



WATCHDOG

news that bites back

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North Korea Tests Nuke; US to Design, Produce New Nukes When and Where Does It End?

The isolated Stalinist regime of North Korea claims that it tested its first nuclear weapon on October 9, after withdrawing in early 2003 from the 1970 NonProliferation Treaty (NPT). The consequences are incalculable. Will Japan--the only country ever attacked by atomic weapons--eventually arm itself with nukes?

The North Korean test must be unequivocally condemned and firm, non-military measures taken to bring it back into the NPT nonproliferation regime (any war could destroy Seoul). Iran's reputed nuclear weapons ambitions compound proliferation fears. President Bush has declared that all options for Iran remain on the table, not ruling out a preemptive nuclear strike. It is time that Americans examine whether our policies are leading to a world free of weapons of mass destruction. Consider:

- The U.S. and the other nuclear weapons signatories agreed to 13 practical steps toward disarmament at the 2000 international NPT Review Conference, as the Treaty requires. Not only has little been done but **the U.S. is going backwards.**

- One of the 13 steps was to implement the **Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty**, which the U.S. signed in 1996 but has since refused to ratify. **Clearly, there should be stronger international prohibitions against nuclear weapons testing**, precisely to help prevent countries like North Korea from testing.

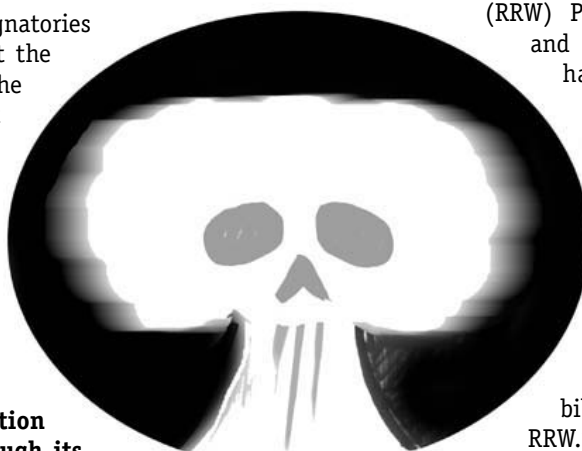
- **In late December 2001, the Bush Administration radically redirected nuclear weapons policy through its now well-known "Nuclear Posture Review" (NPR).** That Review overwhelmingly incorporated the January 2001 recommendations of the neo-conservative National Institute for Public Policy, which called for increasing reliance on U.S. nuclear weapons and "adaptability" in their potential use. In turn, that "requires a capacity to design and build new weapons", including new precision-guided low-yield (so-called "mini-nukes") and earth-penetrating nuclear weapons. The Institute declared arms control was an historic relic that obstructed current U.S. goals, and further that the U.S. should abandon nuclear "deterrence," in which a relatively small number of weapons could hold enemy cities hostage. Instead, nuclear targeting should shift to an unknown number of enemy military assets, for which "a larger number of weapons, weapons with varied characteristics and greater accuracy, will be needed for a counterforce strategy." Linton Brooks, the current head of the National Nuclear Security Administration

(NNSA), the semi-autonomous nuclear weapons agency within the Department of Energy, was part of the Institute's team that made those recommendations.

- **The 2001 Nuclear Posture Review specifically broadened the rationale for the potential use of nuclear weapons and increased targeted countries from Russia and China to also include Iran and North Korea.** That may have convinced them to acquire nuclear weapons in order to deter the U.S.

- The U.S. now spends \$6.6 billion per year for nuclear weapons design and production, almost 50% above historic Cold War averages, and now intends to transform its stockpile and its nuclear weapons complex that supports it. The vehicle for doing so is the so-called **Reliable Replacement Warhead**

(RRW) Program. The Los Alamos and Lawrence Livermore Labs have already submitted competing designs for the first RRW, and the NNSA will select the winning design within weeks. The Department of Defense openly talks about "possible new DoD platforms and delivery systems, possible need for military capabilities [and]... 2-4 types of RRW." Directly related, **NNSA plans to begin annual production of up to 80 plutonium pits or "triggers,"**



Jamie Chase

the core nuclear weapons component, **at LANL by 2012.** What this means, simply put, is that the U.S. is now designing and will soon be producing new nuclear weapons, while preserving the massive design and production infrastructure for continuing new designs and production throughout this 21st century!

- As an example of today's redirected U.S. policy, the NNSA now talks about "long-term plans to support the new NPR stockpile" and the "extended weapon production planning horizon" beyond the year 2015. NNSA says that it will soon begin legally required public review for "**Complex 2030,**" the future nuclear weapons complex that it wants. But don't be fooled by that faraway year. **NNSA is implementing steps now for Complex 2030, which means both existing and new-design U.S. nuclear bombs for the remainder of the 21st century!**

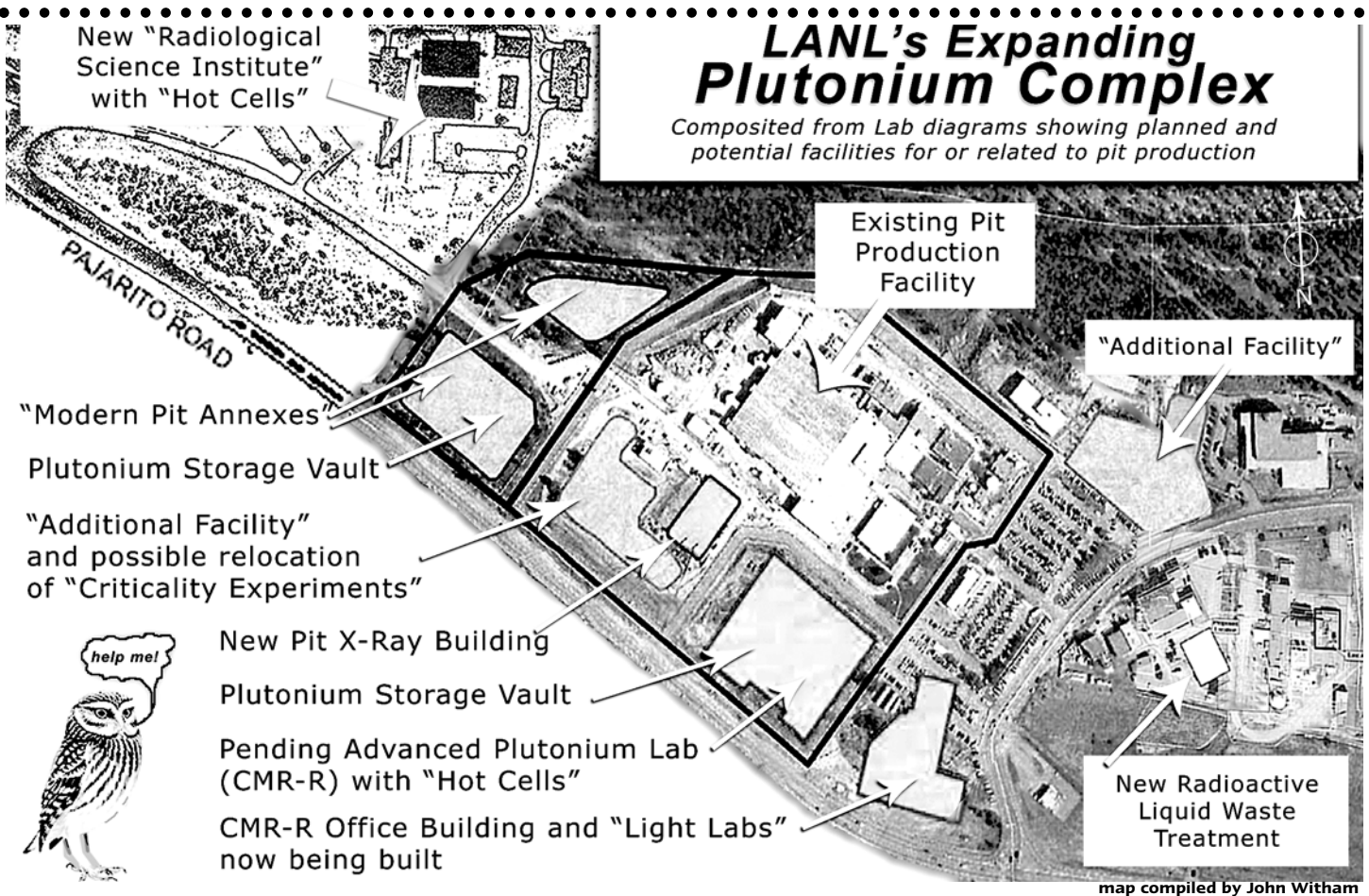
When and Where Does It End? *continued from front page 1*

• Finally, the U.S. is actually taking a concrete step toward **nuclear warfighting**, as exemplified by the proposed Divine Strake Test (please see inserted fact sheet).

All this flies in the face of U.S. demands that other nations rid themselves of WMDs (in Iraq's case, falsely and disastrously). How is it that both 2004 presidential candidates agreed that nuclear weapons proliferation is our most serious national security threat, yet the U.S. fails to provide international leadership and resumes new nuclear weapons designs and production?

This can't and won't work in today's interdependent world.

Just as parents can't properly raise children while saying one thing and doing another, the world's only superpower **cannot convince other countries** to forego weapons of mass destruction **while designing and manufacturing a new generation of nuclear weapons itself**. We have reached dangerous new levels with Iran and North Korea. It is long past time that the U.S. provide credible international leadership by solid example, and Americans should demand just that. Vote accordingly!



The public comment period recently closed for the legally required draft "Site-Wide Environmental Impact Statement for Continued Operations at the Los Alamos National Laboratory" (LANL SWEIS), which is essentially about producing plutonium pits or "triggers" for new nuclear weapons designs under the Reliable Replacement Warhead program. NNSA was compelled to prepare the SWEIS because it wants to increase LANL production to 50 pits per year "certified" for the stockpile (and up to 80 total because of rejects). Internal NNSA viewgraphs state that 30-50 RRW pits per year are planned for production by 2012. Ironically, NNSA refused to discuss and analyze RRW in the SWEIS. In our view, everything else was basically window dressing.

Meanwhile, \$2 billion dollars in additions and new facilities for LANL's expanding plutonium complex are planned over the next five years. That doesn't even include the proposed "Radiological Sciences Institute" (up to 13 new buildings; no costs are publicly available) that will be contiguous to LANL'S existing pit production facility and whose mission will include "Pit Nuclear and

NonNuclear Manufacturing."

Among other things, the SWEIS proposes to raise storage capacity for "special nuclear materials, mainly plutonium" to 7.3 tons (which will include taking on Lawrence Livermore Lab's plutonium). In comparison, LANL had four tons in 1994. LANL is becoming the nation's de facto **permanent plutonium pit production center**. Even Senator Domenici's appropriations subcommittee recently reported that building future nuclear weapons-related plutonium facilities other than at LANL is financially unlikely.

Recommended Resources:

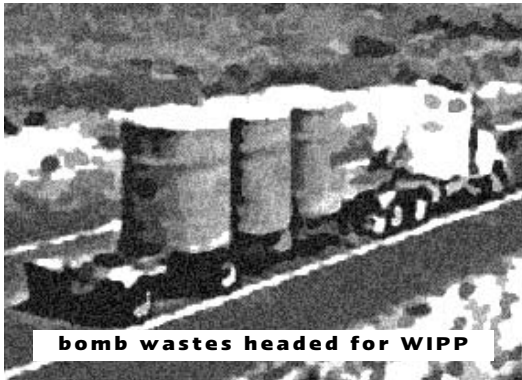
- Reliable Replacement Warhead:**
www.nukewatch.org/facts/nwd/RRWFS.pdf
- Our comments on LANL Site-EIS, including pit production:
www.nukewatch.org/facts/nwd/NWNM_SWEIS_Comments.pdf
- Nuclear Posture Review:**
www.nukewatch.org/watchdawg/newsletters/nprbulletin.pdf
- Divine Strake Test:**
www.nukewatch.org/facts/nwd/strakeupdate.pdf

Nuclear Corridor

Roadmap to a Radioactive New Mexico

Senator Pete Domenici continues to push for what he calls a "nuclear corridor" along the southeastern New Mexico-Texas border, where an existing nuclear bomb waste dump, a uranium enrichment plant, and a radwaste storage site could now be joined by a test nuclear reactor and a reactor spent fuel rod reprocessing plant.

Carlsbad, in Eddy County, is home to the Department of Energy's **Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP)** that buries defense program-related radioactive



bomb wastes headed for WIPP

waste in underground salt beds. Just down the road near Eunice, NM, in adjacent Lea County, ground was broken in late August for the **National Enrichment**

Facility (NEF), which will make uranium fuel for commercial nuclear reactors--the very thing the US insists Iran *cannot* do. NEF will produce, as a waste product, depleted uranium, which currently does not have a disposal path. Just across the Texas border from NEF is **Waste Control Specialists (WCS)**, which currently stores some types of low-level radioactive waste. WCS, located in Andrews County, is hoping to permanently store this waste and more if the State of Texas grants them a license.

In February 2005, the University of Texas approved an agreement between the UT system and several parties to design a **new type of nuclear reactor** to also be built in Andrews County. Although the proposed reactor is being presented as part of the next generation of "clean and safe" nuclear power plants, this design does not address the major problems of existing reactors. Building this reactor in Texas, which is still in the preliminary design stages, would simply spread the failed and polluting technology of nuclear power to yet another part of the country.

Business boosters in southeastern New Mexico are now attempting to steer a new nuclear facility into the area. The small cities of Carlsbad and Hobbs have formed an alliance with Eddy and Lea Counties (the Eddy/Lea Energy Alliance) to compete for funds from a new federal proposal called the **Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP)**. This alliance is among groups that have responded to a Department Of Energy (DOE) request for "Expressions of Interest" for a spent fuel reprocessing center. Two nuclear companies, Washington Group International and Areva (a giant French corporation) have joined the alliance to compete for one of four \$5 million grants for site studies for the project. The winner of the site study phase will host the reprocessing center.

Under GNEP, the U.S. and a few other selected countries would reprocess the world's

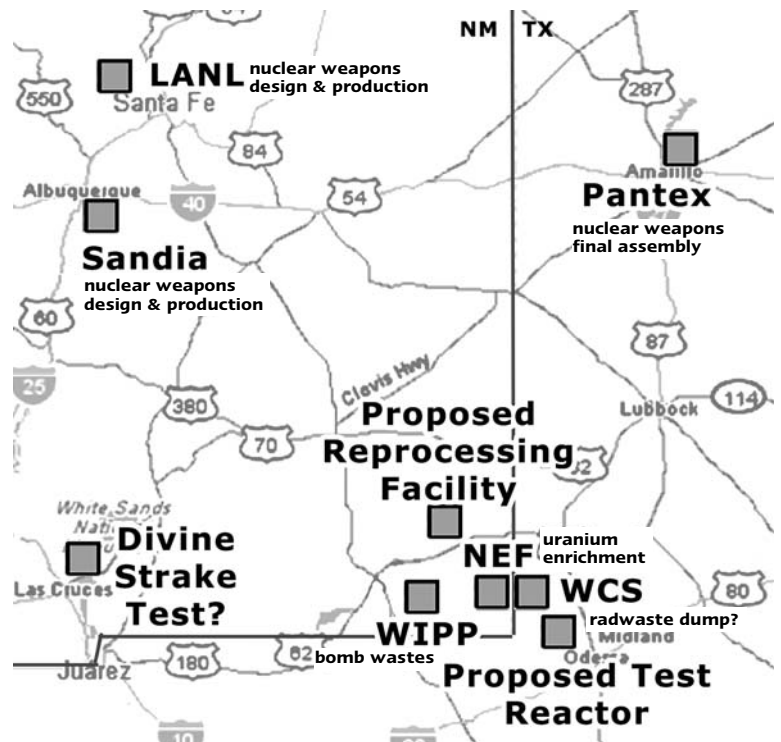
super-hot commercial nuclear waste, and use the separated plutonium in fast neutron reactors. Global experience over the past 60 years has shown that reprocessing is extremely polluting and expensive. Moreover, efforts to build fast reactors have been safety and economic failures. **No solution has yet been found for the wastes generated by nuclear power or reprocessing.** Despite more than \$100 billion spent globally, reprocessing technology has not been successfully commercialized. Governments heavily subsidize all of these programs. A July 2000 report, commissioned by the French government, concluded that reprocessing and plutonium fuel are uneconomical.

GNEP would result in no new energy supplies for a several decades and perhaps much longer, while investment in energy efficiency and renewable energy would provide energy now and in the long-term.

The proposal to bring this expensive technological boondoggle to New Mexico is driven by reputed jobs. NM Rep. John Heaton, D-Carlsbad, said it is crucial for local governments to convince DOE that southeastern New Mexico is the ideal site for its nuclear reprocessing plant. He said the project might create about 5,000 new jobs.

He fails to mention that this proposal will also create nuclear waste disposal problems. Any spent fuel rod in the U.S. could head down the road to New Mexico. Spent fuel rods are currently stored on-site at both operating and decommissioned nuclear reactors, in all more than **60,000 tons**. The rods are stored in steel lined pools or concrete casks, awaiting final disposition. Our state could be used to store this waste until a solution is discovered, which could be indefinitely.

We are at a nuclear crossroads. Will we always allow business and political interests to railroad us in the name of progress...or will we say "NO!" to New Mexico's role as a nuclear sacrifice zone? --Scott Kovac





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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.

***In This Issue: Proliferation in Korea and Here; What Evil Lurks within "Complex 2030"
Our Exclusive Map to Help You Visualize Expanded Plutonium Footprint at Los Alamos
Wake Up, New Mexico: Domenici's Grand Vision for Our "Nuclear Corridor"***



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...unless you'd rather go trick-or-treating in a "full plutonium jacket."

Our guarantee: your donation will be spent more wisely than your federal taxes.

Watch **NukeWatchTV** Sunday evenings at 7:30

Our half-hour "Hot Topics" program: Santa Fe Public Access (cable) Channel 16

November 7 is Election Day!

The Dawgs say, "If you don't vote, don't *itch!"

Hate to see Los Alamos become the nation's permanent pit production plant?

Mouth off to Senator Pete Domenici.
Call (202) 224-6621 or (505) 988-6511.

Or, write to <http://domenici.senate.gov/contact/contactform.cfm>

Keep your ears perked for rumblings about the **Divine Strake Test**.
It now might happen at White Sands.

Let's Keep Our Guard Up! Two more EISs are heading our way!

1. Lookout for public scoping meetings for **Complex 2030** Programmatic EIS. Times should be announced in October; public meetings may happen in November.
2. Watch out for the draft EIS for LANL's new **bioweapons agents research lab**, also currently scheduled for release in November.



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