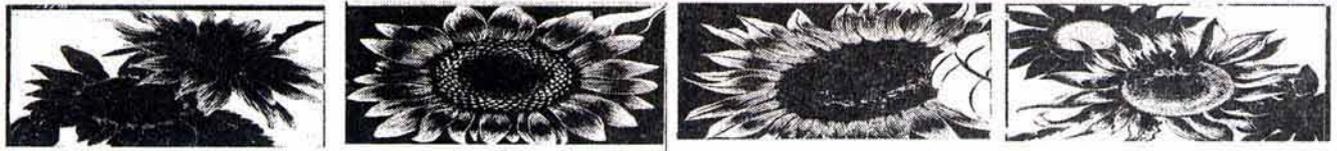


NUKEWATCH

QUARTERLY



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

50,000 Protest German Waste Transports & Policy

By Paul Vos Benkowski

In North Central Germany, thousands of people blocked highways, chained themselves to train tracks, rappelled from high bridges and broke through police lines in November, protesting the long-distance shipment of high-level radioactive waste and the government's repeal of a hard-won reactor shutdown mandate.

Since 1990, Germany has been sending waste reactor fuel to a reprocessing site in France. Once the waste is vitrified (mixed with molten glass and poured into stainless steel tubes for transport to prevent leaking and to reduce the chance of explosions) it is shipped back to Germany to be stored at the highly controversial dump site at Gorleben. Although the exact route and timing of these "Castor" shipments are kept secret, well-organized networks in France and Germany have delayed the transports with massive, diverse and complex protests for over 10 years.

Protests in France preceded those in Germany, and in the city of Caen, Normandy, three people were hospitalized after being injured by police. "Our resistance knows no borders," said a statement from the French nonviolent action group Ganva. "This nuclear convoy, the most radioactive ever, exposes the population to excessive risks. There is a risk to lives in the short term in case of an accident, but also a long-term risk to their health," Ganva said.

In Germany, up to 50,000 critics demonstrated their outrage over the risky transports as well as their broad-based opposition to Chancellor Angela Merkel's move to extend the life of the country's 17 nuclear reactors by at least 12 years. Memories of the 1986 Chernobyl accident weigh heavily in the minds of Germans because highly radioactive fallout from the disaster drifted across large parts of Germany. Merkel says the move to extend operation of the reactors is necessary to keep electricity cheap, but



AP Photo

Police surround anti-nuclear activists near Harlingen, Germany on November 7.



Infrared photos by Greenpeace show heat emitted by high level radioactive waste being moved from reprocessing facilities in France to Gorleben, Germany, the site of a hotly contested nuclear dump site. Tens of thousands protested the November shipments. www.laka.org

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Digitized 2018

“Lost” Missiles & Submarine Grounding Raise Volume of Lopsided United Nations Votes for Nuclear De-escalation

By John LaForge

This past October in the span of two days, the United States and Britain caused embarrassing nuclear weapon scares — the Brits with their newest reactor-powered submarine *HMS Astute*, and the US Air Force which lost contact with 50 of its 450 Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missiles.

The accidents reminded pundits, news reporters and the public of the still-maintained Cold War practice of recklessly keeping nuclear weapons on launch-ready alert status.

On Sat., October 23, U.S. Air Force nuclear war planners who normally control the extremely long-range Minuteman III missiles — they call themselves US “Global Strike Command” — lost electronic contact with 50 of the missiles maintained by F.E. Warren Air Force Base near Cheyenne, Wyoming, for nearly 45 minutes, *The Atlantic’s* Marc Ambinder reported. The Air Force’s 90th “Missile Wing” is nominally in charge of 150 of the Minuteman III missiles in Wyoming, Colorado and Nebraska — each of which is armed with a so-called Mark-12A warhead which, at 335 kilotons, is at least 26.8 times the force of the US bomb that burned and contaminated Hiroshima in 1945 killing 140,000 people.

One Air Force officer who spoke on the condition of anonymity told *The Atlantic*, “We’ve never had something as big as this happen. We can deal with maybe 5, 6 or 7 at a time, but we’ve never lost complete command and control and functionality of 50 ICBMs” (intercontinental ballistic missiles). American Forces Press Services cited Lt. Col. John Thomas, a spokesman for the Air Force’s Global Strike Command, as saying that analysis of the disruption was under way.

Just the day before, on October 22, Britain’s Royal Navy was test driving its newest and most expensive nuclear-powered submarine, *HMS Astute*, when it ran aground backwards off the coast of Scotland. The crash was severe enough that the multi-billion-dollar sub with its crew of 98 was stuck on the rocks for 10 hours. A radiation monitoring crew from the Navy’s “Off-Site Center” was even deployed to search for radiation in case the reactor had been damaged, but a Navy spokesman announced, not too grammatically, “There’s no nuclear issue or no environment issue that we are aware of and no one has been hurt.”

The 323-foot submarine was designed to secretly find and sink other subs, and the Royal Navy says it’s equipped with “the world’s most advanced sonar system.” Finally finished almost four years late and \$1 billion over budget, the sub cost either \$2 billion (*New York Times*) or \$5.5 billion (*London Telegraph*), and carries as many as 36 Tomahawk Cruise missiles which can be armed with 200-kiloton nuclear warheads.

Who Says Driving Nuclear Weapons Can’t Be Fun?

By Colleen Stufflebeem, *Death + Taxes* magazine

What could be scarier than sharing a road with a federal agent transporting nuclear weapons? Sharing a road with a drunk federal agent transporting nuclear weapons. According to the Energy Department’s Assistant Inspector General Sandra D. Bruce, this happened 16 times between 2007 and 2009.

Disclosed Nov. 22, the DOE’s report [“Inspection of Allegations Relating to Irregularities in the Human Reliability Program and Alcohol Abuse within the Office of Secure Transportation”] does not discuss any of the locations where the government drunkards came close to annihilating part of the US, but do detail some of the instances:

One agent was arrested for public intoxication, two more for an alcohol-related incident at a bar and two more agents were found drunk in a hotel on an extended mission.

In response to the discoveries, Rep. Jim Langevin, chair of the House Armed Services strategic forces subcommittee, said, “I was appalled to learn that some couriers responsible for transporting nuclear weapons and material were found to be drinking on the job.”

The Energy Department’s National Nuclear Security Administration is denying the situation though, saying there’s no evidence of them driving drunk while on duty.

Being that the NNSA’s statement didn’t disclaim that the agents were drunk, instead just said they weren’t also driving at the time, it’s as if to say that it was all right for the agents to park their vehicles full of highly explosive thermonuclear weaponry in the Hooter’s parking lot while getting schnockered inside.

While *Astute’s* fantastically expensive features were top-secret and designed for maximum stealth — “more complex than the space shuttle” says the Navy — the grounding put the secrets in full view of highway bridge traffic for a full workday.

Hardly anyone in the media mentioned that the US and Britain — who have repeatedly lost and lost control of their nuclear weapons and/or run them aground — often warn with the utmost gravity of the “instability” and “dangerous intentions” of other heavily armed states, some of which, like Iran, Syria, Cuba, have no nuclear weapons.

These ultimate Bomb scares had the positive effect of temporarily raising the profile of several hugely popular United Nations General Assembly resolutions calling for the removal of nuclear warheads from “alert status.”

Multiple Bomb Scares Strengthen Popular UN Security Efforts

As if to drive home the arguments in their favor, the British and US accidents came only four days before a set of related resolutions passed the UN General Assembly by huge margins. One that passed 144-to-3 was titled “Decreasing the Operational Readiness of Nuclear Weapons Systems,” and calls for “further practical steps to be taken to decrease the operational readiness of nuclear weapons systems, with a view to ensuring that all nuclear weapons are removed from high alert status.”

The three countries voting “no” were the US, France and Britain. However, France and Britain have already lowered the operational readiness of their nuclear weapons and it’s only the United States that retains the destabilizing, accident-prone practice of launch-on-warning.

Sponsored by New Zealand, Switzerland, Chile, Malaysia and Nigeria, the resolution — a reiteration of a 2008 measure that passed 133 to 3 — seemed to have taken its language out of the October headlines. One of the measure’s introductory agreements is that the General Assembly recognizes “that the maintenance of nuclear weapons systems at a high level of readiness increases the risk of the unintentional or accidental use of such weapons, which would have catastrophic consequences.”

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Nuclear Powers Playing Apocalypse Roulette

The October crash of the UK submarine *Astute* raised new calls for the retirement of the entire British nuclear sub fleet rather than its replacement, as the government intends, with *Astute*-class boats. Nuclear-powered submarines — touted as the most sophisticated and expensive of nuclear weapons systems — have crashed many times risking radiation catastrophes. Some that we know about include:

February 2009: *HMS Vanguard*, a Trident nuclear submarine, collided in the North Atlantic with the French ballistic missile submarine *Triomphe*.

May 26, 2008: *HMS Superb* hit an underwater rock in the Red Sea, south of Suez.

March 2007: Two submariners died aboard the hunter-killer *HMS Tireless* after a faulty oxygen generator candle exploded while under the Arctic ice cap.

January 2005: The *USS San Francisco* ran aground 350 miles south of Guam while racing toward Australia. One sailor was killed and 98 injured when the high-speed impact threw them and equipment around the interior.

November 2002: The British submarine *HMS Trafalgar* ran aground off the Isle of Skye while being commanded by a student officer-in-training. Three crewmen were injured, two officers were court martialed and repairs took 16 months.

February 2001: The *USS Greeneville*, while making a high-speed surfacing, smashed the Japanese teaching ship *Ehime Maru* killing nine of the 35 students onboard.

February 1992: The *USS Baton Rouge* collided with the Russian sub *Barracuda* which was also nuclear-powered. Like with the *Nathaneal Greene* (below), specifics about the crash were never made public but damages were serious enough that the *Baton Rouge* was retired and scrapped.

March 1986: The *USS Nathaneal Greene* was two years old when it was wrecked beyond repair after running aground in the Irish Sea. Details of the crash, the condition of the sub’s nuclear reactor and any radioactive contamination are still classified by the Navy which had to decommission and scrap the boat.

September 1977: The *USS Ray* smashed into a coral mountain while cruising submerged in the Mediterranean.

Air Force Nuclear Missile Scares “Routine”.

The Air Force’s 50 “lost” missiles of October was also a repeat performance. In January 1984, and in 1977, and perhaps many more times, the same 90th missile wing at Warren AFB had a computer control panel display that indicated a missile launch was underway. The Air Force had reportedly gone through this sort of scare before. Hoping to smash up any accidental launch on site, officers hurriedly parked a heavy Air Force vehicle on the lid of the seemingly out-of-control launch silo.

The “missileers” evidently intended that the armored car would fall into the underground silo if its giant concrete lid was blown open for launch. What a heavy truck might cause crashing onto a fiery, rocketing nuclear-armed ICBM can only be imagined.

News reports of the 1984 accident quoted a missile launch crewman named Greg Hallen who said the same thing had happened before. Hallen told the *Casper Wyoming Star-Tribune* that in 1977 he “directed a crew to go out and put a vehicle on top of the launch door” of a Minuteman III missile silo “as kind of an extra precaution.” As if to sound reassuring, the *Star-Tribune* report quoted Maj. Pat Maloney, a Strategic Air Command spokesman at Offutt AFB in Omaha, who said the January 10, 1984 incident was a “routine malfunction.”

Just how routine was hinted at in “The Hidden Cost of Deterrence: Nuclear Weapons Accidents 1950-88, by researchers Shaun Gregory and Alistair Edwards who cited more than 230 nuclear weapons accidents involving the US, UK and USSR and speculated that “this was only a fraction of the total” number due to the practice of military secrecy regarding nuclear power and weapons.

Downsizing the Unthinkable

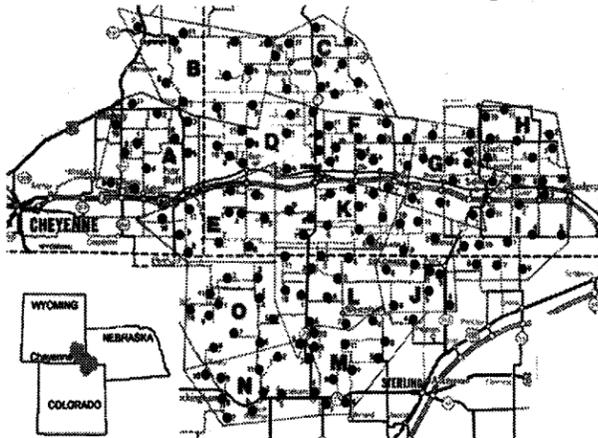
PANTEX, Texas — The Pentagon’s so-called B53 nuclear warheads are finally to be dismantled at the Pantex factory near Amarillo, Texas. The disassembly of the weapons is expected to take 10 years.

The B53 is the second most powerful thermonuclear bomb ever deployed by the US. The biggest was the B17 with a force of between 10 and 15 million tons or “megatons” of TNT equivalent. The B53, a part of the US arsenal since 1962 and carried by giant B-52 bombers, weighs 10,000 pounds and is the size of a mini-van. Its warhead has the force of 9 megatons, 720 times the size of the US atom bomb dropped on Hiroshima. At one point the US possessed 340 of the ghastly devices. An above-ground test of one of them in the Marshall Islands contaminated a Pacific atoll more than 300 miles away.

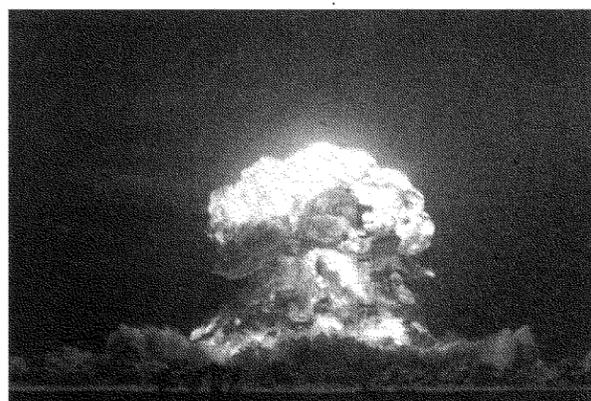
Starting late in 2011, the Y12 uranium processing complex in Oak Ridge, Tennessee will be responsible for dismantling the warheads’ so-called “secondaries” which are dangerously radioactive components containing highly enriched uranium and other toxic materials.

In Texas, Pantex workers are also engaged in dismantling the W84 ground-launched cruise missile warheads that have been part of the nuclear arsenal since 1983. The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty led to this disarmament of the W84s.

At the same time that these nuclear warheads are being dismantled, the Obama administration plans on spending more than \$180 billion over the next 10 years to modernize (ie. replace) existing nuclear weapons and rebuild some intercontinental ballistic missiles. — Unredacted (<http://nsarchive.wordpress.com>), Oct. 21; NNSA, Oct. 13 & Sept. 29; Associated Press, Oct. 13; *Washington Post*, Oct. 18, 2010



The 50 Minuteman III missiles that the Air Force lost contact with in October were in this field of 200, mapped by Nukewatch in 1987, near Cheyenne, Wyoming. Each outlined section holds 10 missiles nominally controlled by crews in a far-off Launch Control Center. The launch center “G1” happens to be on the campus of Western Nebraska Community College, and silo “H10” was the site of a “routine” computer-generated but false “launch sequence” scare in 1984.



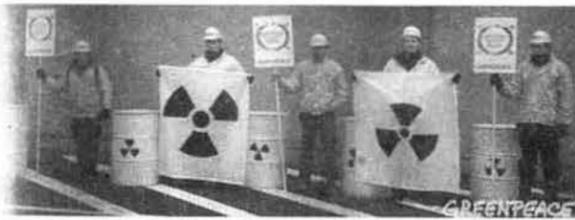
Oops, one too many beers.

Further cause for collective pant-shitting came from NNSA spokesman Damien LaVera, who said, “NNSA’s Office of Secure Transportation maintains a highly trained, highly professional force that has safely and securely transported nuclear materials more than 100 million miles without a single fatal accident or any release of radiation.”

As if knowing that government agents were transporting nuclear materials more than 100 million miles wasn’t terrifying enough, now we know they’re drunk some of time, and Damien LaVera just jinxed them by saying there hasn’t been a single fatal accident yet.

Fortunately, it’s been recommended to the NNSA to get a “zero tolerance” policy, and while it’s not exactly cool to be treated like a teenager, it’s far less cool to blow up half of America.

— Stufflebeem writes for *Death and Taxes*, a music and culture website at www.deathandtaxesmag.com



Protest Against German Waste Transports and Repeal of Reactor Phase-out

Continued from cover

tens of thousands let her know the public wants the reactor phase-out reinstated.

Protesters gathered in the fields around the small town of Dannenberg where the 123 tons of reprocessed reactor waste on 11 rail cars was to be transferred to trucks for the final leg of the 900-mile journey. Demonstrators from all walks of life held thousands of yellow and red flags declaring, "Nuclear power — No Thanks." Police used water cannons and pepper spray to force crowds away from the roads and rails, but several hundred protesters got through and managed sit-ins, lock-downs, blockades, removed gravel from under railroad ties, eventually forcing a delay of over 12 hours. Later, once the casks were loaded onto trucks, area farmers used sheep, goats and tractors to block the route to Gorleben. Over 1,000 protesters were arrested during the three days of international resistance.

With over 17,000 police reportedly deployed to remove blockaders, the protest was one of the largest in ten years. Castor blockades shrank for a period following the adoption of the reactor phase-out statute which would have seen all 17 reactors shuttered by 2021. But since Merkel's rise to power in October 2009, utility companies pushed for reversal of the legislation, and repeal of the law was completed in November. Critics vowed to contest the repeal in court.

News of the record number of German protesters made headlines worldwide, spotlighting the inherent dangers of nuclear power, risky waste shipments and dodgy storage schemes. As the German daily *Die Tageszeitung* put it, "With their protests against the Castor train to Gorleben, nuclear power opponents have scored a clear win on points against Merkel's government. The massive show of participation by demonstrators shows that the government's hasty decision to extend nuclear-[reactor] lifespans has led to more political engagement in Germany, rather than resignation. ... It's now clear that people from all levels of society took to the streets out of personal conviction against the government's irresponsible policies." — *Die Tageszeitung & Der Spiegel*, Nov. 10; *New York Times*, CNN & AP, Nov. 8; and *Agence France Presse*, Nov. 5, 2010

Thousands Protest in France Against its Oldest Reactor

COLMAR, France — In the border town of Colmar, in Alsace, near the German-Swiss border, at least 7,000 people took part in protests against the operation of the Fessenheim reactor, France's oldest, and government plans to extend its operating life another 10 years.

Authorities deployed 3,000 police officers, dozens of anti-riot police vehicles and trucks with water cannons to the demonstration in front of the city's train station, a municipal source said. Organizers said more than 10,000 people, including hundreds from Spain, Italy, Germany and Switzerland, rallied peacefully in Colmar while police said 3,500 took part in the protest.

The critics delivered a letter to Pierre-Andre Peyvel, the regional prefect, demanding the immediate shutdown of the reactor, which opened in 1977 and which they say is now discredited. The anti-nuclear group SDN (One Million Europeans Against Nuclear Power) organized the event with the German movement Bund.

Organizers said that the police presence was exaggerated and that German and Swiss border guards had needlessly blocked some from heading to Colmar.

— www.greenkids.de; & *Agence France Presse*, Oct. 3, 2010

26 Arrested at Ft. Benning Demanding SOA Shutdown

At least 6,000 human rights activists converged in Georgia over the weekend of Nov. 20 to protest the continued operation of the US military's notorious training camp at Ft. Benning, Georgia. The School of the Americas, now named the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, is responsible for having taught torture techniques. Eleven military dictators and 60,000 Latin American soldiers received training at the school and death squad members are among its graduates. For a list, see: www.derechos.org/soa/index.html Twenty-two people were taken into custody and some face six months in federal prison and/or fines of \$5,000 for crossing onto the base. The Columbus police at one point blocked off all exits and made indiscriminate arrests of people on sidewalks. Police arrested SOA Watch organizer Charity Ryerson while she was leaving and even targeted journalists including four Russian reporters from Russia Today and two radio reporters. They were held on \$5,500 bail.

Nukewatch Quarterly

Big Blockade to Scrap Trident

DEVONPORT, England — People by the hundreds arrived at 6 a.m. Nov. 1 to begin a "Big Blockade" of the Trident submarine base in Plymouth. Activists called themselves the "Tamarians," self-proclaimed "shock troops of the sane in the war against insanity," and by the time the protest against Britain's Trident fleet ended, 12 people had been arrested for blockading entrances to the dockyard.

Calling the government's expensive retrofitting and replacement of its giant Trident submarines a clear violation of the spirit of disarmament and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, blockaders used a variety of tools and implements including metal arm tubes and super glue. They locked down to cars and to each other and stretched across entry roads to prevent business as usual for dockyard workers. Others handcuffed themselves to railings causing traffic chaos during rush hour. In a statement, the coalition of activists declared that money spent on nuclear weapons' delivery systems like the Tridents would be better used on green technologies and vital public services. By siphoning public funds from urgently needed social programs, Trident actually costs more jobs than it creates, the statement said.

For those who were arrested, charges may include aggravated trespass and obstruction of the highway. Two people were accused of violating a police restriction under the Public Order Act when they locked themselves to a police van.

Separately, another group of activists gained entrance to Drake's Island in Plymouth Sound and hung a banner saying "Scrap Trident." The events were supported by the Plymouth Green Party, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and Trident Ploughshares. Trident Ploughshares founder Angie Zelter said, "Nuclear weapons distort the moral fabric of our society and undermine our humanity." — *Independent Catholic News*, Oct. 31; *Trident Ploughshares & Plymouth Herald*, Nov. 1; *BBC*, Nov. 2; *Mid Devon Star*, Nov. 3, 2010



Thirteen people were arrested during the Big Blockade of the Devonport Dockyard in Plymouth, England. The British Trident fleet is undergoing retrofitting and replacement there.

Resisting Bombs and Bombers

By Jeff Leys

Two new campaigns of resistance to war and nuclear weapons are making headlines and being heard in court. In Las Vegas, 14 people stood trial for crossing into Creech Air Force Base to protest its remote-controlled "drone" missile attacks on Afghanistan and Pakistan. In Missouri, 14 others were arrested at the Kansas City Plant resisting H-bomb production plans.

The Las Vegas trial resulted from an April 2009 vigil at the Creech AFB's front gate that concluded with 13 people trying to enter the base to speak with base personnel about the indiscriminate effects of their drone-launched missile strikes. The group was arrested, held overnight, then released. Months later the state prosecutor dropped the charges and then, oddly, had them reinstated, but a funny thing happened on the way to a conviction.

Clark County Nevada Judge William Jansen allowed defense testimony by former US Attorney General Ramsey Clark, Col. Anne Wright (US Army, Ret.) and law professor Bill Quigley, on international law and on the role of civil disobedience in social movements. The latitude granted to these witnesses was perhaps due to the novelty in Nevada of a "defense of necessity" in a case of public protest.

Judge Jansen, who at first was reluctant to hear such testimony, said that he would need several months to study the trial transcript and the international legal questions that were raised before deciding on guilt or innocence. The "Creech 14" are to return to Las Vegas for the verdict January 27.

Meanwhile, the group Voices for Creative Nonviolence — which along with Nevada Desert Experience and Pace e Bene helped organize the drone protest action at Creech — continues to send observers to Pakistan and Afghanistan to learn first hand the impact of the remote-controlled attacks on ordinary citizens. The next delegation is scheduled for December. Reports from previous investigations are available at the Voices for Creative Nonviolence website (www.vcnv.org).

In Kansas City, local organizers primarily affiliated with the Catholic Worker effort, continue to organize opposition to a new factory being built to help produce the "next generation" of nuclear weapons. Once opened, the complex will be the third component of a 3-point warhead production network. The Chemistry and Metallurgy Replacement Research Project at Los Alamos, New Mexico will increase the capability of the US to produce plutonium pits. The Y12 site in Oak Ridge, Tennessee will continue to produce uranium components. The Kansas City factory will produce non-nuclear components such as fuses and triggers.

A new multi-billion dollar Kansas City facility is still under construction. In August, 14 people were arrested after blocking an earth moving vehicle at the site. Several other workers stopped their vehicles as well when the first one was surrounded by antinuclear advocates.

The 14 appeared October 7 in Kansas City Municipal Court. Three pled guilty, the others were convicted, and fines were imposed for the infraction. Following court, two who pled guilty proceeded to a city council meeting then in session and were arrested again for disrupting the meeting. In September, eight others were arrested at the weapons facility site during an alternative ground breaking for peace that took place at the same time that the official ground breaking for the factory was underway.

The Kansas City operation is owned by Honeywell Corporation which seems to be dipping back into the waters of war profiteering. From the '60s through the early '90s, its corporate headquarters in Minneapolis were the site of popular nonviolent direct action, civil disobedience and corporate campaigns that targeted the company's cluster bombs and guidance systems for nuclear weapons.

That campaign ended only after the corporation spun off its weapons industries into the newly created Alliant Techsystems — which soon became a focal point of weekly vigils and actions.

Work to close the Kansas City factory is on-going. The Midwest Catholic Worker Resistance gathering will focus on the site in Kansas City from April 29 to May 2, 2011. Contact the Cherith Brook Catholic Worker for more information, <nickpick00@gmail.com>.

Learn more about this ongoing campaign in Kansas City by contacting Jane Stoeber at janepstoeber@yahoo.com — Jeff Leys is a long-time social justice advocate, most recently with *Voices for Creative Nonviolence* in Chicago.

UN Wants Target Data from Depleted Uranium Shooters

On Oct. 29, the United Nations First Committee overwhelmingly adopted a measure calling for users of depleted uranium weapons (DU) to release — to the governments of targeted areas — data on where and how many of the weapons have been used. DU munitions are extremely heavy, armor-piercing shells made of waste uranium-238 which is left over in huge quantities from the manufacture of reactor fuel and H-bombs. The United States has fired hundreds of tons of these shells into war zones and bombing ranges.

The resolution, approved by a vote of 136 to 4, calls on DU weapons shooters like the United States and Britain to make public their quantitative and geographical data on the depleted uranium munitions they used in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kosovo and the Balkans. The resolution now goes to the UN General Assembly (UNGA) for a second vote at the end of November.

Although UNGA resolutions are non-binding, they are a useful means of focusing attention on key issues, like the ongoing refusal of the US to release data on its use of DU in Iraq, and concerns over the use of DU in other conflicts, including its interventions in Somalia. The resolution was submitted by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The resolution was opposed by only four states — the US, UK, France and Israel. The four also voted against previous resolutions accepting that DU has the potential to damage human health (2007) and calling for more research in targeted states (2008). — *International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons* <icbuw.org> — JL

Minnesota DU Profiteer, Worn Down, Allows Critics into Meeting

After dozens of its shareholders were unlawfully arrested for simply trying to attend the company's annual meetings, Alliant Techsystems, Inc. (ATK) of Eden Prairie, Minnesota — the multi-billion dollar depleted uranium munitions maker and war profiteer — was this year finally moved to allow the critics inside. The arrested shareholders had seen their trespass charges repeatedly dismissed, flimsy as they were.

But in August, 12 shareholder members of AlliantACTION (a watchdog group of volunteers that want ATK to convert to peaceful manufacturing without a loss of jobs) were let in to the annual meeting, and some even spoke with company honchos.

Long-time peace activist and AlliantACTION "jailhouse lawyer" Steve Clemens told the *Eden Prairie News* that ATK could use its engineering genius for useful projects, like public transit or the challenges of climate change. "That's what we really want them to focus on, rather than developing new ways of killing people," he said. Clemens noted that several AlliantACTION members had traveled to Iraq and seen the effects of DU weapons on children.

NUCLEAR SHORTS

Severed Fingers Disposed of as Rad Waste

MONROE, Michigan — At the Fermi 2 reactor 28 miles south of Detroit, a worker lost parts of two fingers at 3 a.m. Nov. 25 when his hand was pinched between the reactor cavity wall and a 100-ton reactor shield. The worker was trying to “rig the shield,” the *Monroe Evening News* reported. The severed finger parts remained in the worker’s glove, but were regarded as contaminated material and taken by radiation protection personnel to Mercy Memorial Hospital for possible reattachment. However, at the hospital the finger parts were deemed unusable and returned to the Fermi site around 5:40 a.m. According to the utility DTE Energy which owns the reactor the disposed of as “contaminated material.”

— *Chicago Tribune & Monroe Evening News*, Nov. 26, 2010

Russia’s Radioactive Metal Mystery

VLADIVOSTOK, Russia — Radiation alarms went off in the Sea Port of Vladivostok after highly contaminated metal pipes made their way by rail — without detection — from St. Petersburg in Russia’s far west, to the east coast, a journey of 4,000 miles across 12 time zones. The pipes were reportedly emitting four times the gamma radiation allowed under government limits. The cargo is too hot for local authorities to handle and Bogatyr, the company responsible for the shipment, has said it will retrieve it.

An investigation into the origin of the illegally hot shipment is ongoing. The pipes were described by *Bellona* as “dangerous to human health,” and the train car hauling the load was moved to a dead-end track and placarded with radiation danger signs. The pipes were bound for a \$9.2 million construction project at the upcoming Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit to be hosted in Vladivostok in 2012. The projects contractor is reportedly checking all the construction materials on site for radioactivity.

— *Bellona*, Sept. 29 & 30; *RIA Novosti*, Nov. 13, 2010

Military Reach: \$8 Billion for Nuclear Base on Guam

GUAM — Adding a new level of military tension to the China Sea, the US Navy plans to spend \$8 billion refurbishing its base on the US territory of Guam. The costliest upgrade of a Pacific naval base since WW II, Guam will again be the main base for US military adventurism to the West. Scheduled work includes the construction of a massive pier for giant US aircraft carriers. The rehab is in anticipation of some 19,000 sailors slated to be transferred from Okinawa, Japan — where some 50,000 occupying US troops are hated for a series of rapes committed against minors between 1995 and 2008. Plans also call for a \$153 million hospital, a \$23 million activity center, a \$53 million dormitory, ranges for live-fire military maneuvers and a “missile defense” installation. According to the *Telegraph*, the US Environmental Protection Agency has found that dredging the harbor deep enough for aircraft carriers will damage 71 acres of pristine coral reefs and, further, that the overall build-up would “exacerbate existing substandard environmental conditions on Guam.” Needless to say, local residents are not happy. — *Huffington Post*, Nov. 15; *London Telegraph*, Nov. 24; *Global Research*, Nov. 8, 2010; *Guardian*, Feb. 28, BBC, Feb. 21, 2008

Radiation Sickness-Proof Robotic Ranger at Test Site

JACKASS FLATS, Nevada — They’re called Mobile Detection Assessment Response Systems, but they’re robots. The dune-buggy type machines are designed to patrol remote areas of the radioactively contaminated Nevada Test Site, northwest of Las Vegas. Three of the roving mechanical guards may soon be in use, each equipped with a loudspeaker, two-way microphone, lights, heat sensors, video camera, GPS and siren. The buggers supposedly can detect intruders 1,000 yards away and are expected to monitor gates, locks, barriers and even do inventory without refueling for up to 16 hours. The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) paid \$2.6 million for the devices, not including decades of research and development, and the agency claims that each robot will save \$6 million annually in infrastructure, maintenance and personnel costs. If you’re hiking in the Nevada desert and hear “Intruder stop. Stop and be identified,” or “Please stop following me,” it may be one of the robot’s 300 messages which for some reason include the theme song from *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. — *The Guardian*, Oct. 25; *Government Computer News*, Oct. 14; *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, Nov. 10, 2010

Hot Stuff in Moscow

MOSCOW, Russia — Enough radioactive material has been dumped in Moscow that the city is undergoing cleanup that will take decades and cost \$153 million. Radioactive material was abandoned in ravines that were once outside the city limits but are now located in residential areas. The biggest dump is along the Moskva River and contains somewhere between 60,000 and 800,000 cubic meters of waste in a trench 20 feet deep. *Moscow News* says it will take 200 years to remove it all.

In the past 10 years, 503 other contaminated sites in Moscow were found and “deactivated,” *Moscow News* said. Some of the radioactive material was brought in from the Chernobyl zone and used in construction projects. Fifteen factories within Moscow store radioactive garbage. A

construction project in 2000 had to be halted for five years to dig up buried waste. Of the 65 facilities working in Russia’s nuclear cycle, 20 are located within Moscow, a city of 11 million. — *Moscow News*, Sept. 13, 2010 & *Bellona*, June 16, 2003

For Sale by Owner: Vintage Nuclear Reactor

BURLINGTON, Vermont — Entergy Nuclear, owners of the Vermont Yankee power reactor, put the leaking, accident-prone giant up for sale in November. Talk show hosts lampooned the announcement especially in view of the state legislature’s decision to deny Entergy an operating license beyond 2012. Andrew Morris-Friedman suggests this promotion for potential buyers:

BASIC AD COPY: Now you can be the proud buyer of this stunning pre-owned nuclear classic, Vermont Yankee. A real handyman’s special. A true “fixer-upper.” Folks, they just don’t make ‘em like this any more. Perfect for a growing family that needs lots of energy. Just minutes from schools, hospitals and large population centers. May need some work on the basement plumbing. The current license may not be renewed in 2012, but don’t worry. If the license is rejected, the site would make a perfect nuclear-themed B&B. Imagine two fun-filled nights in the Strontium 90 suite, or a romantic weekend for two in the Plutonium Penthouse.

SPECIAL MID-COPY COME-ON: There is plenty of room to expand, build a breakfast nook or a second nuclear containment vessel. And there’s lots of room right on the site to store all the radioactive waste. You could add solar panels and make the place truly energy efficient.

KICKER: Price reduced by owner, Entergy Nuclear. No reasonable offer refused. Public financing may become available. Foreign buyers welcome.

EXTRA KICKER: Don’t have a meltdown, act now.

A Little Radiation with the Olympics

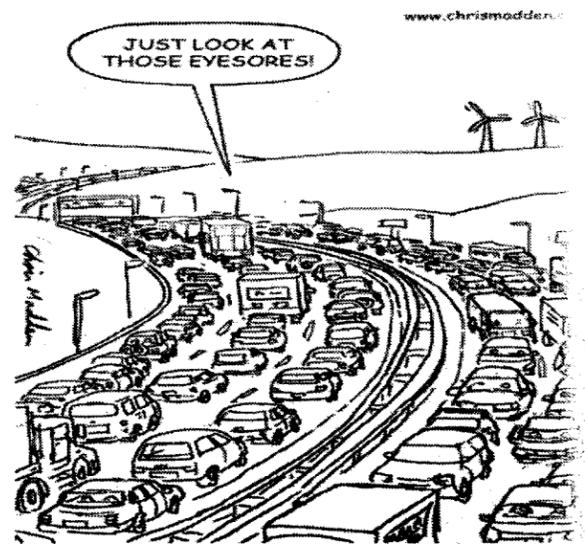
LONDON, England — More than 7,000 metric tons of radioactive wastes including thorium, polonium, uranium and radium were buried under the site of the 2012 Olympic Games stadium now under construction in London. The waste was accidentally uncovered during excavation. Government authorities okayed the mixing, or “diluting” of some of the contaminated soil from near the surface with other low-level waste and had it placed in a radiation storage bunker and built into the approach to a bridge in the Olympic Park 400 meters from the Olympic Stadium. Officials of the Olympic Delivery Authority in July denied a request for data on radiation monitoring, and told the *Guardian*. “The public interest in maintaining the exemption [to withhold the information] outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.”

The Banner Chemicals Company contaminated the soil and groundwater beneath the site with vinyl chloride, and the company’s chemical storage facility was bulldozed to make way for the stadium. Cleanup will continue after the games conclude. The *Guardian* uncovered the facts about the dumps through the Freedom of Information Act in Britain. Banner Chemicals was paid almost \$20 million for the land.

After the games finish, housing is planned in the area. Remediation has been on-going at a cost of \$14.7 million and Olympic organizers assure the government that athletes, spectators, staff and service workers are safe from harm. Questions remain about the long-term radiation risks to future residents. The Olympic location was once home to many polluting industries and contained a number of landfills where illegal toxic dumping was commonplace. — *Games Monitor*, July 27, 2009; *the Guardian*, June 27 & Nov. 12, 2010

Knolls Atomic Power Lab Poisons Mohawk River

NISKAYUNA, New York — The Knolls Atomic Power Laboratory spilled between 600 and 800 gallons of radioactively contaminated water containing cesium-137, strontium-90, uranium and plutonium into the Mohawk River near Schenectady on Oct. 25. The lab declared the contaminated water posed no immediate threat to the public. Authorities with the towns of Colonie and Cohoes, which use the Mohawk for drinking water, complained that no one from Knolls, the state, or federal government alerted them to the spill, the *Times Union* reported. Considering the long latency period between radiation exposure and the onset of cancer, the officials could be right about the word “immediate.” During the Cold War, Knolls developed technology to purify plutonium for nuclear weapons. A *New York Times* report included this seemingly preposterous statement about the plutonium: “Officials said the amount of radioactive material released into the river was no more than the amount that would naturally flow by the site every two minutes.” In a related incident, the Energy Department found that errors made during the demolition of a contaminated building on the site led to an “uncontrolled [2-to-3 acre] spread of radioactive contamination” on Sept. 29. Tests conducted at the site Oct. 5 and 6 found that beta/gamma radiation was 1,700 times the project-imposed safety limit, and that alpha radiation was 550 times the limit. — *WaterWorld*, Nov. 10; *New York Times*, Nov. 9; *Times Union*, Albany, Nov. 20 & 23; *New York League of Conservation Voters*, Nov. 16, 2010



Westinghouse Uranium Spill Endangers Workers

COLUMBIA, South Carolina — In November, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission fined Westinghouse Electric Company \$17,500 for a January uranium and ammonia spill in its fuel fabrication factory in South Carolina. About 750 liters of radioactive waste water was spilled from a faulty pump. The company claimed that the workers it sent to clean up the spill were not affected but as reported in *World Nuclear News* the NRC found that the potential consequences to the workers were significant.

Westinghouse makes uranium fuel rods, control rods, and neutron shields for nuclear reactors at a South Carolina site.

The company also received a “low-level violation” for flaws in a report to the NRC that understated the effect of a plane crash into a reactor. The subject of the report, a prototype AP1000 reactor, has not been approved for construction by the NRC, in part because Westinghouse needs to show that the reactor containment could withstand an airliner crash. The company also needs to demonstrate that the cooling system would remain operable and the used fuel rods be invulnerable. The report failed to adequately consider the consequences of a hit into an annex building, equipment hatch or a door granting access to space between the reactor core and outside wall structure where fire could spread. The reactor design is expected to be approved by the NRC in 2011. — *Associated Press*, Nov. 12; *World Nuclear News*, Nov. 5, 2010

Y12 Resisters’ Speedy Trial Delayed

OAK RIDGE, Tennessee — A May 9 trial has been set for 13 defendants charged with federal trespass during the July 5 Nukewatch/*Nuclear Resister* anniversary action against the expansion of the Uranium Processing Facility at the Oak Ridge Y12 complex. Under Obama Administration plans for site enlargement, the current output of uranium “secondaries” per year would quadruple to 800,000 lbs. — *Desert Voices*, Nevada Desert Experience, December 2, 2010

RESOURCES

- * **Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility**, POB 1328, San Luis Obispo, CA 93405; Email: beckers@thegrid.net; Web: anr.org
- * **AlliantACTION**, Email: alliantaction@circlevision.org; Web: alliantaction.org/home.html
- * **Amnesty International**, 1 Easton St., London, England, WC1X 0DW; Web: amnesty.org
- * **BUND/Ass’n for the Environment and Nature Conservation Germany**, Am Köllnischen Park 1, 10179 Berlin; Email: info@bund.net; Web: bund.net
- * **Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament**, 162 Holloway Rd., London, N78DQ; Email: enquiries@cnduk.org; Web: www.cnduk.org
- * **Electronic Privacy Information Center**, 1718 Connecticut Ave. NW, # 200, Washington, DC 20009; (202) 483-1140
- * **Flyers Rights**, 159 Silverado Springs Dr., Napa, CA 94558; Phone: (877) 359-3776; Email: kate@flyersrights.org; Web: flyersrights.org
- * **Green kids and Nuclear Heritage Network**, Web: greenkids.europas-atomerbe/index.php/Nuclear_Heritage_Network
- * **Greenpeace**, 702 H Street, NW, # 300, Washington, D.C. 20007; Phone: (202) 462-1177; Web: greenpeace.org
- * **National Campaign for Nonviolent Resistance**, Email: jsfirst@tds.net; Web: iraqpledge.org/wordpress/
- * **Nevada Desert Experience**, 1420 W. Bartlett Av., Las Vegas, 89106 Phone: (702) 646-4814; Web: nevadadesertexperience.org; Email: info@nevadadesertexperience.org
- * **Nuclear Information & Resource Service**, 6930 Carroll Av., #340, Takoma Park, MD 20912; Phone: (301) 270-6477
- * **Nuclear Resister**, POB 43383, Tucson, AZ 85733; Phone: (52) 323-8697; Email: nukeresister@igc.org; Web: nukeresister.org
- * **Pace e Bene**, 2501 Harrison St., Oakland, CA 94612; Phone: (510) 268-8765; Email: info@paceebene.org; Web: paceebene.org
- * **SDN, One Million Europeans Against Nuclear Power**, Web: million-against-nuclear.net/links/index.htm
- * **Sortir du Nucléaire**, 9 rue Dumenge 69317, Lyon cedex 04, France; Email: contact@sortirdunucleaire.fr; Web: sortirdunucleaire.org
- * **School of Americas Watch**, PO BOX 4566, Washington, DC 20017; Phone: (202) 234-3440; Web: SOAW.org; Email: info@soaw.org
- * **Trident Ploughshares**, 42-46 Bethel St., Norwich NR2 1NR, England; Email: info@tridentploughshares.org; Web: tridentploughshares.org
- * **Voices for Creative Nonviolence**, 1249 W. Argyle St. #2, Chicago, IL 60640; Phone: (773) 878-3815; Email: info@vcnv.org; Web: vcnv.org

Waste Dump Cancellation Being Challenged

LAS VEGAS, Nevada — A lawsuit contesting the Obama Administration's shutdown of the Yucca Mountain radioactive waste dump project in the Nevada desert is pending in federal court. Last June, a panel of administrative law judges at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) issued a 47-page decision finding that the DOE lacked the authority to withdraw its license petition because the move, the panel said, would violate the 1982 Nuclear Waste Policy Act.

In its 86,000-page application, the Energy Department would have to convince the NRC that Yucca Mountain could isolate and contain the radiation from waste "for hundreds of thousands of years." Senate majority leader Harry Reid of Nevada, has been an adamant opponent of the dump and has promised to thwart any attempt to revive the proposal. Plans for Yucca intended that it hold over 70,000 tons of waste from the nation's privately owned commercial power reactors. The deadly material would have to be shipped to Nevada in trucks, barges and trains from all across the United States.

Still, some in the soon-to-be Republican controlled House of Representatives are eager to renew funding for Yucca which was completely zeroed out in the president's budget for 2011. In November, US Congressmen Mike Simpson, Doc Hastings, and Paul Ryan wrote to Office of Management and Budget Acting Director Jeffrey Zients requesting a review of the decision taken by NRC Chairman Gregory Jaczko to shut down the licensing process.

The Congressmen noted that under law Yucca Mt. is still the only federal dump proposal for highly radioactive waste. DOE spokeswoman Stephanie Mueller told the *New York Times* in June the NRC had not yet weighed in on the decision.

Unsolved problems and showstoppers

Experts who have investigated its geology and seismology determined long ago that the Yucca Mt. site is dangerously unsuitable for high level radioactive waste storage.

In August 1999, evidence that the interior of the mountain is periodically flooded with water came in the form of Zircon crystals found deep inside. "Crystals do not form

Poisons Still Spreading from Cold War Plutonium Site

RICHLAND, Washington — The deadly nature of nuclear bomb production in the US continues to be unearthed at the Hanford Site, a sprawling plutonium production complex in eastern Washington State. In October, cleanup workers found contaminated soil 1,000 feet from the Columbia River and just north of the nearby town of Richland. The soil's radioactivity exceeds lethal levels by about 11 times, and radioactive emissions are so high under "Building 324" that samples could not be taken. Record keeping at the 586-square mile Hanford complex was so haphazard during the Cold War that clean-up work continues to bring surprises.

Hanford files contain a report of a large release of cesium and strontium in 1986 in Building 324, but additional unreported leaks may also have occurred. The Department of Energy attributes the contamination beneath the building to a crack in the steel lining of a sump pump inside a "hot cell" — a room where highly radioactive materials, too deadly for human contact, were handled by machines. The building, used from 1966 until at least 1996, contains five hot cells. Work to develop chemical processes for extracting plutonium from waste uranium fuel rods for nuclear bombs — and research into disposal methods for deadly waste — were the main tasks at Building 324. Liquid waste produced in the cells was collected through floor drains.

The DOE is now trying to solve the problem. The size of the contaminated area must be determined before deconstruction of the hot cells is attempted as it is the only thing protecting workers from radiation.

Three hundred buildings existed in this area of Hanford at the height of H-bomb production. A company called Washington Closure Hanford — a conglomerate of Bechtel, URS and CH2M Hill — currently holds the contract for demolition and cleanup work. There are at least 53 million gallons of high-level waste there, and leaking tanks have contaminated 80 square miles of groundwater.

Rodents spreading cesium contamination

Adding to Hanford's contamination woes, radioactive mice and rabbits have been found near the demolished Building 327. It's well known that wildlife, wasps, flies, tumbleweed, and most anything that passes through Hanford can become radioactive. The discovery of cesium-laden mice and rabbit droppings have led cleanup workers to hunt the tainted critters. Cesium is a particularly deadly reactor waste. In spite of trapping mice and shooting bunnies, and burying them as radioactive waste, a Nov. 17 Richland, Washington *TriCity Herald* story says the highly radioactive varmints are still on the loose. Washington Closure, Inc. has covered contaminated areas with steel plates and gravel, added chain-link fence, and has even sprayed fox urine to deter rabbits and mice from hanging around the contamination. The danger of radioactive insects and animals is that they spread contamination, especially when they are caught by wide-ranging predators. — AP, Oct. 10, Nov. 5, 17 & 18; KUOW Public Radio, Nov. 17; *TriCity Herald*, Nov. 18, 2010

without complete immersion in water," said Jerry Szymanski, a former DOE geologist whose suggestion that deep water rises and falls inside Yucca Mt. was discarded by the DOE. "That would mean hot underground water has invaded the mountain and might again in the time when radioactive waste would still be extremely dangerous. The results would be catastrophic."

In March 1998, the Yucca Mt. site was found to be subject to earthquakes or lava flows every 1,000 years — 10 times more frequently than earlier estimated — according to a California Institute of Technology study. The finding means that radiation dispersal from the Yucca Mt. site is much more likely during the proposed 10,000-year lifetime of the dump — not to mention the 250,000-year-long radioactive hazard period.

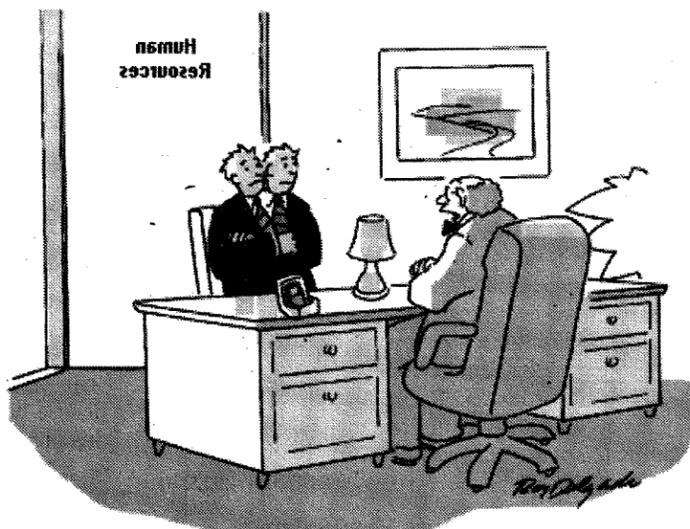
In June 1997, DOE researchers announced that rain water has seeped from the top of Yucca Mt. 800 feet into the repository in a mere 40 years (as dated by chlorine-36). Government scientists had earlier claimed that rainwater would take hundreds or thousands of years to reach the waste. Federal guidelines have long required that the existence of fast-flowing water would disqualify the site.

In March 1995, physicists at Los Alamos National Laboratory dropped a bomb on the Yucca plan by charging that the wastes might erupt in a nuclear explosion, scattering radioactivity to the winds or into ground water or both. Dr. Charles Bowman and Dr. Francesco Venneri noted that serious dangers will arise thousands of years from now after the steel waste containers dissolve and plutonium slowly begins to disperse into surrounding rock. "We think there's a generic problem with putting fissile materials underground," Bowman said. So serious

Koeberg Reactor Contaminates 91 Maintenance Workers

PRETORIA, South Africa — During refueling work Sept. 12 at the Koeberg reactor north of Cape Town, 91 workers were doused with cobalt-58, and an investigation of the accident is pending. South Africa's National Nuclear Regulators (NNR) said the amount of exposure from airborne radioactive dust was nothing to be concerned about in spite of the beta and gamma radiation emitting isotope having a 71 day half-life and the likelihood of internal contamination. Conflicting news reports have been issued about whether alarms were sounded and ignored by the owner/operator, Eskom, Inc.

The cobalt was released to the air from pipes opened during the refueling. Normally, the radiation is vented to the outside. The NNR claimed that alarms did not go off because the level of radioactivity was not high enough. Monitors checking workers at the end of the day detected the contamination. Eskom representatives said deceptively that workers were exposed to about 0.5 percent of the



"How long were you Safety Officer at the nuclear reactor?"

a dispute so late in the planning process might cripple the plan or even kill it, the *New York Times* reported.

In July 1990, the National Research Council said the DOE's plan for Yucca Mt. is "bound to fail" because it is "a scientific impossibility" to build an underground nuclear waste repository that will be safe for 10,000 years.

In 1989, a group of 16 geologists at the US Geological Survey bluntly charged that the DOE was using stop-work orders to prevent the discovery of problems that would doom the project. The government geologists reported that, "There is no facility for trial and error, for genuine research, for innovation, or for creativity." Even the NRC complained then that work at Yucca Mt. seemed designed mostly to get the repository built rather than to determine if the site is suitable.

In 1983, the National Academy of Sciences noted that the chemical characteristics of the water at Yucca Mt. are such that the wastes would dissolve more easily than at most other places. —JL

annually allowed exposure limit, a reference to external doses only. Spokesperson Karen de Villiers said, "Frankly, they would pick up more radiation from a couple of plane trips to Joburg," again confusing external with internal risks.

The contaminated workers received counseling for emotional trauma and Eskom issued a statement saying, "The only harm that [91] Eskom employees suffered when they were contaminated by radiation at the Koeberg nuclear power station was emotional."

South Africa has four aging nuclear reactors, two for electricity production at Koeberg, and two at the Pelindaba/Velindaba site near Pretoria. All built during the Apartheid era, the Koeberg station has been shut down repeatedly over the past 10 years. — *News24.com* (S. Africa) Sept. 20 & Oct. 15; *Independent Online*, Sept. 21; S. Africa Press Agency, Sept. 20, 2010; *Digital Journal*, Mar. 16, 2009, and the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, Radiation Safety Data Sheet.

Another Breeder Reactor Snafu in Japan

TSURUGA, Fukui, Japan — Once again, things are not going well with the rehabilitation of the damaged Monju fast breeder reactor in Japan, which was shut down in December of 1995 after a large leak of radioactive sodium coolant, a fire there and the accident's initial cover-up. For 15 years the faulty reactor — designed to produce more fuel than it uses — has been consuming energy instead of making it. Now its repair and testing have been delayed yet again.

The Japan Atomic Energy Agency reported in Oct. that a 3.3-ton cylinder, 36 feet tall and 18 inches wide, fell through an opening in the reactor vessel head, was damaged, and a way to retrieve it has yet to be designed.

The component is a "preliminary fuel loader" or fuel replacement device and is supposed to be inserted and removed through a tight opening in the reactor lid. When the equipment was dropped, one of its joints split and widened so it cannot presently be dislodged through the highly en-

gineered space. The accident may also have damaged the wall of the reactor core. The entire vessel head may have to be removed to recover the part in a risky operation involving the explosive sodium-and-argon gas atmosphere in which the cylinder is stuck.

Work to restart the Monju reactor finished in 2007, but approval for go-ahead was delayed until April 2010 and now may be put off indefinitely. Only hours after the reactor's test restart in May radiation alarms started going off. Alarms continued to sound even after repairs were completed.

The \$7.5 billion construction and restart project has been opposed by scientists and environmental activists claiming insufficient testing of fuel assemblies, coolant systems, steam generator holes and a number of additional concerns. — *Mainichi Daily News*, Oct. 14 & Nov. 10; *Japan Headlines Examiner*, May 6; International Panel on Fissile Materials, Princeton, May 9; *Japan Times*, May 8, 2010

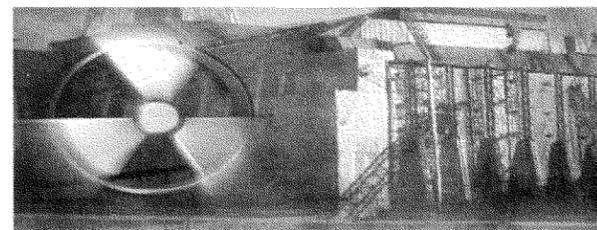
International Day of Action for a Nuclear-Free Future

April 26, 2011 25th Chernobyl Anniversary

Agencies, organizations, campaigners and activists all over the world are planning memorials, protests and actions to mark the 25th anniversary of the Chernobyl catastrophe.

Each year, the French anti-nuclear network Sortir du nucléaire has issued a Chernobyl Day "call to action." In support of the call, Nukewatch and *the Nuclear Resister* encourage you to organize a public protest and/or nonviolent direct action in your area, or participate in other events being planned on or around April 26. It will be a day to declare, together with millions of others around the world, *No to nuclear power, nuclear weapons, nuclear testing, uranium mining, radioactive waste production; and Yes to a nonviolent, renewable energy-powered future!*

Whatever you plan, please post your event on the international roster of actions hosted by Sortir du Nucléaire: <<http://www.chernobyl-day.org/?lang=en>> and let Nukewatch and *the Nuclear Resister* know what you are planning, for inclusion on websites and in media outreach. When the action is over, please post and send reports and photos.



For more about Chernobyl:
Nuclear Information and Resource Service:
www.nirs.org/factsheets/chernobyl_canhappenhere2005.pdf
Nukewatch:
www.nukewatch.com/
Email nukewatch1@lakeland.ws
Nuclear Resister:
www.nukeresister.org/
Email nukeresister@igc.org
Sortir du Nucléaire:
www.chernobyl-day.org/?lang=en,
Email: charlotte.mijeon@sortirdunucleaire.fr

Airport X-Ray Scan(dal)s Risking Cancer, Invading Privacy

By John LaForge

Airport X-rays, CT scans and PET scans (computed tomography and positron emission tomography) have all taken some serious hits from critics lately.

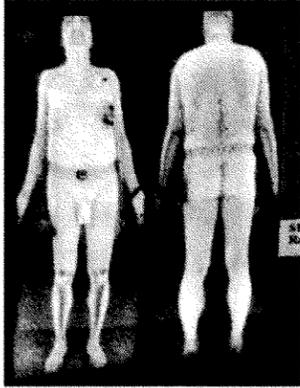
Hundreds of new whole-body X-radiation scanners are being installed at airport security checkpoints in spite of serious health concerns.

The Transportation Safety Administration (TSA) at first said the controversial X-ray machines would only be used on people who set off standard metal detectors. Now, TSA intends to replace metal detectors at all of the 2,200 checkpoints at all 450 commercial airports in the United States.

By July, the TSA had purchased 250 so-called "backscatter" X-ray units built by Rapiscan Systems, and another 242 "millimeter wave" systems that don't emit ionizing radiation. Each costs between \$100,000 and \$170,000.

Why TSA would spend millions of dollars on radiation-emitting scanners when effective alternatives are available remains unclear, especially in the face of widespread scientific, union and consumer group opposition to the backscatter units.

In an April 6 letter to John Holdren, Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, a group of University of California scientists and physicians warned about the "urgent situation" that the backscatter machines create. The letter says there "has not been sufficient review of the effects of radiation exposure associated with the airport scanners. It appears that real independent safety data do not exist." The letter warns in particular, "The risk of radiation emission to children and adolescents does not ap-



pear to have been fully evaluated." The authors also warn of unstudied risks that the machines pose for pregnant women, the fetus, testicles, the cornea and the thymus. (See the letter at: www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/ucsf-jph-letter.pdf)

For its part the TSA says the devices have been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration's Center for Devices and Radiological Health, the National Institute for Standards and Technology, and the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Lab. The TSA claims that "a single scan using backscatter technology produces exposure equivalent to two minutes flying on an airplane."

But comparing backscatter X-ray doses to air travel's cosmic rays is misleading, the scientists say, because, "The majority of [backscatter] energy is delivered to the skin and the underlying tissue. Thus, while the dose would be safe if it were distributed throughout the volume of the entire body, the dose to the skin may be dangerously

high."

The scientists' letter warned especially that "there is good reason to believe that these scanners will increase the risk of cancer to children and other vulnerable populations." The reference is to pregnant women and people with compromised immune systems.

On May 28, a coalition that includes the American Civil Liberties Union and Ralph Nader wrote to congress urging a halt to installation of more backscatter units at airports. (By July there were 99 backscatter units and 43 millimeter wave units at 41 airports.) Besides citing privacy concerns, the coalition's letter also argued that repeated backscatter

exposures are a cumulative risk and that the safety of the technique has not been demonstrated by impartial research.

The TSA's John Pistol defended the X-ray systems before congress Nov. 17, and Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano also endorsed the system, explaining deftly to National Public Radio, "We're not doing it just to do it."

Pilots from major airlines have also joined in opposition to the backscatter machines. In November, a large group of pilots declared that they want exemptions from the scans, arguing that biometric scans or palm prints are sufficient for security.

Captain Sam Mayer of American Airlines, a spokesman for the Allied Pilots Association union, told NPR that at 39,000 feet in-flight workers' exposure is near that of nuclear reactor workers, "so adding the cumulative effects of these scanners over a 30-year career [is] just too big of an unknown." Association president Dave Bates wrote to members urging them to refuse to submit to the backscatter scans, citing health risks and privacy rights.

Homeland Security's Napolitano responded that the pilots "have a legitimate argument there," and on Nov. 19 the TSA officially granted them the exemption they wanted.

The nonprofit group Flyers' Rights has called for a boycott of the whole-body X-rays and has demanded that the TSA use alternative methods. And in early November the Electronic Privacy Information Center filed its brief in a suit against the Homeland Security Department challenging the legality of the X-ray scanners.

Take action: Call or write decision makers (Congress, TSA, the president) demanding that "backscatter" scanners be replaced with non-radioactive "millimeter wave technology" and the use of that only for those passengers who set off metal detectors.

Nuclear Medicine Setting Off Radiation Alarms

CT scans (computed tomography) and positron emission tomography, or PET scans, are types of nuclear medicine that utilize highly radioactive materials to make images of body parts or to kill cancer cells.

PET scans use high-energy radioactive isotopes called radiopharmaceuticals or radiotracers.

The radiotracer is injected, swallowed or inhaled as a gas and accumulates in the organ or area being examined where it emits gamma rays that can be detected by a gamma camera, a PET scanner and/or probe. These devices work together with a computer to produce detailed images that let doctors study targeted organs and tissues.

Radiation treatments make patients dangerous to others for a week. California imposes new oversight of medical CT scans

In "Do you really need that CT scan?" the feature article in the U.C. Berkeley's October "Wellness Letter" (www.wellnessletter.com/html/wl/2010/wlFeatured1010.html), the writers explain, "Abdominal CT scans tend to produce the most radiation, averaging about 500 times more radiation than a simple chest X-ray, and 1,000 times more than a dental X-ray or bone mineral density test." The brain perfusion scan, used on stroke patients, averages the equivalent of about 200 X-rays of the skull when done correctly.

But miscalibrated CT machines gave brain scan overexposures to at least 269 California patients who got as much as eight times the proper dose. Among 400 other overdoses, some patients at Huntsville Hospital in Alabama received 13 times what was expected. Some immediate symptoms of the radiation burning were hair loss, confusion, memory loss and headaches. One New York City patient was even killed by one such radiation overdose.

The shock waves from the *New York Times*' exposé on the accidents moved the FDA to instigate some preliminary oversight of the mostly unregulated scanning. And in October the state of California adopted even tougher regulation. The new law requires the recording of radiation doses for CT scans and the reporting of overdoses to patients and their doctors.

U.C. Berkeley's "Wellness Letter" warns that CT scans "are also being used more often for screening of healthy people, without evidence of benefit. Some examples: CT scans of smokers and former smokers for lung cancer, and 'full-body' scans that are promoted as a way to detect a variety of cancers, cardiovascular disease, and other disorders."

The letter suggests questions to ask before having a diagnostic scan:

- Is this test really necessary, and will it really improve my health care?

- Is there a non-radiation alternative, such as [thermography,] ultrasound or MRI, that's equally good? Keep in mind, though, that CT is better for certain things (such as broken bones, damaged vertebrae, cancer, pneumonia, bleeding in the brain, organ injuries), while MRIs are better for others (tendons, ligaments, spinal cord, brain tumors, most strokes); sometimes both are used. MRIs are more expensive.

- Is the facility accredited by the American College of Radiology?

- Will the test use the lowest amount of radiation and fewest scans for adequate imaging? For children, it's important to make sure the radiation level is appropriate for their smaller size.

- Will the scan be limited to the indicated area, and will nearby areas be properly shielded?

Treatments leave patients too hot to handle

Radioactive treatments for thyroid cancers have also been making headlines. The conventional treatment now involves swallowing radioactive iodine to kill malignant thyroid cells, but the patient's body becomes "contagiously" radioactive for a week or more.

The cancer patients become so hot that they are advised upon discharge not to hug children or pregnant women, not to sleep next to anyone for a week, not to use public transport or to even hold pets. Eating chicken or apples is discouraged too because "the bones or the core will be contaminated with radioactive saliva" the *New York Times* noted.

Hospitals used to quarantine these radioactively contaminated patients, but in 1997 the Nuclear Regulatory Commission lifted the requirement. This October an agency spokesman, James Luehman, admitted that it may have made a mistake.

The cancer patients are not just dangerous to people around them. They have contaminated hotel rooms and bed sheets, endangered workers, set off radiation detectors in tunnels and airports, their household trash and have even rung radiation alarms in municipal landfills.

The House Subcommittee on Energy and Environment, chaired by Representative Ed Markey, D-Mass., has investigated the issue. Markey charges the NRC with deliberately ignoring the problem in violation of its "responsibility to protect public health and safety."

In an October 20 letter to NRC chairman Greg Jaczko, Markey said the agency "actually twice voted to reject proposals that would have required reports of dangerous radiation doses delivered to members of the public, through exposure to released patients, to be submitted to the NRC." The Commission actively chooses to ignore the problem of unwitting and inappropriate public exposures.

Markey's letter recommends that the NRC correct and modernize its regulations, bringing them up to the level of protection "consistent with and as protective of the most vulnerable populations as policies in place" where international limits are accepted. — *JL*

Middle Aged? Avoid Radiation

Children have the greatest risk of developing cancer from exposure to radiation due to rapidly growing cells. But middle-agers are at risk too. It has long been assumed that the older a person is when subjected to emissions, the less chance of cancer. Not so, according to Dr. David J. Brenner at Columbia University. Brenner and colleagues reanalyzed Japanese atomic bomb survivor data that show a greater propensity to cancer by middle-agers. The researchers say the "promotion effect" is more likely to be important because the adult body already contains larger numbers of pre-malignant cells. Brenner's report in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* states: "For radiation exposure in middle age, most radiation-induced cancer risks do not, as often assumed, decrease with increasing age at exposure. ... Radiation-induced cancer risks after exposure in middle age may be up to twice as high as previously estimated, which could have implications for occupational exposure and radiological imaging."

A few words on the cancer epidemic

"Cancer in most cases remains incurable. It is time that we recognize that the war on cancer is not going well. Breast cancer alone claims the lives of 41,000 Americans a year."

— Pamela Lipton, Metastatic Breast Cancer Awareness Network

"The causes of cancer are largely known — and have been for quite some time. Cancer is caused by chemicals in the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the food we eat."

— Robert Proctor, *Cancer Wars*

"Over recent decades, the incidence of cancer has escalated to epidemic proportions while our ability to treat and cure most cancers remains virtually unchanged. Apart from the important role of tobacco, there is substantial and long-standing evidence relating this epidemic to involuntary and avoidable exposure to industrial chemicals in air, water, the workplace, and consumer products. ...

"... the cancer establishment has failed to allocate minimal priorities to research on cancer prevention. It has also failed to provide Congress and the Executive with well-documented evidence on avoidable causes of cancer ... Nor have US citizens been advised of such information ... to enable them to protect themselves."

— Dr. Sam Epstein, *The Politics of Cancer, Revisited*

Dental X-Rays Not for Kids

A new imaging device for dentists and orthodontists is being touted as the latest and best way to produce diagnostic pictures. What's not being advertised is the devastating amount of radiation given to patients by these new machines.

Called a "conebeam" X-ray CT scan (CBCT), the device provides high-resolution, color, 3-D images of teeth, roots, jaws and skull. The faux popularity of the system is the result of a promotional campaign that includes a lot of misinformation. The *Journal of the American Dental Association* allowed one of the leading manufacturers of the conebeam scanner, Imaging Sciences International, to underwrite an issue completely devoted to its alleged benefits. The issue was then shipped to some 150,000 dentists and orthodontists across the country. One of the promotion's more glaring bits of fabrication was the comparison of the conebeam's radiation exposure to that of a typical airport scanner. However, according to independent research, the conebeam emits more than 100 times the radiation. This is a dangerous amount for children, pregnant women and others expecting to receive two or three of these scans during each dentist visit.

Dr. Stuart White, a former chairman of oral radiology at the UCLA School of Dentistry pointedly asks, "Would you like me to use a tool that is entirely safe — a camera — to record the position of your child's teeth, or another method that may rarely cause cancer so that we can save time?" According to the manufacturers, the correct choice is the scan. Parents not wishing to expose their children to unnecessary radiation may answer differently. — *PV*

Prosecute Bush for Torture? "Damn right"

By John LaForge

On Nov. 3, Amnesty International finally called for the investigation and prosecution of George Bush in view of his new memoir and an NBC TV interview in which the ex-president admitted authorizing waterboarding and other abuses against imprisoned terror suspects. It was not the first time Bush and company have admitted to what the world calls torture.

"Under international law, the former president's admission to having authorized acts that amount to torture are enough to trigger the USA's obligations to investigate his admissions and if substantiated, to prosecute him," said Claudio Cordone, Amnesty International's senior director.

In *Decision Points* Bush admits that he personally okayed the use of waterboarding — a terrifying controlled drowning. As the Nov. 4 *Washington Post* noted, "Bush makes clear that he personally approved the use of that coercive technique," which the paper said constitutes "a practice that many international legal experts say was illicit torture."

In making Amnesty's declaration Cordone said, "Under international law, anyone involved in torture must be brought to justice, and that does not exclude former President George W. Bush." Additionally, the US torture statute (18 USC 2340A) makes torture a federal offense and applies to anyone who either participates or is complicit in it.

"If his admission is substantiated, the USA has the obligation to prosecute him," Cordone said, adding, "In the absence of a US investigation, other states must step in and carry out such an investigation themselves."

In his book, Bush says he barked "damn right" when the CIA's George Tenet asked for his permission to waterboard Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. The prisoner was reportedly subjected to the near-death practice 183 times. In spite of his repeated torture and prolonged solitary confinement, K.S. Mohammed is almost always referred to as the "admitted" or "self-proclaimed" mastermind of the 9/11 attacks.

Like former Vice President Dick Cheney before him, Bush claimed during an NBC television interview promoting the book that waterboarding and other abuses (chaining from ceilings, prolonged isolation, the use of "crouch boxes," dousing with ice water) prevented attacks on the US. "I will tell you this," Bush said, "using those techniques saved lives."

Why Amnesty waited for Bush's memoir to call for his prosecution was unclear, since he and Cheney have previ-

ously made similar admissions in public. "Yeah, we waterboarded Khalid Sheikh Mohammed," Bush said during a June 2, 2010 speech to the Economic Club of Grand Rapids, Michigan, according to the *Grand Rapids Press*. "I'd do it again to save lives," Bush boasted, sounding as if he had beaten the gagging prisoner himself.

On FOX News, August 30, 2009, Cheney told Chris Wallace that his administration's use of waterboarding and nine other tortures — "enhanced interrogation techniques" as he called them — was "a general policy that we had approved." Wallace asked, "So even these cases where they went beyond the specific legal authorization, you're OK with it?" Cheney said, "I am."

In closed-door testimony to the House Judiciary Committee May 26, Judge Jay Bybee said that he had never authorized certain tortures that were used by the CIA, including prolonged shackling to ceilings, repeated beatings, and dousings using cold water. Bybee, who was found by the Justice Department to have committed "professional misconduct" while he ran the Office of Legal Counsel under Bush, approved legal memos that the president used to justify the criminal conduct.

Even earlier, on April 9, 2008, Bush made the same acknowledgment to ABC news. Bush said that he knew his top advisers discussed and approved specific CIA methods. Bush told ABC, "I'm aware our national security team met on this issue. And I approved." The American Civil Liberties Union called then for an independent investigation.

For context, the *Huffington Post's* Dan Froomking interviewed Brigadier General David R. Irvine last June. Irvine is a former strategic intelligence officer who taught interrogation and military law for 18 years. Waterboarding is "unequivocally torture," the general said. "As a nation, we have historically prosecuted it as such, going back to the time of the Spanish-American War."

The outraged Gen. Irvine also told Froomking, "It cannot be demonstrated that any use of waterboarding by US personnel in recent years has saved a single American life." Yet even if the claim could be demonstrated, the binding international Convention Against Torture rejects all such rationalizations. The treaty declares that "no exceptional circumstances whatsoever, whether a state of war or a threat of war, internal political instability or any other public emergency, may be invoked as a justification of torture."

The US general staff has an interest in condemning the torture policy, since it must protect its troops from enemies

What is he waiting for?

At his Feb. 9, 2009 press conference, President Obama said: "My administration is going to operate in a way that leaves no doubt that we do not torture, that we abide by the Geneva Conventions, and that we observe our traditions of rule of law and due process... My view is also that nobody's above the law and, if there are clear instances of wrongdoing, that people should be prosecuted just like any ordinary citizen."

that could use Bush's language to excuse their torture of US prisoners.

In the preface to the 2008 Physicians for Human Rights report "Broken Laws, Broken Lives: Medical Evidence of Torture by the US" the highly decorated Army Maj. Gen. Antonio Taguba anticipated Amnesty's call for prosecution. "There is no longer any doubt as to whether the current administration has committed war crimes," the general wrote. "The only question that remains to be answered is whether those who ordered the use of torture will be held to account."



Megastore's 15,800 tritium-laden signs still missing

Walmart stores were a radioactive hazard until the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) noticed and reported, Feb. 5, 2009, that the corporation was improperly disposing of radioactive exit signs. The stores' glow-in-the-dark signs contain tritium gas, the radioactive form of hydrogen. Walmart was cited by the NRC for improper handling of 2,979 signs. Additionally, the company failed to track the signs chain-of-possession, contrary to requirements. The grand total of Walmart's negligence puts the number of signs purchased at 70,000 and the number mysteriously missing at 15,800 — or 20 percent of its inventory — at 4,500 locations in the US. The NRC waived a \$369,300 fine when the company quickly responded by doing an inventory and cleaning up spills from broken signs. Since then, Walmart has switched to nonradioactive exit marquees.

Typical of the NRC, the agency claims there's little danger from the missing exit signs. However, David Lochbaum at the Union of Concerned Scientists did the math, and 15,800 missing signs amounts to 300 quadrillion picocuries of tritium that could be making its way into drinking water or into dirty bombs. Case in point — the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection notified the NRC that more than half of the department's water tests downstream of state landfills showed unacceptable levels of tritium contamination. The state blames improper disposal of exit signs for the contamination.

Tritium, when inhaled or ingested or contaminating a cut, can cause cell damage and has been linked to genetic defects, developmental and reproductive problems and cancer. According to the Product Stewardship Institute at the University of Massachusetts, ingestion of 5 percent of the tritium in a large exit sign amounts to 208 years of background radiation exposure. (Household smoke detectors also contain americium and are often improperly landfilled.)

The Ontario-based company SRB Technologies, Inc. of Pembroke, and Shield Source, Inc. of Peterborough, have sold the largest shares of radioactive signs using waste from Canada's Candu reactors. Canada requires that tritium-laden signs display a radiation warning but does not regulate their disposal. Permissible levels of tritium in Canada's drinking water exceed Europe's by 100 times, and are more than 400 times greater than in California.

Sixty companies and federal institutions are being investigated for the same infractions as Walmart including Home Depot, AMC Theatres, Northwest Airlines, Bed, Bath and Beyond, the US Postal Service, West Point and NASA. It is estimated that some two million radioactive EXIT signs exist across the country. Starting last January, the NRC sent notices to organizations, businesses and agencies with 500 or more requesting an accounting of their whereabouts.

The radioactive signs have the advantage of lasting for 20 years and work without a power supply. Exit signs are one among many uses and misuses of radioactively hot tritium gas and other isotopes. The construction industry uses Troxler gauges that contain cesium-137 and americium-231 to measure soil moisture, chemical composition and density. Each time a gauge is lost or stolen the NRC must be notified. Dozens go missing every year.

And of course, nuclear reactors are notorious for tritium leaks. Tritium, a beta radiation-emitting isotope, is responsible for contaminating ground water near dozens of US power reactors, and in the case of the Braidwood reactor in Illinois, poisoning the drinking water of the neighboring community. Tritium also enhances the explosive power of nuclear bombs. — AOL/Daily Finance, Oct. 28; *The Free Lance-Star*, (Fredericksburg, VA) Nov. 3, 2010; Center for Public Integrity, Feb. 6; *Toronto Star*, Feb. 15, 2009

Radioactive Fallout From Nuclear Testing and the Rise of Thyroid Cancer in the US

By Robert Alvarez, Institute for Policy Studies

According to a recent *New York Times* article, thyroid cancer in the US has been on the rise for nearly 40 years.

The long-standing explanation that this is due to better diagnostics is no longer accepted. This also means that the impacts of radioactive iodine fallout from nuclear weapons testing and Chernobyl cannot be so readily ruled out.

With a half-life of 8.5 days, iodine-131 rapidly contaminates air, vegetation and milk supplies. Because it is absorbed mostly in the body's thyroid, radioactive iodine has been linked to thyroid cancer and other types of thyroid damage in humans for several decades. It takes about 90 days for radioactivity of iodine-131 to diminish to very small levels. Thyroid cancer can have a latency period as long as 38 years.

According to the National Cancer Institute in 1992, about 150 million curies of radioactive iodine was released in the open air from nuclear bomb testing in Nevada, causing heavy contamination of the nation's milk supplies from the early 1950s to the early 1960s. This is more than 20 times the amount estimated to have been released by the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster. At the time of open air testing, millions of children were drinking this contaminated milk. In the early 1950s when radioactive fallout was over-exposing film in cardboard made from contaminated straw, the Eastman Kodak company secretly threatened to sue but withdrew the suit in exchange for routine fallout warnings by the US Atomic Energy Commission. The public was never warned by the government about the dangers of consuming milk it was contaminating in its quest to amass a nuclear arsenal.

After the ratification of the Limited Test Ban Treaty in 1963, the US Food and Drug Administration established "Protective Action Guides" for iodine-131 that triggered removal of dairy products from human consumption following nuclear accidents. Had these limits been in place during open air nuclear testing in the 1950s and early 1960s, the NCI study indicates that milk supplies would have had to be removed from the markets for months at a time. The NCI admitted in testimony before the US Congress in 1998, after an investigation by the US Senate Governmental Affairs Committee, that it suppressed this study for five years.

The NCI also conceded this may have caused as many as 212,000 excess thyroid cancers.

With trust in the US government sinking like a stone, it's time for greater transparency about the price paid for nuclear weapons. As former Senator John Glenn, D-Ohio, a staunch supporter of the military, warned, "What good is it to protect ourselves with nuclear weapons, if we poison our people in the process?"

Robert Alvarez is a Senior Scholar at IPS, where he is currently focused on nuclear disarmament, environmental, and energy policies.

Call to action by National Campaign for Nonviolent Resistance

DISARMAGEDDON

Pentagon Action for Peace

April 8, 2011

Get Involved! Contact: joyfirst5@gmail.com

Blow Baby, Blow

Forget drill baby drill. With three quarters of what's generated world-wide, Europe is leading the world in wind power production. The US now produces 15 percent, and the remaining countries — mainly Canada, China, Japan and India — 10 percent. Wind energy is a rapidly growing industry with advances in technology that will soon see turbines capable of supplying 10 megawatts each, or enough to potentially supply electricity for thousands of homes. By the end of 2009, nearly 75,000 megawatts (MW) of wind energy was installed in Europe — 39 percent of all new energy generation. In 2009, the European Union's wind turbines produced over 6.5 times the total electricity demand of Ireland for an entire year and provided electricity for half a million homes.

Ireland has announced plans to produce 10 times its existing electricity demand by developing new off-shore wind, wave and tidal resources. The projects would make Ireland a major energy exporter. Currently, Ireland has 110 on-shore and off-shore turbine farms. In 2009, wind farms in Ireland alone supplied enough clean, green electricity to power over half a million homes. Future renewable energy projects will help the economy by creating jobs and will significantly reduce carbon emissions. Scotland intends to collaborate with Ireland to provide Britain with electricity through subsea interconnectors, and Wales will soon be connected to Ireland's energy production system. Britain has offshore projects in the works that will generate up to 32 gigawatts (GW) of capacity by 2020.

France may begin off-shore construction of a wind farm, in the planning since 2005, with the long-term goal of supplying 3-6 GW of electricity via wind by 2020. France and the US — both heavily invested in nuclear power and its protection — retain onerous licensing procedures for large wind projects. The US took 10 years to approve a wind farm for Nantucket Sound. — *Business Green*, Nov. 9; Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland; *New Energy Focus*, Oct. 12; *Milton Financials*, Sept. 11; Reuters, Nov. 8, 2010

Shepherds Flat Wind Farm

IONE, Oregon — Construction of the world's largest wind farm, planned for Gilliam and Morrow counties in north central Oregon, has been approved after a year-long application process and in spite of opposition from the Pentagon. To seal the deal, the Department of Energy announced on Oct. 8, a \$1.06 billion stimulus loan guarantee to the company Caithness Energy. The Shepherds Flat Wind Farm will consist of 338 turbines capable of generating 845 megawatts of electricity, enough to power 80,000 homes. Southern California Edison will purchase the energy in a 20-year fixed-price contract. The wind farm will be completed in 2013.

The Pentagon at first objected that the wind turbines would interfere with an area radar system, but active public support and pressure from Oregon's congressional delegation forced the military to implement their own radar protection system and allow Shepherds Flat to move forward. The decision bolsters the image of the Obama administration as one committed to renewable energy and jobs creation. During construction, the SFWF project will employ about 400 people and provide 35 permanent jobs in the sparsely populated rural area. In addition, more than 20 rural landowners will share \$2.7 million-per-year to host the turbines. The project will also pay \$130 million in local taxes for city and county government services.

In addition to financial benefit, Shepherds Flat avoids more than a million tons of carbon emissions. Oregon is home to the 48-turbine Willow Creek Wind Farm run by Invenergy, and plans are underway for construction of another.

— *JustMeans.com*, Oct. 19; *Sustainable Business.com* & Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Oct. 13; *Oregonlive.com*, Nov. 5, *The Huffington Post*, Aug. 2; *New York Times*, July 31, 2010



PAYERNE, Switzerland — A propeller-driven plane called Solar Impulse that carries 12,000 solar panels, stayed aloft for a 26-hour test flight July 8, the longest ever for a sun-powered aircraft. The plane weighs 3,500 pounds, has an airliner size wing-span of 208 feet, flies an average of 43 miles per hour — with a top speed of 78 mph. One quarter of the plane's weight is made up of lithium batteries that power plane's motors overnight with energy collected during the day. It also has four 10 horsepower electric engines.

Project coordinator and founder Andre Borschberg flew the carbon-fiber aircraft for 26 hours over the Jura Mountains, reached an altitude of 28,000 feet and endured 10 hours of zero-degree temperatures. After the flight, Borschberg said to a crowd of cheering supporters that the entire trip was made without using fuel or causing pollution.

After the successful test flight, project co-founder Bertrand Piccard reportedly told the pilot, "You land in a new era where people understand that with renewable energy you can do impossible things."

The next goal of the project is to complete a prototype aircraft to traverse the Atlantic Ocean followed by a flight to circle the globe in 2013 making five stops along the way using only energy from the sun. Solar power is also taking to the skies in the forms of blimps and various satellite designs that have been in the works for more than a decade:

— Associated Press & Bloomberg, July 8; *New York Times*, July 9, 2010



Whose White House was Greener?

In October much ado was made of President Obama's plan to reinstall solar panels on the White House, specifically, solar panels on the roof as well as a solar hot water heater. There was plenty of ink devoted to Obama's replacing what Jimmy Carter had installed in 1979 and what Ronald Reagan had removed during his presidency. But lost in all the glad-handing was the fact that in 2003, George W. Bush installed a nine-kilowatt, rooftop photovoltaic system as well as two solar thermal systems that heat water on the premises. Oilman George W. Bush? That's correct. Not only did Bush quietly make the White House a little greener, he also turned his Crawford, Texas ranch into an off-the-grid environmentally friendly showcase. How this gibes with his failed energy policy and his reluctance to make it easy for the rest of us to put up our own solar panels can only be answered by an in-depth look into who really ran the government while he was president. The misconception that alternative forms of energy are somehow linked to ideals that are no longer modern has to be at the center of the cover-up of Bush's forward thinking on energy. Either way, what is important here is that we can all do our part and whether we publish our actions or we quietly do it, we should look beyond the headlines and to the future. —PV

One Upside in Down Economy

An upside to the economic depression is that the propaganda push for new reactor construction has subsided. First and foremost, industry cost estimates for new reactors have tripled in just the past four years — from \$1,500-2,000/kw, to \$4,500-6,000+/kw. The Nuclear Information & Resource Service reports that some estimates like Wall Street's Standard & Poor's and Moody's project costs of \$7,000/kw. Secondly, belt-tightening efficiency has driven down both electricity demand and the price of competing energy sources — particularly the cost of natural gas — so much that new reactor projects have been shelved, at least for now. Case in point, Constellation Energy is demanding a federal loan guarantee for 80 percent of the cost of its proposed new reactor in Maryland. But after setting the fee according to Constellation's credit worthiness, the government settled on a guarantee of only 11.6 percent of the \$7.6 billion loan, or about \$880 million. Needless to say, Constellation can't afford to make such a monumental investment on its own, so it has shelved the project. Likewise, Canada's Maple reactor plans for medical isotope production were cancelled in 2008. Silver linings in a gray cloud, but at least they're not a mushroom cloud.

Energy Smart Holidays

A slew of new gadgets that monitor and manage energy use are being made available in time for the energy-intensive holidays. "Smart" power strips cut electric power to devices that do not need it when they're turned off while continuing to supply appliances that do; eco-timers turn off power and lights on a schedule that you program; and the newest battery chargers reduce power usage once your batteries are fully charged. Another tip for saving on energy consumption is to take 15 minutes out of your day and properly set the programmable thermostats now installed in most households. It is estimated that 80 percent of North Americans do not use the settings, thereby missing out on the savings. These are steps that can make good a difference in electricity demand and your monthly bills.

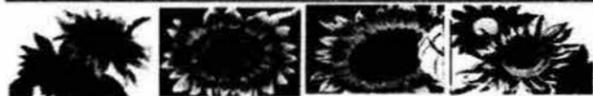
Nukewatch's new website

Nukewatch has finally joined the ".org" family. For a decade or so we had (and still have) the nukewatch.com site, much to the chagrin of certain staff members who officially did not want to be associated with the word commercial. When the .org tag emerged, webpage construction seemed too complex to begin anew so we stayed a dot-com. When the decision to redesign and re-host our website was finally made, the extremely popular name "Nukewatch" had already been taken as a ".org" — by Nuclear Watch of New Mexico. Our next choice, nukewatch.net, belongs to a peace group in California and isn't available. So we now we have a new site in the works at: <http://nukewatchinfo.org/> Remember that, nukewatchinfo.org., and check it out.

We'll continue to carry the Nukewatch.com site until the new pages are completed and web users have been redirected to the new site for a transition period. We have also joined facebook, so look us up and become a friend. In time we may get hip to the world of Twitter and other social forums.



NUKEWATCH QUARTERLY



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Through the Prism of Nonviolence

The 'Hundred Year Vision'

By John Heid

The insight at the heart of nonviolence is that we live in a tragic gap — a gap between the way things are and the way we know they might be. It is a gap that never has been and never will be closed. If we want to live nonviolent lives, we must learn to stand in the tragic gap, faithfully holding the tension between reality and possibility.

— Parker Palmer, interviewed by Bill Moyers

"I joined the army yesterday," the high-schooler announced with Christmas morning-like glee. "Can I have a free brownie?" It was Halloween. I was at Tucson High School supporting a student-based Animal Rescue Group's annual bake sale. The group was raising money to help injured animals who would otherwise be euthanized.

The place was filled with all sorts of costumes. From Dr. Seuss to Spider Man, alongside the traditional fake blood and gore. Still none was more haunting than the cherub-faced senior who was riding high on the fumes of enlistment. The midterm elections were held a few days later. War was not on the ballot, but a proposition to cut school funds was.

As I write, a raw morning-after cloud hangs in the air. Our one night stand of civic engagement — the election — is over. Many friends are despondent, feeling more polarized than ever before. Meanwhile, the fever of triumphalism and reprisal inks the newspapers' pages red.

I watch elections much like 4th of July parades; sitting curbside on Main Street, elbows on my bent knees, chin in hands as the spectacle passes with brass bands, a color guard and maybe some confetti. Parades come and go. Afterward the donkey-drawn cart slowly rolls behind and clowns scoop up the animal droppings and discarded flyers. The street resumes its former appearance. And life goes on much the same as before ... normally, so to speak.

In *No Bars To Manhood*, Dan Berri-gan says "A society discovers itself mercilessly in the mirror of crisis. No point in searching for our identity in times of normalcy."

Our socio-political landscape reveals gaping crevices. Main Street is deeply divided. The "tea party" has blown across the country much like a desert dust devil, fed by the scorching temperatures of anger and the chilly winds of impatience.

Who cannot relate to these feelings? They are much deeper than party affiliation or political ideology. Soul deep. The "tragic gap" is not between the Tea Party and progressives, nor between conservatives and liberals, so much as between the place where we stand and where we want to be. Our concerns are more about well-being than simply health

care. More about clean, respectful, safe communities than a national security apparatus.

Is it possible that the terrain we share, left and right, north and south, blue and red, is this very discontentment? A place between reality and possibility. Can "we the people" fashion something beneficial and sustainable for the commonwealth from precisely where we stand? In this flammable, fragile, yet fecund cauldron. This "tragic gap."

Can we come to know a locus deep within ourselves that government should mirror, not vice versa? Are we not looking in the wrong direction if we expect government of any species to lead? Can we discover the lucent pearl of authentic liberty through individual responsibility? How do we hold the inherent tension between reality and possibility? Can we, as Ammon Hennacy once asked, "... seek to slowly change the forms of society, but not rely on that change alone to make people better?" More than a walk to the polls is required. "Vote with your feet!" to echo the Wobblies' mantra.

Yes, gaps abound. Between electoral issues and human ones. Between justice and law. In September, 14 individuals who, "voting with their feet," tried to hand-carry a letter to the commander of Creech Air Force Base — expressing their opposition to the use of drones in Afghanistan — stood trial in a Nevada courtroom. Professor Bill Quigley, the Legal Director of the Center for Constitutional Rights, testified about the "space between justice and law." He said, "I encourage my students to work every day to narrow the gap between law and justice. I ask them to adopt a 'Hundred Year Vision,' and to remember that 100 years ago, Jim Crow laws were permitted, domestic violence was allowed, and discrimination against women and the disabled were all considered legal acts."

Law and policy must catch up with a people united for the common good. It doesn't happen in reverse anymore than gravity forces elephants and ants skyward. Authentic justice is grounded in healthy human relationships. It's grass-rooted. It can withstand seasonal political dust storms, outlast and even, dare I say, transform the state's machinations and violence.

Some years ago Nobel Peace Prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi was asked by a reporter why she seemed to have no fear. Her reply was, "All they have are guns." Suu Kyi's recent release from decades of house arrest allows her feet to be as free as her disarmed spirit.

"It'll be a great day when schools have all the money they need and the military has to have a bake sale." It'll be a greater day when every last child in the world has access to education and when the myth of "strength through guns" finally takes its rightful place on the shelf beside the flat earth theory. No law can make this happen. Only we can.

— John Heid is a member of the Restoration Project at Casa Mariposa in Tucson, Arizona.



**I WANT YOU
TO THINK**
BEFORE YOU REGISTER
FOR THE DRAFT