



For immediate release February 2, 2016

Contacts: Chuck Montaña 505.470.4273 pumbanm[at]cybermesa.com
Glenn Walp 480.584.9623 pspcolonel[at]yahoo.com
Steve Doran 480.220.5114 sldoran[at]earthlink.net
Jay Coghlan, Nuclear Watch NM, 505.989.7342, c. 505.470.3154, jay[at]nukewatch.org

Watchdogs Call for Renewed Investigation of Corruption at Los Alamos Lab and Questionable Suicide of Former Deputy Director

Santa Fe, NM – Today three well-known whistleblowers sent a certified letter to Mr. Damon Martinez, the US Attorney for the District of New Mexico, asking him to reopen an investigation into fraud and corruption at the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) and the questionable suicide in 2002 of the then-recently retired Lab Deputy Director. Mr. Damon is the top federal law enforcement official in New Mexico, and also serves as the Chair of the National Lab/Research University Working Group for US Attorneys. Therefore, he should be uniquely qualified to address the whistleblowers' concerns.

Glenn Walp and Steve Doran were hired in 2002 by LANL to investigate fraud at the Lab after it had been repeatedly rocked by security and corruption scandals. However, senior Lab officials summarily fired them without cause before they could complete their investigations. During their long careers in law enforcement they were respectively, among other things, Commissioner of Pennsylvania State Police and police chief of Idaho City, Idaho. The third whistleblower, Chuck Montaña, is a multi-credentialed auditor and investigator who worked at LANL for 32 years. He became a federally protected whistleblower after reporting accounting malpractice and abuses that he had witnessed for years, and for which Lab management retaliated against him.

In their letter to Mr. Martinez, the three whistleblowers state that their main concern is the need for law enforcement to fully investigate the claimed suicide in 2002 of LANL's second-in-command, former Deputy Director of Operations Richard Burick. Specifically at issue was the gun found at the scene of his death, and the improbability of this particular type of handgun being left in the state and condition that it was found in if truly used in a suicide. Steve Doran, who is a highly qualified investigator, and other weapon experts have concluded that it is impossible that the gun in question would have landed where it did, with an open, undamaged chamber, had it been truly used in a suicide.

In the same period of time as Burick's claimed suicide, the criminal investigation of major procurement fraud at LANL was derailed by the Lab's hasty firing of Walp and Doran. This, in turn, prevented a congressional committee from learning the full scope of potential criminal activity. Since then, new information has emerged that possibly links the corruption to Burick's suicide, which the three whistleblowers assert deserves serious investigation by federal law enforcement.

The whistleblowers are coming forth now with their letter to the US Attorney for New Mexico prompted in part by a recent article by the Project on Government Oversight (POGO), a

respected national organization that investigates and publicizes government waste, fraud and abuse. The POGO article concluded that if there were ever to be full accountability at LANL, “a new investigation into Richard Burick’s alleged suicide would be a good place to start.”

Walp, Doran and Montaña are also motivated by the recent announcement by the National Nuclear Security Administration that the LANL management contract will be competed in 2017. Their concern is that a full and complete investigation is needed in order to clean house and help ensure that one of the premier nuclear weapons labs, long plagued by scandal, is properly managed in the future, free of any possible reoccurrence of fraud and corruption. They believe that it is imperative that decision makers know the full extent of what transpired in order to know how best to proceed with the award of the new contract. Without a deeper understanding and accountability before the award is made, it is possible that the LANL management contract will end up in the hands of those largely responsible for the cover-up of past mismanagement at the Los Alamos Lab, or even worse the possible obstruction of justice that occurred.

Former Pennsylvania State Police Commissioner Glenn Walp commented, “Unless the consortium contractors for the Los Alamos National Laboratory consciously and aggressively resolve their perpetual management and operational failings, the lab will remain a haven for crime, corruption and cover-ups; perhaps it is time to shut it down.”

Former Police Chief Steve Doran asserted, “Corruption at Los Alamos must be taken out at the roots and those responsible brought to justice. This will build a strong national laboratory system that can be both trusted and productive.”

Federally protected whistleblower Chuck Montaña added, “The Los Alamos Lab is a cash cow for the military-industrial complex, and because politicians are so beholden to these corporations, there's zero accountability for the fraud, waste and abuse that keeps occurring in Los Alamos. We are seeking to end that by asking the US Attorney for New Mexico to intervene and go wherever the facts may take him.”

###

The Walp/Doran/Montaña letter to Mr. Damon Martinez, US Attorney for New Mexico, is available at <http://nukewatch.org/importantdocs/resources/Letter-NM-US-Attorney-LANL-fraud.pdf>

The Project on Government Oversight’s article *Once Upon a Time in Los Alamos* is available at <http://www.pogo.org/blog/2016/once-upon-a-time-los-alamos.html>

Chuck Montaña’s book *Los Alamos: Secret Colony, Hidden Truths* chronicling his 32 years working at the Los Alamos Lab and becoming a federally protected whistleblower is available at <http://losalamosdiary.com/index.html>

Glenn Walp’s book *Implosion at Los Alamos* on his hiring and firing investigating corruption and fraud at the Los Alamos Lab is available at <http://www.implosionatlosalamos.com/>