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BULLETIN #179: IF YOU AREN'T ALREADY A STUDY GROUP DONOR, IT'S TIME TO BECOME ONE. THE ANNUAL STUDY GROUP FUNDRAISING DRIVE IS HERE!

Dear friends –

U.S. tax law dictates that this is the time of year when nonprofits like the Los Alamos Study Group, donations to which are tax-deductible, must focus on fundraising. So we must now do that, relentlessly in fact.

For eight of the past ten years we have never had more than a few months' operating funds in hand. We don't pay rent; sometimes we don't pay staff (which is very stressful for all concerned). These financial handicaps have tremendously limited our work in all sorts of ways. There have been compensations: these limitations have sharpened our strategies and political insights. We've gained a lot of experience.

Some accomplishments we have told you about in [Bulletins](#) and in what have been, over the years, hundreds of public gatherings of various kinds. Our work has left traces in the [thousands of media appearances and articles](#) we have fostered. (See also [here](#) for a media history on Los Alamos waste disposal and related issues through 2006, and [here](#) for a 1989-2006 media history of opposition to plutonium warhead "pit" production, which continues). Work products and news of overall interest can be found on our [home page](#) and in our [general archives](#) while more specialized work and background information has been filed on focused web pages, such as those devoted to the [Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Replacement \(CMRR\) facility](#) and its daughter pages, which deal with post-CMRR plutonium planning.

Our all-out CMRR litigation (which was all-out successful, in fact if not in law), is available in its entirety [here](#). We are fully prepared to sue again over the [latest plutonium plans](#), which lack proper environmental analysis. (Government officials and contractors reading this email, take notice and think carefully about what you are doing.)

Not all our work is posted or emailed. Some is of necessity private, because we work closely with government on occasion. Sometimes we find ourselves at the cutting edge of policy deliberations.

We have been increasingly active in Congress over the past six or seven years, making dozens of weeklong lobbying trips to DC over those years. We enjoy good access with nuclear decision-makers and our effect on legislation and policy is primarily limited by our own time, which is related to our fundraising success, and not by implacable foes in the "military-industrial complex." Many doors are open.

Likewise we find that the mainstream media is far from closed to us, provided we do our homework. It is a reasonable requirement. Again it comes back to skilled staff time, which comes back to funding.

We have been successful over the years because some of you have shown tremendous solidarity and support, extending in many cases over decades. For example, your support, in its many forms, is the basic enabling reason that no new plutonium warhead core ("pit") factory has been completed since the shuttering of the Rocky Flats Plant in 1989, the year this organization began. No new pit factory has meant no entirely-new warheads, and all that entails. The nature of that struggle is changing now, because we have consistently won. We can keep on winning – and it will mean more – if you are with us.

There is something else. The Study Group community – in which many of you have long been a part, however small or great that part might be – is very valuable. It is valuable *in itself*, right now, and it is valuable because it carries within itself the seed of greater future accomplishments and enjoyments for each of us. Why "much greater?" Because history is opening a lot of doors we could never open by ourselves.

The Study Group has an unusually broad financial support base, in which all ages and all economic classes are represented. Hundreds of people have given at least a little bit to support our work.

We have not yet told you what we are going to *do* in the coming year. That depends heavily on fundraising success. Aside from fundraising itself (which is monopolizing a lot of our time right now) we are:

- Working to prevent a "Manhattan Project National Historic Park" (see, for example, [this letter](#) and [this Associated Press story](#), just the latest salvo from us on this);
- Working, mostly behind the scenes right now, to prevent a proposal for new plutonium pit infrastructure;
- Working with the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons ([ican](#)), Reaching Critical Will ([RCW](#)), and allied organizations in an international campaign to ban nuclear weapons just as other weapons of mass destruction are banned – with or without treaty participation from nuclear weapon states; Greg spoke at the U.N. in October on this topic on a panel sponsored by Switzerland and Indonesia, and we are planning further activities with these dynamic organizations;
- Working to better spell out the tight coupling between nuclear disarmament, economic development, and efforts to save a viable climate for life on Earth;
- Preparing for house meetings and face-to-face outreach to interested members, where we can go into greater detail about the issues and our plans ([if you are interested in putting together such an evening, please call!](#));
- Working on long-standing projects in better management and budgeting of the nuclear weapons enterprise ("going back down the branch we are on"), in which we enjoy a great deal of credibility in Washington; we will be returning to Washington early next year; and

- Providing background as needed to reporters, so they can be more ready when something newsworthy, but complicated, appears.

We will be coordinating more with other New Mexico organizations on climate policy issues, on which we have considerable background knowledge as well as access to some of the relevant congressional committees. To put it bluntly, climate and energy policies are central to mitigating economic and social collapse in New Mexico, as they are overall.

We would like to again mentor interns here. We have had great success with our internship programs since the late 1990s but have no funding for them right now. We are sure there are plenty of fine scholars and organizers out there who would like to help here, but at least a little money is necessary to make that possible.

We want everyone on this list to give at least a little bit. Please. There is no one on this list for whom \$5 per month is too great. Others can afford more, perhaps much more.

There are many ways to contribute. You can send a check in the mail to the address below. You can donate stock (and thereby avoid capital gains, if that is important to you); to do this call Trish at 505-265-1200. You can donate electronically at [this secure portal](#). (JustGive will take 4.5% for their service, but it's very convenient). Trish can accept credit card payments over the phone and will be happy to set up an interbank wire transfer (domestic or international).

If you set up a monthly donation you will help with our financial predictability and you won't have to remember to give each month.

If you wish to remember the Study Group in your estate planning, please call us.

We will be happy to accept excess automobiles or other property. Again, these gifts are tax deductible.

If you give through the [Network for Good](#) you can direct your gift to the Study Group through them. They will deduct a little slice to sustain their operation.

You may also give directly to the Study Group through [eBay Giving Works](#), or you can donate any portion of your eBay sales or purchases through them.

If you buy something from Amazon, you can designate the Study Group as your preferred charity at [Amazon Smile](#). This is extremely inefficient (0.5%!), but why not?

The Study Group is a "Gold" participant (the highest level) in GuideStar's nonprofit transparency program. You can find their quick overview of us and our annual financial reports at their web site [here](#).

One of the most important things you could do for us is to reach out to other donors on our behalf.

All that said, there is a conspicuous lack of support for this organization's work from the wealthier members of our communities, sometimes even from those that profess to support our work. In their defense, it can be difficult to discern the cryptic, but real, leadership positions into which some of us have been thrust. Who knew? Many of us may find ourselves saying, with Wordsworth, "I made no vows, but vows were made for me." Sometimes it is just a matter of *being willing* to accept a role.

Our work has widely benefitted the region. Without it, northern New Mexico would very likely be, right now, under the shadow of a growing (and quite unnecessary) plutonium manufacturing complex. And this might yet come to pass, though it needn't. People in New Mexico, especially those who have moved here recently, need to understand that they have moved to the very heart of the world's best-funded nuclear weapons complex, a contested frontier in which small efforts – small *for us* – could reap tremendous benefits for humanity, with the Study Group as a vehicle. That is why we exist and why we work.

Friends, we all need to become politically active – totally active. We will talk much more about that in future bulletins. Meanwhile we can't let our friends and associates get away with merely *expressing an opinion*, casually, without real sacrifice, as if that were a political act. It isn't. Merely *being informed* is useless. Neither can we let our friends get away with just going to (another) lecture, or just seeing (another) documentary. Don't we already know what needs to be done? A lot of people go to such events, meet their friends, and have a nice time, but these kind of events have become a dangerous substitute for political speech and action. Cheap emotional catharsis too often replaces organizing, reflection, and resistance.

Those of you who are new to the Study Group may be interested in our backgrounds. Our [staff and board](#) has decades of experience in our issues and related fields. In Greg's case there has been quite a bit of academic training as well, with years of prior professional environmental work and studies in technology assessment going back to college years. That is part why we have such entre in Washington. We also have many years of religious training and leadership in our backgrounds. Use us, friends. How can we help?

We face converging crises that existentially threaten everything, certainly including our own children and grandchildren. The lovely picture of engagement in Marge Piercy's poem on the right – perhaps you know the poem already – reflects what we are trying to cultivate here. We hope you will join with us, however you can. But we can't kid ourselves either: money is essential, and that is what this bulletin is about.

Call or write us with any questions you might have, please.

Sincerely,

Greg and Trish, for the Study Group

To Be of Use

The people I love the best
jump into work head first
without dallying in the shallows
and swim off with sure strokes almost out of sight.
They seem to become natives of that element,
the black sleek heads of seals
bouncing like half-submerged balls.

I love people who harness themselves, an ox to a heavy cart,
who pull like water buffalo, with massive patience,
who strain in the mud and the muck to move things forward,
who do what has to be done, again and again.

I want to be with people who submerge
in the task, who go into the fields to harvest
and work in a row and pass the bags along,
who are not parlor generals and field deserters
but move in a common rhythm
when the food must come in or the fire be put out.

The work of the world is common as mud.
Botched, it smears the hands, crumbles to dust.
But the thing worth doing well done
has a shape that satisfies, clean and evident.
Greek amphoras for wine or oil,
Hopi vases that held corn, are put in museums
but you know they were made to be used.
The pitcher cries for water to carry
and a person for work that is real.

Marge Piercy