

Paper: Santa Fe New Mexican, The (NM)

Title: REFURBISHING, REDESIGNING AND REBUILDING THE STOCKPILE

Date: August 2, 2004

Most discuss the Stockpile Stewardship Program as a way of maintaining the current stockpile, but the program goes much farther than that. At its heart are the "lifetime-extension programs," which are used to disassemble, replace and often upgrade the innards of nuclear weapons. In part, such upgrades are out of necessity. As anybody who owns a computer or a vehicle knows, technology has advanced quite a bit in recent decades. In some cases, it can be difficult to replace old parts, officials within the program say, so the labs must develop new ones that work the same way as the old ones. Or better. It's the "better" part that worries many, who say the labs essentially aim to entirely remanufacture these devices. Sandia National Laboratories handles the mechanical and electrical components, which make up most of the components in a weapon, while the design labs, Los Alamos and Lawrence Livermore, tend to focus on the "physics package." In some cases, Los Alamos has its engineers look at overhauling a weapon altogether and then compare that to the original in terms of cost, certification and the margins for error in manufacturing, said Don McCoy, a veteran leader in the lab's nuclear-weapons program. "We're looking at alternatives," McCoy said. "What if I designed them differently and offered that as a replacement, rather than replicate the original design?" One of the scientists who has raised questions about a possible design flaw in the W76 submarine-launched warhead has alleged that the lab is doing just that for the W76. Lab officials last week would not comment on the matter except to say that they have confidence in the weapon. A series of older documents unearthed by the **Los Alamos Study Group**, a nonprofit disarmament group based out of Albuquerque, shows that efforts to redesign weapons were commonplace in the 1990s. The Submarine Stockpile Protection Project focused on the W76 and W88 warheads. One memo from the U.S. Navy, dated April 14, 1995, just as Stockpile Stewardship was getting off the ground, requests that the Energy Department work on various replacements for the "exiting" W76 and W88 warheads. That letter was signed by Pete Nanos, then director of the Navy's strategic systems, now director of Los Alamos. Nanos wrote that such activities would allow DOE to work on warheads that protect "reliability and safety margins" while maintaining "design expertise." Los Alamos spokesman Jim Danneskiold said those efforts ended in the late 1990s. Today, lab officials say, the focus is on redesigning any of the warheads to make them easier to certify without testing. Greg Mello, who heads the **Los Alamos Study Group**, says the weapons labs never stopped designing nuclear weapons at all. Outside the public eye, Stockpile Stewardship was always intended as a way to redesign old weapons into new ones. "The first test case is the W76," Mello said, noting that the lab has a "suite" of designs and options at its disposal. "All of the parties involved saw this project as the kind of path-breaking project that would establish how new weapons and weapon modifications would be done under the Stockpile Stewardship Program, and they say that." It's the little improvements that worry many, including former nuclear-weapons scientists such as Bob Peurifoy of Sandia and Ray Kidder of Lawrence Livermore. Both say the labs need to exercise caution and discipline when refurbishing weapons to ensure they don't create more doubts than they resolve by making too many changes. If LANL were to eliminate such programs and stick to basic maintenance of existing systems, Mello estimates the lab could cut its budget by 75 percent. Using similar arguments, Nuclear Watch of New Mexico argues that the lifetime-extension programs for three weapons should be canceled altogether, which would save an estimated \$477 million next year. Savings could exceed \$2.5 billion through 2009. Despite requests, LANL did not provide interviews regarding the W76 lifetime-extension program.

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Author: JEFF TOLLEFSON, PHOTO CREDIT NOT PROVIDED

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The Online News Source for Los Alamos

Print Page

Wednesday, August 4, 2004

Last modified Wednesday, August 4, 2004 4:59 PM MDT

Anti-nuke group makes annual visit to town

ROGER SNODGRASS, roger@lamonitor.com, Monitor Assistant Editor

Northern New Mexico activist and their supporters will be in town for several activities Thursday. Organized by the Los Alamos Study Group, a public interest organization, the visit will cap several days of activities that began with workshops in Santa Fe and Albuquerque earlier in the week.

The program focusing on Los Alamos National Laboratory is called "citizen inspections" and will include aerial and walk-around tours.

A release by the group says, "(C)itizens can see for themselves some of the facilities involved in the Los Alamos weapons programs, barring interruptions by LANL security forces."

The laboratory has alerted its workforce of the visit, warning that the visitors may try to interact with LANL personnel.

"We have informed our employees and it's entirely up to them if they choose to interact or not," said Linn Tytler, a laboratory spokesperson, this morning. "We have asked them to be polite, as they would be to any citizens. They can choose to discuss unclassified information with anyone or they can choose not to."

LASG's invitations have noted the lab's current safety and security crises.

"True nonviolence does not capitalize on this event," Mellow wrote. "We will learn, listen and gently engage. It is, for some, a teachable moment, a moment when they begin to see what the lab is all about."

The core of the group arrives from Albuquerque, where LASG moved its headquarters several months ago, and from Santa Fe by car and van.

A couple of aerial tours that will avoid restricted air space will also bring special guests including journalists to the Hill.

In past years members of the group have been involved in non-violent demonstrations in which some members of the group were symbolically arrested and later released without charges.

This year, no written understanding has been reached between the group and the laboratory, according to LASG Director Greg Mello.

Writing to the laboratory in June, Mello requested permission to inspect several facilities, including "the interiors of the Plutonium Facility (PF-4) and Nuclear Materials Storage Facility (never used) in TA-55, and the site of the proposed Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Replacement Facility, also in TA-55."

The group also asked to receive "an unclassified, on-the-record briefing or briefings on all programmatic, budgetary, and infrastructure aspects of pit production at LANL.

A response by the Government Relations Office said that for national security reasons the visit could not be accommodated and suggested the group visit the Bradbury Science Museum as an alternative for meeting the group's informational needs without the security problems.

LASG proposes to hold a press conference at Sigma Facility parking lot south of the MSL building at 3 p.m. on Thursday.

"They have no authority to hold a press conference on lab property," Tytler said. "They have been told they don't have authority to hold a press conference on lab property."

She said that roadways and sidewalks on Diamond Drive and East and West Jemez roads are public property, but that signage clearly delineates government property. There are signs that say "No Trespassing," about every hundred feet in proprietary areas.

"We've had no indications that the Study Group or its adherents are looking to be arrested," Tytler said.

The proposed press conference will be followed later in the day by a public discussion at Fuller Lodge from 6-8 p.m., focusing on LANL's current and future role in the nation's nuclear pit production plans.

Special guests, joining Mello on a panel, will include

Jacque Breaver, a former Rocky Flats worker and Ron Avery a former pit production supervisor.

Laboratory spokespeople have been invited to participate, but Mellow said on Tuesday, that he had not yet found anybody to represent the laboratory.

Scientists who study the aging nuclear stockpile say new nuclear pits, the plutonium-based packages that provide the triggers for nuclear weapons, may be required in the next several decades.

Formerly, pits were made at the Rocky Flats Plant in Colorado, until the FBI closed it down in 1989 because of health and environmental problems.

Subsequently, LANL was given the mission to develop a temporary pit-making capability, and was one of five locations under consideration for a new pit factory.

An environmental impact statement for the Modern Pit Facility was withdrawn last year, when a key House committee requested more information on the administration's pit requirements.

UC and LANL officials have not shown enthusiasm for bringing the facility to Los Alamos, and the New Mexico congressional delegation has favored Carlsbad as a location.

But Mello believes that Los Alamos, which was the Department of Energy's highest rated location for the production, may get the facility after all.

"People in Los Alamos don't understand that they are moving back into the bulls eye," for the pit facility, Mello said.

Anti-nuke group makes annual visit to town

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Monitor Assistant Editor

8/1/04

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See VISIT, 2



GARY WARREN/Monitor

Anti-nuclear and peace activists marched on Diamond Drive last year on the anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima.

VISIT Nuke group to come

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8-5-04

Sandia Labs Bars Citizen Inspection

Group Says Nukes Worthless to State

By JOHN FLECK
Journal Staff Writer

New Mexico has seen federal nuclear weapons spending continue to grow while the state has remained mired in poverty, an Albuquerque arms control activist argued Wednesday.

"We know that this industry is bad for New Mexico," Greg Mello of the Los Alamos Study Group told an audience of about 30 gathered in a University of New Mexico lecture hall to discuss the U.S. nuclear weapons program.

The session was billed as part of a "citizen inspection" of nuclear weapons work in New Mexico. But it was held at UNM because Sandia National Laboratories refused a request from Mello's group to tour Sandia facilities involved in the work.

Sandia officials acknowledged refusing Mello's request, saying they did not feel obligated to honor citizen requests to tour high-security facilities. "We cannot accommodate inspections by unofficial entities," Sandia public relations administrator Rod Geer wrote in a June 22 letter to Mello.

Spokesman John German said Sandia agrees that "societal verification of our activities is necessary and welcome," but said that takes place through oversight by elected officials as well as federal, state and local overseers.

Such "citizen inspections" have been a staple of the anti-nuclear community for years, taking place at Los Alamos National Laboratory and other nuclear sites around the country.

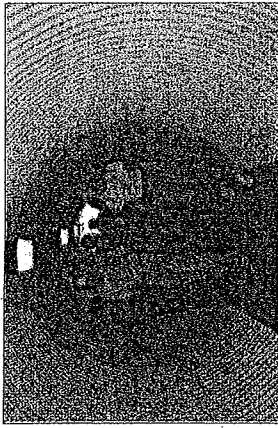
Mello and his colleagues will visit Los Alamos today for the second day of the local citizen inspection tour. Public roads criss-cross much of Los Alamos lab property, making it possible for anyone to reach the barbed wire fences that protect the northern New Mexico lab's secure areas.

But restricted access to Sandia, which is located on Kirtland Air Force Base, has always made it impossible for activists to even approach Sandia's fences from the outside.

In addition to being prevented from visiting Sandia facilities, Mello's group also was denied a briefing by Sandia officials regarding "nuclear weapons modifications, new weapon designs, and earth-penetrating weapons," Mello said.

NUCLEAR WATCH

Los Alamos watchdog takes citizens on tour of LANL



Mello leads people on his tour through a tunnel walkway.



Greg Mello, left, of the Los Alamos Study Group, explains aspects of Los Alamos National Laboratory to activists and members of the media during a citizens' inspection of the lab Thursday afternoon.

Photos by Steve Babujak/The New Mexican

day to push the lab's boundaries but not cross them. He believes more openness on the part of the lab would make it a healthier institution.

"So Bruce, we're going to hug the boundary as close as we can?" Mello asked the pilot before the Cessna 207 lifted off Thursday for a bird's-eye tour of the lab.

"Yeah," the pilot confirmed. Three journalists and a retired elementary-school teacher from Albuquerque made the first of three flights Thursday encircling the nation's largest nuclear-weapons-design lab. Mello, 54, worked four years at the state Environment

By DIANA HEIL 8/6/04
The New Mexican

LOS ALAMOS — In a rare opportunity, a handful of people from Santa Fe and Albuquerque took a free flight Thursday to see the buildings, tunnels and waste pits of Los Alamos National Laboratory.

Flying directly over the lab isn't allowed. A 20-mile perimeter encircling the lab is restricted air space, the pilot said.

But Greg Mello, head of the Los Alamos Study Group, set out Thurs-

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LANL

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and Albuquerque this week, intended to educate people, were poorly attended.

"It's really essential for all of us to ask fundamental questions about the direction of the nuclear-weapons program," Mello said.

In his mind, the notion that nuclear weapons will protect the United States from enemies is flawed. "There's neither data, logic nor morality behind it," he said. "We need to decide whether we're going to make weapons of mass destruction — have them as a centerpiece of our national security strategy — while denying them to others."

Some in the U.S. government think it's time to develop and produce new kinds of nuclear weapons. And Mello said he has little faith that presidential candidate John Kerry, if elected, would flatten the growth of the nuclear-weapons budget.

On the walk Thursday, Santa Fe City Councilor David Coss said he would like LANL to work more construc-

tively with the state, Santa Fe and Northern New Mexico concerning environmental issues. On a larger scale, he'd like the "amazing people up here" to take a stand on the future of nuclear weapons.

"I'd like to see them be a leader in nuclear nonproliferation technology," Coss said.

The flight and walk past such buildings as the Theoretical Division made an impression on Sally Alice Thompson, the retired elementary-school teacher. She hadn't understood the lab was so vast. "It puts a concrete on the absurd," she said, noting the billions of dollars spent on nuclear weapons.

"It's infuriating," she said. "If we use them, it's bad. And if we don't, what in the hell are we building them for?"

Getting people to think about such quandaries was the point of Thursday's symbolic "citizens' inspection," one of four the Los Alamos Study Group has organized over the years. The last one was after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Thursday's event was planned to draw

attention to the anniversary today of America's 1945 bombing of Hiroshima, Japan.

Few people request a walk on lab grounds, said security officer Michael Wismer, who trailed the group on the sidewalk around Technical Area 3.

As Mello urged the group to "think about the endless designs pouring from this building into the testing grounds of the Pacific," a native Los Alamos resident interrupted.

"It's a very complicated beast here in New Mexico," Jeffrey Bussolini said, noting that major medical advances related to HIV have also occurred here. He would prefer the Department of Energy spend more on this kind of science and less on nuclear weapons.

Bussolini said his grandparents came to Los Alamos in 1946, and his parents worked for the lab, too. The 32-year-old assistant professor teaches the sociology of science at City University of New York. "I really think the work that (Mello) does is really important," Bussolini

said. "Sometimes I think he has too much of an anti-lab, anti-Los Alamos point of view."

In Mello's estimation, retired Navy Adm. Pete Nanos has ruled employees with fear tactics since becoming director of the lab in January 2003. "The direction of Los Alamos is in play now. With the culture goes the industry," Mello said. "We all should be alert to the possibility that Los Alamos may be settling under a more authoritarian and even militaristic cloud."

Andrew Jandacek, a native of White Rock who worked briefly at the lab as a graduate student, said he noticed

a change when Nanos came to power — a time of budget slashing and projects under fire. He said the lab has trouble managing its waste, and the budget to do so has been reduced.

"The lab is engaged in a never-ending (public-rela-

tions) campaign to make people feel safe living here," dacek said as the tour end

Two lab spokesmen accompanied the citizens' inspection, but did not silence Mello or respond to his narrative.

Lab Work Protested



KATHARINE KIMBALL/JOURNAL

Greg Mello, right, executive director of the Los Alamos Study Group, describes a Los Alamos National Laboratory building while leading a "citizens inspection" at the lab on Thursday as KUNM radio reporter Leslie Clark records his presentation.

Activists Marking Hiroshima Anniversary

BY ADAM RANKIN
Journal Staff Writer

8/6/04

Anti-nuclear activists and Catholic peace protesters gathered separately on the eve of the 59th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, Japan, in an effort to bring greater accountability to the nation's first nuclear weapons laboratory and to call on the country's Catholics and religious leaders to adhere more closely to the anti-war teachings of Jesus Christ.



GUMBLETON: "Modern warfare ... is unacceptable"

Detroit Catholic Bishop Thomas Gumbleton said the country's Catholic bishops have failed in their role as moral leaders by not speaking out against violence, the war in Iraq and nuclear weapons.

"I believe that the Catholic bishops need to go back and review their own teachings and recommit

If you go

WHAT: Cranes for Peace sixth annual Peace Day

WHEN: 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. today

WHERE: Santa Fe Plaza

themselves to it," he said. "Modern warfare, whether nuclear or conventional, is unacceptable."

Asked how he would counsel Catholics working at LANL, the birthplace of the bombs that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, ending World War II, Gumbleton said "every person needs to look deeply into his or her conscience" to follow the Gospel of Christ, which could include giving up a job to stand for what one believes in.

He also said that "participating in the development of these (nuclear) weapons is participating in something that is evil."

Gumbleton, the co-author of the

1983 U.S. Catholic Bishops Conference Pastoral Letter and an early opponent of the Vietnam War, spoke to a gathering of Pax Christi New Mexico members at Santa Fe's Santa Maria de la Paz Church on Wednesday afternoon.

The state chapter of the national Catholic peace group was formed by Jesuit priest and peace activist John Dear, who until recently served as pastor for several northern New Mexico towns before stepping down from his position after a tumultuous two years.

Gumbleton and Dear called for an immediate and total abolition of all nuclear weapons by the United States and the world, saying that is the only way to ensure the future of world peace.

Dear, controversial for his views that people can't be Christian and support war, and that LANL's work is evil, was prohibited last year from attending a peace vigil at LANL by Santa Fe Archbishop Michael J. Sheehan without the permission of Los Alamos' Father

See **ACTIVISTS** on PAGE 2

Activists Protest Weapons Work

from PAGE 1

John Carney. Dear says Carney didn't give him permission to attend.

Dear said he plans to participate in today's peace vigil in Los Alamos because he is no longer a practicing pastor in New Mexico and doesn't need Carney's permission.

The group of peace protesters, which Dear expects to number about 100, plans to meet LANL workers on their drive to work near the center of the town of Los Alamos, where they will hold a silent prayer vigil for the end of war and weapons of mass destruction.

Later in the day, Dear and others will participate in the sixth annual Peace Day on the Santa Fe Plaza, sponsored by the Cranes for Peace Project.

Earlier Wednesday, about 15 anti-nuclear activists from Santa Fe and as far away as

Wichita, Kan., gathered in Los Alamos for a "citizens inspection" of the laboratory, led by Greg Mello of the Los Alamos Study Group, a local anti-nuclear nonprofit organization.

He said the inspection — which consisted of the group walking on public sidewalks outside top-secret facilities — was meant to be symbolic of the effort to shed light on and uncover information about what happens behind the walls of the nation's nuclear facilities. The inspection was also meant to remind people of their right to ask questions, he said.

Santa Fe City Counselor David Coss and former Green Party gubernatorial candidate David Bacon were among those who joined the inspection.

The inspection was the group's fourth since it was formed in 1989, Mello said, but the first that included a series of workshops designed to educate the public on

LANL and Albuquerque's Sandia National Laboratories. He said the Study Group plans to increase the frequency of citizen inspections to four times a year.

"It's very important to step up the oversight at Los Alamos and at Sandia because the nation is making some critical decisions about nuclear weapons," such as the Bush administration's push to develop new types of nuclear weapons, he said.

Trish Williams-Mello, the operations director for the Study Group, said the laboratories and the U.S. government are using the 9/11 terrorist attacks as an excuse to make it more difficult for the public to access information about nuclear weapons and their development, as well as environmental data.

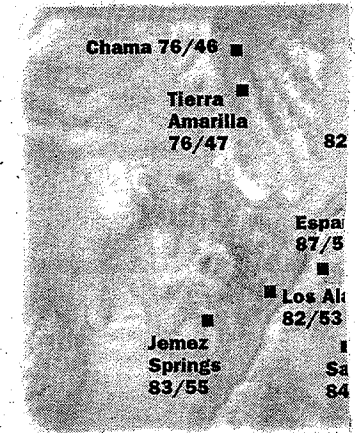
"It's really a very difficult process for any citizen to get any information from the government, and now it is even harder," she said.

YESTERDAY

PRECIPITATION

	Thurs	Month	Year
Total	trace	0.09	4.57
Normal	0.07	0.38	7.80
Change	-0.07	-0.29	-3.23

TODAY'S TEMPER



Problems Stall Nuke Testing

■ DOE puts blame on federal agency's delays, cost overruns

By JOHN FLUECK
Journal Staff Writer 8/8/04

The National Nuclear Security Administration has missed key milestones in its preparations for a possible resumption of nuclear weapons testing, according to a report released Friday by Department of Energy auditors.

The report is the latest independent review to find fault with the federal government's management of the vast U.S. nuclear weapons program for missed milestones, delays and cost overruns.

- Among the problems cited in recent years by the DOE Office of Inspector General, the Government Accountability Office and Defense Department consultants are:
- Mismanagement of regular checks on U.S. nuclear weapons to check for possible aging problems;
- Delays responding to potential problems found when the checks are conducted;
- Delays and cost overruns in a program to upgrade aging

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Nuke Testing Plan Beset by Delays, Cost Overruns

from PAGE A1

weapons;

- Shortfalls in the development of the massive supercomputers used to replace nuclear test blasts with simulations; and
- Cost overruns and lengthy delays in a massive laser fusion complex being built at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California and a machine being built at Los Alamos National Laboratory to X-ray exploding mock nuclear weapons.

The scope of the problems is "worrisome," said Sidney Drell, a physicist at the Stanford Linear Accelerator in California who has served for many years as a nuclear weapons program adviser.

"It's too many," Drell said in a telephone interview.

Drell is a supporter of the program but has co-written studies pointing out problems in the way it is being carried out. He was a member of a National Nuclear Security Administration advisory panel that in 2001 questioned whether managers had "a strong, well-planned and clearly articulated program in place" to maintain the U.S. nuclear arsenal.

A National Nuclear Security Administration spokesman acknowledged problems, but he noted that the effort to maintain U.S. nuclear weapons without test blasts is a first-of-its-kind program.

"NNSA's Stockpile Stewardship Program is doing something that has never been done before and using cutting-edge science to accomplish it," said Bryan Wilkes in a statement

"There have clearly been bumps in the road along the way, but we are proud of our overwhelming successes."

BRYAN WILKES,
NNSA SPOKESMAN

issued Friday. "There have clearly been bumps in the road along the way, but we are proud of our overwhelming successes."

Drell said that some of the older problems, such as with the Livermore laser fusion machine, appear to have been solved. "It's on a good, healthy path," Drell said.

The issues are critical in New

Scientists speak out

Many LANL retirees are critical of lab director Pete Nanos' leadership **B1**

Mexico, with two large nuclear weapons laboratories that are among the state's largest employers. Nuclear weapons spending this year in the state is estimated at \$2.7 billion.

Critics in the House of Representatives, citing problems identified by congressional auditors, have for several years attempted to cut spending on the program.

Stockpile Stewardship was begun in the mid-1990s to maintain nuclear weapons without underground testing. Budgets for the work have risen steadily,

reaching \$6.2 billion this year — roughly equivalent, in inflation-adjusted terms, to the largest nuclear weapons budget during the Cold War.

Critics have long complained that money is being wasted, noting that the spending is approaching record levels despite the fact that no new nuclear weapons are being designed or built.

"I think the question for auditors and for Congress is what of this program is necessary for nuclear weapons," said peace activist Greg Mello, head of the Albuquerque-based Los Alamos Study Group.

Mello argued that so much money has been poured into the rapidly growing program that problems of the sort cited by auditors and independent investigators are inevitable. "Screwing up is the only option

available to them," he said.

The most recent problem, cited in the report released Friday by the Department of Energy's Office of Inspector General, involves efforts to prepare the Nevada Test Site for possible test blasts.

None is currently planned, but the federal government wants to improve readiness in case a problem is found in a U.S. nuclear weapon that requires a test to correct.

Among other problems, environmental permits were not updated as required, and a study of the instruments needed to gather data for a nuclear test was not done, according to the Inspector General's report.

August 15 Week in Review August

LANL faulted for not cleaning up



Courtesy Greg Mello, director, Los Alamos Study Group

In Technical Area 55 at Los Alamos National Laboratory, 4,315 containers of dangerous materials, such as plutonium, must be repackaged or disposed of by 2010. The project was supposed to be finished by 2002.

Lab's repeated delays cost taxpayers

Two Los Alamos National Laboratory workers were exposed to plutonium last year while handling a deteriorated package of rags during an inventory.

On Thursday, the U.S. Department of Energy inspector general cited this case in saying the health of other lab workers is at stake, because the lab is far behind schedule in stabilizing radioactive materials. Further, the lab's repeated delays are costing taxpayers \$78 million more than planned, according to the audit report, with the total project escalating to \$183 million.

Under the original plan, LANL was supposed to stabilize radioactive materials by 2002. Now, the deadline has been pushed to 2010.

Plutonium metals, oxides and residues at

Technical Area 55 — the lab's main plutonium vault — are kept in containers the report says are not acceptable for long-term storage. "As such, there is the possibility that the containers could leak and workers could be exposed to radiation, resulting in serious health consequences," the inspector general's report said.

But it's possible employees haven't accomplished all the tasks because Los Alamos lab didn't have enough money for the scope of the project. The inspector general blamed the problem in part on inadequate DOE funding.

"The (Energy) Department had not made the effort a priority," the inspector general's report said, noting that Los Alamos received only 58 percent of the funding it requested between 1997 and 2002, and only 78 percent of

what it requested in 2001 and 2002.

The Energy Department has since increased funding to Los Alamos for stabilizing materials, and the project should be funded fully through 2010.

In 1994, the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board told numerous DOE sites to stabilize their dangerous materials. The safety board is an agency Congress established in 1988 to provide oversight of the nuclear-weapons complex.

Like Los Alamos, Rocky Flats in Colorado and Savannah River Site in South Carolina missed the 2002 deadline, but only by one to four years. LANL stands out, according to the report. **Friday, A-1**

(Copyright 2004 Santa Fe New Mexican)

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Plutonium metals, oxides and residues at Technical Area 55 -- the lab's main plutonium vault -- are kept in containers the report says are not acceptable for long-term storage. "As such, there is the possibility that the containers could leak and workers could be exposed to radiation, resulting in serious health consequences," the inspector general's report said.

But it's possible employees haven't accomplished all the tasks because Los Alamos lab didn't have enough money for the scope of the project. The inspector general blamed the problem in part on inadequate DOE funding.

"The (Energy) Department had not made the effort a priority," the inspector general's report said, noting that Los Alamos received only 58 percent of the funding it requested between 1997 and 2002, and only 78 percent of what it requested in 2001 and 2002.

The Energy Department has since increased funding to Los Alamos for stabilizing materials, and the project should be funded fully through 2010.

U.S. Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., long instrumental in getting funding for the lab, was in Albuquerque on Thursday to have a U.S. federal courthouse named after him and couldn't review the audit until today, according to a spokesman for the senator.

In 1994, the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board told numerous DOE sites to stabilize their dangerous materials. The safety board is an agency Congress established in 1988 to provide oversight of the nuclear-weapons complex.

Like Los Alamos, Rocky Flats in Colorado and Savannah River Site in South Carolina missed the 2002 deadline, but only by one to four years. LANL stands out, according to the report.

Twice, DOE extended LANL's completion date. However, the safety board disagreed with the revised schedules, because the work was not accelerated. "It should be noted that Los Alamos is the only (DOE) site that has not reached agreement with the board on an acceptable plan," according to the inspector-general report.

Even the new goal of 2010 might not be realistic. The inventory count was short by 155 containers, according to the report.

LANL management failed to set milestones or define the project clearly, according to the report. On the other hand, DOE put performance measures and incentives in its contract with Savannah River Site, but didn't do the same for Los Alamos, according to the report.

Michael Kane, an associate administrator at the National Nuclear Security Administration, didn't argue with the findings, but in July, he wrote a letter to the inspector general that said: "While the auditors are correct the laboratory is behind schedule in some areas, they have exceeded scheduled expectations in other areas."

Of 5,718 items slated for repackaging or disposal, 1,403 had been handled as of last Sept. 30.

"Basically, the information there stands," LANL spokeswoman Nancy Ambrosiano said of the report Thursday.

Some of the material is waste, some has experimental uses, and some can be tapped as fuel for nuclear reactors, she said. "It's not that this is a repository of useless material," Ambrosiano said.

As for the health of the two workers exposed to plutonium last year, the Energy Department fined the lab \$770,000, according to the Associated Press.

[Illustration]

Caption: 1. In Technical Area 55 at Los Alamos National Laboratory, 4,315 containers of dangerous materials, such as plutonium, must be repackaged or disposed of by 2010. The project was supposed to be finished by 2002.

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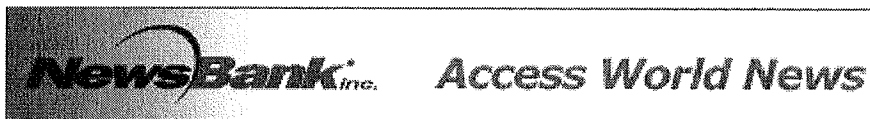
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From: ProQuest



Paper: San Francisco Chronicle (CA)

Title: UC's Los Alamos lab lags in handling of radioactive materials

Inspector general says employees still may be in jeopardy

Date: August 20, 2004

A year after two workers were accidentally exposed to plutonium at Los Alamos National Laboratory, the University of California-run facility remains far behind in a program to improve the handling and storage of fissionable materials.

As a result, "radioactive materials at the laboratory may continue to deteriorate and negatively impact the safety and health of workers," says a report by the U.S. Energy Department's Office of Inspector General.

In a program that is already two years past its originally scheduled completion date, Los Alamos has failed to expeditiously improve the handling and storage of fissionable materials, says the report's author, Gregory H. Friedman, in an accompanying memo dated Aug. 16 and addressed to Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham.

Lab critics responded quickly to the report. The lab's sluggishness "is another blatant example of the University of California's mismanagement of the laboratory," said Jay Coghlan, director of Nuclear Watch of New Mexico, an activist group in Sante Fe that monitors the lab.

Meanwhile, Energy Department officials said Thursday they had discovered that more classified computer disks are missing, this time at the department's regional office in Albuquerque. The disks contain information on nuclear weapons, the Associated Press quoted Bryan Wilkes of the U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration as saying. All classified work with such disks has been halted at the office until further notice.

Since early summer, Los Alamos investigators, aided by the FBI and federal inspectors, have been looking for two missing classified disks at the New Mexico lab.

In the mid-1990s, the Energy Department ordered the nation's nuclear weapons labs to improve handling and storage of nuclear materials in order to prevent accidents, theft or other forms of loss. The stabilization program entails taking the Los Alamos lab's thousands of pounds of plutonium and other fissionable materials and repackaging them in less vulnerable containers, among other steps. Much of the work is under way in a lab building known as Technical Area 55, or TA55.

Originally slated for completion in 2002, the stabilization program is now scheduled to be finished in 2010. Its anticipated budget is more than \$180 million, three-fourths more than originally planned.

The extent of the problem was dramatized on Aug. 5, 2003, when two workers were exposed to a plutonium isotope, plutonium-238. The plutonium had been stored in what one federal investigator's report called a "degraded package" containing cellulose rags that were contaminated with the isotope.

The two employees "are in good health and have returned to work since the incident," said lab spokesman Jim Fallin. "One was a female who became pregnant (afterward). ... She had the baby, the baby's fine."

Fallin said the lab would have no comment on the inspector general report,

other than to express agreement with the National Nuclear Security Administration's formal written response to Friedman, which appears in Friedman's report. In that response, NNSA Associate Administrator Michael C. Kane said the agency "generally agrees with the (inspector general) report and the subsequent recommendations."

The NNSA is the branch of the Energy Department that oversees the nation's nuclear weapons complex.

UC spokesman Paul Schwartz said the university is declining to comment on the report and referring all calls to Los Alamos officials. Officials at the Energy Department could not be reached for comment.

In a Feb. 12 report, another federal agency, the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, scolded Los Alamos for dragging its feet in the stabilization program: The August 2003 incident "should have reinforced the urgency of completing (Los Alamos') activities to stabilize and repackage" such radioactive materials. Yet "it appears that neither (Los Alamos) nor the National Nuclear Security Administration has an appropriate sense of urgency ..."

This week's report by Friedman underlines the same concerns: In recent years, it says, "although the

department has made some progress in stabilizing the most hazardous fissionable materials, stabilization has not been accelerated to the level anticipated."

Greg Mello, director of another activist group, **Los Alamos Study Group** of Albuquerque, said of the lab's long and costly effort to stabilize fissionable materials inside building TA 55: "It's not clear that the country gets very much for the hundreds of millions of dollars that are being spent (on stabilization) in that building. That building is a black hole for money."

The nuclear facilities safety board "started notifying Los Alamos of its deficient stabilization program in 1994, a good decade ago," Coghlan said. "And yet here we are, 10 years later, and the job's not done."

Why the delay?

"Culturally," Coghlan replies, "I think the problem is this kind of (stabilization) work simply doesn't have the prestige that continuing work on new weapons design has, and it's simply not given the priority that it needs." . The report is online at www.ig.doe.gov/reports.htm. Chronicle news services contributed to this article.

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Lab critic leads tour 59 years after Hiroshima blast

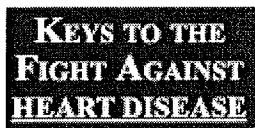
LOS ALAMOS Anti-nuclear activists gave flyover tours near some of the buildings and waste pits of Los Alamos National Laboratory to observe the 59th anniversary of Hiroshima.

The Hiroshima bomb was dropped August Sixth 1945. It killed an estimated 140-thousand people in the first use of a nuclear weapon in warfare.

The aerial tours took place yesterday -- on the eve of the Hiroshima attack. Direct overflights aren't permitted at the lab and the pilot said there is a 20-mile perimeter of restricted air space.

Los Alamos Study Group director Greg Mello says he hoped to extend the lab's boundaries without crossing them in the interest of more openness at the lab. The pilot agreed to Mello's request to hug the boundary as close as possible.

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Publication: Jnl Legacy 1995 to July 2005; Date: Sep 2, 2004; Section: Journal North; Page: 4



**Date:-09/02/2004 Section:-News
Edition:-Journal North Page:-1**

Order Gives Lab 11 Years To Clean Up

Adam Rankin Journal Staff Writer

Water Oversight Still a Hang-Up

Los Alamos National Laboratory will have 11 years to complete a "fence-to-fence" environmental cleanup and could face stiff penalties of up to \$3,000 a day for noncompliance, all enforceable by the state, if a draft corrective action order becomes final.

The 271-page document was released on Wednesday for a 30-day public comment period.

Unless the state, the Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency are able to work out a short-term agreement on the oversight and monitoring of surface water contamination at the weapons laboratory, the entire cleanup order, which took more than two years to hammer out through closed-door negotiations, could be in jeopardy.

"I will not sign the final order until this surface water agreement is completed," state Environment Department chief Ron Curry said in a statement released with the order. "Surface water cleanup and monitoring are a key piece of this holistic LANL cleanup."

New Mexico is one of only five states that do not have authority to govern or regulate surface water contamination within their own borders. Instead, it is handled by officials at the EPA Region 6 offices in Dallas. The state has been working toward gaining full authority to regulate surface water, but doesn't expect to achieve primacy until 2006.

State officials argue that an interim agreement -- called a Federal Facility Compliance Agreement -- between the state, DOE and EPA that governs surface water monitoring at LANL is needed to protect New Mexico's waters.

NMED Hazardous Waste Bureau chief James Bearzi said failing to get such an agreement could "sink" the cleanup order, but he said the state has a commitment from EPA to get the agreement in place.

"I think the likelihood of that is pretty good, especially now that everything else is in place," NMED spokesman Jon Goldstein said.

Curry said the 60 years of legacy waste at LANL and the ensuing cleanup effort is a perfect example of why the state needs to gain the authority to regulate surface water quality.

"If we had surface water primacy today, we wouldn't need this side agreement," he said.

The order itself is a dense document that lays out responsibilities and legal recourse for each of the parties involved -- DOE, LANL, NMED and the University of California, which operates LANL.

LANL spokeswoman Linn Tytler said the laboratory has been meeting the required timetables of the order since 2003 and now has about 750 "solid waste management units" to remediate.

A primary reason for the two-year fight between the state and DOE was due to the state's attempt to regulate through the order radionuclide waste, which DOE argued is beyond state jurisdiction. Negotiations eliminated all state-mandated requirements to deal with such waste in the current draft order, because DOE has agreed to provide monitoring data voluntarily.

However, Bearzi said the state reserves the right to compel DOE and LANL to provide radionuclide information through legal means, should they fail to do so voluntarily.

Jay Coghlan, executive director of Nuclear Watch of New Mexico, sees DOE and LANL's concession to voluntarily provide radionuclide data as a "big win" for the state.

"On the downside, this is not cleanup; I hope it leads to cleanup," he said.

Greg Mello, director of the laboratory watchdog organization the Los Alamos Study Group, is more pessimistic about the state's order and its ability to enforce cleanup.

"The only potentially firm cleanup requirement that I see is the ground-water cleanup... in Chapter Eight," but the standards are vague and there are no explicit cleanup milestones, he said.

He said the state could have accomplished nearly everything through the laboratory's state-issued operating permit, and with more authority and public involvement.

"Which is a big loss for the democratic process and a big loss for the power of the state as a whole... it would make every citizen a potential inspector," he said.

Bearzi said the state doesn't see it that way and that the order does put a firm date -- 2015 -- on cleanup.

"The state believes the consent order covers compounds beyond the scope of the (operating permit)," including perchlorate, nitrates and high explosives, he said. The permit also would not have allowed the state to establish fines, as it does in the order, he said.

"We believe the enforceability of this consent order is much more expeditious and gives the state a stronger stance than the permit," Bearzi said.

NMED's Goldstein also noted that aside from the public comment period for the draft consent order, the public will have separate opportunities to comment on every site-specific cleanup remedy proposed.

If you go

WHAT: Public comment on LANL cleanup order

WHEN: 7-9 p.m. Wednesday

WHERE: Cities of Gold Hotel in Pojoaque PHOTO: b/w

CURRY: Holding out for agreement



In 2000, 36% of the 18-to-24 year-olds in America compared to 70% of 60-to-75 year-olds. Who do you think politicians are paying attention to?

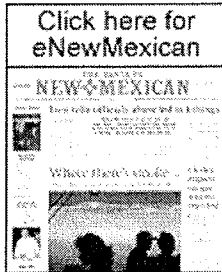
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State, LANL reach cleanup deal

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DIANA HEIL | The New Mexican
September 2, 2004

If everything goes as planned, Los Alamos National Laboratory will clean up all of its hazardous waste by 2015 or face fines and lawsuits.

"All of the historical contamination that has been there since the 1940s will be eliminated," said Charlie de Saillan, an attorney with the New Mexico Environment Department. The estimated cost is \$760 million, according to the lab.

Negotiators with the Environment Department and the U.S. Department of Energy spent nearly two years drafting this agreement. At the outset, the federal government challenged New Mexico's order for investigation and cleanup at LANL.

Finally, on Wednesday, the state released a revised proposed Order of Consent, which requires studies and remediation of groundwater, soil and sediments at the lab. The public has 30 days to comment on the document. The proposal does not cover radioactive waste, however.

At the earliest, the agreement could go into effect in November. That depends on revisions based on public comment, plus the signatures of DOE and the University of California, which runs the lab.

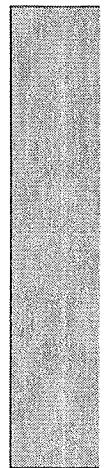
But there's one more "monkey in the wrench," as Jay Coghlan of Nuclear Watch of New Mexico, an environmental group, sees it. Ron Curry, secretary of the state Environment Department, said he won't sign the order unless DOE and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency give New Mexico authority over surface water in a separate agreement.

"Surface water clean up and monitoring are a key piece of this holistic LANL cleanup," Curry said. "As such, I will not sign the final order until this surface water agreement is completed."

New Mexico is one of a few states without jurisdiction over surface water, Coghlan said.

If the Order of Consent comes to pass, it will replace an old system for addressing hazardous waste. For decades, the Environment Department has wanted LANL to clean up its mess. But past efforts haven't been forceful enough, according to de Saillan.

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All Other

Currently, the state works through the "extremely vague" corrective-action section of LANL's hazardous-waste permit.

Under the order of consent, the state instead would tell LANL what to do to properly investigate and contain waste -- with a set of deadlines. The specific language would make it easier to enforce, de Saillan said. "We're not leaving it to them (LANL) to sort of make it up as they go along."

Lab director Pete Nanos expressed support for the agreement Wednesday.

"As a demonstrable measure of the laboratory's good faith, we have been meeting the required timetables of the order on consent and using the required processes, even while negotiations continued in 2003 and 2004 to reach final agreement," lab spokeswoman Linn Tytler said.

The Environment Department said 1,900 solid-waste sites must be cleaned up. But Tytler said that figure should be lowered to roughly 750 sites.

Some sites are under DOE jurisdiction only, she explained. Moreover, "we have received official notice of 'no further action required' from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency at more than 700 of those sites," she said.

Environmentalists looking for tangible cleanup tasks in the order say they can find little more than requests for studies. "No one knows where and what is buried up at Los Alamos," Environment Department spokesman Jon Goldstein explained. "So investigation needs to come before we can choose the best way to clean up."

After studies on the waste, the options for cleanup will be brought before the public for comment. Then the Environment Department secretary must approve the lab's plans for getting it accomplished. "Under the law, it's enforceable in a court of law," Goldstein said.

Environmental groups have mixed reviews on the proposal. Coghlan said it contains victories for the Environment Department. Contaminants, as defined in the order, include explosives, perchlorate, hazardous waste and hazardous constituents. Also, DOE and UC agreed to provide data on radioactive contamination to the Environment Department.

"We're strongly in favor of this ... order and really salute the Environment Department for having the guts and sticking it out," he said on behalf of Nuclear Watch of New Mexico.

On the other hand, Greg Mello of the Los Alamos Study Group blasted it. "Well, it's a dog. There's no actual cleanup orders. The closest we come is the groundwater cleanup."

He searched for a definition of cleanup. "They could just sit there and watch it," he said.

Mello said the order gives New Mexico "a lot more control over the investigation process." But he questioned the need for more studies since DOE basically knows which sites are most important to clean up.

"If Hercules felt he needed to count the piles of dung in the Augean stables, he would have neither counted them successfully nor cleaned up the stable," Mello said.



"In the real world, as in the fable, you just have to start digging. You count as you go."

How much of a threat lab waste poses to New Mexicans is hotly contested. The state believes it has proved that LANL's hazardous waste "may be an imminent and substantial endangerment to health or the environment."

But DOE and the University of California disagree, noting the state bases endangerment on the presence of soil and groundwater contamination alone.

Arguments fly back and forth for pages as agencies debated the proposed consent order.

"A threat to groundwater is particularly serious in New Mexico, an arid state that relies heavily on its groundwater resources," the Environment Department retorted. "Approximately 90 percent of New Mexico's population uses groundwater for its drinking water."

Besides serving Los Alamos, White Rock and Bandelier National Monument, the regional aquifer beneath the LANL facility connects with the aquifer that serves the city of Santa Fe.

In e-mailed comments Wednesday, Tytler stressed that contaminants in the aquifer present no immediate risk to human health. "The fact is, drinking water in the Los Alamos area has not been adversely impacted by laboratory actions," she said. "All drinking water produced by the Los Alamos County water-supply system meets federal and state drinking-water requirements."

Public comment welcome

The New Mexico Environment Department will tell the public about its proposal for making Los Alamos National Laboratory clean up hazardous waste by 2015. The meeting will be from 7 to 9 p.m. Wednesday at the Cities of Gold Hotel in Pojoaque.

A 30-day public comment period on the proposal starts now and ends Oct. 1. To have your comments considered by the New Mexico Environment Department, you must include your name and address and make sure the department receives your letter or e-mail by 5 p.m. Oct. 1.

Send comments to: James Bearzi, Hazardous Waste Bureau Chief, New Mexico Environment Department, 2905 Rodeo Park Drive East, Building 1, Santa Fe, N.M., 87505-6303.

Or send e-mail to: hazardous_waste_comment@nmenv.state.nm.us

To view the proposal and other documents between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays, visit the New Mexico Environment Department Hazardous Waste Bureau, or Los Alamos National Lab Community Relations Reading Room, 1619 Central Ave., in Los Alamos.

Visit <http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/HWB/lanlperm.html>.

Critics Say Lab Pact Missing Cleanup Clause

BY ADAM RANKIN
Journal Northern Bureau

SANTA FE — New Mexico and the U.S. Department of Energy may have struck a deal recently that will allow \$43 million in federal funding to flow into environmental programs at Los Alamos. But there is at least one item missing from the new agreement that previously played a prominent role in the state's attempt to force cleanup on its own terms.

That is the state Environment Department's finding, issued May 2, 2002, that legacy waste at Los Alamos may present an "imminent and substantial endangerment" to human health and the environment.

Laboratory watchdog groups also claim the agreement, which won't be available to the public until early May, is also missing any real cleanup requirements and instead focuses on producing risk reports and characterizing unknown waste.

Knowing that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency considers that Los Alamos hosts more chemical and radioactive solid waste management units than any other facility in the country, the state's finding of "imminent and substantial endangerment" may not seem surprising. But to the laboratory and DOE, it was a big deal, because it set up important legal consequences.

Most significantly, the determination allowed the state to unilaterally file a corrective action order against Los Alamos late in 2002, requiring extensive "fence-to-fence" waste characterization and cleanup.

The DOE and University of California immediately challenged the finding.

First, they argued the state can't issue the determination of potential endangerment because it was based mostly on the release or discharge of radionuclides, over which the state has no legal jurisdiction.

They argued the state couldn't prove with any substantial evidence that legacy wastes posed an imminent threat and that the procedure for making the determination didn't even meet the state's own requirements.

Los Alamos County became concerned about the finding's implications when the County Commission learned the state might post warning signs around certain laboratory facilities.

Fearful the signs might cause unwarranted concern among the county's citizens, the commission, along with state Rep. Jeannette Wallace, R-Los Alamos, met with Richardson and New Mexico Environment Department Secretary Ron Curry, who assured them the signs wouldn't be posted.

"We decided to not put up the signs because of the concern it would hurt the entire community, not just the laboratory," Curry said.

He acknowledged the signs were "a little bit of a bargaining chip" in the disagreement with DOE.

But now, after about 16 months of closed-door negotiations, the state's finding of imminent and substantial endangerment is no longer necessary, following the agreement announced March 19 reached between DOE and the state.

"It is not so much that the finding of imminent and substantial endangerment was removed," explained NMED attorney Charlie de Saillan, as it is that the new consent order, agreed to by DOE, "is based on

a different statutory provision, which doesn't require a finding of an imminent and substantial endangerment."

The order, which is a consent order because both DOE and NMED have agreed to it, is now under a different section of the state's Hazardous Waste Act, section 10, that doesn't give the state as much or as broad authority as it would have under section 13, as it was originally issued in 2002.

Curry said that is fine by the state because the new agreement is in the form of a legally enforceable document with stipulated penalties if DOE and Los Alamos fail to perform according to the agreement.

Furthermore, de Saillan said, the consent order also now includes a provision under the state's Solid Waste Act. That allows the state to include in the order a broader range of wastes, such as high explosives and perchlorate, that couldn't have been included originally.

So, does the state believe 60 years of legacy waste at Los Alamos still poses a threat to human health and the environment?

"I believe that the order will continue to demonstrate that those health concerns will show themselves in different ways," Curry said.

As far as DOE is concerned, waste at Los Alamos did not and still doesn't pose a threat.

"The bottom line is the department believes, that the operations at Los Alamos National Laboratory have not contributed to an imminent or substantial endangerment," said DOE's Joe Vozella, assistant manager of facility operations at Los Alamos. "We are in the midst of a robust cleanup and now are on track to be done by 2015."

Despite the strong contention by both DOE and the state that the agreement, as Richardson said on March 19, "resolves all outstanding cleanup issues," Greg Mello of the Los Alamos Study Group — a lab watchdog organization — wonders how those claims can be made when the document that the agreement is based on isn't even public yet.

If the new agreement is largely based on the state's original corrective action order, as state officials have said, then Mello said it isn't going to require any real cleanup.

He said the original order did not have waste investigations that would address how cleanup should be performed; rather, they were designed to determine whether or how much waste should be cleaned up.

"NMED has not asked for a cleanup plan and has no plan; DOE does have a plan, which is not to clean up," he said.

NMED's de Saillan said the original state order does have provisions for cleanup, but they aren't detailed and don't make up the bulk of the order.

The reason, he said, is that much of the wastes still haven't been characterized and the public should have some input when it comes to deciding how cleanup gets done.

"If we were to build into the order detailed cleanup, we would prejudice the remedy before the public has had a chance to participate in the cleanup process," he said.

And, unlike the original order, the new consent agreement has enforceable deadlines for final implementations and remedies.

"The consent order goes a little further than what was in the unilateral order," he said.

State airs lab proposal for environment cleanup

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ALAMOS — The state Environment Department has released a draft environmental corrective action order for what it calls "fence-to-fence" cleanup at Los Alamos National Laboratory.

The department said the proposal, unveiled Wednesday, requires comprehensive investigation and cleanup of environmental contamination at the northern New Mexico lab, including remediation of disposal areas and contaminated ground water.

The proposal sets a completion date of 2015 for the cleanup work.

"This order will ensure that LANL is held responsible for the environmental contamination it created," Environment Secretary Ron Curry said. "An enforceable order puts New Mexicans in control of LANL cleanup and gives us the power to make sure this important work is completed."

The agreement between the state and the lab was first announced in March by U.S. Sen. Pete Domenici, an Albuquerque Republican, and Gov. Bill Richardson. It resolved a 16-month deadlock between the state, LANL, the Energy Department and the University of California, which manages the lab.

ON THE NET

New Mexico Environment Department:

www.nmenv.state.nm.us

Los Alamos National

Laboratory: www.lanl.gov

The agreement was supposed to be released in May, but it was delayed because the state and the Environmental Protection Agency were trying to negotiate oversight of surface water pollution, which is regulated by the regional EPA office in Dallas.

Environment Department spokesman Jon Goldstein said the state decided to release the draft order and work on the oversight issue later. He said the state hopes to have full oversight authority by 2006.

The public has 30 days to comment on the 271-page proposal.

At the earliest, it could go into effect in November depending on revisions and the signatures of DOE and UC officials.

Lab Director Pete Nanos expressed support for the proposal.

Lab spokeswoman Linn Tytler said Los Alamos, as a measure of good faith, has been meeting the required timetables of the order and using the required process-

es even while negotiations were underway.

The lab estimates the cleanup will cost \$760 million.

But environmentalists looking for tangible cleanup tasks in the order say they can find little more than requests for studies.

"What NMED has produced is an environmental science welfare program and little more," said Greg Mello, director of the Los Alamos Study Group.

He said the order gives the state more control over the investigation process, but he questioned the need for more studies since DOE knows which sites are most important to clean up.

"No one knows where and what is buried up at Los Alamos," Goldstein said. "So investigation needs to come before we can choose the best way to clean up."

After the studies, cleanup options will be brought before the public for comment. Then the environment secretary must approve the lab's plan for getting it accomplished.

Contaminants, as defined in the order, include explosives, perchlorate, hazardous waste and hazardous constituents. While the order doesn't cover radioactive waste, DOE and UC agreed to provide the state data on such contamination.



Date:-09/09/2004 Section:-News Edition:-Journal North Page:-2

State Stands Behind Lab Cleanup Order

Adam Rankin Journal Staff Writer

POJOAQUE -- The chief of the state Environment Department's Hazardous Waste Bureau held firm to his position that a proposed "fence-to-fence" cleanup order for Los Alamos National Laboratory does require cleanup, not just investigations and planning -- despite direct challenges by some environmentalists that cleanup is actually limited.

James Bearzi, NMED's Hazardous Waste chief, told a gathering of about 30 people Wednesday night at the Cities of Gold Hotel that the draft Order on Consent "is as far as the state can go" in requiring cleanup under state and federal laws.

"Yes, there are hard cleanup dates," he said, noting that all environmental remedies need to be implemented by 2015, even if they are not all complete by then.

Bearzi went through the main points of the draft order -- the result of months of closed-door negotiations between the state, LANL and the Department of Energy and University of California, which runs the laboratory. The public has until 5 p.m. Oct. 1 to submit comments, which Bearzi said will be incorporated into the final version if NMED believes they will improve the order. He said DOE, LANL, UC then have to agree on any changes.

Greg Mello, director of the nonprofit LANL watchdog organization the Los Alamos Study Group, pushed Bearzi to point to a single specific cleanup requirement in the draft order.

Bearzi replied that there are, in fact, simple cleanups going on right now and that each site has a specified end date for remediation. But specifics have to come later for most of the complicated sites, he said, after investigations are carried out and after the public has a chance to comment on the prescribed actions.

"It is a plan to develop a cleanup plan," Mello said after the meeting. "That isn't how it has been described in public."

Bearzi said the order sets a nationwide precedent.

"This is a big deal because most agreements that govern cleanup at DOE sites don't have stipulated penalties," he said. Penalties for not complying with the order start at \$1,000 a day and jump to \$3,000 a day.

"DOE is taking the state of New Mexico seriously and I think for the first time," he said.

Publication: Jnl Legacy 1995 to July 2005; Date: Sep 28, 2004; Section: Final; Page: 74



Date:-09/28/2004 Section:-Op-Ed
Edition:-Final Page:-A11

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TALK OF THE TOWN

Nuking Hurricanes a 'Killer' Idea

RE: "SCIENTIST: Hurricanes Can Be Nuked" article

Can nuclear weapons be used to weaken hurricanes? Oh, please. Such a question cannot be taken seriously, and not just for fundamental physical reasons.

The average hurricane releases the energy of about 1,200 10-megaton nuclear detonations a day.

Setting aside the catastrophic diplomatic costs and the patent illegality of such a course of action, the fact is that halting hurricanes with nuclear weapons would kill far more people than the hurricanes themselves.

Sakharov's 1958 estimate of 10,000 expected deaths per megaton exploded was updated at Princeton in 1990 and found to be still more or less accurate, meaning that one 10-megaton explosion can be expected to eventually produce about 100,000 cancer deaths over many generations.

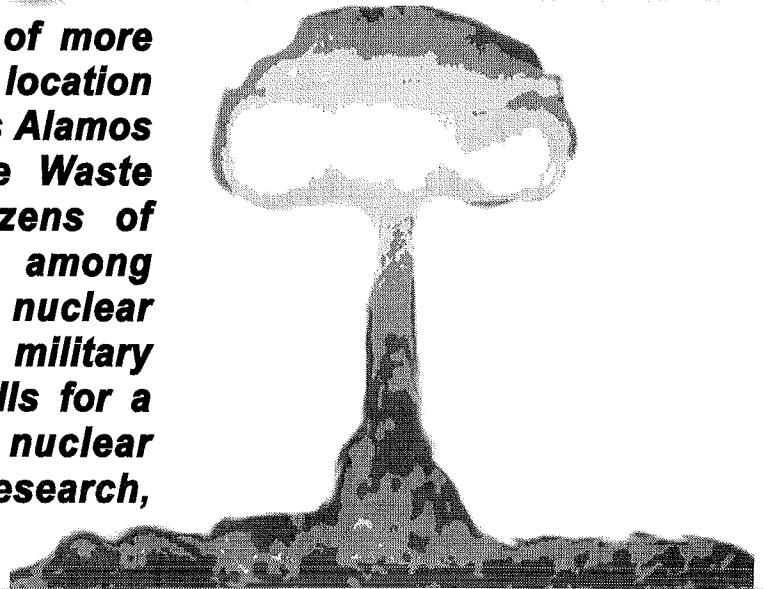
The death toll from all atmospheric nuclear testing (545 megatons) can be expected to eventually cause more than 5 million deaths, under reasonable population assumptions.

GREG MELLO

Albuquerque

Nuclear Weapons, Military Research and the University of New Mexico

Albuquerque holds a stockpile of more nuclear weapons than any other location on earth. New Mexico hosts Los Alamos National Lab, Sandia Lab, the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, and dozens of military-industrial corporations among other facilities of the national nuclear weapons complex. Current US military and nuclear weapons policy calls for a renewed expansion of the nuclear weapons complex, weapons research, and military spending.



Where do UNM and New Mexico fit into this picture?

The Bush Administration's Nuclear Weapons Policy
Los Alamos National Lab
Universities and Weapons Research
New Nuclear Weapons
The Modern Pit Facility
"More Useable" Nuclear Weapons

WHEN: Wednesday October 8th at 7PM

WHERE: 'Lobo B' on the 3rd Floor of the Student Union Building

With Greg Mello of the Los Alamos Study Group, and Darwin BondGraham & Emily Hell of Fiat Pax
(a California based group focused on the militarization of universities, science, and education).

***Sponsored by the Progressive Student Alliance
and the UNM Campus Greens***

Publication: Jnl Legacy 1995 to July 2005; Date: Oct 9, 2004; Section: State; Page: 147



Date:-10/09/2004 Section:-New Mexico & Metro Edition:-State Page:-E1

Energy Sessions Scheduled at UNM

Journal Staff and Wire Reports

The University of New Mexico and the United Nations Foundation will host a discussion on energy choices and the environment at 6:30 p.m., Monday at the Student Union Ballrooms A and B on the UNM campus.

Sam Donaldson of ABC news will moderate the discussion. Panelists include David Bacon of the Los Alamos Study Group, Craig O'Hare, the special assistant for renewable energy for the Energy Minerals and Natural Resources Department and Jeff Sterba, president chairman and CEO of Public Service Company of New Mexico.

The event is one of 25 similar discussions being held across the country. Discussions will cover topics such as on how energy choices can influence U.S. foreign policy. The event is open to the public.

PHOTO: Color

DONALDSON: TV newsman to moderate meeting on environment, resources

DAVID BACON ALB TRIB 10-11-04

InBrief

Donaldson to lead panel at UNM

The University of New Mexico will host a panel discussion on Energy Choices and the Environment tonight at 6:30.

The event will be moderated by Sam Donaldson of ABC News and will feature panelists from the Los Alamos Study Group, New Mexico State Energy Department, UNM Center for Public Policy and Public Service Company of New Mexico Inc.

The group will talk about American power and global security, prosperity in the global economy, energy choices and environmental challenges.

The event will be held in Student Union Ballrooms A and B.



Date:-10/12/2004 Section:-News Edition:-Journal North Page:-A4

Forum on LANL Dump Sought

Adam Rankin Journal Staff Writer

Lab Has Plans To Expand Waste Site

A citizens' group funded by the U.S. Department of Energy wants the people of northern New Mexico to know more about government plans to expand a 65-acre radioactive waste dump at Los Alamos National Laboratory.

The Northern New Mexico Citizens Advisory Board doesn't think people know much about LANL Area G, which has received nearly 11 million cubic-feet of radioactive waste since 1957. The board wants to hold a public forum on the government's plans, which will increase the dump site by about 50 percent.

"The (Citizens Advisory Board) wants to hold this to clarify the issues; part of our charter is to educate the public and educate the board," said Lorelei Novak, the board's public outreach coordinator.

She said the board is hoping to hold the forum shortly after the first of the year.

The forum aims to present various viewpoints and accurate information on Area G, and uncover what is known about the waste dump.

Board chairman Tim DeLong said the time is right for a public forum on the waste site, a target of perpetual attacks from environmental and anti-nuclear groups that want to see the site closed and cleaned up.

But activist Greg Mello, director of the Los Alamos Study Group, cautioned against investing too much effort or hope in an informal forum that carries no weight and may be inspired by questionable DOE public-relations motives.

"The (citizens board) is accountable only to DOE," because DOE funds them and has in the past exerted its control over the board by disbanding it and reconstituting it with new members, he said.

Nonetheless, Mello said, it is important for people to know the government plans for Area G.

"They are going to dispose of a lot of waste (at Area G) and that is the important thing that people should understand," he said.

LANL spokeswoman Kathy DeLucas said the lab will run out of disposal space at the dump, where low-level radioactive waste is buried in a series of unlined pits, in 2006.

"We have been working with DOE on plans to develop another operating zone, called Zone 4, which is an additional 33 acres next to the current operating zones," she said.

That expansion, given projected waste generation estimates, will provide enough space for LANL's low-level radioactive waste for another 100 years, she said.

Low-level waste includes such items as gloves, papers, boxes and plastic sheeting, but does not necessarily mean they have a low level of contamination. Low-level waste can include some highly contaminated materials, with long- or short-lived radiation.

Mello said Zone 4 contains numerous archaeological sites and ancient puebloan ruins that would likely be destroyed by any expansion. He discounted LANL's estimate that an expansion into Zone 4 will last another 100 years.



Date:-10/12/2004 Section:-News Edition:-Journal Santa Fe Page:-A4

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OCTOBER 20-26, 2004

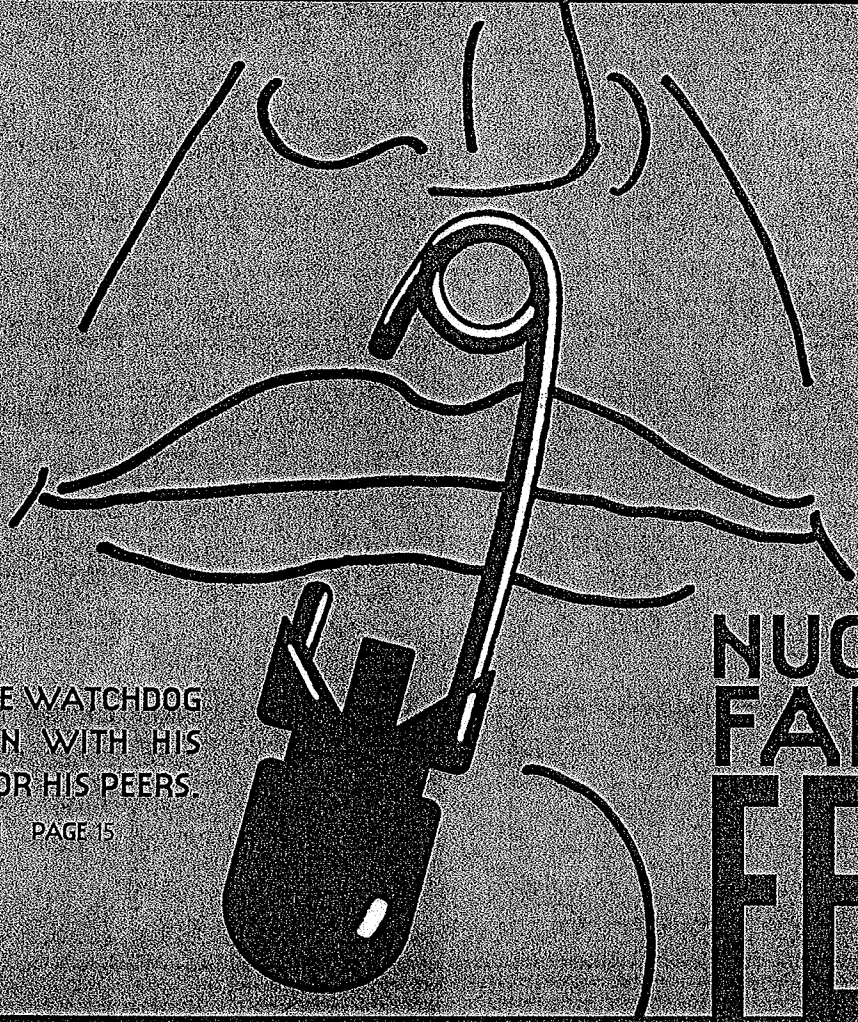
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SANTA FE

REPORTER

WEEKLY NEWS AND CULTURE



AN ANTI-NUKE WATCHDOG IS OUTSPOKEN WITH HIS CRITICISM—FOR HIS PEERS.

BY ZACHARY SMITH PAGE 15

NUCLEAR FAMILY FEUD

SFR TALK

Tom Udall dishes on the election season.
PAGE 9

OUTTAKES

Vote trading in New Mexico?
PAGE 10

MOVIES

Black Cloud casts a dark shadow.
PAGE 39

NUCLEAR FAMILY FEUD

AN ANTI-NUKE WATCHDOG IS OUTSPOKEN WITH HIS CRITICISM—FOR HIS PEERS.

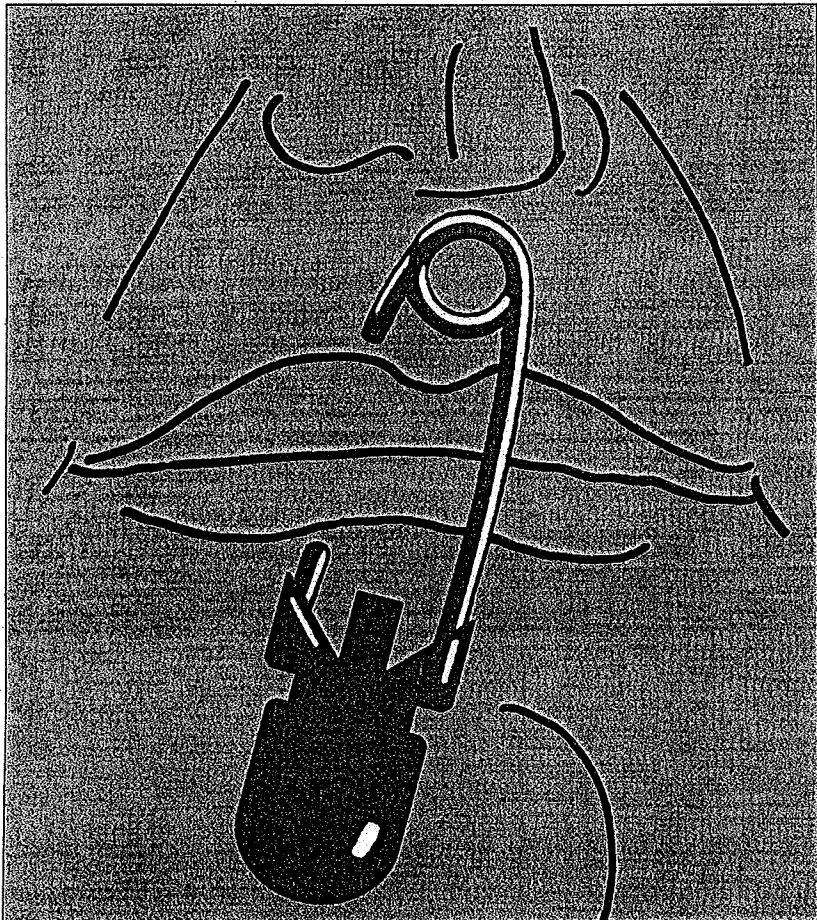


ILLUSTRATION BY LUBA LUKOVA

BY ZACHARY SMITH
zach@sfrreporter.com

Greg Mello sits behind his desk at the Los Alamos Study Group reading his morning e-mail. Mello is the executive director of LASG, a nuclear-advocacy group founded in 1989. Its headquarters is located in a house near the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque and resembles a library dedicated to nuclear issues. Books and reports from the Department of Defense and Department of Energy fill an entire wall. A different cat walks by at regular intervals as Mello continues to read.



Greg Mello of Los Alamos Study Group wants more attention paid to disarmament.

"This is absurd," he says, as he comes across an e-mail from Deepthi Choubey, director of the Peace and Security Initiative for the Ploughshares Fund, a San Francisco-based foundation.

Over the past 22 years, Ploughshares has awarded approximately \$40 million worth of grants to initiatives dedicated to preventing the spread of arms and nuclear weapons. Its

Peace and Security Initiative, created in 2003, was designed to bring together a variety of people and groups working on nuclear issues to create shared goals—and a shared strategy in the face of declining funds for their work in a post 9.11/recession environment, according to Paul Carroll, Ploughshares program officer.

"They faced a fiscal crisis—several major funding foundations had left the field," Carroll says. More than 100 foundations and non-profits are part of the PSI.

Today's e-mail includes the results of a poll in which PSI organizations were asked to prioritize their goals depending on the results of the Nov. 2 election. The consensus is that if Bush wins, PSI should focus on "preventing terrorist

acquisition of weapons of mass destruction." If Kerry wins, it should be the reduction and elimination of the "risks and roles of stockpiles."

"I don't know what 'reducing and eliminating current risks and roles of stockpiles' means," says Mello, reading further.

"Nuclear disarmament isn't even an option." Mello, long an outspoken critic of the federal Department of Energy,



Paul Carroll, program director for the Ploughshares Fund, feels that foundations had to change priorities after 9.11.

According to www.globalsecurity.org, the US has just more than 10,000 nuclear weapons in service, with somewhere between 25,000 and 32,000 in the world.

FILE PHOTO



Joni Arends directs CCNS, which conducts, among other activities, a project to investigate LANL's impact on the Rio Grande. More info at: nuclearactive.org.

More information on New Mexico Sustainable Energy and Effective Stewardship can be found at www.nmsees.org

Los Alamos National Laboratory and other government-run nuclear activities, these days also is a critic of other nuclear activist groups.

He, and some others, contend that disarmament has slid, unacceptably, off the anti-nuke agenda. They maintain that collaborative efforts such as PSI, as well as the spearheading of grantmaking through centralized, large foundations, has unacceptably softened the goals of anti-nuke groups around the country and New Mexico.

The result, Mello says, is a disturbing shift away from promoting the complete destruction of nuclear weapons. Recently, LASG launched a disarmament petition.

In New Mexico, a group of 12 anti-nuke groups received \$200,000 from Ploughshares in 2004 for their work. Together, they have created a new organization, New Mexico Sustainable Energy and Effective Stewardship. They maintain that while the complete reduction of nuclear weapons is an ultimate goal, the on-the-ground work they do, such as monitoring the environment, fighting for proper regulation and educating the public, is a key step toward the goal. Further, they say, their work is going better than ever. "We've had so many victories this year," says Joni Arends, executive director of the Santa Fe-based Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety.

Mello's criticisms are well enough known to other activists who, for the most part, say they'd prefer not to publicly argue about the issues he's raised. In some ways, it's about the difference between nuclear activism as a moral issue and a pragmatic one. The word "abolition," when used to describe the elimination of nuclear weapons, harkens back to slavery. Mello believes that anti-nuke groups should be fighting a cutting-edge battle to abolish nuclear weapons once and for all. And it's impossible to do this, he says, if groups take money from foundations that promote other goals. "Politically and organizationally, there has never been a cutting-edge social movement in the US primarily funded by foundations," says Mello. "Foundations have a hard time criticizing nuclear weapons."

Ploughshares was conceived as a nuclear disarmament foundation when it was founded 22 years ago by Sally Lienthal. "In the past, we supported groups working for abolition," says Carroll, the organization's program officer. "Now we have more of a non-proliferation flavor. There's insecure nuclear materials and nations have blatantly violated nuclear treaties."

Concern over non-proliferation—preventing the spread of nuclear weapons—can be traced to the end of the Cold War. It was then that concerns arose that additional measures were needed to secure the nuclear material scattered throughout the new satellite Soviet states. In 1991, Sam Nunn, a Democratic senator from Georgia, and Richard Lugar, a

Republican senator from Indiana, teamed up to create programs that would help Russia secure its nuclear material.

Nearly a decade later, frustrated with the level of government funding for that program, Nunn moved to the private sector. The Nuclear Threat Initiative was created, with funding pledged by Ted Turner's Foundation. Today, NTI is an active foundation that not only contributes directly to securing nuclear material around the world, but also supports special projects developed cooperatively between non-profits and the NTI.

NTI's board consists of former generals and current elected officials, such as US Sen. Pete Domenici (R-NM), a long-time supporter of LANL and other nuclear initiatives in New Mexico. Joan Rohlfing, NTI's senior vice president, had a long government career that ranged from being a staff member at the House Armed Services Committee, to the director of National Security and Nonproliferation within the Department of Energy. Rohlfing also serves on PSI's policy working group.

Foundation connections to government such as these have helped spark concern from people like Mello. "The people we had been struggling against are now in senior policy positions in the largest foundations," he says, adding that it's one of the reasons his organization no longer seeks funding from Ploughshares. He and others also believe it's the reason why groups that promote abolition of nuclear weapons have been shut out of the funding cycle.

Alice Slater is president of the New York-based Global Resource Action Center for the Environment, which heads Abolition 2000, a group of more than 2,000 organizations from 95 countries that support nuclear disarmament. "Foundations have stopped funding our groups in the US," she says. "The foundations have gotten together and decided not to support abolition."

Jacky Cabasso, executive director of the Western States Legal Foundation, which monitors activities at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California, also believes her group lost foundation funding because it advocates for disarmament.

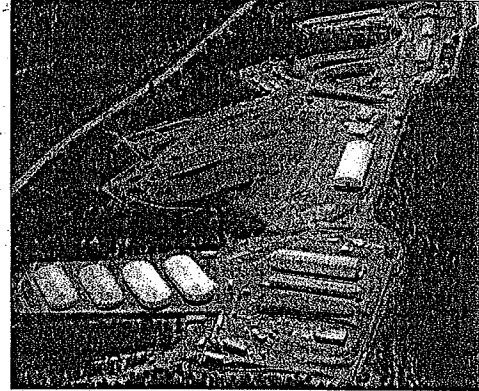
As for New Mexico, Mello is critical of other local groups, which he accuses of working on what he calls "displaced issues," such as monitoring pollution from Los Alamos National Laboratory. He believes the focus should be on nuclear weapons, period. In fact, he believes that LANL wants anti-nuke groups to focus on issues like pollution because it keeps the focus away from the larger ramifications of nuclear weapons. "What disturbs the leadership the most—a pretty good indicator of what you're doing is working—is the moral narrative," he says.

In other words, the nuclear fight should not be an "environmental" battle, based on the damage nuclear activities do to air and water and health. Fighting nuclear weapons, Mello believes, should

be a moral battle. "Santa Fe has never said that making weapons of mass destruction is something they can't support because they want to be inclusive," Mello says.

But many other activists, whose work in New Mexico has the same long and intense profile as Mello's, disagree with his assessment of the situation. They say that eliminating nuclear weapons is still their ultimate goal. The difference, they believe, is in strategy.

"We are supporting nuclear disarmament by raising awareness that LANL impacts New Mexico's air and water, now, and for future generations," says Joni Arends. Arends is CCNS' executive director. The group is one of a dozen that received funding this year from



An aerial view of Los Alamos National Laboratory.

Ploughshares and comprises a new joint effort to change the mission of the state's nuclear labs.

The joint effort, New Mexico Sustainable Energy and Effective Stewardship (NMSEES), has as its goal to address the new security needs of the US by cleaning up the environmental damage of the nuclear era and creating energy independence for the coming years.

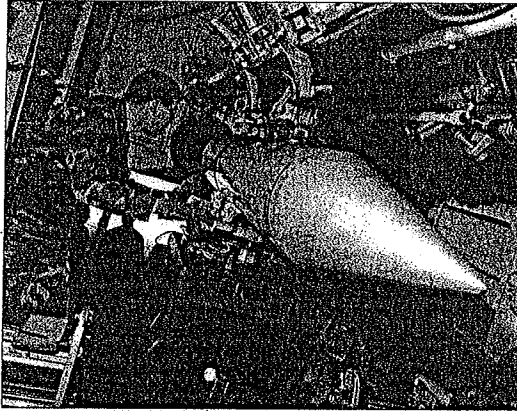
Of the dozen New Mexico groups that comprise the joint effort funded by Ploughshares, several are old war horses in New Mexico's anti-nuke community. CCNS began in 1988 to fight against the opening of the Waste Isolation Pilot Project, and was instrumental in delaying WIPP—a nuclear waste depository in Carlsbad, New Mexico—for more than a decade. That battle helped create the same anti-nuke movement that still exists in Santa Fe. The Albuquerque-based Southwest Research and Information Center was founded in 1971. It focuses on a variety of issues such as uranium mining and current plans to build a uranium enrichment plant in New Mexico. "We tend to work with people that ask for our assistance, like community groups," says the director of the organization's nuclear waste safety program, Don Hancock. "We think it's

According to a study by the University of Maryland, 84 percent of Americans agree with US disarmament obligations dictated in the Nonproliferation Treaty.

valuable." Another group, Nuclear Watch of New Mexico, founded in 1999, focuses primarily on the production of nuclear weapons in New Mexico.

These groups' work run the gamut. SRIC has an intense focus on the impacts uranium mining has had on New Mexico. Nuke Watch was one of the aggressive litigants that has helped

The Nonproliferation Treaty has been signed by 188 nations.



Military loading a "bunker buster" in a B-2 stealth bomber.

stall LANL's plans for a bioweapons lab. "We draw blood, but we are up against powerful forces," says Jay Coghlan, the group's executive director. "We cannot claim victory. There's still a lot of work to do." CCNS has had major successes in air and water monitoring from LANL. All the groups emphasize public health, environmental monitoring and education.

"It really gets down to strategy," says Arends. "There's a myriad of different strategies. We're all drawn to this work for different reasons and we need to focus because it's so difficult, we have to focus on the parts that we love. There's so much work to do. There's plenty of work for everyone."

New Mexico SEES, says Carroll from Ploughshares, works from the point of view that the national labs "are an incredible brain trust. The way the group is approaching this is: Let's turn those resources toward renewable energy issues, because the Cold War is over. There's no rationale to update the arsenal. It's like an economic conversion." It's a concept that resonates with a speech given by Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry when he spoke in Santa Fe recently and noted that, just as the Manhattan Project, which led to the atom bomb, began in New Mexico, so can a new generation of innovation for alternative forms of energy.

Through these collaborative measures, these groups believe disarmament, abolition of nuclear weapons, will happen—over time. It's a strategy of progressive steps.

Mello says it's not enough.

Like other anti-nuke groups, LASG's work has many components. It's led citizen inspections of LANL, posted huge anti-nuclear billboards, litigated for public records. Recently, it launched a disarmament petition. In a letter on the group's website about the petition, Mello writes: "Nuclear weapons are by far the most destructive kind of weapon. The conscience of

The Science-Based Stockpile Stewardship program began when Clinton entered office. From 1992-1999, the program received \$28 billion dollars to develop ways of updating the US nuclear arsenal without traditional testing. Sandia, LANL and Intel received funds to create computer programs to assess the health of the warheads. LANL also modified older nuclear bombs into "bunker-busters," nuclear bombs designed to penetrate deep into the earth and blow up underground shelters.

humanity recoils from them. Yet without a public registry of resistance here in New Mexico, our stifled silence is taken as enthusiastic support for these weapons and everything they stand for."

Mello believes large-scale grassroots opposition to LANL is what's needed. He cites the shutdown of the Rocky Flats site in Denver in the late 1980s as an example.

Due to several major fires in the facility that resulted in plutonium releases, the public gradually found out and grew angry. Activists held demonstrations that highlighted how the Rocky Flats bomb factory had wantonly disobeyed environmental laws under the rubric of national security. Their protests finally led to an FBI raid that shut the factory down.

Don Hancock of SRIC points out that things aren't as cut and dried at LANL. "The US nuclear weapons program can continue with the shutdown of Rocky Flats, but it could not operate without LANL," he says.

Jay Coghlan from Nuclear Watch says also that the protests surrounding Rocky Flats were not based on its role as a nuclear weapons manufacturer. "At Rocky Flats, the environment horrors started to be revealed," he says. "The shutdown was more environmentally propelled."

Additionally, Coghlan and Hancock say it's unlikely that national policy change could come from New Mexico. "You have to affect national policies—it's futile to try and end nuclear weapons here in New Mexico," says Coghlan. Mello believes this thinking is a result of LANL's successful public-relations machine. "LANL holds secret seminars on how to neutralize activists," he says.

The activists in question say that far from being neutralized, they are working together. "In order to be effective, we have to rely on each other to do the best that we can," Arends says. "I'm sure it was the same for the civil rights movements, the women's vote movement. There's a lot of collaboration going on."

She, and others, say they don't want to be drawn into a conflict about strategy within the nuclear activist world because there's too much work to be done. "We're all so very, very busy in this new world that we live in," Arends says. "You have to find something to get people interested in this issue. You have to show where it's impacting them."

One thing that is certain is that the future of nuclear weapons in the US, and the approach taken in general to the myriad complex issues, hangs in the balance right now.

As PSI's poll suggests, the outcome of the Nov. 2 presidential election will have great influence on the tactics taken by all parties within the peace and security community.

Arms-control issues—internationally and in the US—are one of the central issues of the presidential election, because proliferation of weapons of mass destruction speaks directly to national security.

For the anti-nuke community, the outcome of the election will have very practical impacts on national policies and their work.

"If Bush is re-elected, there will be full-scale testing underground in Nevada by 2007," Coghlan says, referring to a test site run by the Department of Energy. There has not been a full-scale nuclear bomb exploded by the US since a 1992 moratorium, but activists are concerned such tests will be re-ignited if Bush is re-elected.

For Mello and the disarmament community, the ramifications of Nov. 2 also are intense. Another review of

the Nonproliferation Treaty begins in May 2005. The Nonproliferation Treaty's ultimate goal, first ratified by the US in 1970, is for worldwide nuclear disarmament.

"When Bush came in, he trashed all the treaties," says Slater, of the Global Resource Action Center for the Environment, who fears what Bush might do to the Nonproliferation Treaty. That review also coincides with the 60-year anniversary of the bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima. GRACE's initiative, called Abolition Now, will bring in 100 mayors from cities around the world—including the only two cities to have felt the bomb's full force—to ask that disarmament be put back on the agenda.

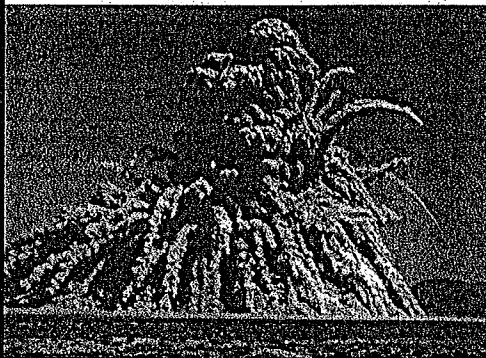
As far as the election goes, Mello agrees with his peers: "Kerry will allow us to ask questions and provides a tomorrow."

SFR



Jay Coghlan believes the rising nuclear weapons' budget has helped raise awareness of nuclear issues.

According to a study by the University of Maryland, 84 percent of Americans agree with US disarmament obligations dictated in the Non-Proliferation Treaty.



SEDAN was part of the Plowshares Program at the Nevada Test Site. It was fired on July 6, 1992.

LASG's disarmament petition can be found at: www.lasg.org/campaigns/DisarmamentPetition2.htm



**Date:-10/25/2004 Section:-News
Edition:-Journal North Page:-1**

Los Alamos Hopes for Land Transfer

Adam Rankin Journal Staff Writer

County, Schools Would Both Benefit

Los Alamos County and its school system are hoping a U.S. Energy Department land transfer will give them space for a new warehouse and administrative offices.

That would free up their current location in Los Alamos for economic development while providing the school system and Los Alamos County with a long-term revenue source.

But first, the state Environment Department needs to clear the once-contaminated parcels for business and commercial use.

The land was originally intended for the county, but an amendment offered by Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., to the 2005 Defense Authorization Bill directs DOE to transfer the land to the Los Alamos Public School system instead.

"Los Alamos desperately needs more commercial development," Domenici was quoted as saying while announcing the deal approved Oct. 8 by a House and Senate conference committee.

Congress then approved the bill, which awaits only President Bush's signature to become law.

In vacating their current 13-acre space in downtown Los Alamos, the county and school system would free up one of the last remaining lots of significant size for commercial development in the downtown area. Office and retail space are at a premium there.

At the same time, the school system would acquire money-making commercial space and the county would gain revenue from property and gross receipts taxes.

The transfer includes two parcels in LANL Technical Area 21, a former plutonium processing facility before that work was shipped to Rocky Flats, Colo., near Denver.

The smaller parcel, called A-15 and about 8 acres in size, would be leased for economic and business development. A county analysis estimates the school system could generate from \$50,000 to \$300,000 a year from leasing the parcel.

"The county wins either way, but if we didn't have the property the county wouldn't get anything (in gross receipts taxes)," Los Alamos Public Schools Superintendent Jim Anderson said.

Rent from the A-15 parcel would be "money that we sorely need in our operational budget," he said.

Los Alamos schools also get an \$8 million boost to their revenue each year from the government in order to make working at the laboratory attractive for prospective scientists.

That additional money -- eyed jealously by poorer school districts in the region -- had to be approved on a year-to-year basis. But a separate Domenici defense bill amendment, co-sponsored by Sen. Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M., makes that additional \$8 million in funding a certainty each year, payable beginning in 2005 by whomever operates the laboratory.

Because the federal assistance is not adjusted for inflation, county and school officials are concerned federal funding will be devalued over time and that other income sources, such as the A-15 parcel, will become necessary.

The larger parcel, A-8, is about 25 acres and will be used to house shared school and county warehouses and physical operations facilities to streamline and cut costs, Anderson said.

But the New Mexico Environment Department still must certify that the land is safe for its intended use.

LANL spokeswoman Kathy DeLucas said the two sites in question have been cleaned by DOE and the laboratory to residential standards, a cleaner standard than necessary for light industrial use.

At the request of the state, LANL and DOE have undertaken another round of studies this summer, she said. A report on the status of the two parcels is due to the Environment Department soon, she said.

The sites held septic tanks and leach fields, and A-15 was used as a construction dump site for such things as concrete, lumber and rebar, DeLucas said.

"As far as the concerns about the cleanup, that is one of those things that has to be worked out with (the Environment Department) because it has to be usable," said Los Alamos County spokeswoman Julie Habiger.

[Greg Mello, director of the Los Alamos Study Group, a LANL watchdog, said portions of both sites abut a dump site where about 750,000 cubic feet of radioactive, chemical and solid waste is buried.]

Jon Goldstein, a spokesman for the Environment Department, said the state is aware of previous releases on the sites of heavy metals, such as lead, mercury and zinc, as well as radionuclides.

"Obviously, the county has an interest in these sites, but we want to make sure the folks in the county aren't left holding the bag in any way if there are any problems," he said.

He added that DOE and the laboratory would remain responsible if any contamination is discovered after the transfer.

"Once we get that final report back from DOE, we will be able to say for sure how clean these parcels are," he said.



Date:-10/25/2004 Section:-News Edition:-Journal Santa Fe Page:-1

Los Alamos Hopes for Land Transfer

Adam Rankin Journal Staff Writer

County, Schools Would Benefit

Los Alamos County and its school system are hoping a U.S. Energy Department land transfer will give them space for a new warehouse and administrative offices.

That would free up their current location in Los Alamos for economic development while providing the school system and Los Alamos County with a long-term revenue source.

But first, the state Environment Department needs to clear the once-contaminated parcels for business and commercial use.

The land was originally intended for the county, but an amendment offered by Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., to the 2005 Defense Authorization Bill directs DOE to transfer the land to the Los Alamos Public School system instead.

"Los Alamos desperately needs more commercial development," Domenici was quoted as saying while announcing the deal approved Oct. 8 by a House and Senate conference committee.

Congress then approved the bill, which awaits only President Bush's signature to become law.

In vacating their current 13-acre space in downtown Los Alamos, the county and school system would free up one of the last remaining lots of significant size for commercial development in the downtown area. Office and retail space are at a premium there.

At the same time, the school system would acquire money-making commercial space and the county would gain revenue from property and gross receipts taxes.

The transfer includes two parcels in LANL Technical Area 21, a former plutonium processing facility before that work was shipped to Rocky Flats, Colo., near Denver.

The smaller parcel, called A-15 and about 8 acres in size, would be leased for economic and business development. A county analysis estimates the school system could generate from \$50,000 to \$300,000 a year from leasing the parcel.

"The county wins either way, but if we didn't have the property the county wouldn't get anything (in gross receipts taxes)," Los Alamos Public Schools Superintendent Jim Anderson said.

Rent from the A-15 parcel would be "money that we sorely need in our operational budget," he said.

Los Alamos schools also get an \$8 million boost to their revenue each year from the government in order to make working at the laboratory attractive for prospective scientists.

That additional money -- eyed jealously by poorer school districts in the region -- had to be approved on a year-to-year basis. But a separate Domenici defense bill amendment, co-sponsored by Sen. Jeff Bingaman,

D-N.M., makes that additional \$8 million in funding a certainty each year, payable beginning in 2005 by whomever operates the laboratory.

Because the federal assistance is not adjusted for inflation, county and school officials are concerned federal funding will be devalued over time and that other income sources, such as the A-15 parcel, will become necessary.

The larger parcel, A-8, is about 25 acres and will be used to house shared school and county warehouses and physical operations facilities to streamline and cut costs, Anderson said.

But the New Mexico Environment Department still must certify that the land is safe for its intended use.

LANL spokeswoman Kathy DeLucas said the two sites in question have been cleaned by DOE and the laboratory to residential standards, a cleaner standard than necessary for light industrial use.

At the request of the state, LANL and DOE have undertaken another round of studies this summer, she said. A report on the status of the two parcels is due to the Environment Department soon, she said.

The sites held septic tanks and leach fields, and A-15 was used as a construction dump site for such things as concrete, lumber and rebar, DeLucas said.

"As far as the concerns about the cleanup, that is one of those things that has to be worked out with (the Environment Department) because it has to be usable," said Los Alamos County spokeswoman Julie Habiger.

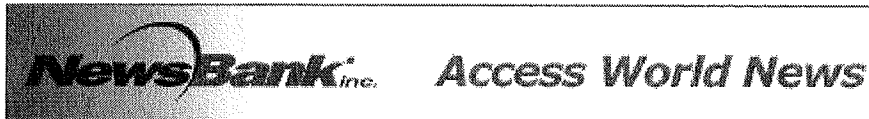
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Paper: Santa Fe New Mexican, The (NM)
Title: TALKS TO FOCUS ON PAKISTAN AND NUKES
Date: November 6, 2004

What are the root causes and consequences of the spread of nuclear weapons in Pakistan and South Asia?

Zia Mian, a Pakistani-born anti-nuclear leader, will tackle the subject this coming week in Santa Fe and Los Alamos.

Mian, a planetary physicist, teaches and conducts research at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University. But he also is president of **Los Alamos Study Group**, a nonprofit organization in Albuquerque that pushes for nuclear disarmament.

In public talks last month, Sigfried Hecker, the former director of Los Alamos National Laboratory, named Pakistan as his top country of concern as a potential source of catastrophic terrorism.

Mian will dig deeper into that assertion.

"Dr. Zia Mian is an expert on Pakistani nuclear programs and their relation to South Asian society and politics, and on nuclear proliferation in general," according to a **Los Alamos Study Group** news release.

He will also discuss: What is the role of citizens in preventing nuclear war? Are citizens powerless to act for their own security? Or if not, how can they act wisely and effectively?

"Dr. Mian's thoughtful and incisive message is of special importance in New Mexico, a state that is host to the two best-funded nuclear weapons facilities in the world, a state where weapons of mass destruction are now the largest industry in dollar terms," according to **Los Alamos Study Group**.

(Sidebar)

If you go ...

Los Alamos

What: "Pakistan and Proliferation: Causes and Consequences," a talk by Zia Mian

Where: The Community Room, 475 20th St.

When: 7 p.m. Tuesday

Cost: Free

Santa Fe

What: "The Election, the Empire and the Bomb," a talk by

Zia Mian

Where: Cloud Cliff Artspace, 1805 Second St.

When: 7 p.m. Wednesday-

Cost: \$7 at the door

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Author: THE NEW MEXICAN

Section: Santa Fe/EI Norte

Page: B-3

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Date:-11/05/2004 Section:-Venue

Edition:-Journal North Page:-S7

BOOKS & LECTURES [also in Journal Santa Fe]

TODAY

"APPLES, CORIANDER AND WATERMELON: SPANISH PLANTWAYS TO NEW MEXICO" The Palace of Governors sponsors an illustrated talk on Southwest agriculture and cuisine by Placitas resident William W. Dunmire at 6 p.m. at St. Francis Auditorium, 107 W. Palace Ave. Free. Call 476-5087.

SOPHIE CABOT BLACK The Southwest Literary Center presents a poetry reading by the author of "Graywolf," "The Descent" and "The Misunderstanding of Nature" at 7 p.m. at Collected Works Bookstore, 208-B W. San Francisco St. Call 988-4226.

"ON TOCQUEVILLE AND LAWYERS" St. John's College presents a lecture by Harrison Sheppard at 8 p.m. at the Great Hall, Peterson Student Center. Call 984-6000.

"CRATER COUNTY: A LEGAL THRILLER OF NEW MEXICO" A book signing by New Mexico author Jonathan Miller at 7 p.m. at Borders Books, 500 Montezuma Ave. Call 954-4707.

SATURDAY

"THIRD VIEWS, SECOND SIGHTS: A REPHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY OF THE AMERICAN WEST" The Santa Fe Center for Photography and the Museum of New Mexico Press present a lecture and dialogue on the subject of rephotography with authors Mark Klett, Byron Wolfe and Rebecca Solnit from 4-6 p.m. followed by a book signing at the James A. Little Theatre, 1050 Cerrillos Road. Call 984-8353.

"HUNDERTWASSER: AUSTRIAN ARCHITECT" A slide show by Shanti Elke Bannwart from 5-6 p.m. at Travel Bug Coffee Shop, 839 Paseo de Peralta. Call 992-0418.

THE ART AND CRAFT OF BOW-MAKING The Santa Fe Community Orchestra presents an exploration of the form and function of violin, viola and cello bows with master luthier Charles Ervin. Violinist, violist and cellist Edward Lawrence will demonstrate a variety of bows and playing styles on all three instruments from 2-4:30 p.m. in the Southwest Annex at the College of Santa Fe, 1600 St. Michael's Drive. Free admission; Workshop registration is \$15/adults, \$5/high school students. Call 466-4879.

ARTY POST An opportunity for family and friends to create and sculpt with Jody Sunshine, Dana Chodzko, J. Barry Zeiger, Kim Hargrove and Kathryn Davis from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at El Museo Cultural, 1615-B Paseo de Peralta. Cost is \$100. Call 992-0591.

"THE TEXAS RANGERS" A book signing and discussion by Louis R. Sadler and Charles Harris III at 3 p.m. at Alla' Latin American Books, 102 W. San Francisco St. Call 988-5416.

FENG SHUI WEEKEND Come hear talks by local practitioners Chantal Quincy on "Beyond Feng Shui: Dowsing & Numerology" at 11 a.m.; Melissa Nelson on "Garden Harmony" at 1 p.m.; and Rhiannon McGehee on "Natural Order of Feng Shui" at 3 p.m. at Tropic of Capricorn, 86 Old Las Vegas Highway. Call 983-2700.

"SUCCESS, MASTERY AND THE POWER OF SISTERHOOD" Author Nicole Grace, Chief Executive Officer of the Art of Consulting will discuss the 18 keys for achieving success, fulfillment and joy in any profession from 1-2 p.m. at Tone, 901 W. San Mateo. Call 989-8552.

SUNDAY

AN EVENING OF POETRY AND MUSIC WITH JIMMY SANTIAGO BACA with music by the Chris Abeyta Trio to benefit Heart Mountain Prison Project from 4-7:30 p.m. at Cloud Cliff Bakery and Cafe, 1805 Second St. Tickets are \$25 at the door, \$20 in advance, \$10 age 21 and younger. Call 988-3229. GATES OF THE GARDEN Learn about feng shui at a talk by local practitioner Debe Holland at 1 p.m. at Tropic of Capricorn, 86 Old Las Vegas Highway. Call 983-2700.

"MASTERCLASS ON BOW TECHNIQUE WITH EDWARD LAWRENCE" The Santa Fe Community Orchestra presents a performance by Santa Fe Youth Symphony musicians Arthur Knouse, concertmaster and Zach Quay-delaVallee, cello from 1-2:15 p.m. at St. Francis Auditorium, 107 W. Palace Ave. Free admission. Call 466-4879.

BEYOND THE BLANK PAGE The Museum of Fine Arts "material pleasures, artistic mediums" program hosts an open-ended, person-to-person salon-style gallery talk by poet Miriam Sagan at 2 p.m. at 107 W. Palace Ave. Free. Call 476-5059.

"AFTER THE VOTE: FINDING COMMON GROUND THROUGH POETRY, PROSE & MUSIC" Celebrate victory or heal election blues with Santa Fe poets Gary Mex Glazner, Barbara Rockman, Rosie Simpson and Stefi Weisburd, fiction writers Seth Biderman and Rick Ferber, and music by Laurianne Fiorentino and Matthew Vaughn at 4 p.m. at Temple Beth Shalom, 205 East Barcelona Road. Free. Call 992-3553.

"LIVING, LOVING AND OTHER HERESIES" A book signing of a book of essays by local musician, former dancer and writer Zsolt from 2-4 p.m. at The Ark, 133 Romero. Call 988-3709.

MONDAY

"THE GREAT DROUGHT OF THE 21ST CENTURY": THE SALT RIVER PROJECT EXPERIENCE" Southwest Seminars "Mother Earth, Father Sky: Perspectives on the Environment and the West" at 6 p.m. at Hotel Santa Fe, 1501 Paseo de Peralta. Cost is \$5/series subscription; \$10 at the door. Call 466-2775.

"SUDDEN AWAKENING INTO DIRECT REALIZATION" A book signing by Eli Jaxon-Bear at 5 p.m. at Ark Bookstore, 133 Romero. Call (800)879-4221.

WET MONDAYS Craig Child's "Desert Cries" will be discussed at the Wet Mondays monthly bookclub at 5:15 p.m. at Collected Works Bookstore, 208-B W. San Francisco St. Call 988-4226.

TUESDAY

"THE CANCER MONOLOGUES:AUTOBIOGRAPHY AS A TOOL FOR HEALING" St. John's College Library & Fine Arts Guild "Speaking Volumes" Lecture presents author Tanya Taylor at 7 p.m. followed by a book signing and reception at the Great Hall, Peterson Student Center. Book is available in the St. John's College Bookstore. Call 984-6000.

POET'S NIGHT WITH ANNE VALLEY-FOX AND JOSEPH SOMOZA A debut reading of "Point of No Return," the newest poetry title by Anne Valley-Fox at 7 p.m. at Collected Works Bookstore, 208-B W. San Francisco St. Call 988-4226.

"APPLES, CORIANDER AND WATERMELONS: SPANISH PLANTWAYS TO NEW MEXICO" The Los Alamos Historical Society's Lecture Series presents an illustrated lecture on Southwest agriculture and cuisine by author Bill Dunmire at 7:30 p.m. followed by a book signing and discussion at the Pajarito Room of Fuller Lodge, Los Alamos. Free. Call 663-0477.

"THE ELECTION, THE EMPIRE, AND THE BOMB" Join Zia Mian, Pakistani-born physicist and antinuclear leader and other members of the Los Alamos Study Group in a discussion of proliferation, disarmament and the essential role of citizens at 7 p.m. at the Community Room at 475 20th St., adjacent to Ashley Pond, Los Alamos. Call (505) 265-1200.

"EARLY CHRISTIANITY: FROM THE ORIGINS TO THE FALL OF ROME" A Symbolic History Series lecture by Charles Bell, tutor emeritus, at 8 p.m. at St. John's College, 1160 Camino Cruz Blanca. Free. Call 984-6117.

WEDNESDAY

GILBERT SORRENTINO WITH MICHAEL SILVERBLATT A Lannan Foundation Readings & Conversations event at 7 p.m. at The Lensic, 211 W. San Francisco. Tickets are \$6, \$3/students with ID. Call 988-1234.

"JUNEBUG" Fall Literary Events at the Santa Fe Public Library hosts a reading by Maureen McCoy from her new novel at 7 p.m. at 145 Washington Avenue. Call 955-6780.

"THE ELECTION, THE EMPIRE, AND THE BOMB" A public lecture by Zia Mian, Pakistani-born physicist and antinuclear leader and discussion of proliferation, disarmament and the essential role of citizen from 7-9 p.m. at Cloud Cliff Artspace, 1805 Second St. Call 820-1974.

"GALLERY REPRESENTATION" The Santa Fe Community College "Wednesday Art Talk" hosts Mark Diprima, Associate Director, LewAllen Contemporary at 7 p.m. in Room 714, 6401 Richards Avenue. Call 428-1413.

RAISING MORE MONEY WORKSHOP Sharon Ervine leads a low-pressure, high results fundraising workshop from 8:30-10:30 a.m. at Santa Fe Community College, 6401 Richards Avenue. Call 428-1343.

THURSDAY

THE READING SAMPLER presents "Ol' Max Evans: The First Thousand Years," a biography by Slim Randles at 6:30 p.m. on KSFR 90.7 FM Santa Fe Public Radio. Call 473-4813.

CCA OPEN POETRY NIGHT Don't miss the chance to read your work to a receptive audience at 7 p.m. (sign-up begins at 6:30 p.m.) at Longevity Cafe, 112 W. San Francisco St. Free. Call 982-1338.

"NEW MEXICO PRINTMAKERS, COLLECTOR'S PERSPECTIVE" The Harwood Museum of Art, Taos presents a lecture by David Farmer at 7 p.m. at the Museum, 238 Ledoux St. Call (505) 758-9826.

POETRY GATHERINGS The Mesa Public Library hosts a monthly poetry gathering at 7 p.m. at 2400 Central Ave., Los Alamos. Call 663-0477.

Talks to focus on Pakistan and nukes

The New Mexican

What are the root causes and consequences of the spread of nuclear weapons in Pakistan and South Asia?

Zia Mian, a Pakistani-born anti-nuclear leader, will tackle the subject this coming week in Santa Fe and Los Alamos.

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The Online News Source for Los Alamos

Print Page

Thursday, November 11, 2004

Last modified Wednesday, November 10, 2004 4:38 PM MST

Proliferation began 50 years ago

ROGER SNODGRASS, roger@lamonitor.com, Monitor Assistant Editor

Most people know the current headlines about Pakistani scientist Abdul Qadeer (A.Q.) Khan and his alarming dispersal of nuclear weapons technology, but fewer know the 50-year background that contributed to Pakistan's notoriety as a nuclear proliferator. Princeton scholar Zia Mian addressed that discrepancy Tuesday night in a public meeting at the Community Center, speaking to a small but informed audience.

The disgraced Khan, under house arrest in Islamabad, has been reviled as the mastermind of a "vast black-market nuclear arms bazaar operating under superpower radar for more than a decade," as the Christian Science Monitor described his operation in a story on Oct. 26.

But Mian, now the president of the Los Alamos Study group, a nuclear watchdog group with a long history of observations in Los Alamos, recalled that Khan's roots go back 50 years and can be traced not just to the invention of the atomic bomb, but to the global marketing of the "nuclear age."

For years, Pakistan received huge military subsidies, as a member of two regional alliances with the U.S. At the same time it was saturated with a steady stream of military, economic and scientific aid and advice, Mian said, that would take it to the threshold of the atomic age.

When President Eisenhower announced the Atoms for Peace program in December 1953, Pakistan's prime minister was first in line to join in; and, by the next year, Pakistan began its atomic research, Mian said. As the most "allied ally of the U.S.," Pakistan embraced what its leaders understood to be "a shortcut to the future."

The result, Mian said, was that the Pakistan army was taught how to fight nuclear war, how to think about nuclear strategy, as the United States began spreading its weapons abroad, basing them on the territory of its allies. The U.S. helped a number of its allies, including Iraq and Pakistan, to build research reactors and trained nuclear scientists, all in the name of spreading the virtues of modernity.

Getting to the next step, opening up shop as a nuclear power was a big leap, and there to take it was A.Q. Khan, who studied in Europe and went to work for Urenco, a large Dutch uranium enrichment firm, Mian said.

From a country on a beeline to modernity, Khan found a shortcut to the technology, as well. Returning home with a list of suppliers, he began to equip his laboratory with legal purchases from legitimate businesses, including an entire tritium processing plant from a German firm and an entire set of reprocessing equipment from the Swiss.

"The U.S. did know about it at a fairly early stage," Mian said, but then power politics and the special relationship with the U.S. came in handy again. When the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, Pakistan's western neighbor, the Reagan administration considered it more important to maintain its military ties than to complicate them with sanctions.

"By then the damage had been done," Mian said. "This didn't spread like smoke in the air, but through large institutions. Once in play, things happen, opportunities arise."

Khan confessed to his role in supplying North Korea, Iran and Libya with nuclear technology in February, and he was pardoned in exchange by Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf. What Khan's motives were and the extent of his nuclear largess, are not fully known.

In the text of a speech given Monday in Sydney, Australia, the International Atomic Energy Agency Director General Mohamed ElBaradei said that the extent of the illicit network, including at least two dozen international countries, by last count, "points to the shortcomings of national systems for oversight of sensitive equipment and technology."

"We have already lost the battle of proliferation," Mian

concluded. "The association of the nuclear notion with the idea of modernity is now global, and there is no getting away from this."

Under the category of lessons learned, Mian warned that the scientific community, once an international community, that had pooled its understanding of nuclear science to realize the Manhattan Project, was now at risk of becoming narrowly nationalistic.

Worse, Mian fears that future conflicts will become more like the Cuban Missile Crisis. While pressure will grow to prevent conflicts from turning into war, countries with war aims will tend to accelerate escalation, "to get where you want to be when the international community tells you to stop."

The Cold War, Mian said in an interview last week diverted the world's hopes for the United Nations from a mutual project "to free the world from the scourge of war."

While there are no easy ways out after a 50-year detour, he said, "the United Nations should be given a way to try to find a solution."

Publication: Santa Fe New Mexican; Date: Nov 23, 2004; Section: News; Page: 5



Activists rejoice after funding turned down for new weapons

By DIANA HEIL The New Mexican

Anti-nuclear groups declared a victory last weekend after Congress rejected funds for new weapons.

Although the Department of Energy got more money than President Bush requested, the most controversial projects either weren't funded or were funded at reduced levels. The moves came after some members of Congress questioned justifications for designing new weapons, building a new nuclear-weapons manufacturing plant and shortening the time it would take to resume nuclear testing.

Greg Mello, head of the Los Alamos Study Group in Albuquerque, counted it as a victory because the Bush administration did not get an endorsement for new nukes in the spending bill.

"No doubt there was real growth in the weapons program despite these cuts, and there will be real new weapons designed this year and upgraded weapons built — don't doubt this for a minute — but these important symbolic projects, which carry messages about the legitimacy of the whole, were stopped for now," Mello said.

Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California, with the help of engineers at Sandia National Laboratories in New Mexico, was poised to design a so-called "nuclear bunker buster." This new nuclear bomb would burrow beneath ground and hit targets much deeper than possible with current technology.

The Bush administration asked for \$27.6 million for the Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator, as it's called in Washington. But in the end, the bunker buster got nothing.

The Bush administration also wanted \$9 million for scientists to explore advanced concepts in weapons design, which could have included new nuclear weapons. But U.S. Sen. Pete Domenici, R.N.M., who chairs the senate Energy and Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee, helped change the program's direction and give it a new title.

The newly named Reliability Replacement Warhead Program — which Congress gave \$9 million last weekend — will encourage scientists to focus on refurbishing existing weapons instead, according to Domenici's office. Weapons designers, including those at Los Alamos, will be challenged to make existing weapons more reliable, easier to certify without testing and safer to store over time. Hypothetically, a brand new version of an existing warhead could be built.

Another project that took a hit was the administration's \$29.8 million request for a new facility to build plutonium pits for nuclear weapons. It was cut to \$7 million. The Energy Department can use the money to evaluate different sites for the facility and conduct environmental-impact studies.

Meanwhile, the Energy Department is wrapping up a major study on the life span of pits that will give legislators more information before they decide whether to build a new pit facility, according to Domenici's office.

What's more, part of the millions that would have gone for pit manufacturing and certification at Los Alamos National Laboratory went for another cause. Congress agreed to spend \$236 million to refurbish

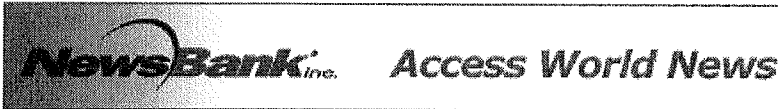
W76, a submarine-launched warhead, according to Domenici's office.

The final bill provides \$23.3 billion overall for DOE in 2005. That is \$150 million more than President Bush requested and \$1.34 million more than the agency received this year. It awaits his signature.

"The fight against the Bush administration's nuclearweapons program was the No. 1 legislative priority of the arms-control community this year," said John Isaacs of the Council for a Livable World based in Washington, D.C.

He attributed the budget victory to Rep. David Hobson, an Ohio Republican who worked to kill these programs; the federal budget deficit; the need to find funds for the Yucca Mountain nuclear-waste dump in Nevada; and the hard work of arms-control advocates.

Hobson, chairman of the House Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee, has battled with Domenici, a supporter of the president's policies and an advocate for Los Alamos National Laboratory and other nuclear labs.



Paper: Santa Fe New Mexican, The (NM)
Title: FDA DISCOVERS PERCHLORATE IN MANY FOODS
Date: December 10, 2004

The same explosive additive that seeps from Los Alamos National Laboratory into springs along the Rio Grande has now been detected in food across the nation.

In 15 states, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration found low levels of perchlorate in lettuce and milk, according to a study released this month. Bottled water appeared to be unaffected, though.

"At this point, there's no reason to be concerned," said Kimberly Rawlings of the FDA in Washington, D.C.

The FDA is telling adults, children and infants not to alter their diets.

No foods from New Mexico were tested. But **Greg Mello**, an Albuquerque-based activist, had a strong reaction to the recent study. He said he believes perchlorate is detrimental to human health and thought processes.

Perchlorate, he said, is "a biochemical assault," which is contributing to "a significant decline in raw potential intelligence in our civilization."

"This has dramatic implications for creativity and leadership," Mello said.

But the FDA isn't sure about that. The National Academy of Sciences is expected to draw conclusions about health problems associated with perchlorate in January.

"That will be a major factor in determining whether it's a public-health risk," Rawlings said.

Perchlorate is an ingredient in rocket fuel, fireworks, explosives and industrial processes. The FDA tested 128 lettuce samples and 104 milk samples in a limited number of products and brands.

In Yuma, Ariz., a head of green-leaf lettuce measured 27.4 parts per billion of perchlorate.

In Belle Glade, Fla., a head of iceberg lettuce came in at 71.6.

In Maryland, a jug of organic whole milk hit 11.3.

These were the highest amounts. One part is roughly equal to one half teaspoon of water in an Olympic-sized pool.

"These data are exploratory and should not be understood to be a reflection of the distribution of perchlorate in the U.S. food supply," the FDA cautioned.

Now the agency is testing other foods.

Perchlorate has been used in plutonium processing at Los Alamos lab and in rocket fuels at White Sands Missile Range near Alamogordo. Traces of it have showed up in the lab's tap water. But like most states, New Mexico has not set safe drinking-water standards for the salt-based chemical even though federal law gives states that option.

The New Mexico Environment Department is monitoring perchlorate closely but waiting for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to fix a drinking-water standard, said spokesman Jon Goldstein.

That could be two or more years away. Before establishing safe levels of perchlorate in drinking water, EPA must know the health effects, where the toxin shows up, how the toxin can be detected and the cost of removing it.

Meanwhile, Los Alamos lab has taken action against perchlorate, since the chemical was put on the EPA's watch list in 1999, spokesman James Rickman has said. The lab installed a new filtration system for perchlorate at the liquid-radioactive-waste-treatment plant, which discharges into Mortandad Canyon, he has said, and installed a permeable barrier to prevent migration of the chemical in the canyon bottom.

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Author: DIANA HEIL
Page: B-4
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Tuesday, December 14, 2004

Last modified Tuesday, December 14, 2004 3:01 PM MST

DOE eyes moving plutonium work

ROGER SNODGRASS, roger@lamonitor.com, Monitor Assistant Editor

After years of making do with various widely scattered production lines for small, very long lasting nuclear power sources, the Department of Energy is beginning a process to rationalize bringing it all together in one location.

Timothy A. Frazier of DOE's Office of Nuclear Energy conducted a public scoping session Monday night at the Los Alamos Golf Course. He sounded out the basic idea and invited public comment in case there is a better alternative than the ones under consideration.

The current process requires a total of five transfers of nuclear material that travel 8,000 miles between Savannah River Site, S.C., Oak Ridge, Tenn., Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico and the Idaho National Laboratory.

The Los Alamos task involves several dozen employees at PF-4 in the Plutonium Facility at Technical Area 55, who purify and encapsulate plutonium-238. The heat-producing packets they produce are then used in thermoelectric heating systems known as radioisotope power systems (RPS) that have space and national security applications.

The plutonium that is purified and encapsulated at LANL arrives after a circuitous route that begins as neptunium-237 in the Savannah River Site in South Carolina, is turned into targets at Oak Ridge, and then irradiated in Idaho. The targets are backtracked to Oak Ridge for processing into plutonium, before heading to New Mexico.

After LANL's input, the encapsulated energy source will now go back to Idaho to be assembled and tested.

Clearly, Frazier suggested by the preferred alternative he described, a more effective, safer and less

vulnerable alternative would be to focus the whole operation in one place, namely the Idaho National Laboratory, the newly named consolidation of the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory and the Argonne National Laboratory - West.

Although significant radiological releases causing personal injuries occurred in the production process at Los Alamos in 2003 and 2002, Frazier said the new facility contemplated for Idaho would build in lessons learned and corrective actions that have since been adopted at LANL.

"The beauty of a new facility," said Doug Outlaw, a contractor with SAIC, who is writing the Environmental Impact Statement, "is that we'd be able to engineer the safety."

A driver for the current push is a plan to use an RPS on NASA's New Horizon voyage to Pluto, departing in 2006.

The space applications are fairly well known. The Apollo Moon-landing expeditions used an early version of RPS and more advanced designs now power Voyager's exit from the solar system and the Cassini spacecraft's survey of Saturn. A future return to the moon and a manned mission to Mars are also likely to need RPSs.

But Frazier was unable to specify the national security uses that are under way or contemplated.

He was able to say that these unspecified uses are "by other federal users," and that they are not related to nuclear or space-based weapons or missile defense.

Gregg Mello of the Los Alamos Study Group objected to the classified aspects of the project

"This is a pig in a poke because we don't know the scope," he said. "We don't know the inventory of plutonium-238. We don't know where it is, what alternative missions there are, or how they can be changed."

The DOE officials with the Office of Space and Defense Power Systems received initial comments in Idaho and Wyoming last week and will now move on to Tennessee and Washington, D.C.

The public has until the end of January 2005 to send comments to: Timothy A. Frazier, EIS Document Manager, Ne-50/Germantown Building, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C.

A draft EIS will be issued next and after that a final EIS, with further opportunities for public comment, before a Record of Decision concludes the process.



Date:-12/08/2004 Section:-News

Edition:-Journal North Page:-1 *[also in Journal Santa Fe]*

LANL Bid Includes Cleanup Contract

Adam Rankin Journal Staff Writer

Draft Calls For Separate Firm

A small but significant clause in the draft request for proposals to operate Los Alamos National Laboratory lays out a new future for how environmental cleanup and management of the most controversial waste sites will be handled at the nuclear weapons research facility.

Work that has until now been the responsibility of the main contractor, the University of California, will soon be assigned to a separate contractor in an effort to improve efficiencies and cut overhead costs, according to federal officials.

Beginning as soon as 2007, the next primary operator of the laboratory will no longer be responsible for environmental restoration work, nor for a significant component of waste management at the laboratory, according to the draft criteria released last week by the National Nuclear Security Administration.

Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham announced in April 2003 that the LANL contract would be put up for bid for the first time in the laboratory's 61-year history following a series of security failures and financial management problems. University of California has operated LANL since 1943, but its contract to run LANL expires at the end of September 2005.

Management of LANL's Radioactive Liquid Waste Treatment Facility, Technical Area 54 -- including the radioactive waste dump known as Area G, cleanup of legacy wastes, decontamination and decommissioning, as well as responsibility for all legacy wastes and environmental restoration could be included in the separate contract.

"For the taxpayers, we need to do whatever we can to make the process more efficient, while fulfilling the mission," said John Ordaz, assistant manager for environmental management for NNSA at the Los Alamos Site Office.

Other Energy Department and NNSA sites, including Oak Ridge in Tennessee and Idaho National Environmental and Engineering Laboratory, have separate cleanup contractors, he said.

"We are trying to get efficiencies in the program" by reducing overhead costs, he said.

Since 1993 about \$700 million of taxpayer money has been poured into environmental cleanup programs and investigations at LANL. Environmentalists and New Mexico's two senators, Jeff Bingaman, a Democrat, and Pete Domenici, a Republican, have expressed concerns that LANL and the Energy Department have little to show for all the money that has been spent on cleanup there and around the country over the years.

Those worries culminated in a nationwide plan to speed up environmental cleanup for a lower cost at the Energy Department's facilities. The so-called "accelerated" plan could cut \$100 billion and 30 years off

cleanup, according to federal officials.

Ordaz said the effort to improve cleanup efficiencies and cut costs at LANL by creating a separate cleanup contract is part of an effort that has been in the works for several years. The new contract start date of 2007 also coincides with NNSA's takeover of environmental management responsibilities from the Energy Department, he said.

"We are not saying that the laboratory folks are not doing a good job," he said, but by creating a separate contract for cleanup the government can get a better deal.

Environmental groups view the proposal with mixed reactions.

"We have some real concerns that a new layer of bureaucracy is being created that will use up resources and prevent shovels being put in the ground to remove the waste that is threatening our ground water," said Joanie Arends, director of the watchdog group Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety.

"We'd like to see more information about how this is going to be a better system," she said.

But others support the action and say it is a move they touted years ago.

"We've been trying to make that happen for ten years," but the effort was blocked, said Greg Mello, director of the Los Alamos Study Group.

"It was just felt that almost anybody would be better (than University of California) -- some real environmental contractor who was used to producing actual work," he said. "Contractors who work for private industry are expected to get things done."

Jay Coghlan, director of Nuclear Watch of New Mexico, said he sees the provision "as a slap in UC's face" for doing a poor job over the years.

"Sure, let's give it to someone who specializes in it, but ... we'd really like to see contractors from within the state get that job," he said.

Ordaz said NNSA will form a review board over the next few months, similar to the one that generated the LANL contract criteria, to develop a scope of work for the cleanup contract that will be open to competitive bids.

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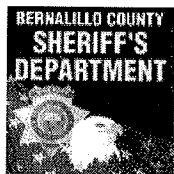
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Wednesday, December 8, 2004

LANL RFP Separates Cleanup Contract

By Adam Rankin
Journal Staff Writer

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