



"float like a butterfly, bite like a dawg"

newsletter of **nuclear watch new mexico** volume 3, issue 3 **october 2002**

<http://www.nukewatch.org>

Nuke Watch sues DOE over Biohazard Facility

In late August Nuclear Watch filed a lawsuit in the District of New Mexico federal court seeking to block construction of a biological safety level 3 (BSL-3) research facility at the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). The laboratory released an Environmental Assessment (EA), a legally required analysis of the environmental, health and safety impacts of the facility's construction and operation. We strongly believe that the EA was grossly inadequate and did not meet the requirements of the federal National Environmental Policy Act. The court action responds to U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) plans to reportedly begin building the facility this month. Once completed it would investigate diseases such as anthrax, Q fever, and bubonic plague, diseases that have "historically been used for bioweapons."

Areas of concern laid out in our Complaint included the wide range of dangerous biological agents LANL proposes to study at the BSL-3 facility. LANL writes itself a blank check by stating that it could conduct experiments on agents currently regulated by the Centers for Disease Control as well as "unregulated" organisms. Nuke Watch is concerned that these unregulated organisms could include emerging diseases for which there is no cure. It is even possible that there would be very little known about the potential human health risks. In our view, this greatly exacerbates the potential risks of the BSL-3, yet LANL failed to consider these risks in its EA. We requested that more information be provided to the public as well as a review of the health and safety risks of such a proposal. These deficiencies must be addressed in an Environmental Impact Statement, a much more comprehensive environmental analysis than the EA that LANL released.

To add fuel to the fire, the EA's socioeconomic analysis states that the population of New Mexico is 86% "white," without separately accounting for the State's historic Hispanic population (an important "Environmental Justice" issue). The EA also relies on a yet-to-be-completed "facility safety basis" study, an internal document not subject to public review, rather than a full, open analysis of security and safety concerns.

Security and safety have long been serious concerns at LANL, as shown by the Wen Ho Lee case, the "missing tapes" and the recent decision to move over two tons of special nuclear materials to a more secure location. More generally, security is a growing concern given the suspected federal lab origin of the anthrax in last October's attacks.

Our suit also addresses the failure of the DOE and its semi-autonomous National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) to conduct a program-wide analysis of its Chemical and Biological National Security Program (CBNP). The LANL BSL-3 facility will be an integral part of
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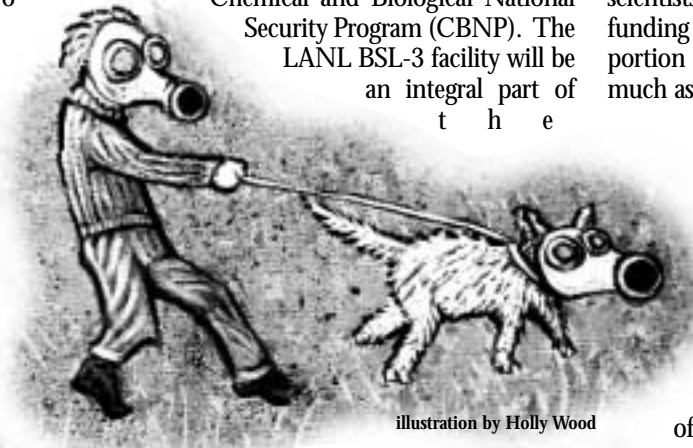


illustration by Holly Wood

CBNP's research mission. Despite the fact that the CBNP has been a well-established "program" since 1997, NNSA has not undertaken the hard look required under federal law at the cumulative environmental impacts of its CBNP. Program research is done in at least 9 national laboratories in the DOE complex, including the three NNSA labs, LANL, Lawrence

Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL), and Sandia National Laboratories. During Fiscal Year '02, the CBNP was funded at the level of \$85.2 million.

Construction at LANL is to be quickly followed by a similar facility at LLNL and possibly other DOE sites. Two months ago LLNL released an EA for its own BSL-3 facility. In many respects LLNL's proposal is much more aggressive than LANL's. The LLNL facility includes an additional BSL-3 laboratory to be used for "aerosol challenges" on small rodents. This means biological disease agents, such as anthrax, would go through a process similar to that created by the spray pump on a perfume bottle. Small droplets of water with anthrax would then be inhaled by test animals.

Sandia Labs has been involved in explosive aerosol testing with the U.S. Army's Edgewood Chemical and Biological Center, using anthrax and ricin simulants. Sandia scientists have also stated that they expect funding for bio programs to become a huge portion of total funding, by one account as much as 25%.

Nuke Watch is not opposed to enhanced national defenses against bioterrorism. In fact we believe that such defenses are vitally important. However, we are deeply concerned that the appropriate levels of public review be met in order that safety, security, and program transparency are better assured. This is of even greater importance given that DOE proposals locate biological research facilities at top-secret nuclear weapons laboratories that have very checkered safety records. It also sets terrible international precedent given that the Bush Administration has terminated implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention.

For our Complaint and comments, see our website: www.nukewatch.org.

--Colin King, Jay Coghlan

TENDING THE STOCKPILE...ABANDONING TRUTH AND TREATY

[Los Alamos Lab Director] Browne defined the laboratory's role in the next 10 to 20 years as one that will focus more on reducing the threat of biological weapons and finding ways to reduce pollution in the atmosphere. *The Albuquerque Journal*, September 27, 2002

"We know that plutonium pits have a limited lifetime," [DOE NNSA spokesman] Wilkes said. Without replacing the bombs, "we could wake up and find out half our stockpile is gone to waste." *The Las Vegas Sun*, September 27, 2002

Both statements are hogwash. The notion that plutonium pits could somehow turn into peanut butter overnight is absurd. [For background info on plutonium pits please see *Dawgbites*] Los Alamos National Laboratory's (LANL's) big business is and will remain nuclear weapons. According to its 2003 budget, anything that can be even remotely construed as reducing atmospheric pollution is less than 2% of the lab's funding. Core nuclear weapons programs make up 80% and have nearly tripled since 1994. On "biodefense" there are grave concerns with locating advanced bio facilities, whose work is inherently dual-use (i.e., can be either defensive or offensive) at a top secret nuclear weapons lab. Meanwhile, the lab never intends to relinquish its own work on nuclear weapons of mass destruction - what it really seeks is to indefinitely preserve existing nuclear weapons and to design new ones. And to do that it wants new design and production facilities.

Two new plutonium pit production facilities are in the works. The first is a new **advanced plutonium lab** (estimated cost up to \$955 million) at LANL's Technical Area-55, the present pit production site. DOE spent up to \$240 million in upgrades to the lab's existing facility for analytical chemistry of plutonium, the Chemical and Metallurgical Research (CMR) Building, now to be abandoned. A draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is expected to be released this calendar year, with a final EIS in November 2003, after which construction can begin. [For more, please see our CMR Replacement Project Scoping Comments at www.nukewatch.org/facts.]

The second facility is the "**Modern Pit Facility**," estimated to cost up to \$4 billion. There are five candidate sites: LANL, WIPP, the Pantex Plant in Texas, the Nevada Test Site and the Savannah River Site in South Carolina (the latter site is the most likely). The justification for the Modern Pit Facility is that "classified analyses indicate that the [pit production] capacity being established at LANL will not support either the projected capacity requirements (number of pits to be produced over a period of time)... or the flexibility to *produce pits of a new design in a timely manner*..." (Emphasis added.)

On "capacity," in the mid-1990's the stated rationale for resumed pit production was replacing the small number of pits destroyed during routine evaluation tests. Now the new Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) calls for a "responsive defense structure" with the capabilities to "upgrade existing weapons, [for] surge production of weapons, or ... if directed, to design, develop, manufacture, and certify new warheads in response to new nation-

al requirements..." The NPR explicitly calls for the construction of the Modern Pit Facility, which will be capable of producing up to 500 pits per year, near Cold War rates!!!!

On the "flexibility" to produce new-design pits: LANL has formally declared that the "target" of the plutonium pit production "campaign" is to "re-establish a robust manufacturing capability to produce stockpiled and *new-design pits without underground testing*." (Emphasis added.) Therefore, the lab plans to produce new nuclear weapons **whether or not the U.S. observes the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty** (the intent of the Treaty is to cut off the further advancement of nuclear weapons).

Potential Aging Effects on Plutonium: The NNSA's official notice for the Modern Pit Facility states that "although no such [aging] problems have been identified, the potential for such problems increases as pits age." The NNSA's spokesman's comment raises the bogeyman of pits turning into mush overnight. While the official statement seems intuitively logical at first, it cries for careful examination as 100s of billions of dollars and the true nature of the U.S.'s nuclear weapons policies ride on the answer. **Is plutonium aging so fast that new pit production facilities are needed? No!**

In 1996 DOE stated that "historical pit surveillance data and pit life studies do not predict a near-term problem" and that "*no age related problem has been observed* in pits up to 30 years in age..." In December 2000 Professor Raymond Jeanios published "Science-Based Stockpile Stewardship." Dr. Jeanios stated that "Pu samples not only retain long-range order but actually get closer to the ideal crystal structure with increasing age... Indeed, there is now consensus among specialists that the Pu pits in the US stockpile are *stable over periods of at least 50-60 years, with the most recent studies suggesting a far longer period*." (Emphases added.)

Then what are these new plutonium pit production facilities for? The justification for the CMR Replacement Project states that the "capabilities [of a new advanced plutonium lab] are necessary to support the current and future directed stockpile work and campaign activities conducted at LANL." "Directed Stockpile Work" is the largest budget category under the NNSA's "Total Weapons Activities." Extensively planned "Stockpile Life Extension Programs" are being implemented to preserve the operational life of each nuclear weapons system for at least 30 years.

Far from the stated rationale of merely maintaining the safety and reliability, these programs are aggressively introducing major modifications and possible new designs. The weapons labs themselves now describe the stockpile as "evolving," in contrast to simply "enduring." The unspoken truth is that these new pit facilities are part and parcel of attempts by American nuclear weaponeers to **circumvent the intent of the CTBT and to never honor the NonProliferation Treaty's mandate to disarm.** Our unilateralist approach may well haunt us someday. In contrast, the U.S. could have provided global leadership in the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction.



--Jay Coghlan



Nuclear Weapons: Big Business Not Paying Its Share!

An Overview of Comparative Budgets in New Mexico



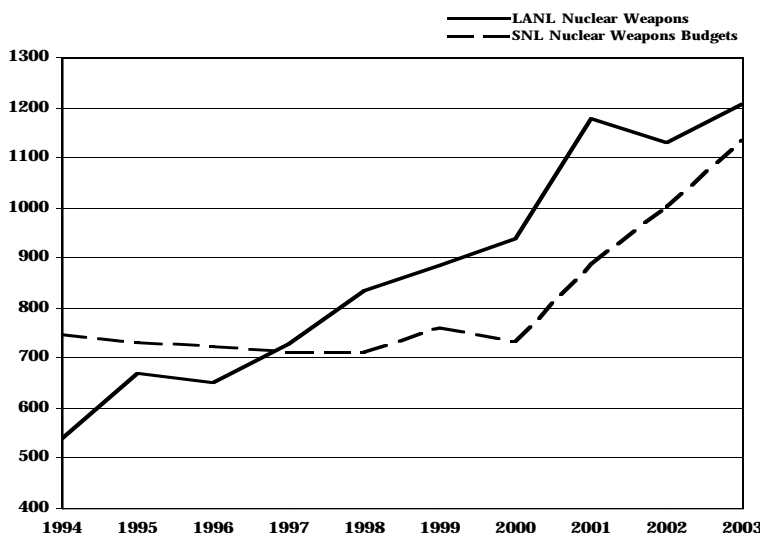
Nuclear weapons research and production in New Mexico is big, big business. Our two nuclear weapons laboratories, Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) and Sandia National Laboratories (SNL) have spent \$16.89 billion since 1994 on nuclear weapons research and development (R&D) and production (all dollars adjusted to 2002). On average, the labs have spent a combined \$844.6 million each year, but current annual spending levels have reached staggering heights that far outmatch the biggest programs in our own State government.

- **LANL:** Nuclear weapons work at the lab since 1994 has cost taxpayers \$8.75 billion. This year alone, LANL is expected to receive more than \$1.2 billion for nuclear weapons R&D and production, nearly 80% of its entire Department of Energy (DOE) funding. LANL's nuclear weapons budget alone has consumed 13% of the entire U.S. nuclear weapons R&D and production budget since 1994.

- **SNL:** By the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2003, SNL will have spent \$8.14 billion for its nuclear weapons R&D and production program since 1994. SNL will likely receive \$1.13 billion this year, and has spent 12% of the national nuclear weapons R&D and production budget since 1994.

Together, for FY03 LANL and SNL will account

LANL and SNL Nuclear Weapons Programs



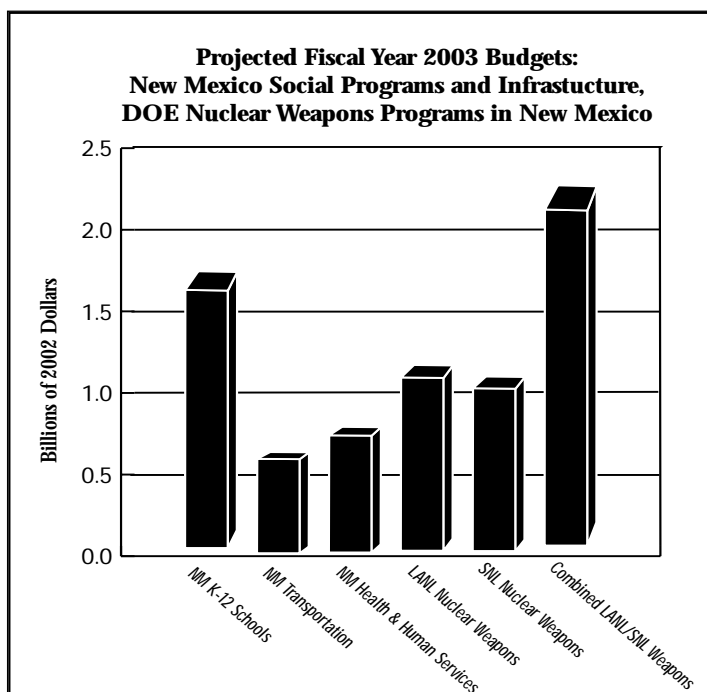
for 49% of DOE's national nuclear weapons budget.

Vital social services in New Mexico, such as education, health care programs and transportation, are in stark contrast to the federal dollars being pumped into our state for nuclear weapons work. The FY03 budget for the New Mexican State government will be approximately \$4.0 billion in expenses. As the State is required to have a balanced budget, State revenues must not be less than expenses. This year alone, gross receipts taxes (GRT) are expected to make up 33% of New Mexico's revenue, or \$1.33 billion. GRT are the taxes levied on consumers when purchasing goods such as food and medical services. GRT go directly into the State's general operating fund and are allocated by the Legislature to various State programs. The major State programs are:

- **K through 12 public education:** In FY 03, public schools will receive some \$1.8 billion, which amounts to 45% of New Mexico's total expenses for the year. If GRT were to solely pay for public education programs, it would provide 74% percent of the funding available for the State's K through 12 schools.

- **Transportation:** The State's Highway and Transportation Department will receive \$657.8 million in Fiscal Year '03, or 19.7% of New Mexico's total budget.

- **Health and Human Services:** Programs under this category, including the Departments of Human Services and of Health, Children, Youth & Families will see a funding level near \$816.8 million in '03. This is 25.7% of the projected State budget of \$4.0 billion.



continued on p.4

Problems with the Gross Receipts Tax

Gross Receipts Taxes are in many ways very regressive taxes. During the Spring 2002 Legislative session some lawmakers were considering exempting food purchases from GRT (which act as a “food sales tax”). In Santa Fe, everytime a family buys \$100 in groceries they pay \$6.40 in GRT, which can seriously impact low income families. During a fiscal crunch at the State level, such as is happening now, the elimination of the food tax would have drastic effects on New Mexico’s budget. Legislators estimated that the food tax provides nearly \$90 million in annual revenue. Additionally, GRT can have a negative impact on the small business owner and the self-employed by driving their prices up. Nevertheless, as one of the State’s largest contributors to its coffers, GRT help pay for some of the most important programs. Providing exemptions to certain goods and services, such as food and medicine, will force State lawmakers and public interest advocates to look elsewhere for supplemental funding.

The Role of the National Laboratories in the GRT Question

Neither the citizen nor the policy maker, whether on the state or the federal level, needs to look very far to find a sound solution to the problem created by the desirable elimination of the food tax. In the 1970s, New Mexico filed suit against the company that then operated SNL. The suit alleged that Western Electric, a subsidiary of AT&T, was not a government entity and therefore was required by State law to pay GRT. The U.S. Supreme Court agreed with the state, and ordered the DOE to pay \$275 million in back taxes, the first time SNL had ever paid GRT taxes to New Mexico since its opening in 1949. Sandia Corporation, a subsidiary of Lockheed Martin (which is the current contractor operating SNL), paid \$48.18 million in GRT to New Mexico during the 2001 tax year. According to Sandia Corporation, it is the largest single payer of GRT in the State and represented “four percent of the state’s ‘non-gaming’ gross receipts taxes” in 2001.

LANL does not pay GRT because its manager, the University of California (UC), is a so-called tax

exempt “educational non-profit organization.” However, only a negligible portion of LANL’s budget is for educational purposes. LANL’s mission is to preserve nuclear weapons forever, along with its sister laboratories SNL and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. Tax-wise, LANL is not substantially different from SNL and should be treated in a similar manner come tax day. Nuclear Watch of New Mexico estimates that if LANL were forced to pay GRT, the State would receive some \$60 million a year from lab operations. This would offset by 66% the loss of revenue that would result from eliminating the food tax. Though many hurdles would have to be overcome in order to tax LANL, several potential avenues to success are available, including an organized effort between State legislators and the New Mexico Congressional delegation that would allow the State to tax UC operations at LANL. Furthermore, such a tax would not necessarily have to come out of UC’s pocket. In fact, according to New Mexico tax law, UC could receive compensation from DOE for what it would pay in GRT.

Conclusion

Nuclear weapons budgets at LANL and SNL continue to grow in contrast to the budget constraints imposed on other federal and state programs (combined, the two national laboratories’ budgets are nearly 75% of the total New Mexico budget). The State is forced to make hard decisions that may severely impact low income families in order to meet its own constitutional requirement for a balanced budget. This is a travesty. Nuclear Watch of New Mexico believes that urgent action needs to be taken on this issue. LANL should pay GRT just like nearly all New Mexicans do!

What To Do: Call or write your State legislators and your New Mexican Congressional delegation to tell them that a) you want the “food tax” rescinded and b) that LANL should pay its fair share in gross receipts taxes to the State of New Mexico.

--Colin King

This article is available as a stand-alone fact sheet with references from Nuclear Watch. If you would like copies for teaching purposes or distribution, you can find this fact sheet on our Web site at www.nukewatch.org.

The Permit Slew of 2002

The Department of Energy (DOE) has been a busy little bee this past year at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP), submitting the most permit modification requests ever at one time. While WIPP has been open for only a few years, DOE continues to try changing its mission and expanding its capabilities beyond what was originally intended. In addition, many of the permit modifications attempt to limit the ability of groups, such as Nuke Watch, to watchdog WIPP.

There have been seven Class 2 permit modification requests submitted to the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED). The Class 2 modifications deal with a number of issues. Here is a list of titles followed by a very brief explanation:

Modification package number 1:

- Item 1: Addition of New Mexico Hazardous Waste Number
- Item 2: Characterizing Re-Packaged Homogenous Solids as Retrievably Stored Waste with Regard to Solids Sampling
- Item 3: Classified Information Record Keeping and Audit Requirements
- Item 4: Addition of HalfPACTs
- Item 5: Use of Radiography for Newly Generated Waste

Modification package number 2:

Add Waste Containers

Modification package number 3:

Update of the Waste Analysis Plan and Associated Documents with Emphasis on Data Management Requirements

Now at first glance these modifications look really boring, and even the most experienced activist still find their eye lids drooping every time they break open another DOE tome, but we must fight this urge to sleep!

Addition of New Mexico Hazardous Waste Number means bringing hydrofluoric acid to WIPP (corrosives are currently prohibited). *Characterizing Re-Packaged Homogenous Solids as Retrievably Stored Waste with Regard to Solids Sampling* seeks to change the WIPP Permit so that DOE doesn't have to do as thorough of a job before shipping waste. *Classified Information Record Keeping and Audit Requirements* wants to have the ability to hide information from the public with national security as its rationale. *Addition of HalfPACTs* and *Add Waste Containers* want to add containers that make the safety review process

more difficult and less complete. *Use of Radiography for Newly Generated Waste* wants to give DOE the chance to do less work on waste verification without explaining why it is necessary.

At first glance, yes these are dull government documents. At second glance, yes they are dull government documents. At third glance, these proposed modifications endanger human health and the environment. They are substantial changes to WIPP's mission and reduce the ability to watchdog DOE. They are dangerous!

This is only a very brief summary of what WIPP is trying to do. For a more in-depth explanation of these permit modification requests, please go to the WIPP section of our Web site (<http://www.nukewatch.org/wipp>) and download our comprehensive summary of these modifications.

By the time you get this newsletter the comment period for the Class 2 modifications will have already gone by. Hopefully you went to our Web site and downloaded our ready-to-send comments and sent them to the NMED. If you didn't make it this time, make sure you do for the up and coming Class 3 permit modification!

This proposed modification is a real bad one. DOE wants to bring Remote-Handled Transuranic Waste, or RH-TRU, to WIPP. This waste is so dangerous that only robots can handle it (hence, "remote handled"). Because RH-TRU waste is so hot, it needs to be dumped into the tunneled walls at WIPP for the protection of workers! On top of all this, DOE doesn't even know how much RH-TRU it have at its sites and shows little sign of rigorously characterizing that waste.



Make sure that you get involved with this one! Check our Web site for downloadable ready-to-send comments (available October 23). Better yet, join our email list and make sure that you are the first to know!

Comments for RH-TRU are due by October 30, 2002.

--Geoff Petrie



Jamie Chase

opinion

The Bush Administration has declared a national security policy of "counter-proliferation," which means pre-emptive military actions to destroy any threat of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), be they biological, chemical or nuclear. This is in contrast to "nonproliferation" policies already enshrined in international law such as the 1970 NonProliferation Treaty (NPT). That international treaties are serious matters is indisputable given that our own Constitution recognizes ratified treaties as "the supreme law of the land."

NPT Article VI mandated the nuclear weapons powers, including the U.S., to begin negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament (an obligation repledged to by the U.S. in 2000 as an "unequivocal commitment"). Those negotiations, of course, have never occurred. Instead the U.S. is regressing backwards as the new Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) increases America's reliance on nuclear weapons and calls for the complete modernization of their delivery systems. [For more, please see our March 2002 *NPR Special Bulletin*.] As we prepare to invade Iraq because of a purported WMD threat the U.S. has provided no global leadership in actually eliminating weapons of mass destruction (and, ironically, supplied Saddam Hussein with bioweapons materials and satellite reconnaissance data while he was using chemical weapons against Iran). Clearly every country has the right to defend itself appropriately as needed. However, a "do as we say, not as we do" approach is not sustainable in the long run. At the same time, our own nuclear weapons labs have definitely pursued a counter-proliferation strategy. After all, a genuine non-proliferation strategy would have put them out of business!

Nuclear Watch of New Mexico does agree that potential WMD use is the gravest near-term threat to both our own national security and to global security. But a lasting solution is not found through flouting the NPT, undermining the Chemical Weapons Convention and terminating negotiations on the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention (all recently done by the U.S.). With increasing globalization, and by virtue of their inherent nature, weapons of mass destruction need the most stringent international verification and control possible. We have only to look at the recent near war between India and Pakistan, which could have quickly escalated into a nuclear war, to see the writing on the wall: counter-proliferation strategies may work for the short term, but only nonproliferation strategies can possibly eliminate the threat! If the U.S. claims the right to pre-emptive attacks, who are we to deny that right to other countries? Where then does the potential descent into global anarchy end?

Our recommendations: First, let's have comprehensive inspections in Iraq before waging war, a war that carries a risk of profound unintended consequences far beyond the boundaries of just that country. Secondly, let us then provide solid global leadership by example in the elimination of weapons of mass destruction by honoring and implementing the global security regime created by existing international treaties. Finally, "trust, but verify," and see to it that that verification is truly global and universally observed, including our own country. The world is becoming increasingly too small for any one nation to not cooperate in the elimination of weapons of mass destruction.

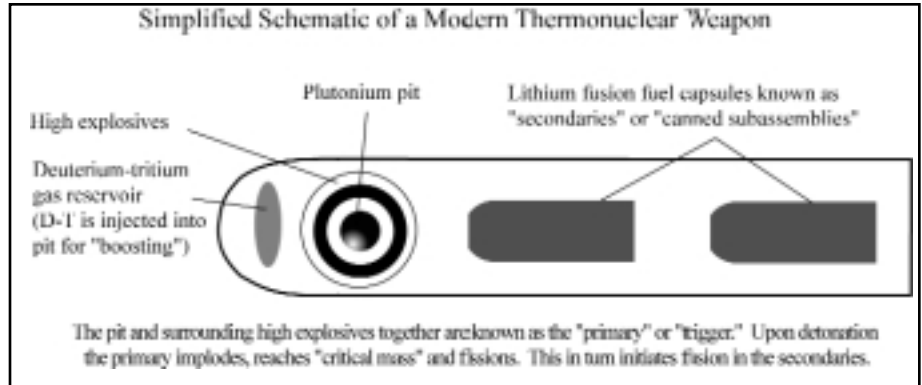
-- Jay Coghlan

DAWG BITES



1. **A snapshot history of plutonium pit production:** The key to resuming U.S. nuclear weapons production is the re-establishment of plutonium pit production. Plutonium pits, in combination with high explosives, are the "triggers" for modern thermonuclear weapons. When imploded, the pits reach "critical mass" and fission. This initiates fusion in thermonuclear secondaries, creating the immense destructiveness of modern nukes. [Plutonium pits are also weapons in their own right, as the destruction of Nagasaki demonstrated.] DOE lost pit production capability in 1989 after an FBI raid investigating environmental crimes at the Rocky Flats Plant near Denver. Since then DOE relocated production to Los Alamos, the original site, where the first new pit is expected to cost \$1.7 billion. Because LANL's production is inherently limited, DOE now wants a new super production facility,

most likely at the Savannah River Site in South Carolina. This "Modern Pit Facility" will be capable of producing up to 500 pits per year (near historic Cold War rates!!!). As the lab makes clear, DOE plans to make both existing types of pits and new designs (meaning new types of nuclear weapons).



2. DOE has recently announced that **WIPP is also a candidate** for the Modern Pit Facility. Until now the Savannah River Site, Oak Ridge (Tennessee) and Los Alamos were the only serious contenders. Senator Pete Domenici, a long-time advocate of all things nuclear in New Mexico, is downplaying the Los Alamos angle (production is "beneath" LANL scientists) while hoping to locate the facility at WIPP. Under so-called "accelerated cleanup," WIPP would ramp down operations 15 years earlier than originally anticipated. Therefore, Domenici wants the glory of over 1,500 jobs coming to Carlsbad, NM with the production facility. There are a bunch of hurdles that DOE will have to clear before any nuclear weapons production programs could be located at WIPP. The big one: the WIPP Land Withdrawal Act, which Congress would have to legislate.

3. In less than two weeks, **two WIPP-bound trucks were involved in accidents.** The first: a drunk driver rear-ended a WIPP truck; the second: a WIPP truck driver passed out and the truck crossed the median, stopping on the other side of the road. In the first accident the waste made it to WIPP, but while workers were doing tests they found contamination in the TRUPACT-II (the transport container for waste barrels). The waste was then sent back to the site it came from. After the second accident, that waste was also shipped back to the generating site because DOE was afraid of finding TRUPACT contamination again. Luckily, no spills, but it reminds us that accidents happen. Meanwhile, DOE plans an "accelerated cleanup program" -- more nuclear waste on the road and more opportunity for accidents. Not to mention 20 years of extremely hot shipments to Yucca Mountain!

Heartfelt Plea for Funds, as You Might Expect!

Dearest Friends and Neighbors,

A lot of worthy causes solicit your support
(and probably a few that aren't so worthy!)

And there's hardly a worthier cause than keeping a watchful eye on the greedy nuclear weapons industry.

You know Nuke Watch is working long, hard hours -- efficiently and almost always cheerfully -- for environmental protection and genuine cleanup, openly debated and sensible nuclear weapons policies, and an end to reckless and dangerous proliferation.

These are tough times for non-profits of every stripe. We want you on our team.

Help us keep a strong voice in national policies. Help us keep bringing you the news you can't get elsewhere.

And help us keep New Mexico on the map-- as more than a bomb factory or a radioactive trash heap.

Send us a tax deductible contribution, and feel extra good about yourself!

Please send checks to 551 W. Cordova Rd., #808, Santa Fe NM 87505

(and enjoy excellent karma as a result.)

Return Address for this mailing: Southwest Research and Information Center, PO Box 4524, Albq. NM 87106
551 Cordova Road #808 Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505-4100 Phone: 505.989.7342 Fax: 505.989.7352



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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: Our Law suit Against the BioLab, WIPP Woes, Cartoons and Opinions, Economic Facts about Nuclear Weapons, the Scoop on Earth-Penetrators, and More!

What To Do!

Urgent! Act now before it's too late! Tell your Congresspersons and President Bush to **give weapons inspectors a chance** in Iraq-- before waging war. This war could have grave unintended consequences, including the potential use of nuclear weapons (for example, in the event that Iraq used biological or chemical weapons against Israel, or India and Pakistan returned to the nuclear brink).

Read and respond favorably to our heartfelt plea for **funds** (inside back cover).

Learn more! Take a stroll through our award-winning website at www.nukewatch.org.

Submit comments to DOE by November 22 on the "scope" you want to see for public review of the proposed **Modern Pit Facility** (please see related article). Please label as "MPF comments" and send to Mr. Jay Rose, Facility Document Manager, NA-53, Forrestal Building, DOE/NNSA, 1000 Independence Ave., Washington, DC 20585 (or fax to 202.586.5324 or e-mail to JamesRose@nnsa.doe.gov). For tips, read our own comments, available on our website (<http://www.nukewatch.org>) by November 11.

For an important To-Do on the **Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator**, see enclosed fact sheet.

Also, please visit our web site to **download our ready-to-send comments** on the Class 3 permit modification request for **Remote-Handled Transuranic Waste** at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant. All you'll need to do is sign, address, and send them to the New Mexico Environment Department. All the information will be provided on our site!

Senator Jeff Bingaman: 202.224.5521, 505.988.6647; Senator Pete Domenici 202.224.6621, 505.988.6511; Representative Tom Udall: 202.225.6190, 505.984.8950
Representative Heather Wilson: 202.225.6316, 505.346.6781; Capitol Switchboard: 202.224.3121; the White House: 202.456.1111

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