



Los Alamos Study Group

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December 14, 2016



Protest at the Rocky Flats Plant near Denver, October 15, 1983, from [Boulder Weekly](#)

It took thousands of people and many years to shut down this plant -- and a few brave whistleblowers who risked their lives. Plutonium work was and is dangerous, expensive, and contaminating. Since June 1989 the US has had no functioning pit production plant of any scale. As a result the US cannot build entirely new nuclear warheads. There have been seven or eight plans to replace the Rocky Flats Plant. All have foundered, with help. This organization -- and Trish with her Amarillo cohorts at STAND -- have played a greater or lesser role in all these victories.

The Study Group, virtually alone but with your help, tripped up the most recent plan, which was finally canceled in 2014 after a long and difficult struggle.

There is now a new multi-billion-dollar plan to expand pit production ([short fact sheet](#)). It can be blocked far more easily now than the work of closing Rocky Flats was then.

No new factory, no new bombs. New factory, new bombs. New bombs, no new priorities. No new priorities, no hope.

Dear New Mexico friends –

Thank you, all of you, for your solidarity and help thus far.

Many of you have sent contributions recently. To you, thank you and we will be in touch before long.

Here's our biggest local nuclear weapons challenge in a nutshell, and why we can win.

For more than three decades, the Rocky Flats Plant made plutonium warhead cores ("pits"). Now, Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) is the only place in the US that plutonium pits can be made.

To make pits *in quantity* would require several billion dollars in brand-new and upgraded LANL facilities for production, analysis, nuclear waste handling, electrical transmission, etc. at LANL. This construction, spread across several projects, is in its initial stages.

Some of the buildings still in the planning stages would be the most expensive buildings in the world, on a per-square-foot basis. Three of them, even if considered separately, would be the most expensive construction projects in the history of New Mexico.

The federal tax dollars they would consume during construction (let alone operation) would be sufficient, if used to sweeten private-sector solar and wind energy projects, to eliminate most stationary carbon emissions in the state, create thousands or even tens of thousands of jobs, save billions of gallons of water annually, and prevent hundreds of early deaths each year from air pollution.

If these gold-plated new factories aren't built, new plutonium pits can't be built in quantity and therefore brand-new warheads won't be possible. The old ones would have to suffice for the nuclear war scenarios being planned day-in and day-out by STRATCOM.

There is no *technical* reason the older warheads could *not* suffice (to incinerate and irradiate millions, and starve the rest of humanity and the animal kingdom in the [freezing dark](#)). But the loss of modernization momentum would be *politically* damaging to the nuclear enterprise in a number of ways.

Omitting most of the numbers, new pits are "needed" if and only if all three of the following policies remain in place:

- The US replaces all, or nearly all, its land-based missiles with brand-new missiles and launch systems (current estimated cost: \$85-\$150 billion);
- The US maintains sufficient reserve warheads for land-based missiles to allow uploading additional warheads onto them -- which would contravene the stockpile size limits of the New START treaty (now set to expire in 2021); **AND ALSO**
- The older W78 warhead on some of these missiles, serviceable through the 2040s with the usual maintenance and upgrade program, is replaced by a *brand-new* design called the "Interoperable Warhead One" (IW-1), which would also replace one of the Navy's warheads. The IW-1, an inherently ambitious design that attempts to replace two very different warheads with one new kind, may or may not be certifiable. The program, which is unlike anything attempted so far, might fail.

The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) and its laboratories proposed this crazy IW plan. Neither the Navy nor the Air Force, the supposed "customers" for this new warhead, actually want it. It was designed to support and enrich the labs and weapons plants.

Other than IW-1, no other warhead or bomb, existing or proposed, requires new pits for decades hence.

The ballpark cost of the IW-1 and its associated new pit factory complex -- precise enough for our purposes here -- is about \$30 billion. That's real money.

These programs are a key part of Obama's overall nuclear modernization plan, which will cost in excess of \$1 trillion with continuing deployments included.

No one knows where all this money -- a marked increase over current nuclear weapons spending, itself far higher than it needs to be because of waste and contractor greed -- will come from.

Planned increases in overall military spending, of which nuclear modernization are an important part, will come from some combination of: a) adding to the national debt; b) cutting federal domestic programs; and c) cutting mandatory spending -- Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and Veterans Affairs. For the next four years, we can rule out increasing taxes.

Trump's pick for Secretary of Defense, retired four-star Marine general James Mattis, testified last year before Congress that in his opinion, [US land-based missiles are especially dangerous](#) and may not add value.

Nuclear hawks don't necessarily support new LANL facilities. If LANL managed its existing facilities better, new facilities would not be necessary, even for expanded pit production. Contrariwise, if LANL doesn't manage its existing facilities and people better, no pit production will be possible there *at all*. For hawks with an eye on the budget, better management is key, not more facilities badly managed. Separating the "facilities question" from the "pit production question" is a helpful step.

There are many ways to fight these deeply stupid and wasteful programs, which despite being a house of cards are nonetheless widely supported in the executive branch, Congress, and the military. Widely-supported, yes -- but not *universally* supported. The more knowledge people have, the more questions they ask -- questions which often turn out to have no good answers.

The Russians, of course, take note of these plans, a familiar -- and for the participants often very lucrative -- mutual dynamic. But the Russians have far less money to waste.

It's a self-perpetuating system, sized for a Cold War and needing a Cold War to justify it. As [Joseph Schumpeter](#) once said of the imperial German war machine, "Created by the wars that required it, the Machine now creates the wars it requires." We will not survive those wars, whether cold or hot.

The relatively cheap ways to kill these programs involve analysis, publishing, media outreach, and lobbying. Cheap, yes, but they require dedicated full-time-plus work by first-class experts.

Next in order of price comes litigation, a drastic but potentially powerful step if supported by analysis, lobbying, publishing, and media outreach.

Organizing *effective* opposition on the ground is also very expensive, given current social and political conditions in New Mexico. Our goal, you see, is to *win*, not just to show up and "make our voices heard."

Nobody is going to stop these programs for us. Amazingly, aims such as preventing a new Rocky Flats Plant from taking shape, or stopping IW-1, tend to not be a priority in the arms control world, which in its wisdom has been unable to stop even a *single* project or program for the past eight years, despite vast expenditures.

So we need your help. Please.

Money is not all we need to win, but it is necessary. As long as our health holds and our communities cohere, we have the rest.

Despite Trump, circumstances are not at all unfavorable, though there are many uncertainties. We can take advantage of those uncertainties. They are how we win.

There are many ways to give. Please see [Bulletin 226](#) for some of them. Those of you who wish to donate and have not yet done so can do so [by check](#) sent to the address below, [by credit card](#) over the phone or via [secure link](#), [by donating stock](#) (thus avoiding capital gains and the associated taxes), or [by donating an extra car, boat, or real estate](#). You can [set up a monthly donation](#). You can remember the Los Alamos Study Group in your will or estate plans. [Please contact Trish by email](#), or phone 505-265-1200 if you have any questions.

Our [2015](#) and [2014](#) fundraising appeals provide more background and are not at all out of date. Our web site contains links to all our recent written *public* work. (There is another body of work we cannot share, such as most correspondence with government.)

[Like every other organization, what we need most are more major donors, whose larger gifts powerfully liberate our time. Enough major gifts, and we can hire skilled help to leverage our own in key areas.](#)

[Right now, I am asking you to approach your wealthier friends on our behalf. We will be happy to make a detailed presentation and funding case to any such group, if you organize the meeting. You have contacts we don't.](#)

[Everyone does. Putting us in contact with potential donors, large or small, is a powerful way to help.](#) Please do not feel that small gifts are not important. They are terribly important!

I don't want to make this note longer than it is. I will write again about other topics in the coming days.

Sincerely,



Nov 15, 2016

forwarded from Sayrah N:

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD: New Mexico is not for sale!

TIDDS = CORPORATE WELFARE

While Bernalillo County has approximately **\$710 million dollars** in unfunded infrastructure backlog, the Santolina developers are asking for taxpayers to dedicate **45%** of all Property Tax Increment generated within the Districts, together with **45%** of Gross Receipts Tax revenue to support Santolina!

Santolina developers will be asking for nearly **\$2 BILLION from NM taxpayers** over the lifetime of their project when our state budget is currently facing a multimillion dollar shortfall!

And the Santolina Developers misled the public: attorney John Salazar, who represents Western Albuquerque Land Holdings (WALH), stated during hearings on Santolina back in May 2015 - *"The developer has committed to pay 100 percent of the project infrastructure... And there's no request for a subsidy. There's been no request that the county provide incentives to bring this project to the county."*

But, just months later, Santolina developers have asked the county to divert much needed gross receipts and property tax money for Santolina that would **REIMBURSE** them for any public infrastructure it builds.

The rules governing this request require that this development be at **NO NET EXPENSE** to all taxpayers but a request for TIDDS violates the Developer's pledge.

WHEN: Tuesday, Nov 15, 2016

WHERE: Civic Plaza – Rally Starts at 4:30 pm; Hearing starts at 5pm - Vincent E. Griego Chambers- basement level

WHAT: We need your public input on how Bernalillo County should NOT support the approval for TIDDS to reimburse Santolina Developers.

We need to be loud and clear that none of taxpayer money should pay for the Santolina Developer's project!

Please wear your Contra Santolina shirts or wear yellow!

SHOW UP AND SPEAK OUT! STOP THE CORPORATE GREED AND CORPORATE WELFARE!

If you cannot attend the meeting, please help us spread the word. You can also call and/or email Enrico Gradi to voice your concerns - **Email: egradi@bernco.gov. Office: (505) 314-0350.**

For more info, visit the Contra Santolina Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/contrasantolina>



BernCo to consider tax district for Santolina; Commission mtg Tuesday (important!!)

Nov 14, 2016

(Am in Washington, DC now, trying to understand and make progress on nuclear -- and other issues if time allows -- amidst new realities here.)

Dear Albuquerque friends --

The article quoted below in full about Santolina caught my attention this morning. Very quickly --

In my opinion:

- Santolina has the potential to destroy Albuquerque. ART is bad but not existential. Santolina is in a whole other league.
- As this article notes, this proposed tax increment development district (TIDD) could extract "up to \$500 M" from BernCo residents. This liability or some portion of it (with prior approval for more?) would begin more or less immediately, whether or not Santolina ever develops. Wouldn't a TIDD, once in place, put the County (i.e. us) over a barrel for subsequent planning and zoning approvals, transportation investments, and so on?
- Of course, if Santolina were a good idea it would be bankable. There would be no need for a TIDD. The purpose of a TIDD is bypass bankers' due diligence and replace that with rolling over local rubes, some of whom are bought-and-paid-for. I mean, Santolina is owned by a huge bank. They could self-finance if they chose. But that would place their own precious capital at risk.
- The political ramifications of this appear horrendous, on top of the fiscal impacts (the increased operational costs of this sprawl would be on top of the capital costs, on top of the resource impacts (e.g. water), on top of the other environmental impacts (e.g. transportation, congestion). Barclays Bank will have more power than we want over the future of Albuquerque.
- There could be terrible impacts from this giant new development -- you can spell them out -- which will almost certainly fail to develop, but which will deliver a massive financial windfall to Barclays Bank if a TIDD is approved.

I see that the Bernalillo County Commission meeting starts at 4:30 pm tomorrow with the Finance Committee. The Commission meets at 5:00 pm. You can sign up to speak [here](#).

I think the City Council was almost criminally delinquent in its responsibilities by not getting involved -- and finding a way to spike -- Santolina.

Meanwhile, Michelle Meaders has warned us that at 6 pm Tuesday, mas o minus the same time, there will be a showing at UNM of the (literally) meaningless anti-nuclear movie "Command and Control," according to [advertising by NM PBS](#).

I saw this film here in DC in August, and learned then that a traveling road show around this film has been developed by some big foundations (who paid for it in the first place). It's agnostic about its main subject, nuclear weapons (and hence explicitly meaningless, as stated above). We know Schlosser and he writes very well, but in our view this is a slick propaganda movie, the exact point of which is...to keep control of nuclear weapons discussion, guiding it into channels supportive of the nuclear weapons complex, US Empire, the labs (especially Sandia) and the status quo. And above all, to keep us all passive and going to movies, listening to the approved "experts," and so on. In this case, the goals include recruitment of UNM students for the State Department, CIA, and the labs. The tender sensibilities of these young people have to be guided in the "proper" channels. They need to learn to use the phrases like "nuclear dangers," which are the linguistic equivalents of malware, rather than more precise, and less morally ambiguous, phrases like "nuclear disarmament." Nuclear disarmament is not an interest of these funders (and so not a subject of this movie) unless it is shorn of its potential for social and foreign policy change, i.e. made compatible with Empire. Which it will never be.

So I hope you don't bother with "Command and Control," especially while the subject of destroying Albuquerque is being implicitly discussed a mile or two away.

In a bit of a panic over the TIDD meeting, trying to convey the seriousness of the situation, and now on to my work here,

Greg

<https://www.abqjournal.com/888272/bernco-to-consider-tax-district-for-santolina.html>

BernCo to consider tax district for Santolina

By Dan McKay / Journal Staff Writer

Monday, November 14th, 2016 at 12:02am

The company behind the massive Santolina Master Plan could divert up to \$500 million in future tax revenue under a plan headed to the Bernalillo County Commission on Tuesday.

Commissioners are set to consider approval of a financing tool known as “tax increment development districts.”

Supporters say the districts provide an incentive for developers to build streets, parks and public amenities quickly because they know they’ll be reimbursed by taxpayers. And getting the infrastructure built should make it easier to lure big companies considering a move to New Mexico, they say.

Opponents, meanwhile, say the districts are simply a subsidy for sprawl development – a way for the developer to be reimbursed with public money for work they would otherwise pay for themselves.

The proposal before commissioners Tuesday would allow Santolina to divert 45 percent of the new tax revenue generated there for about 50 years, or until the districts have generated \$500 million for public infrastructure, whichever occurs first. The company initially had sought a 75 percent diversion, but agreed to the smaller amount.

Creation of the districts would have “substantial positive economic impacts,” according to a county staff report. That’s based on an economic analysis by Impact DataSource, an Austin-based firm.

I will have to send something to our Abq list.

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Reminder: New Directions in Disarmament, this Friday Nov 11, 6:30 pm Santa Fe

Nov 7, 2016

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Please help [support our work](#) if you can! Become a [sustaining donor](#)!

It was the time of the preacher
In the year of '01
When you thought it was over
It had only begun.

"Time of the Preacher," Willie Nelson, lyrics changed to these in the 1985 BBC anti-nuclear thriller "Edge of Darkness"

Dear friends --

The Study Group will host a special talk and discussion of "New Directions in Disarmament" on Friday, November 11, at 6:30 pm in Santa Fe at the Center Stage Performance Space, 505 Camino de los Marquez ([map](#)).

We'll be Skyping in special guest and Study Group board member [Ray Acheson](#) to provide her perspective on the recent [breakthrough](#) in disarmament diplomacy. As a teaser [here's](#) Ray's most recent editorial.

Bring a friend if you can. (This is not just to get more people in attendance. That communication between you and your friend is prototypical of the mobilization we need. The "call to a friend" contains much of the "DNA" of a larger movement.)

Professionals, this means you. In New Mexico, especially in Albuquerque, a lot of the professional community is missing in action these days. I have no idea what all our doctors and lawyers and environmental scientists and ministers and you name it are up to, vis-a-vis the major crises of our time.

The UNM professoriate is particularly MIA. Pity the students there -- where is the guidance? Where, the education? If adjuncts are too poverty-stricken to be active citizens, maybe they should revolt -- like, *yesterday*. (See: "fear", below). It is surely better to be a handyman or plumber -- important professions, both -- with a clear conscience, than an intellectual slave, my friends.

As discussed in [Bulletin 224](#), new doors are opening in nuclear disarmament -- even as our historical crisis becomes acute. Tomorrow we will have a general election which in and of itself will change little. On Wednesday, the day after, the US will *still* be on a course leading toward greater wars, climate collapse will continue unabated by any policy, treaty, or agreement (current, planned, or discussed in the campaign), the poor in this country and abroad (as well as the world's wildlife and habitats) will remain insufficiently protected, and will suffer. New Mexico with its "World War II economy" (Carol Miller) will remain locked in a "death spiral", with a few new faces in leading positions, but few new ideas and no obvious greater commitment to our children or the environment.

In short, this election provides no explicit mandate or platform for change. We have to provide that, nonviolently but coercively. Where is this conversation happening today? We are pretty well connected but we don't hear of it.

Especially at statewide levels and above, we have to do it primarily outside the electoral process, given the many ways in which candidates and elections are bought and sold.

Our collective thought needs now to turn toward how we might best **mobilize**, **resist**, and build* simpler, more sustainable, and more just communities.

If you or your friends are working on climate or energy issues we hope you (and they) will come on Friday.**

By the way, we hope those of you who can, will find a way to support resistance to the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL), in its present alignment or any other which might be found. All new fossil-fuel-producing (and -consuming) infrastructure needs to be considered life-threatening until proven otherwise, wouldn't you say? There are free rides and co-op rides available to the Standing Rock Reservation, where some of you have already been and some are right now.

We are aware that some of you are a bit afraid these days. We hear this from some of our members and we hear it from field organizers in other organizations. A little fear sharpens perceptions -- which is helpful -- but fear-induced paralysis is no way to live. From tomorrow's perspective, these are the good old days.

Two of us will be traveling to Washington, DC next week to see what can be done in the transition period. It is a good time to cut nuclear weapons programs, but will it happen? There is no sign of it yet. Too many powerful liberal funders got sucked into supporting Obama's Nobel-winning faux "disarmament" agenda. There is no sign they have learned from that mistake, or ever will.

How to fix this is the topic for Friday.

Greg, Trish, and the gang

*The Study Group has two NM corporate partnerships benefiting customers, the Study Group, society, and the earth:

- [Positive Energy/Sunpower](#): high-efficiency, long-life, hassle-free solar installations. \$100 to LASG for any consultation (please mention us); an additional \$400 with system installation (please mention us).
- [McCune Solar Works/One World Co-op](#): high-end PV modules; also systems tailored for renters; high-reliability, no-maintenance, long-life, non-toxic battery systems; low-cost emergency backup; more. \$500 to the Study Group with system purchase and other deals that help all of us.

Frankly, most homes and businesses in New Mexico should be running on solar power at this point. We didn't know how (relatively) easy it was until we bit the bullet. There are many ways to go solar. Those who rent have fewer options but if you have a good relationship with your landlord it may be time to start talking with him or her about solar power. Talk to these companies.

**We've previously sent a link to the so-called "[Climate Victory Plan](#)", which we commend to you because of its scope and speed (which more or less accord with natural science, a welcome change from the usual).

One of the bigger missing pieces in this plan is any acknowledgement of the issues raised by Dr. Tim Morgan's "[Perfect Storm: the End of Growth](#)" and related works (all very accessible), or "[Some reflections on the Twilight of the Oil Age](#)" (in three parts) by Louis Arnoux on Ugo Bardi's blog [Cassandra's Legacy](#). We have been talking with you about this for a decade now. You can see more at our own blog, [Forget the Rest](#). We especially recommend the blog roll there. If you get all your news from the mainstream media (including of course NPR and PBS) or even good corporate alternatives like *Democracy Now*, you cannot help but be ignorant of some of the biggest historical currents that are turning our world upside down.



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Ban negotiation vote today, come on over at 2 pm if you want

Oct 27, 2016

Dear friends --

The vote at the UN is expected this afternoon, probably not right at 1 pm our time but later, at circa 2 pm or later. We will suck in the video for viewing later, barring technical failure. We also have a donated large new monitor where you all can watch this live with us if you want.

The UN will stream today's session from <http://webtv.un.org/>, or you can follow the livestream from the ICAN page: <https://www.facebook.com/icanw.org>.

Best,

Greg

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2901 Summit Place NE Albuquerque, NM 87106, Phone: 505-265-1200



BREAKING NEWS: UN votes to outlaw nuclear weapons in 2017 (correction, update)

Oct 27, 2016

Dear colleagues --

Erratum: we forgot to include Morocco among the abstentions, for a total of 16 abstentions.

The conference room was packed; attendance was high. We count only 15 states who were not present or did not vote: Afghanistan, Benin, Djibouti, Georgia, Haiti, Honduras, Liberia, Mongolia, Moldova, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, South Sudan, Syria, and Tajikistan.

ICAN has posted the official vote tally [here](#). Twitter activity from today's meeting can be found at <https://twitter.com/@nuclearban> and #firstcommittee.

gm

Dear colleagues --

I am pleased to pass along the following press release from the International Campaign for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), available at <http://www.icanw.org/campaign-news/un-votes-to-outlaw-nuclear-weapons-in-2017/>. Please see the [ICAN web site](#) for updates.

Further background can be found in our October 24 [press release](#) and in [Bulletin 223: Historic UN vote to mandate negotiation of treaty banning nuclear weapons](#), October 23. Follow the embedded links to the superb work of ICAN, Reaching Critical Will, Wildfire, and others. Prior Study Group analysis, UN testimony and working papers, and explanations can be found on this evolving [web page](#).

This is a historic vote, a major milestone toward a treaty prohibiting the development, possession, or use of nuclear weapons. Tough work lies ahead -- supported however by a majority of the world's states.

We have tabulated the no votes and abstentions below the press release. There are some interesting ones. Netherlands for example abstained, very much against U.S./U.K./French wishes.

DPRK voted *FOR* ban negotiations.

Greg Mello and Trish Williams-Mello

UN VOTES TO OUTLAW NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN 2017

October 27, 2016

NEW YORK – The United Nations today adopted a landmark [resolution](#) to launch negotiations in 2017 on a treaty outlawing nuclear weapons. This historic decision heralds an end to two decades of paralysis in multilateral nuclear disarmament efforts.

At a meeting of the First Committee of the UN General Assembly, which deals with disarmament and international security matters, 123 nations voted in favour of the resolution, with 38 against and 16 abstaining.

The resolution will set up a UN conference beginning in March next year, open to all member states, to negotiate a "legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination". The negotiations will continue in June and July.

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), a civil society coalition active in 100 countries, hailed the adoption of the resolution as a major step forward, marking a fundamental shift in the way that the world tackles this paramount threat.

“For seven decades, the UN has warned of the dangers of nuclear weapons, and people globally have campaigned for their abolition. Today the majority of states finally resolved to outlaw these weapons,” said Beatrice Fihn, executive director of ICAN.

Despite arm-twisting by a number of nuclear-armed states, the resolution was adopted in a landslide. A total of 57 nations were co-sponsors, with Austria, Brazil, Ireland, Mexico, Nigeria and South Africa taking the lead in drafting the resolution.

The UN vote came just hours after the European Parliament adopted its own [resolution](#) on this subject – 415 in favour and 124 against, with 74 abstentions – inviting European Union member states to “participate constructively” in next year’s negotiations.

Nuclear weapons remain the only weapons of mass destruction not yet outlawed in a comprehensive and universal manner, despite their well-documented catastrophic humanitarian and environmental impacts.

“A treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons would strengthen the global norm against the use and possession of these weapons, closing major loopholes in the existing international legal regime and spurring long-overdue action on disarmament,” said Fihn.

“Today’s vote demonstrates very clearly that a majority of the world’s nations consider the prohibition of nuclear weapons to be necessary, feasible and urgent. They view it as the most viable option for achieving real progress on disarmament,” she said.

Biological weapons, chemical weapons, anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions are all explicitly prohibited under international law. But only partial prohibitions currently exist for nuclear weapons.

Nuclear disarmament has been high on the UN agenda since the organization’s formation in 1945. Efforts to advance this goal have stalled in recent years, with nuclear-armed nations investing heavily in the modernization of their nuclear forces.

Twenty years have passed since a multilateral nuclear disarmament instrument was last negotiated: the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which has yet to enter into legal force due to the opposition of a handful of nations.

Today’s resolution, known as L.41, acts upon the key recommendation of a UN [working group](#) on nuclear disarmament that met in Geneva this year to assess the merits of various proposals for achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world.

It also follows three major intergovernmental conferences examining the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, held in Norway, Mexico and Austria in 2013 and 2014. These gatherings helped reframe the nuclear weapons debate to focus on the harm that such weapons inflict on people.

The conferences also enabled non-nuclear-armed nations to play a more assertive role in the disarmament arena. By the third and final conference, which took place in Vienna in December 2014, most governments had signalled their desire to outlaw nuclear weapons.

Following the Vienna conference, ICAN was instrumental in garnering support for a 127-nation diplomatic pledge, known as the [humanitarian pledge](#), committing governments to cooperate in efforts “to stigmatize, prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons”.

Throughout this process, victims and survivors of nuclear weapon detonations, including nuclear testing, have contributed actively. [Setsuko Thurlow](#), a survivor of the Hiroshima bombing and an ICAN supporter, has been a leading proponent of a ban.

“This is a truly historic moment for the entire world,” she said following today’s vote. “For those of us who survived the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it is a very joyous occasion. We have been waiting so long for this day to come.”

“Nuclear weapons are absolutely abhorrent. All nations should participate in the negotiations next year to outlaw them. I hope to be there myself to remind delegates of the unspeakable suffering that nuclear weapons cause. It is all of our responsibility to make sure that such suffering never happens again.”

There are still more than [15,000](#) nuclear weapons in the world today, mostly in the arsenals of just two nations: the United States and Russia. Seven other nations possess nuclear weapons: Britain, France, China, Israel, India, Pakistan and North Korea.

Most of the nine nuclear-armed nations voted against the UN resolution. Many of their allies, including those in Europe that

host nuclear weapons on their territory as part of a NATO arrangement, also failed to support the resolution.

But the nations of Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, Southeast Asia and the Pacific voted overwhelmingly in favour of the resolution, and are likely to be key players at the negotiating conference in New York next year.

On Monday, 15 Nobel Peace Prize winners [urged](#) nations to support the negotiations and to bring them “to a timely and successful conclusion so that we can proceed rapidly toward the final elimination of this existential threat to humanity”.

The International Committee of the Red Cross has also [appealed](#) to governments to support this process, stating on 12 October that the international community has a “unique opportunity” to achieve a ban on the “most destructive weapon ever invented”.

“This treaty won’t eliminate nuclear weapons overnight,” concluded Fihn. “But it will establish a powerful new international legal standard, stigmatizing nuclear weapons and compelling nations to take urgent action on disarmament.”

In particular, the treaty will place great pressure on nations that claim protection from an ally’s nuclear weapons to end this practice, which in turn will create pressure for disarmament action by the nuclear-armed nations.

[ENDS]

Against L.41 (38 states)

Albania
Andorra
Australia
Belgium
Bosnia-Herzegovina
Bulgaria
Canada
Croatia
Czech Republic
Denmark
Estonia
France
Germany
Greece
Hungary
Holland
Israel
Italy
Japan
Latvia
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Micronesia
Monaco
Montenegro
Norway
Poland
Portugal
Republic of Korea
Romania
Russian Federation
Serbia
Slovakia
Slovenia
Spain
Turkey
United Kingdom
United States

Abstentions to L.41 (16 states)

Armenia

Belarus
China
Finland
Guyana
India
Kyrgyzstan
Mali
Morocco
Netherlands
Nicaragua
Pakistan
Sudan
Switzerland
Uzbekistan
Vanuatu

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2901 Summit Place NE Albuquerque, NM 87106, Phone: 505-265-1200



Countdown to historic UN vote, watch live tomorrow or Friday; Nov 11 talk, Santa Fe

Oct 26, 2016

Let us know by return email if you want to be removed from this closed inner list, or added if you have been forwarded this message and want to receive local letters directly.

Previous local [letters](#), wider [bulletins](#), [home page](#).

Facebook: [Los Alamos Study Group](#); Twitter: [@TrishABQ](#); Blog: [Forget the Rest](#)

To subscribe to the Study Group's main listserve [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Mark your calendars: the Study Group will host a special talk and discussion of "New Directions in Disarmament," on Friday, November 11, at 6:30 pm in Santa Fe at the Center Stage Performance Space, 505 Camino de los Marquez ([map](#)). We'll Skype in some special guests to be announced next week, after the UN vote.

Dear friends --

There are now 51 54 55 [co-sponsors](#) to UN General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution [L.41](#), up from 48 five days ago. L.41 mandates negotiation of a treaty banning nuclear weapons next year.

As we said this past Sunday in [Bulletin 223](#), the First Committee vote may occur tomorrow afternoon in the UNGA First Committee some time after 1 pm Mountain time, perhaps closer to 3 or 4 pm Mountain. The First Committee will reconvene on Friday at 1 pm Mountain time, and voting on L.41 could be then as well.

[Two-thirds](#) of UN member states support negotiating a nuclear weapons ban treaty. Check with ICAN's [First Committee blog](#) for updates, of which there have been quite a few since I last wrote.

First Committee meetings (and the vote on L.41) can be seen live on [UN live TV](#). Choose "First Committee" from the right-hand menu.

I am writing to share the sense of drama which hundreds of activists and diplomats are experiencing right now around the world. This is a big deal, unprecedented. It could gradually affect "our" labs and state in a number of ways.

On Monday we provided an update and heads-up to national and regional reporters about the ban process ("[Historic UN vote to mandate negotiation of treaty banning nuclear weapons](#)").

Trish is starting to build a web page for the ban [here](#). We've been distracted by a visiting Japanese TV team for the last couple of days but will return to this project ASAP.

Not a day passes without news of another country, or medical group, or religious spokesperson, or political leader, or Nobel group, expressing support for a ban treaty. It's very easy in New Mexico to think "nothing can change," because change is hard here. Corruption is normal, political aspirations for change weak, civil society limited, poverty and ignorance high, and divisive identity politics has grown across the progressive garden like a noxious weed.

While it looks like we have the votes, a veteran from the [Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons](#) (OPCW) in New Zealand (Bob Rigg) reminded his extensive email list of diplomatic and activist friends as follows:

My own experience of US lobbying in a multilateral disarmament organisation may be relevant here. When I was working for a UN organisation in The Hague I worked in the Executive Council Chamber, drafting meeting reports for adoption by Member States. Once, when there was a major confrontation between the US and most of the other members, the charming head of a developing country delegation approached me and said, with a deadpan expression: "Bob, they say that the Americans twist arms. It isn't true. They break them!" At the same meeting the head of a North African delegation told me how he had been lobbied by the State Department to do what the US wanted. He did what all delegations do when they are away from home, and said: "I am terribly sorry, I cannot come down on this issue until I have consulted with my capital." At this the

State Dept. official produced his mobile and called a number, saying: " I have your foreign minister on the line!" Once, when Argentina was blocking a desperately important resolution for the US, its ambassador was approached at the bar, was shouted a drink, and was told: 'If you would like the IMF to approve that multi-billion dollar IMF loan that your country so badly needs, all that you have to do is to vote with us on this issue." Very many states crumble in the face of such blackmail. Will the US succeed in this case?

That is the Halloween specter haunting the UN right now.

What is going on is easily misunderstood. This is *not* a vote to eliminate nuclear weapons, or to set up negotiations to do that. The negotiations L.41 would mandate in 2017 are toward a treaty that would prohibit the possession, development, and use of nuclear weapons. Joining such a treaty would be *voluntary*. Such a treaty would stigmatize nuclear weapons. As countries join a ban treaty, the so-called "legal gap" would close. This "gap" has opened because the nine nuclear weapons states do not believe, and in all cases (other than Israel) say they do not believe, they are under any definitive obligation to disarm. All are modernizing their arsenals. India and Pakistan are expanding their arsenals and the U.S. has definite plans to do so in a horrible way, exploiting a loophole in the New START treaty. The five nuclear states (the U.S., U.K., France, Russia, and China) are simply intransigent vis-a-vis their Article VI disarmament obligations under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). India, Pakistan, Israel, and North Korea are simply not signatories to any treaty that would require disarmament.

Worse, in 1996 the International Court of Justice refused to say whether all uses of nuclear weapons would violate international humanitarian law (the body of law limiting the nature, extent, and objects of violence of war).

Under such conditions, nuclear war is eventually inevitable, and the world knows it.

The U.S., U.K., France -- and lately also Russia -- are very concerned that L.41 and the ban treaty process will take away some of their power and prestige. Even *talking* about such a treaty is causing headlines in some Western democracies, speeches in parliaments, a surge in party statements against nuclear weapons, and in some cases (e.g. Holland) formal letters from parliamentary majorities to governments urging them to support ban negotiations.

For countries that fancy themselves to be "protected" by U.S. nuclear weapons (and which are therefore under intense U.S. pressure to vote "no"), *abstention* on L.41 would be a step toward independence. Japan is contemplating that step. The decision has been kicked up to Prime Minister Abe.

If progress continues, it will affect New Mexico. The work designing nuclear weapons at Los Alamos and Sandia is in the process of being declared illegal.

Two of the state's larger employers are mostly involved in work which most of the world wants to ban. The labs directly account for only ~20,000 / ~822,000 nonfarm jobs, or ~2.4% of state employment. How many employees work on nuclear weapons? Say ~60% of the ~11,000 at SNL, ~75% of the ~9,000 at LANL, a few hundred at KAFB, or maybe 16,000 in all, or **about 2% of the state's employment**. (It is not worth looking for exact figures for this note, in part because they are so squirrely to begin with.)

Two percent ain't much. The economic multiplier from these jobs is more than offset by the political baggage involved, as historical data show ([Does Los Alamos National Lab Help or Hurt the New Mexico Economy?](#), July 2006).

On Monday Dan Boyd of the *Albuquerque Journal* [article](#):

To bring New Mexico employment back to pre-recession levels, a total of 147,177 "economic base" jobs will have to be created over the next decade, according to findings of the Jobs Council, a bipartisan group of lawmakers, trade officials and business leaders formed in 2013 to study ways to boost the state's economy. Economic base jobs are defined as positions that bring in money from outside the state.

The state's nuclear weapons jobs are almost lost in the weeds compared to this very real employment gap.

The nuclear weapons economy -- such as it is -- is an aging, dangerous dinosaur. The sooner we break free of it and get on with a sustainable, post-fossil-fuel future, the sooner we can escape the "[death spiral](#)" these aging industries are bringing us us.

Greg and gang



Reminder: Important Study Group meeting Wed 10/19, 7 pm, Santa Fe; "extraordinary" developments occurring at UN

Oct 17, 2016

(Let us know if you want to be removed from this closed list.)

Dear friends --

I am writing to remind you of an [important Study Group update and action planning meeting on Wednesday 10/19, 7:00 pm, Santa Fe, at The Commons, 2300 West Alameda St. \(map\)](#).

This is the same time as the final presidential debate, so now you have an excellent alternative to that depressing spectacle.

Nothing said or not said in that debate will affect how the government is run or what its policies will be. Neither will any of us non-megadonors have any impact on those policies *except* (in selected cases and even then only to a certain degree) through careful channels of reform -- or, more significantly and broadly, through organized, principled, nonviolent resistance in its many forms. This is now required.

In any case, watching that debate is a waste of your time. Don't bother stressing about which questions are or are not asked, or how they are answered. Both candidates on the stage will say whatever they feel they need to say, and whatever is said it will be quite disconnected from what will happen after the election.

Trish and I are in the process of returning from New York, where we have been participants in and witnesses to what the Irish government [this morning](#) called "extraordinary" developments:

"Something extraordinary happened in Geneva this year. As the distinguished delegate from New Zealand noted in her opening statement, the [working group] has led to the forging of a new mainstream," it said.

By the May session, **"the majority opinion was coalescing around the potential for a new legal instrument, complementary to the NPT and giving effect to the commitment on nuclear disarmament enshrined in Article VI of that treaty and on which negotiations could be opened in 2017"**.

"There should be no prestige attached to the ability to threaten the life of the planet and every living thing on it. Any such prestige can only beget proliferation and runs counter to the intention of the NPT," it said. **It is long past time to prohibit and eliminate these inhumane, indiscriminate and indefensible weapons of mass destruction."**

Ireland expressed support for the recommendation to convene a conference in 2017 on a new legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons -- **"because we believe in it and we believe in the promise to humanity that this United Nations has made and needs to fulfil"**.

As of this morning there are 39 co-sponsors and 127 pledged supporters to a resolution that would convene negotiations next year on a treaty banning nuclear weapons. There will be a vote near the end of this month or early next month. We have enough votes to carry the motion, and this is causing consternation among the usual nuclear suspects.

On Friday the US and especially the UK delivered remarkably hostile remarks opposing nuclear prohibition negotiations, with the US promising to boycott any negotiations that might begin next year and urging all other states to do the same. This is what Obama's "world without nuclear weapons" has come to -- boycotting the negotiations being proposed by most of the world's nations. So much the better, we think.

After the inflammatory and threatening UK statement -- delivered during "informal" time and therefore not on the official

record -- the US and UK ambassadors shared a celebratory "fist-bump." "We'll show you uppity non-nuclear countries!" they might as well have said. These kind of threats may play well within NATO and in a few other places, but they won't impress too many non-nuclear countries.

You can read all this and more at [ICAN's live update](#) page.

Meanwhile it has been confirmed to us that NNSA has created a **draft plan and budget for underground plutonium factory "modules" in Los Alamos**, to be funded next year (at an eventual cost of billions). Terrible as this is, it is not unexpected. It offers to New Mexicans a very potent way to express themselves on the narrow issue of nuclear modernization as well as broader issues of war and peace and the collapsing US social and environmental contract. Don't imagine that progressive dreams will be fulfilled, or environmental dreams of saving the climate and hence most life on earth, if the New Cold War continues. It is too distracting to our rulers, too expensive, and it creates too many political careers of the wrong kind.

"Cold" is something of a misnomer, because **the war against Russia, Syria, (and Yemen's Houthis, the Donbass region of Ukraine, and [add others here]...) is getting hotter every day**. It's hard to summarize all the developments of the last few weeks and this reminder is probably not the place to do it, but...as you may know Russia has asked all its students studying abroad and officials' dependents living abroad to [return home](#). Russia just conducted an annual [emergency drill](#) involving 40 million people and has begun [building fallout shelters](#). The heavy cruiser/small aircraft carrier Kuznetsov and its support group are moving to the eastern Mediterranean to provide more aircraft sorties over Syria if needed, more cruise missiles to launch, and more anti-aircraft capability. After US warplanes intentionally broke the Syrian ceasefire by bombing a static Syrian army position, killing some 82 people and wounding many more, all of whom were protecting the eastern city of Deir Ezzor from ISIS, the Russians brought in more high-end area-denial/anti-access defensive weapons and issued a stark but realistic warning that the speed with which air bombardment develops will force them to shoot first and ask questions later. Meanwhile Russia moved nuclear-capable short-range (400 km) Iskander-M ballistic missiles to Kaliningrad. The Russians also pulled out of two agreements with the Department of Energy, one concerning joint research and the other, more consequentially, concerning the disposition of excess plutonium. In the latter case, Russia accompanied its withdrawal with a wide-ranging denunciation of all the hostility the US is engaged in vis-a-vis Russia, an ultimatum little-reported in the West.

There is much, much more, and the truly dangerous part is how much the various organs of the US government are listening to little more than their own propaganda at this point. Our relations with Russia are worse than you may think possible -- in part because that's what large parts of the US government want. The dominant idea is to "break Russia," in Kissinger's words. Hard-right elements in the US government are steering policy in their direction, setting the stage for the new administration, foreclosing rapprochement. Syrians and Yemenis are dying for this.

For a short audio review of some of these developments you might want to listen to this recent [John Batchelor interview](#) with prominent Russian scholar Stephen Cohen.

"What can we do about any of this?", you may ask. A lot, actually. As regards nuclear modernization and pit production, work with us. On the broader issues of war and peace, what we can do is much the same as what we can do for climate change and for justice in our society: we need to mobilize ourselves, and fast.

On climate change, you might want to take a look at the [Climate Victory Plan](#) (this link is to the forward by Paul Gilding; follow the included link to the whole draft plan). You may find parts of it inspiring, as I did. It's a "big government" plan, and an extremely optimistic one that omits certain thermodynamic realities. Nonetheless, as a sketch it gives some indication of the scale, sweep, and speed of the effort we need, and that's good. **We need to go beyond the mild reform agendas we so often hear and see around us, all of which will be "too little, too late," if indeed they ever amount to anything at all besides providing comforting narratives with which to greenwash ourselves.**

I am saying that the struggle against war and the struggle against climate change are the same thing, and we need to take a look at that thing which they are, at the opportunities which stand before us.

Please come on Wednesday, and beyond that, let's all take stock of where we are, and what we are going to do.

Best,

Greg



Reminder: important meeting in Santa Fe 10/19 pm; more

Oct 9, 2016

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Previous local [letters](#), wider [bulletins](#), [home page](#).

Facebook: [Los Alamos Study Group](#); Twitter: [@TrishABQ](#); Blog: [Forget the Rest](#)

To subscribe to the Study Group's main listserve [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Dear friends --

As mentioned in [Bulletin 222](#), we (Trish and Greg) are in New York, joining our board member [Ray Acheson](#) and many other colleagues from around the world this week at the UN, where the General Assembly is preparing, we hope, to call for negotiation of a treaty banning nuclear weapons.

It is a momentous debate. One hundred and twenty-seven pledged votes are in place, with others in play. We are here to help discredit the opposition from nuclear-armed states (here's a fun [example](#) from a country near you) and their weasel allies ([definition](#), [spectrometry](#)). Non-nuclear countries are being [pressured](#).

ICAN is posting live updates [here](#). No doubt Ray and her colleagues will also issue updates in RCW's [First Committee Monitor](#). Ray's [opening editorial](#) is a must-read.

This is the good news. Meanwhile we really have our hands full in the U.S., and in New Mexico.

Please come if you can to an important Study Group update and action planning meeting on Wednesday 10/19, 7:00 pm, Santa Fe, The Commons, 2300 West Alameda St. (map).

While progress at the UN is so far steady, the Obama Administration is preparing its final nuclear weapons plans and budgets, including plans for *an expanded plutonium pit factory and production in Los Alamos*, plus new nuclear-tipped missiles (of two kinds), new long-range bombers, new submarines, and new warheads, which (including deployment) comprise a trillion-dollar program. With your participation on the 19th, we will discuss our plans vis-a-vis all of this.

Thanks, everybody.

Greg

PS but important: As you know [Positive Energy](#), as well as our friends at [McCune Solar Works](#), are offering \$500 to the Study Group for successful referrals that result in the purchase of a home or business PV system. These are both good companies that serve different parts of the market. **Positive Energy is now offering the Study Group \$100 up-front for every referral we provide that results in a consultation with a possible customer, with another \$400 awarded to us upon completion of a system.** Frankly, most homes and businesses in New Mexico should be running on solar power at this point. We didn't know how (relatively) easy it was until we bit the bullet. There are many ways to go solar. Those who rent have fewer options but if you have a good relationship with your landlord it may be time to start talking with him or her about solar power. We all need to start talking about the climate doom we face if we do not act decisively in all aspects of our economy and our lives.



REMINDER: John LaForge, "Nuclear Heartland" TONIGHT, 6:30-8:30pm, at LASG headquarters

Oct 3, 2016

Dear Friends,

Don't miss this opportunity to meet John LaForge, author of "Nuclear Heartland" and hear his presentation on the ICBMs here in the United States. It's a valuable chance to hear firsthand about where these missiles actually are housed and what the systems are like.

- **Monday 10/3, 6:30 pm, Albuquerque, Los Alamos Study Group, 2901 Summit Place NE, Albuquerque ([map](#)), talk and discussion with [John LaForge](#), "Nuclear Heartland: A Guide to the 450 Land-Based Missiles of the United States."**

Come join us!

Trish, Greg, and all



Los Alamos Study Group

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Los Alamos Study Group Solar Party this coming Sat, Oct 1, 3-5pm!!

Sep 26, 2016

Dear friends,

As Greg announced in [our last letter to all of you here](#), our Solar Party is this coming Saturday, October 1, 3-5pm, here at the Los Alamos Study Group world headquarters, 2901 Summit Place NE, in ABQ! We hope to see you here!

Please let us know via email (just respond here to me -- not our lists -- that doesn't work), or call the office at 505-265-1200 if you are interested in solar and would like to come! We have to turn in a number for food purposes.

Sunpower/Positive Energy Solar will be serving barbecue (also a vegetarian option), beer, and of course other non-alcoholic drinks. Their staff will be here and give a short presentation and on hand to answer your questions.

We love our solar panels!

Thank you all for your support for our work! Don't forget that the Study Group gets a total of \$500 for every customer that installs a Sunpower/Positive Energy solar system on our recommendation -- and \$100 of that up front for any on-site consultations.

Trish & Greg

Come join us!

Solar Party!

Where: Home of Trish Williams-Mello and Greg Mello
2901 Summit Place, NE • Albuquerque NM 87106

When: Saturday, October 1st • 3:00 - 5:00 pm

RSVP: Lauren 315-272-7317 or Lauren@PositiveEnergySolar.com

Refreshments will be served. Parking will be on the street.

Come celebrate our new solar system from SunPower by Positive Energy Solar and find out why **It Pays to be Positive™!**

SUNPOWER® | by Positive Energy Solar

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Important additional local events and actions; more

Sep 21, 2016

(Let us know if you want to be removed from this closed list.)

(Previous [letter](#) of 9/9/16: [upcoming events](#); [report on our meeting with Rep. Ben Ray Lujan's field staff director](#); [more](#))

Dear friends --

Please carefully note these upcoming events from the Study Group's [calendar](#), four of which are new.

1. **New! Wednesday 9/28, 1:00 pm, Santa Fe, [press conference](#), "Secretary of Defense Ash Carter Visits New Mexico," State Capitol Rotunda, with "Secretary of Defense Ash Carter," "Senator Tom Udall," "Senator Martin Heinrich," and special guests.**
2. **Wednesday 9/28, 6:30 pm, Santa Fe, Center Stage Performance Space, 505 Camino de los Marquez ([map](#)), [talk and discussion](#), "New Directions in Disarmament" with [Dr. Frank von Hippel](#), Princeton University.**
3. **New! Thursday 9/29, 10:00 am, Albuquerque, 400 Gold Ave. SW ([map](#)), a Study Group delegation will [meet with members of Rep. Michelle Lujan-Grisham's staff](#). Call Trish at 505-265-1200 if you want to attend.**
4. **Thursday 9/29, 6:30 pm, Albuquerque, UNM Student Union Building (SUB) ([map](#)), [talk and discussion](#), "New Directions in Disarmament" with [Dr. Frank von Hippel](#). The [UNM Peace and Justice Studies Program](#) and [Students Organizing Actions for Peace](#) are co-sponsoring this event with us.**
5. **New! Saturday 10/1, 10:00 am, Albuquerque, Kirtland Air Force Base (KAFB), Gibson and Truman Sts, ([map](#)), [demonstration to stop U.S. wars](#) (current, future), sponsored by Stop the War Machine, Los Alamos Study Group, and other groups.**
6. **New! Saturday 10/1, 3:00 pm, Albuquerque, Los Alamos Study Group, 2901 Summit Place NE, Albuquerque ([map](#)), [solar barbecue and party](#) (includes vegetarian options) hosted by the Study Group and [Sunpower/Positive Energy](#). Please RSVP to [Trish](#) or call 505-265-1200.**
7. **Monday 10/3, 6:30 pm, Albuquerque, Los Alamos Study Group, 2901 Summit Place NE, Albuquerque ([map](#)), [talk and discussion](#) with [John LaForge](#), "[Nuclear Heartland: A Guide to the 450 Land-Based Missiles of the United States.](#)"**
8. **Wednesday 10/19, 7:00 pm, Santa Fe, The Commons, 2300 West Alameda St. ([map](#)), [important Study Group update and action planning meeting](#). (See details [here](#).)**

We scheduled the 9/28 press conference (item 1.) in honor of Secretary of Defense Ash Carter's [visit to the state](#) next week (to KAFB, Sandia National Laboratories, and Los Alamos National Laboratory, apparently to rally the troops in each location). This visit greatly concerns us, especially in light of the recent illegal and bad-faith [attacks in Syria by the U.S.](#), apparently in direct support of ISIS. We are also aware from our Washington sources that DoD, in the person of Carter, is now so powerful that important analyses specifically requested by President Obama can be kept from the President merely because the appearance of those analyses might "offend" Secretary Carter. Russia has openly asked, in an emergency meeting of United Nations Security Council which Russia requested, exactly who is in charge in the United States ([video in English](#)).

This press conference will be a bit "different," as you will have already surmised. It will be videotaped and will be widely available.

The meeting with Rep. Lujan-Grisham's staff (item 3.), previously scheduled for last week, was postponed at the last minute to the above new date and time by Rep. Lujan-Grisham's staff.

[The anti-war protest at KAFB on Saturday October 1 \(item 5\), is in our view very important and we urge you to carpool from wherever you are in the state to attend if at all possible.](#) We seldom make such a request but in this case we are. Please try to be prompt. Please advertise this event as widely as you can!

After the protest, come on over to our solar party (item 6.) for free barbecue (vegetarian option available) and beer courtesy

Positive Energy! Please RSVP to **Trish** or call **505-265-1200**. You can learn more about why household and business solar installations make excellent environmental and financial sense. As you know Positive Energy, as well as our friends at **McCune Solar Works**, are offering \$500 to the Study Group for successful referrals that result in the purchase of a home or business PV system. These are both good companies that serve different parts of the market. **Positive Energy is now offering the Study Group \$100 up-front for every referral we provide that results in a consultation with a possible customer, with another \$400 awarded to us upon completion of a system. This is also a superb networking event for young people who might want to get involved with solar energy.** We are sure there are good jobs in this business just waiting for people with the right fire in the belly.

As I said in my previous letter, in these local letters we try to avoid details of larger issues that we would very much like to bring to the attention of our whole email list (which includes you). For issues of wider interest, "stay tuned," and forgive their omission here. We took a week and two weekends to visit our California family, a visit that was long overdue. We didn't mention this trip ahead of time for office security reasons. Our next Bulletin to the wider email list will hopefully appear very soon.

So much is going on now, but that's it for today. Thanks, everybody.

Greg

PS: Many of you may find Part I of a CBS "60 Minutes" program on the New Cold War quite interesting and informative. Watch it [here](#). Its basic premise is however false: the President of the United States, or his or her constitutional successor, may not be around to order the use of nuclear weapons. So who would, in that case? Others also have that contingent power. Think about it.

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2901 Summit Place NE Albuquerque, NM 87106, Phone: 505-265-1200



Upcoming local events and actions; report on Cong. Lujan

Sep 9, 2016

(Let us know if you want to be removed from this closed list.)

(In these local letters we try to avoid some of the larger issues and happenings that we would like to bring to the attention of our whole email list. That list includes everyone on this list. We need to get Bulletin 221 out to the big list (and you) ASAP. So for those larger issues, "stay tuned." Please forgive their omission here.)

Dear friends --

First let me mention a few upcoming events this month and next. These are very important to us and foundational in all we do. Notwithstanding the difficulties presented by New Mexico -- "land of the labs, home of the waste" -- there are degrees of freedom here in our local setting, and modalities of resistance and constructive action, that none of us can find elsewhere. We all need to *dig in where we are* and *take a stand*. We will find our greatest strength where we are, not in some other place, as well as the fellowship from which great deeds most readily come. We urge you to be open to these possibilities. We are in this together.

On **Thursday 9/15/16 at 10:00 am at 400 Gold Ave. SW** ([map](#)), a Study Group delegation will be meeting with members of Rep. Michelle Lujan-Grisham's staff. Please email [Ernie Sturdevant](#) if you want to be part of that delegation, or the overflow support demonstration outside if enough of you respond! And with enough people *there*, news coverage becomes possible. The topics of this meeting will be our rising militarism, her recent votes (with mostly Republicans) in favor of new nuclear weapons and expanding plutonium pit production (two separate votes), and need for bold and dramatic efforts to build our productive economy by saving the climate and avoiding more war and militarism. (See also the report on our meeting with the New Mexico field director for Rep. Ben Ray Lujan, below.)

On **Wednesday 9/28/16 at 6:30 pm, in Santa Fe at the Center Stage Performance Space, 505 Camino de los Marquez** ([map](#)), we are hosting Dr. [Frank von Hippel](#), one of the foremost arms control scientists in the U.S. and a long-time Study Group advisor and friend, who will speak on the topic of "**New Directions in Disarmament.**"

Frank will also speak the next day (**Thursday 9/29/16**), **again at 6:30 pm, on the same topic, at the University of New Mexico Student Union Building (SUB)** ([map](#)). The [UNM Peace and Justice Studies Program](#) and [Students Organizing Actions for Peace](#) are co-sponsoring this event with us.

We **may** have a **solar energy party** at the Study Group (**2901 Summit Place NE, Albuquerque, map**) on **Saturday October 1**, hosted by the Study Group and [Sunpower/Positive Energy](#), the company that installed our solar power system. They, as well as our friends at [McCune Solar Works](#), are offering \$500 to the Study Group for successful referrals that result in the purchase of a home or business PV system. These are both good companies that serve different parts of the market. We recommend them.

By the way, we (Greg and Trish) believe there are good jobs in this business just waiting for people with the right fire in the belly, so tell (for example) your kids.

Then on the following **Monday 10/3/16 at 6:30 pm, at the Study Group office (2901 Summit Place NE, Albuquerque, map)** we are hosting a talk and discussion by [John LaForge](#), co-author of "[Nuclear Heartland: A Guide to the 450 Land-Based Missiles of the United States](#)" and long-time dedicated anti-nuclear activist from Wisconsin.

On **Wednesday 10/19/16 at 7:00 pm at The Commons in Santa Fe (2300 West Alameda St., map)**, there will be an important Study Group meeting focusing on **action planning for the remainder of the year**. Greg and Trish will provide short updates from:

- The United Nations, from which we will have just returned the day before -- will be debating this fall whether and how

to open negotiations, in 2017, of a **treaty banning nuclear weapons. Friends, we have the votes to do this -- about two-thirds of UN member states -- right now.**

- Washington DC, where the Obama Administration is preparing its final nuclear weapons plans and budgets, including plans for an expanding plutonium pit factory and production in Los Alamos and related new nuclear missiles (of two kinds), long-range bombers, submarines, and warheads;
- Our meetings with staff from our New Mexico congressional delegation, on the subjects of rising militarism and our failing social and environmental contract; and
- Our own events and actions between now and October 19: lessons learned, and prospects going forward.

The main purpose of the 10/19 meeting is to plan further actions and events this fall, so these four mini-briefings will be fairly short.

A second purpose of this meeting, also very important, is fundraising. If you or anyone you know might want to support our work, please feel free to invite them.

I want to say something about that right now. Looking back over the past eight years, I honestly do not see any arms control victories whatsoever from the mega-funded nonprofits in Washington during this administration. New START, as some administration officials tell us, has been a disaster for disarmament as we predicted. The last-minute "Hail Mary" efforts by the very groups that endorsed the trillion-dollar nuclear triad have come to naught, precisely because of that endorsement and the resulting momentum and commitments, all part of the new Cold War. (I will discuss this in more detail in a wider email.) Frankly, the only clear success in fighting the nuclear modernization agenda has been our own efforts in New Mexico, supported and encouraged by many of you. *You* did that. LANL and NNSA publicly blame the failure of their last proposal for a plutonium pit manufacturing plant at LANL on "cost increases" and "increased safety and security standards," but in private briefings to congressional committees, a different story was repeatedly told: "We can't let contracts or build because of that lawsuit in New Mexico." The initial RFPs were already written, waiting only for the start of the new fiscal year on October 1. When our first (of three) legal actions against the CMRR-NF was filed in August, 2010, all that progress stopped -- for good, as it turned out.

Can we stop the next plan? You bet we can. We, but also NNSA, hold very different cards now -- some better, some worse. Please help us. We can win, but we need to realize the life-changing magnitude of what lies just ahead for *all* of us if we want to preserve our civilization. We also need to realize the essential unity of our struggles. We are not just adjusting the deck chairs on the Titanic. We hope you understand that, and we hope you join us.

You will find the above events (and any others that might be scheduled later) on our [calendar](#).

Second, let me offer a brief report of our 2-hour meeting on 9/2/16 with Jennifer Catechis, District Director for Rep. Ben Ray Lujan, here at our office. There were six of us in attendance (*thank you!*), plus Ms. Catechis. Ms. Catechis represented the Congressman ably and was very personable and professional. It was a pleasure meeting with her.

That said, it was apparent that Congressman Lujan knows effectively nothing about nuclear weapons issues. They wait for LANL to brief them (!). Ms. Catechis could offer no explanation whatsoever for his vote in favor of expanding plutonium pit production at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), or his vote in favor of the Long Range Stand Off (LRSO) cruise missile and its warhead. In both cases Rep. Lujan voted with the corporate nuclear weapons lab in his district which funds him, and against most Democrats in the House. He has in the past voted **against increasing solar energy funding** if that funding would come from nuclear weapons.

We warned Ms. Catechis that these positions, until they are reversed, would result in public shaming and political attacks from this organization.

Troublingly, we learned that Rep. Lujan's office believes he cannot express himself on issues that bear on renewable energy, or on economic development in his district, if his remarks -- even at the "vision" level -- might be construed as interfering with state and local prerogatives. Many of us discussed this nasty aspect of Democratic Party politics -- its meaning for the state and his district, what it implies about the Party, and so on -- later in the evening, at our community activist "movie night."

Despite his willingness to meet with us personally in the past and the relative openness of his office, we conclude that Rep. Lujan will not, for the foreseeable future, oppose weapons of mass destruction if they are designed or made in his district. No kidding, you say! Well, it was important for us to try one more time. His priorities are not ours, and **we can all now criticize him freely for them. We think you should do that, at every occasion, in letters to the editor, public meetings, and at all other opportunities.** He has been warned.

Third, despite our other commitments we will be happy, as time allows, to speak at events you organize! Let us know your thoughts! Greg gave a talk this past Sunday at the Unitarian Fellowship in Albuquerque, entitled "In a Dark Time, the Eye

Begins to See." We all have to wake up and get involved!

We are planning one or two events -- newsworthy, we hope -- for the coming weeks, about which more later. We all need to "step it up," don't you think?

Fourth, our Disarmament Fellow Valentina Bellafante is now back in Rome, her summer with us having come to an end this past Tuesday morning. Very best wishes, Valentina!

Fifth, some of you will find this oldie-but-goodie [article](#) from 1985 quite interesting: "Early Warnings: Journal from an Encampment" by Joanne Forman, who lives in Taos. We certainly did. Trish was living nearby, raising her small children, and she remembers this encampment well!

Sixth and finally, you may enjoy this good article from up-and-coming New Mexican reporter Rebecca Moss ("[Congressional subcommittee grills LANL chief over backlog of repairs, Santa Fe New Mexican, Sep 9, 2016](#)"). Tip of the iceberg, tip of the iceberg.

That's it for now. Thanks, everybody.

Greg

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2901 Summit Place NE Albuquerque, NM 87106, Phone: 505-265-1200



Meeting with Rep. Lujan staff tomorrow in Abq; video and discussion Friday 6:30 pm in Abq; more

Sep 1, 2016

(Let us know if you want to be removed from this closed list.)

Dear friends --

If you are interested please consider joining us **tomorrow, Friday 9/2/16, at 2 pm, at the Study Group office** (2901 Summit Place NE, Albuquerque) ([map](#)) to meet with Rep. Ben Ray Lujan's New Mexico field staff director. We will discuss the future of Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) as well as economic issues in New Mexico's Third Congressional District.

Also tomorrow, Friday 9/2/16, at 6:30 pm at Astrid Webster's house, 901 Solano Dr. NE ([map](#)) we will join with some of our friends and colleagues for a short discussion. Then we'll kick back and watch Michael Moore's recent film together, "[Where to Invade Next](#)."

We are approaching the end of Valentina's summer fellowship period, so please do come to wish her godspeed in her career, and safe travels home!

Please feel free to stick around for a debriefing and planning discussion after the 2 pm congressional meeting, which will end some time after 3 pm. If you live in Santa Fe, Taos, or other points north and want to attend these events, come on down. I'm sure we can arrange overnight accommodations for a few people. Just ask.

This **Sunday 9/4/16, at 11:00 am at the Unitarian Fellowship**, which meets at the [Albuquerque Center for Peace and Justice](#) (202 Harvard Dr SE, [map](#)), I (Greg) will speak on "In a Dark Time, the Eye Begins to See."

On **Thursday 9/15/16, at 10:00 am at 400 Gold Ave. SW** ([map](#)), a Study Group delegation will be meeting with members of Rep. Michelle Lujan-Grisham's staff. Please call Trish (505-265-1200 at the office or 505-577-3366, cell) if you want to be part of that delegation.

On **Wednesday 9/28/16, at 6:30 pm, in Santa Fe at the Center Stage Performance Space, 505 Camino de los Marquez** ([map](#)), we are hosting Dr. [Frank von Hippel](#), long-time Study Group advisor and friend, who will speak on "New Directions in Disarmament."

Frank will also speak the next evening (**Thursday 9/29/16, also at 6:30 pm**) on the same topic, at **the University of New Mexico Student Union Building (SUB)** ([map](#)). The [UNM Peace and Justice Studies Program](#) and [Students Organizing Actions for Peace](#) are co-sponsoring this event.

These and other events are listed on our [calendar](#).

For now, we aim to have some sort of action or discussion weekly in Albuquerque at least. Soon (after Fiesta, 9/11/16) we hope to do this in Santa Fe as well, in both cities with a larger meeting or action once a month or so. We are very hard-pressed for time here, with decisionmakers in Washington and others waiting on us, so we do not undertake this intensity of program lightly. The fact is, staff and core volunteers at the Study Group can make only so much progress under the current political paradigm, which is breaking down rapidly in any case. We need more change than that for our children and the living planet to survive. I am not exaggerating. So, we need you. "Ours," said Rumi, "is not a caravan of despair."

As I have already written to Albuquerque members, I (Greg) have just returned from an interesting week-long trip to Washington, meeting with the usual mix of administration officials, congressional staff, NGO colleagues, and independent agencies. I can report that there is exciting news from deep within the heart of the beast, which I will not attempt to summarize here.

There is also a persistent and quickening drumbeat for greater confrontation with Russia and China. It was interesting to hear one or two congressional staff translate the so-called "need" to "negotiate from a position of strength" into the "need" for local nuclear weapons projects. With neocons riding high, rationality is not required. It's "pedal to the metal" -- right over the edge. Fortunately, there are some grownups around. But are there enough?

Finally, and again repeating something already sent to friends in Albuquerque, I would like to draw your attention to an [excellent 24-minute interview](#) ("This Ship is Sinking' Says Former Bush Official") by Abby Martin at teleSUR with Col. Lawrence Wilkerson, who was Secretary of State Colin Powell's Chief of Staff. It is a very clear appreciation of what is required to stop the wars (the current wars, and the bigger ones under development) and save our planet.

Greg

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2901 Summit Place NE Albuquerque, NM 87106, Phone: 505-265-1200



Call for silent protest Wednesday am at legislative committee; video and discussion Friday night 6:30 pm

Aug 29, 2016

(Tell us if you want to be removed from this closed local list.)

Dear friends --

I wanted to let you know about two upcoming events this week.

First, Carol Miller of [Peaceful Skies](#) sent this request today:

Please help us greet the Legislative Military and Veterans Affairs Committee as they meet in Albuquerque on **Wednesday morning 8/31/16 at 8:30 am**. The committee meeting begins at 9 am and will be in the **Student Resource Center on the main campus of CNM in the Richard Barr Boardroom**.

We would like to show the legislators that New Mexicans care about peace, not just endless war. 5 or 10 people will be a good showing, they usually have the meetings in Clovis, Roswell and other distant communities.

I will be there with a banner. VFP flags, peace signs and posters welcome. The Legislative Committee meeting is open to the public, but this committee does not allow public comment. We will have to make our public comment with our presence.

Second, this **Friday night 9/2/16** we will have another "movie night," showing Michael Moore's recent film, "[Where to Invade Next](#)," at **6:30 pm at Astrid Webster's house, 901 Solano Dr. NE (map)**. We are approaching the end of Valentina's summer fellowship (next week, aaugh!), so please come and wish her godspeed and safe travels home! **Please invite your younger friends to this event.**

Future events are listed on our [calendar](#). For now, we aim to have some sort of action or discussion weekly, and a larger discussion once a month or so.

Astrid and Trish have been trying to set up meetings with our congressional delegation in Albuquerque and Santa Fe, so far without success. We will let you know if and when we are successful. The congressional recess is rapidly drawing to a close; it seems unlikely that either senator or either Democratic representative will meet with any of us. Whether we succeed or fail in organizing these meetings we will need to put other plans in motion.

I (Greg) have just returned from an interesting week-long trip to Washington, meeting with the usual mix of administration officials, congressional staff, NGO colleagues, and independent watchdog agencies. There is exciting news, which I won't attempt to relay tonight or to this relatively small list. There is also in many quarters, and I am afraid they are becoming more dominant, a persistent and quickening drumbeat for greater confrontation with Russia and China, and for war. But you already knew that last part. What was interesting was to hear how the perceived "need" to make Russia back down (expressed as, "negotiate from a position of strength") plays into local nuclear projects.

Third, while I haven't been attempting to summarize the huge influx of nuclear news for people outside the office and few volunteers, **I do however want to draw your attention to [this interview](#) ("[This Ship is Sinking](#)' Says Former Bush Official," 24 minutes) by Abby Martin at TeleSur with Col. Lawrence Wilkerson, who was Secretary of State Colin Powell's Chief of Staff**. We need to be realistic about what real political change will require.

See you soon, on Wednesday or Friday I hope!

Greg, Trish, Valentina, and gang

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2901 Summit Place NE Albuquerque, NM 87106, Phone: 505-265-1200



Reminder: video and discussion tonight! 7 pm, 901 Solano Dr. NE

Aug 18, 2016

(Tell us if you want to be removed from this closed local list.)

Dear friends --

Tonight we will have an interesting **video** ("**White Light, Black Rain**"), **Skype** (we hope!) with Hiroshima survivor Shigeko Sasamori, and **discussion**, at **7:00 pm, Astrid Webster's house, 901 Solano Dr. NE** ([map](#)).

Through her family in California we have finally found Shigeko, who is in Japan, but until the sun rises over there we won't know if she can call in.

Our meetings with officialdom in DC next week are taking shape. August, a vacation month in DC, is a good month for in-depth conversations and briefings with staff who are not on vacation. Of course, many are. This particular trip is timed to reach staff before the annual appropriations bills are finalized, before next year's budget request is shaped, and before some studies relevant to nuclear policy issues and projects we care about are completed.

Please invite your younger friends to this event. There are really a lot of issues on the table, not just about the future not just of nuclear weapons, but how to pay for them, *how many kinds and numbers of nuclear weapons* to pay for, and **whether to ramp up our present wars -- including our multi-pronged attack on Russia. The U.S. social contract is being re-litigated, primarily on the streets, in Congress, and in push-back from a few countries that dare to be sovereign. As in the early 1930s, or as it was in the late 1940s in another way, things are going to change rapidly in America in the very near future. How they change is partly up to us. It is very difficult to imagine this country addressing its internal problems, or replacing its climate-destroying energy and transportation systems, if we are also starting up more wars.**

As matters now stand, wars and threats of war, are considered solutions, not problems.

We will be discussing upcoming public visits with our congressional delegation tonight. Their lack of leadership is conspicuous, and we have to gently but very firmly bring them to realize that merely coasting along won't be enough. Time's up.

In this regard, we might have mentioned how Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham told us that her political advisors say she needs to cozy up to the military and to Sandia National Laboratories as much as possible, to compensate for liberal positions she wants to take (she mentioned gun control).

Since then she has voted with Republicans to fund what would be a dramatic increase in the size of the U.S. nuclear arsenal, via a stealthy long-range cruise missile with variable yield warhead that can be used either in a massive nuclear first strike, or in lower-yield nuclear strikes in regional wars -- for example against Chinese targets to retaliate against attacks on U.S. aircraft carriers and other capital ships. "Escalation control" is the key idea. Obama himself just used the phrase.

You thought we had an arms limitation treaty with Russia -- New START? It does not apply to this weapon, and anyway it expires in 2021. The Russians may withdraw sooner than that as they have warned, if the U.S. goes ahead with missile deployments in eastern Europe in 2018.

Two years ago, we sort of accidentally got a briefing from a recent former member of the Pentagon targeting staff about how wonderful (= terrible) this weapon would be -- how much pressure it would put on our "adversaries" to be able to launch hundreds of *undetectable* nuclear missiles simultaneously. Does it make you feel safer to know that Pentagon planners think Russia and China would feel pretty helpless against our advancing nuclear might? Well that's their idea. The enthusiasm is palpable.

But it won't work like that. Russia and China have PLENTY of ways to make the U.S. pay, plenty of ways to make us feel (and be) just as insecure as they.

All this machinery of threat and multi-dimensional conflict is ratcheting up again right now, with real wars and real covert operations and so on, not to mention proxy wars that have killed hundreds of thousands.

Lujan-Grisham, like her cousin Ben Ray Lujan up north, also abandoned a majority of Democrats to vote for a multibillion-dollar plutonium pit factory in Los Alamos, a particular interest of ours.

Both projects are part of the proposed \$1 trillion investment in nuclear weapons (that's operation and modernization -- both) that Obama has promised over the next 30 years.

As far as we can tell, Lujan Grisham doesn't understand, and in a practical political sense (as opposed to a sentimental sense) doesn't really care, about any of this. She thinks she cannot afford to care about peace, or how the military and labs and new bombs are paid for. We need to convince her that she and her successors cannot afford NOT to think about these things.

We have exciting news to share from Geneva as well, very good news. We are very proud that Study Group board members and our former interns and fellows, are playing a very central role in these world-changing events. Please do come!

Greg, Trish, Astrid, Valentina, and gang

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2901 Summit Place NE Albuquerque, NM 87106, Phone: 505-265-1200



Important upcoming events; Governor Martinez seeks to bring *all* US spent nuclear fuel to NM

Aug 11, 2016

(Tell us if you want to be removed from this closed local list.)

Useful links:

- [Previous local letters](#); the [most recent local letter](#) (8/1/16): *If you want to help put pressure on NM Dems to stop the new nuclear arms race, now's the time*
- [Bulletins](#)
- [Forget the Rest](#) (blog, subscribe for updates; see also blogroll for information sources we like)
- [Los Alamos Study Group home page](#)
- ["Rocky Flats II": evolving background and updates](#) (about the push to build a plutonium pit factory in Los Alamos)

This letter is about:

1. **Upcoming events in Albuquerque**
2. **Upcoming events in Santa Fe**
3. **GAO report on Los Alamos plutonium production construction plans, updated LASG press release, articles**
4. **Daily or semi-weekly crisis updates -- ask me if you want to get them**
5. **Governor seeks storage of *all* current US commercial nuclear reactor waste**

Dear friends --

1. **Upcoming events in Albuquerque (see also calendar):**
 - a. Video ("[White Light, Black Rain](#)"), Skype conversation with Hiroshima survivor Shigeko Sasamori and discussion, Thursday 8/11/16, 7:00 pm, Astrid Webster's house, 901 Solano Dr. NE ([map](#))
 - b. More or less weekly actions, congressional visits, discussions
 - c. Talk and discussion with [Greg Mello](#), Unitarian Fellowship, 9/4/16, 11:00 am, Albuquerque Peace and Justice Center, 202 Harvard SE ([map](#)), "In a Dark Time, the Eye Begins to See"
 - d. Talk and discussion with [Dr. Frank von Hippel](#), Thursday 9/29/16, 6:30 pm, UNM Student Union Building (SUB, [map](#)), "New Directions in Nuclear Disarmament"
 - e. Talk and discussion with [John LaForge](#), "Nuclear Heartland: A Guide to the 450 Land-Based Missiles of the United States," Monday 10/3/16, Los Alamos Study Group, 2901 Summit Place NE ([map](#))
 - f. Fall 2016 visiting lecture/video and discussion series, Thursday evenings 10/20/16 and Friday evening 11/10/16 -- mark your calendars

Regarding b., we and allied organizations will be hosting and/or conducting more or less weekly actions, congressional visits, and discussions in both Albuquerque and Santa Fe. We are quietly preparing for some of these now and look forward to working with you on these occasions, some of which we will announce in the coming days after discussions with some of you and with allied organizations. We will not necessarily be emailing in advance to a large list every planned action we might take! So if you want to *be* involved, *get* involved! Meanwhile, we have recently sent you a [list of suggested actions](#). We did not spell out the *content*. You have to provide that, I'm afraid. For background please see the links above to local letters like this one, bulletins, our blog, etc. That's why we had our recent teach-ins and why we prepare bulletins, letters, press releases, and so on. They are tools for you.

We are acutely conscious that we are entering a time of converging crises, including what we believe will be a severe economic downturn (gradual or in sudden steps, we have no idea) and additional wars (such as the one we just restarted in Libya). There is already a push for more aggressive wars in Syria, Ukraine, East Asia and the South China Sea, and elsewhere under President Hillary Clinton. The propaganda groundwork for these wars is being laid and thickened every day. (See for example today's "Media Builds Up Enemies For Hillary's Wars" at the well-regarded [Moon of Alabama](#) blog).

Greg will be in Washington in late August to work on issues related to nuclear weapons modernization, war prevention, and other issues. Trish and Greg will be at the First Committee of the UN in New York in mid-October, helping our colleagues and board members further efforts toward negotiations of a treaty banning nuclear weapons, being discussed in Geneva this month. We also have a short vacation to see family in mid-September. The schedule above reflects these trips. We are working as fast as we can now in preparation for the two "decision-maker education," aka lobbying, trips.

2. Upcoming events in Santa Fe

- a. Talk and discussion with [Dr. Frank von Hippel](#), Wednesday 9/29/16, 6:30 pm, Center for Spiritual Living (CSL), 505 Camino De Los Marquez ([map](#)), "New Directions in Nuclear Disarmament"
- b. Fall 2016 visiting lecture/video and discussion series, CSL ([map](#)), Friday evenings 10/21/16 and 11/11/16 -- mark your calendars
- c. More or less weekly actions, congressional visits, discussions

Please see the discussion above! There will definitely be more or less weekly meetings and actions in August and September but we haven't organized them yet. For the latest updates contact Trish ([email](#), 505-265-1200 office, 505-577-3366 cell) or Lydia Clark ([email](#), 505-501-2606 cell).

3. GAO report on Los Alamos plutonium production construction plans, updated LASG press release, articles

Our updated press release on this important but complex report with more references and discussion in the footnotes is here: "[Congressional auditors flay Los Alamos plutonium plans](#)," Aug 10, 2016.

The GAO report: "[NNSA Needs to Clarify Requirements for Its Plutonium Analysis Project at Los Alamos](#)," Aug 2016. The language in this report is about as caustic as GAO can be, given its audience and style limitations.

Article by Rebecca Moss, *Santa Fe New Mexican*, Aug 9, 2016: "[LANL's nuclear bomb trigger production questioned](#)".

A *Journal North* article will appear tomorrow [here](#).

We will be educating lawmakers in Washington with this material and much more. *Dear friends, we can defeat this proposal. Please help us and work with us.*

4. Daily or semi-weekly crisis updates -- ask me if you want to get them

Every morning we sift through several news aggregators and web sites for the most crucial news and analysis of the day on several related topics of importance. We send a small subset of what we think are the most important intelligence items to a small internal list, often with short comments, or excerpts highlighted. We have decided, on a trial basis, to offer this service to a wider group. If you are interested please write to me. This will be a closed list, like the lists above which received this email. Your name and email will not be visible to others. Subscribers cannot post comments except back to me. I can only do this if it turns out to be very efficient, time-wise. We hope by doing this we will better inform and inspire, and build the strong community we will need.

5. Governor seeks storage of *all* current US commercial nuclear reactor waste

You want to know this if you do not already. From the [Exchange Monitor Morning Briefing](#), August 11, 2016: "Interim Storage a 'Major Priority' for New Mexico, Outgoing Environment Chief Says":

Departing New Mexico Environment Secretary Ryan Flynn made it clear last week: the administration of New Mexico Gov. Susana Martinez (R) welcomes interim storage of high-level nuclear waste from U.S. power plants.

Holtec International in November plans to submit a license application to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for a 70,000-metric-ton-capacity disposal facility to be located about 10 miles from the Energy Department's Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) transuranic waste-disposal facility near Carlsbad.

"We really want that facility," Flynn told *Weapons Complex Morning Briefing* in an Aug. 2 phone interview. "We feel very good about the people we have working on it. The relationship with Holtec is strong."

Dallas-based Waste Control Specialists got the jump on Holtec by filing its license application with the NRC in April for a 40,000-metric-ton facility in West Texas not far from the New Mexico border. The NRC license review is expected to take two years or more.

Flynn will step down Friday after five years in the Martinez administration, the last three-and-a-half as New Mexico's top environmental regulator. In the past, Flynn has played down the state's interest in interim

storage, sticking to well-socialized language about how New Mexico should focus on reopening WIPP before thinking about any other type of nuclear waste facility. The storage site has been closed since a fire and subsequent, unrelated radiation release in February 2014.

While Flynn, on the cusp of what will be at least a hiatus from public life, was ready to look beyond the WIPP reopening, other New Mexico politicians with statewide constituencies were not.

“No matter where it’s built, whether the site is in Southeastern New Mexico or anywhere else in the U.S., I don’t support creating a new interim disposal site without a plan for permanent disposal because nuclear waste could be orphaned there indefinitely,” Sen. Tom Udall (D-N.M.) wrote in a statement emailed to *Weapons Complex Morning Briefing* on Tuesday. “I also believe that it’s far too early to talk about interim nuclear storage in New Mexico while the state and the Department of Energy are still addressing the WIPP accident and radiation release.”

The Obama administration in 2011 canceled plans for a deep geologic repository for nuclear waste, officially replacing it in late 2015 with a “consent-based” plan that envisions establishing a pilot storage facility by 2021; one or more larger, interim facilities for spent nuclear fuel by 2025; and at least one permanent geologic repository by 2048.

Last year, Udall and fellow New Mexico Democratic Sen. Martin Heinrich issued a joint statement opposing interim nuclear waste storage in the Land of Enchantment. This year, the senators have been largely spared from taking a public stance on interim storage, although both voted for a fiscal 2017 energy and water spending bill that directs the Energy Department to conduct a pilot project for interim waste storage “through 1 or more private sector partners.”

A Heinrich spokesperson did not reply to a request for comment this week.

WIPP closed to new waste shipments after an improperly packaged barrel of radio-contaminated material and equipment from the Los Alamos National Laboratory some 300 miles north burst open in the mine. The Department of Energy recently acknowledged the mine might not reopen in December as announced in February. Nevertheless, the agency’s latest public schedule for WIPP recovery shows DOE only months, not years, behind.

Yet even if WIPP reopens in December, any action on interim storage, whether in New Mexico or elsewhere, will likely wait until after the dust settles from the U.S. presidential election, Flynn thinks. Along with the White House, some Washington watchers believe control of the U.S. Senate may be up for grabs again.

“Time is working against us a little bit,” Flynn said. “I think that decision’s probably going to span over to the next presidential administration. So there’s always the risk that as people kind of step into new roles and have to get themselves back up to speed, that could delay action.”

Nevertheless, the outgoing secretary said, interim waste storage is “another major priority” for the state government.

This is a lot of nuclear waste. It contains (for example) more than [20 times](#) the cesium-137 that was released in ALL the atmospheric nuclear tests ever conducted. If this waste comes here, we believe it will almost certainly never leave.

More on this and other New Mexico nuclear waste proposals and realities must wait for another time (and would be a good discussion topic). Meanwhile we must realize that there cannot be a positive future for the state -- or the country -- if the military, the labs, and the civilian nuclear (waste) industry have their way here. We don’t intend to let that happen.

Thanks again to all,

Greg, Trish, Valentina and the rest of the gang



If you want to help put pressure on NM Dems to stop the new nuclear arms race, now's the time

Aug 1, 2016

(Tell us if you want to be removed from this closed local list.)

1. **Blog post: "The Crisis at Hand, the Emergency Mode, & the Need for Full-Scale Mobilization,"** re-posted from forthcoming *Solar Times*
2. **We have the impression that few of you if you want to help put pressure on the Democrats in the New Mexico delegation regarding nuclear weapons and related issues, there's no time like now.**

Dear friends --

1. **Blog post: short, updated version of "The Crisis at Hand, the Emergency Mode, & the Need for Full-Scale Mobilization,"** re-posted from forthcoming *Solar Times*

This is a shortened version of a longer [talk](#) Greg gave to the Albuquerque chapter of 350.org on June 27, 2016 ([video](#)). With the fine graphic that adorns the issue, it's in the Summer 2016 edition of *SolarTimes*, which will probably appear today or tomorrow at the McCune Solar Works [home page](#).

The takeaway is the same: we need to embrace what Margaret Salamon calls "[The Emergency Mode](#)" before *it* embraces us. We need [build](#) renewable energy and transportation as fast as we can, [simplify](#), [protect](#) vulnerable people and species, and [resist](#).

Since posting this I have had some very positive and interesting questions. I will share those questions in a wider email (a Bulletin).

Meanwhile I should say that I like Salamon's approach for its fidelity to the facts. It is our experience that whole-hearted engagement brings a great deal of energy and happiness, opens all kinds of doors, creates community, and has brought more objective success than I thought possible.

By the way, if you subscribe to [Forget the Rest](#) you will be notified about new entries!

2. **If you want to help put pressure on the Democrats in the New Mexico delegation regarding nuclear weapons and related issues, there's no time like now.**

As we wrote two weeks ago, all the NM Democrats are enthusiastic supporters of expanded plutonium pit production, the proposed Long Range Stand Off cruise missile (LRSO) (Michelle Lujan-Grisham and Ben Ray Lujan just joined with Republicans to support this weapon), and *every other nuclear weapon proposal that has been advanced by the Obama Administration*. As we said, if anyone thinks it is possible to rein in climate change, protect the environment, or provide for more equal opportunity in our society while also spending roughly \$1 trillion/year on various military, nuclear weapons, intelligence, and "homeland security" accounts, please think again.

[Here's](#) Udall deliriously praising New Mexico's nuclear weapons laboratories at the Democratic National Convention -- the first words he spoke prior to announcing New Mexico's votes.

If you want more data about these individuals' support for nuclear weapons, pit production, etc, look back through our Bulletins, or go to the politicians' web sites.

There are many creative ways to influence Democrats in the New Mexico delegation. But they mostly have certain things in common.

First, for citizens who are not major political donors and who are not close family friends, all these methods are *public*. That

is, they involve *publicity*. They reveal the writer or speaker to all who care to listen or read, and they are shared. They do *not* in general include *non-public speech* such as personal letters or calls. Non-public speech, however reasonable it may be (or seem to be), is not political speech at all, generates no political pressure, and typically has no effect whatsoever on contemporary politicians -- especially when they have, as most do have, profound material conflicts of interest. (Money, our courts tell us, is political speech.)

In this regard, some of you would enjoy (and profit from) reading the last part of Hannah Arendt's masterpiece *The Human Condition* (on "Action"), one of the best texts on political action available. (Entire text free [here](#).) There you will find this:

With word and deed we insert ourselves into the human world, and this insertion is like a second birth, in which we confirm and take upon ourselves the naked fact of our original physical appearance. This insertion is not forced upon us by necessity, like labor, and it is not prompted by utility, like work. It may be stimulated by the presence of others whose company we may wish to join, but it is never conditioned by them; its impulse springs from the beginning which came into the world when we were born and to which we respond by beginning something new on our own initiative. To act, in its most general sense, means to take an initiative, to begin (as the Greek word *archein*, "to begin," "to lead," and eventually "to rule," indicates), to set something into motion (which is the original meaning of the Latin *agere*).

....

"Wherever you go, you will be a polis": these famous words became not merely the watchword of Greek colonization, they expressed the conviction that action and speech create a space between the participants which can find its proper location almost any time and anywhere. It is the space of appearance in the widest sense of the word, namely, the space where I appear to others as others appear to me, where men exist not merely like other living or inanimate things but make their appearance explicitly.

This space does not always exist, and although all men are capable of deed and word, most of them—like the slave, the foreigner, and the barbarian in antiquity, like the laborer or craftsman prior to the modern age, the jobholder or businessman in our world—do not live in it. No man, moreover, can live in it all the time. To be deprived of it means to be deprived of reality, which, humanly and politically speaking, is the same as appearance. To men the reality of the world is guaranteed by the presence of others, by its appearing to all; "for what appears to all, this we call Being," and whatever lacks this appearance comes and passes away like a dream, intimately and exclusively our own but without reality. [Footnote: Heraclitus' statement that the world is one and common to those who are awake, but that everybody who is asleep turns away to his own...says essentially the same as Aristotle's remark just quoted.

We still find people who think they can write effective personal, private letters to, say, a senator about some issue. I wish it were so! That's not political activity at all. Step out into the light. Don't be shy. Don't waste your time.

Again, it should not have to be said but unless you have a lot of money to give, *sharp, clear, fair, persuasive criticism that alienates voters and donors, drawing on widely appreciated truths and universal human values* will be more much powerful than praise. Praise will be seen as, and will be, fawning.

Specific helpful activities include (but are not limited to) these:

- **Writing letters to editors;**
- **Writing guest editorials;**
- **Commenting on news articles in the space provided;**
- **Attempting to influence political donors;**
- **Bird-dogging politicians at public events, asking embarrassing but fair questions about their support for weapons of mass destruction, pit production, etc.;**
- **Organizing public demonstrations at offices;**
- **Speaking at churches and other groups; and**
- **Writing open letters to OTHER politicians, in OTHER states, about our situation and the members of our delegation.**

Thanks again to all,

Greg, Trish, and the rest of the gang



If you want to help put pressure on NM Dems to stop the new nuclear arms race, please contact us

July 13, 2016

(Tell us if you want to be removed from this closed local list.)

1. **Posted: "[Crawl Out Through the Fallout Baby](#)," presentation at *Journey Santa Fe*, Jul 10, 2016; [video](#).**
2. **Updated a little: "[The Crisis at Hand, the Emergency Mode, & the Need for Full-Scale Mobilization](#)," June 27 presentation at [350.org New Mexico](#).**
3. **Senator Udall was absent today from a critical hearing requested by Senator Feinstein on the stealthy new nuclear cruise missile.**
4. **If you want to help put pressure on the Democrats in the New Mexico delegation regarding nuclear weapons and related issues, please call or write.**

Dear friends --

1. **Posted: "[Crawl Out Through the Fallout Baby](#)," presentation at *Journey Santa Fe*, July 10, 2016; [video](#)"**

Thanks to all who helped publicize and who attended this past Sunday, and special thanks to our hosts at [Journey Santa Fe](#) and [Collected Works](#), and to moderator Denise Fort!

It was pretty much a standing-room-only event, and a lively one too. We tried to hit a few high points during our limited time. Now, after a little more editing we have posted all the slides, the ones we used, the ones we didn't get a chance to use, and one more.

In hindsight some aspects of this presentation logically follow the previous one (2. below).

2. **Updated a little: "[The Crisis at Hand, the Emergency Mode, & the Need for Full-Scale Mobilization](#)," June 27 presentation at [350.org New Mexico](#)**

Given the importance of some parts of this talk (e.g. why all grand plans to support our present level of consumption solely on renewable energy cannot succeed). I added a little more explanation and a couple of links. We did not do justice to this topic at all, of course. The takeaway is the same: we need to embrace what Margaret Salamon calls "[The Emergency Mode](#)" before it embraces us willy-nilly, with greater suffering and losses and fewer options at hand. [Build](#) renewable energy and transportation as fast as we are able, [simplify](#), [protect](#) vulnerable people and species, and [resist](#).

3. **Senator Udall was absent today from a critical hearing requested by Senator Feinstein on the stealthy new nuclear cruise missile.**

In fact the only Democrat besides Ms. Feinstein who showed up was Senator Tester from Montana, an "ICBM senator." The occasion was a special hearing on the Long-Range Stand-Off (LRSO) weapon, an immensely destabilizing strategic nuclear weapon which is not counted under New START counting rules and which therefore comprises a sort of New START "breakout plan" in action.

Ms. Feinstein was only able to bring one witness, the 89-year-old Dr. William Perry, a former Secretary of Defense who opposes LRSO. The [video](#) of the hearing is posted. The last moments of Senator Feinstein's frustrated and may I say appropriately *frightened* and *responsible* comments (starting at about 1:26:14 to 1:28:40, and then her last minute of comment, starting at 1:31:40) are very worth seeing.

This is not the place to provide more information on LRSO; we are in the process of preparing a web page that will do that.

All three of us in the office felt that for Mr. Udall to be absent from this hearing, unless he had a very good excuse, was disrespectful to his ranking member and to the gravity of the issue, in which he will play such an important role. If he is in favor of LRSO, let's hear it, and why. If he is opposed, let's hear that, why.

Senator Feinstein, with others on the Energy and Water Development appropriations subcommittee, opposed the highly-accurate version of the B61-12 nuclear bomb, slated for deployment in four European countries, plus Turkey. Senator Udall rescued that nasty program, which supposedly brought 600 hires to Albuquerque to offset attrition at Sandia National Laboratories (SNL) and kept a few jobs at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) as well.

New Mexico's two senators are among the most enthusiastic Democratic supporters of nuclear weapons in the Senate. Tom Udall, on the Appropriations Committee is growing in seniority. Does he take these issues as seriously as Ms. Feinstein (who as we all know is no dove)?

4. If you want to help put pressure on the Democrats in the New Mexico delegation regarding nuclear weapons and related issues, call or write us please.

All the NM Democrats are enthusiastic supporters of plutonium pit production, the LRSO (Michelle Lujan-Grisham and Ben Ray Lujan just joined with Republicans to support this weapon), and every other nuclear weapon proposal that has been advanced by the Obama Administration.

If anyone thinks it is possible to rein in climate change, protect the environment, or provide for more equal opportunity in our society while also spending roughly \$1 trillion/year on various military, nuclear weapons, intelligence, and "homeland security" accounts, please think again.

If you want to do more to put pressure on New Mexico Democrats on these issues and others, and we hope you do, please write or call and we will conspire together. In Albuquerque, [write Trish](#) or call the office (505-265-1200). In Santa Fe and Taos, [write Lydia Clark](#) in Santa Fe.

We will also publish a short list of suggested immediate actions in this regard, but we would like to remind everyone that little actions we may take, especially little actions we take alone, won't suffice on any the bigger issues we face. This was a major theme in the above presentations.

So please do call.

Thanks again to all,

Greg, Trish, and the rest of the gang



Crawl out through the fallout, baby

July 7, 2016

(Tell us if you want to be removed from this closed local list.)

1. **Conversation in Santa Fe, Sunday morning, July 10: "[Crawl Out through the Fallout, Baby](#)': Los Alamos National Laboratory and the Future of Santa Fe"**
2. **Posted: "[The Crisis at Hand, the Emergency Mode, & the Need for Full-Scale Mobilization](#)".**
3. **Silence in the nuclear desert, ground zero for climate change**

Dear friends --

1. **"[Journey Santa Fe](#)" conversation Sunday, July 10, 11 am, [Collected Works Bookstore, 202 Galisteo St. \(map\)](#), hosted by [Bill Dupuy](#) and moderated by [Denise Fort](#). Our topic: "[Crawl Out through the Fallout, Baby](#)': Los Alamos National Laboratory and the Future of Santa Fe."**

Our blurb about this discussion:

Does Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) benefit Santa Fe? If not, could it do so under different policy scenarios? Can Santa Fe emerge from the political and cultural shadow of The Bomb? Who is Santa Fe's real patron saint now, Francesco Bernardone -- or Robert Oppenheimer?

The time has come when Santa Fe must choose. We cannot have it both ways. The state, nation and world face a new set of challenges completely different from those that animated the Manhattan Project and the Cold War. Can Santa Fe adapt to this brave new world, or even thrive? If so what might that look like, and what role if any could or should LANL play?

The Obama administration and Congress would like to spend billions of dollars in new construction for industrial-scale plutonium processing, waste handling, and weapons manufacturing -- dirty and risky work, on a scale never before seen in the Santa Fe metro area. Is such a future compatible with a sustainable, attractive, and economically resilient "City Different?"

Can LANL ever be "cleaned up?" Can the lab be converted or effectively diversified to new missions? Come and discuss!

"Our interests and explorations of course go deeper than these questions, which approach the singular mountain of our historical crisis from particular trailheads. We could well have asked other questions but I think we would find they all come back to the *same* question: *are we going up the mountain, or not? Are you?* In either case it's a brave new world now and we are called upon to do our part. Our own lives, not just our children's, depend on our choice.

If we will but make the *right* choice, we will be able to speed up the day, all over America and all over the world, when justice will roll down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream. (Martin Luther King, "Beyond Vietnam")

2. **Posted: "[The Crisis at Hand, the Emergency Mode, & the Need for Full-Scale Mobilization](#)"**

Slides from Greg's talk of June 27 at the monthly speaker's series of [350.org New Mexico](#) are posted at the link above. The video is [here](#).

Highlights:

- We have entered an all-encompassing, existential crisis for humanity, nature, and civilization which is already disrupting millions of lives and which will rapidly increase in severity within the coming decade and beyond, with unimaginably horrible consequences. We have no remaining "carbon budget." We used that up.

- Fossil-fuel based civilization is ending and fast, led by:
 - Depletion of petroleum reserves (not resources), leading to a peak and subsequent decline in global crude oil production (2005, slight imputed decline since), global crude + condensate (C+C) (peak 2015), and liquid fuels overall (probably peaked in 2015 also)
 - Lack of democracy, enfranchisement, and corruption; propaganda and ignorance
 - Extreme concentration of wealth, rising inequality, exploding debt
 - Wars, drought, famine, human displacement on a vast scale (65 million today)
- Real growth is over; real economic capital will decline henceforth until it can be redefined (e.g. in non-FF-dependent terms). Ecological capital is also declining and disasters are increasing. Required investments in RE, EE, and RT collide with these limits and can only occur by redirecting massive expenditures (of skills, time, money) away from the consumer economy and from parasitical sectors (e.g. the military).
- We have three basic choices:
 - Neurotically deny reality with associated complacency, distraction, bad faith, despair;
 - Create alternative realities in which to believe (psychosis); or
 - Accept reality and undertake emergency response, which if pursued wisely will produce a mature and healthy life and genuine character, and which will also achieve objective success to a minor or a major degree, depending.
- The severity of the crisis requires (and will eventually compel, albeit too late if we wait) our *emergency* response. The essential unity and breadth of the crisis requires a *comprehensive* response but therefore also provides many points of access, across all of which *personal and group mobilization* is the common denominator and *first* essential step.
- Perhaps *the* greatest barrier to an effective response is the propaganda, group-think, and thoughtlessly-transmitted assumptions coming from liberal and progressive organizations and traditions and the Democratic Party, all of which are subject to many paralyzing social and economic influences and assumptions. (Right-wing propaganda does not seriously affect most of us.) As a result of these influences, liberal (and yes, "progressive") organizations typically offer blinkered analyses and promote ineffectual policies that *also* fail to ignite significant political interest. So they typically fail in every way, while preventing genuine reform. That is their function.
- The purpose of about 90% of the US military and 96% of nuclear weapons (leaving for the moment the question of a "so-called minimum deterrent") is to uphold US hegemony, corporate profits, and global inequality while capturing an *increasing* "lion's share" of the world's diminishing resources, *while also* perpetuating current domestic power and pecuniary relationships. *In climate terms, the purpose of the US military and nuclear weapons is to prevent effective climate action.* The problem with the US military is mostly not what it consumes (which is bad enough), but what it *is* and what it *does*.
- *None* of the main presidential candidates have shown that they understand the nature and severity of the climate crisis, including Bernie Sanders. There is no road of reform within the present two political parties and the present electoral system at the national or state levels. Revolutionary action and changes are needed.
- Desirable investments in RE, EE, and RT require FFs to produce and install and so produce greenhouse gases (GHGs). Large, rapid transitions *increase* net GHG production. *We must decrease the needed scale*, radically and justly. (This will happen sooner or later anyway, but very brutally if not done consciously now.)
- Example: PV generation: Doubling PV installation each year is a good thing to do but it *increases* GHG emissions during the doubling period because of the energy cost of manufacture and installation, including huge soft costs. Money is a lien on energy across society. In our case, that energy is mostly FF and nuclear (waste-producing) energy.

It was a lively evening and according to the organizers the biggest crowd in the 350.org speaker's series to date! Thank you, Tom (Solomon) and Jim (Mackenzie) for this opportunity. We will do a great deal more on these issues -- *how* much depends in part on YOUR interest. So talk to us.

3. Silence in the nuclear desert, ground zero for climate change

Yesterday at a UNM [symposium](#) Senator Udall remarked that New Mexico and the American Southwest were a "bullseye" of deleterious climate change. He is right.

(Udall then proceeded to offer neither any policies nor any vision of policies remotely capable of addressing the climate problem, even in theory. "Climate" was just a buzzword to sell DOE-funded scientific "innovation" in New Mexico. I do not mean to single out Udall. Senator Heinrich, UNM President Frank, and the man with the money, DOE Secretary Moniz, were singing the same innovation song. As we attendees heard, "innovation" is more or less this administration's main answer to the Gordian knot of problems associated with climate change, energy, jobs, and economic competition. In a word: *punt*.

"Innovation" is also a saleable meme for a set of political priorities and public investments which favor private investment and

ownership by the super-rich, a proposition made mind-mindbogglingly clear by Dr. Moniz.)

Anyway we are at the bullseye -- or ground zero if you prefer -- of climate change. We also have more nuclear weapons than anywhere else in the world stored in Albuquerque, and likewise more money to design and build them in the Santa Fe and Albuquerque metro areas than anywhere else in the world, in both absolute and per capita terms.

We dispose of more federal funds per capita on a net basis than any other state, yet we rank among the poorest. New Mexico currently ranks 49th in child well-being. Our educated young adults are tending to leave the state for greener pastures, literally and figuratively. Our economy, society, and environment are ill, with no recovery in sight.

Despite all this and more, and with much worse to come, our state is silent. The monsoon of protest has not come. There is no thunderclap from the populace, no *Grito*. Nothing much from the churches. Nothing much from the newspapers. Nothing much from the universities. So -- what will hasten the day of that cry? Will we wait until the last tree, the last bear, dies?

All this makes me think of Richard Wilbur's poem, "Advice to a Prophet."

When you come, as you soon must, to the streets of our city,
Mad-eyed from stating the obvious,
Not proclaiming our fall but begging us
In God's name to have self-pity,

Spare us all word of the weapons, their force and range,
The long numbers that rocket the mind;
Our slow, unreckoning hearts will be left behind,
Unable to fear what is too strange.

Nor shall you scare us with talk of the death of the race.
How should we dream of this place without us?—
The sun mere fire, the leaves untroubled about us,
A stone look on the stone's face?

Speak of the world's own change. Though we cannot conceive
Of an undreamt thing, we know to our cost
How the dreamt cloud crumbles, the vines are blackened by frost,
How the view alters. We could believe,

If you told us so, that the white-tailed deer will slip
Into perfect shade, grown perfectly shy,
The lark avoid the reaches of our eye,
The jack-pine lose its knuckled grip

On the cold ledge, and every torrent burn
As Xanthus once, its gliding trout
Stunned in a twinkling. What should we be without
The dolphin's arc, the dove's return,

These things in which we have seen ourselves and spoken?
Ask us, prophet, how we shall call
Our natures forth when that live tongue is all
Dispelled, that glass obscured or broken

In which we have said the rose of our love and the clean
Horse of our courage, in which beheld
The singing locust of the soul unshelled,
And all we mean or wish to mean.

Ask us, ask us whether with the worldless rose
Our hearts shall fail us; come demanding
Whether there shall be lofty or long standing
When the bronze annals of the oak-tree close.

Thanks again to all,



Report from the Doomsday Forum and surrounding events; talk Monday evening

June 24, 2016

(Tell us if you want to be removed from this closed local list.)

1. **Thank you; report from the Doomsday Forum and surrounding events**
2. **Manhattan Project National Historical Park (MPNHP): protest -- and survive**
3. **"The Need for Full-Scale Mobilization for Climate (and everything)" -- talk by Greg in Albuquerque Monday evening**
4. **Internships, fellowships, careers**

Dear friends --

1. **Thank you; report from the Doomsday Forum and surrounding events**

To those of you who participated in the whirlwind of recent events organized by the Study Group, Stop the War Machine, and others -- **thank you**.

The "[Strategic Deterrent Coalition](#)" (SDC) symposium needed a firm response and we did our best to mount one, both within the event itself and outside, where a diverse group of about 20 people picketed on Monday evening and again on Tuesday afternoon.

In context, that number of picketers was sufficient to prompt photos in both the *New Mexican* and the *Albuquerque Journal*. No article appeared without noting opposition. Despite the Dog Head Fire (still burning in the Manzanos on those days), these articles appeared:

- [U.S. must maintain nuclear capability, commander warns](#), *Albuquerque Journal*, Jun 22, 2016
- [Weapons experts gather in N.M. to discuss nuclear work](#), *Santa Fe New Mexican*, Jun 21, 2016
- ['Doomsday Forum' Takes On New Mexico's 'Addiction' to Nuke Dollars](#), *Burque Media*, Jun 21, 2016
- [Nuke forum set for Duke City](#), *Santa Fe New Mexican*, 17 Jun 2016

On Monday we sent this press release out widely:

- [Senior military, nuclear weapons officials convene in Albuquerque to promote \\$1 trillion nuclear weapons plan](#), press release, Jun 20, 2016

Other regional media follow-up is expected on particular topics. I have a request to write for a national magazine blog about this strange event. Valentina and Astrid are also writing.

It was and is, as the military attendees might say, a "target-rich environment." So many lies, so little time. And so many requests, so little time.

The emotional atmosphere of the forum was expected but the *degree* of it, and the lack of rational content, beggared belief. See for example these two videos shown at the conference, [one](#) wildly counterfactual (though produced by a supposed "think tank") and the [other](#) maudlin in the hyper-patriotic, militaristic style to which we former citizens of the American Empire are by now all too accustomed. We're living Orwell's dream.

Our three teach-ins (at our offices, in Santa Fe, and at the University of New Mexico (UNM) (this last in cooperation with the [UNM Peace and Justice program](#), [Stop the War Machine](#), the [Peaceful Skies Coalition](#), and [Burque Media](#)), reached about 45 people in aggregate, including some new and younger faces. Carol Miller of Peaceful Skies presented in Santa Fe as well.

We are deeply grateful to these and other cooperating organizations (such as [Veterans for Peace](#)) for their organizing,

leadership, and participation.

Our two evening programs (Albuquerque and Santa Fe) were attended by still other people. Attendees heard from Visiting Fellow Valentina Bellafante about European nuclear weapon hosting and sharing arrangements, including the expected B61-12 variant (the "omni-bomb") now under development in New Mexico and elsewhere. Attendees also heard about the good news of significant international progress toward a treaty prohibiting the possession of nuclear weapons. We are very grateful to our Santa Fe host.

At the last minute the SDC changed its conference venue away from UNM to the Crowne Plaza Hotel. SDC host Sherman McCorkle told the crowd of 275 attendees this was necessary because of the great number of registrations. Yet the combined UNM ballroom SDC had booked has a capacity of 600 spread out banquet-style (as at the Crowne Plaza), or 780 banquet-style if a partition were folded up. We believe the more likely explanation for moving the conference was security.

We are assembling videos, audio and photographic materials from the SDC symposium, protests, and the UNM teach-in. We will post these. Trish will make a short video compilation of highlights from the UNM teach-in.

There were a couple of revelations about US weapons programs that need writing up and follow-up in Washington.

We will discuss local followup with other groups next week.

For what it's worth, I was able to have a one-on-one conversation with the four-star commander of STRATCOM, Cecil Haney, about the new nuclear war dangers posed by the more accurate warheads being produced for the Navy, in combination with other planned deployments. I tried to make him aware of [Ted Postol's](#) expert analysis ([longer version](#), shorter version with audio [here](#)). I am pretty sure he understood me perfectly. I doubt he agreed. I could talk, but he could not answer except in the vaguest terms.

Thanks to these events we now have some regional momentum, in the form of a larger cadre of knowledgeable members who can write letters to the editor, guest editorials, and who can reach out to others on their own. Don't wait for us! We need your help. It's been said before: the harvest is rich but the laborers are few.

2. Manhattan Project National Historical Park (MPNHP): protest -- and survive

The ill-advised [Manhattan Project National Historical Park](#) is a bogus gift. But it will keep on giving if we are willing to turn it into a physical site of protest.

Greg (with a hat tip to others we know who called in) was on KUNM's call-in show yesterday ("[Telling The Story Of The Manhattan Project](#), Jun 23, 2016). It wasn't a bad program, "everything considered." But such programs are useless if we don't change our lives. "Public awareness," I think you know, is meaningless. The quantum of politics is the self -- I. Me, then you, then we. Forget for the moment the third grammatical persons, him and her and them.

3. "The Need for Full-Scale Mobilization for Climate (and everything)" -- talk by Greg in Albuquerque Monday evening

Greg will speak at the monthly [350.org](#) speakers series meeting on June 27, at 6:30 pm at the Albuquerque Peace and Justice Center, on "[The Need for Full-Scale Mobilization for Climate \(and everything\)](#)." Please join us and invite your friends.

4. Internships, fellowships, careers

We are near to announcing our fall program. Most people can't imagine that such a small organization can be effective. Yet sometimes we are, even in cases where others have given up and or haven't tried because of what seem like impossible odds.

We aren't so great; it's just that rampant failures of leadership leave yawning gaps which we can sometimes fill. Because these gaps are so many and so great, and because of who we are, there are great opportunities here for the right persons.

"We are not," as Rumi [said](#), "a caravan of despair." Far from it.

Thanks again to all,

Greg, Trish, Valentina, Lydia, and the rest of the gang



Protests Mon & Tues in Albuquerque, teach-in Tues at UNM -- update, change of venue: PLEASE COME PROTEST THE DOOMSDAY FORUM!

June 19, 2016

(Letter to local members only; tell us if you want off this closed list. Feel free to forward. If you are getting this via forwarding and want to join this list, let us know.)

1. **Update on next week's events**
2. **Last week's teach-ins and report-back sessions**
3. **Greg will speak at the 350.org meeting on June 27 at 6:30 pm at the Albuquerque Peace and Justice Center**

Dear friends --

1. Update on next week's important events -- *please come!*

Organizers of the [Strategic Deterrence Coalition Symposium](#) (aka "Doomsday Forum," June 20-21, Monday and Tuesday of this coming week) have abandoned their planned venue at the University of New Mexico (UNM), quite possibly because of the organizing efforts being undertaken by organizations here in Albuquerque and the ensuing bad publicity and latent security issues. Their new agenda and speaker list is [here](#).

Background on the forum can be found in [Bulletin 219](#) (but see updated location below).

Apart from tomorrow's "welcome reception" at 6:30 pm at the [National Museum of Nuclear Science and History](#) (there will be a demonstration at 6:30 pm there -- it is better to be early), the Symposium will now take place entirely at the [Crowne Plaza Hotel](#) ([map](#)). A demonstration is planned for the Crowne Plaza at 1:30 pm.

The Tuesday, June 21 teach-in being organized by the UNM Peace and Justice Studies program and Los Alamos Study Group is proceeding as planned in the UNM Student Union Building (SUB) ([map](#)) from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm upstairs, in Lobo A&B.

These events are summarized on our [calendar](#) as well as on the frequently-updated [Doomsday Forum Facebook page](#) organized by Stop the War Machine.

There will be news media present, and what they write about these events and demonstrations and will be communicated to hundreds of key actors in the industry, on Capitol Hill, and elsewhere via nuclear news aggregators, the trade press, and so on. We'll have a "media megaphone" on Monday and Tuesday. We need your help to use it.

There are several Albuquerque organizations involved in organizing these protests. There will be fresh faces, and different styles. *The key thing we are asking our members to do right now is to show up at these protests and the teach-in at UNM.*

These events received some good publicity yesterday thanks to the *Santa Fe New Mexican* ("Nuke forum set for Duke City"). [Their article](#) included our poster (or use [this link](#) if you if you can't access the *New Mexican*).

2. Last week's teach-ins and report-back sessions

We were generally pleased with last week's teach-ins in Albuquerque and Santa Fe and with the report-back sessions and receptions in the evenings. Thanks much to those who came. I want to go into greater depth about those events and some of the key messages we brought, but wish to do so to our main listserve rather than to the present much smaller one.

We aimed to share enough knowledge to support letters to the editor and guest editorials by our members. I think we did that. We also succeeded in educating the journalists who came. We had a pretty good time as well. In Santa Fe we had a guest speaker (Carol Miller of [Peaceful Skies Coalition](#)), and we had live music in the evening by [Lydia Clark](#).

If you want to be more involved, talk to us!

3. Greg will speak at the monthly [350.org](#) speakers series meeting on June 27, at 6:30 pm at the Albuquerque Peace and Justice Center, on "[*The Need for Full-Scale Mobilization for Climate.*](#)"

Thank you for your attention and see you soon!

Greg and Trish

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Join us Friday in celebrating: most of the world's countries want New Mexico to kick the nuclear habit (includes address of afternoon teach-in, omitted previously)

June 14, 2016

(Letter to local members; tell us if you want off this relatively exclusive list.)

Dear friends --

That is certainly *one* aspect of the successful negotiations last month of the UN Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on nuclear disarmament. **A large majority of countries now support negotiation of a treaty banning nuclear weapons.** About 75 of these countries came to Geneva in February and May to help start to those negotiations, where they dominated the room. There are now too many votes in the General Assembly to prevent nuclear disarmament negotiations in a new key: *with or without the U.S.* and other nuclear state participation.

Please join us this week on Friday evening to learn more about these exciting developments and to celebrate them.

This Friday's celebration will be at a lovely private home on the east side of Santa Fe at 6:30 pm. We need you to RSVP ASAP for this event if you plan to come. Bring your family -- they are citizens, taxpayers, and targets too. This is not a public event but if you have friends who might be particularly interested, please call us! We will serve refreshments and there will be time to greet one another before the evening program properly begins. Lydia Clark will provide live music. Our new intern Valentina Bellafante from Rome will give a short talk with slides and lead a discussion on U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe -- a fraught subject in European public opinion. Valentina just arrived last night. She has a recent master's degree in international relations from [Roma Tre University](#) and is fresh from an internship with the Italian Foreign Ministry. We'll continue with a report from the OEWG and discuss how we in New Mexico can join and help these exciting developments. We will also discuss Study Group paid internships as well as critical volunteer work. We are having a pretty good time here and have a good track record.

You might want to consider if there is anyone among your family or friends who might be a candidate for research, outreach, journalism, or lobbying -- four aspects of our work here. You yourself might consider a volunteer "staycation."

That's the second event on Friday. On Friday afternoon, starting at 1:30 pm and running until 5:30 pm, at the [Center for Spiritual Living](#), 505 Camino de Los Marquez in Santa Fe, we are offering a longer and more detailed program to prepare for next week's "Doomsday Forum" and the ongoing assault on the state. We will provide plenty of background information and there will be plenty of discussion, poetry, and music performed and led by Lydia Clark. Carol Miller from Peaceful Skies will join us, speaking and leading a discussion on "Healing the Social, Economic and Emotional Costs of Militarism." We expect other voices as well.

Please join us Friday -- and if you can, the following Tuesday as well! (See the poster being distributed in Albuquerque, below). **And pass the word!**

There will be important protests on Monday the 20th as well as Tuesday the 21st, in addition to the teach-in mentioned below that will be in parallel with the military/laboratory symposium. We'll discuss those at this week's Friday afternoon event. The news media will be covering this symposium -- and New Mexicans' degree of protest to the trillion-dollar nuclear investment it will support. **Please come and be counted.**

Greg, Trish, Valentina, Astrid, Lydia, and the rest of the gang

DOOMSDAY FORUM

Top military & nuclear officials coming to UNM to promote nuclear weapons

They are planning a "brilliant" future for UNM, its students & faculty, & our state



Tired of NM being a nuclear & military colony? Join our teach-ins, learn, & empower yourself!

Teach-Ins

Thursday, June 16, 1 - 5pm
Los Alamos Study Group
2901 Summit Pl NE, ABQ

Tuesday, June 21, 8:30am - 12:30pm
UNM SUB Lobo A&B
Jamal Martin, UNM Peace Studies
Greg Mello, Los Alamos Study Group
Carol Miller, Peaceful Skies Coalition
& more

Protest

Tues, June 21, 8 am - 5 pm
Come join the Protest at the UNM SUB during the
"Strategic Deterrent Coalition" Doomsday Forum • <http://sdc-usa.org/>

For more information: Los Alamos Study Group 505.265.1200 • <http://lasg.org>
<https://www.facebook.com/2016DoomsdayForum>
<https://www.facebook.com/unmsoap/>
<https://www.facebook.com/LosAlamosStudyGroup>

If this poster does not load properly get it [here](#).

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2901 Summit Place NE Albuquerque, NM 87106, Phone: 505-265-1200



Teach-ins (3), receptions (2); community leaders largely silent and absent as NM economy, society collapse under militarism, climate change

June 8, 2016

(Letter to local members only; tell us if you want off this closed list.)

[\(June 5 reminder and update](#) for reference.)

Dear friends --

Almost every day we hear (usually second-hand) that some community leader, church leader, organization, politician, or journalist doesn't want to talk or think seriously about the deeper crises facing our state, though of course not expressing it in precisely those words. Amazing, isn't it?

Or else these community-serving professionals offer policy narratives and choices that aim at "justice," or "jobs" or "economic growth" and so on, *as if* the state was not in the grip of military, nuclear, and fossil fuel corporations and their agents on the one hand, and climate deterioration on the other hand. Any of these factors if not stopped will prevent those attractive outcomes. Churches meanwhile usually offer spiritual solace *as if* that was possible outside mature political engagement with the devastating realities of our society and environment.

We sympathize, but only up to a point.

Somehow a lot of people think the climate can go to hell, or the military and its contractors arrive with even greater force in our communities, without us going to hell also.

Especially if we are comfortable, or absorbed in the hologram of the mass media and its addictive spectacles, we may not notice the ongoing dissolution of our society and its underpinnings.

Unless we act, we and our children, plus much of nature, will be roasted in a nuclear explosion -- either slowly by the light of one 93 million miles away, caught in our poorly-managed earthly solar cooker, or quickly, by a new sun someone brings down upon our heads.

Or we could starve in a nuclear darkness brought upon the whole world by other self-immolating fools -- in South Asia, for example. There has never been a shortage of fools.

A lot of people seem to confuse modern thermonuclear weapons with the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The scale is very different.

A nuclear explosion is like a sudden sun, very bright and very close. After 2 seconds the fireball from a 800 kiloton SS-25 Russian warhead would be nearly a mile across and about 800 times brighter than the noonday desert sun. Everything organic touched by its light would burst into flame, out to a radius of 7 miles. In most of that area -- as big as Albuquerque -- small fires would coalesce into a single giant fire, with wind speeds greater than a Class 5 hurricane. Even at Dresden in 1945, a 3.9 kiloton bombing event, survivors at the periphery of the (engineered) mass fire saw [\(BBC interview\)](#) flaming women and children flying through the air and strong men clinging to curbs, desperately crawling against the wind that was blowing inwards toward the fire.

The Kirtland Underground Munitions Storage Center (KUMSC), with two or three or more thousand nuclear warheads and bombs in storage, is surely a high-priority target. One big warhead there would likely kill most of the people in Albuquerque within an hour. Downwind the fallout would be heavy for a hundred or more miles, past Santa Fe, not even considering the effect of thousands of US bombs that could be vaporized in the fireball and dropped downwind.

These are the weapons promoted by senators Udall and Heinrich *more enthusiastically than by any other*

Democratic senators. These are the weapons in which President Obama is investing \$1 trillion or more. Make no mistake: Obama has started a new nuclear arms race. Using just a small fraction, less than 1%, of existing nuclear arsenals would threaten the survival of 2 billion people through the millions of tons of soot they would inject into the stratosphere.

These are the weapons which the University of New Mexico would take into its bosom as it seeks to co-manage Sandia National Laboratories (SNL), where most parts of US nuclear weapons are designed.

These are the weapons which Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) wants to redesign and rebuild by the thousands, with the dirtiest work -- plutonium processing and manufacturing -- to take place in the Santa Fe metro area. The citizens and institutions of Santa Fe are being asked to stand aside. The newspapers and local political leaders stand (or bow) in paralyzed silence and acquiescence.

As we explained (Bulletin 219), senior figures in the nuclear military are coming to the University of New Mexico on June 20-21st to further cement New Mexico's role as a nuclear-military colony and supplier of subservient workers, especially for the dangerous jobs with nuclear materials and nuclear waste which smart young people from other states don't want.

We hope you will come to one or more of the events we have organized ([calendar](#)), and /or to the Deterrence Symposium at UNM on June 20th & 21st. See also Stop the War Machine's [Doomsday Forum Facebook page](#).

Participants at these training events and demonstrations will make a real contribution to the cause, build bridges with other organizations, and will come away with the tools and experience to be powerful advocates.

In Santa Fe, space could become limited at the private reception on the evening of the 17th. **We need you to RSVP for that event as soon as possible.**

At the evening receptions on the 16th (Albuquerque) and 17th (Santa Fe) we will hear in detail our first-hand accounts and the fantastic news that more than 127 countries have pledged to work toward banning the very possession of these horrible weapons. We need to do our part here in New Mexico and we certainly can. Believe it or not, the politics and prospects for nuclear weapons look very different from the viewpoint of these countries, whose determination has been growing month by month. Feeling a bit lonely in the Land of Nuclear Enchantment? Literally thousands of activists are involved worldwide. Increasing numbers of diplomats understand that nuclear weapons and global militarism threaten the very survival of their countries. The legitimacy of "nuclear deterrence" has become entangled with the idea of *security and power for a very few only*. We need to do our part! And if we don't, you can kiss economic development and jobs and justice and renewable energy goodbye. They won't be for us.

Thank you for your attention and see you soon!

Greg



Reminder of critical upcoming events

June 5, 2016

(Letter to local members only; tell us if you want off this closed list.)

Dear friends --

First, thank you all for your continued support, which is vital for us. We deeply appreciate and crave your participation, which is giving our work wings.

Here in New Mexico we are faced with especially great opportunities and dangers. We will either enable nuclear weapons policies which if continued will destroy us and others, or we won't. New Mexico has an outside role in that choice and its consequences. So we are mobilizing.

In a [letter of May 20](#) and in [Bulletin 219](#) we alerted you to important upcoming events.

Those events are on [this calendar](#). Please refer to that [May 20 letter](#) for details and also see below.

Please, please come to one or more of these events if you can, especially on the 16th in Albuquerque (there are afternoon and evening events of different types), on the 17th in Santa Fe (again, there are afternoon and evening events of different types), and on the 21st in Albuquerque (there are two events in parallel to the [Doomsday Forum](#) that start at 8:00 am). Participants at these training events and demonstrations will make a real contribution to the cause, build bridges with other organizations, and will come away with the tools and experience to be powerful advocates.

Space could become limited at the private reception in Santa Fe on the evening of the 17th. We need you to RSVP for that event as soon as possible.

There are [two new events](#) on the calendar:

- The first is on June 10 at 9 am: the University of New Mexico (UNM) Regents meeting in Ballroom C of the Student Union Building (SUB). This is a time for those of us who live in Albuquerque or have a special interest in UNM to let the UNM Regents and the student body know what is at stake when the state's largest university seeks to design and produce nuclear weapons of mass destruction. This is one of the worst mistakes UNM and New Mexico could make. We briefly wrote to you about this issue on [May 24](#).
- The second is a teach-in on June 21st from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm co-organized by the Study Group, the UNM Peace and Justice Studies Program, and SOAP (UNM "Students Organizing Actions for Peace") in the UNM SUB, in rooms Lobo A&B (upstairs from the Doomsday Forum).

A [small update on pit production](#) (see [May 25 letter](#)): Rep. Garamendi's office wrote us to say that contrary to press accounts there was a roll call vote after all, and "the plutonium pit amendment [got 126 votes in favor](#), including Adam Smith (ranking member on the House Armed Services Committee) and Eliot Engel (ranking member on the House Foreign Affairs Committee)." This is quite good, especially given that there was so little time for lobbying on this amendment. Knowledge of how dumb it would be to expand LANL pit production is spreading but we have a long way to go. Without that expansion, the proposed new warhead program partially collapses. That is partly why this Doomsday Forum is being organized -- and why we are mobilizing as well.

Disgustingly but expectedly, the entire NM delegation voted against Garamendi's amendment.

Our friends at Stop the War Machine created a [Facebook page for the Doomsday Forum](#). Watch the Study Group's [Facebook page](#) for developments on these events and other issues.

Most people do not yet understand the significance of New Mexico in enabling our trillion-dollar nuclear makeover. That

proposed makeover, and the policies and appropriations it requires, would further militarize this country and more so this state. If that process continues we can expect civil society to be further coopted and crushed, with dismal implications all around, including for climate and energy policies. Udall and Heinrich are now especially important enablers on this downward path. Udall alone, voting with Republicans, saved the infamous B61-12 precision-guided nuclear bomb from fatal cuts in the Senate Energy and Water Appropriations subcommittee.

Thank you for your attention and see you soon!

Greg

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2901 Summit Place NE Albuquerque, NM 87106, Phone: 505-265-1200



Informal note to local friends: amendment to bar expansion of pit production at LANL to be voted on tonight

May 25, 2016

Dear colleagues --

We just received word from Rep. [Garamendi](#)'s office that the House of Representatives will vote tonight on Congressman John Garamendi's [amendment](#) to H.R. 5055, the Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, which will prohibit the expansion of plutonium pit production capacity at Los Alamos National Laboratory. Here is a [video](#) of Congressman Garamendi's statement on the floor of the House in favor of the amendment. Here is his letter to fellow representatives:

Dear Colleague,

Our job is about making hard choices. Fortunately, this one is easy. I ask for your support of my amendment which will halt an expensive, dangerous, and unnecessary program to build new nuclear weapons.

My amendment would halt a plan to increase the capacity of the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) to manufacture new plutonium "pits" at the PF-4 facility at Los Alamos National Laboratory. Plutonium pits are [sometimes] spherical pieces of plutonium which form the core of all American nuclear weapons. NNSA is currently planning to increase its capacity to manufacture these pits, and therefore build new nuclear weapons, from 11 per year to 50-80 per year over the next decade. This plan will cost taxpayers billions of dollars and is not necessary.

Why do we need even more capacity for new nuclear weapons?

We don't. Nuclear weapons proponents claim that we need this capacity in case of geostrategic surprise. The United States already has more than 1,500 deployed nuclear weapons (according to New START counting rules) and nearly 5,000 nuclear weapons in the active stockpile. Nuclear weapons proponents also claim that we need this capacity in case we discover a problem with our warheads. However, our nearly 5,000 warheads are spread across many different warhead types and variants, from tactical systems less than a tenth the size of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima to a megaton-class bomb capable of inflicting more than a million casualties in a densely-populated area. A technical failure in one system will still leave us with plenty of options while the existing production capacity manufactures replacement pits or utilizes the existing stockpile of several thousand plutonium pits currently in storage.

Why are we increasing capacity?

NNSA currently plans increase capacity because of an arbitrary requirement and timeline of 80 pits per year by 2027. My office has had repeated discussions with the Department of Defense and NNSA to find the source of the 80 pits per year requirement. Based on those conversations, we believe that source of that number is based on the maximum theoretical capacity of the PF-4 facility and not any specifically calculated military necessity. The arbitrary mandate also pushed up a planned production timeline by four years, putting pressure on an already strained nuclear weapons infrastructure charged with ensuring that our current nuclear weapons are safe and reliable.

Will this amendment restrict safety and construction upgrades at PF-4?

Absolutely not. The PF-4 facility is currently the only facility in the United States with an ability manufacture plutonium pits. It is also a very old building which sits near a major fault line. In recent years, PF-4's MAR rating (the amount of fissile material the building is allowed to contain at any one time) was downgraded because of concerns about the building's structural integrity during an earthquake. My amendment would not restrict construction to make the PF-4 facility safer and more survivable. It would also not restrict current plans to replace and upgrade ventilation systems and glove boxes which keep workers safe and protected from

radiation. It would only restrict funds to increase pit production capacity.

The United States does not need this excess capacity to produce new plutonium pits and new nuclear weapons. I ask for your support on my amendment to rein in unnecessary spending to achieve an arbitrary capacity which the United States does not need.

Sincerely,

JOHN GARAMENDI

Member of Congress

We have been working with Rep. Garamendi closely off and on for two years on this topic but we didn't know he would be able to file an amendment to the Energy and Water bill. At this late moment there is nothing much for any of us to on this particular vote but take heart, dear friends! Many people in government know this proposed expansion is unnecessary and wasteful. We can defeat it, as we have defeated previous attempts to bring a new Rocky Flats to Santa Fe.

We hope you will join us next month to talk about this and so much else. Trish has updated our handy on-line [calendar](#).

As it happens we were developing a [new fact sheet on this topic](#) when Rep. Garamendi's office contacted us tonight.

Some of you will have seen the fine article by Rebecca Moss of the *New Mexican* ([Report finds fire-safety deficiencies at LANL, Santa Fe New Mexican](#), May 20, 2016; see also the underlying [Seismic Qualification of Fire Suppression System at LANL](#), DNFSB report, May 12, 2016). There is now a formal "Evaluation of the Safety of the Situation" (ESS) underway at LANL. In the meantime, [allowable plutonium "material at risk" \(MAR\) in PF-4 has been lowered](#).

From other congressional correspondence tonight we know that this recent important DNFSB information, now summarized and made politically meaningful by Ms. Moss, was not known until now by many (if any) in Congress. So it goes.

The inability of LANS and NNSA to take care of its basic business at PF-4 -- pushing back against needed safety upgrades, often for years, and discovering one problem after another *seriatim* -- is indicative of more failures to come.

Best wishes and good evening,

Greg Mello

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UNM running SNL one of the worst mistakes UNM and NM could make

May 24, 2016

Perhaps you folks in Santa Fe and Taos might be interested in these comments also. The "political heroin" trope is courtesy Carol Miller and I (obviously) think it is excellent.

<http://news.unm.edu/news/unm-part-of-team-bidding-to-manage-sandia-national-laboratories>

<http://www.togethersandia.com/>

Dear [news] colleagues --

If UNM ends up helping run Sandia it would be one of the worst mistakes UNM could make, or the state could make.

This collaboration will do nothing for the state economically, just as the two nuclear laboratories have on balance hurt the state politically and economically so far. It is easy to focus on a few well-paying jobs and a little harder to notice the society-wide effects of supporting nuclear-military priorities.

Nuclear weapons are New Mexico's political heroin. Peddling ideals of mass destruction at the state's main university will make an intellectual desert there.

Sandia's overall purpose is global domination by force. There are a few other elements there but not many, and they are all either supportive or complementary to that central mission.

A bright future for New Mexico, by contrast, can only be built on notions of collective security, justice, environmental protection, and related job creation, funded as necessary from a different social contract. These are essentially opposite political values to those that animate our laboratories and bring them money.

Short of that radical green-pink agenda, the state will continue to fail and to fall. Tiny "reforms," so-called, sought by many but seldom enacted, would not even keep pace with the hammer-blows of bad news coming from our poor educational system, our drying climate, our extreme and rising inequality, and our many other comparative disadvantages.

Sandia is all about the talented 5% working for the continued financial health of the 1%. That model has failed. UNM could become something else, with the proper leadership. Clearly we don't have that. Anywhere, really.

Greg



Important upcoming events -- please join us!

May 20, 2016

(Letter to local members only; tell us if you want off this closed list.)

Dear friends --

First, thank you all for your continued support, which is vital for us.

In this letter, I wanted to make you aware of the following important upcoming meetings and events. We very much hope to see you at some of them!

- **June 13, Monday, 5:30 - 8:00 pm: Talk and discussion by Jim Summers, Veterans for Peace, [Albuquerque Center for Peace and Justice](#), 202 Harvard SE, "[The Golden Rule: Recovery and Re-Launching of the Pacifist Legend Today](#)" (Study Group co-sponsored event).**
- **June 16, Thursday, 1:00 - 5:00 pm: Disarmament Training and Planning, Study Group headquarters, 2901 Summit Place NE, Albuquerque.**

We are ready to step up our resistance and we hope you are also. We seek a rich, cross-issue mobilization of society, involving a spectrum of modalities, styles, and leadership roles, against nuclear weapons, anthropogenic climate collapse, and economic injustice, and *for* justice and an environmentally-sustainable economy. There's a place and a role for everyone. We need everyone.

This training and planning event will be specific to nuclear weapons issues. It will involve factual background (including privileged new information), practice interventions and role playing, and demonstration planning (see June 20-21, below).

The timing of this particular training reflects, in part, what we regard as a fresh *political assault on the state* in the form of the June 20-21 [2016 Strategic Deterrent Coalition Symposium](#), which as you can see involves the heads of the U.S. Strategic Command (STRATCOM), the U.S. Global Strike Command, the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), and others.

The University of New Mexico (UNM), where the Symposium will be held, seeks to be a partner in managing Sandia National Laboratories (SNL). If this came about it would be a further step in the corruption of our leading civil society institutions and our youth.

President Obama is poised to leave office having launched the biggest nuclear arms race since Ronald Reagan. New Mexico is playing a central role in this, both in political support (through our senators especially) and as a design, production, and testing site.

If "modernization" continues as planned, the plutonium warhead core ("pit") production at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) we have been fighting (fairly successfully) since 1989 will begin. Still-secret plans for new underground production facilities are currently slated for initial funding next year, barring successful intervention. The Santa Fe Metro area will soon host the New Rocky Flats, unless we can stop it.

Meanwhile the U.S. is bearding Russia in many ways and places, seeking confrontation and regime change. The military and diplomatic "pivot to Asia" is aimed at containing China (and Russia, also). The risk of great-power war is rising fast and in some ways hybrid war has already begun. Meanwhile the Obama administration has been in "hot" wars -- not counting proxy wars -- longer than any other administration in U.S. history, in multiple countries. Military budgets are at post-World-War II record heights. Militarism within our society is rising. These trends are incompatible with survival, under climate change especially.

New Mexico meanwhile spirals downward in most social, economic, and environmental indicators. Increasingly, New Mexico is being seen from Washington as -- and is offering itself as -- a pliant, nuclear military colony.

Despite all this and in part because of it, *worldwide momentum is building for a new treaty that would prohibit the possession, transfer, development, or use of nuclear weapons.* We in New Mexico can either join this movement wholeheartedly, or be left behind.

The first part of this event -- the background part -- is open to the press.

- **June 16, Thursday, 5:30 - 7:30 pm: Reception, Report, Discussion, "Banning Nuclear Weapons: Worldwide Momentum Builds", Study Group headquarters, 2901 Summit Place NE, Albuquerque.**

This reception as you can see follows the afternoon training directly. We will be joined in both events by our summer disarmament intern from Rome, Valentina Bellefante, who will arrive a few days before. Please come and welcome Valentina.

- **June 17, Friday, 1:30 - 5:30 pm: Disarmament Training and Planning, Center for Spiritual Living, 505 Camino de Los Marquez, Santa Fe.**

See the above description.

In Santa Fe we will be joined by Carol Miller of Ojo Sarco, who will give us an overview of her work in the [Peaceful Skies Coalition](#), including a short report on her (currently) upcoming trip to Washington.

- **June 17, Friday, 6:30 - 8:30 pm: Reception, Report, Discussion, "Banning Nuclear Weapons: Worldwide Momentum Builds", RSVP necessary (earlier is better, please!), Santa Fe, spacious private home.**

Please come if you can. *If you want to bring new friends, or possible supporters of our work, this would be a great occasion to do so. Call or write Trish.* Please come and welcome Valentina if you can.

- **June 20, Monday, 6:30 - 8:00 pm: Demonstration at the opening reception of the [2016 Strategic Deterrent Coalition Symposium](#), National Museum of Nuclear Science and History, 401 Eubank Blvd. SE, Albuquerque.**

We are planning this demonstration and the one that follows the next day in concert with several other area organizations. They are very important to us and we hope for you as well. Please, please, come if you can to one or (better!) both of them.

- **June 21, Tuesday, 9:00 am onward: Demonstration at the [2016 Strategic Deterrent Coalition Symposium](#), University of New Mexico Student Union Building, main campus, Albuquerque.**
- **June 27, Monday, 6:30 - 8:00 pm: 350.org meeting, Greg Mello talk and discussion, "The Need for Full-Scale Mobilization," Albuquerque Center for Peace and Justice, 202 Harvard SE.**

In this talk I will cover some of the key issues that are typically underplayed or ignored in climate policy intervention. The bottom line will be this: we need to talk about a full-scale mobilization, a real social movement involving both determined resistance and the constructive program. The programs and policies offered by Democratic Party politicians and most professional environmental groups will not be enough by far. Scary? Not really. It is time for us to embrace reality and help one another enter [emergency mode, which we are fully capable of handling and indeed thriving within.](#)

- **July 10, Sunday, 11:00 am: "Journey Santa Fe" talk and discussion series, [Collected Works Bookstore and Coffee House](#), 202 Galisteo St, Santa Fe, Greg Mello: "Crawl Out through the Fallout, Baby!: Los Alamos National Laboratory and the Future of Santa Fe."**

Does Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) benefit Santa Fe? If not, could it do so under different policy scenarios? Can Santa Fe emerge from the political and cultural shadow of The Bomb? Who is Santa Fe's real patron saint now, Francesco Bernardone -- or Robert Oppenheimer?

The time has come when Santa Fe must choose. We cannot have it both ways. The state, nation and world face a new set of challenges completely different from those that animated the Manhattan Project and the Cold War. Can Santa Fe adapt to this brave new world, or even thrive? If so what might that look like, and what role if any could or should LANL play?

The Obama administration and Congress would like to spend billions of dollars in new construction for industrial-scale plutonium processing, waste handling, and weapons manufacturing -- dirty and risky work, on a scale never seen before in Los Alamos. Is such a

future compatible with a sustainable, attractive, and economically resilient "City Different?"

Can LANL ever be "cleaned up?" Can the lab be converted or effectively diversified to new missions? Come and find out!

[Greg Mello](#), long-time director of the [Los Alamos Study Group](#), will share insights on these and other questions from 25 years of policy analysis and advocacy in New Mexico, Washington, DC, and international disarmament diplomacy. Mr. Mello was trained as a systems engineer and regional planner. He worked as a hydrologist for the State and private industry, and led the first regulatory enforcement actions at LANL. He was a HUD Fellow in Urban Studies at Harvard and has been a Research Fellow at the Princeton Program on Science and Global Security.

Thank you for your attention and see you soon!

Greg

PS: Consider subscribing to our [blog](#) and liking [us on Facebook](#). It almost goes without saying that we also perennially seek financial support, as we must!

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2901 Summit Place NE Albuquerque, NM 87106, Phone: 505-265-1200



First partial report from Geneva: proposals for starting negotiations on a treaty banning nuclear weapons have been submitted by a large majority of countries

May 12, 2016

Dear friends --

(Letter to local members; tell us if you want off this relatively exclusive list.)

First (partial) report from Geneva: [proposals for starting negotiations on a treaty banning nuclear weapons have been submitted by a large majority of countries](#)

1. **Important developments from last week, lightly updated with more to follow**
2. **Sources of information**
3. **Background**

Dear colleagues --

Trish and I have been in Geneva for almost two weeks first at a 2-day campaigner's meeting with about 130 colleagues from around the world, then at the 2016 "[Open-Ended Working Group \(OEWG\) Taking Forward Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations](#)."

It's been like drinking from a fire-hose here and we have had almost no time for ordinary communications. In fact I may not even be able to send this message, originally crafted for reporters, to any of our mailing lists. Our email distributor wouldn't accept a message from Switzerland last time I tried. We'll see how it goes with this one.

Trish is upstairs tweeting the content in statements and interventions from the floor. She now has an extensive following on twitter. I have spoken from the floor, submitted a working paper, will publish an editorial today, and we both have been discussing issues with delegations, NGOs, and UN officials for the past week. In all this, time has been of the essence.

I am writing you in part to share the grandeur of what has been happening. For more information on this see some of the sources listed below. It will not be easy to process this from within the dark cave of nuclear militarism in which we live in the U.S.

We will put the best of these developments on a web page in due time -- once the fire-hose slows to a manageable flow.

Last week I had a request from a reporter with a national audience to summarize developments here in Geneva. Most of what follows stems from that request.

For U.S.-based reporters and observers, what is happening here may seem unreal or irrelevant, since it comes from outside our usual echo chamber -- from beyond our horizon. But these developments are real. In terms of content, momentum, and overall significance this OEWG meeting is certainly one of the most, and probably is the most, important multilateral disarmament meeting since 1995, when the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) was indefinitely extended without amendment. Attempts to incorporate stronger disarmament content in the treaty were defeated.

Of course any changes would have required consensus among states parties. False calls for unity and consensus are a familiar tool of the U.S. and other nuclear weapon states to block disarmament progress. Upstairs, right now, there may be some nuclear "umbrella" state whining that consensus is needed before doing...anything.

That 1995 defeat was in hindsight a turning point against disarmament in the post-Cold War world, which led to the long twilight of the second Clinton administration and what has followed in domestic policy.

The extent to which the tremendous momentum among non-nuclear-weapon states (NNWSs) for a treaty prohibiting the

possession, transfer, development, use (etc.) of nuclear weapons are relevant in our "exceptional" country *right now* is partly up to us. *Sooner or later*, however, these developments will be hard to ignore. The momentum here is very hard to deny. There is a new sense of agency and of urgency, backed by deep knowledge and growing experience in a new generation of diplomats and NGO leaders.

The U.S. is not present. Neither are any other nuclear weapon states. Our reliable sources inform us that the U.S. is supplying back-channel talking points to its 30 NATO and South Asia nuclear "umbrella," aka nuclear-dependent, states. "Peace-loving" states like Germany and the Netherlands are supporting nuclear weapons. And we will be demonstrating at several of these embassies later this afternoon, for the benefit of news media in those countries.

As I said to a few reporters last week it is fascinating to see the interplay of courage, evasion, deception, and bursts of candor in the mortal men and women who are the characters on this particular stage.

1. Important developments last week

Multiple proposals were made last week for near-term negotiations on a treaty banning nuclear weapons in official foreign ministry submittals, in addition to the proposals made in floor statements.

For example:

- [Working paper 34](#) from nine states parties to three [nuclear weapons free zone](#) (NWFZ) treaties proposes to begin negotiations on a ban treaty in 2017, essential elements of which are provided.
- [Working paper 15](#) from the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), composed of 33 states, proposes to begin and complete negotiation of a ban treaty as soon as possible, by 2018 at the latest.
- [Working paper 36](#) from the 127 states who have signed the Humanitarian Pledge calls for urgent negotiation of a ban treaty and suggests elements of the content and process.

I could go on, but there are more up-to-date, expert summaries available from RCW and ICAN (see next section below). The breadth and depth of state support for banning nuclear weapons is breathtaking.

These and other state contributions not listed here assure that the OEWG report will include a mandate -- not a *consensus* mandate but a *strong* mandate -- to pursue negotiations on one or more new nuclear disarmament treaties, including but not limited to a ban on nuclear weapons, by far the best-supported option.

2. Sources of information (compiled for reporters who might want to do in-depth stories, originally -- see ICAN and RCW sources, updated daily, for the best updates and interpretations)

- United Nations Office in Geneva 2016 [OEWG](#) (Foundational page only. The UN has no consolidated page to track the official documents and statements from this event. RCW does this to the best of its ability.)
- The Chair's [Synthesis Paper](#) from the February meeting (April 21)
- Background ICAN/RCW [podcast](#)
- [2016 OEWG](#) (RCW)
 - [May OEWG main page](#) (RCW)
 - List of [statements](#) (texts provided and linked where available)
 - [Documents and working papers](#) (RCW)
 - [RCW OEWG reports and editorials, February and May](#)
- [ICAN at the OEWG](#)
- [ICAN OEWG news releases](#)
- [Audio recordings](#) of the plenary meetings so far, in chronological order, separated by speaker/country (To use, first go to the box titled "organization" and choose "WG on nuclear disarmament"). These are about 24 hours behind events here.
- ICAN [Facebook](#)
- Trish's [Twitter account](#)
- From ICAN Austria:
 - "[The new Abolition Map](#) illustrates governments' record on nuclear disarmament at a glance. States are awarded a green, a yellow or a red dot, reflecting their level of commitment to a nuclear weapon free world. Throughout the OEWG, we will update this analysis and feed it with new statements.
 - [Our Tweet map](#) displays twitter communication on nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament in real time - displaying the last thousand tweets tracked around the world. We are tracking a number of terms, entities and hashtags related to nuclear weapons and disarmament - now including #OEWG! (click [here](#) for a full list of terms tracked along with additional info)." [Mello: In 2014 in Vienna, ICAN Austria activists provided similar real-time updates on giant (~2.5 meter x 3.5 meter) vertical DIY touchscreens made with silk-screen fabric in aluminum frames, each with a thin invisible plane of infrared laser light to illuminate fingers as they nearly touched the scrim and an infrared webcam to see these illuminated points, which feed was used as a pointing

device or mouse.]

3. Background

As of Monday 2 May, there were 83 states and 79 NGOs in attendance at this meeting. These numbers rose a little this week but not too much. States in attendance on 2 May were:

Afghanistan Algeria Argentina Armenia Australia Austria Belgium Brazil Cambodia Canada Chile Colombia Congo, Democratic Republic of Costa Rica Cote d'Ivoire Croatia Czech Dominican Republic Ecuador Egypt El Salvador Estonia Finland Germany Greece Guatemala Haiti Holy See Honduras Hungary Indonesia Iran Iraq Ireland Italy Japan Kazakhstan Kenya Korea Kuwait Laos Latvia Lebanon Lithuania Madagascar Malaysia Malta Mexico Montenegro Morocco Myanmar Namibia Nepal New Zealand Nicaragua Nigeria Norway Oman Palau Palestine Panama Peru Philippines Poland Saudi Arabia Serbia Singapore Slovakia South Africa Spain Sri Lanka Sudan Sweden Switzerland Thailand Netherlands United Arab Emirates Togo Tunisia Turkey Ukraine Venezuela Vietnam

I am guessing that at least three-fourths of the NGOs here, including the Los Alamos Study Group, are partnered with the [International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons](#) (ICAN).

That is because this entire negotiating forum is basically the result of efforts by ICAN and its 440 [partner organizations](#) in 98 countries, which then became efforts by states, groups of states, and entire continents (South and Central America, and Africa, for example).

Without going through the history of ICAN since its inception in 2007, this has happened primarily in and through:

1. Three special fact-finding conferences (Oslo, Nayarit, and Vienna) devoted to the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons ("the humanitarian approach"), which were heavily attended by delegations from states;
2. Discussions and diplomatic failures at Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) preparatory and review conferences;
3. Initiatives undertaken at UN General Assembly (UNGA) meetings;
4. Hundreds if not thousands of in-country meetings with foreign ministries, parliamentarians, and others by ICAN partners, and their related political organizing; and
5. Endorsements of a nuclear ban treaty by various prestigious persons and groups such as [Nobel Peace laureates](#) and -- this week -- [the four major world-wide associations of medical professionals](#).

Obviously, these ICAN efforts have built on broader prior and parallel efforts by many others -- millions of people actually -- over several decades. The genius of ICAN has been to sharply focus long-standing nuclear disarmament aspirations, as well as standing expertise and institutional capacity, into a clearly-focused agenda and process which in principle *cannot be blocked by nuclear weapon states* (NWSs).

Initially led by a changing group of perhaps ten or a dozen states, interest in a treaty banning nuclear weapons became explicit (thanks to [Austria](#)) via the "[Humanitarian Pledge](#)," now signed by 127 states, which inter alia commits states to supporting negotiation of a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons. An additional 22 states which have not formally signed the Pledge [voted](#) for it in the form of an UNGA resolution last fall. It appears that the number of states willing and able to provide leadership to this movement is increasing.

As a result of this powerful groundswell, by what is now an overwhelming majority of countries, the UNGA [created](#) this negotiating forum last fall (after competing status-quo proposals were defeated).

As an aside, I am pleased to say that the Study Group has been part of these efforts from an early point. Ray Acheson (in New York) and Mia Gandenberger (in Geneva), both in the [Reaching Critical Will](#) (RCW) nuclear disarmament program of the [Women's International League for Peace and Freedom](#) (WILPF) as well as on the Study Group board of directors, have been among those who have done a great deal to create the present forum. Trish and I have played supporting roles attending, talking to diplomats, contributing to newsletters and fact-finding reports and speaking at conferences, side events, and elsewhere.

The humanitarian approach to disarmament is not new. What has been renewed over the past few years is a focused effort to *ban the bomb*, i.e. to apply what we know about nuclear weapons and therefore to actually prohibit them, much as chemical and biological weapons are prohibited. Accession to a prohibition treaty would be entirely voluntary. States retaining or depending upon nuclear weapons would gradually become outlaws.

As a social and political process this can be very clearly distinguished from prior U.S.-based nuclear disarmament efforts in a number of positive ways (which are copied here with edits from LASG [Bulletin 198](#), December 2014):

- It is not based in the U.S. and not subject to the adverse political conditions that prevail here;

- Much of its leadership is a full generation younger than is typical in U.S. nuclear policy organizations, which by and large have not been successful in generational renewal;
- Most of its funding does not come from, nor is it hostage to, U.S. foundations;
- Its leadership is multinational and naturally diverse;
- Instead of being "institution-centric" or even "network-centric," the campaign is organized around a clear moral vision and a clear, practical objective, namely a ban;
- Many of the leading organizations involved are not exclusively focused on nuclear weapons but include broader humanitarian and development objectives; and, most crucially,
- Banning nuclear weapons does not depend on the sympathy or even the participation of either nuclear weapon states or their allies.

The nine NWSs dislike or disdain this approach to nuclear weapons as well as the conferences and fora which embody it. They generally don't attend. The U.S. finally showed up in Vienna in December 2014 (having skipped prior gatherings in Norway and Mexico), principally to condemn the conference. (This backfired.) The NATO nuclear states -- the U.S., U.K., and France, all putative democracies with active civil societies -- are the NWSs most threatened by this movement. They have worked actively to undermine it, largely behind the scenes, with Russia and China (who do not feel so threatened) joining them for the sake of diplomatic solidarity.

No NWS is here. In the present forum, U.S. perspectives and strategies for undermining disarmament negotiations are being carried, with interesting independent variations, by the nuclear "umbrella" (or as they might better be called, "nuclear-dependent" states -- or, as has become popular, "weasel states"), all of which are U.S. allies. (These nuclear-dependent states are the [28 NATO states](#), Australia, South Korea, and Japan.) It is the U.S. (directly, and indirectly through its allies) which is the main state actor fighting a treaty that would prohibit nuclear weapons. The U.S. *always* strenuously opposes multilateral disarmament negotiations and measures.

This OEWG will report back to the UNGA this fall after a final 3-day OEWG meeting in August. Then the UNGA will again take up competing proposals for how to go forward. There will be votes. As is evident, there is a very clear and widespread demand to open a negotiating forum for a new disarmament treaty to "fill the legal gap," complementing the NPT's vague Article VI disarmament mandate. Negotiations this week and next are devoted to conditioning the coming debate in the fall over what form such a negotiating forum should take.

The first meeting of this OEWG in February set the stage for this month's meeting, which comprises the core of the OEWG's work. The February meeting was summarized in a [Chair's synthesis paper](#), which came under immediate mild attack from nuclear umbrella states this past Monday but was nonetheless praised by most states. Most countries in the world are simply not following the U.S./NATO/Australia/Japan lead on nuclear disarmament, a reality which has characterized this movement since its beginning.

For more background on the humanitarian disarmament movement see the ICAN and RCW web sites linked above or scroll through Los Alamos Study Group [archives](#) since our Feb 12, 2014 press release, "[International Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of nuclear weapons](#)." There are too many articles to list.

That's it for now. I hope our listserv will allow this to reach you without further ado.

Greg



Quick important note and four more items

April 19, 2016

(Letter to local members; tell us if you want off this relatively exclusive list.)

1. **2016 Strategic Deterrent Coalition Symposium, June 20-21, UNM Main Campus. Will you help us protest this event? Write back if you can.**
 - o **Preview (likely to be of interest only to a very few but it will piss you off): speech by one of the confirmed nuclear hawk speakers, Mello recording (24 minutes + 6 min Q&A) of General Jack Weinstein from February, 2016 Deterrence Summit, Washington**
2. **We sent you Ted Postol's important Harvard talk ("How the US Nuclear Weapons Modernization Program Is Increasing the Chances of Accidental Nuclear War with Russia," Harvard College Peace Action, Feb 25, 2016) in the last letter. Here is the audio recording of that talk to go with the slides.**
3. **We have offered complete support for full-time activists, not a trivial offer for us. So far, not a single person from New Mexico has taken us up.**
4. **The Bernie Sanders campaign will lose. Hillary is a war-mongering corporate neocon for whom lying is a way of life. Regardless of the outcome of national elections, expect more war, more corporate pillage, more genocidal squeeze on vulnerable peoples, no effective climate action, and no positive change in America. What now, dear friends?**
5. **Greg and Trish heading to Geneva; excellent new paper on a nuclear weapons ban -- explains pretty much everything in simple language ("It's Time to Outlaw Nuclear Weapons," Tom Sauer, *National Interest*, April 18, 2016)**

[Archive of these local letters](#) (for reference; a work in progress)

Dear friends --

[Concerning item 1](#), we hope you will consider penciling in those dates in June -- June 20-21. [Wherever you are, please consider spending the summer solstice with us.](#)

With this note we issue a call to join us in protesting this event.

This corporate event is an important part of a coordinated national public relations campaign, *funded by the privatized nuclear weapons industry (i.e. taxpayers)*, to protect and fund the proposed massive U.S. nuclear modernization program, which with deployment costs will require more than \$1 trillion. The projected cost grows every year.

The person organizing this event -- Peter Huessy, President Reagan's MX basing czar and still one of the busiest pro-nuclear advocates in DC -- told his audience, in response to my question, that the money for all these nuclear weapons could be found in our (apparently excess) "entitlements." In February he took aim at "welfare" again. This is in fact their agenda. They cannot so easily take the money from wars (Overseas Contingency Operations) and other weapons programs ([overview](#)), nor do they intend to support higher taxes. That leaves more debt, and non-military federal spending, as sources.

If you want to be in a planning group for this multi-day action, which could be nationally important if we make it so, please let us know. I can't write more about this here.

[Concerning 2](#), the addition of this [audio recording](#) will help you understand the [slides](#) sent previously. Dr. Ted Postol is a very estimable person and what he has to say in this talk is very important.

[Concerning 3](#), it's amazing, isn't it?

[Concerning 4](#), I wonder if the Democratic Party will continue to corral and waste most of the attention, energy, and money of people who don't like environmental destruction and injustice. The notion that elections merely can save us is really pathetic.

Return to 3.

That's it. Best wishes to all. We will be reachable in all the usual ways.

Best,

Greg, Trish, Astrid

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What you can do; resources; news

April 13, 2016

(Letter to local members; tell us if you want off this exclusive list.)

1. **What you can do**
2. **The presidential election, and what needs to be done**
3. **Critique of the Nuclear Security Summit**
4. **Plutonium disposition: let the wild rumpus continue**
5. **Working paper for UN on multilateral negotiations; comments**
6. **Ted Postol on the increasing risk of accidental nuclear war due to U.S. modernization**
7. **Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) hearing testimony and followup**

Dear friends --

We haven't written since March 24 -- and there's a great deal to relate! Some of this will find its way into a Bulletin very soon for our larger national and international audiences, but not all.

First, here's what you can do if you want to work directly with the Study Group. For local members this is a bit different than for people far away, and in some ways more important.

- Internship and fellowship opportunities -- help us with outreach if you can, *but quickly*. If you know someone who would like to join our program this summer, now's the time. We sent a flyer around to UNM and a few networks in January, with no bites. In late March we refocused the program to just the summer months ([updated internship flyer for your use.pdf](#)), opened the program to undergraduates, re-sent and stepped up our outreach, and increased our own commitment to what might be a half-dozen undergrads. We have one interested person from abroad (with a relevant master's degree and foreign ministry experience), but despite our outreach at UNM (including our colorful outreach at an interesting internship fair, where we had lines at our table for most of four hours) and to hundreds of U.S. colleges and universities with special outreach to several, we have no U.S. applicants. We will close the application process one week from today (i.e. 4/20).

We conclude that we need to sweeten our offer, or undertake more and better outreach, which would cost more money or more time than we can afford. UNM graduates and students need *jobs*, not internships, even though they are generally not ready to make an immediate net contribution. Their spirits are willing but their bank accounts are far too weak. As is ours.

- This leads us back to money. We can't make any more *time* in our days, but we *could* (and *should*) raise more money, which which we could recruit more time and skills. Will you help us? The [appeal](#) we sent in December is still quite relevant. It is rich with links. *We do not know the people you do.*

Money, as they say, talks. It talks to young people, to funders, and to other actors in our broad field, who think nuclear disarmament (for example) is "not mainstream," in part and subconsciously because it is certainly not well-funded.

- If you would like to significantly volunteer, please call and let's talk. We would need to make this a serious commitment with significant responsibilities, just as in any other business. But it could be rewarding to that same extent.
- If you would like us to speak or lead a discussion, you have to ask. Talks at churches, environmental groups, and in house meetings can be very valuable. University classes can be important. A very strange silence has descended over the local political scene, for the most part. It is, for the most part, the quiet of the [slaughterhouse pen](#).
- For every residential or commercial solar system contract signed and completed with [Sunpower by Positive Energy](#) (which offers [excellent, 25-year-warranted panels](#)), the Study Group will receive \$500.

Another route to go, *with even longer-guaranteed (30 years!) solar panels -- the most robust in the business -- and much cheaper as well* (but less efficient, for now), is the DIY path, via [McCune Solar Works](#) (store; you can get involved by joining their [co-op](#)). McCune's experienced staff will help you get started and you will gain valuable experience, overcoming what Chuck McCune and we call our society's "learned helplessness." [Like Positive Energy, McCune will donate to the Study Group for every referred system they sell.](#)

- [Op eds and letters to the editor are very helpful! See for example Reader View: Accelerated plutonium pit production wrong for New Mexico](#), Monika Steinhoff, *Santa Fe New Mexican*, Mar 19, 2016.

Second, the presidential election, and what needs to be done. The Study Group cannot endorse candidates obviously, but we have our views, which we can't put here. On the Democratic side, it is highly likely that Hillary Clinton will be the Democratic nominee. By the end of this month, this may become a near-certainty, after more primaries run their course. Or perhaps there will be upsets.

Many of you are Bernie Sanders supporters. Let us assume for the moment that Sanders loses. *What are Sanders supporters going to do about it? Anything? What is Plan B?* Shouldn't a prudent person who thinks "Plan A" is extremely important to our common future but has a serious risk of not happening, also have a Plan B? In our day-to-day conversations we are not hearing about any "Plan B."

One of our advisors, when asked what Sanders supporters would do in the event Sanders lost the primary, answered, "[Nothing](#)." I was taken aback by the starkness and brevity of that answer, but in our experience it is the correct answer most of the time. And that is the problem. It is all our problem. If we go quietly into that good night, there will be no dawn. The resource crisis and the ecological crisis -- all our crises run together, are ONE crisis -- are now too deep. Humanity is in profound crisis, as William I. Robinson eloquently [reminds us](#). You couldn't discover that little fact at any of the campaign rallies or debates.

We are in general appalled by how exclusively many people are focusing on this election without actually *working* in it. If you think it's a make-or-break moment and decision for the U.S. by all means jump in with both feet -- as we have done here for 26 years.

The leading Republican (and most explicitly anti-war) candidate, Donald Trump, as well as the second fellow in the Republican running, Ted Cruz, may both be out-maneuvered by the pols at or before the Republican Convention in favor of some yet-to-be-anointed nominee. Should this happen, it could trigger (additional) social unrest.

Meanwhile a number of organizations have started a mass arrest action at the U.S. Capitol, with 600 arrests so far, to protest the overwhelming role of money in U.S. politics.

[In some ways this is a propitious moment.](#)

It is however possible that a fascist politics of xenophobia, hatred, and revenge will be more powerful and persuasive than the typical ephemeral and weak protest on the left (to the extent there is a left). We hope not, but we can't prevent bad political outcomes just by wishful thinking. Wishful thinking is perhaps the only resource that is not in short supply at the moment in this country.

Dear friends, this national election, *no matter who wins*, will not halt the drift toward militarism and fascism. These trends have deep roots and are driven by harsh new realities. We have to get into the streets, into corporate lobbies, into congressional offices, into fundraisers, into legislative chambers, into our self-centered churches. The planet is dying, and our economic system will grind up, is already grinding up, billions of people and species as a matter of course. Most of us will be spared the face-to-face blood and screams for now, so life will seem very pleasant for many of us. For now. We need to rediscover a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand persuasive ways to get essential truths across, to awaken values we have almost lost -- gently but also, as Gandhi showed us, very firmly.

We will be happy to support such action however we can. Some of you will see us at a joint planning meeting soon.

Third, we've been very active on a half-dozen radio shows and on RT television providing commentary on Obama's final hypocritical and ineffective Nuclear Security Summit, thanks to a press release ("[Nuclear Security Summit](#)" — [Hypocrisy, Profiteering, Spectacle](#)") from the Institute for Public Accuracy. It's a pity we can't easily share some of those interviews with you, and a pity that none of them were in New Mexico. (New Mexico is, as we know, largely conquered. It has to be wrested back. Minor reforms have failed, and will fail.)

Fourth, plutonium disposition has been in the news (and in our workload). From previous Bulletins and letters you all understand, we hope, that we are in favor of disposing of surplus U.S. plutonium at WIPP. Where pits are concerned, we favor direct disposal of "sterilized" pits, appropriately prepared and packed, without any plutonium processing. We are NOT

in favor of disposing of other kinds of nuclear waste at WIPP, besides transuranic waste (TRU). Neither are we in favor of disposing of foreign plutonium at WIPP (there is just far too much of it). For general background see [this page](#). Here is some of the local news:

- [Changing nuclear landscape alters WIPP's role](#), *Santa Fe New Mexican*, Apr 9, 2016
 - [Mello's comments](#)
- [Our view: WIPP waste: On the road again](#), *Santa Fe New Mexican*, Apr 6, 2016
- [Feds Plan to Send Nuke Waste to N.M.](#), *Emergency Mgmt*, *Santa Fe New Mexican*, Mar 31, 2016

We've had a great deal of correspondence and discussion on this topic, face-to-face in Washington DC and Princeton, and in press calls and requests.

Yesterday the House Appropriations Energy and Water Development Subcommittee issued its [draft Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill](#) for fiscal year (FY) 2017, which requires the (\$50 billion) mixed-oxide (MOX) program to continue. Let the wild rumpus start -- er, continue! As we wrote to colleagues at Princeton:

I had to laugh at what [Putin said](#) about MOX and I hope you found it humorous as well. I am sure he got a draft list of possible ways to hit back at the U.S. and chose some, including U.S. plans for Pu disposition. I am sure he knows full well that MOX competes with warhead spending. I told _____ I thought dilute and dispose would fail (still far too expensive, and takes far too long, especially in our present peak oil/industrial/economic decline reality). I say this because I saw that Frank [von Hippel] was in SC recently trying to explain why D&D would be better than MOX. It is better of course, but not so conspicuously better as to really attract conspicuous support, or really (IMO) to be practical over decades. On the other hand, as _____ said to me, "One step at a time." There is political wisdom in that, primarily because nobody wants to talk about the future in realistic, scientific terms.

Please note: MOX competes with nuclear weapons spending in the "Atomic Energy Defense Activities" account, where it competes with cleanup as well, and in the National Nuclear Security Administration's (NNSA) and Department of Energy's (DOE's) overall budget.

[Fifth, we submitted a working paper \("Progress in multilateral nuclear disarmament requires a treaty prohibiting the possession, threat, or use of nuclear weapons"\) to the 2016 Open-Ended Working Group \(OEWG\) of diplomats gathered at the United Nations in Geneva.](#)

We also felt compelled to broadcast a note enclosing the above paper and making further points to fellow NGOs touching on multilateral disarmament strategies, which is captured [here as a blog post](#) and sent worldwide by [Pressenza](#). We also received nice comments about that note from experienced people we respect, which was nice for us.

There is much more to say and we hope to do so in the coming days, before Trish and I head toward London and Geneva to talk to diplomats and colleagues on the side of the OEWG deliberations. You can find more resources on these deliberations on [ICAN's web site](#). (That is former LASG Fellow Mia Gandenberger in the foreground of the picture at the top.)

[Sixth, we were very interested to see a recent talk by the Dr. Ted Postol \(bio\) to Harvard Peace Action](#), in which he provides a short description of a nuclear attack on Boston (to scale), and explains (yet again) some of the reasons why the Obama program of nuclear modernization is creating new risks of nuclear war.

Please take a look at [that talk](#), especially the final pages.

Most people don't know that Russia has no early warning satellite system any more, or how the increased accuracy of submarine warheads today doubles the effective size of the U.S. arsenal against hard targets, or how this new accuracy and lack of warning for launches from the sea decrease Russian reaction time to essentially nothing. [We are in a hairy situation](#), to a degree we didn't have during the Cold War.

You can thank our president for this. It's not the Republicans fault. It is Obama's fault, the fault of his Party in Congress, and the fault of the arms control community that did not oppose these upgrades. To repeat what I said above, we are in very deep water in a number of ways, and aiming for minor reforms will fail.

Two years ago Ted sent us a [1998 paper](#) outlining the analytical bases for this concern. As it happens, in 1999 I [wrote](#) about what I thought were disturbing ramifications of Trident upgrade plans, using documents obtained mostly by FOIA litigation. (See also [this important article](#) by Admiral Pete Nanos, later Director of Los Alamos National Laboratory.)

We weren't aware of the Harvard talk until Steven Starr, senior scientist with Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR), sent it to us along with another interesting Ted Postol paper from 20 years ago ("[Possible Fatalities from Superfires Following](#)

Nuclear Attacks in or near Urban Areas," 1986), which prefigured Lynn Eden's excellent *Whole World on Fire: Organizations, Knowledge, and Nuclear Weapons Devastation* (2006).

With Ted's permission, we decided to post all this on its own web page, at least for now.

While that web project was in the queue the *New York Times* published a so-called "retro" video piece about [Nuclear Winter](#), which downplayed the danger and omitted all the more recent work validating nuclear winter concerns. We publish here a comment by [Steven Starr](#) that sets the story straight.*

Seventh, thank you to everyone who came to the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) hearing. The *New Mexican* wrote about the hearing ("[At forum, LANL officials admit to struggling with safety issues, management](#)"), among others. Here is my testimony ([Part I](#), written before the hearing, and [Part II](#), submitted afterward). A congressional staff member gave us this interesting and pertinent presentation on safety, which is referenced ([Working on Small Problems Before They Become Big Problems](#), Thomas M. Weishar, NNSA Naval Reactors). The NNSA warhead complex and LANL in particular does not run by these principles!

I've got to leave it at this and close for now.

Best wishes to all --

Greg and Trish

*The other issue badly handled in that video is that of solar radiation mitigation (SRM) in the arctic by means of aerosols sprayed into the atmosphere, regarding which I wrote a considerable comment to Dr. Alan Robock at Rutgers. Ethically and scientifically, the matter is not so simple as Robock says in that video. It needs to be discussed. You can trust the *New York Times* to misreport key facts, for a purpose. They do it daily. I will try to get my comments up as a [blog post](#), which can be a basis for discussion.



Regarding the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) hearing: testimony and closure

March 24, 2016

(Letter to local members; tell us if you want off this exclusive list. This will be the last email on the subject of the DNFSB hearing.)

1. **Testimony and comments regarding the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) hearing held March 22 in Santa Fe**
2. **About the hearing, more broadly**

Dear friends --

Thanks so much to all those who were able to attend the above hearing or send comments to the Board. Many people came; your spoken comments were eloquent.

In addition to those who came, thousands of others received flyers handed out at farmer's markets last weekend, or read about the hearing in newspaper articles before and after the hearing. Our sharp-eared journalist friends did a good job at making wine from what turned out to be a very few grapes.

The hearing record will remain open until April 22; send any comments to [Ms. Nora Khalil](#), DNFSB public communications director.

The Board has posted a [video](#) recording of the 4-hour hearing. Excepting public comment (find it near the end), we found the hearing rather boring overall for non-professionals.

Our [post-hearing comments](#) frame and supplement the longer [testimony](#) we provided Tuesday. In both we attempted to broaden the meeting's agenda, given the unusual (but as it turned out, partial) presence of two Department of Energy (DOE) appointees with decision-making power about warhead and cleanup programs.

For those interested in safety culture, a topic that came up briefly during the hearing, we appended an excellent short [presentation](#) on how to manage a strong safety culture. The contrast with the approach taken at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) could not be starker, as we explain in our comments.

National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) Principal Deputy Administrator Ms. Creedon, one of the officials present and whom we have known for many years through various government positions, received our testimony yesterday.

About the hearing, more broadly

One of the reasons we felt it essential, at least for our part, to broaden the subject of the hearing is this: from the end of the Cold War until now (about a quarter of a century) there has been, objectively, a two-order-of-magnitude (i.e. 100-fold) decline in government participation in public policy forums.

While most of those forums 20 and 25 years ago were pretenses, "hypocrisy," as La Rochefoucauld famously said, "is the homage vice renders to virtue." And for the enterprising among us they led to a great deal more. They were *something*. Now, as Astrid Webster said after the hearing on Tuesday, there is a "great silence" about the most important truths and dangers we face.

Although the Board is dear to us, as a whole and in its individuals, in some ways Tuesday's hearing was to our eyes a triumph of the relatively trivial. Everyone involved in nuclear issues should understand that the Board has a narrow mandate, but we – those outside government and contractor bureaucracies – do not. DOE and even NNSA also have a far broader mandate than the board; they own and control all of LANL. To their credit, most citizens who spoke did not confine themselves to issues regarding the management and safety of transuranic (TRU) waste at LANL.

Nuclear safety as a concern is real enough, but it is also a metaphor. It points beyond itself to a much larger whole, which

some speakers emphasized. In past decades, that metaphorical channel conveyed larger and often unspoken truths at least haltingly well, because there was widespread tacit agreement that nuclear weapons were “evil,” as Fermi and Rabi said they were, and that institutions like LANL which support and promote them held, in Eisenhower’s words, “disastrous misplaced power.”

But no more. The decades in which nongovernmental groups as well as liberal politicians have consistently shied away from questioning the foundations of the nuclear weapons enterprise – its purposes, its scale, and its political effects – have exacted a heavy toll. Civil society was where cogent critique and protest came from. When it largely stopped, when and to the extent disarmament and dismantlement of Cold War institutions were defined downward and co-opted into “nuclear safety” and arms control, the soul left the subject. The nuclear safety metaphor died, leaving, with few exceptions, bureaucrats and “watchdogs.”

A narrow focus on nuclear safety fit right in with our society’s increasing inequality and the increasingly narcissistic mores of its wealthier members. As John Pilger cogently wrote on Tuesday (“[Start of a New World War](#)”),

Self-absorption, a kind of “me-ism,” became the new Zeitgeist in privileged Western societies and signaled the demise of great collective movements against war, social injustice, inequality, racism and sexism.

Now, what amount to Cold War ideologies are back, partially clothed in new slogans. Russia and China are again enemies which must be “defeated,” a goal which if not abandoned will destroy the United States if not the world.

The failure to dismantle Cold War institutions at the end of the Cold War, a goal repeatedly frustrated by arms control organizations and their liberal sponsors inside and outside government, was a grievous mistake.

Thus we think the issue of the unremediated 60 drums of legacy nitrate salt TRU waste at LANL, the main subject of Tuesday’s hearing, is something like a tempest in a thimble inside a teapot. Citizens, and citizen organizations, must get out of the teapot, not just the thimble, and understand the relatively trivial importance of nuclear waste safety if we are to survive as a civilization, let alone thrive. (Relatively trivial to us I hasten to add, but not of course to the Board, whom we trust but also must from time to time advise.)

To repeat, the metaphor of nuclear safety is dead. Our collective lack of courage and clarity, and above all our self-absorption, allowed it to die. Those who hope that the nuclear safety narrative carries politically transformative content hope in vain. It has been co-opted by powerful parties who want stability, not change. They want nonproliferation, but only in a form that spells U.S. dominance, rather than disarmament, which is incompatible with empire. They want “nuclear security,” not human security. It’s up to us not to be herded into that corral.

Sincerely,

Greg Mello, for the Study Group



Reminder: Important LANL hearing TOMORROW EVENING in Santa Fe, 5 pm

March 21, 2016

(Letter to local members; tell us if you want off this exclusive list. We usually send fewer emails to this list than of late.)

Re: Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) Hearing to be held tomorrow ([agenda](#)), Tuesday March 22, from 5:00 - 6:30 pm (Session 1) and from 6:45 - 9:00 pm (Session 2) at the Santa Fe Community Convention Center, 201 West Marcy Street ([map](#)).

Dear friends --

This is a reminder about **tomorrow evening's DNFSB-hosted hearing in Santa Fe**, which nominally concerns transuranic (TRU) waste management at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL).

We think it is important. For why, see:

[LASG friends ltr \(03/11/16\)](#)

Senior DOE nuclear officials coming to Santa Fe for public hearing; more

[LASG friends ltr \(03/14/16\)](#)

Why the March 22 hearing on LANL safety is critically important

[LASG friends ltr \(03/15/16\)](#)

Pre-register by March 18 to reserve a speaking slot at the March 22 hearing re LANL; other updates

We hope you will invite your friends to this meeting if you have not done so already.

Besides TRU waste, this hearing will also be a forum on pit production at LANL and its expansion, LANL cleanup, the future of WIPP, and the management and future of LANL.

There will be no further opportunity for public input, or for NNSA senior officials to gauge public opinion, on the question of whether or not this administration should commit to building a multibillion-dollar [underground plutonium foundry and associated manufacturing works](#) at LANL. **It would be far better, at a minimum, to postpone this decision to the next administration and the next contractor*** while reviewing [alternatives](#) and also reviewing the question of whether or not **these investments are needed**. (They are not.) Such a review is underway right now, but it will be peremptory if it is forced to conclude in the few months remaining in this administration's budget process for next year.

Best,

Greg

*LANS has been fired, effective in late 2017 or 2018 -- we don't know which.



Pre-register by March 18 to reserve a speaking slot at the March 22 hearing re LANL; other updates

March 15, 2016

(Letter to local members; tell us if you want off this exclusive list. We usually send emails to this list only rarely.)

Re: [Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board \(DNFSB\) public hearing \(agenda\)](#) at the Santa Fe Community Convention Center, 201 West Marcy Street ([map](#)) on Tuesday, March 22, 5:00 - 6:30 pm (Session 1) and 6:45 - 9:00 pm (Session 2, with public comment).

Dear friends --

First, I failed to notice this passage on the [web site](#) for this event:

Persons interested in speaking during the public comment period are encouraged to pre-register by submitting a request in writing to the Board's address or by telephone to the Office of the General Counsel at (202) 694-7062 prior to close of business on March 18, 2016.

My apologies!

Second, some of you might be interested in a new blog post ("[We must triage the threats we face](#)") at [Forget the Rest](#), posted by request after our last Albuquerque meeting, with an introduction.

Third, if you haven't seen it some of you will be interested in [new piece](#) by Laura Paskus on the Administration's "Clean Power Plan," at [New Mexico In Depth](#). I have a comment there, only partially developed, to the effect that the CPP will have a trivial or possibly negative effect on U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.

The point of my comment, which I left for readers to figure out for themselves, is that in our policy proposals as well as our tactics, we must go very far beyond what is being proposed by the environmental groups who support the President's policy. I sent some of them those calculations last year but no one ever called or wrote back.

I tend to agree with one of the speakers at our recent Albuquerque meeting who remarked that the environmental groups working on energy and climate have now formed an almost impervious bubble or echo chamber. In saying that I don't mean to tar everybody equally with the same brush. Still, our public discourse, and our tactics, about energy and climate in this state are absolutely abysmal. There is no effective organizing going on that I -- and many others with whom we speak -- can see.

Finally, many of you who read the *New Mexican* probably saw this: "[Sandia, Los Alamos national labs, cultivating economic growth for New Mexico](#)." Nothing could be further from the truth than this title, as *decades* of failure ought to sufficiently attest.

For background please see:

- [Does Los Alamos National Lab Help or Hurt the New Mexico Economy?](#) July 2006
- [Weapons Labs and the Future of New Mexico: Problems, Prospects, Messages](#), May 2007

If you scroll down after the *New Mexican* article you will see my off-the-cuff comment and any others that have accreted since this morning.

The key quote in this article: Lujan [-Grisham] said she understands that despite some progress, "the economic growth here has not materialized."

Think about that. Seventy years of not materializing. Seventy years of new faces and old repeatedly trying to

see "some progress." Seventy years of hopeful tripe from politicians and journalists.

It is all too easy to make another trip to the DOE casinos when you are playing with other people's money. What an addiction.

The labs are the political heroin of New Mexico [thanks to Carol Miller for this trope].

William Weida, former chair of economics at Colorado College, once remarked, "The people who look to the labs for economic development are people for whom 60 years of data are not enough." It's 70 years now and the same people are singing the same sad song.

Dr. Weida also remarked, more pointedly, that New Mexico's greatest economic development problem was the failure to understand that "The Bomb" -- by which he meant not just the physical bomb and its institutions but also the complex of loyalties and ideologies that have taken the catbird's seat in this state -- has been "a mistake."

Others, and more pointedly still, call it New Mexico's "Stockholm Syndrome," for the positive psychological valence [transference, I should have said] that hostages can develop for their captors.

In fact the present situation works swimmingly for those who drive this folly. "Tech transfer" entrepreneurs want and get a second tranche of taxpayer dollars, the first not being enough of a subsidy for technologies which can't cross the threshold into something anyone actually might want enough to stimulate conventional business loans and development activity.

The real gold mine comes next, when a DoD- or Homeland Security-funded buyer, let's say (amazing, isn't it, how much of this vaunted technology is all about domination, fear, and war), actually places the first big order for the suicide- bomber-detecting radar illustrated above, or the surveillance software mentioned. Then the entrepreneur -- who has moved his start-up to California or wherever by this time -- can really cash in and retire.

Wow. What a fantastic economic development model for New Mexico.

Of course economic development for New Mexico is not a major interest for anyone involved in perpetuating these myths. If it were they would take the problem more seriously. They might even look at the data.

Best wishes,

Greg

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2901 Summit Place NE Albuquerque, NM 87106, Phone: 505-265-1200



Why the March 22 hearing on LANL safety is critically important; March 16 LASG meeting; Bechtel etc. want to hire 1,150 more warhead production workers

March 14, 2016

This letter is being sent to local members. Tell us if you want off this exclusive list.

Dear friends --

1. The great importance of the March 22 public hearing on LANL safety

As mentioned in our March 11 letter, senior Department of Energy (DOE) nuclear officials are coming to Santa Fe on Tuesday, March 22 in the context of a [public hearing](#) organized by the [Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board](#) (DNFSB). The hearing will be held from 5:00 - 6:30 pm (Session 1) and from 6:45 - 9:00 pm (Session 2) at the Santa Fe Community Convention Center, 201 West Marcy Street ([map](#)). As mentioned previously, there will be a public comment period from 8:00 - 8:45 pm. If you want to speak we highly recommend arriving at 4:30 pm to sign in to do so. The [agenda](#) provides detail.

The Honorable Madelyn Creedon, National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) Principal Deputy Administrator, will be there among others. As noted previously, Ms. Creedon plays a role in most major decisions about the nuclear warhead complex -- ***such as, whether or not Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) will expand its pit production facilities.***

Later this year, Ms. Creedon either will, or won't, sign off on building underground plutonium processing "modules" at LANL, the biggest step in expanding LANL's plutonium processing and manufacturing role. NNSA calls it "PMA," the "Plutonium Modular Approach." It is a multibillion-dollar underground expansion of LANL's Technical Area (TA)-55, on top of billions already programmed for repair, upgrading, and equipment installation in existing TA-55 buildings.

Our allies in government stopped NNSA from including PMA in its fiscal year (FY) 2017 budget request. That battle will continue during Obama's final year. We need a big push to get this project canceled or at least delayed into a new presidential administration and a new LANL contract.

We need Ms. Creedon and her associates, not to mention the DNFSB, to understand as clearly as possible that Santa Fe and New Mexico do not want this kind of expansion, and we will make it very difficult!

The New Mexico delegation is all in favor of the PMA.

There will be no other opportunity to express your views in person directly to DOE on the topic of turning LANL into a plutonium manufacturing center -- "Rocky Flats II" -- and using the additional factory space to produce new kinds of nuclear warheads on a crash basis as soon as the buildings are done -- which is precisely what is being planned. That's what "safety" is ultimately all about. That's the mission that makes and manages the bulk of the transuranic (TRU) waste at LANL.

There may or may not be future "scoping" meetings for environmental analysis of PMA under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). If there are, they would be in 2017 or later, i.e. *after* NNSA has fully committed to PMA and asked Congress for its initial funding.

We succeeded in killing the Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Replacement Nuclear Facility (CMRR-NF). We thereby slowed the acquisition of higher pit production capacity by 5-10 years. PMA aims to be smaller, cheaper (but still up to \$3 billion), with modular production labs entirely underground, all of which will make it harder to kill than CMRR-NF. It would be much better and easier to defeat or delay the project this year. **For that we need visible public support as well as expert analysis.**

Please ask your friends to come to this hearing.

We very seldom ask you to attend any government public meeting because most of them are not worth your time. We have

not asked you to come to any government meeting since November 2011, almost five years ago, which was also a DNFSB meeting and quite a substantive one that received a significant amount of national attention, at the time and afterwards. For example:

- [Overdose. Is LANL exposing the public to excessive risk?](#), *Santa Fe Reporter*, Wren Abbott, Dec 7, 2011
- [Debate over \\$6B Los Alamos nuke lab](#), *Associated Press*, Dec 5, 2011 (By noon 12/05/11, Google News reported that the article had been carried by 183 outlets.)
- [Oversight board questions adequacy of LANL efforts to protect against quake](#), *Associated Press*, Nov 17, 2011

What we could not tell anyone then was that the Administration, including senior military figures, had already decided to "delay" CMRR-NF, for the same reasons we argued. Even NNSA was not "in the loop" at that point, not yet. *The adverse national publicity from the Santa Fe hearing was very helpful then -- do you see how this works?* Now look at the present situation.

There is no limit to the creativity you and your friends can employ.

People always ask, "What can I do?" **Well, please pack the Santa Fe Convention Center with all your friends and relations. Bring whatever banners you want to make (without sticks).** [Guidelines](#).

2. Reminder: Study Group meeting coming next week!

We'll be meeting this Wednesday, March 16, at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 107 W Barcelona Rd ([map](#)), from 6 to 8 pm. We'll meet in the library. We will provide talking points for March 22, plus a short update on the administration's nuclear weapons and plutonium disposal plans, especially as they relate to the New Mexico labs and New Mexico. We also want to briefly describe the progress made in Geneva so far this year on a [nuclear weapons ban](#).

What we are doing is like pecking from inside the egg; our international colleagues are pecking from outside.

Hardly a day passes without some senior administration or military figure giving a speech about the importance of investing heavily in the U.S. nuclear stockpile. Back in January, retired STRATCOM Commander General [Kevin Chilton was at Pantex rallying production workers](#), whose morale has been seriously flagging.

[Chilton] noted that **more work will be coming to Pantex and Y-12 as nuclear weapons work ramps up in the coming decades.**

"The cycle is picking up right now, and it's picking up fast. There is a tremendous amount of work to be done, and there are those who doubt we can do it," Chilton said. "And then there are those like me who are counting on folks like you to make it happen because we have to make it happen. It's just so important to our country."

Last week, Bechtel-led [Consolidated Nuclear Security \(CNS\)](#) **announced** that ***Pantex and Y-12 are hiring 1,150 more warhead production workers. Pantex hopes to hire 300 people in just 90 days,*** an emergency pace. Come on the 16th and we will explain why.

See you soon,

Greg



Senior DOE nuclear officials coming to Santa Fe for public hearing; more

March 11, 2016

This letter is being sent to local members. Tell us if you want off this exclusive list.

Dear friends --

1. Senior DOE nuclear officials coming to Santa Fe for public hearing

"We interrupt our regular programming" to advise you that on the evening of March 22, senior Department of Energy (DOE) officials are coming to Santa Fe in the context of a [public hearing](#) organized by the [Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board](#) (DNFSB).

The hearing will be held on Tuesday, March 22, 2016, from 5:00 - 6:30 pm (Session 1) and from 6:45 - 9:00 pm (Session 2) at the Santa Fe Community Convention Center, 201 West Marcy Street ([map](#)).

There will be a public comment period from 8:00 - 8:45 pm. This is not a long comment period, so we highly recommend arriving at 4:30 pm to sign in to speak, if you think you might want to do so. We believe it would be futile and counterproductive to use what influence we have with the DNFSB to stretch out the comment period.

The [agenda](#) provides detail. The presence of Madelyn Creedon, National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) Principal Deputy Administrator, and Monica Regalbuto, DOE Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management (EM), indicates that this is an important meeting.

As Administrator Frank Klotz's principal deputy, Ms. Creedon plays a role in most major decisions about the nuclear warhead complex, such as who manages Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) and how, and the shape of NNSA's programs and budgets for nuclear weapons. Ms. Regalbuto is the person ultimately most responsible for allocating DOE's cleanup funds and establishing cleanup goals. Both have only a few months remaining in office but their actions and decisions during that period will help guide the next administration for at least its first year, a crucial period.

As noted in the agenda, the official purposes of this meeting are to:

1. Discuss the hazards posed to the public and workers by the containers of waste stored at Area G.
2. Discuss actions taken or planned to resolve known inadequacies in the current safety bases [safe operational rules and limitations] of the various facilities that manage or store transuranic waste at LANL.
3. Discuss actions taken to improve transuranic waste management at LANL in response to the challenges caused by the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant accident and its associated findings.

The meeting will also be, whether we like it or not, an occasion in which NNSA, DOE, and the DNFSB assess how much interest there is in safety at LANL and, more subtly, how much public support there is for LANL's dangerous nuclear weapons missions, and for cleanup. As you will have noticed, there are very few opportunities for the public to speak to senior nuclear officials.

Communication to NNSA and DOE about "the big picture" will no doubt be as much tacit and "between the lines" as it will be overt. In our view, many creative and respectful forms of communication may be helpful. The Board even provides helpful [guidelines](#). But unlike the case in many (faux) "hearings," in this case our simple words will receive close attention. DNFSB sincerely does want public input into these issues.

DNFSB is a small, high-quality federal agency with strong traditions of openness, responsiveness (e.g. to LASG requests), and tremendous expertise. It is highly respected in most places, feared by contractors, and loathed by neoconservative nuclear hawks, especially by certain staff on the armed services committees, who see "excessive" safety as an impediment to nuclear warhead production. For this reason the DNFSB has been under continuous political attack for many years now.

Trish and Astrid Webster recently met with DNFSB Chair Joyce Connery, board member Bruce Hamilton, and staff in Santa Fe; Greg and sometimes others (Trish, or Peter Neils) meet privately with the Board and staff in DC on roughly a quarterly basis.

The DNFSB deserves our support and help. One way to provide that is to come to this meeting and speak.

Feel free to ask your friends to come to this hearing, and to the meeting below.

2. Reminder: Study Group meeting coming next week!

We'll be meeting on Wednesday, March 16, at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 107 W Barcelona Rd ([map](#)), from 6 to 8 pm. We'll meet in the library. We will provide a short update on the administration's nuclear weapons and plutonium disposal plans, especially as they relate to the New Mexico labs and New Mexico. We also want to briefly describe the progress made in Geneva so far this year on a nuclear weapons ban, and how you can help.

Given the importance of the hearing on the 22nd we will have to at least lightly address the above safety issues. We will provide possible talking points for your consideration, but in truth if you attend the hearing you will be well-equipped to speak from what you will learn from the issues raised (or not raised!) by the speakers during Session 1 (5:00 to 6:30 pm).

Why is all this important? Because it is really about global empire, the wars we are conducting to maintain that empire, our national priorities, whether we will transition from fossil fuels and protect the climate -- the whole enchilada. But don't take my word for it. Here's the nation's #2 military officer, in [an article](#) published yesterday:

Gen. Paul Selva, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, spent a chunk of his appearance at a defense conference discussing the need to educate the public on why nuclear weapons remain relevant in order to secure funding for a coming wave of modernization costs.

"We have a bill to pay to modernize our nuclear force in all three legs of the triad. And we need to figure out how to do that and how to talk about it so that everybody understands why each leg of the triad is so important,"...

Selva seemed to argue that the triad — the naval, air and ICBM nuclear delivery arms of the Pentagon — needs to take precedent over conventional systems, given its centrality to American global power projection.

"Our capacity to deter nuclear foes adds credibility to our conventional force, and if we are ever threatened by a nuclear foe who is our equal or our better, then our conventional force loses relevance quick," Selva said.

As much as we would like to think otherwise, nuclear weapons are currently New Mexico's greatest defining political loyalty. This state will never thrive until we end our abusive, non-consensual relationship with the nuclear empire.

See you soon,

Greg



Los Alamos Study Group

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Update on Santa Fe meeting, March 16

March 8, 2016

Dear friends --

As promised, here's an update on next week's Study Group meeting in Santa Fe. We're meeting on Wednesday, March 16, the same date as previously announced, at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 107 W Barcelona Rd ([map](#)), from 6 to 8 pm. We'll meet in the library.

We are also still meeting this Wednesday, March 9, at 5:30 pm, at the World Headquarters, 2901 Summit Place NE, Albuquerque ([map](#)).

At these meetings we will provide short updates with lots of discussion on the administration's nuclear weapons plans, especially as they relate to the New Mexico labs, plutonium disposition and waste disposal in New Mexico, prospects for cleanup at Los Alamos and elsewhere, a possible commercial nuclear fuel storage site near Hobbs, and related developments.

There is good news to tell, and some interesting tidbits that we can't write into Bulletins.

We want to save the last half-hour or so to discuss, together, our integral responses to these developments.

I want to emphasize that these meetings are safe places to bring your concerns and uncertainties. There will be space for them. We won't overdo it with numbing facts and details. We are all in this together.

Hopefully you all got [Bulletin 217](#) this morning. If there were formatting difficulties for you in the email version, read the [web version](#).

Best,

Greg and Trish

P.S. We are heading up to Santa Fe soon to Sally Denton's book event (***The Profiteers: Bechtel and the Men Who Built the World***) this evening at 6 pm at [Collected Works](#), 202 Galisteo St. in Santa Fe ([map](#)). Perhaps we will see some of you there!

P.P.S. If you want off these local lists let me know by return email.

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2901 Summit Place NE Albuquerque, NM 87106, Phone: 505-265-1200



Upcoming meetings and get-togethers!

March 2, 2016

(This is a letter to local members in and near Albuquerque, Santa Fe, and Taos. Let us know via email if you want to be taken off this list.)

Dear friends –

First, this coming Tuesday evening, March 8, at 6 pm, author Sally Denton will discuss her newest book, *The Profiteers: Bechtel and the Men Who Built the World*, at [Collected Works](#) in Santa Fe, 202 Galisteo St. ([map](#)).

Bechtel, as those on this list understand, is a partner (we believe the leading partner) in the consortium [Los Alamos National Security](#) (LANS) that runs Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), a contract that the Department of Energy (DOE) once valued at [\\$36 billion](#) (B). The LANS contract is being [terminated](#), for cause.

Among its other DOE contracts, Bechtel is a partner at LANL, in [Lawrence Livermore National Security](#) (LLNS), at the Pantex and Y-12 nuclear weapons plants via its [Consolidated Nuclear Security](#) (CNS) partnership, and is building the [Hanford Waste Treatment Plant](#) (WTP), probably the nation's single largest civil engineering project (a project we believe will fail in substantial part). Bechtel is the largest single corporate recipient of DOE dollars and a powerful force on Capitol Hill, in the Pentagon, and in the broader Deep State ([Lofgren](#), or if you prefer, [Scott](#) – both fine books).

From the event blurb:

Today Bechtel is one of the largest privately held corporations in the world, enriched and empowered by a long history of government contracts and the privatization of public works, made possible by an unprecedented revolving door between its San Francisco headquarters and Washington. Bechtel executives John McCone, Caspar Weinberger, and George P. Shultz segued from leadership at the company to positions as Director of the CIA, Secretary of Defense, and Secretary of State, respectively.

Like all stories of empire building, the rise of Bechtel presents a complex and riveting narrative. In *The Profiteers*, Sally Denton, whom *The New York Times* called “a wonderful writer,” exposes Bechtel's secret world and one of the biggest business and political stories of our time.

This is an important book and we think it will be seen as even more important in the coming months, as more damning information comes to light. We hope you can go to this event!

Second and third, the Study Group is hosting important issue updates and get-togethers.

The first will be at our World Headquarters, 2901 Summit Place NE, Albuquerque ([map](#)), on Wednesday, March 9, at 5:30 pm.

The second will be in Santa Fe on Wednesday, March 16, at a private home. [Please RSVP](#) for this event and we will tell you how to get there.

We learned a great deal on Greg's 12-day sojourn in the Imperial Capitol late last month, and meanwhile our agents (Ray and Mia) have been extremely productive (as usual) in and around international disarmament negotiations in Geneva. We would like to share news from both cities with you. We will put a little bit of this into a coming Bulletin but frankly we can't publish a lot of what we learned.

The practical upshot is that we really need your help, for example to capitalize on critical opportunities in:

- Stopping the proposed underground warhead core (“pit”) factory “modules,” which our allies in government barely delayed again late last year, just as we correctly divined from the budgetary tea leaves.
- Stopping what has become, through Obama's passivity and incompetence vis-à-vis the powerful nuclear advocates in his government, an all-out nuclear arms race against Russia and China. We have a lot of allies in this, and the good

news is that, like us, almost no one believes all these modernization programs can be funded.

- Helping the gathering international forces seeking a ban on the possession and use of nuclear weapons.
- Building Study Group internship, fellowship, and volunteer programs.
- Reaching out with helping hands to allied climate and energy organizations in New Mexico and nationally.

We can offer opportunities and flexibility locally that we cannot offer nationally – hence this email and these meetings.

Fourth, please consider attending the Sandoval County Planning and Zoning Commission meeting on Wednesday, March 23 at 6 pm, at 1500 Idalia Road, Bernalillo ([map](#)), in the County Commission chambers, when the application of the (nearly-bankrupt) SandRidge Energy to explore for oil and gas in the Albuquerque Basin will again be heard. This first location is not very far from residences and parkland, and would impact people near and far in all the usual ways. Unfortunately, SandRidge is not the only company involved in exploration. Local geologists involved in this first proposed well are talking up the wider possibilities for oil and gas development around Albuquerque even as I write this.

Find out more from our friends at [Stop the Frack Attack](#).

For more news, see our upcoming Bulletin!

See you soon we hope!

Greg Mello, for the Study Group

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(The following is a notice pertaining to the previous letter below.)

KAFB event is closed to the public after all; no Coffee Club

February 3, 2016

Dear friends --

As it turns out, and contrary to the formal announcement, this Friday's [panel discussion](#) at the [School of Advanced Nuclear Deterrence Studies \(SANDS\)](#) at [Kirtland Air Force Base \(KAFB\)](#) is only open to those members of the "public" who hold *badges enabling entry to KAFB*, or who enter the base in a car with a badge-holder.

I had put in a call to the SANDS director Adam Lowther yesterday about logistics and this morning he called back with this news. In our conversation it seemed as if the concept of discussing nuclear issues with "civilians or "the public" without base access was not overtly ridiculous, but not something he had thought of.

The *Albuquerque Journal* will be at the event, however, under a "long-standing arrangement" with the KAFB press office. You can bet that any journalist who asks hard questions would not be granted such access by the KAFB press office.

Tomorrow morning's proposed LASG "Coffee Club" gathering to discuss this event is also cancelled. We are rushing to meet deadlines here.

In 2004 I spoke with the retired General Horner, now deceased, who led the bombing of Iraq in Desert Storm and who examined nuclear attack scenarios at that time, as requested by Colin Powell. The experience convinced both men that nuclear weapons had no utility and should be negotiated away. Importantly in the present connection he said that most senior officers in the military shared his anti-nuclear views but what he chiefly feared was the possible development of a cadre of young Air Force officers whose career influences were too narrowly nuclear, who spent a lot of time with people from Sandia and Livermore and Los Alamos and STRATCOM, and who thereby developed an unchallenged nuclear ideology and "groupthink." He feared a nuclear weapons echo chamber or intellectual bubble.

That bogey is now a reality. That's what SANDS is.

Greg and Trish

On Friday, KAFB will explain why we should stop worrying and love the bomb; LASG discussion Thursday morning

February 2, 2016

Dear friends --

This Friday from 12:30 to 4:30 p.m, the [School of Advanced Nuclear Deterrence Studies \(SANDS\)](#) at [Kirtland Air Force Base \(KAFB\)](#) will host a [panel discussion](#) on "why the United States has a nuclear arsenal and how it contributes to the nation's security."

The event will take place in the presentation room of the 377th Air Base Wing Headquarters building. There is no charge to attend, and no pre-registration is needed. Eight presenters will lead the symposium.

This event may be of considerable interest to Study Group members, as it is to us.

We hope many of you will attend. Exactly how that will work out we do not know. Some imagination may be required.

We will discuss this event, its logistics and its content, in a special LASG "Coffee Club" gathering at our World

Headquarters, 2901 Summit Place NE, on Thursday morning at 7:30 am. Come one, come all.

The [mission of SANDS](#) is "to increase comprehensive knowledge of the nuclear enterprise by teaching military and civilians alike."

"When it [the panel discussion] is over, attendees should be able to explain to their mother in Des Moines why the United States has a nuclear arsenal and how it contributes to the nation's security," SANDS Director Dr. Adam Lowther said.

"SANDS is for the best and brightest of the command," [said](#) Lt. Gen. Stephen Wilson, former AFGSC commander and the driving force behind the school's creation. "It will draw on educators and curricula from across the nation. These students will be the 'Jedi Knights,' the really smart folks every combatant command wants."

Presumably this event is related to KAFB's 75th anniversary. From the *Albuquerque Journal* [we learn](#) that this past Friday Mayor Richard Berry told the gathered civic and military leaders that Albuquerque was "blessed to have Kirtland in our city."

We thought you'd want to know, and we hope to see some of you Thursday.

There are other important events coming -- two of which be the subject of a second email -- but for now we leave you with just this news, and this photo taken at KAFB or the Sunport in 1943, when generals Patton and Doolittle visited, helping set the stage for the economic and human development powerhouse, and that paragon of participatory democracy, that New Mexico is today.

Greg and Trish



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Park Service meeting Monday requesting "input" on the Manhattan Project National Historical Park

February 2, 2016

Dear friends –

(It is very rare to send two emails on the same day to these lists. Write me if you want to be taken off this list.)

When you shop at the [La Montanita Coop](#) in February in Santa Fe, Albuquerque, and Gallup, and use your own bag, the Coop will donate a dime per bag to the Los Alamos Study Group. It really adds up! See the [February Coop newsletter](#) (p. 5) for a blurb about us.

Dear friends --

Besides Friday's public [nuclear weapons symposium](#) at Kirtland Air Force Base, there are two other meetings of special interest to us (and perhaps to you) in the coming week. Here is one of them. (We will send information on the other one in a separate email tomorrow.)

The National Park Service (NPS) is [requesting public input](#) on the new Manhattan Project National Historical Park (MPNHP). NPS is conducting a meeting for this purpose, **in Los Alamos** at the **Los Alamos County Council Chambers** in the **Los Alamos Municipal Building, 1000 Central Avenue**, on **Monday, February 8, from 5:00-7:00 p.m.**

We need to give them some input.

Los Alamos County's [announcement of this event](#) provides interesting and useful background on the local organizations and issues involved with the MPNHP.

Our web page, with articles and commentary on this travesty, is [here](#). See especially this [brochure](#) (reprinted [here](#) on our blog which may be easier to read on a cell phone). As we wrote to you on November 7 of last year:

We hope that this nascent Park (there is no money as yet, and no management plan) can become a [permanent] locus of local [and international] protest. We see the Park not as "history" but as pure propaganda for Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) and its enduring mission of creating weapons of global destruction, for LANL's private, Bechtel-led contractor Los Alamos National Security (LANS), for the "greatness" of the Manhattan Project (the quote is from the enabling legislation) and therefore the legitimacy and "greatness" of nuclear weapons, and for heinous war crimes now celebrated in a new National Park. This Park is not exactly about the past because the Manhattan Project never ended. It's also about who we are today, what we celebrate and glorify, and what we will become.

Perhaps it really should be called the "Bechtel National Park," as it is one of the 40 or so different ways we have identified that the for-profit nuclear laboratories have subverted democratic oversight and created – for themselves, their defense industry sponsors, and for local [comprador](#) politicians – an almost-perfect, self-licking ice cream cone. *Almost* perfect – even this they cannot manage.

Some Study Group members -- six of us -- silently protested in Los Alamos at the signing celebration creating the Park on November 11.

Every protest in Los Alamos has its memorable moments. Here is one: one woman in our group was approached by a military veteran, who took a look at the Hiroshima poster she was holding, walked up close and said, "Why don't you go somewhere and kill yourself, you stupid broad."

In our experience that side of Los Alamos always emerges when the myths are poked a little bit. Los Alamos is a "nice" town -- in a Stepford kind of way. (Sorry for the judgment, it's just a fact and something a lot of people there -- especially the troubled kids -- know. It will be that way until it stops being the company town for doomsday.)

Here is another memorable bit: elementary school children singing a creepy little skit, the "high" point of which was this verse:

He is Oppie on the Hill
He is Oppie on the Hill
We have a Gadget we must make
For the human race's sake.
'Cause he is Oppie on the Hill.

Count on LANL's influence to invert the moral universe. Here's the [video](#) (mp4, posterized to protect the kids identities; their parents, the school, and the town were exploiting them; we won't.)

Best, and see some of you on Monday in Los Alamos,

Greg and Trish

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Los Alamos Study Group

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Updates for local members: biweekly meetings suspended; internship, fellowship, volunteer opportunities; news

January 19, 2016

Dear friends –

First, we are suspending our twice-weekly get-togethers for now. They have been valuable to and enjoyable but they do take a considerable amount of time, which is scarce. Our doors remain open to visits, however – especially if you want to talk about working with us!

Second, THANK YOU for your generous donations, the financial foundation of our work this year. Thanks to you we've got a start on what will surely be an eventful year. If you know others who also might like to help, you can use [this letter](#) in your outreach.

Third, for some specific ideas about how to work with us, please see [Bulletin 214](#), topic 4, "What is to be done." We need your help!

Fourth, if you or anybody else you know are thinking of installing a solar photovoltaic (PV) system and engage [Positive Energy](#) to do that for you with their excellent and long-lived [SunPower](#) modules, please mention that we referred you. If you or your friend does so, Positive Energy will pay us \$500 for the referral when your project is complete. There are volunteer opportunities in this "dual-use" matter as well.

Fifth, please think about candidates for internships and fellowships with us. We explain the program a little [here](#). We see especially ripe opportunities this year. There are too few workers to bring in the whole harvest. Not a day passes without us recognizing *yet another* potentially very fruitful, and pleasant, project for *somebody*, which would amplify our work and that of others.

Sixth (mentioned to Albuquerque members already), some of you may be interested in last Tuesday's [resolution](#) in Carlsbad supporting disposal of an additional 6 metric tons of non-pit plutonium at WIPP. [We support this disposal](#), for reasons we have explained and would be happy to explain further in the right context. We have opened a new page for plutonium disposition [here](#).

Seventh (also mentioned to Albuquerque members already), you might be interested in these two recent blog posts at [Forget the Rest](#):

- [The New York Times gathers a "critical" mass of former insiders now dissing nuclear modernization plans](#)
- ["What is to be done"](#)

If you like, please subscribe (see box on top of page, right hand side)! It is our intent to provide a précis of important daily articles on this blog (please subscribe, and refer to others!). We do most of the work involved already but every hour has been spoken for lately.

Eighth, there have been several news articles recently about Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), pit production, plutonium disposal, and the Manhattan Project National Historical Park. We know of other articles on the way. Rather than list them here, look in these places, where there is context:

- [Our home page](#)
- [LANL's proposed "modular pit facility"](#)
- [Plutonium disposition](#)
- [Manhattan Project National Historical Park](#)
- [LANS' loss of the LANL contract](#)

There have also been some excellent articles and blog posts about nuclear weapons modernization, which we will review and examine in forthcoming blog posts.

Very best wishes,

