr. Carl Kabat, the Plowshares form (hammering directly on nuclear weapons systems) didn't make the transatlantic leap.

When we eventually got around to hammering a U.S. "dual capable" F-111 fighter-bomber in March 1990 (Upper Heyford Plowshares), the reaction from the English peace movement was mixed. Some local CND groups were very supportive, but peace movement journals such as CND's *Sanity* gave us minimal coverage, and one Quaker Meeting publicly disowned us. We had hoped to stimulate debate about the connections between nuclearism and interventionism, but achieved limited success.

The recent "Seeds of Hope" Plowshares action—in which four women disarmed a Hawk fighter-bomber destined for Indonesia and were acquitted by a jury—has transformed the image and influence of Plowshares. The women's peace movement, the backbone of the resistance movement, has owned and engaged Plowshares, as has the environmental direct action movement. Both radicals and conservatives within the peace movement thoroughly enjoyed the "not guilty" verdicts. I'm sure that any forthcoming anti-nuclear Plowshares actions would receive very good, educated and active support. For the first time, polls consistently show the majority of the population against nuclear weapons.

Q. In the U.S. there is a contest in political correctness between strictly symbolic disarmament and the intent to achieve as much material damage as possible when conducting Plowshares actions. Is this debate ongoing in Europe as well, and what is your position on the question?

S.H. The European Plowshares movement holds a couple of reflective "Hope & Resistance" gatherings every year. The debate about symbolic and maximum damage is a regular one. At the last gathering, Per Herngren, from the Swedish Plowshares movement (*Paths of Resistance: The Practice of Civil Disobedience*, New Society Pub., Philadelphia, 1993), said that the Swedish movement started off with minimal, symbolic hammer-taps, but now that such disarming acts are generally understood, people wouldn't understand or appreciate such minimalism; more extensive, but not necessarily maximum disarmament is expected.

I think that extensive disarmament could sometimes represent the strongest symbol—of intent, seriousness, urgency, unacceptability. But I wouldn't be too prescriptive about it—the lengthy preparation process involved in Plowshares actions attempts to discover a communal wisdom about such things. However, once you've decided what your limits are, you should stick to them "on the night" and not get carried away by the excitement, and should also be careful to distinguish your work from unconsidered vandalism. When we did our Upper Heyford action we just went for a few modest hits, but hadn't reckoned on the immodest cost—a quarter of a million pounds. This was bad homework on our part, but we soon rose to the occasion!

If the four "Seeds of Hope" women had only swung a couple of hammer hits at the Hawk, I think they might have lost their acquittal. Certainly, the prosecution in such cases likes to seize on any symbolism as a flaw in the defense: "You weren't really trying to prevent a crime, you were just seeking publicity." While courts tend to understand Plowshares actions if presented as "crime-prevention," I'd say that the main power of such actions lies in communication—educating, challenging, inviting debate and further resistance.

Furthermore on the maximum damage issue, if you're really into maximum damage, why hang around to risk arrest? In which case maybe sabotage is what you're after—which is a very different sort of action and dynamic from Plowshares. I

think Plowshares actions are distinguished by the participants taking full and open responsibility for their actions.

Whatever our positions on these issues, I think it's vital that Plowshares actions don't rotate around our own definitions or integrity, or on questions of technique, but constantly emphasize the victims of militarism, how government policies and weapons systems ensure such victimization, and the necessity for responsible nonviolent resistance.

Q. Sentences for disarmament actions in the United States have been severe on one hand, and extremely variant on the other. For example: For \$12,000 in assessed damage done to a Minuteman missile silo, the Silo Pruning Hooks were sent to prison for 18 years; while for \$38,000 damage to Trident submarine computers, the Sperry Pair were given six months probation. How do European sentences compare to those in the States?

S.H. We've only had three Plowshares actions in England, resulting in fifteen months (for \$40,000 worth of disarmament), ten months (for \$160,000) and a not guilty (for \$2.25 million). The prison sentences have been much lower than expected. In the rest of the European movement—Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany—it's never been more than 18 months. So, compared to some of the sentences in the U.S.—not just for Plowshares, but also for such things as the Missouri Peace Planting—we've been "lucky." However, I think our judges have been constrained by our level of public and international support—a constraint not all judges are worried about.

Q. German judges have demonstrated, in their judicial robes, against nuclear weapons making specific reference to the Nuremberg Principles which prohibit any "planning and preparation" of indiscriminate warfare. Have judges in other countries joined this extraordinary group?

S.H. I'm not aware of such amazing scenes in England, although we've got some ex-military bigwigs on our side. Understandably, people in Germany tend to be much more aware of the dangers of unquestioning obedience to the state. Still, the anti-nuclear struggle has not yet been won in Germany.

There was a Scottish sheriff who jailed many of the anti-Trident Faslane peace-campers. On the eve of his retirement some of his colleagues entered the peace camp to request a piece of the Faslane fence as a retirement present. Then the peace camp heard that the sheriff had moved up to near Aberdeen and helped set up a Justice and Peace group in his parish. Hardly the great, responsible public stand we need, but the law works in mysterious way.

Q. U.S. juries are regularly prevented from hearing any legitimate defense to charges of destroying government property by judges who declare international law "irrelevant." How have European courts treated the affirmative defenses of international law, defense of others, crime prevention and self-defense?

S.H. In keeping with the dominant U.S. tradition, we weren't allowed to present a legal defense for our Upper Heyford Plowshares action. The case was kindly reduced to, "Did you do it?" And, as we'd left our names and addresses in the cockpit, there wasn't much wriggling out of that one. It was a frustrating case, and I think activists have to be well-prepared for such disappointment—five of the six "Prince of Peace Plowshares" folks (Bath Iron Works, Maine) decided to turn their backs on the judge after they were disallowed a defense. The second English action—in 1993—was only allowed to present a subjective defense, based on the defendant's state of mind, and was therefore not allowed to present any of the expert witnesses lined up (as they related to an objective defense). The four women however were able to present a full and comprehensive defense with some very impressive witnesses, including Jose Ramos Horta, East Timorese exile and recent winner of the Nobel Peace Prize. International law doesn't tend to have much influence in English law, but we do have a useful statute law called the Criminal Law Act which states that "reasonable force may be used in the prevention of a crime." Some international laws are incorporated into domestic law, such as the Geneva Conventions Act and the Genocide Act—these are supposedly binding in a way unincorporated international laws don't seem to be. In the wake of the jury acquittal in the "Seeds of Hope" Plowshares (by and 11-1 majority), I'm sure

that the powers that be will be tempted to lean on any future presiding judges to disallow any justification or necessity defenses.

Q. What impact do you see the Advisory Opinion of the World Court, outlawing the possession of nuclear weapons, having on governments and on the disarmament movement?

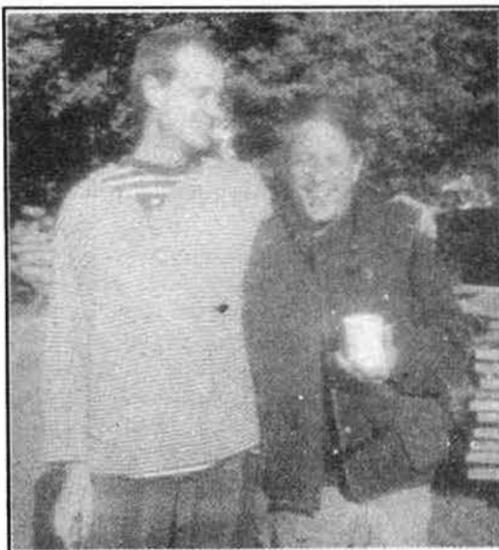
S.H. I have seen the Advisory Opinion affect people a lot, not just its content, but because people feel they played a part in bringing it about. And now, there are more conservative elements contemplating nonviolent resistance—not as civil disobedience but as law enforcement. As we've seen in the English environmental movement, these marriages of radicals and conservatives are fertile events, and ones which tend to worry the powers that be.

Interestingly, the law in the hands of an unprejudiced jury, or in the hands of a non-western dominated body of legal experts, is different from the law in the hands of a patriarchal old-school judge. It's a more fluid thing than we sometimes imagine. And, in our own disarming hands, we seem to render it a very good thing.

Still, I think that as an institution, the law is clearly an enemy of justice and disarmament, irredeemably hierarchical and patriarchal, and would

need to be overhauled to even approximate a process of justice. While we're at it, we might as well be honest and include the law on our list of weapons systems to be disarmed and dismantled.

For sample copies of Peace News, and The Daily Hammer, write: Box X, 111 Magdalen Rd., Oxford OX4 1RQ, England.



Stephen Hancock (l.) with John LaForge during his August visit to the Nukewatch office.

1998 PEACE CALENDAR

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NUCLEAR SHORTS

Rainwater Saturates Yucca Mountain Dump Site

☛ In just 40 years, rainwater has percolated into the government's proposed underground dump site for highly radioactive waste. The DOE has said that it would take thousands of years for the water to travel deep into Yucca Mt., NV, limiting how soon radiation would spread from the site. The material will be dangerous for 250,000 years. Proof that the water is "young" was the discovery of radioactive chlorine-36, a component of fallout from above-ground nuclear bomb tests. While the DOE claimed that the amount of water "was not enough to spread much waste," and would not disqualify the area as the zone for reactor wastes, Nevada's Agency for Nuclear Projects said that federal rules require that the mere discovery of fast-flowing water would eliminate the selection of Yucca Mt. —*New York Times*, June 20, 1997.

Nuclear Trojan Horses to Cook North Korea

☛ Industrialists from the U.S., Japan and South Korea arrived in North Korea Aug. 19, to begin work on two nuclear reactors. The North has evidently agreed to open for inspection its state nuclear programs in exchange for the Trojan Horses of international debt and radioactive waste. Stephen Bosworth, the U.S. executive director of the New York-based "Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization," may have delivered a diplomatic *faux pas* when he boldly told the *New York Times*, "We are not doing this to help the North Koreans." The light water reactors are to produce electric power even in the face of the industry's failure to safely contain the tons of radioactive wastes that result. Most of the estimated \$5 billion cost is to be provided by government-backed Japanese and South Korean firms.

—*Mpls. Star Tribune & The New York Times*, Aug. 20, 1997.

Stealth Bombers Still Failing Tests for Non-mission

☛ The General Accounting Office reports that the new B-2 Stealth nuclear bombers, the most expensive warplanes ever made, cannot be stationed where they were built to go—overseas. Too much money would be wasted in trying to do maintenance there. The "skin" of the plane, which the Air Force has claimed for years would allow it to evade radar, deteriorates in rain, heat and humidity. However, the GAO says that during test flights, rainwater did so much damage to the bomber's shell that they were sent back for "a new coat of stealthy skin"—in climate-controlled hangers unavailable at forward bases. A 1995 GAO study found that the B-2's radar could not distinguish a rain cloud from a mountainside, and that its stealthiness was "dubious."

At more than \$2 billion per plane, the B-2's cost "roughly equals three times its weight in gold." After the USSR's collapse, the Air Force argued that the bomber could also be used for conventional warfare. Sen. William Cohen, now Sec. of Defense, ridiculed that idea saying then that that would be like sending "a Rolls-Royce into a combat zone to pick up groceries." Twelve of the cold war dinosaurs are stationed at Whiteman AFB in Missouri. Although the Air Force says it doesn't want or need any more B-2s, Northrop Grumman Corp. is now building 21 at an estimated cost of \$44.7 billion. The bomber has never been used.

—*New York Times*, Aug. 23 & *Mpls. Star Tribune*, Aug. 19, 1997.

Declared Unsafe, Seven Canadian Reactors to Close

☛ Within the year, the Canadian utility Ontario Hydro will shut down seven of its 19 nuclear reactors "after an internal report concluded that the company was so badly managed that it had compromised the safety of its entire nuclear power system." The report, ordered last year after accidents forced a shut-down of the Pickering-I reactor near Toronto, found that the plants are exposing their workers to unacceptable levels of radiation. Still, 12 of the company's reactors will be kept in service while they undergo \$1.5 billion in repairs between now and 2001. The company's "Candu" type reactors have been sold to Argentina, Romania, South Korea and China. Ontario Hydro decided that shutting down the reactors would be cheaper than the overhaul needed to meet safety requirements. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's *As It Happens* reported, "A lot of people are declaring nuclear power dead."

—*As It Happens*, CBC & *The New York Times*, Aug. 14, 1997.

Bombing Treaties at the Nevada Test Site

☛ The Energy Dept. conducted a nuclear weapons test on July 2 at the Nevada Test Site, violating a test moratorium in effect since 1992. Called "Rebound," the secret blast was done without foreign observers, and another test, named "Holog," is set for September. Although the DOE has repeatedly said

the cost of these experiments would run between \$15 and \$20 million each, the department admitted in June that preparations alone had cost at least \$77 million—before any testing.

The DOE justifies the "subcritical" or "zero yield" blasts saying, "data obtained from the experiment will be used to support efforts to maintain the safety and reliability of the nation's nuclear weapons stockpile without underground nuclear tests."

The experiments contradict the U.S. claim of abiding by the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. The NPT's Article VI commits the nuclear weapons states to conduct good faith negotiations toward nuclear disarmament. The July 2 detonation also violated the spirit if not the letter of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty outlawing all nuclear bomb testing.

—*Nevada Desert Experience*, Las Vegas, *The Valley Times*, Pleasanton, CA, July 1, 1997.

50 Years Late, Downwinders Told: 'Have a Physical'

☛ Hanford, WA—Government scientists have recommended that thousands of Washington and Oregon state residents, exposed to radiation spewed from military reactors at the Hanford Reserve from 1945 to 1951, be found and provided with periodic examinations for cancer, especially thyroid related problems.

More than 14,000 people had their thyroid glands, etc. heavily irradiated when over 13,000 square miles of territory downwind from the H-bomb factories was contaminated with air-borne radioactive iodine-131. Researchers with the federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) reported that at least 10 percent of the people exposed received "10 rads or more of radiation, enough to raise health concerns." The thyroid readily absorbs iodine. Dr. Robert Spengler of the ATSDR's health studies division said the monitoring plan would not provide treatment for any conditions identified since his agency was not authorized to do so.

—*New York Times*, March 22, 1997.

Nuclear Waste Trains Derail in Europe

☛ On Feb. 3, a train carrying three casks with 180 tons of high-level radioactive waste derailed near Apach France, not far from the Franco-German border. The waste was on its way from the reactor in Lingen, Germany to Sellafield, England, where it is to be reprocessed. On January 15, a nuclear fuel cask derailed in front of the German reactor at Krummel during a track change.

—*Greenpeace*, Feb. 4, 1997; *WISE*, No. 467, Feb. 28, 1997.

Bombs More "Challenging" Than Nuclear Waste Dilemma

☛ Twenty-five thousand people are still hard at work on new designs for nuclear warheads according to formerly secret federal documents. The work focuses on the B-61, an "earth-penetrating" bomb for planes; the W-87, a warhead for MX missiles; and the W-76 and W-88, warheads for Trident missiles launched from Trident submarines. (That covers all the nuclear weapons systems the U.S. has.) *Four billion dollars* this year has gone into nuclear weapons designs, and this, in an era when citizens around the world overwhelmingly favor nuclear disarmament and an end to proliferation.

The DOE claims to be making "modifications," not building new H-bombs, but last year its "Science-Based Stockpile Stewardship Program" called upon the Los Alamos Lab. in New Mexico to build 50 new "plutonium pits" (warheads) every year. Jobs and budgets there, and at the Livermore Nat. Lab. in California—for "a scientific elite eager for new challenges"—are expected to increase over the next nine years.

—*New York Times*, Aug. 18, 1997; *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, Feb. 2, 1996; *The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, Nov./Dec. 1996.

Senate's Secret Spending Violates U.S. Constitution

☛ In June, the Senate approved something like \$30 billion in secret spending for the CIA, the National Reconnaissance Office and the other secret services, in violation of a Constitutional requirement that the government publish an accurate account of its spending. The Congress has ignored the law for 50 years and continued to do so June 19, by defeating an amendment that would have disclosed the actual amount (although not an itemization). Since the end of the cold war, England, Canada, Australia and Israel have all abandoned secret budgets. Revealing the exact amount—which goes in addition to the \$268 billion Pentagon budget—would be "highly



dangerous to the national security of the United States," said Senator Jon Kyl (R-AZ). —*New York Times*, June 20, 1997.

Accident-Plagued French Fast Breeder to Be Shutdown

☛ The world's first and largest commercial fast breeder reactor, Superphenix, in France, will be closed for good. The Europeans Against Superphenix had asked the environment minister Dominique Voynet, of the Green Party, to "put an end to the biggest failure of the French nuclear power industry." The hapless \$10 billion reactor operated a total of 278 days in its 11-year history. The French government estimates that the shut-down costs, to include debt retirement, waste reprocessing and physical plant dismantling, will exceed \$3.4 billion.

—*WISE News Communiqué*, No. 475, July 4, 1997.

Livermore Workers Contaminated Again

☛ Two more workers at Lawrence Livermore Nat. Lab. in California were contaminated with tritium while packaging radioactive waste May 27. The DOE said one worker was contaminated through his gloves while the other "had skin contamination on his forearms and hands... His shirt and pants were also contaminated." —*Citizen's Watch*, July 1997.

First Civilian Reactor to Join War Machine

☛ The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) will be the first civilian utility to join the government's bomb-building complex, when special fuel rods, that will produce tritium (the "H" in H-bombs), are loaded Sept. 5 into the Watts Bar reactor near Sweetwater, TN. The Energy Dept. and Westinghouse will both be bailed out by the project: DOE's dangerous, contaminated production reactors were closed in 1988, and a \$7.5 million "irradiation fee" will go to Westinghouse/TVA for the "favor." The 1954 Atomic Energy Act forbids the employment of civilian reactors for nuclear weapons.

—*New York Times*, Aug. 11, 1997.

TVA Bail-Out May Involve Weapons Plutonium as Fuel

☛ The TVA's unfinished Bellfonte commercial power reactor near Scottsboro, AL is a financial albatross that no other utility would help construct. So the DOE has proposed an expensive "triple play" rescue: 1) tritium production; 2) "disposal" of weapons plutonium; and 3) electric power production. Last year, TVA announced it would not finish the plant without the DOE's infusion of public funds, which is still tentative. The plutonium "disposal" scam is the proposed "mixed-oxide" or MOX fuel option for using retired warheads as fuel in civilian reactors. This MOX method has never been tried and is even more dangerous than it is expensive. This scam can still be stopped.

—Stephen Smith, Exec. Dir., Tennessee Valley Energy Reform Coalition.

RESOURCES

* *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 6042 S. Kimbark, Chicago, IL 60637, (773) 702-2555 (monthly, \$36/yr).

* *Citizen's Watch*, Tri-Valley Citizens Against a Radioactive Environment, 5720 East Ave., No. 116, Livermore, CA 94550, (510) 443-7148.

* *Greenpeace* magazine, 1436 U Street NW, Washington, DC 20009, (202) 319-2444, (quarterly) \$30/yr.

* Nevada Desert Experience, P.O. Box 4487, Las Vegas, NV, 89127, (702) 646-4814.

* Tennessee Valley Energy Reform Coalition, P.O. Box 1842, Knoxville, TN 37901, (423) 637-4479.

* *WISE News Communiqué*, World Info. Service on Energy, P.O. Box 59636, 1040 LC Amsterdam, The Netherlands, Phone: 31-20-612-6368, (twice monthly) \$35/yr.

NATO on Notice

Confronting Illegal Nukes

Nonviolent Direct Action Campaign for Nuclear Abolition Begins: World Court Opinion Cited

By Jack Cohen-Joppa

A new phase of anti-nuclear civil disobedience has begun.

Over the next several months, nonviolent direct action for nuclear disarmament will be defended in the courts of seven nations, as part of an international citizens campaign to enforce last year's International Court of Justice (the World Court, or ICJ) opinion on nuclear weapons. The ICJ Advisory Opinion of July 8, 1996 declared the threat or use of nuclear weapons to be generally contrary to international humanitarian law.

Exactly one year later, an international delegation of peace activists served a Citizen's Summons on NATO leaders meeting in Madrid. The Summons declared that unless NATO leaders 'take immediate action to review NATO's illegal nuclear policy' in light of the World Court decision, "we shall use all means in our power, including direct nonviolent resistance, to intervene against all preparations for nuclear war at all the places where they are carried out."

Nuclear resisters who raise a defense based on necessity and supported by international law are often stymied. Judges routinely reject the defense, sometimes because options for legal protest remain, or because of the absence of an international judgment specific to nuclear arms. The Madrid action pursued an important legal avenue that follows and builds on the Advisory Opinion. Legal documents now verify that citizens have put the nuclear powers and their NATO sycophants on notice. A stronger case for bringing global justice to local courts in many countries is now available, and the promised nonviolent direct actions at the sites of nuclear crime has begun.

But can an appeal to international law help bring about nuclear disarmament? What will really change if nukes are outlawed?

I joined the Madrid disarmament delegation to participate in the actions initiated by For Mother Earth International and the Nuclear Weapons Abolition Days network.

Spanish police denied many applications to demonstrate near the NATO summit site. We made no such application. Instead, the media, NATO officials and the police were merely informed when the nonviolent event would take place.

On the morning of July 8, we assembled in the presence of an imposing Spanish police detachment and a crowd of

journalists at the Canillejas Metro station. Large, colorful banners were declared "NUCLEAR WEAPONS OFF ALERT NOW" and "NATONUCLEARPLANSILLEGAL." Formal enlargements of the Citizens' Summonses, each individually addressed and decorated with the flag of the recipient country and a sunflower, symbol of the Abolition 2000 movement, were displayed for the media to photograph, while journalists interviewed many of the participants.

Under a cloudless sky, we were permitted to proceed on foot, accompanied by police and media, nearly two miles to the site of the summit. There, delegates signed the impressive documents, the text of which had been endorsed by more than 60 international and national peace groups from around the globe, in addition to several members of the Belgian, English, Spanish, and European Parliaments.

After persistent and gentle persuasion, NATO finally agreed to receive three representatives. George Farebrother (World Court Project, UK), Florentina Carrasco (Asociacion Libre de Abogados, Spain) and Pol D'Huyvetter (For Mother Earth International, Belgium), were escorted to the steps of the conference center.

The peace delegation informed the head of Spain's summit organizing committee that these were not mere petitions, but copies of documents that had been legally certified by a Spanish notary. He accepted the documents and promised to deliver them to the President of NATO with the request that they be personally delivered to individual heads of government. The notarized documents were also officially delivered the same day. (Copies of these legal papers and strategy suggestions for nonviolent direct action are available from For Mother Earth International, address below.)

As expected, a change in NATO nuclear policy did not follow the Madrid meeting. In early August the Nuclear Weapons Abolition Days network requested a meeting with NATO officials at their Brussels headquarters. Request denied, the network decided to close down the headquarters on Hiroshima Day. Pol D'Huyvetter explained, "NATO member states continue to oppose the worldwide call by, among others, the UN General Assembly, for starting multilateral negotiations to ban nuclear weapons. As citizens, we have the obligation to act under the Nuremberg Principles to uphold international law. We have no choice but to engage in actions of civil resistance."

The headquarter's doors were blocked for several hours by activists and banners reading "Closed Due to War Crimes Preparations." A "War Crimes Inspection Team" entered the compound to search for documents about NATO nuclear targets. Instead of arrest, the four inspectors were given a brief audience with a secretary for NATO Chief Solano, before be-

ing escorted from the building. Despite the day-long blockade, no arrests were made. Return inspections are likely.

In the United States, 43 Hiroshima Day demonstrators were arrested at Livermore nuclear weapons lab in California as they delivered an "Order to Cease and Desist Illegal Activity." At the Pennsylvania headquarters of space war giant Lockheed-Martin, none were arrested. Three days later, Nagasaki Day, self-appointed "inspectors" and "Honorary Marshals of the World Court" turned up at weapons factories and military bases in Europe, England and the United States. Eviction notices were posted at such sites of nuclear crime as the England's Aldermaston nuclear bomb factory, and the Faslane and Coulport nuclear submarine bases in Scotland. Arrests were reported at the U.S. spy base at Menwith Hill in England, and nearby Forest Moor, which sends the English Trident submarines their illegal orders.

In Wisconsin, the "Tromp Trident" peace walk concluded with three arrests at Project ELF, the Navy's "pager" for signaling the Trident's nuclear first-strike.

At the Nevada Test Site, nearly 36 arrests on August 10 involved inspection of the site where the subcritical tests earlier in the summer prompted several arrests.

Citizen inspectors were turned back at Volkel air base in the Netherlands and at France's nuclear submarine base in Cherbourg. Other inspectors were arrested at bases in Germany and Belgium, where U.S. nuclear weapons are stockpiled for NATO use. Reports on these citizens' inspections are being filed with the ICJ in The Hague.

Still, for many nuclear resisters international law is a troubled, if not doomed, concept. Only the losing sides' war criminals are prosecuted, while the crimes of the victorious have gone unchecked. There were no Los Alamos war crimes trials, just Tokyo and Nuremberg.

Furthermore, as technology advances and the distinction between "nuclear" and "conventional" war becomes ever less clear, an international ban on nuclear weapons may only succeed in providing PR cover and added government support for warriors already gone post-nuclear. Some U.S. Air Force generals envision a world free of nuclear MADness, but are endowed with a new generation of offensive weapons: the post-nuclear guarantors of U.S. global hegemony. The U.S. Space Command's motto boasts that they are the "Masters of Space."

Admitting the crime or not, the Pentagon may come to accept nuclear disarmament, even by the year 2000. But it plans to leave the peace movement where it was, at the 1963 signing of the Atmospheric Test Ban Treaty, and now—with "subcritical" tests—the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty: Trumped by advancing technology and rhetoric.

Attitudes, particularly illegitimate ones like global domination or mutually-assured destruction, are not changed by new laws. Nonetheless, international law evolved as an attempt to limit the devastation of war and ensure that some remnant of society would remain to rebuild. To the extent that it provides a platform to bring humanity into the legal equation, it educates the courts and public alike for future struggles against all forms of militarism.

While international law usually cuts for the powers that be, it is now a double-edged sword. But to cut for nuclear abolition, that other edge must be honed. The whetstone is federal and local courts. Laws regarding trespass, obstruction, or destruction of property should be challenged when they are used to protect nuclear criminality, so that juries and neighbors can learn of the ICJ opinion, and weigh it in the verdict.

Together, the ICJ Opinion and the Citizens' Summons presented in Madrid make a solid footing and a persuasive case for a renewed campaign of civil resistance to nuclear weapons. The time has come to bring it home to our own community.

Fifteen years after millions of anti-nuclear voices shook New York's Central Park and European capitols, we must reassert our right and accept our renewed obligation to inspect and impede the continuing preparations for nuclear war.

More information about the ICJ Advisory Opinion is available from the Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy (see Resources on page 5), and from the World Court Project, UK, 67 Summerheath Road, Hailsham, Sussex BN27 3DR, UK, Phone/fax: 01-323-844-269, email: <geowcpuk@gn.apc.org>

For Mother Earth International: Lange Steenstraat 16/D, 9000 Gent, Belgium. Phone/fax: 32-9-233-84-39; email: <int@fme.knooppunt.be>

Jack Cohen-Joppa is co-editor of The Nuclear Resister, a comprehensive chronicle of anti-nuclear civil resistance and peace prisoner support. The views expressed are those of the author alone, and do not represent the editorial position of The Nuclear Resister: P.O. Box 43383, Tucson, AZ 85733, email: <nukeresister@igc.org> (520)323-8697. Free sample issue on request.

Warding Off Another Chernobyl

by Bonnie Urfer

Since long before Chernobyl and just after Three Mile Island, the nuclear power reactor market here dried up. That didn't stop Westinghouse from building reactors, spreading the danger and creating more waste. They're just doing it overseas.

Fortunately, citizens worldwide know how deadly the industry is and hundreds of thousands are working to stop the nuclear Mafia everywhere.

Construction of the Temelin reactors near Prague, in the Czech Republic, was abandoned by the USSR after the 1989 Czech revolution. An EIS was never done for the reactors because the Czech government insists that since construction began under the old regime, normal rules of environmental assessment do not apply. Westinghouse and CEZ (a Czech utility monopoly) agree with the Czech government. They've joined forces to complete the reactor.

Westinghouse is sending U.S. technology that could not be licensed in the U.S. and is using U.S. taxpayer dollars in the form of loan guarantees from the U.S. Export-Import Bank.

Temelin risks the lives of 10 million people. Sixty of 64 villages in the area publicly oppose the reactor as did neighboring Austria. The project, started in 1986, has met with cost overruns totaling more than \$1 billion. The Temelin reactors are four years behind schedule. Safety software failed testing 48% of the time. Hydro and wind power plants are said to be feasible alternatives to the 1200 MWe nuclear reactor.

Last year, 500 people successfully blockaded Temelin for three days and the resistance continues.

In July, despite heavy rain and cold, nearly 600 activists from 23 countries struggled in heavy rains to block workers from advancing construction on the two containment buildings. With banners, songs, drums and chants, the unfinished

reactors were surrounded by the activists.

On the first night, police arrived with picks, hammers and tourist busses to cart away the arrestees.

Most of the entry gates were blocked by groups of 50-70 activists lying on the pavement, covered with sleeping bags and sheets of plastic. Police prevented heavy equipment from entering the area to be used in fortifying the blockade.

The rain, in the end, became so bad that the demonstration stopped four days early. Group discussions included talk of going to help in flood relief elsewhere.

Nearly 100 people, mostly internationals, were arrested during the four days of protest. The blockade had originally been scheduled to last from the July 6 to 13, but was called off on July 9.

Temelin isn't the only place experiencing resistance to nuclear power. An international protest took place at the Rostov reactor in Russia from July 15 to August 15. Rostov is one of the many incomplete reactors worldwide; citizens are working to be sure they stay that way.

Nuclear extortion is underway in the Ukraine. The government there says it will close Chernobyl only if Rovno-4 and Khmelnytsky-2 (both almost equally unsafe reactors) are upgraded at a cost of \$1.2 billion.

On a more positive nuclear note, the Swedish government decided to phase out all twelve of its nuclear reactors beginning with two next July. The 12 reactors were originally scheduled to be shut-down by 2010, but the schedule has been speeded to complete the task as soon as feasible.

The day will come when the entire nuclear industry will voluntarily cease its insane agenda, not because it is just and right, but because the profit margin runs out. The day has already arrived when nuclear power once touted as "too cheap to meter" is the most expensive source of electricity.

GROUND ZERO RESISTS

by Bonnie Urfer

The Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action in Poulsbo, WA, is coming of age next year. The community will be 21 years old. In honor of its "adulthood," and in an effort to revitalize and strengthen itself for the task of resisting Trident into middle age, a weekend conference took place August 2 & 3. The meeting ended with two people crossing "the line" and thousands upon thousands of sunflowers being planted on the walking route between Ground Zero and the main gate of the Bremerton Submarine Base that houses half the U.S. Trident fleet.

Saturday morning's conference began with a historical narrative on activism by founders of the Poulsbo/Bremerton community. Memories included "Bangor Summer," "Live Without Trident" and a great retelling of the story of the "flotilla"—organized to stop the first Trident, *USS Ohio*, from docking at Bangor. The flotilla is on record as being a truly daring and dangerous endeavor.

Clearly, diversity within the Community, from the beginning until now, has grown. Musicians, teachers, atheists, lesbians, artists, retired military personnel, catholic workers, bus drivers, full-time activists, students, and more, came together to find common ground, recommit to peace work and vow to resist Trident.

TRIDENT AT SEAFAIR

by Geov Parrish

On Sunday, August 10—the final day of "SeaFair," and of the nuclear weapon-equipped *U.S.S. Ohio's* stay at the Port of Seattle—the Nonviolent Action Community of Cascadia carried out two direct actions to cap a week of protests and public opposition to the first-ever Seattle visit of this machine of global annihilation.

Early Sunday afternoon, a team of about 15 folks installed two huge and highly visible banners on the lower pedestrian walkway across Alaskan Way, directly facing Pier 66, where hundreds of people were waiting for tours on the Navy ships docked there. The banners read "NUKES KILL: NO TRIDENT." Their removal was made more difficult by U-locks installed in gates at both ends of the walkway (after the walkway had been cleared of people, of course). The banners' installers left and no arrests were made.

Later in the afternoon, a total of nine people were detained after an incident on board the *U.S.S. McKee*, the sub-tender to which the Trident submarine *U.S.S. Ohio* was attached. During a public tour of the *McKee*, Carolyn Stevens,

A round-robin meeting offered the opportunity to talk about group activities outside Ground Zero, and ways and means for drawing efforts together. The group also considered ideas for Sunday's trespass.

A deserving mention goes to Sallie Shawl who for 17 years has diligently, persistently, and weekly, leafleted at the Puget Sound Shipyard. Every Thursday morning Sallie appears at the gate, sometimes alone and sometimes with others. She is always looking for more help.

"Nuclear Jeopardy," designed and hosted by Brian and Liz Watson, made up Saturday's evening entertainment. It was a delightful event based on the long-running and popular TV game show. Some Nuclear Jeopardy categories included: Oops, Ground Zero, Nuclear Personalities, Nuclear Nuts and Bolts and The White Train.

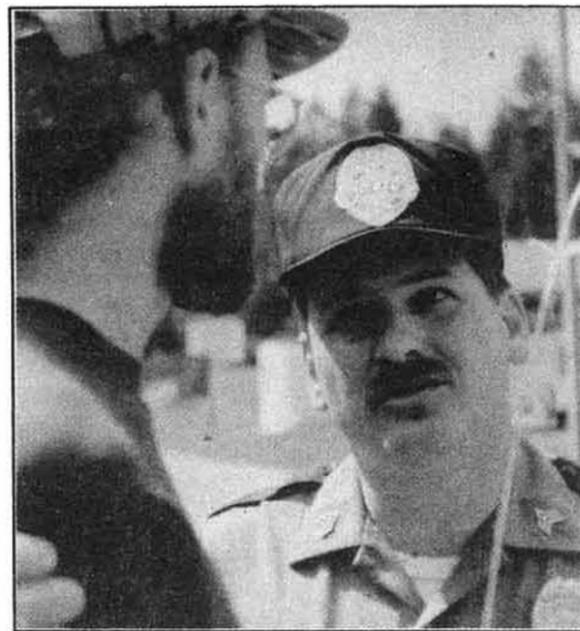
Weekend events ended Sunday with a walk from the Ground Zero Community to the main gate of the Trident submarine base. Glen Milner and his family played music, sunflowers were planted en masse, and Brian Watson and Mr. "No More Nukes" entered the base and received permanent "Ban and Bar" letters from the commander.

In its coming of age, Ground Zero promises to be yet another strong voice for justice in an ever-growing and committed network of people working for peace worldwide.

John Reese, and Bob Kubiniec poured a red, blood-like substance over the edge of the *McKee* providing a more fitting appearance for the *McKee*, the *Ohio*, and the water between. Leafleters explained their action, while others read aloud from past trial transcripts describing the horrors of Trident as a first-strike nuclear weapon. Carolyn, John, Bob and Erica Kay were escorted off the ship at that point. Maria Tomchick, Genjo Marinello and I were detained as we were leaving the ship, and Brian Watson and Gavin Greene were detained on the pier. All nine were released without charges and others participating in the action were not detained.

Thanks to all the folks who participated and helped in both actions, and thanks to the many people and organizations who turned out to greet the *Ohio's* arrival, the media coverage and public outcry over the Trident's visit has been phenomenal. The Navy, SeaFair, and the city of Seattle will have to think long and hard before bringing in Trident as a form of family entertainment again.

Geov Parrish is the editor of Eat The State! a "shamelessly biased" weekly political journal published in Seattle, WA.



Security officer Sanders tried coaxing Brian Watson of the Ground Zero Community to leave the Bangor Trident submarine base without being arrested.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September

20—Cancel Cassini Demonstration at the U.N. (44th St. & 1st Ave.) Speakers: Michio Kaku, Karl Grossman, Mark Eliss. Noon until 8 p.m. Contact: LOVEARTH, (718) 426-5361, Web: www.lovearth.org.

28—Cancel Cassini Demonstration at the White House. Noon until 8 p.m. Contact: LOVEARTH, above.

21-Oct. 3—Vigils to Halt Cassini. Round-the-Clock vigils at Cape Canaveral's front gates against the Cassini Space Probe, with its 73 lbs of plutonium, leading to the Oct. 4 demonstration. Contact: Florida Coalition for Peace and Justice, PO Box 2486, Orlando, FL 32802, (510) 443-7148.

October

4—International Demonstrations to Stop the Oct. 6 Cassini launch. Contact: Florida Coalition for Peace and Justice, above.

4-6—Cape Canaveral, FL: Launch Pad Sit-Ins to prevent the possible catastrophe of the plutonium-laden Cassini Space Probe. Contact: Florida Coalition for Peace and Justice, above.

8—Jury Trial of Trident/ELF Resisters in Ashland WI, 9:00 a.m., county courthouse. Two resisters face "obstruction" and "trespass" charges. (See facing page.) Contact: Nukewatch: (715) 472-4185.

24—"A Day Without the Pentagon." Plan a local action. Actions across the country to stress "breaking the military addiction." A project of War Resisters League with nationwide sponsorship. Contact: WRL, 339 Lafayette St. New York, NY 10012, (212) 228-0450, <wrl@igc.apc.org>

24-25—"So the Children Might Live": Protest against Project ELF on the anniversary of the death of Sadako due to the A-bombing of Hiroshima. Peace Crane-making and fast starting at 6:00 p.m. on the 24th in Duluth, MN. Caravan the 25th to the Navy's Project ELF for a noon gathering and nonviolent action. Contact: The Olive Branch: (218) 728-0629, or Nukewatch: (715) 472-4185.

November

9-11—Catholic Worker Gathering in Las Vegas. Celebrate Dorothy Day's 100th birthday at the Nevada Test Site. Contact: Nevada Desert Experience, (702) 646-4814, <nde@igc.apc.org>

13-16—We need 1,000 people to each deliver 1,000 signatures. Vigil and Civil Disobedience Action to Close the U.S. Army School of the Americas. Main Gate, Ft. Benning, Columbus, Georgia. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. Contact: SOA Watch, 1719 Irving St. NW, Washington, DC 20010, (202) 234-3440, http://www.derechos.org/soaw/

Please send your calendar items, articles, and photos to *The Pathfinder* on or before our deadlines: February 15; May 15; August 15; and November 15.

ELF Resisters Charged with Obstruction

Jane Hosking and Ida Cunningham, long-time ELF resisters from Duluth, MN, will be tried on charges of forfeiture-level trespass and misdemeanor "obstructing an officer" Oct. 8, before a 6-person jury in Ashland County Circuit Court.

Jane and Ida were among the 16 resisters arrested at the Mother's Day action May 11, 1997. Both Jane & Ida identified themselves to officers and peacefully cooperated with the arrest procedure.

The Ashland County Assistant District Attorney (DA) usually charges the ELF line-crossers with forfeiture "trespass," an offense the level of a traffic ticket. However, the DA has also brought, but never won a conviction on, the heavier misdemeanor charge of "obstructing an officer."

In Wisconsin, "obstructing" requires proof that a defendant knowingly obstructed an officer while the officer was acting in his or her official capacity. Obstruction includes deliberately giving false information to, or placing physical evidence, with intent to mislead the officer.

With ELF resisters regularly refusing to pay the \$256.00 trespass fine (and even enduring the loss of Wisconsin driving privileges as a result), the DA is anxious to stifle the resistance campaign. The obstructing charge has maximum penalties of nine months in jail and/or a \$10,000 fine. Bringing the charge is yet another attempt to scare off the protests.

In 1995, the DA brought obstruction charges against four ELF resisters who refused to give their names to arresting

officers. On motion from the defense, citing the Wisconsin Supreme Court (*Henes v. Morrissey* and *State v. Hamilton*), Judge Robert Eaton dismissed the charges. The DA appealed this dismissal, contending that the high court's rule applied to a suspect in a criminal investigation, while the ELF resisters were detained on "probable cause."

Arguing that refusal to identify oneself to an officer obstructs the police in their official duties, the DA actually sought to dismantle, in Wisconsin, the right to remain silent. This case was watched closely by civil rights activists.

The Court of Appeals agreed with Judge Eaton and the defense, and upheld his dismissal of the charge. "Mere silence, standing alone, is insufficient to constitute obstruction," the Appeals Court said.

Now, even after the Appeal Court's slap at the DA's attempt to expand police power, the office is again bringing obstruction charges.

The Ashland County Circuit Court has previously tried to impose illegally severe jail terms for nonpayment. Retired Judge William Chase handed down a 6-month jail term for refusing to pay \$175.00 fines. He withdrew the sentence on appeal when we found that the maximum penalty was 10 days.

It remains to be seen whether the DA can convince an Ashland jury to violate the Wisconsin Supreme Court standard—something the Appeals Court refused to do.

—JL

Doing Time on House Arrest

By Donna Howard-Hastings

It's been a year since Tom and I were tried for the disarmament action we called Laurentian Shield Plowshares. A year since a jury of Wisconsin citizens decided that we were not guilty of sabotage because we had not interfered with legally allowed military activity, a year since we received a felony conviction for criminal damage to property. And what a year it has been!

Once sent to prison, we never asked to come home on electronic monitoring supervision; we never agreed to meet all the conditions of our sentencing. Tom even requested that he be left in Gordon Prison Camp because we were certain that release to the "Intensive Sanction Program" would require immediate payments of restitution. The situation we find ourselves in at present is a complete surprise. We're both home, home is a joy, and we have not been required to do anything we cannot do in good conscience.

They've thrown us in that thar briar patch, where we're thriving. It feels like stealing back the days of our sentence, doing movement work while doin' time.

Plowshare resisters do not usually end up at home on electronic monitor. Some completely refuse to comply with the requirements of scheduling and supervision. Almost all are required to begin payment of restitution to the military branch declared in court to be "victim" of one's "crime." Most refuse to pay the required monitoring fees.

We have considered the scheduling only a minor inconvenience and supervision an opportunity to challenge a couple Department of Correction officers in a fairly close long-term relationship. Monitoring fees in Wisconsin turn out to be paid into an emergency assistance fund to help other intensive sanction inmates who need rent or clothing, etc., something we do not mind paying at all. And the rules with which we are expected to comply are far fewer than those inside prison.

Most surprisingly, we have not to this date encountered any consequences for our refusal to pay to the Navy even one cent of the \$7,497.03 alleged repair cost for our disarmament of the Trident/ELF antenna. We have not even been required to sign anything agreeing to pay. We have simply not been confronted about it, contrary to all our predictions.

It's a kind of pleasant limbo. As Wisconsin state inmates, we can't exactly return to normal activities and involvement, but we aren't inside a prison either. The two remaining years of our sentence are up for grabs—we could find ourselves back in prison quite abruptly, or we could spend a lot of that on parole.

It was hard not to be with those who tromped through Ashland County in opposition to Trident/ELF over the anniversaries of Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings. It is hard not to march to the front line and cross it, consistent with conscience and spiritual law.

But it isn't DOC rules that keep us from doing civil resistance right now. Before acting, we assessed our relationship, lives, energies and weaknesses, and then bit off as much as we felt we could possibly chew. We believed that with good support we could disarm the ELF antenna and survive the consequences and then reclaim the simple and intimate lifestyle we wanted after that. Perhaps more people could undertake acts of disarmament with the idea of serving one's sentence in the power of nonviolence, but being free to make choices along the way that limit the personal costs. We hope so.

We got the intimate, rural lifestyle back much sooner than we expected, but it isn't exactly simple. The insecurity of an unenforced court order which could send us back to prison lurks in the background even as we give thanks for the wonder of each day.

A public defender appointed to review the transcripts of our trial believes that Wisconsin statutes do not allow naming

a governmental entity as a "victim" due restitution. On August 18, Judge Eaton heard attorney Steven Weiss's argument on that point but denied a motion to vacate the restitution order. Weiss believes that "the law is clearly on our side" in this and will now ask the appellate court to overturn Eaton's order. It is an interesting situation, and certainly it would be lovely to be relieved of the threat of further prison time or a civil suit. But it has little to do with resistance. We will pay no money to the Navy. We challenge them to begin reimbursing society for their constant theft, and we find it an impossibly corrupt use of the language to call it our "victim."

So what to do right now? Having not planned for this eventuality, we are making it up as we go, doing the best we can. We have created a not-for-profit organization to logically follow our disarmament action: Laurentian Shield Resources for Nonviolence. We hope to bring in enough money with donations, speaking, teaching, writing, and selling a few products to support ourselves in this home cell and promote nonviolence vigorously and creatively. As such, we can lobby in support of the ELF Termination Act, create a phone tree linking peace and justice organizations in the region, support resisters, organize against threatened violence, etc. To support, make suggestions, ask us to speak, or request our monthly newsletter, Please contact us at 12833 E. Hwy 13, Maple, WI 54854, (715) 364-8533.

Donna and Tom Howard-Hastings shut down the Navy's Trident Trigger system, Project ELF, on Earth Day 1996, by cutting down three of its 600 antenna poles. A jury found them not guilty of sabotage but convicted them of criminal damage. Tom served 7, and Donna 10 months in county jail and state prison before being "released" to 3 years of intensive sanctions probation. Tom's been freed from electronic monitor and Donna is set to have house arrest end in Sept.

Nuclear Notes from Havana

by Jason Husby

Between July 26 and August 5, twelve thousand of the world's youth gathered in Havana, Cuba for the 14th World Festival and Conference of Youth and Students. A delegation of more than 800 students from the United States defied a U.S. travel ban which is still part of the 37-year-old embargo of the island.

The conference consisted of many centers of political discussion of issues ranging from human rights to the environment, as well as several tours of sites of cultural and socio-economic interest. I had the fortune of attending this historic event with a delegation of more than 40 from the University of Minnesota. We lived with Cuban families, generous and caring hosts, and attended a wide variety of activities, from concerts to a huge march through the streets of Havana.

While in Havana, I visited the Institute of Sciences and Nuclear Technology (ISNT). This institute is unique in Latin America. With an enrollment of approximately 300 post-graduate students, all of whom are guaranteed employment upon completion of the program—many as physicists in hospitals—we were able to tour the facility while the Cuban guides and professors answered our questions freely.

The institute is home to a small "subcritical" reactor used for research, which was a part of the tour. We were also able to inquire about the nuclear power plant in Cienfuegos province in Cuba. It is known as the Planta Nuclear de Juragua and is supposedly about 80 percent complete. The Cubans were building the plant with aid from the former Soviet Union, but construction was halted in 1991 at the end of preferential trade agreements with the USSR.

In order to complete construction, millions of dollars in investment capital is needed as well as petroleum and new hydraulics technology. Acquisition of all three is severely impeded by the U.S. blockade. The Cubans would also need approval from the International Atomic Energy Association, an organization which the Cubans stress is highly influenced by the United States.

The Cubans who spoke with us on the tour were clear in stating Cuba's eagerness to utilize the nuclear power reactor. A research center in Santiago de Cuba is dedicated to solar energy. Like many Americans, the tour guides at ISNT have been deceived into believing that solar power is not yet feasible. It is being studied for small applications like water heaters. Although nuclear power could cut the petroleum needs of the country by a third, it appears unlikely that Cuba will be able to complete the Juragua Plant in the near future, due to the increasing severity of the economic embargo.

While attending this conference, I also had the opportunity to be involved in a two-day discussion under the title "Peace, Security, Nuclear-Free World and International Coop-

eration." This event was attended by delegates from over 50 countries, who made statements and presentations concerning disarmament to a panel of delegates. Many delegates denounced the presence of foreign military bases in their respective countries—such as the U.S. base at Guantanamo, Cuba—as well as numerous aggressions against their countries sovereignty by imperialist nations.

I had the privilege of speaking to the panel as well, contributing my belief in nonviolent civil disobedience and direct acts of disarmament as a means of applying political pressure toward the end of a nuclear-free world. It was extremely gratifying to bring greetings from my peace community to people representing the struggles of the rest of the world. While we know of the existence of a global peace movement of activists, we rarely have the opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with these other communities. This is why I believe the conference was of great importance. We all agreed that the abolition of weapons of mass destruction, as well as conventional and chemical weapons, will only be possible through a global network of opposition.

It was crucial that the U.S. delegates were present to show our solidarity with this movement. It is important that they know that there are many of us here in the United States who take responsibility for our government's massive stockpiling and sales of nuclear weapons, and in fact some who dedicate their lives to putting an end to the war machine. I received an extremely positive reaction to my speech, especially from the Cuban delegates who were eager to meet me and hear of our beliefs and methods of opposition to Project ELF and other facilities.

At the closing of the disarmament conference a final statement was adopted by the delegates, as well as specific appeals from a number of countries. It was agreed that the end of the cold war obviously did not signify an end to the arms race and that there is a false hope about the status of nuclear weapons worldwide. We called for the immediate and complete abolition of all nuclear weapons and an end to current ethnic conflicts. It was also agreed that disarmament should begin to be based on the equal sovereignty of nations, the withdrawal of foreign military bases, and the non-expansion of NATO.

Like many of the delegates attending the 14th World Festival, I expected (or hoped) that the conference would be enlightening as well as empowering, and this is exactly what I took from it. First, it was indispensable to my Latin American Studies education. We receive hardly anything but misinformation about the socialist system in Cuba through the commercial media. My experiences at the conference and the opportunity to talk with the Cubans themselves, made it possible to see firsthand the advances that Cuba has made and

what the Cuban Revolution has been able to do for the Cuban people. While I was disappointed in their focus on activation of the nuclear power reactor, I admire the conviction of the Cuban people to uphold the Revolution under the choke hold of the U.S. blockade—which affects daily life in Cuba through the denial of such basic needs as food and medicine.

Second, I feel empowered to continue the struggle for disarmament now that I am home. It was indescribably heartening to hear the statements of peace from delegates of so many countries who are all working toward a common goal. And it has been equally gratifying to return to our community and share my experiences and energy, as I have here with you.

Peace be with you and hello from a great number of youth from Cuba and the World.

Jason Husby is a Latin American Studies major at the University of Minnesota and lives in Minneapolis.

The Pathfinder is the quarterly newsletter of **Nukewatch**, a project of **The Progressive Foundation**, founded in 1979.
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Nukewatch educates and organizes to nonviolently create an environment free of the nuclear industry and free of weapons of mass destruction.

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The Progressive Foundation
P.O. Box 649
Luck, WI 54853
phone: (715) 472-4185,
email: nukewatch@win.bright.net

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SO THE CHILDREN MAY LIVE

A DAY WITHOUT THE PENTAGON

Sadako Sasaki was two years old when on August 6, 1945 the U.S. dropped the atomic bomb on her home city of Hiroshima. Ten years later Sadako developed radiation-induced leukemia.

Sadako knew of the Japanese legend that if one folded 1,000 paper cranes, one's wish would come true. She began folding paper cranes wishing for her own health and for world peace. And Sadako wrote a poem: "I will write peace on your wings and you will fly all over the world."

Sadako Sasaki died on Oct. 24, 1955, with 646 cranes folded. Her classmates finished folding the rest.

Oct. 24 & 25 STOP PROJECT ELF

People all over the world still fold paper cranes as a symbol of world peace, and in grieving the death of Sadako Sasaki. Join us in making peace cranes, and in a commemorative fast, starting at 6:00 p.m. on Friday evening, Oct. 24, in Duluth, MN (call or write for location). Saturday, Oct. 25, caravan to or join us at the Navy's Trident trigger, Project ELF, for a noon gathering and Nonviolent Direct Action. Information: The Olive Branch, 1614 Jefferson St., Duluth, MN 55812, (218) 728-0629; or Nukewatch, P.O. Box 649, Luck, WI 54853, (715) 472-4185.

A DAY WITHOUT THE PENTAGON www.laka.org

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1 Cassini Launch
Oct. 6, 1997

2 Venus Flyby
April 21, 1998

3 Venus Flyby
June 20, 1999

4 Earth Flyby
August 16, 1999

5 Jupiter
Dec. 30, 2000

6 Saturn
June 25, 2004

CASSINI

NASA's Space Probe to Saturn
October 6, 1997—June 25, 2004

5

"A bizarre and insane-sounding scheme"

On October 6, 1997, NASA plans to launch its experimental nuclear-powered Cassini Space Probe on a 7-year trip to Saturn. On board will be 72.3 pounds of plutonium-238, the most deadly form of plutonium. Cassini is to blast off aboard a Titan 4-B rocket from Cape Canaveral, Florida. The satellite is to go first to Venus, fly around it twice, then hurtle back toward Earth in what NASA calls a "swingby." Cassini is expected to be traveling at 42,300 miles per hour as it catapults past Earth, only 312 miles above the surface. Utilizing the Earth's gravity for the special "slingshot" maneuver, NASA intends the craft to be thrown into deep space heading toward Saturn.

NASA has a record of past radiation accidents. With no need for this experiment, NASA's Cassini mission is extremely reckless and must be stopped.

6

CANCEL CASSINI !

HELP STOP NASA'S "PLUTONIUM ROULETTE"

On October 6, 1997, the National Aeronautical and Space Administration, NASA, intends to launch from the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida its Cassini space probe to Saturn, carrying 72.3 pounds of deadly plutonium-238. The plutonium dioxide, to generate a mere 745 watts of electricity for Cassini's onboard electrical instruments during its voyage, is 280 times more radioactive than bomb-grade plutonium-239.

In what Seattle journalist Geov Parrish calls "plutonium roulette" and "a bizarre and insane-sounding scheme," NASA has chosen to power Cassini with a deadly long-lived toxin, rather than use available solar power systems. NASA is rushing its Cassini mission to Saturn when a five-year postponement would allow for a safe solar-powered mission.

THE CASSINI MISSION

The \$3.4 billion Cassini Space Probe is a joint project of NASA, the European Space Agency and the Italian Space Agency.

A malfunction within the Earth's atmosphere could cause the "most toxic chemical known to science" to "shower down with a tremendous tragedy for the people of the Earth," according to City University of New York nuclear physics professor Dr. Michio Kaku.(1)

NASA itself states in its June 1995 Final Environmental Impact Statement for Cassini that, "In the unlikely event that an inadvertent reentry occurred, approximately five billion of the estimated seven to eight billion world population at the time of the 'swingby' could receive 99 percent or more of the radiation exposure."(2) NASA guesses that perhaps 2,300 could suffer health effects as a result.(3)

Inhaled plutonium particles can cause lung cancer, leukemia, liver cancer and bone cancer. Ingested particles can cause intestinal cancer, and particles on an open wound eventually cause bone cancer.

The space agency says that the odds of a disaster are "less than 1 in a million." However, Dr. Kaku says, "Those numbers are a scientific fraud."(4) Before the space shuttle Challenger explosion, NASA had estimated the risk of a catastrophic space shuttle launch failure as one in 100,000; after the accident, NASA's estimate was revised to one in 76.

Cassini's plutonium "radioisotope thermoelectric generators" (RTGs) pose a risk of spreading cancer both at launch time, and later when it flies back around the Earth in the "slingshot" or "swingby" maneuver being planned by NASA.

★ **LAUNCH RISK:** The odds of a failure during the launch on a Titan IV rocket are "between one in ten and one in twenty," according to John Pike, head of the Federation of American Scientists.(5)

★ **"SWINGBY" RISK:** During the "swingby" scheme—when Cassini shoots back toward Earth from Venus, in 1999, using Earth's gravity to increase its velocity for the trip to Saturn—Cassini will be traveling 42,300 mph, and trying to circle the globe only 312 miles overhead. But if Cassini falls into Earth's 75-mile deep atmo-

sphere, the machine will disintegrate, globally dispersing minute particles of plutonium oxide.

The amount of plutonium that NASA calculates might be released under these circumstances is "an astronomical quantity of a potent alpha-emitting cancer producer," writes Dr. John Gofman, medical physicist and co-discoverer of uranium-233. "The number of cancer doses is so high as to make calculations extraneous."(6)

NASA claims that Cassini's plutonium power pack is built into a tough container that will withstand any accidental crash through the Earth's atmosphere.

Karl Grossman, a professor of journalism who has written extensively on the dangers of nuclear power in space, talked with Dr. Horst Poehler, a veteran of 22 years of work with NASA contractors at the Cape. Dr. Poehler said the shielding for the plutonium on Cassini is, "fingernail thin. It's a joke."(7)

CASSINI AND THE PLUTONIUM RISKS IT ENTAILS ARE UNNECESSARY

In 1994, the European Space Agency (ESA) announced a "technological milestone": construction of high-efficiency solar cells that will generate the modest amount of electricity needed for deep space probes like Cassini. With the money to do the work, the ESA could, within five years, have solar cells ready to power a space mission to Saturn, according to Carla Signorini, a physicist with the ESA in Holland.(8)

The ESA reported that, "Until now, deep-space probes had to use thermonuclear power generators, like the so-called RTGs."(9) During a debate broadcast on Tampa, Florida's WMNF radio, a NASA representative admitted that solar power would have worked on the deep-space Galileo mission to Jupiter in 1989. This was the first time NASA had made such an admission.(10) On June 23, 1997, Gerhard Strobl, project leader for the ESA said on German television without any reservations that, "We can do solar cells for deep space missions."(11)

As Geov Parrish reports, "The scariest part is that the risk is being taken on for no apparent reason. Cassini is a scientific probe; alternative fueling via solar panels is perfectly feasible. Life on earth is being jeopardized essentially to feed the macho, pro-technology sensibilities of a militarized government bureaucracy (NASA) incapable of admitting error."(12)

THE OUTER LIMITS OF NUCLEAR MADNESS

In 1993 a Titan IV rocket like Cassini's exploded on its launch pad and blew its spy satellite payload to bits. On January 17, 1997 a NASA Delta II rocket exploded and crashed 13 seconds after take-off from Cape Canaveral. The \$60 million rocket was carrying a \$40 million NAVSTAR satellite used for pinpointing targets for nuclear missiles and B-2 bombers. The crash dumped fire and debris onto neighboring communities. Residents as far away as 100 miles were warned to stay in their homes because a toxic cloud from the burning rocket fuel was heading their way.(13)

More recently, on Nov. 16, 1996, the \$300 million Russian "Mars 96" spacecraft failed in its attempt to leave the Earth's gravitational field. The craft crashed back through the atmosphere

traveling 17,000 mph. The U.S. government understood just how serious a disaster may have occurred, because President Clinton himself phoned the Australian Prime Minister to warn him. *The New York Times* reported that the threat of the satellite's half-pound of plutonium landing on Australia, "sparked a short-lived national emergency."

That day, the U.S. announced the "very good news" that the plutonium "appeared likely to land harmlessly in the Pacific Ocean." The government admitted the possibility that a "small lethal cloud of plutonium" would contaminate the atmosphere if the canisters had burned up. Indeed, the Russian craft burned and crashed over Northern Chile, according to eye witnesses, and may have reached the ground.(14)

The Cassini space mission has already caused radioactive poisoning. Government workers building the RTGs in New Mexico are being contaminated by Cassini's toxic plutonium. Based on official documents it obtained, *The New Mexican*, of Santa Fe reported that 241 cases of radioactive contamination occurred at the Los Alamos National Laboratory between 1993 and 1995 as the RTGs were being processed. *The New Mexican* revealed that previous denials by NASA and the Department of Energy concerning worker contamination, reported in February in the *Albuquerque Journal*, were cover-ups.(15)

NASA OFFICIAL GOES CRITICAL

A recently retired NASA safety officer has condemned the Cassini mission, warning nearby residents to, "get the hell out of there before that launch." Alan Kohn, who spent 30 years with the agency, accused it of covering-up and lying about the dangers of rocket launches and of faking emergency response preparedness.

As head of emergency preparedness until 1994, Kohn was responsible for the safety of government workers at Cape Canaveral and at the Kennedy Space Center. He prepared for the Galileo and Ulysses missions which also carried plutonium, and Kohn was part of the Radiological Emergency Force Group and the RTG Contingency Working Group.

"Let me tell you, they didn't even let me do that job," Kohn said. "I was told that the job was cosmetic...that I could take all protective measures 'real time.'"

"The orders come down," he said in a June 24, 1997 speech to Cassini opponents outside the gates of Cape Canaveral. "And when the orders come down you do what you're told, you say what you're told to say, and you even think, despite your intelligence, the way you're taught to think." He regrets keeping quiet.

"My own management told me: lay off, keep a low profile, don't let the public know, and above all don't let the protest groups know that there is any danger at all." Kohn studied NASA maps showing that people in Titusville, Cape Canaveral, Cocoa Beach and Cocoa, etc. were at risk in the event of a plutonium accident.

Kohn ridiculed the actions NASA was willing to take in case of a disaster: "What they were going to do was...go out and monitor the fallout as the plutonium fell on your heads. And what could they have done to stop that plutonium from falling on your heads if it was a real-time emergency? Exactly nothing." (16)

Reckless Endangerment

In Recent Years Radioactive Materials from these Missions have Crashed to the Earth or Burned in the Atmosphere

★ MARS 96 (Russia)

Reentry date: Nov. 16, 1996. Location: Chile or Bolivia; 0.44 lbs (200 grams) of plutonium, thought to have burned and crashed near northern Chile.

★ COSMOS 1402 (USSR)

Reentry date: Feb. 7, 1983. Location: South Atlantic; 68 lbs of uranium-235. It is unknown if any debris reached the ground.

★ COSMOS 954 (USSR)

Reentry date: Jan. 24, 1978. Location: Northwest Territories, Canada; 68 lbs of uranium-235. Scientists concluded that 75 percent of the radioactive material was vaporized and dispersed world-wide.

★ RORSAT Mission (USSR)

Reentry date: April 1973. Location: Pacific Ocean, north of Japan. Radiation released from the RTG was detected.

★ APOLLO 13 (US)

Reentry date: April 14, 1970. Location: South Fiji. Officially, 5.5 lbs of plutonium-238 is said to be intact on the ocean floor. Dr. Karl Grossman contends that Apollo 13's "SNAP-27" power pack carried 8.3 lbs of plutonium. It fell into the 3½ mile deep Tonga Trench in the S. Pacific, off New Zealand.

★ COSMOS Lunar Missions (USSR)

Reentry date: 1969. Two missions failed. Radiation was detected as the crafts burned up in the atmosphere.

★ NIMBUS B-1 (US)

Reentry date: May 18, 1968. The debris, including 4.2 lbs of plutonium-238, landed in the Santa Barbara channel off California. The fuel was recovered.

★ TRANSIT 5BN-3 (US)

Reentry date: April 21, 1964. Location: Indian Ocean. 2.1 lbs of plutonium-238 in a "SNAP-9A" vaporized in the atmosphere and spread world-wide, prompting the U.S. to redesign its RTGs. A group of European government agencies found SNAP-9A debris to be present on all continents and at all latitudes.

Sources: Chris Bryson, "How Safe are Nuclear-Powered Space Missions?" *Christian Science Monitor*, Dec. 17, 1996; David Chandler, "Hot Spot: Mars 96 failure renews concern about plutonium-carrying spacecraft," *The Boston Globe*, Dec. 9, 1996; David Chandler, "U.S. is said to fumble space debris alert," *The Boston Globe*, Dec. 4, 1996; Dr. Karl Grossman, "Risking the World: Nuclear Proliferation in Space," *CovertAction Quarterly*, Summer 1996.

ROCKET FUEL LEAK THREATENS LAUNCH

Cassini's leaking rocket has threatened launch plans for the \$3.4 billion mission. After a two-day delay, NASA admitted Aug. 7, that it discovered a leak in the 'Centaur' upper stage of Cassini's Titan 4-B rocket.

The leak of super-cold liquid hydrogen occurred during a countdown test. (In 1989 liquid hydrogen fuel blew up the space shuttle Challenger, killing the crew and spreading burning debris across the Cape.)

While communication with NASA's Mars *Pathfinder* failed, and as the guidance systems aboard the Mir Space Station broke down, NASA made self-contradictory statements about its Cassini leak: first, that it was not serious and could be fixed; and, second, that they would know more about the leak soon and could then make a better assessment of the problem.

Bruce Gagnon, State Coordinator of the Florida Coalition for Peace and Justice, said the leak is especially worrisome because the plutonium is situated in the nose of the rocket, directly above the leaking 'Centaur' upper stage. "This is a perfect example that things can and do go wrong," said Gagnon. "No matter how many assurances we get, we know things can go wrong."

In a not-so-reassuring admission, NASA officials said the plutonium is encased in multi-layered canisters that can withstand most launch accidents, and that even if the canisters were to break, "only small amounts of the material would be reduced to the tiny particles that can be inhaled or swallowed, leading to cancer."

The Space Agency claimed Aug. 25 that the leak had been fixed and would not delay the intended Oct. 6 launch.

Source: *New York Times*, Aug. 9, 1997; *Florida Today*, Aug. 8, 1997.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Contact the Florida Coalition for more information or to purchase a copy of the award-winning videotape "Nukes In Space": Florida Coalition for Peace and Justice, P.O. Box 90035, Gainesville, FL 32607, (352) 468-3295 <fcj@afn.org>
- Participate in the Coalition's campaign of education and action. Send a delegation to Florida for the "Cancel Cassini International Demonstration and Nonviolent Actions," at Cape Canaveral, on Oct. 4, 1997.
- Call the WILPF Cancel Cassini Hotline at 1-800-651-1462 to send a telegram to the President to stop Cassini. Cost: \$7.50.
- Write to the President and your U.S. Senators and Representatives demanding:
 - 1) Legislation canceling the Cassini mission until NASA replaces the plutonium with a safe power source; and
 - 2) Congressional hearings to investigate: a) the need for the

mission; b) the potential consequences of a "Plutonium Challenger" disaster over Florida; and c) alternatives to the plutonium-powered deep-space mission.

- Urge your local cable provider and public broadcasting stations to show the "Nukes in Space" video (above).
- Use the information available from the FL Coalition and Nukewatch to write letters to newspaper editors.
- Create public actions to dramatize the potential harm of a Cassini disaster.
- Make a special contribution to Nukewatch today. We need your help to cancel Cassini and NASA's plans for future nukes in space.

~

Notes: 1) "Stop Using Plutonium in Space," Global Response, G.R. No.3, 1997, Boulder, CO (303) 444-0306; 2) *Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Cassini Mission*, NASA, June 1995, p.4-76; 3) David Chandler, "Hot Spot: Mars 96 failure renews concern about plutonium-carrying spacecraft," *The Boston Globe*, December 9, 1996; 4) *Ibid.*, n.3; 5) *Ibid.*, n.1; 6) *Ibid.*, n.1; 7) Dr. Karl Grossman, "Nuclear menace in outer space," commentary, *The Baltimore Sun*, December 8, 1996; 8) Marilyn Meyer, "Risks of plutonium launch debate," *Florida Today*, May 21, 1995; 9) European Space Agency, "New solar cells with record efficiency," Press Information Note, No. 07-94, Noordwijk, Netherlands, April 29, 1994; 10) *Just Peace*, newspaper of the Florida Coalition for Peace & Justice, Vol. 15, No. 1, p.6; 11) Press Release, June 25, 1997, Florida Coalition for Peace and Justice; 12) Geov Parrish, "How NASA could doom life on earth this October," *Eat The State!*, Seattle, WA, June 17, 1997; 13) "Self-Destructive Rocket," photo outline, *New York Times*, January 18, 1997, p.A7; 14) *Ibid.*, n.3; Chris Bryson, "How Safe are Nuclear-Powered Space Missions?" *The Christian Science Monitor*, December 17, 1996; David Chandler, "U.S. is said to fumble space debris alert," *The Boston Globe*, December 4, 1996; Michael Gordon, "Mystery of Russia Spacecraft: Where Did it Fall to Earth?," *New York Times*, November 19, 1996; "Russian Space Probe Falls to Earth," *Reuters News Service Online*, November 18, 1996; 15) "Lab contamination rises: Alamos cites NASA project," *The Denver Post*, July 30, 1996; 16) Alan Kohn, speech at Cape Canaveral, FL, June 24, 1997; *The Orlando Sentinel*, June 14, 1997.

See also: Dr. Karl Grossman, "Risking the World: Nuclear Proliferation in Space," *Covert Action Quarterly*, Summer 1996.

Written by John LaForge

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NUKEWATCH

THE PROGRESSIVE FOUNDATION

P.O. Box 649, Luck, WI 54853

Phone: (715) 472-4185, Fax: (715) 472-8721

nukewatch@win.bright.net

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