



For immediate release September 1, 2015

Contacts: Dr. James Doyle, nonproliferation expert, 505.501.0306, jimdoyle6[at]msn.com
Jay Coghlan, NWNM, 505.989.7342, jay[at]nukewatch.org

Los Alamos National Laboratory Files Motion to Dismiss James Doyle Whistleblower Case

Santa Fe, NM – On August 25, 2015 the for-profit contractor that runs the Los Alamos National Laboratory filed a motion with the U.S. Department of Energy Office of Hearings and Appeals to dismiss Dr. James Doyle’s whistleblower complaint. Doyle’s case received widespread national and international media attention after Los Alamos National Security, LLC (LANS) terminated his employment in July 2014. In 2013 Doyle had published a study arguing that the global, verifiable abolition of nuclear weapons was in the best national security interests of the United States.

In September 2014, following his termination, DOE Secretary Ernest Moniz wrote to Doyle that Frank Klotz, the head of the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), had asked the DOE Office of Inspector General (OIG) to investigate if “Dr. Doyle’s termination resulted in whole, or in part from the publication of his article in question or the views expressed in it.” NNSA Administrator Frank Klotz repeated this promise of an Inspector General investigation in a February 2015 letter to Senator Edward Markey, but it has yet to take place.

The promised Inspector General investigation is essential in determining whether LANS and NNSA acted properly in the Doyle case, and must be conducted before the DOE Office of Hearings and Appeals rules on LANS’ motion to dismiss. This is underscored by the fact that an earlier Inspector General report had determined that the LANS classification officer who retroactively classified Dr. Doyle’s study had a history of mishandling classified information and misrepresented himself to OIG investigators.

Dr. James Doyle remarked, “This attempt by LANS to have my case dismissed before the promised Inspector General investigation or an administrative hearing is a blatant attempt to deprive me of my rights and to cover up misconduct. I have written to President Obama and Energy Secretary Moniz asking that they deny LANS’ motion to dismiss and complete the promised Inspector General investigation.”

Doyle was among only 14 people within the laboratory workforce of over 10,000 employees to be laid off in 2014.

Doyle claimed in his whistleblower complaint that LANS’ Classification Officer abused his authority by improperly and retroactively classifying his article “Why Eliminate Nuclear Weapons,” which supported President Obama’s declared policy of a future world free of nuclear weapons. Although he wrote the study on his own time, Doyle took the precaution of successfully clearing his article with LANL in advance of publication. Various media articles have reported that his study was retroactively classified only after an inquiry by Republican staff on the House Armed Services Committee as to whether it contained sensitive information.

Because of classification rules Doyle cannot address allegations that his study contains secret information. However, Jay Coghlan, Director of Nuclear Watch New Mexico, observed, “Anyone can download Doyle’s study from the internet and see for themselves that it contains nothing sensitive about nuclear weapons deployments, designs or materials. There is only one word in his study that can possibly be classified, and that word is “Israel,” whose possession of nuclear weapons is commonly regarded as the worst kept secret in the world. Nevertheless, it is official US government policy to keep it classified. Many officials have crossed that line, but only Doyle has had to pay the price after it was misused in a biased manner to gag him after his article was published and he fought back.”

The DOE Office of Hearings and Appeals has not yet responded to the LANS motion to dismiss the Doyle case.

###

Los Alamos National Security, LLC’s motion to dismiss is available at <http://nukewatch.org/importantdocs/resources/LANS-motion-to-dismiss.pdf>

Dr. James Doyle’s letter to Secretary Ernest Moniz is available at <http://nukewatch.org/importantdocs/resources/Doyle-Moniz-letter.pdf>

Doyle’s January 2013 study “Why Eliminate Nuclear Weapon?” is available at: <https://www.iiss.org/en/publications/survival/sections/2013-94b0/survival--global-politics-and-strategy-february-march-2013-3db7/55-1-02-doyle-a88b>.

The DOE Office of Hearings and Appeals’ docket on the Doyle case is available at <https://cse.google.com/cse/publicurl?cx=011145866664225340457:yhreib3focq>

The February 2015 DOE Inspector General report is available at <http://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2015/02/f19/DOE-IG-0935.pdf>.

Additional background on the Doyle case is available at: <http://www.publicintegrity.org/2014/07/31/15161/nuclear-weapons-lab-employee-fired-after-publishing-scathing-critique-arms-race>
and <http://www.latimes.com/business/hiltzik/la-fi-mh-antinuclear-article-20140815-column.html>