

Abq Arts July 2005

Mightier Than the Sword
Writers Address the Nuclear Age



Karen Jones Meadows



John Bradley

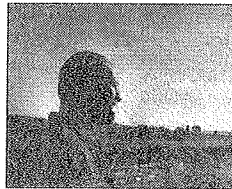


Maisha Baton

Saturday, July 15, 7 pm

Lobo Theater

3013 Central Ave NE, Albuquerque



William Witherup



Mary Oishi

Silent Auction &
"Round Robin" open mike!

Tickets available for \$10 at:

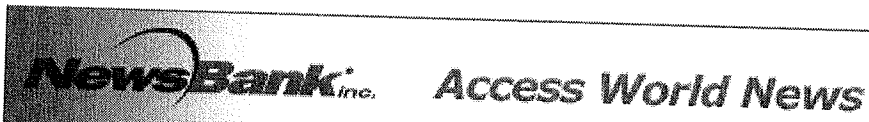
Bookworks, 4022 Rio Grande Blvd NW, 344-8139

Page One Books, 11018 Montgomery Blvd NE, 294-2026

The Book Stop, 3410 Central Ave SE, 268-8898



Or online from the —
Los Alamos Study Group
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Paper: New York Times, The (NY)

Title: Senate Votes to Shut Down Laser Meant for Fusion Study

Date: July 2, 2005

The Senate voted early yesterday morning to stop construction of the nation's costliest science project, a laser roughly the size of a football stadium that is meant to harness fusion, the process that powers the Sun.

The project, the National Ignition Facility, or NIF (pronounced niff), is at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California and has cost \$2.8 billion. About 80 percent complete, NIF is scheduled to be finished in 2009 at a cost of \$3.5 billion and operate for three decades at an annual cost of \$150 million, for a total of \$8 billion.

The Senate's action, part of the \$31 billion energy and water appropriations bill, prompted warnings from the project's leaders that its demise could damage the nation's leadership in a field important to confronting energy shortages. This week, an international consortium picked France as the site of the world's first large-scale, sustainable nuclear fusion reactor, a project with an estimated cost of \$10 billion.

"What's at stake here is the opportunity to meet one of the grand challenges of science," Michael R. Anastasio, director of the Livermore laboratory, said in an interview. "It's essential for investigating fusion, which will help sustain confidence in our nuclear stockpile and inform our future thinking about fusion energy."

Other Livermore officials warned of a parallel to the Superconducting Supercollider, a proposed 54-mile particle accelerator that Congress killed in 1993 after spending \$2 billion. Some physicists regard its fate as a symbol of the erosion of the nation's scientific standing.

The Bush administration backs the National Ignition Facility, and the Senate action could be reversed or modified later this summer in conference with the House.

"There's going to be some meeting of the minds," said Greg Mello, director of the **Los Alamos Study Group**, a private organization in Albuquerque that monitors the nation's nuclear laboratories. "I think NIF will be hurt, but I doubt that it will come to a complete standstill."

In nuclear fusion, atoms merge and release bursts of energy, as in the sun or in hydrogen bombs.

The facility's powerful laser beams are intended to produce blistering hot conditions similar to those in exploding nuclear arms, helping scientists ensure the reliability of the nation's nuclear stockpile without the need for underground tests. Less directly, scientists want to use the beams to explore laser fusion as a way of producing commercial power.

But last month, Senator Pete V. Domenici, the New Mexico Republican who heads the Subcommittee on Energy and Water, proposed to delete all construction money, \$146 million, from the administration's request for the coming year.

The bill does provide \$314 million for limited research. Livermore scientists have built 4 of NIF's planned 192 laser beams and are firing them at targets the size of a BB, producing the first scientific insights.

Mr. Domenici, whose state includes both the Los Alamos and Sandia National Laboratories, in recent statements has accused the administration of "single-mindedly" supporting the California project at the expense of other worthy efforts. The ignition facility "is just one of many tools that must be supported," he said.

"The Senate bill will correct this imbalance," he said.

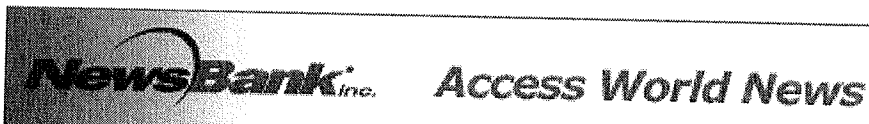
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Author: WILLIAM J. BROAD

Section: National Desk

Page: 16

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Paper: Ventura County Star (CA)
Title: Senate votes to halt costly nuclear fusion project
Date: July 2, 2005

Lawrence Livermore laser researchers say decision could harm U.S. standing

New York Times News Service

The Senate voted early Friday morning to stop construction of the nation's costliest science project, a laser roughly the size of a football stadium that is meant to harness fusion, the process that powers the sun.

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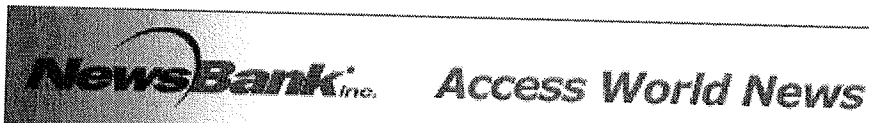
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Author: William J. Broad

Section: Main News

Page: 3

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Paper: Albuquerque Tribune, The (NM)
Title: Museum fund-raiser energizes both sides of nuclear debate
Date: July 13, 2005

If Ben Diven ever wanted to write a book about his experience with the Manhattan Project, he could literally start it with, "It was a dark and stormy night."

Diven, 86, was one of several scientists who spent hours testing the first atomic bomb 60 years ago this week.

"The day we shot (the bomb), the weather was bad. There was thunder and lightning going on," the Los Alamos man recalled.

Sixty years later, Diven is still not sure whether the atomic bomb was a change for the good or the bad.

On Friday, that debate will be brought to the forefront at a fund-raiser hosted by the National Atomic Museum, which will be attended by people who worked on the Manhattan Project and members of the **Los Alamos Study Group** an organization opposed to nuclear weapons and nuclear energy.

With Saturday marking the 60th anniversary of the first atomic bomb test at Trinity site a day some say changed the course of the world the fund-raiser features a dinner, 1940s-style fashion show, and a panel discussion featuring some of those who were involved with the Manhattan Project.

Those who buy tickets at \$125 per person will take a tour of the site at the White Sands Missile Range and dine at the Owl Cafe just as scientists did back in 1945.

"We thought it would be a fun fund-raiser," coordinator Kara Hayes said. "We thought it would be interesting to have people feel like they were part of the Manhattan Project."

But not everyone embraces the anniversary.

"We were somewhat appalled that such a serious subject would be treated as a parody," said Greg Mello, executive director of the **Los Alamos Study Group**. "The events they are celebrating resulted in the death of at least a quarter of a million people."

Three members of the group bought tickets and will attend, along with Shigeko Sasamori, a survivor of the Hiroshima bombing.

"We understand that there will be some discussion, and we certainly plan to be a part of that," Mello said.

The museum is aware of the group's planned attendance and has no problem with it, Director Jim Walther said.

"It's an event that changed our world," Walther said. "People feel different about it one way or another."

Walther said the museum does not take sides on nuclear issues. "Our role is to inform people," he said.

With money raised from Friday's event, the museum will run a "Peace Day" exhibit Aug. 6 to mark the dropping of the bomb at Hiroshima, Walther said.

C. Paul Robinson, who recently retired as director of Sandia National Laboratories, said the world's first nuclear explosion on that July day 60 years ago made the world a less aggressive place to live in.

"The second World War cost the lives of 45 million people, but it's important to note that since the Trinity explosion, we've had no other world wars," Robinson said. "It's my belief that we may have put the fear in people that the world cannot allow that kind of mass slaughter again."

Diven, who won't attend the museum's event, said the goal of his work at Trinity was to bring an end to World War II, which it did.

"I don't see what good protesting does," he said. "We're going to have nuclear energy anyway. I would just urge people to advocate for the development of a safe way to harness that energy."

That night 60 years ago, Diven remembered tensions growing as scientists watched the weather, afraid

lightening would strike the bomb.

"Up until minutes before, we didn't know when it was going to go off," Diven said.

"It was like the sun came out," Diven said. "It was a long time before the the shockwave hit, but it was obvious the bomb had worked."

NUCLEAR HAPPENINGS

"Blast from the Past"

*Where: National Atomic Museum.

*When: 5 to 9 p.m. Friday and 6 a.m. Saturday.

*What: Fund-raiser commemorating the 60th anniversary of the first test of the atomic bomb. The event features dinner, fashion show and panel discussion Friday. Tour of the Trinity site Saturday, followed by lunch at the Owl Cafe.

*Price: \$125.

*Phone: 242-6083.

"Mightier Than the Sword: Writers Address the Nuclear Age"

*Where: Lobo Theater, 3013 Central Ave. N.E.

*When: 7 to 9 p.m. Saturday.

*What: Poetry reading featuring several writers, followed by open mike session.

*Price: \$10. Advance tickets available at Bookworks, Page One Books, the Book Stop or online at www.lasg.org.

*Phone: 265-1200.

Trinity Site

*Where: White Sands Missile Range.

*When: 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday.

*What: Special opening of the site where the first atomic bomb exploded 60 years ago. The site is usually open only on the first Saturday of April and October.

*Price: Free; no reservations required.

*Phone: (505) 678-1134.

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Author: Megan Arredondomarredondo@abqtrib.com / 823-3602

Section: News

Page: A1

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Poets to speak on bomb anniversary

7/14/65 LA Monitor

SANTA FE - Poets and playwrights will speak on the 60th anniversary of the first nuclear explosion at 7 p.m. Friday at the James A. Little Theater (1060 Cerrillos Road) in Santa Fe, and again 7 p.m. Saturday at the Lobo Theater at 3013 Central Avenue NE in Albuquerque.

On Friday, Albuquerque poet Mary Oishi will be emceeding the event, which will feature anti-nuclear poets John Bradley and William Witherup; poet, author, educator and Santa Fe resident Elaine Maria Upton; award-winning playwright, actor, producer, author and educator Karen Jones Meadows; and New Mexico poet Judyth Hill.

On Saturday, Bill Witherup, John Bradley and Karen Jones Meadows will be performing again, this time joined by Mary Oishi and by poet, playwright and educator Maisha Baton. After an intermission, the second half of each show will be led by poets from our communities reading in a round-robin fashion from an open microphone.

There will be a silent auction at each event to raise money for the Aug. 6 commemoration and teach-in in Los Alamos. If you want to donate to the silent auction,

call Claire at the Los Alamos Study Group at 265-1200.

Tickets are \$10 for both events. They are available at the door and online, at lasg.org. Tickets for Friday's event are also available at Collected Works Bookstore and Nicholas Potter Books in Santa Fe. Tickets for Saturday's event are available at Page One, Bookworks and The Book Stop in Albuquerque.

Publication: Jnl Legacy 1995 to July 2005; Date: Jul 15, 2005; Section: Journal North; Page: 54



Date--07/15/2005 Section--Venue Edition--Journal North Page--S7

BOOKS & LECTURES

[also in Journal Santa Fe]

TODAY

"MUSEUMS: WHY SHOULD WE CARE?" Art Santa Fe presents a talk examining art in the midst of global turmoil by Phillipe de Montebello, director of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, at 6 p.m. at The Lensic, 211 W. San Francisco St. Tickets are \$35-55, students/\$20. For information, call 988-1234.

"MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD: WRITERS ADDRESS THE NUCLEAR AGE" The Los Alamos Study Group presents local writers Karen Jones Meadows, Elaine Maria Upton and Judyth Hill and national poets John Bradley and William Witherup with local poet, activist and writer Mary Oishi serving as emcee, a silent auction and "round robin" open mike at 7 p.m. at the James A. Little Theater, 1060 Cerrillos Road. Tickets for \$10 are available at Collected Works or Nicholas Potter Bookseller. For information, call 988-4266.

"PERILOUS PURSUIT ON THE SANTA FE TRAIL" A book signing and talk by Santa Fe Trail hikers and authors Inez Ross and Phyllis Morgan, author of "Marc Simmons of New Mexico" 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at Harry's Roadhouse, Old Las Vegas Highway.

SOMOS SUMMER WRITERS SERIES Society of the Muse of the Southwest presents Chellis Glendinning, author of "Chiva" and Arnoldo Garcia, author of "XicKorea" at 7:30 p.m. at Michael McCormick's Gallery, 106-C, Paseo del Pueblo Norte, Taos. Admission is \$5, \$4/members. For information, call 758-0081.

TAOS POETRY SLAM AND OPEN MIC for all ages with hosts Zayn Bilal and Allie at 8 p.m. at Western Sky Cafe, 1398 Weimer Road, Taos. Tickets are \$4 at the door, \$3/slammers. All proceeds benefit the Taos Poetry Slam Team. For information, call 770-3172.

SATURDAY

"THE CONSCIENTIOUS COLLECTOR: DOCUMENTING, DISPLAYING AND CONSERVING YOUR ARTWORKS" A workshop for collectors, artists and art professionals by Dr. M. Susan Barger, art conservator and collections expert and Hollis Walker, art writer and collection manager, 1-5 p.m. at the Center for Contemporary Arts, 1050 Old Pecos Trail. Cost is \$115. For information, call 455-7162.

"GUATEMALA" A slideshow by Bob D'Antonio 5-6 p.m. at the Travel Bug, 839 Paseo de Peralta. For information, call 992-0418.

"RALLI QUILTS: TRADITIONAL TEXTILES FROM PAKISTAN AND INDIA" Textile Arts Alliance hosts a lecture on ralli, a traditional quilt of bright colors and bold patterns made by women in the areas of Sindh, Pakistan, western India and surrounding areas by professor Patricia Ormsby Stoddard at 3 p.m. at the Wheelwright Museum Gallery, Museum Hill, followed by a booksigning and sale. Free/TAA members, \$5/non-members, membership available on site. For information, call 474-6257.

"AN EVENING WITH CHRISTINE BREWER" Intermezzo of the Santa Fe Opera offers a

pre-performance event with one of America's favorite "Divas" at 7 p.m. at Stieren Pavilion, Santa Fe Opera, 10 minutes north of Santa Fe. Free, members only. Performance tickets are not included. For information, call 946-2407.

"PRINTMAKING WITH STENCILS: IS IT WALLPAPER OR ART?" The education staff of the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum offers a hands-on workshop 9:30-11:30 a.m. Free, reservations suggested. Call 946-1007.

"THE ART OF NARRATIVE NONFICTION" WordHarvest offers a writing workshop with Emily Esterson, University of New Mexico journalism and creative writing teacher 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Cost is \$125. To register, call 471-1565.

"BLOC-BUSTA TALKS" Join Bloc-Busta organizers, artists and Cyndi Conn, director of Visual Arts, for an informal gallery talk and brunch with artists Erika Blumenfeld, Todd Anderson, Ann Gaziano, Chad Person, Clayton Potter, and Sheilah Wilson 10 a.m.-noon at the Center for Contemporary Arts, 1050 Old Pecos Trail. Free Bloc-Busta books will be available. For information, call 982-1338.

"STORYTELLING BY JOE HAYES" The Wheelwright Museum presents New Mexico's favorite storyteller at 7 p.m. at the Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian, 704 Camino Lejo on Museum Hill, today and Sunday. Come early, bring a chair and enjoy the outdoors. For information, call 982-4636.

"DRIP IRRIGATION" Santa Fe Greenhouses staff will provide a demonstration 9:30-10 a.m. followed by plant expert led tours through mature xeriscape display gardens at 10 and 11 a.m. at the onsite Garden Center, 2904 Rufina St. Free. For information, call 473-2700.

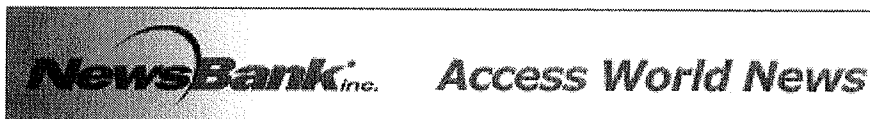
POND INSTALLATION WORKSHOP Shannon Young will lead a hands-on workshop at 1 p.m. at the Tropic of Capricorn, 86 Old Las Vegas Highway. For information, call 983-2700.

"CHINESE OPERA" Pearl Weng Liang Huang, Taos artist, scholar and University of New Mexico faculty member will speak at 1 p.m., in conjunction with the "Magic and Mystery in Taos" exhibit at The Harwood Museum of Art, 238 Ledoux St., Taos. For information, call 758-9826.

SUNDAY

"NATIVE ART FROM A NATIVE PERSPECTIVE" Collected Works presents a public talk and booksigning by Lucy Williams and Robert Preucel in honor of their new book "Native American Voices on Identity, Art and Culture: Objects of Everlasting Esteem" at 2 p.m. at Collected Works Bookstore, 208-B W. San Francisco St. For information, call 988-4226.

"INSECTS OF SANTA FE" Entomologist and consultant Linda Wiener, "The Bug Lady" will talk about how to attract, discourage and/or live with summer bugs at 1 p.m. at the Tropic of Capricorn, 86 Old Las Vegas Highway. For information, call 983-2700.



Paper: Santa Fe New Mexican, The (NM)

Title: INSIDE SANTA FE'S FAITH COMMUNITIES: BEARING WITNESS — INTERFAITH RETREAT REMEMBERS ATOMIC BOMB

Date: July 16, 2005

An interfaith retreat to mark the 60th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, will be held Aug. 5-9 in Santa Fe and Los Alamos.

Led by Joan Halifax Roshi, Hilda Ryumon, Ryumon Gutiérrez Baldoquin, Maia Duerr, Constanze Frank and other teachers, this retreat is part of "National Days of Remembrance and Action," a series of events in August across the United States to mark the anniversary.

Halifax, Baldoquin and other teachers will begin this interfaith retreat Aug. 5 at the Upaya Zen Center, 1404 Cerro Gordo Road.

Participants will sit in silence and in council at the center on Aug. 7 and 8. This gathering is a commitment to compassionate engagement and to inner and outer disarmament. Participants also will prepare to bear witness Aug. 6 and Aug. 9 at the Los Alamos National Laboratory, where the atomic bomb was invented and manufactured.

Those who participate in this retreat are able to choose either to attend the entire retreat or the witness days in Los Alamos - which includes a visit to the Atomic Bomb Museum, and prayer and study around Ashley Pond.

Tuition for the full retreat, including food and lodging, is \$200 for members; \$250 for nonmembers. A donation is requested for the Los Alamos days.

The interfaith retreat is organized by the Upaya Zen Center, Pax Christi, Buddhist Peace Fellowship, **Los Alamos Study Group** and is co-sponsored by the San Francisco Zen Center and Zen Peacemaker Family.

For more information, send an e-mail to upaya@upaya.org or visit the Web site at www.upaya.org or call 986-8518.

Summer Ango

A summer Ango with Joan Halifax Roshi, Togen Moss Sensei, Anzan Hyde, Kyojo Bakker, Soko Marohn, and special programs with Kazuaki Tanahashi, Genpo Roshi will be held at the Upaya Zen Center, 1404 Cerro Gordo Road.

This year's summer Ango - a time of daily training, study and practice - will also mark the 60th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The monthlong Ango includes all aspects of Zen study and life, private interviews with teachers, daily seminars and two programs on engaged practice.

Participants can attend for the whole month, by the week, by the program or by the day. The Ango is appropriate for both seasoned practitioners and beginners. Tuition is \$1,200 for members, \$1,500 for nonmembers; by the week, the tuition is \$450 for members, \$490 for nonmembers. The cost includes meals and lodging. A \$200 deposit is required. Participants are encouraged to give a dana to the teachers.

Here is the schedule of the programs and fees:

* July 29-31 will be "Our Original Dwelling Place: The Practice of the Paramitas," with Halifax. The Paramitas, or Perfections, are the natural and intimate practice of the Bodhisattvas. The Ango begins with the exploration of the true actualization of compassion and wisdom. Halifax will explore the Six Great Perfections. Tuition is \$190 for members, \$210 for nonmembers, plus lodging and dana. A \$100 deposit is required.

*Aug. 12-16 will be "Mountains and Rivers Sesshin," with Halifax. This sesshin invites participants to contemplate the interdependence of monastery and mountain. In the mornings, there will be practice zazen, followed by a day of strong walking meditation in the mountains. In the late afternoon, participants will return to the center and continue zazen practice with Zen Master Dogen's "Mountain and Rivers Sutra." This retreat emphasizes the integration of mind/body practice, a view of boundlessness, and the realization of mountains and rivers. Tuition is \$300 for members, \$350 for nonmembers, plus lodging and dana. A \$100 deposit is

required.

* Aug. 19-24 will be "Avatam Saka Sutra Sesshin" with Halifax , Kazuaki Tanahashi Sensei and Togen Moss Sensei. This sesshin will open the heart of the Avatam Saka Sutra with its vast vision of interconnectedness and compassion. Participants will follow a gentle and penetrating retreat schedule, exploring the translations of key sections of the sutra that opens the Bodhisattva's path of universal kindness and great peace. This sutra is considered to be the most sublime of the Mahayana scriptures. The sesshin includes teachings, sitting and walking meditation, chanting service, and interviews with teachers. Tuition is \$360 for members, \$420 for nonmembers, plus lodging and dana. A \$100 deposit is required.

* Aug. 26-28 will be "Opening to the Big Mind," with Genpo Merzel Roshi. The Ango ends with the Big Mind process, a direct exploration of true nature. Merzel draws from more than 30 years of Zen teaching and Western therapeutic practices to bring a radical technique that can unlock the wisdom of Zen with directness and clarity. Participants learn to sit with nonseeking mind in its vastness, rather than grasping after the truth.

Tuition is \$190 for members, \$220 for nonmembers, plus lodging and dana. A \$100 deposit is required.

To register or for information, send an e-mail to upaya@upaya.org or visit the Web site at www.upaya.org or call 986-8518.

Inside Santa Fe's Faith communities is compiled by the individual faith community and edited by the religion editor. Call 986-3049.

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Section: Religion

Page: C-7

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Nuke Lab Report Calls for Changes

from PAGE A1

— are among the state's largest employers.

The report praises the nuclear weapons labs as "national assets" but suggests it will not take as many people in the future to maintain the U.S. arsenal as are employed at the labs.

The report suggests that, in some cases, the laboratories have built redundant research equipment, such as supercomputers, when a single centralized machine would suffice.

Sen. Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M., said, if carried out, the effects of the report's recommendations "could be pretty substantial." But he questioned whether Congress and the administration would be willing to do what the report suggests.

Officials at the Department of Energy and the labs declined comment, saying the report was still being reviewed.

Even before its release, the report drew sharp criticism from Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., the labs' chief congressional defender.

Domenici's congressional nemesis on the issue, Rep. David Hobson, R-Ohio, who originally called for the report, said Thursday he "agree(s) 100 percent" with the report's conclusions, setting the stage for a showdown.

The proposed lab cuts are part of a sweeping reorganization of U.S. nuclear weapons design, manufacture and maintenance recommended by the panel.

Whether the report's advice is accepted is up to the Department of Energy and Congress. The recommendations, contained in a "draft final report" published Thursday for public comment, go to the Secretary of Energy Advisory Board, an independent panel that provides advice to the Department of Energy.

Central to the plan is the design of a new "Reliable Replacement Warhead" that would be cheaper to maintain than existing Cold War designs.

That might mean more work for some weapons designers. But the report suggests that, overall, the labs' staff of nuclear scientists and engineers "can be significantly reduced." The report does not specify how many jobs would be cut.

In the short term, Los Alamos National Laboratory needs to increase its ability to manufacture plutonium nuclear weapons parts, the Advisory Board report concludes.

But in the long term, plutonium work now done at Los

Alamos and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory should be moved to the new factory, the report recommends.

The report recommends that one extreme high-end supercomputer be maintained for nuclear weapons research. Currently, each of the three labs has its own — computers that compete for the title of "world's fastest."

Substantial money could be saved by moving work now done at Los Alamos' troubled Dual-Axis Radiographic Hydrotest Facility, where scientists detonate mock nuclear weapons to X-ray them, to Nevada to a central explosives testing site, the committee concluded.

The report makes only minor recommendations for specific cuts at Sandia beyond the general call for a reduction in the size of the labs' work force.

Despite their nonbinding nature, and the fact that it is only a draft document, the report's conclusions appear to have started a congressional debate about the direction and future of the U.S. nuclear weapons complex.

Domenici began criticizing it three months before it was made public.

In an April 18 telephone news conference, Domenici told New Mexico reporters the report's call for consolidation and cuts at the labs — at that point just a rumor — "probably won't be" accepted.

In a statement issued Thursday, Domenici said, "While there is always room for improvement I believe our labs are doing good work, and I do not think we should rush into any quick fixes."

Hobson, who has clashed with Domenici in recent years over nuclear weapons funding, was far more enthusiastic.

"The task force concludes that the current stockpile and supporting weapons complex is neither technically credible nor financially sustainable," Hobson said in a statement.

The disagreement between Hobson and Domenici is critical to the outcome of the debate. The two chair the House and Senate committees responsible for the Energy Department's budget.

The new report is largely supportive of the direction Hobson has tried to set for the budget, while Domenici's version is substantially different. The two must come to some sort of compromise by this fall on a final spending plan.

Report Calls For Big Changes At Nuclear Labs

DOE Advisory Panel Makes Suggestions

By JOHN FLECK
Journal Staff Writer

7/15/05

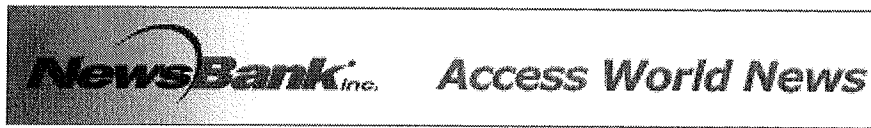
The United States needs new, easy-to-maintain nuclear warheads and significantly smaller staffs at its nuclear weapons labs, a senior Energy Department advisory panel has concluded.

The Nuclear Weapons Complex Infrastructure Task Force, in a draft report made public Thursday, calls for a centralized nuclear weapons factory to be built, consolidating work that's scattered among old Cold War-era plants and the labs.

Where the new plant might be built remains a question.

The report carries significant implications for New Mexico, where two of the nation's three nuclear weapons labs — Sandia and Los Alamos

See NUKE on PAGE A8



Paper: Los Angeles Times (CA)

Title: The Nation

Power and Money in Los Alamos Contract

The UC system, which has run the sprawling nuclear weapons lab since World War II, is battling its critics and an imposing challenger.

Date: July 17, 2005

The competition for the newly lucrative contract to run Los Alamos National Laboratory is now a head-to-head battle between two formidable teams: on one side, the University of California and engineering powerhouse Bechtel; on the other, the University of Texas and Lockheed Martin, the nation's largest defense contractor.

At stake is not only the day-to-day operation of Los Alamos, the vast nuclear weapons design center that stretches across 40 miles of New Mexico high desert. The contract winner also will claim a key role -- potentially for the next two decades -- in advising policymakers on the safety and reliability of the nation's aging nuclear stockpile and whether new bombs are needed.

"Big power, political and otherwise, is really what draws people to this contract," said Greg Mello, executive director of the **Los Alamos Study Group**, an independent nuclear watchdog group based in Albuquerque. Now, Mello noted, with the government's recent decision to boost the annual fee to run the lab by a factor of nine -- to as much as \$79 million -- "it's big money too."

Since World War II, when Los Alamos scientists toiled in secrecy to create the atomic bomb, the lab has been operated by the University of California under a no-bid contract with the federal government. But after fiscal and security breaches at Los Alamos sparked sharp criticism in Congress of UC's management, the Energy Department in 2003 said it was opening the next contract to competition.

Facing a Tuesday deadline, the contending teams -- one holed up in San Francisco, the other in Albuquerque -- are scrambling to complete the detailed proposals that each hopes will tip the scales its way. They are laying out visions for managing the huge laboratory, its 12,000 employees and its yearly budget of \$2.2 billion, pointing out their own strengths and, at least indirectly, their rival's weaknesses.

Energy Department officials say the winner will be announced by December and is expected to be on the job June 1. The seven-year contract will be renewable annually for 13 additional years.

The drama for many observers is in the high-stakes matchup between two such powerful, politically influential -- and, some say, roughly equivalent -- teams.

Will the University of Texas enjoy a political advantage with one of the state's favorite sons in the White House and another, Republican U.S. Rep. Joe L. Barton, heading the key congressional committee overseeing Los Alamos? Will UC be able to overcome the view of many in Washington that it should not be rewarded for its failures?

And what of Lockheed? Should a weapons manufacturer, even with a university as partner, be a primary manager of the country's premier nuclear weapons center? If it wins the contract, will lab scientists feel free to conduct research and express views on technical matters, even if those run counter to government or company policy?

As Tuesday's deadline nears, the teams are laboring nearly around the clock to put the final touches on bid documents numbering hundreds of pages. Most substantive details, and even some participants' identities, are closely guarded secrets. Some say, half joking, that they wonder if rivals are watching their comings and goings at the office.

The Los Alamos competition already is "a pretty good show," said Peter Stockton, a longtime weapons investigator with the Washington watchdog group Project on Government Oversight. "The lobbying here over the next few months is going to be just fascinating to watch."

Joining UC's 10-campus system in its bid is Bechtel National, a division of San Francisco-based Bechtel Group, a global engineering and construction firm. Other team members include companies with expertise in nuclear operations and environmental cleanup, and a group of New Mexico universities.

On the other side is Lockheed Martin, which has managed Sandia National Laboratories, nuclear weapons

engineering and technology centers in New Mexico and California, since 1993. Its key partner in the Los Alamos contest is the nine-campus University of Texas system, whose leaders have long expressed interest in running a national lab.

UT Chancellor Mark G. Yudof said in an interview that the team's bid also will include other research universities, although he said he could not name them publicly before the proposal is submitted. The Lockheed group also includes firms with specialties in nuclear operations and facilities development.

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Energy Department officials say the award will be made on the proposals' merits, along with performance records.

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At a time of escalating concern about terrorism and other security threats, UC supporters argue that the university has provided effective leadership and renowned scientific ability for decades on one of America's most sensitive security missions.

They cite the potential risks of completely new management and say that it makes sense for such a highly respected public university system -- along with new partners that can shore up its weaknesses -- to continue to operate the facility.

Stung by the Energy Department's decision to pull its exclusive contract, UC leaders for months remained undecided about whether to compete. Finally, however, as UC President Robert C. Dynes said in a recent interview, the question came down to: "If not us, who? And we felt comfortable that we had put the best team together."

Some outside experts agree. "I don't want to say that Lockheed or the University of Texas can't do this," said Sidney Drell, a Stanford University professor emeritus and nuclear weapons expert who has served on review committees at Los Alamos. "But what I do know is that you have the experience of UC, which has done it, now combined with the management and security expertise of Bechtel. What more could you want?"

But there are many inside and outside Los Alamos who criticize UC's recent history at the lab and admire Lockheed's management of Sandia.

"There's no question, under Lockheed, Los Alamos would be run more effectively and efficiently," said Chris Mechels, a former Los Alamos employee and longtime activist on lab issues. "You've got to get a cultural change in there. If UC gets this contract, there's a much greater likelihood of all the problems remaining."

He and others recited UC's recent troubles at Los Alamos, including financial mismanagement, repeated security and safety incidents, and a lax leadership style. Last year, after two classified computer disks were believed to be missing -- mistakenly, it later turned out -- the lab was shut down for much of the year.

Members of the Energy Department panel that will evaluate the contract proposals will spend a day in August with each team and meet the team leaders -- Michael R. Anastasio for UC-Bechtel, C. Paul Robinson for Lockheed-UT -- one of whom will become the director of Los Alamos.

Anastasio, 56, is director of the UC-run Lawrence Livermore nuclear weapons laboratory in the Bay Area, a sister facility to Los Alamos. "We are a new team," Anastasio said. "Our challenge is to convince the Department of Energy that that's true, and that not only are we a new team but that we're the right team."

Known as a consensus builder, Anastasio, a physicist, has worked at Livermore for 25 years. Before becoming Livermore director in 2002, he was deputy director for strategic operations there and also headed its nuclear weapons programs.

Both Anastasio and Robinson have testified extensively before Congress and advised the Energy Department and the Pentagon on nuclear weapons issues, including debates about the continued moratorium on underground nuclear testing.

Robinson, 63, also a physicist, stepped down in April as the head of Sandia. Among other roles, he served as chief negotiator and head of the U.S. delegation to the U.S.-Soviet nuclear testing talks in Geneva from 1988 to 1990. He also spent nearly 20 years at Los Alamos and led its nuclear weapons program.

Robinson suggested recently that Lockheed's bid will paint a portrait of a lab badly in need of new, more efficient management.

"We're devoting most of the time in our proposal [to discussing] regenerating a laboratory that's down on its back," he said in a telephone interview. "Folks in the lab are very displeased that they have not had direction for their work. I guess leadership is the right word for that ... and we want to make things easier for the folks there. Science is difficult enough."

Robinson also responded to concerns about the potential conflict of having scientists managed by a defense contractor rather than by a university.

For many years, he said, Lockheed has had its own version of academic freedom, with its leaders stating publicly and repeatedly that those running Sandia or other Lockheed operations should never put the company's interests ahead of the nation's.

Whichever team prevails, weapons investigator Stockton and others say the decision to open the contract to bidding for the first time may help ensure more safety and efficiency at the lab.

"We really don't have a dog in this fight," said Stockton, whose organization has often criticized UC's management of the lab. "What we wanted and are glad to see is that there is finally a real competition for the Los Alamos contract."

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Author: Rebecca Trounson

Section: Main News

Page: A-1

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Los Alamos lab's plutonium role studied

By DIANA HEIL The New Mexican

Radioisotope power systems produce heat and electricity for decades, with little maintenance, thanks to plutonium-238.

In places where solar panels and batteries aren't practical modes of power, they do the job. And for the past 35 years, this has been an ideal technology for space exploration and national security missions.

But in the wake of terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001, the federal government faces the problem of reducing risks associated with transporting Pu-238, a special nuclear material, across the country.

Currently, production of radioisotope power systems involves three far-flung sites: Los Alamos National Laboratory, Idaho National Laboratory and Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee.

To better secure this highly radioactive material, the federal government wants to consolidate all steps of production, from the storage of neptunium-237 to the assembly of Radioisotope Power Systems, at one location.

Los Alamos was considered for the task but rejected, according to a government report issued last month. LANL has the capability to purify and encapsulate Pu-238 but lacks nuclear reactors. The government's preferred location is Idaho.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Department of Energy predicts a shortage of Pu-238 by the end of the decade and wants to start making more. The United States lost the ability to make Pu-238 when processing facilities in South Carolina closed in 1996. It relies on reserves.

According to a June report from the Energy Department, the U.S. has 88 pounds of Pu-238 left in its inventory. Most is stored at Los Alamos. The U.S. also buys some from Russia. But a bilateral agreement prevents the U.S. from discussed in comments."

Since then, the government has formulated three options:

Continue production under current practices, which involves nuclear reactors at Idaho and Tennessee. Modify facilities so 11 pounds of plutonium-238 could be produced each year. Estimated cost: \$90 million.

Los Alamos lab would continue receiving shipments of processed plutonium from the Tennessee lab. In New Mexico, the material is purified and encapsulated at Technical Area-55, then shipped to Idaho, where radioisotope power systems are assembled.

Consolidate all nuclearproduction operations in a secure area at Idaho National Laboratory. New construction would be required. Operations would start in 2011 and make 11 pounds of plutonium-238 a year.

All reserves of plutonium-238 would be relocated from Los Alamos and the Pantex tapping Russia's Pu-238 for national security missions, according to the report.

In a first round of public comment on the issue last year, the Energy Department heard an abundance of concerns. Numerous comments were received expressing opposition to the use of plutonium-238 in deep-space missions, the June report said.

"NASA's safety record, especially in light of the Challenger incident, was cited as a reason that plutonium should not be used in space," the report said. "General opposition to the production, use, handling and management of plutonium was frequently Site in Texas to Idaho. This is the government's preferred alternative. Estimated cost: \$300 million.

Until new facilities are built at Idaho National Laboratory, the nuclear reactor at Tennessee would make almost five pounds of plutonium-238 per year. Los Alamos would continue its purification role until 2011, when everything would be centralized at Idaho National Laboratory as described in Option 2. Estimated cost: \$324 million.

Greg Mello, director of Los Alamos Study Group, said the list of options is far too limited. "The option of not making more (plutonium-238) is not an option this administration is interested in, but we are interested in," he said of his antinuke group. "We don't need it."

All the same, he would be happy to see the reserves of this nuclear material leave Los Alamos. "It's the most dangerous material that they work with there," he said. "It's the dark part of TA-55."

Mello believes the government wants to remove plutonium-238 from Los Alamos to make room for something else at the lab: the production of triggers for nuclear weapons, another mission Mello opposes.

Nuclear Watch of New Mexico, based in Santa Fe, also questions the need for potent plutonium. For spacecraft, the government can buy surplus Pu-238 from the Russians, but in addition should pursue alternative power supplies that won't contaminate the atmosphere, said director Jay Coghlan.

For national security missions, the government hasn't adequately explained the need for more Pu-238, he said.

"DOE should give some general description of what these needs are instead of completely stonewalling over them, if they want to persuade the American public to support resumed Pu-238 production," Coghlan said.

NukeWatch is concerned about waste disposal and worker safety. "It is a particularly dangerous plutonium isotope that is inherently difficult to handle and manage," Coghlan said. "One cannot have confidence in DOE's track record given the repeated incidences of Pu-238 occupational contamination at Los Alamos National Laboratory."

SUMMER MEANS CAMPS, FIESTAS AND RETREATS

Santa Fe New Mexican, The (NM)

July 23, 2005

Author: THE NEW MEXICAN

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Interfaith retreat

An interfaith retreat to mark the 60th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, will be held Aug. 5-9 in Santa Fe and Los Alamos.

Led by Joan Halifax Roshi, Hilda Ryumon, Ryumon Gutiérrez Baldoquin, Maia Duerr, Constanze Frank and other teachers, this retreat is part of "National Days of Remembrance and Action," a series of events in August across the United States to mark the anniversary.

Halifax, Baldoquin and other teachers will begin this interfaith retreat Aug. 5 at the Upaya Zen Center, 1404 Cerro Gordo Road. Participants also will prepare to bear witness Aug. 6 and Aug. 9 at the Los Alamos National Laboratory, where the atomic bomb was invented and manufactured.

Those who participate in this retreat are able to choose either to attend the entire retreat or the witness days in Los Alamos - which includes a visit to the Atomic Bomb Museum, and prayer and study around Ashley Pond.

Tuition for the full retreat, including food and lodging, is \$200 for members, \$250 for nonmembers. A donation is requested for the Los Alamos days.

The interfaith retreat is organized by the Upaya Zen Center, Pax Christi, Buddhist Peace Fellowship, **Los Alamos Study Group** and is co-sponsored by the San Francisco Zen Center and Zen Peacemaker Family.

For more information, send an e-mail to upaya@upaya.org or visit the Web site at www.upaya.org or call 986-8518.

Section: Religion

Page: D-4

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- [back to story page](#)

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Saturday, July 23, 2005

Bid to Run LANL a Formidable Duel

By Rebecca Trounson

Los Angeles Times

The competition for the newly lucrative contract to run Los Alamos National Laboratory is now a head-to-head battle between two formidable teams: on one side, the University of California and engineering powerhouse Bechtel; on the other, the University of Texas and Lockheed Martin, the nation's largest defense contractor.

At stake is not only the day-to-day operation of Los Alamos, the vast nuclear weapons design center that stretches across 40 miles of New Mexico high desert. The contract winner also will claim a key role— potentially for the next two decades— in advising policy-makers on the safety and reliability of the nation's aging nuclear stockpile and whether new bombs are needed.

"Big power, political and otherwise, is really what draws people to this contract," said Greg Mello, executive director of the Los Alamos Study Group, an independent nuclear watchdog group based in Albuquerque. Now, Mello noted, with the government's recent decision to boost the annual fee to run the lab by a factor of nine— to as much as \$79 million— "it's big money, too."

Since World War II, when Los Alamos scientists toiled in secrecy to create the atomic bomb, the lab has been operated by the University of California under a no-bid contract with the federal government. But after fiscal and security breaches at Los Alamos sparked sharp criticism in Congress of UC's management, the Energy Department in 2003 said it was opening the next contract to competition.

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Whichever team prevails, weapons investigator Stockton and others say the decision to open the contract to bidding for the first time may help ensure more safety and efficiency at the lab.



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[Back to story page](#)

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New Mexico senator shepherds plan for Russian nuke material

By **ANDY LENDERMAN** *The New Mexican*

New Mexico's senior senator is hopeful the Russian government will soon formally approve a plan to convert 34 metric tons of its own nuclear-weapons material into fuel for nuclear reactors.

U.S. Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., told the Senate earlier this month that President Bush's administration and Russian officials have agreed on liability concerns that had stalled the initiative, which aims to create mixed-oxide fuel that can be burned in nuclear reactors. The final plan has yet to be approved by the Russian Duma, or parliament.

"As we see the world become more and more dangerous," Domenici told the Senate, "it is critical that we make progress on reprocessing plutonium

into (mixed-oxide fuel). Black marketers and terrorists would love to get their hands on this plutonium. President Bush has worked hard to engage (Russian) President (Vladimir) Putin on this issue, and as a result of that continuing dialogue, there is now an agreement to implement a (mixed-oxide fuel) program."

Robert Kuckuck, director of Los Alamos National Laboratory, said in a news release the initiative is "the largest nonproliferation project in history."

However, at least one citizen watchdog says the project is costly and offers no additional nuclear security.

The plan calls for each country to build a mixedoxide-fabrication facility and to eventually process 34 metric tons of excess plutonium, respectively, Domenici told the Senate.

Sixty-eight metric tons of plutonium is enough to supply 8,000 nuclear weapons, according to Domenici's office.

The initiative has been stalled since July 2003, when a liability agreement that protected U.S. workers on duty in Russia expired. A new agreement that protects workers was agreed upon July 19 of this year.

Now, Domenici said, the agreement must go to Putin, be signed by American and Russian diplomats and finally ratified by the Duma.

Once the document is signed by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Domenici said, the federal Department of Energy will move forward with plans for a mixedoxide-fuel-fabrication facility in Savannah River, S.C. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2006. The cost of each facility is estimated at \$1 billion, Domenici staffer Scott O'Malia said.

Domenici also pressured House and Senate members to fund the program, which he said had been

cut by the House and Senate armed-services committees.

So far, the governments of the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Japan, Italy and France have pledged \$860 million to help finance the Russian facility, Domenici said.

A spokesman for the watchdog Los Alamos Study Group, Greg Mello, took issue with the project.

"It's not a good way to get rid of bomb material," Mello said. "That's just a publicrelations ploy."

Mello said weapons material is expensive to convert into fuel and unsafe to use in reactors.



Sen. Pete Domenici

Publication: Santa Fe New Mexican; Date: Jul 28, 2005; Section: News; Page: 1



LANL worker exposed to radioactive matter

By **ANDY LENDERMAN** The New Mexican

Health and nuclear experts have been decontaminating the home of a Los Alamos National Laboratory employee this week after he was exposed to radioactive material while working, the lab reported.

No other workers were contaminated in the employee's lab facility, and there's no risk to the general public, the lab said in a news release late Wednesday.

Lab officials are looking into how and when the contamination occurred, although a response team found "trace amounts" of americium 241 in the employee's car and residence, the lab reported. Americium 241 is a manmade radioactive metal.

It's the first time in 10 years that the federal Department of Energy's Radiological Assistance Program — made up of experts who respond to contamination incidents — have found contamination off lab property, lab spokeswoman Kathy DeLucas said.

Lab officials are investigating to see if the contamination was spread beyond the employee's work area and home. The home is located in Los Alamos County, and the employee was living alone since his wife was out of town, DeLucas said.

"However, the extremely low levels of radioactive material found at the employee's home do not pose a credible risk to the general public," a news release said.

Citizen watchdogs criticized the lab's response to the incident. Lab officials said they learned of the contamination Monday and did not know when the employee was exposed.

Lab officials are also trying to determine the origin of the contamination and whether safety rules were followed, according to the news release.

"Our first concern is to ensure that every employee is safe and that the general public is protected," lab director Robert Kuckuck said in prepared remarks. "We believe that this has been accomplished."

Greg Mello of the watchdog Los Alamos Study Group said the lab has too many facilities and too many projects, which can lead to mishaps.

"I think that because the programs at Los Alamos don't have a clear focus, they are shipping material around too much, with too many people involved," Mello said by telephone. "And so there's screwups."

Both Mello and Jay Coghlan of Nuclear Watch New Mexico said the public should have known about the incident sooner.

"This is the time for the lab to be forthcoming about these type of incidents," Coghlan said.

- [back to story page](#)

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Thursday, July 28, 2005

LANL Worker's Home Decontaminated

By Adam Rankin

Journal Staff Writer

A federal team of nuclear incident first responders was busy surveying and decontaminating a Los Alamos National Laboratory employee's home Tuesday and checking to see that the contaminated worker didn't spread radioactivity elsewhere, according to lab officials.

"The contamination is very low level, but is serious," wrote Terry Wallace, LANL's associate director for strategic research in a Wednesday e-mail to employees.

"The health and safety of the employees is the absolute first priority, and the present analysis is that only one employee is affected," he wrote.

The uranium researcher at LANL's Sigma complex was contaminated by a sample of radioactive americium. It was part of a July 14 shipment from a neighboring plutonium research facility at the lab, though the Sigma facility is only equipped to handle uranium. The contamination was discovered Monday.

LANL and Los Alamos County are conducting a joint decontamination of the employee's home and are investigating the possibility that the contamination spread to other locations. The americium sample never left LANL; the researcher spread the contamination through contact.

LANL employees discovered the contamination Monday and closed access to the Sigma facility Tuesday to all but essential employees to clean residual contaminants and conduct surveys. Lab officials plan to reopen the facility today, according to LANL spokeswoman Kathy DeLucas.

A team of health physicists and nuclear response experts, part of the U.S. Department of Energy's Radiological Assistance Program, discovered trace contamination in the employee's car and in several locations inside the employee's Los Alamos County home.

The unnamed employee and five co-workers from the same area are undergoing a monitoring regimen to determine the extent of the contamination and if the others were affected. The tests will determine how much americium has entered the employee's body and if any is in the researcher's lungs.

'A significant risk'

A byproduct of plutonium processing, americium-241 "poses a significant risk if ingested or inhaled," and exposure, whether internal or external, poses an increased risk of cancer, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection

Agency.

When inhaled, americium-241 tends to concentrate in bone, the liver and muscle tissue and can remain radioactive in the body for decades, continuing to expose surrounding tissues to radiation.

A decay product of plutonium, americium has a half-life of about 430 years. Because it decays slowly, americium also slowly emits radiation.

LANL's chemistry division Web site states that "americium must be handled with great care to avoid personal contamination" and that when gram quantities of americium are handled, the intense gamma activity makes exposure a serious problem.

While LANL's americium-241 is generally considered a byproduct and waste— stored at Technical Area-54 for later shipment to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant near Carlsbad— it is used elsewhere for a range of commercial and research purposes, including precision measurements of the thickness of glass and in aircraft fuel gauges. Its most common use is in household smoke detectors, in which less than half a gram is placed in a sealed chamber as part of the detection mechanism.

"It is important that we establish the causes of this event and whether our institutional procedures were adequate and followed so that we can learn from this incident and take appropriate measures to prevent this from happening in the future," LANL director Robert Kuckuck said.

DeLucas said investigators are still working to determine why americium was sent to the Sigma facility.

'A little baffling'

"How come it takes so long for them to discover that a person was contaminated? That doesn't bode well for either occupational or public safety," said Jay Coghlan, director of the lab watchdog Nuclear Watch of New Mexico. "Were they stonewalling on this?"

Greg Mello, director of the anti-nuclear organization the Los Alamos Study Group, said: "It is a little baffling this could happen."

He said his greatest concern is why LANL officials didn't make the contamination incident more broadly known sooner.

"You have to have openness or you are going to have more screw-ups," he said.

The contamination was first reported anonymously on the blog "LANL: The Real Story" about 8 a.m. Wednesday.

DeLucas said lab officials were preparing a statement to inform the public of the contamination but hadn't acquired all the necessary facts by the time the anonymous report was posted.

"We wanted to wait until the (Radiological Assistance Program) team had gotten back and all the data was in until we could tell you truthfully what we

knew," she said. "Otherwise, it would just be conjecture."

A time line created by a Materials, Science and Technology team—the division where the incident occurred— reports that a package containing 18 uranium nitride pellets from TA-55, packed in three layers of plastic bags, a metal container and a 30-gallon "overpack," was received by the researcher's unit on July 14.

On the same day, the metal container was removed from the overpack and placed in a glove box. The container was opened and vials were taken out of the bags but not opened, according to the time line sent to lab employee's by LANL's Wallace.

A radiological control technician discovered a radiological tag in the trash on Monday that raised some concerns. A test of the glove box determined that it was contaminated with americium-241.

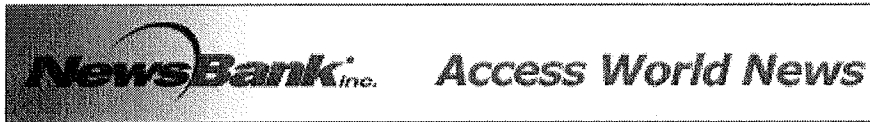
Subsequent tests found contamination in the employee's office and personal items, while limited contamination was discovered in the hallway, as well as the employee's car and home.

On Tuesday, contamination was found on a second employee's computer mouse pad, though a review of 162 Sigma employees found no other indications of contamination.



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[Back to story page](#)



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Title: AT A GLANCE
Date: July 28, 2005

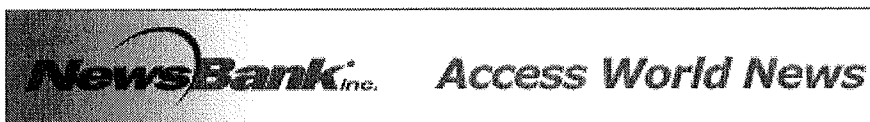
IN BRIEF

Nuke study: The **Los Alamos Study Group** will offer a college-credit course this weekend at the University of New Mexico Law School on the legal status and history of nuclear weapons. The three-day, six-session course offers 8.4 units of continuing legal education credit and runs Friday night through Sunday morning. Information is available by calling 265-1200.

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Section: News
Page: A2
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Paper: Santa Fe New Mexican, The (NM)

Title: IN BRIEF

Date: July 30, 2005

Santa Fe Iris Society plans sale

The Santa Fe Iris Society will hold its annual sale today at 10 a.m. at DeVargas Mall.

The sale features hundreds of varieties of rhizomes, or iris bulbs, grown in gardens in Santa Fe. An auction of the society's newest varieties will begin at about 11 a.m. The rhizomes are priced at about half their cost in catalogs.

Construction delays at several sites

Construction next week will continue to delay motorists in Santa Fe and Rio Arriba counties. Here's where delays can be expected:

* Overlay work continues on St. Francis Drive. Expect rough roads in spots from Rabbit Road to Siringo Road. Work is being done at night from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m.

* On Old Las Vegas Highway, motorists are using a temporary lane. Those traveling in and out of County Road 36 El Gancho Way/Steaksmith will use a detour starting Monday for realignment operations. All businesses on N.M. 300 are open.

* Hyde Park Road will be closed at mile post 13, Big Tesuque, due to an oil-tanker roll over and spill. Crews are working to have the road open by today.

* The left lanes on both west- and east-bound sides of N.M. 502 from the entrance of Pojoaque High School will be closed next week. Crews are removing curbs and gutters and widening the entrance to the high school.

* Lane closures will occur on N.M. 76, the High Road to Taos. A flagger will stop traffic. Motorists should expect long delays in the early morning and afternoon. There are also unpaved stretches of road outside Cordova.

Los Alamos Study Group plans event

The **Los Alamos Study Group** will host a conference on nuclear-weapons history and legal issues today and Sunday in Albuquerque.

Seminars on nuclear law, peace activism and other topics will be presented at The University of New Mexico Law School, Room 2405.

The cost is \$50 for nonlawyers, and \$150 for lawyers. One session is free of charge -- "How Peace Activists Saved the World." It's scheduled for 4:30 p.m. today.

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Author: THE NEW MEXICAN

Section: Santa Fe/El Norte

Page: C-3

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Mightier than the Sword

Writers Address the Nuclear Age
by Claire Long

Within minutes of the explosion on July 16, 1945, a mushroom cloud rose, towering over 38,000 feet. The heat of the explosion, 10,000 times hotter than the surface of the sun, melted the sand of the surrounding area into a green glassy substance. The blast obliterated every living thing within a mile. The shock from the explosion shattered windows 120 miles from the source of the blast and was felt by people 160 miles away.¹ According to one eyewitness, "I saw first a yellow glow, which grew almost instantly into an overwhelming white flash, so intense that I was completely blinded."² The public-relations story given by U.S. Army officials for the phenomena witnessed by so many was "an accidental explosion of a munitions storage bunker."

The "Trinity" test of the new implosion-weapon design, developed at Site Y, now Los Alamos National Laboratory, was conducted at the Alamogordo Test Range, on the Jornada del Muerto ("Journey of Death") desert between Socorro and Las Cruces. The 21-kiloton explosion ignited the nuclear age. On the 60th anniversary of the test, writers and poets will come together in Santa Fe and Albuquerque to publicly reject nuclear weapons and to propose alternate philosophies and solutions. The event, titled "Mightier Than the Sword: Writers Address the Nuclear Age," is sponsored by the Los Alamos Study Group and will take place on July 15 and 16.

The historical importance of the Trinity test was immediately apparent to many involved in the Manhattan project. I.I. Rabbi, who worked at Los Alamos under Oppenheimer, describes, "[A] few minutes afterward, I had goose flesh all over me when I realized what this meant for the future of humanity. Up until then, humanity was, after all, a limited factor in the evolution and process of nature. The vast oceans, lakes and rivers, the atmosphere, were not very much affected by the existence of mankind. The new powers represented a threat not only to mankind but to all forms of life: the seas and the air." In his response to the experience, Oppenheimer quoted from the Bhagavad-Gita: "I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds."

More and more people believe that the alternatives to violence, death and domination are the only pathways to

peace, whether on the individual, local, national or global scale. On the 60th anniversary of the Trinity test, the Los Alamos Study Group is providing the stage for people to voice their opposition to nuclear weapons and their vision for a nuclear-weapons-free world.

"Mightier Than the Sword: Writers Address the Nuclear Age" will take place on Friday July 15 in Santa Fe at the James A. Little Theater and in Albuquerque on Saturday July 16 at the Lobo Theater. Both shows will begin at 7:00 p.m. and will feature five writers. The events will also include silent auctions of quality art, jewelry, gift certificates and other items of value and beauty. After the featured writers, the evening will conclude with a "round robin" open mike and poets from the community will be invited to add their voices to the chorus of calls for nuclear disarmament and a sustainable future.

The five featured writers at the Santa Fe event will be John Bradley, poet and educator; Judyth Hill, poet and educator; Karen Jones Meadows, author and award-winning playwright; Elaine Maria Upton, poet, author and educator; and William Witherup, poet. Public-radio host and poet Mary Oishi will serve as emcee. The five featured writers at the Albuquerque event will be poet, playwright and educator Maisha Baton, John Bradley, Karen Jones Meadows, Mary Oishi and William Witherup.

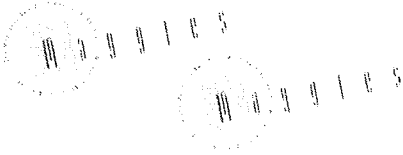
"Mightier Than the Sword" is a fundraiser to build momentum for "August 6th: Hiroshima 60 Years," happening in Los Alamos on August 6. Activists and concerned citizens from New Mexico and throughout the U.S. will convene at Ashley Pond Park in Los Alamos for an all-day event (10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.) to oppose nuclear-weapons research and production at the Los Alamos National Laboratory and other nuclear-weapons facilities.

It will be a day to remember the devastation of the atomic bombings of 1945, reject nuclear weapons and commit ourselves to working for a political culture based on the dignity of the human person rather than the ever more pervasive politics of fear, hate, greed and war. All "Mightier Than the Sword" writers are donating their time and talents to bolster the movement for nuclear disarmament.

Coop Newsletter July 2005

THE magazine

VOLUME XIII, NUMBER II



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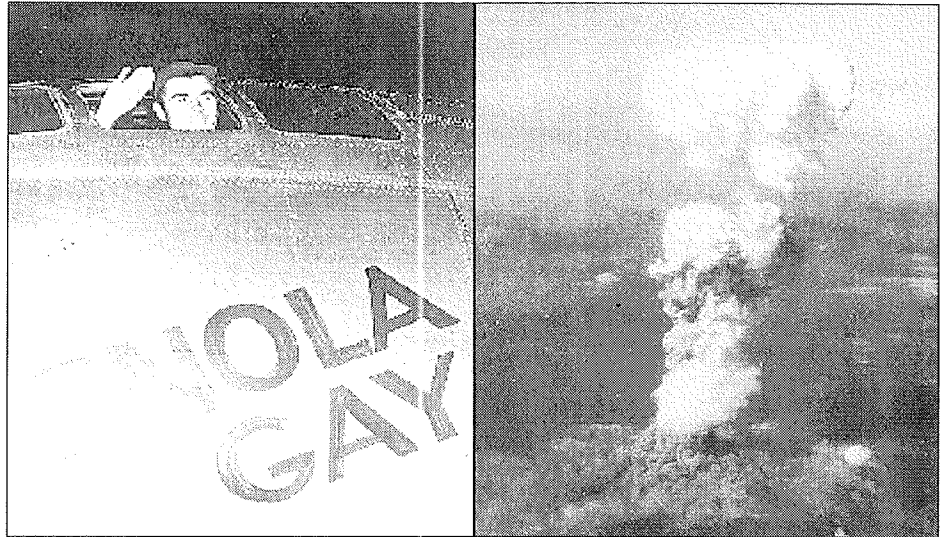


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On August 6, 1945, 140,000 people were killed by a single bomb at Hiroshima. Three days later, another 70,000 people were killed by another bomb. Both bombs were built in Los Alamos. *Hiroshima 60 Years*, a marking of this horrific event, will take place on August 6, from 10 am to 9 pm at Ashley Pond Park in Los Alamos. The purpose of this event is to stand-up-and-be-counted as one of those who want to stop the nuclear madness. Over one hundred thirty organizations involved in this event recognize that complete nuclear disarmament is a legal obligation, a moral imperative, and a practical necessity. Do your part—attend. Are you a door or a wall?

TO THE EDITOR:

Thank you Kathryn Davis for your insightful review of *A Grain of Sand* at Touching Stone Gallery. As usual you have a grasp of what lies behind the work, which shows me something new and gives me something to think about. Today, painting on the porch as I love to do in the summer, nine miles out of Ennis and sixty-five miles from a freeway, I was reminded of why Sumi-e is about the moment. Out of the wren house near my table came five new baby birds. After weeks of careful attention by the parents they were off to being wrens on the wing. I also look forward to a wall of black-and-white abstractions released to be on the wing, on their own.

—Susan Christie, Ennis, Montana

TO THE EDITOR:

We very much enjoyed your article on Robert Kennedy, Jr., and we thought the photograph on the July *Architecture Details* page in July was a wonderful example of the changing American landscape.

—Harry and Gigi Benson, New York

TO THE EDITOR:

Thank you for such a vital offering—I really need *THE magazine*. Re: Joshua Baer's *One Bottle*. God, I love his writing. Not too much naval-gazing. On the contrary, he engages in introspection as a means of self-understanding and communing with others on the meaning of life. I adore the way he relates all things beautiful and paradoxical to what lovers of life love the most—the mystery, the sublime, the agony and ecstasy. Something would be missing with out Baer's musings in *THE*. I can't get enough of this kind of laser-piercing perceptiveness. Long live Joshua Baer! Long live *THE magazine*!

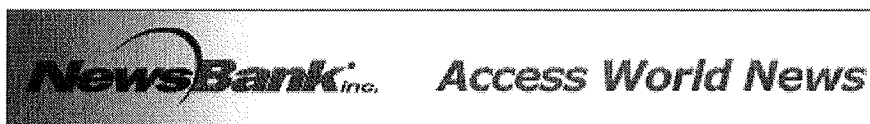
—A Loyal Reader in Santa Fe

TO THE EDITOR:

First, let me commend you on a fine magazine of integrity, richness, and surprise. I believe you are fast on your way to many awards. Each issue seems to grow in size and in content. I especially enjoyed your coverage of Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s political commentary on the current state of the environment under this administration. I have just picked up the most recent issue, and have not gotten any further than Jane Fonda's mug shots—fond remembrances. Having worked for the *Santa Fe Reporter* under Richard McCord—when it was a solid news weekly and beautifully laid out (we did it by hand)—I so appreciate the beauty of each page in your layout. Thank you for your continuing dedicated efforts and commitment to such a fine piece of work as *THE magazine*. Bravo!

—Danita Ross, Santa Fe

TO THE EDITOR:



Paper: Las Cruces Sun-News (NM)

Title: State economy tied to nuclear weapons

Date: August 1, 2005

Sun-News reporter

For New Mexicans, the question of nuclear weapons development hits close to home.

The state economy and environment are directly affected by nuclear weapons research and development, as the state is home to four nuclear arms facilities and receives billions of federal dollars to fund that work each year.

People on both sides of the aisle recognize that nuclear weapons development has a direct impact on New Mexico.

What is not so clear is whether this impact is beneficial for the state.

New Mexicans may be most directly affected by the jobs the nuclear facilities, including Los Alamos National Laboratory and Sandia National Laboratories, create.

"The labs are an important source of jobs ... really good-paying jobs," said Chris Erickson, a professor of economics and international business at New Mexico State University.

The labs themselves employ thousands in positions ranging from scientific researchers to facilities managers to security guards, Los Alamos National Laboratory spokesman James Rickman said.

More than that, the labs generate jobs throughout the state.

"The lab every year is spending about \$538 million ... buying goods and services, which means that businesses throughout the state are able to hire people," Rickman said.

But positions at the laboratories may take jobs away from other areas, as no other businesses are able to match the high salaries at Los Alamos and other facilities, said Greg Mello of the **Los Alamos Study Group**, an organization that promotes nuclear disarmament.

"The local economy gets drained of some of its best, most productive people," he said, and as a result smaller business owners may be unable to survive.

New Mexico receives almost half of the entire federal budget for nuclear weapons development and research, Mello said, or about \$3 billion a year.

This funding is a vital part of the state economy.

"The driver of the economy is federal dollars, and many of those dollars are S caron> through the national labs," Erickson said.

On one hand, this funding means more money for New Mexico.

Most of the employees at Los Alamos are New Mexicans, who live and spend their money in the state, Rickman said.

But others balk at the state's dependency on federal money.

"On the surface it looks like it brings jobs to the state," but as a result of the nuclear weapons sites, "our state has suffered, has not grown like other states which don't have these facilities," Mello said.

Some feel that other important areas of commerce have been neglected, leading to a weaker economy overall.

"Right now, we're very interdependent with the rest of the country," said Claudia Pavel, a Las Cruces resident who opposes nuclear arms development and plans to protest at Los Alamos National Laboratory with hundreds of others Saturday.

The long-term answer to the state's economic difficulties, she said, is to develop internal industries that will

benefit New Mexico directly, rather than pouring resources into nuclear development facilities.

Sara Taylor can be reached at staylor@lcsun-news.com

Nuclear facilities in New Mexico

There are four nuclear weapons facilities in New Mexico. Three are funded by the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), a quasi-independent agency within the Department of Energy (DOE). The fourth, WIPP, is a DOE-funded nuclear waste disposal site

Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL)

Contractor: University of California, 9th largest defense contractor in the U.S.

Budget: \$2.22 billion: 73 percent nuclear weapons; 7 percent nonproliferation; 6 percent science; 4 percent other defense; 4 percent environmental "cleanup" (half for other DOE/NNSA sites); 3 percent homeland security and related; 3 percent energy.

Mission: Design and test nuclear explosives; prototype nuclear explosive devices and manufacture selected components; military and defense sciences; on site nuclear waste disposal; supporting sciences.

Sandia National Laboratories (SNL)

Contractor: Lockheed-Martin Corp., largest defense contractor in the U.S.

Budget: \$2.22 billion (includes branches in CA, NV, HI): 56 percent nuclear weapons; 14 percent other military; 13 percent secret/unclear; 7 percent nonproliferation; 10 percent science, energy, corporate, homeland security, other.

Mission: Weaponizing nuclear bombs and warheads; testing warheads and components and manufacturing selected components; defense, spy, and space hardware and software; supporting science and technology.

NNSA Service Center, Albuquerque

Contractor: no operating site contractor; federal site.

Budget: \$584 million: 55 percent nuclear weapons; 30 percent nuclear nonproliferation; 11 percent other defense; 4 percent cleanup, science, energy.

Mission: Contract administration; frankly somewhat unclear and evolving.

Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP)

Contractor: Westinghouse TRU Solutions.

Budget: \$183 million.

Mission: Defense transuranic nuclear waste disposal.

Los Alamos Study Group; www.lasg.org

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Author: Sara Taylor

Section: A Section

Page: 7A

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Group calls for nuclear disarmament

◆ Los Alamos site
of Saturday rally

DARRYL NEWMAN
lareporter@lamonitor.com
Monitor Staff Writer

8/3/05

Aging survivors of the atomic bomb blasts that devastated the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki 60 years ago will help bring thousands of sunflowers, the international symbol of nuclear disarmament, to Los Alamos this weekend as part of "Hiroshima 60 Years: It Started Here, Let's Stop It Here."

Hibakusha - survivors of the nuclear blasts will present letters from the mayors of the Japanese cities to members of the county council requesting its assistance in worldwide disarmament efforts.

So far, more than 140 organizations and 250 New Mexico businesses have endorsed the Saturday event calling for a complete disarmament of nuclear weapons.

As part of the event sponsored by the Los Alamos Study Group in remembrance of the 60th anniversary of the bombings that ended World War II, the day will begin at 8 a.m. with a traditional sackcloth-and-ashes witness, organized by Pax Christi New Mexico at Ashley Pond. Buddhist groups from northern New Mexico and California will join the group.

Other events throughout the day are as follows:

- 10 a.m.: Welcome address, music and keynote speakers, including Nuclear Age Peace Foundation President David Krieger, Father John Dear and others.

- Noon: Pageant with thousands of sunflowers, procession and the delivery of sunflowers to county officials at the post office. Los Alamos community leaders present will be joined by members of the Santa Fe City Council and local business representatives who will give short presentations

- 1 p.m.: Lunch, local speakers, poets and music with afternoon keynote address.

- 2 p.m.: A workshop on nuclear history at the Community Building and a workshop on a post-

See RALLY, 2

RALLY

From Page 1

nuclear economy for New Mexico will be held at the Betty Ehart Senior Center.

- 6 p.m.: Break for dinner
- 8 p.m.: At Ashley Pond - Music, poetry and thousands of floating candle lanterns, one for each hundred victims at Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Greg Mello, executive director of the Los Alamos Study Group, said the organization has formally invited the council to attend the events of the day.

"We are outreaching to the county council to say that we know Los Alamos is a town like other towns with aspirations and needs," Mello said. "We want to work together to decrease nuclear dangers."

For more information about the event set for Saturday, visit the Los Alamos Study Group at lasg.org or call (505) 265-1200.

GIVE PEACE A CHANCE

Mass demonstrations planned for nuclear anniversary.

BY NATHAN DINSDALE
nate@sfireporter.com

The pastor sees Nineveh when he looks at The Hill.

He hopes the lessons of the Book of Jonah—in which every man and beast in the city of Nineveh was adorned with sackcloth and ashes in repentance before God—can be replicated in Los Alamos.

Which is why Father John Dear and members of his Pax Christi New Mexico peace organization plan to cover themselves in sackcloth and ashes on Aug. 6 in Los Alamos to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the American nuclear attacks on Japan.

"It's a new experiment in creative nonviolence," Dear says. "It's an ultimate sin what we're doing at Los Alamos so we're going to take up this symbol of repentance and call for everyone to renounce the sin of nuclear weapons."

The symbolic act is oddly fitting considering the Iraqi city of Mosul—partially leveled in the current war using weapons honed in places like Los Alamos National Laboratory—stands on the ancient site of Nineveh. Dear—the author of 20 books on peace—nonetheless stresses the protest is not an exclusive indictment of LANL.

"We're not going in pointing fingers at anyone," Dear says. "We're all victims of the nuclear age. We just hope this event will make good people think about the evil things we're doing."

The sackcloth-and-ashes demonstration is part of a broader event—dubbed "Hiroshima 60 Years: It Started Here, Let's Stop It Here"—being held Aug. 6 in and around Ashley Pond Park in Los Alamos.

The commemoration was spearheaded by the Los Alamos Study Group in conjunction with Pax Christi, the Upaya Zen Center and Veterans For Peace. The day's events include workshops, the release of 3,000 floating candle lanterns (one for each 100 victims of the atomic blasts) and presentations from activists, politicians and two survivors of the nuclear attacks—known as *hibakusha*—who will present letters from Hiroshima and Nagasaki to community leaders.

More than 140 organizations and 250 New Mexico businesses have endorsed the event, which LASG director Greg Mello expects to draw hundreds of people to Los Alamos on Aug. 6.

"Once there was an event, it was much easier to get people's attention," Mello says. "People are extremely selective about where they focus their atten-

tion...and we have to overcome the sense of disempowerment that people have. People are discouraged that the situation is hopeless, but it's quite possible for a small group of people to have a profound effect on national policy."

Getting a reaction from LANL may prove harder. The lab is no stranger to criticism, nor the sight of protestors gathering on its flanks every year to memorialize the anniversary of when the "Fat Man" and "Little Boy" atomic bombs the lab created fell on Japan.

"It doesn't really have much of an effect on our day-to-day operations," LANL Spokesman Kevin Roark says of the protests. "It happens every year... and it's usually the same group of people. We know them and they know us. It's free speech. It's America. It's a beautiful thing."

According to United for Peace and Justice, more than 50 demonstrations are planned across the nation, including four at weapons facilities in California, Nevada, Tennessee and Los Alamos.

Santa Fe will be host to its own commemoration when the Seventh Annual Peace Day begins at 5:15 pm, Aug. 5 (8:15 am., Aug. 6 in Japan, the time when "Fat Boy" instantaneously

killed thousands of people 60 years ago) when the Hiroshima Peace

Bell—rung annually in Japan—is broadcast live on KSFR. Peace Day founder Shannyn Sollitt says several area churches have agreed to toll their bells at the same time.

Despite the somber beginnings of Peace Day—which will take place primarily in Railyard Park—the focus in Santa Fe will be more on celebrating art, music and culture rather than civic protest.

"We can all see that there is a plethora of horrific problems in the world right now," Sollitt says. "The intention of Peace Day is to focus on the positives and what we're doing to advance peace both in the world and in our own communities."

For more info: www.lasg.org, www.upaya.org, www.paxchristinewmexico.org and www.losalamospeaceproject.us



Father John Dear calls his protest plans a new form of creative non-violence.

Publication: Santa Fe New Mexican; Date: Aug 4, 2005; Section: Santa Fe ElNorte; Page: 15



DOE report: New labs needs coordination

By **ANDY LENDERMAN** The New Mexican

The federal Department of Energy could do a better job coordinating its biological-agent work with national labs and other government agencies, according to a recent report.

The department is building five labs where research on diseases such as anthrax and the plague can take place, according to a July 27 report released by the department's inspector general. Two of those have been constructed at Los Alamos, according to the report. The facility is not yet open.

"We determined that the department had not established an orderly mechanism for coordinating its biological select agent research and development activities," Inspector General Gregory Friedman wrote.

Friedman's findings include:

A working group formed to address coordination issues was disbanded, and no other group was assigned responsibility after that.

"The department has not developed and executed a plan for the development, construction and operation of the BSL-3 laboratories."

A BSL-3 lab is "designed to contain agents with a potential for respiratory transmission that can cause serious and potentially lethal infection," like anthrax, according to DOE.

The department's management agreed with the findings of the report.

A spokesman at Los Alamos National Laboratory said the BSL-3 lab can help scientists analyze how, when and where an anthrax attack was produced, for example. "We're hoping to get it up and running in the near future," spokesman Kevin Roark said.

The leader of a lab watchdog group said the report understates the problem. "It's not clear that any of this is coordinated — or that this is the appropriate way to protect the nation," Greg Mello of the Los Alamos Study Group said.

• [back to story page](#)

URL: http://www.abqjournal.com/north/377336north_news08-04-05.htm

Thursday, August 4, 2005

Groups Mass Against Nukes

By Adam Rankin

Journal Staff Writer

Buddhists, Catholics and other proponents of peace and nuclear disarmament are massing this week to observe the 60th anniversary of the world's first nuclear attacks when the United States bombed Hiroshima, Japan, in an effort to hasten the end of World War II.

All told, the various groups leading the events— Pax Christi New Mexico, Upaya Zen Center and the Los Alamos Study Group— hope the weekend events planned for Saturday will be the largest disarmament gathering in Los Alamos, the birthplace of the atomic bomb.

"What the 60th anniversary is about is what we as a society think about mass destruction," said Greg Mello, executive director of the Los Alamos Study Group. "It isn't just nuclear weapons, it is about our tolerance for mass killing and whether it is something we might conduct under certain circumstances or whether it is something we wish to reject under all circumstances in order to build worldwide consensus against mass killing and genocide."

Beginning today with a press conference featuring two survivors of the American nuclear attacks against Japan, the groups have gatherings, seminars, music, prayers and vigils planned through Tuesday, the 60th anniversary of the bombing of Nagasaki, Japan. About 240,000 people died as a result of both bombings.

On Friday, the Catholic peace organization Pax Christi New Mexico plans a Mass for the Feast of Transfiguration at 7:30 p.m. in Santa Fe at the Santa Maria de la Paz Church, 11 College Ave. Jesuit peace activist Father John Dear will deliver the homily.

Also on Friday, the Upaya Zen Center begins a five-day retreat focused on repenting for the bombing by performing 108 prostrations, bowing and chanting in concert in the traditional Japanese style. The prostrations are scheduled to begin at 5:15 p.m., corresponding to the time the bomb was dropped on Hiroshima.

Also at 5:15 p.m. Friday, SITE Santa Fe will broadcast a live audio feed from Hiroshima on KSFR-FM and KUNM-FM of the ringing of the Hiroshima Peace Bell.

Saturday is Santa Fe's seventh annual Peace Day, scheduled to take place at the Railyard from 11 a.m. until 10 p.m. The event will feature numerous dance and music performances throughout the day.

Symbol of repentance

Pax Christi plans to gather Saturday by Ashley Pond in Los Alamos to carry out a vigil of repentance and peace through the town beginning about 8 a.m.

"Our group began talking last fall about what we were going to do for the 60th anniversary, and we decided we were going to use a biblical symbol," Dear said.

He said the group chose the story of Jonah and his effort to get the people of Nineveh to repent their sins, in part because Nineveh is the only example in which an entire city joined together in repentance.

"Los Alamos is engaged in far greater evil (for supporting nuclear weapons) than Nineveh or Sodom and Gomorrah, so if anybody needs to repent, it is us," Dear said.

As in the story of Jonah and Nineveh, Pax Christi members plan to don sack cloths— converted grain and potato sacks— and pour ashes over themselves as they repent for what they perceive as the sins of those involved in building and maintaining the country's nuclear weapons.

"It is an ancient symbol of repenting your sin; it is a spiritual action begging God to forgive us for what we have done," Dear said.

The ashes also serve to evoke the image of the ashes of the victims killed during the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, so "it brings in the reality of nuclear weapons," Dear said.

The group plans to reconvene at the Los Alamos Post Office, where visiting survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki will present a letter from the current mayors of those two cities to the Los Alamos County Council requesting their assistance in worldwide disarmament efforts.


The Los Alamos Study Group will pass out thousands of sunflowers grown in Corrales that have come to symbolize the movement away from nuclear weapons.

"We are not demonstrating for peace," Mello said. "This is a disarmament rally. Because Los Alamos National Laboratory and Sandia National Laboratories are in their view working for peace, so we are all for peace, but the truth of the matter is that is not good enough. We stand for different policies."

Mello said the 60th anniversary is an important moment to bring awareness to the issues surrounding nuclear weapons policies.

"Nuclear weapons issues are very much active right now," Mello said. He said the United States is reviewing its stockpile, and the Bush administration and Congress have proposed several different visions for the future of the nation's nuclear weapon stockpile— now numbering more than 10,000 warheads.

"As a result, the issues are really wide open in a way they haven't been," he said. "It is important for citizens to express what it is exactly that they want,

and it is important for citizens to work to make those specific aspirations a reality."  Copyright 2005 Albuquerque Journal

[Back to story page](#)



ROBERTO E. ROSALES/JOURNAL

A-bomb survivor Koji Ueda cuts down sunflowers in a Corrales field. They will be used later this week in a ceremony commemorating the 60th anniversary of the A-bomb.

DISARMAMENT EVENTS

8/4/05

Groups Gather Against Nukes

Participants Mark 60th
Anniversary of A-Bomb

BY ADAM RANKIN
Journal Staff Writer

Buddhists, Catholics and other proponents of peace and nuclear disarmament are massing this week to observe the 60th anniversary of the world's first nuclear attacks when the United States bombed Hiroshima, Japan, in an effort to hasten the end of World War II.

All told, the various groups leading the events — Pax Christi New Mexico, Upaya Zen Center and the Los Alamos Study Group — hope the weekend events planned for Saturday will be the largest disarmament gathering in Los Alamos, the birth-

place of the atomic bomb.

"What the 60th anniversary is about is what we as a society think about mass destruction," said Greg Mello, executive director of the Los Alamos Study Group. "It isn't just nuclear weapons, it is about our tolerance for mass killing and whether it is something we might conduct under certain circumstances or whether it is something we wish to reject under all circumstances in order to build worldwide consensus against mass killing and genocide."

Beginning today with a press conference featuring two survivors of the American nuclear attacks against Japan, the groups have gatherings, seminars, music, prayers and vigils planned through Tuesday, the 60th

See **GROUPS** on **PAGE 4**

Atomic Bomb Survivors State Their Case in N.M.

■ *Two Japanese citizens tell their stories in Duke City, plan LANL tour*

BY ELAINE D. BRISEÑO
Journal Staff Writer

ALBUQUERQUE — Six decades have passed since the United States dropped two atomic bombs on Japan, changing the face of war forever.

Two survivors of the 1945 bombs arrived in New Mexico on Wednesday to tell their stories and honor those who died. They will travel to Los Alamos today for a tour of the Los Alamos National Laboratory, birthplace of the atomic bomb.

On Saturday, they will attend a 60-year Hiroshima Day commemoration

ceremony at Ashley Pond Park in Los Alamos. The week's events and visit were arranged by the Los Alamos Study Group.

Speaking through an interpreter Wednesday afternoon, the two sipped hot tea under a tree in the backyard of an Albuquerque home and explained their mission. Masako Hashida and Koji Ueda want to put an end to war and make sure the world never again sees another Hiroshima or Nagasaki. They believe they have an obligation to tell their stories to honor those who died.

On the morning of Aug. 6, 1945, the United States launched the world's first nuclear attack, dropping an

See **SURVIVORS** on **PAGE 4**

Groups Marks 60th Anniversary

from PAGE 1

anniversary of the bombing of Nagasaki, Japan. About 240,000 people died as a result of both bombings.

On Friday, the Catholic peace organization Pax Christi New Mexico plans a Mass for the Feast of Transfiguration at 7:30 p.m. in Santa Fe at the Santa Maria de la Paz Church, 11 College Ave. Jesuit peace activist Father John Dear will deliver the homily.

Also on Friday, the Upaya Zen Center begins a five-day retreat focused on repenting for the bombing by performing 108 prostrations, bowing and chanting in concert in the traditional Japanese style. The prostrations are scheduled to begin at 5:15 p.m., corresponding to the time the bomb was dropped on Hiroshima.

Also at 5:15 p.m. Friday, SITE Santa Fe will broadcast a live audio feed from Hiroshima on KSMR-FM and KUNM-FM of the ringing of the Hiroshima

Peace Bell.

Saturday is Santa Fe's seventh annual Peace Day, scheduled to take place at the Railroad from 11 a.m. until 10 p.m. The event will feature numerous dance and music performances throughout the day.

Symbol of repentance

Pax Christi plans to gather Saturday by Ashley Pond in Los Alamos to carry out a vigil of repentance and peace through the town beginning about 8 a.m.

"Our group began talking last fall about what we were going to do for the 60th anniversary, and we decided we were going to use a biblical symbol," Dear said.

He said the group chose the story of Jonah and his effort to get the people of Nineveh to repent their sins, in part because Nineveh is the only example in which an entire city joined together in repentance.

"Los Alamos is engaged in

far greater evil (for supporting nuclear weapons) than Nineveh or Sodom and Gomorrah, so if anybody needs to repent, it is us," Dear said.

As in the story of Jonah and Nineveh, Pax Christi members plan to don sack cloths — converted grain and potato sacks — and pour ashes over themselves as they repent for what they perceive as the sins of those involved in building and maintaining the country's nuclear weapons.

"It is an ancient symbol of repenting your sin; it is a spiritual action begging God to forgive us for what we have done," Dear said.

The ashes also serve to evoke the image of the ashes of the victims killed during the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, so "it brings in the reality of nuclear weapons," Dear said.

The group plans to reconvene at the Los Alamos Post Office, where visiting survivors of Hiroshima and

Nagasaki will present a letter from the current mayors of those two cities to the Los Alamos County Council requesting their assistance in worldwide disarmament efforts.

The Los Alamos Study Group will pass out thousands of sunflowers grown in Corrales that have come to symbolize the movement away from nuclear weapons.

"We are not demonstrating for peace," Mello said. "This is a disarmament rally. Because Los Alamos National Laboratory and Sandia National Laboratories are in their view working for peace, so we are all for peace, but the truth of the matter is that is not good enough. We stand for different policies."

Mello said the 60th anniversary is an important moment to bring awareness to the issues surrounding nuclear weapons policies.

"Nuclear weapons issues are

Survivors To Tour Los Alamos Lab

from PAGE 1

atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan. Three days later, a second bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. Thousands were killed instantly and others died soon after from radiation. Shortly following the blasts, Japan surrendered, bringing an end to World War II.

After their tea, Hashida and Ueda traveled to a Corrales field to pick sunflowers that will be presented to the Upaya Zen Center in Santa Fe where they will stay during their visit to New Mexico. Los Alamos Study Group member Trish Williams-Mello said the sunflower is the international symbol for disarmament. The group contracted Corrales residents Ben Schwartz and his wife, Molly, to grow the flowers.

Ueda and Hashida are *hibakusha*, the Japanese term for survivors of the atomic blasts. Ueda's family home

was within a mile of the epicenter of the blast in Hiroshima. He was 3 at the time, but he and his family survived because they had been evacuated to a village about 20 miles away before the bomb was dropped. Ueda said he does not remember much, but heard stories from family members while he was growing up. Ueda began telling his story about six years ago.

Hashida, a stay-at-home mom and grandmother, only began telling her story in the last year. She was 15, working in a factory in Nagasaki, when the bomb fell. Speaking through University of New Mexico interpreter Holly Siebert Kawakami, Hashida told her story while standing next to the Corrales sunflower field.

"Toward the end of the war, like so many of my peers, I was not going to school. I was ordered to work in the munitions factory ... I was separated from my family living in a

boarding house. It was a hot and humid day and I was working by my friend. I saw a huge flash and many different colors of light coming toward me. Then I was unconscious. When I woke up, I was blown outside the factory ... I remember seeing a creature, I could not tell if it was human or male or female. This creature was trying to stand up and skin was dripping from its fingers. I think it was looking for water."

Hashida's friend was never found and was presumed to have been killed.

For most of her life, Hashida could not bring herself to talk about that day. She suffered from survivor's guilt, not understanding why she had lived when so many had died. But as she got older, she said she felt a responsibility to those who died.

"I need to say something to the world," she said. "That something is 'no more war.'"

Hashida is a board member of the A-bomb Sufferers Asso-

ciation in Kumamoto.

Ueda is the assistant secretary general of the Tokyo Federation of A-bomb Sufferers Associations. This is his third trip to the United States, but first to the birthplace of the bomb. Ueda became visibly emotional when asked how he felt about his impending visit to the Los Alamos labs and whether he was angry at the United States.

"You can tell by his reaction it is very difficult to talk about it," Kawakami said. "He says he can only think of the people who died. He said, 'What I would like to say is can't we end all wars? It's the best we can do for the people that died.'"

"I know when I come to the United States and say no more Hiroshima, people will say no more Pearl Harbor. So, actually, nobody is right."

The group will return to Corrales Friday morning to harvest thousands more sunflowers to be used in Saturday's ceremony in Los Alamos.

RALLY TO MARK 60 YEARS SINCE ATOMIC BOMBINGS



Stacia Spragg-Braude/Tribune

Masako Hashida, a survivor of the atomic bomb attack on Nagasaki, cast a giant sunflower skyward Wednesday during a welcoming ceremony in Corrales

in connection with the 60th anniversary of the bombing. Sunflowers, a symbol for nuclear disarmament, will be trucked to Los Alamos for a rally.

Hope blooms eternal

Japanese survivors will spread message during anti-nuclear event in Los Alamos

By Jakob Schiller

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When Masako Hashida came to, she was lying outside the Mitsubishi torpedo manufacturing plant where she worked in Nagasaki. All she could remember was a blast and waves of light coming toward her. It was Aug. 9, 1945, and the United States had just dropped an atomic bomb on her city.

Hashida, 15 at the time, looked around for her best friend, who worked next to her at the plant. She couldn't find her. For days, Hashida searched. She wandered through the crowds of dead and dying people but never found her friend. Her most distinct memory is of something she refers to as "the creature."

It was a person who had been so badly injured that Hashida could not tell if it was a man or a woman. The skin was dripping, the hair burned off. "The creature" was trying to stand up

8/4/05
An atomic bomb set off by terrorists would change world politics, civil rights and the course of history in an instant. Page A6

and find water.

Standing under a blazing sun similar to the one that hovered over her city that summer day, Hashida told a small crowd gathered Wednesday afternoon in Corrales that nobody should experience what she saw.

"I want all nuclear weapons banned," she said through a translator.

Hashida, now 75, is outside her country for the first time to participate in a series of events that commemorate the 60th anniversary of the bombing and connect New Mexico as the place where the bombs were developed.

She and another survivor, Koji Ueda, who was 3 when the bomb was

Please see **FLOWERS/A8**

FLOWERS *from A1*

dropped in Hiroshima near where his family lived, on Wednesday helped harvest part of almost a half-acre of sunflowers in a Corrales nursery.

The flowers will be trucked to a rally and teach-in in Los Alamos on Saturday morning, 60 years to the day that the Hiroshima bomb fell.

Most of the more than 5,000 flowers will be cut Friday by volunteers.

Greg Mello, a member of the Los Alamos Study Group, the non-profit organization that contacted Hashida and Ueda and organized the Los Alamos rally, said the sunflower is the international symbol for nuclear disarmament.

He and his wife, Trish Williams-Mello, who also works for the study group, contracted Corrales Garden and Nursery, which planted the sunflowers in May.

"We wanted to make the symbol of the sunflower more concrete," Mello said.

More survivors were expected to come to New Mexico, Mello said, but there is a high demand for testimony from survivors around the world to commemorate the anniversary.

In Japan, the survivors are referred to as Hibakusha. Ueda said there are an estimated 270,000 Hibakusha in Japan, but their numbers are rapidly decreasing as they age.

Hashida and Ueda, who are members of the A-bomb Sufferers Association, said they wanted to come to the United States to ensure that their message is spread before they grow too old.

Both know people who have died of what they suspect is cancer that was a result of exposure to radiation.

Neither Hashida nor Ueda have had cancer, but they said that among Hibakusha, it is expected they will die from one type of cancer eventually.

Hashida said she spent most of her life as a homemaker and never talked publicly about what she witnessed. As she got older, she said she felt the "spirits of those who died urging me on to testify."

Ueda has been to the United States three times and has been speaking about the event for six years. Although he was too young to remember much of what happened, Ueda, 63, had family members die from what he suspects was radiation exposure. He has lived with the memories of what his mom told him about that day.

Ueda said he knows the atomic bomb is a complex issue in the United States. He said he acknowledges that Japan attacked the United States at Pearl Harbor.

His fight, he said, is to stop all wars, period.

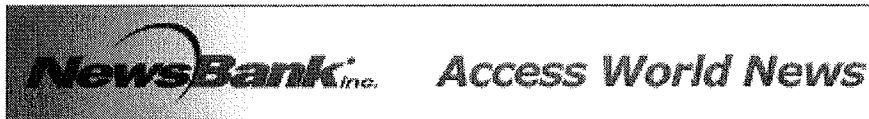
"We must end all wars," he said. "This is the least we can do for the people who died."

LOS ALAMOS RALLY

What: "Hiroshima 60 Years: It Started Here, Let's Stop It Here." A rally and teach-in tied to the 60th anniversary of the dropping of atomic bombs on Japan.

When: 8 a.m., Saturday, Ashley Pond Park, Los Alamos.

For more information: Contact the Los Alamos Study Group at 265-1200 or www.lasg.org.



Paper: Santa Fe New Mexican, The (NM)

Title: SURVIVORS OF NAGASAKI, HIROSHIMA SPEAK AGAINST VIOLENCE

Date: August 5, 2005

Masako Hashida is lucky.

She survived an atomic blast in Nagasaki, Japan, nearly 60 years ago when roughly 100,000 others died. She later married and had two sons, and now is a grandmother to two boys and two girls.

Hashida saw a model of Fat Man at a museum in Los Alamos on Thursday -- the bomb that dropped on Nagasaki and hastened the end of World War II.

"I saw the bomb that was dropped on my city, and it's hard to talk about what I was feeling," Hashida said through an interpreter at the Upaya Zen Center in Santa Fe.

Hashida and Koji Ueda, who was six miles from the Hiroshima blast, are in New Mexico this week to preach a message of abolishing nuclear weapons. "There must never be more victims of nuclear weapons or nuclear war," Hashida said.

"What we are saying is that we cannot use violent means to achieve peace," Ueda said.

Peace groups and religious leaders have united around the 60th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, offering the public ways to protest nuclear weapons and repent.

But veterans and Los Alamos retirees are organizing as well to celebrate the creation of the weapon that, from their perspective, saved lives.

From the anti-nuke perspective, religious services and public lectures are scheduled in Santa Fe today and Los Alamos on Saturday, where scientists built the first atomic bomb.

Leading figures in the nuclear-disarmament community and Hashida and Ueda are scheduled to speak.

The Rev. John Dear will lead his group, Pax Christi New Mexico, in a Saturday service where members will wear sackcloth and ashes. "We're recalling through the symbol of ashes the deaths of all the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki who were just vaporized by the nuclear blast," Dear said in a telephone interview. "And we're also calling upon the God of peace for the gift of nuclear disarmament.

"This is an ancient Biblical symbol of repentance, for saying we are sorry for the wrongs we have done."

Hiroshima was bombed Aug. 6, 1945. Nagasaki was bombed Aug. 9. About 240,000 people died from the blasts and subsequent radiation.

Japan surrendered Aug. 15, preventing the need for American troops to invade the Japanese home islands in a massive attack. Many Americans expected a lengthy invasion that could have killed hundreds of thousands of soldiers and civilians -- maybe millions, according to some studies.

"That would have been our next step," said Steve Stoddard, a World War II Army veteran and member of the Los Alamos Education Group.

Stoddard's group will be at Ashley Pond in Los Alamos on Saturday, where a day's worth of memorial services are planned by anti-nuke groups.

"This thing is going to be featured as the truth booth," Stoddard said. "... What we're primarily there for is to stop this endless demonizing of the bomb. We still think it engendered 50 years of peace."

Hashida used those 50 years to build a family. She was a stay at home mother, wife to a kind man, she said. "I feel that my family life has been very happy," she said.

But survivor's guilt lingers. "Always I think about the people that died, that were killed that day. ... And I feel guilty for living."

Among events marking the 60th anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic blasts:

In Santa Fe, today:

* Peace Day, Art in the Park, 4:30-6 p.m., Railyard Park.

* Mass by the Rev. John Dear, nuclear-disarmament speaker, Santa Maria de la Paz Catholic Community, 7:30 p.m.

* In repentance for what they believe was a sinful act by their nation, American Buddhists will perform 108 prostrations, bowing and chanting, at the Upaya Zen Center, 1404 Cerro Gordo Road; 5:15 p.m.

In Los Alamos, Saturday:

The **Los Alamos Study group** has organized peace and disarmament events all day Saturday at Ashley Pond in Los Alamos. Prayer, songs, poetry, educational workshops and other ceremonies are scheduled.

Highlights include:

* Pax Christi event,

8-9:30 a.m.

* Koji Ueda and Masako Hashida, survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, speak about their experiences at 11 a.m.

* A workshop on Building a Post-Nuclear Economy in New Mexico is from 2:15-4 p.m.

* A candle-lantern ceremony is at 8:20 p.m.

For more information, contact the **Los Alamos Study Group**, 265-1200.

In Los Alamos, Tuesday:

The 60th Anniversary Commemorative Committee will host a free lecture featuring two Manhattan Project veterans and retired Vice Admiral Frederick Ashworth, the weaponeer on the B-29 that dropped the bomb over Nagasaki, 7 p.m. at Fuller Lodge, 20th Street and Central Avenue, Los Alamos.

For more information, call Steve Stoddard of Los Alamos Education Group, 662-0482.

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Section: Main

Page: A-1

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Los Alamos Study Group

Nuclear Disarmament • Environmental Protection • Social Justice • Economic Sustainability

On August 6

[Article to appear in the *El Dorado Sun*, August 2005 edition]

Greg Mello

On August 6, 1945, at 8:15 in the morning local time, a ball of white fire appeared in the air 1,970 feet above Hiroshima, near the Aioi Bridge. The brilliance of the rapidly expanding ball instantly filled the city like liquid fire, brighter than anything a naked living eye had ever seen or could see, annihilating everything. Neither could anyone see those other rays, intense and invisible, that also bathed the city, grievously harming the life they touched.

In one second, the white ball expanded to 1,500 feet in diameter. Over the next two seconds it hung there horribly a few hundred feet above the doomed city, like a mistaken sun. By the end of the third second, the huge ball was still very bright, but for those whose eyes could still see or whose skin still feel, the burning intensity of light was already fading.

It was, after all, an early experiment. A few years later, the laboratory that made this white ball would find a way to make the all-consuming light last much longer — up to a minute, an eternity at such intensity. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, when the huge new bombs were tested, the fire came in vast spheres that grew to miles in diameter, charring the flesh of caged experimental animals over hundreds of square miles and burning all feathered life from the sky 20 or more miles away. On August 6, 1945, however, those advances in technique were still to come.

On the day of the first nuclear attack, 13-year-old Shigeko Sasamori was standing in the street about 1 mile from the center of the ball of light. Now, as the whiteness faded, her clothes were burning. Her skin was boiling away and her face was smoking. Then the first blast wave came, and Shigeko was slapped to the ground as if by a giant's hand. She got up.

The main shock wave came then. To those eyes miles above in the three silver airplanes, it looked like a pale, shimmering bubble expanding in the air. For Shigeko on the ground, hidden from their eyes by the black smoke and dust already mixed by the giant's hand, it came as another hard blow, with winds of 150 miles per hour. Tiles and rocks and pieces of glass came in it, and lumber was hurtled like spears. Shigeko was knocked down again, and for a while she couldn't see anything.

In fact, no one could see. The bright morning was gone as if it too had been crushed by the sudden, unearthly light. All was now dark — completely dark. In the dark, 10,000 fires began to grow.

At this point, just 10 seconds had passed since the white ball had appeared. In that short time, humanity's prospects changed. Whole worlds of possibility were now passing away, not just for the people dying around Shigeko but for everyone. Those who watched from above the mushroom cloud couldn't see this. They were too far away. They are always too far away.

Now, sixty years later, the darkness that began at Hiroshima has not been dispelled. The peace brought by the giant bomb was so badly deformed it was called a new war – a “cold” war. In that war, dozens of “hot” wars were fought, and millions of people were killed. Tens of trillions of dollars were diverted from human needs. Millions of people starved or died of preventable diseases, or else lived in wretched poverty, helpless and hopeless. It was indeed a cold war – very cold. And before it quite ended, the next big war began, the perpetual, omnipresent “War on Terror,” also known as the “Petroleum War” or “The War for Our Vanishing Way of Life.” The coldness has not let up, and the promise of peace burned away by the white ball sixty years ago has not returned. Not yet.

The miracle

Despite extensive burns, Shigeko Sasamori would live. As fate would have it, she had been so exhausted that morning that she put on a second pair of pants over the ones she was already wearing, which protected her lower body just long enough to keep her legs from burning. Her head, however, was so completely burned that her parents could not even tell the front of her head from the back. And in those first three seconds after the white ball appeared, her fingers, ears and nose partly boiled away.

Shigeko’s parents eventually found her lying in a makeshift first-aid station. For weeks she hovered between life and death. Very gradually she healed, but remained badly disfigured and, like the other young survivors, socially stigmatized.

Ten years after these horrific events, in 1955, Norman Cousins, a well-known American journalist and leader in the small but influential nuclear-disarmament movement, brought Shigeko and 24 other badly burned young women to Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York. There they received extensive reconstructive surgery.

Later, she would struggle with thyroid and stomach cancer. Always, she would live with bomb-related ailments. But Shigeko had been given a new life. She stayed in the United States, became a nurse, married and had a son, who is an attorney in Los Angeles. Shigeko, now 73, works tirelessly for nuclear disarmament.

It was nothing less than a miracle that Shigeko, so badly burned, recovered — a miracle of life and attentive, selfless love. Surely it is just the same kind of miracle, ever creative and new, that has sustained and renewed life on this planet so far, a miracle in which each one of us participates today. Except for certain occasions, we usually don’t see this creation any more than the men in the airplanes could see the destruction they caused. We, like they, are just too distant, too estranged.

Unlike Shigeko, the government that dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, and another one three days later on Nagasaki, has never recovered. Far from backing away from apocalyptic violence after this experience, the U.S. quickly went on to build as many nuclear weapons as possible. By 1949, when Russia tested its first bomb, senior officers were openly advocating the preemptive annihilation of Russia — genocide, in other words. Prompt, intentional and complete destruction of the enemy — contingent, anticipatory genocide — became official policy.

It still is today.

Staying the course

Not everyone involved wanted to drop those bombs in 1945. We now know they were dropped over the strenuous objections of many senior U.S. military and civilian leaders and over the objections of many scientists as well. But the men who ran the war had by then firebombed over 60 Japanese cities, and they were not in a mood to listen. Even *after* Nagasaki, and *after* the Japanese emperor had announced surrender over the radio, the War Department conducted a massive 1,000-bomber raid, the biggest in the Pacific war.

By August 6, it wasn't about defeating Japan — that country was already defeated. The few senior U.S. leaders “in” on the secret of the bomb were then focused on much more than just victory in war. They also believed the bomb, if adequately demonstrated, would give the U.S. a “master card” in postwar diplomacy. At the top levels in the Manhattan Project, the “speedup” for the Trinity test was not driven by anything happening in the Pacific but by the impending negotiations with Stalin at Potsdam. After Trinity, the leaders at Los Alamos were quietly told they absolutely *had* to use the bombs prior to August 15, for reasons not explained.

As Nobel Prize–winning physicist Patrick Blackett — whom future Los Alamos director Robert Oppenheimer apparently had tried to kill with a poisoned apple in the fall of 1925¹ — observed soon after the war, those nuclear attacks were less the conclusion of one war than the initial shots in a new cold war with Soviet Russia. General Groves, who ran the Manhattan Project, had privately said exactly that in 1944.

To be valuable diplomatically, the new bomb had to be demonstrated spectacularly, meaning on real cities with real people. Those in charge were not about to forgo that demonstration, no matter how defeated Japan might be. They also believed it was important to end the war very quickly, not so much to save American lives as to limit the ability of the Soviet Union, which would enter the Pacific war on August 9, to gain territory and influence in East Asia.

Thus it was that the machine created to bomb Japan, a machine in which the bomber crew high above Hiroshima and the scientists in New Mexico were cogs, had attained its own kind of critical mass. The goal was now a maximum of violence itself — maximum shock and awe, in more modern terms. Few in positions of responsibility at the time recognized the full extent of what was happening because, like the white ball that appeared over Hiroshima, the inherent violence of the enterprise, once it was set up, was wholly unprecedented in its scale, efficiency, and scope.

The war ended, but the institutions, financial relationships and inverted ideals of the Manhattan Project did not. It was huge by then — a system of secrecy and compartmentalization, of paranoia and deception, staffed by the best and brightest and funded extravagantly outside all congressional oversight. The entire apparatus had been brought into being to create an instrument of absolute violence, what Secretary of War Henry Stimson hoped would be the old Roman *ultima ratio*, the “ultimate arbiter of force.” After the war, and despite the efforts of many scientists, that mission remained. The Manhattan Project soon morphed into the Atomic Energy

Commission, but the quest for bigger, better, and more numerous weapons remained its central organizing principle.

The white ball had made the world deeply uncertain and fearful. Now, the bureaucracy that produced it offered itself as the prime guarantor of security. No expense could be spared. That same secret, inaccessible bureaucracy, with violence at its core, was also a new model of governance, in diametrical opposition to more democratic conceptions. The absolute weapon required absolutism in government. And so the “national security state” was born, its key enabling legislation passed and its ideals largely accepted by the political class. The social contract Americans had had with their government and with each other changed, in the light of the white ball.

Now the unthinkable was not only thinkable but real. It had happened. Our own government, or parts of it, had engaged in what turned out to be, in retrospect, horrendous crimes, with the willing participation of everyone involved. This was the strangest and greatest secret, because everybody knew it. There could never be any apology because that would diminish the power of the new weapons — the “credibility of our deterrent,” as we learned to say. Those who had bombed cities told us we had to “stay the course.” For far too long, we did.

People of the bomb

Novelist E. L. Doctorow once remarked that the bomb “... was first our weaponry and then our diplomacy, and now it’s our economy. How can we suppose that something so monstrously powerful would not, after years, compose our identity?”

The question for Americans, especially we in New Mexico, is, does it? Are we now “the people of the bomb”? Because if we are, if we allow that identity to remain thrust upon us by those who profit thereby, there is no hope for us — no hope at all. If we remain passive and allow the great fiction of nuclearized “national security” to be the master story of our communal life, we will continue to wander in a desert of our own making, and we will die there.

Believe it or not, we can choose. But to choose at all, we must *really* choose. It won’t be enough to merely express an opinion, or to vote — not nearly enough. Some people seem to think that if they do these small things, or go to a demonstration, the world should change, just like that. It doesn’t work that way and never has. We have to *insist* on humane, sustainable priorities *and make sacrifices for them* or they won’t happen.

Citizenship begins on the far side of convenience, and political power begins where being merely polite leaves off. “Power concedes nothing without a demand,” 19th-century abolitionist leader Frederick Douglass reminds us. “It never has and it never will. Find out just what a people will submit to, and you have found out the exact amount of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them.”

Think about it. We live in a state where making instruments of genocide is the second-largest industry, after oil and gas extraction. We take our children to museums in Los Alamos and Albuquerque that glorify weapons of mass destruction and the people who invented them (many

of these scientists were later very sorry, but this is never mentioned). The corporations who run these labs are the very largest in the state along with the Public Service Company of New Mexico, and their executives are deeply insinuated into policy-making circles. How could anyone think that a just economy and clean environment could ever be the product of an industry devoted to death?

In this country, we've spent \$7.3 trillion over the past 63 years on nuclear weapons. More than \$100 billion of that has been spent in New Mexico. On a net per capita basis, federal funds have been coming to New Mexico far more than to any other state, for decades. And what have we gotten from the bomb factories? Continued poverty. A decline in average relative income over the past 3 ½ decades. Bottom-drawer rankings in every important social indicator.

And nuclear waste — lots of it. Los Alamos is home to the largest nuclear dump in four states (Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and Texas). More is buried every week. Millions of additional drums are expected to be generated and buried in Los Alamos over the next few decades. In the land where the first nuclear explosion was conducted in a place called the “Journey of Death,” enchantment is giving way to entombment.

The good news

So what's the good news? The good news is that only a very few people really want all this to continue. Outside the corrupted halls of power and a few corporate conference rooms, nuclear weapons have no significant political constituency. Polls show that more than 80 percent of Americans prefer complete nuclear disarmament pursuant to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, which legally requires it. Americans, despite decades of propaganda, have never accepted the legitimacy of nuclear weapons.

It's not too late. While imperial overstretch, fiscal irresponsibility, an addiction to cheap oil and many other trends make America's decline quite certain in conventional terms, the depth, the trauma and, above all, the *meaning* of that decline are partly up to us. Our story can be a noble one, but it can't be that if we “stay the course.” We are going to have to come down from the bomber high above the burning city, abandon our strange loves and awaken to the miracle of life on Earth. The world is suffering; when we see this, who can refrain from helping, since we can? The alternative offered by the national security state, whose aegis of violence rises above the din of the consumer society, is despair.

On August 6, the Los Alamos Study Group and more than 130 allied organizations working for a just and sustainable world are holding an all-day commemoration and teach-in, called “August 6th: Hiroshima 60 Years,” at Ashley Pond Park and nearby buildings in Los Alamos. The day's events begin at 10 a.m. and continue until 9 p.m. There will be inspiring speakers, workshops (on nuclear history and on building a postnuclear economy in New Mexico), music, thousands of sunflowers and floating lanterns, and much more. Bring your family, bring your friends — bring everyone you can. On this August 6, we will say a firm “No!” to continued investment in absolute violence and “Yes!” to the constructive action we now must take, and take without delay, to build the world our children need.

For more information about “August 6th: Hiroshima 60 Years” or the Los Alamos Study Group, go to www.lasg.org or call 505-265-1200.

Notes

1. Kai Bird and Martin J. Sherwin, *American Prometheus: The Triumph and Tragedy of J. Robert Oppenheimer* (New York: Knopf Publishing Group, 2005), 46. Blackett was Oppenheimer’s tutor at Cambridge.

About the author

For the past 13 years, Greg Mello has been the director of the Los Alamos Study Group, a disarmament research and education organization based in Santa Fe and now Albuquerque. Originally trained as a systems engineer and regional planner, he has been an environmental scientist, teacher, and hydrologist. In 2002 he was a research fellow at Princeton in underground nuclear weapons effects. The Study Group's work is recognized worldwide; this year Greg was invited to brief members of the European Parliament on U.S. weapons programs.



Shigeko Sasamori

(Photo: Guy Cross)

"It's got to stop. I feel repentance for the whole human race for what we've done in the name of defense. How horrific we are as a species."

FRAN STEIN



RANDY SINER/FOR THE JOURNAL

Lorraine Chan of San Francisco helps set out buckets of sunflowers around Los Alamos' Ashley Pond on Saturday during an observance of the 60th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, Japan.

Sunflowers and ashes

Nuclear anniversary inspires disarmament rally

By LAURA BANISH
Journal Staff Writer

LOS ALAMOS — Sunflowers, ashes, songs and prayer were used to send one message here Saturday: Stop the bomb where it started.

An estimated 300 people traveled from cities across the United States and as far away as Japan to this small mountain town — the birthplace of the atomic bomb — to mark the 60th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. During an emotionally charged, daylong rally, they called for peace and nuclear disarmament.

ment.

"It's got to stop. I feel repentance for the whole human race for what we've done in the name of defense," a teary eyed Fran Stein of North Fork Valley, Colo., said. "How horrific we are as a species."

Throughout the day, many types of imagery were used to convey the message of peace.

Sunflowers, which have become the international symbol for nuclear disarmament, were everywhere. The bright yellow flowers appeared on T-shirts, hats, buttons and an estimated 5,000 sunflowers in royal blue buckets encircled Ashley Pond.

"Symbols are very powerful. They bring it all home," said Father John Dear of Pax Christi New Mexico, the state chapter of an international Catholic peace movement.

Some members of Pax Christi donned sack cloths and carried bags of ashes to depict penitence and conversion to nonviolence, as portrayed in a story from the Book of Jonah in the Bible.

"Jonah used sack cloths and ashes in Nineveh. Two hundred years ago in Boston, they used tea. Mahatma Ghandi took a pinch of salt," Dear said. "With this symbol, we

WWII Vet: Bomb Saved My Life

By LAURA BANISH
Journal Staff Writer

Army Air Force veteran Stanley E. Logan believes that the atomic bomb saved his life.

On the 60th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, hundreds of protesters converged at Ashley Pond in Los Alamos — birthplace of the bomb — to call for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

But Logan was not one of them.

Across from the park, which was sated with signs and symbols of peace and messages denouncing the bomb, Logan of Santa Fe, and a handful of other World War II veterans, including some LANL retirees, gathered under a small green tent on the opposite side of Central Avenue to tell their story.

The men identified them-

See 300 ATTEND on PAGE 8

See WWII on PAGE 8



RANDY SINER/FOR THE JOURNAL

testers walk along Trinity Drive toward Los Alamos' Ashley Pond on Saturday during an observance of the 60th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, Japan.

300 Attend Anti-Nuke Rally

from PAGE 1

reclaim an ancient biblical image to show our political and spiritual opposition to nuclear weapons and the work of Los Alamos."

Disarmament urged

Dear read a letter that was later presented to the Los Alamos County Council from Tadatoshi Akiba, the mayor of Hiroshima.

"The eyes of the world today are on Los Alamos, where the first nuclear bombs were built," the letter said. It detailed the devastating impacts of the Aug. 6, 1945, bombing of Hiroshima.

The Hiroshima mayor asked for the County Council to reject the development of nuclear weapons and adopt a resolution that mirrors one recently passed by the city of Santa Fe, calling for the U.S. government to agree to complete nuclear disarmament as per the 1969 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

Later, Dear planned to fly to Las Vegas, Nev., to conduct an act of civil disobedience with actor Martin Sheen at a Nevada weapons testing site.

Some used costumes to communicate their message. One man dressed like Ghandi and another posed as U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, wearing handcuffs and an orange jump suit that said "war criminal."

Jillian Niven of Albuquerque stood on a milk crate, draped in an American flag, wearing only a black leotard and fishnet stockings underneath. She opened the flag to reveal the message: "Expose Politics of Bush's War." Niven said that Los Alamos, "being the originator

of the bomb, is the cancer of our social conscience."

Survivors speak

Of all the demonstrations and speeches, the most powerful came from atomic bomb survivors Masako Hashida and Ueda Koji, who traveled from Japan to advocate for the abolition of nuclear weapons in Los Alamos.

They told their stories through an interpreter.

Now 75 years old, Hashida said she was a 15-year-old girl working at the Mitsubishi weapons factory in Nagasaki, conscripted to make torpedoes, when the bomb fell on Aug. 9, 1945.

When she regained consciousness, she encountered a human-like creature with skin dripping from its bones and later other bomb survivors with badly burned, bleeding bodies.

"I was numb and in shock. I did not feel anything when I saw them. I have never seen humans look like that," Hashida said through an interpreter.

Hashida said she has suffered from survivor's guilt ever since. Until recently, she had not been able to talk about the bombing.

As an interpreter, translator Holly Siebert Kawakami said it has been emotionally challenging to see Los Alamos through the eyes of two bomb survivors. Her lips trembled and tears welled in her eyes as she recalled their experiences over the last few days.

According to Siebert Kawakami, the pair of survivors were shocked and disappointed to discover during their trip to learn that the

city continues to develop nuclear weapons.

'Our earnest wish'

The survivors have pledged to remember the dead. The mission of their trip was to send a message to Los Alamos and the world: "Humanity must never again inflict nor suffer the sacrifice and torture that we have experienced."

"This is our earnest wish.

This is why I have come," Koji said. "When human beings have lost the memories of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, nuclear war would be more likely to break out. The hope for the future of mankind will rest upon how the dead will be engraved in the memories of the living."

Organizers said Saturday's gathering was possibly the largest anti-nuclear weapons protest ever held in Los Alamos.

Los Alamos Council chairwoman Frances Berthing said she didn't think the county would pass a resolution against nuclear disarmament because it was not a local issue.

Santa Fe City Councilor David Coss, who read a section of the city's nuclear disarmament resolution at the rally, voiced a different perspective.

"People have to be able to express their positions, and if not through their elected representatives, then how?" Coss said. "I don't accept the idea that issues of war and peace aren't important to local governments, and I don't accept that local government as representatives of the people should never be able to express matters of opinion to the national government."

WWII Pilot: Bomb Saved My Life

from PAGE 1

selves as part of the Los Alamos Education Group. They said they neither endorse nor criticize LANL programs. However, their organization is interested in dispelling "irrational" fears of radioactivity and explaining issues surrounding the challenges of safety and nuclear technology and nuclear waste disposal.

A few men pointed out that the lab has been good to the small mountain town. Los Alamos was largely developed by the Atomic Energy Commission in the 1940s and '50s, and county continues to rely on the federal government for employment and financial support.

"We didn't think all of these (protest) activities should go unanswered," WWII veteran and retired LANL scientist Steve Stoddard said.

"There is a lot of public scrutiny of the bomb," he continued. "It's always been our perspective that, although the bombs took lives, they saved a lot more because it stopped the war. We thank our lives for



RANDY SINER/FOR THE JOURNAL

World War II veteran Stanley Logan talks with friends at the Los Alamos Education Group booth near Ashley Pond in Los Alamos on Saturday.

the bomb."

Logan, now 81, also believes thousands more people would have died, possibly including himself, if the atomic bombs hadn't been dropped on Japan on Aug. 6 and Aug. 9, 1945.

Logan was 21 years old, "just a kid," when he flew solo night missions in a P-61 Black Widow over Japan in the late summer of 1945. Logan recalled that he, his radio operator and other members of the 418th Night Fighter Squadron were preparing for what appeared to be a very long and arduous mission. He had been on several nighttime artillery spotting missions before, but this was something different — the pilots

were preparing for invasion.

Logan had heard reports that the bombs had been deployed a few days earlier, but the Japanese had not yet surrendered.

The young pilots were nervous.

"We didn't know what was coming up, but we were on notice that our invasion of Japan was coming soon," Logan said.

Logan's squadron was getting ready one day, just before dusk, when someone ran out and shouted, "The mission is canceled. The war is over!"

Though he can't be sure of it, Logan thinks that on that day his life was spared.



Buddhist ceremony remembers Hiroshima

Left: On Friday — one day before the 60th anniversary of the United States' dropping an atom bomb on Hiroshima during World War II — American Buddhists repent by performing 108 prostrations at the Upaya Zen Center in Santa Fe.

Above: Buddhists bow to each other during the ceremony. The bomb used on Hiroshima was developed in Los Alamos at what was then called the Manhattan Project. The Manhattan Project eventually became Los Alamos National Laboratory.

Photos by Lara Shipley/The New Mexican

Suppressed footage of Hiroshima after the bomb to air on cable TV

Knight Ridder Newspapers

WASHINGTON — Sixty years after the United States dropped two atomic bombs on Japan, a film documenting the aftermath is reminding Americans about the horrors of nuclear war.

Footage from a U.S. government-produced film, which was labeled top secret and kept out of public view for decades, is included in *Original Child Bomb*, a documentary that will air on many cable stations today, the 60th anniversary of the day that Hiroshima became the first city to suffer atomic attack.

Its release on the Sundance Channel is the culmination of years of effort to bring the government footage before a large American audience.

It's the most extensive exposure yet of this long-suppressed footage in the United States. Some antiwar activists see the film's appearance on cable television as a crucial step toward an open discussion about the controversial bombings that ended World War II.

The young soldiers who shot the film in Hiroshima and Nagasaki less than a month after the dawn of the atomic age were unprepared for what they found.

Local events

Today in Los Alamos

The Los Alamos Study group has organized events all day today at Ashley Pond in Los Alamos. Prayer, songs, poetry, educational workshops and other ceremonies are scheduled.

Highlights include:

■ Pax Christi event 8 a.m.

■ Koji Ueda and Masako Hashida, survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, speak at 11 a.m.

■ A workshop on Building a Post-Nuclear Economy in New Mexico at 2:15 p.m.

■ A candle-lantern ceremony at 8:20 p.m.

For more information, contact the Los Alamos Study Group, 265-1200.

Tuesday in Los Alamos

A free lecture featuring two Manhattan Project veterans and retired Vice Adm. Frederick Ashworth, the weaponer on the B-29 that dropped the bomb over Nagasaki, 7 p.m. at Fuller Lodge, 20th Street and Central Avenue, Los Alamos.

For more information, call Steve Stoddard of Los Alamos Education Group, 662-0482.

"It was to me the most horrendous, terrifying thing I had ever seen," camera operator Herbert Sussan, who's

now deceased, said in a 1983 interview with the British Broadcasting Corp. "I finally convinced myself and some of these people that there was some value for the rest of the people of the world to see what had happened in this first bombing."

Showing their work to the rest of the world was no easy task. The nine hours of film, shot in color, captured horrifying scenes of destruction and human suffering, including a woman with the pattern of her dress burned onto her back and the shadows of vaporized civilians burned into walls.

U.S. government officials deemed it too sensitive to release. They also confiscated black-and-white footage that a Japanese film crew shot before the Americans arrived.

When Lt. Col. Daniel McGovern, the head of the U.S. film crew, learned about the Japanese crew's earlier effort to document the carnage, he was able to obtain their film and lobby successfully to hire some of them for his project.

Sussan, who was 24 when he went to Japan, paid a personal price for his involvement in the project.

Like many of the people he filmed, he developed lymphoma, a form of cancer, and

died in 1985.

He wanted his ashes to be spread at ground zero in Hiroshima, but when his daughter traveled there a year later to fulfill his wish, she was told it was illegal.

The Japanese government continually asked the United States for its footage, which had been transferred to the National Archives in Washington by September 1967.

After negotiations with the State Department, a copy of the black-and-white newsreel was shipped to Japan in the summer of 1968.

Erik Barnouw, a film historian, created a moving 16-minute montage from the Japanese footage that screened in New York for the news media; all three major TV networks rejected it.

Editorials criticized the move, and on Aug. 3, 1970, a public broadcast station aired the short to mark the 25th anniversary of the bomb. It would be nearly 10 more

years before the American footage would emerge.

Greg Mitchell, who detailed the story behind the Hiroshima footage in a recent issue of *Editor & Publisher* magazine, said the postwar movie should be part of any debate about

nuclear war.

"These guys weren't anti nuclear. They were for showing of what the truth was," he said of Sussan and McGovern.

"It's the right of people to see what's done in their name."

Sackcloth and ashes

Protesters repent Los Alamos bombs dropped on Japan



Photos by Luis Sánchez Saturno/The New Mexican

Arletta Hartmann, left, from St. Michaels, Ariz., laughs upon seeing her friend Octavia Fellin, right, of Gallup having trouble putting on her sackcloth during Pax Christi New Mexico's third annual witness-for-peace program Saturday in Los Alamos, birthplace of the atomic bombs dropped on Japan 60 years ago.

By NATALIE STOREY
The New Mexican 8/1/05

LOS ALAMOS — Seventy-one-year-old David "Hutch" Hutchison lumbered down Trinity Lane on Saturday morning, dragging a sackcloth and carrying a cardboard sign on his back that read: "No nuking. Not even shrubs."

The Farmington resident came to Los Alamos, the birthplace of the atomic bomb, on the 60th anniversary of the dropping on the world's first atomic weapon on Hiroshima, Japan, to call on the U.S. government to disarm itself and get rid of its cache of nuclear weapons.

The bombs dropped on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945, and on Nagasaki, Japan, three days later caused the deaths of 210,000 people and prompted the Japanese to surrender.

Hutchison, who has pulmonary hypertension, carried oxygen and walked slowly from Ashley Pond along Trinity Drive toward the bridge with about 250 others. Near the bridge, the group planned to sit, wearing sackcloth and ashes, to repent for the sins of nuclear weapons and war.



Betsy Martinez of Taos colors a pray-for-peace sign.

The Rev. John Dear, a peace activist and founder of Pax Christi New Mexico, led the walk and the vigil. As they walked, some people prayed, "Forgive us our sins; save us from the fires of hell."

Hutchison was 11 and living in New

York when the bombs were dropped on Japan. Back then, he thought the bombing was cool. Now he thinks of it as "genocide." "As long as we try to solve things violently, we are just

Please see **ASHES**, Page B-4

ASHES

Continued from Page B-1

going to create more violence," he said.

The sackcloth-and-ashes demonstration was part of a day of remembrance organized by Dear and others who want to stop nuclear-weapons activities at the lab.

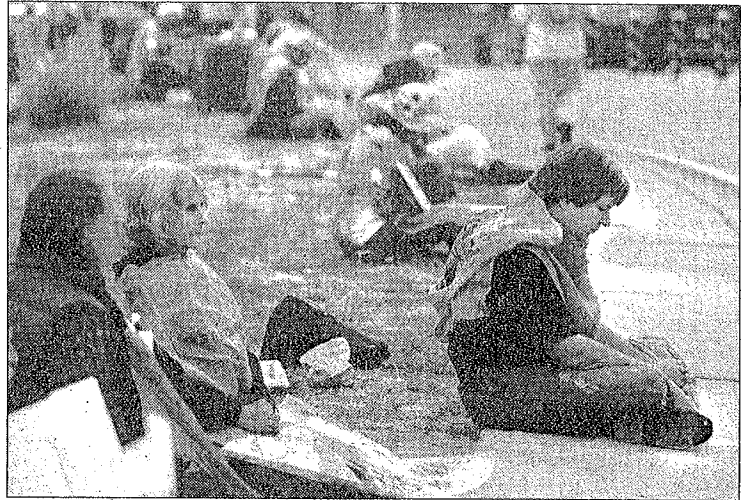
A number of speakers, including two Japanese bomb survivors, called for an end to nuclear weapons.

"Regardless of what we thought back then, we're learning that it's immoral," Dear said.

Dear was not yet born when the bombs were dropped. But back then, Bun Ryan, who sat in a tent across from Ashley Pond Park on Saturday, was trekking through rice fields on a tiny island in the Philippines, where divisions of the U.S. military were trying to expel Japanese soldiers.

Ryan had been in New Guinea and the Philippines for about two years and was getting ready to invade Japan when orders came to halt operations.

He didn't know yet about the American bombs, Little Boy and Fat Man. And he and the other young soldiers didn't immediately grasp what had happened.



Luis Sánchez Saturno/The New Mexican

The Rev. John Dear, founder of Pax Christi New Mexico, sits on a pile of ashes during a demonstration on Trinity Drive in Los Alamos on Saturday morning on the 60th anniversary of the U.S. bombing of Hiroshima, Japan.

"When we got the word that a bomb had been dropped and destroyed an entire city, we were like, 'What in the hell?'" he said.

A physics student in his company gave them a quick lesson on atom splitting, he added.

Instead of preparing for the invasion, members of Ryan's unit were ordered to turn in their arms and, in exchange, got a case of beer.

What followed was a huge celebration.

It was Aug. 15, 1945.

Ryan was with the Los Alamos Education Group, a veterans organization with a different perspective on the bomb.

Many of the men say the bomb saved their lives by stopping the war.

Meanwhile, across the street, Dear's voice boomed over the sound system.

We must save our souls and disarm, he said. "Those who created the atomic bomb have committed the gravest sin."

Protesters rally for nuclear disarmament

9/7/2005

JAYNA BOYLE
lareporter@lmonitor.com
Monitor Staff Writer

Hundreds of people rallied for nuclear disarmament Saturday at an event organized in Los Alamos on the 60th anniversary of the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima.

As part of the event, County Council Chair Fran Berting arrived at the U.S. Post Office to accept a letter written by the mayor of Hiroshima and a resolution passed in April by the Santa Fe City Council.

David Coss, a Santa Fe city councilor, gave Berting the letter, which outlines the need to globally work together to end the production of nuclear weapons. He also gave her the Santa Fe resolu-

tion which calls upon the U.S. government to order the disarmament of nuclear weapons.

"I respectfully accept this letter and will take it to the next council meeting," Berting said. "I think we all share the same ultimate goal - world peace."

Sunflowers, the international symbol for nuclear disarmament, were arranged around the pond and protesters gathered to listen to guest speakers.

Banners and posters that read things such as, "You cannot simultaneously prevent and prepare for war" and "Stop the new bomb factory" were prominently displayed

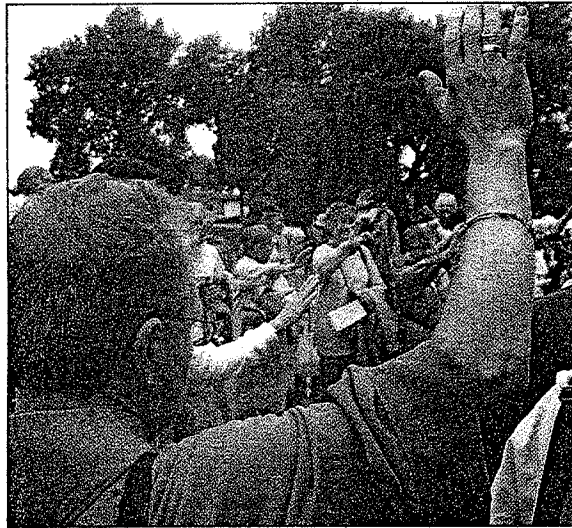
See RALLY, A3



MATTHEW HIETALA/Monitor

MOMENT OF SILENCE Silent protesters meditate in ashes and burlap sacks along the fence near Omega Bridge to repent the effects of the atomic bomb during a peace demonstration Saturday in Los Alamos.

Anti-nuclear activists gather in remembrance of blasts



MATTHEW HIETALA/Monitor

ARMS UP Father Vincent Petersen of El Paso, Texas, pledges to remember those who died in Japan in 1945 during Saturday's protest at Ashley Pond.

JAYNA BOYLE
lareporter@lmonitor.com
Monitor Staff Writer

Overcast skies matched the solemn mood of more than 300 people Saturday morning as they walked from Ashley Pond to the approach of Omega Bridge. They came to meditate in silence for the people who died 60 years ago from the atomic bombs dropped over Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Father John Dear, coordinator of Pax Christi New Mexico, an organization that strives to create peace worldwide, said this is the group's third year organizing the walk.

While meditating, some people wore burlap sacks and spread ashes on the ground in front of them as a way to repent for the damage caused by nuclear weapons.

The practice is taken from the book of Jonah in the Bible and is a manner used to ask God for forgiveness.

"We wish no ill will on the people of Los Alamos," Dear said. "We've been praying for them all morning."

Sister Linda Chavez of the Char-

ity of Cincinnati said: "This is a prevalent time to repent for Hiroshima and the evils of war. The threat of nuclear war seems to hang over the earth."

Gina Dellorusso, who walked with the group, set up her meditation spot near the bridge. "It's important to recognize what we do as a society and what we do as individuals," she said. "This is an opportunity to acknowledge the evil and the beauty we are capable of."

Later in the morning at a rally for nuclear disarmament, a survivor of one of the nuclear bombs spoke through translators about her experience during the bombing and about how her life was affected afterward.

Masako Hashida said she was 15 and working in a Mitsubishi weapons factory making torpedoes in Nagasaki on Aug. 9, 1945, when the second atomic bomb was dropped.

"All at once I heard a loud metallic sound," Hashida said. "I saw huge red, blue, yellow and purple light waves coming toward me. I must have fainted at that

moment."

Hashida said when she regained consciousness, she was under a cliff outside the factory and she was surrounded by sooty smoke. She saw bent and torn steel frame girders from the factory.

"As I started to move to seek help, I saw a human-like creature trying to draw itself up to its full height," Hashida said. "Despite the fact that the creature's head was swollen, its eyes were red and popping out, its lips were painfully swollen, and its skin was hanging from the bones, it managed to stand. This person was just staring straight ahead without seeing, without feeling or control. I could not tell if it was a man or a woman."

The next day, Hashida's father came to Nagasaki to look for her body, and when he found her, he hugged her tight and sobbed.

Hashida said at that point she began to realize the impact of what had happened and she too began to cry.

"I have suffered all these years

See BLAST, A3

throughout the day's speeches.

Prior to the event, about 250 New Mexico businesses signed a petition stating they were against the production of nuclear weapons, and banners set up at the rally identified each of those businesses or organizations.

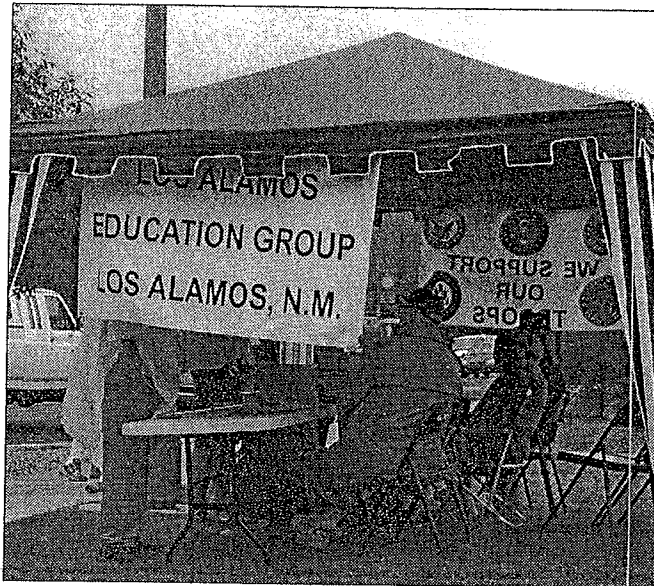
"We're trying to protect the planet from being destroyed," said Father John Dear of Pax Christi New Mexico, an organization that strives to create peace worldwide. "Nuclear weapons are the ultimate form of terrorism. We are New Mexico people and we're not going away. We're going to keep building a movement until the weapons are abolished.

"We invite the good people of Los Alamos to quit their jobs working on nuclear weapons and pursue a spiritual path of nonviolence," he said.

Greg Mello, executive director of the Los Alamos Study Group, an organization that provides leadership on nuclear disarmament and related issues in New Mexico, said Los Alamos does not need a laboratory to be a successful community.

"The more waste dumped here and the more plutonium manufactured here, the more pigeon-holed and associated with pollution the community becomes, and the public doesn't like that," he said.

"If we are going to oppose militarism, then it's best we oppose our own militarism right at home because that would be most effective,"



MATTHEW HIETALA/Monitor

UNDER THE TENT Members of the Los Alamos Education Group spread their message from their tent on the Fuller Lodge lawn Saturday. The group was offering a counter argument to the nuclear peace rally at Ashley Pond.

Mello said.

Los Alamos is the home of the atomic bomb. The weapon was developed in the early 1940s as part of the Manhattan Project here in Los Alamos, in conjunction with Oak Ridge, Tenn.

Across from Ashley Pond on the Fuller Lodge lawn, members of the Los Alamos Education Group, an association of local veterans and retirees from Los Alamos National Laboratory, set up a booth. They were there to educate people about radiation safety, nuclear energy and technology, the handling of nuclear waste and related public policy issues.

"We're protesting the pro-

testers," said Bernard "Bun" Ryan, an Army veteran. "We're just a couple of World War II vets whose lives were probably saved by those bombs."

Don Petersen, a Navy veteran with the education group, said if it were not for the nuclear bombs, estimates of the number of people who would have died in the war exceed the number of people who died in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. "And those deaths would not have all been in Japan," he said.

Ryan said the Japanese started the war with the United States when they attacked Pearl Harbor. "They awakened the Sleeping Giant," he

said. "There's a reason why there's that proverb, 'Don't start something you can't finish.'"

Petersen said people exaggerate the danger of waste management. "We are simply trying to place the facts in perspective," he said. "We describe problems in quantitative and relative terms that people can understand."

Katherine Lage, an attendee at the peace rally who drove up from Santa Fe, said she came because she has a love for peace.

Wendy Mapes from New York City said: "I wanted to stand up and not be so passive. If we don't take action, we're allowing Nagasaki to happen again, as we are in Iraq right now."

Mello said he has spoken with hundreds of scientists at the lab and has found that only about 10 percent support the production of nuclear weapons.

"Scientists need to speak up," Mello said. "If they don't, it's assumed they support nuclear weapons. If they don't want to work on nuclear weapons, they shouldn't. These are hard choices they have to make. We have nothing against the people here, but we have to be firm about these destructive policies."

Dave Thomson, a retired employee of LANL said he is the treaty study chair of the Los Alamos Committee of Arms Control and International Security. The group works to create policies for step-by-step reductions of nuclear material.

BLAST Survivor remembers

From Page A1

with survivor's guilt," Hashida said. "I even lost my ability to speak for a month or more. For a long time, until recently, I could never talk about that day."

Hashida said people are now forgetting the sorrow, pain and death caused by weapons of mass destruc-

tion. She said her memories of all the people who died, including her friends and loved ones, drove her to come to Los Alamos.

"I believe that I must raise my voice and tell as many people as possible about what I witnessed so that these weapons will never

again be used," Hashida said.

At dusk Saturday, people who support nuclear weapon disarmament made 3,000 floating candle lanterns, each representing 100 nuclear bombing fatalities, and set them afloat on Ashley Pond.

Joining the Los Alamos

demonstrators, peace activists at Oak Ridge, Tenn., held a moment of silence outside the heavily guarded weapons factory that helped fuel the bomb during World War II. Others gathered in Las Vegas, Nev., near the Nevada Test Site.



Alessandro Trovati/Associated Press

SYMBOL OF PEACE

8/7/2005



ROBERTO E. ROSALES/JOURNAL

Masako Hashida, left, a survivor of the atomic bomb attack on Nagasaki in 1945, is jubilant after cutting a sunflower in a Corrales field on Wednesday. The sunflower is the international symbol for nuclear disarmament. She and Koji Ueda, right, a survivor of the Hiroshima A-bomb, are visiting New Mexico this week to tell their stories and honor those who died in the attacks. The two said they hope their stories will encourage peace and an end to wars. They will travel to Los Alamos on Saturday to participate in a ceremony commemorating the 60th anniversary of the dropping of the bombs. Story, C2.

Publication: Santa Fe New Mexican; Date: Aug 9, 2005; Section: Santa Fe ElNorte; Page: 11



Report: Label in trash led to probe

R LANL worker sent contaminated package to lab in Pennsylvania

By **ANDY LENDERMAN** The New Mexican

An ongoing investigation into contamination at Los Alamos National Laboratory began when a supervisor found a radioactive-material tag in a trash can, a newly released report says.

At least two people have been contaminated by a man-made metal known as americium 241. The lab has been monitoring their conditions but has not released information on their health.

The worker who handled the radioactive material sent a contaminated package to another federal lab in Pennsylvania, according to a lab report made public Monday by a watchdog group.

Lab officials didn't learn of that Federal Express package until a week after it was sent. None of the Pennsylvania workers who handled the shipment were contaminated, nor were Los Alamos workers at the shipping warehouse, according to the report.

"In this situation it's really sloppiness at its worst," said Peter Stockton, an investigator for the nonprofit Project on Government Oversight, based in Washington, D.C. "And the business of taking the radiation tag off and throwing it in the trash can ... So there are big problems."

The Project on Government Oversight made the report public Monday along with a news release. A lab spokeswoman confirmed its authenticity and repeated earlier assurances that the contamination incident poses no health risk to the public.

"We have an investigation under way, and it's not a common occurrence," said Kathy DeLucas, a spokeswoman for Los Alamos National Laboratory. "Certainly we hate for it to happen. There was no health danger to the public."

So far, traces of americium 241 have been located in six places: The Sigma complex at Los Alamos where the employee handled a package; at the employee's Los Alamos County home; at another employee's Santa Fe County home; and in Kansas and Colorado, where the first employee visited relatives before lab officials discovered the contamination on July 25, the lab has previously reported.

Traces of the material also showed up in the package sent to Pennsylvania, according to the report.

Stockton said americium is dangerous if inhaled.

"If you inhale this stuff, it's far worse than plutonium, as far as cancer," he said.

DeLucas said that was an overreaction to the incident.

"The full facts on the possible pathways of contamination weren't fully known until the 27th," DeLucas

said.

Stockton said it's unusual for radioactive material to leave the lab.

"It's a big deal within (Department of Energy), let me tell you," he said.

Contamination timeline

According to a Los Alamos National Laboratory report:

On July 14, the Los Alamos worker opened a shipment of 18 enriched uranium nitride pellets from Technical Area 55 for testing and other work. The worker then unloaded the pellet containers from the shipping container to verify the serial numbers.

"This operation was not supported by an (radiological control technician), as is required by laboratory shipping/receiving procedures," the report reads.

On July 20, another Los Alamos worker picked up some "weld test samples" from the first worker. Those samples were sent to the Bettis Laboratory in Pennsylvania via Federal Express. Bettis is operated by Bechtel Bettis Inc., for the federal Department of Energy.

DeLucas said none of the workers who handled the package at Los Alamos were contaminated. And none of the Bettis workers were contaminated, according to the report.

On July 25, a radiological-control technician supervisor "found a radiological material tag in the trash can of a non-radiological area" in the Sigma complex, according to the report. The supervisor surveyed the area for contamination. "The surveys indicated unexpected surface contamination in several areas around the glove box, where readings of 118,000 (disintegrations per minute) were observed," the report reads.

"Disintegrations per minute" is a reading that measures radiation, according to Greg Mello of the Los Alamos Study Group. In contrast, Mello said, his own office tested at about 60 disintegrations per minute on Monday afternoon.

Contamination was also found on the worker — "9,000 dpm on right thumb and personal badge and 10,000 dpm on the back of his office chair," the report reads.

The worker's home-computer equipment, furniture and pipes were also contaminated. So was the steering wheel and gear shift of his private vehicle, according to the report.

On July 27, managers discovered the contaminated shipment to Pennsylvania. The Los Alamos worker who shipped the package had a towel in his car contaminated, but his office area was clean, according to the report.

The Billboard Campaign: The Los Alamos Study Group and the Nuclear Public Sphere

Joseph Masco

In the domestic realm of U.S. politics, the nuclear weapons complex has always maintained two extreme attributes: phenomenal cost and social invisibility. While seemingly opposed, these aspects are actually reinforcing, a structural effect of compartmentalized secrecy, patronage networks, and an implicit nuclear security consensus among policy makers. Stephen Schwartz (1998) has documented that between 1940 and 1996 the United States spent *at least* \$5.8 trillion on nuclear weapons. This makes the bomb the third largest federal expenditure since 1940, ranking just after nonnuclear military spending and Social Security—accounting for roughly eleven cents out of every federal dollar spent (Schwartz 1998: 3). Yet despite this colossal investment and the widespread distribution of nuclear production, testing, and waste sites across the continental United States, most Americans have little or no knowledge of the historical or continuing investments in weapons of mass destruction *by* the United States. It remains a disturbing truth that today most Americans can say more about Iraq's nuclear ambitions (which, in 2003, were the target of the first explicit policy of preemptive warfare in U.S. history) than those of the United States. Most would be surprised to learn that the 1990s witnessed not a post-Cold War movement away from nuclear weapons but rather the establishment of a new nuclear status quo in the United States, one requiring a massive reinvestment in the nuclear program. Nuclear weapons budgets at the national laboratories, for example, have exceeded their Cold War averages since 1995 and have doubled since 1998. In



Figure 1

short, the most active nuclear weapons program on the planet is in the United States, and much of that nuclear infrastructure is located in New Mexico. For New Mexicans committed to disarmament and peace activism, the dilemma of the post-Cold War period has thus been how to engage this resurgent U.S. nuclear project in a way that breaks the structures of silencing and patronage that keep America's investments in weapons of mass destruction from public view.

Beginning in 1998, visitors to New Mexico could encounter one of the most direct and imaginative efforts to engage New Mexico's nuclear economy simply by driving out of the Albuquerque International Airport. Positioned on the main exit route from the airport, a large billboard confronted motorists with an image of a rainbow-enhanced desert and the words (see fig. 1): "Welcome to New Mexico: America's Nuclear Weapons Colony." Seeking to defamiliarize the desert landscape through shock, the billboard both evokes and inverts the familiar portrait of New Mexico as the "Land of Enchantment," a zone of pristine nature and exotic culture. A Web site address on the billboard—www.lasg.org—serves as both a signature and an invitation for viewers to learn more about the scale of the U.S.

nuclear project in New Mexico (which includes two of the three national weapons laboratories, the largest missile testing range in the continental United States, the largest arsenal of U.S. nuclear weapons, and the most active U.S. nuclear waste dumps). By recontextualizing a centrally located commercial space, the billboard challenges residents and visitors alike to recognize an invisible presence in New Mexico, one that colonizes the austere beauty of the landscape with the nuclear science, toxicity, and militarism of a global superpower (see Masco 1999, 2004).

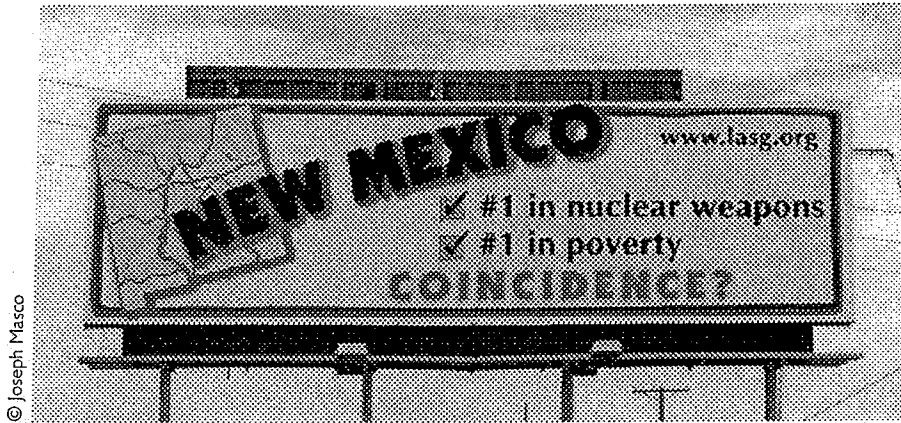
The “Welcome” sign was merely the first salvo in an ongoing billboard campaign orchestrated by the Los Alamos Study Group (LASG), a nonproliferation and peace activism group formed in the waning days of the Cold War. As one of the most vocal nuclear watchdog groups in New Mexico, the LASG has vigorously challenged the post-Cold War consolidation of nuclear weapons science at Los Alamos National Laboratory while promoting public education about the accruing environmental effects of the nuclear complex. In a December 2003 discussion in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Greg Mello, the cofounder and director of the LASG, explained to me that the billboards started as a response to a lack of public conversation about the evolution of the nuclear complex in New Mexico at the end of the 1990s. They were also a reaction to the high cost and episodic nature of newspapers, radio, and television. Billboards could make a long-term, highly visible statement at, as Mello calculates it, “one-tenth of a cent per viewer.” Billboards thus offered a new kind of political space that could perform a complex set of ideological tasks in an economical manner. From the start, the goals of the LASG billboard project have been to puncture the normality of the nuclear economy by linking New Mexico’s two leading industries—tourism and nuclear weapons—and to present a stable and highly visible space for political dissent and nuclear critique. For Mello, the project is also intended to “slow down” the media space in order to encourage public contemplation in a largely commuter and tourist economy, thereby transforming New Mexico’s road culture into a new conceptual space for political critique. As part of a larger activist effort in New Mexico to “use the tourists to get rid of the plutonium, or the plutonium to get rid of the tourists,” the LASG project, as described by Mello, is interested in provoking a “more enlightened form of tourism,” one that could ultimately contribute to the LASG’s environmental and nonproliferation efforts.

Placed for maximum visibility along the main thoroughfares and highways that connect Albuquerque to Santa Fe and ultimately Los Alamos, the LASG billboards speak directly to occupants of the twenty-five thousand cars that travel Interstate 25 daily. Mello told me that the LASG initially had specific audiences in mind for the billboard campaign, namely, laboratory management (Los Alamos National Laboratory is a Department of Energy institution managed by the Uni-

versity of California), state and federal politicians, and particularly new recruits to the weapons program who might be visiting on job interviews. By visually disrupting the assumed social consensus on the role of the nuclear economy in New Mexico, the LASG seeks to document for policy makers and employees evidence of local resistance and hope for an alternative nuclear future. The billboard project is also a direct response to decreasing access to policy makers and laboratory personnel after a brief period of post-Cold War openness. After a series of security scandals at Los Alamos (see Masco 2002), expanding secrecy within the nuclear complex has forced activists to seek an alternative public sphere to mobilize for change.

Pursuing the LASG's political agenda in visual statements that are forty-eight feet wide by eighteen feet high, the billboard campaign has raised a wide range of provocative issues since 1998. The first billboards provided a direct counterdiscourse to the U.S. nuclear project in New Mexico, while more recent efforts have responded to the expanding forms of U.S. militarism under the Bush administration's "war on terror." Evoking the 1930s WPA (Works Progress Administration) aesthetic that is featured in much of the tourist literature about New Mexico, the second LASG billboard asks (see fig. 2): "New Mexico: #1 in Nuclear Weapons, #1 in Poverty—Coincidence?" Here, the LASG challenges the primary local justification for the nuclear weapons complex—that it provides jobs for New Mexicans. But while Los Alamos National Laboratory currently maintains an annual budget of over \$2 billion, New Mexico has for decades competed for the title of poorest state in America. Marshaling equally alarming statistics about violent crime, drug abuse, suicide, alcoholism, and the condition of the public school system in New Mexico, the LASG has argued that the nuclear economy has actually prevented other sustainable industries from developing, creating a highly distorted regional economy dangerously reliant on external investments. For Mello, New Mexico is "held hostage" to Washington, D.C., because of its poverty. Consequently, New Mexico is part of that rural American economic space that relies on toxicity, vice, security, and industrial livestock or, as Mello puts it, the "four Ps—plutonium, poker, prisons, and pigs." By arguing that the nuclear complex prevents the development of a sustainable regional economy, the "Coincidence" billboard also moves the discussion of what constitutes security from the realm of geopolitics to the terms of everyday life.

The LASG billboard campaign has sought to reveal the links between global and local economies and to provoke motorists to consider how the nuclear project participates in a larger political and moral sphere. For example, one billboard presented a color image of a mushroom cloud on a stark black background, declar-

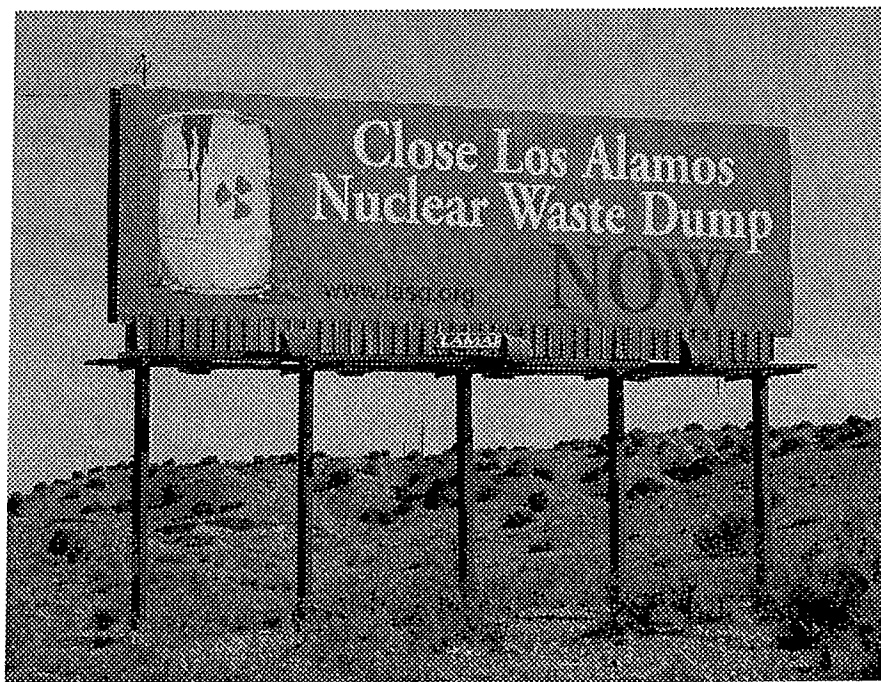


© Joseph Masco

Figure 2

ing in bright orange letters: “New Mexico: World Capital of Weapons of Mass Destruction.” By identifying New Mexico as the center of the U.S. (and thus the global) nuclear complex, the billboard challenged the tourist portrait of the region as idyllic desert landscape and multicultural paradise. The LASG has also sought to link the local nuclear economy to the global nonproliferation project through direct actions. Sponsoring a “citizens’ inspection team” modeled on the United Nations arms inspectors who worked in Iraq in the 1990s, the group has repeatedly demanded entrance to U.S. nuclear facilities in New Mexico in order to certify that the United States was living up to the terms of the 1968 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (in which all signatories agreed to pursue the end of the arms race and work for global nuclear disarmament). By drawing attention to the expanding U.S. commitment to nuclear weapons in the post–Cold War period, the LASG has argued for a coherent global policy for nuclear disarmament, one that begins by rejecting the assumptions of American exceptionalism that currently support the U.S. nuclear arsenal.

The LASG billboard campaign has sought not only to provide basic information about the status of the U.S. nuclear project in New Mexico but also to ground that knowledge in a broader moral economy. Another early billboard presented a large white dove on a bloodred background alongside text declaring: “Nuclear Weapons are Incompatible with the Peace We Seek For the 21st Century—The Vatican.” By quoting the Vatican, the LASG sought to mobilize the largely Catholic population of northern New Mexico to consider the moral implications of

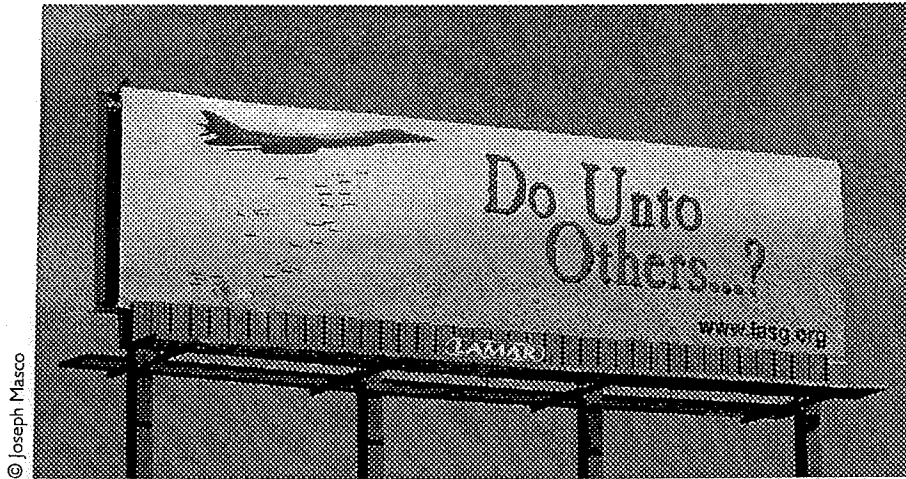


© Joseph Masco

Figure 3

participating in the production of weapons of mass destruction. Similarly, the LASG has sought to make New Mexicans uniquely responsible for the nuclear age itself. Another billboard, which quickly became a popular bumper sticker in New Mexico, declared on a blue sky beside a mushroom cloud: “It Started Here, Let’s Stop It Here.” In each case, the call is for New Mexicans to take responsibility for their participation in the U.S. nuclear economy—to replace the status quo logics of “national security” with an ethical investment in a nonnuclear future. The billboard campaign has also, at times, appealed directly to residents’ fear of nuclear hazards. In 2002, a bright red billboard presented a leaking barrel of nuclear waste and declared in large white letters (see fig. 3): “Close Los Alamos Nuclear Waste Dump Now.” Here, the LASG provokes viewers to see Los Alamos National Laboratory as not only a high-tech research facility that supports America’s military power but also an environmental hazard that is colonizing both the land and the region’s future with nuclear waste.

In linking the global with the local, the tourist with the military-industrial, and



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Figures 4 and 5

the environmental with the social, the billboard campaign has turned a purely capitalist and largely banal space—the stuff of accident lawyers, casinos, and car lots in the desert west—into a space of political mobilization and subversive critique, one literally integrated into the New Mexican landscape. In January of 2003, the LASG expanded its efforts to provide a direct counterdiscourse to the Bush administration’s “war on terror.” The first billboard presented a terrifying image of an Air Force bomber releasing a load of cluster bombs beside the text (see figs. 4 and 5): “Do unto Others . . . ?” Mello told me that this sign was directed at the conservative Christian coalition supporting the Bush administration. Seeking to remind the administration of biblical doctrine, the billboard asks



© Greg Mello. Photo courtesy of Los Alamos Study Group.

Figure 6

whether the “golden rule” is compatible with the evolving global military logic of the United States as a counterterrorist state. A second billboard challenged an implicit rationale for the war, declaring “No Blood for Oil” in white letters on a red background. Within weeks of the 2003 Iraq war, the sign was vandalized, the heavy vinyl torn so that the previously posted advertisement was visible, adding an ironic “Cool Summer Idea” to the antiwar message (see fig. 6).

In May of 2003, the first post-Iraq war billboard went up on the northern edge of Albuquerque asking provocatively (see fig. 7): “Weapons of Mass Destruction? Look Closer to Home.” This billboard was not simply a reply to the official rationale for the war with Iraq (that Saddam Hussein was stockpiling nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons) or to the inability of U.S. authorities to find those weapons after occupying Iraq; the billboard was also a statement about the evolving shape of U.S. nuclear policy. In its most recent Nuclear Posture Review, the U.S. Department of Defense (2002) expressed a desire for several new types of nuclear weapons and projected an increasing role for nuclear weapons in U.S. military planning. Conse-



Figure 7

quently, U.S. weapons laboratories have been authorized to begin conceptual design work on a new generation of nuclear weapons for the first time since the 1980s and are preparing for a return to underground nuclear testing.

The war on terror, which has been largely structured around fear of the foreign bomb, has been coterminous with increased U.S. nuclear investments and a massive increase in U.S. military spending: in 2003, the United States was responsible for half of all global military expenditures. The nearly half-trillion dollars the United States now spends annually on its defense budget will likely support New Mexico's weapons scientists for another generation—reproducing the structures that the LASG has been mobilizing to critique. However, as the billboard campaign has argued from the start, escalating U.S. militarism can be answered only by a clear accounting of its social, environmental, economical, and geopolitical costs. It is not surprising, then, that the billboard campaign has recently taken on a more intimate form, as house signs began surreptitiously appearing throughout northern New Mexico in the fall of 2003, asking rhetorically (see fig. 8): “Weapons of Mass Destruction? Iraq: 0, Albuquerque: 2000 (at Kirtland

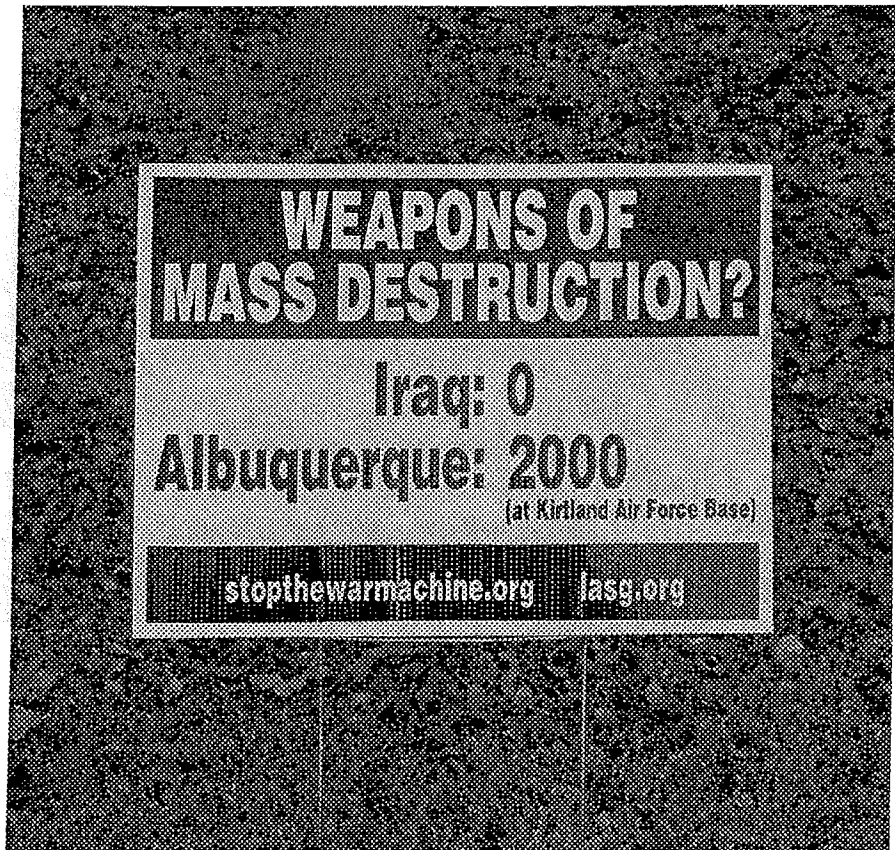


Figure 8

Air Force Base).” Consistent with their long-term antinuclear critique, the LASG underscores that for those pursuing nuclear nonproliferation, New Mexico is as good a place to start as any.

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Joseph Masco is an assistant professor of anthropology at the University of Chicago. He is the author of the forthcoming book *The Nuclear Borderlands: The Manhattan Project in Post–Cold War New Mexico*.

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New lab panel to manage hiring

LANL braces for cut in funding for nation's weapons programs

By Andy Lenderman The New Mexican

Los Alamos National Laboratory has created a nine-member council that will manage all the lab's hiring and have the power to approve or reject hiring by all its divisions.

Director Robert Kuckuck said in a memo to employees Wednesday that the action was being taken because of tight budget projections for the federal Department of Energy and a pending change in who will manage the lab.

Although Kuckuck's memo cited "the reality that we must constrain hiring," lab spokesman Kevin Roark said reduced hiring is "not the goal. The goal is not to have more people on the payroll than you can pay for."

The new laboratory hiring council created by Kuckuck will review all job postings and hiring requests.

Previously, the lab's divisions could hire and fire on their own, usually with some level of higher approval, Roark explained.

"The tight budget projections ... bring into focus the reality that we must constrain hiring to ensure staffing levels that can be sustained and do not create an imbalance in the near future," Kuckuck wrote. "A solid long-term hiring plan is in order, but such a plan would be best addressed after the contract award and transition."

The National Nuclear Security Administration is scheduled to announce a new lab managing contractor Dec. 1.

Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., said Friday that an interim budget passed by Congress will "put a pinch" on weapons programs at Los Alamos and Sandia National Laboratories.

Congress has yet to pass a budget for the 2006 fiscal year, which begins today.

A continuing resolution that lawmakers passed temporarily pays for most government operations until the House and Senate can agree on how to pay for many federal programs, including those of the Department of Energy.

"The good news is that we do not expect the funding restrictions in the (continuing resolution) to cause any layoffs at Los Alamos or Sandia," Domenici said in a news release.

Kuckuck's message Wednesday said that the lab "cannot sustain an aggressive hiring mode. Instead, we need to focus on mission-essential skills, as well as the pipeline, to sustain our scientific capability."

Lab spokesman Jim Fallin stressed "the hiring sign is still out at Los Alamos. This is not a hiring

freeze.”

The hiring council, which will meet every two weeks, is chaired by lab managers John Immelle and Rich Marquez.

There were 9,591 University of California laboratory employees as of July 31, including 625 students, Kuckuck said, compared with 7,987 employees in September 2001. The cost of labor as a percentage of the overall lab budget is at an all-time high of 58 percent, he said.

“I want to assure everyone that the laboratory is not in a state of fiscal emergency,” Kuckuck wrote.

“These actions are intended as a preventive measure to ensure fiscal responsibility.”

Domenici's statement Friday about the weapons budget pointed to a significant gap between the House and Senate in terms of funding for the Department of Energy, the Army Corps of Engineers and the federal Bureau of Reclamation.

Domenici chairs the Senate Energy and Water Development appropriations subcommittee, which approved \$31.245 billion for those agencies in the current fiscal year.

In contrast, the House Appropriations subcommittee on energy and water development approved \$29.7 billion.

The continuing resolution was written to continue funding at the lowest level possible, Domenici's news release said.

The House version reduced funding for National Nuclear Security Administration weapons programs by \$449 million.

“I am not pleased with the current funding situation, which will affect the labs and many other federal activities in New Mexico,” Domenici said. “It's not good, but we can live with this for a short period of time.” Domenici is leading a Senate team trying to settle differences between the House and Senate versions of the bill.

The office of U.S. Rep. David Hobson, R-Ohio, who chairs the House subcommittee, did not respond to a request for comment Friday.

The head of a citizen watchdog group commended the lab for its “prudent” efforts to control hiring.

“It's a wise thing that Kuckuck is doing,” Greg Mello of the Los Alamos Study Group said. He also said Congress has to choose between some nuclear spending and repairing what hurricanes Katrina and Rita have wrecked.

“The country has to pick between the optional components of nuclear-weapons spending and funding flood control and harbor construction to rebuild the country,” Mello said.

“These infrastructure projects will have big economic benefits to the country if done, and enormous economic and security costs to the country if not done.”



Fairness key in choosing new LANL management

[print](#)

By ANDY LENDERMAN | The New Mexican
October 2, 2005

The men and women choosing who will manage the nation's premier nuclear-weapons laboratory include a former submarine officer and a lawyer praised for his honesty.



Thomas D'Agostino, a deputy administrator for the National Nuclear Security Administration, and Tyler Przybylek, the agency's former general counsel, will play a big role in deciding who runs Los Alamos National Laboratory next year.

It's the first time the management contract has been put out for bid since the lab's inception in 1943. A new manager will be announced Dec. 1.

New Mexico Sens. Pete Domenici, a Republican, and Jeff Bingaman, a Democrat, were briefed recently by Linton Brooks, the head of the NNSA. Both senators said they're satisfied with the fairness of the process for choosing a new lab manager.

"As best as I can determine, the process is going to be fair," Bingaman said by telephone. Brooks, he said, "explained in some detail the various steps that they were taking to ensure that the bids were appropriately considered and the factors that needed to be given the greatest importance were in fact going to be given the greatest importance."

Details of the contract proposals submitted to the NNSA are secret. But the winner can earn up to \$79 million a year.

Eight NNSA employees -- called the Source Evaluation Board -- have been reviewing applications from groups who want to manage the lab's 8,000 employees and \$2.2 billion yearly budget.

Some members of the board work at NNSA sites in Los Alamos and Albuquerque, according to the NNSA.

The University of California, which currently manages the lab, has joined with Bechtel National to bid for the contract, as is a partnership between the University of Texas and Lockheed Martin Corp.

The board, headed by Przybylek, will give D'Agostino a report. And the Naval Academy graduate will make a decision to be announced in about two months.

However, the head of a lab-watchdog group doubts the board's influence. "There's no major (Department of Energy) decisions that don't have a political component," said Greg Mello of the Los Alamos Study Group. "It's money and power rather than the technological reality that dominate the weapons programs."

Contact Andy Lenderman at 995-3827 or alenderman@

<http://sfnewmexican.com>.

THE SOURCE EVALUATION BOARD

The board includes Przybylek and seven other voting members. All are NNSA employees.

Richard F. Sena, Joseph C. Vozella, Patrick T. Cahalane, Kenneth E. Zamora, George N. Pappas, Jodi Lardner and Michael G. Loera round out the group. There are also nine nonvoting members on the board -- a secretary and eight advisers on things like finances, procurement and legal issues.

"They are a good bunch of people trying to do a very difficult thing," said Joe Ladish, spokesman for the Coalition for LANL Excellence, a group of lab employees and community leaders voicing concerns about the transition.

Ladish also said he thinks the board is trying to keep away from Washington and "from the pressures that might influence their decisions."

BENEFITS

Ladish said the coalition organized in part because of concerns about benefits that play a big role in attracting and keeping the world's best scientists. "It isn't just about money," he explained.

His group of "a few hundred" members is concerned about retirement and medical benefits, academic freedom, the Los Alamos community quality of life and "the ability to criticize within the correct environment."

"The reason we feel those things are important is because we care about maintaining the science excellence at the laboratory," Ladish said.

For example, he said, it takes about 10 years to train a first-class theoretical bomb designer. "You make a lifetime commitment when you go into the weapons program," Ladish said.

Current lab-employee retirement benefits will be "substantially equivalent" to the current University of California system, according to the NNSA.

Pension benefits will continue under the University of California plan. Retiree medical benefits will be provided under a new contract, according to the NNSA.

Domenici said he was pleased with the agency's decision to extend comment periods for people to voice their concerns.

Bingaman agreed. "Obviously," Bingaman said, "we'll see what the end result is of this process. I do think that they took into account a lot of concerns that people have raised."

Bingaman also discussed the lab's need to be competitive in its recruitment efforts. "The future strength of the lab depends entirely on who they're able to keep there at the laboratory," he said.

No matter who wins the contract, Mello, of the nuclear watchdog group, said the real question is what happens next. "The key thing is what is the lab going to do," he said. "And that is also up in the air right now."

A new manager will take over a seven-year contract on June 1.



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Nuclear Bunker-Buster Dropped From Budget

BY JOHN FLECK ^{10/26/05}
Journal Staff Writer

Sen. Pete Domenici signed the death warrant for the nuclear bunker-buster Tuesday after defense planners said conventional explosives are the best way to attack deep underground bunkers.

As a result, \$4 million for the nuclear bunker-buster will be dropped from the fiscal 2006 budget, Domenici said.

National Nuclear Security Administration officials concluded that bunker-busting

weapon research under way should focus on conventional weapons, Domenici said.

National Nuclear Security Administration officials declined comment Tuesday evening, but a document sent to Congress summarizing their position said they had concluded that only non-nuclear bunker-buster work should continue.

The amount of money to be spent on the nuclear bunker-buster in the coming year was

See **BUNKER** on **PAGE A10**

Bunker-Buster Research Drops Nuclear Focus

from **PAGE A1**

small — less than a tenth of 1 percent of NNSA's nuclear weapons budget. But the issue had become a flash point in debates over the future of the U.S. nuclear arsenal, with members of the arms control community launching a lobbying blitz in recent months to kill the project.

"It's an important symbolic statement about the lack of value of nuclear weapons," Albuquerque arms control activist Greg Mello said of Tuesday's announcement.

Mello cautioned against the possibility that research on non-nuclear bunker-busters might be used in nuclear weapons in the future.

The \$4 million would have largely gone to fund a rocket sled test at Sandia National Laboratories. It was unclear Tuesday whether that test might continue, but be geared toward the development of conventional weapons.

The technical challenge in building bunker-busting weapons is to build a bomb or warhead strong enough to slam into the ground and then detonate once it has burrowed beneath the surface.

Military planners argued for

their development because of the increasing use of deep underground bunkers to house military command centers, as well as the possibility that chemical or biological weapons might be stored in them.

In the 1990s, Sandia National Laboratories engineers designed a hardened case for the B61 nuclear bomb, allowing a limited earth-penetrating capability. But military planners complained it would not go deep enough, and work began in 2003 on a new, tougher design.

Critics complained that it marked a dangerous expansion of U.S. nuclear capabilities, and funding for the work has always been controversial. For 2005, Congress killed funding entirely, but the Bush adminis-

tration had asked for work to begin anew next year.

Domenici said in a telephone interview late Tuesday that he had been willing to continue trying to get the money through Congress, arguing that the amount of money involved was modest and would merely establish whether the weapon was technically feasible. But he said administration officials told him "they did not want to fight about it."

The action to kill the bunker-buster came as staff for the House and Senate Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee were putting the final touches on a spending plan for the Department of Energy for fiscal 2006. Domenici said he expects a final agreement on that by the end of the week.

DOE scuttles 'bunker buster' bomb

By James W. Brosnan

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WASHINGTON — The Bush administration has abandoned its plan to build a "bunker buster" nuclear bomb that strikes at targets deep underground.

Sen. Pete Domenici said Energy Department officials told him the research should focus on using conventional weapons, not a nuclear warhead, to penetrate the ground.

The Albuquerque Republican,

10/26/05
who made the announcement Tuesday, heads the Senate Appropriations Committee's Energy and Water Subcommittee.

The bunker buster program has been a centerpiece of intense debate over the future of nuclear weapons programs, with critics arguing a new tactical weapon could spur nuclear proliferation.

Domenici's counterpart on the House Appropriations Committee, Ohio Republican David Hobson, has long opposed the bunker buster

bomb.

With the administration throwing in the towel, Domenici also agreed to drop \$4 million for research on the new warhead, called the Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator, from the final energy and water appropriations bill.

A spokesman for the National Nuclear Security Administration, Bryan Wilkes, said the administration would not comment until the House-Senate conference committee completes its work on the bill.

But an Energy Department memo to Domenici said the research program would be renamed and continue only as a Department of Defense study at Sandia National Laboratories on how to attack underground targets.

The Department of Defense also will use the sled track at the Albuquerque lab instead of developing an "impact test" at one of its locations, the memo said.

Please see **BOMB/A3**

Wednesday, October 26, 2005

BOMB from A1

On June 30, Domenici beat back an attempt in the Senate by Sen. Dianne Feinstein, a California Democrat, to eliminate the bunker buster funding. Her amendment failed 53-43.

Domenici said he supported a study on the new nuclear bomb but had not decided whether the project should go forward.

"I never told anybody that when the design was finished that I had already made up my mind what would happen," Domenici said.

The bunker buster bomb grew out of concern that potential foes were protecting civilian and military leaders from conventional weapons by building deep underground bunkers.

Critics charged that developing a new kind of tactical nuclear weapon would set a bad example to the rest of the world.

"The U.S. is telling other nations not to acquire nuclear weapons, and here we are making new ones for new missions," said Lisbeth Gronlund, a senior scientist at the Union of Concerned Scientists.

"They were trying to make a more usable warhead, and that means somebody is more likely to use it," said Scott Kovac, operations and research director for Nuclear Watch of New Mexico. He said Domenici's announcement "is a victory."

summit from page 1

students in the military, and I think there needs to be some effort put forth to counter that," Evans said.

Santelli said she hoped people came to the event to meet other activists in the state.

"The opportunity to come together in New Mexico is neat," she said.

Greg Mello, of the Los Alamos Study Group, was the lecturer in the strategic overview of nuclear weapons. He said most Americans are against nuclear weapons.

"The American public consistently hates nuclear weapons," Mello said. "Despite all the propaganda. Despite everything, the poll numbers are high. People want complete nuclear disarmament in this country."

He said America's nuclear security is not as secure as people think.

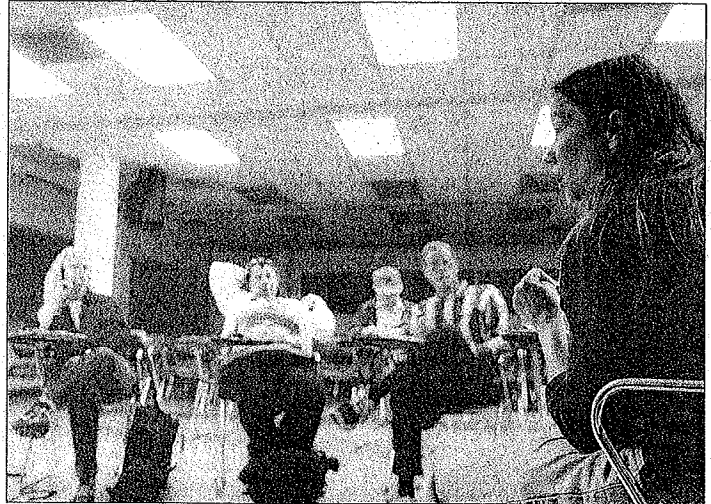
"We hear a lot about loose nukes in Russia. Security at our weapons sites is inadequate," Mello said. "There are natural hazards like seismic hazards."

He said Las Alamos sits on an active fault.

"It's active, it moves," Mello said. "There have been two earthquakes since 1992. They were little earthquakes, but microseismicity like that is an indicator of activity."

New Mexico will be hosting a world peace conference in 2006. New Mexico is unique because of the international border and the testing of the atomic bomb, Santelli said.

"Our economy has depended on the war industry for six decades, yet we're at the bottom of the list in poverty, education and personal violence," she said.



Maria Santelli, right, with the Albuquerque Center for Peace and Justice speaks at the College of Education during the peace summit held over the weekend about G.I. rights and military recruitment in public schools.

Harriet Brooks / Daily Lobo

N.M. activists form new anti-war union

by Christopher Sanchez
Daily Lobo

About 50 students and community members attended a statewide strategy summit on militarization at UNM over the weekend.

Maria Santelli, an organizer of the event, said the summit was in connection with Stop the War Machine, the Albuquerque Center for Peace and Justice, and Students Organizing Action for Peace. The summit was organized to bring the groups together to discuss military issues relevant on the state, national and global levels, she said.

Santelli said the event went well because the groups formed an alliance, which is now known as the New Mexico Peace Alliance.

"We realized that some of the important things among the peace and justice community are a network community to give support and education on each of our issues," Santelli said. "We're stronger if we're unified."

She hopes to have more summits throughout the year, she said, with the possibility of the next summit being hosted in Las

Vegas, N.M.

"This is just the beginning," Santelli said. "We hope to rotate these gatherings and pull in other communities."

There were five workshops throughout the weekend. The workshop topics included military recruitment in public schools, strategic overview of nuclear weapons issues, New Mexico's role in the militarization of space and a political reform discussion.

UNM student Bryan Evans said he came to the workshop because he is interested in becoming more active in countering military recruitment in high schools.

"This is certainly something they need volunteers for," Evans said. "Even doing some of the work in the high schools, so going in and doing some presentations and providing literature and information for our kids that are being recruited."

He was only able to attend the morning lectures, he said.

"The military has spent \$4 billion a year in getting high school

See summit page 6



Paper: Santa Fe New Mexican, The (NM)
Title: DOMENICI: N.M. LAB BUDGETS GOING UP
Date: November 3, 2005

Senator clashes with Ohio congressman on funding,
future of facilities

Lab: Ohio congressman says country needs a smaller nuclear stockpile

Enormous pressure on the federal budget and a leading critic of how the national labs are managed have collided in Washington with U.S. Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M.

Domenici has been long regarded as the unbeatable protector of lab funding -- and jobs -- in New Mexico.

He faces an Ohio congressman who argues that the glory days of nuclear-weapons spending are over.

U.S. Rep. David Hobson, R-Ohio, has questioned how much to spend on the country's nuclear-weapons complex. Now, urgent needs like the war in Iraq and hurricane devastation are competing with money for the labs.

But Domenici said last week that the overall budgets for both Los Alamos National Laboratory and Sandia National Laboratories are going up in the 2006 fiscal year. He didn't provide further details on nuclear-weapons funding because a final deal hasn't been reached on next year's budget.

"The laboratory is not going down," Domenici said in a telephone interview about the budget. "The overall Los Alamos National Laboratory is going up."

Domenici has been negotiating with House and Senate leaders on the 2006 Energy and Water Appropriations Act, which funds the Department of Energy, the Bureau of Reclamation and the Army Corps of Engineers. No final compromise has been announced.

But the budget discussion highlights another debate about the future role of the labs.

Budget pressure

Hobson has said the country needs a smaller nuclear stockpile and leadership, and fresh thinking about nuclear security.

The policy debate strikes home in Northern New Mexico, where about 9,500 employees and a \$2.2 billion budget at Los Alamos National Laboratory fuel a huge chunk of the state's economy.

As chairman of a House subcommittee which oversees funding of energy and water issues, Hobson faces Domenici, who chairs a similar committee in the Senate.

Hobson's committee wants less money for weapons programs than last year's budget. Domenici's wants more.

Hobson's office declined to talk with The New Mexican but pointed to several speeches that outline his views on lab funding. Last year, in a speech to the the National Academy of Sciences, he said, "Never again will the federal agencies and national labs have the discretion or the budget that was allowed during the Cold War to pursue any type of nuclear-weapon research no matter what the cost."

Domenici earlier this year said he looked forward to a productive conference committee "to reconcile two very different Senate and House bills. It will be a challenge, but it is important that we reach an accord that suits our security and scientific priorities."

As part of these negotiations, the House Appropriations Committee has suggested funding nuclear-weapons programs nationwide at \$6.2 billion for the 2006 fiscal year. That's \$296 million below last year and \$449 million below the president's request.

The Senate Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee, chaired by Domenici, proposed funding weapons programs at \$6.57 billion for the 2006 fiscal year. That's about \$238 million above last year's weapons budget and \$77 million below the president's request.

House and Senate leaders must work out a compromise and pass a final budget before places like LANL have a final spending plan for the coming year. A final budget is expected yet this fall.

Tight budget projections, in part, have prompted LANL director Robert Kuckuck to form a committee that will review all lab hiring. The lab needs to constrain its hiring now, Kuckuck told employees recently.

Domenici has said there won't be layoffs at Los Alamos or Sandia as a result of a temporary funding measure,

called a continuing resolution, that is keeping funding flowing to the lab.

Both subcommittees headed by Hobson and Domenici also oversee the Army Corps of Engineers. The corps typically undertakes large flood-control projects that have been highlighted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Future mission

Hobson has also questioned the country's nuclear strategy.

"In summary, we are fighting too much of the last war on the nuclear weapons front and not paying enough attention to the developing front of nuclear terrorism," Hobson told the Arms Control Association in a speech earlier this year. "It's time we take a comprehensive and reasoned look at our nuclear security strategy and decide what we want, what we need and what we can afford for the future."

Other New Mexico Congressional leaders say the labs can continue to receive funding through a broad, science and research-based mission in addition to weapons work.

"I do not see hard times for Los Alamos and Sandia in the near future," Rep. Tom Udall, D-N.M., said. "I hope that we can orient them to doing the research on the big challenges that face us as a country." He mentioned energy issues, climate change and homeland security as examples of nonweapons work that could continue to be handled by the lab.

U.S. Sen. Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M., said Hobson is not the only member of Congress concerned about how to fund nuclear-weapons programs.

However, Bingaman disagreed with Hobson over funding issues.

"I think it comes down to a question of how the country and the Congress and the administration choose to define the mission of the labs," Bingaman said. "If we can agree, as I believe, that the missions of the labs should be broad and the labs should be defined as national laboratories that are available to help the country meet a variety of challenges, then I think that, while you might not see the kind of increased funding for the nuclear-weapons programs that we've seen in the past," the lab could receive high levels of funding for many missions.

Domenici said: "Cutbacks are the order of the day in terms of nuclear weapons. And even though it's a high priority, it's quite obvious they're not going to have large increases in the future, unless the mission changes."

Homeland security, nonproliferation and energy work could increase at the labs, he said.

"So I'm not as pessimistic ... or worried as some," Domenici said.

But a leading critic of Los Alamos National Laboratory is not impressed with the non-nuclear weapons work at the lab.

"In general, they do a bad job," Greg Mello of the **Los Alamos Study Group** said. Los Alamos has a high overhead, an unaccountable culture and is geographically and intellectually isolated, he said.

Mello, whose group advocates nuclear disarmament, says the government has better things to pay for, like fixing ports damaged by hurricanes and protecting oil refineries.

"If we want to be secure, we actually have to invest in real things which will bring real security," Mello said, "and not just some nuclear pacifier."

And change is coming to Los Alamos soon.

The National Nuclear Security Administration is scheduled to announce a new lab manager on Dec. 1. A coalition including the University of California and Bechtel are competing with Lockheed Martin Corp. and the University of Texas for the job.

"I believe that with a new contractor, whomever gets it, there's going to be some new life breathed into this lab," Domenici said. "... And I'm kind of upbeat about the future."

Contact Andy Lenderman at 995-3827 or alenderman@sfnewmexican.com.

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Section: Main

Page: A-1

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DOE funding hammered out

ROGER SNODGRASS
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Monitor Assistant Editor.

4/8/05

House and Senate conferees split the \$1.5 billion difference between their respective energy and water appropriations bills, they reported Monday. The House went up \$748 million to reach agreement on the \$30.5 billion measure; the Senate came down \$750 million.

"There were significant differences between the House and Senate on this bill, but I believe we have come up with a package that will maintain key lab missions without personnel or facility disruptions," said Sen. Pete Domenici, R-NM, chairman of the Senate Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee.

"I want to be clear that our increased investments in science, nonproliferation, nuclear energy and the like

will keep our labs strong. And when you consider the Homeland Security funding going to our labs, we are in good shape," he said.

The House-passed cuts and Senate-approved increases revealed fundamental differences in the two bodies' approaches to funding the Department of Energy, which was cut by \$179 million overall to reach the \$24.3 billion recommended.

The two houses of Congress must now endorse the agreement, before it is forwarded to the President for approval.

"I am very pleased with the energy and water conference bill," said Los Alamos National Laboratory Director Robert Kuckuck in a prepared statement. "Sen. Domenici has once again helped secure the laboratory's position as a world

See DOE, 6

DOE Mixed results on LANL projects

From Page 1

leader in national security, science and technology."

Key projects at Los Alamos National Laboratory met with mixed results.

One winner, as expected: Environmental Cleanup at the laboratory will increase significantly, from about \$80 million last year to \$142.2 million in FY2006.

Noting its importance to maintaining scientific integrity at the national laboratories, Domenici said the conferees had agreed to his effort to raise the Lab Directed Research and Development level from 6 percent up to 8 percent. This key item supports a variety of independent scientific projects, fosters recruitment and enables collaborations with many other institutions.

Another installment in developing the proposed Chemical and Metallurgy Research Replacement facility was fully funded at \$55 million.

"It is obvious that as federal budgets continue to constrict, that we will be faced with more difficult choices on the direction of the labs and some projects related to ensuring the safety, reliability and future of our stockpile," Domenici said. "In that light, we've built in a number of reforms and directives to force DOE to take a critical look at projects like Yucca Mountain, DARHT, pit production and other ongoing projects."

While the bill denies funding once again for construction of a modern pit facility, it instructs NNSA to improve the existing manufacturing capability at LANL, a move that nudges the laboratory closer to assuming a major long-term responsibility in that area.

LANL's Dual-Axis Radiographic Hydrodynamic Test Facility won its budget request of \$27 million, but the bill calls for an independent study by the JASONS research group, to see if the unfinished second axis is on budget and capa-

ble of providing its expected function.

Gregg Mello, executive director of the Los Alamos Study Group, said he believes the hard decisions have been postponed for next year.

"Sen. Domenici has succeeded in getting money to Los Alamos, but a price has been paid in overall coherence," he said. "Horsetrading has resulted in a fragmented approach to the program."

In the broader weapons community, the bill restores full funding for Lawrence Livermore's National Ignition Facility, which Domenici had tried to cut. Domenici expressed his continuing doubts that the facility would meet future milestones.

The bill also continued the declining fortunes of Yucca Mountain, now dipping to \$500 million for the year, but including a \$50 million fund to reduce the spent fuel bound for the repository by setting up a recycling plan and campaign to find local governmental entities who want to volunteer to accept a reprocessing facility.

Despite the apparent resolution of budget uncertainties, LANL will continue to scrutinize its hiring activities through the current contract, which expires May 31.

"The council will closely review and consider each proposed hiring action to insure that priority is given to hiring positions that are crucial to mission and science capabilities, safety and compliance needs and internal efficiencies," said James Rickman, a laboratory spokesman. "The hiring council will help insure that the lab maintains a stable workforce and a sound fiscal profile from now through the transition to a new prime contract."

Also included in the bill, another \$5 million will go to Los Alamos County to stabilize the airport landfill and \$500,000 has been earmarked for Manhattan Project site preservation.

LANL

Bill gives money to science, research

By Andy Lenderman The New Mexican

November 8, 2005 p. C-4

U.S. Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., has again helped to deliver billions in federal money to be spent on New Mexico nuclear, energy and water projects that employ thousands.

Science and research programs at Los Alamos National Laboratory and Sandia National Laboratories were clear winners in Monday's announcement of a deal between House and Senate leaders on the 2006 Energy and Water Appropriations Bill.

Weapons programs were cut overall. But a few specific weapons programs — such as the Reliable Replacement Warhead project and the Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Facility at Los Alamos — were given as much or more money than President Bush's administration sought. The bill also directs the National Nuclear Security Administration to improve the manufacturing capability at Los Alamos for plutonium pits, which are triggers for nuclear warheads.

The \$30.5 billion measure includes an estimated \$4.4 billion for New Mexico projects overseen by the federal Department of Energy alone.

"I am very pleased with Sen. Domenici's bill," Robert Kuckuck, director of Los Alamos National Laboratory, said. "He has once again helped secure the laboratory's position as a world leader in national security, science and technology."

The lab has about 9,500 University of California employees and a \$2.2 billion budget, the majority of which comes from the Department of Energy.

Domenici negotiated with a leading critic of how the labs are managed — Rep. David Hobson, R-Ohio, who leads the House committee that oversees energy and water projects. Hobson has pushed for a new strategy for nuclearweapons funding. Plus, the federal budget faces pressure from costly hurricane cleanup and an ongoing war in Iraq.

"There were significant differences between the House and the Senate on this bill, but I believe we have come up with a package that will maintain key lab missions without personnel or facility disruptions," Domenici said in a news release. "I want to be clear that our increased investments in science, nonproliferation, nuclear energy and the like will keep our labs strong." Homeland-security funding also helps the lab budgets, he noted.

The leader of a nuclearwatchdog group was pleased with an overall decline in nuclear-weapons funding and elimination of the so-called bunker buster, or Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator.

But Jay Coghlan of Nuclear Watch of New Mexico said by e-mail that the country still spends "50 percent above the Cold War average on nuclearweapons research, development, testing and production."

Coghlan said his group and others will lobby Congress that the Reliable Replacement Warhead program, which Domenici says replaces parts on existing weapons, isn't necessary. He called it a "nukes forever program, and a Trojan horse for future new designs."

Coghlan also noted that the bill deletes funding for the Modern Pit Facility, a proposed new project to mass produce triggers for nuclear warheads, and directs the NNSA to improve manufacturing capability at Los Alamos. Greg Mello of the Los Alamos Study Group said the bill "tries to get as much money for New Mexico with as little thinking about the future as possible."

- [back to story page](#)

URL: http://www.abqjournal.com/north/406206north_news11-09-05.htm

Wednesday, November 9, 2005

Lab Expected to Get New Plutonium Unit

By **John Arnold and John Fleck**

Journal Staff Writers

A project to replace one of Los Alamos National Laboratory's largest and oldest buildings— an aging nuclear research facility with a history of safety problems— would receive its largest chunk of funding to date under a new Department of Energy spending plan.

A \$30.5 billion Energy and Water Appropriations bill hammered out by House and Senate negotiators Monday includes \$55 million for construction of a new Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Facility.

The existing 550,000-square-foot building, located in the lab's Technical Area-3, dates back to the early 1950s and is used to test and analyze plutonium and other nuclear materials. But safety problems, including a 1996 explosion, have plagued the facility over the last decade, and lab officials say it's been expensive to upgrade and maintain.

Lab spokesman Kevin Roark said the new building will be more efficient, more secure and much smaller— about half the size of the current building.

"Really, the driver (for the new facility) was we don't need as much space. We need a facility that's cheaper to maintain, and we need a facility that's located inside an existing security perimeter," Roark said.

The new facility, to be located with other plutonium facilities in Technical Area-55, will cost an estimated \$838 million, according to Sen. Pete Domenici's office. In addition to this year's pending appropriation, Domenici, R-N.M., helped secure \$40 million for the project last year and \$10 million the previous year.

The project is moving forward over objections from lab watchdogs, who contend the new building is not needed and that it's part of a larger strategy to increase weapons manufacturing at the laboratory.

"We shouldn't build more plutonium space," said Los Alamos Study Group executive director Greg Mello. "The additional floor space is only needed because of the desire to design new weapons, to manufacture new weapons and probably also to do research and development of novel nuclear fuels (for civilian nuclear power). We're opposed to all three of those missions. If you take away those missions you take away the need for the facility."

In addition to CMR facility funding, the DOE spending measure also includes language likely to expand nuclear weapons plutonium manufacturing at Los Alamos.

The lab is currently working on a production line to manufacture small

numbers of plutonium "pits"— the radioactive cores of nuclear weapons. Current plans call for production of 10 such pits per year in 2008. The budget approved by negotiators Monday includes several directives that could expand that work substantially in the future.

The United States has not had a large-scale plutonium factory since the Rocky Flats Plant outside Denver shut down in 1989. Los Alamos has long been seen as an interim manufacturing site while DOE develops plans for a large new factory. But the 2006 budget approved by House and Senate negotiators this week cuts all money for that new factory, while directing the National Nuclear Security Administration "to undertake a review of the pit program to focus on improving the manufacturing capability at TA-55."

Domenici said that the CMR project is not directly tied to pit manufacturing.

"However, as long as the pit manufacturing mission remains at LANL, the more important the (CMR) facility is. It performs the analytical experiments on pits and other special nuclear material," he said in a written statement.

Work will begin on the CMR building's first phase— a radiological laboratory— early next year, Roark said.

The Energy and Water Appropriations Bill, which funds DOE, includes \$6.43 billion for nuclear weapons spending. That's a 1.6 percent increase for the coming fiscal year.

The House approved the measure Tuesday. It now requires Senate approval and the president's signature.

E-MAIL Journal Staff Writers John Arnold and John Fleck

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[Back to story page](#)

11/11/05

Weapons program draws split positions

Domenici: Goal is to improve existing arsenal; critics call project a backdoor upgrade

By Andy Lenderman

The New Mexican

Congressional committees have more than doubled funding for the Reliable Replacement Warhead program, money that will go to Los Alamos and Lawrence Livermore national laboratories. But proponents and a nuclear-watchdog group are already arguing about what the program means. Supporters say the program is just a concept for now, but one that could create more reliable parts for an aging nuclear-weapons stockpile. Critics say it's the backdoor to a totally new weapons program. U.S. Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., a leading supporter, said in a written statement Thursday that

“program designed build on the successes that we've had using a sciencebased approach to improving the design of existing weapons. This is not intended to be a new weapons program, but rather a method to improve the way that we manufacture existing weapons.”

The goal will be to reduce the maintenance costs of nuclear weapons and improve safety and reliability, Domenici's office explained in a news release earlier this week.

A nuclear-disarmament group is opposed to the idea.

“The reliable replacement warhead is not needed,” Greg Mello of the Los Alamos Study Group said. “... Designing a new warhead and building a new warhead ... is just a sharp stick in the eye to the rest of the world.”

The program has been allocated \$25 million this year from Congress — up from \$10 million the year before.

The money, Domenici reported, will support a design competition between Los Alamos and Livermore labs “to create replacement components on existing weapons.”

Both labs will submit their concepts to the U.S. Department of Energy in March, LANL spokesman Kevin Roark said. The labs will also submit “a very firm plan on how to get it done,” he said, and the department will decide what to do with the concept.

“Nothing's been decided,” Roark said.

Mello, whose group advocates nuclear disarmament, said the project will cause other countries to consider whether they should invest in new nuclearweapons programs.

And the project, he said, “will entail a multibillion-dollar program of construction and operation for these manufacturing facilities. It's a backdoor in an upgrade of the U.S. nuclear arsenals, and it's not something that the House of Representatives or the Senate can control ... once they let the dog out of the pen here.”

A new budget bill pending congressional approval appears to restrict what can be done with the money.

“Any weapon design work done under the RRW program must stay within the military requirements of the existing deployed stockpile, and any new weapon design must stay within the design parameters validated by past nuclear tests,” a report on the 2006 Energy and Water Appropriations Act reads.

Roark also said the program could lead to less nuclear weapons.

The directors of the program “are firm in their belief that the (reliable replacement warhead) really furthers the cause of stockpile reduction. Because if we have a robust reliable replacement for existing warheads then we don’t need as many warheads in reserve. And so the hope is this will eventually lead to a reduction in the overall stockpile.”

The programs and other weapons issues received more attention this week since Congressional committees negotiated a \$30.5 billion appropriations bill that covers the Department of Energy.

A second project to receive more money includes a new chemistry and metallurgy research building at Los Alamos, where nuclear-chemistry work would take place. The lab is scheduled to break ground on the \$800 million project early next year, Roark said. Not all the money has been secured.

Domenici secured \$55 million for the project this year and nearly \$40 million the year before.

Congressional committees have also directed the National Nuclear Security Administration, which oversees the nuclear labs, to strengthen the manufacturing capability at Los Alamos to produce plutonium pits, or triggers for nuclear bombs.

The last new pit, or trigger for a nuclear bomb, was produced about 15 years ago at the Department of Energy’s Rocky Flats weapons complex, Roark said.

“The U.S. lost its capability to make new weapons when Rocky Flats closed,” Roark said.

“We are slowly regaining that capability with limited pit production at Los Alamos.”

Some would argue this federal spending, and potential for more, is a good thing for New Mexico’s economy.

Although \$25 million could build a new school in New Mexico, it’s just a small chunk of the estimated \$4.4 billion that Domenici estimates the Department of Energy will spend in New Mexico during the 2006 fiscal year.

By comparison, New Mexico’s state government budget is about \$4.7 billion this year.

But Mello argues that reliance on federal spending actually depresses New Mexico’s economy because it discourages innovation and encourages complacency.

“The nuclear-weapons business has hurt New Mexico economically,” he said. “And the rise of the nuclear-weapons business has coincided with the relative decline of New Mexico in comparison to other states.”

Watchdogs: Labs 'Rewarded' For Errors, Delays

BY JOHN FLECK
Journal Staff Writer

Members of Congress last week called for an independent investigation into a Los Alamos National Laboratory nuclear weapons project that is 18 years behind schedule and more than \$250 million over budget.

But funding for the project and others with similar troubles will continue, drawing criticism from watchdogs who say there has been no accountability for the nuclear weapons program's problems.

"They're rewarded for their failures," said Greg Mello of the Albuquerque-based Los Alamos Study Group.

In its final version of the fiscal 2006 budget, members of Congress approved \$27 million for continued work on the Dual-Axis Radiographic Hydrodynamic Test Facility. But they asked a panel of independent experts to investigate whether the long-delayed nuclear weapons X-ray machine will ever work.

See **WATCHDOGS** on **PAGE A2**

Watchdogs Criticize Nuke Project Funds

from **PAGE A1**

Plagued in the past by cost overruns and schedule delays on a number of nuclear weapons projects, federal managers at the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration have said they believe they now have DARHT and other similar problem projects under control.

Members of Congress apparently took them at their word, providing continued funding for the projects in fiscal 2006. But they also called for a number of studies aimed at keeping a close leash on the work.

"We've built in a number of reforms and directives to force DOE to take a critical look" at the programs, Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., said in a statement announcing the spending plan.

DARHT, the Los Alamos X-ray machine, was completed in 2003, but scientists discovered that part of the machine did not work. The working portion has been used successfully for nuclear weapons experiments, while a lab team scrambles to rebuild the rest of the machine.

The review of the Los Alamos project will be done by the JASONS, a group of senior scientists that periodically conducts independent studies of U.S. defense programs.

Los Alamos welcomes the study, said lab spokesman Kevin Roark. Roark said the rebuilding now under way is on schedule.

The congressional action came in a final spending plan for the Department of Energy in the coming year, approved late last Monday and made public Tuesday.

Domenici, chair of the Senate Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee, worked out final details of the spending plan with his House counter-

parts.

The House approved the final bill Wednesday; it now awaits Senate action and President Bush's signature.

Among the problem projects that got a funding reprieve is the National Ignition Facility. Under construction at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California, the nuclear fusion research machine is some \$2 billion over budget and six years behind schedule.

Domenici had threatened to cut construction money for the project, but in the end he acceded to a House request to provide \$142 million for continued work in the coming year.

NIF, which will aim a bank of lasers at a tiny target in an attempt at nuclear fusion, was supposed to be completed in 2002 at a cost of \$1 billion. The current price tag is at least \$3 billion, with completion now targeted for 2008 or 2009.

Completion of construction is not the project's finish line, though. Livermore's promised goal is to achieve nuclear "ignition" — a key project milestone — by 2010. But an independent analysis by the JASONS concluded they will be unlikely to meet that milestone.

Domenici, in an interview, said the amount needed to complete NIF was small compared with the overall cost of the project, so it made sense to give Lawrence Livermore the money to complete construction. But he said the California lab is on notice that if the laser fusion machine does not work as advertised, he will be willing to pull the plug on money to continue operating it.

"If they don't meet what they're supposed to, I'm not going to fund it even if it's finished," he said in a telephone interview.



Experts disagree on lab's impact

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Related Links

[LANL: Lab retirees tout perks of UC contract](#)

By ANDY LENDERMAN | The New Mexican
November 20, 2005

The U.S. Department of Energy will spend more than \$4.4 billion in New Mexico this year.

As the sun sets on the old way of managing Los Alamos National Laboratory, one of New Mexico's senior economists and two nuclear-disarmament groups argue about whether that's a good thing for the state.

"You take away the lab and their payroll, what happens to Northern New Mexico? It goes back to prehistoric times," said Larry Waldman, an economist with The University of New Mexico's Bureau of Business and Economic Research.

And the stability of those federal jobs tends to protect New Mexico from economic recessions that impact the rest of the country, he said.

Jay Coghlan of Nuclear Watch New Mexico scoffed when asked about the University of California's impact on Northern New Mexico.

"Los Alamos County ... pretty much remains isolated and insular with respect to the rest of Northern New Mexico," he said.

Coghlan said he lived in Rio Arriba County, just down the hill from Los Alamos, for most of the 1970s. "And there simply is not a conspicuous UC presence in Española or the Española Valley," he said.

Greg Mello of the Los Alamos Study Group said the labs "are the worst thing to ever happen to New Mexico. The data shows that as lab funding increased, New Mexico's relative economic performance declined."

New Mexico ranked 46 out of 50 states in personal income, per capita, according to a 2003 report from the U.S. Census Bureau.

But working at Los Alamos appears to offer a solid path to the middle class.

A driver can make more than \$40,000 a year; a public-affairs spokesman, more than \$70,000 a year; and many team leaders and scientists, more than \$100,000 a year, according to a list of lab salaries posted on the University Professional and Technical Employees Web site.

In comparison, the average job in New Mexico paid \$31,368 in 2004, according to the Bureau of Business and Economic Research.

Waldman said the lab's \$1.1 billion payroll is good for the entire state.

That money goes all over Northern New Mexico. Twenty-four percent of the lab's work force lives in Rio Arriba County, second only to Los Alamos County, home to about 44 percent of the work force. Santa Fe County is third with 22 percent, and Sandoval County is fourth with about 4 percent.

"Most of that money is spent here in New Mexico," Waldman said. "That really boosts the New Mexico economy."

Technology transfer

Some LANL employees have quit their jobs at the lab and founded new companies that employ New Mexicans in nongovernmental positions.

Congress required in the early 1990s that the national labs make an effort to take their technology inventions out of the labs and create new businesses.

Roger D. Jones was among the first Los Alamos scientists to leave the security of the lab and a steady paycheck.

He left in 1995 to work with other ex-scientists on consumer-banking issues and later formed his own company, Comodicast, in 2000.

Jones has 15 employees who work on Wall Street trading systems and math problems for pharmaceutical companies.

Those positions are among the estimated 270 jobs in existence as a result of the so-called spinoff from Los Alamos, said Duncan McBride, a small-business liaison who works for the lab.

The overall success of this transfer of government ideas to the private market could be better, Jones said.

"Given the technology, all the technology, it's extremely surprising that there are not more entrepreneurs," he said.

There were about 30 companies that came from Los Alamos at one time, Jones said, but that's now down to about six.

Waldman said Los Alamos' effort to create new jobs has had "some success, but not a whole lot."

He agreed with Jones that Northern New Mexico has not seen technology booms like other places -- Austin, Texas, and the Silicon Valley of California, in particular.

New Mexico businesses need more start-up money, known as venture capital, and more business expertise to help them flourish, Waldman said.

Comments

By **Eli Chavez** (Submitted: 11/20/2005 7:29 pm)



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Pursuing prestige: UT may have edge in bid to run Los Alamos

After 62 years, contract to run famed weapons lab is up for grabs; UT-Lockheed Martin team finds out winner soon.

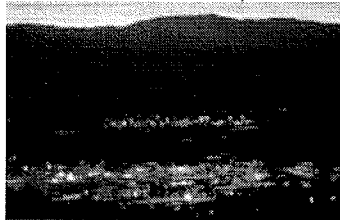
By Ralph K.M. Haurwitz
AMERICAN-STATESMAN STAFF
Monday, November 21, 2005

(syndicated by Cox News)

LOS ALAMOS, N.M. — It's written on concrete at the entrance to Los Alamos National Laboratory in the mountains of northern New Mexico: "Operated by University of California for the Department of Energy."

Those words could soon be out of date.

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(enlarge photo)

Jay Janner/AMERICAN-STATESMAN

Los Alamos National Laboratory

MOST POPULAR STORIES

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The University of Texas System and Lockheed Martin Corp. have teamed up to compete for the contract to run this federally owned nuclear weapons lab, which has been operated by the University of California since one of its physicists, J. Robert Oppenheimer, led development of "Fat Man" and "Little Boy," the atomic bombs that were dropped on Japan during World War II.

Energy Department officials say they will choose by Dec. 1 between the UT-Lockheed team and the only other contender, a team led by the University of California and its industrial partner, Bechtel National Inc.

The UT-Lockheed team might have an edge.

"People at the lab are more comfortable with UC because they know it," but conventional wisdom holds that the incumbent is at a disadvantage, said Tom Bowles, the lab's chief science officer and a member of its executive board.

After all, Bowles and other University of California employees acknowledge, if the government was satisfied with current management, why would it have opened the contract to competition?

The Energy Department did so, for the first time in the lab's history, after a series of lapses in recent years involving purchasing practices, security and inventory control.

Bechtel and Lockheed, both major defense contractors, would likely bring a more disciplined, business-oriented flavor to "one of the great scientific temples," whose workers are blessed with such brilliance and ingenuity that managing them is like "marshalling cats," as Richard Smalley, Rice University's late Nobel laureate in chemistry, once put it.

In a sense, the competition for the contract is a quest for the prestige, the opportunity for national service and the legacy that attach to this institution and its work force.

The primary mission of the lab, which has a \$2.1 billion annual budget, is to ensure that the country's nuclear weapons would work as intended, without actually detonating them.

Engineers and scientists use computers, lasers and other machines to replicate the forces unleashed in billionths of a second by a nuclear explosion. The United States declared a moratorium on test blasts in 1992.

Slightly more than half of the lab's science portfolio is focused on weapons. The rest involves other national security matters, basic science, alternative energy, computational biology and other fields. The lab has assembled the world's largest electronic archive of genetic codes for flu, allowing researchers to track the disease as it mutates and spreads. And it has made important advances in the development of hydrogen fuel cells, which someday could reduce the nation's reliance on imported oil.

The new contract, which could pay the winning team a fee as high as \$79 million a year, comes at a time when the lab's core duties are evolving. Los Alamos is in a competition of sorts with Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California to design a "reliable replacement warhead" that would be easier to maintain than the current aging warheads.

The lab is also poised to expand its production of plutonium pits for the W88 warhead, which is carried aboard the Trident II D5 submarine-launched ballistic missile, a cornerstone of the U.S. nuclear deterrent. The pits provide the initial spark that triggers a thermonuclear explosion, and officials say more are needed to replace those cut up for analysis while tracking the condition of the nation's stockpile.

Meanwhile, an Energy Department task force has recommended a radical downsizing of Los Alamos and other labs in the weapons complex, with many of their functions consolidated at a single location, perhaps the Nevada Test Site.

"The mission of the lab is on the table in a way that it hasn't been since the end of the Cold War," said Greg Mello, executive director of the Los Alamos Study Group, an independent watchdog organization.

In 1943—, when the lab was established, it had a singular mission. Leslie Groves, the Army general in charge of the Manhattan Project, as the top-secret effort to build an atomic bomb was known, chose the location for its remoteness.

The lab sits on a plateau of the Jemez Mountains, 35 miles northwest of Santa Fe. The administration area, at the edge of the town of Los Alamos, has gradually become a hodgepodge of industrial and office buildings made of concrete, green glass and metal. Roughly four dozen smaller installations, called technical areas, are scattered across 38 square miles. The terrain is rocky, with an abundance of ponderosa pine and Douglas fir. National forest, park and Indian lands lie nearby.

The lab boasts one of the heaviest concentrations of scientific and engineering talent in the world. About 3,000 of its 13,500 workers hold doctorates, including 270 chemists and more than 300 materials scientists. Much of their work is classified. Arms developed at Los Alamos — the W88, W76 and W78 warheads and the B61 bomb — account for about two-thirds of the nation's stockpile, according to the Energy Department's National Nuclear Security Administration. The rest were developed at Lawrence Livermore.

A daylong tour of the lab provided a sense of its scale, variety and high-security status. Visitors are escorted at all times.

In the Nicholas C. Metropolis Center, a computer known as Q, for a "Star Trek" character, consists of row after row of rack-mounted servers called pizza boxes and other equipment in a room three-fourths the size of a college football field. Churning through 20 trillion mathematical calculations per second, Q simulates the operation and performance of nuclear weapons.

In another part of Metropolis lies the Cave, one of the largest virtual reality rooms in the world, with 33 computer-controlled projectors. Researchers don special glasses to observe three-dimensional representations of such things as the molecular flexing of foam used to cushion nuclear weapons in missile silos.

Some of the weapons research is more real than virtual.

"We explode things," said Steve Eversole, a team leader for a portion of the lab known as DARHT, for dual-axis radiographic hydrodynamic test facility.

The \$350 million DARHT, part of which is still under construction, houses a maze of wires and electrical equipment that generates and accelerates an electron beam. This burst of energy, measuring millions of volts, produces rapid-fire X-rays at the same moment a simulated nuclear weapon — complete with high explosives and many other ingredients except for fissile plutonium — is detonated. The resulting pictures can be compared with computer simulations of nuclear explosions to improve the accuracy of the computer models.

Labs where hydrogen fuel cells are developed are more typical of a university science building. An irreverent spirit flavors the work, judging by a sign on a piece of equipment built by a onetime graduate student: "Guido's Kick Ass Segmented."

Kenneth Stroh, group leader for the fuel cell program, said some people worry that the lab's new management won't be so interested in nonweapons research.

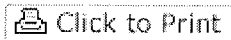
"Even if the University of California won, it'll be a different laboratory," he said. Energy Department officials say the selection will be made on merit, with points assigned for each team's key personnel, business plan, approach to science and performance in an oral examination in which hypothetical problems were posed.

If the UC-Bechtel team wins the contract, the lab would be headed by Michael Anastasio, currently director of Lawrence Livermore. C. Paul Robinson, former director of Sandia National Laboratories, also part of the nuclear weapons complex, would direct the lab for the UT-Lockheed team.

"This is truly different from any other venue I've been a part of," Robinson said of the competition. "The request for proposal, if you printed it out double-sided, measured 3 1/2 inches thick. Our submission in response measured 16 1/2 inches thick, more than 1,900 pages. And certain sections were page-count limited."

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Lab Debate Rooted In Assorted Scandals

Cultural shifts and the end of the Cold War have bred increased criticism of LANL management

By JOHN ARNOLD
Journal Northern Bureau

SANTA FE — The historic competition for the contract to manage Los Alamos National Laboratory has been a long time in the making.

While security and management lapses in recent years were cited in a 2003 DOE report recommending that the lab contract be put up for bid this year, those who study the lab's history say it's important to put the pending change in historical context. It has roots in assorted scandals dating back more than two decades. Bit cultural changes and the end of the Cold War have significantly affected the lab's mission, opening it to scrutiny and criticism, according to lab watchdogs, scholars and government investigators.

The University of California has been LANL manager since 1943, when the lab was organized to build the world's first atomic bomb.

Now, two teams of academic and industrial partners are competing for the contract and a management fee of up to a \$79 million. The winner of the bid was expected to be announced this week, but the National Nuclear Security Administration recently announced that the decision would be delayed. No new decision date for the contract has been set.

The University of Texas, which has expressed interest in running the lab for years, has teamed up with Lockheed-Martin. And the University of California has chosen to partner with Bechtel Corporation in an effort to keep its long-standing affiliation with the lab.



LEE: Case
spotlighted concerns about LANL security

Management Criticism Nothing New for Embattled LANL

from PAGE B1

That baffles Hugh Gusterson, an MIT anthropology professor who is working on a new book about the nation's nuclear weapons laboratories in the post-Cold War era.

"I have to say, the greatest mystery to me with the whole thing is why the University of California is so committed to hanging on to the contract," he said. "Increasingly, it's become a millstone around their neck."

Probing security

That burdensome aspect of the contract dates back to the early 1980s, when members of Congress began to more carefully scrutinize lab management and security, said Pete Stockton, a former congressional staffer who in the 1980s and 1990s worked on a House subcommittee that investigated lab problems.

Beginning in 1982 and continuing into the 1990s, the House

Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, led by Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., conducted investigation after investigation into security and management of facilities across the weapons complex.

LANL and sister lab Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, figured prominently in the subcommittee's work, which included inquiries into illegal drug use at the two facilities in 1988; a 10-week security force strike at LANL in 1989; and allegations of environmental, health and safety problems at LANL in 1991.

But while some congressional leaders like Dingell publicly questioned lab management, "the gloves never came off," said Gusterson. "And then in the late '90s, the gloves came off, particularly in the Wen Ho Lee case and around the series of missing (computer) disks."

Lee, a Taiwan-born U.S. citizen, was indicted on 59 counts of mishandling nuclear secrets.

After spending nine months in solitary confinement, Lee pleaded guilty to a single count and was released. The story drew huge media attention, especially when U.S. District Judge James Parker, who presided over the case, apologized to Lee, saying the government's handling of the case was an embarrassment.

"Months and months and months of that kind of intense media coverage of an institution really takes its toll," Gusterson said, adding that the temporary disappearance in May 2000 of two computer hard-drives containing nuclear weapons designs "just re-enforced this idea that Los Alamos had a broken security culture."

The final straw

The last straw came in 2002, when LANL managers fired two lab whistle-blowers who revealed weak purchasing and property control systems at the lab.

The following year, Energy

Secretary Spencer Abraham announced the lab's contract would be put up for bid. The DOE review recommending the competition called the 2002 fiascoes "the precipitating incidents."

But Gusterson says bigger cultural shifts outside the lab were also factors in the decision. For example, globalization and modern business practices make UC's 63-year-old contract seem outdated and the idea of competition more acceptable, he said.

"There's a way in which Los Alamos and Livermore are sort of a holdover, not just from the Cold War, but from an era where people felt that you got a job in your 20s and you stayed in it until you retired. Now everything is being competed."

The end of the Cold War and nuclear testing has played a role in changing lab culture as well, calling into question LANL's mission, lab watchdogs say.

"Right after the Cold War, there was a period of time

where the (weapons) labs lost their way. They lost their identity," said Greg Mello, director of the Albuquerque-based Los Alamos Study Group. "Then they came up with the so-called stockpile stewardship program."

Stockpile stewardship is the DOE effort to keep the nation's nuclear stockpile reliable in the absence of underground tests.

Calls for competition

Despite the security lapses, plus employee discrimination complaints and several worker accidents in the mid- and late 1990s, former energy secretaries Hazel O'Leary and Bill Richardson extended the University of California's contract, citing the need for continuity and stability. University of California supporters have argued that the school's long-time hold on the contract has been an important tool in recruiting and retaining top scientists, who are attracted by the institution's

academic prestige and generous benefits package.

"The truth of the matter is the University of California, if everything is going well, it is a really terrific institution from the scientific end to be affiliated with," said U.S. Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., who supported UC's past contract extensions but has also been supportive of the 2003 decision to put the contract up for bid.

O'Leary's and Richardson's decisions to extend UC's contract came after repeated calls to put the contract up for bid. The University of Texas had expressed interest in running the lab as far back as 1996. A congressman at that time, Richardson himself urged O'Leary to approve a contract competition. U.S. Sen. Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M., also supported a competition in 1996.

"So it's not a new idea, and it's something that should have been done," said Stockton, now a senior investigator with the Project on Government Oversight.

Nuclear weapons program discussion at Tech

By Argen Duncan

El Defensor Chieftain Reporter
aduncan@dchieftain.com

Has New Mexico's large role in the nation's nuclear program really benefited the state, and should the federal government continue to support the construction of the weapons?

The director of a New Mexico organization that investigates nuclear issues in the state, and to a lesser extent nationally, answers "no" to both questions.

Director of the Los Alamos Study Group, Greg Mello, is scheduled to speak on the status of the U.S. nuclear weapons program Thursday, Dec. 1, 7 p.m., on the New Mexico Tech campus in Workman Hall, Room 101. Mello said his talk would include New

Mexico's role in the nation's policy.

The Tech group Students for Progressive Action is sponsoring the event.

"As a geology student, I'm naturally concerned with the environmental impact and practices of the Los Alamos National Lab," said member Phillip Turner, adding that as a citizen, he's interested in the personnel and financial resources in maintaining and stockpiling nuclear weapons.

"Here at Tech, the labs are a big employer of many students, and it's important that students get a different view of where their time and energy will be spent and to what ends," he said.

Group staff adviser Kathryn Alberecht said New Mexicans have every right to input on the nation's nuclear weapons policy.

She said the current administration has its "toes over the line" in aggravating the arms race, which has been the case since the Reagan years.

"So it's a grim reversal after decades of stepping back from the brink," Alberecht said.

Mello has worked with nuclear policy full-time since 1992, after helping to start the study group a few years earlier. He also once worked on regional economic policy as a fellow in urban studies at Harvard University.

"The nuclear weapons business is not much discussed," he said.

Many current questions in nuclear policy revolve around New Mexico because the country spends most of its budget for nuclear warheads in the state, he said.

Mello said many Congressional decisions on nuclear matters have never come to action because they didn't fit with "realities on the ground" or the public rejected them.

"In New Mexico, there's much more going on than following orders," he said.

Because of New Mexico's place as a center of weapons activity, he said, residents have the power to effectively make decisions independent of Congress by rejecting certain policies.

"The future of nuclear waste disposal at Los Alamos is in play because the House of Representatives has some doubts about it and the citizens of Northern New Mexico don't want it," he said, adding scientific reasons indicate problems with the

shallow burial of the waste at Los Alamos.

Also, with the nuclear weapons budget dropping this year, Congress is less willing to fund open-ended projects, he said. This could push Los Alamos towards a role with more manufacturing than science, he added.

Due to an act of Congress this month, the lab could become a successor to a Colorado lab to manufacture plutonium bomb cores, he said.

Mello said New Mexico's biggest issue is how national nuclear policy affects state residents. While military plays an important role in the state with bases and scientific sites, it has brought a lack of prosperity, he said.

"I would argue that the data

shows nuclear weapons are associated with decline in New Mexico," he said, adding a number of factors cause this.

Mello said calculations he helped with show a military budget of over \$850 billion. With 111 million households in the United States, the burden on each is well over \$7,600 per year.

Although money from the military bases and labs comes back to citizens, the prioritizing of military over issues such as health and education have large costs many don't take into account, he said.

However, Mello discouraged feelings of helplessness.

"Since we're a small state, everyone in New Mexico, potentially, has a real voice in what happens," he said.



Group faults lab on plutonium records

[print](#)

By Andy Lenderman The New Mexican |
December 1, 2005

A Maryland nuclear-watchdog group says Los Alamos National Laboratory should do a better job of keeping track of plutonium.

Various organizations involved in monitoring the weapons lab say they believe much of the highly radioactive atomic-bomb ingredient referred to in a new report is buried as waste at Los Alamos.

But authors of a report released Wednesday by the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research want managers of the federal lab to explain what it says are "major discrepancies" in accounts of plutonium at LANL.

One of the report's authors said there's no evidence the plutonium has left Los Alamos.

An official with the National Nuclear Security Administration's Los Alamos office was studying the report Wednesday. But spokesman Bernie Pleau said his office wouldn't be able to respond until today.

The report states: "An analysis of official data indicates that the unaccounted for plutonium amounts to at least 300 kilograms, and could be over 1,000 kilograms, though the higher figure appears unlikely."

Authors Brice Smith and Arjun Makhijani speculate about where the plutonium could be. However, Greg Mello, the head of a separate nuclearwatchdog group in New Mexico called Los Alamos Study Group, said activists have known since the 1970s that most of the plutonium in question is buried in waste at the lab.

Jay Coghlan of Nuclear Watch New Mexico agreed that's likely. "Nevertheless, we're talking about a very serious discrepancy," Coghlan said.

The report details discrepancies between documents at the federal Department of Energy headquarters and other DOE offices, Smith and Makhijani wrote.

A summary offers possibilities to explain the discrepancy, including that the plutonium is buried in waste or has been shipped to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant near Carlsbad. And if part of the plutonium is missing, they wrote, it would have major national security implications.

"If much or most of the plutonium was disposed of as buried low-level waste and buried transuranic waste, the long-term radiation doses would exceed any allowable limits," the report reads.

The report recommends a detailed explanation of the discrepancy and says appeals to the department and the lab "have failed to elicit a serious response or investigation."

[back to story page](#)

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Thursday, December 1, 2005

Plutonium Unaccounted For

By John Arnold*Journal Staff Writer*

POJOAQUE— More than 660 pounds of plutonium at Los Alamos National Laboratory is unaccounted for, a Maryland-based environmental watchdog said Tuesday.

The Institute for Energy and Environmental Research compared public records data from the nation's weapons and disposal sites with a 1996 U.S. Department of Energy report detailing plutonium waste inventories. IEER researchers discovered large inventory discrepancies at Los Alamos, said institute president Arjun Makhijani, who co-authored a report on the findings.

"We've got three sets of books with plutonium numbers in waste, and they are so far apart that they cannot be reconciled by any reasonable means," Makhijani said at a news conference in Pojoaque.

Makhijani said his findings raise serious environmental, regulatory and security questions. The amount of unaccounted-for plutonium, a radioactive by-product of nuclear weapons manufacturing, can be used to make dozens of bombs, according to the report. There's no evidence the plutonium has been stolen or has left LANL, Makhijani said, but "it is the responsibility of the Department of Energy and (LANL manager) the University of California to guarantee that it has not gone off site."

It's possible that the unaccounted-for plutonium is buried in nuclear waste pits at LANL, which "would have very significant environmental and health implications," the report states. Another possibility for the discrepancy, according to Makhijani, is that DOE documentation understates the amount of plutonium being disposed of at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant near Carlsbad.

A National Nuclear Security Administration representative who attended Tuesday's news conference said the agency would analyze IEER's report and provide a response. John Ordaz, an NNSA assistant manager for environmental stewardship said the analysis would take time.

"But we're doing everything to make sure the public is safe, and everything we do is formal and by the book and we have many, many assessments," Ordaz said.

Makhijani's concerns aren't new. Anti-nuclear activists have raised the issue for years and in 2004 wrote a letter to then-LANL director Pete Nanos asking him to address inventory accounting discrepancies during a work stand-down at the lab.

Greg Mello, director of lab watchdog the Los Alamos Study Group, said he is "comfortable with the assumption" that the unaccounted-for plutonium is buried at LANL, is awaiting shipment to WIPP or has already gone there.

The root of the problem, he said, is poor disposal records, especially related to early disposal areas, that prevent an accurate accounting of plutonium waste.
"The uncertainty we have in (waste records) is more than enough to account for several hundred kilograms," Mello said.

E-MAIL Journal Staff Writer John Arnold

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[Back to story page](#)

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Tuesday, December 20, 2005

Cost of Lab Stand-Down Unclear

By John Arnold*Journal Staff Writer*

The federal government was justified in reimbursing the University of California for most of the cost of last year's work stand-down at Los Alamos National Laboratory, a new federal report concludes.

But that same report, released by the U.S. General Accountability Office, also finds that the exact cost of the shutdown cannot be determined.

Former LANL director Pete Nanos brought all but the most critical lab operations to a halt in July 2004, after a student was partially blinded by a laser and officials reported that two classified computer disks were missing. Lab officials later determined the disks never existed.

LANL estimated that the stand-down— which for some lab operations lasted 10 months— cost \$121 million. A separate National Nuclear Security Administration review put the cost as high as \$370 million. But according to the GAO report, neither of those numbers is accurate because LANL did not track actual time spent on stand-down activities like safety reviews and training.

"Without the ability to track costs, it is difficult for DOE to hold management and operating contractors accountable and to make determinations regarding the allowability of costs," the report states.

Under the LANL operating contract, DOE reimburses lab manager University of California for "allowable costs." Most costs associated with the shutdown are allowable, the report concludes.

The contract "authorizes stand-downs to address serious safety and security concerns," it states.

A lab watchdog said Monday that it's possible both UC and the government bear responsibility for the cost.

"There is merit to the idea that UC should have to eat some of the cost for the shutdown, because UC has not been a good manager," said Los Alamos Study Group executive director Greg Mello.

However, one could argue that NNSA— a semi-autonomous arm of the DOE— isn't being tough enough in its oversight of the lab and is to blame for negligence, he added.

The GAO conducted its review at the request of U.S. Rep. Joe Barton, R-Texas, chairman of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. Barton asked the GAO to determine whether the NNSA's decisions to reimburse UC were reasonable. He also wanted investigators to review the accuracy of previous cost estimates and the impact of the stand-down on lab programs.

According to the report, the stand-down affected nearly every critical lab

mission, including nuclear weapons work. But all programs have recovered, and the lab has so far managed to stay on track to complete most projects on time, the report says.

In a written statement released Monday, UC spokesman Chris Harrington said the lab is "a safer, stronger and more secure laboratory because of the work of LANL employees to recommit themselves to the necessary policies and procedures."

But in their findings, GAO investigators continue to raise concerns about safety at the lab, noting that since the stand-down there have been at least three serious accidents "where procedures were not followed."

The GAO's conclusions state that DOE has an opportunity to address problems with LANL's safety culture when negotiating a new operating contract for the lab.

That contract is up for competitive bid for the first time in lab history. The University of California has teamed up with industrial partner Bechtel National in a bid to continue running the lab. UC/Bechtel are competing against another academic-industrial alliance led by the University of Texas and Lockheed Martin. A decision on the winner is expected this month.

DOE should hold contractors "to the highest performance standards as the basis for awarding fees and additional contract years," the report concludes.

E-MAIL Journal Staff Writer John Arnold

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[Back to story page](#)



UC-led group to manage lab

[print](#)

By ANDY LENDERMAN | The New Mexican
December 21, 2005

LOS ALAMOS — The University of California earned a major victory and another chance to help manage Los Alamos National Laboratory on Wednesday, despite several lab-safety and security concerns that played a role in the government's decision to put the lab's contract up for bid.



The university has managed the lab exclusively since it was created in 1943 to build the world's first nuclear bomb. The decision ended more than two years of anxiety and speculation for the thousands of employees who work there.

The university formed partnerships with three private companies, led by Bechtel Corp., and defeated the University of Texas and Lockheed Martin Corp. for the job to manage the country's top nuclear-weapons lab. They have formed a new private company, Los Alamos National Security LLC, which will be responsible for managing the lab.

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The Lockheed team has 10 days to file an appeal, an official with the National Nuclear Security Administration said. A Lockheed spokeswoman said Wednesday that no decision had been made.

The performance-based contract offers the winner a chance to earn up to \$79 million a year and extend the length of the contract. Poor performance could earn the company less money.

"This means somebody is really in charge of management," U.S. Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., said Wednesday. "I can't imagine that we'll have business as usual if we're talking about safety problems, security problems."

Some scientists don't know what they're working on, and others are frustrated by bureaucracy, he said.

"Those kinds of things are going to change, and many more," Domenici said.

The decision was seen as positive for scientists, who are often attracted to the lab for

research opportunities.

“I think this will be a very welcome announcement up here in Los Alamos,” U.S. Rep. Tom Udall, D-N.M., said Wednesday.

Udall said few have questioned the university’s scientific reputation. “It’s the management part and the security issues where the University of California was having difficulty,” Udall said.

U.S. Sen. Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M., said he’s confident the new manager “will ensure that LANL remains one of our nation’s most important research laboratories.”

The exact details of the management structure were not immediately available Wednesday.

Federal laws and rules prevented the release of more details about the proposals, said Tyler Przybylek, a lawyer for the National Nuclear Security Administration.

The decision was made by Tom D’Agostino, a former Navy officer and administrator at the National Nuclear Security Administration. “What I saw with respect to the LANS proposal itself was essentially a team and a concept and an approach that really stressed integration within the laboratory,” D’Agostino said.

Its proposal discussed ways to ensure that the best operational and business practices would “permeate across the laboratory,” D’Agostino said.

The winning proposal also included a “unique approach” to “integrating the nuclear-weapons complex” for efficiency, he said.

Michael Anastasio is the lab’s new designated director. Anastasio is a nuclear physicist and heads Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California.

“Los Alamos has the tradition for over 60 years of pushing scientific frontiers for the benefit of our nation through its unique and outstanding workforce,” he said in a news release. “LANS is committed to ensuring that this tradition continues well into the future.”

Reaction to the contract award was mixed. Lab critics were aggressive in denouncing the decision and brought up the lab’s history of security and safety controversies that have attracted national attention.

U.S. Rep. Joe Barton, R-Texas, demanded an explanation on the decision by Jan. 6. “Based on the track record by the University of California and the seemingly invulnerable culture of mismanagement at Los Alamos, I am surprised to learn that the current contractor has been invested with new trust,” Barton wrote to Energy Secretary Samuel Bodman. “I have minimal hope and no belief that UC can reverse its record of consistent failure.”

U.S. Rep. Dave Hobson, R-Ohio, played a key role in creating a competitive contract process. “Forcing the University of California to actually compete for this contract against another top-notch team should result in better performance for the Department of Energy and the U.S. taxpayer,” Hobson said in a news release Wednesday.

Jay Coghlan of Nuclear Watch New Mexico said the decision was political “to

protect the privileged lifestyles of Los Alamos County. ... I think that DOE just didn't want to upset the UC gravy train."

But Greg Mello of the Los Alamos Study Group, which advocates nuclear disarmament, said he was glad that Lockheed Martin Corp., a large defense contractor, did not get the job.

But he's not excited about the winning team, either. "One hates to see a huge nuclear lab run by committee, further complicating the accountability and management problems inherent in any government-owned, contractor-operated facility," Mello said in a news release.

Spokesman Jeff Berger of Los Alamos National Security said the new company will be managed by a 12-member board of governors. The members have yet to be announced.

"It will be a victory for the employees if Bechtel can come in and manage without ... basically management by fear and intimidation," said Manny Trujillo, president of a lab-employee association.

No major changes in the mission of the lab were discussed during Wednesday's announcement.

Both Domenici and Robert C. Dynes, president of the University of California, referred to a potential rejuvenation of science and research at the lab.

"I have worried for some time that science and technology ... will end up in the back seat at Los Alamos," Dynes said. "And from the beginning, our proposal underscored the importance of science and technology as a leader for national security. And that was the message we delivered in our proposal."

Some observers have speculated that a major change at the lab would lead to dissatisfied scientists leaving to work in the private sector. And Domenici, Bingaman and others have been concerned about a general shortage of American scientists for years.

"I think the stability that this decision will bring will allow the laboratory to move forward and turn from a brain drain to a brain gain," Dynes said.

Domenici said the decision will likely be well-received in Washington.

"I think it's probably going to cause the members of Congress to be very interested, excited about a new approach," he said.

Contact Andy Lenderman at 995-3827 or alenderman@sfnewmexican.com.

Comments

By Morrow Hall (Submitted: 12/22/2005 8:12 am)

Isn't Bechtel a wholly-owned subsidiary of Halliburton?

By Johnny Mata (Submitted: 12/22/2005 6:47 am)

Lab pact the pits?

All this money for Los Alamos' new partners.
All this drive for more plutonium cores. All this concern.

By Greg Mello

12/28/05

Since its inception in 1943 as Site Y of the Manhattan Engineering District, the facility now called Los Alamos National Laboratory has been owned by the U.S. government and operated by the University of California and its subcontractors.

This is now about to change. On Dec. 21, the management of Los Alamos was handed over to a new private company called Los Alamos National Security, which will assume full management powers at Los Alamos after a six-month transition period.

The company is a partnership among UC; Bechtel National (a subsidiary of the Bechtel Group); BWX Technologies, a nuclear weapons and nuclear materials manufacturer that does 96 percent of its business for the U.S. Department of Energy; and Washington Group International, a growing government services firm with large contracts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

As of last summer, Washington Group ranked fourth among all contractors in sales in those countries. Bechtel ranked sixth.

Most folks don't know that 96 percent of DOE nuclear weapons program spending goes to contractors, mostly for-profit companies. This month's decision continues the privatization trend, moving Los Alamos' \$2.2 billion budget into a new for-profit business that, unlike the

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TODAY'S BYLINE

Mello is director of the Los Alamos Study Group, a nuclear weapons watchdog group in Albuquerque.

situation in the past, stands to make hundreds of millions of dollars in management fees.

If the new partnership succeeds in pleasing its federal paymasters, the organizations will be rewarded with a continuous, no-bid, government contract of up to 20 years, worth tens of billions of dollars overall and fees in the \$1.6 billion range.

There is also a great deal of the political influence associated with such enormous sums.

Can a huge, secret "national security" laboratory and production site be managed without waste, fraud and corruption in our present political climate? Not really. History concurs with common sense in this regard.

All three nuclear laboratories, as well as the nuclear production plants, have experienced egregious problems of virtually every kind, and in spades.

Los Alamos' scale is a big problem. Since the Reagan era, its budget has not been determined by the mission, but rather its mission has been determined by its budget.

U.S. Sen. Pete Domenici, an Albuquerque Republican, gets as much money for the lab as possible. And the lab gives him the language with which to get these vast sums.

Because the language is quite technical and Congress is quite busy, usually only a vague pseudo-scientific fig leaf is all that is necessary to hide what is essentially pork barrel interest.

Thus our senior senator is himself a major cause of problems at the lab. Our junior senator, Democrat Jeff Bingaman of Silver City, usually keeps a studious silence on the subject. Los Alamos represents, after all, his largest campaign contributor.

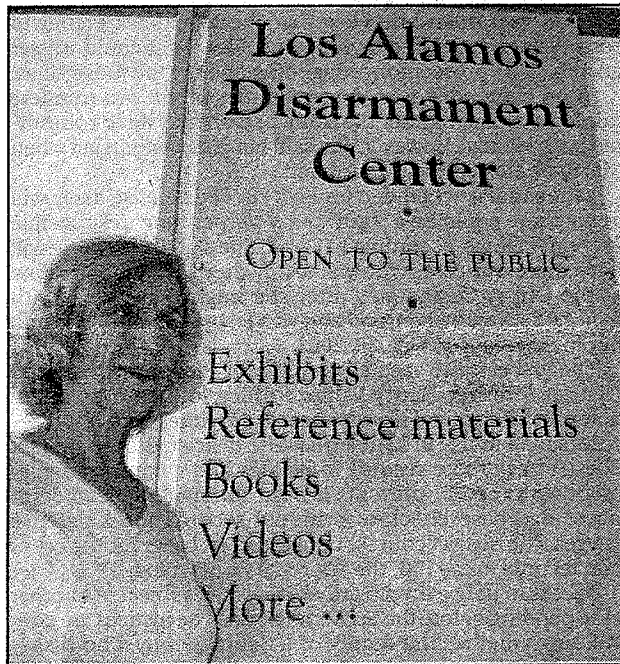
Los Alamos' three core missions are to maintain nuclear weapons, design new warheads and manufacture the plutonium cores ("pits") for both.

On Nov. 7, Congress tentatively assigned it the job of making pits for the nation's stockpile, a role UC did not relish and did not do well. Yet, this summer the secretary of energy's Advisory Board slammed Los Alamos for operating its aging plutonium facility at just "5 percent" efficiency.

But the new contractors now have hundreds of millions of dollars in fees riding on the proposition they can begin manufacturing Trident warhead pits in 2007 and a new kind of pit in 2012.

Is New Mexico ready for this? I hope not.

Disarmament center opens doors downtown



DARRYL NEWMAN/Monitor

CENTER Astrid Webster, a docent at the Los Alamos Disarmament Center, is just one of several volunteers who are available to answer questions and provide an inside look at the global effects of nuclear weaponry.

DARRYL NEWMAN
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Monitor Staff Writer

12/29/05
12/29/06

In a continuing effort of calling for nuclear disarmament, the Los Alamos Disarmament Center has opened downtown and serves as an educational resource in the area regarding nuclear issues.

Opened Dec. 10 by the Los Alamos Study Group - an organization that seeks nuclear disarmament, environmental protection and enhancement, social justice and economic sustainability - the center is almost completely staffed with volunteer docents.

LASG Executive Director Greg Mello said that by having such a center in Los Alamos, the birthplace of the atomic bomb, he hopes that the organization provides educational outreach and fosters healthy discussion.

"The world faces enormous challenges and nuclear weapons make no positive

"We need to focus on the real problems of the 21st century."

- Greg Mello, LASG Executive Director

contributions to meeting those challenges," Mello said. "We need to focus on the real problems of the 21st century and not on threats and coercion."

A counter museum housed at the disarmament center, consists of a series of mostly black-and-white photographs that capture the devastating effects of the atomic bomb on the people and the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The exhibit was sent from the Hiroshima Peace Museum.

"It's a counter museum in the sense that it is an alternative look at the prevailing belief that nuclear weapons make the world a safer place," said volunteer docent Astrid Webster as she explained

photographs in the collection. "It's counter to the idea that nuclear weapons somehow enhance our nation."

One photograph shows a woman's back and the thermal rays from the bomb blast, which left the imprint of the pattern of her clothes burned onto her skin. Another photo presents a demolished elementary school and a third haunting photo shows a girl standing by the charred body of a boy who burned to death.

"I don't think people have a conception of the real impact of the bomb," Webster said. "The U.S. people are in many ways, the victims of this impact, for example, schools are not being built because much of the money that would have been used goes

toward building bombs and weapons."

The disarmament center also contains a small bookstore of nuclear disarmament books, videos, papers and other materials.

Research facilities and Internet access is available to visiting disarmament scholars and activists by prior arrangement.

"We're really interested in people using this as a place of information and where they can meet other people who have the same goals and thoughts as they do," Webster said.

The Los Alamos Disarmament Center is "always looking for volunteers," Mello said.

Those interested in volunteer opportunities through the center should call Mello in Albuquerque at (505) 265-1200. The center, 1362 A-2 Trinity Drive, can be reached at 661-9677 and is open from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Saturday.