Hiroshima Day at Livermore

About 250 peace advocates gathered on the morning of August 6th at the Livermore nuclear weapons Lab to stand in solidarity with the hibakusha (survivors of the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki). Overhead, a hand painted banner bore these words: “65 Years After Hiroshima: It’s Time to Retire The Bomb!”

We all heard spoken word and song from Kaylah Marin, calls for peace through forgiveness from Hiroshima survivor Takashi Tanemori, an update on the U.S. nuclear weapons complex and its Livermore Lab from Tri-Valley CAREs’ own Scott Yundt, and a deep analysis of the realities of nuclear weapons from Norman Solomon.

Following the program, many participants marched with signs and banners for about a mile along the western edge of the Livermore Lab to the large entrance gate at the corner of East Ave and Vasco Road. There, after significant machinations by the apparently flustered Lab security police, including the hasty placement of a temporary fence, 31 people were arrested in acts of peaceful “direct action” to bring attention to the horror of nuclear bombs — and to Livermore Lab’s ongoing nuclear weapons development activities.

A hundred or more supporters remained in the road a scant few feet from those risking arrest, singing and chanting for peace, listening to Japanese Taiko and Native American style drumming, and standing firm and peaceful in the face of scores of armed security forces. The demonstration succeeded in closing down traffic at all of the entrance gates on the western side of the Livermore nuclear weapons Lab for approximately 3 hours.

Tri-Valley CAREs and allied groups organized the annual commemoration to honor and recognize communities and individuals in the Bay Area and around the world who are adversely affected by the mining, milling, enrichment, weaponization, storage, and hazardous wastes associated with every aspect of the nuclear cycle. The event also raised awareness about the serious threats posed by ongoing U.S. nuclear weapons programs, particularly the new nuclear bomb research at Livermore Lab.

Participants left energized and rededicated to the goal of abolishing nuclear weapons.

If you missed the commemoration, we invite you to join us in 2011. And, check www.trivalleycares.org. We will soon be posting photos and a video taken by some amazing young people at the action.

Planning Together

On Aug. 14, Tri-Valley CAREs’ board, staff and community members gathered in Livermore for the group’s annual strategic planning retreat. One of the features that serves to strengthen Tri-Valley CAREs and boost its creativity and effectiveness throughout the year can be found in the shared decision-making of doing strategic planning with representation from all sectors of the organization.

Our retreat was facilitated by Chrissy Anderson-Zavala, who began with a tutorial on strategic planning and ensured throughout the day that we stayed on task and on time.

Our Executive Director, Marylia Kelley, presented an accounting of the program priorities chosen at last year’s retreat and the group’s progress toward them, including victories, interim achievements and places where we fell short. This is an exercise that we do each year to examine our faithfulness to the priorities we chose and to hold ourselves accountable for them. (A written account is on our website at www.trivalleycares.org under “reports” and “2010”.)

With these foundational elements in place, and our mission statement in front of us, the planning participants tackled the central task of choosing Tri-Valley CAREs program priorities for the coming year.

We started with a draft list of prospective programs (with strategic opportunities noted for each) that had been prepared by Tri-Valley CAREs’ staff. The heart of the day was devoted to a lively, thoughtful and deep discussion of all of our program options, including an opportunity for participants to propose and consider new or different programs.

The participants then voted for the program priorities that they deemed most important for Tri-Valley CAREs to focus its attention and energy on in the coming year. Each participant had one “first place” and two “regular” votes to cast. And, drum roll, please...

Tri-Valley CAREs’ new program priorities are: (1) Stop the further development of nuclear weapons and new bomb plants; (2) Constrain bio-warfare agent research; (3) En
**New START.** The Senate Foreign Relations Committee has scheduled a vote on New START in mid-Sept. It is expected to pass out of committee with a simple majority easily, but will need a 2/3 vote by the entire Senate for ratification. CA Senators Feinstein and Boxer can help by speaking up more forcefully for the treaty. Call or email them with the message “New START-YES, $$ for new nuclear bomb plants and bombs - NO.” (feinstein.senate.gov, boxer.senate.gov or call 202-224-3121.)

**Breaking Ground & Hearts.** As we go to press, the U.S. is set to break ground on its first new nuclear weapons production plant in a generation. On a former soybean field in Kansas City, MO, the Kansas City Plant will make non-nuclear parts for nuclear weapons, including firing and guidance systems. Activists will hold a news conference at the site before the groundbreaking and engage in nonviolent direct action to demonstrate opposition to the facility.

**No Urgency for B61.** Bob Peurifoy, former head of nuclear weapons at the Sandia-NM site, has taken issue with the supposed “urgency” to modernize the B61 with a $4.9 billion Life Extension Program (LEP). In an email to reporter John Fleck, he stated, “I don’t understand the use of ‘sense of urgency’ [by lab directors]. Being skeptical of the design labs’ management integrity, I’m suspicious that the real reason for the ‘urgency’ is budget related.” We concur. Congress, are you listening?

**It’s About the Pits.** The Los Alamos Study Group has filed a lawsuit under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) seeking to halt further investment in a massive new plutonium facility proposed at the Los Alamos Lab and known as the Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Replacement. The lawsuit alleges a violation of NEPA because the scope and size of the project has greatly expanded since the initial Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and argues that construction should be enjoined until a new EIS is completed.

**NNSA's Fiscal Year 2011 Plan...** Cont. from page 4

**Modernizing the Arsenal**

Connecting the “big picture” to some of its key ingredients, we find that the NNSA Fiscal Year 2011 Plan shows that the agency’s projected costs for nuclear weapons Life Extension Programs (LEPs) are skyrocketing. In particular, the planned B61 and W78 LEPs have per unit costs four times higher than the usual costs for nuclear weapons in previous LEPs.

LEPs are the vehicle through which nuclear weapons and their components are being “modified” and “improved.” In the age of Obama, the NNSA has expanded its definition of LEP to include “reuse” and “replacement” warheads. This semantic sleight of hand is intended to allow the weapons labs at Livermore and Los Alamos to move forward with new designs similar to the Reliable Replacement Warhead (RRW) that Congress de-funded and Obama foreshadowed when he took office.

Dr. Roger Logan, an independent weapons expert who served as the first head of Directed Stockpile Work at Livermore Lab, said of the NNSA Plan, “Where is the cost-benefit analysis that would justify these [LEP] expenditures? I know from my time in the weapons program that a benefit vs. cost analysis of the full range of stockpile options was first undertaken in 2002, with an annual update each year thereafter.” Logan continued, “The for-profit Limited Liability Company monopoly that now manages both our nation’s nuclear weapons labs does not think in terms of benefit vs. cost. Instead it continues to push for the new design RRW programs... This is an incredibly expensive obsession... I see no valid rationale that would explain why a four-fold increase in budgets is necessary.”

In addition to “modernizing” the stockpile, the NNSA Plan further pushes dangerous and unnecessary new bomb plants, most notably a new plutonium facility at Los Alamos (NM) and a new uranium processing facility at Y-12 (TN), with their collective price tag in the neighborhood of $8 billion (and rising).

**Abandoning Ignition at the NIF**

Drilling more deeply into the Plan, we come to the Livermore Lab’s National Ignition Facility (NIF) mega-laser, the touted “flagship” of the NNSA Stockpile Stewardship program and its single most expensive element. The NNSA and Lab management have repeatedly promised that NIF would reach its scientific goal of “ignition” (a self sustaining fusion reaction) and “gain” (more energy out than was put in) by Fiscal Year 2010, which ends on September 30.

What we discovered is that NNSA has abandoned its pledge of ignition and gain altogether. Under “key milestones” in Volume 1, the NIF goal is degraded from actual ignition to merely a “credible experiment” in 2010. In Volume 2 (Annex A) there is a list of “key deliverables” through 2013, but, instead of ignition, the Plan posits only an experiment at 1.0 megajoule, instead of the NIF’s design energy of 1.8. And so it goes throughout the 3 volumes.

NIF construction and its construction-related R&D have cost taxpayers about $7 billion so far. The Plan’s NIF “Funding Schedule” graph shows the mega-laser’s out year costs continuing at about $500 million per year through 2015, when the graph ends (although NIF costs will not).

Both in its “big picture” and in its particulars, the NNSA Fiscal Year 2011 Plan reveals an agency that is following its own perceived, narrow interests and not the nation’s. If left unchecked by President Obama and Congress, the NNSA will reach deeper and deeper into the taxpayers’ pockets in the coming decades, even as it jettisons scientific objectives. What we will get, according to the Plan, is new bomb plants and new bombs.
Thursday, October 7

Livermore Lab and DOE host a public meeting on cleanup of the off-site plume from the Lab’s main site
6:30 - 7:30 PM, Arroyo Seco School
5280 Irene Way, Livermore
422-2567 (DOE) or 443-7148 (TVC)

The DOE and Livermore Lab will discuss the off-site ground water plume and the plan to build a pipeline and remediate the contaminated water on-site. Public comments will be accepted. Tri-Valley CAREs will staff an information table. Come on by.

Saturday, October 16

Tri-Valley CAREs Yard & Bake Sale
9 AM - 5 PM, Tri-Valley CAREs offices
2582 Old First St., Livermore
(925) 443-7148 for details

Can you bake us a cake? Or, donate your used goods to a good cause? Do you have a handcrafted item that we can sell? We will begin accepting goods at the Tri-Valley CAREs offices October 1. The sale will take place on Saturday, October 16. You are invited to browse for tasty treats, treasures, and other “finds”. (See enclosed flier.)

Thursday, November 4

Tri-Valley CAREs presents:
Letters to the Editor (writing party)
6:30 PM, Tri-Valley CAREs offices
2582 Old First St., Livermore
(925) 443-7148 for details

Write a letter to the editor on the first Thursday of each month. The subject for Nov. is nuclear disarmament. We will have fact sheets and hand outs. And, if you want to write a letter on another topic, that’s great too. Exercise your creative voice in a supportive atmosphere.

We offer our heartfelt appreciation to all who have contributed so generously toward our $15,000 challenge from Colombe Foundation. As we write this, we are $3k from our goal. Your donation in any amount can put us “over the top” to collect the $15k challenge, thereby doubling each donor’s gift. Please consider donating today via our website or by mail. THANKS!
NNSA’s Fiscal Year 2011 Plan for Nukes, NIF and Your Money

Tri-Valley CAREs has been consistent in its support for President Obama’s 2009 speech declaring “America’s commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons.” And, we have been equally outspoken in our criticism of actions by Obama and his Administration that move the country in the opposite direction.

Further widening the gap between the President’s soaring rhetoric and his Administration’s actual deeds is the Dept. of Energy National Nuclear Security Administration’s (NNSA) Fiscal Year 2011 Stockpile Stewardship and Management Plan. The Plan is important because it contains the building blocks for future programs and budgets.

We obtained the Plan’s three unclassified volumes earlier this summer. We sent a Freedom of Information Act request asking that the Plan’s additional two classified volumes be released to us in a declassified form. The NNSA has yet to comply. So, this assessment is based on the unclassified volumes, which cover Fiscal Years 2011 - 2030.

The Big Picture

As part of “America’s commitment” to disarmament, we give the NNSA Plan a failing grade. While the Plan does contemplate smaller stockpile numbers within 20 years (around 3,000 to 3,500), its major revelation is in its proposal to increase the nuclear weapons budget through 2030, spending $175 billion for “modernization” of the nuclear weapons complex and arsenal. (Note: The NNSA number does not include hundreds of billions in DoD funding, e.g., for planes, subs, and missiles, that would be necessary to fully implement the NNSA Plan.)

A few words about the political environment are essential to understand the Plan in context. Certain Senators, led by Jon Kyl (R-AZ), are demanding “modernization” as the ransom to be paid for their possible vote on the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) when it comes up for ratification.

As a technical matter, however, New START and new bomb plants are not related. New START involves a modest reduction in U.S. and Russian arsenals and a welcome resumption of verification measures that lapsed with old START. It can stand, and should be judged, on its merits.

We at Tri-Valley CAREs believe that Kyl and friends must be called on their cynical political maneuvering, not swaddled in the new bomb cash that NNSA (itself more philosophically aligned at the top with Kyl than with Obama) is so opportunistically promoting in its Fiscal Year 2011 Plan. In sum, the “big picture” outlined in the NNSA Plan involves more and more money for new bomb plants and weapons, albeit for slightly fewer bombs.

This is precisely the George W. Bush “Bombplex” plan. The only real difference is that the price tag has risen from $150 billion to $175 billion. Certainly, the NNSA Plan is inconsistent with Obama’s stated vision of America leading the way toward a world without nuclear weapons.

Continued on page 2

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◆ Got Planning? Page 1
◆ Heartfelt Thanks. Page 3
◆ Hiroshima Remembered. Page 1
◆ Print Bites, Events & More. Pages 2 & 3
DANGEROUS WATERS:
Toxic & Radioactive Pollution at Livermore Lab

Action Now Can Safeguard Public Health and the Environment

The Livermore Lab main site was founded in 1952 to design new types of nuclear weapons. The Lab’s Site 300 high explosives testing range was opened in the hills near Tracy in 1955 to aid in the bomb design effort. Decades of nuclear weapons activities have contaminated the air, soil, groundwater and some surface waters at both locations.

In the 1980s, the Livermore Lab main site was investigated by the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and, in 1987, it was placed on the agency’s “Superfund” list of most contaminated sites in the country.

In the years that followed, the Lab’s Site 300 was likewise investigated, given a high hazard ranking, and, in 1990, placed on the Superfund list.

The contaminants being addressed under the nation’s Superfund law at one or both sites include a toxic and radioactive soup of solvents, PCBs, hazardous metals (e.g., mercury, hexavalent chromium), perchlorate, high explosives, and radioactive materials (e.g., tritium, uranium and plutonium).

Estimated cleanup costs top $300 million. Estimated cleanup times are multi-generational, involving 50 years or more.

Pollution Migrates into the Community

Among the contaminated areas being addressed under Superfund is a significant toxic groundwater plume that has migrated from the Livermore Lab main site into the community aquifer.

The off-site contaminant plume has moved from the Lab in a generally westward flow, and the plume and its “leading edge” (its outer boundary) are presently under homes, apartments, the arroyo, a city park and a community swimming pool near Charlotte Way and surrounding neighborhoods.

The major toxic contaminant at the plume’s leading edge is a solvent, PCE (formally known as Tetrachloroethylene). Other portions of the off-site plume contain additional pollutants, including TCE (Trichloroethylene), another solvent routinely used for decades in the nuclear weapons programs at Livermore Lab.

These solvents affect the central nervous system, liver, kidney and the immune system, and are cancer-causing, among other negative health outcomes.

The Lab’s contaminated groundwater prompted the State of California to issue a “Determination of Imminent or Substantial Endangerment” in 1984, compelling Livermore Lab to close wells at neighbors’ homes along its western perimeter and provide the residents with bottled water. The Lab subsequently acquired many of those properties.

The toxic contaminants continued to move with the overall groundwater flow, following the original Arroyo Seco channel (as the path of least resistance) at a rate of about 70 feet per year through the neighborhoods further to the west of the Livermore Lab.

Over the past 25 years, partly due to the insistence of Tri-Valley CAREs and others, Livermore Lab has prioritized the construction of a series of groundwater treatment facilities on-site along its western perimeter.

The Lab also built a system of off-site extraction wells and underground pipelines out into the community to carry the contaminated groundwater back on-site, where it is treated.

Continued on next page
in one of the specially built facilities to separate the pollutants from the water. Finally, the clean water is put back so that it recharges the groundwater aquifer, which is a precious resource used for both drinking water and agriculture in Livermore.

However, the Lab’s off-site pumps and pipeline are insufficient to reach and clean up the leading edge of the contaminated groundwater plume. The Lab has just enough infrastructure out there to keep those pollutants in a “holding pattern” in the area around Big Trees Park and the community swimming pool, but not enough to actually clean it up.

And, the half-mile long stretch of community aquifer between the Lab’s western perimeter and the contaminant plume’s leading edge is still, today, polluted with solvents like TCE, although their concentrations have diminished significantly due to the pumping over the years.

The Upcoming Decision

Under the Superfund law, Livermore Lab is responsible for cleaning up the leading edge of the off-site plume. In 2007, Tri-Valley CAREs objected to the Lab’s initial “plan” because it failed to actually clean up the toxic mess. Instead, Livermore Lab had instituted a “pilot project” to pump the PCE-contaminated groundwater and put it, untreated, into a city sewer line that runs along Charlotte Ave.

The sewer system is not a hazardous waste treatment facility and so the toxic solvent was neither being isolated nor cleaned up. Instead, ultimately, it was being sent into the San Francisco Bay.

After we met with the regulatory agencies and voiced our objections, they agreed with us that the sewer line was not a “treatment technology,” and the Lab withdrew its plan to pump and dump a total of 80 million gallons of PCE-contaminated water.

Now, Livermore Lab has a new plan, which, in essence, is to build an additional pipeline out to the leading edge of the plume and pump the contaminated water into that pipeline, which would take the water back to an on-site treatment facility for cleaning.

The Lab’s current draft plan is one of several options that Tri-Valley CAREs has analyzed, and we consider it generally acceptable. It will actually clean up the groundwater, and do so in an environmentally friendly manner.

There are still important issues that must be addressed in the Lab’s cleanup plan. One of our remaining concerns involves the paucity of monitoring wells at the leading edge of the plume, making it difficult to know if the entire contaminated area is being cleaned up. Another of our concerns is the relative lack of funding that the Department of Energy is giving the Livermore Lab to do the cleanup. And, we will be watching closely to see if hexavalent chromium is also present in the groundwater at the leading edge of the plume, as one Lab report suggested it might be.

Tri-Valley CAREs’ Role in the Cleanup

Achieving a full and comprehensive cleanup of the environmental impacts of nuclear weapons development was one of Tri-Valley CAREs’ founding objectives in 1983, and it remains a priority today.

Tri-Valley CAREs won the first Technical Assistance Grant in the western United States from EPA in 1989. With that grant, we have contracted with an environmental scientist, Peter Strauss, and have offered testimony and technical comments on every aspect of the Superfund cleanup.

Also, since 1989, Tri-Valley CAREs has participated in the Livermore Lab Main Site Community Work Group to advise the Lab and the regulatory agencies on the Superfund cleanup. Tri-Valley CAREs was the first non-governmental organization to win a national recognition award from EPA for the effectiveness of its work in 2000.

Further, Tri-Valley CAREs maintains an ongoing commitment to involve the directly affected community in Superfund decision-making, and so the group hosts community meetings and produces reader-friendly materials to help encourage and empower public participation.

We will host a community meeting on September 30 on the Superfund cleanup of Livermore Lab, with a focus on the off-site contaminated plume and the upcoming decision. The Lab’s public meeting to present its plan and receive public comment will be held on October 7. (See inside and below for details.)

Further, we ask our readers to please sign and circulate the petition (inside) to help us improve the entire Livermore Lab main site and Site 300 Superfund cleanup, of which this off-site plume is only one small part.

YOUR VOICE MATTERS

◆ Community meeting, hosted by Tri-Valley CAREs. Thursday, 9/30/10 at 7 PM, 749 Hazel St., Livermore. RSVP to Tri-Valley CAREs, (925) 443-7148.


◆ Sign and send us the enclosed petition to compel adequate funding to clean up the mess at Livermore Lab. We will use the petitions to advocate for cleanup in meetings with the Dept. of Energy and Congress.
PETITION
to Compel Adequate Funding to Clean Up Toxic and Radioactive Contamination at Livermore Lab

WHEREAS, The Dept. of Energy (DOE) National Nuclear Security Administration owns the Livermore Lab main site in Livermore and its Site 300 high explosives testing range near Tracy, CA.

WHEREAS, the Livermore Lab main site was placed on the EPA's Superfund list of most contaminated sites in the nation in 1987, and the Lab's Site 300 was placed on that list in 1990.

WHEREAS, both Livermore Lab locations are contaminated with radioactive and toxic materials that have oozed through soils, groundwater aquifers and some surface waters.

WHEREAS, the contaminants that have leaked into the environment at one or both sites include radioactive hydrogen, uranium, plutonium, solvents, high explosive compounds, mercury, hexavalent chromium, and others.

WHEREAS, if the Livermore Lab main site pollution is not remediated, the EPA has estimated that the cancer risk associated with drinking the water is one cancer per every thousand residents, and the EPA has estimated the cancer risk of drinking the water at one of the contaminated areas at Site 300 is one in one hundred.

WHEREAS, the DOE budget for Livermore Lab exceeds $1.2 billion annually, with nuclear weapons activities taking up more than 85% of the budget and cleanup efforts receiving 2%.

WHEREAS, the DOE received an additional $6 billion (above annual appropriations) in federal "stimulus" funding to accelerate toxic and radioactive waste cleanup at its sites.

WHEREAS, the DOE has allocated zero "stimulus" funds to the cleanup of the Livermore Lab main site or Site 300, although Bay Area members of Congress and the community have sent letters requesting funds.

WHEREAS, stimulus funds and additional appropriations are urgently needed to address contamination at the Livermore Lab main site, including recently discovered mixed radioactive wastes and mercury in soils, decontamination of an old nuclear reactor building, an off-site toxic groundwater plume, and other long-standing hazards.

WHEREAS, stimulus funds and additional appropriations are also urgently needed to address contamination at Site 300, including cleanup at “firing tables” where nuclear bomb experiments are, to this day, detonated in the open air and polluted groundwater is migrating toward the fence line.

THEREFORE, WE CALL ON THE ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESS TO ADEQUATELY FUND CLEANUP AT LIVERMORE LAB. WE FURTHER CALL FOR CESSIONATION OF ACTIVITIES THAT CONTINUE TO POLLUTE.

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Send to/Order more: Tri-Valley CAREs, 2582 Old First St, Livermore, CA 94550 • trivalleycares.org
COMMUNITY MEETING

"Toxics, Radiation, Superfund & the Livermore Lab"

Thursday, September 30

7 PM – 8:30 PM, 749 Hazel St., Livermore, (925) 443–7148

This community meeting will take place at Janis Kate’s home, near the off-site toxic waste plume emanating from Livermore Lab.

The keynote speaker will be environmental scientist Peter Strauss, who serves as Tri-Valley CAREs’ advisor on the Superfund cleanup.

Come and learn about the contaminants, the off-site plume, the proposed cleanup options, the Superfund law, and what you can do to help win justice for the people of Livermore and our environment.

At the end of the meeting, we will offer a short “field trip” to the nearby Big Trees Park. There, you can see one of Livermore Lab’s contaminant pumping wells, several of the Lab’s monitoring wells and two proposed pipeline routes for contaminated groundwater.

Convert Livermore

A GREEN LAB FOR A SAFER ENVIRONMENT
For more information www.trivalleycares.org

RSVP to Tri-Valley CAREs at (925) 443–7148.

In addition to hosting community events like this one, we meet on the 3rd Thursday of the month, 7:30 PM at the Livermore main Library. Interested members of the public are invited.
Donate your used goods to a good cause!!

Tri-Valley CAREs is holding a Yard & Bake Sale/Bazaar

Bring Donations to the Tri-Valley CAREs Office starting October 1st
***baked goods
***household items
***artwork & crafts
***electronic items
***sporting goods
***small furniture
***toys
***books
***clothing items
***and more

Don’t forget to come by the Tri-Valley CAREs office and shop for fresh baked goods, original crafts, and yard sale “finds” on

Saturday, October 16 from 9:00 to 5:00!!

Tri-Valley CAREs: 2582 Old First Street Livermore, CA 94550 (925) 443-7148