

NUKEWATCH

Summer, 1999

PATHFINDER

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



Photo by Heleen Snyders, Renhum, Netherlands

Water cannons and baton-wielding military police were used against 200 nonviolent "citizen inspectors" at the NATO headquarters May 27 in Brussels, Belgium, when they entered the base in an attempt to find evidence of NATO's involvement in the planning of illegally indiscriminate nuclear warfare. The cannons, above, were trained on fence cutters clearing the way through razor wire barricades erected in anticipation of the anti-war action. Over 270 were arrested at the base over three days, including Nukewatch staffer John LaForge.

The demonstrators had just completed a two-week-long peace walk that started from the International Court of Justice in The Hague, Netherlands. Following a one-hour meeting inside the headquarters, NATO officials rejected the group's demands for a nuclear "No First Use" declaration, full disclosure of the Alliance's nuclear war plans, a pledge to negotiate a Nuclear Weapons Convention that will finally ban the bomb, and an immediate halt to NATO's bombing of Yugoslavia. Krista van Velzen, a spokesperson with For Mother Earth International which organized the walk, said of the impasse, "We will continue to inspect the official nuclear weapons states, as long as they violate international law." —JL

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From the Peace Palace to the War Room: An International Walk for Disarmament

Story and Photos by John LaForge

BRUSSELS, Belgium, May 27—Calling ourselves “an international citizens inspection team to prevent war crimes,” 500 nonviolent activists from around the world who had walked more than 100 miles from the Hague, converged on the beleaguered NATO headquarters, where we were met with water cannons and hundreds of baton-wielding riot police.

The marchers, protesting NATO’s illegal nuclear weapons policies and its disregard for civilian lives in its bombing of Yugoslavia, defied the Mayor of Brussels’ declaration that our final walk to the NATO facilities was illegal. With my Nukewatch press badge in tow, I was honored to be a part of the group, arrested twice, an enemy of the Alliance’s nuclear, chemical and conventional warfare operations.

Over the course of three days, some 272 would-be inspectors were arrested on a variety of charges—or no charge at all—and jailed for up to 12 hours. The May 27 arrests followed NATO’s refusal to disclose records of its “Nuclear Planning Group” regarding its weapons of mass destruction. Our international delegation of self-styled citizen inspectors had intended to provide the information to the international press, the United Nations International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court.



A total of 21 affinity groups, like the one above, practiced “locking weight” during large group nonviolence training May 26 at the walkers’ camp near Mechelen outside Brussels. Participants devoted eight hours to the planning and practice of nonviolent action.

On Saturday, May 29, 63 activists were arrested without probable cause of any kind, miles away from the NATO base, under a temporary edict issued by the Mayor of Brussels who declared any protest of NATO illegal. Fifty of those arrested had simply stepped from a crowded public tram when national police and Belgian secret police detained them and carted them to jail.

The police actions made a mockery of NATO’s routine championing of democratic freedoms such as a free press. En route May 29 to a publicized press conference, 15 of us were surrounded and ordered out of our cars after we stopped at a light. When I asked the chief officer why we’d been pulled over, he told me “You’re in a war zone.” With my press badge displayed, I scribbled his answer in a notebook and reminded him that no declaration of war had been made by any party. When I then asked the name of the charge against us, he answered, “Uh, the impression of the intention to interfere with NATO.” No one made it to the press conference, but instead we were jailed without charges till midnight and released.

Only our legal advisors were unsurprised by the Mayor’s adoption of a police state mentality. Kuen Muntz, a Brussels-based peace activist, smiled at our outrage and explained that “Brussels is the birthplace of surrealism.”

Starting out Sunday, May 16 from the Peace Palace in The Hague, Netherlands, seat of the UN International Court of Justice, about 250 of us walked, talked, danced, drummed, sang and reveled for twelve days in a spirited anti-war parade of flags, congas, whistles, banners and costumes. With participants from 31 countries, we walked a total of 124 miles carrying a demand for the immediate start of international negotiations for a treaty banning all nuclear weapons (as required by the July 8, 1996 Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice), and for an end to the U.S./NATO bombing raids against Yugoslavia. In the spirit of UN arms inspections in Iraq and North Korea, we likewise demanded that NATO’s Nuclear Planning Group provide us “transparent” access to information about its European nuclear arsenal including warhead numbers, types, yields, costs and targets.

Organized by For Mother Earth International, an anti-war network based in Gent, Belgium, the “2000 Walk for Nuclear Disarmament” was planned many months prior to the U.S.-led bombing of Yugoslavia. NATO currently threatens the “first-

use” of the 200 nuclear warheads and other weapons of mass destruction that it now deploys in Belgium, Britain, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, and Turkey.

Germany and Canada suggested last November that NATO renounce its nuclear first-use policy. Defense Secretary William Cohen attacked the anti-nuclear proposal, saying the current policy was “sound doctrine.” A NATO delegate told the *New York Times*, Nov. 24, “We have 200 nuclear weapons systems in [Europe] and their credibility would be undone without the first-strike option.”

Founded in 1949, NATO members “agreed to settle disputes by peaceful means, develop individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack, to regard an attack on one as an attack on all, and take necessary action to repel an attack under Art. 51 of the UN Charter.” The undeclared, immoral and illegal U.S./NATO bombardment of the former Yugoslavia—no NATO member was attacked—added a mournful background and a dreadful urgency to the march.

Nevertheless, and in spite of sore feet and sunburns, we all enjoyed the lush, windswept, bicycle-friendly tabletop flatness of the Dutch and Flemish countryside, and the ornate, statuesque beauty of their medieval city centers—en route to the sprawling urban command center for NATO’s nuclear, chemical and conventional warfare operations.

Nearly every day on the road brought news of another U.S./NATO crime, including the killing of civilians in trains, TV and radio studios, police stations, hospitals, refineries, apartment buildings, power plants, refugee columns, a nursing home, an embassy and even a prison. My journal mentions May 13: a Korisa refugee encampment, 80 killed; May 19: a Belgrade hospital, 4 killed; May 30: a Varvarin bridge and market, 11 killed; May 31: a Surdulica hospital, 16 killed; May 31: a Novi Pazar apartment complex, 10 killed. NATO and the UN HCR say that 1,500 civilians have been killed by the U.S./NATO bombardment.

—As anti-war and human rights activists with years of jail experience between us, the multiple bombing of the Istok prison—and the death there of at least 19 inmates—was particularly horrifying. Vladan Bojic, an inspecting magistrate who visited the scene, said the attack was “one of the biggest crimes of modern civilization.”

The walkers were fed delicious and complex meals by “Rampenplan” (translation: “disaster plan”) a mobile kitchen collective based in Sittard, Netherlands. The members donate their time, cooking vegetarian and vegan meals for peace and anti-nuclear groups across Europe.

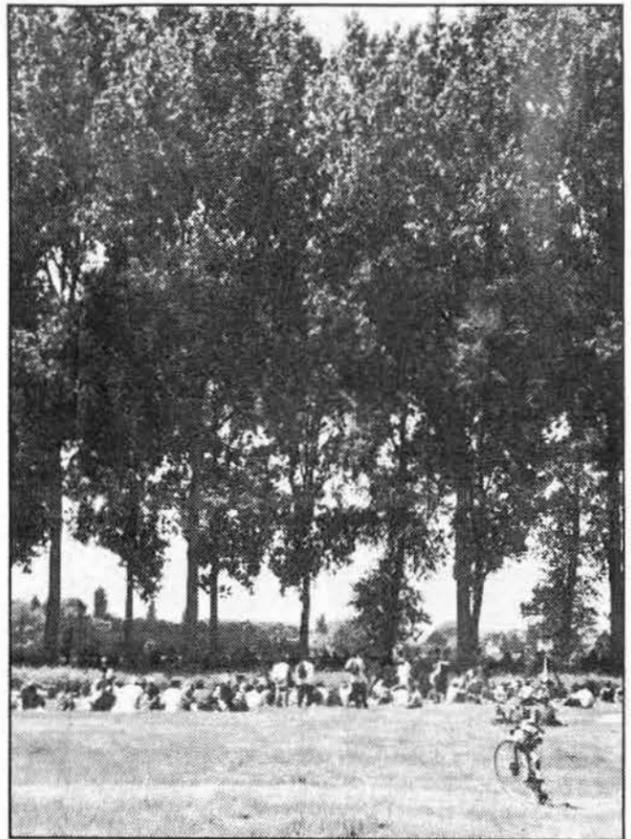
The walk was supported as well by six City Councils that offered camping facilities and warm greetings, while official receptions took place at the city halls of Antwerp and Mechelen, Belgium. In Dordrecht, Netherlands, Mayor Vanja Bonkina spoke to the group as we rested near a giant bridge, “We see your visit as an honor. Here in Dordrecht, there began an 80-year-long war between the Dutch and the Spanish. We still want peace.” In Zevenbergen, City Councilor Marjolein Dewit told us, “I’m amazed to see people from all over the world here. Thank you for using your words to fight for peace.”

As we campaigned, we were all aware of the stark contrast between the conscientious working life of the farms, villages and towns we passed, and the barbed, mechanized and impassive face of the war system we condemn. Our slow-paced, pedestrian experience of civil society—blooming agriculture, manicured suburbs, bustling cities—was abruptly ended upon reaching Brussels.

With NATO HQ, the European Parliament, branch offices of all the Fortune 500, and the embassies of the G-8 all established here, the city is shadowed by the spirit of empire, haunted by the machines and armor of national police, secret police, military police and riot police.

Dr. Fernand Rochette, director of the Catholic high school who defied the Mayor by hosting us on his campus, took the ice out of the city’s cold reception. He told us, “I didn’t hesitate to welcome you. My students will benefit from your commitment to the prevention of war.”

The long, hot days on the road were filled with meetings: meetings along the way, meetings over meals, meetings during camp work and after hours. Regular meetings, often held after six hours of walking, elec-



Walkers lunched and rested May 22 beneath a stand of tall poplars south of Breda, Netherlands en route to Antwerp. Bicycles were used for messages, rest and first-aid help.

trified the fluid organization of 250 strangers. We met as a whole, in speakers’ councils, in affinity groups, as organizers and as nonviolence trainers. The consequent solidarity and friendship that was established, over the course of 200 kilometers, across 25 languages and 30 cultures, came as a beautiful shared gift.

It was easy to see why dozens of the participants in this disarmament walk were seasoned by previous marches. They know from experience the love and power that a peace walk generates.



Over-tired, windburned and exhilarated, but “sorry the walk is over” after 220 kilometers, the walkers entered Brussels May 26—in defiance of the Mayor’s prohibition. “Brussels and Belgrade are the only two places in Europe where demonstrations against the war are prohibited,” said Pol D’Huyvetter, a spokesperson with For Mother Earth.

ORGANIZE * EDUCATE * EMPOWER NUCLEAR FREE GREAT LAKES SUMMER ACTION CAMP 1999

A week long gathering focused on skills building, networking, and nonviolent public demonstration to protect the Great Lakes and work toward a sustainable energy future.

August 13 - 19

at Camp Soni Springs, near Three Oaks, Michigan
\$10 donation, plus daily food.

Contact: Nukewatch, P.O. Box 649, Luck, WI 54853, (715) 472-4185

ELF Goes to War

By Cory Bartholomew and Bonnie Urfer

In response to the U.S.-led bombing of Yugoslavia—its towns, bridges, trains, power stations, and even a prison—peace activists have held four protests at the gates of Project ELF calling for its shut-down.

Nukewatch confirmed in April that Project ELF is likely being used to aid in the horrendous submarine and jet bomber attacks. Dozens of Tomahawk Cruise missiles have been fired into the Balkans from the *USS Miami* and the *USS Norfolk*, U.S. Navy fast attack submarines positioned in the Adriatic Sea. According to Rob Aiksnoras of the Naval Undersea Warfare Center in Newport, Rhode Island, who spoke with staffer John LaForge April 12, "Presumably they can 'task' *Miami* to receive" [messages from ELF] because "all the subs have ELF receivers."

Thirty-five demonstrators attended an April 18 protest at the Wisconsin ELF site, where Nukewatch staffer Bonnie Urfer used kryptonite bicycle locks to shut down the main gate. One lock was attached to the fence and one around her neck. It took ELF employees and sheriff's deputies about two hours to remove the locks, cite and release Urfer. Four other protesters were taken into custody and transported to the sheriff's department in Ashland.

Nukewatch later learned that Navy officers would be at the site April 20 for an "inspection." Navy brass are rarely seen at ELF so once again, resisters gathered to oppose its use in the planning or commission of war crimes. By the 20th, all trace of the April 18 action had been erased: The gate was freshly painted, chalk warnings ["NATO Crime Scene"] were washed from the road. Sheriff's deputies informed us that ELF staff had for days been polishing floors, washing windows and voiding all traces of ELF opposition. It should be so easy to abolish war.

Trespassers have been given citations ranging from \$181 to \$209. Those choosing to not pay fines are likely to lose their

Wisconsin driving privileges for up to 5 years. A federal law makes suspension of one state's driving privileges active for all 50 states.

ELF "Improvement" Update

The U.S. Forest Service and the Navy are pushing ahead with a so-called "ELF Improvement Plan," but it's anyone's guess as to why. At an estimated cost of \$2 million, each of the following excuses is mentioned by one source or another as a reason for the "improvement," scheduled for completion sometime in 2002: 1) to save on power costs; 2) for annual certification; 3) for more efficient grounding of the current; 4) for performance improvement; 5) to improve the safety of the line; 6) to improve the ecological review of aquatic systems; 7) to reduce the cost of manually evaluating the ecological review; 8) to reduce stray voltage; or 9) to strengthen the world-wide communications power of the system.

The U.S. Navy says it wants to eliminate as much of the buried horizontal wire as possible. Copper electrodes will be inserted in up to ten, 100-foot shafts. The electrodes are intended to distribute the millions of watts of electricity that the system jolts deep into the Earth. The existing cable is buried horizontally six feet beneath the surface.

Thirty acres of the Chequamegon National Forest will be razed for this "improvement." Vice Admiral, Robert J. Natter, director of the Navy's Space, Information Warfare, Command and Control, said Dec. 9 last year, "Once design work is completed, it will be submitted to the U.S. Forest Service for approval before any permission to begin construction is given." The U.S. Forest Service says the public comment period for the ELF improvement plan begins in July and will last for 30 days. Send your comments to: District Ranger, Great Divide Ranger District, P.O. Box 126, Highway 13, Glidden, WI 54527, (715) 264-2511.

Mothers' Day at the Wisconsin ELF Site

For the 12th Mothers' Day in a row, peace activists gathered in Northern Wisconsin to resist Project ELF and celebrate the original anti-war intent of Mothers' Day. "Moms Not Bombs" was the theme as people from around the Great Lakes region gathered at Anathoth Community Farm and Project ELF for a weekend of food, music, fun and nonviolent resistance.

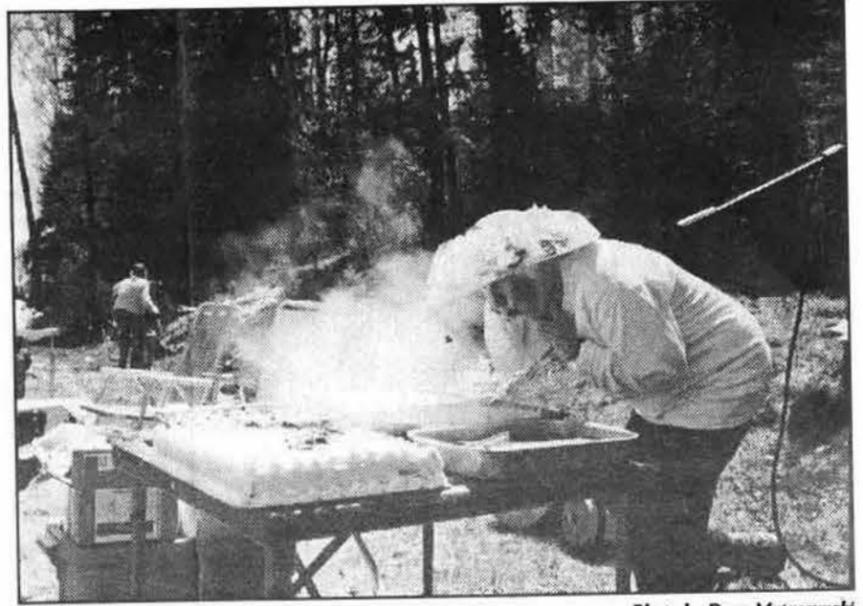


Photo by Dave Mataczynski

Maggie Drew blows out 80 Birthday candles at Project ELF on Mothers' Day and was one of 11 people arrested for opposing the submarine warfare system.

In 1870 Julia Ward Howe delivered her Mothers' Day Proclamation urging mothers to stop sending their sons to war against other mothers' sons.

Saturday's events included a mock trial starring ELF resister Mary Alice Shemo, of Pittsburgh, PA, who used the event to prepare for her May 11 bench trial. During the real trial, Shemo was denied a defense by Ashland County Judge Robert Eaton. The Judge found her guilty of trespass stemming from the M.L. King Day action, and because she refused to pay a fine, sentenced Shemo to nine days in jail.

On Sunday, May 9, about 100 people gathered at Project ELF where we met our guest of honor Maggie Drew, co-chair of MN Metro Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Drew chose to celebrate her 80th birthday by resisting ELF. Maggie was the founder of the Mothers' Day protests at Project ELF in 1987. In 1989 she celebrated her 70th birthday by crossing the same line. Other speakers included Jeanne Larson, of Cable, with members of the 1984 "Women's Peace Presence at Project ELF," long-time peace activist Gail Vaughn and disarmament activist Donna Howard-Hastings.

The whole group began using yarn to tie the entry shut with a colorful "web of life." Eleven individuals who wove the front gate closed were arrested for trespassing. They were ordered to pay \$209 or face jail time and the loss of their driving privileges.

As long as it's been "tasked" to threaten and wage war, we've been "tasked" to resist ELF.

CALENDAR

July

6-8—Grass Roots Getaway & Get Together, to protest and resist Project ELF and observe the 3rd anniversary of the World Court opinion on the illegality of nuclear weapons. Enjoy Little Presque Isle cabins near Marquette, in Upper Michigan, as well as discussions of international law, nuclear weapons, nonviolent action and more. Supervised activities for children provided. **Contact:** Laurentian Shield Resources for Nonviolence: *Phone:* (715) 364-8533; *Email:* laurentn@cpinternet.com

August

6—Hiroshima Day Observance at Y12 weapons complex. Grand finale of the year's events in Oak Ridge, TN. **Contact:** OREPA, 100 Tulsa Rd, Suite 4A, Oak Ridge, TN 37830; *Phone:* (423) 483-8202; *Email:* orep@igc.org.

6-8—Beyond the Bomb; A New Agenda for Peace & Justice. Speakers, workshops, entertainment and nonviolent demonstration and civil disobedience at Los Alamos National Laboratory—birthplace of the atomic bomb. **Contact:** Peace Action, 1819 H St. NW #420, Washington, DC 20006; *Phone:* (202) 862-9740 ext. 3038; *Fax:* (202) 862-9762.

7-9—Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action, in Poughkeepsie, Wash. A weekend of reflection and action with Kathleen Pruitt. **Contact:** Ground Zero, 16159 Clear Creek Rd., Poughkeepsie, WA 98370, *Phone:* (360) 779-4672.

9-16—Trident Plowshares 2000 disarmament camp at Faslane with open actions at Coulport, Scotland. **Contact:** TP2000, 42-46 Bethel St., Norwich, Norfolk, NR2 1NR; *Phone:* (01603) 611953; *Email:* reforest@gn.apc.org

3-8—Tromp Trident Trek III: 52-mile Peace Walk and Hiroshima and Nagasaki Commemoration, from Ashland, WI to Project ELF. Camping, community-building, nonviolent direct action, evening discussions. **Contact:** Nukewatch, *Phone:* (715) 472-4185; *Email:* nukewtch@win.bright.net



Photo by John LaForge

Bonnie Urfer sits at the main gate of Project ELF in a "No Business as Usual" action in opposition to the bombings of Kosovo.

action had been erased: The gate was freshly painted, chalk warnings ["NATO Crime Scene"] were washed from the road. Sheriff's deputies informed us that ELF staff had for days been polishing floors, washing windows and voiding all traces of ELF opposition. It should be so easy to abolish war.

Trespassers have been given citations ranging from \$181 to \$209. Those choosing to not pay fines are likely to lose their

3rd TROMP TRIDENT TREK

From Ashland, WI. to the Navy's Project ELF, August 3 through 8, 1999.

Remember Hiroshima & Nagasaki. Abolish nuclear weapons!

For more information and to register please send your name, address, and phone number to Nukewatch:

P.O. Box 649, Luck, WI 54853; telephone: (715) 472-4185; email: nukewtch@win.bright.net

Ashland Orientation Tues. Aug. 3
Walk begins Wed. Aug. 4



You're invited on a 52-mile peace walk to commemorate the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Walk or bicycle for an afternoon, a day or two, or the whole four-day stretch. We'll be camping overnights. Support vehicles carry gear and food.

Visit our camp sites, join the music, conversations and campfires.

Children of all ages welcome. Plan to join the gathering at Project ELF Sunday, Aug. 8th at noon with lunch, music, speakers, legal public rally & nonviolent direct action. (\$5 - \$10 sliding-scale food cost per day.)

NUCLEAR SHORTS

Power Reactor Shut-down & Disassembly: Electricity's Endless "Balloon" Mortgage

WASHINGTON—The electric industry is the largest in the U.S. with \$700 billion in assets and \$200 billion in annual revenue. Most electric bills include a tax for an escrow account set aside to pay for the retirement, tear-down and disposal (decommissioning) of power reactors. Today, 66 U.S. reactors are short a total of \$14 billion for decommissioning, between \$200 to \$300 million per reactor.

Rate payers will be picking up the tab for this NRC oversight long after the reactors are shutdown. When Trojan closed, it had only \$43 million of the \$198 needed, Maine Yankee had \$188 million of the \$357 million it required and Zion 1 and 2 had collected \$362 million of the \$834 million needed for their shutdown.

Few of the 76 reactor owners have collected funds at a rate that would pay for decommissioning and the NRC does not include all related expenses when it estimates decommissioning costs. In the U.S., not a single reactor has operated through its full licensing term.

Some economists have predicted that half of U.S. reactors will be retired early due to poor economic performance and deregulation of the power industry. In California for instance, customers can now choose an electricity provider. None of those predicted to close early will have sufficient decommissioning funds on hand.

—U.S. General Accounting Office, RCED-99-75, May, 1999.

NASA's Titan 4 Failures: Three Out of Three

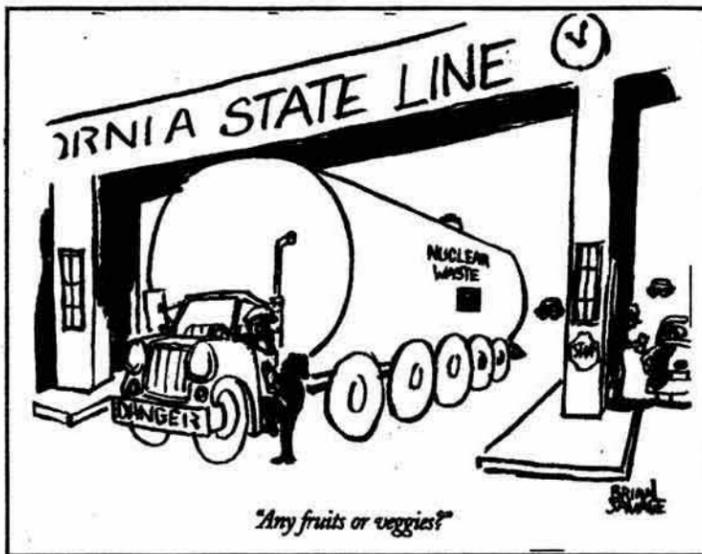
CAPE CANAVERAL—The Air Force blew their latest Milstar satellite into a useless orbit April 30, putting another \$1.2 billion up in smoke. The Pentagon blames manufacturer Lockheed Martin for poor quality control.

Each of NASA's last three Titan 4 rocket launches have failed. The total cost to taxpayers: \$3 billion. The latest Titan clunker is drifting without enough fuel to right its orbit. The new satellite was intended to enhance far-flung military actions and provide fast data-rate transmissions.

Milstar satellites were developed in the cold war to provide jam-proof communication during nuclear war. The Air Force says it can also use Milstar to support troops, tanks, ships and aircraft in the field, pick up phone conversations and locate rocket launch sites. The system was employed during the 78-day bombardment of Yugoslavia.

With the plutonium-laden Cassini Space Probe due to fly by the Earth August 17 at 42,000 mph, NASA's six rocket failures in less than nine months don't inspire confidence.

—Florida Today, May 1, 1999; Lockheed Martin, Press Release, April 29, 1999; AP aerospace writer, Marcia Dunn, May 5, 1999.



has been scrapped, "because it produces explosive gases."

The failed process produces benzene gas that will explode in certain concentrations. The DOE has known about the problem since 1983 when more benzene was produced than could be measured with instruments. The DOE is firing Westinghouse, the contractor it blames for the failure.

The government's Savannah River Site in South Carolina has about 34 million gallons of waste held in 51 giant, aging underground tanks that are "vulnerable to earthquakes." In Washington State, at Hanford, 177 tanks hold 54 million gallons of similar liquid rad wastes.

The plan was to treat the dissolved radioactive cesium in the tanks using chemicals, causing the highly radioactive elements to sink to the bottom. The bottom waste, radioactive for thousands of years, would then have been collected and "vitrified" or turned into "glass logs."

Westinghouse has suggested another method it says allows a faster process and produces less benzene. Cost: \$1 Billion.

The DOE estimates that it needs to fabricate 5,200 remotely-handled waste "logs," each costing \$2.6 to \$3.3 million, at a total of between \$13.6 and \$17.4 billion—not including the \$2 billion to build the vitrification facility.

—New York Times, June 2, 1999; General Accounting Office, RCED-99-69, April 30, 1999.

British /U.S. Nuclear Waste Scam Thwarted

MANCHESTER, England—A corporate conspiracy to illegally ship thousands of irradiated waste reactor fuel rods to England—12 barge loads, over five years—has been exposed by Friends of the Earth in London.

Documents leaked to FOE disclosed discussions—between

British Nuclear Fuels Ltd. (BNFL) and three New England utilities—about deadly waste shipments from Yankee Rowe, Connecticut Yankee, and Maine Yankee reactors to Sellafield in Cumbria, England.

The U.S. reactor operators are running out of space to store their deadly waste fuel rods. The conspirators intended to buy 15 or so years of storage time, avoid costly U.S. waste regulations, and secretly violate the British ban on storage of imported nuclear waste.

In a May 28 letter to the three U.S. utilities, Ian Porter, a BNFL manager, wrote, "I would be most grateful if, in your discussion with DOE you do not refer to BNFL by name or to the specific cask names mentioned in the paper.

Clearly, if you wish to leave something in writing with DOE it will be necessary to 'doctor' this paper accordingly. I am sure that Marilyn will help you in this."

England's energy minister has said BNFL's March 22 purchase from CBS of Westinghouse's commercial nuclear businesses (which make uranium fuel for U.S. reactors) would not involve imports of U.S. nuclear waste. "American wastes will be dealt with in the U.S.," the minister said last July 8.

NRC officials say no criminal charges are pending because, "there's nothing that says you can't talk to someone."

—The Manchester Guardian, May 18, 1999; Portland Press Herald, May 18, 1999.

Jury Refuses to Convict Plowshares in Conspiracy Trial

PRESTON, Scotland—On Friday May 14, the 8-day trial in Preston Crown Court of three Swedish Plowshares activists ended when the jury, after 7 hours of deliberation, could not reach a verdict. Annika Spalde, Stellan Vinthagen and Ann-Britt Sternfeldt, of the Bread Not Bombs Plowshares group, had been accused of conspiring to cause criminal damage to

the new Trident nuclear weapons submarine, HMS Vengeance, last September 13 at Barrow.

Stellan said, "We are really impressed that a jury of ordinary citizens from a town so dependent on weapons production refused to find us guilty, in spite of them being told by the judge that that was their only option."

—Bread Not Bombs, Trident Plowshares 2000, May 16, 1999

Peace Activists Paul Kabat, 67, Larry Cloud-Morgan, 61, Pass On

The peace movement lost two respected, long-term activists in the span of a single week this spring. Paul Kabat, 67, died May 31 at a Nashville, IL nursing home from the consequences of diabetes and a serious stroke suffered April 30. Then June 6, Larry Cloud-Morgan, 61, died at a Minneapolis hospital from complications caused by diabetes.

Both men were thrust into the headlines in 1984 when a federal judge sentenced them to prison for 10 and eight years respectively, some of the longest sentences ever imposed for a Plowshares disarmament action. The Pruning Hooks used sledgehammers, blood and a compressor-driven jack hammer in their Plowshares action against a Minuteman 2 ICBM on Armistice Day in 1984. Their story is partly retold in the Nukewatch book, *Nuclear Heartland*.

Besides his anti-war activism, Kabat was a Catholic Priest and a life-long family farm advocate. Cloud-Morgan was an Anishinabe spiritual leader, a linguist of the Ojibwe language and an Indian treaty rights activist.



L-R, Paul Kabat, Helen Woodson, Larry Cloud-Morgan and Carl Kabat, Nov. 11, 1984, at their Minuteman missile "Silo Pruning Hooks" action in Missouri.

RESOURCES

- *CARD, Citizens for Alternatives to Radioactive Dumping, 144 Harvard SE, Albuquerque, NM 87109; (505) 266-2663.
- *Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety, 107 Clenega St., Santa Fe, NM 87501; (505) 986-1973.
- *Food & Water Journal, 389 Vermont Route 215, Walden, VT 05873; (802) 563-3300.
- *For Mother Earth Int'l, Lange Steenstraat 16/d, 9000 Gent, Belgium, +32-9-233-49-24 <pol@motherearth.org>
- *Nuclear Information and Resource Service, 1424 16 St. NW, #404, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 328-0002; <nirsnet@igc.apc.org>
- *Rocky Mountain Institute, P.O. Box 1156, Boulder, CO 80306; (303) 444-6981
- *Trident Plowshares 2000, 42-46 Bethel St., Norwich, Norfolk, HR2 1NR, England, Phone: (01263) 512049; Email: tp2000@gn.apc.org, Web: <http://www.gn.apc.org/tp2000>

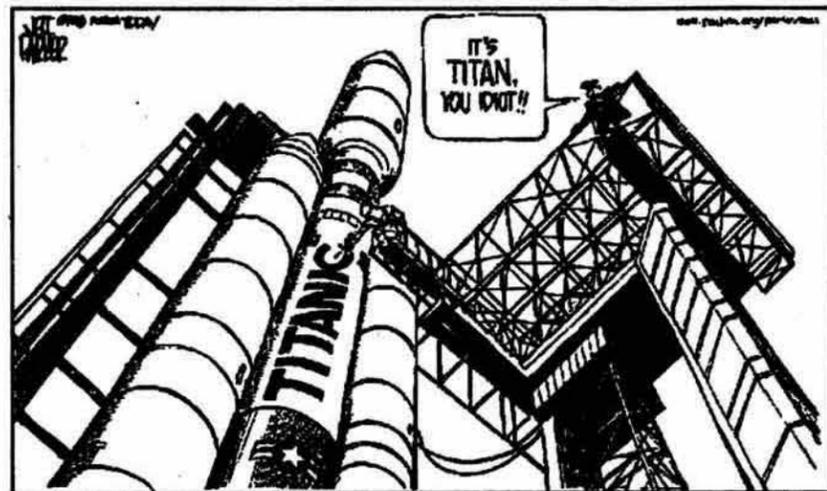
The Pathfinder is the quarterly newsletter of Nukewatch, a project of The Progressive Foundation, founded in 1979.

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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.

The Pathfinder submission deadlines:
Nov. 15, Feb. 15, May 15, Aug. 15.

The Progressive Foundation
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Quakes Still Rocking Yucca Mt. Waste Site

LAS VEGAS—After spending more than \$6.5 billion, the DOE has to yet to declare its radioactive waste project at Yucca Mountain, NV suitable for long-term, (hundreds of thousands of years) storage of irradiated reactor fuel rods.

Between May 14 and 17, another 16 earthquakes, ranging between 2.8 and 4.3 on the Richter Scale, shook Yucca Mt. Quakes are so common in the area that hardly a week goes by when it is not listed on the U.S. Geologic Survey's earthquake site. Public Citizen, NIRS and other DOE critics said in February that the government's own analysis should finally disqualify the site. (See Spring 1999 Pathfinder)

—Department of Energy Challenges, GAO/OCG-99-6; U.S. Earthquake Service, <http://civeng.carleton.ca/cgl-binz/quakes>

Failed Nuclear Waste Plan Called "Explosive"

WASHINGTON—After 16 years and \$489 million, the Department of Energy's (DOE) plan for separating millions of gallons of liquid "high-level" from "low-level" radioactive waste

Rad Waste on the Road to WIPP

By Bonnie Urfer

It will leak. And when it does, it will contaminate the environment with deadly radioactivity for 200,000 years. Nevertheless, U.S. District Judge John Garrett Penn declared that the Department of Energy (DOE) is free to ship military radioactive waste to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) near Carlsbad, New Mexico. (See Spring 1998 *Pathfinder*.) Toward the end of March, some of the cancer-causing garbage—left over from nuclear bomb production and space programs—began arriving.

Clothing, tools, equipment, soil and sludges contaminated with plutonium and other highly radioactive carcinogens are on their way down into caverns 2,000 feet beneath the surface, where they will eventually be buried in collapsing, 250-million-year-old bedded salt formations. Besides its corrosive power, salt may be a dangerously unstable bed for nuclear waste.

According to Judge Penn, "The court injunction entered in 1992 does not prevent the shipment of...waste to WIPP." Penn concluded that this waste "is not hazardous under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, so...DOE may make the shipment."

Betty Ball, an organizer with the Rocky Mountain Institute observed that, "hauling 28,000 truckloads of waste through Colorado to WIPP from all of the sources in the U.S. with WIPP-designated waste, will jeopardize people and land for 200,000 years." Over 50% of the storage space at WIPP is designated for nuclear weapons waste *yet to be produced*. WIPP is intended to accept military radioactive waste for about 30 years.

The first waste shipment left Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico and arrived on March 26. A second truck load of plutonium waste from the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory (INEL) near Pocatello made a trip April 27 that took 36 hours. The INEL load consisted of 42 55-gallon drums.

The DOE has said in formal Environmental Impact Statements that its plan may cause at least 78 transportation accidents, with seven releases of radiation at various locations around the country. It projects five accidents and one radiation release in New Mexico alone. The DOE says there is "a fairly high possibility of accidents leading to latent cancer fatalities."

One non-release accident already happened. In January 1997, a truck designed to transport rad waste to the WIPP received minor damage when it struck a cow 40 miles north of Carlsbad. It was heading toward WIPP on Highway 285 from Albuquerque and was being used for training.

The DOE's "Trupac-II" containers weigh 19,250 lbs. loaded, and are built of ceramic

fiber and polyurethane foam insulation and stainless steel. The containers stand 10 feet high and are eight feet in diameter. It takes four hours to unpack each Trupac-II container and an hour to take each shipment down into WIPP for storage. Each truck holds three Trupac-II cans.

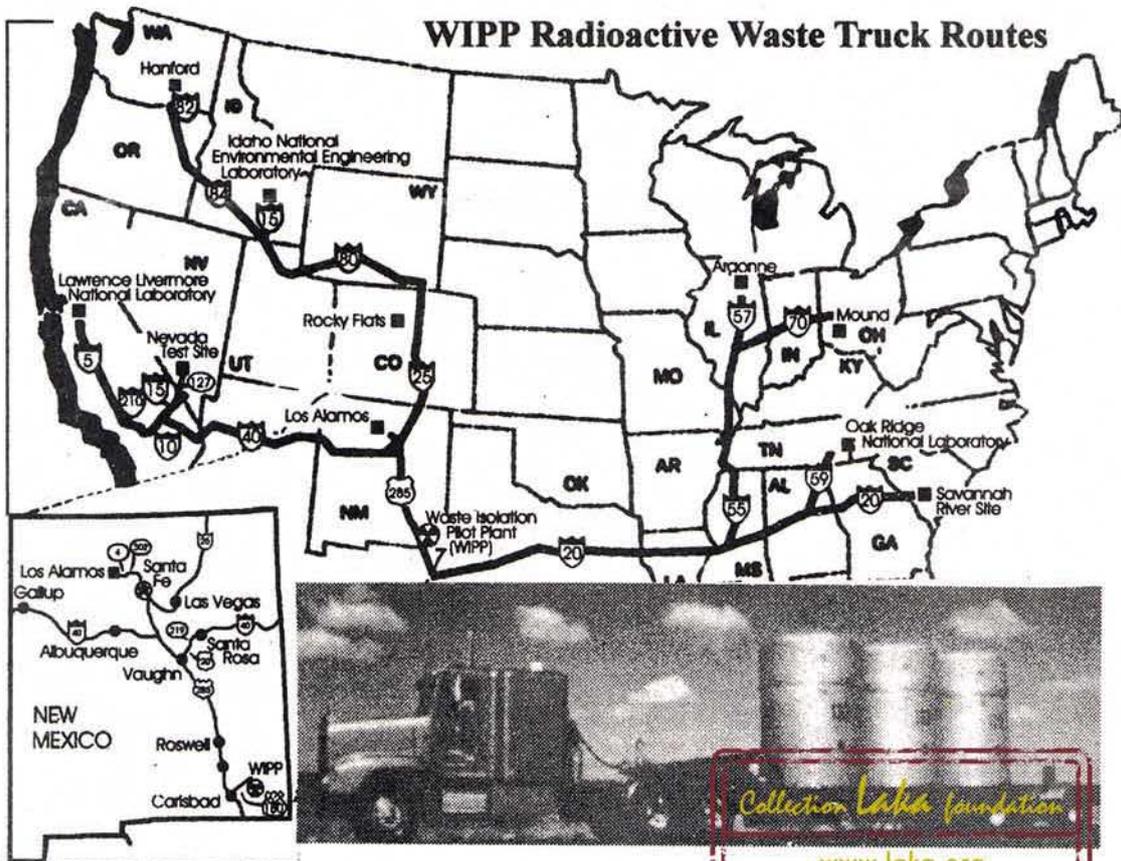
Conventional truckers will have computer linkage to the "TransCom" satellite system, cellular telephones, direct two-way radio satellite phones, and continuous tracking by a central monitoring room at the WIPP site.

Trucks will primarily travel the interstate system unless alternative routes are designated by individual states. New Mexico forced the DOE to build a new bypass around Santa Fe.

INEL intends to send about 9,000 shipments to the WIPP by 2018. The Savannah River Site in South Carolina is preparing 2,250 shipments; Los Alamos, New Mexico—5,400; Rocky Flats, Colorado—2,500; Oak Ridge, Tennessee—1,500; and Hanford, Washington—17,000. Other sources include Argonne in Illinois, Mound in Ohio, the Nevada Test Site and Lawrence Livermore in California. The waste is divided into "contact handled" and "remote handled." Remote handled is simply too hot and deadly to approach, requiring heavier packaging and robotic handling.

The DOE says it has radioactive waste from 20 U.S. nuclear weapons sites slated for transport to New Mexico. Its plans mean that plutonium waste shipments may crisscross 30 states and 11 Native American nations.

Once the drums are underground, surrounded by salt, corroding and leaking, there will be no possibility of retrieval and no chance for clean-up. Neither the government nor the nuclear industry can contain this sort of radioactivity for 200,000 years. They haven't done it effectively for 40 years. The first answer to the radioactive waste problem is to stop making it.



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