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**Reminder: breakfast discussion tomorrow at LASG World Headquarters, 7:30 am**

December 30, 2015

Dear Albuquerque friends --

Just a reminder -- we have coffee (and scones, muffins and fruit AND conviviality) tomorrow morning, New Year's Eve, 7:30 am, at the Study Group office.

And there's another open house at 3:00 pm on Friday, New Year's Day, if you can't come tomorrow.

We can talk about whatever you like but I, Greg, also have a blunt question I'd like to talk about. Is there any effective climate activism going on in Albuquerque? In New Mexico? If so, where and how?

I have not yet seen any serious agenda from any group as yet, or any candidate, let alone an action or organizing plan we could get behind. But I might not see such a thing.

Wait, there is [Citizens Climate Lobby](#). We just sent them a small check. It's something anyway, along with this endorsement. There's also our friends at [New Energy Economy](#), who have lately been fighting against corruption on the PRC among other good work. But what is the plan, actually?

By serious, I mean something aimed at fairly rapid change *in this decade* -- and not, say, substituting methane for some coal, which is probably a negative substitution as far as the climate is concerned (for reasons I would be happy to explain).

If we are going to make any sort of transition we had better get moving. Real capital (as opposed to money-as-electronic-cyphers) is limited, and so is time.

If there is no such activism or only a little, what should be done? What are the productive approaches? Can we help other organizations, and if so how? Shouldn't we be talking about this?

And do you think we can prevent catastrophic climate change, and heal our fracturing and anguished society, while pursuing world domination with our vast military and [Wehrwirtschaft](#)?

Happy New Year to all,

Greg and Trish

PS: We are looking for volunteers, and interns. We have a good program here, but we could use help. Let's talk about it.

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## Thank you for your support; coffee club reminder; more good news

December 27, 2015

**Reminder:** Coffee Club re-opens this week, 7:30 am Thursday and 3:00 pm Friday, Study Group HQ (2901 Summit Place NE, Albuquerque). Coffee, tea, fruit, snacks, and talk.

Dear friends –

**Thank you so much for your generous financial support.** We have only a few more days in the year and we hope all who can contribute but haven't will do so. You can contribute [on-line](#) as well.

After the first of the year (and one more Bulletin to the large email list) we'll give these financial appeals a short rest. Thank you for your patience and support in the meanwhile. Also, many of you have written very kind notes and some have stopped by to see us. Thank you.

Hopefully you are all aware by now (e.g. via [Bulletin 213](#)) that for Los Alamos National Security (LANS), the contractor running Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), the end of the road is coming. See:

- Contract to Manage Federal Nuke Lab up for Grabs After 2017, *Associated Press*, Dec 21, 2015
- Senators confirm LANL contract will go up for bid, *Santa Fe New Mexican*, Dec 19, 2015
- LANL Contract Goes Out For Bid After 2017, *Los Alamos Daily Post*, Dec 19, 2015 (text of Director's memo)
- Feds won't renew contract for private LANL operator, *Santa Fe New Mexican*, Dec 18, 2015

Then, on *Christmas Eve* of all times LANL published its latest hazardous waste [noncompliance report](#), which was noticed by an alert reporter (Rebecca Moss) at the *New Mexican*. It was pretty shocking, as she reported ("[LANL reports more safety lapses at waste sites](#)" *Santa Fe New Mexican*, Dec 24, 2015). Thirty-one years ago I was the first hazardous waste inspector on site at LANL. It was then the worst facility in the state by far, for danger and for noncompliance. The hazardous waste compliance situation at LANL, *three decades later*, remains very disappointing. Perhaps it is still the worst in the state.

As much as we fault LANS we [don't actually think](#) another contractor would do better. UC wasn't much better, though it was significantly cheaper. LANL, not LANS, is the problem. Increasingly LANL is a problem we can't afford.

There will be more bad news in the near future for LANL, LANS, and Bechtel (the big dog in LANS), as a number of stories are working their way toward publication, and details of DOE's evaluations will soon be public. Local author Sally Denton's new book on Bechtel ("[The Profiteers: Bechtel and the Men Who Built the World](#)") will be out on March 1.

Stepping back from LANL's self-inflicted woes, it is high time to ban the bomb, and helping that process along as best we can is on our agenda. We know full well the U.S. and other nuclear weapon states will not participate in such a ban but other states will, and a large group of important states will find themselves under pressure to choose. There are many domestic and international implications of this entirely voluntary and exquisitely flexible process, all of which are positive and (should it proceed to a ban treaty as hoped) quite powerful. Some [121 states have pledged](#) to support negotiations; here's a very nice [map and summary](#) of positions. Discussions in the so-called "[Open-Ended Working Group](#)" begin in Geneva in February for a few days, then again in May for two weeks, then again in August. It is not up to us, obviously, but it would be fitting if a ban treaty were opened for signature on the 30th anniversary of the [Reykjavik Summit](#) between Reagan and Gorbachev (October 11-12, 1986). Jus' sayin.' We will update and expand our overview of nuclear weapons modernization, which was very useful to diplomats last year, in the coming months.

Over Christmas, we began a consultative process with former and serving government officials aimed at dramatically downsizing the physics labs (LANL and the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, LLNL, run by a nearly identical corporate consortium and board). We hope to have our first discussions in late January, in Washington or in Princeton. We don't need two Cold War sized laboratories, each doing the much same thing (I can hear the quibbles now) for three or four times as much money as before (in constant dollars).

We hope you will have a wonderful week; stay tuned for more at the end of the year.

Greg Mello

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## LASG "Coffee Club" to open this Thursday and Friday

December 6, 2015

Dear friends --

Trish and I have decided to open the office for some laid-back, friendly discussions on current political topics and news twice a week. We are aiming for a warm and supportive atmosphere, without particular preconceptions as to agenda, for now. All those on these New Mexico lists are welcome. Children are welcome as well.

We will meet on:

**Thursdays, from 7:30 to 9:00 am  
Fridays, from 3:00 to 4:30 pm**

There are three cats in the house, so if you are very allergic to cats the morning time might not work for you. The afternoon meetings will be in the greenhouse in sunny weather, and better for you.

We will serve healthy snacks as well as coffee and tea.

We will not meet Christmas Eve and also not on Christmas Day, but yes, we will meet New Year's Eve and New Year's Day if anyone is interested.

We will not meet during the first week in January (i.e. on 1/7 and 1/8) but will pick up again the following week (1/14 and 1/15) with the same, or a modified (and announced) schedule.

Your suggestions are meanwhile welcome, on the following topic. We communicate daily with dozens of people -- members, activists, media, academics, government -- on a fairly wide range of issues but little of this gets to you, our local members, because a) communicating takes time and b) we are aiming at practical political action, not information for its own sake. I am loathe to fatten the overall bandwidth of the Study Group, or yours, in the absence of such action. This is a terrible problem overall. Or does it mask an even worse one? There is no right answer to communication technique if we cannot overcome our passivity relative to the real Crisis we face and the present, extremely fraught historical moment. In comparison to the challenges before us we do not see much political activity going on in New Mexico. Many of us would like to see more, but it ain't happening yet. The usual suspects rule, and the usual outcomes can be expected. This has long been a problem in New Mexico, but now it's a potentially *fatal and acute* problem for the planet, our country, our communities, our families, and our brother and sister animals and plants.

For those of you who have sent contributions to support the Study Group's work, thank you so much. We will be continuing our fundraising drive through the end of the year; you can donate in any of the usual ways (for more see my note of December 1): check, credit card, secure [link](#) on our web site, and more.

In other important local news, our friend Elaine Cimino has launched a [Facebook page](#) to bring together people (like us) who want to stop [SandRidge Energy](#) from drilling for oil in Rio Rancho Estates -- go there for much more information, news, and views. There is a [Planning and Zoning Committee meeting](#) on the 10th in Bernalillo (at 1500 Idalia Rd. NE) to consider the proposal and make recommendations to the Sandoval County Commission. Send your written comments [by COB Monday](#) to [mhill@sandovalcountynm.gov](mailto:mhill@sandovalcountynm.gov). This is a broad, as well as a narrow, educational opportunity for our communities, as I am sure you understand.

We are always looking for volunteers and mature interns, whom we can pay and/or support in other ways if the situation warrants. Communication and networking take time -- more time than we have -- as does in-depth research, which is more often than not a struggle for basic facts these days. Not just reporters and editors but even government are flying blind these days. Quality information, information which can be trusted in the right hands is very powerful.

That's it for today. Look for more in the coming days in the next Bulletin and on our [blog](#).

In solidarity,

Greg and Trish, for the Study Group

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## Update to local members and request for your support

December 1, 2015

Dear friends –

We had an excellent fundraising event in Santa Fe on the Sunday before Thanksgiving. I am sorry more of you couldn't be there.

The food was terrific (thank you, Willem and Michael!), the music during dinner was fabulous (thank you, Lydial), our digs were beautiful (thank you, anonymous host!), and our "guest" speakers (via Skype) were superlative (thank you, [Frank](#) and [Bob](#)!). Dr. von Hippel and Robert Alvarez are really two of the most knowledgeable people on nuclear policy issues in the U.S.

Our heartfelt thanks go out to those who were also able to contribute. Many of you on this list have already done so – thank you. We hope more of you will join them!

You can donate in any of several ways:

- By [check](#) to the address below;
- By [one-time credit card use](#) over the phone (call Trish at 505-265-1200);
- Through a very convenient and secure [link](#) on our web site (via JustGive, which will take 2.5%);
- Via a [direct monthly donation](#) (call Trish);
- By [donating stock](#) (thus avoiding capital gains and the associated tax increment; call Trish);
- By [donating something valuable](#) which can be sold (e.g. a car, boat, or real estate);
- By calling [Positive Energy](#) and asking them to [install a photovoltaic system](#) at your home or business; when the project is completed they will give the Study Group \$500 (we are just beginning this cooperative program, now that our own system is installed);
- By making a major [challenge donation](#) in which you match other donations we raise up to some limit (alas we do not at present have any such grant or gift!);
- By [hosting](#) a gathering at your home or workplace;
- By [volunteering](#) with us, in the office or "in the field"; and
- Other ways I am not thinking of just now!

We have a very long way to go on our fundraising goals. We hope you will consider being ambassadors for us, as you reflect on what you heard on the 22nd and have seen over the years. Few groups, even very large organizations in our field, can boast of anything like our track record of concrete successes.

What local people often do not see is that national funders in fields like nuclear policy, as well as in climate policy, are typically caught up with our national craziness, to a greater or lesser extent. (James Kunstler's [take](#) on this yesterday is worth reading.) The leaven in the loaf has always come, and will continue to come, from "outside," from the margins, including from us – all of us at the Study Group. Your leadership must, and can, replace the leadership which is not forthcoming from places from which it ought to be coming.

There were several especially noteworthy comments made at the fundraiser on the 22nd.

One person, a retired academic from California and new to New Mexico, spoke to a couple of us about the strange deference or defensiveness toward Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) she has experienced in Santa Fe, her new home. She never experienced anything quite like it in her previous state of California, which of course hosts Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL).

It is important for everybody to know that yes, New Mexico is quite unique in its subservient attitude toward our nuclear labs. That means that we in the Study Group are, in some ways – in many ways – a *resistance*, and not so much the *reform* organization we thought we were in the 1990s. LANL's fence line runs through – or really surrounds – Santa Fe and nearly all of its civic life and organizations. It runs through many families and many environmental NGOs. Our local news organizations are increasingly captured. Reporters can feel that they are, and maybe they really are, unsupported by their

editors and publishers when it comes to critical stories about the labs.

Environmental NGOs are afraid of the labs. They usually have significant funding from laboratory staff members or in some cases by the Department of Energy (DOE). The State Environment Department is supported by DOE. The LANL Foundation supports numerous individuals and families (e.g. through scholarships), and organizations. And on and on and on it goes.

These numerous conflicts of interest in the community can, *if not understood and resisted*, turn “enterprises of great pitch and moment” awry so that they lose – continuing Hamlet’s speech – “the name of action.” But this very fact makes individuals who speak out and resist far more powerful for doing so.

Another person present, who has served in a senior government position, mentioned to me the great promise for progressive issues embodied in Elizabeth Warren. (I expected there to be a question or comment from somebody about Bernie Sanders, but there wasn’t.) Regarding Senator Warren, that promise may be as it may be, but it need not concern us. Both major parties, the national security Deep State and its extensive lobbying apparatus, the mainstream news media, the corporate Main Street, the Israel lobby, and Wall Street – to pick a few huge forces in American political life – are all fully committed for the foreseeable future to a militarized American Empire. Nobody is going to get elected President who thinks differently until the political realities in our society change. But change they will, because those realities are unsustainable.

Another local person (who did not attend) later asked if we had recordings of Dr. von Hippel and Bob Alvarez, that we could share with him. The answer is no we do not, and if we did we wouldn’t share them. We want people to “show up” in some way, real or metaphorical, and to find a real way to contribute. It must be added that this was not a public meeting. We did not invite all and sundry (see “resistance,” above).

These are some highlights from our presentation (“Nuclear Disarmament, Society, Environment”).

- **State- and socially-sanctioned mass violence is politically incompatible with economic, social, and environmental health, let alone development, nationally and in New Mexico.**
- **Trenchant, fact- and value-based, “all in” opposition builds bridges, supports and *is* civilization. It succeeds in multiple dimensions. So please join us!**
- Pope Francis, in his message to the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons Conference (Vienna, 2014), eloquently described the core values in our work:

“Now, more than ever, technological, social, and political interdependence urgently calls for an ethic of solidarity..., which encourages peoples to work together for a more secure world, and a future that is increasingly rooted in moral values and responsibility on a global scale.”

- In many ways World War III has already started, as a Republican friend recently remarked. The suffering is already tremendous, is growing rapidly, and we need to stop it. Colleague Sam Husseini’s [recent remarks](#) about “perpetual war” remind us of how this connects with everything in our polity and society:

I’ve got news for you: Perpetual war is going to cost you a lot. The Vietnam War helped undermine the war on poverty — Martin Luther King called it a “demonic suction tube.” Perpetual war is going to make you lose your soul. Perpetual war will make you an accomplice to murder many times over. Perpetual war will mean generations more of Muslim youth driven to madness against the U.S. Perpetual war is going to potentially lead to nuclear war. Perpetual war will mean an even more militarized police force. Perpetual war will likely mean more of a repressive state. Perpetual war will mean you can’t march against climate change — or anything else. Perpetual war will mean that refugees and other folks get treated like trash. Perpetual war means your kid can’t get a job in much of anything other than the military. Perpetual war means soldiers with PTSD coming home and beating the crap out of their wives and traumatizing their children. Perpetual war will mean at every public venue you’ve got to go through security so that you can scratch yourself without court approval.

- **We must re-frame the issues properly while we can. Why? Just ahead:**
  - More and wider war, and terrorism, challenging the foundations of our civilization and society.
  - Deepening economic decline, with widening financial crises that are spinning out of control and will unravel economies fairly fast.
  - The current economic decline could make investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency at the appropriate and necessary scale more difficult than otherwise unless “renewable energy Keynesianism” coupled with new, progressive taxes are embraced.
  - The current decline is likely to induce peak oil, since new supplies are unaffordable. Post-peak oil is likely to mean peak GDP also given their historic tight correlation, making growth-dependent loans difficult to service

across society.

- Tensions within the EU ramping up rapidly.
- Increasing migrations and deaths *en route*.
- With each passing year the competition for lower-cost hydrocarbons and pipeline routes has intensified and this will continue.
- The risks of major power war are increasing year by year in ways that are not controllable without major changes in what has been our overall foreign policy since at least World War II and our energy policy since 1900. The risk of nuclear war is rising rapidly. The U.S. now seeks military and political dominance vis-à-vis Russia, and Russia is responding. Tensions between nuclear-armed India and Pakistan are even more fraught.
- **The battle we must fight, which will unite all life-affirming strands and constituencies, is for human solidarity, and preservation of a living planet. The fight is against militarization and empire and its associated domestic austerity and pervasive violence, and for solidarity and survival.** In NM, this battle must be in major part nuclear. We are *not* fighting for “the purity of our bodily fluids.”
- New Mexico currently leads the U.S. in WMD, in both absolute and relative expenditure, in unwavering political support for WMD from Democrats, in nuclear design laboratories, and in warheads and bombs present (though not deployed). These priorities are incompatible with economic growth, climate and energy progress, *and all other sound policies*. They lead *nowhere*, in fact. *We are fighting for our lives here*.
- The U.S. nuclear weapons enterprise – the “empire of nuclear might,” to paraphrase Simone Weil – needs unwavering, enthusiastic support in and from New Mexico to successfully expand its production facilities, for recruitment, retention, and motivating employees, for successful program management, and for corporate prestige and profits. *Real opposition and loss of prestige is very damaging*.
- *The nuclear weapons enterprise is very fragile.* This fragility occurs because of its immorality, its dangers, its complexity, the extensive privileges it has amassed relative to the rest of society, its secretive, cloistered wastefulness and stupidity, its irrelevance to society’s real security needs, the inherent robustness and longevity of nuclear weapons, and the competition for funds within the military and between military and non-military government objectives. These factors have combined to tip the DOE warhead complex into a rolling crisis, which limits its present and future possibilities.

I want to close with something I wrote over Thanksgiving, first to a long-time supporter and then (with edits) to the "Stop the War Machine" discussion (SWM-D) list serve in Albuquerque, and then again to attendees on the 22nd. (Those who attended need not read further.) I will put the whole SWM-D post on the Study Group's [blog](#), [to which I hope you all subscribe](#), tomorrow.

*Face-to-face conversation, learning, mutual responsibility, bodily commitment, personal skills practiced in a human context, identity formation in a political and moral context, and resurrection of moral life, are central [to successful activism].*

As Marge Piercy put it, "The pitcher cries for water to carry/and a person for work that is real."

In about 2006 or 2007 we [LASG] realized that there was *nothing whatsoever* we could do, short of a million or more dollars a year and a large staff, to change the mind of (then-congressman) Udall and others in similar positions in New Mexico. It was not a matter of doing this or that *better*. It is simple *impossible*. That was when we began *going around* our delegation.

The results were [surprising and] delightful.

The U.S. as a whole is now pretty much in that same post-democratic, militarist position [as New Mexico was then]. Everything has gotten worse. [On the national level], Obama has squandered the last best hope of democracy in the U.S., quite probably. There are however other countries in the world, and they are more and more acting to limit U.S. reach and the destruction which pretty much now always accompanies it. That's a good thing.

Trish thinks the only way major positive change will come to the U.S. now is through massive catastrophe, *provided the living seeds are there*. We have gone past some points of no return. I agree.

*It is these living seeds -- real people and their human-scaled institutions, with real, local accountability -- which we must nurture*, while halting some critical damage and building out positive real-world changes we need. It

won't be "enough," but it will be better than not doing so, and we can't tell how *much* better overall. It could be decisive.

For example, without a new pit factory there will be no new pits, and no new nuclear weapons requiring new pits, and no design of same, and no military policies depending on same, and no recruitment of staff for same, and no budgets for same.

The soldier in his position [just] cannot know how the whole battle will turn out. It might, or might not, depend on his bravery, loyalty, and skillful initiative.

It is quite possible we, LASG, have already killed a new pit factory for all time (despite support for that factory from nearly all NGO's – herded as they were by their funders and by their tired DC leadership), but that won't be known for another decade, during which time we have to be vigilant, creative, and effective. *On all our issues, we need to advance to avoid defeat.*

As far as national policy and international disarmament outcomes go, we have to link a devoted local set of people, in and through this organization, with the people who can actually make desired outcomes happen.

History is on the move, chaos is rising, and we want certain very specific, key, short- and medium-term outcomes, as well as new vocations.

See Bulletin 211, which will follow tomorrow, for more. Thank you for your attention and support.

Please help us if you can.

In gratitude, wishing you all a wonderful, deeply joyful, and insightful holiday season,

Greg Mello

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November 19, 2015

Dear friends –

**One last reminder! Our get-together on Santa Fe this Sunday, from 4 to 7 pm, is filling up nicely but there is still room for more!**

So please RSVP as soon as possible by phone (505-265-1200) or by [email](#) and we'll tell you how to get there!

**Please consider reaching out to your friends who might be interested or who might want to help support our work.**  
If your friends want to come on Sunday have them [contact Trish ASAP](#).

Our terrific guest speakers at this meeting include [Robert Alvarez](#), who will speak (and take questions) on the future of the nuclear weapons complex (and its cleanup), and [Dr. Frank von Hippel](#), who will speak (and take questions) on pit production (and surplus plutonium disposition). I will introduce them along with some of the other figures in the Study Group present, and I will talk about our plans for the coming months.

Selected recent news of interest:

- **The "Disarmament Guru" returns**, courtesy [wildfire-v.org](#)

"We were so appalled at the proliferation of absurdities and witlessness at the recent [EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Conference](#), particularly the session on "[The NPT Review Conference and the Future of Nuclear Disarmament](#)", that we begged the Disarmament Guru - last seen at the NPT review conference in May - to come to our aid once more. He has graciously assented to share his wisdom: you can [read it here](#).

- **Sally Denton's new book** on Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) management contractor Bechtel ([The Profiteers: Bechtel and the Men Who Built the World](#)) has been given a prestigious Kirkus Review "Star" for "exceptional merit." [Their review:](#)

"Investigative journalist Denton (*The Plots Against the President: FDR, A Nation in Crisis, and the Rise of the American Right*, 2012, etc.) offers an ambitious "empire biography" of the Bechtel family and the secretive, privately held construction company-turned-diversified international conglomerate that has been "inextricably enmeshed" in U.S. foreign policy for seven decades.

"In this incredible-seeming but deeply researched book, the author traces the phenomenal rise of the California-based corporation that became famous for building the Hoover Dam and went on to handle billion-dollar projects from the Channel Tunnel to the Big Dig; to construct airports, power plants, and entire cities; to cart away the wreckage of the World Trade Center and rebuild Iraq; to privatize America's nuclear weapons business (assuming control of Los Alamos, etc.); and, in the end, to complete 25,000 projects in 160 countries. Now the world's largest contractor, with offices in 50 nations, Bechtel, from 1999 to 2013, received \$40 billion in contracts from the U.S. Departments of Energy and Defense. "Despite its fiercely antiregulatory, antigovernment stance," writes Denton, "the Bechtel family owes its entire fortune to the U.S. government." She describes the dizzying revolving door between Bechtel's headquarters and the federal government: Bechtel executives that include John McCone, George P. Shultz, and Casper Weinberger have passed through, forging links with the CIA and other government agencies and leading to favorable contracts and subsidies. Whether in war-torn Europe, the Middle East, or elsewhere, it has always been "difficult to determine if Bechtel was doing favors for the US government, or if it was the other way around." Parts of this mammoth story have been told before, but Denton has shaped it into a taut, page-turning narrative detailing the company's machinations under five generations of family leadership. She

concludes that the firm is "either a brilliant triumph or an iconic symbol of grotesque capitalism."

"Filled with stories of cronyism and influence peddling, Denton's riveting and revealing book will undoubtedly displease the so-called "boys from Bechtel," who refused to talk to Denton, referring her to the company website."

Sally's book hits the shelves on February 16, 2016.

- **"U.S. government proposes 17-year delay in start of Hanford nuclear tank cleanup -- until 2039"** (Ralph Vartebedian, *LA Times*, 11/18, with nice pictures).

This article is undoubtedly oversimplified but, that said, this news about clinches it: a major part of the Hanford cleanup -- the Waste Treatment Plant (WTP), or major parts of it -- will fail. This is a \$72 billion project in total life-cycle cost. It is certainly the largest project in the Department of Energy (DOE), the flagship project in the DOE cleanup program, and also probably the largest civil engineering project in the United States. *It's a Bechtel project*, and it's failing like so many DOE and NNSA projects before it.

The huge Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility (MFFF) and its associated Mixed Oxide (MOX) fuel program is also failing, *regardless of what the administration or Congress does at this point*.

These failures are part of the flowering of *a larger pattern of failure* that began as long ago as the Arab Oil Embargo in 1974, as a formerly classified GAO report we obtained from that office helps make clear (not posted, per request). Bob Alvarez has seen it all "go down" and may speak to this on Sunday.

The local LANL cleanup program will certainly leave most of the waste buried on site, while creating more waste all the time, some buried locally. It too is failing overall.

- **NNSA, Air Force Complete Successful B61-12 Life Extension Program Development Flight Test at Tonopah Test Range** (NNSA press release with important video still) (**Nerd warning**)

The picture shows the moment of impact. Trish and I have seen the unpublished impact video (in the Senate) and expect it by mail this week. The plowed circle appears to be roughly of radius about 8 times the length of the bomb (11' 8") and so is on the order of 100 ft, or ~30 m. This comports well with the advertised 30 m Circular Error Probable (CEP) for the new guidance system (tail kit) and is the likely meaning of the plowed dike.

The entry of the bomb into the dirt is very clean in the video with hardly any dirt kicked up. The B61 has always had intrinsic earth-penetration ability and that is surely being retained. Even a shallow explosion underground is considerably tamped and so the shock wave transfers to the earth pretty well, tempting NATO to target in that mode -- but that shock also then transfers from the earth to the atmosphere (like a drum head), causing far-away damage from air shock as well as the rolling radioactive basal surge, which follows. So much for "low yield." A 50 kt airburst over Santa Fe would create a firestorm from St. Michael's Drive to U.S. 599. There would be few if any survivors.

The combination of variable yield (reportedly not functional in tactical B61s today), unprecedented accuracy (allowing lower yields for assured target destruction), multiple fuzing modes (any height above, at, or below the earth's surface), delivery by stealthy airplanes, forward basing, and unprecedented target acquisition intelligence, make this a nuclear "bomb for all reasons." But frankly, which nuclear bomb isn't horrible? This one is no more dangerous than any other bomb or warhead.

Development is fairly advanced, thanks to passive approval of the whole modernization program by the arms control community and "antinuclear" groups as a condition for ratifying New START in the Senate. Now it's all about the evil Russians, just like the Cold War. First production is slated for FY2020. Officially, it is to be replaced by the B61-13 starting circa 2040, on about the same schedule as the Hanford WTP -- and a joke.

- **North Dakota, a star of "Saudi America" propaganda, is now losing production at a rate of 2.5% per month** (See data and comments [here](#)). Also, OPEC has world oil supply peaking in June and July and declining by about 1 million bpd since then. U.S. production has been declining about 1% per month overall and so is Canada, within the accuracy of the data. Despite what you may have read, there are no new bonanzas ready to come on line globally that can easily compensate for this sag. With prices low and likely staying low (according to about everybody) due to a developing lack of commodity demand (aka economic depression), investment in production has been declining precipitously. Heinberg has a nice summary today ("[Can We Afford the Future?](#)"). The short answer, as an increasing number of analysts are beginning to understand, is -- not really.

This is not the place to discuss this in depth but what this means is that a gentle, slow transition to a renewable energy, climate-friendly future while keeping the "American Way of Life" intact is not going to happen. We must make the transition rapid or it probably will not happen at all. Theo Kitchener has a recent speculative [article](#) addressing this problem -- just the latest one that could be cited.

To our knowledge this conversation is not happening in climate movement circles in New Mexico, and in very few places elsewhere. As a result of people not really understanding how urgent our transition has to be, the best organizations are isolated and stymied in their efforts, and overall progress is glacial, so to speak.

See you on Sunday!

Greg

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# Los Alamos Study Group

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November 17, 2015 update

Dear friends –

**Reminder: Fundraising soirée and discussion in Santa Fe this coming Sunday afternoon, November 22, 4 pm to 7 pm!**

We will be meeting in a spacious and lovely private home on the east side of Santa Fe. There will be valet parking. We'll serve a simple but scrumptious dinner. This is a private event and our host has asked us to not give out the address except to those who are coming.

**So please RSVP as soon as possible by phone (505-265-1200) or by [email](#) and we'll tell you how to get there!**

**This is the most important event of the year for us. Please consider reaching out to your friends who might help support our work and see if they would like to come, meet, and talk about what we want to do in 2016. Have your friends contact Trish ASAP.**

Our guest speakers at this meeting will include:

- **Robert Alvarez**, one of our two new Study Group board members. Bob is a [Senior Scholar at the Institute for Policy Studies](#) and Professorial Lecturer in the [Energy, Resources and Environment Program](#) at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. Bob's knowledge of nuclear technologies, safety, cleanup, and related public policy issues is legendary. While a Senate staffer, he played a central role in establishing the DOE cleanup program. While at DOE, he coordinated the enactment of legislation providing compensation for sick nuclear workers (the [Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act](#), EEOICPA). Most recently he has been working on cutting-edge issues in spent nuclear fuel management and investigating extensive contamination from Manhattan Project residues in communities near St. Louis.

Bob will speak and take questions on the future of the nuclear weapons complex.

- **Dr. Frank von Hippel**, a long-time Study Group mentor and friend. Frank (his bio is [here](#)) is probably the single most distinguished arms control and nonproliferation scientist in the United States. He has played an important role in every single nuclear issue -- nuclear weapons, nuclear materials, and nuclear power -- all of them. During the Cold War Frank was a leader in developing back-channel relationships with senior Soviet scientists, including Andre Sakharov, involving many dozens of citizen "shuttle-diplomacy" trips to the USSR. Frank was the point person on the scientific aspects of arms control and disarmament in the Clinton White House. Frank provided courtroom testimony in Albuquerque in our (ultimately successful, though we lost) lawsuit against a new pit production facility. Frank's disarmament passion is "bred in the bone;" his Nobel-winning grandfather James Franck chaired a scientists' committee in June 1945 that [argued against](#) using atomic bombs in the war, and predicting the nuclear arms race. Frank is currently working to preventing proliferation of nuclear materials in several countries. Longtime former Study Group president [Zia Mian](#) works in the [program](#) Frank started. Greg was a visiting scholar in the program in 2002.

Frank will talk about pit production -- and why it is not needed -- and take questions. FYI, Frank is also an expert on surplus plutonium disposition and can answer questions on this OTHER big new mission proposed for Los Alamos.

We may have one other speaker, from Congress. We'll see.

Please RSVP as soon as you can!

Greg



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November 16, 2015

Dear friends –

As we wrote in late October, **we are having an important fundraising soirée and discussion in Santa Fe [this coming Sunday afternoon, November 22!](#)** We will be meeting in a spacious and lovely private home on the east side of Santa Fe **from 4 pm to 7 pm**. Parking on our narrow streets can be tough so we've arranged for valet parking. And we'll be serving a simple but scrumptious dinner. This is a private event and our host has asked us to not give out the address except to those who are coming. The atmosphere will be relaxed and there will be plenty of time to meet new friends and old.

**Please RSVP as soon as possible by phone (505-265-1200) or by [email](#) and we'll tell you how to get there!**

**We will be one, or perhaps two, highly-knowledgeable guest speaker(s) via "Skype and screen." I will let you know more in the next day or two.**

**This is the most important event of the year for us. Please consider reaching out to your friends who might help support our work and see if they would like to come, meet, and talk about what we want to do in 2016. Have your friends contact Trish ASAP.**

Nuclear weapons issues are incredibly important in this state, more so here than anywhere else in the U.S. They nuclearize our intellectual life and they pull us to the political right. They blight our prospects. The Study Group is the most knowledgeable and effective organization in this state working on nuclear weapons issues. We work here, in Washington, and internationally. We don't see nuclear weapons as isolated from other pressing issues, and we work with many other like-minded organizations. Nationally, we are a unique organization and we have a fabulous track record. We hope you will keep supporting us and we hope you will reach out to others on our behalf. We have a wonderful, supportive group of local donors and volunteers, but we need to expand and stabilize our programs -- and bring in young people. This takes money, and this is the time of year we have to ask, more pointedly than at any other time.

By the way, and just in case anybody thought it was over, the zombie [Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Replacement](#) (CMRR) project is back, in its new abridged edition (which we hope to kill). Our senior senator [counted coup](#) for its inclusion (along with the new [B61-12](#)) in this year's National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). Prospects for success are excellent, but huge projects with political momentum are always hard to kill. The point is that the U.S. does not need new nuclear weapons, a battle we are fighting in other ways as well. The U.S. needs disarmament -- to survive.

**On another subject we are now very happy to announce that our board of directors has grown to include two of people we already work with closely, in Washington and Geneva. They are:**

- **Mia Gandenberger**, whom some of you will have met in the summer of 2013 when she was a Disarmament Fellow with the Study Group. Mia is one of the world's foremost diplomatic correspondents on disarmament issues. She is the Geneva Program Manager for [Reaching Critical Will](#), a project of the [Women's International League for Peace and Freedom](#) (WILPF), the oldest women's peace organization in the world.
- **Robert Alvarez**, a Senior Scholar at the Institute for Policy Studies and Professorial Lecturer in the Energy, Resources and Environment Program at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. Bob's knowledge of nuclear technologies, safety, cleanup, and related public policy issues is legendary. While a Senate staffer, he played a central role in establishing the DOE cleanup program. While at DOE, he coordinated the enactment of legislation providing compensation for sick nuclear workers (the [Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act](#), EEOICPA). Most recently he has been working on cutting-edge issues in spent nuclear fuel management and investigating extensive contamination from Manhattan Project residues in communities near St. Louis.

That's it for now -- more soon!

Please RSVP, now!

Greg

PS 1: Coming soon: the [Disarmament Cafe](#), at the World Headquarters! Stay tuned!

PS 2: Some [nice people having lunch after tempering](#) -- just a little -- local enthusiasm for the [Manhattan Project National Historical Park](#).

PS 3: The [ICAN team](#) this past spring at the NPT Review Conference, New York.

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November 7, 2015

Dear friends –

## **1. Now's the time to RSVP for our November 22 fundraiser in Santa Fe!**

This is a very important fundraising event for us and we hope many of you will come. The event will be held from 4 to 7 pm in a lovely eastside Santa Fe home that can accommodate only 60 people, so please RSVP as soon as possible, while space remains! Dinner will be provided by friends of the Study Group; wine is being donated by our host. We have provided for valet parking. There will be plenty of time to meet other donors and we will also be conferencing in with some of our senior nuclear policy friends from Washington and elsewhere.

If there are potential donors you know who might like to know more about us, or want ask questions of us or the other experts we will "bring" in electronically, now is the time to approach those friends. We will let you know more about the program as the day approaches.

We also want to have a fundraiser here in Albuquerque, but have not set a date. It will be after Thanksgiving, most likely in early December. And we are open to other fundraising ideas you may have. 2016 will be a very crucial year on all our issues. We are optimistic, but funds are very limited.

## **2. Will you join us in Los Alamos on Wednesday, November 11, at 10 am, at the ceremony inaugurating the new Manhattan Project National Historical Park (MPNHP)?**

We fought this appalling travesty but eventually lost. The principal arguments against the park can be found in [this letter](#) to selected senators.

On Tuesday, Nov. 10th, in Washington, DC, Department of Energy (DOE) Secretary Moniz will sign a memorandum of agreement between DOE and the National Park Service (NPS) establishing the Park. Los Alamos County is sending a delegation to the festivities.

On Wednesday there will be a public celebration and luncheon in Los Alamos at the Park Visitor Center, 475 20th St. and at Fuller Lodge, respectively.

At least three of us are going up from Albuquerque to this event. We will be preparing counter-Park leaflets for the public and media, at a minimum. If you go we urge you to wear a somber and formal outfit, exactly as to a funeral.

If you want to go we would like to talk to you to plan our approach to the event, and perhaps have a meeting in Santa Fe or Pojoaque en route. We will be meeting with international media on the 10th and there will be media present on the 11th as well. This event is an important chance to help interpret the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to U.S. and international audiences. The more interest there is in this event from our members and friends, the more we can do and the better it will be done. So please think about it, and call or write us.

We hope that this nascent Park (there is no money as yet, and no management plan) can become a locus of local protest. We see the Park not as "history" but as pure propaganda for Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) and its enduring mission of creating weapons of global destruction, for LANL's private, Bechtel-led contractor Los Alamos National Security (LANS), for the "greatness" of the Manhattan Project (the quote is from the enabling legislation) and therefore the legitimacy and "greatness" of nuclear weapons, and for heinous war crimes now celebrated in a new National Park. This Park is not exactly about the past because the Manhattan Project never ended. It's also about who we are today, what we celebrate and glorify, and what we will become.

Perhaps it really should be called the "Bechtel National Park," as it is one of the 40 or so different ways we have identified that the for-profit nuclear laboratories have subverted democratic oversight and created – for themselves, their defense industry sponsors, and for local comprador politicos – an almost-perfect, self-licking ice cream cone. Almost perfect – even this they cannot manage.

## **3. Update and additional perspective on the UN First Committee**

You will have received our press release on events this past week at the UN yesterday ([Majority of Countries Slam Nuclear Deployments, Decry Lack of Disarmament, and Pledge to Support Negotiations toward a Treaty Banning Possession and Use of Nuclear Weapons](#), Nov 6, 2015). As it turns out, our friends at wildfire had [written](#), incisively as usual and well worth reading, on that same series of votes.

#### **4. Report on Study Group meetings and the demonstration at Kirtland Air Force Base (KAFB)**

Both the Santa Fe and Albuquerque meetings went well, with small but potent groups of us in attendance in each case. We gave updates on weapons issues from our recent staff time in Washington and at the UN, discussed the progress of the LANL cleanup and the looming decisions in surplus U.S. plutonium disposition (which very much affect New Mexico), and conferred on a number of other matters of interest to those present.

The KAFB demonstration organized by Stop the War Machine in Albuquerque and supported by us and others was reasonably successful for a mid-day event during the work week. Many thanks to those who came and to Astrid Webster, whose phone calls and flyering at UNM and elsewhere were crucial to the event. We could certainly use more outreach and networking help, to help overcome “stove-piping” between issues and organizations (just for starters). Without volunteers, that outreach won’t happen.

The Global Strike Command exercises this fall include, in addition to the “Global Thunder Vigilant Shield” exercise [at KAFB](#) and [elsewhere](#), the largest NATO exercise in 20 years, dubbed “[Trident Juncture](#),” involving 36,000 participants in “more than” 30 NATO and partner nations. Why, you might ask? Why does NATO exist at all?

Vigilant Shield [locked down](#) the students at all Pojoaque schools (elementary, junior high, and high school) this past Thursday, November 5 due to an “active shooter” message sent to a high school teacher who is also in the Air National Guard. Two dozen Santa Fe County deputies, state police, and tribal police were scrambled to the site and searched the schools while the students sheltered in place, a frightening experience for all concerned – and one worth thinking about just a little.

Very best wishes,

Greg and Trish

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## Important demonstration Tuesday in ABQ (volunteer outreach needed)

**We suggest that you forward this alert to your own lists and friends.**

*(This note is going to a relatively small list of people, not our regular big list. Write us if you want to be removed from this list - or if you are changing email addresses!)*

October 31, 2015

Dear friends –

Here's the scoop on the event, as written by our friends at [Stop the War Machine](#) in Albuquerque, who have initiated and are leading the demonstration (thank you!):

The U.S. Air Force Global Strike Command is conducting a [special weeklong war exercise](#) at Kirtland AFB from Mon., Nov. 2 to Fri., Nov 6. Operation Global Thunder Vigilant Shield\* is code for a first-strike nuclear attack against Russia and/or China arising out of a regional conflict with U.S. military forces. U.S. military strategy now includes denying Russia and China use of their space satellites - so this next war will be a war in space too. Including Kirtland AFB in this exercise is a leap in global war planning. The base is a pivotal link between the military's nuclear weapons capability and space war operations... Our military leaders have gone mad again, thinking the planet can survive a global nuclear and space war both. Stop the next war now.

**Tue. Nov 3, 2015, 11 am – 1 pm**

**Truman St. @ Gibson SE, Albuquerque, NM**

(One block west of San Mateo. Arrive early, some streets maybe be blocked, and perhaps cell phones too.)

Endorsed by Stop the War Machine, Peaceful Skies Coalition, Los Alamos Study Group, Sabeel-Abq, Coalition to Stop \$30 Billion to Israel, Jewish Voices for Peace, and others: 505-858-0882

Over the past few weeks the Study Group has been on the fringes of a discussion among some national peace groups about the need for some form of citizen mobilization in response to the strident calls from politicians, presidential candidates, and some military leaders for heightened military responses to the spiraling problems created by our *previous* aggressive wars and "regime change" efforts in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and East Asia. These wars have violated and still violate the U.N. Charter, the Nuremberg principles, and the very foundations of international law, in many ways. They have degraded our society. They have cost trillions of dollars and millions of lives, mostly civilian, and have displaced millions more in an arc of hardship, chaos, and that stretches across north Africa, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and now Western Europe, where refugee arrivals threatening fragile political structures and values within and across EU states. In 2015, U.S. Special Forces have been deployed to a record-shattering [147 countries so far](#). The U.S. spends as much on its military as the next 9 largest militaries combined (China, Russia, Saudi Arabia, France, UK, Germany, Japan, and India).

Many powerful factions in the U.S. now want more and bigger wars, more covert operations, more confrontations, "no-fly zones" in countries where the U.S. has no business being in the first place, more sales of powerful weapons to favored belligerents in proxy wars, more mobilization and display of armed might on Russia's borders, and so on.

It should be obvious that with this level of militarism and empire there will be no effective response to *any* the largest problems facing the U.S., for abundant social, political, economic, and institutional reasons. Forget about democracy in that case. A [Deep State](#) will rule wherever its interests lie, no matter who is elected.

U.S., NATO, and allied "regime change" in Iraq, Libya, and our attempted regime change in Syria has *caused*, has in part *financed*, and has in part *armed* IS, a terrorist would-be "state" that is conspicuously at war with civilization generally. That same Syrian "regime change" effort, fueled at every stage by the U.S. and its allies in all possible ways, is among the main causes of the hundreds of thousands of deaths and the displacement of millions in the Syrian civil war, as UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon recently implied or *said* (choose your own interpretation). We agree with Rep. [Tulsi Gabbard](#) (D-HI) (link to CNN interview) and with the Russian Federation and many in U.S. military and intelligence circles that removing

Assad and his government would likely result in a catastrophic expansion of IS and allied terrorist structures.

Confrontations with Russia in Ukraine, across eastern Europe in general, in Syria, and with China in the South China Sea and western Pacific generally, are just the most visible hotspots that we, the U.S., have either created in whole cloth or are making needlessly hotter. In our view these confrontations have a single common theme: *geopolitical advantage for the U.S.* -- or inversely, *prevention of Eurasian economic integration*. We have discussed this in detail in two teach-ins thus far and I am sure there will be others.

I don't need to tell you that war with Russia and China, which has already begun in its modern hybrid form, is a risky business, and one with vast collateral damage for populations and nature at every step of escalation.

We live in a war zone in New Mexico, which has skewed our politics and government far to the political right. In addition to drone attacks conducted from New Mexico bases, [Kirtland Air Force Base](#) (KAFB) just this month became part of the Air Force's [Global Strike Command](#), now led by a four-star general for the first time (thus elevating Global Strike in the military as a whole). Global Strike entails not just Air Force nuclear weapons -- its primary mission -- but also involves space war, cyber war, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, conventional global strike, and ballistic missile defense "assets." KAFB has a role in many of these missions in addition to hosting [Sandia National Laboratories](#) (SNL).

According to the Air Force, Kirtland is home to the largest nuclear weapons depot in the world, the [Kirtland Underground Munitions Storage Complex](#) (KUMSC), which in 1998 was estimated to contain 2,450 warheads and bombs. We believe it contains more than this today, more than any other base or locale on the planet.

These warheads and bombs are not all, and perhaps in all cases not fully, "retired," a word which has lost some meaning under President Obama ("[U.S. claims of nuclear weapons retirement, dismantlement 'may be misleading' – GAO](#)"). Many of them are being stored in varying degrees of readiness for possible uploading onto missiles in case the U.S. should withdraw from [New START](#), or for uploading after the treaty expires in February 2021 (unless renewed for 5 years by the U.S. and Russia).

"Global Thunder 15" was a huge nuclear war exercise conducted last year. From [The Aviationist](#):

Exercise Global Thunder 15 (first exercise for FY 2015, hence the 15) "is a command and control exercise designed to train Department of Defense forces and assess joint operational readiness across all of USSTRATCOM's mission areas with a specific focus on nuclear readiness."

Conducted in coordination with North American Aerospace Defense Command and U.S. Northern Command's Exercise Vigilant Shield 15 (attended by tactical warplanes with the aim to train homeland defense forces), Global Thunder 15 is a realistic exercise during which nearly every USSTRATCOM component, task force, unit, command post and bomb wing takes part in the training events which are aimed at improving all the Command capabilities: space, cyber, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, global strike, and ballistic missile defense.

On a 24-hour period, yearly Global Thunders foresee intense [B-52](#) and [B-2s](#) perform their MITO departures and going up to the Arctic and back, [controlled](#) by several [E-6B Mercury](#) aircraft.

Some strategic bombers route up over Nova Scotia and up past Thule/Greenland and either go all the way around North of Canada and back down through Canada/Alaska or they turn round and go back the way they came. Other waves go up over Alaska first and come back down viceversa.

A one-day simulated nuclear war.

That big exercise is not being repeated this year. But the smaller "Vigilant Shield 2016" component is underway in various places. See 22 recent photos [here](#).

This rising militarism is being financed by cuts in social programs and debt, not by increased taxes. [This "re-balancing" of the U.S. social contract toward an austerity that privileges the military \(and of course nuclear weapons\) will continue until the rising pain in society is effectively expressed, or until a war occurs that is devastating to enough U.S. elites \(and the rest of us\), or until an internal or natural catastrophe breaks U.S. imperial ambitions.](#) We prefer the first option. We see this demonstration as a step in that effective outcry and we hope you and your friends will join us at KAFB Tuesday. [We hope Tuesday's events will extend to other events in a variety of flavors, and come to embrace a broad set of issues and organizations across the justice, anti-war, and environmental spectrum.](#)

Best wishes to everybody,

Greg

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**Save the date: fundraiser for the Study Group: Sunday Nov 22 in Santa Fe**

October 30, 2015

Dear friends –

(This note is going to a relatively small list of people, not our regular big list. Write us if you want to be removed from this list - or if you are changing email addresses!)

**Please save the date! We will be having an important fundraising soirée in Santa Fe on Sunday afternoon and early evening, November 22!**

I will put other news and announcement in a second email to keep this one simple. More details will be forthcoming next week but we wanted to let you all know ASAP.

This is a good time to start thinking about people you know that might want to help us fight a new generation of nuclear weapons, with negative consequences for New Mexico. We are encouraged by what we saw in DC last week well below the headline chaos, and believe that with your help we can succeed in halting expansion of warhead core production and nuclear waste processing at LANL.

Best wishes to everybody,

Greg

PS: We snapped [this picture](#) at a laboratory lobbying extravaganza in Washington last week (National Laboratory Day; for some reason they forgot our name tags so we wrote our own). You can see some familiar faces. The rapt attention shown by the entire Democratic part of the New Mexico delegation to nuclear weapons and their institutions is attention not going to the environment and the human goals of government.

We later met with Rep. Michelle Lujan-Grisham in her DC office and asked her to explain her vote in favor of the FY16 National Defense Authorization Act, which broke budget caps for the military *alone* and expanded the war slush fund ("Overseas Contingency Operations"). We did not get a coherent explanation, beyond wanting to appear eager to support military and nuclear interests in Albuquerque. Obama has since vetoed the bill. Presumably it will pass with minor adjustments now that the 2-year budget deal (which also increases military spending) has passed.

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**Meetings this week: Santa Fe Wednesday 10/28, Albuquerque Thursday 10/29**

October 26, 2015

Dear friends –

Our next meeting is in Santa Fe on Wednesday, October 28, at 6:00 pm. **Please RSVP** to this meeting so we can plan accordingly, and we will tell you how to get to the meeting place. Space is limited. This is not a public meeting but if you have a friend you think would be interested please give us a call at 505-265-1200 or [write Trish](#).

We will then meet in Albuquerque the following day, Thursday, October 29, also at 6:00 pm. This meeting will be at the Study Group office, 2901 Summit Place NE.

At these meetings we will *briefly* present and discuss with you:

- The current state of progress toward an international prohibition on the possession, transfer, and use of nuclear weapons. Trish and Greg have just returned from the UN General Assembly and we are monitoring developments there closely from here, New York, and Geneva.
- The ongoing fiasco in disposing of 34+ tons of excess U.S. plutonium, currently slated to be processed in the Santa Fe metro area over the next couple of decades for shipment to South Carolina and manufacture there into nuclear reactor fuel that no commercial operator wants. The Study Group is promoting disposal of this material at WIPP. We also advocate further study of direct disposal at WIPP *without plutonium processing*, the so-called "sterilization" option. Trish will post some of the key references between now and Wednesday on a new "plutonium disposition" web page. In the meantime please see "[Direct disposal is better solution for South Carolina's plutonium problem](#)," by Ed Lyman and Frank von Hippel. We discussed this issue with Frank and others in Princeton 8 days ago, not for the first time and with congressional staff this past week.
- The current state of efforts to expand warhead core (pit) production infrastructure and capacity for new warhead types, also in the Santa Fe metro area. Teaser: it is clear to us from meetings on Capitol Hill that at present all parties assume no interest or resistance from Santa Fe. You and we must change that.
- Possible new Study Group member committees. We are thinking of Outreach and Action committees. It is difficult for me to avoid using words like ridicule, satire, and protest in relation to the second one. So be thinking. We are. Frustrated with activism about our converging crises? Channel that and have fun with your friends. We really do need help.
- If we stand up volunteer committees we will also need more frequent meetings, which must quickly pay off in terms of visibility, leverage, and funding. Shall we then, or not? The answer depends on how active people want to be. With too few exceptions, the message we get from New Mexico is one of passivity and victimhood. We aren't into that.

We may have a short presentation from outside the state via Skype at each of these meetings. Stay tuned.

Don't forget, **please RSVP right away** for the Santa Fe meeting if you have not done so already!

For more background and suggestions please see our previous letter to you of October 7 announcing these meetings.

Best wishes to everybody,

Greg

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## Important announcements and upcoming meetings!

October 7, 2015

Dear friends –

Hello everybody, and happy fall!

### 1. Heads-up: upcoming meetings!

Trish and I are headed to the United Nations to bring our "nuclear heartland" perspective to key delegations next week in the context of the UN First Committee, toward initiating negotiations on a ban treaty. Then we go to Washington the following week, where we will talk to our Hill, executive branch, media, and other contacts about nuclear weapons programs and infrastructure.

There will be "all-purpose" Study Group meetings the week after that which we hope you can attend.

**Our next meeting in Santa Fe is on Wednesday, October 28, at 6:00 pm. Please RSVP to this meeting so we can plan accordingly, and we will tell you how to get to the meeting place. Space is limited. This is not a public meeting but if you have a friend you think would be interested please give us a call at 505-265-1200 or [write Trish](#).**

**Our next meeting in Albuquerque is on Thursday, October 29, also at 6:00 pm. This meeting will be at the Study Group office (or "World Headquarters" as we sometimes call it -- see below).**

We may have a short presentation by an allied international organization at each of these meetings via Skype. Stay tuned.

### 2. What's on our plate after these trips?

The top items are:

- Every trip creates considerable followup analysis and correspondence. We are privileged to respond to those allies in power who want our work. A lot of this we can't share.
- We will be preparing and printing fact sheets on four key issues facing our state and nation, with associated new web pages, and using them in a mailing to New Mexico political donors.
- We are keen to build up our volunteer and internship programs ASAP (see below).
- We are working on expanding our board of directors and of course on fundraising.
- We will continue with a number of ongoing programs, including building opposition to the latest plan for increasing plutonium infrastructure at LANL.

### 3. Please sign up to our blog and follow the Study Group on Facebook if you use it.

Other ways of keeping in touch with us are via [Bulletins](#) (which we hope you read and share with your interested friends), [Twitter](#), and checking our complicated but rich [web site](#) for updates from time to time. Up to now, Facebook and Twitter have carried the bulk of our most frequent postings but we are trying again to provide new content for the Study Group blog more frequently. The extensive analysis and commentary we currently don't share could, with minor edits, be shared in this way for those who are interested.

We have decided to post letters like this one to our more active members, with their subject matter shown, [here](#).

We will be reorganizing and updating our web site to make it more user friendly. In the meantime you should know that besides updates to the home page, there are pretty frequent updates to the plutonium infrastructure pages, such as the "Modern Pit Facility II" ([MPF2](#)) page and some of those linked to it.

We closely follow a great deal of pertinent foreign, environmental, and nuclear policy issues for the sake of decisionmakers, our own board and advisors, and the news media, but figuring out how to translate this into something genuinely helpful to

our membership seems beyond us given our time limitations, apart from the renewed blog emphasis mentioned previously.

**4. The Study Group is elevating its international identity and profile.**

This is a work in progress and we hope to report on it at the above meetings.

**5. We can certainly use your help.**

Some ways to help were discussed in [Bulletin 194](#), and again recently in [Bulletin 207](#). We want to be very careful about wasting anybody's time, not least our own. With a very few serious commitments we could better coordinate the efforts of those who have comparatively less time.

Two recent examples of some fine leadership undertaken by our members were a great op ed by Craig Campbell ("[Atomic bombs were not needed to defeat Japan](#)," Sept. 19, now with 52 comments!) and Carol Benson's invitation to us to speak at a 9/26 Gray Panthers meeting in Albuquerque regarding developments in Ukraine.

In addition, some of you able to do so have stepped forward with increased monthly contributions. And two of you have requested pretty large billboards designed for highly-visible locations you own -- we have not forgotten those requests!

**6. Committees.**

We would like to stand up one or two volunteer committees, which presupposes (among other things) more frequent meetings than we have been having up to now. We would like to discuss this further at the above two meetings.

Greg

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**TOMORROW! Sept. 26, 1pm -- Ukraine talk and discussion, ABQ**

September 25, 2015

Dear Albuquerque friends,

This is a reminder that Greg Mello, Los Alamos Study Group, will be giving a talk on the Ukraine crisis and related matters tomorrow,

**Saturday, September 26th  
1:00 pm**

**Albuquerque, Highland Senior Center  
131 Monroe St NE**

**Hosted by the  
Gray Panthers of Greater Albuquerque**

*An excerpt from our [Bulletin 207](#):*

In the [announcement](#) to a Ukraine crisis teach-in we hosted this summer at the UNM Law School, I mentioned a deeply disappointing meeting I had late this spring with a staffer in the National Security Council. From that meeting I learned, more than before, just how ignorantly the White House was approaching Russia and the Ukraine crisis. The apparent aim is (as Henry Kissinger of all people recently [said](#)), "breaking Russia." *That* project cannot end well for any of us and is especially tragic for Ukraine. Needless to say there will be no nuclear disarmament while a hot proxy war rages in Eastern Europe, begun as an ethnic cleansing project by a Kiev government installed and supervised by the U.S. and our European allies.

Everyone is invited to attend!

See you there tomorrow!

Trish

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## Meeting reminder for TOMORROW, Wed, July 15th

July 14, 2015

Dear friends –

As mentioned in our June 14 and July 8 notes, **our next meeting in Santa Fe is tomorrow, Wednesday, July 15, at 5:00 pm.** (**Please note that this meeting is one-half hour earlier than the previous ones!**) We'll have a little more substantive food and more time to visit with one another.

**Please RSVP to this meeting. We will also tell you how to get there.** This is not a public meeting, but if you have a friend you think would be interested please give us a call at 505-265-1200 or [write Trish](#).

As we said, we will be presenting and discussing some of the results of strategic deliberations we are having with our national and international allies and advisors. As we mentioned before, tremendous strides have been made internationally toward delegitimizing and prohibiting nuclear weapons, with [112 countries](#) – a majority of countries in the world – having pledged to support a ban treaty just this year. (Please see [Bulletin 206: Desultory NPT conference ends in division, a good thing; 108 countries pledge to help ban nuclear weapons](#), Jun 9, 2015.)

Hopefully we will see many of you tomorrow!

Greg (and Trish)

PS: I will be co-leading a [teach-in on the Ukraine situation at the UNM Law School on Wednesday, July 22, from 6-9 pm.](#) I will be joined by Steven Starr, Senior Scientist with the Physicians for Social Responsibility. We expect this discussion to be lively and wide-ranging.

PPS: We appear in this article today: '[Los Alamos will never be clean](#)'

Two comments on this from Greg published in train, as one:

Not much net cleanup has occurred at LANL. While well-intentioned environmental management folks have done their bit and taken home billions in paychecks, LANL has continued to create, bury, re-bury, and ship away wastes. A lot of "cleanup" at LANL, apart from the 90% of the cost which has been studying, monitoring, and overhead, is just moving waste from one place to another. The sources of toxic wastes continue operation, with grand plans to expand.

Probably 90% of the pollution emplaced at LANL will never be cleaned up. There has never been any intent or plan to do so. The "cleanup program" was and is primarily a propaganda effort designed to clean up LANL's image. The audiences are first of all its own recruits and secondarily opinion leaders in surrounding communities. The propaganda exhibits in the Bradbury Museum about LANL environmental programs give the impression that LANL has been and is a BENEFIT to the environment.

It's important to understand that in most respects the Manhattan Project never ended at LANL or in New Mexico. We can't see it because we are in it. We accept a World War II economy. Our leaders do not aspire to more. We wonder why we can't get economic development traction, why our young people are leaving. We are constantly trying to re-work the myths we tell ourselves but we do not have sufficiently serious conversations about our economy and society. When we try, our Big Brothers at the labs are always there to "help."

The pollution created by LANL is not in its environment but its products. Nuclear weapons are LANL's pollution. The little spillover in the canyons and on the mesas is trivial in comparison.

Nuclear weapons (and now also cleanup, a very minor part) have consumed at least \$9 trillion over the past 70 years. Just in financial terms that expense has been too much for U.S. infrastructure and our educational

systems, and for our social contract. In New Mexico, post-1972 increases in lab spending are coincident and associated with concurrent declines in our state's standing in relative per capita income. Domenici was first elected to the Senate in that year: the turning point.

The legacy of the Manhattan Project has been nothing less than the death of democracy in this country, the fate of which was sealed once a full-blown national security state arose in the late 1940s and was implemented over the following decade across society. Nuclear weapons magnified our post-war geopolitical hubris and our collective fears to such a pitch that the delicate threads of democracy were torn. We've been falling since. The Soviet bomb itself was a response to ours, and a copy.

At Los Alamos, Rotblat honorably left the project in December 1944, when he saw it all coming. Klaus Fuchs and others took matters into their own hands.

Nuclear weapons are illegitimate, criminal, and threaten all human life. 112 countries want to ban them. LANL uniquely contributes nothing of value and should be closed.

Greg Mello

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## Teach-in on Ukraine, Wed July 22, UNM Law School

July 8, 2015

Dear Albuquerque friends –

The Study Group will be hosting a [teach-in on the Ukraine situation at the UNM Law School \(1117 Stanford NE\) on Wednesday, July 22, from 6-9 pm.](#) I (Greg) will be joined (via Skype on the big screen) by Steven Starr, Senior Scientist with the Physicians for Social Responsibility. We expect this discussion to be lively and wide-ranging. We hope you will be able to come. This is a public event, so feel free to tell any interested friends.

As we see it, the U.S. has embarked on hybrid wars with Russia and China in order to retain U.S. global dominance. The arms control presumption of gradual nuclear disarmament is being replaced by war, a quite intentional process which will destroy this society one way or another if it is not stopped soon.

I debated U.S.-Russian relations with the senior arms control specialist in the National Security Council last month and heard a far more solidified, obstinate, and *uninformed* belligerence toward Russia than I expected. As you probably also see from your own reading, we are in serious trouble.

The relatively stable post-Cold War decades are now gone, never to return. We are in a completely new situation, one in which our president just declared that our current “anti-terrorism” wars are “generational,” i.e. permanent. Hybrid and proxy wars are increasing, [according to the Pentagon itself](#).

Progress on nuclear disarmament is now intimately connected with profound economic, climate, and ecological crises, with justice within and between societies, with human dignity and common survival. We do not see nuclear disarmament as an isolated issue (and never have). It is more and more a fundamental requirement for human solidarity and survival, and it is high time we approached it as such.

In our view, this leads to a very different kind of politics than we usually see coming from the carefully separated niches of the U.S. nonprofit community, something closer to what we are seeing in parts of Europe today.

We are eager to hear your practical political insights and suggestions as well as to discuss the situation in Eastern Europe. We have been strategizing with our colleagues in a few other organizations and may be able to discuss some of that content as well if there is time.

Very best wishes,

Greg and Trish



## Meeting reminder for Wednesday, July 15

July 8, 2015

Dear friends –

As mentioned in our June 14 letter, **our next meeting in Santa Fe is on Wednesday, July 15, at 5:00 pm. (Please note that this meeting is one-half hour earlier than the previous ones!)** We'll have a little more substantive food and more time to visit with one another.

**Please RSVP to this meeting so we can plan, and we will tell you how to get there.** This is not a public meeting, but if you have a friend you think would be interested please give us a call at 505-265-1200 or [write Trish](#).

We will be presenting and discussing some of the results of strategic deliberations we are having with our national and international allies and advisors. As we mentioned before, tremendous strides have been made internationally toward delegitimizing and prohibiting nuclear weapons, with [112 countries](#) – a majority of countries in the world – having pledged to support a ban treaty just this year. (Please see [Bulletin 206: Desultory NPT conference ends in division, a good thing; 108 countries pledge to help ban nuclear weapons](#), Jun 9, 2015.)

But as we wrote to you on June 14, New Mexico is pretty stuck, in a country that is stuck.

We are not aiming at a popular movement for nuclear disarmament. We believe there will be no successful *narrow* social and political movement for nuclear disarmament in the U.S. That time has passed forever. We see rapidly declining economic and ecological prospects for the U.S. and the world. [The stable post-Cold War decades are gone, never to return.](#) [We are in a completely new situation, in which nuclear disarmament is intimately connected with profound economic, climate, and ecological crises and with justice within and between societies, with dignity and our common survival.](#) We do not see nuclear disarmament as an isolated issue and never have. It is a fundamental requirement for human solidarity and survival, and can be approached far more boldly than in recent decades. This is a very different kind of politics than we usually see.

As we see it, the U.S. has embarked on hybrid wars with Russia and China in order to retain U.S. global dominance. The arms control presumption of gradual nuclear disarmament is being replaced by war, a quite intentional process which will destroy this society one way or another if it is not stopped soon. I debated U.S.-Russian relations with the senior arms control specialist in the National Security Council last month and heard a far more solidified, obstinate, and *uninformed* belligerence toward Russia than I expected. We are in serious trouble.

Speaking of that, I will be co-leading a [teach-in on the Ukraine situation at the UNM Law School on Wednesday, July 22, from 6-9 pm](#). I will be joined by Steven Starr, Senior Scientist with the Physicians for Social Responsibility. We expect this discussion to be lively and wide-ranging.

[Don't forget to RSVP for this coming Wednesday's meeting in Santa Fe.](#)

Greg (and Trish)



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**Demonstration this coming Tuesday (Peaceful Skies), followup from SF meeting Wednesday, next SF meeting July 15 (tentative)**

June 14, 2015

From Washington, DC, where I am this week

Dear friends –

Skipping ahead, and in partial response to the excellent question “What can I do?”, please consider this important alert from [Peaceful Skies](#) (see also further discussion as to why this is important, below):

**Join representatives of the Peaceful Skies Coalition and other New Mexicans at the east entrance of the New Mexico State Capitol in Santa Fe on Tuesday, June 16th, at 1:30 PM.**

Peaceful Skies Coalition has been monitoring the extent of military training on public and private land in NM and throughout the US with great concern. On April 17, 2015, we sent a letter to NM Governor Susana Martinez asking her to assure that Jade Helm 15, a very large scale military training, be limited to the 4 million acres of military land in NM. The letter was re-sent on April 29th after having received no response from the governor. Still no response.

Jade Helm 15 may be the largest military exercise ever conducted in the US.

*It is especially unusual in that civilian agencies like the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the FBI, and the Department of Homeland Security and local law enforcement will join in the training under military control by the Special Operations Command.*

Seven states will be a part of the war training over a several month period of time. This is unprecedented.

Peaceful Skies Coalition has requested a 15 minute meeting with Governor Martinez or her Chief of Staff on Tuesday, June 16th at 2 PM. We will meet outside the Capitol at 1:30, at 1:55 a delegation will go to the office of the Governor to present the letter in person. At 2:30 PM, we will address the media and supporters.

We hope to see you in Santa Fe on Tuesday, June 16, 2015.

Military operations within the US in our communities on public and private lands must stop! It is time to turn from end, less war towards peace.

(For further background on this particular “straw on the camel’s back” please see “[Jade Helm 15 Is Not a Federal Takeover: It’s Domestic Military Expansion](#),” Candice Bernd, Truthout, May 22 and “[Does Jade Helm Violate Posse Comitatus](#),” Ralph Lopez, June 1).

We have to take these opportunities as they come and we are grateful to Peaceful Skies for putting this one together. Think of this manifestation, if you like, as a continuation and realization of our meeting this past Wednesday in Santa Fe.

[It was a pretty good meeting](#). I would say it was marked with a wonderful respect and trust, anchored by a resilient network of relationships anchored in public service that spans decades. We had an excellent discussion and Trish and I are very grateful to all who attended. We know your time is very valuable and are especially grateful to those who came from far away.

The meeting location helped a great deal as well.

**Our next meeting is tentatively set for Wednesday, July 15, at 5:00 pm (note this difference from before!) so there will be more time for snacks and meeting and greeting one another.**

This will be a quite different and more formal meeting, with some new faces as well as familiar ones, with slides this time, and I hope you will be able to pencil it into your calendars. We will be presenting some of the results of strategic discussions we have been having with you as well as our national and international allies and advisors. You will hear more about this meeting in a week or so, and as the date approaches.

Tremendous strides have been made internationally and more are on the way. We want to make nuclear disarmament a present narrative reality *in New Mexico and the rest of the US* even as we – that's you and the rest of the Study Group – help open the door to a broad-based anti-war, environmental, and social justice movement. Without that disarmament narrative, and without that movement, New Mexico and its environment will, we believe, spiral down into immiseration and degradation. There is not a moment to lose.

If for some reason we have to change that July date we will let you know right away. We will also send reminders. **Again, please write us for the meeting location with your RSVP (or call 505-265-1200).**

We have pages of notes and insights from this past Wednesday's meeting, which like previous meetings help guide us more than may be apparent. Like many meetings, it was a mix of old hands and new. From this longer list I would like to offer the following remarks to our most interested members.

- Few of us grasp the urgency and gravity of the multidimensional crisis in which we find ourselves, which threatens to irreversibly undo much of life on earth in a very short time. Our situation is so new, and so drastic, it is all but invisible. We are in protective denial. This is apparent in comments we often hear about the churches not being a good place for which to look for full-time, independent, locally-responsible, morally-grounded organizers.

We agree it is difficult. But then we also have to ask – and these are not at all rhetorical questions – *where else shall we produce and find them? What other moral foundation and social support can we quickly provide, independent of frequently-compromised, agenda-setting, liberal philanthropy (as much as we ourselves depend to some extent on it)? Without full-time commitments, how shall we build, inform, sustain, and win the necessary struggle?*

Please notice that we are not asking for something we have not done and are doing ourselves. We are asking for people to join us, in a multiplicity of ways that are accessible to everyone and with maximum, but local, social and financial support. We are *not* suggesting that people become volunteers for any national nonprofit, an old model that has led to three decades of “failure-to-thrive” in the environmental movement for example and is entirely unsuited to today's multidimensional crisis situation.

Please note that we are not at all asking for your *ideas* now. We are asking for our core members to reach out to others they know and help organize full-time climate and justice activists in the churches *or wherever*. In our meetings it is sometimes difficult for people to grasp that we are not talking about something else that Trish and Greg will do!

Our own version of this is to bring in new interns to the Study Group. We are working on that assiduously, including here in Washington. We will need your help with that too.

As you may know the Pope [will issue](#), on Thursday, his first encyclical, on climate protection and the poor. His [December 2014 message](#) on the necessity of *banning nuclear weapons* was based on closely-related, perennial Christian teaching. We will issue a press release on Thursday. It is a [door](#). I have no idea why anyone would see these as very different issues. He doesn't. We don't.

- In New Mexico especially, most people are so beaten down, politically speaking – so used to having essentially no agency or enfranchisement – that it is difficult to imagine having real agency. This affects all of us. It can be quite comforting, excusing inaction at every level of involvement. If we can't do anything, why try? This is probably the most common, post-democratic attitude in the US. Public engagement is even considered aberrant – not cool – in some subcultures now. However arrived at -- and there are many avenues -- this norm of disengagement also contributes to making some of us who *do* have some degree of agency a bit *invisible* – especially if it does not come with a flourish of trumpets the way our celebrity-poisoned culture says it should! (It also means *that only a few people can make a very great difference*, since most people are disengaged.) This contributes to the conclusion in the last bullet below.
- Many assume without really knowing it that disembodied public education has far more political value than it does. Decades ago, in the formative years for many of us, it may have had. But it doesn't now. Political information and sentiment, if it leads to opinion merely, has [zero impact on policy](#). [Public education in the absence of sustained organizing, the associated infrastructure, face-to-face relationships, and sound, resourced strategies, has approximately zero political value.](#) The political and cultural ramifications of this are profound for academics, artists, and nonprofit leaders. So when we hear various ideas as to how to “reach” *more people*, it is not quite the right note.

Without quite realizing it, we can fall into propaganda and advertising, which of course saturates the culture and is the norm. But that is a terrain upon which we cannot win. We are looking for something else instead – more personal, more satisfying, and more certain of success. Quite certain in many ways.

- Because of widely-mistaken political assumptions that were perhaps accurate at one time, and the general lack of genuine democratic experience in our communities (or "communities") of late, and other cultural and political impediments too tedious to list, we pretty much need to jump right in before all the i's are dotted and the tees all crossed. We'll learn as we go. It will also take a lot of discussion but there is a regrettable tendency in our culture today to stop at the discussion stage. That is another reason we are urging you to consider going to the Capitol on Tuesday with Peaceful Skies. It would be a mistake to consider this an issue-driven demonstration *merely* (however vast and fundamental galloping militarism is as an "issue"). It is also a carrier for a broader and potentially more powerful cultural conversation, using that nonviolent term broadly.

In solidarity, and see you on July 15!

Greg Mello

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## Study Group mtg Wed May 20: economic implications of nuclear militarism for NM

May 16, 2015

Dear friends --

You are invited to a meeting at Study Group World Headquarters, [2901 Summit Place NE](#), on [Wednesday, May 20](#), from [5:30 to 7:30 pm](#). There will be wholesome snacks and good company, as usual!

As those of you know who were at the previous meeting, we are looking for potential full-time "hires," i.e. research fellows, and interns. We can, we believe, provide a modest stipend, in-kind support, training, and networking for highly-qualified persons. We can't provide real-world salaries at the present time. (Those don't exist here for any of us.) Such a program is the only way we know of to expand the hours per day available, but it will be costly in terms of time especially, so we need be very picky about this commitment. Successful applicants will need to present an uncommon combination of skills, willingness to work, maturity, willingness to take direction, and to persevere. The Study Group has an internal culture more akin to Washington, DC than to New Mexico. Despite almost no money, we play in the big leagues. We have to. That can create some culture shock.

Who and where are such people? [That's not a rhetorical question.](#)

At our last meeting we discussed "The Swamp," the complex of negative net energy and miscommunication phenomena associated with a politically demobilized, *privatized* (to use the word in a different way than is usual) society. The Swamp arises from many causes and we can't fix it. We simply must avoid it.

This past week we had an excellent meeting in Santa Fe. Highlights include:

- New Mexico is so undemocratic and culturally conquered it cannot save itself via standard liberal political reform, which is widely failing. Like the country as a whole it has been sliding downward politically and is very likely to get worse. New Mexico is an occupied territory, and "liberal" Santa Fe is no exception – far from it. [Albuquerque, the Nuke City, is obviously no exception either.] Far more radical measures are needed.
- For a variety of reasons, there is no possibility for a grassroots disarmament movement, *sensu stricta*, in the U.S. or, especially, in NM. To the extent nuclear issues are salient, overt nuclear politics in US civil society is guided and controlled, or in other cases tethered, by powerful private-sector interests which seek to perpetuate the status quo for their own personal and corporate financial gain and for their personal careers and prestige. All the way up to the pinnacles of power, the actors involved cannot accurately assess what to do or what they are doing because the ideas, values, and behaviors involved are so universal -- and required. Mere citizens are at the mercy of a long chain of manipulation and social engineering, much as ordinary Ukrainians were in the Maidan "color revolution." The blind lead the blind.
- We want to convey to you and to others a dual sense of great possibility and extreme danger at this moment in history, more than ever before. People tend to see neither. The future will be very unlike the past and frankly it will be full of human suffering and extinctions. For the most part progressives deny all this.
- Probably the greatest danger and obstacle we face is mild reformism, or "liberal progressivism" as Bob Anderson called it last week. Fake policies promoted by political poseurs, the naïve, and cynical opportunists.
- Wrong turns are legion, so we want and need an aware, alert phalanx, a solid core.
- Narcissistic issue framing will go nowhere interesting or real. No "purity of our precious bodily fluids," please.
- Loyalty is essential for all serious relationships and endeavors (marriage, politics, the military, diplomacy). It's not about "the issues." It's about people, and truth, the latter being an ideal that is very much at risk. When truth as an ideal goes, people are next.

At Wednesday's meeting we won't be presenting further on the wider organizing problem, e.g. the need for full-time commitments, at churches especially. The main thing we said again in Santa Fe is that people have to dig deeper. We make a big mistake if we try to make it easy. Middle-class Americans are very wealthy and powerful. A full-time organizer or lobbyist will cost very little if in-kind support -- material, social, intellectual, and moral -- is available. But enough of that.

If you have ideas about people who should be there on Wednesday, please [let Trish know](#).

On Wednesday we hope to discuss the economic and social implications of being a nuclear weapons state, and the economic benefits of clawing our way out of that condition. Tom Luebben especially brought this topic up. We were already committed to producing a fact sheet on this so we aim to do that early next week in time for the meeting and also present to you the wider implications of our status in a way that we hope will be useful in your own activist work and in other organizations, schools, and churches.

Best wishes,

Greg and Trish

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**Reminder: discussion Thurs May 7, 5:30 pm**

May 4, 2015

Dear friends --

This is a reminder about the upcoming Study Group discussion on May 7 at 5:30 pm at the Study Group offices, 2901 Summit Place NE. We're just sending this invitation to a hand-picked group of people in Albuquerque.

This is not going to be a public meeting, since we want to talk about strategy. Attendance will be restricted to those receiving this email and their spouses. We don't see the benefit of a public gathering at this time but this could change.

We wrote on 4/21 with some background for our main discussion topic (outreach to churches), which I won't repeat here. Meanwhile I (Greg) have returned from a week of discussions with congressional and White House staff, the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) and others in Washington. The Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference has also gotten underway in New York at the U.N. There are important developments in both places we ought to touch upon.

So on Thursday we hope the meeting will go something like this:

- Introductions (5 minutes)
- Update on nuclear issues in Congress, the Administration, and NM (10 minutes, plus 10 minutes Q&A).
  - \$1+ trillion in nuclear weapons over next 30 years on track but will need considerable new money from civilian spending.
  - Plutonium pit production and related construction: on track until we take it off-track.
  - Albuquerque now almost certainly the largest cache of nuclear weapons in the world, with all this implies in war and in "peace."
  - All excess plutonium (40+ tons) to be shipped into Los Alamos for processing and out again, over many years.
  - LANL's plutonium factory and waste complex growing. No net cleanup occurring?
  - WIPP reopening will be delayed.
  - Related: spent nuclear fuel (SNF) storage site attempts in NM, and in Andrews, TX and Loving Co., TX both adjacent to NM. Udall and Heinrich oppose the NM plan, for now.
  - Meanwhile, the sun shines and wind blows. Massive opportunities open or almost open, too few working on them.
- Update on current developments in nuclear weapons diplomacy (5 minutes, plus 5 minutes Q&A).
  - NPT RevCon repeating tired clichés, provides nuclear weapons states with cover
  - Reaching Critical Will (overlaps with Study Group board) and ICAN (Study Group a partner) distinguishing themselves.
  - Opportunities for we in NM and key resources.
- Study Group plans and hopes to expand our staff. We need your help with this. (10 minutes, plus 15 minutes discussion)
  - Several openings available; no money; will describe possibilities, tasks.
- The need for full-time or near-full-time activist-revolutionaries and how best to reach out to religious leaders and other communities in Albuquerque to create those positions. (See 4/21 email.) (10 minutes, plus 30 minutes discussion)
- Your urgent concerns not mentioned in the above (questions: 5 minutes; discussion of same: 15 minutes)

See you Thursday!

PS: U.K. general elections are also Thursday!



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**Reminder: Briefing and discussion Wed May 13, 5:30 pm (RSVP) (Fun! And seriously hopeful.)**

May 11, 2015

Dear friends --

This is a reminder of the Study Group briefing and planning discussion on **Wednesday, May 13 at 5:30 pm**. **Don't forget to RSVP!** We're just sending this invitation to a few dozen people in Santa Fe so we can meet and plan most effectively. When you call or write we will tell you where the meeting will be, a lovely converted private east-side home.

**This is a very important meeting for the Study Group, and I think you will find it especially interesting and hopeful.**  
**We really hope you will come.**

For more details and some ruminations on strategy see the preceding 5/4 email. We'd like to unveil some of our plans, ask for help in various ways -- and, *mostly separate from what we can do in the Study Group without more staff*, describe some fruitful and supportive organizing paths others can take. We know they work because we've done them ourselves, in Amarillo, Santa Fe, and Albuquerque.

We want to tell you about the steady progress on the international disarmament front these days, though that progress is like pulling (nuclear) teeth (from the mouths of the nuclear weapon states). The best news is that a lot of countries -- 84 as of now, and we are hoping for 100 by two weeks from now -- have joined with Austria in wanting to discuss banning nuclear weapons *with or without* the participation of the nuclear weapon states.

More good news is that Scotland is now largely politically united behind a party, the Scottish National Party, that puts ridding Scotland of Trident as one of its top three political demands. Ending austerity is another. The third is more independence for Scotland. Altogether a major headache for Cameron.

I have just returned from a week in Washington, meeting with high officials, congressional staff, and long-time colleagues. I can report that the situation on nuclear policy is rather bleak overall, though not without glimmers of sanity. Even in Washington reality does intrude, chiefly in its fiscal form.

We'll have slides in the presentational part of this little get-together, and healthy snacks. The Albuquerque Study Group chapter got part of the briefing last week, in beta form. You'll be the beneficiary of last week's talk and discussion.

In one way or another, a ban on nuclear weapons is coming on strong. What does that mean for Santa Fe? How can you help us bring it about? This is difficult to wrap our heads around but it is part and parcel of the revolutionary change we need. New Mexico has, as far as I can tell, more warheads and bombs here than in any other state or place in the world. But they are generally illegal under international law, and getting more unpopular month by month and year by year.

Very best wishes to everybody,

Greg, Trish, and the gang

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**Strategy discussion Wed May 13, 5:30 pm -- must RSVP**

May 4, 2015

Dear friends --

This is an announcement of a Study Group discussion on [Wednesday, May 13 at 5:30 pm](#). We're just sending this invitation to a hand-picked group of people in Santa Fe. [Please RSVP](#) if you want to come to this meeting and we will tell you where it is (right now, we've got two possibilities).

Also, [please do not forward this email.](#)

This is not going to be a public meeting, since we want to talk about information we are privy to, our own plans and strategies, and [why what you can do is so essential to success](#). Attendance will be restricted to those receiving this email and their spouses. We don't see the benefit of public gatherings at this time but that could change and become part of our planning later, with your help.

A couple of you were told this meeting would be this coming Thursday but we had to delay the meeting one week.

We wrote on 4/19 expressing our desire to discuss outreach to churches with you. We have already had one small meeting in Santa Fe on that topic. It remains essential, and some further background on this subject is appended below.

I (Greg) have just returned from a week of discussions with congressional and White House staff, the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) and others in Washington. Also, the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference has gotten underway in New York at the U.N., and general elections in the U.K. -- significant for the future of nuclear weapons -- will have occurred (May 7).

I wanted to mention, before going further, that while in Washington I heard in greater detail than before how [NNSA told an impatient Congress again and again over the course of a year how our litigation was making it impossible to proceed with the Chemistry and Metallurgy Research Replacement Nuclear Facility \(CMRR-NF\)](#). They could not proceed until our litigation was resolved. This was very gratifying, as that endeavor was very costly for us in many ways. Our final success was in no small part due to you, who helped support this litigation with your dollars, volunteerism, and prayers.

On Wednesday, May 13, we anticipate 2 hours of discussions along these lines:

- Introductions (5 minutes)
- Update on nuclear issues in Congress, the Administration, and NM (10 minutes, plus 10 minutes Q&A).
  - \$1+ trillion in nuclear weapons over next 30 years on track but will need considerable new money from civilian spending. Resources you can use in your outreach to churches.
  - Plutonium pit production and related construction: on track until we take it off-track. A new government report, which we have seen and commented upon in draft, will soon emerge that will help.
  - Albuquerque now almost certainly the largest cache of nuclear weapons in the world, with all this implies in war and in "peace."
  - All excess metallic plutonium (~40 tons or so, in round numbers) to be shipped through Santa Fe and into Los Alamos for processing into oxide, and then out again through Santa Fe, over many years.
  - LANL's plutonium factory and waste complex are growing. Is any net cleanup occurring? Not really.
  - WIPP reopening will be delayed.
  - Related: spent nuclear fuel (SNF) storage site attempts in NM, and in Andrews, TX and Loving Co., TX both adjacent to NM. Udall and Heinrich oppose the NM plan, for now. So NM could get #1 rankings for nuclear weapons (Albuquerque), plutonium (Santa Fe metro), and maybe someday also nuclear waste (Lea-Eddy cos.)
  - The DOE-NMED WIPP settlement: what it says.
  - Meanwhile, the sun shines and wind blows. Massive opportunities are open or almost open, and too few working on them.
- Update on current developments in nuclear weapons diplomacy (5 minutes, plus 5 minutes Q&A).
  - NPT RevCon the scene of many tired clichés, provides nuclear weapons states with cover

- Reaching Critical Will (overlaps with Study Group board) and ICAN (Study Group a partner in it) are distinguishing themselves.
- Opportunities for us, and key resources.
- The U.K. elections and The Bomb: no matter what happens, the situation is fluid there (5 minutes, plus 5 minutes Q&A). The anti-nuclear Scottish Nationalist Party (SNP) is expected to do very well at the expense of Labor in Scotland, so well that Labor, if it wins a majority, would not be able to govern without the SNP MPs. Retiring Trident is a core demand of the SNP.
- Main topic #1: Study Group plans and hopes to significantly expand our staff. We need your help with this. (5 minutes, plus 10 minutes discussion)
  - Several openings available, albeit without much money; will describe possibilities, and key tasks. We need your help.
- Main topic #2: The need for full-time or near-full-time activist-revolutionaries and how best to reach out to religious leaders and other communities in Santa Fe to create those positions. Pope Francis and nuclear weapons. (10 minutes, plus 30 minutes discussion)
- Your urgent concerns not mentioned in the above (questions: 5 minutes; discussion of same: 15 minutes)

We can't think of anything citizens in Santa Fe can do on most of the issues facing our society, or regarding the structural conditions in our society, other than to be or make possible, full-time committed organizers, researchers, writers, lobbyists, citizen diplomats, and activists. Each of these roles is loosely associated with various complementary strategies but what unites them all is depth and duration of commitment and the experience and independent knowledge that will come from that. Nothing powerful can be done without these. This is now the only answer we are giving to the question "what can I do?"

In more detail:

- Convince churches and other organizations (businesses, nonprofits, associations) to support more full-time activists, possibly including yourself;
- Raise funds to support more full-time people at the Study Group, which we will more than match in kind;
- Locate and recruit committed, skilled, mature candidates for us, especially young adults whom we can employ and train; and
- Get very seriously involved in electoral activity but only for a very good candidate (which might be yourself).

Apart from these or similar endeavors, what is there? All campaigns, so-called, will either be flashes in the pan or they will acquire real institutional infrastructure of some kind, i.e. full-time people, as we understood at the outset of the 25-year "nonviolence campaign" of the Los Alamos Study Group. Experience tells us that either you are in such a campaign all the way or you are mostly just pissing in the wind and calling it rain.

Now, a little more on why we hope you will reach out to churches (we can help, but you will need to do the lion's share):

Probably many or most of you saw Tim DeChristopher's letter to churches, "[Lead, Don't Follow on Climate Justice](#)," republished at Truthout. The same letter could as well have been written regarding nuclear disarmament, and many other issues. These issues aren't really distinct anyway.

For many of us, political activities will be naturally combined with "transition" activities that generally fall under the heading of the Gandhian "constructive program." But the constructive program in all its forms is not enough, because there is a war going on. Multiple wars, or one war, depending on how you count. There won't be peace, and there won't be justice, and there won't even be a tomorrow for millions of people and species unless we protect them.

As we have said previously "we" need to offer jobs to capable young people *with whatever resources we have got* in order to accomplish particular, highly disruptive, political goals. We are in an emergency situation. This quality is somehow missing from most of the political discourse we see on the left, here and everywhere. Where are the resources to do this? They are in our own homes and bank accounts and those of our friends and their friends, but the social and political "software" is largely missing. We are a society which bowls alone, as Robert Putnam wrote so long ago.

Those of you getting this email are among the most generous people there are, but I have to inform you that some pieces of the social circuit that are needed are missing today. Not news to you I am sure.

Buried deeply in their "operating systems" (but often not activated), churches have that software of faith, love, commitment, joy, trust, and tradition.

By contrast we certainly cannot count on foundation philanthropy to provide appropriate leadership, for example through the nonprofit industry (including climate nonprofits and nuclear disarmament nonprofits, such as they are). It never has and it never will. Such philanthropy sometimes responds, but does not lead. More frequently, it destroys the conditions for effective organizing and democratic reform.

At the Study Group, our role has evolved to deploy the most truthful power we can with the least time and money. This has led us to analysis, lobbying, writing, and sometimes (as of late, as at times before) international citizen diplomacy. We live in a state that supports, at almost every level and in almost every relevant institution, weapons of mass destruction. What that has meant is that we have had to go elsewhere to be effective, with perhaps 3/4 of our time. Most people in NM are terrified of opposing the structures of domination, to an extent I for one never imagined 25 years ago.

But at the same time we live and work here with you, our friends, and also we know that even if we win elsewhere, say with a nuclear weapons ban treaty, those victories are implemented (or not) here, and we know that our economic life in this state and ALL life will be cut off if we do not end our political addiction to ways of life that destroy it all.

We ourselves are able to provide housing and training in exchange for work, but not to just anybody. We can't provide free tutoring or free parenting, so we are very demanding as regards skills and maturity. We can't be that first encounter with workforce reality that often characterizes post-university life. We can't afford to interview a long line of strangers, either. A mere 10 hours per week, say, is not enough to do anything significant. We can't pay much. Everybody in our situation has similar "Catch-22s."

Churches can solve such problems far more easily, and as we have previously written, I think that every church which can afford to pay a pastor can also afford to support a full-time climate/energy worker supported by a committee of people with free housing, free food, free social and spiritual support, a stipend or low salary, and so on. Such a person would amplify the moral and political effectiveness of the church a hundredfold. Pious homilies and petitions mean about zero. It takes boots on the ground, as the other side says.

What is essential is to get beyond the constraints of liberalism as well as the politically-correct fads of today, and to learn and gain experience, and to learn to respect reality. All this will happen if the commitment is strong enough. To be effective, these communities have to know the issues themselves and can't take marching orders from the big professional nonprofits.

As matters stand, there is no social infrastructure, not much experience, not much independence from the political parties and from foundation philanthropy, and so on, which means there is no social movement, no media and political traction to speak of, and very little effectiveness.

What stands in the way, more often than not, is thinking the situation, at every level and in every way, is better than it is.

We want you to be ambassadors and emissaries, because we can't do it all ourselves, so be prepared for that.

Best wishes to everybody,

Greg

PS Here's a photo Trish took at the Faslane base in Scotland in early January. A Vanguard-class Trident submarine with its police escorts is shown heading over to Loch Goil to be acoustically checked and then, later that same day, out to sea. It carries 16 Trident D5 missiles leased from the US missile pool, each with up to 8 100 kiloton warheads (in practice, fewer). The UK activists will win, we believe -- if not this year, then later as economic conditions bite harder. Stopping the UK Trident replacement this year or next is however crucial to avoid a long slog later.



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No meeting this Wednesday morning! Now Thurs May 7, 5:30 pm

April 21, 2015

Dear Albuquerque friends --

We really didn't have enough potential attendees for the meeting tomorrow morning to come together, so that meeting is not happening.

What is happening is a meeting on May 7 at 5:30 pm at the Study Group offices, 2901 Summit Place NE. Some people had a rough time with the early morning meeting so we changed that to the early evening slot.

There is no need to RSVP for this meeting.

We wrote (with minor edits and emphases added),

At these meetings we want to talk specifically about outreach to religious leaders and other communities about the need to cultivate and support full-time work on the core crises facing our planet (and therefore also facing any and all religious institutions), including but not specifically involving nuclear weapons, New Mexico's primary and particular contribution to global nihilism.

We also want to discuss the local strategic implications of international disarmament developments, both as regards development of a treaty banning nuclear weapons and as regards current developments in the United Kingdom, which also affect us.

As always, we want to hear your hopes and concerns. We want these meetings to be safe places to share what often can't be said in other places. A lot of people we know feel rather alone in their insights.

..."We" need more full-time people to meet the challenges of our time -- in our own organization, and elsewhere. Staffed positions are generally unaffordable everywhere and lead to dependence on questionable funding sources. We at least can offer much more of value to the right persons.

Probably many or most of you saw Tim DeChristopher's letter to churches, "[Lead, Don't Follow on Climate Justice](#)," republished at Truthout. The same letter could as well have been written regarding nuclear disarmament, and many other issues.

As we wrote earlier, we don't think we are going to win without creating more full-time or at least half-time occupations and careers for organizers, lobbyists, writers, and so on in political change in our communities.

For many of us these political activities will be naturally combined with "transition" activities that generally fall under the Gandhian "constructive program." But the constructive program in all its forms is not enough, because there is a war going on. The Koch brothers want the resources you save, to put it bluntly. There won't be peace, and there won't be justice, and there won't even be a tomorrow for millions of people and species unless we protect them and make those conditions.

As we have said previously "we" need to offer jobs to capable young people *with whatever resources we have got* in order to accomplish particular, and as it will turn out, highly disruptive political goals. We are in an emergency situation. This quality is somehow missing from most of the political discourse we see on the left, here and everywhere. Where are the resources to do this? They are in our own homes and bank accounts and those of our friends and their friends, but the social and political "software" is largely missing. We are a society which bowls alone, as Robert Putnam wrote so long ago.

Those of you getting this email are among the most generous people there are, but I have to inform you that some pieces of the social circuit that are needed are missing today. Not news to you I am sure.

Buried deeply in their "operating systems" and often not used for one reason or another, the churches have that software of faith, love, commitment, joy, trust, and tradition.

By contrast we certainly cannot count on foundation philanthropy to provide appropriate leadership, for example through the nonprofit industry, including climate nonprofits and nuclear disarmament nonprofits, such as they are. It never has and it never will. Such philanthropy sometimes responds, but does not lead.

At the Study Group, our role has evolved to deploy the most truthful power we can with the least time and money, which has led us to analysis, lobbying, writing, and sometimes (as of late, as at times before) international citizen diplomacy. We live in a state that supports, at almost every level and in almost every relevant institution, weapons of mass destruction. What that has meant is that we have had to go elsewhere to be effective, with perhaps 3/4 of our time. Most people are terrified of opposing the structures of domination, to an extent I for one never imagined 25 years ago.

But at the same time we live and work here with you, our friends, and also we know that even if we win elsewhere, say with a nuclear weapons ban treaty, those victories are implemented (or not) here, and we know that our economic life in this state and ALL life will be cut off if we do not end our political addiction to ways of life that destroy it all.

We ourselves are able to provide housing and training in exchange for work, but not to just anybody. We can't provide free tutoring or free parenting, so we are very demanding as regards skills and maturity. We can't be that first encounter with workforce reality that often characterizes post-university life. We can't afford to interview a long line of strangers, either. A mere 10 hours per week is not enough to do anything significant. We can't pay much. Everybody in our situation has similar "Catch-22s."

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What is essential is to get beyond the constraints of liberalism as well as the politically-correct fads of today, and to learn and gain experience, and to learn to respect reality. All this will happen if the commitment is strong enough.

As matters stand, there is no social infrastructure, not much experience, not much independence from the political parties and from foundation philanthropy, and so on, which means there is no social movement, no media and political traction to speak of, and very little effectiveness.

What stands in the way, more often than not, is thinking the situation, at every level and in every way, is better than it is.

So that is a better explanation of the discussion I hope we can have on May 7. We want you to be ambassadors and emissaries, because we can't do it all ourselves, so be prepared for that.

Best wishes to everybody,

Greg

PS On May 7 the UK general elections will be held. The anti-nuclear Scottish Nationalist Party is expected to do very well at the expense of Labor, so well that Labor, if it wins a majority, would not be able to govern without the SNP MPs. Retiring Trident is a core demand of the SNP. Stay tuned.

Here's a photo Trish took at the Faslane base in Scotland in early January. A Vanguard-class Trident submarine is heading over to Loch Goil to be acoustically checked and then later that day, out to sea. It carries 16 Trident D5 missiles leased from the US missile pool, each with up to 8 100 kiloton warheads (in practice, fewer). The UK activists will, we believe, win -- if not this year, then later as economic conditions bite harder. Neutron generators for the UK warheads are built in Albuquerque, by the way.



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**Meetings Wed 4/22 in Abq and SF, depending on interest**

April 19, 2015

Dear friends --

This email is being sent to a small fraction of our regular lists.

For various reasons we've had a hard time scheduling followup meetings to our March 19 and April 1 discussions in Santa Fe and Albuquerque. We've been swamped with work and sometimes key variables affecting whether we could meet could not be pinned down in time to send an invitation.

This coming Wednesday, April 22, might be a good day to meet. We propose meetings at 7:30 am at our office and at 5:30 pm in Santa Fe, location TBD, and hope that would be convenient to some of you. We haven't been able to get to Taos and can't meet in Taos this month either.

If these times and dates work for you **please RSVP** so we can go ahead and finalize these meetings on our respective calendars. If either of these are not good times to meet we'd rather know sooner than later so that we don't waste anyone's time. If people don't respond positively we will try again in two weeks or so. I will be in Washington all next week.

We will put out a Bulletin late tomorrow morning with some of our public work, so you may want to watch for that.

At these meetings we want to talk specifically about outreach to religious leaders and other communities about the need to cultivate and support full-time work on the core crises facing our planet (and therefore any and all religious institutions), including but not specifically involving nuclear weapons (New Mexico's primary and particular contribution to global nihilism).

We also want to discuss the local strategic implications of international disarmament developments, both as regards development of a treaty banning nuclear weapons and as regards current developments in the United Kingdom, which also affect us.

As always, we want to hear your hopes and concerns. We want these meetings to be safe places to share what often can't be said in other places. A lot of people we know feel rather alone in their insights.

To repeat somewhat, we the staff, and all of our core group, have been fairly swamped with responsibilities. "We" need more full-time people to meet the challenges of our time -- in our own organization, and elsewhere. Staffed positions are generally unaffordable everywhere and lead to dependence on questionable funding sources. We at least can offer much more of value to the right persons.

Very best wishes to all of you,

Greg and Trish

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## Get-together at Study Group HQ Wed., Apr 1, 7:30 am; breakfast!

March 26, 2015

Dear Albuquerque friends --

The Los Alamos Study Group is having an important get-together, update, and discussion this coming Wednesday morning, April 1, at 7:30 am, at the Study Group "World Headquarters" (2901 Summit Place NE, Albuquerque). We'll serve a simple breakfast, coffee or tea, and fruit.

As some of you probably saw, we threw this meeting open to everybody on the Stop the War Machine discussion group. We have no idea how many people will come. We doubt many will. We hope you do. We are all very busy but perhaps you'll have time to join us for an hour and a half or so -- two hours, if you want to help with cleanup.

I think we all understand, at this point, that "we" -- New Mexico, the U.S., civilization, all of nature -- are facing a multidimensional, existential crisis. Our efforts, however valiant and sometimes successful in part, are not succeeding overall.

The purpose of this meeting is first and foremost solidarity pure and simple, and secondarily to hear from you, take in your ideas, and thirdly provide whatever very brief political updates you may wish.

We have been deeply engaged in nuclear weapons issues in international circles as well as locally. We can report to you that diplomatic efforts to ban nuclear weapons are developing nicely so far. There are some excellent opportunities that we could seize.

We are very concerned that New Mexico may have passed a point of no return as far as losing its democracy and economy. We think a lot of people are kidding themselves about the efficacy of standard reforms. Stronger measures seem necessary to match the times.

We know of no faculty at UNM who have an informed, active, critical stance on any of the existential issues we face generally, or on the issues of war and peace we face here in New Mexico. Do you? We really want to connect with people, but we can't afford to waste time either. Any ideas?

We know of no student groups working against war, or nuclear weapons. Do you?

We know of no churches actively working against war -- which is now underway in many places, for real and at great scale already, and growing -- or against nuclear weapons, New Mexico's unique -- and evil -- industry. Do you? Many people are for "peace," but what exactly are they DOING? It is very strange for us to be so welcome at the UN, in parliamentary offices abroad, in senior offices in our government, and yet nobody in New Mexico seems to want to talk or do much about what "we" do here. Are we in New Mexico truly that dysfunctional?

I could go on to discuss climate and energy, two other issues that will define our future here in New Mexico. We don't see much leadership there -- not in the activist community, not in the churches, not in the environmental community, not anywhere really. Can somebody fill us all in on who is working on these issues full-time, and how we all might help them?

Our senior political leaders and parties are the way they are -- flagrantly promoting nuclear weapons (illegal under international law) at the expense of the poor, doing nothing serious on climate, nothing serious on energy, nothing serious about anything that might be described as green or just, nothing that builds the state economically or socially -- because we allow them to be that way. Many people even give them money.

What are we missing? You can tell us.

We don't put a lot of strategy into our Bulletins, due to their very broad subscriber universe. Last week a VP of Sandia signed up. Senior government people in DC get it. So meetings like this are where that strategy can happen.

Right now, powerful people in DC and New Mexico believe that New Mexico wants to be a nuclear-military sandbox. We've got to change that.

See you Wednesday we hope,

Greg, Trish, and the rest of the Study Group

PS: You might be interested in this 1,000 word op ed ("Treat the state's lab addiction," *Albuquerque Journal Santa Fe*, Mello, Mar 20, 2015). Both of our senators want to increase nuclear weapons spending, as does Rep. Lujan (Udall [here](#); Heinrich [here](#) -- search the hearing transcript; Lujan [here](#), as samples). (As a congressman, Heinrich was THE most active supporter of nuclear weapons spending among House Democrats.) ALL our delegation voted for sending military aid to the hyper-corrupt neo-Nazis in Kiev.

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**Thanks for coming this past Thursday; op-ed published; more**

March 21, 2015

Dear Santa Fe friends --

This email is just going to a few of you among our Santa Fe members.

Trish and I really enjoyed our get-together at Willem's house this past Thursday evening. It was really great to see some of our old friends, stalwart fighters and builders all.

We hope to meet again in about two weeks, probably late on Sunday afternoon April 5 but we have to check that date with a few key people so it's only tentative right now. We're really busy on writing projects at present.

As expected, that 1,000 word op-ed was published ("[Treat the state's lab addiction](#)," *Albuquerque Journal*, Mello, Mar 20, 2015). (The version on our web site has been improved with 3 or 4 minor word changes.)

Here's the [original link](#) if you want to comment. (Carol Miller did right away; as of this writing there are no other comments.)

As we discussed on Thursday, it's an especially good time to write letters to the editor or op eds about northern New Mexico's nuclear addiction and what alternatives we might choose.

Both of our senators want to increase nuclear weapons spending, as does Rep. Lujan ([Udall here](#); Heinrich [here](#) -- search the hearing transcript; Lujan [here](#), as samples). (As a congressman, Heinrich was THE most active supporter of nuclear weapons spending among House Democrats.)

The true path of influence, however, lies in building a movement for crucial domestic priorities and against further militarization, war, and nuclear weapons. It is a broad and friendly path. What's missing (say, missing from our churches, a natural home for this) is a realistic sense of urgency. We need to roll back militarization, which is ramping up fast at the moment.

[It is really critical to get our "electeds" to publicly commit to these political values.](#)

It's essential for citizens who wish to halt this country's rightward drift to make themselves very clear, both in language and in political commitments. (And forget what somebody "intends," or "wants," or "believes." It's what we do that counts.) We need to clean up our language and be very clear about our direction, as well as distinguish action from Hamlet-like contemplation. On Thursday someone asked, "What's the difference between 'nuclear disarmament' and 'banning nuclear weapons'?" ("Abolition" might have been in there too.) The short answer is: a lot. The phrases "nuclear disarmament," "a world without nuclear weapons," "nuclear abolition" are now rather shopworn phrases. "A world without nuclear weapons" was *born* as propaganda -- it never meant anything, ever. "Banning nuclear weapons" by contrast refers to something quite specific, namely a treaty which prohibits the design, testing, production, stockpiling, sharing, threatening with, and using nuclear weapons. Such a treaty is now a realistic possibility, with [dozens of countries supporting beginning negotiations](#), quite unlike the unreality of hopes for fruitful bilateral or multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations.

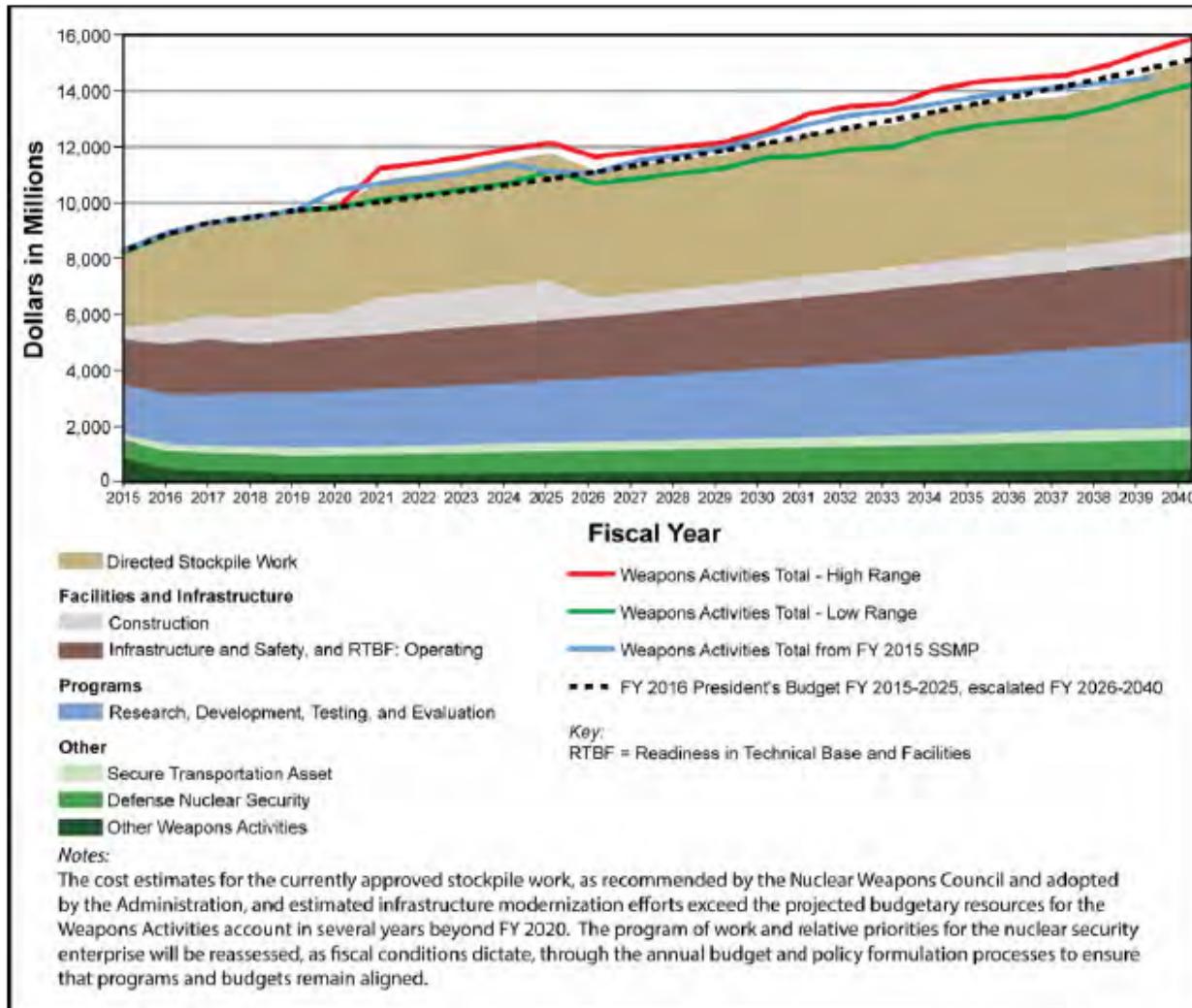
The question of a ban also shines an important light on political landscape at home, stripping away layers of propaganda and clarifying the issues. Do churches, environmental groups, unions, social justice organizations, and local governments actually support building weapons of mass destruction, a single one of which can fry millions of people in a minute, or not? Where do people stand? Afraid to take any stand on this at all? Are WMD to be our economy, our identity as a city and state? The Santa Fe metro area is currently the largest concentration of nuclear weapons spending in the world. What will become of Santa Fe, given this continuing influence, in the coming decade? What will it do to the kids? Oh, I forgot. Most of them left already.

It is the environmental community which is the main source of greenwashing for our senators, the labs, and nuclear weapons. Look at [Heinrich's funding profile](#) at opensecrets.org. But do either of our senators have a plan or even a vision to

preserve or improve New Mexico's environment? Or our economy? No and no. That's just the beginning of the problems with their "environmental" credentials.

As we said in our meeting, the Study Group staff and local board are ready to help you, but we can't do the work of many people by ourselves. It's you who need to be reaching out to the churches, for example. Now is the time.

Just for "fun" here's figure 8-12 from the [new Obama nuclear weapons plan](#) released this week. Assuming all goes well for the nuke business, the nominal annual cost of warhead work is supposed to rise forever, nearly doubling by 2040. There's (make)work planned to fill in all those colored areas (that's the rest of the plan).



**Figure 8-12. Estimate of out-year budget requirements for NNSA Weapons Activities in then-year dollars**

Good luck and see you in about two weeks,

Greg and Trish

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**Reminder! Get-together at CloudCliff today, 5:30 pm**

March 19, 2015

Dear friends --

You are reminded!

Senators Heinrich and Udall both support expanding Santa Fe's plutonium and nuclear waste industry -- already the metro area's biggest manufacturing industry in dollar terms, I'm sure. But how to pay for it all? By cutting programs for poor Americans, of course.

1. "[House GOP budget cuts \\$5.5T in spending, balances in nine years](#)," The Hill, March 17, 2015.
2. "[House Republican Budget Overhauls Medicare and Repeals the Health Law](#)," New York Times, March 16, 2015.
3. "[Proposed Medicaid Block Grant Would Add Millions to Uninsured and Underinsured](#)," Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, March 17, 2015.
4. "[House Republican Budget Whacks Food Stamps And Medicaid](#)," Huffington Post, March 17, 2015.

We need to build a sufficient movement to block and reverse the proposed increases in military and nuclear spending. A contact in government just sent me a 19-page list of weapon systems now being purchased, including but not limited to nuclear weapon systems, with a total price tag of \$1,642,000 million, i.e. \$1.6 trillion. Ouch!

The new plutonium infrastructure proposed for LANL would be the largest public works project in NM history in constant dollars, except for the three interstate highways. It would dwarf everything else. Its shadow would fall over Santa Fe for the rest of this century.

It's really in our power to stop all this.

We are looking forward very much to seeing you.

Greg and Trish and the rest of the gang

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**Get-together at CloudCliff this Thursday 3/19, 5:30 pm**

March 16, 2015

Dear Santa Fe friends --

The Los Alamos Study Group is having an important get-together, update, and discussion this coming Thursday, March 19th, at 5:30 pm, hosted by Willem Malten in his residence adjacent to the CloudCliff Bakery in Santa Fe, at 1805 2nd St.

We aren't sending this note to everybody, just to about 10% of our broad Santa Fe membership. Our goal is not a general public meeting where we have to start "at the beginning" on the issues we work on (here, in Washington, and internationally), but rather a more action-oriented discussion which will hopefully be very useful and inspiring to all who attend.

We won't be serving dinner this time but there will be snacks.

Our topics will include:

- The status of the Obama Grand Nuclear Modernization Plan. Good news: some of it is delayed so long it is really canceled. Stick a fork in it. Bad news: the rest is continuing. Good news #2: there isn't enough money for it all, so something has to give. Bad news #2: DoD hopes to take the money from a "reassessment of our national priorities." And it goes on like that. We're in a real struggle for the future, with Santa Fe -- the #1 metro area in the world for

- nuclear warhead spending, having wrested the title back from Albuquerque this year -- in the crosshairs.
- The very encouraging status of international efforts to ban the bomb and what they could mean for Santa Fe and for all of us.
  - The latest plan for restarting plutonium warhead core ("pit") production and how you can help us defeat it. We're back to a stealth multibillion-dollar plan, again.
  - Global hybrid war and what we can collectively do to stop it. It's coming to Santa Fe, via plutonium, not even counting the rest.
  - Your fundraising ideas. This is not a fundraising meeting per se but we are interested in your ideas.
  - We are always recruiting and we want you to think about that too.
  - Fresh new opportunities opening up (as in, starting next week).

This is really going to be a discussion, not just a presentation, so bring your thinking caps!

We don't put a lot of strategy into our Bulletins, due to their very broad subscriber universe. Last week a VP of Sandia signed up. Senior government people in DC get it. So meetings like this are where that strategy can happen.

Right now, powerful people in DC and here believe that New Mexico, and Santa Fe, want to be a plutonium-oriented place, a nuclear-military playground. There have been personnel changes at NNSA and just as before, they do not remember what happened 5 years ago, or 10 years, or 25 years ago. What happened is that every single plan they have put forward has been defeated -- about 5 at Los Alamos alone. The newbies think the state is a political doormat for nuclear weapons, which would be their natural starting assumption, reinforced by our senators. As Willem emphasizes, we've got to change that.

See you Thursday we hope,

Greg, Trish, Willem, Lydia, Tom, and the rest of the Study Group

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2901 Summit Place NE Albuquerque, NM 87106, Phone: 505-265-1200



# Los Alamos Study Group

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