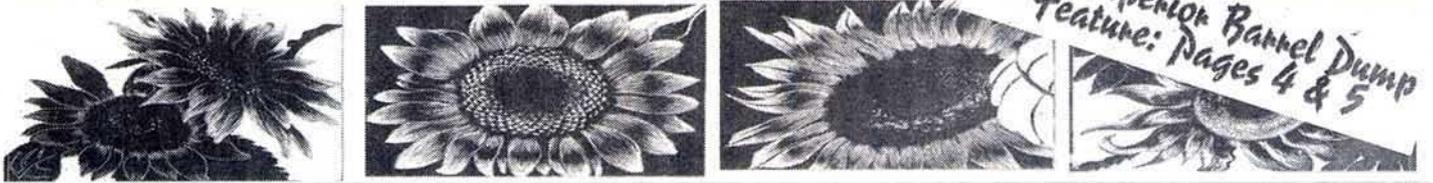


NUKEWATCH

QUARTERLY

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Feature: Pages 4 & 5



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

A publication of the Progressive Foundation — Winter 2007 - 2008

Waste Trains Derail, *Lucky This Time*

By Bonnie Urfer

"Lucky this time!" is a mantra in the Nukewatch office when nuclear accidents cause only "allowable" radioactive releases. It's also the name of our website chronology of truck and train accidents that luckily didn't cause a radiation disaster. See: nukewatch.com/wrecks/index.html

The Oct. 25 derailment of at least two train cars at the Shearon Harris nuclear reactor site, 25 miles from Raleigh, North Carolina, and the 2005 derailment of a military waste fuel cask in New York State are a pair of the "Lucky This Time" events.

At Shearon Harris, workers were moving a 150,000-pound canister filled with extremely radioactive waste reactor fuel or "spent nuclear fuel," that had arrived from the Brunswick reactor, 220 miles away near Wilmington and Southport.

Information about the accident has been strictly controlled by Progress Energy (PE), which operates the facility and owns it jointly with North Carolina Municipal Power. No photos of the incident have surfaced that could verify the company's claim that the waste canister did not go off the tracks. PE informed the press that only a caboose and a buffer car derailed.

Progress Energy and the Nuclear Regulator Commission (NRC) claim that federal law prohibits releasing more information. But the restrictions apply only to the scheduling, destination or origin of nuclear waste shipments, whereas the train accident took place entirely on PE company property.

According to PE, the accident was caused by yard workers who failed to communicate about the readiness of the tracks. The cars derailed while traveling 4 to 5 miles per hour, the company said. Workers had mistakenly sent the cars into the railyard's own "derailer," a device placed on railroad tracks to prevent out-of-control trains from ramming the reactor. The derailer diverts a railcar's wheels, putting the cars — in railroad lingo — "on the ground."

As usual, the NRC and PE repeated the industry chant, *No danger to the public*, in spite of the train's cargo being the second-most radioactive material on earth. (Only waste fuel from the Navy's shipboard propulsion reactors is more radioactive.)

Shearon Harris is a 900-megawatt Pressurized Water Reactor that's been in operation since 1987. Every year, PE ships about 12 heavily-guarded containers of waste reactor fuel to the 10,700-acre Shearon Harris site for storage in a 40-foot-deep cooling pool.

A History of Scary Operations

The Shearon Harris reactor has been plagued with problems. In Dec. 1995, four of the eight wheels on an empty fuel shipping



An empty Department of Energy M-140 transport cask tipped over in the Buffalo, NY train yard Sept. 22, 2005

car were derailed because of rotten railroad ties. Around the same time, armed guards blew the whistle on lax security, reporting that vehicles weren't properly searched, doors to vital parts of the reactor didn't lock (employees were told not to pull so hard on the doors while checking them), weapons were improperly used in protected areas, logs were falsified, employee cheating on tests for state security certification was routine and encouraged, and security personnel were forced to stay on duty even while injuries hampered their effectiveness.

Other disturbing occurrences include a breach of security when a black flag was discovered near the top of a 100-foot communications tower, a security guard being shot at from nearby woods leading to a lockdown at the reactor, and the sabotage of the rail line leading into the reactor by someone who drove spikes



An upright DOE M-140 that carries waste shipboard reactor fuel to Idaho. This is the deadliest nuclear waste because it is left in Navy reactors far longer than fuel in commercial ones.

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Armed B-52 Overflight: Accident or Interrupted Raid?

By Paul Vos Benkowski and John LaForge

On Aug. 30, six nuclear warheads were removed from high security storage and installed in six Advanced Cruise Missiles at the Minot Air Force Base (AFB) in North Dakota. Then the missiles, designed to be fired from B-52 bombers, were attached to the wings of just such a B-52.

The B-52 then flew to Barksdale AFB in Louisiana without proper clearance and in violation of strict, decades-old Air Force prohibitions against transport of nuclear weapons by air. The no-fly rule was enacted after nuclear warheads were damaged or lost during bomber crashes in Greenland, Spain and South Carolina in the 1950s and '60s.

Air Force officials admitted that, "The warheads were unaccounted for several hours while the missiles were in transit," the *Washington Post* reported. Air Force Maj. Gen. Richard Newton told the BBC that the aircraft's pilots and other crew members were unaware that they were carrying

nuclear warheads. After their three-and-one-half hour flight, the weapons sat on a runway at Barksdale AFB for nearly ten hours before workers noticed that the nuclear warheads were inside the missiles.

Hans Kristensen, a weapons expert at the Federation of American Scientists, reports that the spectacularly unusual flight was the first time in 40 years that a nuclear-armed warplane was allowed to fly across the U.S. In 1991, President George H. Bush ordered nuclear weapons removed from all aircraft and surface ships.

The Air Force sought at first to bury the incident, and issued a dismissive notice declaring, "No press interest anticipated." But a few conscientious officers leaked the story to *The Military Times* which caused a worldwide sensation and forced the Air Force to conduct an investigation.

The Air Force now says the missiles were being delivered to Barksdale for decommissioning. Yet retired Cruise missiles are normally sent to Kirtland AFB, in New Mexico, which ships them to the Pantex dismantlement site in Texas. Barksdale AFB, on the other hand, trains all the B-52 combat crews and is the main staging area for B-52s heading into combat in Afghanistan and Iraq.

On Oct. 20, Gen. Newton said the unauthorized fly-over involved an "unprecedented string of procedural errors." Consequently, three colonels and a Lt. Col., including a Wing Commander and the Base Commander at Minot, were sacked and 66 airmen were decertified for nuclear weapons handling.

However, calling such an extraordinarily complex and procedure-laden flight an "error" stretches credulity to the breaking point. Kristensen says, "It seems so fantastic that so many points, checks can dysfunction." Rep. Ed Markey, D-Mass., told the *Post*, "Nothing like this has ever been reported before, and we have been assured for decades that it was impossible."

Investigative reporter Dave Lindorff has found, "There is something deeply disturbing about the official report," which claims that, "six nuclear warheads get mounted on six Advanced Cruise Missiles and improperly removed from a nuclear weapons storage bunker at Minot ... then get improperly loaded on a B-52, and then get improperly flown to Barksdale AFB."

The problem with the official explanation, Lindorff writes, is that "all nuclear warheads in the U.S. stockpile are supposedly protected against accidental transport or removal from bunkers by electronic anti-theft systems ... and even anti-motion sensors that go off if a weapon is touched or approached without authorization." Under strict Air Force rules at least two people had to have deliberately disabled those alarms.

The Air Force cover story begs more questions than it answers. Who ordered the disabling of alarms and sensors, and the arming and loading of missiles? Why did the bomber fly to Barksdale? Were the missiles flyable, fueled up and ready to fire? Finally, did the *Military Times* news scoop foil a surprise attack, say on Iran, as researcher Michael E. Salla has asked? Congress should be pressed to investigate.

Continued from the Cover

Train Derailments

into a switching mechanism. The vandalism was discovered before causing a derailment.

One guard who contacted a local anti-nuclear organization to complain, since contact with the NRC's inspector general's office brought no corrective action, reported to North Carolina's *Independent Weekly* that "People are so frightened [of reprisals]..." he said. "They get fired right and left."

In 1999, Richard Kester, a former high-ranking security official at Shearon Harris, was fired after refusing to lie to the NRC about improper security clearances.

In 2002, two prison escapees climbed aboard one of Progress Energy's waste fuel transport train cars, exposing the vulnerability of its rail shipments.

In 2005, the 9/11 Commission gave the Department of Homeland Security a "D" for failing to guarantee safety and security at the country's 103 commercial power reactors.

European waste shipments no safer

On Feb. 4, 1997, a train carrying four Castor casks loaded with approximately 360,000 pounds of irradiated fuel rods derailed while switching in Apach, France. Three of the casks derailed completely but didn't tip over. The train was traveling about 20 miles per hour and the casks have been crash tested at 30 mph. Greenpeace reports that trains carrying deadly radioactive cargo in Europe often travel up to 60 mph. The fuel rod shipment began at the Lingen reactor in Germany, and headed for Sellafield on Britain's west coast where it was to be transferred to the freighter *European Shearwater*. A few hours behind this transport and on the same railway stretch was the transport with waste fuel from the Krümmel reactor — a shipment Greenpeace activists had blockaded for a week near Hamburg. This second train was detained in Trier until it could be re-routed. On Jan. 15, 1997, a train derailed outside the German reactor at Krümmel during a track change. On Feb. 3 of the same year, an engine driver carrying nuclear waste passed out on the job. In 1998, Castor casks were stopped during a shipment because exterior radiation levels exceeded the legal limit.

U.S. Military Cask Accident Noted Only in Foreign Press

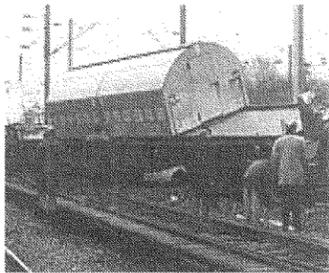
An Associated Press report dated Sept. 22, 2005, and printed in the London *Guardian*, dispels the myth of "no danger to the public" when shipping high-level waste.

The AP photo (on cover) shows a Department of Energy "M-140" cask lying on its side in the CSX Frontier Rail Yard in Buffalo, New York. The M-140 is the Navy's standard canister for shipping waste fuel from shipboard reactors to a dump in Idaho. (Nukewatch published extensive news and picture postcards of these shipments in the 1990s.)

The AP reported that the 320,000-pound M-140 container — which luckily was unloaded — tipped over when two trains merged at one switch. Part of the rail yard was shut down. It took workers from the Bettis Atomic Power Lab, Knolls Atomic Power Lab and the Portsmouth Naval shipyard 36 hours to right the cask and 60 hours to repair it. State and Federal officials were called to investigate. A Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program report of Oct. 2006 says, "Dealing with a full canister would probably result in a similar scenario with similar results, but would probably need more response on the public affairs side."

In view of the fact that not a single newspaper in the United States reported this accident, the "public affairs side" seems to have been flawless. From the military, government and industry points of view, it didn't happen.

Extensive shielding on casks keeps radiation levels on the outside low, but the deadly nature of the contents guarantees that anyone investigating a breached cask could die within minutes of approaching the waste. All military and civilian waste reactor fuel shipments are done in secret and without consent from uninformed *en route* communities.



February 4, 1997 — A Castor cask carrying deadly used reactor fuel rods, derailed in Apach, France.

Israel Bombs Suspected Syrian Reactor Building Site

By John LaForge

Israeli jets are reported to have bombed Syria Sept. 6, evidently targeting a partly-built nuclear reactor, which appears from satellite photos to be modeled on one North Korea has used to produce nuclear weapons material, according to U.S. and other officials.

The attack on the Syrian reactor construction site mirrored Israel's bombing raid against Iraq in 1981, which destroyed the newly-completed Osirak nuclear reactor.

The September bombardment, according to U.S. and international authorities, targeted a Syrian project that was still "years" away from operation and any production of highly radioactive waste fuel from which plutonium can be extracted for H-bombs.

In the U.S. and Israel, "information about the raid has been wrapped in extraordinary secrecy and restricted to just a handful of officials," according to the *New York Times*, which reported that the Israeli press has been prohibited from publishing anything about the September bombing.

Pentagon chief Robert Gates and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice reportedly voiced concerns, "about the ramifications of a pre-emptive strike in the absence of an urgent threat" — something they know a lot about. (George Bush expanded on the hypocrisy theme Nov. 9 when he said to Pakistani dictator Gen. Pervez Musharraf, "You can't be president and head of the military at the same time.")

The *Times* mentioned — in a manner rare when reporting on Iran's nuclear power program — that as a party to the

Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, Syria is not obligated to declare the existence of a reactor under construction. "It would have also had the legal right to complete construction of the reactor, as long as its purpose was to generate electricity."

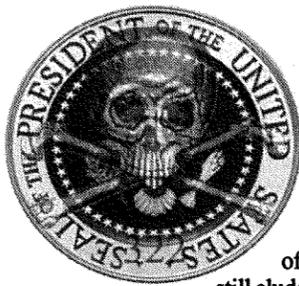
Kevin Drum, in the *Washington Monthly*, reported that the International Atomic Energy Agency's director and Nobel Peace laureate Mohamed ElBaradei expressed anger at the Syrians, Israelis and [U.S.] foreign intelligence agencies for not providing information about a suspected nuclear program. "We have said, 'If any of you has the slightest information showing that there was anything linked to nuclear, we would of course be happy to investigate it,'" he told the French newspaper *Le Monde*. In a thinly veiled criticism of Israel and the U.S., ElBaradei added, "Frankly, I venture to hope that before people decide to bombard and use force, they will come and see us to convey their concerns."

Violations of Geneva Conventions

Israel's 1981 and 2007 bombings of nuclear reactor sites are both violations of the Geneva Conventions relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts.

Article 52, Sec. 1 of Protocol I of June 8, 1977, says "Civilian objects shall not be the object of attack or of reprisals." Art. 56 notes, "Works or installations containing dangerous forces, namely dams, dykes and nuclear electrical generating stations, shall not be made the object of attack, even where these objects are military objectives, if such attack may cause the release of dangerous forces and consequent severe losses among the civilian population."

Bush Threatens World War III Over "Knowledge"



With the sophistication of a comic book he-man, George Bush uttered a staggering yet preposterous threat Oct. 17 from the White House. Bush said, "I've told people that if you're interested in avoiding World War III, it seems like you ought to be interested in preventing [Iranians] from having the knowledge necessary to make a nuclear [sic] weapon." The knowledge of nuclear weapons design has been public information for over 30 years, even if its pronunciation still eludes the President. Anyone with access to what Bush calls "the internets" can learn how. In 1979 the details were drawn from open sources by Howard Morland for *The Progressive* magazine article that the government attempted to censor and that in turn became the impetus for launching Nukewatch. News anchors speculated that Bush's shocking reference to world war was intended to distract public attention from the bloody quagmire created in Iraq by the U.S. military takeover and occupation, a war that both Kofi Annan, the former UN Secretary General, and King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia have called "illegal."

Would You Buy A Used Car From the Vice President?

"We have great information. They're going to welcome us. It'll be like the American Army going through the streets of Paris. They're sitting there ready to form a new government. The people will be so happy with their freedoms that we'll probably back ourselves out of there within a month or two."

— Vice President Dick Cheney in September 2002, trying to persuade Dick Arme, the Republican House majority leader, that U.S. war on Iraq would be quick.

DOONESBURY GARRY TRUDEAU



“Call Me Unreliable...”

Unplanned Shutdowns Highlight Inefficiency of Nuclear Power

By Paul Vos Benkowski & Bonnie Urfer

As the debate continues over which energy source is most efficient, safe and reliable, Nukewatch has been working hard to counter the unverifiable claims propagated by public relations and advertising departments of the nuclear power industry. While solar panels and wind turbines are dubbed unreliable by the oil, gas and uranium lobby, nuclear energy is portrayed as an ever-present source of electric power — never mind the facts.

A quick survey of nuclear reactor shutdowns in the three months since our Fall '07 *Quarterly* shows that the well-publicized dependability of nuclear power is a hoax. Reactor shutdowns are caused by routine maintenance, refueling needs, human error and malfunctions, all of which involve enormous costs and create dangerous situations that reveal the inherent instability of nuclear reactors.

We have decided to exclude from the following list shutdowns caused by regular maintenance and refueling, though the cost of these off-line periods should not be ignored. The average refueling bill for a 1,000-megawatt reactor is \$24.4 million. Refueling shutdowns, when about one-third of a reactor's fuel rods are replaced, occur every 18 to 24 months and normally last 5 to 8 weeks.

The following list includes only unplanned shutdowns. In chronological order:

- ♦ Aug. 30 — Vermont Yankee was shut down after a lack of grease caused a steam valve to malfunction. This was just nine days after the collapse of its cooling tower, after which the reactor was running at about 62 percent.
- ♦ Sept. 1 — Bulgaria's Kozloduy Reactor underwent an automatic scram (emergency shutdown). Experts do not know what caused the automatic shut down or when the reactor will be back online.
- ♦ Sept. 3 — Just three months after Australian Prime Minister John Howard officially opened Australia's first reactor in Lucas Heights, near Sydney, at a cost of \$400 million, it was shut down due to loose fuel plates. Scientists do not know when the problem will be solved but it is costing the Australian Science and Technology Organization about \$100,000 a week.

- ♦ Sept. 3 — The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)-run Browns Ferry reactor shut down due to a leak in an electro-hydraulic control system. It was the fourth shutdown since the May 22 restart of Unit 1, which cost TVA \$1.8 billion. TVA workers also had to reduce the power of all three reactors for several days in mid-August because the intake water from the river, warmed during the summer's heat wave, prevented them from operating within environmental regulations. TVA last month announced it would temporarily increase rates. The Brown's Ferry reactor has been shut down five times since August.

- ♦ Sept. 4 — The Finnish utility Teollisuuden Voima Oy shut down Unit 2 at Okiluoto due to an unidentified malfunction in the cooling system. Operators were working to identify and repair the problem before restarting.
- ♦ Sept. 4 — Ohi nuclear reactor in Japan went offline after a leak of some 3.4 tons of radioactive water. No date has been set for restart.
- ♦ Sept. 25 — The reactor at Point Lepreau in New Brunswick's Bay of Fundy on Canada's east coast was shut

down after a technical malfunction. The reactor was expected to be off line for more than a week.

- ♦ Sept. 27 — Palo Verde, 34 miles west of Phoenix, reduced power output at Unit 3 to 75 percent to repair its main condenser. It will remain at reduced power until an upcoming refueling shutdown.

- ♦ Oct. 9 — Palo Verde shut down Unit 2 because of a cooling-water leak simultaneous with Unit 3 being offline. The power losses forced Arizona Public Service (APS) to turn up some of its little-used natural gas-fired power plants in order to meet energy demand. On a related note, APS announced an October 1 rate increase.

- ♦ Oct. 14 — The Fitzpatrick reactor on Lake Ontario shut down due to an influx of algae and mussels clogging the cooling water intake. It is not known when the reactor will be back online but this is the third time the reactor has shut down for this reason.

- ♦ Oct. 19 — Both reactors at Byron in Illinois were shut down because of “inoperability of ultimate heat sink system due to [the] structural failure” of pipes in the cooling towers. No further information was available.

- ♦ Oct. 22 — British Energy, based in Livingston, England, shut down two of its reactors due to faulty wiring. Restart is being delayed by inspections and repairs. According to the London *Guardian*, seven of England's 16 power reactors are currently shutdown for repairs or maintenance, four after recent inspections. Citizens have been warned of possible winter power outages.

- ♦ Oct. 28 — Shearon Harris in North Carolina shut down automatically for failure of a start-up transformer. The reactor was in the process of a manual shutdown and at 30 percent power when shutdown occurred.

- ♦ Nov. 8 — The Ignalina reactor in Vilnius, Lithuania was shut down after a short circuit closed the entire system. It is unknown when the reactor will be back online.

- ♦ Nov. 11 — Unit 3 at Japan's Onagawa reactor north of Tokyo was shut down for unknown causes. The company is still investigating the reasons for the shutdown.

- ♦ Nov. 28 — The Nuclear Regulatory Commission began a special inspection at Perry Nuclear Power Station to review the causes of a reactor scram and problems with systems designed to supply and maintain the appropriate water level in the reactor.

In mid-November Japan's nuclear power output was down to 56.3 percent of capacity. Britain shut down half of its reactors in 2007. Its yearly output totaled 51.2 percent of capacity, down from 60.4 percent in 2006 and 60 percent in 2005. The rate has been steadily dropping. France experienced worker strikes that cut reactor output by 16 percent in October. On Sept. 1, Germany's Environment Minister Sigmar Gabriel called for seven of the country's oldest nuclear reactors to be closed immediately for safety reasons.

The gargantuan amount of heat that must be removed from steam in nuclear reactors is transferred to cooling water, which in turn transfers this heat primarily to the atmosphere through evaporation.

According to the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy in Asheville, North Carolina, at the Edwin Hatch site in SE Georgia, two 924-megawatt reactors each take 57 million gallons per day from the Altamaha River. Thirty-three million gallons are consumed by evaporation, and 24 million are returned to the Altamaha at higher temperatures.



Scottish Government: No More Nukes!

On Oct. 9, the Scottish Parliament announced on its website that the country “neither wants, nor needs, new nuclear power stations,” offering staunch opposition to and criticism of the pro-nuke British government. According to the document, the risks and costs involved in importing uranium, decommissioning closed reactors, and disposing of radioactive waste, as well as radiation's effects on human and environmental health “remain too great when set against the low levels of carbon dioxide reduction that would be provided by a new generation of nuclear power stations.” The document, “The Scottish Government's Position on Nuclear Power,” announces the intention to decrease the country's carbon emissions by 80 percent by 2050 with the use of micro-generation and the country's “indigenous energy resources” such as wind power and hydroelectricity.

Ministers Oppose Nuclear Waste Transport

Opposition to the nuclear industry continued in Scotland's Shetland region Oct. 17, after the freight ship *Atlantic Osprey*, carrying nuclear fuel bound for the Sellafield Nuclear Site, passed the Shetland Islands en route from Sweden. Councillors discussed the risks of radiation accidents, and John Mouat, the environment liaison officer for the Shetland Islands Council said, “S.I.C. policy is that nuclear waste should be dealt with at the site at which it was produced, or as near to that as possible.” Mouat stressed that when waste must be transported, it should “be in the best available technology.” Calling the *Osprey* unsafe for nuclear shipments, Councillors cited a 2002 fire in the ship's engine room, forcing it to return to port, and the fact that *Osprey* was not specifically built to carry nuclear materials. Mouat suggested that another ship, the *Pacific Pintail*, be used instead, as it was built to carry radioactive waste.

— *Shetland News*, Oct. 18, and *Neimagazine.com*, Oct. 10, 2007; *New Scientist*, March 27, 2002

Fault Lines Rattle Yucca Mt. Project

Irradiated fuel rods, the deadly million-year waste legacy from nuclear reactors, are so radioactively and thermally hot that they must be handled remotely by machines. Moving them out of reactors to cooling pools or to storage or transport casks must be done under water. The Department of Energy plans to place at least 77,000 tons of this waste in oversized casks, transport them from reactors around the country to Yucca Mountain, Nevada (85 miles from Las Vegas), then place them outdoors on concrete pads for decades — until they cool enough to be buried deep under Yucca Mountain.

However, another in a long list of “project stoppers” was revealed in September when U.S. Geological Survey maps showed that the Bow Ridge earthquake fault line runs directly under the site chosen for “long-term parking.”

The DOE learned of the fault last May but kept the discovery secret until private discussions at the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board meeting in September. The *Las Vegas Review-Journal* obtained a copy of a letter and maps showing the fault and published the news.

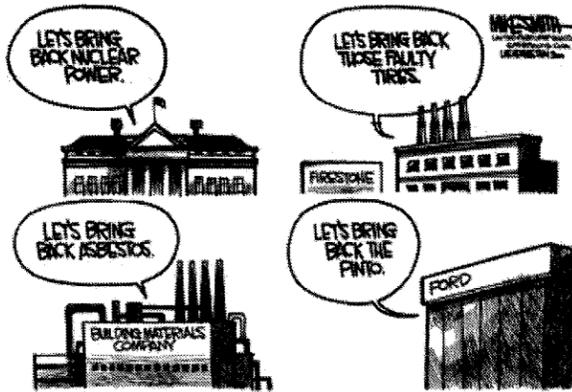
The DOE has nevertheless revamped its plans and will move the pad 100 feet from the fault line. The agency still intends to dump at Yucca.

That scientists, who have spent \$8 billion and 25 years studying the Yucca site, miscalculated the location of an earthquake fault line only exposes the DOE's incompetence and shortsightedness. The waste must be isolated from our environment for a million years.

In an ironic twist, Nevada attempted to prevent state water from being used at the site for the boring of test wells. Although the state intended to impede dump plans, the test wells using the contested water may aid Nevada in proving that Yucca Mt. is an unstable and unsuitable dump site.

The DOE has yet to file a license application with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, due in June 2008. The application will include earthquake probabilities and contingency plans for operating cranes, hoists and other equipment for surface operations. Seismologist Leon Reiter said there are more than 10 earthquake faults that can generate ground motion within a 20-mile radius of Yucca Mountain. The Solitario Canyon fault can cause a 6.5 magnitude earthquake. Since 1976, there have been 621 seismic events of magnitude greater than 2.5 on the Richter scale within 50-miles of Yucca Mountain.

Bob Loux, head of the Nevada Agency for Nuclear Projects and the state's chief Yucca opponent calls the fault line discovery and DOE's 100-foot design adjustment “just-in-time engineering,” and states, “This should not be new information.”



Georgia, Florida & Alabama Need Water, Reactors Too

On October 25, the governors of Florida, Alabama and Georgia received news from Southern Company, parent of Southern Nuclear, that the Chattahoochee River was about to run too low for the Farley reactors to continue full power. Alabama Gov. Bob Riley asked George Bush to deny a request by Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue for a disaster declaration allowing water from Lake Lanier to be kept in state for residents of Atlanta rather than be allowed to flow south. Riley pointed out to Bush that the Farley reactors must have enough water for cooling to prevent a meltdown. Farley, 20 miles east of Dothan, Alabama, has recently been cited for numerous safety problems including failure of a valve that regulates heating and cooling. A whistle-blower was illegally suspended for raising safety concerns about its understaffed and overextended heating and cooling department. Farley received a “yellow” finding, second worst possible from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for its poor safety performance. Thirty new reactors are on the drawing board for U.S. utilities.

Seeking Source of Cooling Water Loss

For over a month, radioactive water has been leaking from the 52-year-old Breazeale nuclear reactor at Pennsylvania State University's main campus in central Pennsylvania. On Oct. 9, staff discovered a loss “of several hundred gallons” from the reactor's 71,000-gallon cooling water pool and reported the leak at a rate of ten gallons per hour. A Nov. 7 article on the university's website recorded the leak “at mid-teen gallons per hour.” As if to sound reassuring, Jack Brenizer, the school's chair of nuclear engineering, reportedly said that “every pool — including swimming pools — has these types of issues occasionally.” A'ndrea Elyse Messer, the university's senior science and research spokeswoman, said, “... we are ... continuing to look for the leak.” The search involved draining the cooling pool. The university even said in a formal statement that someone drinking the contaminated water for a year would be exposed to only half the amount of radiation deemed safe by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and less than half the amount received from a conventional X-ray. In fact, the EPA actually warns that there is no safe dose of radiation, and internal contamination is far more hazardous than an external medical X-ray.

NUCLEAR SHORTS

Lazy Sailors Jeopardize Submarine Reactor

SAN DIEGO, California — Commanding officer Michael B. Portland has been relieved of duty and five enlisted personnel punished after the discovery Sept. 17 that sailors on the submarine *USS Hampton* failed to perform daily safety checks of its propulsion reactor for a month, then falsified records to cover the lapse. Redundancy checks caught the cover-up after the sub returned to San Diego following operation in the Pacific.

Commander Ryan Perry officially stated for the Navy, "There is not, and never was, any danger to the crew or the public." However, an anonymous source told the *Navy Times* that there may have been some danger associated with the *Los Angeles* class submarine — the most advanced attack sub in the world: "The reason you maintain water chemistry within certain parameters is to prevent corrosion. But we measure also for general radioactivity levels in the water to make sure the reactor [fuel elements are] intact." A former commanding officer of another sub was outraged, stating that such laxity could be devastating." — Associated Press, Oct. 25; UPI & *Navy Times*, Oct. 22, 2007

Mafia Investigated for Dumping Radioactive Waste

ROME — Italian federal officials have been investigating, for 12 years, the Italian 'Ndrangheta clan, based in Calabria, and the Cosa Nostra Sicilian Mafia for trafficking in radioactive waste, illegal shipping and dumping and efforts to produce plutonium during the 1970s, '80s and '90s. At least eight government employees are being investigated, including former officials with the Italian National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and the Environment (ENEA). According to an informant, an ENEA manager allegedly paid the 'Ndrangheta to get rid of 600 drums of toxic and radioactive waste from Italy, Switzerland, France, Germany and the United States. Five hundred of the drums were said to have been dumped in the Somalian desert and 100 in Matera, in southern Italy. An informant even claimed that the mob blew up ships carrying radioactive waste off the Calabrian coast.

— UPI & *London Times* Oct. 9; *Guardian*, Oct. 9 & 17, 2007

Uranium Firm Buys Entire Utah Town

TICABOO, Utah — Uranium One (UO) bought the entire town of Ticaboo along with 38,000 acres of mineral claims in southeastern Utah for \$2.7 million in cash. The Canadian company bought the Shootaring Canyon Uranium Mill, five miles from Ticaboo in April of 2007. UO also owns the nearby Velvet uranium mine in the Lisbon Valley and the Frank M. mine in Garfield County. The Town of Ticaboo comes with a motel, restaurant-lounge, convenience store, boat storage site, mobile home park, residential subdivision and an RV park. Uranium One must still apply for a state Division of Radiation Control permit to operate the mill. Uranium One has operations in Kazakhstan, South Africa and Australia.

Chris Sattler, Senior Vice President of Investor Relations for UO said in the *Salt Lake Tribune*, "From a political risk standpoint, the U.S. is the best place in the world. It's a nice bit of diversification into a first-world jurisdiction."

— Reuters & *The Salt Lake Tribune*, Oct. 30, 2007

Sleeping Reactor Guard Called "Inattentive"

YORK COUNTY, Pennsylvania — In the doublespeak used by the nuclear industry, "inattentive to duties" refers to sleeping on the job. Such is the case of a security officer at the Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station on the Maryland/Pennsylvania border. Exelon, owner and operator of the reactor had no comment, nor have they viewed the videotape of the "inattentive" guard. Apparently WCBS, a local television station, learned of the lapse and requested the videotape from Wackenhut Corporation, which provides security at the site. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has yet to comment on the tape, yet admits to numerous security lapses at many nuclear reactors. Wackenhut describes its staff as a "heavily armed, highly trained paramilitary force."

— Sept. 29, 2007 *Philadelphia Inquirer*

Radioactive Cargo Surprises Port Authorities

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras — Cargo containing radioactive waste was discovered Oct. 27, during a security scan at Puerto Cortes, one of Central America's largest shipping ports. Government officials have called in the International Atomic Energy Agency to determine exactly what is inside the sealed container and how to handle it properly. Radiation levels were more than 130 times higher than allowed. Puerto Cortes is one of numerous ports around the world that have been chosen by the U.S. government to participate in an international radiation detection program. — AP, Oct. 30; Reuters, Oct. 29, 2007

Waste Hauled to Another Backyard

PITTSBURGH, Pennsylvania — After 13 years and \$4 million, a uranium-contaminated wastewater area was finally emptied, backfilled and reseeded. Thirteen thousand, six hundred cubic yards of decades-old radioactive waste from the former B&W nuclear fuels processing factory in Apollo and Parks was hauled away in 572 truck loads then transferred to railcars for a cross-country trip 1,600 miles to a waste facility in Robstown, Texas. Originally, the NRC allowed the waste to be held at municipal landfills, until a knowledgeable citizen

alerted neighbors and public officials to the inherent danger. Public pressure forced three local landfills to withdraw their bids. The additional cost of shipping the waste to an area far, far away was added to the tax payers' tab.

— *Valley News Dispatch & Tribune-Review*, Oct. 28, 2007

Nuclear Industry Compensated for Creating Rad Waste

NEW ORLEANS, Louisiana — In the latest in a string of similar lawsuits against the Department of Energy, Entergy Corporation in New Orleans was awarded \$48.7 million because the government has failed to open a permanent nuclear waste dump, thereby defaulting on a contract signed in 1998. Entergy's lawsuit was just one of 60 filed for breach of contract. Several other suits have ended with huge settlements. Entergy has been storing its radioactive waste in dry casks on site since 1996. However, government-licensed storage canisters are temporary, plagued with cracking problems and susceptible to extreme weather, flooding and terrorist attacks. Taxpayers are responsible for the bill. — *The Courier, Russellville Newspapers*, Nov. 1, 2007

Russia's Ticking Time Bomb

YEKATERINBURG, Russia —

A service truck at the Mayak reactor in Russia's Ural Mountains leaked radiation for a mile along a service road. Russian nuclear weapons material and radioactive waste are reprocessed at the remote site. Decontamination of the site began immediately although Mayak has a reputation as one of the most radioactively polluted places on Earth. It is commonly known as Russia's ticking time bomb due to incidents in the '40s, '50s and '60s. Thirty villages were permanently evacuated after a 1957 explosion, considered one of the world's worst nuclear accidents.

— BBC, AP & Reuters, Oct. 26, 2007

Workers Exposed at Hanford

HANFORD, Washington — Four workers at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory were exposed to radiation while experimenting with minus 40 degree temperatures. Exposing a sealed source to the low temperatures caused a leak of plutonium 238 this past summer. The initial exposure was not detected so the four workers moved about the facility and their homes, spreading radioactivity from one building to another and to their families, cars, clothing and other articles. An internal investigation determined that the plutonium-238 had begun leaking on June 7. Everyone leaving Building 326 where the leak occurred normally would have had a radiation check, but for unknown reasons no radiation detection was performed that week.

— *Hanford News, Tri-City Herald*, Sept. 20, 2007

Worker Contaminated at Research Reactor

CAMBRIDGE, Massachusetts — The NRC sent three inspectors to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology research reactor, where a worker received an unusually high dose of radiation — 80 percent of a year's allowed exposure — sometime between July 1 and September 30. MIT contacted the NRC on October 17. The inspectors reviewed reactor procedures, examined worker responses and recreated events that could have led to the high exposure. The small reactor has 53 employees and is used in nuclear engineering research, materials science, industrial testing and medicine. — Associated Press, Oct. 22 & 23; *International Herald Tribune*, Oct. 23; *The Sentinel Newspaper*, Carlisle, Penn., Oct. 26, 2007

Imported Radioactive Waste

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah — Energy Solutions (ES), a nuclear waste disposal company, has asked the NRC to allow it to import 20,000 tons of radioactive material from Italy for reprocessing at the DOE's Y-12 complex in Tennessee. Although many companies have received approval from the NRC to import radioactive material, the amount ES is proposing to bring in has alarmed members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. Since 1995, ES has imported more than 2.2 million tons of radioactive waste from Germany, Belgium and Britain. The Italian waste would be unloaded in New Orleans, Louisiana or Charleston, South Carolina, shipped to Tennessee then made into shielding for nuclear reactors. Remaining waste would be shipped across country to Energy Solutions' Clive, Utah dump site.

— *Salt Lake Tribune*, AP, *Desert Morning News*, Nov. 22, 2007

River Contaminated with Mine Wastes

KINSHASA, Democratic Republic of Congo — The Mura River in southeastern Congo was found contaminated with radiation nearly 50 times the allowable limit before a major cleanup. The contaminated site was just four miles upstream from one of three pumping stations providing drinking water to 300,000 local inhabitants. The government banned water use and set up a quarantine zone around the area while they cleaned the river. Authorities had ordered nearly 20 metric tons of toxic and radioactive materials to be disposed of at an old uranium site, but 12 tons of the mineral waste ended up in the Mura. Several tons are still missing. Seven people have been arrested in connection with the dumping including the entire team tasked by the government to dispose of the

waste. The toxins may have come from the nearby Kolwezi area, home to several foreign mining operations. Joseph Monga Herion, a technical advisor to the provincial infrastructure minister, stated reassuringly, "Practically all of the product has now been removed from the river."

— Reuters, Nov. 20, and BBC, Nov. 9, 2007

French Firm to Build Unproven Reactors in China

PARIS — On Nov. 26, the French nuclear giant Areva, signed what is being called the biggest deal in the industry's history (\$11.86 billion), with China Guangdong Nuclear Power, the country's number one power company.

Most nuclear power-friendly states like the U.S., Germany and Japan have chosen not to build new reactors for decades. Likewise, Italy and Poland, which have no nuclear power stations, have decided to avoid the risky business. Bowing to antinuclear public opinion, Germany and Sweden have both legislated complete phase-outs of their nuclear reactors by 2020 and 2010, respectively.

The Areva deal is to supply the Chinese with two new European pressurized water reactors, or EPRs, a novel design. Areva is currently building the first-ever EPR in Finland. News reports say the project is years behind schedule and \$1 billion over budget.

The China deal includes a separate China National Nuclear Corporation study of whether to build a waste fuel reprocessing complex. Reprocessing is the pollution-intensive and remotely controlled system of extracting plutonium from waste fuel.

Official Chinese media report that the government plans to spend \$60 billion on reactors by 2020. In July Westinghouse struck a \$5.3 billion deal to build four reactors in China. The company's website says nuclear technology will provide future generations with safe, clean and reliable electricity. — *New York Times*, Nov. 27, 2007

Alabama Utilities Apply for New Reactor Licenses

PITTSBURGH, Pennsylvania — The Tennessee Valley Authority and NuStart Energy consortium, comprising 12 giant utilities and reactor manufacturers, on Oct. 30 filed a combined construction and operating license application with the NRC for two reactors at the Bellefonte site in northern Alabama. Members of NuStart are Constellation Energy, Duke Energy, Detroit Edison, Entergy Nuclear, Exelon Generation, Florida Power & Light Company, Progress Energy, South Carolina Electric & Gas, Southern Company, TVA, GE-Hitachi Nuclear Energy and Westinghouse.

Westinghouse Electric Company said it was honored to have its "AP1000 as the standard design" on the application.

"In continuing to work together — industry and government ... [and] other utilities will reference the AP1000 in their COL [Construction/Operating License] applications as we move ahead with the nuclear renaissance in the United States," a Westinghouse spokesman said. Westinghouse is now a group company of Japan's Toshiba Corporation.

— "Westinghouse Statement Regarding Nuclear Plant," Westinghouse website, Oct. 30, 2007

RESOURCES

- *AlliantACTION, Email: alliantaction@circlevision.org; Web: www.alliantaction.org/home.html
- *Bank Track, Boothstraat 1c 3512 BT Utrecht, The Netherlands; Phone: 31-30-2334343; Web: www.banktrack.org
- *Christian Peacemaker Teams, Email: peacemakers@cpt.org; Web: www.cpt.org
- *Community Coalition Against Mining Uranium, Web: <http://www.ccamu.ca>
- *Greenpeace, 702 H Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20001; Phone: (202) 462-1177; Email: info@wdc.greenpeace.org; Web: www.greenpeace.org/usa/
- *Incite! Women of All Red Nations, Email: incite_national@yahoo.com; Web: www.incite-national.org/involve/statement.html
- *International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons & CADU, Bridge 5 Mill, 22a Beswick Street, Ancoats, Manchester UK, M4 7HR; Phone: +44 (0)161 273 8293; Email: info@bandepleteduranium.org; Web: www.bandepleteduranium.org/en/i/57.html
- *Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy, 675 Third Avenue, Suite 315, New York, NY 10017; Phone: (212) 818 1861; Email: lcnp@lcnp.org; Web: www.lcnp.org
- *Mining Watch Canada, Suite 508, City Centre Building 250 City Centre Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K1R 6K7 Canada; Phone: (613) 569-3439; Email: info@miningwatch.ca; Web: www.miningwatch.ca/BE_feedback.php
- *Netwerk Vlaanderen, vzw Vooruitgangstraat 333/9 Brussels Belgium B-1030; Phone: +32(0)2 201 07 70; Email: info@netwerk-vlaanderen.be; Web: www.netwerkvlaanderen.be/en/
- *Peace Action Wisconsin, 1001 E. Keefe Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53212, Phone: (414) 964-5158; Email: website@peaceactionwi.org; Web: www.PeaceActionWI.org
- Radiation and Public Health Project, Web: www.radiation.org
- *Raging Grannies; Email: webgranny@gmail.com; Web: www.geocities.com/raginggrannies/
- *The Western States Legal Foundation, 504 Franklin, Suite #202, Oakland, CA 94612; Phone: (510) 839-5877; Email: webmaster@wslfweb.org; Web: <http://www.wslfweb.org>
- *Wisconsin Network for Peace & Justice, 122 State Street, Suite 402, Madison, WI 53703; Phone: (608) 250-9240; Email: info@wnpj.org; Web: www.wnpj.org

L. Superior's Toxic Waste Barrels: Activists

Editor's note: Glen Maxham of Duluth, Minnesota has investigated the barrel scandal for over 13 years. He is currently Vice President of the Save Lake Superior Association. While not speaking officially for the SLSA, Glen made the following presentation Feb. 3, 2007 at the Living Green Conference in Superior, Wisconsin.

The majority of you have no doubt heard about the 1,450 barrels that have been dumped in the lake.... They were dumped by Honeywell, via the Army Corps of Engineers between 1957 and 1962.

The cities of Duluth, Superior and Thunder Bay, Congressmen Jim Oberstar and David Obey, the Save Lake Superior Association and others have been seeking over the past 20 years remedial action, ranging from chemical testing of the barrels' contents, to removal of all the 55-gallon drums, to other kinds of testing to find out exactly what may be circulating now in our water.

So, what was the response from the governmental agencies regarding the contents of the barrels once their presence was revealed to the public? ... Initially, the official response about the barrel contents amounted to saying, "There ain't nothin' down here in the barrels but a bunch of scrap left over from the manufacture of secret land mines."

A brief history

From the MPCA (Minnesota Pollution Control Agency), here's a brief history. In 1959 the Army was responsible for supervising a contract with Honeywell to produce assemblies for anti-personnel grenades and rockets at the Twin Cities Army Ammunition Plant (TCAAP), located in Arden Hills near the Twin Cities.

The designs for these munitions were classified and the disposal of the waste materials had to take into account national security.

Four separate methods of disposal were attempted: 1) A smelting furnace in Duluth did melt some of the materials into scrap, up until 1959; 2) Demolition of the wastes with explosives was attempted at Camp Ripley, but that wasn't successful; 3) A proposal to install a permanent hammer mill to demolish scrap was considered to be too expensive, so it was determined that 4) Sinking the material in Lake Superior was the most economical and secure method of disposal.

According to affidavits and available records, the classified material was packed into 55-gallon drums, trucked to Duluth under heavy guard down to the waterfront, loaded onto the Corps of Engineers barges and then sunk in the lake.

The 1959 records indicated that the drums contained no explosive or radiological materials. Between 1959 and '62, the Corps disposed of classified material at seven different locations, a total of 1,450 drums.

Then in 1968, a local fisherman netted several barrels while trawling ... approximately seven miles northeast of Duluth. The crew found a barrel weighing about 700 pounds containing what they described as metal parts resembling buckshot. The materials were dumped back into the lake.

Subsequent inquiries showed that the source of the material was TCAAP, now the largest Superfund site in Minnesota and the site of several hazardous waste disposal areas. Local Duluth media interviews with various persons include claims that the barrels contained radioactive materials.... From that point, public interest in the barrels increased considerably.

Award Winning Lake Advocate Warns of Barrels

Note: At its annual conference in Duluth Oct. 30, the Lake Superior BiNational Forum presented Bob Olsgard of Siren, Wisconsin with its prestigious Environmental Stewardship Award. Bob worked for many years as coordinator of Lake Superior Waterkeeper and the Lake Superior Alliance. In an acceptance speech that he provided to Nukewatch, Bob warned of real and present threats to the Big Lake that demand attention. Excerpts follow.

"... It is a great honor and a privilege to be recognized for this work and to be counted among those who have contributed to cleaner, healthier Lake Superior...."

"When I began my work we were focused on the initiative for zero-discharge of toxic pollutants. After 16 years we are closer to that goal. But serious questions remain ... questions about pollution and public health impacts ... questions that should have been addressed years if not decades ago...."

"After nearly half a century, community members still wonder about the barrels dumped in Lake Superior off the Duluth harbor. What was in them? Are they leaking? If so, does this leakage present a threat to the health of the people of Duluth who take their drinking water from the lake?"

"...Suggestions that dangerously toxic hexavalent chromium and radioactive materials may be among the contaminants in the barrels have surfaced. But no further testing has been performed.... To have such serious questions unanswered in the same community that houses so many research organizations and their research vessels seems a bizarre and contradictory statement about our collective commitment to protecting the water...."

— Bob Olsgard

Why is the MPCA pressing the barrel location effort? It's received conflicting information about the disposal events and the barrel contents from individuals who claim to have been eye witnesses of the dumping.

In addition, records from the time of the disposal "are limited due to required record destruction and the sinking of one tug boat and the burning of another, both with log books," according to the Army Corps (Civil Engineer James R. Hager, April 28, 1977).

Why recover the barrels?

You're going to hear many reasons why we should get the barrels out of the lake. One of these reasons looms larger than the others. It's in the form of a very revealing document. Significantly, it's dated June 30, 1977.

The subject is listed as: "Environmental hazards of waste disposal in Lake Superior." The communication is between the U.S. Army Environmental Hygiene Agency (USAEHA) at the Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland, and the Armament Material Readiness Command's Environment Quality Office, in Rock Island, Illinois.

This was a request to the USAEHA for "evaluation on a worst case basis the potential environmental hazard due to chemical toxicity of disposal in Lake Superior during the period 1957 to 1962, of six sealed 55-gallon drums containing potential toxicants." The toxicants are lithium chloride, barium, calcium chromate, calcium chloride, chromium and zirconium metal.

As recently as Jan. 31, 2007, an employee of the MPCA told me that he has never seen any evidence whatsoever that the public was informed by his agency of the existence of these six barrels, 55-gallon drums that the military itself described as containing "potential toxicants."

There's documentation that during the course of disposal, some barrels were purposely punctured. Now if the six barrels were among those that were struck with the axes, it's reasonable to assume that their contents then were released into the lake.

Now the total weight of those toxicants from the government's records exceeded six tons. ... and nobody was told about it. In defense of the MPCA, all this was classified. Therefore, they couldn't, for a period of time, tell us that those six barrels had gone in.

With that scenario, it seems possible that the barium, zirconium, lithium chloride and calcium chromate all got into our drinking water. The concentration in the Duluth system, if any, of the dilution is only speculation.

The Army's interagency communications contained a list of the maximum estimated pounds of each chemical dumped into the lake: 3,305 pounds of barium, 1,275 pounds of calcium [chromate], 1,285 pounds of chromium, 1,002 pounds of lithium, and 6,120 pounds of zirconium. That's just under seven tons of waste.

The alternative scenario is really no less alarming. If the six mystery barrels were not among those that were punctured decades ago, and if they are still intact and still holding their contents ... should there be an immediate search for them so they could be removed before they rust and their contents leak into the lake?

Suspicious of harm

We wondered whether there's any evidence whatever that humans or animal life showed signs of ingesting toxics from these barrels. We know of no studies that humans were affected, but there's this disturbing information from Don Mount, Director of the EPA's research lab in Duluth. The inquiry was sent to the MPCA's executive director Peter Gove, on Nov. 11, 1976, and in it [Mount] suggests more should be known about the contents of these barrels. This letter says, in part, "We've noticed again a change in the water characteristics coming into our lake water intake at the laboratory, such that some of our animals have stopped spawning, and other behavioral abnormalities have cropped up. We have noticed instances of this nature from time to time in past years."

The government was concerned not only about these six barrels, but also about the hundreds of others....

The Environmental Quality office requested a "separate evaluation of environmental hazard due to chemical toxicity of some 1,450 drums of steel and aluminum parts, consisting of six dumps at the same site during the period 1957 to 1962."

To paraphrase a question frequently raised in Washington inquiries, I wondered whether the MPCA knew about the June 30, 1977 Army document, and if so, when ...?

I quote the MPCA here: "The MPCA does not dispute the Army's evaluation and/or its conclusions, that is, their negligible environmental hazard evaluation." They concluded without any serious scientific proof that the effects would be negligible.

The MPCA also stated that it knew about the 1977 letter since the onset of the barrel investigation. In going over the reams of documents in the MPCA's collection ... I found no news releases or any other statements that warned the public of this ominous potential.

"No short term threat"

What has been the MPCA's public response to the Army's evaluation of what it has labeled "potential toxicants?" The line that we've been hearing so much over the past 13 years has been, "We don't believe there's any short-term threat to human health."

So how should we interpret that statement from Ron Swenson, who supervised the barrel issue for the MPCA? Does it imply that there could be long-term threat to human health? It would seem to me that that is the implication.

Herb Bergson, when Mayor of Superior, was troubled enough by the prospect of harm to human health to ask the

Submarine Investigation Recorded Radiation

Note: For a 1990 report on whether radioactive materials were in some of the barrels dumped in Lake Superior, KBJR Channel 6 television in Duluth, Minn. did some investigation. News anchors Dave Jensch and Michelle Lee introduced the subject. Then reporter Barbara Reyelts interviewed three people: Captain Harold Maynard, the submarine operator who went down to investigate a part of one of the dump sites, Chuck Williams, then director of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and Army Corps of Engineers officer Bob Dempsey.

Captain Maynard has said in a sworn statement that his Geiger counter registered radiation near one barrel, that the tether securing his sub to a surface ship was radioactively contaminated, and that the Corps of Engineers would not allow him to return to the same place to verify his reading. Nukewatch obtained a DVD copy of the KBJR newscast and our transcript follows:

News Anchor Michelle Lee: "Did the Army Corps of Engineers ignore and coverup findings of radioactivity in the Lake Superior mystery barrels?"

Co-Anchor Dave Jensch: "Environmentalists say 'yes,' and State and federal officials say 'no.' The submarine captain who first took the readings says the whole thing has become a big cover-up."

Lee: "Channel 6 News tracked him down in New York and Barbara Reyelts brings us his story."

Barbara Reyelts: "It was October 15, 1990. The Army Corps of Engineers had hired Harold Maynard and his submarine to probe the bottom of Lake Superior for barrels. From his home in New York, Captain Maynard tells us [that] as a precaution on that dive, he took onboard a Geiger counter provided by the Corps of Engineers."

Captain Harold Maynard: "... as I turned toward the barrel, about thirty feet off the bottom, the nuclear Geiger counter went off, started clickin'. I turned towards the barrel and when I got almost to the barrel it went off again. It was clickin' again, low level."

Reyelts: "When Maynard resurfaced, Corps officials went over his sub with a Geiger counter. Maynard said it

went off as it moved over the line that tethered the sub to the surface craft."

Maynard: "When he got near that tether with that Geiger counter, it took off. It went right up the line. You could hear it rattling, click, click, click, click, click."

Reyelts: "[Bob] Dempsey of the Army Corps went back down with Captain Maynard to read the levels himself. In a telephone interview, he tells us:"

Dempsey: "We anchored ourselves as close to the same spot as possible for a good hour.... But we could never repeat Mr. Maynard's readings."

Reyelts: "But Maynard says the Corps refused to go back to the spot where the radioactivity was detected."

Maynard: "The nuclear readings that I got, the low-level ones, were in the south of this barrel field. They wouldn't let me go back there again. They kept me to the north and to the east."

Chuck Williams: "Uh, as far, uh, as, uh, these stories, you know, I started to get really tired of it."

Reyelts: "Chuck Williams, Director of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, admits they got a radioactive reading, but says the whole thing is being blown out of proportion."

Williams: "I think that he, uh, yeah, is mistaken. And if he's willing to step forward and, uh, um, uh, and show us the documentation, uh, we'll certainly take a look at it. But I don't think he can do that."

Reyelts: "Maynard says that he has done it. He says he signed a sworn affidavit saying that he encountered radioactive levels while scanning the mystery barrels. Now, he says the whole thing is making him mad."

Maynard: "When it [a Corps of Engineers report] came back and said that the Corps had denied any reading, it really upset me. 'Cause now one of us is a liar, and I got no reason to lie."

Reyelts: "Duluth environmentalists brought the issue before the city council this week, and at the upcoming agenda session, councillors will take a deeper look."

"In Duluth, Barbara Reyelts, Channel 6 News."

Lee: "It's estimated it would cost 12 million dollars to bring up the remaining fourteen-hundred-plus barrels."

Confront Denials, Disinformation, Delays

Department of the Army about doing further research on the barrels' contents. The Feb. 23, 1995 response from the Army said of the barrels, "They do not contain spent radioactive material or containers of toxic wastes." And the letter ... concludes, "The Army's studies have shown that the barrels contain harmless, formerly classified, scrap grenade assemblies."

Now, consider the examination of the seven recovered barrels of June 1994 — aside from those awful six barrels mentioned earlier. Four of them actually did contain waste munition parts. But in the other three there was evidence of acetone, arsenic, barium, benzene, n-butylzine, chromium, cadmium, ethyl benzene, 4-Isopropyl toluene, lead, naphthalene, PCBs, toluene, trimethylbenzene and xylene.

But [the Army] said, "No. There wasn't anything like that in the barrels." They kept telling us that for a long time.

PCBs — one of the worst among the cancer causing agents — were found in some of the barrels [in concentrations of] 44 to 590 parts per billion. Minnesota's recommended limit of PCBs in our drinking water is only 0.4 parts per billion.

Ron Swenson of the MPCA told the Duluth *News Tribune*, "I guess we're most surprised about the PCBs. We simply didn't know why (PCBs) were in the barrels that were tested."

Drinking water intake

According to this [Sept. 22, 1994] story, the barrels containing the high concentrations of the pollutant were lifted from the lake bottom just two miles from the city's water intake pipe. The Corps of Engineers, the MPCA and the EPA ... refer to the dilution factor in the apparent belief that two miles is a safe distance from that water intake pipe.

Someone with expertise in hydrology may disagree with our assumptions, but we believe that toxics in the barrels could very likely be carried to the water intake pipe, and do so with the influence of something called the *Coriolis Effect*. ... It's known to exist on the North Shore and, simply stated, it's a current that flows toward Duluth as a result of the earth's rotation.

As the map of the dump sites reveals, some of the barrels are so-to-speak upstream from the [intake pipe]. Now this leads us to presume that contents of barrels that may have leakage could flow downstream and into the range of that pipe. We don't know whether this has actually happened because there's no testing equipment at the water treatment plant capable of analyzing the water for evidence of most of these toxics. [Among the heavy metals, only lead content is tested.]

We were told by city officials that the Minnesota Department of Health does periodically test for some of the toxins. I was informed by the MPCA three days ago that, "Sampling by the health department is done after filtration of the actual drinking water going into the city, rather than the raw water entering the plant from the lake, and that tests for certain toxins may not be done for as long as nine years."

As for the odds of leaking chemicals moving two miles and being sucked into Duluth's water intake pipe, I would remind you of the nasty asbestos in our water some years ago. Many of you remember the asbestos scare when filters had to be put into the schools ...

Now these fibers resulted from the taconite tailings of Reserve Mining and like the barrels were released into Lake

In 1985, EPA Named Barrels "Priority Hazard"

A June 23, 1985 report by the United States Environmental Protection Agency titled "Potential Hazardous Waste Site Preliminary Assessment," identifies the issue as "Barrel Dump, Lake Superior."

The report's section titled, "Description of Substances Possibly Present, Known or Alleged," includes a long list: PCBs, lead, cadmium, chromium, copper, zinc, nickel, barium, uranium-234, uranium-235, uranium-238 (known also as "depleted uranium"), and the "volatile organic compounds" acetone, butanone, dichloroethylene, trichloroethylene, trichloromethane (chloroform), dichloromethane, carbon tetrachloride, vinyl chloride, and toluene.

Describing the "Potential Hazard to Environment And/Or Population," the document warns of, "Contamination of western Lake Superior, the primary drinking water source in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, cities in U.S.A., Ontario, Canada, barrel dump within 1 mile of Duluth water intake. Biological concentration in aquatic organisms."

In the report's section, "Priority Assessment for Inspection," the choice marked is "High," rather than Medium, Low or None. We couldn't agree more.

Barrel Documents on the Web

Nukewatch has posted documents and news articles about the barrel dump scandal on our website, at nukewatch.com/barrels/. We are grateful to Jennifer Hauf for her website work and to independent researcher Greg Price for his collection of so much of the historical record. A hard copy of Price's 100-page compilation can be obtained for \$17 plus postage from the UPS Store in Duluth, Minn.

Superior. ... to reach the Lakewood pumping station they had to flow a distance of about 50 miles, ... [from] Silver Bay, which of course is a much greater distance than the [barrels] which are in some cases less than a mile from our water intake.

Many of the chemicals and metals were in concentrations which were too small to exceed levels considered harmful to humans, though not necessarily harmless to fish and other aquatic life. But others exceeded the safe levels. And yet the military maintained the drums contained only harmless scrap metal, and so no need to worry. ...

The Save Lake Superior Association has always ... demanded either removal of the barrels, or, at the very least, testing of the sediment around the drums, and expanded recovery of the barrels, testing at least 15 percent of [the barrels in] these six or seven dump sites. This is after all a Superfund site and funding should be readily available.

We are hopeful that Congressman Jim Oberstar will renew his 1999 call to get the barrels out of the lake. In his letter to [EPA administrator] Carol Browner, he expressed what he called "grave concern" over the barrels. Writing for himself and for Congressman Dave Obey of Wisconsin he said, "Some of these dump sites are perilously close to the water intake pipes." So as far as we know, EPA administrator Browner, however, did nothing and her successors have likewise done nothing.

Questions of radioactive contents

Another burning question is, could some of the barrels possibly contain radioactive materials?

Consider the November 20, 1994 news story by John Myers in the Duluth *News Tribune* in which he states, "According to the EPA and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, both the Honeywell Corporation and the 3M Company used radioactive materials, including uranium, plutonium, and thorium at the Twin Cities Army Ammunition Plant in Arden Hills, throughout the 1960s and as far back as the late 1950s."

The MPCA's Ron Swenson, responding to the possibility that radioactive substances were in the barrels, said in Myer's report, "There may be no way to determine or to discount the possibility some of the barrels contain radioactive waste short of exhuming all of the barrels."

In 1985, [the late] John Pegors ..., then Regional Director of MPCA, said in his report that radioactive waste was on his list of possible contents. He said, "the potential indeed was there." [Pegors] noted that, "A private investigator was hired to take his small submarine down to one of the known barrel sites, and that his Geiger counter recorded readings that exceeded the natural level background."

Sub captain swears Geiger counter found radiation

John Pegors was referring to Captain Harold Maynard. In a notarized statement on Oct 15, 1990, Maynard stated, "On the third dive with my submarine, on October 14, 1990, when I was 30 feet from the bottom, the Geiger counter started to click. It was set at the lowest level and only clicked about once a second for a total of about 12 times, and then it stopped when I put it on the window."

"There was a barrel off to my right about 20 to 30 feet. I approached the barrel and the counter began to click again, four to six times."

"I considered these very low readings. I attempted to attach my device to the barrel anyway, but the mechanism prematurely locked itself before it was attached, so I aborted

Is Minn. Rewriting Barrel History?

Ron Swenson was the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) supervisor who oversaw two rounds of Army investigations of the barrels. His official statements give the impression of an agency working to misinform the public.

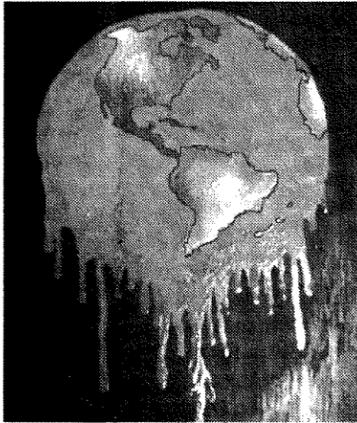
"Nothing hazardous or radioactive has ever turned up in any of the searches or analyses."

— Ron Swenson, interviewed in *Minnesota Environment*, the MPCA's journal, Fall/Winter, '05/'06.*

"Three [recovered barrels] contained an ash/slag mixture. Exceedences [sic] of RALs [Recommended Allowable Limits for drinking water] were noted for barium, benzene, cadmium, lead, and PCB."

— Ron Swenson, in the MPCA investigative "Results Table" issued on Sept. 19, 1994

* *Ralph Pribble, the MPCA water quality expert who interviewed Swenson for Minnesota Environment, told the Duluth News Tribune, Jan. 21, 1995, "We feel we know everything there is to know about these barrels."*



the dive so I could report on my readings on the Geiger counter.

"And when the sub was again on the barge, Bob Dempsey of the Army Corps Engineers checked the entire sub with the [Geiger] counter and he was satisfied with the readings." Maynard allegedly asked to return to the barrels but he was denied this request. [See sidebar]

Though we failed to find any media story or any news release from the MPCA, another document on possible radiation from the barrels came to light as we perused this agency's files and found a Nov. 27, 1990 letter [from] the EPA's Office of Radiation Programs to Bob Dempsey of the Army Corps. It told of the EPA's results of its own survey for signs of radiation. It was done immediately after Harold Maynard's services were terminated. In the final report [EPA] says, "Because the underwater probe is insensitive to the presence of alpha and/or beta radiation, no conclusions concerning the presence or absence of radionuclides (which are pure alpha emitters) can be made."

EPA used wrong radiation monitor

At least on the part of two MPCA employees in the Duluth office, there were lingering concerns about the radiation issue. They were expressed in interoffice emails. One on May 24, 1995 first refers to the writer's belief that his superior was more concerned about gamma than [about] alpha or beta. The latter two, [Tim Musick] noted, are dampened significantly by the water. "However, since alpha consists of a large massive particle in the radiation sense, it can do great damage per particle with an animal body if ingested (by way of public drinking water). If alpha radiation is leaking from any of the barrels, it will not be picked up on a gamma scan because of the very efficient absorption of alpha radiation by water."

"I would encourage," says [Musick], "the MPCA to discuss the radiation survey with the EPA with emphasis on looking for all types of radiation and not just gamma radiation." He goes on to urge the collection of sediment samples to look for alpha radiation in the vicinity of the barrels for analysis.

"In summary," he says, "only performing gamma scan, (which would be the easiest) may not provide enough information about the potential food-chain/ingestion radiation concerns of the public." I found no indication in the MPCA records that the barrels were revisited as he had suggested.

One day later, on May 25, there was this message to [Musick's] co-worker that reads in part, "I'm sure you recall the issue of the purple gelatinous material oozing out of one of the barrels after it was hit with an axe, on the deck of one of the barges carrying the barrels into Lake Superior."

"This message was given to me about 1979 by an eye witness who was on the deck of the barge at that time it was happening. He said the purple material became noticeable, and at that time the onsite supervisor ordered everyone away from the barrel, and a fellow wearing rubber gloves and some protective gear proceeded to push the barrels off the barge, wash off the deck, and then allow the rest of the crew to continue working on the barrels. People who know something about these things tell me that the purple material could be potassium permanganate which has a purple color and is or was used to dampen radioactive materials."

So where do we go from here? Can we adopt an out-of-sight, out-of-mind attitude continuously, and ignore all that you just heard? Can we assume that the nine recovered barrels included the only ones among the 1,457 that have hazardous contents? Those nine barrels represent less than 2 percent of the 55 gallon drums that lie off of our shore, and as Congressmen Oberstar said, are "perilously close" to the water intake, on which some 86,000-plus people rely.

The MPCA has stated the following: "There are no known records or documents that conclusively identifies the contents of each of the barrels," but adds, "The chances of finding, investigating and retrieving are much better today with advanced technologies."

Sediment and water quality testing needed

Finally, until such time that all the barrels can be removed, we strongly suggest that samples of sediment from around and beneath the drums be secured and analyzed. This would determine the status of the hazardous contents.

The Save Lake Superior Association also contends that Duluth should acquire state-of-the-art technical equipment needed to do continuous testing of the lake water at the point of entry into the pumping station.

This is a preventative measure, one that would allay fears of the public that the aging barrels may be rusting and releasing their potentially dangerous contents. Testing every nine years is certainly nowhere near often enough.

The expense of buying and operating the sophisticated testing equipment should be borne by the polluter, and/or by the Army Corps of Engineers that dumped these barrels into the lake. There's always the chance that the dollars could be extracted from the Superfund, especially since the federal government lists the barrel dumps as being a Superfund site.

A good DVD recording of this presentation by Glen Maxham, "Barrels of Deception: Are They Really Benign?" is available from Public Access Cable Television in Duluth, Minnesota. (218) 723-3686

Wisconsin Should Look To Clean Energy Sources

By Joseph Mangano

The Wisconsin Legislature is considering AB 346, a proposal that would end restrictions on building new nuclear reactors in the state. Some legislators want to revoke the 1983 law, viewing nuclear as a clean source of electricity because they do not release greenhouse gases.

But nuclear reactors are far from clean, creating huge amounts of more than 100 radioactive chemicals — the same toxic mix found in fallout clouds from atomic bomb tests years ago. Some of these chemicals disappear quickly, but others last many years and must be kept from humans. Nuclear waste was supposed to be stored at a permanent site by now, but the federal government's selection of Yucca Mountain in Nevada has been slowed due to safety concerns. Many believe Yucca will never open.

In the meantime, each nuclear reactor must store the equivalent of hundreds of Hiroshima bombs indefinitely. Radioactivity in the reactor's core and waste pools must be constantly controlled with cooling water to avoid a meltdown. Mechanical errors like those at Chernobyl or an act of sabotage like the Sept. 11 attacks could bring a radiation catastrophe.

A meltdown would release a huge mass of radioactive gases and particles into the air, which would be propelled by winds and inhaled by humans. Safe evacuation would be impossible, and many thousands would suffer from radiation poisoning or cancer.

Nuclear Disorder ... ?

Book review by Chuck Baynton

The Lawyer's Committee on Nuclear Policy, the Western States Legal Foundation and Reaching Critical Will have published *Nuclear Disorder or Cooperative Security*, an extraordinarily timely warning alluding to events as recent as March 2007. The new book is a friendly critique of the Blix Commission's *Weapons of Terror*.

In 2003, Swedish diplomat and former weapons inspector Hans Blix took on an assignment proposed by the Swedish government to produce a new study of how nuclear, chemical and biological weapons might be abolished.

Similar work had been done before but Blix and his sponsors believed that the time was ripe for a renewed effort to eliminate weapons of mass destruction. Blix assembled an expert commission made up of former diplomats, foreign ministers and cabinet secretaries. He issued its report, *Weapons of Terror: Freeing the World of Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Arms*, in June 2006. It made 60 recommendations, 30 of which relate to nuclear weapons.

Happily, *Nuclear Disorder or Cooperative Security* requires no specialized knowledge. The book is information-dense and carefully argued, and extensive notes and a bibliography complement the text.

A principal message of this book is that we need better modes of thought, and in that spirit the authors reject the term "weapons of mass destruction" in favor of nuclear, biological, chemical or NBC weapons. The new acronym avoids trivializing H-bombs or treating the three military systems as equal in destructiveness.

Of four main sections of text, the concluding one on the role of civil society is largely devoted to critiquing other dangerous mental constructs including "nuclear deterrence" and "national security," in which the first is commonly seen as the path to the second. Critiquing these ideas is vital to our security. It needed doing and *Nuclear Disorder* does it well.

The first three sections include a menu of steps that disarmament organizations and most of the world's governments have advocated for decades, generally with little success because of resistance by the nuclear powers.

The authors rightly point to the increasingly dubious legitimacy of the UN Security Council as presently structured. Among other problems, the first five nuclear-armed states are the five veto-wielding permanent Security Council members. Their perennial message on nuclear weapons is "Do as I say, not as I do." Non-nuclear-armed states are keenly aware of the self-contradiction, and North Americans need to wake up to it.

Nuclear Disorder also sounds a note of caution on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), whose entry into force has been delayed for years by lack of ratification by the U.S. and a few others.

CTBT entry into force is properly high on everyone's list of steps toward the abolition of nuclear weapons. However, in one possible scenario, the U.S. might ratify in a public show of commitment to nuclear abolition, while cynically using computer power to further refine weapons designs, in the belief that no others have that advanced capability.

The best summary of all this is the final paragraph of the book's introduction:

"*Nuclear Disorder or Cooperative Security* delves into complex aspects of the 60-year nuclear age and how to bring it to a close. But the fundamental point is this: the U.S. must end its reliance on nuclear weapons and work to bring about their global elimination."

Chuck Baynton is on the Executive Committee of Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice and chairs the Disarmament Committee of Peace Action Wisconsin.

Nuclear Disorder or Cooperative Security is available from The Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission, www.wmdreport.org for \$15.

In Wisconsin, three reactors at the Kewaunee and Point Beach sites (five miles apart) near Green Bay are still operating. At 33, 35 and 37 years old, they are among the oldest in the United States. Their parts are corroding, raising the chance of a meltdown. A recent report cited seven "near miss" meltdowns at the reactors since 2001, more than any other U.S. reactor. In addition, in 2004 - 05, they were closed more than 21 percent of the time for repairs, double the U.S. average of 10 percent.

The Kewaunee and Point Beach reactors are approaching the end of their license period of 40 years (reactor parts were not expected to last more than 40 years without problems). But recently, federal regulators extended the two Point Beach licenses for another 20 years and are soon expected to do the same for Kewaunee. Keeping aging reactors running adds more radioactivity to plants and the environment.

In the past, Kewaunee and Point Beach may have harmed local residents, since all reactors must routinely release a portion of radioactivity into the air. Humans ingest it through breathing and the food chain raising the risk of cancer, especially in the young.

Most of the 370,000 residents of Brown, Door, Kewaunee and Manitowoc counties live within 35 miles of Kewaunee and Point Beach. There are no obvious health risks in this area. The percent of non-English speakers and poverty rate are below Wisconsin averages, while educational achievement is similar.

In the past quarter-century, the local death rate for infants, children and adolescents for all causes is three percent below the rest of Wisconsin but 36 percent greater for cancer. With 171 local youngsters dying of cancer since 1979, this pattern is statistically significant. Are radioactive emissions from local reactors to blame? Many factors can contribute to cancer — including radioactivity — and the matter deserves further study.

Given the concerns raised by reactors, it would be sound policy to keep the pre-conditions on new reactors. Because the 20 percent of the state's electricity produced by (the relatively old and small) Kewaunee and Point Beach reactors will be lost when they eventually close, a clean energy program should be pursued.

This should include conservation, efficient products and safe/renewable energy sources. In particular, wind power — the fastest-growing source of energy — could be developed offshore to serve the many Wisconsin residents living along Lake Michigan.

Joseph Mangano, Executive Director of the Radiation and Public Health Project, a research and education group based in New York, wrote this article for the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel.

Uranium Weapons updates

Activists Target DU Profiteers

Activists around the world united Nov. 6 — International DU Action Day — in confronting banks and other financial institutions profiting from uranium munitions production.

In Minneapolis and Edina, Minnesota, Nukewatch and AlliantACTION volunteers distributed leaflets at two US Bank sites, condemning its \$11.25 million investment in the Minnesota-based Alliant Techsystems, the country's biggest producer of uranium weapons.

The same day, the International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons (ICBUW), Network Vlaanderen and Bank Track issued a global call for disinvestment in uranium weapons production by unveiling their report, "Too Risky for Business," a 29-page dossier detailing the investments of Wall Street banks and other firms around the world profiting from the dirty business and by how much. For the full report, see <www.bandedpleteduranium.org/en/docs/32.pdf>

United Nations Moves to Confront DU

On Oct. 31, the United Nations First Committee on Disarmament and International Security passed by an overwhelming majority a resolution calling on member states to investigate the effects of the military use of depleted uranium weapons.

The armor-piercing shells made of toxic and radioactive uranium-238 are used extensively by the U.S. and Britain having fired hundreds of tons of them into Iraq in 1991 and 2003, into Afghanistan in 2001 and lesser amounts into Bosnia in 1995 and Kosovo in 1999.

The UN resolution entitled "Effects of the Use of Armaments and Ammunitions Containing Depleted Uranium," passed 122 to 6 with 35 abstentions. Only the Czech Republic, France, Israel, The Netherlands, Britain and the U.S. voted "no." If the weapons are as benign as the Pentagon and the State Department assert, an internationally recognized analysis of the weapons effects should be welcomed by them.

The resolution asks that member states and international NGOs submit a report to the UN General Assembly next year. It says in part:

"The General Assembly...

"Convinced that as humankind is more aware of the need to take immediate measures to protect the environment, any event that could jeopardize such efforts requires urgent attention to implement the required measures,



Photo by David Holloway/Getty Images

Stop the Biggest Taxpayer Giveaway to the Nuclear Industry in History

Graham Nash, Bonnie Raitt and Jackson Browne (L. to R. above) have gone to bat against a proposed bailout of the nuclear industry contained in a new Energy Bill. The plan would give \$50 billion in tax incentives and loan guarantees to the nuclear reactor ownership class. Working with *Beyond Nuclear*, a project of the Nuclear Policy Research Institute in Tacoma Park, Maryland, the three activist singer/songwriters, along with Keb' Mo', Ben Harper and others, have produced a music video — a reworking of "For What It's Worth" — condemning the hand-out and urging political action. To help stop the giant subsidy (\$25 billion in 2008; \$25 billion in 2009) see the *BeyondNuclear.org* website.

Here are a few things you can do right away:

*Call your Representatives and Senators at (202) 224-3121 or (202) 225-3121. Tell them you don't want your tax dollars squandered on new nuclear power reactors.

*Sign the MUSE (Musicians United for Safe Energy) petition that says "No" to the \$50 billion handout.

*Tell your friends and family to call their senators and representatives.

*Get informed. Read the five excellent new fact sheets at the *Beyond Nuclear* website.

*Reach the media. Use the sample letters to the editor and op/ed pieces posted at *Beyond Nuclear's* website to write your own, and submit them to your local newspapers.

*Check out <www.nukefree.org> for more information about the \$50 billion nuclear power boondoggle.

"Taking into consideration the potential harmful effects of the use of armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium on human health and the environment,

"Requests the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States and relevant international organizations on the effects of the use of armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium, and to submit a report on this subject to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session."

The UN First Committee is one of only five major committees that conduct UN business.

The vote came after a year of intense campaigning by the ICBUW and the Campaign Against Depleted Uranium in Manchester, Britain, and follows four resolutions by the European Parliament calling for a ban. The UN action also comes on the heels of the first national ban on the manufacture, production, sale or use of uranium weapons, adopted unanimously last March by Belgium's Parliament.



Photo by Tom Boffolone

AlliantACTION's Steve Clemens (L) and Nukewatch's John LaForge offered DU disinvestment information to customers Nov. 6 outside US Bank's Edina, Minn. branch as the assistant manager ordered them to leave.

The magazine *New Internationalist* has devoted half its November edition to a comprehensive investigation of uranium weapons. It includes a Nukewatch account of Minnesota jury trial victories over Alliant Tech trespass charges. Send us \$10 for a copy of this superb primer (postage and handling included).

Say No to Uranium Mining

By Bonnie Urfer

On June 28, 2007, members of the Ardoch Algonquin and Shabot Obaadjiwan First Nations in Canada began a protest blockade to prevent uranium exploration on their 30,000 acres near Ardoch, Ontario southwest of Ottawa. The Royal Proclamation Act of 1763 and the Canadian Constitution Act of 1982 enshrine sovereign Aboriginal title to the territory. The indigenous people are demanding an end to outdated 1870's mining laws that give any prospector the right to lay claim to any subsurface. Four hundred claims have already been staked in northern and central Frontenac by Frontenac Ventures Corporation (FVC). The prospecting company surreptitiously cut trees and blazed roads using subsurface "mineral rights" to justify the above-ground destruction.

The Algonquins and their supporters aim to protect traditional native lands and area drinking water from radioactive contamination. The price of uranium has climbed rapidly over the past three years and today hovers at \$90 per pound, compared to \$20 in 2004. The price increase lured Frontenac Ventures to commandeer the "mineral rights" for uranium extraction and subsequent profit. The matter has not been settled.

The First Nations oppose uranium exploration and mining based on past experience. One Canadian example is the Elliott Lake and Bancroft areas where 200 million tons of radioactive tailings remain. In the east, Frontenac divulged plans to use a lake near Ardoch to dispose of future tailings.

Aboriginal people have no legal recourse to forbid mining on their land. Beside the site blockade a canoe flotilla was launched Sept. 22 and journeyed for six days to the Parliament buildings in Ottawa demonstrating that the water systems are connected. Letters opposing uranium mining were sent to Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, the Minister of Indian Affairs, and to Ontario's Premier and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. Activists set up road barriers to slow traffic for outreach and educational purposes. Protests were bolstered by drumming circles, teach-ins, discussion groups, highway marches and speakers' panels.

Supporters of a mining moratorium founded the Community Coalition Against Mining Uranium which launched a website with an events calendar at www.ccamu.ca. Haudenosaunee Mohawks of the Six Nations communities in Southern Ontario and the northern United States, Mining Watch Canada, Greenpeace, Christian Peacemaker Teams volunteers and Raging Grannies joined in the struggle. Donations of food and cash rolled in to support the blockade.

Donna Dillman, a Grandmother and Canadian Green Party member, began a hunger strike Oct. 8 in protest of uranium mining. She has camped at the protest site and intends to stay until a mining moratorium is declared. Temple of the Dog recorded "Hunger Strike," a song honoring Dillman that is being heard around the world.

Frontenac Corporation filed a \$77 million suit against the First Nations and the Ontario Supreme Court issued an Aug. 27 order for removal of protesters which local police

Nuclear Dump Operators Girding For Waste Explosions

You may have thought that the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) in Carlsbad, New Mexico had partially solved the military's problems with plutonium-tainted waste from its nuclear weapons complex. But you'd be wrong. The Department of Energy and the Pentagon have sent thousands of shipments to the desert site and they began loading tens of thousands of barrels into the deep underground caverns, or what it calls "panels," in 1999.

Now, proposed changes to the facility's permit tell an alarming story. On Nov. 21 the DOE requested permission to "monitor for hydrogen and methane in filled panels." The build-up of methane and hydrogen gas must be worrying the operators of the dump, considering the planned changes that follow:

"Establish actions levels of methane and hydrogen gas that would trigger various activities that may include the installation of the explosion isolation wall.

"... add a substantial barrier and steel bulkhead, in the intake and exhaust drifts of the panel as part of the monitoring.

"Initiate an inspection schedule and inspection criteria for the explosion isolation walls...."

Readers may recall that during the 1979 Three Mile Island accident in Pennsylvania, a hydrogen gas explosion within the reactor containment building caused a rapid pressure surge. And at the Point Beach reactor on Lake Michigan May 28, 1996, a potentially catastrophic explosion of hydrogen gas up-ended a 6,390-pound lid while it was atop a cask filled with high-level waste. You might say they don't call it the hydrogen bomb for nothing.

— DOE, WIPP Fact Sheet, "Changes to WIPP Hazardous Waste Facility Permit," Nov. 21, 2007; Daniel Ford, *TMI: 30 Minutes to Meltdown*, 1981

refused to enforce. When officials arrived to read the injunction, mining protesters made so much noise that the order couldn't be heard. Two Algonquin communities filed a counter-suit against Frontenac and the Ontario government seeking \$1 billion from the federal government for breach of trust and breach of the duty to consult. The two First Nations learned of Frontenac's plans to mine from a landowner who approached the Tribes for help after Frontenac encroached on her land to drill test wells.

FVC President George White quoted in the Toronto-based *Globe and Mail* said, "What message this brings [for] any investor looking to invest in Ontario [is that] it's similar now to Niger, where you have to hire armed guards to protect your rights. That's the message that the Ontario Provincial Police is sending." Nigerians face continuing contamination and impoverishment caused by the French uranium mining company Areva and have been embroiled in armed conflict for a decade. White said he's frustrated that the Ontario Provincial Police have told him he will be arrested if he attempts to go back to the prospecting site in which his company has already invested millions obtaining permits for its operations.

On Oct. 12, the First Nations, Frontenac Venture, and the Canadian and Ontario governments agreed to a 12-week mediation process and the First Nations ended their occupation.

UN Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples Opposed by Uranium Mining States

On Sept. 13, the UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 144 to 4. The United States was among the four to vote no, joining Canada, Australia and New Zealand. There were 11 abstentions.

The U.S., Australia and Canada hold the world's largest known reserves of uranium ore. In all three nations, the ore is found primarily in indigenous territories and its extraction has devastated the environment and health of indigenous peoples. Millions of tons of uranium tailings have been left behind at the mine and mill sites, permanently scarring First Nation reservations around the world.

Andrea Carmen, Yagui Nation member and Executive Director of the International Indian Treaty Council (IITC), who was on hand to witness the historic vote, noted that the same three naysayers (U.S., Canada and Australia) historically signed the greatest number of nation-to-nation treaties with indigenous peoples — treaties that the countries continue to violate.

Oglala Lakota Bill Means, a board member of the IITC who participated in drafting the Declaration in the early 1980s, said, "The principles of self-determination, treaty rights, and the protection of our cultures and languages contained in the Declaration are basic human rights to build on. The U.S. has finally realized that 400 million Indigenous Peoples around the world can no longer be ignored or excluded from the family of nations."

The Declaration marks the first time that the UN has officially recognized that the rights affirmed in treaty law are "matters of international concern, interest, responsibility and character" and that states are obligated to uphold and honor them.

While not legally binding upon member states, the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People has political and moral clout and it delineates the UN's member nations' obligations to uphold the rights.

— *The Circle*, Minneapolis, Oct. 2007

Pine Ridge Reservation Poisoned, Ignored

In the 1970s, water pollution from uranium mining near the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota was confirmed by Lorelei Decora and Madonna Thunder Hawk who tested samples themselves. They found in 1979 high levels of radioactive contamination along with high percentages of miscarriages, pregnancies complicated by excessive bleeding and large numbers of children with birth abnormalities.

The story appears in a new book *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-profit Industrial Complex*, edited by Incite! Women of Color Against Violence and reviewed by Jeanine Plant.

Decora and Thunder Hawk founded Women of All Red Nations to help see their research acted upon, but their study was discredited by the Centers for Disease Control and Indian Health Services. And while it was vindicated that same year by the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, the NRC refused to act and merely raised the level of "acceptable" or allowable contamination. Indian Health Services began providing bottled water in one area. Congress authorized a new water pipeline to Pine Ridge in 2002 — but the funding was "diverted by the financial demands of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan." — *In These Times*, July 2007



2008
Space Conference
April 11 - 13
Omaha, Nebraska

Global Network Against Weapons
and Nuclear Power in Space

Stratcom: The Most Dangerous Place
on the Face of the Earth

In 2008, the Global Network will hold its 16th Annual Space Organizing Conference and Protest outside Strategic Command. Hundreds of people from around the world will come to Omaha from April 11-13 to learn first-hand about this military installation that operates in America's heartland. For the first time, world citizens will gather to shine a light on what StratCom has become.

Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space
PO Box 652, Brunswick, ME 04011
www.space4peace.org, globalnet@mindspring.com
(207) 443-9502

Nukewatch Staffer Wins Achievement Award

The Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice gave its 2007 Lifetime Achievement Award to Nukewatch staffer John LaForge. The WNPJ, based in Madison, connects 159 peace, environmental and human rights organizations.

In accepting the pat-on-the-back, John mentioned several achievements: shutdown of the Navy's Project ELF, cancellation of Marine Corps "mock landings" in Duluth, removal from the Great Plains of half the 1,000 Minuteman missiles mapped by Nukewatch in *Nuclear Heartland*, not-guilty verdicts for John and three other Anathoth Community members in a 2004 depleted uranium protest trial and the acquittal of Donna Howard and Tom Hastings on sabotage charges after their 1996 ELF disarmament action. Nukewatch played a part in all these successful projects.

The late Sam Day, a Nukewatch founder and its legendary mastermind, was the 2000 recipient of the lifetime achievement award. WNPJ's Peacemaker of the Year honors went to Nukewatch's senior staffer Bonnie Urfer in 2001, and fellow Anathoth Community Farm member Mike Miles in 2002.



Nukewatch staffer John LaForge (L) with Peacemakers of the Year Jim Murphy, Sarah Quinn and Sue Ruggles.

NUKEWATCH QUARTERLY



Nukewatch is a project of
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Through the Prism of Nonviolence

Constructive Program or Corporatism

By John Heid

"The first person to greet our soldiers as they arrive in the Balkans and the last one to wave goodbye is one of our employees," a Halliburton spokesperson explained, making the company's staff sound more like cruise directors than army logistics coordinators. That was the Halliburton difference: Cheney saw no reason why war shouldn't be a thriving part of America's highly profitable service economy — invasion with a smile."

— Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise Of Disaster Capitalism*

"Nonviolent protest must now mature to a new level to correspond to heightened black impatience and stiffened white resistance. This higher level is mass civil disobedience. There must be more than a statement to the larger society; there must be a force that interrupts its functioning at some key point It must be open and, above all, conducted by large masses, without violence. If the jails are filled to thwart it, its meaning will become even clearer. . . ."

— Martin Luther King Jr., *The Trumpet of Conscience*

This time next year U.S. voters will once again proceed lock step to the polls. Last November many citizens performed a similar ritual. The outcome of the 2006 midterm elections was dubbed a "mandate" to end the occupation/war in Iraq. Today the bloody enterprise rages on. There is no end in sight and no insight to end it emanating from either inside the beltway or from the monotone presidential candidates.

In her most recent book, *The Shock Doctrine*, Naomi Klein writes, "Warfare is always partly a performance, always a form of mass communication. . . ." The performance *du jour* has three distinct audiences: first and foremost, Iraqi citizens, secondly, those in the world community who might consider challenging U.S. hegemony, and finally, we the people who are funding it, in whose names this war is waged.

Often when I find my vertebrae pressed smack against a gelid cinder block wall of ideology, the insights of Martin Luther King Jr. and Gandhi come to mind.

The first step in Dr. King's nonviolent campaign for social change is investigation to determine if injustice exists. Strategic activism requires clarity about the nature of the dominant forces we seek to engage, challenge and transform.

With this King insight in mind, we as nonviolent activists need to familiarize ourselves with our "virtual fourth branch of government" — contractors — both on and off the battlefield. Contractors are not bipartisan. They are beyond partisan. They are exempt from the scrutiny of most checks and balances. They are not on any ballot and operate outside the geography of public debate and formal policy. Contractors are the inconspicuous foot soldiers of the nation state's latest behemoth, corporatism.

Klein notes, "A more accurate term for a system that erases boundaries between Big Government and Big Business is not liberal, conservative or capitalist but corporatist."

Our activism, whether it includes electoral politics or not, cannot ignore this corpse in the living room. The corporatist party will not have a single candidate on the ballot in 2008. It has all of them.

There is no immediate, simple or risk-free way out of the status quo of corporatism. We are up against a wall. Enter Gandhi. How would his social transformation program look in this fray? How could it be adapted to the 21st century systemic violence of corporatism? The three elements of his program were: 1) personal transformation 2) political action and 3) constructive program.

In "Creating a New Society in the Shell of the Old," Joanne Sheehan revisits Gandhi's "constructive program" (*WIN* magazine, Summer 2007). She encourages the creation of cooperative enterprises across social divides, reduction of consumption, serious anti-oppression work and dealing with the economic inequalities within our society. We need to get our houses in order even as we confront what Audre Lourde called "the master's house." We need to engage in a participatory process, that knows no borders, with a constructive vision rather than a disaster capitalist, i.e. corporatist agenda. Our failure to imagine is a greater deterrent to a revolution of values than any totalitarian regime.

Robert Burrowes, in his 1995 study *The Strategy of Nonviolent Defense: A Gandhian Approach*, points out that "a constructive program is a wholistic approach to the development of new social structures that foster political participation, cultural diversity, economic self-reliance and ecological resilience."

A constructive program is naturally interwoven with political action, Gandhi's second step. Even as we pursue cross-cultural relationships we can, for example, speak out on behalf of the human rights of immigrants, today's *persona non grata*. Corporations can cross borders at will, why not human beings?

Forty-seven banks support the manufacture of uranium weapons. Find out who they are (bandepleteduranium.org/en/a/136.html) and publicly agitate for divestment. Support young people attempting to resist the poverty draft. Connect returning vets with young people who are considering the military as a career. Resist gates and walls anywhere as they are the architecture of oppression everywhere. In January all the presidential candidates will be within earshot of the public at caucuses in Iowa and New Hampshire: Take a trip and speak your truth to these corporate myrmidons (info@vcnv.org).

"Negotiate with your hands." That expression comes out of the experience of Thai coast villagers who are doing direct action by reoccupying and rebuilding their communities following the 2004 tsunami and government prohibition to return home. In Klein's words, "... in what they called 'reinvasions' Thai villagers passed armed guards on the payroll of developers, tools in hand, and began marking off the sites where their old houses had been."

In the last year of his life, Martin Luther King Jr. ratcheted up his call for global nonviolent revolution against corporate wealth and military power. His urgent call for higher levels of mass civil disobedience, alongside Gandhi's constructive program, are significant antidotes to the malaise of our times and crimes.

— John Heid, a longtime Nukewatch volunteer, is a Plowshares activist, Quaker and a reservist with Christian Peacemaker Teams. Recently of the Anathoth Community Farm, he now lives and works at the Winona, Minnesota Catholic Worker. Watch for his regular column in the Nukewatch Quarterly

