

newsletter of  
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<http://www.nukewatch.org>

watchdog

"float like a butterfly, bite like a dawg"

## Armed and Dangerous: The Nuclear Empire

It's a fundamentally different world now; one in which the Bush Administration claims that it has the right to launch pre-emptive war at will (including the use of nuclear weapons if deemed necessary). Thus we have gone to war against Iraq, in the name of eliminating weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Even if Iraq has chemical weapons they can never approach the destructiveness of nuclear weapons. This is a war that is arguably not so much about Iraqi WMDs or even oil. Instead, it is about **breaking OPEC's price controls** and protecting the current denomination of "petrodollars" in U.S. dollars (directly subsidizing the increasingly weak American economy). It's also about **military global positioning**. A prolonged occupation of Iraq will

flank an increasingly unstable Saudi Arabia and nearly surround Iran. Ominously, there is increasing talk within the Bush Administration indicating that **Iran is next**.

The Iraqi war provides a strange contrast to **the crisis in North Korea**, one arguably caused by Bush's seriously misguided national security and nuclear weapons policies. First of all, no sympathy here for Kim Jung Il, who leads an anachronistic Stalinist regime that allows its people to starve while subsidizing an immense military. However, the U.S. has backed a lunatic into a corner after Bush branded North Korea as part of the now famous "axis-of-evil." Further, as a matter of policy, the 2002 Nuclear Posture Review legitimizes possible pre-emptive nuclear strikes while it simultaneously lists North Korea as a potential target. Ironically, since it is believed that North Korea already possesses a few nuclear weapons, perhaps their deterrent value is being demonstrated by the fact that the U.S. has not yet threatened to attack. Will other countries conclude that the way to deter the U.S. from its self-appointed right of pre-emptive attacks is by possessing nuclear weapons?

As a broader irony, the U.S. denounces North Korea's withdrawal from the 1970 NonProliferation Treaty (NPT). That treaty was an international bargain in which the non-weapons states promised never to acquire nuclear weapons, in return for which the nuclear powers promised "to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament..." (NPT Article VI). Needless to say, **the nuclear powers have never honored that commitment**, and the U.S. deployed nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula from the mid-1950's to mid-1980's. Further, as NukeWatch and others have detailed many times, the U.S. is now planning to preserve its nuclear weapons indefinitely, completely modernize its nuclear forces, introduce major nuclear weapons modifications and possible new designs, and potentially return to full-scale testing as well.



cartoon by Jamie Chase

--Jay Coghlan



## Watchdogs Puncture DOE's Economic Propaganda!

The Department of Energy (DOE) has long maintained that its presence is a great boon to New Mexico. For much of the 1990s, **economic propaganda** was churned out by DOE's Albuquerque Operations Office asserting that the Department boosts the State's economy by as much as **\$10 billion annually**. Furthermore, DOE claims that it creates **72,453 jobs** (approximately 20,000 directly employed by DOE) in New Mexico as a result of its activities. **A careful examination, however, punches more holes in these assertions than can be found in the head of a watering can.**

In a collaborative effort with NukeWatch, Lloyd Dumas, Professor of Political Economics at the University of Texas in Dallas, prepared an analysis of the DOE's *real* economic impact on New Mexico. In his report Professor Dumas found that: *"[T]he DOE has overstated its economic impact of its facilities in New Mexico by roughly \$4 billion-\$6 billion in terms of economic activity and by roughly \$500 million to \$1.25 billion in terms of personal income. Similarly, the DOE ... may have overstated the job generating effects of the DOE activities in the State by some 32,000-45,000 jobs."*

DOE's extravagant claims are based on data collected in 1998 by its Albuquerque Operations Office. Despite the age of this data, the DOE continues to claim in the press and public documents that every dollar it spends in New Mexico generates another two dollars in the private sector (this is known as an economic multiplier effect). Professor Dumas comments, "These claims are not consistent with the findings of multiple, independent researchers. *The DOE has greatly exaggerated its economic impact on New Mexico, misleading the public and lawmakers.*"

Professor Dumas compares the DOE's claims to seven previously published analyses of economic multipliers arising from the activities of private businesses or non-military governmental activities. In the case of the private sector, for every dollar spent (for example, at a factory) an additional 50 cents to one dollar is generated elsewhere (for example, in grocery stores or at gas stations). In the case of nonmilitary governmental activities, for every dollar spent less than an additional 50 cents is generated in the private sector. Further, earlier analyses have concretely demonstrated that **beneficial economic impacts are much stronger for non-military governmental activities than for military research and development**. Professor Dumas concludes by stating, that "...there is much evidence to indicate that the State suffers substantial economic loss (in terms of opportunity lost and the burden on infrastructure) as the result of the DOE activities in New Mexico." **Opportunity is lost because of New Mexico's dependency on federal military dollars which suppress the creation of alternatives.** Meanwhile, the State remains at the very bottom of numerous socioeconomic indicators.

For more information, including the complete report by Professor Dumas and supplementary analyses by NukeWatch, please go to [www.nukewatch.org](http://www.nukewatch.org).

-- Jay Coghlan

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***On the other hand, NukeWatch's economic propaganda is entirely truthful.  
We can always use a check from you to keep us growling and biting on your behalf!  
When you have a moment, please throw us a bone at  
551 Cordova Road #808 Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505-4100***

## Contaminants on the Move, Deception Remains

Recent studies by the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) are revealing water contamination problems coming from the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL).

NMED's online report states that shallow alluvial groundwater has been tainted with nitrate, fluoride, perchlorate, high explosives, and radioactive contaminants. In addition, the regional aquifer has been contaminated by highly mobile ground water contaminants: chloride, nitrate, perchlorate, and tritium.

How is it possible that so many water sources have been contaminated? It is because these water sources are interconnected (anyone remember that the knee bone is connected to the leg bone?). Alluvial aquifers recharge intermediate perched groundwater zones, which recharge the regional aquifer. These recharge pathways allow for the movement of contaminants from surface water and alluvial aquifers to the regional aquifer.

Until the mid-90's, LANL had claimed that its work had not contaminated deep groundwater supplies at all, and had even gone so far as to ask NMED permission to stop ground water monitoring. Now LANL is claiming that NMED's work is inconclusive and questionable. However, through the use of "spike" testing (a method where a known quantity of a chemical being tested for is added to the sample and then that quantity is subtracted from the sample after the chemical has been tested), NMED has confirmed that their own results are sound.

In 2002, LANL published that groundwater velocities of the regional aquifer were 33 feet/year. NMED's own studies find that LANL's projections were incorrect, and that the groundwater velocities are substantially faster than LANL had believed. In fact, NMED's results state that the groundwater velocities of the regional aquifer are off by an order of magnitude, i.e., ten times faster. The actual velocity is around 330 feet/year. Quite a difference.

NMED has also discovered historically high levels of plutonium (among other contaminants) in storm-water run-off that leads from LANL to the Rio Grande. This is exceptionally disturbing since both Santa Fe and Albuquerque have announced that they wish to divert water from the Rio Grande to supplement their own water supplies. Obviously with this new data coming from NMED, the cities will have to rethink their plans.

NMED has put LANL's water contamination studies in serious question. Now steps can be taken to prevent further contamination and more studies can be performed, such as NMED's current study on how LANL's groundwater contaminants will affect the Buckman Wells, a major source of water for Santa Fe.

For the NMED report, please see our web site at [www.nukewatch.org](http://www.nukewatch.org).

-Geoff Petrie

[nukewatch.org](http://nukewatch.org)

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Visit and bookmark our award-winning site at [www.nukewatch.org](http://www.nukewatch.org). While you're there, you're welcome to sign up for our e-mail list, so you can receive an electronic version of this newsletter, and keep up to date with electronic "What to Do's."



**Amy Goodman interviewing Jay for TV and radio**

**NukeWatch TV**

Every Sunday evening at 7:30, Santa Fe Cable Access (Channel 8) airs our original show, NukeWatch Television. We feature interviews with a variety of individuals who have something informative to say about nuclear issues. Recently, the tables were turned when Amy Goodman, host of Pacifica Radio's nationally popular show *Democracy Now!* interviewed our own Jay Coghlan on the state of the nuclear weapons complex in New Mexico. Other recent shows have featured Fred Nathan, Executive Director of Think New Mexico, talking about if the State taxed Los Alamos National Laboratory the food tax could be eliminated! And did you miss Don Hancock, Nuclear Waste Programs Director for Southwest Research and Information Center, talking about the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant and how it affects you?

Don't live in Santa Fe? Well, Taos Local TV Channel 2 is airing us now, and Albuquerque's Channel 27, *Quote-Unquote*, will be airing us shortly. What happens if you don't live in those areas either? Give us a call, and we can work something out with you... Better yet, call your public access station and tell them that you want NukeWatch TV on your station! For our faithful viewers, we thank you for watching, and we sincerely appreciate all the great feedback we get from you. This show is going to get better and better -- don't miss it!



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**mission statement**

The mission of Nuclear Watch New Mexico is to provide timely and accurate information to the public on nuclear issues in the American Southwest, and to encourage effective citizen involvement and activism in these issues. We seek to promote greater environmental protection, safe disposition of radioactive wastes, and federal policy changes that will curb the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Inside this issue: US Armed and Dangerous; DOE's Not Making Us Rich After All; State Finds Lab Has Mucked Up Groundwater; Fact Sheet on Nuke Weapons Bucks

**Nuke Weapons Issues Need Your Activism Now!**

Tell Congress What You Think!

- DOE has asked Congress for **\$6.4 billion in 2004** for its core nuclear weapons programs, 9% above 2003 and **50% higher than the Cold War average**.
- The Pentagon has drafted legislation to overturn a 1994 law that bars research into "**mininukes**." Mininukes are considered more "useable," thereby making them more dangerous. And they send the wrong message to other countries as we preach to them to give up their own weapons of mass destruction.
- The Pentagon is preparing to issue a formal military requirement for the **Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator (RNEP)**. The Pentagon's sanction of the RNEP is bound to increase its funding and accelerate the timetable for its design, production and deployment to the stockpile. [For more, please see [www.nukewatch.org/facts](http://www.nukewatch.org/facts).]
- DOE is seeking to shorten the lead time for a **return to full-scale nuclear weapons testing** --from 2 years to 18 months or less. Should George W. Bush be reelected in November 2004, a resumption of full-scale weapons testing by the U.S. is a very real possibility. This could have disastrous implications for global nuclear arms control.
- DOE is building or planning to build **massive new nuclear weapons facilities** at Los Alamos and Sandia Labs and elsewhere (see enclosed fact sheet). In NukeWatch's view, public opposition to all of these facilities should be immediate and vocal.

**nuclear watch new mexico**

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