

NUKEWATCH

PATHFINDER

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News & Information on Nuclear Weapons, Power, Waste & Nonviolent Resistance

Anti-U.S. War Marches Around the World

War mongering by President Bush and the U.S. Congress has resulted in worldwide protest -- long before the Blitzkrieg is begun. Bush's talk of sending 250,000 U.S. troops to kill and die -- and the inevitable massacre of Iraqi civilians -- has provoked protests in more than 400 U.S. cities. Almost half a million marched in both London and Florence in Italy. In England over 70% oppose PM Tony Blair's support for the Bush juggernaut. If you look up "war protests" on Google's search engine you find 3,950 sites with reports and action calendars -- and this war is still in "practice" mode. In the *New Statesman*, journalist and filmmaker John Pilger says this about the unprecedented actions taken to stop the war before it starts: "Something is stirring among the people. Energy and organization are far in advance of the 1960s. ... For all the achievements of the movement against the Vietnam war, it did not get under way until four years after the [North] Americans had invaded. Today, under countless banners, from the anti-globalization movement to the Stop the War campaign, the new movement, drawing millions all over the world, may well be the greatest. We need it urgently." *A national demonstration against Bush's proposed war against Iraq is scheduled for January 18-19, 2003 in Washington D.C. and San Francisco.*

Nov. 17	Athens	10,000	Oct. 19	Tucson	1,500
	Portland, Oregon	thousands	Oct. 14	New Deli	thousands
	Ft. Benning, Georgia	10,000	Oct. 10	New York	25,000
Nov. 16	Toronto, Ontario	2,500		Los Angeles	7,000
Nov. 10	Santa Rosa, Calif.	3,000	Oct. 7	Minneapolis, Minn.	1,000
	Brussels, Belgium	1,600		Detroit, Mich.	750
	Cleveland	1,000	Oct. 6	Portland, Oregon	12,000
Nov. 9	Florence, Italy	450,000		Seattle, Wash.	10,000
	Atlanta	2,500		Los Angeles	10,000
Oct. 31	51 British towns	12,549		San Francisco	10,000
Oct. 26	Washington	200,000		Chicago	4,000
	San Francisco	100,000		San Diego	1,000
	Los Angeles	42,000		Sante Fe, N.M.	1,000
	St. Paul, Minn.	10,000		San Diego	750
	Denver, Colo.	5,000		Austin	2,000
	London	4,000	Oct. 5	Eugene, Oregon	1,000
	Seattle	4,000		Klein Brogel, Belgium	2,000
	Chicago	4,000	Oct. 4	Boston	1,000
	Augusta, Maine	3,000	Sept. 28	London	400,000
	Taos, New Mexico	2,500		Flagstaff	1,000
	Ann Arbor, Mich.	2,500		Denver	3,500
	Edinburgh, Scotland	2,000		Rome	200,000
	Kingston, New York	1,500		Paris	80,000
	Honolulu	1,100		Washington, DC	5,000
	Spokane, Washington	1,000		Portland, Oregon	15,000
	Syracuse	1,000		New York City	20,000
	Madison, Wisconsin	1,000		Los Angeles	15,000
	Missoula, Montana	1,000		Seattle	10,000
	Montpelier, Vermont	1,000		Atlanta	3,000
	Auckland, New Zealand	1,000		Austin, TX	10,000
			May 20	Berlin	10,000

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Meltdown "Pill" Highlights Risks

By Molly Mechtenberg-Berrigan

In a recent development, states with nuclear power reactors are now able to request potassium iodide (KI) pills from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and distribute them to households within the 10-mile "emergency zones" around the reactors. KI saturates the thyroid gland with iodide, preventing the body from absorbing most radioactive iodine-131, a dangerous form of radiation emitted by reactors routinely in "allowable" amounts, but spewed in heavy concentrations during reactor core accidents, or "excursions." The NRC announced in December 2001 that it had set aside \$800,000 over two years to distribute the drug, free of charge, to the 31 states with reactors. The NRC is hoping this will cover the cost of pills for approximately six million people living within 10 miles of the country's aging and increasingly dangerous reactors.

For 25 years, the NRC resisted stockpiling and distributing potassium iodide. NRC capitulation to public concern is significant. The move formally acknowledges the chance of radiation disasters at U.S. reactors and waste sites, and their vulnerability to terrorists.

Industry & government opposition

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) first authorized use of potassium iodide as an iodine-131-blocking agent in 1978. A year later, after Three Mile Island's partial meltdown, federal and state officials searched for supplies of KI only to find that none were available. Ever since TMI, the FDA's refusal to distribute KI has been severely criticized. The NRC began working toward stockpiling the pills. In 1982, this work was put on hold when the NRC claimed KI was "less cost beneficial than previously assumed."

For 20 years the debate has continued, with the NRC waffling and ultimately resisting stockpiling the pills. A 1993 memo from the Nuclear Management and Resources Council to the NRC offers some insight into the debate. It says, "Public confidence in the technology could be affected by the decision." As recently as the year 2000, KI legislation was left hanging in Congress.

Meanwhile, the nuclear industry continues to understate the negative health effects of exposure to radiation. Nuclear power is promoted under the pretense that reactors are secure and reliable, and that a "safe" level of exposure to radiation exposure exists. It is only in the past year, in a post Sept. 11 world fearful of terrorist attacks, that the public is considering the dangers of living near a nuclear facility and asking for reassurance.

The Indian Point evacuation smokescreen

The NRC knows the best response to a release of radiation from a nearby facility is large-scale evacuation. On Sept. 24, 2002, a mock evacuation took place at the Indian Point Nuclear reactors in Buchanan, NY. This facility is particularly notable because it is just 20 miles up river from where the twin towers once stood. Reactor operators and local officials faced escalating "problems" as a fake power outage forced a shutdown of the reactor. Eventually, officials were forced to deal with a phony leak of radioactive water into the reactor's containment building. The drill reached the highest level of a nuclear emergency.

The drill was performed in secrecy, with no independent observers or members of the press allowed on the property. The only observers were representatives from the NRC and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). No members of the public participated. It was a standard NRC "tabletop" drill, which involved a simulated run-through of checklist items involving limited action.

Under the title "There's no humor in Indian Point's joke of a drill," in the *White Plains Journal News*, columnist Phil Reisman wrote, "You are being asked to take it on faith that the plan to evacuate thousands and thousands of people -- among them schoolchildren, nursing home patients and Sing Sing prison inmates -- will work, and that the mock disaster response conceived and carried out by four counties and watched by the Federal Emergency Management Agency is all the proof you need or should ask for."

The drill was declared a success by FEMA and NRC. The outcome was of course prescribed. Vincent Tamagna, a legislator from one of four counties involved in the drill, said at a news conference afterward, "They have to say it works. Or, by FEMA rules, they'll have to shut [the reactor] down."

KI pills insufficient protection against radiation

The Indian Point case illustrates the problem. KI distribution is an attempt to strengthen a weak and inadequate emergency response plan. The December 2001 NRC press release stated, "The Commission has found that potassium iodide is a reasonable, prudent and inexpensive supplement to evacuation."

Radioactive iodine-131 generated inside the reactors is a major human health concern in an airborne release from a damaged reactor because of its mobility and radioactivity, having an eight-day half-life. Radioactive iodine is quickly absorbed and concentrated by the thyroid. Researchers have consistently reported that children who were exposed to iodine radiation from the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster are developing an aggressive form of thyroid cancer sooner and in larger numbers than expected.

KI pills are ideally taken before exposure to radiation, but have been proven effective in blocking thyroid cancer

if taken as quickly as possible after exposure. Side effects include rashes and nausea, especially if higher than recommended doses are taken.

The KI distribution plan has serious flaws:

- Potassium iodide protects a person from only one form of radiation -- iodine-131. If a nuclear accident were to occur, many other radioactive isotopes, including cesium-137 and strontium-90, would be released into the atmosphere. In past studies the NRC has concluded that cesium-137 is the primary long-term cause of cancer.
- The consequences of a reactor accident would not be limited to a 10-mile radius. Much depends on the weather and wind direction. Once radioactive fallout is released to the atmosphere, it can be blown thousands of miles and contaminate rainwater and soil, and end up in the food chain. Iodine-131 concentrates in milk, thereby making children in a large area vulnerable.
- The FDA says a 14-day dosage is the best defense against radiation, but the NRC offers only a one- to two-day supply. Some radioactive isotopes give off radiation for hundreds, even thousands of years, and there is a good chance that the immediate vicinity of an accident site would never again be habitable.
- There are uncertainties concerning the logistical details of thousands of people taking potassium iodide in the midst of a crisis: child doses would need to be administered correctly in schools; adults would need to have the pills on hand; everyone would need to be aware of possible allergic reactions.

The KI gamble

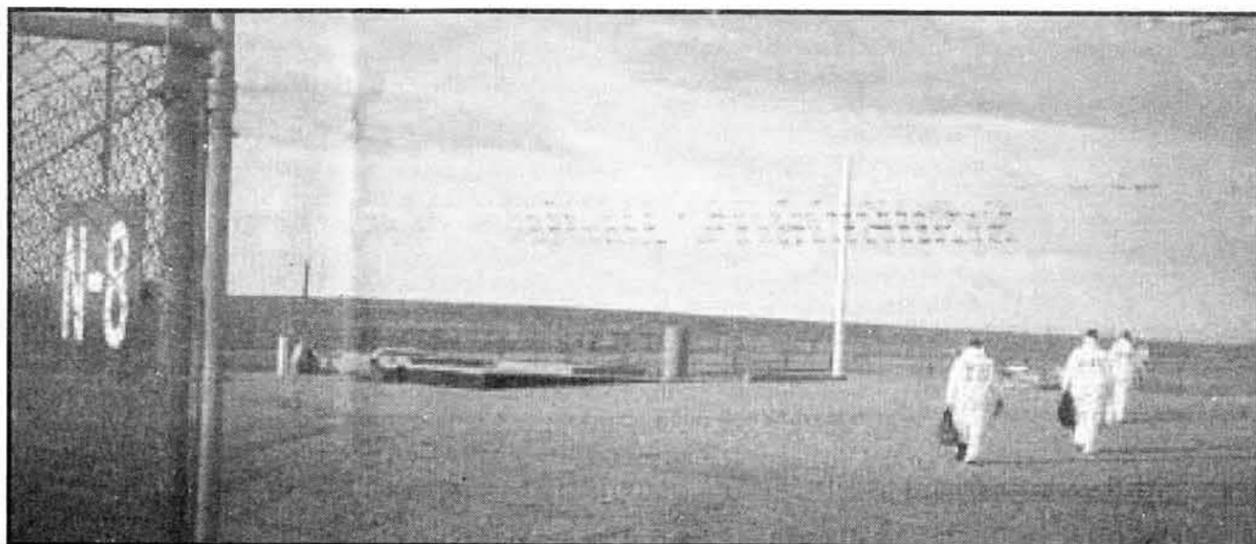
The nuclear industry and NRC rely on public confidence to keep their reactors operating, and since Sept. 11, people near reactors are losing confidence. The KI program could just be a "cost-effective" attempt to silence public fears and concerns.

In June, the State of Wisconsin decided not to distribute KI pills in the three counties with nuclear power reactors. Local officials said the potassium iodide pills would give people near reactors a "false sense of security." Also cited were concerns about the difficulty of large-scale distribution. Nancy Crowley, director of emergency management in Manitowoc County said, "Just because it is free doesn't mean it is a good idea."

Perhaps a "false sense of security" is exactly what the NRC wants. If this is the case, then the question becomes: Will KI pills be effective in quelling fear and silencing the public? Or will they create more awareness and dissent?

NRC: 10-mile evacuation and iodide plans 490 miles short

A fullscale loss-of-coolant, or melting of waste fuel, at a U.S. reactor could cause fatal, radiation-induced cancers in thousands of people as far as 500 miles from the site, according to a special Feb. 2001 NRC report. The *White Plains, NY Journal News* reports, "The potential spread of contamination cited in the report far exceeds the 10-mile zone the nation's nuclear [reactors] currently utilize in developing emergency evacuation plans." --JML



Dominican Sisters Ardeth Platte, Jackie Hudson and Carol Gilbert entered the unguarded Minuteman III missile site N-8 in Colorado Oct. 6 to turn "sword into plowshares." They poured their own blood and used hammers to damage fences, silo cover tracks, and the 120-ton steel and concrete lid. They face federal charges carrying \$500,000 fines and/or 30 years in prison.

Disarmament Specialists' Plowshares at Colorado ICBM

By Bonnie Urfer

A self-styled team of "Disarmament Specialists" comprised of Jackie Hudson from Bremerton, Washington and Carol Gilbert and Ardeth Platte from Baltimore, Maryland, entered and damaged a Minuteman missile silo near Keota, Colorado, Oct. 6, 2002. The three women, all Dominican Sisters, called their action Sacred Earth & Space Plowshares II. Each participated in an action with the same name two years ago at Colorado's Peterson Air Force Base. In a statement carried to the site they wrote about their intention to, "speak truth to power," to "enflesh the spirit of truth," and to "preach truth with love."

They are charged with a two-count grand jury indictment alleging, 1) injury/interference/obstruction of the national defense, and 2) injury of property of the United States. Taken together, conviction carries a possible maximum of 30 years in prison and a \$500,000 fine.

Platte said that the group carried documents explaining the merger of Space Command in Colorado and Strategic Command in Nebraska and the new command's global reach.

Minuteman III missiles have three 335-kiloton nuclear warheads -- carrying a total of over one million tons of TNT. Taken together, one missile has 80.4 times the power of the Hiroshima bomb. Since that bomb initially killed 140,000 people, one Minuteman III system can potentially kill 11,256,000 people. The U.S. still keeps about 500 of these Minuteman III missiles on alert in the Great Plains.

Part of the group's prepared statement says, "We, women religious, naming ourselves Sacred Earth and Space Plowshares II, come to Colorado to unmask the false religion and worship of national security.... We reject the U.S. Space Command's 'Vision for 2020' -- to dominate space for military operations; to exploit space as a U.S. 4th frontier, making all other nations vulnerable to U.S. conventional and nuclear attacks; to integrate space forces for war-fighting ... and to waste more billions and billions of dollars and more human

and material resources, causing the destruction of Earth and desecration of Space.

"This Plowshare action on the anniversary of the U.S. bombing of Afghanistan is a passionate cry to reign in a nation gone mad -- a nation which prefers dictating to diplomacy -- an empire reaching out to control the Earth and Space. We pray that we as citizens will be awakened and demand a sane and humane approach to life in today's world. We must not fight terrorism with terrorism."

The Sisters were dressed in white "mop-up" suits with CWIT (Citizen Weapons Inspection Team) stenciled on the back and "Disarmament Specialist" on the front. They used household hammers to pound on the 120-ton steel and concrete missile silo lid and the tracks that the lid slides over to open the silo. They poured their own blood on the lid, cut cables, and cut the fence surrounding the launch site in three places. The women were inside the always-unguarded compound for an hour before Air Force personnel arrived.

Once finished with their disarmament duties the three Sisters completed liturgy and sang songs before being surrounded by Air Force humvees and personnel brandishing machine guns.

They were placed under arrest and questioned by the FBI then were taken to a local jail.

At arraignment in federal court in Denver, the Sisters refused to sign a personal recognizance bond because it promises no participation in further demonstrations -- a pledge that as a matter of conscience they couldn't make.

Hardly out of date, Nukewatch's *Nuclear Heartland*, featuring detailed maps of the U.S. ICBM missile silo fields, has again been put to good use.

The Disarmament Specialists get mail (envelopes must have your complete return address), and donations with postal money orders only, at, Centennial Jail, 910 Tenth Ave., Greeley, Colo. 80631. Financial support to the defense fund can be sent to Citizens for Peace in Space, Box 15, Colorado Springs, CO 80901.

Iraqi Cancers, Birth Defects Blamed on Depleted Uranium

By Larry Johnson

Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Nov. 12, 2002

SOUTHERN DEMILITARIZED ZONE, Iraq -- On the "Highway of Death," 11 miles north of the Kuwait border, a collection of tanks, armored personnel carriers and other military vehicles are rusting in the desert.

They also are radiating nuclear energy. In 1991, the United States and its Persian Gulf War allies blasted the vehicles with armor-piercing shells made of depleted uranium -- the first time such weapons had been used in warfare -- as the Iraqis retreated from Kuwait.

The devastating results gave the highway its name.

Six-year-old Fatma Rakwan, being held by her mother at the Basra Hospital for Maternity and Children, was recently diagnosed with leukemia.

Today, nearly 12 years after the use of the super-tough weapons was credited with bringing the war to a swift conclusion, the battlefield remains a radioactive toxic wasteland -- and depleted uranium munitions remain a mystery.

Although the Pentagon has sent mixed signals about the effects of depleted uranium, Iraqi doctors believe that it is responsible for a significant increase in cancer and birth defects in the region. Many researchers outside Iraq, and several U.S. veterans organizations, agree; they also suspect depleted uranium of playing a role in Gulf War Syndrome, the still unexplained malady that has plagued hundreds of thousands of Gulf War veterans.

Depleted uranium is a problem in other former war zones as well. Yesterday, U.N. experts said they found radioactive hot spots in Bosnia resulting from the use of depleted uranium during NATO air strikes in 1995.

With another war in Iraq perhaps imminent, scientists and others are concerned that the side effects of depleted uranium munitions -- still a major part of the U.S. arsenal -- will cause serious illnesses or deaths in a new generation of U.S. soldiers as well as Iraqis.

The dangers

Depleted uranium, known as DU, is a highly dense metal that is the byproduct of the process during which fissionable uranium used to manufacture nuclear bombs and reactor fuel is separated from natural uranium. DU remains radioactive for about 4.5 billion years.

Uranium, a weakly radioactive element, occurs naturally in soil and water everywhere on Earth, but mainly in trace quantities. Humans ingest it daily in minute quantities.

DU shell holes in the vehicles along the Highway of Death are 1,000 times more radioactive than background radiation, according to Geiger counter readings done for the Seattle *Post-Intelligencer* by Dr. Khajak Vartaanian, a nuclear medicine expert from the Iraq Department of Radiation Protection in Basra, and Col. Amal Kassim of the Iraqi Navy.

The desert around the vehicles was 100 times more radioactive than background radiation; Basra, a city of 1 million people, some 125 miles away, registered only slightly above background radiation level.

But the radioactivity is only one concern about DU munitions. A second, potentially more serious hazard is created when a DU round hits its target. As much as 70 percent of the projectile can burn up on impact, creating a firestorm of ceramic DU oxide particles. The residue of this firestorm is an extremely fine ceramic uranium dust that can be spread by the wind, inhaled and absorbed into the human body and absorbed by plants and animals, becoming part of the food chain.

Once lodged in the soil, the munitions can pollute the environment and create up to a hundredfold increase in uranium levels in ground water, according to the UN Environmental Program.

The U.S. Army acknowledges the hazards in a training manual, in which it requires that anyone who comes within 25 meters of any depleted uranium-contaminated equipment or terrain wear respiratory and skin protection, and states that "contamination will make food and water unsafe for consumption."

Just six months before the Gulf War, the Army released a report on DU predicting that large amounts of DU dust could be inhaled by soldiers and civilians during and after combat.

Infantry were identified as potentially receiving the highest exposures, and the expected health outcomes included cancers and kidney problems.

The report also warned that public knowledge of the health and environmental effects of depleted uranium could lead to efforts to ban DU munitions.

But today the Pentagon plays down the effects. Officials refer queries on DU munitions to the latest government report on the subject, last updated on Dec. 13, 2000, which said DU is "40 percent less radioactive than natural uranium."

The report also said, "Gulf War exposures to depleted uranium have not to date produced any observable adverse health effects attributable to DU's chemical toxicity or low-level radiation...."

In response to written queries, the Defense Department said, "The U.S. Military Services use DU munitions because of DU's superior lethality against armor and other hard targets."

It said DU munitions are "war reserve munitions; that is, used for combat and not fired for training purposes," with the exception that DU munitions may be fired at sea for weapon calibration purposes.

In addition to Iraq and Bosnia, DU munitions were used in Kosovo and Serbia in 1999. Also in 1999, a United Nations subcommission considered DU hazardous enough to call for an initiative banning its use worldwide. The initiative has remained in committee, blocked primarily by the United States, according to Karen Parker, a lawyer with the [London based] International Educational Development - Humanitarian Law Project, which has consultative status at the United Nations.

Parker, who first raised the DU issue in the United Nations in 1996, contends that DU "violates the existing law and customs of war."

She said there are four rules derived from humanitarian law regarding weapons:

[1] Weapons may only be used in the legal field of battle, defined as legal military targets of the enemy in war. Weapons may not have an adverse effect off the legal field of battle.

[2] Weapons can only be used for the duration of an armed conflict. A weapon that is used or continues to act after the war is over violates this criterion.

[3] Weapons may not be unduly inhumane.

[4] Weapons may not have an unduly negative effect on the natural environment.

"Depleted uranium fails all four of these rules," Parker said last week. On Oct. 17, 2001, Rep. Cynthia McKinney, D-Ga., introduced a bill calling for "the suspension of the use, sale, development, production, testing, and export of depleted uranium munitions pending the outcome of certain studies of the health effects of such munitions. . . ."

More than a year later, the bill -- co-sponsored by Reps. Anibal Acevedo-Vila (Puerto Rico), Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.), Dennis Kucinich (D-Ohio), Barbara Lee (D-Calif.), and Jim McDermott (D-Wash.) -- remains in committee awaiting comment from the Defense Department.

The studies

Gulf War veterans faced a wide array of potentially toxic materials during the war: smoke from oil and chemical fires, insecticides, pesticides, vaccinations and DU.

Of the 696,778 troops who served during the recognized conflict phase (1990-1991) of the Gulf War, at least 206,861 have applied for VA medical benefits. As of May 2002, 159,238 veterans have been awarded service-connected disability by the Department of Veterans Affairs for health effects collectively known as the Gulf War Syndrome.

There have been many studies on Gulf War Syndrome over the years, as well as on possible long-term health hazards of DU munitions. Most have been inconclusive. But some researchers said the previous studies on DU, conducted by groups and agencies ranging from the World Health Organization to the Rand Corp. to the investigative arm of Congress, weren't looking in the right place -- at the effects of inhaled DU.

Dr. Asaf Durakovic, director of the private, non-profit Uranium Medical Research Center in Canada and the United States, and center research associates Patricia Horan and Leonard Dietz, published a unique study in the August issue of *Military Medicine* medical journal.

The study is believed to be the first to look at inhaled DU among Gulf War veterans, using the ultra-sensitive technique of thermal ionization mass spectrometry, which enabled them to easily distinguish between natural uranium and DU.

The study, which examined British, Canadian and U.S. veterans, all suffering typical Gulf War Syndrome ailments, found that, nine years after the war, 14 of 27 veterans studied had DU in their urine. DU also was found in the lung and bone of a deceased Gulf War veteran.

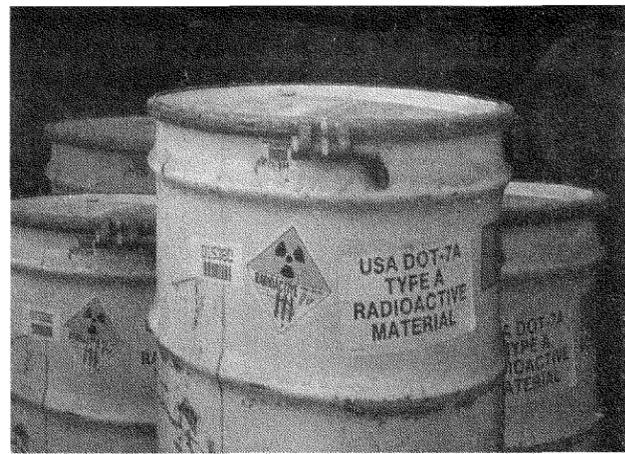
That no governmental study has been done on inhaled DU "amounts to a massive malpractice," Dietz said in an interview last week.

The soldier activist

Dr. Doug Rokke was an Army health physicist assigned in 1991 to the command staff of the 12th Preventive Medicine Command and 3rd U.S. Army Medical Command headquarters. Rokke was recalled to active duty 20 years after serving in Vietnam, from his research job with the University of Illinois Physics Department, and sent to the Gulf to take charge of the DU cleanup operation.

Today, in poor health, he has become an outspoken opponent of the use of DU munitions. "DU is the stuff of nightmares," said Rokke, who said he has reactive airway disease, neurological damage, cataracts and kidney problems, and receives a 40 percent disability payment from the government. He blames his health problems on exposure to DU.

Rokke and his primary team of about 100 performed their cleanup task without any specialized training or protective gear. Today, Rokke said, at least 30 members of the



team are dead, and most of the others -- including Rokke -- have serious health problems.

Rokke said, "Verified adverse health effects from personal experience, physicians and from personal reports from individuals with known DU exposures include reactive airway disease, neurological abnormalities, kidney stones and chronic kidney pain, rashes, vision degradation and night vision losses, lymphoma, various forms of skin and organ cancer, neuro-psychological disorders, uranium in semen, sexual dysfunction and birth defects in offspring.

"This whole thing is a crime against God and humanity."

Speaking from his home in Rantoul, Ill., where he works as a substitute high school science teacher, Rokke said, "When we went to the Gulf, we were all really healthy, and we got trashed."

Rokke, an Army Reserve Major who describes himself as "a patriot to the right of Rush Limbaugh," said hearing the latest Pentagon statements on DU is especially frustrating now that another war against Iraq appears likely.

"Since 1991, numerous U.S. Department of Defense reports have said that the consequences of DU were unknown," Rokke said. "That is a lie. We warned them in 1991 after the Gulf War, but because of liability issues, they continue to ignore the problem." Rokke worked until 1996 for the military, developing DU training and management procedures. The procedures were ignored, he said.

"Their arrogance is beyond comprehension," he said. "We have spread radioactive waste all over the place and refused medical treatment to people ... it's all arrogance.

"DU is a snapshot of technology gone crazy."

Birth defects in Iraq

At the Saddam Teaching Hospital in Basra, Dr. Jawad Al-Ali, a British-trained oncologist, displays, in four gaily colored photo albums, what he says are actual snapshots of the nightmares.

The photos represent the surge in birth defects -- in 1989 there were 11 per 100,000 births; in 2001 there were 116 per 100,000 births -- that even before they heard about DU, had doctors in southern Iraq making comparisons to the birth defects that followed the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in WWII.

There were photos of infants born without brains, with their internal organs outside their bodies, without sexual organs, without spines, and the list of deformities went on and on. There also were photos of cancer patients.

Cancer has increased dramatically in southern Iraq. In 1988, 34 people died of cancer; in 1998, 450 died of cancer; in 2001 there were 603 cancer deaths.

On a tour of one ward of the hospital, doctors pointed out boys and girls who were suffering from leukemia. Most of the children die, the doctors said, because there are insufficient drugs available for their treatment.

There was one notable exception, a boy whose family was able to buy the expensive drugs on the black market.

Al-Ali said it defies logic to absolve DU of blame when veterans of the Gulf War and of the fighting in the Balkans share common illnesses with children in southern Iraq.

"The cause of all of these cancers and deformities remains theoretical because we can't confirm the presence of uranium in tissue or urine with the equipment we have," said Al-Ali. "And because of the sanctions, we can't get the equipment we need."

Some U.S. Weapons of Mass Destruction

Land-based ICBMs: 550 missiles, carrying 1,700 warheads (502,000 kilotons)

Submarine-based ICBMs: 432 missiles, carrying 3,120 warheads (456,000 kilotons)

Bombers: 115 jets, carrying 1,660 warheads (209,000 kilotons)

Tactical nuclear weapons: (on subs and bombers) 1,120 warheads (184,000 kilotons)

Total warheads..... 7,600 (with 382 "spares")

(Source: *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, May 2002)

Total kilotons: 1,351,000; or 108,080 Hiroshima bombs

NUCLEAR SHORTS

Breast Cancer "Study" Ignored Radiation

LONG ISLAND, New York -- In October, results of a multimillion dollar Long Island breast cancer study revealed no links between the chemicals studied and breast cancer incidence. This federal study took place over 10 years and examined high rates of breast cancer on Long Island. Tellingly, radiation was not included as an environmental factor in the study.

Dr. Janette Sherman, an internist and toxicologist who has extensively studied the relationship between radiation and breast cancer, criticized the blatant omission in a letter to the *New York Times*: "Long Island is home to the leaking Brookhaven Lab and downwind from nuclear power reactors in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. Residents have been exposed to more than 200 radioactive chemicals emitted during routine operation, including strontium-90, cesium-137 and iodine-131, all demonstrated carcinogens."

At the outset of the study, co-coordinator Alice Slater of the Global Resource Action Center for the Environment questioned the administrator from Columbia University as to why radioactivity was not included. Slater said, "He told us this is a National Institute of Health study and the NIH does not want to step on the toes of the Department of Energy."

-- *East Hampton Star*, Aug. 22, & *New York Times*, Aug. 17, 2002.

Floating Chernobyls?

MOSCOW -- In October, the head of the Russian Atomic Ministry approved the technical design of two low-powered floating nuclear reactors in the region of Severodvinsk. The first reactor, a \$120 million project, is expected to take 40 months to build. It will be constructed by Sevmarsh Enterprise, which specializes in the production of military submarines. After completion it will be transported to a nuclear submarine base, where it will make the town independent of the local power grid. Russia has 10 nuclear power reactors in operation. The safety standards of the Soviet designs have been questioned by international experts, leading to the new reactors being dubbed "floating Chernobyls."

-- *Pravda*, Nov. 2002.

Don't Get Too Close

MIDDLETOWN, Iowa -- A helicopter crew began Oct. 23 looking for signs of radiation at the Iowa Army Ammunition Plant with a low-level flyover that will take four to six days. PR officials with the IAAP said a specially equipped helicopter will cover the entire 19,000-acre complex in southeast Iowa. The helicopter will pass about 50 feet above the ground, its equipment measuring radiation in 200-foot swaths, covering 5 square miles a day. It also will fly over areas of Middletown that border the complex. The helicopter will search for radiation emissions -- from plutonium, depleted uranium or radium -- that might have been left behind by the now-defunct Atomic Energy Commission which assembled and test-fired nuclear weapons components at the site from 1947 to the mid-1970s. The discovery of declassified documents by former workers suggested that some contamination may remain. Two years ago, shards of depleted uranium were found at two test-firing sites. Officials said results of the flyover would be included in a report that will be issued by the Army in March, but the Army said it was prepared to take immediate action if anything is found that is considered an imminent threat to employees or the public.

-- *Omaha World-Herald*, Oct. 18, 2002.

Nuclear Safety Lies

TOKYO -- The world's third largest nuclear utility, the Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO), announced in August that safety inspections at its reactors had been skipped, and that test data was falsified throughout the 1980s and 1990s. TEPCO's plan to introduce controversial mixed-oxide (MOX) fuel in power reactors has now been indefinitely postponed. TEPCO president Nobuya Minami said "We personally hurt the public's trust in us. We cannot ask for understanding to continue the MOX project." On Oct. 25, TEPCO's managers were suspended from operating the Fukushima reactor No. 1 for a year. Japan's Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency ordered the suspension because regulators said rigging the tests was a "serious misdeed."

The scandal comes as the bankrupt, bailed-out British firm BNFL returned a cargo of its rejected MOX fuel from Japan to Sellafield, England. The fuel shipment was refused after BNFL was caught lying to another Japanese firm about falsified quality control data. Britain has agreed to pay over £100 million in compensation to Japan in exchange for a promise that Japan would buy more MOX fuel from BNFL.

-- *Mainichi Shimbun* (Japan), Oct. 25, & *The Ecologist*, Oct. 2002.

Civilian Reactors Used for Nuclear Weapons

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. -- The NRC has disregarded the international agreement not to use civilian nuclear reactors to supply weapons material. In September, the NRC approved two Tennessee reactors for tritium production. Tritium, a radioactive isotope of hydrogen, is used in thermonuclear weapons to boost explosive power. The DOE halted tritium production in 1988 and, despite the May 2002 Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty in which the U.S. and Russia agreed to cut their nuclear warhead stockpiles by nearly half, the department plans on replenishing the tritium in the entire nuclear weapons stockpile. The new license allows the Watts Bar and Sequoyah reactors to install tritium-producing burnable absorber rods in their cores. Each

reactor will irradiate 2,256 fuel rods over an 18-month fuel cycle and then ship them to the Savannah River Site in South Carolina where the tritium will be extracted for use in new nuclear weapons. -- *Arms Control Today*, Nov. 2002.

Neptunium Tested for Yet Another H-bomb

TAOS, New Mexico -- For the first time ever, a radioactive material other than plutonium or uranium has been used to achieve a nuclear chain reaction. Scientists at the Los Alamos National Laboratory announced that they used neptunium-237 to achieve "criticality," which can lead to yet another H-bomb design. Neptunium is a waste byproduct of nuclear reactor operation and is extracted when waste fuel is reprocessed. Because it is so accessible, the scientists at Los Alamos have expressed concern over the proliferation risks of neptunium. The lab contends that it's only because of these worries that it is planning to conduct experiments to establish the material's "full range of capabilities." -- *Albuquerque Journal*, Oct. 2002.

County Proposes Condemnation of Reactor

BUCHANAN, NY -- Andrew Spano, County Executive in Westchester County where the Indian Point Power Reactors are located, proposed Nov. 13 that the county take over the reactors and replace them with natural gas-powered generating units. If Entergy Nuclear Northeast, owner of Indian Point, is unwilling to sell, the county could condemn the facility in state court, just as the county has the ability to acquire other property from an unwilling seller. Spano proposed spending \$500,000 out of the county budget for an in-depth study that would answer questions involved in the proposal. The takeover is estimated to cost \$3 billion, and the county would have to pass a referendum in order to borrow the money. Neil Sheehan, spokesman for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, said, "It would be unprecedented for a state, county or town to condemn an operating reactor in this country."

-- *The White Plains, NY Journal News*, Nov. 14, 2002.

National Sacrifice Zone Tainted by DU

MADISON, Indiana -- The Pentagon has closed the 200-acre proving ground where it test-fired depleted uranium rounds in Indiana. Cleaning up the site will cost at least \$7.8 billion, but won't repair permanent damage to vegetation and soil to a depth of six meters. The military considered the full cleanup cost too high, and offered to give the tract to the National Park Service for a nature preserve -- an offer that was promptly refused. Now there is talk of turning it into a National Sacrifice Zone and closing it forever. -- *Windows East and West*, Summer 2002.

Russian Duma Protests Navy's HAARP System

MOSCOW -- The Russian State Duma is concerned about a U.S. program to develop geophysical weapons that would influence the lower atmosphere with high-frequency radio waves. The State Duma maintains that the U.S. High Frequency Active Auroral Research Project (HAARP), based in Alaska, "Will create weapons capable of breaking radio communication lines and equipment installed on spaceships and rockets, provoke serious accidents in electricity networks and in oil and gas pipelines, and have a negative impact on the mental health of people populating entire regions." A commission of the State Duma's international affairs and defense committees wrote the statement. In August, an appeal that demanded an international ban on large-scale geophysical experiments was sent to the UN and its member states as well as other international organizations. -- *Interfax News Agency*, Aug. 9, 2002.

Radioactive Produce Season in Moscow

MOSCOW -- The Moscow atomic food inspectors job is to nab fruits and vegetables rich in cesium and strontium before they reach any of the city's 69 open air produce markets. Ever since the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear meltdown, just 415 miles from Moscow, forest produce -- mushrooms, wild berries and other delicacies that are handpicked in the wild -- must be checked for radioactivity before moving on to the market. Inspectors are located in laboratories at each of the city's markets, where they run hand-held scanners over each crate that passes through. Last year 3,000 pounds of produce were seized; as of September this year, 160 shipments had been stopped, a rate 10% ahead of the previous year. Radioactive produce season runs roughly from June through October.

-- *New York Times*, Sept. 13, 2002.

UK Minister Suggests Replacing Nuclear Power

CARDIFF, Wales -- British Cabinet Minister Peter Hain, the Welsh Secretary, has called for nuclear power to be consigned to the past. The former Energy Minister said a huge expansion in green energy sources could replace electricity from nuclear reactors. Hain told *The Western Mail* it would require a planning shake-up to overcome local objections to green projects. He stated: "We've got to end the curse of 'nimbyism' [not-in-my-backyard-ism] which is really like a plague... Or we will end up, whether we like it or not, with more nuclear power. But ... I don't see a queue of companies wanting to build nuclear power stations. And there's an enormous legacy of liabilities in terms of storing and disposing the waste." He added, "I think that we need to ask if we want to be dealing with that legacy forever."

-- *The Western Mail* (UK), Nov. 24, 2002.

15,000 Drums of Plutonium Waste Sent to WIPP

IDAHO FALLS, Idaho -- With a bit of fanfare, the DOE announced that it has trucked 15,000 drums of plutonium-contaminated waste from the Idaho National "Environmental" Engineering Lab (INEEL) to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) near Carlsbad, N.M. The agency didn't report that it still has 485,000 barrels to go.

The 55-gallon drums are filled with plutonium wastes from decades of nuclear weapons production. On their way to WIPP from Idaho they pass through Salt Lake City, Cheyenne, Denver and Colorado Springs. In May 2000, one of the barrels failed a stress test when a 30-foot drop caused a 4-by-9/16-inch crack between the lid and the container. The maximum "allowable" cracking is 3-by-1/8-inches!

An Idaho/DOE agreement requires the feds to deliver at least 9,700 drums of INEEL's plutonium waste to WIPP every year, so that the barrels will be out of INEEL by 2019. Over the next 35 years, the government plans 40,000 truck deliveries from around the country to the controversial site. In 1988, DOE scientists discovered water leaks in the deep underground salt bed that should have disqualified the site.

-- *Idaho Statesman*, Oct. 25, 2002.

So. California Edison's Hemispheric Shell Game

CHARLESTON, S.C. -- The State Ports Authority (SPA) is challenging the safety of shipping a 35-year-old, 1.4 million pound used nuclear reactor from California, through the Panama Canal, to the state's Barnwell radioactive waste dump. The reactor's owner, Southern California Edison, says it hired Charleston International Ports to do the job and may ship the reactor through Charleston as soon as March.

The utility's plan is to ship the reactor to Charleston by barge, then move it by truck to a rail car for shipment to Barnwell.

Southern California Edison spokesman Ray Golden told *Post and Courier* the reactor has been filled with concrete then sealed in a steel canister with more concrete between the reactor and canister. The total package weighs about 700 tons (1.4 million pounds). "It would be almost impossible for terrorists to seize the reactor and make any use of it," Golden said.

Golden said appropriate state and federal agencies have approved the arrangement and only the shipping route needs to be finalized. The evidently inappropriate SPA says the issue isn't settled. SPA's Peter Hughes recently wrote Charleston International Ports saying, "The movement of a spent nuclear reactor is a uniquely dangerous and complex operation with significant security and safety issues." Hughes concluded that, "We are unable to consent to your supervising this movement."

-- *The Charleston, S.C. Post and Courier*, Nov. 12, 2002.

RESOURCES

- *Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League, P.O. Box 88, Glendale Springs, NC 28629; (336) 982-2691.
- *Citizen Alert, P.O. Box 5339, Reno, NV 89513; (775) 827-4200; <citizenalert@earthlink.net>
- *Citizens for Peace in Space, Box 15, Colorado Springs, CO 80901; (719) 389-0644.
- *EFMR Monitoring Group, P.O. Box 4100 Hillsdale Rd., Harrisburg, PA 17112; (717) 541-1101; www.enviroweb.org/contefmr.html
- *Federation of American Scientists, 1717 K St. NW, Suite 209, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 546-3300; <fas@fas.org>
- *For Mother Earth, 59000 Gent, Belgium; Phone: +32 9 242 87 52; www.motherearth.org; <david@motherearth.org>
- *Georgians Against Nuclear Energy, 1053B Atlantic Dr., Atlanta, GA 30318; (404) 378-4263; <davidmcb@mindspring.com>
- *Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space, P.O. Box 90083, Gainesville, FL 32607; (352) 337-9274; www.space4peace.org; <globalnet@mindspring.com>
- *Global Resource Action Center for the Environment, 215 Lexington Ave., Suite 1001, New York, NY 10016; (212) 726-9161; www.gracelinks.org; <grace@gracelinks.org>
- *Medact, Int'l Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, 601 Holloway Rd., London, N19 4DJ; Phone: +020 7272 2020; <info@medact.org>
- *Medical Association for Prevention of War Australia; Phone: +0425 786 301; <dimitry.hawkins@mapw.org.au>
- *Nevada Desert Experience, P.O. Box 46645, Las Vegas, NV 89114; (702) 646-4814; www.NevadaDesertExperience.org; <AmmonHennacy@angelfire.com>
- *Nuclear Information and Resource Service SE, P.O. Box 7586, Asheville, NC 28802; (828) 675-1792; <nirs.se@mindspring.com>
- *Physicians for Social Responsibility, 1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 1012, Washington, DC, 20009; (202) 667-4260; www.psr.org; <psrmatl@psr.org>
- *Public Citizen, 1600 20th St., NW, Washington, DC 20009; (202) 588-1000; www.citizen.org; <cmap@citizen.org>
- *Shundahai Network, P.O. Box 1115, Salt Lake City, UT 84110; (801) 359-2614; <reinard@shundahai.org>
- *Three Mile Island Alert, 315 Peffer St., Harrisburg, PA 17102; (717) 233-7897; <TMI-Alert@tmia.com>
- *Union of Concerned Scientists, D.C. Office, 1707 H St. NW, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20006; (202) 223-6133; <ucs@ucsusa.org>
- *Uranium Medical Research Center, 493 Lynett Crescent Richmond Hill, ON L4C 2V8, Canada or 3430 Connecticut Ave. Washington, DC 20008; Phone: +1-905-883-8036; <info@umrc.net>
- *Women's Action for New Directions, 464 Cherokee Ave. SE, Suite 201, Atlanta, GA 30312; (404) 524-5999; www.wand.org; <membership@wand.org>

Iraq's Big Nothing & Blair's Empty "Dossier"

Blair's "evidence" fails to make the case for war

By Robert Fisk
The Guardian, Sept. 25, 2002

Tony Blair's "dossier" on Iraq is a shocking document. Reading it can only fill a decent human being with shame and outrage. Its pages are final proof, if the contents are true, that a massive crime against humanity has been committed in Iraq. For if the details of Saddam's building of weapons of mass destruction are correct and I will come to the "ifs" and "buts" and "coulds" later, it means that our massive, obstructive, brutal policy of UN sanctions has totally failed. In other words, half a million Iraqi children were killed by us for nothing.

Let's go back to 12 May 1996. Madeleine Albright, the U.S. Secretary of State, told us that sanctions worked and prevented Saddam from rebuilding weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Our Tory government agreed, and Tony Blair faithfully toed the line. But on 12 May, Mrs. Albright appeared on CBS television. Leslie Stahl, the interviewer, asked, "We have heard that half a million children have died. I mean, that's more than died in Hiroshima. And, you know, is the price worth it?" To the world's astonishment, Mrs. Albright replied, "I think this is a very hard choice, but the price, we think the price is worth it."

Now we know if Mr. Blair is telling us the truth that the price was not worth it. The price was paid in the lives of hundreds of thousands of children. But it wasn't worth a dime. The Blair "dossier" tells us that, despite sanctions, Saddam was able to go on building weapons of mass destruction. All that nonsense about dual-use technology -- the ban on children's pencils because lead could have a military use and our refusal to allow Iraq to import equipment to restore the water-treatment plants that we bombed in the Gulf War -- was a sham.

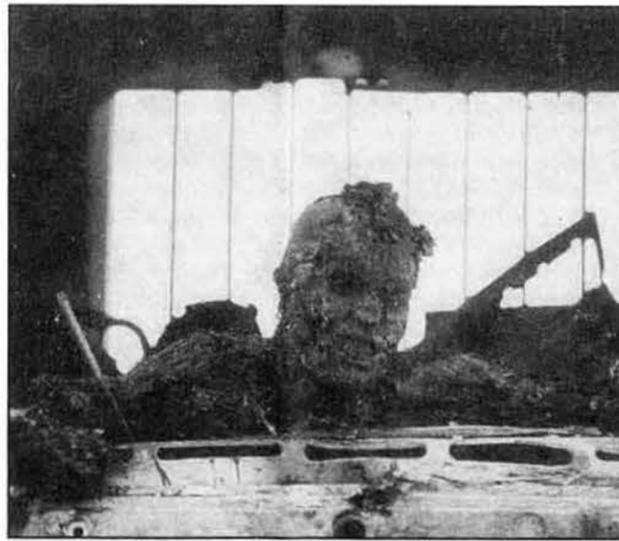
This terrible conclusion is the only moral one to be drawn from the 16 pages that supposedly detail the chemical, biological and nuclear horrors that the Beast of Baghdad has in store for us. It's difficult, reading the full report, to know whether to laugh or cry. The degree of deceit and duplicity in its production speaks of the trickery that informs the Blair government and its treatment of [Parliament].

There are a few tidbits that ring true. The new ammonium perchlorate plant illegally supplied by an Indian company which breached those wonderful UN sanctions, is of course a frightening little detail. So is the new rocket test stand at the al-Rafah plant. But this material is so swamped in trickery and knavery that its inclusion becomes worthless.

Here is one example of the dishonesty of this "dossier." On page 45, we are told in a long chapter about Saddam's human rights abuses that, "on March 1, 1991, in the wake of the Gulf War, riots (sic) broke out in the southern city of Basra, spreading quickly to other cities in Shia-dominated southern Iraq. The regime responded by killing thousands." What's wrong with this paragraph is [this]: the lie is in the use of the word "riots." These were not riots.

They were part of a mass rebellion specifically called for by President Bush Jr.'s father and by a CIA radio station in Saudi Arabia. The Shia Muslims of Iraq obeyed Mr. Bush Sr.'s appeal. And were then left to their fate by the [North] Americans and British, who -- [Iraqis] had been given every reason to believe -- would come to their help. No wonder they died by the thousands. But that's not what the Blair "dossier" tells us.

And anyone reading the weasel words of doubt that are insinuated throughout the text can only have profound concern about the basis for which Britain is to go to war. The Iraqi weapon program "is almost certainly" seeking to enrich uranium. It "appears" that Iraq is attempting to acquire a magnet production line. There is evidence that Iraq has tried to acquire specialized aluminum tubes (used in the enrichment of uranium) but "there is no definitive intelligence" that it is destined for a nuclear pro-



"If I don't photograph this," Kenneth Jarecke said of an Iraqi soldier killed by the 1991 U.S. bombing of the Gulf, "people like my mom will think war is what they see on TV."

Bunker-Busters, Tested in Afghanistan, To Go Nuclear?

New Scientist, Nov. 7, 2002

The U.S. is set to fund research into a new type of nuclear weapon that is designed to penetrate and obliterate deeply buried targets such as underground weapons bunkers.

Coming 50 years after the world's first hydrogen bomb was detonated in the Pacific, the news has alarmed scientists opposed to nuclear proliferation. They say the thousands of tons of radioactive debris produced by a bunker-busting nuclear weapon would not be contained within the rock, concrete and soil above the target, but would contaminate a wide area around it.

Funding of \$15 million has been proposed for research into the so-called Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator (RNEP), as part of the government's draft Defense Authorization Bill for 2003. ... [In mid November, Congress authorized the three nuclear weapons labs to create preliminary designs for the RNEP. The project involves hardening existing hydrogen bomb casings, rather than creating new designs. Livermore weapons designers say they don't expect the project to require nuclear tests.]

Research into the nuclear bunker-buster follows the Bush administration's leaked Nuclear Posture Review, which in part set out the circumstances under which nuclear weapons might be used. It says the RNEP could be used in pre-emptive strikes against rogue states using deeply buried facilities to store weapons of mass destruction, for example.

Dirty "mini-nukes"

The RNEP would be used on targets that may be immune to conventional weapons. Its backers claim it would create little contamination above ground, but critics say that it would produce huge amounts of [radioactive] fallout. The RNEP may also remove the distinction between a nuclear deterrent and conventional weapons, increasing the risk of a nuclear [war].

U.S. law prevents development of new "mini-nukes" that have an explosive yield of less than 5 kilotons. But the RNEP falls outside this ban because [its designers say] it is not a new weapon.

Rather, it will be a modification of an existing nuclear bomb, probably a highly modified B61 [Mod 11], sources say,

a weapon whose explosive yield can be set from anything between 0.3 and 340 kilotons. The bomb uses fission at low yields but is a fusion (hydrogen) bomb at high yields. The Hiroshima fission bomb had a yield of 12 kilotons.

Underground explosions are 10 to 15 times as effective against buried facilities as airbursts. A conventional bunker-buster is dropped from high altitude and hits the ground at enormous speed. It penetrates earth, rock and concrete before exploding. A nuclear version has the advantage of a far more powerful shock wave, increasing the depth of its destructive effect.

The U.S. already has around 50 "penetrating" nuclear weapons in its stockpile, but these can only reach a depth of six meters in earth. David Wright, a nuclear weapons expert at the Union of Concerned Scientists in Washington DC, says this would not be nearly enough to contain the radioactivity.

"Even for a 0.3-kiloton explosion, you would need a burial depth of about 70 meters in dry soil and about 40 meters in dry, hard rock to contain the blast," Wright says. An explosion at the maximum depth achievable so far would throw thousands of tons of highly radioactive debris into the air.

Velocity threshold

Moreover, Wright's calculations show that a warhead of this size at the depths currently possible would only destroy a hardened target buried less than 10 to 20 meters deep in rock. Some Iraqi facilities are said to be under 60 meters of rock, requiring a warhead of hundreds of kilotons, which would cause unacceptable devastation above ground.

But a study by the Federation of American Scientists concludes that greater penetration with the RNEP is unlikely, as there is a threshold at which increasing impact velocities simply cause the warhead to deform and melt. Attempting to make the RNEP and its warhead robust enough to withstand impact will require extensive research and development.

Weapons designers at three DOE labs -- Lawrence Livermore in California, and Los Alamos and Sandia in New Mexico -- will have to come up with the new ground-penetration technology. Sandia has already patented a new penetrator.

While the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty bars any test with a live warhead, this would not prevent the RNEP's use untested.

gram. "If" Iraq obtained fissile material, Iraq could produce nuclear weapons in one or two years. It is "difficult to judge" whether Hussein's missiles could be available for use. Efforts to regenerate the Iraqi missile program "probably" began in 1995. And so the "dossier" goes on.

Now maybe Saddam has restarted his WMD program. Let's all say it out loud, 20 times: Saddam is a brutal, wicked tyrant. But are "almost certainly," "appears," "probably" and "if" really the rallying call to send our grenadiers off to the deserts of Kut-al-Amara?

There is high praise for UN weapons inspectors. And there is more trickery in the relevant chapter. It quotes Dr. Hans Blix, the executive chairman of the UN inspection commission, as saying that in the absence of (post-1998) inspections, it is impossible to verify Iraqi disarmament compliance. But on August 18 this year, the very same Dr. Blix told Associated Press that he couldn't say with certainty that Baghdad possessed WMDs. This quotation is excised from the Blair "dossier," of course.

So there it is. If these pages of trickery are based on "probably" and "if," we have no business going to war. If they are all true, we murdered half a million Iraqi children.

U.S. War on Iraq Will Cause "Human Catastrophe"

LONDON -- A Nov. 12 report says a war against Iraq could escalate into a nuclear conflict that would kill nearly four million people and have catastrophic health and environmental consequences, medical experts said. Even without nuclear weapons, as many as half a million people could die, civil war, famine and epidemics could occur, oil fields may be set ablaze and the entire region could be embroiled in the conflict.

"Collateral Damage: The Health and Environmental Costs of War on Iraq," was prepared largely by Medact, the British affiliate of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW). The U.S. affiliate, Physicians for Social Responsibility, also was involved. Most of the estimated casualties would be Iraqi civilians caught in the bombing, said Bob Schaeffer, a spokesman in Massachusetts for the international physicians' organization. IPPNW was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985 for what the committee called its "authoritative information."

"We're saying that there'll be a very large short-term impact and an even more profound longer-term impact," Schaeffer said. "The report uses the word 'human catastrophe' even if it does not escalate to the level of poison gas, civil war or nuclear weapons." The estimates of casualties, he said, range from a low of 50,000 up to 250,000.

James Snyder, spokesman in Washington for Physicians for Social Responsibility, said the report utilizes information about likely Iraq invasion scenarios as well as knowledge gleaned from study of the 1991 Persian Gulf War and U.S. actions in Somalia and Panama.

World's Church Leaders Blast Bush

PARIS -- The Paris daily *Le Monde* reported Oct. 15 that, "Eleven years since the Gulf war, almost all churches in the U.S., Britain, Europe and the Middle East -- irrespective of their denomination -- have once again joined forces to oppose Washington's policy."

The U.S. National Council of Churches, comprising about 50 Christian denominations, has repeatedly written to Bush stating, "Pre-emptive military action cannot be morally justified." The Council says that the criteria of a "just war" have not been met, that Bush's concept of a preventive war represents a violation of international law, and that the losses caused by another U.S. invasion would trigger a regional or world-wide conflagration. The Council wrote that even a UN-authorized assault would present "a model of aggression that may encourage other nations to attack neighboring countries which threaten them."

On Nov. 13, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops voted 228 to 14 that it is, "difficult to justify the resort to war against Iraq, lacking clear and adequate evidence of an imminent attack of a grave nature." The statement is a rebuke to President Bush's repeated assertions that Iraq threatens the United States.

WHAT THEY REALLY SAID

Bill Maher of "Politically Incorrect"

We have been cowards, lobbing cruise missiles from 2,000 miles away. That's cowardly. Staying in the airplane when it hits the building, say what you want about it, it's not cowardly. -- Sept. 17, 2001.

German Minister of Justice Herta Daeubler-Gmelin

Bush wants to distract attention from his domestic problems. That's a popular method. Even Hitler did that. -- Sept. 15, 2002.



Photo by Molly Mechtenberg-Berrigan

From left, John LaForge, Jeff Leys, Jane Hosking and John Bachman, Nov. 20, after being sentenced for trespass at the ELF site. Cory Bartholomew, not pictured, was briefly detained by federal marshals who demanded he pay some traffic tickets.

ELF UPDATE

Punishing the Messenger

MADISON, Wis. -- Saying he didn't disagree with the message but with the method of delivery, federal Magistrate Stephen Crocker decided Nov. 20 to "punish people who crossed the line," at Project ELF. Crocker sentenced five ELF resisters to 85 hours of community service and six months of "unsupervised" probation. Crocker ordered the work be finished by April 25.

Crocker, who last September sent John Heid to federal prison camp for 30 days, seemed to contradict that action saying, "Jail is pointless and a waste of money."

The five resisters who were sentenced brought to the courtroom a wealth of experience with the Navy's "Trident Trigger." John Bachman, an attorney from Eau Claire, was part of the defense team for Bonnie Urfer's and Mike Sprong's Silence Trident plowshare action, and he has helped defend many other ELF resisters.

Jeff Leys, a long-time draft resister and ELF opponent from Milwaukee, served two years of a 3-year state prison sentence for cutting notches in an ELF pole in 1985. Jane Hosking, from the Anathoth Community in Luck, Wis., was jailed in Ashland County for 54 days in 1998 for a mis-applied charge of "obstructing an officer" at the ELF site. Cory Bartholomew served six months in 1995 for refusing to pay ELF fines. I did seven-and-a-half months that same year, also for nonpayment.

Bachman told the Magistrate, "I was at the ELF site Oct. 7, 2001. Just as we were leaving, a deputy sheriff told us the U.S. had begun bombing Afghanistan. I was so ashamed for not crossing the line that I vowed to do so the next chance I had."

Jane Hosking said to the magistrate, "These are weapons of mass destruction that you're protecting by enforcing the trespass statute." Jeff Leys followed this line of thought and asked Crocker to "ponder going further." Leys told the court about the Ashland County judge who initially tried to deter protests by imposing 20-day jail sentences, but who "would come to refuse to impose any sentence."

Assistant U.S. Attorney Tim O'Shea told Crocker that community service was "insufficient" as a deterrent. Crocker said, "I have no illusions that anything I do today will deter these five defendants, but I don't want to encourage others."

For my part, I told Crocker I don't intend to perform the community service because it amounts to punishment for trying to prevent a crime. Since ELF and Trident are a first-strike system deemed by the World Court to violate international law, trespassing at ELF amounts to crime prevention. "By doing nothing to impede the threat of uncontrollable, illegal missile attacks, we ignore and trivialize the law and our responsibility."

—John LaForge

1,117 Arrested Protesting U.S. Nukes at Belgian AFB

KLEINE BROGEL, Belgium -- Over 2,000 activists took part in the nonviolent direct action dubbed "Bombspotting" at the Kleine Brogel Air Force Base in central Belgium Oct. 5. A total of 1,117 people were arrested inside the base and in the surrounding area. The base has long been the target of anti-nuclear protests because NATO and Belgium continue using illegal U.S. nuclear weapons on site.

Protest organizers with For Mother Earth report that, "The preparation and training for the use of these nuclear weapons cannot continue when there are uninvited people in the base." Despite a heavy police and military presence, and a prohibition on gathering in groups of more than four people, several hundred people managed to enter the base. Once inside, the activists sat down and began to picnic.

Many hundreds more joined a support demonstration in the nearby village. Among those arrested were anti-nuclear activists from the Netherlands, Finland, Sweden, Germany, Italy, Britain and France. They were joined by several members of the Belgian and Dutch parliaments, including members of three of the parties which make up Belgium's coalition government. The arrested were all released by 10 p.m. The Bombspotting action was one among dozens that took place around the world as part of the "Keep Space for Peace" week of protests against the militarization of space, and the "Nuclear Weapons Abolition Days" events protesting nuclear weapons in Europe. -- For Mother Earth, Belgium

Food Irradiation Being Pushed

By Molly Mechtenberg-Berrigan

Irradiation of imported fruits and vegetables

In October, the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), a branch of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, issued a new rule allowing the irradiation of imported fruits and vegetables that might carry fruit flies. Imported fruits and vegetables make up some 40% of the produce consumed in the U.S., and account for \$39 billion in business annually.

The ruling means that the amount of irradiated food sold in the U.S. will dramatically increase. For the past two years, papayas and other fruits from Hawaii have been irradiated and sold on the mainland, but the new rule opens the technology to growers from all over the world. Food irradiation has been promoted under the guise of advancing food safety. When asked for comment, food safety advocate Christine Bruhn said, "Most people are not eating five servings of tasty fruits a day, and this will give them more choices than they've had before."

Perhaps more important for consumers' health is the problem of avoiding irradiated foods. The new rule will make this hard. Restaurants are not required to tell diners which foods or ingredients are irradiated. Now there is doubt that the already understaffed APHIS will be able to track the increased amount of irradiated fruits and vegetables being imported. This will make it almost impossible to avoid irradiated food.

Public Citizen, a nonprofit consumer advocacy organization, criticized the ruling saying it creates more opportunities for multinational companies to import their goods at the expense of small farmers. "Small-scale farmers already suffering from the fallout of 'free trade' agreements such as NAFTA don't need more imports; which have resulted in the dumping of lower-priced fruits and vegetables onto American markets." The group advocates the least expensive and safest technique to control pests in imports -- cold and heat treatment.

Giant Food, Inc. now selling irradiated ground beef

For those living in Washington D.C., Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey and Virginia, Giant Food is the latest chain to begin test marketing irradiated ground beef. They promote the new product saying it's "a healthy idea: nourishing mind and body." Let management know what you think (below).

WHO ignores dangers, allows irradiation of fruit

In an October report, Public Citizen and Global Resource Action Center for the Environment (GRACE) say that the World Health Organization (WHO) has ignored a growing body of evidence citing serious health problems resulting from food irradiation. Instead, the WHO has declared irradiated food safe for human consumption and is working to expand the legalization, commercialization and consumer acceptance of irradiated foods, the report found.

Alice Slater, president of GRACE, says, "The WHO's job

is to protect the health of the world's citizens -- not use them as guinea pigs for experimental food products."

The GRACE report found that:

*The WHO has halted its original 1961 research agenda, which urged comprehensive research on the basic human health implications of irradiated foods.

*The WHO has ceded to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), whose mission is protecting the nuclear industry, the ultimate power of researching the safety of irradiated foods. The IAEA is leading a global campaign to promote irradiation. "We must confer with experts in the various fields of advertising and psychology to put the public at ease," one IAEA report states. It suggests that, "Identification of the process should not be required on the label."

*The IAEA and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) have misrepresented a vast body of research that revealed health problems in animals that ate irradiated foods and even reported that no such problems were attributable to irradiation.

Wenonah Hauter, director of Public Citizen's Critical Mass Energy and Environment Program, says, "The WHO's negligence could put at risk the health of millions of people throughout the world."

Take action -- stop irradiation in the marketplace

- ** Vote with your dollars -- don't buy irradiated food.
- ** Fax or write Giant and tell them to stop carrying irradiated meat and keep imported irradiated fruits and vegetables off their shelves. Call 888-4-MyGiant (Washington, DC, Maryland, Virginia); or 888-MySuperG (Delaware, New Jersey) to air your views.
- ** Flyer locally to raise awareness in your community.

Action Alert: Comment deadline is Dec. 20!

The USDA has asked for public comment on its plan to buy irradiated food for the National School Lunch Program. The comment deadline is Dec. 20, 2002. Write or email the USDA: Livestock and Seed Programs, Ag. Marketing Service U.S. Department of Agriculture Stop 0249, Room 2092-S Washington, DC 20250-0249 <foodsafetytechnology@usda.gov>

Talking points:

- * The health effects of children eating irradiated food are unknown.
- * Irradiation creates unique chemicals in meat known to cause numerous illnesses in lab animals, including genetic damage, cancer development and reproductive problems.
- * Parents have a right-to-know what their children are eating, but rules on labeling irradiated food don't apply to schools.
- * Irradiation depletes nutrients making lunches nutritionally deficient.

MOX & the Bomb: Bush/Cheney Pursuing Nuclear Weapons & Power Convergence

By Mary Fox Olson

The Department of Energy (DOE) claims that the U.S./Russian program to turn "excess" weapons plutonium into MOX (mixed oxide) fuel for commercial nuclear power reactors will turn "swords into plowshares."

The DOE's new effort to build a factory to make new plutonium pits -- the core of nuclear weapons -- puts the lie to this MOX spin. This loss of credibility resonates even inside the DOE, Duke Power, and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), since many employees have worked on MOX believing they were pursuing nuclear disarmament. They now must admit being used as pawns in a cover for new nuclear weapons production.

The ties that bind MOX and plutonium pits are simple: both require the re-purification of plutonium to a powder, and both are best accomplished at the DOE's Savannah River Site (SRS) in South Carolina, across the river from Augusta, Georgia. The MOX mission gave DOE the justification to move plutonium to SRS and to build a new facility for plutonium purification at a time (1996) when building new bombs was not polite dinner conversation. Sept. 11 and Bush/Cheney have changed all that.

The need for re-purification or "plutonium polishing" (coined by Duke Power) is also simple. Plutonium pits contain ingredients -- more secret than cigarette formulas -- to make the plutonium metal malleable. These ingredients are not viable in a nuclear reactor core and must be removed by dissolving the plutonium in acid, etc. When Bush/Cheney killed the alternative of immobilizing plutonium in high-level waste, additional "dirtier" plutonium was added to the MOX mix. This means more plutonium "polishing" and the creation of significantly more high-activity liquid waste.

"Plutonium polishing" is also needed to make new pits, says the DOE. Constant radioactive decay builds up "waste" elements in plutonium stocks. Sub-critical fission also occurs in plutonium pits, resulting in the formation of americium-241

and other isotopes also considered "waste" inside pits. Radioactive alchemy!

The DOE says the "waste" in pits reduces the reliability of nuclear weapons and also makes aged plutonium undesirable for new nuclear weapons production. This in turn calls into question the need for "plutonium disposition" programs in the first place. Plutonium "disposition" ostensibly prevents "surplus" plutonium from being used for new nuclear weapons. If time alone degrades plutonium, what is the need for MOX, which only makes nuclear reactors more dangerous? The answer is simple: Tax subsidized welfare for "needy" nuclear corporations -- this time civilian nuclear utilities like Duke Power and Cogema.

Duke and Cogema have sweetened their deal considerably. The DOE recently announced that it would sell Russia a MOX factory identical to the one Duke, Cogema, Stone and Webster designed for the Savannah River Site. According to a story by the Norwegian environmental watchdog Bellona, the DOE is awaiting Russia's decision on this offer. If Russia rejects the plan, the MOX deal is off. One wonders whether both the U.S. and Russia are rethinking whether *any* plutonium is "excess" or whether to just go ahead and make new bombs instead. This would be a negative "victory" over MOX, but then, it would focus our efforts on only one front -- stopping new bombs.

Nonetheless the NIX MOX Campaign is alive and well in all the countries dealing with plutonium fuel. When they were asked recently to make a small batch of test fuel, U.S. activists collaborated with Belgian campaigners to pressure Belgium not to cooperate with the U.S. program. The southern anti-plutonium effort is picking up speed as the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League and Georgians Against Nuclear Energy are heading toward a 2003 evidentiary hearing challenging the proposed MOX factory.

Mary Fox Olson is the director of the Southeast office of Nuclear Information and Resource Service.

Fighting Weakened Radiation Standards at Yucca

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Seven environmental and public interest organizations suing the federal government over its weakening of groundwater standards for Yucca Mt. nuclear waste dump, have asked the court to require the government to strengthen a rule regarding how to measure contamination from the dump. The request, contained in a reply brief filed jointly with the state of Nevada Sept. 3 to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit, is part of a legal challenge to the EPA's radiation standards for the proposed storage of high-level nuclear waste at the site.

The proposed nuclear waste dump would sit atop an underground aquifer that area residents rely on for drinking water. National and Nevada-based environmental and public interest organizations contend that the EPA illegally weakened groundwater protection standards at Yucca Mt. to allow the Energy Department (DOE) to proceed with its flawed plan to create a national nuclear waste dump. The case has been consolidated with a similar lawsuit brought by the State of Nevada.

A primary issue is the compliance boundary -- the distance from the proposed repository within which no limit will be placed on the amount of radioactive contamination in groundwater. In its Yucca Mt. rule, the EPA changed that distance from three miles to more than 11 miles, so regulation of the amount of contamination that can seep from the dump would begin only at a line drawn 11 miles from the dump.

35,000 Tons of Radioactive Waste on Lake Huron?

By Bonnie Urfer

Some 14,000 tons of high-level radioactive waste is sitting on the shore of Lake Huron and even more is heading there. Canada's reactor operators are anxious to deluge the Bruce reactor site near Tiverton, Ontario (150 miles north of Detroit) with 1.5 million bundles of irradiated fuel -- deadly, plutonium-contaminated radioactive waste from 22 Canadian reactors. The waste is dangerous and must be contained for more than 250,000 years, while storage casks have been tried for about 20 years.

Without more storage space, some of Bruce's idle reactors can't restart. Larry Kraemer, mayor of the Municipality of Kincardine, home to Bruce, said, "Interim facilities are very important to allow the restart of Bruce A."

The Western Waste Management Facility, WWMF, formerly known as Radioactive Waste Operations Site 2, is only 1.3 kilometers from the Lake Huron shore. Radioactive Waste Operations Site 1 used from 1967-1974, is the source for tritium and beta and gamma contamination of the groundwater. Of course Ontario Power Generation (OPG) and the Canadian government claim there's no danger to the public. OPG is trying to clean up the mess.

Canadian nuclear regulators recently approved 2,000 new storage casks for the OPG complex on the shore of Lake Huron. The additional casks slated for Bruce would more than double the amount of high-level waste on site. Bruce is the world's largest nuclear power development. With the additional 2,000 casks, the amount increases to about 35,000 tons.

OPG's new Western Used Fuel Dry Storage Facility (WUFDS), at the Bruce site, was officially opened Oct. 9. WUFDS features a huge 4,600 square meter shed for the storage of the dry casks. It will be used for interim storage of irradiated fuel rods. Every five years a new shed will be completed each with an expected life span of 50 years.

Keith Mombourket, project manager for WUFDS, says that a 63-ton dry storage container holds 384 hot reactor fuel bundles. Under current law, the number of dry storage containers to be loaded for storage could increase to 84 per year, assuming two units of Bruce A are restarted. All of the "low" and "intermediate" level radioactive waste from 20 power reactors across Ontario is already buried at the Bruce site.

On April 25, 2001, Ralph Goodale, Minister of Natural Resources (NRCan) introduced legislation for long-term management of reactor fuel waste. The Nuclear Fuel Waste Act mandates nuclear utilities to set up a non-profit Waste Management Organization (WMO) to propose, within three years, and later implement, disposal strategies. WMO, its web site and the new Nuclear Fuel Waste Act became effective Nov. 15. Responsibility for oversight of the WMO, nuclear utilities and Atomic Energy Canada, Ltd. goes to NRCan.

WMO will present options for storage and the government will implement it without a full Environment Assessment Panel. The generically named nuclear waste management organization is made up of the same nuclear power operators that are creating the waste. This conflict of interest has somehow escaped the government.

Bankruptcy threatens Canadian reactor operations

When the Ontario government sought last spring to privatize operations of the Bruce A and B reactor facilities, potential purchasers complained they could not get financing to take over the reactors because banks feared being held liable for radiation accidents. Weakening the old Nuclear Safety and Control Act took care of that problem. With the passage of Bill C-4, now wending its way through Parliament, lenders will be absolved of liabilities in the event of a nuclear incident.

The Bruce reactors are the only nuclear power reactors in Canada operated by a private company, which is

In a response filed last month, the EPA said its congressional mandate to establish a site-specific standard for radiation protection at Yucca Mt. gave it the right to weaken the rule as it did. But in their reply brief, the critics, lead by the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and Public Citizen, maintain that the EPA's action undermines the requirements of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act.

"The EPA's Yucca Mt. rule assumes the proposed repository will leak and inappropriately allows the DOE to rely on dilution in order to meet national standards. The agency should not be permitted to misuse its discretionary powers to undermine the Safe Drinking Water Act," said Geoff Fettus, attorney with the NRDC.

"The Yucca Mt. 'house of cards' rests on a regulatory structure that has been ridiculously weakened by the Bush administration," said Lisa Gue, senior energy analyst with Public Citizen. "By taking this issue to court, we are challenging the EPA's presumption that public health and the environmental regulations can be sacrificed for nuclear industry interests," Gue said.

The DOE's controversial Yucca Mt. site recommendation won congressional approval in July. The agency must now apply for a license to construct and operate a nuclear waste dump from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The licensing process will assess projected compliance with the EPA radiation protection standards. -- *Public Citizen*

majority-owned by British Energy. British Energy is in imminent danger of bankruptcy and seeking a \$3.9 billion loan to stay in business -- in addition to an outstanding \$1.5-billion loan from the British government.

Canadian taxpayers supported reactor operations with \$5.1 billion between 1970 and 1999. In the event of a reactor accident, taxpayers are stuck with everything over \$75 million in liability. Costs of a worst-case reactor accident have been estimated to be around \$400 billion. The new waste site, WWMF, will carry only \$6 million in insurance.

The cost of monitoring and storing radioactive waste cannot be exaggerated. It is simply an endlessly expanding debt, compounded every day by new waste production as long as reactors operate. Dry cask storage of the huge volumes of waste being generated is a short-term fix designed to keep the operators in business for now.

Complaints from U.S. Senators

Reactor operators in Canada, through WMO, have been given three years to find "a solution" to the long-term problem of nuclear waste containment. One popular long-term plan involves burying the waste in northern Ontario in the Canadian Shield (ancient granite bedrock). Industry pundits promise it won't leak for 30,000 years -- only 220,000 years too soon.

Some U.S. lawmakers are concerned about the plans. Michigan Senators Carl Levin and Debbie Stabenow wrote to Secretary of State Colin Powell asking him to discuss the issue at the next Canadian-U.S. bilateral meeting. "Given the importance of the Great Lakes to tens of millions of Canadian and U.S. citizens, special consideration needs to be given to the potential environmental impacts of such a large radioactive waste site." The Senators also said, "In the wake of the events of September 11, 2001 the establishment of such a high-profile and large facility for the storage of high-level radioactive waste on the shorelines of the Great Lakes needs to be thoroughly evaluated and carefully considered."

In response to negative criticism Atomic Energy of Canada, Ltd. spokesman Marc Kealey said, "It is ... something we take umbrage to because we work with incredibly smart people here who have the best interests of Canadians at heart in terms of safety in the permanent disposal of nuclear fuel. Obviously public acceptance is an issue we have to work hard on."

At the Test Site with Shundahai Network

Over 60 arrested at actions for nuclear abolition

By John LaForge

MERCURY, Nevada -- More than 300 people joined the Actions for Nuclear Abolition peace camp at the Nevada Test Site from Oct. 5 to 15.

The encampment, organized by the Shundahai Network, Citizen Alert, Nevada Desert Experience and Seeds of Peace, drew vans, campers, buses, cars and trucks from all corners of the U.S., Canada and even Belgium. Hundreds of stalwart activists weathered the extremes of desert camping to protest the DOE's "sub-critical" bomb tests and the Bush Administration's plans to resume full-scale testing.

During the 10-day gathering, Nye County Sheriff's deputies made over 61 arrests -- some for simple line-crossing at the main entrance, others for back-country excursions into the vast off-limits compound including the hidden city of Mercury. Among those given trespass citations was Charles Laws, the Nevada Green Party's 2002 candidate for Governor.



Photo by Gabriela Bulisova

At the Nevada Test Site near Mercury, the highway dept. officially acknowledges the steadfast anti-nuclear campaign. Nukewatch staffer John LaForge (2nd from left), joined the October "Actions for Abolition" (bottom of page) that drew hundreds of activists from around the country to protest the DOE's bomb tests and nuclear waste dumping.

Increased Cancer Risk for Radiation Workers

LONDON -- People who are exposed to even low levels of radiation at work may be at risk of cancer, scientists have suggested. They believe that current safety limits may be too high and that more research needs to be done to protect health workers, scientists, and others who come into contact with radioactive materials.

Scientists from Britain and Germany have found that prolonged exposure to relatively low doses of radiation can cause mutations in human DNA. They have suggested that it may also affect genes that have been linked with leukemia and other cancers.

The scientists analyzed the effects of radiation exposure on nearly 1,000 people living in southern India. The study's results were published in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

Background radiation

These people live in Kerala, which has one of the highest levels of natural background radiation in the world.

The radiation is caused by monazite sands which contain the radioactive element thorium. These sands are washed down from nearby mountains and accumulate on the seashore. The vast majority of people living in this area are fishermen and come into regular contact with the sands.

The scientists examined the effects of the radiation on mitochondrial DNA -- the tiny energy factories which power cells. They found that those exposed to radiation had higher levels of "point mutations" in their mitochondrial DNA. A "point mutation" takes place when a single "base" -- genetic code is made up of four bases -- along a DNA strand gets changed.

People who lived nearby but were not exposed to the radioactive sands had significantly fewer mutations. The mutations affect non-coding DNA and do not have an impact on health. However, the scientists have suggested that encoding genes -- those that can trigger disease -- could also be affected.

They added that the findings raise serious questions about the levels of radiation people should be exposed to at work. The people in the study were exposed to radiation that is 10 times greater than the worldwide average. However, radiation workers are allowed to receive up to 50 times the normal level.

Dr. Peter Forster of the Molecular Genetics Laboratory at the McDonald Institute at the University of Cambridge, said these safety limits should be reviewed. "These findings may be cause for rethinking whether the maximum levels for radiation exposure at work should be brought down."

Speaking to *BBC News Online*, he added, "This section of DNA will always be non-coding but we only looked at this bit. Perhaps it is happening to other genes and maybe it is happening to genes that have been linked to cancer."

-- *BBC News On-Line, Oct. 10, 2002*

Davis-Besse's Acid Trip, Crimes & Cover-ups

By Bonnie Urfer

TOLEDO, Ohio -- Radiation leaks at the shut down Davis-Besse reactor on the shore of Lake Erie have contaminated its labor force, and acid corrosion at the Ohio reactor, discovered in March, ate away 70 pounds of steel and left the reactor's core vulnerable to rupturing.

Aware of this contamination, owner-operator FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Company (FENOC) sent poorly-protected contract workers into the steam generator's radioactive environment to do repairs last February. Days later, two; no, four; no, six of five; no, seven men registered external contamination. Reports are extremely inconsistent. Some isotopes were inhaled and some were carried on shoes and clothes.

Radioactive particles from leaks in the reactor fuel rods during the previous five years of operation contaminated the reactor coolant and everything it touched, including the insides of the generators. The company knew this because it has to regularly analyze the coolant and report levels of "transuranics" to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). Transuranics are isotopes heavier than uranium (such as plutonium, an

alpha emitter), created by the nuclear reaction inside the fuel rods. Levels of penetrating radiation had increased in the reactor building about nine hours before the workers entered the generators, but nothing was said to the contract employees.

Workers can stay in the steam generator area for no more than two minutes. The Davis-Besse technicians responsible for the safety of the workers sampled the inside surfaces for radiation but failed to notice or announce any contamination. The technicians failed to sample the air as required by regulation. Airborne radiation was 1,000 times above normal.

The company sent Framatome employees in wearing protective clothing but not respirators. According to NRC inspector Tom Kozak, respirators would have slowed down the work in the cramped steam generator, exposing the men to additional gamma radiation and increasing their immediate radiation dose. Even after seven showers, radiation monitors detected doses on the men's bodies. Two of the six inhaled or ingested cancer causing isotopes.

The NRC later determined the site's radiation monitors were not correctly calibrated to detect the fuel rod particles that are present only if the rods are damaged.

FirstEnergy is spewing the familiar nuclear industry mantra "No danger to the workers." Early reports had FENOC claiming that the contamination came from some place else. The contaminated workers arrived at the Oak Harbor site from three different nuclear reactors.

Discovery of the human contamination occurred when one man subsequently went on to work at Duke Energy's Oconee reactor in South Carolina -- and set off alarms. Radioactive particles were found in vehicles and homes, on clothing, and in hotel and motel rooms in five states from Texas to South Carolina. Some particles were removed using tape and taken back inside Davis-Besse. Kozak said, "There is little danger to the public," because the particles emit a kind of radiation that is stopped by clothing or skin. He neglected to mention the likelihood of inhaling or ingesting the isotopes.

According to FirstEnergy's Todd Schneider, "That extremely low level of radioactivity does not need to be reported to the NRC.... If you put all of those on the tip of a pen, you couldn't see them. ... They are nothing to be alarmed about. ... There's no health impact."

Plutonium and Americium have very slow decay rates and will remain radioactive for thousands of years. Tests are being conducted to see if exposure levels were under-reported.

FirstEnergy has since added equipment to its screening procedures at Davis-Besse to better ensure that anyone contaminated with radioactive particles is detected before they leave the premises.

Company personnel filed inaccurate records, committed numerous infractions and lied about internal contamination, still the company expects to be back on line early in 2003.

NRC Moving to Deregulate, Disperse Radioactive Waste

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is pushing ahead with plans to treat radioactive waste as ordinary garbage and to sell tons of it to metal recyclers. The agency's Nov. 7 announcement indicates that it intends to write rules allowing the "release" of thousands of tons of contaminated metal, concrete, soil, etc., from dismantled nuclear weapons facilities. The plan would "dramatically increase the volume of radioactive waste material that is dumped in unlicensed landfills and recycled into consumer goods," according to the Nader consumer group Public Citizen.

David Ritter of Public Citizen said the announcement indicates that the NRC is "abdicated its regulatory role to protect the public ... The agency knows that this dumping can lead to radioactive consumer products like bicycles and belt buckles. It knows that this practice is wholly unnecessary and its sole beneficiary is the nuclear industry."

The agency's earlier attempt to deregulate the deadly waste (as "Below Regulatory Concern") was foiled by public uproar and a 1992 Congressional ban. Today, NRC Chairman Richard Meserve suggests is keenly aware that the public is still opposed to the program. In written comments submitted with his vote approving the rulemaking procedure -- comments ignored in the press release -- Meserve says that public hearings are "resource intensive and expensive" and that "additional workshops should be limited."

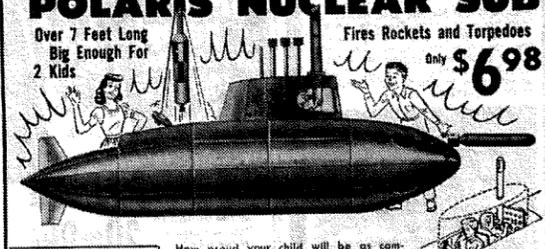
This official position ignores and contradicts recommendations from the National Academy of Sciences. In a March 2002 report the Academy warned the NRC to seriously address public concerns on the issue, in part to overcome a "legacy of distrust." Publicly of course the NRC promises that, "NRC staff will seek broad public participation and engage diverse viewpoints."

Public Citizen President Joan Claybrook said of Meserve's attitude, "In limiting public workshops and stating their preference from the get-go, it looks like they've already made a decision. The upcoming 'process' will most likely be a PR maneuver and sham." --JML

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This ad appeared in *American Home* in 1967. The text says in part, "If you don't think it is the greatest ever -- the best toy you ever had -- just send it back."

Nuclear Subs Unsafe At Any Speed

LONDON -- Two nuclear-powered attack submarines were involved in separate accidents in November. On Nov. 6, the 4,750-ton *HMS Trafalger*, one of 12 nuclear-powered attack submarines in the British Royal Navy, hit a rock on the Isle of Skye during military exercises. A spokesman for the Navy claimed there was no damage to the hull or the nuclear propulsion reactor. Two crew members sustained injuries.

The *Trafalger* usually carries Tomahawk cruise missiles and was used in the bombing of Afghanistan. Liberal Democrat leader Charles Kennedy said, "...when a nuclear submarine is involved in an incident of this nature, with the potential for disastrous consequences, it is essential that a full investigation is undertaken, the conclusions of which must be made public." After the incident, a Royal Navy warship escorted the *Trafalger* back to Clyde Submarine Base at Faslane, Scotland, where the damage could be assessed.

On Nov. 13, the nuclear-powered attack submarine the *USS Oklahoma City* collided with a merchant ship in the Strait of Gibraltar in the western Mediterranean. The *Oklahoma City* is one of 57 attack submarines in the U.S. Navy.

A Navy press release said that the "*USS Oklahoma City* attempted to make radio contact with the other vessel. However, the other vessel did not respond, did not appear to need assistance and departed the area." The submarine discovered that the vessel hadn't "departed the area" when it rose to periscope depth and struck the ship.

There were no injuries on the submarine and the damage appeared to be limited to the periscope and the "sail" command and control area atop the *Oklahoma City*. The merchant ship was not reported to have serious damage.

-- *The Independent*, Nov. 7, & *Washington Post*, Nov. 14, 2002

CALENDAR

ON-GOING

***First Thursday of each month -- Ground Zero leaf-letting at the gates of the Bangor Submarine Base, 6:00 -- 7:30 a.m. Contact:** Ground Zero, 16159 Clear Creek Road NW, Poulsbo, WA 98370; (360) 377-2586; Web: www.gzcenter.org; Email: info@gzcenter.org

***Irradiation Action Alert -- Dairy Queen, Wegmans Supermarkets and Giant Foods Inc. sell irradiated beef. Call these companies to express your distaste. Dairy Queen: 1-866-793-7582; Wegman's Supermarkets: 1-800-934-6267, Ext. 4760; GIANT Foods: 888-4-MyGiant (DC, Maryland, & Virginia), or 888-MySuperG (Delaware & New Jersey).**

DECEMBER

26 - 28--**The 24th Annual Feast of the Holy Innocents Retreat, Witness and Line Crossing at Offutt Air Force Base.** The retreat begins at 7:00 p.m. Dec. 26th with a Holiday Party. Offutt AFB is home to nuclear weapons targeting and command headquarters. This year's retreat will be at St. John's Church on Creighton University campus, at 2500 California Plz, Omaha, Neb. **Contact:** Frank Cordaro, P.O. Box 4551, Des Moines, IA 50306; (515) 243-0765; Email: frankcordaro@earthlink.net; Web: no-nukes.org/mcw/

31--**Three Day Alternative New Year's Eve Celebration at the Nevada Test Site.** With speakers Joanna & Francis Macy, a "Las Vegas parade," ceremonies and candlelight procession & nonviolent direct action at midnight -- Mercury entrance to the NTS. New Year's Eve gathering at St. James Church in North Las Vegas. Sliding scale fee for housing & food. **Contact:** Marc Page, For the Sake of the Future, c/o JPIC Office, 1500 34th Ave, Oakland, CA 94601; (505) 870-2275 or (702) 646-4814; Web: NevadaDesertExperience.org; Email: AmmonHennacy@angelfire.com

JANUARY

18-19, 2003--**No War In Iraq.** Tens of thousands will converge in Washington DC for a mass demonstration. Buses, vans and car caravans are being organized from communities across the country. **Contact:** A.N.S.W.E.R., New York, (212) 633-0166; Los Angeles, (213) 487-2368; San Francisco, (415) 821-6545; Web: InternationalANSWER.org; Email: dc@internationalanswer.org

FEBRUARY

3--**Trespass trial of seven Project ELF resisters begins at 1:30 p.m. in federal district court, 120 N. Henry St., Madison, Wis. Contact:** Nukewatch.

3-4--**Global Network protest of the "20th Annual Symposium of Space, Nuclear Power & Propulsion" in Albuquerque, NM.** Top players from NASA, DOE, DOD and nuclear aerospace plan and push for nuclearism in space. **Contact:** Global Net-work Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space, P.O. Box 90083, Gainesville, FL 32607; (352) 337 9274; Web: space4peace.org; Email: globalnet@mindspring.com

MARCH

6- 7--**Consultation for Nonviolence.** All day at St. Benedict Center, Madison, WI. Sponsored by the Nonviolence Education and Training Task Group. **Contact:** Wisconsin Network for Peace & Justice, 122 State St., Madison, WI 53703; (608) 250-9240; Email: wnpj@mindspring.com

29-30--**Spring Action for Peace in Oak Ridge.** We are seeking all who want peace and are committed to Nonviolence. Co-sponsored by the Spirit of Peace Community. **Contact:** Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance; (865) 483-8202; Email: orep@stopthebombs.org; Web: stopthebombs.org/calendar/rides.html

MAY

10--**Annual Stop Project ELF May Gathering in celebration of Mothers' Day.** Plan early to attend a Saturday of speakers, music & nonviolent civil resistance to end the deadly transmission of this first-strike system. **Contact:** Nukewatch.

Three Mile Island Cancer Deception Unmasked

Science for sale: Faulty study finds "insignificant" increase in Three Mile Island cancer deaths

Editor's note: Brief news accounts distributed Nov. 1, 2002, dismissed claims that radiation from the partial melt down at Three Mile Island in 1979 caused increased cancer deaths. A typical account even said the accident sent "low" amounts of radiation into the surrounding environment.

For example the Minneapolis Star Tribune reported, "People who live near the Three Mile Island nuclear plant show no significant increase in cancer deaths more than 20 years after an accident at the plant released low amounts of radiation compared with the expected number of deaths in the general population. Researchers at the University of Pittsburgh studied deaths between 1979 and 1998 among people who reside within 5 miles of the Pennsylvania plant."

Close observers know better, as this report from Eric Epstein makes clear. President Carter's commission said about 15 million curies of radiation were released.

By Eric J. Epstein

The University of Pittsburgh's most recent Three Mile Island (TMI) "health study," is essentially a recitation of discredited protocol and disputed data. Re-released on Oct. 31, 2002, the study actually acknowledged an increase in lymphatic and blood cancers among men.

However, as in previous University of Pennsylvania studies conducted by the same group of researchers, this survey relied on government- and nuclear industry-sponsored "health studies" that were completed in the early 1980s. These studies were based on inaccurate dose projections, did not factor data only available in 1985 regarding the severity and conditions of the partial-core meltdown at Three Mile Island Unit-2, and did not factor the prevailing weather conditions and wind patterns in March and April 1979.

Nor did any of these studies evaluate the health impact on members of the community who "defueled" TMI. In fact, General Public Utilities chose not to maintain a health or cancer registry, despite the fact that between 1979 and 1989, 5,000 cleanup workers received "measurable doses" of radiation exposure.

Moreover, the University of Pennsylvania's study relied heavily on the much-maligned Pennsylvania State Department of Health's 17-year-old survey released in September 1985. That study's protocol was ridiculed and criticized by epidemiologists at Harvard (Dr. George Hutchison), and Penn. State (Dr. Robert A. Hultquist) for "diluting" increases in cancer by "expanding" the population base to include people living outside the 10-mile study-zone. (October 1985.)

Contrary to popular belief

A great deal of radiation was indeed released by the loss of coolant and partial core meltdown at TMI. The President's commission estimated about 15 million curies of radiation were released into the atmosphere. A review of dose assessments conducted by Dr. Jan Beyea estimated that between 276 and 63,000 person-rem were delivered to the general population within 50 miles of TMI. More recently, David Lochbaum of the Union of Concern Scientists estimated that between 40 million curies and 100 million curies escaped during the accident.

For 11 summer days in 1980, Met Ed illegally vented 43,000 curies of radioactive Krypton-85 (a beta and gamma emitter with a 10 year half-life) and other radioactive gasses into the environment without having scrubbers in place. And by 1993, TMI Unit-2 evaporated 2.3 million gallons of accident-generated radioactive water containing tritium -- a radioactive form of hydrogen with a 12.5-year half-life (dangerous for 125 years) -- into the atmosphere despite legal objections from community-based organizations.

The reactor's owners, codefendants and insurers have paid over \$80 million in health, economic and evacuation claims, including a \$1.1 million settlement for a baby born with Down's Syndrome. In June 2000, the U.S. Supreme Court sent 1,990 unsettled TMI-accident health suits back to Federal Court.

A 1996 study by the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill authored by Dr. Steven Wing found that, "...there were reports of erythema, hair loss, vomiting, and pet death near TMI at the time of the accident.... Accident doses were positively associated with cancer incidence. Associations were largest for leukemia, intermediate for lung cancer, and smallest for all cancers combined.... Inhaled radionuclide contamination could differentially impact lung cancers, which show a clear dose-related increase."

Today, TMI Unit-2 remains a high-level radioactive waste site in the middle of the Susquehanna River. There was no decommissioning fund established for TMI at the time of the accident. The site of the nation's worst commercial radiation accident has not been decontaminated or decommissioned. There has not been a human being in the basement of the reactor building since March 1979.

Mr. Epstein is chairman of Three Mile Island Alert, a safe-energy organization based in Harrisburg, Penn. and Coordinator of the EFMR Monitoring group that researches the Peach Bottom and TMI reactors.

"War" Against Cancer Still Lost After All

The National Cancer Institute repeatedly reports a "decline" in U.S. cancer rates -- most recently this past September. Papers around the country heralded the news on front pages. However as the *Wall Street Journal* reported, a revised analysis shows that "America isn't winning the war on cancer after all. ... Accurate information about cancer rates presents a grimmer picture." Rather than "leveling off or even declining," cancer rates in most of the varieties studied are increasing. Since 1987, breast cancer rates in white women have steadily risen 0.6% a year; lung cancer in women has been rising 1.2% a year since 1996 (100% between 1973 and 1990), and killed 68,000 (and 80,000 men) in 1999. Skin cancer has soared 4.1% a year since 1981, and 36% between the 1960s and the 1990s. "Staying out of the sun" isn't preventing the deadly disease. Prostate cancer in white males is rising 2.2 % a year; 180,000 new cases occurred in 1999 and about 31,500 north Americans die of it every year. Testicular cancer increased 51% between 1973 and 1995, while liver cancer increased 71% from the mid-1970s to the mid-1990s. --JML

Sources: *Wall Street Journal*, Oct. 17, 2002; *New York Times*, Apr. 18, 2000 & Mar. 11, Oct. 12 & 14, 1999; *Scientific American*, Jan. 1994;

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