Plutonium Shake & Bake

Please read this carefully for important information: The Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board’s June 21, 2013 report on Livermore Lab states that, “Recently contractor personnel began efforts to install a refurbished Shaker apparatus in the facility [i.e., the Hardened Engineering Test Bldg. 334]. The approved safety basis provides for Shaker operations with up to 5 kilograms of fuels grade equivalent plutonium. The contractor [i.e., Livermore Lab management] believes that the ability to perform this operation should be retained in the safety basis and determined that the refurbished model should be installed to support future operations. A readiness assessment is planned for December 2013."

In plain language this means that Livermore Lab management is maintaining and upgrading equipment to conduct tests with full plutonium bomb cores. These bomb cores would come by truck 1,200-miles from Los Alamos to Livermore (and then return 1,200-miles to Los Alamos when the tests are finished).

Yet, the entire Livermore Lab site lacks the Category II/II high-security required by law to house and test the plutonium bomb cores. Livermore Lab utterly failed its “force on force” security tests and permanently lost its Category II/II high-security clearance. The Lab was then forced to de-inventory (move out) all of its bomb-usable quantities of plutonium to more secure storage areas at other sites. More than 100 Livermore Lab security personnel were laid-off or transferred.

Thus, what is not written, but is implied, is that Livermore Lab would get “variances” from existing laws to conduct these plutonium tests each time the trucks arrive. The “safety basis” noted above does not equate to a proper site-wide security status and, moreover, that basis originates from before Livermore Lab lost its high-security status.

To answer another key question about the quantities of plutonium that Livermore plans to use in the new refurbished Shaker operation, open sources state that modern nuclear bomb cores contain from about 2 kilograms of plutonium up to 4 kilograms or more, depending on design. Thus, 5 kilograms of fuels grade equivalent plutonium, as noted in the DNFSB

Continued on Page 3...

And, the Priorities Are...

On a recent Saturday, Tri-Valley CAREs’ board of directors, staff, and members gathered for our annual strategic planning retreat. We began the day with a “SWOT” exercise to analyze our organization and the political environment in which we operate according to: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. This helped set the foundation for planning our specific strategy and programs.

Executive Director Marylia Kelley and Staff Attorney Scott Yundt shared a review of the group’s 2012 strategic plan and our record of accomplishments over the past 12 months. This gave us the opportunity to relish the results of our hard work, evaluate where we stand now, and set our sights on what we need to do in the coming year.

Next came a discussion of various potential program priorities. A vote was taken and — drum roll, please — the following programs received the highest ratings:

1. Uphold the termination of bomb-usable plutonium activities at Livermore Lab and prevent transport of nuclear bomb cores on our highways;

2. Stop new nuclear bombs and bomb plants; and shrink the weapons complex, arsenal and budget;

3. Ensure the cleanup of pollution at the Livermore Lab Main Site and Site 300;

4. Prevent plutonium use in the National Ignition Facility, cut its budget and move it out of the National Nuclear Security Administration’s control;

5. (TIE) Advocate a “green lab” to transform Livermore Lab and Sandia, Livermore to civilian science;

5. (TIE) Promote global nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and “rule of law;” and

6. Obtain justice for sick workers, focusing on Livermore and Sandia Lab workers made ill by on-the-job exposures.

To all who were there, we salute you and offer deep thanks for your thoughtful and perceptive work. To the larger community of our members and friends, we invite you to become increasingly active with Tri-Valley CAREs. Join us in whatever ways you are able!
First, a huge “thank you” to all of our members who called or wrote their Congressional representatives asking them to withhold funding for the B61-12 Life Extension Program (LEP). Your efforts are making a difference.

The Senate Appropriations bill cut 30% of the $537 million requested for Fiscal Year 2014 to upgrade the B61 nuclear bomb. This leaves $369 million for the LEP, a reduction of $168 million. In its legislative report, the Senate appropriators urged a more limited “proposed scope of work” because the labs’ preferred option is “not the lowest cost, lowest risk option that meets military requirements.” The report further notes the escalating price tag for the B61-12 LEP. Senator Dianne Feinstein deserves much of the credit for the outcome.

As we have reported, the original estimate for the B61-12 LEP was $3.9 billion. That ballooned to $10.4 billion. And, as Hans Kristensen of the Federation of American Scientists has written, that figure does not include the cost of the new B61-12 tail kit, which is being designed separately by the Pentagon - and will add another $1 billion or more to the bomb’s overall cost. About 400 new B61-12s will be produced. Ploughshares Fund calculated that the new bomb will cost more than its weight in solid gold.

With this information in hand, Rep. Mike Quigley (D-IL) introduced an amendment to cut the $23.7 million that the House appropriators had added to the Administration’s request. The amendment was narrowly defeated 196-227. It garnered more votes than expected. And, 30 Republicans voted with Quigley to cut the B61. This bodes well for ultimate cuts to the program.

Next, the House and Senate must iron out their differences. This process is likely to continue into the fall. Therefore, your continued calls, letters, emails etc. into Congress will matter. If the Senate “mark” stands, the B61-12 LEP will be cut 30%. If not…

Exciting Lawsuit News. On June 7th we filed litigation against the U.S. Department of Energy and its National Nuclear Security Administration for multiple violations of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Even as we await the formal case management conference with the Magistrate Judge and a hearing date, we are suddenly getting some (but not all) of the documents we sued for. While it is frustrating to have to file litigation to get the agencies to respond, it is a success of sorts to know we now have their full attention. The documents responsive to our FOIA suit just arrived and we are reviewing them. We will post information we gather from them on our website, in our electronic updates (if you do not get these, send us your email address) and in upcoming editions of Citizen’s Watch. Our initial reading reveals charges that beryllium-contaminated equipment is being moved around Livermore Lab willy-nilly and more. Stay tuned.

New Appointment. Exchange Monitor recently reported that retired Air Force General Frank Klotz is expected to be named head of the Department of Energy’s National Nuclear Security Administration, overseeing the U.S. nuclear weapons complex and its research, development, testing, production and dismantlement of nuclear weapons.

Court Decision. Five workers laid off from Livermore Lab in 2008 were recently awarded $2.7 million in damages for wrongful termination. 125 similar plaintiffs await trial. At issue are allegations that, following implementation of a new for-profit management contract, Livermore Lab illegally targeted higher-paid senior workers for lay-off resulting in age discrimination. Plaintiffs are represented by the firm of Gwilliam, Ivary, Chiosso, Cavalli & Brewer, which includes Tri-Valley CAREs’ former staff attorney, Rob Schwartz.

Bomb Plant Update. On July 12, 2013, the Government Accountability Office (GAO), which is the investigative arm of Congress, released a report on the history and status of the Uranium Processing Facility at Y-12 in TN. As our readers know, the UPF would increase U.S. production of nuclear weapon secondaries (the H-bomb component) to up to 80 units per year. This number of new secondaries per year implies new U.S. nuclear bomb designs. And, cost? That’s likely to be around $11 billion. The GAO noted that if one assumes $200 million to $500 million in spending each year, UPF will cost between $10.3 billion and $11.6 billion, using estimates from the Army Corp of Engineers. The GAO reported too that UPF design and schedule problems could push its completion date out to 2035. Tri-Valley CAREs will continue to insist that Congress cease funding this behemoth and that any new construction at Y-12 focus on the disassembly of existing, retired H-bomb components rather than the production of new bombs.

Mayors on Board. On June 24, the U.S. Conference of Mayors unanimously adopted a Resolution calling for U.S. leadership in eliminating nuclear weapons globally and for the “redirection of military spending to domestic needs.” The Resolution, which follows President Obama’s remarks in Berlin of June 19 on U.S. disarmament goals, offers specific measures to “meet the needs of U.S. cities.” Thirty Mayors introduced the Resolution, including four from California. The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the nonpartisan association of American cities with populations of 30,000 or more. For a copy of the Resolution, go to www.trivalleycares.org or to www.wslfweb.org.

Fukushima Leaking. Nuclear plant operator TEPCO admitted this month that radioactive groundwater, contaminated by the crippled Fukushima reactors, is flowing into the sea and likely has been doing so continuously for two years since the meltdowns. On July 10 the New York Times reported that Shinichi Tanaka of the Nuclear Regulatory Authority said neither his staff nor TEPCO knew how to staunch the flow of radioactive contamination into the ocean. This information follows on the heels of the July 9 news of the death of Masao Yoshida from cancer of the esophagus. Yoshida led heroic efforts to stabilize the plant after the March 11, 2011 earthquake and tsunami led to triple meltdowns at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. TEPCO officials denied that radioactive exposures contributed to Yoshida’s death at age 58.

2...........................................Tri-Valley CAREs Citizen’s Watch
Sixty-eight years after the United States dropped atomic bombs on the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, the threat of nuclear annihilation remains. Nuclear devastation could come by accident, miscalculation, madness or malevolent intent. The Fukushima disaster demonstrates the dangers of nuclear technologies derived from the bomb. And, while instructions on how to “duck and cover” to survive a nuclear bomb may seem quaint, modern propaganda still blinds many to our most urgent and unfinished business: the total abolition of nuclear weapons.

HIROSHIMA DAY RALLY & NONVIOLENT DIRECT ACTION (See reverse for guidelines)

- Tuesday, August 6, 2013, 7 AM Program; 8:15 AM March
- Livermore Lab NW corner; Vasco & Patterson Pass Roads
- Parking on Patterson Pass Road
- Van pick-ups at Dublin-Pleasanton BART; MUST CALL TO RESERVE!
- Aug. 5 Peace Camp Out, Del Valle Park

AUGUST 6, 2013: 7 AM
Join us at the LIVERMORE LAB for UNFINISHED BUSINESS
AND OUR MOST URGENT RESPONSIBILITY
BANNING the BOMB!
at the Livermore Lab and Globally

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
DANIEL ELLSBERG
and special guests:
REV. NOBU HANAOKA
Nagasaki A-bomb survivor
CECILE PINEDA
author “Devil’s Tango; How I Learned the Fukushima Step by Step”
PETE YAMAMOTO
poet, “Mayor of J-town”
with:
LOULENA MILES,
Livermore Lab’s nuclear weapons activities
GENYU KAI, Okinawan band
TAIKO DRUMMERS & more

Questions? Contact:
(925) 443-7148, www.trivalleycares.org
(510) 839-5877, www.wslfweb.org
Livermore Conversion Project
Nonviolence Guidelines

We agree to abide by the following guidelines in all of the August 2013 Livermore actions:

- We will be open and respectful to everyone we meet;
- We will not use verbal or physical violence;
- We will not destroy property;
- We will not bring drugs or alcohol, except for medicinal purposes;
- We will not bring weapons;
- We will not run, which can cause panic;
- If arrested, we will not resist;
- If legal consequences follow our actions, we will treat all those we encounter in the process with openness and respect.

* Adopted by consensus of the planning committee for the August 6, 2013 actions at Livermore Lab


In conjunction with the annual Hiroshima Commemoration,
Rally and Action at the Livermore Nuclear Weapons Lab

2013 PEACE CAMP OUT
at Del Valle Regional Park in Livermore
August 5, 2013

WHAT: a group Camp Out in beautiful Del Valle Regional Park and Reservoir the night before the annual Hiroshima Commemoration, Rally and Action at the Livermore Nuclear Weapons Lab

WHEN: Monday, August 5, 2013: Check-in 2 PM—9 PM. At 6 AM the next morning, Tuesday, August 6, we will caravan to the Lab (the park gate opens at 5 AM)

WHERE: Eagle View group camp ground at Del Valle Regional Park, located on Del Valle Road off Mines Road, about 9 miles outside of Livermore

PARKING: Parking is limited at the campground, so carpooling is suggested

COST: $10 per person (no additional charge for parking)

RSVP to: Scott Yundt at Tri-Valley CAREs: (925) 443-7148 or scott@trivalleycares.org

RSVP IS REQUIRED · Musical instruments are welcome · Pets are not allowed
No alcohol · Bring your own food and beverages
PETITION

To Prevent the Transport of Plutonium Bomb Cores Back and Forth Between Los Alamos, New Mexico and Livermore, California

WHEREAS, these nuclear bomb cores will be transported back and forth on trucks through three states - New Mexico, Arizona and California.

WHEREAS, the government lowered the security at Livermore Lab on September 30, 2012 so that the facility has no authorization to handle, test or store nuclear bomb usable quantities of plutonium, including these bomb cores.

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) National Nuclear Security Administration has proposed trucking plutonium bomb cores from its Los Alamos Lab in NM to Livermore Lab in the Bay Area, despite its lack of security.

WHEREAS, the bomb cores would undergo diagnostic tests at Livermore Lab that involve a “shaker pit,” “thermal chamber,” and “drop test” that simulate conditions during the bombs’ “storage, transportation or use environment.”

WHEREAS, after completing these diagnostic tests in Livermore, the plutonium bomb cores would be loaded back on trucks and sent on the road again to Los Alamos.

WHEREAS, publically available DOE documents state that it would take only 4 trucks to move the diagnostics from Livermore Lab to a more secure location at or near the bomb cores, thus reducing or eliminating their transport.

WHEREAS, these diagnostic tests were not performed on any of the nation’s plutonium bomb cores for a period of about six years, from 2005 to 2011, and the DOE has not publically justified a “need” to resume them now.

WHEREAS, the proposal to bring plutonium bomb cores to Livermore Lab, with its reduced security status, has never been analyzed under the National Environmental Policy Act, our nation’s most basic environmental protection law.

WHEREAS, this proposal may, therefore, be illegal as well as dangerous.

THEREFORE, WE CALL ON THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY TO CANCEL ITS PLAN TO TRANSPORT PLUTONIUM BOMB CORES TO LIVERMORE LAB. WE FURTHER CALL ON THE AGENCY TO PRIORITIZE ALTERNATIVES THAT WOULD REDUCE OR ELIMINATE TRANSPORTATION RISKS.

Your Name (print or write clearly)  Address/City/State/Zip  Email  √ for updates

1.

2.

3.

4.

Send to/Request more from: Tri-Valley CAREs, 2582 Old First St., Livermore, CA 94550 • www.trivalleycares.org
PETICIÓN

Para Prevenir el Transporte de los Núcleos de Bombas de Plutonio de Ida y Vuelta Entre Los Alamos, New Mexico y Livermore, California

MIENTRAS QUE, estos núcleos de bombas nucleares serán transportados de ida y vuelta en camiones por tres estados – New Mexico, Arizona y California.

MIENTRAS QUE, el gobierno bajó la seguridad del Laboratorio de Livermore en el 30 de septiembre, 2012 para que la instalación no tenga la autorización para utilizar, probar o guardar niveles de plutonio que sean suficiente para una bomba, lo cual incluye estos núcleos de bombas.

MIENTRAS QUE, la Administración de la Seguridad Nuclear Nacional del Departamento de Energía (DOE) ha propuesto el transporte por camión de los núcleos de bombas nucleares de su Laboratorio de Los Alamos en NM al Laboratorio de Livermore en el Bay Area, a pesar de su falta de seguridad.

MIENTRAS QUE, los núcleos de bombas nucleares pasarían por pruebas diagnósticas en el Laboratorio de Livermore que incluyen un “hoyo de agitación” (shaker pit), “una cámara térmico” (thermal chamber), y “una prueba de caída” (drop test) que simulan las condiciones del “almacenamiento, la transportación o el ambiente de uso” de las bombas.

MIENTRAS QUE, después de completar estas pruebas diagnósticas en Livermore, los núcleos de bombas de plutonio serían cargados en camión y transportados de nuevo por carretera a Los Alamos.

MIENTRAS QUE, los documentos del DOE que están disponibles al público indican que requeriría sólo 4 camiones para transportar los diagnósticos de Livermore Lab a algún lugar más seguro o más cerca de los núcleos de bombas, así reduciendo o eliminando su transporte.

MIENTRAS QUE, estas pruebas diagnósticas no han sido realizadas en ninguna de los núcleos de bombas de plutonio de esta nación por un periodo de seis años, de 2005 a 2011, y el DOE no ha justificado públicamente una “necesidad” de resumirlas ahora.

MIENTRAS QUE, la proposición de llevar los núcleos de bombas de plutonio al Laboratorio de Livermore, con su estado de seguridad desminuida, nunca ha sido analizado bajo el Acto de la Política Nacional del Medio Ambiente, la ley más básica de nuestra nación acerca de la protección del medio ambiente.

MIENTRAS QUE, esta proposición puede, por lo tanto, ser tanto ilegal como peligrosa.

POR LO TANTO, HACEMOS UN RECLAMO HACIA EL DEPARTAMENTO DE ENERGÍA DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS PARA QUE CANCELEN SU PLAN DE TRANSPORTAR LOS NÚCLEOS DE BOMBAS DE PLUTONIO AL LABORATORIO DE LIVERMORE. ADÉMÁS, RECLAMAMOS QUE LA AGENCIA DÉ PRIORIDAD A LOS ALTERNATIVOS QUE REDUCIRÍAN O ELIMINARÍAN LOS RIESGOS DE TRANSPORTACIÓN.

Nombre (imprima claramente) Dirección/Ciudad/Estado/C. Postal Email √ para actualizaciones

Enviar a / Pedir más de: Tri-Valley CAREs, 2582 Old First St., Livermore, CA 94550 • trivalleycares.org
Save the Date!

What: Tri-Valley CAREs 30th Anniversary Party
When: Tuesday, December 10th at 5:30 - 8:30pm
Where: Livermore Library Community Rooms A & B, 1188 South Livermore Ave.
Who: Everyone is invited.
RSVP to (925) 443-7148

// Alerts 4 U //</code>

Thursday, August 1
Letter to the Editor writing party
5:30 PM – 7 PM, Tri-Valley CAREs
2582 Old First St., Livermore
(925) 443-7148 for details

Come and write a letter to the editor of your favorite newspaper in a friendly and supportive environment. Our suggested topic will be cutting the nuclear weapons budget. We will offer a short briefing and handouts to get you started. Or, you may choose to write on a different topic. Snacks and refreshments served.

Sunday, August 4
Sacramento August Peace Event
3 PM– 5 PM, Social Hall,
St. John’s Lutheran Church
1701 L St., Sacramento
(916) 536-9956 (JoAnn Fuller)

This annual gathering to remember the bombings of Nagasaki and Hiroshima will feature Tri-Valley CAREs Executive Director Marylia Kelley. The theme of this year’s event is A Nuclear Threat in Our Backyard

Monday, August 5
Peace Camp Out
2 PM– 6 AM, Del Valle Regional Park
Eagle View group camp ground, Del Valle Road off Mines Road, about 9 miles outside of Livermore
(925) 443-7148 for details

(See insert flier for more information)

Tuesday, August 6
Hiroshima Day Action
Gather at 7 AM, March at 8:15 AM,
Livermore Lab, Corner of Vasco Road & Patterson Pass Road
(925) 443-7148 for details

This year’s event, 68 years since the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, will include a rally, march and nonviolent direct action. Speakers will include Daniel Ellsberg, Rev. Nobu Hanaoka, Cecile Pineda, Loulena Miles and more. (See insert flier for details)

Friday, August 9
Monthly Livermore Peace Vigil
7 AM – 8 AM, Livermore Lab East Gate, Located on Greenville Road
(925) 443-7148 for details

Vigil leaders are Chelsea Collonge and Marcus Page. The monthly vigils are a practice of peace. Lab workers are encouraged to stop and discuss nuclear weapons and their abolition. Additional vigil participants are welcome. This vigil is on Nagasaki Day.

Thursday, August 15
Tri-Valley CAREs meets
7:30 PM – 9 PM, Livermore Library Community Room A
1188 South Livermore Ave.
(925) 443-7148 for details

Our monthly meetings are open to new and longtime members alike. Get the latest news on nuclear weapons and related topics, meet great people and help change the world. Snacks included.

/// Plutonium... Cont. from Page 1 ///

report, equals enough weapons grade plutonium to include putting whole bomb cores in the Shaker.

As you may recall from our earlier reporting, the “shake and bake” equipment at Livermore Lab consists of three units: the Shaker to vibrate the plutonium bomb cores, a Thermal Unit to heat them up and a High Crane from which to drop test them. Livermore Lab has the “shake and bake” equipment but has neither the authorization nor the security infrastructure to safely handle the plutonium.

Further, the December date for a “readiness assessment” noted in the DNFSB report is important to consider. That means Livermore Lab is trying to move quickly to get these plutonium bomb cores on the road from NM to CA despite the danger to Livermore Lab workers, area residents and the millions in NM, AZ and CA who live along the transportation route, which includes the Los Angeles area.

Tri-Valley CAREs is conducting a vigorous campaign to prevent the transport of plutonium bomb cores from Los Alamos to Livermore Lab (see prior editions of Citizen’s Watch for details).

We are asking all of our members and friends to circulate the petition in English and Spanish you will find inside. We have about 2,000 signatures so far, and we need YOURS and your friends to add to the number.

Your Tri-Valley CAREs team will be using the petitions and other materials in meetings with Congress and the Obama Administration. Check us out at www.trivalleycares.org, contact us at (925) 443-7148 or email marylia@trivalleycares.org to find out how you can help stop the plutonium from being put on our highways!

/// Erratum Box ///

The May/June 2013 Citizen’s Watch, Page 1, NIF tab, should have read, “The FY 2014 ask for ICF is $401 million, the lion’s share of which will find its way to NIF...” rather than $461 million.

Tri-Valley CAREs Citizen’s Watch.................................3
Stopping Nuclear Weapons at Livermore Lab on August 6

On August 6th, Hiroshima Day, we invite you to join Tri-Valley CAREs and other peace, justice and environmental groups at a major event at Livermore Lab.

Exactly 68 years since the U.S. dropped an atomic bomb on the people of Hiroshima, Japan, we will gather at the place where U.S. scientists are developing new and “modified” nuclear weapons. We will commemorate the suffering of the people of Hiroshima and of Nagasaki, which was bombed three days later on August 9, 1945.

The threat of nuclear annihilation remains, and it is perpetuated every day in our backyard at the Livermore Lab. While U.S. nuclear weapons are rarely covered on the six-o’clock news, more money is being spent today on their development than during the average years of the Cold War. There is money in the current budget request for Livermore Lab to undertake development of a new warhead to launch nuclear weapons interchangeably from a land-based silo or a submarine.

Commemorating Hiroshima at Livermore Lab will make visible the present-day reality of U.S. nuclear weapons. Further, while the old instructions to “duck and cover” to survive a nuclear attack may seem quaint, modern propaganda still blinds many to our most urgent unfinished business: the total abolition of nuclear weapons.

Thus, the theme of this year’s event is, “Unfinished Business and Our Most Urgent Responsibility: Banning the Bomb at the Livermore Lab and Globally.” We will gather at the northwest corner of Livermore Lab (at Vasco Road and Patterson Pass Road) at 7 AM on Tues., August 6.

The events will begin with a rally featuring Daniel Ellsberg (left), who will deliver the keynote address. Other speakers will include Rev. Nobuaki Hanaoaka, a Nagasaki bomb survivor, Cecile Pineda, Genyu Kai, an Okinawan band, Daniel Zwickel and drummers will bring the music.

Following the rally will be a call to action fell on Hiroshima. There will be a short procession to the Lab’s West Gate, where those who choose will peaceably risk arrest. Others will provide supportive witness.

This event is sponsored by dozens of local and regional groups, including Tri-Valley CAREs. We believe that public involvement at this historic time, at the gates of one of the two principal U.S. nuclear weapons research labs, can concretely move us closer to the more truly secure, environmentally friendly, just and peaceful world we seek.

A flyer is enclosed, and more information is available at www.trivalleycares.org. We hope to see you there!