

Los Alamos Study Group

[About us](#) · [Home](#) · [Contact](#) · [Contribute](#) · [Blog](#) · [Twitter](#) · [Search](#)

December 7, 2021

[Permalink](#) for this letter. Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New-Mexico-oriented list.

Previously: (11/30/21): [Nuclear-weapons-oriented "innovation triangle" developments, tax changes, pitched to NM legislature](#)

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here](#).

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserv (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg](#) or [Trish](#).

Los Alamos to "NM Innovation Triangle:" you are maintaining a menace to public safety and are ordered to demolish your building ASAP

Dear friends --

In the previous letter we tried to bring you up to speed on the LANL-inspired plans of New Mexico Innovation Triangle, LLC (NMIT) to build mid-rise tech ghettos "villages" in Los Alamos and Santa Fe. After sending that letter it occurred to me that it may not have been obvious to some that the "high-tech" jobs NMIT is pitching have anything to do with LANL. Well, LANL's recruitment has long had an element of "bait and switch." Then-Director Sig Hecker:

It's never been terribly popular for a fresh PhD to become a nuclear weapons designer. What we've always had to do ... is to make the whole Los Alamos environment attractive to creative young physicists, chemists and mathematicians. We try to imbue the laboratory with an intellectual stimulus. That means the laboratory must resemble a university campus, with academic people and activities ... It turns out that once you get people into the laboratory, the challenges associated with the nuclear weapons programs are so immense that in the past it's not been a terrible problem to bring in good people. But it's going to be much more difficult from now on. (Lubkin, Goodwin, and Levi, 1991; emphasis added) (cited [here](#))

Those particular technology areas are good staff magnets for LANL. Those specialties have little other market in Santa Fe.

In a recent development in its short but colorful history, NMIT has now found itself the subject of a "clean and lien" order unanimously passed by the Los Alamos County Council last week ("[Council Votes To Uphold Hilltop House Clean And Lien Resolution 6-0](#)," *Los Alamos Reporter* (LAR), December 4, 2021).

The property in question is the former Hilltop House motel, near the center of the town and owned by NMIT, which the County demands be removed "in due haste" and in any case by March 30, 2022. From the Los Alamos Fire Marshal's Order, here's why:

"In essence the inspection revealed that the Hilltop House structure remains unsecure for curious and/or misguided teenagers and persons without housing have entered the structure and its many nooks and crannies throughout including the higher floors. The inspection reveals a structure that is difficult to secure from entry due to the significant degradation of the windows, doors, and other entrance points due to failure to maintain the building. The inspection reveals an enormous amount of combustible material inside a structure that has no working fire suppression or fire alert system. The inspection revealed an enormous amount of mold due to moisture entering the building from a degraded roof that would likely collapse quickly in a fire. The structure contains a large vertical shaft from the ground to the roof that creates a natural chimney allowing a fire to travel quickly to the higher floors and roof. The floor and walls throughout the structure show a profound level of degradation and disrepair. The walls and floors contain a patchwork of large holes going vertically and horizontally throughout creating an almost Swiss cheese effect throughout the structure.

"Given the particulars outlined above and more particular in the report, the entire hotel structure is a rapid burning fuel package. A fire in this hotel would rapidly engulf the entire structure. This rapidly burning fuel package would most likely produce flying embers that would most likely precipitate other adjacent fires, a wildland fire event and respiratory emergencies for anyone in proximity. Any person in one of the higher floors or sequestered away in any of the nooks and crannies would likely perish in such a fire. Finally given the catastrophic fire threat the hotel poses, firefighters would not enter the structure even to save human life because of the extreme threat this would pose to the life of the firefighter because of the very high potential for structural collapse."

As you can read in the above article, despite this NMIT appealed the Los Alamos County Fire Marshal's Order to board up and fence the property and comply with all laws and regulations pertaining to underground storage tanks.

NMIT offered no reasons as to why the Order wasn't reasonable, and still hadn't managed to board up the lower windows and doors, or get a local fencing contractor to put up a fence.

Remember (from the 11/30 letter), that the owner of NMIT, John Rizzo, bragged to the *Santa Fe New Mexican* about the "hundreds of millions of dollars" he was going to bring to Santa Fe ("[Innovation Village aims to combine tech sector, housing in Santa Fe](#)," Teya Vitu, *SFNM*, March 29, 2021). But he can't be bothered to put up a chain link fence or get some plywood to board up windows -- or even to respond to local municipal authorities, who must later approve his plans? Wow.

So far, the local newspapers (other than LAR) have not written about this. Are folks just busy, or could it have something to do with those "hundreds of millions of dollars"?

We do not see, in NMIT's behavior, any indication that NMIT cares about New Mexico, or even knows how. Jobs for those who need them in this state? Not really a

consideration, except as a sales tactic.

As for NMIT's grand plans for Santa Fe (see last letter), we are hearing rumors that the Webber administration and one or more as-yet-unknown city councilors will try to roll back the present height limits to accommodate NMIT and Rizzo some time in January.

Please call the Santa Fe city councilors and tell them NOT to introduce, or vote for, any roll-back of the City's height ordinance -- least of all for NMIT. This "plutonium profit food chain" monstrosity would bring a whole train of negative consequences for the city, region, and state, as previously discussed.

More soon,

Greg Mello

[^ back to top](#)

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

Los Alamos Study Group

About us · Home · Contact · Contribute · Blog · Twitter · Search

November 30, 2021

[Permalink](#) for this letter. Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New-Mexico-oriented list.

Previously: (11/24/21): [How New Mexico Could Become A Climate Leader](#)

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here](#).

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserv (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish](#).

Nuclear-weapons-oriented "innovation triangle" developments, tax changes, pitched to NM legislature

1. **Background**
2. **Rizzo's latest plan**
3. **Concluding harsh comments**

Dear friends --

We have said that the proposed expansion of Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), including but not limited to \$18 billion (B) in plutonium warhead core ("pit") production [expenses](#) planned for this decade, would badly damage Los Alamos, Santa Fe, and the region, and do so in a comprehensive way.

The social, political, economic, and environmental impacts of deeper nuclear colonization involve a sea-change in identity and culture. A sea-change is also in store for LANL.

Industrial pit production is a nearly impossible mission at LANL for many reasons. Some of the difficulties lie in LANL's location, others in the limited regional workforce and training available. Still others lie in LANL itself. To solve some of its external problems, LANL hopes to leverage private efforts, State funds, and various forms of local governmental and tribal support to enhance its worker "pipeline" and to provide housing and targeted education for its workers.

This letter provides background, and talking points that may be helpful to citizens, activists, and journalists regarding LANL's informal partnership with one active developer, John Rizzo, who in turn is an active sales agent to an elite network of movers and shakers, to local governments, and to the legislature -- without bringing LANL and its controversial, dangerous missions into the discussion.

Buzzwords and euphemisms are used instead -- especially, "innovation."

Rizzo's company is called "New Mexico Innovation Triangle," a name originally provided by LANL's Deputy Director Kelly Beierschmitt prior to July 20, 2019 (email of that date from John Rizzo to Rich Brown, City of Santa Fe Economic Development Director, and several others).

As always, those who want to special favors from government in New Mexico always tell their elected audiences they will create "jobs." In this case, this developer believes his projects will add a total of about 165,000 new jobs (25,000 direct and the balance indirect; see the legislative presentation below). If, that is, he is properly subsidized. It sounds laughable, but for Santa Fe and Los Alamos it is very serious.

What's somewhat unusual about this effort is its boldness, which includes changing the tax code to favor investors like him as well as those who will rent from his company.

Where would these renters work? For now and the foreseeable future, they will work mostly at LANL. LANL is the "anchor tenant" in his virtual "mall" and the only one of any size. What will these workers do? What LANL workers mostly do, and will always mostly do: work on nuclear weapons.

At the moment and for the foreseeable future, these developments are mostly housing for LANL's pit factory, not to put too fine a point on it.

Background

On Sunday morning, May 5, 2019, serial entrepreneur John Rizzo met with his invited guests over brunch to discuss the future of New Mexico -- specifically, technology "triangles and villages."

From an email* Rizzo sent to them, these guests included:

- Alan Webber (Mayor of Santa Fe)
- Lilian Montoya (CEO of CHRISTUS St. Vincent)
- Mark Johnson (CEO Descartes Labs)
- Vince Kadlubek (CEO Meow Wolf)
- Alicia Keys (Cabinet Secretary of Economic Development at State of New Mexico)
- Provost Rich Wood, UNM
- Kelly Beierschmitt (Deputy Laboratory Director LANL)
- Patrick Woehrlé (Director of Government Affairs & Protocol LANL)

- David Douglass (Deputy Laboratory Director Sandia National Laboratories)
- John Mahoney (Developer)
- Zane Fischer (Founder of Extraordinary Structures and Make Santa Fe)
- Kim Shanahan (sustainable housing and development consultant)
- Annie Mansfield (my spouse and SVP at Wells Fargo Advisors)

*(We obtained Mayor Webber's copy of this email via the New Mexico Inspection of Public Records Act, IPRA.)

Other meetings followed with other guests that included Rich Brown at the City of Santa Fe, State Senator Michael Padilla, Paul Laur of Pebble Labs, Daniel Hernandez (program manager for the City's Midtown project), and others.

Rizzo and his wife hosted their guests in a brand-new, [award-winning](#) multi-million-dollar "Grand Hacienda," half a mile from the Las Campanas clubhouse. The fact that Rizzo's development ideas were developed and discussed in secret, with some of the most influential people in northern New Mexico, tells us a great deal about the nature, quality, and purposes of those plans. As does the venue for his sales pitch, which I for one hesitate to call a "home."

According to the well-informed *Santa Fe New Mexican (SFNM)*, the couple had not yet actually moved to New Mexico at that point ("[20 who will make news in 2020](#)," 12/31/2019).

Despite living here only on weekends, he's already broken bread with many in Santa Fe's mover-and-shaker crowd.

Rizzo continues his day job in San Francisco [as CEO of Deem, a corporate travel software company], but on the side, he is leading a master developer team proposing a Santa Fe Innovation Village for the city-owned midtown campus. He said he wants to develop more innovation villages in Santa Fe and other parts of New Mexico.

He sees himself as a catalyst to transform the state with these innovation villages, which would combine innovation and tech jobs, housing, education, office space, restaurants, services and access to investment capital for entrepreneurship.

During 2020, Rizzo and his team will continue "to support the city and its plans for an innovation village at midtown," create an investment syndicate to finance the several innovation villages he hopes to create, work with city and state governments on infrastructure and collaborate with public and private entities on education programs to support the concept.

Rizzo also wants to have community engagement session to help refine his plans. And within 18 months, Rizzo expects to be living full time in Santa Fe.

Rizzo reportedly had been "evaluating Santa Fe as a potential innovation center" since 2015, "noting the housing shortage, lack of modern office space, no major university and limited venture capital" ("[Silicon Valley executive enters midtown campus derby](#)," Teya Vitu, *SFNM*, 12/10/2019).

The time was not right for him back then.

"Things had changed substantially," Rizzo said of the past year [2019]. "There is a convergence here of a new mayor, new governor, Netflix."

Rizzo said he has had meetings with all sorts of officials, including Santa Fe Mayor Alan Webber, New Mexico Economic Development Secretary Alicia J. Keyes, the Los Alamos National Laboratory spinoff company Pebble Labs, affordable housing leaders, film industry people and Meow Wolf's Vince Kadlubek.

"I started having convenings at my house," Rizzo said.

... Rizzo's vision for Santa Fe Innovation Village at the midtown campus involves about 1,000 residential units and "hundreds of thousands of square feet of office space" for tech companies and education elements that could train tech workers.

"In a state of 2 million people with a budget surplus, with the Permian Basin, the Spaceport America, Los Alamos National Laboratory, there seemed to be a way to do something interesting for the state, to do all this without wrecking the state," Rizzo said. "The way to do this is with innovative and tech jobs. The midtown campus seems like a very interesting opportunity with a high density of offices, restaurants and bars, things that are open until midnight, extending a Rail Runner stop at midtown. We have a lot more we are thinking about that I am not comfortable sharing right now."

I would like to insert some comments here.

Of the four factors Rizzo said prevented Santa Fe from being an "innovation center" (a housing "shortage," lack of "modern office space," limited venture capital, and no major university), only the last (no major university) is in our view real. The theory that the City can build its way out of a shortage of *affordable* housing has never panned out, *over half a century*. Venture capital is limiting only because there are few reasons for it to grow here. Venture capital also requires very high rates of return, implies distant ownership stakes and attendant loss of sovereignty and democracy, and because of its high-interest "impatience" leads toward disruption and inequality, all of which is more or less the definition of carpetbagging. As for office space, that is easy enough to build if there is a viable economic purpose and need for it. But the lack of a major university and the talent pool associated with it is not something that can be magically grown in a few years. That takes decades of continuous public investment along with other supporting factors.

Three of the four New Mexico positive factors Rizzo mentions (Permian Basin, Spaceport, LANL) are geographically disparate. Two are irrelevant: how the Permian Basin and the Spaceport relate to the creation of an "innovation" village *in Santa Fe* eludes this reader. The fourth factor -- a "budget surplus" -- isn't real. The State has profound needs, more than fit in its present budget. He just doesn't see those needs as real, or perhaps important. He would like to have some of that "surplus."

By late January 2020, Rizzo's company was out of the running for the "master developer" role in the City's Midtown project ("[Midtown campus list may be down to 3](#)," Teya Vitu, *SFNM*, Jan. 24, 2020).

John F. Rizzo, who heads the Santa Fe Innovation Village team and was thought to be a serious contender, said he's in discussions to potentially

collaborate with three other master developers that may make the short list.

"Our philosophy was to help the state with innovation villages," said Rizzo, a part-time Santa Fe resident and CEO of Deem Inc., a San Francisco-based corporate travel software company. "The midtown campus is one. *I've got a lot of other things in play in New Mexico.*" (emphasis added)

One of those "things in play" became apparent in March of this year, when Rizzo announced plans to develop a 140-acre site in southwest Santa Fe ("[Innovation Village aims to combine tech sector, housing in Santa Fe](#)," Teya Vitu, *SFNM*, March 29, 2021).

To make his plan work, Rizzo sought "to apply Midtown LINC (Local Innovation Corridor overlay district) components to his project, such as a streamlined development process, more modernized architecture and increased density that would allow for a 75-foot height limit."

The city's economic development director, Rich Brown, is a believer. He would be, having discussed it privately the year before at Rizzo's house, as did the Mayor. He sees "Rizzo's project [as] adding to the patchwork of innovation centers sprouting around the city" [?].

Rizzo's project, he added, would fit nicely in an innovation hub with Los Alamos and Albuquerque.

"We think of the three cities as part of an innovation triangle just like you have in North Carolina," Brown said. "It's innovation place-making of the future. It's building a corridor in Santa Fe that helps us recruit companies and create jobs."

... "Why don't we build a tech economy so I have something to do?" Rizzo said. "Could we build an innovation economy in Santa Fe?"

Over the past year, he pitched the notion to dozens of local and state leaders at Sunday brunches at his home.

New Mexico Innovation Triangle "was formed as a result of these meetings," Rizzo said. "We want to create 25,000 jobs in 10 years in Northern New Mexico."

...Rizzo has partnered with heavy hitters for his innovation triangle with the San Francisco-based global architecture firm Gensler and the Chicago-based global real estate and investment management firm JLL.

... JLL buys, builds, occupies and invests in industrial, commercial, retail, residential and hotel real estate.

"They are raising the capital," Rizzo said. "It's going to be hundreds of millions of dollars over 10 years."

Meanwhile Rizzo's company, New Mexico Innovation Triangle (NMIT), LLC, which incorporated in May of 2019, had been active in Los Alamos, negotiating with Kroger to buy the Mari Mac Village Shopping Center in the center of town. According to Los Alamos County Council Chair Sara Scott, that shopping center would be demolished and redeveloped by NMIT ("[Scott: Mari Mac Village Shopping Center Under Contract](#)," *Los Alamos Reporter (LAR)*, June 3, 2020). Eight business tenants would be evicted. Another business had mysteriously been prevented from opening in a vacant space on this site by the County, a matter which is still being litigated.

Persuasive opposition developed immediately, which raised questions not just about the development but also about the nature, propriety, and legality of the County's involvement in this and related deals ("[At What Cost Are We Building Our Bigger, Better Future?](#)", Jessie Conrad, *LAR*, June 9, 2020).

Kroger backed out. Rizzo's NMIT had meanwhile purchased the adjacent 2-acre Hilltop House property, announced by Sara Scott in June, 2020, again for demolition and redevelopment.

NMIT's plans stalled, and nothing was done to secure the abandoned Hilltop House, which at that point was a serious fire danger. The Los Alamos County Fire Marshal finally contacted NMIT in July of 2021, requiring that NMIT secure the property ("[Los Alamos County Fire Marshal Tells Owners Of Former Hilltop House To Secure The Building](#)," *LAR*, July 15, 2021).

A month later Maire O'Neill -- the *Los Alamos Reporter* -- interviewed Rizzo about the Hilltop House property (plans were "90%" complete) and NMIT plans generally. *LAR* observed that NMIT's overall plan was presented by LANL in the fall of 2019 as the foundation of its own planning ("[New Mexico Innovation Triangle's Plans For Former Hilltop House Property At 90 Percent](#)," *LAR*, August 18, 2021). As noted above, "NMIT" was a LANL idea.

To see intimate relationship between Rizzo's concept and LANL's, look at the first portion of this silent [video presentation](#) by Triad, the management and operations (M&O) contractor running LANL, to potential LANL contractors on August 8, 2019, attended by the Los Alamos Study Group (LASG) and later obtained under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

LASG wrote and presented extensively about these plans, which are larger by far than the Manhattan Project in New Mexico, for example [here](#) and [here](#). For more background and press engagement, see entries on [this page](#) in the fall of 2019.

Triad made a similar presentation to the Los Alamos County Council that fall. See [this video](#) starting at 14:15, especially at about 20:00, and the *LAR* article that followed it ("[LANL Deputy Director Of Operations Discusses Infrastructure Plans And Challenges At Council Work Session](#)," *LAR*, October 18, 2019).

A key aspect of the "innovation triangle" concept is transportation, including at the time a possible new bridge over the Rio Grande and connecting highways to Santa Fe and I-25. This proposed new bridge and highway was a feature of every public presentation of LANL's plans that fall, and had been discussed internally at LANL for months ("[Better Connections To Santa Fe And Albuquerque Discussed In Recent LANL All-Hands Meetings](#)," *LAR*, July 9, 2019). Reactions in Los Alamos were decidedly mixed, as *LAR* notes.

In fact the proposed new bridge and highway had been proposed by Triad, LLC immediately after Triad assumed full management of LANL in November 2018 if not before. Already by January of 2019 a "Los Alamos Bypass" ("Construction of 15-16 miles of additional roadway and an additional crossing over the Rio Grande") was proposed by the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) ([slide 12](#)), no doubt on the basis of Triad prompting. The estimated cost was \$67 million (nowhere near enough).

We (LASG) fought these highway plans in Washington, DC, as well as locally. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) nixed them. "Not one dime" of taxpayer money was going to any such bridge and highway, OMB decided, as we were told by a colleague present.

Returning to the Hilltop House, now apparently an orphaned part of what had been a much larger plan, the County Fire Marshal found that the property, still unsecured in late September after the Fire Marshal's June letter, to be a "clear and inimical threat to human life, safety" and issued an order requiring NMIT to finally secure the property and prepare for its demolition by no later than March 30, 2022 ("[Fire Marshal Takes Action On Former Hilltop House Hotel Property](#)," LAR, October 20, 2021).

With no response from Rizzo or NMIT, Los Alamos County held a special session "to discuss a resolution declaring the former Hilltop House a menace to the public comfort, health, peace, and safety and ordering the removal of the building along with associated ruins, rubbish, wreckage and debris from the County" ("[County Council To Vote On Hilltop House Resolution During Special Virtual Meeting Friday Afternoon](#)," October 27, 2021). LAR was able to reach Rizzo, who stated that "he is traveling and was unaware of the proposed resolution."

The resolution passed. NMIT objected without providing why or further details, and so a special hearing by the Los Alamos County Council is planned for December 3 ("[County Schedules Hearing On NMIT's Objection To Resolution On Former Hilltop House Property Requiring Removal Of Building](#)," LAR, November 16, 2021). Should NMIT fail in its appeal and fail to demolish the buildings and remove the debris, the County could obtain a court order to do so itself, placing a lien on the property for reasonable costs and if necessary foreclosing on the property as provided in statute.

It is unclear why NMIT and Rizzo would maintain such a hazard and fail to respond to County warnings. Presumably there will be some answers at the hearing this Friday, December 3.

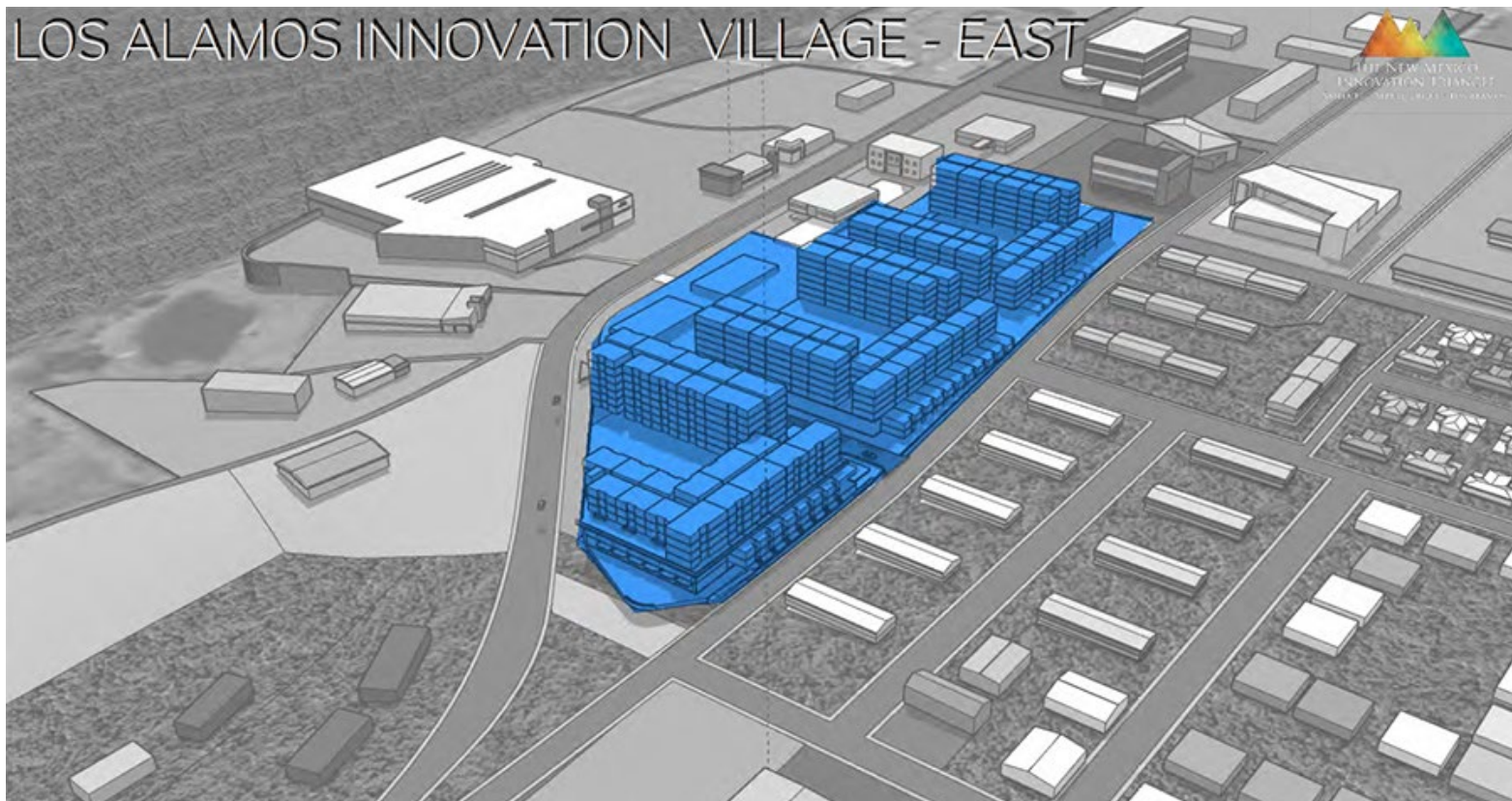
Back in Santa Fe, NMIT's plans required overcoming Santa Fe's height restrictions, as noted above. In the summer of 2021, City Councilors Roman "Tiger" Abeyta and Signe Lindell were persuaded to introduce a bill that would excuse "qualifying innovation projects" and "qualifying innovation village projects" from the height restrictions in the City's land development code ("[Growing like weeds? Many Santa Feans worry taller buildings will proliferate](#)," Sean Thomas, SFNM, July 25, 2021). As the author noted, "building heights have long been a sensitive topic in Santa Fe, and if history is any guide, agreement on the proposal is far from assured." The two sponsors held back the measure "for further discussion, clarification and outreach."

By late November of this year, "Tiger" Abeyta was a lame duck councilor and Signe Lindell, who was reelected, had withdrawn her sponsorship for the targeted exemption bill. On the morning of November 18, the day of the Planning Commission meeting at which the proposed bill was the only item on the agenda, Abeyta withdrew his bill, which would have allowed "qualifying innovation projects" and "qualifying innovation village projects" to build up to 75 ft in height ("[Proposal withdrawn to relax limits on building heights in parts of Santa Fe](#)," Sean Thomas, SFNM, November 18, 2021). It appears likely the proposal was withdrawn to avoid on-the-record defeat.

Rizzo's latest plan

The alert *Los Alamos Reporter* noticed that Rizzo had presented the [latest iteration](#) of his "innovation triangle" plans to the Legislature's Revenue Stabilization & Tax Policy Committee on November 22, 2021 ("[Rizzo Indicates Two 'Innovation Villages' Planned For Los Alamos In Presentation To Legislators](#)," LAR, November 26, 2021)

There are now two "innovation villages" planned for Los Alamos, a 7-story behemoth located on about 10 acres in the eastern heart of downtown Los Alamos ([slide 19](#)), "Los Alamos Innovation Village -- East," and a mysterious "Los Alamos Innovation Village -- West" ([slide 18](#)) of unknown size. Apart from the former Hilltop House, NMIT does not own any of this property.



Rizzo's "preliminary master plan" for his Santa Fe development ([slide 21](#), zoom for details) is presented in more detail than previously:



A fourth "innovation village" is supposedly to be located in the Mesa del Sol development in Albuquerque ([slide 23](#)). There is no precise indication of precisely where it would be, or what it would entail.

Satellite "innovation hubs" would or could, in Rizzo's vision, be located in Springer, Vaughn, Taos, Tierra Amarillo, Cuba, Farmington, Gallup, Grants, and Belen ([slide 24](#)). Really.

No minutes or video are available from Rizzo's testimony at this time. According to the vigilant *LAR*, Rizzo told the legislature that his "strategy is to build these three innovation villages which are highly dense work/play environments to essentially create new capital formation initiatives to bring new start-ups to the state and to encourage people in the state who are bright and have a lot of energy to start their own companies which are great job creators, to transform and help the education system, create more graduates that could work in these companies and also most importantly, to prevent the young people that grew up in New Mexico and have been here for centuries from feeling they have to leave the state because they can't get a good job or can't find a place to live."

The real meat of Rizzo's legislative pitch lies in a package of proposed tax exemptions, credits, and subsidies ([slide 31](#)) as well as infrastructure investments, specifically:

- Surgically targeted tax reform measures for specific sectors with tight guardrails
- Higher education investments per sector
- Dedicated venture capital funds per sector
- Funds to drive the expansion of the idea and implementation [meaning, what?]
- Support RailRunner enhancements to build a transit corridor between Mesa del Sol & SAF [presumably, Santa Fe, including a new RailRunner stop at the Innovation Village]
- Encourage a regional approach rather than a silo'd city approach

He would like an "integrated program" of state subsidies with "a narrow focus on job, education, tax incentives" that focuses on six industrial sectors ([slide 39](#)) that is "completely integrated and aligned across education and industry," including LANL ([slide 40](#)). These six sectors are:

- Quantum Computing/storage
- Immersive Entertainment
- Space Sciences
- Bio Sciences
- Sustainable energy/hydrogen
- Software and AI

Five of these six are of interest to LANL. Not mentioned: plutonium pit production, LANL's fastest-growing program. Rizzo never uses words like "nuclear" or "plutonium" even though these missions comprise more than 80% of LANL's work and are the major driver of LANL's needs for new housing in the region.

The bottom line ([slide 45](#)) is that Rizzo would like to see, in his six named technology areas,

- Student debt relief, or conversion to a lower rate
- No capital gains on stock options

- Gross receipts tax (GRT) credits for office space leases
- GRT credits for investment in curriculum, paid internships, and mentoring
- Accelerated GRT credits for training of targeted under-represented groups
- Targeted venture funds from the State
- Broader application and scope of the New Mexico Job Training Incentive Program (JTIP)

Concluding harsh comments

There is nothing altruistic here. Basically, it seems that Rizzo believes he can make a huge, narcissistic splash here in this state because we are all greedy rubes, or so he thinks. We are seen as a colony in other words, with no independent destiny or sovereignty; a region peripheral to centers, especially financial centers, elsewhere.

His huge developments would sit at the entrances to two cities, proclaiming to all who enter that he is the greatest mover and shaker of them all, a kind of king.

It's a con. His diagnosis of New Mexico's problems is wrong as noted above, and tailored to the specific subsidies and rule exemptions he wants. His answer to the problems he names is basically a variation of "if you build it they will come." Why would they come? They won't. Well, they might come to work at LANL. For a while.

And why would our northern New Mexico towns want all that growth -- his 165,000 or so jobs -- assuming that ever happened? Where would the water come from? This plan is based on resource-crisis denial and climate-change denial -- as is LANL's.

But above all it's based on ignoring the poor and any comprehensive social contract and policy. It's very targeted, as he says -- on his vision and what it needs to succeed.

These "villages" [sic] are not just buildings. They comprise, as LANL's Beierschmitt said in 2019, a plan for the whole region -- and not just a development plan but with the tax changes and targeted subsidies, a very specific economic plan and therefore also a social plan, that would complement LANL in five out of six foci, with the unstated nuclear component the largest of all. With Rizzo doing it, LANL's fingerprints are kept away.

It's also a plan to further shift power to wealthy elites by changing the tax code to favor developers like himself and his technology-workforce renters, while decreasing public participation in zoning and building height decisions. It's carpetbagging.

The infrastructure needed to serve his developments (e.g. a RailRunner link between "innovation villages") is going to be expensive. We need more mass transit, but transit investments need to be made more democratically. These subsidized tech ghettos would not rank highest on the list of needs. Talk about throwing the poor "under the bus."

By the way, the Brookings study he cites ([slide 10](#)) says innovation clusters *cannot* easily be started in places in Santa Fe. In other words, the study says the opposite of what his slides and proposals imply. Public investments to create innovation clusters in adverse locations would be wasted, though profitable to those who could get out in time.

Like many others before him, Rizzo misunderstands or misrepresents the nature of LANL, thinking it is a sort of generic "high tech" institution. It is, fundamentally, a top-secret nuclear military enclave, that also does other national security missions. The small remainder is largely window-dressing.

It is possible that the Los Alamos component (for which NMIT aka Rizzo does not actually own the land) is unnecessary and could even be a feint, or at a minimum less certain. The same goes for the (remote, isolated) Mesa del Sol. Santa Fe is a different story.

To us, the Santa Fe tech "village" pretty much implies a new highway to LANL, down the line. He wants a new Railrunner stop immediately, of course.

Meanwhile Rizzo is maintaining a clear public hazard in Los Alamos (Hilltop House), and appealing the County's order to tear that fire-trap down.

If student debt is forgiven or converted to a lower interest rate there will be conditions on the length of service required. It is very reasonable to do this for much-needed public service jobs, but why should society put its thumb on the labor market scale to favor LANL and its nuclear weapons jobs in this way, or for that matter the entertainment industry? There will be a length-of-service requirement, which will conveniently create a class of semi-indentured servants -- servants of The Bomb, in most cases.

And then what? Will they stay? Will these developments provide roots for them, or the family-oriented, single-family dwellings many of them will soon want?

Will these be local people? Perhaps a few. But five words we did not hear in 5 hours of LANL presentations on their infrastructure plans in August 2019 were "Española," "Chimayo," and "Rio Arriba County."

Who will own these innovation villages? Rizzo says [JLL](#) will raise "hundreds of millions" for his Santa Fe project. How could Santa Fe or Los Alamos governments ever control these developments? We see secret dealing already.

We think this would more or less destroy the cities of Santa Fe and Los Alamos.

We hope you will use the information provided here to decisively defeat these proposals.

Greg and Trish

Los Alamos Study Group

About us · Home · Contact · Contribute · Blog · Twitter · Search

November 24, 2021

[Permalink](#) for this letter. Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New-Mexico-oriented list.

Previously: (11/2/21): [Will energy monopolies and the nuclear weapons cartel control New Mexico's future? Reclaim our resources and build resilient communities. not plutonium bombs](#)

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here](#).

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserve (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish](#).

How New Mexico Could Become A Climate Leader

Re: [How New Mexico Could Become A Climate Leader](#), *Los Alamos Reporter*, Nov 24, 2021

Dear friends --

You all got [Bulletin 287](#) ("Nov 5 demonstration and workshops; NM greenhouse gas emissions have risen by about half under the current administration; legislative testimony on plutonium pit production"). There was a lot there on all three subjects!

In the process of summarizing part of that Bulletin for another audience it became clear that the New Mexico's climate strategy did not include the greenhouse gas emissions from the marketed oil and gas from which the State profits from so handsomely. Those emissions, which occur elsewhere as a result of policies here, are much larger than all the emissions produced in New Mexico (and which are inventoried as part of the climate plan).

Just considering those emissions which ARE tallied, and toward which state policy is directed, greenhouse gas emissions have already risen as much over the past three years as is planned for them to be reduced over the coming nine years. New Mexico is galloping backwards.

This is discussed in the above commentary, kindly published by the [Los Alamos Reporter](#).

Yes, this does relate centrally to nuclear weapons and plutonium pit production. There are only a few ways New Mexico can be a climate leader. From the above commentary:

The second way [to lead] would be to first learn about, and then to seriously oppose, plutonium pit production at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). Halting pit production at LANL would halt pit production for a decade -- the decisive decade for the future of humankind and countless species.

New nuclear weapons in the quantities now planned require new pits. Détente is necessary for international progress on climate issues. A crash program to build pits, encouraging and allowing a nuclear arms race, is the opposite of what we need. Delaying pit production until the mid-2030s or later is one of the most consequential things New Mexicans could do on the climate issue.

We have a lot more to say about this, but not today.

Have a wonderful thanksgiving, everyone.

Greg

[^ back to top](#)

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

Los Alamos Study Group

About us · Home · Contact · Contribute · Blog · Twitter · Search

November 2, 2021

[Permalink](#) for this letter. Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New-Mexico-oriented list.

Previously: (10/24/21): [Please come to the State Capitol on Friday, Nov. 5, noon to 5 pm: update: new full-page ads for your use: help us get the word out please!](#)

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do you interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here](#).

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserv (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish](#).

Will energy monopolies and the nuclear weapons cartel control New Mexico's future? Reclaim our resources and build resilient communities, not plutonium bombs!

Join us at the State Capitol this Friday, November 5, from noon to 5 pm

Local and internationally-acclaimed speakers, plenary workshops on energy, climate and nuclear issues

Dear friends -- Good morning.

Our last [letter](#) updated plans for a demonstration and workshops at the State Capitol this week on **Friday, November 5, starting at noon and concluding at 5 pm**. This letter provides further updates and a concise invitation (at this [event page](#) shortly) you can use. We have truly great speakers lined up from around the world, including:

- Dr. Antonio Turiel in Barcelona will speak on [the problems inherent in becoming a hydrogen hub](#);
- Dr. [Ugo Bardi](#) in Florence on the broad resource problems we face; and
- David Spratt (@djspratt) of [Climate Code Red](#) in Australia, on the gross inadequacy and deceptions of the "net zero by 2050" goal.

Representative Antoinette Sedillo Lopez, one of our state government's most important environmental leaders, will help kick off events. We'll have several other local speakers; we await confirmation from some so we can't list them all here.

As you can see the "center of gravity" or balance of the event has shifted from nuclear weapons to energy, climate, and resources. The nuclear weapons portion of the event -- the issue that ought to be a "no-brainer" -- has shifted to the latter part of the afternoon. We will conclude with a summation for the press at about 4:30 pm.

We will post background materials on-line prior to the event [here](#). Some of the speakers may refer to slides or illustrations. You can find them and print them out from there and bring them, or refer to them on a device you bring. We will print quite a few as well.

To repeat what we said last time, we will NOT be inside the Capitol Building because we now think our numbers will be too great for proper social distancing inside. Friday in Santa Fe is expected to be sunny and mild with a light breeze, perfect for us outside. Meet on the southeast side of the building, dress warmly, bring something to drink and a snack as appropriate, and **bring something to sit on!** We can use the restrooms inside the Capitol. Wear a mask.

Last time we asked everyone to please:

- **Sign the [Call for Sanity, Not Nuclear Production](#)** if you have not already done so (check [the list](#) first!). As we said, this little act of witness and solidarity is very important. In the total absence of any democratic process relative to these momentous developments, this "register of resistance" is the only public way to say "no" with a significant number of others.

The list of endorsers is growing, but many groups and individuals are still hanging back. If you follow international events closely as we do, you will know that the risks of nuclear war involving the U.S. are growing. Flashpoints in Europe and the Western Pacific are heating up. The idiots in the White House are stumbling from crisis to crisis, making one wrong decision after another. Locally, U.S. late-empire desperation means pressure to give over more of our political autonomy, more children, more federal tax dollars, more water and other scarce resources, and more self-respect, all to an out-of-control nuclear war machine. The nuclear Pax Romana is failing from within and without, for some of the same reasons as before.

Meanwhile Santa Feans are truly becoming "the people of The Bomb" (Doctorow). Progressive and environmental groups who think they can achieve their objectives while the U.S. ramps up pressure on Russia and China -- in which Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) and its crash program to build new warheads play an essential role -- should think again. Talk to us on Friday.

- **Help in getting the word out to your friends and contacts, or in recruiting a participating organization.** You can send links to our ads (see [here](#)) or to these [letters](#). **We really do depend on you to get the word out.** Please don't think we are going to be able to do everything important, especially in these shut-down, fearful days, so filled with political tribalism.

Nuclear weapons are a relatively simple problem. We know disarmament is coming. We don't know whether it will be before, during, or after a nuclear war. We know the LANL plutonium pit program will collapse, and we know approximately why. What we don't know is when, or how much damage will be done to our world and our state before that happens.

Santa Fe and northern New Mexico could really be a huge force for peace between great powers, which is necessary for international progress on climate issues. **Halting pit production at LANL means halting pit production for at least a decade -- the decisive decade for the future of humankind and countless species. It is one of the most consequential things Santa Feans could do on the climate issue.**

The other great opportunity, in which Rep. Sedillo Lopez has been such a leader, lies in curtailing oil and gas production, not in better (i.e. real) regulation of methane leaks. Which is still not happening. Decreasing methane leakage is good of course, even very good, but it doesn't go far enough. The big opportunity lies in curtailing oil production (in which, in the Permian, natural gas is the far-less-profitable byproduct). This is because **New Mexico is the leading U.S. state in oil production growth, and as such is crucial in keeping overall U.S. oil production from falling.**

NM thus plays an important role in perpetuating the "happy motoring" fantasy. Steady or growing oil and gas production is likewise crucial to our imperial self-image and liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports, on which our imperialists hope to hook other countries, driving up prices and profits all across the industry.

Meanwhile here in NM the money gushing in from oil creates the illusion that this state does not need a genuine social contract, expressed in the material terms of progressive taxation. Or even a full-time legislature. With injections of oil and gas on the one hand, and breathing in the plutonium vapors of the nuclear weapons complex on the other, our leaders are intoxicated far beyond what ought to be the legal limit -- and certainly, beyond any safe limit. The carnage is everywhere.

So will 100% renewable energy provide the answer? How about "green hydrogen" ("blue hydrogen" being too stupid to even consider, but we will)? Do we have enough resources to "build back better" and resume economic growth much as before? No, no, and no.

We need to talk. New Mexicans aren't getting accurate information from many leading environmental groups -- and certainly not from our corrupt nuclear labs.

See you on Friday.

Greg, Trish, and the rest of the Study Group gang

[^ back to top](#)

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

Los Alamos Study Group

About us · Home · Contact · Contribute · Blog · Twitter · Search

October 24, 2021

Please come to the State Capitol on Friday, Nov. 5, noon to 5 pm: update; new full-page ads for your use; help us get the word out please!

[Permalink](#) for this letter. Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New-Mexico-oriented list.

Previously: (10/11/21): [Friday, Nov. 5 at the State Capitol: noon demonstration, workshops & dialogues: help wanted!](#)

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here](#).

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserv (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish](#).

Dear friends --

Good morning. Our last [letter](#) outlined plans for a demonstration and workshops on Nov. 5, starting at noon and concluding at 5 pm. That plan remains in place with this clarification: **We will NOT be in the Capitol Building** because we now think our numbers will be too great for proper social distancing in the limited space of the Rotunda.

So dress warmly! Bring something to drink and a snack as appropriate! We can use the restrooms inside the Capitol. Wear a mask. We don't want anybody getting sick from being at this event.

We have a lot to talk about on Nov. 5. We desperately need dialogue and understanding, so the tone on Nov. 5 will be oriented in that direction. There are a lot of consequential misconceptions in circulation and now policy, as we express in the ads below.

To those who have responded already to our call for help -- thank you! We asked everybody to:

- **Sign the [Call for Sanity, Not Nuclear Production](#)** if you have not already done so. This little act of witness and solidarity is very important. It is not a petition. It is a register of resistance, necessary because there is no other public way to say "no." Each endorsement makes others easier.
- **Help in getting the word out to your friends and contacts, or in recruiting a participating organization.** YOU are our only social media presence these days (there are only so many hours in a day!), so please send links to our ads (see below or [here](#)) or these [letters](#) if the spirit moves you. **We really do depend on you to get the word out.** Please don't think we are going to be able to do everything important! Especially in these shut-down, fearful days, so filled with political tribalism.

In general, writing to our elected representatives on these issues won't work, unless perhaps you are a major donor or have some other special connection. We are asking those representatives to come on Nov. 5. You could ask them that, of course! Our national representatives have shown themselves willing to ignore hundreds of letters and calls so far. As one staffer in these offices had the candor to say in distant years past, they consider themselves untouchable on these issues in strongly-Democratic northern New Mexico. They don't weigh the *merits* of the policy issues, as long as they have an *excuse* to build a nuclear warhead factory complex in greater Santa Fe. Private letters are generally powerless and forgettable. Public letters are more important but still too little.

To repeat: there would be no plan to build an industrial plutonium operation at LANL without years of promotion by Senator Heinrich and former Senator Udall especially, and then-Congresspersons Ben Ray Lujan and Michelle Lujan Grisham. Bingaman, Domenici, and Richardson [never supported](#) such an activity at LANL, as did LANL itself. The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) and its predecessor the Department of Energy (DOE) never supported it either -- until 2018, when the New Mexico delegation and its allies strenuously called for it. Freshman congresswoman Theresa Leger Fernandez fell right in line and opposed preparation of a Site-Wide Environmental Impact Statement (SWEIS, which subsequently became something of a dead issue).

Thanks to these officials, we are now dealing with an even more primitive issue: nobody knows precisely what is going on -- including NNSA and LANL, which keep changing their plans, growing them each year and proceeding (despite many warning signals) on "a wing and a prayer." As long as the money flows. That's the main thing, for them.

Thanks to generous donors, we were able to run advertisements in the [Santa Fe Reporter](#) this past Wednesday and today, in the [Santa Fe New Mexican](#). You can use these ads however you like. (The *New Mexican* ad contained a typo: "Quality of life costs money, and New Mexico has been unwilling to pay for it." Those two letters in bold here got dropped. The version on our web site corrects this.)

We will be contacting some of you who have offered to help in the coming days. If haven't contacted us please do. Meanwhile, the main thing we can all do to make this event a success is to get the word out.

To you who got the overprint copies of the first *Santa Fe Reporter* ad ("[Plutonium warhead factory under construction near Santa Fe](#)," Sep 22 and 29, 2021) and have been handing them out -- thank you very much.

Greg, Trish, and the rest of the Study Group gang

[^ back to top](#)

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

Los Alamos Study Group

About us · Home · Contact · Contribute · Blog · Twitter · Search

October 11, 2021

Friday, Nov. 5 at the State Capitol: noon demonstration, workshops & dialogues; help wanted!

[Permalink](#) for this letter. Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New-Mexico-oriented list.

Previously: (08/31/21) [Protest and press conference at "Q Station" in Nob Hill tomorrow. Wednesday September 1, 11:00 am. If you don't want a military takeover of NM please come.](#)

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here.](#) To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here.](#)

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserv (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here.](#) To unsubscribe [send a blank email here.](#)

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity.](#) [Twitter.](#)

[Contribute.](#) Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish.](#)

Dear friends --

We hope you will join us on on Friday, November 5, at noon on the east side of the State Capitol in Santa Fe for a demonstration and workshops to follow against the huge nuclear weapons build-up underway at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), and for dramatically different national and state priorities that help build resilient communities while cutting back on fossil fuel extraction.

During the noon hour we will be joined by speakers from cooperating organizations and invited elected officials, if the latter come.

In the afternoon we will have in-depth workshops on LANL's new mission and its impacts, and the climate crisis and "energy transition," assisted by cooperating organizations, both hopefully including public discussions with elected officials or their representatives. It is also possible that we will be in the Capitol building for part of the time. We will let you know as details develop.

We will conclude with a press conference at 5:30 pm, or a little earlier if we are inside.

This event closely follows the important "New Mexico Climate Summit," to be held at the Roundhouse on October 25-26, where "actionable ideas" to address the climate crisis are to be discussed (detailed description and registration portal [here](#)). In our view, some of this event's core assumptions are wrong, such as continued support for high levels of oil and gas extraction, which is all the more reason to participate.

Our themes on November 5 will include these:

- The urgency of our converging crises: whole-of-government, whole-of-society responses are needed.
- We need our political leaders to a) lead and b) do what is necessary, not just expedient. We need to succeed, not just try. Why are we doing so little on virtually every major issue? Where is the leadership?
- We need a great deal more transparency and democratic accountability.
- Dramatically different priorities are needed instead of militarism and empire. Why are "we" starting a new Cold War? Why are we spending nearly \$1 trillion/year on "defense," dwarfing every other component of discretionary spending?
- Building more nuclear weapons is the antithesis of security. We need to build strong, resilient communities (human, and ecological), mitigate climate collapse, and avoid further social and environmental catastrophes.
- Plutonium warhead production is a dead end for New Mexico, the wrong mission for LANL, and the wrong decade in which to do it, even if new pits were some kind of necessary evil -- which they are not.
- Nuclear disarmament is inevitable. Disarm now, avoid the rush after the first "button" is pushed.
- Let's not be frightened, but work together and support each other where we can. We can find freedom, joy and fulfillment in constructive, nonviolent courage.

There will be some excellent music.

We'd like to have as many groups and people participating as possible. Groups can table and participate in workshop planning. Some will speak at noon.

If you haven't done so, **we want YOU (and your organization, business or church) to sign the [Call for Sanity, Not Nuclear Production](#).** This little act of witness and solidarity is very important.

We need your help! The Los Alamos Study Group is a small organization, with prior commitments to work with federal and state officials on some of these issues over the coming weeks. We are stretched thin.

So if you can help in any way, especially in getting the word out to your friends and contacts, or in recruiting a participating organization, please let us know! A few people have come forward to help and it is largely because of them -- the voices that have said "yes" instead of "maybe" or said nothing at all -- that we are proceeding with this event.

Also, if you are planning to attend, please do let us know! An event such as this entails a great deal of preparation, with significant opportunity costs in other work we do to prevent a new arms race and provide expert energy policy advice.

Commitment is contagious!

Los Alamos Study Group

[About us](#) · [Home](#) · [Contact](#) · [Contribute](#) · [Blog](#) · [Twitter](#) · [Search](#)

September 28, 2021

Important public information and planning meeting, this Thursday 9/30/21, in Santa Fe -- please inform and recruit your friends as well

[Permalink](#) for this letter. Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New-Mexico-oriented list.

Previously: (08/31/21) [Protest and press conference at "Q Station" in Nob Hill tomorrow, Wednesday September 1, 11:00 am. If you don't want a military takeover of NM please come.](#)

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here.](#) To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here.](#)

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserv (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here.](#) To unsubscribe [send a blank email here.](#)

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish](#).

Dear friends --

First, there will be a double-page ad tomorrow in the *Santa Fe Reporter*, similar to (but subtly better than) last week. **We urge you to forward it to your contacts, either as a link or attached file: "[Plutonium warhead factory under construction near Santa Fe.](#)"**

Second, this past Sunday the *Albuquerque Journal* finally published this op-ed, after a month of waiting (why?): "[How deep a 'pit' will Biden dig at LANL?](#)" Again, **please forward this to your friends. They probably won't get this information any other way.**

We really need you to help us publicize these issues. The public information space is fragmented, and the mainstream news media is censoring this big story, along with a lot of other challenging realities. Not to put too fine a point on it, we are entering an Orwellian world and we have to fight back or worse will befall us and our children.

Third, as mentioned previously, **this Thursday evening 9/30/21 -- the day after tomorrow -- we will be hosting an important public briefing and discussion on**

- a) the proposed expansion of Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) and its transformation into a plutonium warhead core ("pit") production site, now in its initial stages, and**
- b) the immediate next steps in halting and reversing the nuclear colonization of northern New Mexico and all that entails.**

Basically LANL wants to provide the same services the former Rocky Flats Plant did, on a smaller scale. The political impacts are already profound.

- **Where:** St. John's United Methodist Church, 1200 Old Pecos Trail([map](#)) in the "Gathering Room." This is a large hall with superb outdoor cross-ventilation. Wear a mask as usual.
- **When:** Thursday 9/30/21, 6:00 to 8:00 pm. Be prompt; we have a full schedule.
- **What:**
 - Background and update on recent nuclear weapons developments, nationally and particularly at LANL, with Q&A, discussion
 - Savannah River Site pit production, background and update: presentation, Q&A, discussion with our guest speaker
 - Overcoming artificial divisions between issues
 - Next steps, including: demonstration and call for transparency, dialogue, and accountability, November 5 at the State Capitol -- general outline, objectives, volunteer opportunities, internships; and meanwhile. Put it on your calendar please!

There are some other "next steps" but we need to develop them further before promising anything here.

Nothing important is going to happen on any of the major issues we face without a broader political awakening on the part of a critical mass of citizens, sufficient to impel more transparency and accountability from elected officials. Secret meetings will result in corrupt, faithless, unjust outcomes. That's how policy is being made, currently. We have an extreme lack of democracy.

In our New Mexico work on nuclear weapons and related issues, our immediate objectives are public meetings -- in-person, hybrid, and on-line -- at which our elected officials are present, and at which they tell us what, exactly, is happening with LANL expansion and pit production, where they stand on these matters, and why.

We'd like to know what our elected officials think the impacts of this expansion will be. We would like them to be present -- physically, if possible -- and accountable. We want them engaged in this issue on others, not hiding. That is what we will be asking between now and November 5 and afterward.

On this issue, we'd like to know the actual plutonium plans, the ones being funded and implemented at LANL to the tune of over \$1 billion dollars this year, and every year after. Elected officials as well as citizens need to see the construction plan overall, the regional transportation plan with its several dozens of coach-class buses and parking lots for workers hither and yon and who is going to pay for it all, the plans for trailer encampments for workers, the plans for building another big nuclear facility to process plutonium, at a cost of billions. Where will the workers come from? What resources will be needed to house them? We want to see the projected nuclear waste production, shipment, and disposal plans. We want to know how many nuclear materials and weapons convoys will be traveling the roads. We want to know when LANL expects to transition to production and construction around the clock.

Transparency is necessary but it's not enough. We, the public, need to talk and interact with our elected representatives about the impacts of these plans and understand where they stand on them, and why.

We also need to talk with those same officials about federal priorities in a time of national social, economic, and environmental crises. Why are "we" starting a new Cold War? Why are we spending nearly \$1 trillion/year on "defense," dwarfing every other component of discretionary spending? We need to have some serious talks with our delegation about such priorities, in which pit production plays such a crucial, enabling role. It will be impossible to address any of our national or local problems while funding and supporting a new Cold War.

What's important is not just seeing some "scenarios" as would be the case in an environmental impact statement, which can be (and usually are, by design) quite detached from reality. We asked for that in 2019 and 2020 and we got little or no support from elected officials.

It's important to discuss, publicly, the *actual* plans as they are understood and endorsed, or not, by our elected representatives. They are the ones who are choosing \$50 million plutonium pits -- that will be the [minimum unit cost](#) -- over hiring 1,000 new teachers for a year. Those elected officials are the ones who are passively standing by, or hiding. Will such people be capable of leadership in the face of climate disruption? Or in the face of vast inequality, with two or more decades of difference in life expectancy between some census tracts?

No, of course they won't be. The elected officials who want pit production at LANL are also offering bogus energy and climate technologies like "blue hydrogen," with [more](#) greenhouse gas emissions than just burning the natural gas it is made from even under optimistic assumptions. These same elected officials are offering a few pennies to address really profound social problems instead of the tens and hundreds of millions actually needed, while pushing hard to support nuclear weapons to the tune of more than \$6 billion per year in New Mexico. These same elected officials want to continue oil and gas production at maximum levels, while professing to care deeply about climate change.

None of this will change without a sufficient quantum of public pressure. We won't even get the news media to start speaking much truth without more social pressure. Editors and reporters are terrified. Their business models and careers are fragile, their worldviews are being challenged just like everybody else's, and they need social support and encouragement to explore and speak the shocking truth of our situation as best they can. Right now they are hiding behind various authorities, who themselves are mostly functionaries.

So what can change, really, in this paralyzed situation? We can, for starters. Our first moral and political job is to overcome our own fears and liberate our own creative energies in service to our communities. The state and the country are facing real crises, and we need to get real about them, which means getting beneath and beyond the propaganda spewing from political parties and their actors, and of course from defense contractors like LANL. Many possibilities, personal and political, will open when we do that. That is our ulterior motive here.

Greg, Trish, and the rest of the Study Group gang

[^ back to top](#)

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

Los Alamos Study Group

[About us](#) · [Home](#) · [Contact](#) · [Contribute](#) · [Blog](#) · [Twitter](#) · [Search](#)

Aug 31, 2021

Protest and press conference at "Q Station" in Nob Hill tomorrow, Wednesday September 1, 11:00 am. If you don't want a military takeover of NM please come.

[Permalink](#) for this letter. Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New-Mexico-oriented list.

Previously (08/23/21): [Door hanger update: help wanted: protest and press conference at Q Station in Nob Hill 9/1/21](#)

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here](#).

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserv (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish](#).

Dear friends --

Good afternoon everybody!

[Protest and press conference at "Q Station" in Nob Hill tomorrow, Wednesday September 1, 11:00 am](#)

As mentioned a week ago there is going to be a **demonstration and press conference tomorrow at the "Q Station," 3225 Central Ave NE, Albuquerque (across Central from the former Kelly's Brewpub), on Wednesday, Sept. 1, at 11:00 am** ([map](#), [photo](#) of Q Station in action).

For background on Q Station and the broad space war thrust in New Mexico, see this previous [letter](#) and [this one](#).

As mentioned last time, the "Q Station" is meant to suck young people into the "pipeline" of America's war machine -- it is, quite literally, a storefront for what Martin Luther King called a "demonic, destructive suction tube."

We would like as many people as can come to show up at the Q Station at 11:00 am, joining with the ANSWER Coalition, Stop the War Machine, Veterans for Peace, and other allied groups. Bring signs and friends. You know the issues. See also below.

Please recruit people who are active on other issues.

Please alert talented people who might want to work with the Study Group here in Albuquerque.

[Why is this important, and why is it important now?](#)

This is not just about space war. Far from it. It's about empire, militarism, and war in general of course, but also much more than that.

New Mexico is being ever more deeply colonized by:

- the military;
- the nuclear weapons industry;
- the nuclear waste industry;
- the oil and gas industry, which makes NM a leader in destroying the planet;
- the idiotic space tourism industry, mutually enabling militarization of space as well;
- extractive renewable energy (RE) corporations that profit from sending NM RE to fuel climate-killing growth in other states;
- the suburban real estate development industry;

Etc.

Basically our colonial mindset, limited-capacity "territorial-style" government, widespread corruption, and lack of education among the political classes and their advisors, make us ripe for the plucking by whatever organized extractive industry comes knocking, as long as they say the magic word: "jobs." *That* kind of economic development philosophy has made New Mexico poorer than any other state in the ways that count most. We have been bottom-bouncing in the well-being of our children for decades.

The world, dear friends, is burning. Not just in the sense of the [Buddha's Fire Sermon](#), but also physically. The earth's heat imbalance is now equivalent to about four Hiroshima detonations per second, or to ["every person on Earth using 20 electric tea kettles at once."](#)

Please do not misunderstand me. We have tried to create some baby steps so that people could feel comfortable getting involved.

Now I suggest we all have some family meetings about how our families are going to face the end of the world as we know it, and what we personally are going to do with the remainder of our lives. Kick back, watch the world burn, the species disappear and hope flicker and die out in our young people? If you think that please get off this list.

Expectations of the younger generation about their standard of living need to change, lest disappointment and despair be overwhelming. We of the older generation need to help them and protect them as best we can.

There are no solutions to our environmental problems that do not involve, in the U.S., a huge decline in overall consumption of resources, particularly energy. "100% renewable energy" at present levels is an utter fraud. Shame on those nonprofits who promote it.

Most importantly, nothing whatsoever is going to change for the better by the methods most beloved by liberals. In many ways, liberal progressivism is the biggest obstacle we have. As Caitlin Johnstone says, trying to reform the Democratic Party is like trying to walk through an exit door painted on the wall.

We think the time is propitious for making this and subsequent public actions embrace the need for a whole-of-government, whole-of-society response to climate change and the grotesque, crushing inequality that is destroying our society. We need to broaden our thinking and our base for action to matter.

As I wrote [here](#), we need to start throwing sand in the gears. We at the Study Group see the Q Station action as a beginning of that.

The conjunction of hell (drought, fires, and smoke in the West) and high water (Hurricane Ida, TN floods before that) provide an ideal moment for talking about our national priorities in a time of climate collapse.

What is bigger than the military-industrial complex is the sum of all the people getting screwed by it. We have to reach to them and help them find a way to understand their material losses in light of predatory national security priorities and attendant corruption and moral failure.

The Afghanistan war [cost](#) \$19,000 per U.S. household *so far*, and has *directly* caused the deaths of roughly 241,000 people. The number killed indirectly is many times that. It is the U.S. war machine that has been the primary killer of women in Afghanistan since Operation Cyclone began in the 1970s, is it not? The [fury of an embarrassed empire](#) is likely to kill millions more, through crippling sanctions, political destabilization campaigns, and sponsorship of covert killing. The [CIA Afghanistan heroin "rat-line"](#) killed millions more, all over the world, as the CIA's cheap heroin flooded the world market. Heroin production increased some 25-fold under U.S. occupation, making Afghanistan the main source of the world's heroin.

That's just Afghanistan. Worldwide, the U.S. government is the world's greatest killer. As Chris Hedges observes:

Its [the U.S.'s] entire economy, a "military Keynesianism," revolves around the war industry. Military spending and war are the engine behind the nation's economic survival and identity. It does not matter that with each new debacle the United States turns larger and larger parts of the globe against it and all it claims to represent.

It has no mechanism to stop itself, despite its numerous defeats, fiascos, blunders and diminishing power, from striking out irrationally like a wounded animal. The mandarins who oversee our collective suicide, despite repeated failure, doggedly insist the U.S. can reshape the world in its own image.

This myopia creates the very conditions that accelerate the empire's demise.

Not just the empire's demise. Everyone's. And all the animals. We are pushing the envelope toward [an entirely different planet](#). The timeline for action is very short.

It's nice to cultivate our own gardens, and we should. But let's not kid ourselves. If we do not stop the Empire, it will stop us, in every way.

We need to get people into the streets. Tomorrow, at Q Station. We have to feel our way forward. We need to be humble but firm. We need to cry out for the rising generations, not write worthless letters to the president or our sociopathic senators -- who, don't you know, demand fealty from our new congresswomen to their perverted national security priorities.

We need to understand that the New Mexico Democratic Party is a mafia that derives a decisive amount of its power through its subservience to the national security state. Get real. It's completely given over to greed and further colonization. It's not listening yet.

A press conference with a dozen, or two dozen, or even a few dozen people may or may not be that terribly interesting to the press, but events that grow in size and continuity, uniting issues around themes related to our horribly misplaced priorities, would. Love must find a way.

Greg, Trish, and the rest of the Study Group gang

[^ back to top](#)

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

Los Alamos Study Group

About us · Home · Contact · Contribute · Blog · Twitter · Search

Aug 23, 2021

Door hanger update; help wanted; protest and press conference at Q Station in Nob Hill 9/1/21

[Permalink](#) for this letter. Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New-Mexico-oriented list.

Previously (08/12/21): [Door hanger campaign beginning TOMORROW: volunteers needed](#)

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here](#).

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserv (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish](#).

Dear friends --

Good morning everybody.

Door hangers: update

As some of you have told us, few people know what is going on with the evolving crisis of constructing industrial plutonium warhead ("pit") facilities at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), still in its early stages with many difficult milestones (read: opportunities) ahead.

Fewer still understand what that full expansion would mean, in the context of other developments for this state and its people. How about "Government in Our Pocket" for the combined nuclear weapons industry, space war industry, global surveillance industry, megacorporate wind and solar extraction industry (to support brown growth in other states), and all the special corporate "friends" working on absolutely stupid, unworkable schemes like "blue hydrogen," "carbon capture," and "hydrogen fuel cell cars"?

Under the combined weight of these corrupt, mostly senseless schemes there will be no need or role for most of the people now living in the state, or their children. They and their gardens and crops are just "useless drinkers" to the new [carpetbaggers of "innovation"](#). Of course a certain amount of "charm" is needed for the purpose of luring and keeping the hapless new technocratic minions, so we need lots of brewpubs and suitable entertainment venues (e.g. Meow Wolf: "Psychedelic Nihilism R Us!"). Hurry and squeeze into the plutonium "jobs pipeline" while you can! You too can stop worrying and learn to love The Bomb!

Back to door hangers. The fragmentation of information sources in our society leads to us reach out in various new ways. The [door hangers](#) complement billboards and other outreach methods, as well as your own personalized outreach (which is likely to be an order of magnitude more effective than any more impersonal method).

So -- a huge [thank you](#) to everybody who has helped so far with the campaign. Thanks to some of you we've distributed about 2,000 door hangers so far.

Delivery by hand is however complicated to administer, and our overall delivery rate is much slower than we'd like. While our conviviality and popular participation goals are being partially achieved, this is true only for those few who volunteered. Also many people with health issues can't participate.

Undeterred, we will now speed up delivery by saturating USPS carrier routes.

Meanwhile those of you who wish to distribute door hangers as flyers [in your church or other group](#) (which would be lovely) please [write Trish](#) and we will supply you!

Please get ready to help with in-person, mass actions -- one of which will be on Sept. 1

The [door hanger](#) asks these questions:

- I prefer in-person events, on-line events, or neither
- I might like to help with outreach, alliance-building, other.
- I can help financially with a one-time gift, a monthly donation, in other ways (see lasg.org/contribute.htm)

"On-line events," which are to say trainings and meetings, are really only preliminary to "in-person events," which are where the political rubber meets the road. To make these in-person events large enough to matter we need help in the ways indicated (and more).

So the queries on the door hanger are for all of us to answer. Only with your help we can help others [get out of their own way](#). Can you help with outreach and alliance-building, starting with the "Q Station" action below?

There hasn't been any significant political opposition to nuclear weapons, or war, in New Mexico for a long time. There are occasionally forgettable (and quickly forgotten) feel-good gestures, like standing on a street corner holding signs aimed at passersby, or a handful of people gathering at the State Capitol. **The same situation generally holds true with some exceptions for climate issues, energy issues, education issues, health care system issues, poverty issues, and many others. The bottom line is that people want major change without major action.** Frederick Douglass famously said:

If there is no struggle there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate agitation are men who want crops without plowing up the ground; they want rain without thunder and lightning.

Typically, we are so inured to empty political gestures from activists on the one hand, and utter hypocrisy and lies from politicians on the other hand, that most people can hardly remember -- or perhaps never knew -- what actual political traction looks like and requires. "We thus drift," as Einstein said in 1946, "toward unparalleled catastrophe." Seventy-five years later, "drift" is too slow and far too mild a word for what is happening, although "unparalleled catastrophe" remains up-to-date. We drifted alright. Now a tsunami of consequences is coming ashore and we are in it, whether we know it or not. It's a horrible situation. What can we do? There is only one grown-up answer, though it has a thousand faces. "[Save as many as you can.](#)"

We need to question the "feel-good" actions we typically see. We should not feel good about things which have no effect. They infantilize us and help create an overall atmosphere of unreality.

I'd like to quote from a recent [essay](#) by Patrick Mazza:

First, we cannot trust the people who run this world. They rose to their high positions in institutions buying into the power and profit assumptions which drive those institutions. If they are not sociopaths going in, the institutions make them into sociopaths in order to rise in the ranks. Some of them may even say the right words to soothe us. Sociopaths are good at that. As always, look at what they do, not what they say.

What does this mean, in practical terms -- to not "trust" our political authorities? It means to stop writing letters to the President, or our senators, pretending to ourselves and others that they will actually pay attention. It means to stop doing a whole host of silly things and take up the burden of understanding and doing things that will actually be powerful. For crying out loud stop begging from sociopathic politicians.

Second, it's up to us as ordinary people to take it into our hands. *Rise in mass action, in ways that stop business as usual, throw sand in the gears of everyday operations.* Until we do, our own personal realities will be as schizoid as the world we live in.

Mazza is absolutely right. It is the same point Chris Hedges emphasizes over and over, and he too is right. *We need mass action to have any possibility for our children and countless beautiful species, to survive.* The flyering and advertising we are doing is for the purpose of broadening the base for those actions.

In all such actions, in whatever form they take, *we must be totally nonviolent, to persons and to property.* Nonviolence is really holding firm in truth (*satyagraha*) even as we seek to know it, to stand in it. We do need that for our own integrity, as Mazza concludes, but in the final analysis it's not about "us" at all.

Protest and press conference at "Q Station" in Nob Hill, Wednesday September 1, 11:00 am

There is going to be a third action at the "Q Station," 3225 Central Ave NE, Albuquerque, on Wednesday, Sept. 1, at 11:00 am. (For partial background please see [this earlier letter](#)). The "Q Station" is meant to suck young people into America's war machine -- it is, quite literally, a storefront for what Martin Luther King called a "demonic, destructive suction tube:"

It seemed as if there was a real promise of hope for the poor -- both black and white -- through the poverty program. There were experiments, hopes, new beginnings. Then came the buildup in Vietnam, and I watched this program broken and eviscerated, as if it were some idle political plaything of a society gone mad on war, and I knew that America would never invest the necessary funds or energies in rehabilitation of its poor so long as adventures like Vietnam continued to draw men and skills and money like some demonic, destructive suction tube. So, I was increasingly compelled to see the war as an enemy of the poor and to attack it as such.

We would like as many people as can come to show up at the Q Station at 11:00 am, joining with the ANSWER Coalition, Stop the War Machine, Veterans for Peace, and other allied groups. Bring signs and friends. You know the issues.

Thank you, and stay well everybody,

Greg, Trish, and the rest of the Study Group gang

[^ back to top](#)

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

Los Alamos Study Group

About us · Home · Contact · Contribute · Blog · Twitter · Search

Aug 12, 2021

Door hanger campaign beginning TOMORROW; volunteers needed

[Permalink](#) for this letter. Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New-Mexico-oriented list.

Previously (08/10/21) [Update: door hanger campaign now beginning FRIDAY of this week! \(more info included\)](#)

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here](#).

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserv (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish](#).

Dear friends --

Tomorrow morning (8/13) at 8:30 am -- from 8:30 to 11 am -- a tiny handful of volunteers will begin distributing [door hangers](#) in Santa Fe. Mighty oaks...

These first volunteers -- you know who you are -- are already mighty oaks.

The next opportunity is **tomorrow evening from 5:30 to 8:00 pm**.

The **same times morning and evening repeat on Saturday (8/14)**.

Then **next week we'll repeat the drill on Wednesday (8/18), Friday (8/20), and Saturday (8/21), at the same times**.

We need more help. Each person will seed others in this campaign. It's all outdoors, it's wholesome, and it's fun!

To volunteer, [write me](#), as Trish now also has covid. I am getting better but as you can imagine we aren't always able to do things in as timely a fashion as we would like.

Sarah Johnson, our Doorhanger Team Leader, has got it all organized to a "tee." You will enjoy meeting her! Write me and she will call you ASAP.

If there were a time to help, this is it. All we need is for people to put door hangers on doors. It is easy!

One other news, *Energy Daily* picked up yesterday's press release ([NNSA moving on new facility to dispose of plutonium - greens](#). *Energy Daily*, Aug 12, 2021).

Yesterday, NNSA would not "confirm or deny" *their own decision*, but *Energy Daily* published anyway, forcing NNSA to confirm the story today. How it works. Local press have grown too close to LANL. This is just the beginning of this story, and battle. Building a new multibillion-dollar high-hazard plutonium facility to process tens of tons of Pu, nominally at LANL pending an Analysis of Alternatives, is very big deal.

NNSA has tried to do this twice before at LANL. Reality was not on their side, as we helped many parties to see. The second battle was [quite tough](#). This is why they are scared. LANL's Kelly Beierschmidt declined to answer my questions about this last week, saying my question "had bear traps in it." I didn't put the traps there. He did. "Everything we do in New Mexico is under a microscope," he had complained earlier to his contractor audience.

And that is why we need help with door hangers.

Take a walk, distribute some door hangers!

Stay well everybody,

Greg

Greg Mello, Trish Williams-Mello, Sarah Johnson, Lydia Clark, and the rest of the Study Group gang

[^ back to top](#)

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

Los Alamos Study Group

About us · Home · Contact · Contribute · Blog · Twitter · Search

Aug 10, 2021

Update: door hanger campaign now beginning FRIDAY of this week! (more info included)

[Permalink](#) for this letter. Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New-Mexico-oriented list.

Previously (08/9/21): [Door hanger campaign beginning Wednesday of this week! Please help!](#)

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here](#).

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserv (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish](#).

Dear friends --

Yesterday's request for help with door hangers came rather late and omitted a thing or two!

First, our initial efforts will be focused in Santa Fe. We got several inquiries about Albuquerque but we are going to stick to northern New Mexico for this campaign, starting with Santa Fe.

Second, we didn't show you the door hanger. You might quite reasonably wonder what it says! [Here it is](#).

Third, we've pushed back our first canvass date two days to **Friday, Aug. 13, either 8:30 - 11 am or 5:30 - 8:00 pm. Saturday Aug. 14, morning and evening, are still on the calendar, at the same times.**

If you want to participate write [Trish](#) as soon as you can so we can plan.

We do think this can be fun. Exercise, meet friends, etc! Bring friends!

To spice up this note let me add a couple more tidbits from the recent "Deterrence Summit."

- LANL has just built two new parking garages. (See them [here](#) [one brand-new, one some years old shown, in TA-03] and [here](#) at TA-50). LANL has a need for *an additional six parking garages*, but the regional road network would never handle the traffic, LANL knows. Hence the plan for buses mentioned yesterday.
- When I pointed out how expensive NNSA's pit production program was (startup costs exceeding \$30 billion in the best case), and asked NNSA's guy in charge of it (Michael Thompson) whether or how long he thought Congress would continue funding it, he said: "*It's not a question of money.*" Good to know. So what is it a question of? "Payload."
- LANL Director Thom Mason: "We are at the end of the world's longest cul-de-sac."
- "Pits. Mmmmm. Lose a little sleep on pits." Robert Webster, deputy director, weapons, LANL (h/t Dan Leone, *Exchange Monitor*).
- "The U.S. disarms by budget, not by decision." Steve Guidice, former operations manager of the nuclear weapons complex, to me.
- If you have 50 qualified applicants, instead of hiring 20, hire all 50 and "sort them out down the road." Bob Webster again.
- "We can't treat nuclear as a separate box when it comes to conflict...Nuclear deterrence underpins every military operations plan." General Cotton, Deputy Commander, U.S. Global Strike Command, and Deputy Commander, USSTRATCOM.

More soon, thank you.

Greg Mello, Trish Williams-Mello, Sarah Johnson, Lydia Clark, and the rest of the Study Group gang

[^ back to top](#)

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

Los Alamos Study Group

About us · Home · Contact · Contribute · Blog · Twitter · Search

Aug 9, 2021

Door hanger campaign beginning Wednesday of this week! Please help!

[Permalink](#) for this letter. Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New-Mexico-oriented list.

Previously (07/28/21): [From the ANSWER coalition, us, and others: "Shut Down 'Q-Station' on Hiroshima/Nagasaki 76th Anniversary!"](#)

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here](#).

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserv (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish](#).

Dear friends --

Good afternoon! We hope you are all well and enjoying the summer.

I have just returned from a conference in the DC area with many of the key actors in the nuclear warhead business (lab and plant directors, NNSA and DoD leaders, and many contractors). A few reporters and I got to ask some tough questions. It's a conference where fear, concerns, and plans are discussed, and back-channel communications opened. It was helpful.

However, I returned home with covid, delaying this organizing note and much else. It is a light case and I am very much on the mend. I don't recommend it. FYI Trish and I are fully vaccinated; we are following the "I-mask" protocols of the [FLCCC](#) for prophylaxis and treatment.

To encourage you, I want to say that objectively speaking, LANL's plans for pit production are acquiring a desperate, surreal tinge. The many problems of the LANL site are creating some really painful headaches. This was a never-say-die crowd, especially when \$10 billion (omitting sunk costs) through FY28 is on the table. LANL pits are going to cost north of \$50 million apiece, an eye-popping number even for NNSA and DoD. LANL's need for workers overwhelms local roads, so LANL is now thinking of operating a fleet of ~60 coach-class buses. This, we deem, will never happen for various logistical, financial, and cultural reasons. LANL is negotiating with the Pueblos to build trailer parks on Pueblo grounds. New Mexico True, all right.

Meanwhile NNSA is designing, and soon will be building, a pit factory in South Carolina capable of filling all production needs with a single worker shift. Pretty much everybody knows LANL cannot make enough pits to matter for any warhead program, so if there are going to be warheads -- and there are for some time yet, despite what me and thee might want -- the SC facilities will proceed. Efforts to support one pit production site at LANL, have led to the present stupid two-site plan.

LANL is quite candid that its plans, far larger than the Manhattan Project in constant dollars, will essentially remake northern New Mexico. Most people are unaware of this.

Meanwhile the West is burning, and the recent IPCC report -- conservative, no doubt; they all are -- puts our dilemma starkly ([IPCC report: global emissions must peak by 2025 to keep warming at 1.5°C -- we need deeds not words](#), Keith Baker, today). As veteran energy and climate journalist Kurt Cobb [said](#) (also today):

Will we humans rally and address this and other looming climate threats? Some will try and even try very hard. But to truly reverse climate change now so late in the game would require draconian measures that few people would tolerate. For those who say that we will adapt, we now have an emerging picture of just what that adaptation involves. For many "adaptation" will simply mean ruin. For the truly unlucky, it will mean death.

So that is our context. We are not under the illusion we can have nuclear disarmament while continuing with our First-World lives. Not going to happen. We are looking at a big step, not a baby step. The bad news and the good news is that everybody will be faced with that step, one way or another.

We can stop pit production, and not just in Los Alamos. At this conference it was abundantly clear that pit production is an *existential* need for those directing the show.

We crave your help, right now -- as in, this week. We will be -- you, we hope, will be -- putting door hangers on as many residences and/or businesses as we can in the coming few weeks. The theme is "Build strong communities, not plutonium bombs." We are asking for help and participation, so this is a sort of bootstrap approach. We start with you. For a variety of reasons we believe few people have heard or understand what is going on. This door hanger tells people, accurately, and asks for their help in various ways.

Our contractor and outreach coordinator Sarah Johnson outlines the basics as follows.

On behalf of Los Alamos Study Group,
Hello!

Thank you for enlisting to canvas with us to stop the development of the new atomic warhead core production facility at LANL.

Here are the dates and times under consideration for our first canvassing run:

Wednesday morning, August 11, 8:30-11am
Wednesday evening, August 11, 5:30-8pm

Friday morning, August 13, 8:30-11am
Friday evening, August 13, 5:30-8pm

Saturday morning, August 14, 8:30-11am
Saturday evening, August 14, 5:30-8pm

Please respond to [Trish](#) or the office ASAP with a list of all sessions in which you'd like to participate. We need a minimum of three teams of two to go forward with each session. If there is a likeminded friend and potential teammate you'd like to get on board, forward this email and have them sign up too!

Two days before each session, we'll count our teams and confirm the date with all of you--if we have the numbers. If not, we'll let you know how we're looking for the next date. Pardon our increased email volume to you as we set up for these events; we want those of you interested to be fully in the loop.

~~~

Finally, we'll be sending reminders, but start prepping now; you'll want

- WATER!
- shoes comfortable to walk in for two hours
- a comfortable bag for carrying doorhangers, paperclips, and other small items as well as your water and any layers needed.
- sunscreen/hat/rain jacket/sweater??? Watch the weather as we get closer to your sessions (*and remember, you're in The City of Four Different Seasons per Day!*)

~~~

Thanks for your involvement and your commitment to our shared cause. We look forward to seeing you soon.

Sincerely,

Sarah Johnson
Outreach Coordinator

Trish and I were hoping to join in this week but we now obviously will not be. We are therefore depending even more on you. This will be pretty fun, we think.

More soon, thank you.

Greg Mello, Trish Williams-Mello, Sarah Johnson, Lydia Clark, and the rest of the Study Group gang

[^ back to top](#)

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



Los Alamos Study Group

 [Follow us](#)

["Remember Your Humanity" blog](#)

[Home](#) • [Contact](#) • [Contribute](#) • [Search](#)

July 28, 2021

From the ANSWER coalition, us, and others: "Shut Down 'Q-Station' on Hiroshima/Nagasaki 76th Anniversary!" (2 of 2 letters today)

[Permalink](#) for this letter. Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New-Mexico-oriented list.

Previously (07/28/21): [Reminder: "Stop the plutonium pit factory, here and now:" update and outreach training Thursday 7/29, 6 pm in Santa Fe \(1 of 2 letters today\)](#) Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here](#).

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserve (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish](#).

Dear friends --

The ANSWER Coalition, Stop the War Machine, Veterans for Peace Albuquerque Chapter, Peaceful Skies Coalition and us (so far) are organizations co-sponsoring an event at the "Q-Station," one of the new "Space War" sites here in Albuquerque on August 6.

The alert is copied below.

It would be impossible in this small space and time to review even a fraction of what lies behind this major new push for space "dominance" and all the ways it is now being expressed right here in New Mexico. In our 7/23/21 letter we mentioned

[T]he enthusiastic political [embrace](#) of yet another high-tech war company in Albuquerque ("[Blue Halo](#)"), to be built at "[Max Q](#)," next door to a 2 million square foot surveillance satellite factory (the [Orion Center](#), more [here](#), part of [Theia Group](#) -- check out the promotional video).

"Q Station" is another piece of this ugly puzzle -- a storefront which happens to be very accessible to the University of New Mexico ("[Hub for space, directed energy lands in Nob Hill](#)," *A. Journal* 4/22/2021), with obvious benefits to all concerned (us too).

If you know of other organizations which might want to co-sponsor, please contact [Chris Banks](#) at ANSWER, [Trish](#) here, or [Bob Anderson](#) at Stop the War Machine.

We are not that "into" merely holding signs and protesting. We hope this action will grow and bear fruit both before and after Aug. 6.

If you can come, please do. To win hearts and minds we must be seen, which pretty much means being seen *by* the news media and then *through* the news media, which pretty much means the TV stations in this case. There will be implicit or explicit disagreement with Mayor Keller on this, which is newsworthy.

Over time, we want to actually shut down this operation and the bigger ones mentioned above by education and nonviolent (i.e. political) means, not merely protest them.

As regards activities surrounding the Hiroshima/Nagasaki anniversaries in general, we endorse them. We have organized many such events in Los Alamos, starting in 1981 and including a day-long demonstration in 2005 with workshops taught by speakers from around the country, attended by nearly 1,000 people. It is very important "not to forget" -- especially in Los Alamos.

Once, a DOE Area Manager, responsible for the entire laboratory, told me a few days before his official departure that Los Alamos was "haunted" by what had been done here in 1945, and as a result "nothing good will ever come from this place."

At the same time there is a tendency to lose focus on real current events and the real political commitments we need now in a sort of vague negative nostalgia about what was done in 1945. There can be too little intellectual and moral discrimination, too little speaking truth to power *today*, with sacrifices.

It's easy to decry the terrible things done in 1945 by people who are now dead, while tacitly or passively opening the door to a nuclear weapons factory in one's own back yard. It happens. And it is much harder to confront living politicians with real power today than it is to criticize dead ones. We here are acutely sensitive to the damage done by substituting what often turns out to be feel-good activism for the more trenchant work that will prevent future Hiroshimas, or worse.

Join the Picket: Shut Down "Q-Station" on Hiroshima/Nagasaki 76th Anniversary!

Friday, August 6, 4-6pm
Picket the "Q Station" at 3225 Central Ave NE

Sponsored by:

ANSWER Coalition, Los Alamos Study Group, Stop the War Machine, Veterans for Peace Albuquerque Chapter, Peaceful Skies Coalition



August 6 will mark the 76th anniversary of the U.S. genocidal nuclear bombing of Hiroshima. Three days later will be the anniversary of the bombing of Nagasaki. Hundreds of thousands of civilians lost their lives without warning from bombs built and tested in New Mexico. Japanese survivors and their children suffered unspeakable health impacts for decades, as did Navajo uranium miners and their families, along with Southwest communities downwind from testing sites, all victimized during the terrible production of nuclear weapons.

On Friday, August 6 from 4-6pm, we will come together to remember the victims of these crimes against humanity and recommit ourselves to the struggle for peace. We will be holding a picket at the "Q Station," a new military-driven storefront in Nob Hill designed to find startups to sell technology to the U.S. military for the purpose of fighting the next war. While marketing itself as hip and innovative, the "Q Station" is nothing more than a way to direct science and technology into building the war machine.

The threat of horrific U.S. nuclear acts repeating themselves poses a threat to us all as the United States is dramatically increasing its drive toward war and confrontation targeting China. The new military doctrine of the Pentagon prioritizes preparations for "major power conflict" in coming years.

Instead of urging peace and cooperation with China, state and local government officials want to place New Mexico at the center of a new destructive arms race. Plans to build hundreds of new nuclear bomb cores at Los Alamos will move forward unless they can be stopped. Kirtland is already playing a central role developing military-technologies to wage war from space.

And now, as a slap to the face of the people of Albuquerque, the military has shamelessly and brazenly helped open up a storefront -- the "Q Station" -- in Nob Hill along Route 66, where producers of weapons-related technologies can openly mingle with military war-planners!

The "Q Station" needs to be shut down!

Over and out, see some of you tomorrow,

Greg Mello, for the Study Group

[^ back to top](#)

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



Los Alamos Study Group

 [Follow us](#)

["Remember Your Humanity" blog](#)

[Home](#) • [Contact](#) • [Contribute](#) • [Search](#)

July 28, 2021

Reminder: "Stop the plutonium pit factory, here and now:" update and outreach training Thursday 7/29, 6 pm in Santa Fe (1 of 2 letters today)

[Permalink](#) for this letter. Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New-Mexico-oriented list.

Previously (07/23/21): [New Mexico under assault: voters approve plutonium bomb factory for Los Alamos: update and outreach orientation Thursday July 29, Santa Fe](#) Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here](#).

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserve (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish](#).

Dear friends --

Tomorrow evening (that's Thursday, July 29), from 6:00 to 8:00 pm, we will host an update and outreach training meeting at St. John's United Methodist Church (1200 Old Pecos Trail) in Santa Fe.

We will provide an overview and update of the current nuclear weapons situation, especially as regards the production of plutonium warhead cores ("pits"), LANL's would-be new mission. And we need to talk about what we are up against and who our allies might be, which aren't necessarily obvious. And finally we need to talk about strategies and tactics in a rapidly-changing time.

The proposed LANL plan for an [extra pit factory](#) is premised solely on a falsely-perceived "need for speed" promoted by nuclear hawks, weapons contractors, and pork-barrel politicians in New Mexico.

In addition to other forms of outreach, we will be announcing a new door-to-door campaign in Santa Fe and explaining how you can get involved. (Those of you in Albuquerque, see the next letter.) A new flyer is at the printer's now and we should be ready to go by the second week in August, so stay tuned. If you want to take part, please come tomorrow evening if you can. Otherwise, stay tuned.

Our education and lobbying work in DC is also intensifying. We are encouraged by receptive comments about our work from people in government. I will be there all next week. We are preparing as fast as we can and you will see some of those materials.

In George Orwell's *1984*, protagonist Winston Smith is told "If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face— forever." When and if not just the politics and economy but the *identity* of New Mexico is defined by nuclear weapons, military bases, space war, nuclear waste, and by the associated "innovation" and employment "pipelines," we will have reached "full Orwell." It will then be impossible to even ask whether LANL's plutonium missions, or the latest space war installation, "benefit" New Mexico. The question will no longer make sense.

Or as E.L. Doctorow put it, "We have had the bomb on our minds since 1945. It was first our weaponry and then our diplomacy, and now it's our economy. How can we suppose that something so monstrously powerful would not, after years, compose our identity?"

We are not there yet. Our situation is akin to being on the convex slippery slope near the top of a mountain glacier, where each step down gets *far* more dangerous. With a moment of complacency and all of a sudden you're going down fast, and your life -- the state's life, it's promise to its citizens -- may well be over. "Forever."

In the last letter I linked to a non-factual [presentation](#) made by LANL to a legislative committee of a LANL plan to guide our energy future. Oh brother. As I said, our Governor is already deeply [invested](#) in elements of this fantasy -- or one element anyway: hydrogen. These [questions](#) by eminent Spanish scientist Antonio Turiel and this [critique](#) by energy journalist Kurt Cobb should adequately destroy LANL's creepy "vision" for you, if necessary. These apt critiques of LANL's vision -- and of the vision of *former* scientist and Energy Secretary Ernie Moniz -- came here serendipitously. I am saying it would take about 5 minutes of research, or the quick application of a little undergraduate science or engineering, to undercut what LANL is offering this state. The whole "hydrogen hype" should never have made it past the first manager's desk. The moral is that LANL's civilian science is sometimes even more dangerously off-base than its nuclear weapons.

Thank you for your attention, see you on Thursday,

Greg Mello



Los Alamos Study Group

 [Follow us](#)

["Remember Your Humanity" blog](#)

[Home](#) • [Contact](#) • [Contribute](#) • [Search](#)

July 23, 2021

New Mexico under assault; voters approve plutonium bomb factory for Los Alamos; update and outreach orientation Thursday July 29, Santa Fe

[Permalink](#) for this letter (tomorrow). Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New-Mexico-oriented list.

Previously (07/19/21): [LANL: Plutonium is Good for You](#)

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here](#).

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserve (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish](#).

Dear friends --

OK, voters didn't approve that. The national security state does not *need* your vote to turn Greater Santa Fe into a plutonium processing and manufacturing center, the better to supply its global empire with fresh weapons of mass destruction and keep the profits rolling for defense contractors.

As revolting as this situation is, it is also a precious opportunity for citizens to roll back the juggernaut of injustice and planetary doom. Why?

Because even though we can't vote on it, the national security state *does* need our permissive silence to proceed.

And without a pit factory, it's harder to maintain the fiction that the U.S. runs the world and therefore need not cooperate to solve problems like climate change.

Without a pit factory, the U.S. cannot remain "exceptional." Having a working pit factory is all about helping U.S. politicians and generals feel and act "tough."

We will not repair injustice at home without relinquishing hegemony abroad. They are two sides of the same coin.

The good news is that LANL's pit plans will not proceed in the face of determined opposition. Why? It's not *just* because those plans run counter to international law and the common conscience of humanity. They *also* run counter to sound engineering and good management *within the nuclear weapons system itself*.

For the moment, LANL's slowly-expanding pit program enjoys a compliant political environment. Nature and human geography have been less kind. As we recently [wrote](#), that program is already failing for about the fifth time. "How long, oh Lord, how long?" ["Not long," said Dr. King](#).

There is some progress in Washington. **The notion that LANL could make *all* the pits is receding; the idea that LANL shouldn't make *anypits* is gaining ground.**

We want to talk with you about that, in the context of other opportunities and dangers we face, Thursday evening, July 29, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm at St. John's United Methodist Church, 1200 Old Pecos Trail, in Santa Fe ([map](#)).

We want your help in a new outreach program, which we will explain. We may have other speakers as well -- we will let you know.

There are additional urgent reasons to meet.

New Mexico, as a habitable state in its climate and ecosystems, and as a democratic polity, is now *openly* in crisis. This is not an entirely new condition, so what is "new" may not be obvious. **What is new is the breadth, degree, and *publicity* of our crises, and the often-strange responses of civil society leaders.** This situation presents new challenges, dangers, and possibilities.

Item: the obscene, depraved momentary trips to "space" by Branson and Bezos, which get nothing but fan-dom from our news media and politicians. (Caitlin Johnstone's [take on Bezos](#). [Bruce Gagnon's](#).)

Item: the public semi-acknowledgement ([here](#) and [here](#)) of catastrophic, ever-rising temperature increases and water shortages as front-page news. What's missing in official narratives is sufficient realism as to what 3 degrees Celsius would *really mean*. There is a fantasy that we can "adapt" to

such a world, when we know that temperatures like this will trigger amplifying earth-system feedbacks that take us in a deadly direction. And why does our Governor focus on 50 years from now? We know why, and so does she.

Item: the enthusiastic political [embrace](#) of yet another high-tech war company in Albuquerque ("[Blue Halo](#)"), to be built at "[Max Q](#)," next door to a 2 million square foot surveillance satellite factory (the [Orion Center](#), more [here](#), part of [Theia Group](#) -- check out the promotional video).

Item: an utterly mistaken [presentation](#) (yesterday) by LANL to our hapless legislature of *their* plan to guide our energy future. Our Governor is already deeply [invested](#) in elements of this fantasy, among others. Needless to say, the state is a big part of the climate problem, not the solution, and our "scientific" national labs are helping maintain convenient fantasies.

Add these to pit production, the planet-killing oil and gas industry, our military bases, our nuclear weapons labs and waste sites, and consider the effect all these have on our educational system, legislature, culture, and public morality, and you may conclude **that there will be no recovery for this state once we go down this road. That would be correct.**

We think progressives are fooling themselves about what is possible under political conditions which look remarkably like willful moral depravity.

New Mexico is failing, whether we know it or not. For the children, for the animals, for the fragile web of life, we need to talk, and act -- swiftly, nonviolently, and as effectively as we can, working as much on ourselves as also engaged with the nightmarish political and climate situation in which we find ourselves.

What we do not need are anesthetized hearts that do nothing. [James Hillman](#):

So, the question of evil, like the question of ugliness, refers primarily to the anesthetized heart, the heart that has no reaction to what it faces, thereby turning the variegated sensuous face of the world into monotony, sameness, oneness. The desert of modernity.

Surprisingly, this desert is not heartless, because the desert is where the lion lives. ... the lion's cubs are still-born. They must be awakened into life by a roar. That is why the lion has such a roar: to awaken the young lions asleep, as they sleep in our hearts. ... What is passive, immobile, asleep in the heart creates a desert which can only be cured by its own parenting principle that shows its awakening care by roaring. "The lion roars at the enraging desert," wrote Wallace Stevens....

We fear that rage. We dare not roar....The moral restraint that is inherent to the animal, its natural piety, requires in us human beings an operation on the heart.

As Homer taught, we're not going to get past anesthesia on one side and violence on the other without some losses. Better those losses be ours than our children's. "[Protest and survive](#)," said E.P. Thompson in his 1980 pamphlet.

See you on Thursday,

Greg Mello

[^ back to top](#)

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



Los Alamos Study Group



["Remember Your Humanity" blog](#)

[Home](#) • [Contact](#) • [Contribute](#) • [Search](#)

July 19, 2021

LANL: Plutonium is Good for You

[Permalink](#) for this letter. Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New-Mexico-oriented list.

Previously (06/7/21): [Key pit production talking points: some progress in DC in killing LANL pit production: important article on co-optation and destruction of U.S. disarmament movement](#)

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here](#).

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserve (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish](#).

Dear friends --

We hope this letter finds you well.

You should have received a short history of attempts to add a "Rocky Flats mission" to Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) ([LANL pit production: fifth failure in progress](#)). Many of you also saw a guest editorial we wrote recently in the *New Mexican* (paywall but mirrored here: [Los Alamos lab: Plutonium is good for you](#)).

It is copied here below the line, in case you missed it. Those of you who find yourselves engaged from time to time with friends who say, "but LANL provides important jobs" may find it useful. Beierschmidt's prior op ed, to which this responds, is here (paywall): [LANL's growth means opportunity for Northern New Mexico](#).

It is a pity the *New Mexican* did not see fit to quickly pair Beierschmidt's op ed with my response (12 days passed) or even, dare we say, to ask me and/or others for a response *prior* to publishing Beierschmidt's piece, so they could be published together. That approach would accord the advocates of a peaceful, just society too much status -- which is as Simone Weil said the face of power. LANL, which makes weapons of mass destruction and is a sorry mess morally, intellectually, and managerially, has the highest overall status of any institutional entity in northern New Mexico. Whether as cause or as symptom, that fact alone shouts our poverty. The *New Mexican* definitely wants LANL to grow, as does the Democratic Party mafia.

LANL growth means nuclear weapons growth. There can't be and won't be any other kind. (Nor should there be. We have much better places to do non-bomb R&D. Beyond that, technology is accorded far too much weight in many people's thoughts and hopes anyway. There are no magical replacements for oil, or water, or food, no magical means of pulling CO2 out of the atmosphere other than the miraculous operations of the living biosphere.) In any case LANL is a "national security" lab through and through. The rest is window dressing ("public relations science" or "staff recruitment science") and its "non-weapons" research often has weapons applications anyway in the broad sense, which is why it is being done at LANL in the first place.

So then, what to do? A great deal is possible. We are sooner or later going to win this narrow battle, but it would be much better to do so quickly, in time to contribute to the wider struggle for survival that we and our animal friends and their habitats face.

Meanwhile we do want to steer clear of "feel-good" activities that make believe there is political traction where there isn't. From the introduction to Robert Bly's fine work, [The Sibling Society](#):

It is hard in a sibling society to decide what is real. We participate in more and more nonevents. A nonevent transpires when the organizer promises an important psychic or political event and then cheats people, providing material only tangentially related. An odd characteristic of the sibling society is that no one effectively objects....

Kierkegaard once, in trying to predict what the future society would be like, offered this metaphor: People will put up a poster soon saying, *Tonight John Erik will skate on thin ice at the very center of the pond. It'll be very dangerous. Please come.* Everyone comes, and John Erik skates about three inches from shore, and people say, "Look, he's skating on thin ice at the very center of the pond!" A lecturer says: *On Friday night we will have a revolution.* When Friday night comes, the hall is filled, and the radical talks passionately and flamboyantly for an hour and a half; then he declares that a revolution took place here.

We can skate 3 inches from shore but we have got to follow up with skating 3 feet and then 30 feet from shore. Instead of weakly-attended symbolic protests we need to actually prevent our communities from "going over to another order" in our place and time, while building the foundations of

sustainability directly.

We are working as hard as we can on informative advertisements, op eds, and above all educating Congress before they make decisions on the coming year's nuclear weapons programs, which is happening literally as I type this and over the coming few weeks. I will be in Washington in early August and for the coming three weeks we can't do more than we are, so we can't organize anything surrounding the twin nuclear attacks of 1945. Perhaps others are doing so. We here must apply the limited hours we have where they will do the most good.

We do want your help in on-the-ground campaigns to begin in roughly mid-August however.

And as you know we crave help in amplifying the hours we have: [Research Associate position available](#).

More to follow quickly now, as we have new work we will be sending out this week.

Thank you so much,

Greg Mello, for the Study Group

[LANL: Plutonium is Good for You](#)

7/15/21

Kelly Beierschmitt's July 3 op-ed ("LANL's growth means opportunity for Northern New Mexico") repeats familiar fictions: LANL helps "our" region thrive; LANL's growth is an "opportunity;" and LANL's "diverse" missions support "our" global community.

These myths invert the truth. Their purpose is to comfort the consciences of politicians and enlist their support. These myths are the same old "political heroin" (h/t Carol Miller) that has helped keep New Mexico poor.

Beierschmitt did not mention nuclear weapons – 80% of what LANL does. That mission expanded by 49% since last year, primarily to create a plutonium processing center and warhead core ("pit") factory. New pits (at about \$50 million apiece) are "needed" on a crash basis for the new warhead LANL's sister lab in California is designing for the Air Force. The entire justification for the new LANL factory is to provide pits quickly. A better, safer facility is planned in South Carolina but it won't be ready in time to meet the artificial deadline set by Congress.

Beierschmitt is saying plutonium pits are good for our families. It's his job to do so. At the same time, he is keeping what is planned secret. He writes in bad faith.

Readers can glean between the lines that LANL is desperate for housing, including "RV parks," aka trailer parks. The new plutonium mission require 24/7 operations involving 4,000 people and tens of tons of plutonium. LANL's infrastructure and nuclear waste management capacity are already overwhelmed. LANL is bursting at the seams. Is regional growth sustainable, or good? Beierschmitt assumes so.

Since 1943, LANL has spent about \$130 billion. What shared prosperity and social advancement has this flood of money created? Northern New Mexico is one of the poorest regions in the U.S. and one of the worst places in the U.S. to raise a family. Los Alamos County has thrived, to be sure.

To quote one regional economist we know, "Those who think LANL has been a boon to northern New Mexico are people for whom 70 years of data are not enough."

LANL did provide millions of cubic feet of permanently buried nuclear waste, some contaminated groundwater, and more than 1,600 federally-documented occupational deaths.

LANL benefits very few people, and is a major inequality engine. Inequality is devastating – far more important in social outcomes than aggregate GDP. Corporate paternalism is not the same as a true social contract.

Local labor markets are distorted as LANL absorbs scarce talent, an internal "brain drain." Housing markets are bid up. Scarce resources such as water and road capacity are consumed. Taxpayers in LANL bedroom communities pay for public services, often with net negative local fiscal impacts.

Even more damaging than these "deadly upas tree" phenomena, LANL suborns the attention and loyalty of our political and civic leadership and provides false, self-serving answers to economic, environmental and social problems, just as we see in Beierschmitt's op ed. Imaginations are stifled as narrative dominance becomes complete. Political and opinion leaders become unable to "think outside the labs." Instead of coming together to truly grapple with problems, our leaders talk about LANL "jobs," a narrative that centers our attention on LANL – not where it belongs, in our communities. In short, LANL corrupts.

And then there is the moral problem. These are weapons of mass destruction, illegal to use under several treaties. Just one of these pits would burn a whole city full of people. There was a reason Beierschmitt didn't mention nuclear weapons.

"Without vision, the people perish." LANL has a vision, but it centers around death, not life. Buzzwords like "innovation" are empty. Governor, what's your plan?

(Op ed ends here. I also appended a comment, part of which follows).

Government and this newspaper operate in a conceptual framework that ignores actual economic experience in peripheral regions such as ours. It's easier to kowtow to powerful federal forces than to think. Northern New Mexico is poor in part because too few people actually care. Economic and political inequality are in that sense self-perpetuating. If people in responsible positions cared more they would focus on the problems better. Many of our senior leaders profess to care but few actually do care enough to explore outside the mental corral created for them and which they themselves have created. Part of the problem is that political and opinion leaders who have entered the wealth-forming classes tend to look upward to the sources of wealth rather than downward to those left out, economically and politically. The system is working fine for them, thank you very much. They turn away from addressing the poverty system in all its aspects, and one of the main directions they turn toward is LANL. One regional economist of long experience remarked to me that in his view the main impediment to economic and social development in northern New Mexico -- or was it New Mexico as a whole? -- is "the failure to recognize that The Bomb was and is a mistake."

[^ back to top](#)

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



June 7, 2021

Key pit production talking points; some progress in DC in killing LANL pit production; important article on co-optation and destruction of U.S. disarmament movement

[Permalink](#) for this letter (tomorrow). Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New-Mexico-oriented list.

Previously (05/24/21): [Key talking points, discussion outside the State Capitol this Thursday, May 27, noon, east side: massive expansion at LANL, new arms race, plutonium "pits" out the wazoo](#)

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here](#).

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserve (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish](#).

Dear friends --

We hope this letter finds you all well.

You heard from us most recently last Tuesday ([Administration budget for warhead cores \("pits"\) jumps again, as Biden team struggles with Trump's rushed "double-factory" plan](#), June 1, 2021).

Pit production is a crucial part of the proposed \$2 trillion ([pp. 6-13](#)) that the Biden Administration is doing its part to spend on nuclear weapons over the next 30 years.

To summarize the pit situation afresh:

- The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) hopes to spend more than \$10 billion on infrastructure and start-up costs to begin industrial pit production at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) over the next 6-8 years, and a billion or so every year after that for as long as LANL produces pits;
- Each pit LANL makes will cost in the neighborhood of \$50 million; the Congressional Budget Office estimates ([p. 14](#)) every other part in a warhead including final assembly will cost \$9 to \$14 million; using LANL pits will double or triple overall warhead cost;
- Producing pits at LANL also requires building a factory in South Carolina but the reverse is not true, as the SC facility would suffice; producing pits at LANL will also require additional facilities at LANL;
- The estimated price tag for the SC factory has more than doubled to about \$11 billion, and the more realistic schedule NNSA predicted in 2017 is now admitted again (p. 2 [here](#): "2033 at the earliest"; slide 9 [here](#): "2029-2036"; compare Hruby [testimony](#) of 5/27/21 at 56:55, background provided at note 1 [here](#));
- The only reason to proceed with pit production at LANL is to facilitate production of a brand-new warhead for silo-based missiles, which is altogether unnecessary;
- In short the Trump "dual-factory" pit plan is based entirely on contractor greed, geopolitical panic, engineering and management fallacies, and a desire to placate Democratic Party senators, led by Heinrich and at the time Udall, who wanted a pit factory at LANL.

Not just the Biden Administration, but we too have also been struggling with the "double pit factory" plan. We are making progress. Our analysis is gaining at least some adherents in the Administration and Congress. Some people are beginning to see that ***a dollar spent on pit production at Los Alamos is a wasted dollar***, beyond a pilot production level.

There are NGOs which favor LANL for pit production. They are altogether wrong to do so -- wrong on policy, wrong on social justice, and wrong on environmental issues.

It's easy to say, and we have said many times, that "we don't want pit production anywhere," but that and \$3.00 *might* buy a cup of coffee. (In fact we say that and much more: that the perceived need for pits is part of a paradigm of folly that will be fatal to the United States, should it persist; see [pp. 4-7](#))

The key question concerns when pit production is to begin. Making pits at LANL is all about making them NOW, as soon as possible. That's really the

only reason for government to invest in industrial pit production at LANL.

You might ask, as many do, what can I do to help bring this fiasco to an end?

Don't bother writing to New Mexico politicians. It won't work. The politics of begging is not going to help. It's just an expression of weakness -- especially if it comes from reliable Democrats.

Nothing will change much in New Mexico absent a great deal more visible, nonviolent, principled, disciplined discontent. (*Violent* discontent would change things all right -- *very much for the worse for everybody, especially you*. Don't go there! And beware provocateurs!)

Absent that social movement, elections aren't going to help either. Money and propaganda and parties choose candidates and winners, not citizens.

There is much that can be done, but we need to recognize that we ourselves are going to change along the way. That's all I want to say about that tonight.

On a related topic, Dave Lindorff has published an important article in Salon, "[Peace-washing: Is a network of major donors neutralizing activism in the peace movement?](#)" This is an entirely accurate, if also greatly understated, article. It is really just a glimpse. Other authors have also looked at this but not in such a recent, focused way. One cannot really understand what happened to the peace and disarmament movement in the U.S. without some appreciation of the phenomena Lindorff discusses. The political and institutional results of what Lindorff reveals is discussed here: "[Stewards of the Apocalypse: an abridged history of U.S. nuclear weapons labs since 1989.](#)"

The same phenomena occur in the climate and energy fields, as many on this list can attest.

Stay tuned, be well, get ready, take heart.

Greg Mello, for the Study Group

[^ back to top](#)

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



Los Alamos Study Group

 [Follow us](#)

["Remember Your Humanity" blog](#)

[Home](#) • [Contact](#) • [Contribute](#) • [Search](#)

May 24, 2021

Key talking points, discussion outside the State Capitol this Thursday, May 27, noon, east side: massive expansion at LANL, new arms race, plutonium "pits" out the wazoo

[Permalink](#) for this letter. Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New-Mexico-oriented list.

Previously (05/20/21): [Discussion outside at the State Capitol today, May 20, noon, east side](#)

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here](#).

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserve (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish](#).

Dear friends --

This **Thursday 5/27 at noon at the State Capitol, on the east side**, we will have another discussion and planning session regarding the massive expansion of nuclear weapons work in the Santa Fe area.* (*It is no longer accurate to say, "in Los Alamos.")

Please come!

Last week's gathering was fruitful and reasonably well-attended. Many thoughtful points were raised and actions discussed -- and importantly, personal reactions and concerns were brought forth by the dozen people there.

Not everyone who wanted to come last week could do so. **We very much hope that those of you who were able to come last time will reach out to your friends and bring them with you this time.** A lot depends on people not being shy.

Our discussion had several foci, one of which was outreach. **The first and most important outreach each of us can do right now -- those of us who were there last time and those who could not come -- is to bring people together in one place to talk about some of these issues, and to learn.**

While our numbers are small, we are on the track of doubling attendance with each gathering. This is a good track for the immediate future, among other goals. Yes, some intimacy will be lost. Our format will evolve. Additional speakers and discussants will be added. We are also very interested in artistic expression (let's talk about that.) But for now, we need to focus our energy in one place and strengthen just a few common understandings as we reach out to others, while respecting many differences. There are a lot of misconceptions out there.

Obviously, a public gathering at a state Capitol is also a manifestation in itself.

There is almost no organized popular opposition in New Mexico to the new nuclear arms race, which is in critical ways centered right here. **There are also almost no widely-shared narratives with factual bases. Without these there is no basis for growth.** On nuclear weapons and related issues, New Mexicans have been propagandized from not just one but multiple directions.

What concern there is lives all across the political spectrum, with important gaps. Trying to approach these issues -- to educate, to organize, or to lobby -- from a partisan perspective will be ineffective. We don't.

Our elected officials are mostly uninformed. Some think they understand what is going on at LANL on the basis of a briefing by LANL's operating contractor. Ouch.

As for the Study Group, we aim to link people and issues across parties and perspectives. We are all in this mess together. That said, we believe it is important to prioritize and identify with the vulnerable -- vulnerable people and ecosystems -- and the poor.

Although it is out of fashion, we also assert there are objective truths we can know, and ought to know, before picking up a megaphone. As Martin Luther King said, "Nothing in all the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity." This sometimes confuses people who can't think beyond "advocacy," in what has become a post-modern age. Such an age will be brief.

These standpoints do not comprise an "antinuclear" frame of reference, and we are not an "antinuclear" organization (nor are we any kind of "watchdog"). We do want to make government better, and we want to empower people in ways that minimize suffering and provide hope for humanity and nature's survival.

That being the case, these discussions are fundamentally not just about nuclear weapons and plutonium warhead core ("pit") production. We face converging existential crises -- crises which can destroy our civilization, people, and the living landscape -- of which the grotesque expansion of nuclear weapons work is just one. The nuclear arms race happens to be a potentially world-ending policy of staggering idiocy and immorality that our communities are being asked to support. It is also a juggernaut we together have the power to halt, as we have done in the past -- we here in New Mexico, and nationally.

The reason the new arms race can be stopped is precisely because it is idiotic and immoral and billions of people know that already, and there are powerful economic forces, and corporate liabilities, at work which make the enterprise quite fragile -- doomed, in fact. Here in Greater Santa Fe it is literally and figuratively being built on a very shaky foundation.

At this meeting we will provide printed discussion and talking points. We can't draft a fully up-to-date fact sheet until the Administration releases its proposed budget on Friday, so that will come next.

Thank you very much for your solidarity. We are working in multiple ways, of which this is only one. Work with us, if you want. We are a pretty merry band, with a lot of mutual support.

Hopefully I will be able to summarize some technical work done last week in Bulletin form this week; stay tuned. There will also be a press release about the Biden budget request Friday, which will be the first detailed indication of the new Administration's nuclear policies.

Until then,

Greg, for the Study Group

[^ back to top](#)

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



Los Alamos Study Group

 [Follow us](#)

["Remember Your Humanity" blog](#)

[Home](#) • [Contact](#) • [Contribute](#) • [Search](#)

May 20, 2021

Discussion outside at the State Capitol today, May 20, noon, east side

Dear friends --

This is a last-minute reminder about today's discussion and planning session in Santa Fe. Please come if you can.

LANL's nuclear weapons missions are expanding rapidly now, and NNSA and LANL leaders have a national security serving vision for New Mexico. Here, if you are interested, is a video of the [presentation](#) LANL operations manager Kelly Beierschmidt gave to the Los Alamos County Council earlier this week. Here are the [slides](#). As Beierschmidt said (at 1:10:25), "We've almost added an entire other national lab to the mission space of Los Alamos." Yes, and more is planned.

Combined with the dramatic growth planned in public and privatized intelligence and surveillance in New Mexico, the national security organs of the imperial state, supported by our elected officials, could remake our state's identity and polity. "Jobs?" Yes, for those willing to stunt their minds and hearts to enter the nuclear job-training "pipeline."

Is this inevitable? No. Other factors are intervening. Meanwhile we have to decide which side we are on.

Meanwhile, under a neoliberal banner, New Mexico's renewable energy is being given away to hedge funds and out of state corporations, much of it to be shipped to points west where it will support brown growth and charge Teslas for the wealthy few. Careers that count? Communities? Schools? Nurses and doctors? These are largely afterthoughts that will continue to suffer under today's trickle-down plans. Decreasing greenhouse gas emissions? Not going to happen while we are slaves to growth -- i.e. wealth for a few -- and to oil and gas. Our Environment Department is, primarily, in the business of legitimating pollution and extinction.

Young activists are being trained to be obedient to the same powers that crippled their elders.

This is a plea to end the denial that cripples our politics and communities. The poor are the ones who suffer from our blithe acceptance of what hurts them. We need to talk, and that is why we are meeting today and will be meeting more in the future, in person (by far the best) and otherwise. Write us any time.

Best,

Greg, for the Study Group

May 17, 2021

Discussion outside at the State Capitol this Thursday, May 20, noon, east side

[Permalink](#) for this letter. Please forward whole message as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New-Mexico-oriented list.

Previously (04/26/21): [Reminder: public briefing, discussion Thurs. Apr 29, 6-8 pm. St. John's UMC, Santa Fe: "How Santa Fe liberals and environmentalists are enabling plutonium pit production at LANL in support of Biden's failing foreign and nuclear policies, and what we can do differently"](#)

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here...](#)

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserv (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish](#).

Dear friends --

We hope you are all well.

We hope you can join us for a live discussion on Thursday, May 20, at noon on the east side of the State Capitol in Santa Fe. We will meet for two hours. The program is still evolving, but we hope to devote the first hour and half to an update and discussion -- as thoughtful as we all can manage -- regarding nuclear weapons issues (so important for the future of northern New Mexico) in the context of the other crises we face, especially the

climate and related energy and economic crises.

We want to discuss, at least briefly, the fallacy that LANL "jobs" and related growth will benefit our communities, the fallacy that LANL can "diversify" its missions, and the danger of focusing public attention and concern on "LANL cleanup."

But above all we want to talk about what barriers each of us experiences, and what barriers we see around us that block "the next step" in leadership, in whatever form that may take for each of us.

We don't care how many people come to this particular meeting -- whether it is six or sixty. Our primary concern is how we can come to grips with the real situation we share. We need mature understanding and action, first and foremost from ourselves. How can we break through the denial and paralysis around us? What posture shall we take in the public square, what action? You each have insights, applicable specifically and in some measure generally. We are listening.

We cannot do this type of meeting virtually, and we won't be filming or recording it for those who can't come. There will be other opportunities.

Speaking of that, we intend to return to the Capitol or to another central and symbolic location approximately a week later, in greater numbers. For that we are going to ask for your help in outreach. Can you help? Write us now, and/or come on Thursday, if you can. What we do, and plan to do, depends on you.

A handful of friends came to our April 29 meeting, which was certainly safe in the large room we had! We used these highly abbreviated [slides](#) (typos included) for the first part of the discussion, which will give you an idea of the general drift of our thought.

There is a lot going on right now. The expansion of LANL is finally getting into the news in a more serious way, although few will have heard of it.

- <https://www.abqjournal.com/2388532/lanls-move-to-santa-fe-means-jobs-and-controversy-ex-the-reality-is-that-its-vast-amounts-of-money-and-jobs-make-lanl-with-an-annual-budget-north-of-3-billion-an-irresistible-force.html>
- <https://www.abqjournal.com/2388567/nuclear-agency-set-sights-on-sf-midtown-campus.html>
- https://www.santafenewmexican.com/news/local_news/lanl-looking-for-100-000-square-feet-to-lease/article_614896d2-af4b-11eb-a840-ab407257b624.html
- https://www.santafenewmexican.com/news/local_news/report-los-alamos-lab-packed-prohibited-metal-in-sparking-waste-drum/article_293da0dc-b1a5-11eb-9bb0-fba77ee68de6.html

Also, the Regional Coalition of LANL Communities (RCLC) is finally dying. As many of you know, Taos County, and then Santa Fe County, voted to get out, as did the Quality of Life Committee of the City of Santa Fe Governing Body. More shoes will drop soon enough. Many of you helped with that -- some did a great deal. Thank you!

We have just sent off another technical review of some pit production issues to executive branch leaders and congressional experts in Washington, DC. It is all we can do on that front before the detailed Biden budget appears on May 27.

Let's leave the rest for Thursday. Meanwhile please be encouraged, as we are.

Greg and Trish, for the Study Group



Los Alamos Study Group



["Remember Your Humanity" blog](#)

Home • Contact • Contribute • Search

May 17, 2021

Discussion outside at the State Capitol this Thursday, May 20, noon, east side

[Permalink](#) for this letter. Please forward whole message as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New-Mexico-oriented list.

Previously (04/26/21): [Reminder: public briefing, discussion Thurs. Apr 29, 6-8 pm. St. John's UMC, Santa Fe: "How Santa Fe liberals and environmentalists are enabling plutonium pit production at LANL in support of Biden's failing foreign and nuclear policies, and what we can do differently"](#)

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here](#).

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserve (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish](#).

Dear friends --

We hope you are all well.

We hope you can join us for a live discussion on Thursday, May 20, at noon on the east side of the State Capitol in Santa Fe. We will meet for two hours. The program is still evolving, but we hope to devote the first hour and half to an update and discussion -- as thoughtful as we all can manage -- regarding nuclear weapons issues (so important for the future of northern New Mexico) in the context of the other crises we face, especially the climate and related energy and economic crises.

We want to discuss, at least briefly, the fallacy that LANL "jobs" and related growth will benefit our communities, the fallacy that LANL can "diversify" its missions, and the danger of focusing public attention and concern on "LANL cleanup."

But above all we want to talk about what barriers each of us experiences, and what barriers we see around us that block "the next step" in leadership, in whatever form that may take for each of us.

We don't care how many people come to this particular meeting -- whether it is six or sixty. Our primary concern is how we can come to grips with the real situation we share. We need mature understanding and action, first and foremost from ourselves. How can we break through the denial and paralysis around us? What posture shall we take in the public square, what action? You each have insights, applicable specifically and in some measure generally. We are listening.

We cannot do this type of meeting virtually, and we won't be filming or recording it for those who can't come. There will be other opportunities.

Speaking of that, we intend to return to the Capitol or to another central and symbolic location approximately a week later, in greater numbers. For that we are going to ask for your help in outreach. Can you help? Write us now, and/or come on Thursday, if you can. What we do, and plan to do, depends on you.

A handful of friends came to our April 29 meeting, which was certainly safe in the large room we had! We used these highly abbreviated [slides](#) (typos included) for the first part of the discussion, which will give you an idea of the general drift of our thought.

There is a lot going on right now. The expansion of LANL is finally getting into the news in a more serious way, although few will have heard of it.

- <https://www.abqjournal.com/2388532/lanls-move-to-santa-fe-means-jobs-and-controversy-ex-the-reality-is-that-its-vast-amounts-of-money-and-jobs-make-lanl-with-an-annual-budget-north-of-3-billion-an-irresistible-force.html>
- <https://www.abqjournal.com/2388567/nuclear-agency-set-sights-on-sf-midtown-campus.html>
- https://www.santafenewmexican.com/news/local_news/lanl-looking-for-100-000-square-feet-to-lease/article_614896d2-af4b-11eb-a840-ab407257b624.html
- https://www.santafenewmexican.com/news/local_news/report-los-alamos-lab-packed-prohibited-metal-in-sparking-waste-drum/article_293da0dc-b1a5-11eb-9bb0-fba77ee68de6.html

Also, the Regional Coalition of LANL Communities (RCLC) is finally dying. As many of you know, Taos County, and then Santa Fe County, voted to get out, as did the Quality of Life Committee of the City of Santa Fe Governing Body. More shoes will drop soon enough. Many of you helped with that -- some did a great deal. Thank you!

We have just sent off another technical review of some pit production issues to executive branch leaders and congressional experts in Washington, DC. It is all we can do on that front before the detailed Biden budget appears on May 27.

Let's leave the rest for Thursday. Meanwhile please be encouraged, as we are.

Greg and Trish, for the Study Group

[^ back to top](#)

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



Los Alamos Study Group

 [Follow us](#)

["Remember Your Humanity" blog](#)

[Home](#) • [Contact](#) • [Contribute](#) • [Search](#)

April 26, 2021

Reminder: public briefing, discussion Thurs. Apr 29, 6-8 pm, St. John's UMC, Santa Fe; "How Santa Fe liberals and environmentalists are enabling plutonium pit production at LANL in support of Biden's failing foreign and nuclear policies, and what we can do differently"

[Permalink](#) for this letter. Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New-Mexico-oriented list.

Previously (04/21/21): [Public briefing, discussion Thurs. Apr 29, 6-8 pm, St. John's UMC, Santa Fe: "The nuclear and foreign policies of the Biden Administration"](#)

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here](#).

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserv (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish](#).

Dear friends --

We hope you are well and finding renewal from the long covid confinement in this beautiful spring.

Please come if you can to the important public meeting on **Thursday, April 29, 2021, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall at St. John's United Methodist Church, 1200 Old Pecos Trail** ([map](#)).

This is a very large, well-ventilated hall with plenty of room to spread out, as noted previously.

We have adjusted the emphasis in the topic somewhat: **"How Santa Fe liberals and environmentalists are enabling plutonium pit production at LANL in support of Biden's failing foreign and nuclear policies, and what we can do differently."**

The long and short of it is that many parties are being herded into enabling pit production at LANL by powerful agenda-setting funders and the Democratic Party mafia. These power players are in turn working to support a neoconservative foreign policy that is failing on all fronts, with mounting dangers in the Western Pacific, in central Europe, and in the Middle East. Biden's foreign policies -- just as revanchist as Trump's -- have already failed, in virtually every direction.

As regards Russia, our only nuclear peer, Democrats and Biden continue to act as if all the "Russiagate" myths had not already been discredited. We now have a brand-new "national emergency" because of "Russian aggression."

Going back to the seemingly-narrow issue of pit production (without which the U.S. cannot make new kinds of nuclear weapons), there is a confluence of interests between those who do not want a pit factory in South Carolina and those who do want a pit factory here in New Mexico.

Many concerned but naive New Mexicans do not see what is happening, but it hardly matters if they are passive. In gaming lingo, most people are now "non-player characters" -- that is, citizens without democratic agency, if that is not an oxymoron. This includes most people who think they are being politically active.

We are being divided, distracted, and deluded into not seeing the difference between empty gestures and powerful dissent.

The local press is now generally too understaffed and/or frightened to take on the prevailing myths (such as, LANL does a lot of wonderful non-weapons science and could do more, LANL brings economic development, LANL is good for New Mexico, etc). This probably won't change.

We are very concerned that individuals and our communities have lost, or perhaps in many cases never had, a clear sense of what is real *in general* and what is not. The question is not who or what is to blame -- the causes, mostly impersonal -- but rather what we can do about it.

Our collective co-optation and paralysis works the same in energy and climate issues, where DC-based NGOs and corporate Democrats have successfully pushed what amounts to a colonial, corporate agenda that is starving the state of renewable energy and conservation and efficiency careers while failing to create energy democracy, local control, or address our advancing inequality. What could have been is quickly being lost. Possibilities for the future are diminishing because the majority of our politicians are too ignorant, corrupt, or cowardly and too many others are swept along with them, not wanting to offend.

Greg and Trish, for the Study Group



Los Alamos Study Group

 [Follow us](#)

["Remember Your Humanity" blog](#)

[Home](#) • [Contact](#) • [Contribute](#) • [Search](#)

April 21, 2021

Public briefing, discussion Thurs. Apr 29, 6-8 pm, St. John's UMC, Santa Fe: "The nuclear and foreign policies of the Biden Administration"

[Permalink](#) for this letter. Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New-Mexico-oriented list.

Previously (04/12/21): [RCLC delenda est; want to help stop the plutonium-fueled "innovation" in YOUR town? Write us.](#)

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here.](#) To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here.](#)

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserve (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here.](#) To unsubscribe [send a blank email here.](#)

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity.](#) [Twitter.](#)

[Contribute.](#) Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish.](#)

Dear friends --

We hope you are well and enjoying the spring.

There are several topics to cover. We can only do two today.

1. Mark your calendars! We are going to have an important public briefing and discussion on Thursday, April 29, 2021 from 6:00 to 8:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall at St. John's United Methodist Church, 1200 Old Pecos Trail ([map](#)).

Our topic will be **"The nuclear and foreign policies of the Biden Administration,"** which very much involve New Mexico. Support (or passivity, the same thing) from northern New Mexico communities is vital to the U.S. nuclear weapons agenda and to U.S. wars and aggression worldwide, as Admiral Richard explained in so many words (below).

We will be masked and socially-distanced ("physically distant" is a better phrase but not current) at this meeting, which will take place in a very large room with high ceilings and windows.

The Commander of the U.S. Strategic Command, Admiral Charles Richard, said yesterday in his prepared [testimony](#), **"Strategic deterrence is the foundation of our national defense policy and enables every U.S. military operation around the world"** (emphasis in original). "[I]f deterrence fails," he said, "we are prepared to deliver a decisive response, decisive in every possible way."

Ouch. Tulsi Gabbard [explains](#) (3:28 video) how "decisive" that would be.

But how does this involve northern New Mexico, precisely? Admiral Richard spelled a lot of it out yesterday:

After the closure of the Rocky Flats Plutonium pit fabrication facility in the early 1990s, the nation no longer had the capability to produce key components, turning instead to limited warhead refurbishments to sustain the stockpile. As a result, component and materials manufacturing needed to produce new nuclear weapons effectively stopped and much of the infrastructure atrophied. Then, shifting budget priorities over the past 30 years delayed needed weapons and infrastructure modernization programs, contributing to erosion of critical nuclear force capabilities and capacities. Today's NSE infrastructure, which the command relies on to sustain strategic deterrence, continues to decline and requires investments for sustainment and immediate modernization. Facility condition, loss of key capabilities, and constrained capacities also limit the NNSA's timely response to unforeseen technical, geopolitical, programmatic, or operational developments. As such, the NNSA is now challenged to simultaneously complete one limited refurbishment (B61-12 LEP) and one maintenance activity (W88 Alteration). This is concerning as recapitalizing the remaining force will require the capacity to concurrently execute up to four modernization programs to meet operational requirements.

Progress has been made with close NNSA collaboration and budget transparency, but much of the damage to the infrastructure and personnel has already been done. As a result, many of the modernization and sustainment efforts (which typically require 10-15 years to execute) have zero remaining schedule margin and some are already late-to-need. If the nation does not continue to address these concerns, no amount of money will be able to adequately mitigate operational risks associated with key stockpile and infrastructure capability losses. Long lead times needed to field modern replacement infrastructure require continued investments in future and enduring facilities and capabilities.

Today's nuclear complex relies on single production points and vendor sources, putting at risk our plutonium and uranium processing, high explosives manufacturing, and production of radiation hardened electronics. This provides few to no alternatives in the event of an unplanned production facility or vendor shutdown. In such an event, recovery of those production efforts could take many years.

Plutonium pit production is the biggest stockpile modernization issue - pits have not been produced at scale since Rocky Flats ceased production in 1989. As a point of comparison, our adversaries produce new pits in modern facilities at a rate many times greater than 80 per year; while most of our stockpile depends on pits that are, on average, over 50 years old and well past their design life. Accurately predicting aging plutonium performance with today's facilities and modeling capabilities is limited at best. We cannot study our way out of this problem. If we fail to recapitalize plutonium pit production now, we risk catastrophic failures given an infrastructure incapable of responding in a timely manner. Bottom line, re-establishing plutonium pit production is a "must do" and is foundational to stockpile modernization. (emphasis added)

Russia, he said, has "a robust nuclear weapons production complex capable of producing hundreds of warheads per year, enabling Russia to increase its overall nuclear stockpile-driven primarily by projected increases in unconstrained nuclear weapons - while our production capacity remains essentially non-existent."

So there you have it. As we have [previously noted](#), the only reason LANL's old, small, admittedly unsafe, and not built-to-purpose plutonium facility is "needed" for pit production is because NNSA wants pits ASAP to equip its new missiles (life-cycle cost: [\\$264 billion](#) with a "b", NOT including warheads and their pits; LANL pits will cost [\\$40-60 million EACH](#)).

Traditional arms control and "nuclear watchdog" groups are not opposed to pit production at LANL. They prefer pit production at LANL starting in the 2020s to production starting in the 2030s at larger, more modern Savannah River Site (SRS) facilities in South Carolina.

We oppose all pit production, now and later. Delaying pit production for another 10 years or so would be very valuable -- quite possibly decisive, as Adm. Richard says. Doing so would accelerate the erosion of the fallacious assumptions behind his thinking, quoted above. **We have no nuclear weapons crisis. We have an existential climate crisis, a social crisis, a fiscal crisis, a governance crisis, and very dangerous crises of war and peace. We must redirect national priorities if we expect this country and the people in it to survive. We need to do that NOW. Not making pits right now, in this decade, is one of those changes.**

If, later, there must be pit production, we prefer that it happen in safer facilities ten times further from affected communities than is the case here, which is the situation at SRS.

What is most likely to result from the approach of the liberal groups is two pit factories at roughly double the cost and double the impact of one, given that LANL's current facilities are objectively inadequate, dangerous, and -- despite billions in various life extensions -- temporary.

2. If you live in a chartered "LANL community," write or call your city, town, county, or tribal leaders and tell them to get out -- get out of the "Regional Coalition of LANL Communities" (RCLC)

The RCLC member communities are:

- Los Alamos County;
- City of Santa Fe;
- Santa Fe County;
- City of Espanola;
- Rio Arriba County;
- Town of Taos;
- Taos County;
- Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo; and
- Pueblo of Jemez

See our 4/12/21 [letter](#), [prior letters](#), and [this page](#) for more background.

The RCLC will collapse when it no longer serves the purposes for which LANL established it, which will likely be when enough members drop out. None have left so far, so colonial is our mentality here.

The purpose of writing and calling local leaders, wherever you are, is not however just to get out of RCLC. It is to implore local officials to speak out against LANL's main mission, against LANL's expansion, against preparations for plutonium warhead core ("pit") production, and in favor of nuclear disarmament and investments in society and a liveable environment. Our local governments are overworked. Our local leaders do not need to be helping LANL. LANL can and does help itself -- plenty.

As you probably know all RCLC member communities have signed a standing authorization that enables the RCLC, a [blatantly corrupt entity](#) controlled (financially and in every other way) by the Department of Energy (DOE), the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), the LANL management and operating contractor Triad LLC, Los Alamos County -- a captive "company town" -- and its own (sometimes interest-conflicted) board members, to conduct a broad range of planning and lobbying activities on behalf of elected governments. Why would anyone want that?

DOE and LANL can also quite accurately say to anyone that the member governments of the RCLC support all of LANL's missions (which are mostly one mission: nuclear weapons, including pit production) because the RCLC [Joint Powers Agreement](#) says that.

By belonging to RCLC our communities have surrendered a portion of their sovereignty to the national security state -- which, we can assure you after conducting more than 500 private congressional and White House meetings and briefings over the last 13 years -- is really and truly "deep." (The "Madisonian" institutions of the presidency, Congress, and the federal courts have proven unable to control what Michael Glennon calls [[5 minute video version](#)] the "Trumanite institutions" set up in 1947 and 1949 to prosecute the Cold War. The RCLC basically formalizes a feudal relationship with the "Duke on the Hill," and a colonial relationship between NNSA's LANL contractor and these local governments and tribes. Glennon, you might want to know, believes only an aroused citizenry can return the U.S. government to a constitutional track.)

Thank you so very much for your thoughtful engagement. We will get to those other topics in a day or two, and meanwhile please mark your calendars!

Greg and Trish, for the Study Group

[^ back to top](#)

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



Los Alamos Study Group

 [Follow us](#)

["Remember Your Humanity" blog](#)

[Home](#) • [Contact](#) • [Contribute](#) • [Search](#)

April 12, 2021

RCLC delenda est; want to help stop the plutonium-fueled "innovation" in YOUR town? Write us.

[Permalink](#) for this letter. Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New-Mexico-oriented list.

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here](#).

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserve (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish](#).

Dear friends --

We hope you are enjoying the lovely spring weather.

Do we need to remind ourselves that unless the military-industrial complex is dethroned from its commanding position in U.S. public life there will be no possibility of any genuinely progressive or truly environmental program being enacted, at any level?

This is nowhere more true than in New Mexico, where elected politicians increasingly identify with -- increasingly *represent* -- nuclear weapons and military-related institutions, public and private.

In the main, these institutions embody priorities exactly opposite to those we seek.

It may appear easier to just ignore and work around these institutions. And it can be. But all history and experience suggests that overall, the results of doing so will be stunted at best. Sooner or later, the proverbial "elephant in the room" has got to be faced. Because it is growing, and it wants to eat not just our lunch, but everything. It's a monster.

In New Mexico, our incredible public tolerance for poverty and inequality is enabled and advanced by genuflecting to our nuclear and military institutions and by the political loyalties and corruption that goes with that. New Mexico politicians live far too much in the nuclear dream, fantasizing that "innovation" and a "high tech" future will lift all boats. Just how that will happen is never explained. As they say, "hype springs eternal."

Nuclear weapons, as Carol Miller says, are our political heroin.

So as we all work on our various social and environmental agendas, in our important charities, and on the thousands of sustainability projects that make up the Gandhian "constructive program," we should not lose sight of the gigantic "taxation without representation" going on. We don't have a say in it ([short video](#) illustrating this [study](#)), but the fact is that the Empire sucks up resources to the tune of about \$7,200/household-year (i.e. [\\$934 billion/year](#) divided by 130 million U.S. households). Whether you consider it tax or a debt makes no difference. Either way, it is a vast opportunity cost into which our whole future is continually sinking. Whatever else we do, we will not succeed until we throw off this yoke. And because we live here, in the heart of the beast, we have quite a lot more leverage than most people.

Which brings us to this update.

1. Drive a stake through its heart: "Regional Coalition of LANL Communities" (RCLC) update

RCLC [delenda est](#).

As we [wrote](#) on 4/1/21, the City of Santa Fe rejected the "new and improved" RCLC legal basis, aka Joint Powers Agreement (JPA), throwing a something of a wrench into RCLC operations. The Santa Fe City Attorney believes this rejection is not enough to remove the City from the RCLC and that a separate motion would be required to effectuate that. Such a motion is not on the [agenda](#) of the City's Governing Body this week. We have not heard if or when it might be.

So the RCLC staggers on, for now. **Our target is not just the pathetic RCLC, but rather nuclear weapons and LANL itself, both of which the RCLC inherently supports.** Nuclear weapons are the *raison d'etre* and overwhelmingly dominant mission of LANL. If you respect LANL as an institution you respect nuclear weapons.* (*Please don't fall into the fallacy of thinking LANL does, or could do, a lot of "wonderful civilian science." If you think that way, feel free to bring it up at our next in-person meeting.)

As it happens, the RCLC will meet virtually this Friday, 4/16/21. The agenda and meeting coordinates are not yet posted on the RCLC's derelict [website](#). That will happen tomorrow. Questions as to how the RCLC will function without endorsement of its new JPA by the City of Santa Fe or

Jemez Pueblo (and without certainty regarding its core DOE funding) are sure to be on the agenda.

At every RCLC meeting there is an opportunity for public comment. Consider using this opportunity! And don't hold back! You don't have to know more about the RCLC than the simple points outlined here.

Even by New Mexico standards the RCLC is corrupt. This is probably the most important point that needs emphasis, along with its ineffectuality (Much of this [RCLC background and talking point page](#) is one long chronicle of corruption). The notion that the RCLC can change federal priorities -- get more pork, in other words, beyond that obtained by the untiring efforts of the New Mexico congressional delegation -- is laughable.

Apart from that risable goal, the RCLC has no actual *raison d'etre*. It is a vehicle for corruption, pure and simple.

The people who promote and lead the RCLC are thus promoting and leading corruption, along with promoting nuclear weapons.

Assisting young people to get jobs at LANL -- building a better LANL jobs "pipeline" -- is another RCLC claim to fame. Aside from being redundant in that role, this is not a good thing to do. It means, in nine out of ten cases, assisting young people to orient their careers -- the single biggest hunk of the time they have available on this earth -- toward weapons of mass destruction. It's just another form of the "poverty draft."

That giant sucking sound you hear around our universities and community colleges these days is the sound of talented, beautiful young people being sucked up by the nuclear weapons industry. These are now people who will NOT be helping you with your solar installation, cultivating tomorrow's spinach, or building and working in the new health clinic. This is nothing less than the "demonic, destructive suction tube" of military spending that Martin Luther King spoke of, a year to the day before his assassination.

LANL jobs are for the most part *not* good jobs -- not "decent" jobs anyway. We all know and love people who are trapped in such jobs, or in one of the "[bullshit jobs](#)" our capitalist system creates by the millions -- jobs with little or no redeeming social value. (We who are not in such jobs are the lucky ones, but that doesn't mean we are better people. We aren't.)

But let's not promote *more* such jobs *as public policy*, all the more so during what could be humanity's last stand against the environmental and social catastrophes created by our own collective greed and folly. *It's an all-hands-on-deck moment*. Nuclear weapons are not necessary. A rapid transition to a sustainable way of life *is* necessary, or by definition we won't live.

We understand the larger political purposes of the RCLC well enough. But why, many here are asking, do local politicians like [Darren Fernandez](#) in Taos or [Henry Roybal](#) in Santa Fe, or the other [RCLC board members](#), actually *want* to be associated with this thing? And why is [David Israelevitz](#) such an "Energizer Bunny" in promoting the RCLC, visibly holding other board members' hands, answering questions here, there and everywhere? By one count Israelevitz has appeared four times before the Santa Fe Governing Body and its committees to promote the RCLC.

We leave speculation to readers but the broader point is robust: when a public body has no clear purpose other than suborning local governments and tribes by tying them to a corporate agenda, that body is corrupt to the core and should be abolished.

For other talking points see our 3/30/21 [letter](#) and more recently this April 7 [Open Letter To Taos County Commission, Town Council On Membership Of Regional Coalition](#) by Suzie Schwartz of Norteños for Peaceful and Sustainable Futures.

2. NNSA, LANL, and well-connected profiteers have huge plans for Los Alamos, Santa Fe, and beyond

Unprecedented growth and the new plutonium pit production mission in particular have led LANL to lease additional facilities in Santa Fe to accommodate its rapidly-growing staff ("[Los Alamos nuclear weapons lab to open offices in Santa Fe: Shift in identity, values feared for "Royal City of the Holy Faith of Saint Francis"](#), Feb 10, 2021; "[LANL leases second office complex in Santa Fe as nuclear weapons growth pushes admin staff off "The Hill": 2,000 more staff needed for "24/7" plutonium "pit" production mission for only 20 pits/year](#)," Mar 8, 2021.)

We can now say that NNSA plans for Santa Fe recently also included a national "innovation campus" that would serve "the operators of all our DOE/NNSA facilities" and transform "the entirety of St. Michael's Drive," requiring "additional housing, entertainment, business, and retail development." Regional schools and universities would be engaged as partners to strengthen a "pipeline initiative" to recruit and train additional nuclear weapons employees. This conceptual plan, obtained by the Study Group, and other competing plans for the City's Midtown campus, have never been made available either to the public or even to city councilors.

While this particular NNSA plan appears dead or at least dormant, private development may take its place ("[Innovation Village aims to combine tech sector, housing in Santa Fe](#)," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, March 29, 2021.) Developer John Rizzo envisions some 25,000 new "innovation"-created jobs in the region over a 10-year period. (For further background on developer John Rizzo's "innovation villages" and their dependence on NNSA, see for example this [12/12/19 letter](#) and its links.)

Triad LLC, which runs LANL for NNSA, uses the same "innovation triangle" meme in its region-wide site plan, which we also obtained in redacted form (for an overview see [LANL Future Campus](#) video of Aug 27, 2019). From other information requests we know Mr. Rizzo has met privately with city, state, and federal officials as well as local corporate leaders, as he himself said to the *New Mexican*.

The previously-unforeseen growth in LANL staffing and costs for pit production was a key finding in our October 1, 2020 workshop [presentation](#). Some \$14 B in startup and early production costs can be expected over the FY19-FY30 period. To grasp the true magnitude of the growth NNSA envisions for LANL one must also include *other* new programs, such as the proposed W93 warhead for U.S. submarine-launched missiles.

In other words, transformative plans for increasing the role of nuclear weapons in northern New Mexico are right now being hatched in secret by the New Mexico congressional delegation, NNSA, Triad, and others. These plans are far more ambitious and transformative than most people imagine. We see only glimpses. Local governments are being kept in the dark, as are citizens. Our future is being decided by national security bureaucrats and syndicates of private interests, which are to be rubber-stamped by elected local officials at the appointed times.

When will any local government or tribe see and discuss LANL's site plan, which involves all of them? When will NNSA's plans for pit production at LANL -- the mission of the former Rocky Flats Plant -- become available? We know that NNSA says it will employ as many people in pit production as worked at Rocky Flats until that plant's last decade. This is not some just-right Goldilocks effort. It's an all-out campaign to make an old, small facility designed for R&D only function as a full-up nuclear factory. It is also the largest construction project in the history of the state -- in constant dollars, it rivals all three interstate highways put together.

With pit production using up most of LANL's allowed shipments to WIPP, how will LANL be able to ship its thousands of drums of legacy transuranic waste, now sitting in tents or buried under a few feet of sand adjacent to the San Ildefonso Pueblo and just upwind from White Rock? Nobody knows.

Centrally, where will the water come from? Let's be frank. Santa Fe and the Espanola Basin do not have enough water to support our present population and activities in the megadrought now beginning, let alone more growth.

How can LANL's nuclear weapons mission, especially at the bloated scale now imagined, be reconciled with our moral and legal obligations, or with a climate emergency that threatens our survival, or our obligations to the vulnerable, or even with our exploding deficit spending?

What is being proposed, once the PR gloss is scrubbed off even a little, is ruinous. It hurts us at every level -- economically, culturally, politically, spiritually.

So what can be done? A great deal can be done, both in Washington and here. Both are necessary.

Can you help us organize, in principle at least? That means, are you potentially interested in reaching out to your friends, and to others we suggest? Little can be done unless a few people step forward and say, "I can help, at least a little!"

Right now, we want to hear from you. That will give us some idea of what the next steps can fruitfully be.

Thank you so very much for your thoughtful engagement -- and looking forward your reply,

Greg and Trish, for the Study Group

[^ back to top](#)

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



Los Alamos Study Group

 [Follow us](#)

["Remember Your Humanity" blog](#)

[Home](#) • [Contact](#) • [Contribute](#) • [Search](#)

April 1, 2021

Thank you contacting the City of Santa Fe, which last night rejected the revised legal basis for the "Regional Coalition of LANL Communities"

[Permalink](#) for this letter. Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New Mexico oriented list.

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here](#).

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserv (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish](#).

Dear friends --

We hope you are well.

(In that regard, there are now many opportunities for the exercise of constitutionally-protected freedom of assembly and we intend to use some of them. Some 13 New Mexico counties, including Santa Fe and Los Alamos, are currently under the permissive "turquoise" covid health [restrictions](#) while another 10 counties, including Rio Arriba and Taos, are in the "green" category. The remaining 10 counties are "yellow." Stay tuned.)

THANK YOU VERY MUCH for contacting Santa Fe City councilors regarding the City's endorsement of the amended Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) authorizing the Regional Coalition of LANL Communities (RCLC).

The City REJECTED the amended JPA last night. Debate against the amended JPA was carried by Councilor Renee Villarreal and Councilor JoAnne Vigil Coppler. Councilors Signe Lindell, Chris Rivera, Roman Abeyta also voted against the JPA while Councilor Garcia, who represents the City on the RCLC, abstained. Councilor Villarreal's long-term, principled engagement was particularly persuasive.

Those who want to see what happened in detail can view the [video](#) of the March 31 Council meeting 3:06 to 4:57. The vote was at 4:52. See also [Santa Fe City Council rejects LANL coalition agreement](#), *Santa Fe New Mexican*, Mar 31, 2021 and (before the vote but recommended for its authoritative background) [Santa Fe City Council To Consider Adopting Amended Regional Coalition Of LANL Communities JPA Today](#), *Los Alamos Reporter*, Mar 31, 2021. The vigilant [Los Alamos Reporter](#) is likely to publish an after-action account as well in due time.

Words of gratitude would not be misplaced, especially to councilors Villarreal and Vigil Coppler. ([Contact information](#))

Councilor Villarreal has also put forward a motion to formally withdraw from the RCLC. This presumably will be placed on a near-term Governing Body meeting agenda. Regular meetings occur on alternate Wednesdays but no agendas are as yet available. **If you contact her, please encourage her to proceed with this motion.** We will let you know when this happens.

The City's rejection of the JPA has legal and political implications which are not yet clear. As we [said on March 30](#), this certainly means the amended JPA cannot be approved by the state or enter into force. RCLC Treasurer David Israelevitz said last night that Jemez Pueblo has also not endorsed the new JPA. Can the RCLC conduct business with its membership split between two slightly different legal authorities? We don't know. Will the Department of Energy (DOE) feel comfortable providing a new \$100,000 grant to the RCLC given its history of fiscal malfeasance, the lack of endorsement by the City of Santa Fe and Jemez Pueblo, and therefore with no improved State-approved operating charter? Will Los Alamos County provide its customary \$60,000?

The situation in the two Taos civil governments vis-a-vis RCLC is uncertain and confusing (a hallmark of everything related to the RCLC). Suzie Schwartz (Norteños for a Peaceful and Sustainable Future), with Erich Kuerschner and others, have attended virtually every recent RCLC meeting. Suzie is the go-to RCLC expert in Taos and is in communication with the County and City on the question of whether Taos should remain in the RCLC. **Especially now with Santa Fe's rejection of the JPA it is time for everyone to contact leadership of the Town of Taos and of Taos County, urging them to leave the RCLC. Coordinate with Suzie or Erich if you can.**

That's it for now. We here are all sick of the RCLC, but it is a serious infection that needs attention in order for healing -- aka decolonization -- in northern New Mexico to proceed.

Thank you so very much for your thoughtful engagement,

Greg and Trish, for the Study Group

PS Trish has updated this [RCLC background and talking point page](#).

[^ back to top](#)

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



Los Alamos Study Group

 [Follow us](#)

["Remember Your Humanity"](#)
[blog](#)

[Home](#) • [Contact](#) • [Contribute](#) • [Search](#)

March 30, 2021

Please contact the Santa Fe City Council TODAY, before tomorrow's critical meeting, and spread the word: don't endorse the revised agreement supporting the "Regional Coalition of LANL Communities"

[Permalink](#) for this letter. Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this New Mexico oriented list.

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here](#).

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserve (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish](#).

[RCLC background and talking points](#)

Dear friends --

We hope you are well in every way.

Once again all of us here at the Study Group are urgently asking you to write or call the Santa Fe City Council ("Governing Body") and Mayor regarding the Regional Coalition of LANL Communities (RCLC), and to get all your friends and families to do so as well.

Demand that they NOT ENDORSE the revised legal basis ("Joint Powers Agreement," JPA), for the RCLC.

The Santa Fe City Council will meet tomorrow, Wednesday, March 31 at 4:00 pm MDT ([agenda](#) with links to Zoom coordinates, and YouTube) to decide whether or not to endorse the revised JPA.

This issue will come up in the afternoon session, in which no public participation is allowed.

In addition to writing and calling the [councilors and Mayor](#) directly, you can also provide a written (email) comment up to 1:00 pm Wednesday before the decision (see [p. 10 for how](#)) or you can make live comments from the floor during the evening session (after the decision) starting at 6:00 pm (see [p. 10](#) again for how to do that).

Here are the emails of the councilors and Mayor in a convenient form for block pasting into your email program:

rdvillarreal@santafenm.gov, silindell@santafenm.gov, mjgarcia@santafenm.gov, cromero-wirth@santafenm.gov,
cmrivera@santafenm.gov, rrabeyta@santafenm.gov, jcsanchez@santafenm.gov, jvcoopler@santafenm.gov, mayor@santafenm.gov

Some of you have received notes from officials -- or gotten a call, as we did yesterday, which was revealing -- asserting that this vote is NOT a vote as to whether or not to remain in the RCLC. Formally, this is debateable but that doesn't matter too much because actually, that is exactly what it is -- as City staff more or less admitted to us. (More on this below.)

The implication of the position advanced by City staff and some councilors is, *don't worry your pretty little heads about it.*

Please do worry. This is not just a formality. Far from it. Please do whatever you can to prevent the City from endorsing the revised RCLC JPA. It's very important!

If you have written or called already please do so again.

Contact the Santa Fe councilors even if you do not live in Santa Fe, because no matter where you live in New Mexico, you have a stake in the future of northern New Mexico. **The stated purpose of the RCLC is to "act on behalf" of its member governments as regards ALL regional planning and development in the LANL region (see below).** While the RCLC is highly dysfunctional in all its stated goals, it is highly functional in its unstated goal of preventing any government action which is not centered around and supportive of LANL and Los Alamos County (LAC). It's in the name: **our communities are by law "LANL communities" if they endorse the JPA.**

Without Santa Fe participation, the JPA as written (text, [pp. 796-802](#), which explicitly includes the City of Santa Fe as a contracting party) **cannot be approved by the New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration (DFA). Without DFA approval the new JPA** (which by May 2020

had been endorsed by [all the other RCLC members](#) with the possible exception of Jemez Pueblo) **does not enter into force. What then would be the legal status of the RCLC? What is its status now?**

The Study Group has consistently opposed the existence, not just the mission, of the RCLC since its inception (see for example "[DUKE ON THE HILL. Local governments shell out for LANL coalition](#)," *Santa Fe Reporter*, Dec 8, 2010). It was transparently corrupt from the day it was set up. The ensuing 11 years have more than proven this out. By 2018, the shady purposes of the RCLC had manifested in overtly corrupt practices. A chorus of voices came to agree with us:

- [Pull the plug on regional coalition — it's time](#), *Santa Fe New Mexican Editorial*, Sep 8, 2018
- [LANL Coalition Remains Huge Taxpayer Waste](#), *Rio Grande Sun Editorial*, Aug 23, 2018
- [LANL Coalition is what's toxic in our governments](#), *Albuquerque Journal Editorial Board*, Aug 18, 2018
- [Time to Pull the Plug on the Regional Coalition](#), *Albuquerque Journal North Editorial Board*, Aug 10, 2018
- [Drinking on the public dime](#), *Santa Fe New Mexican Editorial*, Feb 26, 2018

At this point, I hope that nobody is trying to "reform" the RCLC or look for some "win-win" solution. The RCLC is all about handing over local sovereignty and pretending that local governments have some "seat" at some make-believe "table" paid for and administered by the contractors and minions of the national security state. There's no "win-win" solution. It's a pretend tea party the federal parents have set up for the kids in the yard so they can be supervised.

Those who say that the City of Santa Fe has not gotten any bang for the \$100,000 or so the City has invested in the RCLC are incorrect, even though *none* of the so-called recent "accomplishments" attributed to the RCLC are actually true (for a list, see [pp. 44-52](#)). The actual purpose of the RCLC is to suborn local governments. All the rest is for show. The City has been paying to join the LANL cult, but the exit door is open.

While the City says to us and others that tomorrow's vote on the JPA will not affect the City's participation in the RCLC, the City's own documents say otherwise. On February 25 of this year, City staff wrote "The purpose of this [JPA] is to renew the City of Santa Fe's participation in the [RCLC]" (see p. 803 in the [agenda packet for tomorrow's Governing Body meeting](#)).

Part of what is at stake here is apparently the appropriateness and perhaps legality of a \$20,000 payment from the City of Santa Fe to the RCLC by City Manager Jarel LaPan Hill on October 5, 2020. This payment was made for 2020 and 2021 RCLC membership dues even though:

1. the City had not joined the revised JPA;
2. the question of whether to do so was actively being examined by City Council committees (beginning with the Quality of Life Committee on July 1, 2020, which had sent the issue to the Finance Committee without an endorsement);
3. the RCLC had no executive director at the time and thus no way of providing its dubious "services" to Santa Fe;
4. the future of the RCLC was (and still is) very much in doubt.

In fact on February 25 of this year the City called its pending "agreement" with the RCLC "contractor" an "after the fact procurement...Services rendered [meaning, dues paid] prior to agreement" ([p. 803](#)).

Even now, none of the three City Council committee meetings on this subject have resulted in a recommendation for the Governing Body to endorse the JPA. It is something of a political football, as the background provided in the agenda packet shows ([pp. 788-803](#)).

So we believe the City Manager acted inappropriately, as we wrote to the City Council yesterday ("[Letter to Santa Fe City Council re: Regional Coalition of LANL Communities \(RCLC\)](#)", Mar 29, 2021).

Covering up this inappropriate expenditure may be one reason why the City wants to characterize tomorrow's vote so narrowly. Another is to keep the RCLC alive with Santa Fe in it, as long as possible. They want to avoid citizen outrage.

These questions aside, it is clear that by making this payment during the pendency of City Council approval of this controversial issue, the City thumbed its nose at its citizens.

That's what the RCLC is all about -- thumbing its nose at democratic due process. There is absolutely nothing democratic or fair or transparent about it.

There is more, unfortunately.

The JPA legally entitles the RCLC to act "on behalf of" member governments and tribes "with respect to the subject matters of this Agreement" -- which are a) extremely broad and b) under the control of the LANL contractor, the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), and the Department of Energy (DOE). The RCLC has zero real input, actually. Meanwhile Los Alamos County (LAC) -- which is more or less entirely dependent on these federal agencies and LANL -- also provides [more money](#) to the RCLC than all the other governments and tribes put together. With that money comes control. What all the controlling parties have in common is a desire to keep local governments supportive of LANL and compliant with its needs.

What are the powers the City would be granting to the RCLC in this JPA? These:

2. Authority of the Regional Coalition. The Regional Coalition shall have the authority to exercise the following powers common to the Parties in accordance with New Mexico state law with respect to LANL and LANL-related activities and issues:

A. Promotion of economic development, including:

- (i) promotion of new missions for LANL that the citizens of the Coalition Members support;
- (ii) advocacy of long-term stable funding of LANL missions;
- (iii) promotion of new and diverse scientific endeavors at LANL, focusing on employment and educational opportunities within the Coalition Members' jurisdiction;
- (iv) support of business incubation and business development on nonfederal lands;
- (v) support of workforce training and development; and
- (vi) promotion of awareness of LANL and its contributions toward and impact on the region.

B. Promotion and coordination of environmental protection and stewardship, including:

- (i) clean-up activities and site maintenance to ensure consistency with community values and future use goals;
- (ii) planning activities to address future use goals, stewardship needs and obligations, and prevention of future contamination;
- (iii) evaluation of cleanup planning, implementation and oversight for protection of workers and neighboring communities.

C. Participation in regional planning, including:

- (i) evaluation of policy initiatives and legislation for impacts on Coalition Members;
- (ii) development of long-term relationships between local, state and federal officials and LANL officials;
- (iii) coordination of regional planning with LANL strategic initiatives and other advocacy organizations and initiatives.

D. Evaluation of policy initiatives and legislation for impact on the Regional Coalition, including:

- (i) Participation in public comment and outreach initiatives to influence decision-making concerning LANL activities;
- (ii) Advocacy in state and federal legislative process and administrative proceedings.

This list of authorities and goals should chill you to the bone.

A lot of people apparently harbor the fantasy that LANL does "science," that it can be "converted" to "peaceful" research, or "cleanup," or other malarkey. Please disabuse yourselves of those fantasies. LANL is a bomb lab and would-be production site. That is what all this is about. See this [letter](#) sent yesterday to the City Council and this [press release](#) for some recent data on what LANL actually does.

The above purposes directly conflict with numerous [resolutions](#) the City of Santa Fe (and other local governments) have passed, which in various ways and to various degrees stigmatize and oppose nuclear weapons and plutonium warhead core ("pit") production. The JPA is aimed at negating independent (i.e. non-LANL) values and political expressions.

Finally, as we [read](#) in today's *Santa Fe New Mexican*, LANL's vision of an "innovation triangle" encompassing Santa Fe (LANL [video](#)) is also being advanced by well-heeled capitalists like John Rizzo. Their capital is impatient.

Where governments no longer serve the people, and good people do too little, carpetbaggers like Rizzo and his Wall Street backers will move in and take over. Colonial decline is cumulative and synergistic, just like green social policies could be IF we put our hearts and souls into them.

Stay tuned for more. We are just ramping up. But for right now, **get rid of the RCLC by preventing Santa Fe from endorsing this JPA.**

Greg Mello, for the Study Group



Los Alamos Study Group

 [Follow us](#)

["Remember Your Humanity" blog](#)

[Home](#) • [Contact](#) • [Contribute](#) • [Search](#)

March 19, 2021

Once more into the breach: contact the Santa Fe City Council and Taos County Commission urging RCLC withdrawal NOW

[Permalink](#) for this letter (tomorrow). Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this list.

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here](#).

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserv (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish](#).

Dear friends --

We hope you are doing well in every way.

Thank you for responding to our last request for letters and calls, if you did. Now, again:

1. Please contact the [Santa Fe City Council and Mayor](#), urging the City to leave the [Regional Coalition of LANL Communities \(RCLC\)](#). If you already did so after our previous [letter](#), please do so again now! Please also contact the [Taos County Commissioners](#) urging the same thing.

Lots of background and publicity -- nearly all negative -- about the RCLC can be found [here](#).

We have consistently [called for the dissolution of this group](#) since its first meeting and refused to take part in the charade of its meetings. It's inherently corrupt, existing only to suborn and undermine the independence of local government. Hundreds of citizen hours have been spent trying to "reform" the RCLC -- trying to get it to focus more on "cleanup," for example. That could never have worked because *the basic purpose of the RCLC is to foster corruption*.

Local governments and tribes which are part of the RCLC automatically register their political, i.e. moral, support for whatever the Department of Energy (DOE) and Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) want. With DOE and the (company town) Los Alamos County supplying nearly all the money, no other entity has any genuine say in the matter. And if the purpose is "jobs," well that's just the same as lobbying for more money for whatever NNSA and LANL want. Cleanup is always a political afterthought. NNSA runs LANL. The RCLC has never had an ounce of traction on cleanup budgets anyway. The senators do that.

The main purpose of the RCLC is not at all to lobby for "jobs," as if it could ever add any value in that anyway -- but rather to bind the identity of local governments and tribes to LANL's identity. It is an entirely feudal and colonial entity. It makes sure northern New Mexico is "all in" as a nuclear weapons colony.

More simply and to the point at this moment in history, the purpose of the RCLC is to make sure there is no official opposition to plutonium warhead core ("pit") production, which NNSA, LANL, DoD, and our congressional delegation all know is controversial.

Both these local governments -- the City of Santa Fe and the County of Taos -- are about to decide whether to renew their memberships in the RCLC, which involves a token payment of dues and signing a new Joint Powers Agreement (JPA).

There are a lot of specific problems we could mention but we don't want to kill the RCLC on technicalities. **We want to kill the RCLC because we don't want local governments and tribes to be subordinated to a nuclear weapons agency, and we want that factory stopped.**

In Santa Fe, the City's Quality of Life Committee discussed this matter at length this past Wednesday, March 17 ([all packet materials, video](#); quick summary: [Santa Fe's benefit from LANL coalition questioned](#), *Santa Fe New Mexican*, Mar 17, 2021).

The Committee treated the RCLC like the "hot potato" it is, kicking the question of membership to the main Governing Body for a decision without making either a positive or a negative recommendation.

Councilwoman Renee Villarreal really stood out for the quality and tenacity of her questioning and her opposition to the RCLC. She deserves a lot of credit and thanks. Two councilors abstained, which was interesting.

The next meeting of the Santa Fe Governing Body is on 3/31/21. the agenda is not yet available.

This means we have time for a major outpouring of anti-RCLC activism, so let's do it! We need to get Santa Fe out of this coalition, which will go a long way to killing it. Taos County -- same!

If everybody on this list wrote the decisionmakers in these two local government bodies, that would be the *coup de grace* for the pathetic RCLC.

LANL very much needs the support of Santa Fe in particular in order to make pits. Pits are necessary for new warheads. New warheads are necessary (but very far from sufficient) for the U.S. to remain a global empire. The RCLC exists, basically, to help prevent democracy, human values, and justice from gaining ground in northern New Mexico, or abroad.

Ending RCLC is not the goal of this organization in this matter. Ending preparations for pit production at LANL, and ending support for nuclear weapons while gaining support for a green social agenda on an emergency basis -- that's more like it. These are revolutionary goals. Anything less will not be enough for our grandchildren to survive. The RCLC is just a millstone around local government necks and a soporific drug on their minds and hearts. We mustn't get too distracted by it but at the same time it is highly problematic and we can end it right here and now.

We need to dispatch it with maximum prejudice, like a golf ball is dispatched from the tee. We aren't trying to nudge it off. We need to show that we are aroused and are demanding a future, something which "jobs" at LANL undercut for everybody involved.

2. This list

It was almost 3.5 months between the last two letters to this 500-person list (though you did get several other updates sent to our main mailing list). It has been a mere 17 days since the last letter, LOL. Expect the next one within a few days.

We expect to be sending either a "Bulletin" to the 1,400-person main list (less often, with more national and international content), or a "Letter" to this more New-Mexico-oriented list quite often now.

This New Mexico list will be the one used more frequently. If you find you are getting more emails than you want, you can unsubscribe to this list by [sending a blank email here](#). On the other hand, if you think these more local updates are valuable and want your friends to get them, please urge them to subscribe by [sending a blank email here](#).

The same goes for our main mailing list, which we use for Bulletins and press releases. To subscribe [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Thank you for your attention, solidarity, and help,

Greg and Trish (who has been working on the web site a few feet away) for the Study Group



Los Alamos Study Group



["Remember Your Humanity"](#)
[blog](#)

[Home](#) • [Contact](#) • [Contribute](#) • [Search](#)

March 2, 2021

Please contact the Santa Fe City Council urging the City to leave the "Regional Coalition of LANL Communities"

[Permalink](#) for this letter. Please forward as desired. Prior [letters](#) to this list.

Please endorse the [Call for Sanity not Nuclear Production!](#)

Do your interested New Mexico friends get these updates? To subscribe, [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe, [send a blank email here](#).

[Home page](#); [Press releases](#); [Bulletins](#)

To subscribe to our main listserv (less frequent, more national and international content) [send a blank email here](#). To unsubscribe [send a blank email here](#).

Our blog (little used at present but this may change): [Remember your Humanity](#). [Twitter](#).

[Contribute](#). Volunteer. Contact [Greg or Trish](#).

Dear friends --

We hope you are all well in every way. We are fine here.

We haven't used this New Mexico Activist Leader list in a long time now, for various reasons too boring to list. My apologies. So much has been going on we have barely kept up ourselves, let alone kept all of you "in the loop" as we should have.

All of a sudden however we do really need your immediate help, tonight or tomorrow if possible. I know that many of you are busy with the 60-day legislative session, now more than half gone, but **a small investment of time right now could be decisive -- really powerful and catalytic for good.**

As you can see from the two articles copied below, Santa Fe City councilors Rene Villarreal, and apparently also Signe Lindell, are questioning whether the City of Santa Fe should remain in the [Regional Coalition of LANL Communities](#) (RCLC). The purposes of the RCLC -- not withstanding whatever the latest iteration of its formal purpose may be -- are to suborn local governments and political leaders, getting governments and individuals to formally identify as part of a coalition of "LANL communities," and secondarily to lobby for more money for whatever LANL does -- waste management, plutonium pit production, whatever.

In effect, local governments which are part of the RCLC automatically register their political, i.e. moral, support for whatever LANL is doing.

The RCLC has been one long fiasco since its inception. Its purpose is corrupt, and by golly that's how it turned out. It's no wonder Andrea Romero got temporarily confused about what was and was not to be done with the organization's money. Almost anybody would.

At this point a Request for Proposals for a RCLC executive director has returned zero offers. Los Alamos County, which has been the fiscal sponsor, has been uncertain about continuing with that. Funding is uncertain. It is a troubled organization.

I can testify that it is also ineffective in Washington. I have been asked more than once in so many words, "Who were those people from some "regional coalition" and why do they have such an attitude of entitlement?"

RCLC member governments "get" to contribute to support RCLC lobbying on behalf of a multibillion-dollar corporation. The real value to LANL is the use of New Mexico local government names in Washington, which shows solidarity for nuclear weapons to any doubters on key congressional committees and in the White House.

The function of the RCLC is to show that New Mexico is "all in" as a nuclear colony.

Please write the Santa Fe [City Council and Mayor](#) and ask them to end their relationship with the RCLC. We aren't sure when this will come up for a vote but it could be as soon as tomorrow, in the Quality of Life Committee meeting ([agenda](#); it's not visibly there but it could be hidden within another item).

There's a raft of articles on the RCLC at [this link](#). Local journalists have been all over this, thankfully.

Thank you all,

Greg

<https://www.abqjournal.com/2364796/santa-fe-councilors-question-lanl-coalition-membership-ex-coalition-has-had-no-federal-funding-for-3-years-because-of-past-financial-impropriety.html>

Santa Fe councilors question LANL coalition membership

By [Kyle Land / Journal Staff Writer](#)

Tuesday, March 2nd, 2021 at 12:05am

Copyright © 2021 Albuquerque Journal

What's the actual benefit to the city?

That was the question Santa Fe city councilors debated Monday as they considered the city's membership in the Regional Coalition of LANL Communities.

At the center of it all was a revised Joint Powers Agreement for the coalition, which officials hope will solve some of the group's long-standing organizational issues.

Formed in 2011, the coalition consists of elected officials from nine local governments near Los Alamos National Laboratory. The body's website states it seeks to ensure federal decisions regarding LANL reflect local needs.

But some in Santa Fe question how beneficial membership is, especially when it costs upwards of \$10,000 to join. Those concerns were highlighted at Monday's Finance Committee meeting, where councilors considered ratifying the new agreement.

"What's troubled me ... is that we remain a member of this coalition, yet we never have received any updates about accomplishments," Councilor Renee Villarreal said.

What has come out of the body is disorganization. The coalition has had no executive director for the past six months, has no fiscal agent and has lacked federal funding for three years due to financial impropriety.

That impropriety stemmed, in part, from purchases made by former executive director Andrea Romero, such as baseball tickets, expensive dinners and alcohol. All funding for the coalition is taxpayer money.

"All of these things combined just make me very wary about our role and relationship (in the coalition)," Villarreal said.

Los Alamos County Councilor David Izraelevitz, who sits on the coalition, said the body still serves a valuable purpose to local communities.

The city's Quality of Life Committee will vote on the agreement before it goes before the City Council at a later date.

https://www.santafenewmexican.com/news/local_news/panel-weighs-benefits-to-lanl-communities-coalition/article_6e6ad618-7aa8-11eb-959e-b732a1e82896.html

Panel weighs benefits to LANL communities coalition

By Sean P. Thomas sthomas@sfnewmexican.com Mar 1, 2021 Updated 3 hrs ago

Santa Fe City Councilor Renee Villarreal renewed her concerns Monday about the city's involvement in a joint powers agreement with the Regional Coalition of LANL Communities.

During a Finance Committee meeting Monday, Villarreal said she has yet to understand how the city benefits from the agreement, which calls for a \$10,000 contribution.

"Why is it important we are part of this coalition?" she asked. "It's never been clear to me about the benefits and how it holds up the values that we care about in Santa Fe."

The city is one of nine cities, counties, towns and tribal governments that make up the regional coalition, which was established in 2011 to give communities in Northern New Mexico a more official say in decision-making pertaining to job development and cleanup at Los Alamos National Laboratory.

But controversy emerged in recent years over the organization's spending practices.

The city now must decide whether to approve a revised agreement that shifts the group's fiscal management away from Los Alamos County — which has served in the role since the coalition was formed.

The city previously discussed the new joint powers agreement at a Quality of Life Committee meeting in July, when Villarreal first raised questions.

That committee eventually moved the agreement forward without recommendation. On Monday, however, the Finance Committee voted unanimously to send the agreement back to Quality of Life to receive a more clear understanding of the coalition's benefits to the city.

The coalition routinely received more than \$200,000 a year in public funding — \$100,000 from the U.S. Department of Energy and the other half from its member municipalities based on the number of residents who are directly employed at LANL.

In October 2019, however, the Energy Department's inspector general recommended the federal agency seek reimbursement of up to \$300,000 from the coalition, saying it had failed to properly account for its spending and citing prohibited lobbying practices.

In 2018, the New Mexico state auditor also released a report identifying issues with spending practices. The audit identified improper travel expenses involving current state Rep. Andrea Romero, a Santa Fe Democrat who previously served as the coalition's executive director. After the audit, her contract was not renewed.

Los Alamos County Councilor and coalition board member David Izraelevitz, who attended Monday's meeting, said current contributions to the coalition can only fund a part-time executive director, and that a request for proposals for an executive director did not yield a candidate.

Finding a new fiscal agent is "one of the issues" that the coalition needs to iron out moving forward, Izraelevitz added.

He said the coalition helps the city of Santa Fe and other communities by providing a "common voice" to federal issues surrounding the lab.

As of Monday, the city of Santa Fe and Jemez Pueblo were the last holdouts to sign the agreement. **The full City Council is slated to decide on the agreement at its next meeting.**

Councilor Signe Lindell asked for the last two years of coalition budgets ahead of the vote.

"I know we're not talking about a huge amount of money, but if I could see the finances, I could see what this group is doing, and what is accomplished by it," Lindell said.

Councilor Carol Romero-Wirth noted the Los Alamos lab recently announced it was opening an office in Santa Fe and voiced her support for participating in the coalition.

"I think they will get their house in order and we will start to see the benefits of our membership," she said.

[^ back to top](#)

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