

NUKEWATCH

PATHFINDER

A publication of the Progressive Foundation — Summer 2005

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

U.S. Nuclear Submarine Crashes into Undersea Mountain 500 Feet Down

One submariner died and 98 were battered and bloodied Jan. 8 when the nuclear-powered, fast attack submarine *San Francisco* — racing at top speed — smashed into an uncharted undersea mountain 500 feet below. Now, over four months after one of the worst wrecks in U.S. submarine history, details are finally emerging.

After the crash, "blood was everywhere," one account read. "There was so much blood on the instruments and on the control-room floor," Chief Petty Officer Danny Hager said, "that the place looked like a slaughterhouse." Men were hurled through the air by the crash, several were knocked unconscious and many were bleeding from head wounds and lay in open areas where they had gone flying — the crew's mess, the smoking room and the engine room. Petty Officer Joe Ashley, 24, was thrown 20 feet. He lived with a fractured skull for a few hours but died after medics failed in their attempt to evacuate him from the sub.

Were it not for extraordinary luck, the *San Francisco* and its crew were nearly lost. Indeed, Commander Kevin Mooney recalled that during several dreadful minutes adrift on the bottom, "I thought I was going to die." Seeing the sub's crushed bow in dry dock, electrician's mate Bryan Barnes told the *New York Times*, "Your jaw just kind of dropped open, and you wondered why you were still alive."

The Navy says that the sub's inner hull, nuclear reactor, torpedoes and Cruise missiles were not damaged. Repairs are expected to cost \$100 million.

The *San Francisco*'s captain and six others were relieved of their duties after the crash, 350 miles south of Guam, in the Caroline Islands near the Equator. The undersea mountain is on every chart of the area except for the one the *San Francisco* was using, which otherwise has the most detailed view of the seabed.

The dismissals of the officers came after Navy investigators concluded that the sub's speed (38 miles per hour) was too high given the number of mountains among the islands, that insufficient depth soundings were taken, and that officers failed to cross-check their map with other charts.

The Los Angeles class fast attack subs, with crews of 100 men, are 360 feet long and are armed with sophisticated torpedoes, land attack Cruise missiles and mines. Fast attack subs fired one-third of the 240 U.S. Cruise missiles that were used during President



U.S. Navy photo

The *San Francisco*, one of 49 nuclear-powered, fast attack submarines, in the U.S. fleet in dry dock in Guam. It crashed into an undersea mountain January 8.

Clinton's 78-day bombardment of Kosovo and the former Yugoslavia in 1999.

Submarine disasters and their dreadful close calls don't get much attention because the nuclear Navy is one of the most secretive branches of the American military.

How and where are the subs' radioactive effluent and gases vented? How many and what kinds of radiation accidents have happened aboard U.S. subs? How many sailors have been contaminated by reactor accidents and their emergency repair missions? We don't know, because retiring veterans are sworn to secrecy upon leaving the service. It's like the old joke: Why doesn't the Navy like Jehovah's Witnesses? The Navy doesn't like any witnesses.

Still, some accidents and near catastrophes couldn't be kept secret, even if very little about the causes and nothing about the actual release of radioactive materials to the environment, ever becomes public.

* Some 700 men have died in submarine disasters since the 1950s — 507 of them Russian.

* Thirty-two crewmen were rescued in 1939 when the U.S. *Squalus* sank in 240 feet of water.

* U.S. subs *Thresher* and *Scorpius* both sank in the 1960s.

Collection Laka foundation

Continued on page 5

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Radioactive Environmental Racism

DURBAN, South Africa — At the Third World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCAR) held in South Africa, conferees developed language on environmental justice to add to the Draft Declaration and Program of Action Documents of the WCAR. The draft language says, in part:

"A new form of racial discrimination against Indigenous Peoples, environmental racism, is the implementation of environmental, natural resource and development schemes that nullify or impair the enjoyment of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of Indigenous Peoples. ... Environmental racism results in the devastation, contamination, dispossession, loss, or denial of access, to Indigenous Peoples' biodiversity, their waters and traditional lands and territories." — *Indigenous Environmental Network*

48 Years and Counting

MAYAK, Russia — Residents of the Muslimovo village in the Cleyabinsk region of Russia's southern Ural mountains are still waiting for resettlement after a radiation accident that occurred at the nearby Mayak reprocessing site. Mayak is the largest nuclear complex in the world and its long history of radioactive pollution has blighted the lives of nearby communities. In 1957, one of the cooling systems at Mayak exploded and more than half the amount of radioactive waste released by the accident in Chernobyl got into the atmosphere. Some villagers were evacuated but many were not. "At least 272,000 people have been exposed to high doses of radiation," according to Greenpeace International, "thousands have died, and those who are left still suffer the horrific effects." Mayak has been the key Soviet and Russian military nuclear facility for over 50 years. The Bellona Foundation in Grunerlokka, Norway reports that the Russian's liberal Yabloko party presented a list of 444 families to the Russian Atomic Ministry last February. Alexander Rumyantse, the head of the agency, promised to bring the problem to the Ministry of Emergencies — nearly 50 years after the fact — and to find money for the village resettlement.

— "Half Life" at <archive.greenpeace.org/mayak/>

Reckless British Gov't Spews Waste on Beaches

By Arianne Peterson

The British Atomic Energy Authority (BAEA) is facing possible criminal prosecution since new radioactive pollution has been recovered from a public beach two miles west of its Dounreay site in Caithness, Scotland. The latest contamination — cesium-137 — was found March 4 on a beach 20 miles from Dounreay. The BAEA has admitted that hundreds of thousands of plutonium and uranium particles, each the size of a grain of sand, have been released from the facility.

Herbie Lyell, a health physics surveyor at Dounreay from 1960 to 1989, has recently come forward with claims of severe safety breaches during the 30 years he worked there. Lyell said high-level radioactive waste was washed down drains intended for low-level waste and then went on to effluent pits which were flushed into the open sea — including the flushing in 1988 of 40 litres of highly radioactive glycol oil. Discoveries of radioactive wastes on beaches were covered up, and inadequately labeled radioactive containers were left in dumps.



Lyell claims that two former employees who died of cancer in their forties had removed a faulty probe from a reprocessor without adequate protection. On one occasion, Lyell himself refused to carry out a dangerous procedure that went against government safety rules, and he was charged with refusing to obey an order.

A report by the Committee on Medical Aspects of Radiation in the Environment is expected to reveal leukemia clusters around Dounreay. In its minimalist response to the radioactive pollution found most recently, the Highland Council merely plans to post signs advising the public of the hazard, and allow visitors to make their own choice regarding their safety.

"This contamination is a legacy being left for my children's children," said Lyell. "It is an absolute disaster."

Rad Waste Illegally Dumped Off Somalia, Strewn by Tsunami

By Arianne Peterson

SOMALIA — A report released by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) in late February confirmed that nuclear and other hazardous waste illegally stored on the coast of Somalia has leaked as a result of the December tsunami. Since the wave struck Somalia, residents have complained of unusual health problems resulting from tsunami winds blowing inland. According to the report, "the health problems include acute respiratory infections, dry heavy coughing and mouth bleeding, abdominal hemorrhages, unusual skin chemical reactions, and sudden death after inhaling toxic materials."

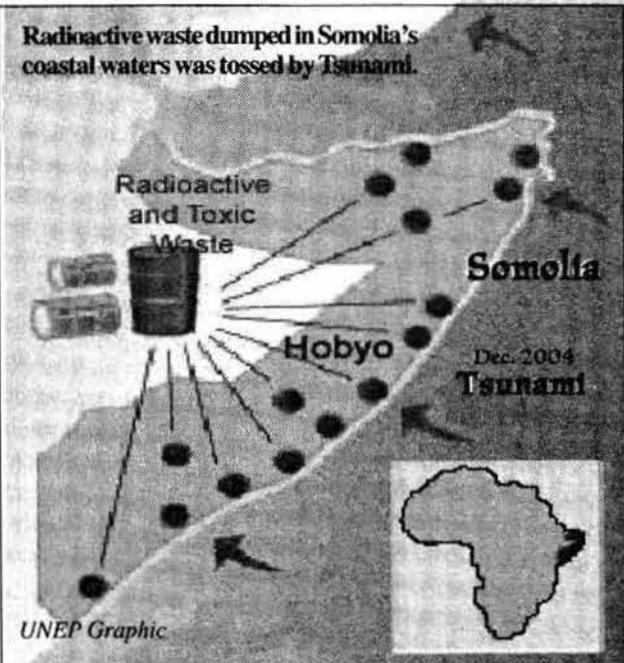
Somalia has been a dumping ground for first world hazardous wastes since the 1980s. The UNEP report, titled *National Rapid Environmental Desk Assessment*, cites European firms as the source of the nuclear waste but does not disclose which companies were involved in the outlawed dumping. It is estimated that the cost of dumping hazardous waste in Africa is as low as \$2.50 per metric ton, compared to \$250 per ton in Europe. Somalia has lacked a central government since 1991 and has therefore been powerless to safeguard its coastlines against rogue activities. Because of the extreme poverty and other social problems in the area, local residents were either unaware of the situation or powerless to stop it. European firms participated in the lawlessness and violated international treaties by negotiating hazardous waste disposal contracts with a country in the midst of a civil war and without a functioning government.

The December 26 tsunami is said to have dislodged and broken open containers which had been dumped on the seabed.



Photo by UNEP

A barrel of hazardous material found along the coast of Somalia is one of many dislodged by the tsunami.



Over the past decade, Italian and Swiss companies are alleged to have made thousands of illegal shipments of nuclear waste along Somalia's coastline.

The UN said the situation also poses a serious environmental hazard for neighboring countries.

"Our experts believe that a wide range of wastes had been dumped there," said Nick Nuttall, UNEP's head of media services. "Radioactive wastes, hospital wastes, heavy metals like lead and cadmium, chemical wastes and leather treatment wastes." The impact of the tsunami stirred up waste deposits on the beaches around North Hobyo and Warsheik. Nuclear waste, along with seawater, sewage, and other hazardous wastes is believed to have contaminated groundwater and wells in the region.

The UNEP says it is urgent that repairs to wells and sewage systems are completed and that all hazardous wastes are removed. The agency suggests using local labor for intense cleanup programs to maximize benefits to coastal communities. Following the report, the interim Somali government issued an appeal to the international community for help cleaning up the hazardous waste. Three hundred people were killed directly by the tsunami in Somalia, and approximately 18,000 households were left in need of immediate assistance.

According to the UNEP, "natural disasters are short-term catastrophes, but the contamination of the environment by radioactive waste can cause serious long-term effects on human health as well as severe impacts on groundwater, soil, agriculture and fisheries for many years. Therefore, the current situation along the Somali coastline poses a very serious environmental hazard, not only in Somalia but also in the eastern Africa subregion." — *UNEP National Rapid Environmental Desk Assessment*, available at <unep.org>

Federal Safety Board: Risk of Waste-Spewing Jet Crash on Indian Reservation "Acceptable"

By John LaForge

SKULL VALLEY, Utah — The future of a proposed high-level rad waste dump on a small Native North American Indian reservation is again in the hands of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), after the Atomic Safety Licensing Board (ASLB) — a part of the NRC — gave its go-ahead May 24.

The ASLB rejected arguments by the State of Utah and Skull Valley Goshute tribal members who had demanded reconsideration of its February approval.

The proposal by Private Fuel Storage (PFS), a group of large nuclear waste producers, would see 44,000 tons of highly radioactive used reactor fuel — 4,000 casks each weighing roughly 124 tons — shipped to the tiny Skull Valley Goshute Reservation 45 miles southwest of Salt Lake City, and placed "temporarily" in the open air on a fenced tarmac.

In February 2005, the ASLB, under pressure from NRC commissioners and PFS, reversed its earlier finding that the chance of a high-speed jet crashing into the waste casks (4-in-a-million) was four times what the standards allow. The board's February turn-around claims that the chance of such a crash is the same, but the likelihood that such a crash would break casks and release radiation "beyond allowable limits" is less than one-in-a-million and is therefore "acceptable."

The proposed rad waste "parking lot" is directly in the flight path of hundreds of U.S. Air Force F-16 fighter jet training runs. In its February decision, ASLB concluded, without doing physical tests, that even a direct hit by a crashing F-16 on one of the waste casks would not break its two-foot concrete shell and crack the steel inner shell.

Questions of deliberate attacks on the site by terrorists were ruled "too speculative" to merit consideration. But the ASLB later closed its quasi-judicial hearing to the public claiming it needed to keep information away from terrorists.

It was this cavalier and fickle treatment of risk assessment that moved Utah's attorney general to demand a reconsideration of the ASLB's February ruling.

At the April 6 appeal hearing in Washington, DC, the ASLB's chief administrative law judge, Michael Ferrar, heard extensive new testimony about the dangers of an F-16 crash. "The Chairman [Michael Ferrar] is under pressure from NRC Commissioners and PFS to grant approval," said Kevin Kamps, nuclear waste specialist for the Nuclear Information and Resource Service. Adding that he's skeptical about the independence of the board, Kamps said, "ASLB is a part of NRC, and it never saw a license it didn't like."

Tom Goldtooth, executive director of Indigenous Environmental Network, warns that "PFS must be stopped." Goldtooth told the *Desert Morning News* that "Locating high-level radioactive waste facilities on Indian lands violates federal laws and treaties and the trust responsibility of the U.S. government. It's an extreme example of the continuing environmental racist policies against Indian people."

Lies My Nuclear Engineer Told Me

John Parkyn, the Chief Executive Officer of Private Fuel Storage in LaCrosse, Wis., is upbeat about radioactive waste. His gang of waste producers wants to ship 44,000 tons of their waste to an Indian reservation in Utah. He spoke with Nukewatch on May 24.

Nukewatch: What about the licensing and appeal process holding up the proposed Goshute dump in Utah?

Parkyn: Everything comes to an end.

Nukewatch: Except radiation from nuclear waste.

Parkyn: No. Nuclear waste goes away. Its decay is the process of going away. Unlike lead or mercury, which stay in the environment forever, radiation decays and goes away.

Nukewatch: In 2004, the U.S. Court of Appeals said radiation from high-level waste would be deadly for over 300,000 years.

Parkyn: Yes, then it goes away.

Note: Mr. Parkyn, who reminded Nukewatch that he is an engineer, may not believe that 300,000 years is essentially forever. He should know that uranium, which takes millions of years to decay, decays to lead. — JL

Downwinders Win Some, Lose Some

By Molly Mechtenberg-Berrigan

SPOKANE, Washington — A federal jury has awarded more than \$500,000 to two thyroid cancer victims who as children during the 40s, 50s and 60s lived downwind from the Hanford Nuclear Reservation. The jury deadlocked in a third cancer case and ruled against three people who suffered from thyroid-related autoimmune disease. The verdicts bring some closure for the victims of Hanford's deadly legacy of radioactive contamination during its four decades of plutonium production. Meanwhile, in April the government cut funding for a large study examining the link between radioactive fallout and thyroid disease and cancer.

In 1986, the U.S. Department of Energy released 19,000 pages of previously classified documents detailing the more than 740,000 curies* of radioactive iodine-131 vented both accidentally and intentionally from Hanford. Iodine-131, known to concentrate in the thyroid gland, is passed to humans from the milk of cows that grazed on contaminated pastures. The largest single release of radioactive iodine-131, known as the Green Run, occurred in Dec. 1949. Eight thousand curies were intentionally released to study the plume on the theory that by tracking a similar plume in the Soviet Union, U.S. scientists could learn the location of Soviet plutonium.

The defendants, DuPont and General Electric, operated Hanford's reactors during the height of the airborne radioactive releases. Estimates of the companies' legal fees in the case range from \$60 to \$100 million. These costs are paid for with taxpayer money because the Price-Anderson Act protects the companies from liability. Approximately 2,300 other downwinders have sued DuPont and General Electric. "There are not enough courts or enough juries to try 2,300 cases. Everybody knows that," said Richard Eymann, a lawyer representing the downwinders. "Here we have the United States government spending a hell of a lot of money fighting its own citizens when it's out there compensating (Hanford) workers for the very same illnesses."

Just weeks before the May verdict, the federal government abruptly cut funding for a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) study examining the possible connection between thyroid diseases and radioactive fallout that hit Utah and Nevada during the 1950s and 60s. The Utah Thyroid Disease Study had been tracking the thyroid condition of 4,000 former school children who had grown up downwind from the nuclear tests.

Leading the study was Dr. Joseph Lyons, a professor at the University of Utah. It was Lyons' ground-breaking study in 1979 for the *New England Journal of Medicine* which proved that radioactive fallout from the open-air nuclear tests in Nevada had lead to increased incidents of cancer in communities downwind of the blasts. In 1993, Dr. Lyons published research in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* that linked fallout to thyroid tumors. The results of this study prompted Lyons to apply for funding from the CDC for a more extensive study examining all 4,000 former schoolchildren who were identified in 1965 as being exposed to the most extreme levels of fallout.

Lyons believes that the current study was axed for political reasons. "The only interpretation I can put on it is that the Bush administration doesn't want to know the health effects of fallout on American citizens," he told Utah's *Desert News*.

In the Hanford trial, DuPont and GE used a flawed study completed in 1999 to successfully fend off the suit by the three plaintiffs with thyroid disease. The Hanford Thyroid Disease Study, a nine-year, \$18 million epidemiology report, assessed offsite emissions of radioactive iodine-131. Completed by the federal CDC, the study found that iodine-131 did not increase the risk of acquiring thyroid disease and cancer. Activist groups and downwinders challenged the study and less than one year later the National Academy of Sciences found that the study had serious errors.

*A curie, a huge amount of radiation, is about 27 billion atomic disintegrations per second.

Bomb Testing Museum Excludes Downwinders

LAS VEGAS — On February 20, the Atomic Testing Museum opened in Las Vegas, Nevada, showcasing the Nevada Test Site, where 904 nuclear tests were conducted between 1951 and 1992. The \$4.5 million museum is a partnership between the Nevada Test Site Historical Foundation, the DOE and the Desert Research Institute in association with the Smithsonian Institution. Included are displays showing the history of nuclear weapons experiments and simulations of atomic detonations with shaking benches, loud explosions, blasts of air and eyewitness accounts describing the "beauty" of the explosions.

The museum excludes the largest group of participants in the four-decade testing program — tens of thousands of people living downwind who developed cancer and other fallout-related illnesses. Downwinders have called the museum nothing more than a monument to propaganda.

Half of the museum's funding came from federal tax dollars through a congressional appropriation secured by Nevada Sen. Harry Reid, and the rest came from private donations, including major gifts from Bechtel and Lockheed Martin. Utah downwinder Michelle Thomas said, "This is a shrine to the wrong thing. It's insulting that the government is authorizing and financially supporting this effort when downwinders are still struggling to pay for their chemotherapy. This is unconscionable."

National Academy of Sciences Recommends Changes to Compensation Act

WASHINGTON — An April report released by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) is broadening the scope of who qualifies for radiation exposure compensation while tightening the scientific guidelines. The 372-page report recommends changes to the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act, established in 1990 for people with diseases related to radiation who lived in certain counties downwind from the Nevada Test Site. The new report recommends widening the number of potential claimants to include the whole country, acknowledging that bomb test fallout affected the entire U.S.

The NAS report also suggests more stringent scientific guidelines in reviewing requests and awarding compensation. The new scientific method would likely result in fewer successful claims.

The report acknowledges that only a very small number of monitoring stations around the country recorded fallout during the period of above-ground testing. Outside of monitoring at the test site itself and counties in close proximity, there were only 95 monitoring stations in operation around the U.S. "It is not possible for many victims to produce hard scientific evidence of their exposure because studies were not done at the time," said Mary Dickson, a Salt Lake City woman who has survived thyroid cancer.

Food Irradiation Updates

Food Irradiation Facility Closes Its Doors

In April, CFC Logistics announced its plan to shut down its controversial food irradiation facility in Milford Township, Pennsylvania. Citizens in Milford had been fighting the facility for years because of concerns regarding the transport and use of radioactive cobalt-60 in their community. The facility brought unwanted risk to its neighbors so that a company could cash in on questionable and unnecessary "treatment" for food.

CFC Logistics joins SureBeam — formerly the largest food irradiation company in the United States, which went bankrupt and closed its facilities in 2003 — in demonstrating that despite aggressive promotion by both industry and government, there is no consumer demand for irradiated food. CFC was planning to provide the irradiation for ground beef purchased by the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the National School Lunch Program — a plan that did not materialize because schools questioned health impacts on children and did not want to pay for the higher-priced irradiated meat.

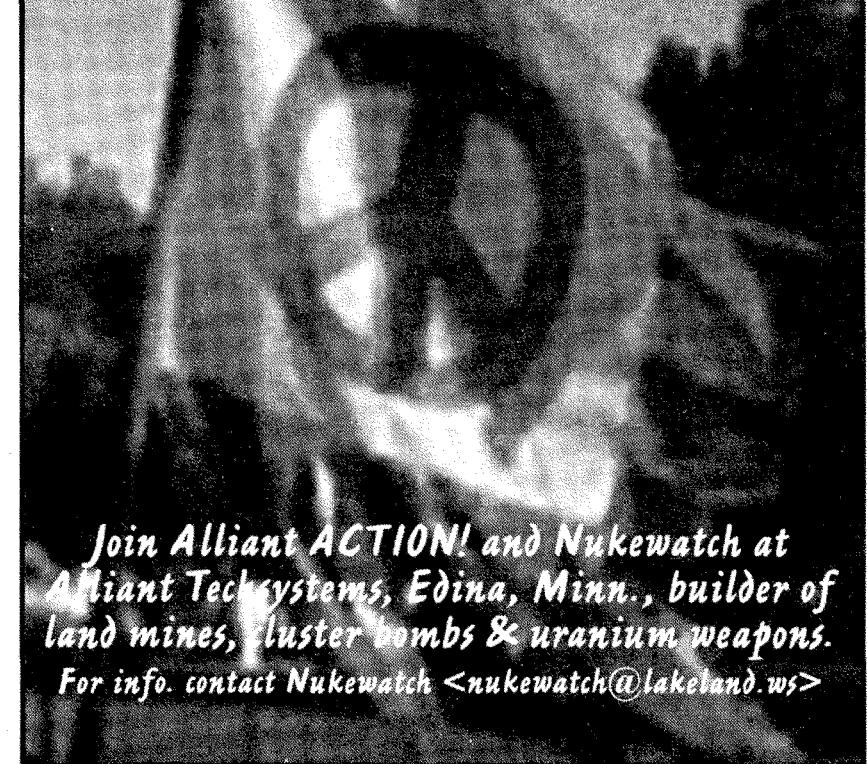
Bills Seek to Notify Parents of Irradiated Meat in Schools

Current guidelines do not require either the labeling of irradiated food in school lunches, or parental notification if irradiated food is served. Public Citizen's California office sponsored a right-to-know bill that would require school board approval, parental notification, and labeling of irradiated food in California schools. This bill was passed by the California House and Senate but was vetoed by Republican Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Currently, a grassroots group, Minnesota Voices for Choices, is sponsoring a food irradiation right-to-know bill in Minnesota. Introduced into the House as bill number 1795 and the Senate as number 1450, the act would require the school board to adopt a formal policy prior to purchasing irradiated food, as well as labeling the product and notifying parents if irradiated food is served in schools. If you live in Minnesota, take the time to call or e-mail the Senate Education Committee and urge them to support the Irradiation Right-to-Know Legislation.

For more information check out: mnvoicesforchoices.org.

Mark your Calendar
for October 23 & 24



Join Alliant ACTION! and Nukewatch at
Alliant Techsystems, Edina, Minn., builder of
land mines, cluster bombs & uranium weapons.
For info. contact Nukewatch <nukewatch@lakeland.ws>

Did U.S. Navy "Torpedo" Kursk?

A former torpedo engineer and senior member of the British Defense Ministry has backed a politically explosive film that accuses U.S. forces of torpedoing the Russian submarine *Kursk* on August 12, 2000, sending it 350 feet to the bottom of the Barents Sea and causing the deaths of its 118 crew members. Maurice Stradling says he supports a new French documentary, *The Kursk: A Submarine in Troubled Waters*, which shows footage of a precise circular hole in the side of the vessel — which clearly bends inwards — consistent with damage done by the U.S. Navy's MK-48 torpedoes, according to a U.S. military source. The film points out that two U.S. submarines, the *Toledo* and the *Memphis*, were shadowing the *Kursk* at the time. It alleges that the *Toledo* accidentally collided with the *Kursk*, causing the Russian sub to open its torpedo tubes, leading to an attack from the *Memphis*.

Although the nuclear-powered *Kursk* was equipped to do so, Russian authorities said it wasn't carrying nuclear weapons when it sank. The *Kursk* was salvaged in 2003 and its reactor fuel was removed and shipped to the notorious Mayak reprocessing site in the Ural Mountains. (See: "Still Waiting," p. 1)

Since October of 2000, former Russian officials including the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Commander of the Russian fleet, and the Defense Minister, "insist with growing conviction that the *Kursk* was sunk by a collision with a Western submarine."

A commission of Russian Navy officials headed by then Deputy Prime Minister Ilya Klebanov cited "irrefutable data" that the *Kursk* collided with "some external object of very large tonnage" causing a large dent in the conning tower and "big grooves of something scraping along and peeling off the [sub's] outer rubber layer."

Then Defense Minister Marshal Sergeyev reported that men from two Russian warships "directly observed" a large underwater object August 13 "equivalent in size" to the *Kursk*. *The New York Times* reported that "It appeared from [Sergeyev's] remarks that in the early stages of the rescue operation, Russian Navy officials were not only organizing the attempted rescue of the crew but also seeking a foreign submarine that they suspected in the collision."

The U.S. claims that the *Kursk*'s own torpedoes misfired on board and caused the disaster. Both U.S. and British officials still refuse to reveal exactly how close their submarines were at the time of the sinking.

The French documentary alleges the actual cause of the sinking was covered up at the time by then presidents Bill Clinton and Vladimir Putin in a deal that included the cancellation of \$10 billion of Russian debt.

U.S. subs have been involved in more than a dozen collisions with Soviet and Russian submarines.

The U.S. has admitted that even after the explosions that sank *Kursk*, its two U.S. subs did not immediately leave but continued to gather information "and coordinate a rescue effort" which ultimately failed. Fuel for the documentary's allegations was added August 18 with the arrival in Moscow of CIA director George Tenet.

—AP & JL

— *The Australian*, May 9, 2005; *New York Times*, Feb. 27, 2001; & Nov. 9; Oct. 9, 26 & 27; & Aug. 15 - 30, 2000

NUCLEAR SHORTS

Germany Closes Nuclear Reactor

OBRIGHEIM, Germany — The government shut down its oldest nuclear reactor as part of its plan to phase out nuclear power by 2020. The 36-year-old, 340-megawatt reactor in this southwestern town is the second of Germany's 19 reactors to be closed. To replace the energy produced by nuclear reactors, the government is proposing investment in renewable sources such as wind power. Germany already produces 40 percent of the world's wind power through its 16,000 wind turbines. The government plans to meet 12.5 percent of the country's electricity demand through wind power by 2010.

Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder's Social Democrats and their Green coalition partners reached an agreement with Germany's main energy providers in 2001 to phase out nuclear power. Under current legislation, each of the country's 19 reactors will be closed on its 32nd birthday. The Stade reactor, near Hamburg, was the first to be shut down and is now awaiting decommissioning. Germany's nuclear program and its efforts to reduce its reliance on fossil fuels have made it a leader in efforts to fulfill the Kyoto protocol, though concern has been expressed that the country is creating an energy crisis for itself. According to *Reuters* news service, the next reactor to close will be the Biblis — a nuclear reactor, which has been in use since 1975 and is scheduled to shut down in February of 2007.

— BBC, May 11, 2005; Solar Today, March/April, 2005

Deformed Fish Found Near Canadian Uranium Mine

REGINA, Saskatchewan — Federal regulators are worried about the high number of deformed fish turning up near a decommissioned uranium operation in northwest Saskatchewan. On April 5, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) announced its approval of a two-year license for Cameco Corp., to operate the defunct Beaverlodge mine and mill as a waste facility. Cameco, has been investigated after a 2003 environmental study found a potential risk to humans "related to an exceedance of toxicity benchmarks" for selenium and uranium at two lakes, Beaverlodge and Martin. CNSC staff said that the contaminated lake sediment poses a "generally very low" risk to people and the environment in the short term, but long-term risks are harder to gauge.

The high levels of nonradioactive selenium in area lake sediment were identified as a particular concern with respect to the fish population. "They are believed to have resulted in a relatively high incidence of deformities in fish, specifically the Lake Chub species," the CNSC reported. Commission staff believe the selenium levels are high enough "to cause significant reproductive failure" in fish and the problem will remain for decades. One intervener said she suspected radiation and not selenium was the cause of the deformed fish, but commission staff disagree.

— Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Apr. 7, 2005

Weapons Groundwater Contamination of 131 Acres

TALLEVAST, Florida — A plume of groundwater contamination near a former weapons manufacturing site in Manatee County, Florida is nearly 30 times larger than initially estimated, according to the military contractor responsible for cleaning up the property. The American Beryllium Co. mill, which operated for nearly 40 years, closed in 1996 and was then bought by Lockheed Martin. Lockheed has known about the contamination since 2000, and the estimated size of the plume has grown steadily with each new report, most recently covering 131 acres. The pollution has spread to include groundwater under local farms, residential areas, a golf course, and commercial areas including the Airport Animal Hospital and Goodwill.

People in Tallevast have been drinking from contaminated wells for at least four years which is when Lockheed started its probe. Residents have reported an inordinate number of illnesses, from respiratory problems to miscarriages to cancer. State health officials are still trying to assess levels of exposure to area residents. The major pollutant studied so far has been the carcinogenic solvent trichloroethylene, or TCE, which can cause liver and kidney cancer. A new carcinogenic solvent, Dioxane, was identified for the first time in a Feb. 1 report. Dioxane can move more quickly through groundwater and perhaps for a greater distance than TCE. After current tests are finished, Lockheed plans to discuss the results and propose a cleanup plan in a public meeting. Cleanup is expected to take up to ten years.

— Sarasota Herald-Tribune, & Bradenton Herald, Apr. 16, 2005

South Africa Concerned About Missing Nukes

CAPE TOWN — The South African National Intelligence Agency (NIA) is concerned about missing nuclear weapons in Africa. New NIA director-general Billy Masehtha was said to be concerned about missing weapons-grade uranium from an enrichment program run by the late Zaire dictator Mobutu Sese Seko. Mobutu, who seized power in Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo), developed a nuclear program during the Cold War with the assistance of a "Western power," Masehtha confirmed. Since the civil war in the DRC, it is unclear what has happened to the nuclear weapons. Masehtha said the weapons could have ended up in the hands of terrorists or criminals.

Two fuel rods went missing from a civilian reactor during the 1980s. One of them was recovered but the other is still missing. The Congo is a key source of uranium and, according to the report, supplied most of the uranium used to make the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. — *South African Broadcasting Corporation*, February 27, 2005

FDA Approves Reactor Accident Pills for Kids

WASHINGTON, DC — On March 18, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) awarded a \$5.7 million contract to Fleming & Company Pharmaceuticals for the manufacture and delivery of 1.7 million pediatric doses of liquid potassium iodide. This supply of potassium iodide, which is being purchased under the BioShield program, would be used in the event of a release of radioactive iodine-131, commonly unleashed in large quantities during reactor accidents. Once it is delivered to HHS, the pediatric potassium iodide will be made available to states for distribution in communities around commercial nuclear power reactors.

Because the thyroid gland rapidly absorbs any iodine in the body, a dose of potassium iodide can block the uptake of radioactive iodine-131 by saturating the thyroid gland. However, potassium iodide does not prevent the absorption of other radioactive isotopes released from reactors including cesium, strontium, and the radioactive gases krypton and xenon. The liquid potassium iodide formulation is the first to be developed specifically for children. Its black raspberry taste is designed to make it more palatable.

— *Department of Health and Human Services Press Release*, March 18, 2005

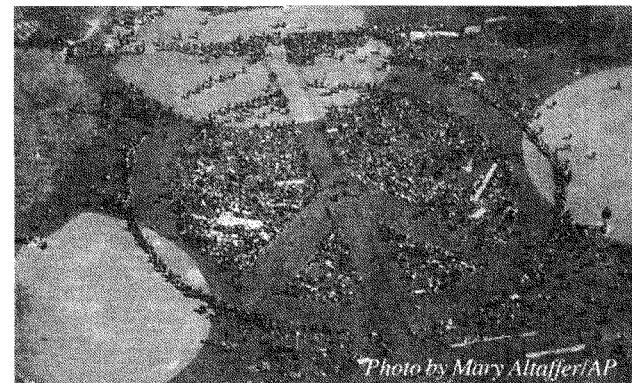


Photo by Mary Altaffer/AP

On Sunday May 1, over 40,000 people marched from the United Nations to Central Park in New York City demanding nuclear disarmament.

Possible Sites for New Reactors Named

PHILADELPHIA, Penn. — The nuclear power consortium NuStart Energy announced May 19 the names of six sites from which two will be chosen to build and operate new reactors. The sites are Scottsboro, Alabama, Port Gibson, Mississippi, St. Francisville, Louisiana, Aiken, South Carolina, Lusby, Maryland, and Oswego, New York. Four of the six sites already house operating nuclear reactors.

The last license to build a new reactor was issued in 1973. No company has followed through with building a new reactor since Three Mile Island's partial meltdown in 1979. The announcement by NuStart is part of the Bush administration's push for nuclear power rejuvenation.

The sites will be evaluated based on 75 factors, including seismic activity, availability of water, as well as local and state incentives. NuStart says it expects to name the two finalists by October. If the licenses are approved, construction could begin in 2010.

Under the DOE's Nuclear Power 2010 program, half of the estimated \$520 million cost of the project is to be paid for with taxpayer dollars and the other half by the consortium members. — *MSNBC*, May 20, 2005

Plutonium Stored in Paint Cans

LIVERMORE, Calif. — In March, the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) disclosed that Livermore Laboratory in California is using thin-walled receptacles that "have no technically justified safety or design basis" for storing plutonium. The safety board also said, "These container types are generally forms of packaging typically used in nonnuclear applications (e.g., paint cans or food pack cans)." The DNFSB is commissioned by Congress to oversee safety issues in the DOE nuclear weapons complex.

Oxidation has been found in thin walled food pack cans with plutonium metal at the Lab. The paint cans that Livermore uses to store plutonium do not seal tightly at the lid. Other cans containing plutonium have loose fitting covers closed only by tape. The Board found that 15 percent of weapons-related nuclear materials stored there are in technically unjustified packaging more than five years old. Meanwhile, Livermore is pushing to increase its plutonium inventory from a storage limit of 1,540 pounds to 3,300 pounds.

Livermore Lab's plutonium facility has been shut down since January 15 of this year due to a slew of other safety violations and problems. This is not the first time Livermore has been cited for safety lapses. More than a decade ago, the DOE Plutonium Vulnerability Assessment Team found

plutonium in bulging cans at the lab. — *Citizen's Watch, Tri-Valley CAREs, Livermore, Calif.*, April 2005

Twelve Million Tons of Radioactive Waste to be Moved

MOAB, Utah — A 12-million-ton mass of radioactive waste that has been polluting the Colorado River for decades will be moved, it was announced April 6 by the Department of Energy. The toxic pile is residue from one of the nation's largest uranium processing plants, which operated near Moab, Utah from 1956 to 1986. The mound sits 750 feet from the Colorado River, which provides drinking water to an estimated 25 million people downstream in Los Angeles, San Diego, Las Vegas, Phoenix and other cities throughout the Southwest.

The mound, which is 94 feet high and spreads over 130 acres, will be dug up then shipped by rail and buried on a desolate expanse of open range about 30 miles from the river. The project will not begin until 2007 and it is expected to be completed by 2012. The cost of the project is estimated at \$329 to \$464 million.

Members of Congress and governors in five states joined with concerned citizens in calling for removal of the waste. At one point, groundwater contaminated by the waste was leaking into the river at an estimated 28,000 gallons a day, although recent Energy Department cleanup efforts slowed the contamination to 15,000 gallons a day.

— *San Diego Union-Tribune*, April 7, 2005

Survey: One in Four Would Use Nuclear Weapons

NEW YORK — More than one in four Americans would go so far as to utilize nuclear bombs if need be in the fight against terrorism, according to a national survey released on March 1. Gallup asked Americans whether they would be willing or not willing "to have the U.S. government do each of the following" and then listed an array of options. The option of using "nuclear weapons to attack terrorist facilities" drew the support of 27 percent of adults, with 72 percent opposing. Experts agree that the power of today's weapons, their range of damage and the peril of drifting radioactive fallout far exceeds the bombs used at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The same poll showed that 65 percent of Americans would agree to "assassinate known terrorists," while 39 percent would support "torturing known terrorists if they know details about future terrorist attacks in the U.S."

— *Editor & Publisher*, March 3, 2005

Los Alamos National Laboratory Sets Off Mock Warhead

LOS ALAMOS, New Mexico — A mock nuclear warhead was set off April 1 at the Dual Axis Radiographic Hydrodynamic Test Facility at Los Alamos National Laboratory. The weapon, a W76 submarine-launched missile warhead, is scheduled for renovation in 2007 as part of the National Nuclear Security Administration's Stockpile Life Extension Program, which involves refurbishing aging nuclear weapons by replacing some components. An "inert material," which officials refused to identify, was used instead of the warhead's plutonium. The exploding device was said to have been contained within a nylon tent that was filled with foam to contain radioactive materials used in the test. "We do use some nuclear material, and that's the purpose of the foam, so we don't eject it into the environment," said Kevin Jones, head of the lab's experimental division. The W76 warhead is the most common in the U.S. nuclear arsenal, with an estimated 2,300 now on submarines. — *The Albuquerque Journal*, Apr. 5, 2005

RESOURCES

* **Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space**, PO Box 652; Brunswick, ME 04011; (207) 729-0517; Email: globalnet@mindspring.com; Web: space4peace.org

* **Greenpeace International**, Otto Heldringstraat 5; 1066 AZ Amsterdam, The Netherlands, (+31) 20-718-2000; Email: supporter.services@int.greenpeace.org; Web: greenpeace.org/international

* **HONOR, Honor Our Neighbors Origins & Rights**, 6435 Wiesner Rd., Omro, WI 54963, (920) 582-4619; Email: info@honoradvocacy.org; Web: honoradvocacy.org

* **IEER, Institute for Environmental and Energy Research**, 6935 Laurel Ave., #201, Takoma Park, MD 20912; (301) 270-5500; Email: ier@ier.org; Web: ier.org

* **Indigenous Environmental Network**, PO Box 485, Bemidji, MN 56619; (218) 751-4967; Email: ien@igc.org; Web: ienearth.org

* **Lockheed Martin Vigil**, Eagan, MN, (651) 454-3850; Email: skograce@mtv.org

* **NIRS, Nuclear Information & Resource Service**, 1424 16th St. NW, #404, Wash., DC 20036; (202) 328-0002; Email: nirsnet@nirs.org; Web: nirs.org

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* **Shundahai Network**, P.O. Box 1115, Salt Lake City, UT 84110; (801) 533-0128; Email: shundahai@shundahai.org; Web: shundahai.org

* **Tri-Valley CAREs**, 2582 Old 1st St. Livermore, CA 94551; (925) 443-7148; Email: marylia@earthlink.net; Web: trivalleycares.org

* **WISE, World Information Service on Energy**, P.O. Box 59636, 1040 LC Amsterdam, Netherlands, Email: wiseamster@antenna.nl

Fear and Lying in Las Vegas

Faked data contaminates nuclear dumpsite project

As if anyone needed more proof that politics — not science — has been driving the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste dump plan for Nevada: In March came news of falsification of data by government scientists in order to support the project.

Senator Harry Reid, D-Nev., said in a statement March 17, "This proves once again that Department of Energy (DOE) must cheat and lie in order to make Yucca Mountain look safe." DOE wants to bury 77,000 tons of waste there.

Under pressure in April from Congressional inquiries about the fabricated data, the DOE only managed more lying.

Internal E-mails (sent between 1998 and 2000 but only now divulged), from Interior Department scientists with the U.S. Geological Survey discussed fabricating entries involving calibration of instruments (see box at right). The admissions raise questions about basic studies used by Congress and the President in 2002 to approve the site as the nation's 2nd nuclear dump. (The first, for military waste, is operating near Carlsbad, New Mexico.)

The e-mails concerned computer models used to predict water infiltration and climate "over hundreds of thousands of years." In the messages, scientists discussed non-calibrated instruments and falsified data on how water would flow through the proposed deep-underground dump site beneath Yucca Mountain, about 90 miles northwest of Las Vegas.

The movement of water through or around nuclear waste poses crucial danger to living things near radioactive waste sites. Observers on all sides of the issue admit that water will eventually degrade the radioactive waste canisters and contaminate surface or well water supplies with radiation, some of which is cancer-causing for more than 300,000 years.

Peace Activists Hold Their Ground

By Greg Skog

Note: Sue and Greg Skog, of DoPeace Minnesota in Eagan, hold a weekly vigil to protest war profiteering by the giant weapons contractor Lockheed Martin at its Eagan facilities.

Our family started a peace vigil in Eagan on November 11, 2004 at the corner of Pilot Knob Road and Yankee Doodle Road every Thursday from 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. It's the intersection where Lockheed Martin, the largest weapons manufacturer in the world, has its facility. We got wonderful handcrafted signs and banners from our friends that do the "peace bridge" vigil and the vigil at Alliant Tech.

We noticed that we were more visible if we stood out on the crosswalk islands. We also decided to change our signs because we were getting negative reactions. Our family decided that we would attract more positive attention by changing many of our signs to what we want, peace, and less of what we don't want, war, immoral government and corporations that cash in on war and violence.

We immediately noticed the amount of positive reaction dramatically go up after our transformation to a more positive message. Our daughter made a neon orange sign that said "Honk 4 Peace" in bold black letters. The signs she made were simple, easy to read and understand by passing motorists, non-offensive, positive and fun. People began to interact with us by giving us the peace sign, honking and thumbs up. Now hundreds of people were positively interacting with us for the one-hour vigil. Our daughter made three more signs; one for each corner, and now our visibility is great.

All was going well until March 3 when an Eagan police officer stopped to tell us to move back off the crosswalk

island to the corner. We asked him why and he said it was an order from high up. For the next four weeks the police gave us many different statutes, all of which didn't really apply to where we could stand during our vigil. On March 24 the police threatened to cite one of our vigilers. On March 28 we went to the Eagan police station to try to peacefully resolve the disagreement. They got back to us with two different statute numbers that also didn't apply.

On March 31, we showed up for our weekly vigil. Since none of the statutes the police had given us seemed to apply to us, another vigiler, Ross made the decision to go out on the crosswalk island and was prepared to get arrested if that was what the police decided. Within minutes an unmarked police car pulled up and told him to move. He didn't. The officer went to park his vehicle. Moments later three more squad cars surrounded him. They were yelling at him to move. He refused. The first officer walked out and began a dialogue with an angry frustrated tone. He then took Ross' drivers license to write him a citation. After receiving the citation he was still not willing to move. They threatened him with jail. I walked onto the island with Ross and the officers to try to defuse the situation. We didn't get angry, remained calm, poised and talked honestly and peacefully to the officers, stating our case and reason for being there. All but two of the officers left and the four of us remaining had a positive dialogue for about another hour. The officers explained their side and views. We did the same. The two officers listened and so did we. As both sides listened to one another the situation continually improved.

All continued to be totally respectful of one another. The

E-mails Hint at Fraud

Following is a sample of the U.S. Geological Survey e-mails that were released. Sent between 1999 and 2000, they refer to data incorporated into two "Analysis and Model Reports" concerning water infiltration through Yucca Mountain. Some information was deleted before being made public.

E-mail from USGS employee 2 to USGS employee 1 dated April 22, 1999:

What if you just download the raw files from _____ and say you used those? Do they need to know any more than that? You don't really need to do an analysis just say this is the data I used. Maybe that would work.

E-mail from USGS Employee 1 to presumed USGS employee 2 and presumed Federal Employee (PFE) dated Nov. 15, 1999:

Don't look at the last 4 lines. Those lines are a mystery that I believe somehow relate to the work PFE was doing in entering the 1994 data. These lines are not used by _____ (we stop at 9/30/94). I've deleted the lines from the 'official' QA version of the files (which do have headers). In the end I keep track of 2 sets of files, the ones that will keep QA happy and the ones that were actually used.

E-mail from USGS employee 1 to presumed USGS employee 2, Jan. 6, 2000:

There is of course, no scientific notebook for this work. All work is in the form of electronic files.... They may be expecting to see something that at least looks like a scientific notebook documenting work in progress. I can start making something up but then the _____ projects will need to go on hold.

E-mail from USGS employee 1 to PFE, March 30, 2000:

The programs, of course, are all already installed otherwise the _____ would not exist. I don't have a clue when these programs were installed. So I've made up the dates and names (see red edits below). This is as good as its going to get. If they need more proof, I will be happy to make up more stuff, as long as its not a video recording of the software being installed. — HONOR Digest, March/April 2005

Some British Nuclear Waste May be "Burned"

LONDON, England — The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) is considering burning thousands of tons of radioactive graphite. The health impact could be huge.

Burning tens of thousands of tons of waste graphite from the UK's nuclear power stations sounds like the last thing you should do, but that is exactly what is being considered by the UK government's NDA. If the plan is carried out, any radioactive carbon-14 released into the atmosphere could endanger people's health.

Nearly all of the UK's nuclear reactors have graphite around their cores to slow down escaping neutrons and help sustain the nuclear reaction. Until now, it was assumed that the contaminated graphite would be stored or buried along with other radioactive waste.

But according to the NDA, some companies are proposing to incinerate the graphite, and the NDA has told *New Scientist* that the idea "may have merits." The only problem, it says, is how to ensure the "safe management" of the radioactive carbon-14 the graphite will contain.

— *New Scientist*, May 21, 2005

[Editor's note: Graphite fires are extremely difficult to control. In the April 1986 Chernobyl disaster in Ukraine, a graphite fire burned out of control for over two weeks, spewing radiation high into the atmosphere and across the northern hemisphere.]



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NASA's Nuclear Option

By Bonnie Urfer and John LaForge

Project Prometheus, NASA's previously fast-tracked mission to Jupiter, is being delayed in favor of a nuclear rocket test closer to home. The space agency intends to push on with a scientific mission to the inner solar system — the moon, Mars or an asteroid — to test an experimental nuclear propulsion system that could later be used on Prometheus. Concerns about cost, risk and the sheer technical complexity of Prometheus keep the launch more than a decade away.

NASA's Prometheus Nuclear Systems & Technology, along with Energy Department's Office of Naval Reactors, signed a Memorandum of Understanding in August of 2004 for the development, design, delivery and operational support of "civilian" nuclear reactors in outer space. The project is now at the preliminary design phase. The program would also develop new types of so-called radioisotope thermoelectric generators (RTG), which are plutonium batteries.

But it's all completely theoretical at this point. The most favored space propulsion scheme is a "nuclear-[low-thrust] electric option" or "high-efficiency electric propulsion thrusters." The theory involves propelling electrically-charged particles — produced in a nuclear reactor — out the rear of the craft.

One launch design could be the "nuclear-enhanced-air-breathing rocket." A uranium dioxide fission reactor would heat hydrogen to 2500 degrees and mix it with a little air to produce combustion and lift-off at 4000 degrees. The boondoggle has been tried before, but failed nuclear rocket programs — NERVA and Projects Orion, Pluto, Rover and Poodle — were abandoned in the '50s and '60s due to technical problems, political opposition (1963 Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty) and exorbitant cost.

Some NASA/DOE reports say Prometheus could use conventional rockets for launch with reactor propulsion not kicking in until high altitude is attained. Never mind the 1963 Partial Test-Ban Treaty which commits the U.S. "to prohibit, to prevent, and not to carry out any nuclear weapon test, or any other nuclear explosion ... in ... outer space."

Prometheus appears so outlandish on its face, there's no wonder the White House and NASA kept it quiet in the wake of the Columbia disaster and worldwide protest over the 72 pounds of plutonium aboard the Cassini mission in 1997. Leonard David, of Albuquerque, a senior space writer for *Space.com*, reports that, "Those attending [a 2003 Space Technology & Applications International Forum] ... were asked by NASA not to openly discuss details of [Prometheus] given the Columbia catastrophe."

The administration agreed to an intentional outing last year only after perception spin doctors were in place. A new PR effort emerged, spouting articles and web sites in support of the program's Nuclear Systems & Technology Project — all with slick and appealing pictures. Project managers decided that openness would go over better with the public, so lots of facts, figures and "benefits" are listed.

Glossy PR rationales for the mission include: long-term stays on the moon to test exploration systems and extract resources; exploring the solar system; speeding up expeditions to Mars (two months instead of six) for human study of potential life; and travel to Pluto. One enthusiast even mentioned "settlements" in space. Project literature says nuclear fission for propulsion and electricity is necessary to enable these applications.

Program manager Matt Forsbacka says public comment is welcome on the nuclear rocket initiative. Prometheus Nuclear Systems and Technology has taken responsibility for documenting comments and evaluating alternatives to be considered in a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement scheduled for publication in 2006.

The corporations will bilk enormous profit from the decades-long scam. Northrop Grumman won a \$400 million contract in September '04 for a test spacecraft design. Northrop Grumman's team includes Newport News, Electronic Systems, Integrated Systems and Information Technology, Hamilton Sunstrand and Alliance Space Systems, Inc. Study contracts were awarded in 2003 to Boeing, Lockheed Martin and Northrop Grumman Space Technologies. The DOE will take charge of all nuclear testing.

The government sector includes NASA, its Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Glenn Research Center, Marshall Space Flight Center and the Department of Energy's Office of Naval Reactors. These NASA and DOE projects will ultimately feed the Pentagon's weapons habit under the cover of "civil" space exploration without overt military involvement.

The Energy Department's plutonium batteries, already aboard the Cassini space probe orbiting Saturn, make electricity for instruments. These RTGs provide power by converting heat, produced through the decay of plutonium-238, into electric current. RTGs have been used on 24 NASA missions including Galileo (42.25 pounds of plutonium) and Ulysses (25 pounds). NASA's Mars Exploration Rovers both carry eight Radioisotope Heater Units (RHUs), each containing 2.7 grams of plutonium. In 2009, RTGs may be aboard the Mars Smart Lander if it gets off the ground.

Prometheus's production plan now includes yet-to-be-built facilities for testing nuclear reactors. The website

Space.com reports that the plan requires a giant chamber capable of mimicking the vacuum of outer space. Prometheus could cost \$2 billion over the next five years — on top of the \$1 billion Nuclear Systems Initiative NASA received in 2002.

NASA has even included in its budget the cost of dealing with anti-nuclear campaigns.

Pro-nuclear pundits claim that the anti-nuclear agenda has lost support and credibility because the on-going Chernobyl catastrophe is under-reported and a distant memory. *Space News* reports, "Today's anti-nuclear environmentalists have not given much notice to this latest nuclear space initiative. ... They have also lost much of the public influence they once claimed to have. Their predictions of countless nuclear disasters in the wake of Chernobyl have fallen flat, and so has their support base."

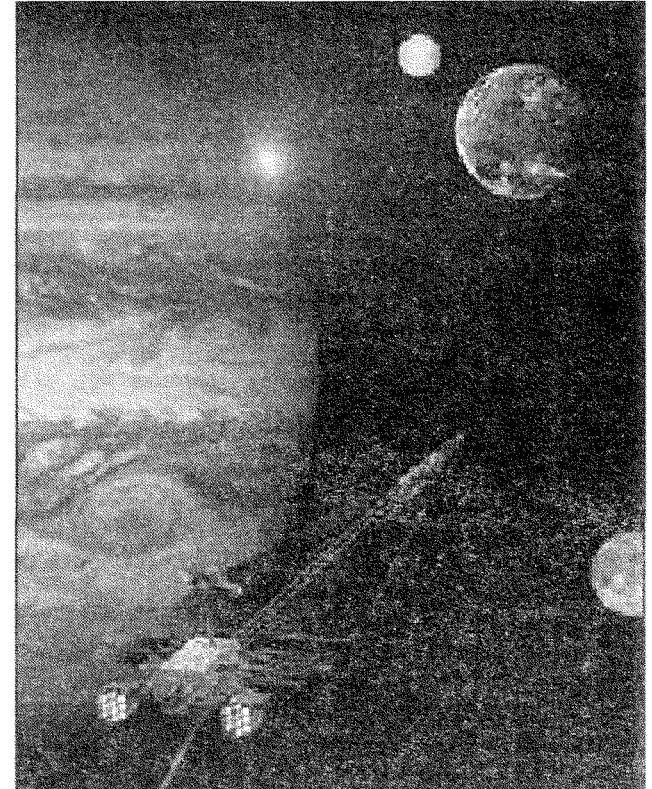
Additional launches of radioactive devices increase the risk of a deadly accident. Space shuttle fatalities and the 1-in-20 failure rate of NASA's Titan-IV booster rocket highlight the downside of NASA nuclearism. Facilities producing reactors and plutonium batteries, like the Los Alamos National Lab in New Mexico and the Idaho National Engineering Lab, will spread even more radioactive contamination to workers and nearby communities. *The New Mexican* reported that when Cassini's RTGs were being processed between 1993 and 1995, the 241 cases of isotope contamination that occurred at Los Alamos were initially covered-up.

Preventing Nuclear Power and Weapons in Outer Space

Opposition continues around the world. The Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space says plans for nuclear reactors and weapons in space are illegal and risk catastrophe. (The Outer Space Treaty prohibits WMD in outer space. It was ratified by the U.S. Senate and entered into force Oct. 10, 1967.)

Two hundred Global Network representatives from as far as Alaska, Vancouver, Japan, Eastern Europe, and Britain met April 29 in New York City for its 13th annual conference, "Full Spectrum Resistance" — a play on the Pentagon's published plans for "Full Spectrum Dominance."

Dr. Michio Kaku, a physicist with the City University of New York, presented the keynote at the conference. Kaku reminded the group that in 1978, the Cosmos-954 satellite, with 100 pounds of enriched uranium onboard, disintegrated



NASA's slick rendition of the proposed nuclear powered Project Prometheus visiting the three moons of Jupiter.

as it crashed to Earth over northwest Canada, spewing radiation over 124,000-square kilometers.

In 1964 the U.S. SNAP-9A satellite (Systems for Nuclear Auxiliary Power) "vaporized" 2.1 pounds of plutonium-238 which was "dispersed worldwide" at 120,000 feet. SNAP-9A's radioactive debris was reported to be "present on all continents and at all latitudes."

Journalist and author Carl Grossman reports that there have been three accidents out of the 24 known U.S. space missions involving nuclear materials. The Russian failure is higher: six of their 39 nuclear missions failed.

Grossman told the conferees that Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney, Democrat of Georgia, intends to lead a fight to cancel Project Prometheus. McKinney is sending a "Dear Colleague" letter to Congress inviting them to join her in the effort.

The Network asks everyone to contact their U.S. representatives urging them to join McKinney.

"Rods from God"

Air Force Seeks Green Light from Bush for Weapons in Outer Space

The Air Force is seeking Bush's approval to deploy offensive space weapons, according to White House and Air Force officials, *The New York Times* reported May 18, 2005.

An unnamed official said that a new presidential directive would replace a 1996 Clinton administration policy that emphasized a more peaceful use of space.

With little public debate, the Pentagon has already spent billions of dollars developing space weapons and preparing plans to deploy them.

In January 2001, a commission led by Donald H. Rumsfeld recommended that the military should "ensure that the president will have the option to deploy weapons in space."

In 2002, after weighing Rumsfeld's space commission report, Bush withdrew from the 30-year-old Antiballistic Missile Treaty, which banned space-based weapons.

A new Air Force strategy, Global Strike, calls for a military space plane carrying precision-guided weapons armed with a half-ton of munitions. Gen. Lance Lord, who leads the Air Force Space Command, told Congress last month that Global Strike would be "an incredible capability" to destroy command centers or missile bases "anywhere in the world." The Air Force believes "we must establish and maintain space superiority," Gen. Lord said.

However, senior military and space officials of the European Union, Canada, and elsewhere have objected publicly to the notion of U.S. space superiority.

They agree with Teresa Hitchens, vice president of the Center for Defense Information, a policy analysis group in Washington. Hitchens told the Council on Foreign Relations, "The United States doesn't own space — nobody owns space. Space is a global commons under international treaty and international law."

The Air Force already has a potential weapon in space, the XSS-11, an experimental microsatellite with the technical ability to disrupt other nations' communications and military satellites. It was launched in April.

Another Air Force space program, nicknamed *Rods from God* (emphasis added), aims to hurl cylinders of tungsten, titanium or uranium from the edge of space to destroy targets on the ground, striking at speeds of about 7,200 miles an hour with the force of a small nuclear weapon.

A third program would bounce laser beams off mirrors hung from space satellites or huge high-altitude blimps, redirecting the lethal rays down to targets around the world.

In April, Gen. James Cartwright, chief of U.S. Strategic Command, told the Senate Armed Services Nuclear Forces Subcommittee that the goal of space weapons was to deliver an attack "very quickly ... any place on the face of the earth."

Leading weapons scientists, physicists and engineers say the cost of a space-based system could be anywhere from \$220 billion to \$1 trillion.

But Gen. Lord said such problems should not stand in the way of the Air Force. "Space superiority is not our birthright, but it is our destiny," he told an Air Force conference in September. "Space superiority is our day-to-day mission. Space supremacy is our vision for the future."

Submarine Crashes into Mountain

Continued from cover

* The power reactor on the Soviet sub K-19 overheated in 1961, and all nine men who went into the reactor compartment to shut it down died within weeks. The sub was later nicknamed "Hiroshima." Another 19 later died.

* The military has still given no public explanation for the 1968 sinking of the *Scorpio* in the Atlantic near the Azores.

* In 1970, the U.S. *Tautog*, a nuclear powered attack sub, collided with a Soviet sub near Russia's Pacific coast.

* The most recent of 12 collisions between U.S. and Russian subs occurred in 1992 and 1993.

* In 1980, in the Sea of Okhotsk off the coast of Siberia, the U.S. nuclear-powered sub *Seawolf* was stuck for two days in the sandy seafloor, requiring one of the terrified sailors to be sedated.

* In June 1984, fire aboard the K-131 killed 13.

* In 1986, the Soviet K-219 suffered an explosion in a missile silo. Two men died from the blast but the sub got to the surface. With the reactor out of control, two men went inside the containment to crank down the control rods by hand.

* In March 1998, two U.S. nuclear submarines collided off the Long Island coast.

* The Russians have lost a total of four submarines (in 1968, 1970, 1986 and 1989). The *Komsomolets* sank off the coast of Norway in 1989 killing 42, while 27 were rescued.

Nuclear Power Is the Problem, Not A Solution

By Dr. Helen Caldicott

The Australian, April 13, 2005

There is a huge propaganda push by the nuclear industry to justify nuclear power as a panacea for the reduction of global warming gases.

In fact, Leslie Kemeny on these pages two weeks ago suggested that courses on nuclear science and engineering be included in tertiary level institutions in Australia.

I agree. But I would suggest that all the relevant facts be taught to students. Mandatory courses in medical schools should embrace the short and long-term biological, genetic and medical dangers associated with the nuclear fuel cycle. Business students should examine the true costs associated with the production of nuclear power. Engineering students should become familiar with the profound problems associated with the storage of long-lived radioactive waste, the human fallibilities that have created the most serious nuclear accidents in history and the ongoing history of near-misses and near-meltdowns in the industry.

At present there are 442 nuclear reactors in operation around the world. If, as the nuclear industry suggests, nuclear power were to replace fossil fuels on a large scale, it would be necessary to build 2,000 large, 1000-megawatt reactors. Considering that no new nuclear reactor has been ordered in the U.S. since 1978, this proposal is less than practical. Furthermore, even if we decided today to replace all fossil-fuel-generated electricity with nuclear power, there would only be enough economically viable uranium to fuel the reactors for three or four years.

The true economies of the nuclear industry are never fully accounted for. The cost of uranium enrichment is subsidized by the U.S. government. The true cost of the industry's liability in the case of an accident in the U.S. is estimated to be \$560 billion, but the industry would only pay \$9.1 billion — 98 percent of the insurance liability is covered by the U.S. federal government. The cost of decommissioning all the existing U.S. nuclear reactors is estimated to be \$33 billion. These costs — plus the enormous expense involved in the storage of radioactive waste for a quarter of a million years — are not included in the economic assessments of nuclear electricity.

It is said that nuclear power is emission-free. The truth is very different.

In the U.S., where much of the world's uranium is enriched, including Australia's, the enrichment facility at Paducah, Kentucky, requires the electrical output of two 1000-megawatt coal-fired plants, which emit large quantities of carbon dioxide, the gas responsible for 50 percent of global warming.

Also, this enrichment facility and another at Portsmouth, Ohio, release from leaky pipes 93 percent of the chlorofluorocarbon gas emitted yearly in the U.S. The production and release of CFC gas is now banned internationally by the Montreal Protocol because it is the main culprit responsible for stratospheric ozone depletion. But CFC is also a global warmer, 10,000 to 20,000 times more potent than carbon dioxide.

In fact, the nuclear fuel cycle utilizes large quantities of fossil fuel at all of its stages — the mining and milling of uranium, the construction of the nuclear reactor and cooling towers, robotic decommissioning of the intensely radioactive reactor at the end of its 20 to 40-year operating lifetime, and transportation and long-term storage of massive quantities of radioactive waste.

In summary, nuclear power produces, according to a 2004 study by Jan Willem Storm van Leeuwen and Philip Smith, only three times fewer greenhouse gases than modern natural-gas power stations.

Contrary to the nuclear industry's propaganda, nuclear power is therefore not green and it is certainly not clean. Nuclear reactors consistently release millions of curies of radioactive isotopes into the air and water each year. These releases are unregulated because the nuclear industry considers these particular radioactive elements to be biologically inconsequential. This is not so.

These unregulated isotopes include the noble gases krypton, xenon and argon, which are fat-soluble and if inhaled by persons living near a nuclear reactor, are absorbed through the lungs, migrating to the fatty tissues of the body, including the abdominal fat pad and upper thighs, near the reproductive organs. These radioactive elements, which emit high-energy gamma radiation, can mutate the genes in the eggs and sperm and cause genetic disease.

Tritium, another biologically significant gas, is also routinely emitted from nuclear reactors. Tritium is composed of three atoms of hydrogen, which combine with oxygen, forming radioactive water, which is absorbed through the skin, lungs and digestive system. It is incorporated into the DNA molecule, where it is mutagenic.

The dire subject of massive quantities of radioactive waste accruing at the 442 nuclear reactors across the world is also rarely, if ever, addressed by the nuclear industry. Each typical 1000-megawatt nuclear reactor manufactures 33 tons of thermally hot, intensely radioactive waste per year.

Already more than 80,000 tons of highly radioactive waste sits in cooling pools next to the 103 U.S. nuclear power plants, awaiting transportation to a storage facility yet to be found. This dangerous material will be an attractive target for terrorist sabotage as it travels through 39 states on roads and railway lines for the next 25 years.

But the long-term storage of radioactive waste continues to pose a problem. The U.S. Congress in 1987 chose Yucca Mountain in Nevada, 150 km northwest of Las Vegas, as a repository for America's high-level waste. But Yucca Mountain has subsequently been found to be unsuitable for the long-term storage of high-level waste because it is a volcanic mountain made of permeable pumice stone and it is transected by 32 earthquake faults. Last week a congressional committee discovered fabricated data about water infiltration and cask corrosion in Yucca Mountain that had been produced by personnel in the U.S. Geological Survey. These startling revelations, according to most experts, have almost disqualified Yucca Mountain as a waste repository, meaning that the U.S. now has nowhere to deposit its expanding nuclear waste inventory.

To make matters worse, a study released last week by the National Academy of Sciences shows that the cooling pools at nuclear reactors, which store 10 to 30 times more radioactive material than that contained in the reactor core, are subject to catastrophic attacks by terrorists, which could unleash an inferno and release massive quantities of deadly radiation — significantly worse than the radiation released by Chernobyl, according to some scientists.

This vulnerable high-level nuclear waste contained in the cooling pools at 103 nuclear power plants in the U.S. includes hundreds of radioactive elements that have different biological impacts in the human body, the most important being cancer and genetic diseases.

The incubation time for cancer is five to 50 years following exposure to radiation. It is important to note that children, old people and immuno-compromised individuals are many times more sensitive to the malignant effects of radiation than other people.

I will describe four of the most dangerous elements made in nuclear power plants.

Iodine-131, which was released at the nuclear accidents at Sellafield in Britain, Chernobyl in Ukraine and Three Mile Island in the U.S., is radioactive for only six weeks and it bio-concentrates in leafy vegetables and milk. When it enters the human body via the gut and the lung, it migrates to the thyroid gland in the neck, where it can later induce thyroid cancer. In Belarus more than 2,000 children have had their thyroids removed for thyroid cancer, a situation never before recorded in pediatric literature.



Stron튬-90 lasts for 600 years. As a calcium analogue, it concentrates in cow and goat milk. It accumulates in the human breast during lactation, and in bone, where it can later induce breast cancer, bone cancer and leukemia.

Cesium-137, which also lasts for 600 years, concentrates in the food chain, particularly meat. On entering the human body, it locates in muscle, where it can induce a malignant muscle cancer called a sarcoma.

Plutonium-239, one of the most dangerous elements known to humans, is so toxic that one-millionth of a gram is carcinogenic. Plutonium is handled like iron in the body, and is therefore stored in the liver, where it causes liver cancer, and in the bone, where it can induce bone cancer and blood malignancies. On inhalation it causes lung cancer. It also crosses the placenta, where, like the drug thalidomide, it can cause severe congenital deformities. Plutonium has a predisposition for the testes, where it can cause testicular cancer and induce genetic diseases in future generations. Plutonium lasts for 500,000 years, living on to induce cancer and genetic diseases in future generations of plants, animals and humans.

Plutonium is also the fuel for nuclear weapons — only 5 kg is necessary to make a bomb and each reactor makes more than 200 kg per year. Therefore any country with a nuclear power plant can theoretically manufacture 40 bombs a year.

Because nuclear power leaves a toxic legacy to all future generations, because it produces global warming gases, because it is far more expensive than any other form of electricity generation, and because it can trigger proliferation of nuclear weapons, these topics need urgently to be introduced into the tertiary educational system of Australia, which is host to 30 percent to 40 percent of the world's richest uranium.

Dr. Helen Caldicott is an anti-nuclear campaigner and founder and president of the Nuclear Policy Research Institute, which warns of the danger of nuclear energy.

Reprocessing Revisited

In May, the House Energy and Water Appropriations Committee approved a \$10 million proposal to consider moving highly radioactive used reactor fuel to "interim" storage sites in Idaho, Washington and Georgia. The proposal also directs the DOE to speed research on "recycling" technologies, indicating a possible return to the "reprocessing" of used reactor fuel, a dangerous, waste-generating extraction technique largely abandoned by the U.S. in the 70s. If passed by the Senate, "Mobile Chernobyl" shipments of the reactor waste to the three sites could begin as early as 2006.

Rep. David Hobson, R-Ohio, who led the proposal, said his purpose was to provide a cushion for the scandal-ridden Yucca Mountain dump which may never open. (See "Fear and Lying," p. 4) "It helps bridge the time until [Yucca Mountain] is open, and it helps underwriters," Hobson said. The underwriters Hobson refers to are the financial institutions which are hesitant to loan billions of dollars for the construction of new nuclear reactors in the face of uncertainty about how waste reactor fuel will be managed.

Rep. Hobson argued that it is "time to rethink our reluctance to reprocessing fuel." According to the subcommittee, the DOE will have to choose a process for "recycling" nuclear waste by 2007.

Reprocessing commercial irradiated nuclear fuel involves chemically separating uranium-235 and plutonium from the waste fuel. The uranium can then be reused as reactor fuel, and the plutonium for nuclear weapons. Reprocessing is not recycling — it's an extremely polluting process that produces millions of gallons of liquid high-level waste. The Savannah River Site in Georgia, where a reprocessing mill operated from the mid-1950s to the early 1990s, holds the most radioactive waste in the country — over 30 million gallons of high-level liquids and sludges containing caustic chemicals and a laundry list of radioactive isotopes created inside the reactors. The two other possible interim sites, the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory and the Hanford Reservation in eastern Washington, have also reprocessed reactor fuel to make H-bombs during the cold war, and are likewise saddled with millions of gallons of high-level waste.

Huge Leak at British Reprocessing Facility

A catastrophic leak of highly radioactive fuel dissolved in nitric acid was discovered at the Thorp reprocessing site at the Sellafield facility in Cumbria, England on May 8. The toxic mixture, containing about 20 tons of uranium and plutonium, is enough to fill half of an Olympic-size swimming pool. It was contained in a huge stainless steel chamber that is now impossible to enter. The facility is closed indefinitely.

The Thorp facility reprocesses hot waste fuel from reactors to provide plutonium for Britain's nuclear weapons and usable uranium for reactor fuel. Because of weapons proliferation risks and pollution created by the reprocessing, Thorp has been the subject of intense controversy. Critics claim the facility is a boondoggle because it has never operated to capacity since it opened 12 years ago.

A problem was first noticed on April 19 when operators could not account for all the waste fuel that had been dissolved in nitric acid. A broken pipe was discovered by cameras that scan the interior of the remotely controlled system. Thorp officials claim the leak is fully contained in a "clarification cell," a stainless steel-lined, 60 x 20-meter space, with concrete walls two to three meters thick. Recovering the liquids and fixing the pipes will take months and require special robots and highly developed engineering techniques.

Although most of the liquid is uranium, the mixture contains about 440 lbs of plutonium, enough to make 20 nuclear weapons.

The leak creates a financial disaster since income from Thorp is supposed to pay for the cleanup of closed nuclear facilities. About 25 percent of the £2.2 billion (\$4 billion) cleanup budget for 2005-06 was to come from income of Thorp. The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, owner of the facility, is now suggesting it wants to shut Thorp down for good. The cleanup budget would then become the taxpayers' burden. The accident comes at a time when Britain is debating the possibility of building new nuclear reactors.

Hiroshima and Nagasaki Commemorations

Confronting 60 Years of Nuclear Myth-Making

Editorial

Many U.S. citizens rely on debunked propaganda, repeated endlessly, that U.S. atomic mass destruction at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was committed to force the Japanese to surrender and to "save lives." The historical record contradicts this hoax.

In 1945, Brig. Gen. Bonnie Feller wrote, "Neither the atomic bombing nor the entry of the Soviet Union into the war forced Japan's unconditional surrender." Even President Dwight Eisenhower, who at the time was the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, said the Bomb didn't end the war. Ike said, "First, the Japanese were ready to surrender and it wasn't necessary to hit them with that awful thing. Second, I hated to see our country be the first to use such a weapon." Historian Gar Alperovitz (*Atomic Diplomacy*, Penguin Books, 1985 and *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb*, Random House, 1996) has said, "I think it can be proven that the bomb was not only unnecessary but known in advance not to be necessary."

These authoritative challenges refute official government history. Still, all three statements share a thoughtless implication: namely, that a nuclear attack could conceivably be "necessary" or "excusable" under some circumstances. That most people in the United States believe this to be true is the result of decades of myth-making started by President Harry Truman. Truman said in August 1945, "The world will note that the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, a military base. That was because we wished this first attack to avoid, insofar as possible, the killing of civilians."

Taking Truman at his word, the 140,000 civilians killed at Hiroshima are the minimum to be expected when exploding a "small" nuclear weapon on a "military base." At this rate, today's weakest warheads—which are 12 times the power of Truman's bomb—would each kill a minimum of 1.68 million civilians.

The ability to think of such acts as "necessary"—and to prepare and threaten them—requires the adoption of a learned indifference that insulates the conscience from the consequences of one's actions. Deep-seated denial is needed

Navy Veteran Who Saw Nagasaki Calls A-Bombing 'Crime'

Edward L. Stayton, 80, of Cromwell, Minnesota was a fireman 1st class aboard a navy destroyer in the Pacific during World War II. On September 1, 1945, he went ashore with fellow crew members at Nagasaki, Japan, on a mission to liberate prisoners of war held outside of the city. He arrived at Nagasaki three weeks after it was hit by the atomic bomb. Stayton says what he saw changed his life forever. In response to news that Paul Tibbets, the pilot who flew the Enola Gay on its bombing mission against Hiroshima, was the featured speaker at a Commemorative Air Force fundraiser, Mr. Stayton wrote to our friend Joel Kilgour at the Loaves & Fishes Community in Duluth:

"They say that the bombs helped end the war, but at what cost? Mr. Tibbets has his view on the importance of the Bomb, but I was there. The day we dropped anchor at Nagasaki was a watershed moment in my life. I remember clearly the corpse of a child — probably three years old — floating upside-down, bloated and barbecued, in the harbor. I remember the streets piled high with charred bones and heaps of human remains. I will never forget that for all of eternity. From that point on I was no longer a bright-eyed patriot, willing to turn my conscience over to the government. Wars are unconscionable. They are hell on earth. And it is a crime to use the lives of children to win them."

to excuse any mass destruction because, generally, the injustice of indiscriminate attacks is not debatable — whether at Wounded Knee, Oklahoma City, Sarajevo, Rwanda, New York City, Fallujah or Hiroshima. Furthermore, since H-bomb explosions produce uncontrollable, long-term results, it follows that the rationalization of U.S. nuclear war planning

has hardly changed since 1945. Consider how similar to Truman's words are those of the U.S. State Department's written declaration to the International Court of Justice (the World Court) on the question of the legality of using nuclear weapons: "Nuclear weapons can be directed at a military target and can be used in a discriminate manner."

This artful lie, the engine of the nuclear weapons establishment, amounts to the cynical, outlawed, fascist notion that positive good can come from the commission of massacres. The State Department's claim cannot, no matter how often or skillfully repeated, make the effects of even one nuclear warhead limited, controllable, militarily practical or ethically justifiable. A rebuttal is provided by no less an authority than a former top commander of the U.S. Strategic Air Command (SAC, now Strategic Command).

Gen. George Lee Butler (USAF Ret.), in 1996, became the first SAC commander in history to condemn U.S. nuclear weapons and the nuclear war policy that he himself had implemented. Gen. Butler now speaks and writes against the Bomb with the clout of his unassailable credentials. He has said current nuclear war policy is based on "the mistaken belief that nuclear weapons retain an aura of utility." On the contrary, "The likely consequences of nuclear war have no politically, militarily or morally acceptable justification, and therefore the threat to use nuclear weapons is indefensible," Butler says, concluding that nuclear weapons' "effects transcend time and place, poisoning the earth and deforming its inhabitants for generation[s]."

Admiral William Leahy put Butler's point well in 1950. As the WWII Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Leahy's denunciation of the Bomb bears repeating as an epitaph for the nuclear age: "I was not taught to make war in that fashion," he said about Hiroshima, "and wars cannot be won by destroying women and children."

—John LaForge

2005 August 6 – 9 Days of Remembrance and Action

1945 - 2005 August 6 and 9, 2005 mark the 60th anniversaries of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the United States. Join the global majority to say NO! to militarism, war and oppression, and YES! to nonviolence, justice and a more secure world.

Los Alamos Nuclear Weapons Lab, New Mexico

Hiroshima, 60 Years: It Started Here Let's Stop it Here! Teach-in, sunflower pageant, workshops, music, candlelight meditation and more. Ashley Pond Park in Los Alamos, Saturday, August 6, 8:30 a.m. - 10:00 p.m. **Contact:** Los Alamos Study Group, (505) 265-1200, lasg.org; Pax Christi New Mexico, (505) 870-2275, http://paxchristi.org; and Upaya Zen Center, Joan Halifax, (505) 986-8182, upaya.org

Nukewatch is organizing a bus/van to Los Alamos from the upper mid-west. Call (715) 472-4185 for information and a reservation.

International Peace Walk

Organized by For Mother Earth, the walk is approximately 250 km, will start in Ypres, Belgium and end at the NATO/U.S. nuclear weapons base in Kleine Brogel where there will be a peace camp from August 6 - 9. **Contact:** For Mother Earth: motherearth.org; E-mail: International@motherearth.org

Y-12 Nuclear Facility, Oak Ridge, Tennessee

Stop the Bombs! Remembrance/names ceremony, peace march, rally and direct action, and peace lantern ceremony. Saturday, August 6, all day at the main gate of the Y-12 National Security Complex, Oak Ridge. **Contact:** Ralph Hutchison, Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance, orepa@earthlink.net, (865) 483-8202, www.stopthebombs.org

Nevada Test Site, Nevada

Many Stories, One Vision for a Nuclear Free World Conference, speakers and public witness including storytelling, nonviolence trainings, liturgy, music, performance, workshops and nonviolent direct action. University of Nevada, Las Vegas and at the Nevada (Nuclear) Test Site, August 4 - 7. **Contact:** Nevada Desert Experience, (702) 646-4814, nde_youth@peacenet.org, www.nevadadesertexperience.org

Candlelight Vigils

We are calling for candlelight vigils to be held at City Halls in communities across the country. In addition, we encourage people to organize readings, lantern lighting ceremonies, shadow projects and more. In support of Mayors for Peace, we are calling on local groups to invite their mayors to participate in the vigils. **Contact:** Jackie Cabasso, Western States Legal Foundation, wslf@earthlink.net, (510) 839-5877

Livermore Nuclear Weapons Lab, California

Seeds of Change. Celebrate the vision of a nuclear-free world with music, dinner, rally and candlelight march. William Payne Park, 5800 Patterson Pass Road, Livermore, Saturday, August 6, 5 p.m. **Contact:** Tara Dorabji, Tri-Valley CAREs, tara@trivalleycares.org, (925) 443-7148, www.trivalleycares.org

Depleted Uranium Update

Lawmakers Consider DU Tests for Vets

State legislatures in Connecticut and Louisiana are considering bills requiring testing of state National Guard troops who believe they've been contaminated with "depleted" uranium (DU).

Internal exposure to DU's toxic, radioactive uranium-238 may be the cause of the documented increase in birth defects among children of recent U.S. vets, as well as a major factor in the combination of undiagnosed illnesses plaguing thousands of veterans returning from wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kosovo and Bosnia, known collectively as Gulf War syndrome.

The Louisiana bill, No. 570, would require National Guard and Reserve vets returning from Iraq to be tested for DU contamination. But the bill's wording doesn't spell out who would provide or pay for the tests. The bill's supporters say the legislation would allow the Governor to request DU testing as part of the state National Guard's yearly funding request to the Pentagon.

The far stronger Connecticut bill, No. 6008, requires the use of "a bioassay procedure involving sensitive methods capable of detecting DU at low levels and the use of equipment with the capacity to discriminate between different radioisotopes." The act also requires the preparation of a report on whether the troops are adequately trained in protecting against DU exposure.

The Louisiana bill has passed the House but needs Senate approval and the Governor's signature. The Connecticut bill was passed in committee and is headed to the House floor.

In Washington, DC, U.S. Rep. Maurice Hinchey, Democrat from New York's 22nd District, has promised to hold an informal House panel on DU in mid-June.

Iraqi Doctors See Increased Numbers of Deformities in Newborns

The UN's news and information service IRIN reported April 27 that doctors in Baghdad are seeing a significant increase in deformities among newborn babies.

Dr. Nawar Ali, of the University of Baghdad, said that in the south of the country, especially around Basra and Najaf, there has been a 20 percent jump in birth abnormalities since 2002. The most frequently observed abnormalities include multiple fingers, unusually large heads, unilateral lips and missing limbs.

"In my experiments we have found some cases where the mother or father were suffering from pollution from weapons used in the south and we believe that it is affecting newborn babies in the county," said Dr. Ibraheem al-Jabouri, a scientist at Baghdad University.

According to Dr. Lamia'a Amrad, a pediatrician at the Iraqi Red Crescent Society hospital in the capital, 60 percent of the birth defects resulted from radiation and pollution.

The grim reality of life in occupied Iraq is made all the more painful by the fact that—according to Dr. Wathiq Ibrahim, director of the Central Teaching Hospital for Pediatrics — 90 percent of newborns with birth abnormalities do not survive.

Goodbye To Project ELF!

Anti-war campaigners from all over the region and as far away as Oak Ridge, Tenn., gathered May 7 to celebrate the end of a long and hard-fought struggle. Almost 150 activists -- who shared involvement in the ELF shut-down effort for over 35 years -- enjoyed good food and great music, thoughtful words and comic lightheartedness.

Kathy Kelly, a founder of Voices in the Wilderness and an organizer of the 450-mile Chicago-to-ELF walk in 1995, presented the keynote address. She reminded everyone that steadfastness is more important than victory and that nonviolence, practiced not only in confrontations with authority but in our day-to-day lives, is the very success we seek in the wider world.

Anathoth Community's family band Relative Minor came out of semi-retirement for the event, working up a set of old and new tunes that ranged from political parody to sweet home harmonizing. The band's members Barb Kass and Mike, Jim and Linda Miles were joined by Chris LaForge on his mandolin. Chris and Donna Howard were emcees for the event.

A high point was the 20-minute slide show of ELF action photos produced by Molly Mechtenberg with help from Anathoth Community intern Xong Xiong. Bonnie Urfer and John LaForge helped identify faces found in the 30-year archive of photos. Singer/songwriter Sara Thomsen and Rachel Kilgour,



Relative Minor, the family band from Anathoth Community Farm made up (L to R) of long-time ELF resisters Jim, Mike and Linda Miles and Barb Kass, performed at the Shutdown Celebration May 7.

both of Duluth, performed during the slide show. The photos and captions seemed to draw people into a trance: all those actions taken; miles walked; courtrooms entered; and sentences endured. Looking across so many years, it was easy to feel a load of relief and to cheer all the breakthroughs along the way.