



Paper: Albuquerque Tribune, The (NM)

Title: Visions for '99

Date: January 1, 1999

Quality education for our children. Literacy programs for older folks. Meals for the homeless. Assistance for the abused and the neglected and the elderly and the working poor. Peace, prosperity and good will. And more green trees and shrubs! Those are some of the visions expressed by a collection of young and old, well-known and lesser-known people -- all of whom participated in today's "Visions for '99" pages. Each was asked: What would you like to see in our community in 1999? Their responses offer a glimpse of what some people in our community would wish for this year, 1999.

Shira Greenberg, executive/artistic director, Keshet Dance Company

Albuquerque is ripe for incredible growth in the arts in 1999 and beyond. My wish is to see an increase in opportunities for all artists to get paid for their talent. There are tremendous possibilities for a city that recognizes "artist" as a realistic and viable vocation.

John McGraw, director, Institute for Astrophysics; executive director, The Lodestar Project, Department of Physics and Astronomy, UNM

I predict that every one of our wishes for 1999 is made possible by, or better because of, education. Our children are our most worthwhile legacy. I envision parents, educators and government -- and all of our diverse communities -- working together to provide demonstrably excellent education for all our students.

Blair Kaufman, member of TVI Board of Governors; Washington Middle School principal

We will create additional solutions to the pressing issues of work-force training. TVI staffing and administration must work toward mutual trust and understanding on issues of pay, workload and meeting the educational needs of our citizens. APS, TVI and the business community should continue to build innovative educational partnerships to enhance student learning.

Brad Allison, superintendent, Albuquerque Public Schools

My hope is all students are given the opportunity to reach their full potential. My first wish is for more parental and community involvement. Second, more money to recruit and keep the best teachers in APS, maintain and build adequate learning facilities, and for technology so students can learn skills to help them compete in the real world. And finally, I wish that government would make education its top priority, putting our children and our future first.

Ruth Baldwin, longtime Albuquerque resident, widow of former Tribune reporter and columnist George Baldwin

I would like to see a disappearance of the cloud that has been hanging over our nation -- and the world -- as 1998 ends. Also, I hope that in 1999, The Tribune continues its efforts to make our city and state a better place for all of us to enjoy life.

Harold Morgan,

economist and publisher

I wish that the City Charter Task Force, just now starting work, will devise a civic political system allowing real public dialogue and stacked toward easy participation rather than open only to City Hall insiders. And that this dialogue (as embodied by candidates) poses substantive questions and choices. Finally: less whining.

Mary Dudley, UNM Family Development Training Institute

We're watching prisons become a growth industry in New Mexico, but we can't continue to expand the economy on the backs of kids who grow into criminals. We know that early care really matters in how children turn out. Especially as welfare reform moves more parents away from their babies, we'll need new private/public partnerships to fund the best early care and education for all of our youngest children.

Geraldine Rivera, District Court judge

1999 must be a time for focusing our attention on our children and our values. The two are inseparable. Unless we stop the moral erosion caused by poverty, poor education, violence as a norm, and political corruption, the way of life we cherish will be history. We're starved for leadership!

Steve Brewer, author and Tribune columnist

I'd like to see the community do more to promote literacy. People who can't read or write hold little hope of improving their lives. Readers make better citizens. Everyone can help. Visit the library and support it. Give books

to friends and family. Read to your children. Teach someone to read. The rewards will be voluminous.

Doug Turner, public-relations executive and campaign manager for Gov. Gary Johnson's re-election campaign

What I'd like to see: for the Legislature to look toward improving education in New Mexico by implementing increased school and parental choice in both the public and private sector; increased accountability for teachers, specifically ensuring that they are qualified in the subjects they are teaching; more testing of students to ensure they are learning the subjects they are studying. Last, but not least, I'd like to see a decrease in the state income tax.

Jeff Rein, New Mexico Public Defenders, Capital Crimes Unit

What a dynamic, powerful time to be alive. 1998 defines the mistake of placing the responsibility for our future with someone else. The opportunity to make a difference, whether your circumstances are mighty or desperate, is equally available. 1999 presents an occasion to find the heroes and leaders within us.

Barb Grothus, artist

Renew compassion; share bounty; engender respect for differences; seek honor through personal integrity; promote equal education and disperse the burden of poverty through mixed-income housing citywide; teach creative problem-solving skills through arts education; care for animals and the environment. Most important: love and nurture every child.

Gordon Church, public art program manager, city of Albuquerque

It's 1999, and 'Burque the big town is whirling into a big city centered on the Big-I and interstates that beg to be real mega-main streets; handsome, functional, distinctive! And with four fine gateways on them for 2006, the civic tricentennial, can we do it? Can a publicly owned building for the arts be dreamed?

Tom Tinnin, director, New Mexico State Fair

I was taught that the word vision was a dream, with a plan. Albuquerque is a good city but can and should be a great city. This greatness can be achieved but only if our civic and business groups set aside their personal agendas and come together with one vision and a plan. This plan has to be inclusive and sensitive to the needs of all of our citizens.

Rebecca Rose, grant writer, New Mexico Symphony Orchestra

The arts are both my vocation and my avocation in this community. Over the years I've seen increased professionalism in many performing groups, while others have folded. For the coming year, I would love to see a professional theater or repertory company start to thrive and I would love to see a suitable, medium-sized venue built for performing arts.

Jane Butel, businesswoman, cookbook author

I would very much like to see the redevelopment of Downtown continue, even in fast forward if possible. I am very happy that several of Albuquerque's civic-minded citizens have created the new plans that are under way. Coupled with this redevelopment, I feel that a positive, sensitive and workable program must be implemented for our homeless who frequent the Downtown streets. These two programs will definitely make Albuquerque much more interesting and valuable to visitors and convention attendees.

Judith Phillips, businesswoman, landscape designer specializing in native plants

The growing use of xeric plants in Albuquerque's metro-area landscapes as a result of the city's efforts to conserve water are wonderful, but there are too many sterile rockscapes cropping up around town. Plants: smaller trees, lower water-use shrubs, grasses and flowers provide cooling shade and reduce glare. Let's keep our city green!

Monsignor Joaquin Bazan, priest at St. Anne's Catholic Church

Dreams and hopes for the South Valley are: That all our youngsters receive a quality education; that the new sheriff command center scheduled to open on Isleta Boulevard on or around July 26, 1999, does in fact open; and that our Rio Grande High School Ravens win another state title in 1999.

Pat Graff, teacher, La Cueva High School

Educating our children in New Mexico is not a process politicized and maligned by politicians and talking heads with hidden agendas. Instead, it is a complete community endeavor toward excellence and opportunity for all our children. Public education, based on high standards, is fully supported, both philosophically and financially. Strong, self-supporting private schools complement the system.

Meredith McEuen, 13, student

I would like to see the schools in better shape and wish children would get a better education about drugs and what they can do to you. I'd like it if there was a drive-in movie theater again. It would be nice if more people had a place to live. These are the things I'd like to see happen in 1999.

Judith Chazin-Bennahum, professor of theater and dance, University of New Mexico

I'd like to imagine that in a peaceful city, all of the young and old people would have an opportunity to study dance in different forms and styles and that they would also discover the feeling and wonder of self-expression in movement, and that, furthermore, they would experience dance by seeing it performed and reading about it.

Enid Howarth, University of New Mexico, general honors instructor/counselor

The most ingenious and creative military personnel and the military budget (~\$380 billion) are redeployed to wage war on suffering. Military resources are commandeered to pay for and provide first-rate universal health care, excellent and imaginative schooling for all, homes for the homeless, food for the hungry, care for the aged, the mentally ill, the disabled, the needy, the children. Why not?

Greg Mello, executive director of **Los Alamos Study Group**

Children as top priority will give the best economic growth; provide a vastly better educational system, with much higher standards and costs. Help for the poor is needed now; our social problems must be solved from the bottom up. We need full-time, paid legislators to be a real state.

Anne Kass, District Court judge

I wish our whole community would make self-awareness a top priority. Many of us are experts when it comes to recognizing what others do that causes trouble and conflict but blind to our own contributions to the discord. We need to stop fixing the blame, before we can start fixing the problems.

Michelle Giger, president and CEO, Center for Civic Values

My hope is that in 1999 we will make education for all of our young people a top priority -- that we will encourage and foster in them a desire to gain the knowledge, skills and vision they will need to lead us in the new millennium.

Mary Sullivan, principal, Freedom High School

My vision for education in Albuquerque is that in 1999 everyone who is part of this community will see education as their highest priority. When educators, parents, business and community leaders all work together, we will make good schools into great schools.

Virginia Sears, senior citizen volunteer

My hope for 1999 is for able-bodied seniors to concentrate their ideas on how they can contribute to the concerns in the future for our young and for future leaders and citizens in our state. Seniors have a lifetime of experience. Many already volunteer. Let's make 1999 when we vow to give back to our community unselfishly for the support we have received in our growing years. For example: the schools and teachers need us for after-school programs.

Sam Hitt, president, Forest Guardians

I want a federal commitment to resolve conflicts over wildlife conservation in Northern New Mexico and southern Colorado. The new State of the San Juan-Sangre de Cristo Bioregion report by the environmental group Forest Guardians is a first step. Funding is now needed for a scientific assessment to protect one of the wildest regions of North America.

Stanley Bregman, Albuquerque resident

Albuquerque is on the verge of becoming a first-class sports city. The Albuquerque Sports Stadium will be improved. The Dukes' games will be even more enjoyable, and major-league teams will be able to play spring training exhibition games in the stadium. A major golf tournament will be held in Albuquerque, and plans for a new arena will begin.

Diane Denish,

businesswoman

My vision for 1999 is for a growing number of women to provide and finally be recognized and welcomed to leadership in business, politics, planning, education, family issues, government, health care, law, technology and the media as we prepare for the Century of the Woman in 2000!

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Secret blasts held at LANL, critics say

1/14/87

By BARBARA FERRY
The New Mexican

An anti-nuclear activist group claims Los Alamos National Laboratory is conducting secret plutonium explosions at LANL.

The Los Alamos Study Group of Santa Fe is raising questions about classified "subcritical" explosions that the group's director, Greg Mello, alleges have started up at LANL.

A Department of Energy spokesman in Albuquerque said he could not comment specifically on the experiments because they are classified. But DOE spokesman Al Stotts said there are ongoing — not new — experiments at the lab that "use a variety of materials and high explosives to help understand the behavior of materials."

The activity "doesn't represent a safety hazard for employees, the public or the environment," Stotts said.

Critics have said subcritical tests violate the spirit of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, which is intended to stop new designs of nuclear weapons. Department of Energy officials say subcritical tests are needed to ensure the safety and reliability of the nuclear weapons stockpile.

Subcritical nuclear tests are used to test nuclear weapons components but stop short of actual nuclear explosions. They have been conducted at the Nevada Test Site in an underground tunnel, most recently in September with the "Cimarron" test of a plutonium pit designed at LANL. Plutonium pits are the cores of nuclear weapons.

But Mello believes subcritical explosions are being performed at LANL — under the code name "Appaloosa" — as well as in

LANL

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Nevada.

The LANL experiments, Mello said, involve detonating plutonium in a steel container.

Plutonium is a radioactive metal that when compressed by explosives sets off a nuclear chain reaction.

"Blowing up plutonium is an intrinsically dangerous activity," Mello said.

Mello bases his claim that the lab has begun detonating plutonium on documents he received from the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, a five-member advisory panel that conducts

inspections of LANL and other defense sites, and reports to the Department of Energy.

In a November letter to Assistant Secretary of Energy for Defense Programs Vic Reis the safety board raised concerns about a top-secret project that was scheduled to start at the lab.

Safety board chairman John Conway wrote that he was concerned "that because of inadequate planning, there may not be sufficient time or talent for effective reviews of safety prior to commencement of these start-up activities."

Conway asked for a full report on the project. Reis' response to

Conway was classified but an unclassified cover letter refers to "confinement vessel integrity," and assures the board that the vessels are safe.

Mello interprets this to mean that the secret project questioned by the safety board refers to containment explosions.

LA Study Group raises safety questions about new plutonium tests

1/14/79
By The Associated Press

Los Alamos National Laboratory scientists want to explode plutonium inside a specially designed containment vessel — reviving speculation they're building and testing full-scale mockups of atomic weapons.

Details of the research are top-secret, and test dates have not been set.

The tests would never qualify as a true nuclear blast, but arms control advocates worry that the experiments still could be valuable for refining nuclear weapons and thus would violate the intended spirit of a global ban on nuclear weapons testing.

"The only reason to do this is to create an exact copy of (the first stage of a nuclear weapon). Anybody who can do this doesn't need to worry much about the Comprehensive Test Ban," said Greg Mello, head of the Los Alamos Study Group, a Santa Fe-based environmental organization.

Lab officials and representatives of the U.S. Department of Energy said Wednesday the tests aren't aimed at creating new nuclear weapons, but rather are meant to ensure existing ones keep working as they age or as parts are replaced.

They said the experiments are consistent with the treaty and are not

DOE says the tests are safe and necessary to stockpile maintenance

meant as a way to investigate new weapons designs.

The explosions would mark the revival of lab work from about a decade ago with plutonium-242, a heavier isotope than the plutonium-239 used in nuclear weapons.

The heavier form behaves almost identically to weapons plutonium, except it's less radioactive and it takes several times more plutonium-242 to achieve a nuclear fission explosion. Those factors make it an ideal stand-in for weapons plutonium explosive tests.

"It doesn't represent a safety problem for workers or the public," said Al Stotts, a DOE spokesman in Albuquerque.

Mello argues weapons scientists don't need any more familiarity with plutonium.

"Somehow the data from these cutting-edge experiments will not be used to improve the design capabilities?" he said. "That's hard to believe. LANL is working to make the test ban obsolete, at least for us (the United States)."

Scientists intend to do the experiments inside a massive X-ray machine, probably Los Alamos'

Dual Axis Radiographic Hydrotest facility. The first of that machine's two X-ray beams is to start operating this summer.

Such machines let researchers film the first billionths of a second as high explosives crush the heart of a weapon. Weapons designers can use the films to double-check computer

simulations that take the place of banned actual nuclear tests.

The planned series of tests was largely secret until questions raised last month by the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board. The board, which referred to the experiments only as "new classified activity," expressed concern that tests might be

done without a full safety review.

"Let me assure you that this is not the case," Vic Reis, DOE assistant secretary for defense programs, told the board in a letter Dec. 17.

Mello's organization obtained the letter, which suggests lab scientists want to detonate greater amounts of chemical high explosives than previ-

ously used in the containment vessel, which has walls 2 inches thick.

Safety board analysts were concerned they might not have time to make sure the vessels can lock in the exploding plutonium, a radioactive metal that can cause lung cancer if inhaled.

A senior DOE official promised Wednesday that tests could not be done until the safety board is satisfied the vessels would hold.

Lab Critics: Tests Will Mock Nuke Blasts

1/14/99
BY IAN HOFFMAN
Journal Staff Writer

In a top-secret experiment, nuclear-weapons scientists in Los Alamos want to explode an exotic kind of plutonium inside a containment vessel of naval warship steel.

Details of the research remain classified. Yet by using such a rare form of plutonium, scientists have revived speculation that they are building and detonating full-scale mockups of the A-bombs inside modern thermonuclear weapons.

The test explosions never would shatter such a multitude of atoms as to qualify as a true nuclear blast. But arms-control advocates worry the experiments still could be valuable for refining

nuclear weapons and so could violate the intended spirit of a global ban on nuclear testing.

"The only reason to do this is to create an exact copy of (the first stage of a nuclear weapon)," said Greg Mello, head of the Los Alamos Study Group, a Santa Fe disarmament group. "Anybody who can do this doesn't need to worry much about the Comprehensive Test Ban."

Officials at Los Alamos National Laboratory and the U.S. Department of Energy said Wednesday that the tests are not aimed at creating new nuclear weapons, but ensuring that existing weapons will keep working as they age or their parts are replaced.

"These experiments are fully consistent with the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. We are not planning these experiments to investigate new

designs," said a DOE official familiar with the lab's plans. "These experiments are useful for understanding the physical and chemical nature of plutonium."

Dates for the tests have not been set. Scientists will perform the explosions inside a massive x-ray machine, most likely the Dual-Axis Radiographic Hydrotest facility. The first of DARHT's two x-ray beams is scheduled to start operating this summer.

These machines let scientists film the first billionths of a second as a weapon's heart is crushed by high explosives. Weapons designers can use those "movies" to double-check the computer codes and simulations that are taking the place of

See **LAB CRITICS** on **PAGE 3**

LANL Delays Repairs To Fire-Protection Unit

System Serves Lab's Plutonium Facility

Journal Staff Report

Repairs to a leak-prone fire-suppression system at Los Alamos National Laboratory's most sensitive technical area have been delayed, but lab officials say the system can still put out fires.

The delay comes as LANL's Technical Area 55 gears up to make plutonium fission triggers, called pits, for nuclear warheads and bombs.

Besides being toxic, shavings of plutonium metal can spontaneously ignite in the presence of air. Plutonium fires and inadequate fire safety contributed to the closure of the now-defunct Rocky Flats site outside Denver, the nation's last factory for plutonium pits.

That work is being shifted to

LANL's top-secret Technical Area 55, home to the lab's plutonium facility.

Underground steel water mains that supply the TA-55 fire system were improperly installed in the 1970s and are corroding, with sporadic leaks. Lab workers watch the system pressure to detect the leaks and replace the most corroded pipes. The sprinkler systems inside buildings are not affected by the problem.

Wholesale replacement of the pipes and installation of new seismic braces for the system's water tanks will cost an estimated \$8 million. But the engineers hired to design the new fire-suppression system were unable to verify the validity of their new design and were fired by the lab last fall, said Deidra Yearwood, a nuclear engineer in charge of facility manage-

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LANL Delays Repairs to Fire-Protection Unit

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ment at TA-55.

"It's on hold now, of course. There's no design work going on," Yearwood said.

The lab is seeking a new engineering contractor to redo the design, pushing the deadline for operation of the new system to the summer of 2000. Yearwood said she does not worry about the delay partly because the fire system has a back-up pump and is fed by two independent tanks, each capable of supplying the 150,000 gallons

deemed necessary to extinguish a fire.

"All I need to fight a ... fire is one tank and one pump," she said.

"We have a very robust fire-protection system here at TA-55," Yearwood said. "We feel this delay is acceptable. We don't feel it presents any new risks to the facility or the public."

Analysts at the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board agreed that single leaks in the system may not be a major safety problem.

"However, should several leaks occur at once, it might be difficult

to provide adequate water flow for the entire system," they noted in a recent report.

Lab critics say the government and the lab have known about the corroding pipes for years yet placed a higher priority on securing weapons work than on fire safety.

"It's frankly amazing they haven't fixed this yet," said Greg Mello, head of the Los Alamos Study Group, a nuclear-disarmament organization in Santa Fe. "There's many millions being spent on top-secret tests (of weapons compo-

nents), but there doesn't seem to be any interest in providing fail-safe fire protection for the plutonium facility."

Mello's group worries about earthquakes.

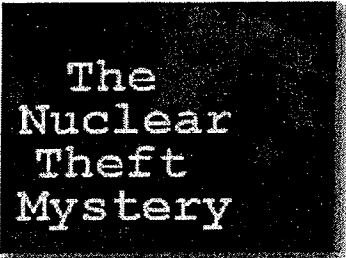
The corroded pipes are vulnerable to breakage in the event of an earthquake, he said. "To me, that's a realistic scenario."

Lab geologists say sufficiently large earthquakes probably occur in the Los Alamos area no more than once every 2,000 years or so.

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Wen Ho Lee: a scapegoat?

Los Alamos, China long had ties;
 Congress said to turn a blind eye

March 9, 1999: 8:51 p.m. ET

China denies spy link to fired U.S. scientist - March 9, 1999
DOE admits nuclear theft - March 8, 1999
Los Alamos National Laboratory

LOS ALAMOS, N.M. (CNNfn) - The investigation of security leaks from the nation's research lab here has until recently focused on one individual - Wen Ho Lee.

As a scandal brews about security leaks, the Taiwan-born scientist was fired Monday from the Los Alamos National Laboratory because he did not comply with investigators looking into the alleged leaks.

Documents obtained by CNNfn show a tight relationship between Los Alamos officials and the Chinese government.

In 1994, Dr. Siegfried Hecker, then director of Los Alamos, led a delegation of officials to Beijing for meetings designed to boost science and technology exchanges and cooperation.

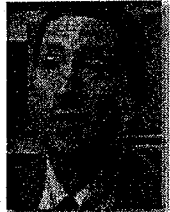
The Chinese government even offered to pay the group's expenses -- an offer lab officials say was declined.

Still, documents show Los Alamos officials took 11 trips to China in 1995 and 1996.

Several of the visits took place during the tenure of Federico Pena as energy secretary. Pena assured Congress there were no ongoing discussions about nuclear weapons matters.

"Congress has washed its hands of the nuclear program -- Congress's attention is elsewhere," said Greg Mello of the Los Alamos Study Group.

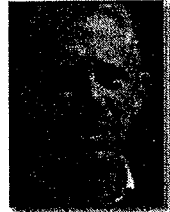
"And with the revolving door between Los Alamos, the DOE, the other contractors, there is a system of thought that is incapable of policing



Greg Mello



Fred Farnsworth



Chris Mechels

itself," he added.

The exchanges between Los Alamos officials and governments deemed sensitive went both ways -- 2,700 overseas nationals visited Los Alamos from 1994 to 1996, with only about 5 percent receiving background checks.

"It's a disturbing thing that we have got so much technology here, and they allowed so many people to see -- and a result we have this thing," said retired Los Alamos employee Fred Farnsworth. "It's put the whole country in jeopardy."

Meanwhile, the man at the center of the controversy, fired Los Alamos scientist Wen Ho Lee, remained out of sight.

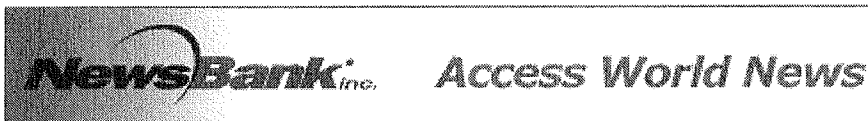
Chris Mechels, of Citizens for LANAL Employee Rights, who represents disgruntled Los Alamos workers, said he doesn't believe the charges against Lee.

Mechels said he's suspicious no criminal charges have been filed yet against Lee. Some believe Lee is little more than a scapegoat for leaks out of Los Alamos.

"My understanding, from friends who are closer to the situation, is that there were pressures from headquarters -- the Department of Energy -- for termination and that Los Alamos complied with those pressures for termination and came up with what they considered a suitable story to support termination," Mechels said. ▀

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Paper: Santa Fe New Mexican, The (NM)

Title: LANL chief says scientists can't work in vacuum

Date: March 11, 1999

Need for secrecy must be balanced with the need to learn from international experts, lab director says

Los Alamos National Laboratory cannot return to the Manhattan Project days of total secrecy despite the possibility that a computer scientist gave nuclear secrets to China, lab director John Browne said in a telephone interview Wednesday.

"We cannot put the fence back up and still be a vital national lab," Browne said. "We cannot have our people totally isolated scientifically."

Browne said it was important for LANL researchers to have contacts in the international scientific community, sometimes even with people from countries once considered enemies of the United States.

But he added, "Security has to take priority. We need to know who is coming to the lab and for what purpose."

The lab and the Department of Energy are under fire, accused of lax security that might have led to a leak of nuclear weapons design information in the 1980s.

Congressional Republicans are questioning the weapons lab's foreign-visitor program and asking why computer scientist Wen Ho Lee, the lead suspect in an FBI espionage investigation, was allowed to keep his job and his security clearance for more than three years after the investigation began.

Lee, 59, a U.S. citizen who was born in Taiwan, was fired from LANL on Monday. He has not been charged with any crime.

The New York Times reported that Lee completed his undergraduate studies in Taiwan, emigrating to the United States in the 1960s and earning a master's degree and doctorate from Texas A&M University. He worked at LANL for nearly 20 years along with his wife, Sylvia, a former secretary for the lab.

Observers say the lab faces a paradoxical task: to balance security and scientific concerns in an era when the United States no longer faces off against a Cold-War enemy and when nuclear weapons are tested not by underground explosions but by state-of-the-art supercomputer simulations.

Browne hinted at the difficulty of achieving both goals, saying, "I think the basic tenets of security were a little more clear cut during the Cold War."

Greg Mello, a persistent critic of the lab, echoed those sentiments.

"I think Congress has not clarified the lab's mission," said Mello, who directs the **Los Alamos Study Group**, a lab watchdog group in Santa Fe. "They want them to be scientists, but they tell them to keep information secret. I don't think those two goals are necessarily compatible."

Browne said that when he became lab director in 1997 he was told that an employee was under FBI surveillance. Browne said he was also told by lab internal-security officials about Lee's alleged violations of lab-security policies. Browne declined to elaborate on the alleged security breaches.

But Browne said it was not until last weekend that "all the pieces came together," and he and Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson independently concluded that Lee should be fired.

Despite the lack of resolution to the FBI investigation, Browne said Lee was fired for "defensible reasons."

"He lost his job for security violations, not for espionage," Browne said.

The New York Times published a front-page article Saturday in which officials criticized the Clinton administration for responding too slowly to the alleged leak after it came to light in 1996.

Browne said he does not know Lee either as a lab employee or as a neighbor in the small community of White Rock, where both men live.

He said that since becoming director he has sought to beef up security by providing training for employees who might run into agents of foreign countries while attending conferences abroad. Browne said he also stepped up the lab's counterintelligence program, which has been in place since 1987.

Between 1988 and 1993, the lab did checks on foreign visitors to determine whether U.S. intelligence agencies identified any of them as agents of a foreign government. Browne said only one out of 2,000 visitors was rejected by the checks. According to a report to Congress, those checks were virtually halted after 1993. However, recently Richardson required the lab to reinstate background checks.

While Congressional leaders railed the lab in Washington, residents of White Rock appeared to be rallying in support of their neighbor, Lee.

In a town that owes its existence to the lab, distrust of the government and the Department of Energy in particular seemed to be a leading reason for suspicion that Lee was a scapegoat.

Two residents who requested anonymity expressed disbelief that Lee could have failed a lie-detector test, as DOE officials have stated.

Hard feelings between area residents, even those who work at LANL, have arisen in recent years. Cuts in support payments to the community began during the 1960s to wean the community away from being a government-owned town.

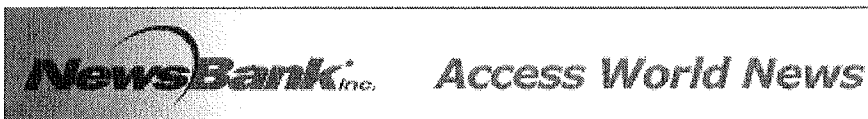
Resentment also grew during the tenure of Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary, appointed during President Clinton's first term. Some accused O'Leary of betraying the nation's defense-laboratory workers when she criticized as immoral human radiation studies performed by DOE scientists in the 1940s.

Employee trust of the Department of Energy had been shattered, one lab scientist angrily told O'Leary at a forum as many others in the room applauded.

Writer Kathleene Parker of The New Mexican contributed to this report.

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Author: By BARBARA FERRY/The New Mexican
Section: Main
Page: A-1
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Paper: Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (PA)
Title: GLOBAL ASPECT TO SCIENCE PUTS SECURITY AT RISK
Date: March 12, 1999

As science becomes an increasingly collaborative international enterprise, a clash has intensified between the creative impulse to share information and the national security need to keep secrets, including the advanced designs of nuclear weapons.

Science has rapidly evolved from a small men's club into a mix of men and women from every continent, and some of them say that the balancing act has grown extraordinarily difficult.

This collision, scientists say, lies at the heart of the investigation into possible espionage at the Los Alamos National Laboratory. Government officials say they believe China stole nuclear weapons secrets from the lab in the mid-1980s and used the information to make miniature warheads.

When more than half of the graduate students in engineering programs at top American universities are foreign born, when research teams are commonly composed of scientists from half a dozen countries, and when important findings are presented at meetings held all over the world, the idea that "you can keep one aspect of your work secret and another aspect open is simply illusory," said Greg Mello, who studied engineering at Harvey Mudd College in Claremont, Calif., under professors coming from as far as Turkey and China.

Last year, 277 Chinese, 364 Russians and 115 Indian nationals visited or worked at Los Alamos, according to the lab's director, Dr. John Browne. Of these, 88 were allowed access to secure areas.

"Science is not a closed box," said Mello, who is now director of the **Los Alamos Study Group**, a watchdog organization that follows a range of nuclear issues. "You can't draw a line down the middle of a person's head."

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Many intelligence officials say the conflict between sharing information and keeping secrets has too often been resolved at the expense of national security. Robert Gates, director of the CIA from 1991 to 1993, said in an interview: "We were appalled at the number of Soviets they allowed to tour the labs. In the world of science, there are no borders. It makes people naive about the potential for exploitation."

U.S. law-enforcement officials say that security at the labs has been lax for years and they are dismissive of arguments from scientists who have resisted increased counter-intelligence programs in favor of expanded international scientific exchanges.

But scientists value those exchanges. At Los Alamos, for example, which calls itself a quasi-academic institution, scientists are using supercomputers to model how new weapons components would behave if incorporated into real bombs. The findings are top secret.

At the same time, these weapons designers are sharing their solutions of complex computer problems with Los Alamos colleagues who are solving similarly complex problems in weather prediction or brain function. Those findings, which are not classified, are in turn shared with scientific colleagues all over the world.

Since the end of the Cold War, scientists from America, Russia, China and other nations have been attending an increasing number of international meetings to share information, said Dr. Harold Agnew who directed Los Alamos in the 1970s and is now retired in Solana Beach, Calif.

Someone might give an unclassified account of how detonators are used in physics, he said, and just hearing the talk could give another scientist clues for solving weapons problems. "This may be a form of spying that happens all the time," he said.

But Browne, a career Los Alamos scientist who took over as director in October 1997, said that it was not so difficult to separate the worlds of secret and open information. Some ideas are "born classified," he said. These insights play such an important role in weapons design that everyone recognizes the need for secrecy.

"They tend to involve the integration of mathematical and physical principles and engineering details into a code that simulates aspects of nuclear weapon performance."

Other ideas can be shared safely with scientists working on other complex problems, Browne said. "Ideas go in both directions," he said. "We might find someone working on a nonlinear system and realize it has an application in weapons as well."

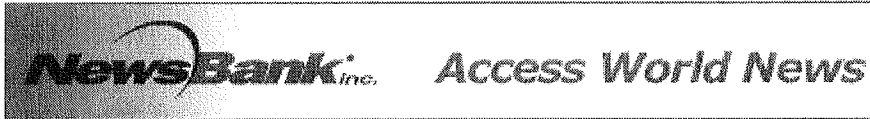
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Author: SANDRA BLAKESLEE, THE NEW YORK TIMES

Section: NATIONAL

Page: A-1

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Paper: Watertown Daily Times (NY)

Title: BALANCING SECURITY, SCIENCE HAS BECOME MORE DIFFICULT

Date: March 12, 1999

As science becomes an increasingly collaborative international enterprise, a clash has intensified between the creative impulse to share information and the national security need to keep secrets, including the advanced designs of nuclear weapons.

Science has rapidly evolved from a small men's club into a mix of men and women from every continent, and some of them say that the balancing act has grown extraordinarily difficult.

This collision, scientists say, lies at the heart of the investigation into possible espionage at the Los Alamos National Laboratory. Government officials say they believe China stole nuclear weapons secrets from the lab in the mid-1980s and used the information to make miniature warheads.

When more than half of the graduate students in engineering programs at top American universities are foreign-born, when research teams are commonly composed of scientists from half a dozen countries, and when important findings are presented at meetings held all over the world, the idea that "you can keep one aspect of your work secret and another aspect open is simply illusory," said Greg Mello, who studied engineering at Harvey Mudd College in Claremont, Calif., under professors coming from as far as Turkey and China.

Last year, 277 Chinese, 364 Russians and 115 Indian nationals visited or worked at Los Alamos, according to the lab's director, Dr. John Browne. Of these, 88 were allowed access to secure areas.

"Science is not a closed box," said Mello, who is now director of the **Los Alamos Study Group**, a watchdog organization that follows nuclear issues. "You can't draw a line down the middle of a person's head."

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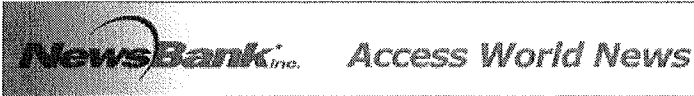
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Author: New York Times

Section: National News

Page: 1

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Paper: Commercial Appeal, The (Memphis, TN)
Title: SCIENTIFIC SHARING EXPOSES SECRETS
Date: March 13, 1999

As science becomes an increasingly collaborative international enterprise, a clash has intensified between the creative impulse to share information and the national security need to keep secrets, including the designs of nuclear weapons.

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U.S. law-enforcement officials say that security at the labs has been lax for years and they are dismissive of arguments from scientists who have resisted increased counter-intelligence programs in favor of expanded international scientific exchanges.

But scientists value those exchanges. At Los Alamos, for example, which calls itself a quasi-academic institution, scientists are using supercomputers to model how new weapons components would behave if incorporated into real bombs. The findings are top secret.

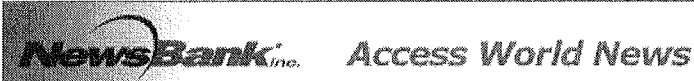
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Author: Sandra Blakeslee The New York Times News Service
Section: News
Page: A5
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Paper: Santa Fe New Mexican, The (NM)
Title: LANL beefs up computer security
Date: March 13, 1999

Computer engineers at Los Alamos National Laboratory are working around the clock this weekend to install a new security system designed to keep hackers from accessing unclassified information.

The new system called a "firewall" in computer lingo will be installed by Monday, said lab spokesman Steve Sandoval.

The lab insists the firewall is intended to stymie mischievous hackers and not to keep the public from accessing unclassified information about goings-on at LANL.

"There should be no discernible change to the public," Sandoval said. Sandoval said that the types of information that will go behind the wall are drafts of reports, unclassified controlled nuclear information, proprietary information and trade secrets.

None of the information is now public, Sandoval said.

But lab critics say they are concerned the change may be part of a trend away from openness at the Department of Energy and its weapons labs.

"It's too soon to tell exactly what the effects of this change will be," said Andy Lichterman, an analyst with the **Los Alamos Study Group**. "But in general the days when DOE appeared to be moving towards more openness appear to be over."

Lichterman said it may be hard for an outsider to tell, even if the change does affect access. "It's very difficult to attribute," he said.

Lab officials say the firewall was created to protect the lab against "cyber attacks."

"Putting a firewall up around a computer network is like putting a moat around a medieval castle," said Gina Fisk of Los Alamos' Network Engineering Group. "It's another layer of protection against cyber attack."

Phil Wood, of the same department, said he observes "several hackers trying to break into our network each week."

LANL Director John Browne called for the firewall in October, stating in a memo to employees that "threats to laboratory unclassified information resources from the Internet have been increasingly dramatically."

"Several unclassified computer systems have been compromised," Browne wrote.

The changes means that unclassified information will now be divided into two categories: the blue, "protected" network will only be accessible to those with the right password, while the green, "open" network generally will be accessible to Internet users.

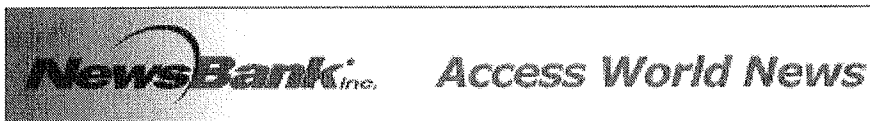
Classified data at the lab resides in a separate network and won't be affected by the change.

Lichterman said that in the past several years the types of information from DOE headquarters and weapons labs available on the Web has tended to appear "more like general public-relations presentations."

A review of the lab's general Web page seemed to illustrate that point. During a week when the world's attention descended on Los Alamos over an employee's alleged passing of secret nuclear weapons designs to China, LANL's Web page was silent on the topic. Instead, the Web page offered news items about an on-line math contest and the naming of an employee to the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences.

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Author: BARBARA FERRY
Section: Local
Page: B-1
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Paper: Albuquerque Tribune, The (NM)
Title: Los Alamos lab hopes to thwart hackers
Date: March 15, 1999

IN BRIEF

LOS ALAMOS Los Alamos National Laboratory is trying to keep hackers out of its unclassified computers.

Computer engineers are installing a new security system called a firewall in computer lingo that will deny access to such information as drafts of reports, unclassified but controlled nuclear information, proprietary information and trade secrets, said lab spokesman Steve Sandoval. None of the information is now public, he said. The move does not appear to be related to recent spy allegations involving a lab employee. Lab critics worry the change may be part of a trend away from openness at the Department of Energy and its weapons labs.

"It's too soon to tell exactly what the effects of this change will be," said Andy Lichterman, an analyst with the **Los Alamos Study Group**, a lab watchdog organization. "But in general the days when DOE appeared to be moving towards more openness appear to be over."

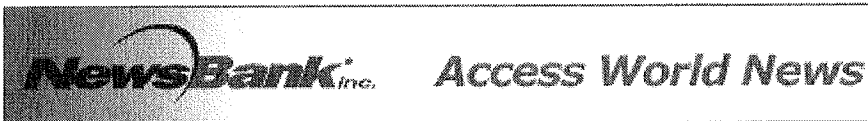
Under the system, unclassified information will be divided into two categories: a blue, "protected" network accessible to those with the right password, and a green, "open" network accessible to Internet users.

Lab officials say the firewall was created to protect against "cyber attacks."

Classified data are on a separate network and won't be affected by the change.

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Author: Staff and wire reports
Section: Local News
Page: A3
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Paper: Santa Fe New Mexican, The (NM)
Title: Agency: Replace LANL building
Date: March 16, 1999

The Department of Energy should replace a massive Cold War-era nuclear weapons research building at Los Alamos National Laboratory because of earthquake threats and other safety problems, the head of a federal oversight agency believes.

"I would be happier if they built a new building," said John Conway, chairman of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board. The board oversees health and safety at LANL and other nuclear weapons facilities.

Conway said his agency has not made a formal recommendation to Energy Secretary Bill Richardson to replace the 550,000-square-foot Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Building.

But Conway said, "Given that a lot of taxpayer money has to be used for upgrades, I think prudence would dictate a new building. If I had my druthers, that would happen."

Conway said he is not worried about safety to the public in the short term. "If we felt it couldn't be operated safely," he said, "we would have closed it down."

The future of the building where scientists perform experiments with plutonium and other radioactive materials and other work crucial to DOE's stockpile stewardship plan for maintaining nuclear weapons has been in doubt since evidence surfaced that an earthquake fault runs underneath it.

The Department of Energy recently issued a report to the safety board on its plan for managing risks at the building, which is in the lab's core technical area, where about half of lab's 10,000 employees and contractors work.

DOE also is analyzing whether to scrap the CMR building and start over.

Geologists who have studied the faults estimate that a major California-style quake is likely to occur at the site only once every 10,000 to 100,000 years. But a smaller quake, resulting in the building shaking and "structural failure," is considered a once every 500 year event, according to the report.

DOE has so far spent \$50 million in renovations to the building, including improving fire equipment and laying out evacuation routes, lab spokesman Jim Danneskiold said. But plans don't call for structural changes to bring the building up to modern seismic standards.

"It's questionable whether it's logical to be spending money buttressing a 45-year-old building against an earthquake," Danneskiold said.

Part of DOE's strategy to limit risk is to reduce the level of plutonium at the site so that in the event of an earthquake or fire, the radiation dose to the public would be within what DOE considers acceptable levels, according to the report.

The building is authorized to have on site 20.2 kilograms (about 44 pounds) of plutonium "at risk" meaning not stored in an earthquake-proof nuclear materials vault.

Danneskiold said that the actual quantity of plutonium at the CMR building is significantly less, but that the exact amount is classified.

Danneskiold said that since early drafts of seismic studies became available, the lab has reduced the amount of plutonium at the building. The lab also plans to store plutonium in "Trupac" containers similar to those DOE has designed to transport radioactive trash to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant near Carlsbad.

Greg Mello, director of **Los Alamos Study Group**, a lab watchdog group in Santa Fe, said he is concerned about the amount of plutonium nevertheless. He said he was told by lab officials in 1997 that the building was authorized to have much less than 20.2 kilograms.

"They said it was in the low single digits," Mello said. "They've always told us that (researchers) do analytical chemistry in the CMR building and that they don't use a lot of plutonium there."

Mello charged that DOE "seriously lowballed" the risks of plutonium escaping during an accident last spring during a federal court challenge his group mounted against the stockpile stewardship program. The group's lawsuit led to further seismic studies of the area surrounding the building.

He said that based on DOE's own numbers, 178 grams of respirable plutonium could be lost in an a catastrophic accident.

"That's 250 times more than the maximum that was contemplated under stockpile stewardship," Mello said.

The lab also has removed combustible materials from the site to reduce the chance of fire, Danneskiold said.

The report says that "DOE is sensitive to the perception that might exist regarding the long-term operation of a nuclear facility, such a CMR, over a fault such as that found at this site."

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Author: BARBARA FERRY

Section: Local

Page: B-1

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Paper: Santa Fe New Mexican, The (NM)
Title: Lab's computer security snags Web site
Date: March 18, 1999

Those seeking to log on to Los Alamos National Laboratory's Web page in the past few days may have found themselves reading some frustrating and cryptic computer messages: "missing Web page," the computer might say, or more alarmingly, "the certificate issuer for this site is untrusted or unknown."

The glitches are due to a new computer security system that was installed last weekend, lab officials say. The system places much of the lab's unclassified information behind a protective so-called "firewall" to ward off hackers bent on "cyberattack."

The new system was installed over the weekend and was supposed to be ready Monday. But lab spokesman Steve Sandoval said moving the files has taken longer than expected.

Sandoval, who works in the lab's public affairs office, said he too has had problems logging on.

"I haven't been able to get in on my internal browser, so I can imagine what people from the outside are going through," Sandoval said.

Sandoval said the problems are temporary and that by Wednesday afternoon many outside users were reporting they were able to get into the system.

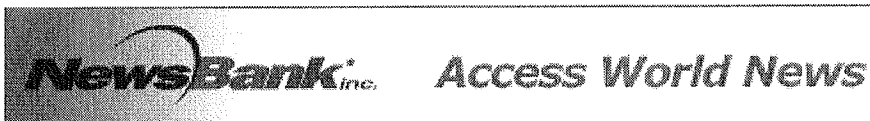
The new system divides unclassified information into two networks, those that are accessible to the public and those that require a pass code. Sandoval said that even before the change, information placed in the closed network wasn't accessible to the general public only to hackers who managed to break in.

Sandoval said once the glitches are worked out, the public won't notice a difference in the amount of information they are able to access. **Greg Mello**, a lab critic, said he is reserving judgment but is worried the change is part of a trend towards less public access to information.

LANL's public Web page address www.lanl.gov remains the same.

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Author: BARBARA FERRY
Section: Local
Page: B-1
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Paper: Albuquerque Tribune, The (NM)
Title: DOE delegation reviewing security at Los Alamos lab
Date: March 19, 1999

A high-level Department of Energy delegation today began a security review at Los Alamos National Laboratory amid congressional complaints that security is lax at DOE's three nuclear-weapons laboratories.

The delegation, including Deputy Secretary Ernie Moniz, has directed that top Los Alamos management attend a mandatory meeting with the group this afternoon in the lab's main secure auditorium, said John Gustafson, a lab spokesman.

Gustafson said other employees could attend the meeting as space allows. A press conference is scheduled at the end of the day.

Joining Moniz at the lab today are: Vic Reis, DOE assistant secretary for defense programs; Ed Curran, director of the DOE Office of Counterintelligence; Joe Mahaley, director of security affairs; and Robin Staffin, DOE senior policy adviser.

Told of the visit and meeting, lab critic Greg Mello laughed today, saying it is another example of "the administration's response . . . that taps the people to investigate who have created the problem."

Mello, a physicist, works for the **Los Alamos Study Group**, a Santa Fe-based lab watchdog critical of DOE's nuclear-weapon stockpile-stewardship program.

While the nuclear-weapons labs and DOE contend the program is essential to maintaining the nation's warhead arsenal, Mello and other critics contend it undermines national security.

"The proliferation importance of this program cannot be underestimated," he said, saying that it is structured to share information at the margins of classification with scientists from other countries who easily can infer classified information.

"They won't fix the problem," he said, "because they are the problem."

The on-site DOE security review comes less than two weeks after a lab employee was fired for security infractions. The firing came after allegations that China in the last decade obtained classified design information about the W-88 miniature warhead.

No charges have been filed against Wen Ho Lee. The W-88 warhead is a Los Alamos design that allows multiple nuclear warheads to be packaged within a missile cone for aiming at individual targets.

The revelations have created an uproar in Congress, where several Senate and House committees are investigating the spy claims and examining the ease with which foreign scientists have had access to the labs.

The delegation is expected to examine physical security at critical lab facilities and possibly review document controls before leaving for Washington about 7 p.m.

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Author: Lawrence Spohn TRIBUNE REPORTER
Page: A1
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Paper: Albuquerque Tribune, The (NM)
Title: Local FBI joins effort to beef up lab security
Date: March 20, 1999

LOS ALAMOS Top Department of Energy officials say the Albuquerque FBI office will help conduct counterintelligence at Los Alamos National Laboratory amid growing criticism of suspected Chinese pilfering of the lab's nuclear weapon information.

The announcement was made Friday at a news conference conducted at the lab by DOE Undersecretary Ernie Moniz.

Moniz headed a senior DOE delegation making an emergency, one-day review of the lab's security measures.

Ed Curran, DOE director of counterintelligence, said local FBI agents under the direction of Albuquerque Special Agent Dave Kitchen and including the Santa Fe office will conduct quarterly reviews of their counterintelligence efforts to compare notes with DOE agents at the lab.

"They will assist our people, and we will help them," said Curran, a 35-year FBI veteran, who was cited by Moniz as an example of DOE's long-term efforts to beef up security before the current crisis.

Moniz said Curran was hired in April 1998 and has taken a number of steps at the Forestall Building headquarters of DOE in Washington as well as at the nuclear weapons labs.

"We've had a very productive day," Moniz said, after the officials addressed hundreds of employees in the lab's main classified auditorium.

He said that during the meeting the DOE executives had praised lab employees for their continuing contribution to the nation's security but he reminded them that the key to protecting classified information remains "personal responsibility and accountability."

He denied his visit was intended to chastise the lab or its employees as DOE attempts to deal with the politically charged spy case in Congress.

He said the purpose of the trip was to have the ad-hoc team, personally selected by Department of Energy Secretary Bill Richardson, make an independent, virtually instant appraisal of the lab's security measures and report back to him in Washington next week.

He said the trip was the first the team will make to national laboratories that do nuclear weapon research, including:

- * Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque, which is the nation's nuclear engineering lab.
- * Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, east of San Francisco, which like Los Alamos is a theoretical and warhead design lab.
- * Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee and Pacific Northwest National Laboratory in Washington state, which assist the prime nuclear weapons labs.

"There is tremendous progress being made here," Moniz said, saying the team was "extremely impressed with the physical security in place" at Los Alamos.

He said they also reviewed measures to protect sensitive documents, as well as cyber-security efforts to control access to the lab's classified computers with so-called "firewalls" that separate classified and non-classified computer networks.

Moniz said, however, that DOE and the labs will continue to make improvements as problem areas are identified and that the collaborative FBI role in Los Alamos is an example of another layer of security.

Moniz and lab Director John Browne, meanwhile, declined to address the case of Wen Ho Lee, the Los Alamos scientist who was fired after news reports that government officials suspect China got design information about the W-88 warhead last decade. Lee has not been arrested nor charged with any crime.

Moniz noted there is a governmentwide review of the espionage allegations primarily to assess the damage and to determine how best to prevent future leaks of classified information from the lab.

He and Curran said Los Alamos and its scientists "will always be targets," not only because the lab is the nation's premier nuclear weapons research facility but because it does world-class, cutting-edge science valuable to other nations.

Joe Mahaley, DOE director of security affairs, confirmed that the department has a backlog of some 5,000 to 6,000 employee background checks or reviews of existing "Q" clearances, which provide access to classified information on a need-to-know basis.

He said the reviews are supposed to be done every five years, and that while the number may sound extreme, it is down from some 15,000 earlier this decade.

"It takes money to do these reviews," he said, noting DOE recently shifted \$15 million to fund the reviews. Mahaley said that nationally 110,000 people have "Q" clearances.

Moniz and Vic Reis, DOE assistant secretary for nuclear weapons defense programs, flatly rejected the allegation Friday by a lab critic that DOE has created its own security nightmare with its science-based stockpile stewardship and management program.

The program is pouring hundreds of millions of dollars into advance supercomputers and nuclear bomb simulators, which DOE and the labs say are necessary to ensure warheads are reliable and safe without actually testing them.

The facilities also have been promoted by DOE as advancing basic science.

Greg Mello, a physicist with the **Los Alamos Study Group**, a nuclear weapons watchdog group in Santa Fe, charged Friday that the stockpile research program is mixing civilian research with classified weapons research and is ripe for espionage.

Because the program also uses American universities for some of the research where many foreign students get advanced degrees and because the program supports foreign scientists as research collaborators, Mello contends stockpile stewardship is a prescription for the proliferation of nuclear secrets around the globe.

Moniz said "I reject that," and Reis insisted that Mello is wrong, that there is no crossover of classified information into civilian research supported by the stockpile stewardship program.

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Author: Lawrence Spohn TRIBUNE REPORTER

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Bingaman Seeks Funds For Design of Weapons Facility

4/15/1999

BY IAN HOFFMAN
Journal Staff Writer

Sen. Jeff Bingaman is pressing for design of the nation's first new plutonium- and weapons-research facility in more than 20 years.

Bingaman, D-N.M., is seeking \$5 million in year 2000 defense funds to design a replacement for Los Alamos National Laboratory's troubled Chemistry and Metallurgical Research building.

Nuclear-disarmament advocates

are likely to mount vigorous opposition. They argue a new weapons lab for Los Alamos is just as unnecessary now in the wake of the Cold War as in 1990, when Congress killed lab plans for a \$385 million Special Nuclear Materials Laboratory.

"It's like a horror movie: It keeps coming back," said Greg Mello, head of the Santa Fe-based Los Alamos Study Group. "There's nev-

See **BINGAMAN** on **PAGE 3**

Bingaman Seeks Funds for Design of Weapons Facility

from **PAGE 1**

er a stake through the heart. When will we wake from the 'Night of the Living Dead' ideas?"

So far, the lab's owners at the U.S. Department of Energy are undecided on seeking a new nuclear-weapons lab for Los Alamos and plan to study the issue for another year. Meanwhile, the DOE plans to continue spending \$125 million to keep the CMR, as the building is called, running through 2010.

Inside CMR, scientists and engineers work on nuclear-weapons parts, as well as perform tests for the lab's environmental and cleanup programs. At times, CMR has hosted high-level nuclear waste, tests on nerve gases and a variety of other defense projects.

"There are problems with that building," said Bingaman spokeswoman Kristen Ludecke. "It's not an emergency, but it's a question of whether it would be cost-effective to build a new facility."

With the \$5 million, engineers and architects could begin sketching out a rough size and design for the new lab, she said.

"This would not be a Taj Mahal but a scaled-down, streamlined facility that would meet the needs of the lab at a lower cost than they are met now," Ludecke said.

The 1950s-vintage CMR, once the largest building in New Mexico, is a massive holdover of the Cold War that has frustrated efforts to extend its working life. Besides outdated systems — electricity, fire and ventilation — CMR is more contaminated than lab managers once thought. Renovations in 1996 and 1997 ran at least \$15 million overbudget and, combined with unsafe building operations, caused lab managers to shut down work at CMR for months.

Last year, geologists found yet another problem: An earthquake fault lies under a third of the building.

Officials of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, an oversight

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Nuclear Materials Laboratory. He wrote a bill amendment requiring the DOE first to report on its need and supply of nuclear materials labs. The DOE never submitted its report, and a House-Senate conference committee killed funds for the Los Alamos project.

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By then, the Energy Department and Los Alamos had 100 people working on the project and already had spent \$32 million. Ludecke said Bingaman isn't necessarily committed to building the new lab but wants to "begin the conversation."

"It doesn't lock us into building a new structure," she said. "It shouldn't be taboo to talk about a new building. If the current structure is continuing to deteriorate and cost a great deal to repair, we should be able to examine whether a new building makes sense."

\$5 million requested for new LANL complex

4/15/1999

By BARBARA FERRY
The New Mexican

Researchers at the complex do chemical studies on plutonium, uranium and other radioactive materials.

Sen. Jeff Bingaman is seeking federal money to replace a problem-plagued research facility at Los Alamos National Laboratory that sits atop an earthquake fault.

Bingaman, D-New Mexico, has requested \$5 million to begin designing a replacement for the Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Building, a 550,000-square-foot research complex which was built in the early 1950s.

Researchers at the complex do chemical studies on plutonium, uranium and other radioactive materials. The building, which employs 350 people, was shut down twice in 1997 because of safety problems.

Money for a new building is not included in President Clinton's budget request, an aide to Bingaman said.

"This is something Sen. Bingaman has decided to push for," said spokeswoman Jude McCartin. "The (CMR) Building is old. It doesn't have proper ventilation. We can continue to make upgrades, but eventually the long-term answer is to get a

new building."

She said there have been no estimates of how much a new building would cost, though a DOE official estimated the price would be at least \$500 million.

LANL spokesman Jim Danneskiold said the laboratory has "no plans, no drawings for a new building." He referred all other questions about the budget request to the Department of Energy. Al Stotts, a spokesman for the DOE in Albuquerque said the department plans to decide this year what to do with the building.

A Santa Fe disarmament activist said the lab wants to expand its capacity to produce plutonium "pits," or triggers for

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B-4 THE NEW MEXICAN Thursday, April 15, 1999

LANL

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nuclear weapons.

"The seismic and other issues surrounding the CMR building provide a public-relations opportunity but not a reason for a new facility," said Greg Mello of the Los Alamos Study Group, who asked, "Why is it that the public is continually asked to fund expansions of nuclear programs or new nuclear facilities under the guise of increasing 'safety?'"

Current DOE plans call for the lab to have the capacity to produce 50 plutonium pits a year by 2005. The CMR building is one of the facilities planned to be used for pit production.

Bruce Hall of Peace Action, a disarmament group headquartered in Washington, D.C., said

activists would fight any attempt to spend public money on a new nuclear-production facility at LANL.

"It's pure pork for the lab," Hall said. "With the Cold War over, we have to question why we need to spend more money on nuclear weapons."

In 1980s, a proposal to build a \$450 million Special Nuclear Materials Laboratory at LANL sparked community opposition. In 1990, Congress rejected the plan as too expensive.

Safety concerns — including worker accidents — including an explosion that caused \$100,000 in damage, safety violations and defects in the complex's fire alarm and ventilation systems led Los Alamos officials to halt work at the CMR building twice. Among other concerns, a federal

oversight board, along with lab critics — fear that a catastrophic accident such as a fire could release plutonium into the atmosphere.

DOE already has spent about \$62 million on safety upgrades at the building. Renovations were temporarily halted by DOE in 1997 after cost overruns for the first phase of the project reached \$15 million. A senior DOE official blamed the overruns on "weak management and poor design effort."

DOE's Stotts said the renovations have resumed and are expected to keep the building running until 2010.

But renovations were further

complicated by geologists' discovery of a seismic fault underneath last spring. The 45-year-old building is too old for seismic upgrades, lab officials said in a report.

Publication: Jnl Legacy 1995 to July 2005; Date: Apr 15, 1999; Section: Journal North; Page: 62



Edition--Journal North Date--04/15/1999

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Bingaman Seeks Funds For Design of Weapons Facility

Ian Hoffman Journal Staff Writer

Sen. Jeff Bingaman is pressing for design of the nation's first new plutonium- and weapons-research facility in more than 20 years.

Bingaman, D-N.M., is seeking \$5 million in year 2000 defense funds to design a replacement for Los Alamos National Laboratory's troubled Chemistry and Metallurgical Research building.

Nuclear-disarmament advocates are likely to mount vigorous opposition. They argue a new weapons lab for Los Alamos is just as unnecessary now in the wake of the Cold War as in 1990, when Congress killed lab plans for a \$385 million Special Nuclear Materials Laboratory.

"It's like a horror movie: It keeps coming back," said Greg Mello, head of the Santa Fe-based Los Alamos Study Group. "There's never a stake through the heart. When will we wake from the 'Night of the Living Dead' ideas?"

So far, the lab's owners at the U.S. Department of Energy are undecided on seeking a new nuclear-weapons lab for Los Alamos and plan to study the issue for another year. Meanwhile, the DOE plans to continue spending \$125 million to keep the CMR, as the building is called, running through 2010.

Inside CMR, scientists and engineers work on nuclear-weapons parts, as well as perform tests for the lab's environmental and cleanup programs. At times, CMR has hosted high-level nuclear waste, tests on nerve gases and a variety of other defense projects.

"There are problems with that building," said Bingaman spokeswoman Kristen Ludecke. "It's not an emergency, but it's a question of whether it would be cost-effective to build a new facility."

With the \$5 million, engineers and architects could begin sketching out a rough size and design for the new lab, she said.

"This would not be a Taj Mahal but a scaled-down, streamlined facility that would meet the needs of the lab at a lower cost than they are met now," Ludecke said.

The 1950s-vintage CMR, once the largest building in New Mexico, is a massive holdover of the Cold War that has frustrated efforts to extend its working life. Besides outdated systems electricity, fire and ventilation CMR is more contaminated than lab managers once thought. Renovations in 1996 and 1997 ran at least \$15 million overbudget and, combined with unsafe building operations, caused lab managers to shut down work at CMR for months.

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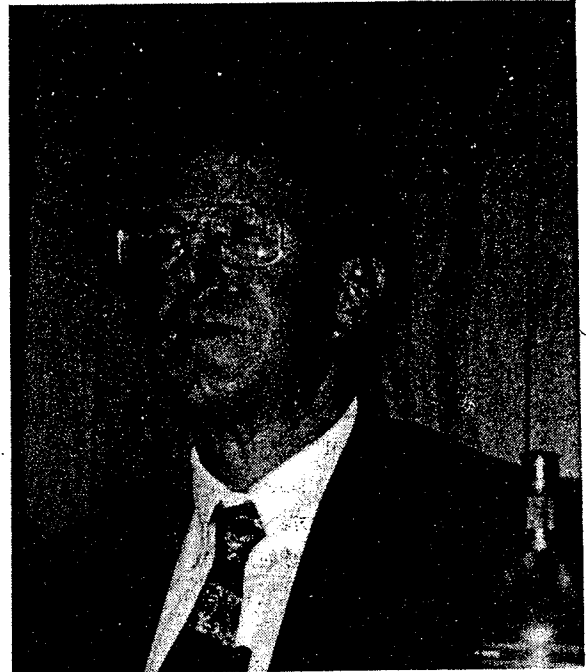
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LANL's Don "Spooky" Cobb.

LANL's Gary Salzman.

Photos by Joan Chernock.

A new and sinister threat

Los Alamos Biowarfare Research

by Pat Wolff

Los Alamos National Laboratory recently admitted that it planned a series of biowarfare experiments involving the release of *Bacillus globigii* (Bg) into the environment of northern New Mexico.

At first, LANL only disclosed its plans to a few Indian pueblos, two Los Alamos County officials, and Bandelier National Monument. It intentionally did not notify the news media, state health authorities, or Santa Fe area governments.

When word finally got out to the masses, (thanks to an exposé by The Albuquerque Journal's Ian Hoffman) the public was rightfully outraged. The planned experiments were strongly criticized and opposed even by Los Alamos Lab employees, many of whom live in White Rock, in close proximity to the proposed bacteria release site.

Lab officials quickly organized and held a public meeting at the White Rock town hall on the evening of July 7 to deal with this pesky "public relations" problem, thinking all would be fine after a few patronizing assurances were given. However, the geniuses at LANL underestimated the public's common sense once again.

The turn-out for the meeting was so large that dozens of people had to sit outside the town hall and listen to the proceedings through a sound system.

Attempting to allay the public's concerns were David Keller, representing the State Health Department, Don Cobb, the lab's head "Spook," and Gary Salzman, the

(continued on page 8)

*from Mountain Citizen
Summer, 1999*



Ernest Garcia gave shocking testimony about his involvement in secret biological experiments, then lifted his shirt to show how his skin has been discolored and scarred by contact with dangerous biological agents.

Photo by Joan Chernock.

Los Alamos Biowarfare Research

(continued from front page)

lab's principle investigator on this project. Although the trio tried to present themselves as "experts" with all the answers, they came across as arrogant, dangerous, and untrustworthy.

Their message was: "National security...blah blah blah...weapons of mass destruction...blah blah blah...trust us, it's totally safe...blah blah...we're scientists...blah blah blah...we're smarter than you hysterical commoners...blah blah blah."

The people who stood up to testify against the experiments included retired LANL employees, Indian pueblo neighbors of the lab, cancer victims, and several Santa Fe activists. And then came Ernest Garcia, a frail man who walked to the microphone, lifted up his shirt to show his scarred body, and told the hushed audience of the hurt and pain he suffered during the last few decades due to covert biological warfare experiments.

Duh! "We are still dealing with a legacy of distrust," LANL spokesman John Gustafson said. Photo by Joan Chernock.



Carol Miller of the NM Green Party questions lab officials about public health impacts. Photo by Joan Chernock.

Hours after the meeting, LANL officials announced that they would cancel the biowarfare experiments near White Rock, but still conduct them in a different location. The question is where?

The people of White Rock breathed a sigh of relief after the announcement, but should they really be so relieved? After all, LANL is still proceeding with its construction of a "Biosafety Level 3" laboratory where experiments will be conducted on biological agents such as *Bacillus anthracis*, the bacteria that causes anthrax. We also wonder if LANL is conducting biological experiments covertly, without informing the public. It seems likely, considering how LANL is dying to get on board the lucrative biowarfare-research gravy train, and how the lab and the U.S. government as a whole haven't had a very good track record when it comes to evil experiments conducted on unwitting victims.

Legacy of Lies

In the 1960's *Serratia marcescens* was secretly sprayed by our government over San Francisco. At least one man died and hundreds developed a "mystery illness." In another experiment, in which Minneapolis was sprayed with a bacterial agent, the residents were told that a harmless smokescreen was being tested to hide the city from radar-guided missiles. In 1966, *Bacillus subtilis* was released into the subway system of New York City to determine how vulnerable it was to attack.

During the 50's and 60's, the U.S. Army secretly sprayed toxic chemicals, such as zinc cadmium sulfide, over several U.S. cities as part of its Operation LAC. In public hearings held later, people complained of a variety of ailments, including cancer, reproductive disorders and respiratory illnesses. The government pooh-poohed the complaints and said the experiments did not endanger public health.

The U.S. government was aware of Japanese biological warfare experiments on U.S. soldiers during WWII but did nothing

Zuni Mountain Citizen

immunity to the would-be war criminals in exchange for the information the Japanese learned from these experiments.

Under Operation Paperclip, hundreds of Nazi scientists were protected from prosecution for war crimes and brought to the U.S. after WWII, despite their involvement in criminal experiments conducted on Jews, Gypsies, homosexuals, and other concentration camp prisoners.

During the Cold War, government scientists conducted hideous radiation experiments on thousands of U.S. soldiers and civilians, including pregnant women and children.

From 1952 to 1978, the U.S. Army secretly fed hallucinogenic drugs to more than 7,000 soldiers in bizarre drug experiments. Many suffered from long-lasting mental and physical after-effects.

The Central Intelligence Agency conducted secret mind-control experiments on U.S. citizens as part of its MK-ULTRA project. The CIA's experiments resulted in the death of Frank Olson, an Army scientist from Fort Detrick who jumped out of a hotel window after his colleagues secretly slipped LSD into his drink.

We could also mention Agent Orange and Gulf War syndromes, and experiments on retarded children, prisoners and racial minorities. The list goes on and on.

The U.S. has one of the biggest stockpiles of biological warfare chemicals in the world. We are the terrorists! We are the ones who have created and used weapons of mass destruction in the past and we are the ones who will most assuredly use them in the future.

If biowarfare concerns you, please read two books by Leonard Cole: *The Eleventh Plague* and *Clouds of Secrecy*: the army's germ warfare tests over populated areas. Get informed and get active. This issue is not going away.



Greg Mello of the Los Alamos Study Group urges lab officials to keep out of biowarfare research. Photo by Joan Chernock.

LANL Storage Facility Falls Short of Purpose

6/22/99

BY IAN HOFFMAN
Journal Staff Writer

For more than \$20 million, here is what U.S. taxpayers got: virtually nothing.

What they were supposed to get was a high-tech tomb for tons of nuclear weapons-grade plutonium and other metals inside a top-security area at Los Alamos National Laboratory.

Yet quietly, the U.S. nuclear-weapons establishment has scuttled the Nuclear Materials Storage Facility, or NMSF. Los Alamos'

NMSF is no casualty of the end of the Cold War, however. It was, by all accounts, killed primarily by incompetence.

The NMSF was so deeply flawed, so poorly designed that it reportedly could never store even a few pounds of plutonium when "completed" in 1987. U.S. Department of Energy executives pulled the plug on NMSF a few weeks ago.

They plan to spend more money figuring out what went wrong, why the cost of fixing NMSF doubled in two years to nearly \$114 million,

more than five times the original construction cost.

But NMSF's most fundamental flaws, the reasons its storage vault never opened, are clear from DOE in Los Alamos reports:

- If you worked at NMSF, there was a good chance you would be irradiated. To reach the storage vault, workers hauling containers of nuclear materials would walk past the desks of office workers. Office workers also had no radiation shielding from the storage vault, which vented unfiltered air

into their offices as well.

- The vault was designed so containers of weapons metals were too close, and cooling air could not remove the heat of their radioactive decay.

- The loading-bay doors are too narrow. This means the government's "Safe-Secure" tractor trailers for hauling nuclear-weapons parts could pull in, but not open their doors.

- The roof is cracked and could

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LANL Storage Facility Falls Short of Purpose

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not support its proposed cover of dirt in an earthquake.

■ NMSF's concrete is weakening prematurely.

■ A special "Placite" wall paint to make decontamination easier is peeling off the walls.

■ Two gas-fired furnaces intended to be walled off by concrete were instead located inside the storage area, increasing the risk of an explosion in a room full of plutonium.

So who wasted millions on a useless building? In short, almost everyone involved, a LANL official says.

Rising expense

"There's enough blame to go around," said Scott Gibbs, Los Alamos National Laboratory's program director for nuclear-weapons materials and manufacturing. Gibbs inherited the unusable NMSF recently and led the last study on fixing it.

Some blame goes to architecture and engineering giant Burns & Roe Inc. and to Santa Fe construction contractor Davis and Associates, DOE investigators found. But most of the blame lies with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Department of Energy and the operator of the national laboratory, the University of California. They were to design NMSF and manage its construction.

"There were enough things wrong to share the blame among DOE, the Corps and the university," Gibbs said. "Nobody covered themselves with glory."

Laboratory managers and their overseers at the Energy Department still were unwilling for at least 12 years to cut their losses and walk away. So the 30,000-square-foot NMSF persisted, drawing Congress to appropriate at least \$10 million in the last decade for studies and design reviews.

In each, reports show the pricetag to rebuild NMSF jumped — from at least \$13.5 million in 1992, to \$45.3 million in 1996, to \$56.7 million in 1998 and finally to more than \$100 million.

Those costs were for gutting and rebuilding the entire facility, possibly expanding its maximum storage capacity from 7.25 tons of weapons materials to as much as 27.5 tons.

Yet Energy officials classified the project as "routine maintenance" and "air-conditioning repairs." Those classifications allowed the project to avoid full-scale environmental reviews that may have opened the rebuilding of NMSF to broader public debate and possible litigation.

By late December, NMSF rebuild costs were estimated to go much higher.

The reasons are somewhat vague, but higher standards for nuclear facilities such as better electrical feeds and more concrete walls to shore up the facility against earthquakes played a role.

"None of these are very fancy changes, not very exciting really," Gibbs said. "But when you're modifying a facility to standards expected by the public of nuclear facilities today, it takes a bit of rigor and quite a bit of money to do that."

These added perhaps \$20 million, but fall short of explaining why the



COURTESY LOS ALAMOS NATIONAL LABORATORY

UNUSED BUILDING: A \$20 million white elephant, the Nuclear Materials Storage Facility is unsuited for its purpose and making it so would cost another \$114 million, a recent study found.

final repair estimates ran over \$100 million.

"We're going back and looking at this project to do a formal 'lessons learned,'" Gibbs said, using DOE's term for dissecting failed projects. "We're going to look at why we're seeing this growth (in rebuilding costs)."

'Cost overruns'

In any event, it was clear Congress would never fund anything like \$100-plus million.

"It's become increasingly obvious to both the laboratory and the DOE that we need to look at a different solution. It's too expensive for what we want to do there," said Earl

Whiteman, a top-ranking DOE weapons official in Albuquerque.

When Gibbs' group at Los Alamos sent the final total estimate of \$114 million to the Energy Department in mid-May, they supplied ideas for alternative kinds of nuclear-materials storage.

For example, Los Alamos could move a wall inside the nuclear-materials vault at its nearby Plutonium Processing and Handling Facility. No cost estimates are available, Gibbs said, but they probably will run to several million dollars at a minimum.

This would buy five to 10 years of storage. After that, the Energy Department probably will look

elsewhere for storing radioactive weapons metals, such as a proposed new facility at Savannah River Site in Aiken, S.C.

DOE's Whiteman prefers that kind of "off-site storage" to spending much more money at Los Alamos.

"It's not as if we wanted to store a lot of material at Los Alamos," he said.

This gets to the heart of NMSF's most basic problem, as far as Greg Mello is concerned. As head of the Los Alamos Study Group, Mello has watched the NMSF's evolution and demise more closely than anyone outside the government and Los Alamos.

"They never needed it. The mission was inflated from a fantasy to a necessity and they said disaster would occur if they didn't get it," Mello said. "We've never found any evidence that the 12-year delay in completing this facility has harmed the laboratory in any way. If this facility was really needed, something would have been done a lot sooner."

A General Accounting Office study indicates the NMSF is symptomatic of what is the Energy Department's difficulty in running and delivering construction projects on time and within budget.

Auditors for the GAO, the investigative arm of Congress, found that DOE never finished 31 of 80 major projects from 1980 to 1996, after spending \$10 billion on them. Three of the 15 completed projects are not being used for their intended purposes.

"The NMSF saga is just the latest in a series of Los Alamos and DOE cost overruns and poor management of what is the Energy Department's largest construction projects," said Mello. "It's too bad there is no effective evaluation of these projects before they begin; before tens of millions of dollars are spent."

The NMSF is being used somewhat: About 20 weapons-program employees work in its offices. As for the storage vault, Los Alamos and Energy officials are mulling ideas such as storing classified documents or non-nuclear weapons parts there.

"We've actually got several good proposals from people. The problem is selecting the right one," said Gibbs. "It will not sit idle."



Paper: Albuquerque Tribune, The (NM)

Title: Los Alamos lab to hear town's concerns about bacteria release

Date: July 7, 1999

Officials from Los Alamos National Laboratory will meet with citizens of White Rock tonight to address concerns over the lab's planned outdoor release of bacteria about 10 miles from the small northern New Mexico community.

Although officials from Los Alamos and the State Health Department say the bacterial release will be harmless, citizens and watchdog organizations have voiced concerns over possible dangers to public health.

The lab has postponed the release until public concerns are aired.

The bacteria will be released to field-test biosensors the lab has developed for defense against biological warfare. The release will occur at facility's southwestern boundary.

Lab officials say the bacterium to be used in the test, *Bacillus globigii*, is a common soil bacterium intended to serve as a harmless stand-in for life-threatening bacteria such as anthrax which have the potential to be used as biological weapons.

"The purpose of these detectors is to save lives, and if you don't know that a release has occurred, you can't treat the problem," said Lab spokeswoman Nancy Ambrosiano, referring to the potential use of the toaster-sized devices for detecting actual biological attacks.

"Every time you eat a potato skin or shuffle your feet in the dirt you are in contact with the very same bacterium (to be used in the test)," she added.

But some residents of White Rock and members of citizens' advocacy groups worry that the outdoor bacterial release poses a serious health threat to civilians living near the test site, especially those with weak immune systems.

Greg Mello, director of the **Los Alamos Study Group**, said, "Los Alamos is not remote enough from population centers for the release of live organisms, even those purported to be safe."

Ambrosiano said it was highly unlikely that any of the bacteria would actually reach the boundary property of the test zone, and added that the bacterial release would raise only slightly the total level of airborne particulates in the test area.

Researchers in the Department of Molecular Genetics and Microbiology and the Department of Pathology at the University of New Mexico declined to comment on the test.

But David Keller, a physician with the State Health Department, said, "We don't believe the experiment as (Los Alamos National Laboratory) described it poses any risk whatsoever to public health.

"In the literature, there is a small handful of infections caused by *Bacillus globigii*," he said, "but these are in individuals who have almost no white blood cells."

That degree of immuno-suppression is nearly exclusive to hospitalized cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy, he said.

Concerns from people in surrounding communities were great enough to prompt officials at the lab to delay the field test of biodetectors originally planned for June 28 and arrange the public meeting.

"The problem is that there had to be some initial public outcry to get the laboratory to (hold the meeting) in the first place," said Jay Coghlan of Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety.

Coghlan criticized lab officials for granting the test a categorical exclusion, which means the test could have proceeded without public review.

WHITE ROCK MEETING

A public meeting tonight on the planned outdoor release of bacteria near Los Alamos National Laboratory will take place at White Rock Town Hall at 7:30 p.m.

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Author: Dan Stimson dstimsonabqtrib.com / 823-3610

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LANL meeting to discuss plan to use bacteria in test

57 AM 7/2/99

By BARBARA FERRY
The New Mexican

Los Alamos National Laboratory officials hope a public meeting tonight in White Rock will allay residents' concerns about the lab's plan to release handfuls of bacteria into the air during experiments at Frijoles Mesa.

The bacteria, *bacillus globigii*, or Bg, would be used as a replacement for dangerous biowarfare agents during the tests. Lab scientists are experimenting with "biodetectors" that could be used after a terrorist attack to signal the presence of agents that cause deadly diseases such as anthrax.

In a statement, the lab said *bacillus globigii* is a "harmless stand-in for the targeted bioagents, one that has no ill effects on anyone but the most extremely ill." The bacteria is found in soil and in root vegetables such as potatoes.

"Only a few bacteria have bad effects on people, and this is not one of them," said LANL spokeswoman Nancy Ambrosiano.

There have been a few published cases of people with weakened immune systems being infected by Bg. But Ambrosiano said a person weak enough to be vulnerable to infection by the

The bacteria, bacillus globigii, or Bg, would be used as a replacement for dangerous biowarfare agents during the tests.

bacteria "would already be in an isolation ward at a hospital."

LANL originally planned to begin the tests on June 28, but postponed the experiments after worried residents contacted lab director John Browne, Ambrosiano said. She said the lab hopes to reschedule the tests soon after tonight's meeting, at 7:30 p.m. at Town Hall in White Rock.

"It would be nice to have the tests rescheduled, but that's not set in stone," Ambrosiano said. "(Director of the program) Don Cobb has said he wants to make sure the community has reached a consensus on the importance of these tests before we reschedule them."

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Ambrosiano said that since the postponement, the lab has received a "reasonable level" of calls about tests, many of which were from residents receiving chemotherapy who asked whether the bacteria release could affect their health. She said the lab is referring the callers to their own doctors and to the state Health Department.

LANL is paying for the biode-tector tests with discretionary research funds. But the lab's overall budget for countering biological and chemical warfare is on the rise.

LANL's move to "diversify"

into the area reflects a growing concern by President Clinton and Congress over the potential for a terrorist attack involving biological or chemical agents. Along with the concern, federal budgets for military and civilian spending have rapidly grown. Under the Clinton administration's proposed budget for 2000 it would more than double, to \$1.4 billion.

LANL anticipates its current budget of \$5 million for research in the area will grow as well, possibly to \$8 million next year, said Dave Simons program manager for non-proliferation, international security, research and development. In addition, the Depart-

ment of Defense has contracted \$5.25 million in chemical and biological agent counterterrorism work with LANL this year.

Simons said LANL plans to spend about \$500,000 for a biowarfare-analysis lab, which could be built in the sub-base-ment of LANL's Life Sciences Building. Scientists working in the 200-square-foot room would conduct DNA analysis of samples of soils and tissues sent by mail. Other planned experiments would seek to reduce the time needed to detect and analyze agents and create badges that would change color if the wearer was exposed to an agent.

Lab critics are worried about

LANL's move to diversify.

"This kind of work should not take place at a nuclear-weapons lab or at any secret lab," said Greg Mello of the Los Alamos Study Group in Santa Fe. "It should be conducted by public-health organizations, and all the results of research should be disseminated openly and worldwide."

Simons said the biological and chemical warfare detection work belongs at LANL.

"It belongs in the Department of Energy weapons complex because DOE has the expertise to detect weapons of mass destruction," he said. "DOE has been conducting nuclear-

weapons detection for 40 years. This is a natural extension of those capabilities.

"A lot of these same people have argued that the economy of Northern New Mexico should be diversified," he said.

But Green Party member and public-health specialist Carol Miller said that activists called for diversification at LANL, "biowarfare detection wasn't what they had in mind."

"We meant projects that would benefit humanity, such as hydrogen fuel cells for cars and solar energy," Miller said. "We weren't talking about more work involving weapons of mass destruction."

7/8/99
SF
New Mexican

Planned bacteria tests trigger fears near LANL

Neighbors voice concerns at White Rock forum

By **BARBARA FERRY**
The New Mexican

WHITE ROCK — The bacteria is found on potato skins, in gardens and in people's homes, Los Alamos National Laboratory officials argued. It's used by hospitals to test sick patients' rooms to ensure they are free of dangerous substances. It's even sold in Asian groceries as a health food, they said.

But try as they might, lab officials and a state infectious-disease specialist seemed unable to convince people Wednesday night that the lab's plan to release handfuls of the bacteria *Baccillus globigii* into the open air is safe or that the lab's intentions are benign.

The lab wants to release the bacteria on a monthly basis over the next year to test a sensor for biological agents such as anthrax. The director of the research, Gary Salzman, said the sensors are vital to protecting people from terrorist attacks at coming events such as the Olympics. He said scheduling problems at the Army's Dugway Proving Ground in Utah, where most biological testing is done, made it necessary to do the experiments here.

"We think this is really completely harmless," Salzman told the crowd of more than 100 at White Rock Town Hall.

He said that once the research advances to the point of testing the detectors with real agents, such as anthrax, the experiments



Ernest Garcia of Albuquerque shows his discolored skin. Garcia, who claimed to be a disabled, retired military officer, said his skin problems were caused by biological agents.

would move to Dugway.

But many in the audience — which overflowed outside the hall, where loudspeakers were set up — were unconvinced. "I don't want to be your guinea pig, thank you very much," said M.A. Buchholz, who lives in Pajarito Acres, about 2½ miles from the Frijoles Mesa site where the tests are planned.

Buchholz, a grandmother, said she never before had been moved to attend a meeting on lab-related health or safety issues in the more than 30 years she had lived in the area.

"I've felt secure in this town," she said. "But this is my back yard, this isn't someone

moving into your neighborhood. This is a neighbor that moves into your body and you don't even know it's there."

To improve its credibility, the lab brought in Dr. David Keller, infectious-disease chief for the state health department.

Keller said that cases of infection by the bacteria have been documented in people who have zero or very few white blood cells because of chemotherapy or other treatment. Keller said such patients would be cared for in isolation rooms at hospitals and

BACTERIA

Continued from Page A-1

are more susceptible to infection by the bacteria they carry in their bodies. Heroin addicts who inject heroin contaminated with dirt containing the bacteria also have had documented cases of infection, he said.

"The official position of my office is that these tests pose no risk whatsoever to the health of the public," Keller said. "Everyone in this room has organisms in your intestines and in your mouth and in your nose that are much more pathogenic than these."

Although a few speakers applauded the lab's plan, many more residents expressed doubts. At work seemed to be a larger culture of skepticism of the lab over its past actions. Speakers mentioned the lab's involvement in human radiation experiments and promises broken by lab officials.

"We are still dealing with a legacy of distrust," LANL spokesman John Gustafson said near the close of the meeting.

Salzman said the lab might move the tests to Technical Area 49, which is 5.8 miles from White Rock, further from populated areas than the current test site.

On Tuesday, a lab spokeswoman said the lab hoped the meeting would build consensus in favor of the tests and that the lab would be able to reschedule the experiments, which it originally planned to start June 28.

But on Wednesday, Gustafson said, "I don't know what we do after this. I don't think anybody thought this would bring resolution to all these issues. It's just a step."

Gustafson said that in retrospect the lab should have been more forthcoming about its plans. Wednesday's meeting was scheduled after newspaper sto-



Dr. David Keller, left, of the New Mexico Health Department, and Don Cobb, director of nonproliferation research at LANL, listen to questions and comments from the crowd.

Julie Graber
The New Mexican

ries prompted White Rock residents to demand a fuller explanation of the lab's plan.

"Based on the reaction, we should have made more of an effort to build the community into the plan, instead of announcing it as a *fait accompli*," he said.

Activist Greg Mello of the Los Alamos Study Group argued that secrecy at the lab is the very reason Los Alamos shouldn't be involved in biological weapons counterterrorism.

"The level of trust of the lab is rightly very low," Mello said.

He argued that other nations worried that the United States might be developing biological weapons might jump to the conclusion that the nuclear weapons

lab is developing biological arms.

"There's no detectable difference between defensive and offensive research," he said. "It gives the wrong signal to other countries."

Don Cobb, director of nonproliferation research at LANL, pointed out that the United States is prohibited from developing such weapons under an international treaty.

But Mello countered that many of LANL's nonproliferation programs are funded are top secret.

"You can't tell us about these programs," he said. "This work should take place at universities. Having the lab do it is not a good idea."

Funds sought to defend against chemical attack

By BARBARA FERRY
The New Mexican

Terrorists attacking New Mexico with chemical or biological weapons might seem as unlikely as Mulder and Scully *not running into some creepy, gooey creature during an episode of The X Files*.

But encouraged by a sharp increase in federal funding, the New Mexico Department of Health has applied for about \$1.5 million to protect state residents from such an attack.

"It's the hot thing right now," said state epidemiologist Dr. C. Mack Sewell.

The federal Centers for Disease Control is awarding grants to states for emergency preparedness; increasing state laboratories' capacity to identify biological and chemical agents; improving surveillance of infectious agents; and creating health networks to link hospitals and other health providers together by computer, Sewell said. The state will learn whether it has been awarded the funds in August, he said.

Sewell, who has attended conferences on chemical and biological weapons, thinks an attack is unlikely here, though he said the state's two weapons labs are potential terrorist targets not found in other places. But Sewell said that if an attack did occur, it probably would unfold differently than other violent events or natural disasters.

"It's not going to play out like any other emergency," he said. "What you're going to have is people showing up in the emergency rooms with severe illnesses."

For this reason, Sewell believes the surge in federal

funding is warranted. He also sees a "spin-off benefit" of new infrastructure for public health.

Not all public-health professionals support the department's move into counterterrorism.

"To me, this is all chemical and biological warfare pork," said Carol Miller, a Green Party former Congressional candidate and member of the New Mexico Public Health Association. "We still haven't stopped kids getting poisoned by lead, for God's sake, and now we're getting into this."

Publicity over biological weapons has spurred a wave of anthrax hoaxes. But in the United States only one mass-casualty biological terrorist attack has ever succeeded, said Jonathan Tucker. Tucker is director of the Chemical and Biological Weapons Nonproliferation Project at the Center for Nonproliferation Studies in Monterey, Calif.

That attack occurred in 1984, when members of the Rajneeshee cult contaminated salad bars in a town in Oregon with salmonella bacteria, affecting 751 people with diarrhea.

Tucker, who has compiled a database of 192 attempted and 71 successful chemical and biological attacks in the world since 1900, thinks policy-makers are overreacting to the threat.

"I think there's quite a bit of exaggeration by senior government officials, the media and the popular culture that feeds people being all spun up about this," Tucker said in an interview. "But it's one of these real dilemmas."

"There is an extremely remote chance that an attack with mass casualties could occur, but it's so unlikely the question becomes, 'Is it worth spending \$1.4 billion on?'"

The Battle Is Over

Biodetector experiment won't be at LANL

L.A. Monitor 7/8/99

By SARAH MEYER
Monitor Assistant Editor

Los Alamos National Laboratory announced this morning in a news release that tests involving the release of a common bacterium have been canceled because of a public outcry against the planned experiment.

Bacillus globigii (Bg), which occurs naturally in soils and is present in dust, rugs and upholstery, would have been released in small amounts at Technical Area 33 in order to test biodetectors that are being developed in order to protect large public gatherings and those in military situations from biological terrorism.

The decision to cancel the tests and to seek another location to conduct them came after a public meeting held in White Rock Wednesday evening and a meeting held June 28 with neighboring pueblos, the news release said.

"The proposed tests represent an important step in developing detectors to counter the threat of bioterrorism," said Don Cobb, associate laboratory director for threat reduction, in the news release. "The tests are probably safe with a high degree of scientific certainty.

"Nevertheless, maintaining the trust and confidence of our neighbors is essential," he said. "Therefore, we will not conduct the tests at the lab."

Wednesday's meeting drew about 65 people.

Some White Rock residents seemed genuinely concerned that there might be a health risk from the bacteria.

A few people spoke in favor of the tests, but most of them seemed to be there to protest the tests because they distrust the federal government and the laboratory.

Remarks by Jim Brannon of Santa Fe said he didn't understand the outcry about tests of the innocuous material until, after sitting through the meeting at the White Rock Town



Rod Thurston, above, who retired after 36 years at Los Alamos National Laboratory, tells lab officials of his concerns about using bacteria in biodetector tests at Technical Area 33. At left, David Keller, director of the state Department of Health's Infectious Disease Program; Don Cobb, associate laboratory director for threat reduction; and Gary Salzman, lab scientist who is leading the research project, listen to comments and ques...

Hall, he realized the reasons were political.

He said he had worked with the Defense Threat Reduction Agency and had been involved in tests using 100 pounds of *Bacillus globigii* in enclosed buildings.

The lab plans to release 10 grams at a time in each of 12 tests over 12 months.

"I would like to have a better way of detecting something somebody's going to throw at me," Brannon said, referring to the lab's goal of developing detectors that will be able to sense biological agents.

He said people sweep more Bg off their porches after a wind storm than will be used in the tests planned by the lab.

"Maybe there are some things you should be concerned about," he told the audience, "but not Bg."

Marty Holland, a retired lab scientist, said the front yard of his house in Pajarito Acres faces the test site area.

Holland said he has had respiratory problems for 36 years and has "absolutely no fear of the tests."

"All this political talk has nothing to do with bacteria," he said. "Damn it, let them do it."

Gary Salzman, the scientist who is



leading the research, said Bg, also known as *Bacillus subtilis*, is "an organism that we all live with." One million of the bacteria naturally live in each gram of soil.

The scientists had planned to release the bacteria at TA-33, about 100 feet upwind of a recreational vehicle where biodetectors would have been stationed. The tests would have lasted for about 10 minutes each, and were scheduled to be conducted between 9 p.m. and 3 a.m. when the wind was blowing at less than 10 miles per hour.

Most of the bacteria would have fallen to the ground on lab property, blowing toward the Rio Grande, two miles away, Salzman said. The bacteria were not expected to reach Pajarito Acres, the nearest residential area,

which is 2 1/2 miles away, he said.

David Keller, director of the state Department of Health Infectious Disease Program, told the audience that the department's official position was that the testing "poses no risk whatsoever to the health of the public."

A "small handful" of Bg infections have been reported, he said, in people who are undergoing chemotherapy or radiation treatments, and those who have injected contaminated heroin. Eye infections also can develop in people who wear contacts.

The bacteria are very common in the environment, Keller said, occurring in gardens, in dust and on root vegetables.

Bg also is used in attempts to boost immune systems, and in hospitals to test ventilation systems. Keller said

everybody has bacteria in his body that is more pathogenic than Bg.

Concerns

Before the meeting, Pat Wolfe of Santa Fe distributed a yellow flyer asking "Who will protect us from our own government?" The flyer refers to several secret government experiments in the past using bacteria, germs and toxic chemicals. It also asked, "What kind of secret experiments are going on now that the public isn't being told about?"

Wolfe and other protestors cited information from two books by Leonard Cole: "The Eleventh Plague" and "Clouds of Secrecy."

When she spoke to the panel, Wolfe said, "If it's so safe, why don't you release it into the office of Sen. Pete Domenici or someone else in

listen to comments and questions during a public meeting held in White Rock on Wednesday. This morning, lab officials announced that they have decided not to conduct the experiment in Los Alamos.

AL CABRAL/Monitor

Washington D.C.?"

"We don't really feel we can trust you," she said, referring to her list.

"The best detector in the world is not going to protect us," Wolfe said, because anyone can easily search the Internet and find instructions for developing biological agents.

She said a change in "public consciousness" is the only thing that will reduce the threat of biological warfare.

Barbara Gonzales of San Ildefonso Pueblo said, "I think more clarification needs to be done ... I feel there is no justification for the release of these spores."

"I say, 'No, these tests should not occur,'" she said. "Yes, it will go downhill."

(See 'BIODETECTOR, Page 8)

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BIODETECTORS

(from Page 1)

"Our (Native Americans) voices have just been wind in the environment," she said, commenting that contamination of plants, animals and air "should not happen."

Comments and Questions

Rod Thurston, who lives in Pajarito Acres, said that after 36 years at LANL, he has a lot of experience with research.

"The statistics of having something go wrong are extremely low, but still there," he said. "We're not lab rats, we're people."

He said many of the residents of Pajarito Acres are elderly, and several have cancer, making them more susceptible to infections.

"I personally consider these experiments very valuable to the nation, even to our own community," Thurston said. "But I think we ought to give ourselves enough distance."

He asked lab officials to find a location with less risk.

Thurston said he believed the winds would sweep the bacteria toward Pajarito Acres.

Ernest Garcia raised his shirt to show white scars on his chest and neck. His face and arms have brown

scars, such as those that might result from burns. He said the scars were the result of biological warfare experiments in the name of military intelligence.

The experiments killed his friends and his children, he said.

"When I was exposed, they told me, 'This isn't going to hurt you,'" he said. Biological weapons have been tested in the New York subways and on the Indian pueblos, he said, by LANL and other agencies.

"Some way, these experiments have to be stopped," he said. "It's all a weapon. There's no defense for it."

"I think it's too late for any of that," he said, referring to the detectors. He recommended doing "something about the people" who instigate bioterrorist attacks.

Carol Miller, who has been a Green Party candidate for U.S. Congress twice, said she had spoken to people at Dugway Proving Ground in Utah, and she wondered why the tests

could not be conducted there.

She also asked about LANL's plans to have a lab capable of conducting tests of the detectors using actual biological agents.

She said she thought the Defense Department could better spend its time and money to resolve some of the issues that cause other countries to be angry with the U.S. and launch attacks instead of diversifying "into another field of biological warfare."

"I don't think we have heard the whole story," Miller said, asking the panel to explain plans for Phase II of the tests.

Greg Mello, leader of the Los Alamos Study Group (an anti-nuclear organization based in Santa Fe), said that with increased funding for bioterrorism research, "It's clear Los Alamos (the laboratory) is making a push for money."

"This is not the right place (for this type of research)," he said. "It sends the wrong signal to other countries."

"At a nuclear weapons laboratory,

it is not a good idea," he said. "There's a big list of things you can't tell us about," he said to Cobb. "This is why we don't think this is the right place."

Mello also accused the lab of withholding information from the public.

"There's a tremendous difference between the partial truth unloaded at meetings like this and what's really going on," he said. "Please don't go in this direction. The militarization of biotechnology is not a good idea for Los Alamos."

Mary Ann Buckholz said she has lived in Los Alamos since 1965 and moved to Pajarito Acres in 1967.

"I basically felt pretty secure here," she said. "This is in my backyard. This is a neighbor that you can't know is in your body. I don't want to be your guinea pig."

She read a list of 14 questions, and one of her comments was, "Better reconsider" the location "instead of putting it literally in my back yard."

Several people asked if the tests

were safe and if there was any danger from the bacteria.

Others also were concerned that the bacteria could "escape" and drift to White Rock, San-Ildéonso Pueblo and even Santa Fe.

Georgia Nunz of La Senda asked why the tests had to be conducted in a populated area and why simulated material could not be used.

Responses

"We are not involved in the development of any biological agent," Cobb said.

Several members of the audience indicated their distrust in his answer by saying, "Yet."

Cobb also said, "We're working on countering weapons of biological mass destruction. We're working to reduce the threats of these agents."

Keller said the tests are not dangerous in any way, and Cobb said the tests are safe.

Salzman said the lab plans to build a very small BSL-3 (biosafety level 3 lab) to test actual biological agents.

Keller said normal, healthy humans cannot be infected by Bg.

"Bs and Bg are so ubiquitous that if they were harmful to people, we would see a lot of infections," he said. "This is a bacterium that we are all exposed to every day, and cases of illness are minuscule."

Salzman said, "When the wind blows, you are exposed to far more of these than we could ever release."

He said the lab hoped to do the tests on-site because it's very hard to get on the schedule at Dugway.

The lab has compiled a huge database of background levels of normally occurring substances in the air at TA-33, Salzman said. And 10 grams of Bg would include about 1,000 billion particles.

Salzman said the bacteria decay "fairly rapidly" (within 30 days) when they are affected by the sun on top of the soil. He also said that substitute material would not replicate the qualities of the spores.

'We're working on countering weapons of biological mass destruction,' Don Cobb said. 'We're working to reduce the threats of these agents.'

7/8/99 L.A. member



Paper: Santa Fe New Mexican, The (NM)

Title: Richardson relentsagency

Date: July 9, 1999

New Mexico Sen. Pete Domenici, the author of a plan to create a semiautonomous nuclear-weapons agency within the Department of Energy, said Thursday he is happy to have won over Energy Secretary Bill Richardson.

"I'm pleased he's decided we are right," Domenici said. "But I'm more pleased that he decided the president's own advisory board is right."

Richardson told The Washington Post on Wednesday that he was ready to accept the plan touted by Domenici and two other Republican senators, Jon Kyl of Arizona and Frank Murkowski of Alaska. Richardson had previously strongly opposed the plan to create the Agency for Nuclear Stewardship, arguing it would create a separate "fiefdom" for nuclear weapons.

The Domenici plan got a boost a few weeks ago when a panel of advisers to President Clinton headed by former Republican Sen. Warren Rudman called for a similar overhaul of the agency.

Richardson could not be reached Thursday for comment. But a DOE official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Richardson had changed his mind to reach a compromise with the senators.

"I think he's convinced himself that he doesn't want to lose all the advantages of all his own security reforms at the department," the official said.

Richardson and the Republicans have wrangled for weeks over how the department should be restructured in the response to the political uproar over lax security at nuclear-weapons labs and the alleged theft mostly in the 1980s of nuclear-weapons secrets by China.

Until this week, Richardson had maintained that his proposal to strengthen counterintelligence and security, including the naming of retired Air Force Gen. Eugene Habiger as "security czar," was addressing the concerns.

Nuclear-weapons lab directors welcomed Richardson's acceptance of the overhaul. Los Alamos National Laboratory Director John Browne said the new agency would offer "a tremendous opportunity to fix longstanding problems and to improve our ability to carry out the national security mission."

"This new agency should result in improved overall performance while maintaining appropriate oversight of the nuclear complex," Browne said in a statement.

But critics are worried the plan will hinder environmental, safety and security oversight at the weapons labs.

"We already have a semiautonomous cabal operating the weapons complex. This is likely to make it worse," said Greg Mello of the **Los Alamos Study Group** in Santa Fe.

Sen. Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M., was also critical of the plan, saying that weapons programs should not be responsible for policing their own security.

But Domenici countered that the existing system doesn't work.

"Just because you have layers and layers of bureaucracy doesn't mean that it's good," he said.

The proposed Agency for Nuclear Stewardship, although still in the department, would consolidate control over the three nuclear weapons labs Sandia, Los Alamos and Lawrence Livermore as well as the Nevada nuclear test site and various nuclear-material production and assembly plants around the country.

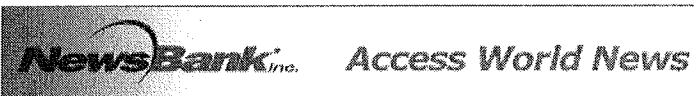
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Author: Staff and wire reports

Section: Main

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Paper: Santa Fe New Mexican, The (NM)

Title: Radioactive leak more volatile than thought, DOE report says

Date: July 13, 1999

LOS ALAMOS A U.S. Department of Energy incident report shows that a recent radiation spill at Los Alamos National Laboratory was more volatile than first reported.

The incident in which high-level radiation leaked into a test lab apparently occurred due to a rupture in a "glovebox" a special container in which radioactive or hazardous materials can be safely handled from outside using gloves. A glove came loose from the container as radioactive compounds were being heated in the box, a lab official said.

Wing 4 of the sprawling 11-plus acre Chemical and Metallurgy facility was evacuated and remains shutdown as a clean up and investigation continue.

But, according to the report, emergency personnel on June 25 were confronted with a dangerously contaminated test lab.

Meanwhile, three hot plates within the damaged "glovebox" continued to heat trays containing radioactive compounds. Workers and emergency personnel attempted unsuccessfully to turn off the hot plates until a radiation technician, under the supervision of firefighters, entered the room and cut the power.

Officials at the huge facility in the lab's main Technical Area 3 feared the trays would boil dry, releasing nitrous oxide.

The compound is often used as an anesthesia. But excessive levels can depress breathing and cause suffocation, although emergency workers wore independent air supplies, said LANL spokesman James Rickman.

When asked if the heated trays could leak radiation into the air, Rickman replied, "It's hard to say. Potentially, presumably, but you can't say for sure."

The original leak happened as trays of nitric acid, uranium and technetium-99 were heated, part of an experiment testing how to reduce the volume of radioactive wastes.

Hazardous materials personnel and firemen twice entered the by-then evacuated Wing 4 in an attempt to cut electricity to Room 4064, which according to an earlier press release was contaminated with "relatively high levels of radiation." But they could not find the correct circuit breaker.

"During a third entry into the wing, a radiological control technician entered the affected room while he was being observed by firemen outside the room," the report stated.

The technician wore a pressurized safety suit, Rickman said.

He plugged in the leaking glovebox and checked circuit breaker labels to identify how to cut power, the report said.

The difficulty in locating the circuit breaker is linked to the CMR facility's huge size and the many modifications made during its 47-year history, Rickman said.

The DOE report revealed for the first time that radiation seeped into a second room. But the test lab is one large area assigned three room numbers. Radiation merely moved into additional parts of the same lab, Rickman said.

Radiation released during the incident was beta radiation, DOE said. That can cause burns if it makes contact with the skin and internal burns if inhaled, said Greg Mello of the **Los Alamos Study Group**, a lab watchdog group.

While small amounts of radiation escaped the building during the incident, a person walking outside on the sidewalk would have received far below naturally occurring background radiation, said Rickman. No lab personnel were contaminated.

The incident is still under investigation, he said.

The CMR facility, which has experienced a rash of safety problems in recent years, among other things, does chemical testing to assure the integrity of nuclear weapons.

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Author: KATHLEENE PARKER

Section: Local

Page: B-6

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Anti-nuclear exhibit to return to counter 'Why the Bomb'

By **BARBARA FERRY**
The New Mexican

Los Alamos National Laboratory's Bradbury Science Museum, which in past years has been at the center of the town's culture war between no-nukers and pro-nukers, is getting its no-nuke exhibit back.

The exhibit, by Santa Fe activist Cathie Sullivan, will be a "rebuttal" to another amateur exhibit by a group of veterans and former Manhattan Project workers, titled "Why the Bomb."

Ironically, "Why the Bomb" was originally put up to rebut an anti-nuclear exhibit by the Los Alamos Study Group in Santa Fe.

The tangled history of the battle for space in the museum dates from 1985, when a California court ruled it was unconstitutional to bar anti-nuclear groups from displaying their views at publicly-funded museums. The decision was the result of a lawsuit brought by an anti-nuclear group that wanted to display its views at a museum run by the Lawrence Livermore weapons laboratory.

In 1992, Los Alamos Study

Group of Santa Fe asked for and was given space in the museum, though lab officials initially argued that the California decision didn't have standing in New Mexico.

The study group's exhibits included a map of contaminated sites in Los Alamos and statements by Manhattan Project workers who later regretted their work on the atomic bomb.

Three years later, a group of World War II veterans and former Manhattan Project workers objected to the study group's exhibit and demanded space for a display of their own.

Steve Stoddard, a retired lab employee and member of the group, said "Why the Bomb" is intended to show why the use of the atomic bomb in Japan was justified. "It saved both American and Japanese lives," Stoddard said.

After a heated debate, the two groups agreed to split the space temporarily. But after the anniversary of the bombing, the museum decided on a lottery system to decide which of the two sides would control the space.

The Los Alamos Study Group

refused to participate in the lottery.

"We didn't think it was an appropriate way to administer free speech," said the group's director, Greg Mello. "Besides, there are at least seven empty walls in that museum."

By 1997, the Los Alamos Study Group's installation had been taken down. The pro-nuclear group, the only participant in the lottery, won the right to keep up "Why the Bomb."

But Sullivan, who hands out leaflets to museum-goers each Saturday, said she grew frustrated with the lack of response to "Why the Bomb" and to the museum's other exhibits.

"I'd see it there every week and I felt it needed a response," Sullivan said.

Sullivan's exhibit, which goes up Monday, will include statements from Japanese survivors of the bombings and photographs of the destroyed cities and injured children.

In August, after the anniversary of the bombing, the two groups will switch to the opposite sides of a different debate: the future role of nuclear energy.

Publication: Jnl Legacy 1995 to July 2005; Date: Jul 21, 1999; Section: Journal North; Page: 55



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Exhibit Challenges Use of Bomb

Ian Hoffman Journal Staff Writer

Nuke Museum Again Has Dissident Voice

After a 21/2-year hiatus, nuclear disarmament advocates once again have a dissident voice inside the pro-nuclear bastion of Los Alamos National Laboratory's science museum.

On Monday, a single-panel exhibit reinvested the Bradbury Science Museum with photographs depicting the aftermath of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings and suggesting they never were necessary.

The exhibit's debut marks a new chapter in the long clash over nuclear ideology and free speech in the hometown of The Bomb.

Santa Fe activist Cathie Sullivan created the new display as rebuttal to a larger neighboring exhibit by the Los Alamos Education Group, a coalition of World War II veterans and lab retirees who argue the nuclear bombing of Japan was justified.

So far, Bradbury visitors are warming to the newly re-established balance of views.

Mary Toomey, visiting from Jacksonville, Fla., said the juxtaposed exhibits were "educational and provided a good debate."

"They give both sides so that you can make your own decision," she said.

The veterans' exhibit, titled "Why the Bomb?," contends the A-bombings were indispensable in forcing Japan to surrender and saved thousands more Allied and Japanese lives than were lost at Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

"I felt it needed a response," Sullivan said. "The museum's mission is generally to create a positive public feeling about the laboratory. But it's also a science museum and science is about the give and take of ideas. That debate was nowhere to be found at the Bradbury."

A related Santa Fe disarmament organization, the Los Alamos Study Group, originally secured amateur exhibit space inside the Bradbury museum in 1992. The group cited a California court ruling that a similar group was entitled to display their views inside a publicly funded museum at Los Alamos' sister laboratory, Lawrence Livermore.

The veterans and retirees coalition, led by former state lawmaker and lab retiree Stephen Stoddard, was incensed by the study group's exhibit and sought a share of the space. National media leapt to compare the flap to controversy over the Smithsonian's 1995 Enola Gay exhibit, which

inspired outrage from veterans and led the director of the National Air and Space Museum to resign.

Attorneys for the Los Alamos lab and museum management settled on a lottery system to decide which group would dominate the amateur space.

The study group boycotted the lottery as an illegal incursion on its free speech. "We didn't believe our constitutional rights should be subject to lottery," said the group's leader, Greg Mello.

Mello also was miffed that the laboratory had managed to deflect criticism of itself and its mission into a seeming standoff between two citizens groups and their ideologies. The Los Alamos Education Group groused that the activists were interested only in their own free-speech rights.

"They feel that whole wall should be theirs and we should never have a share," said Stoddard, who has no complaint with sharing the amateur space via lottery.

"We've never contested the idea that there should be a minority part of the wall," he said. "It's good to have democracy. We have no complaint with that."

The group's exhibit disparages critics of the Hiroshima-Nagasaki bombings as "revisionists" bent on twisting history to suit an anti-military, anti-nuclear ideology.

"The Japanese general staff were saying they would never give up," Stoddard said. "All this is documented. How they can say these people were ready to give up is nonsense. That war machine wasn't going to give up."

Sullivan's exhibit quotes the views of historians who draw on recently declassified or discovered documents to contend Japan was teetering on the verge of surrender and would have by November 1945, with or without the bomb.

Some historians suggest the United States might have hastened Japan's surrender by offering to let Japanese Emperor Hirohito remain in place as a figurehead or by pressing Stalin to open a second front in the Pacific Theatre. Instead, they argue, U.S. officials worried the Soviet Union might use its forces to claim new territory and spread communism in the region.

Sullivan's exhibit also suggests that Brigadier General Leslie R. Groves, the Manhattan Project military supervisor, was anxious to prove the A Bomb's military usefulness as justification for spending \$2 billion or roughly \$20 billion in 1990s dollars.

"I'm very convinced" the bombings were unneeded, Sullivan said. "I don't see a political agenda in this. I see it as a matter of historical accuracy."

PHOTO BY: SARAH MARTONE/FOR THE JOURNAL

PHOTO: Color

ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW: Suzanne Boyles of Tulsa, Okla., studies a new public forum exhibit that opened Monday at the Bradbury Science Museum in Los Alamos.

PHOTO BY: SARAH MARTONE/FOR THE JOURNAL

PHOTO: b/w

NUKE BOMB DEBATE: Mary Toomey of Jacksonville, Fla., on Monday reads arguments against dropping the atomic bomb on Japanese cities in 1945.

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Edition--Journal North Date--07/30/1999 Page-- 5

LANL Plans Waste-Site Caps; Group Fears Fed Fund Cutoff

Ian Hoffman Journal Staff Writer

The federal nuclear-weapons laboratory at Los Alamos is planning to propose capping its worst dumps for tons of radioactive and hazardous wastes dating to the Manhattan Project.

The caps, often made of clay or synthetic mats, are designed as shields against rain and snowmelt that erode the dumps or leach the wastes into ground water.

A new report by a Santa Fe nuclear disarmament organization, the Los Alamos Study Group, found the lab's 24 dumps contain roughly 17.5 million cubic feet of toxic metals, radioactive elements, hazardous chemicals and explosives.

That's nearly three times the ultimate capacity of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, a nuclear-weapons waste burial site near Carlsbad.

In its report Thursday, the Los Alamos Study Group suggested lab officials are spending vastly more money on studying cleanup, rather than digging up the wastes.

"This lack of action persists despite the expenditure by the LANL Environmental Remediation program of more than \$500 million in the past 10 years," wrote Michael Beatz, a research intern for the study group.

Lab officials challenge the report's assertion that LANL has "no definite plans or commitments to stabilize or remediate" its 24 worst dump sites.

"That's absolutely false," said lab spokesman James Rickman. "Right now, we're going to put a cap on all these sites until we know what the final remedial measure will be."

That still worries lab critics. They fear cleanup of other U.S. nuclear-weapons sites, such as Rocky Flats near Boulder, Colo., will leave Los Alamos without enough federal money to get rid of more than 50 years of buried wastes.

"Are we just wasting our opportunity to do cleanup?" asked Greg Mello, the study group's leader. "Will Congress wake up and say 'You've had enough money, now we're cutting it off?' We don't want that to happen."

LANL's largest and most complicated dumps are known as Material Disposal Areas, or MDAs, for short. They usually are shafts, pits or trenches, mostly unlined, and they represent the lab's most intractable cleanup problems. In some cases, lab officials do not know for certain what the older

dumps contain.

So far, lab-cleanup officials have focused on more than 1,000 of the lab's easier cleanup sites. Many sites had been wrongly identified and turned out not to be actual waste sites at all; at others, the sources of pollution could be contained or removed fairly easily. But the vast majority of LANL's cleanup money has gone to studies and management of the program.

A 1997 U.S. Department of Energy study found only about 21 percent of the lab's cleanup spending from 1991 to 1996 went toward cleanup.

Lab officials remain uncertain about what to do with several hundred remaining sites, including most of the material disposal areas. Of the MDAs, LANL has firm plans to dig up the contaminants at only one such dump, called MDA P, that was used for 40 years to dispose of explosive residues and metal wastes from explosives testing.

Within a few weeks, lab officials will present a plan to New Mexico environmental regulators for capping the other MDAs, leaving the waste in place while they study what to do with it, Rickman said.

A state environmental study found two-thirds of the MDAs pose "moderate" to "high" risk of seeping contaminants into ground water. Neither the lab nor its owner, the U.S. Department of Energy, plan to perform any ground-water cleanup at Los Alamos.

Report: LANL's buried waste outdoes WIPP

7/30/99
S.F.
New
Mexican

► *Anti-nuclear group says that 17.5 million cubic feet of radioactive waste is stored or buried at Los Alamos lab*

By **BARBARA FERRY**
The New Mexican

Los Alamos National Laboratory has nearly three times as much radioactive waste stored or buried on site than will be buried at WIPP when it is full, a report by a local anti-nuclear group contends.

However, laboratory spokesman James Rickman said the report is an "apples and oranges comparison" because most of the waste buried at the lab is less dangerous than the waste slated for WIPP.

The Los Alamos Study Group of Santa Fe examined 24 waste sites at the lab, including Area G — which has been used as the lab's main dump for waste since the 1950s.

The report says there is 17.5 million cubic feet stored or buried at the lab sites, compared to the 6.2 million cubic feet which is slated to end up at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant near Carlsbad. WIPP, which

opened in March, is the Department of Energy's planned repository for transuranic waste from the weapons complex sites around the country. DOE expects it will take 35 years to fill up WIPP.

At WIPP, waste is buried 2,150 underground in salt beds believed by DOE to be impervious to outside elements, while waste at Area G is buried in shallow pits, the report states.

The lab's waste sites contain at least 100 pounds of plutonium, a million curies of tritium, tons of hazardous waste and other contaminants and a variety of other radionuclides and contaminants, according to the study group's report.

The waste going to WIPP is called transuranic waste, which is uranium- or plutonium-contaminated waste that, because of its long half-life, must be isolated for many years. Rickman said that since 1970, all transuranic waste at the lab has been kept in retrievable storage, to be held there until a repository opened.

Most waste buried at Area G and other LANL sites is low-level waste. Most low-level waste is short-lived and has low levels of radioactivity. However, environmental groups say some waste in this category presents a greater radiation hazard than

Please see **WASTE**, Page B-4

WASTE

Continued from Page B-1

transuranic waste.

Transuranic waste generated prior to 1970 is buried at Area G, Rickman said. Area G is reaching capacity and the lab plans to expand the 63-acre site by 30 to 66 acres, Rickman said.

The lab will continue to bury waste at the site until 2044 when it will be covered with 6 to 10 feet of earth, he said.

The study group also criticizes the lab's efforts to clean up dump sites, saying that despite spending \$500 million during the past 10 years, the lab has done little to actually clean up any waste.

The report says there are no plans to clean up or stabilize waste sites at the lab and that 16 of the dumps are classified by the New Mexico Environment Department to pose a moderate or high risk of long-term groundwater contamination.

But Rickman said the lab is negotiating with the New Mexico Environment Department on how to remediate waste sites.

"That's absolutely incorrect that we have no plans to remove or stabilize these sites," he said. "But until the environment department approves plans for corrective actions, it's not appropriate for us to go in there and start digging them up."

High explosives which contaminate one dump site are being removed, he said.

"I think the lab would say it has made substantial progress on (clean up)," Rickman said.

Keigher: Bombing of Hiroshima, Nagasaki saved his life, many more

Editor:

Here we go again. Outside critics are tarring and feathering Los Alamos — again! Again the laboratory should never have designed the nuclear devices used in August 1945, and the laboratory should never had continued in the nuclear weapons business, particularly since our arch enemy, the Russian giant, collapsed a few years ago.

The new display in the Bradbury Science Museum, not by the Los Alamos Study Group, the usual critic, but a new splinter group, reminds the Los Alamos community of its guilt in designing the bomb. Also, Los Alamos is/was guilty of fostering massive attacks on civilian Japanese; most of World War II massive attacks were made on civilians, by both sides.

Somehow these critics fail to read in-depth the true history of World War II and of the super weapons that ended this terrible conflict abruptly. Yes, the Japanese were beaten, their naval forces depleted. Landings on the Mainland Japan were already being planned for, by both sides. But the word "surrender" was not in the Japanese vocabulary or culture! So their defense of the Homeland we expected to be even stronger than the blood baths at Iwo Jima and Okinawa. It took two bombs; one to truly get the war lords' and the Emperor's attention, and a second to prove it could be done again. The Emperor, within hours, started the STOP talk. It took days, but they did (stop the war). Read Richard Rhodes "Making of the Atomic Bomb," chapter 19, and Al Christman's "Target Hiroshima," chapters 15 and 16.

I know these critics of the atomic bomb use discredit the views of our American service men in the West Pacific where they were dropped. We're prejudiced because we say they ended WWII and saved our lives! I'm one of them. I was a young engineering officer on the USS KNAPP (DD-653) only 150 miles off shore at 0915 Aug. 6, 1945, (just 54 years ago) when the Hiroshima bomb was detonated. We heard this good news within two hours of the drop via a terse fleet message from Task Force 58. Hope ran high on the KNAPP that surely the war would be over. No word. Our task group, 58.1, was attacked every day by enemy planes as our planes carried out raids on Mainland Japan. Three days passed, then word that a second, the Nagasaki bomb, had been dropped about 11 a.m. No word. The constant attacks, ours and theirs, continued; dawn alerts, GQs, dusk attacks. A false message on Aug. 11 said

peace was likely.

On Aug. 13, we were detached to escort a limping carrier to Iwo Jima where we picked up some V.I.P. officers for our task force. Next morning, Aug. 15, at 0812 as we steamed north alone, we heard, "The War is Over."

Some of our young crew members cried; some swore; some prayed. There was no real jubilation — just a weary "When do we go home?"

After earning nine battle ribbons and experiencing 16 months of increasing fatigue and wearing tension, particularly after the nine picket station assignments we did at Okinawa, we were Mission Accomplished! Even that last day, our task group shot down six enemy planes!

The rest is happy history for us. Tear up those orders to support the attack and landings at Kyushu in October. No more kamikaze air attacks. No more going to battle stations 10 times a day! There wouldn't be the expected 300,000 to 400,000 American casualties, nor the 3 million or more Japanese deaths, including women and children.

I was ashore in Japan by Sept. 5; I saw the Yokohama and Tokyo devastation. Please critics, see this from the eyes of those of us who were there in 1945, and in the context of the time and events. Because of Los Alamos's tenacious scientific efforts, my life and those of my shipmates were spared, thank you!!

The significant work done at Los Alamos from 1946 to 1986 was a major nuclear deterrence factor. Los Alamos carried out its country's mandate with quality research, led by the second team of leaders, after the Nobel Prize winners and scientific stars had left.

Good work, well done, Los Alamos! Please don't hang the blame on this mountain community for every cost aspect and illness of the U.S. nuclear program. The many accomplishments in science and related progress in a vast array of technical fields are worth vastly more than the price. Year after year, LANL has won national and world recognition; aren't the critics aware?

Parade and demonstrate next Monday; that is a right of citizenship. But don't ignore or rewrite our history! The U.S. nuclear program has been an historical and continuing success!!

Donald J. Keigher
1001 Oppenheimer Dr.
Los Alamos

LA Monitor, Aug. 4, 1990

Two anti-nuclear rallies scheduled

By CHARMIAN SCHALLER
Monitor Editor

Anti-nuclear activists are planning two demonstrations in Los Alamos County in the next several days.

Jennifer Reasoner of the Los Alamos Study Group said today that the organization has received approval from Los Alamos National Laboratory for a Hiroshima Day activity Friday at Technical Area 16, a lab site near the "Back Gate" on West Jemez Road.

Jim Danneskiold, a spokesman for LANL, told the Monitor Thursday that the group had submitted a request on July 29 and that he expected a decision before Friday.

Earlier, a news release from the group said, "An international citizens' inspection team will document first-

LA Monitor, Thursday, Aug. 5, 1999

hand the impacts of continued nuclear weapons research, development, and production at Los Alamos National Laboratory on Friday, Aug. 6, at 10:30 a.m. — the 54th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, Japan."

The news release said a "memorial ceremony" will be held at 10:30 a.m. at TA-16, "sight of atomic bomb assembly point." The release said the ceremony will be "followed by citizens' inspection."

The group has scheduled a news conference at the Los Alamos Inn at 1 p.m.

The news release said that two survivors of the Hiroshima bombing will be among those participating in the ceremony.

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FBI

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Asked whether TA-16 is open, Danneskiold said most of it is "behind the fence," but a parking lot and cafeteria are open.

The Friday demonstration will be the first of two planned events. Peace Action announced several days ago that it is planning a rally at Ashley Pond followed by a march to LANL, all in the context of a three-day national peace conference being held in Albuquerque.

Danneskiold said the lab has received "two separate requests" for the Friday and Monday events.

But examination of news releases for the two rallies showed that many of the same people are listed as participants.

Asked how the lab is responding to the Monday rally plans, Danneskiold said, "The laboratory and the Los Alamos Police Department are making preparations for the peaceful demonstrations scheduled for Aug. 9."

Asked how the lab would handle a demonstration at the Chemistry and Metallurgy Research building, which is mentioned in Internet information about the Monday rally, Danneskiold said, "The actual location is still not set." Organizers have said only that they will "walk across the bridge and go somewhere in the TA-3 area," he said.

In Los Alamos, Capt. Marla Brooks of the Los Alamos Police Department, said, "Our main concern is parking, traffic, and being able to provide medical help" during the Monday demonstration. "We have the typical concerns for any large gathering," she said, "We really aren't expecting anything other than a peaceful demonstration. If they move somewhere, that movement has to be done safely...."

She added, "Depending on the numbers of people we end up expecting, we may have to solicit outside help from other agencies."

She said, "There has been open communication between LAPD and the organizers of the event ... We have talked to one of the organizers who said possibly three busloads or more of people are coming up — that's 150 to 180 people, maybe more."

She also made clear that the department has been in communication with the lab.

She concluded, "We are aware that the possibility of confrontation exists. We are preparing for possible civil disobedience. But we are aware that this civil disobedience (if indeed it happens at all) would most likely be in the form of non-violent confrontation." She spoke of the possibility

LA Monitor, Aug. 5, 1999

ty of people being issued citations or arrested without incident.

Meanwhile, the Los Alamos Education Group ran into problems in its efforts to plan for an event of its own on Aug. 9.

The Los Alamos Education Group includes members of veterans' organizations and laboratory retirees who first came together "to counter arguments of revisionist history regarding the dropping of the nuclear weapons that ended World War II."

State Sen. Steve Stoddard, chairman of the group, said members plan to set up tents and provide information to the public and the news media on Monday at the pond.

But when Stoddard went to the county to ask for space at the pond to set up two tents, he was told that the anti-nuclear activists had rented the entire pond area — for \$3.25 — and had rented all of Fuller Lodge as well.

In an interview Wednesday, Stoddard expressed frustration that he called a sequence of county officials — among them, Assistant County Administrator Fred Brueggeman — without getting an answer on what could be done.

He had proposed that the county allow his organization to rent the parking lot just south of the Los Alamos Community Building. County officials told him they would "let me know," he said, then were slow to call back — while the clock ticked away.

Stoddard said, "I know we're not going to convert any of the people who are coming," but he said he wanted "a place to offer a counterpoint" for the media.

On Monday, he said, he called Brueggeman one more time, and Brueggeman suggested he use the small green area west of Fuller Lodge where the large bronze head now stands (as part of the current sculpture exhibit).

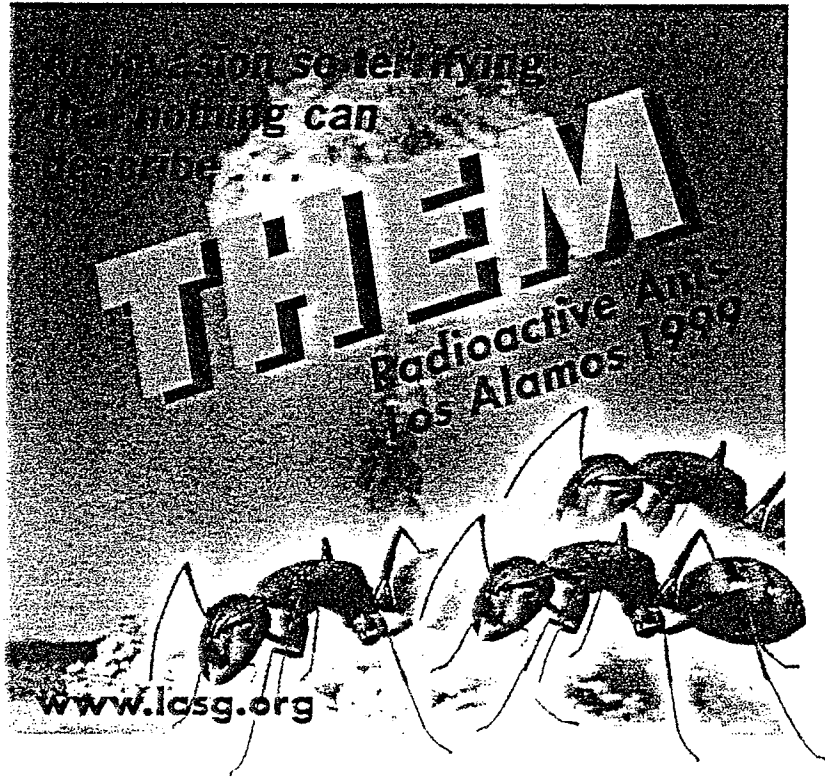
Stoddard said he told Brueggeman, "I don't really like that. It sounds like all the action is at Ashley Pond and on Trinity."

When he asked again for the parking lot, he said, Brueggeman told him the police chief felt there should be "some kind of buffer zone between you and them."

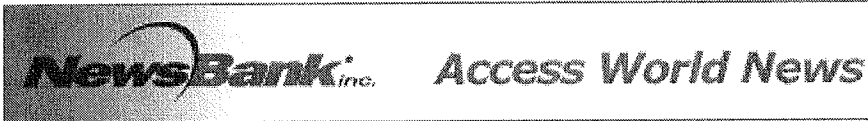
He heard nothing Tuesday and kept calling Brueggeman, he said. "Then I got a call from the police chief." He said the chief, Richard Melton, "was very nice," and seemed to be well informed about the issues.

They finally agreed on the "head site," Stoddard said, and the group will be there.

"I'm going to invite a couple of Bataan Death March Survivors" to participate, he said, and all other interested persons are welcome to join the group.



New Mexican, 8/6/99



Paper: Albuquerque Tribune, The (NM)
Title: N.M., Colorado AGs raise safety fears over new nuclear agency
Date: August 6, 1999

SANTA FE The attorneys general of New Mexico and Colorado say a plan to create a new agency within the Energy Department could hinder the states' ability to enforce environmental and safety regulations at nuclear-weapon sites.

The proposed Agency for Nuclear Stewardship, although still a part of the Energy Department, would consolidate control over the three nuclear weapons labs Sandia and Los Alamos in New Mexico and Lawrence Livermore in California as well as various nuclear plants around the country.

In a letter to a congressional committee overseeing the creation of the new agency, Colorado Attorney General Kenneth Salazar stated: "The reorganization should not subordinate environment safety and health concerns to weapons production and development. I am concerned that this will be the unintended consequence of the proposed amendment."

In a separate letter, New Mexico Attorney General Patricia Madrid agreed.

"There is language in the bill which could be interpreted in a way that would make it more difficult for the New Mexico Environment Department to assert the state's power with regard to environmental concerns," said Glenn Smith, special counsel to Madrid.

Smith said New Mexico has not had enough time to give input into the plan.

U.S. Sen. Pete Domenici, an Albuquerque Republican, rejected the notion that the proposal would weaken external safeguards.

"The assertion that this legislation in any way waives or lessens environmental protection at DOE sites is disproved by the plain reading of the legislation," Domenici said in a written statement.

"The simple truth is that what this legislation changes is not statutory requirements, just the management structure responsible for complying with these requirements," the statement reads.

New Mexico Environment Department spokesman Nathan Wade said the agency's lawyers are still studying the proposal to determine how it might affect state authority.

"Our general philosophy is that the federal government is a better environmental actor when it is externally regulated," Wade said.

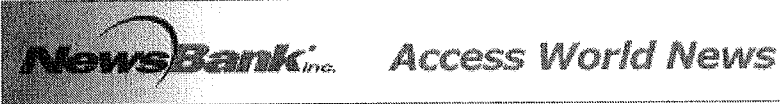
The director of one local environmental group also is concerned about the bill's possible effect on local control.

"Creating a sovereign agency to deal with a secret nuclear-weapons complex has created enormous mischief in the past," said Greg Mello of the **Los Alamos Study Group**.

"It has been a difficult struggle to get effective environmental regulation for weapons organization, and I'm afraid we're losing a decade of progress."

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Paper: Santa Fe New Mexican, The (NM)
Title: Madrid mobilized against plan for DOE
Date: August 6, 1999

New Mexico Attorney General Patricia Madrid is opposing a plan to re-organize the Department of Energy, arguing that the legislation could reduce the state's ability to oversee the environment, safety and health at Los Alamos and Sandia national laboratories.

Madrid joined Colorado Attorney General Kenneth Salazar in opposing the measure, which was approved by a House-Senate conference committee Thursday. The proposal would create a semi-autonomous agency, dubbed the National Nuclear Security Administration, which would have direct control over nuclear weapons. Backers of the plan, including Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., argue that the new agency would keep nuclear-weapons programs from being bogged down in too much bureaucracy. The plan has gained congressional support in the wake of the alleged theft of nuclear-weapons designs from Los Alamos by China.

However, in a letter to the chairs of the House-Senate conference, Salazar stated "the reorganization should not subordinate environment safety and health concerns to weapons production and development. I am concerned that this will be the unintended consequence of the proposed amendment." In a separate letter Madrid said she shared Salazar's concerns.

Glenn Smith, special counsel to Madrid, said the attorneys general are worried language in the proposal that would require the new agency to comply with all "applicable environmental, safety and health statutes and substantive requirements" could be interpreted in a way that actually would limit the state's oversight authority.

"There is language in the bill which could be interpreted in a way that would make it more difficult for the New Mexico Environment Department to assert the state's power with regard to environmental concerns," Smith said

At risk might be agreements and memorandums of understanding between the environment department on such issues as the cleanup of contaminated sites at the labs, he said.

Smith said the state is also concerned that it has not had more time to give input into the plan.

"This is all happening very fast," he said.

But in a statement, Domenici rejected the notion that the proposal would weaken external safeguards.

"The assertion that this legislation in any way waives or lessens environmental protection at DOE sites is disproved by the plain reading of the legislation," Domenici said. "The simple truth is that what this legislation changes is not statutory requirements, just the management structure responsible for complying with these requirements."

New Mexico Environment Department spokesman Nathan Wade said the agency's lawyers are still studying the proposal to determine how it might impact state authority.

"Our general philosophy is that the federal government is a better environmental actor when it is externally regulated," Wade said.

The director of one local environmental group is also concerned about the bill's possible impact on local control. Greg Mello of **Los Alamos Study Group** likened the proposed new agency to the Atomic Energy Commission, which controlled nuclear-weapons production until President Jimmy Carter created the Department of Energy in the 1970s.

"Creating a sovereign agency to deal with a secret nuclear-weapons complex has created enormous mischief in the past," Mello said. "It has been a difficult struggle to get effective environmental regulation for weapons organization, and I'm afraid we're losing a decade of progress."

The proposal now goes back to the House and Senate for a floor vote and then to President Clinton's desk for a signature.

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