



A “No More Nukes in Our Name” hunger strike was joined by 44 students and others on California campuses. The strike culminated in a protest and 13 arrests at a May 17 Board of Regents “more nukes” meeting (above) in San Francisco.

U. Calif. Hunger Strike Against the Bomb

BERKELEY, Calif. — More than 40 students and alumni at three University of California campuses began a hunger strike May 8 calling for the U. to get out of the nuclear war biz. Activists fasted in the run-up to their presence at a May 17 UC Board of Regents meeting in San Francisco. Thirteen people were arrested there for disrupting the Regents’ discussion of the “Report on the National Nuclear Security Administration Vision for the Nuclear Weapons Complex of 2030.” The university system has been designing, engineering and manufacturing nuclear weapons for 60 years, as operators of the Los Alamos National Laboratory (in New Mexico) and the UC’s Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory.

The fast ended after activists secured a meeting with the Regents and received news that the UC Santa Barbara faculty senate will, on June 8, produce a resolution to support some of the goals of the strikers.

The principled nonviolent resistance came in response to the U.S. Nuclear Weapons Council’s recent announcement that the Livermore lab would design the first new hydrogen bomb since the end of the Cold War in 1990. The fasters objected as well to the planned resumption of plutonium core manufacturing *en masse* at Los Alamos in 2008. These programs are the first step in Bush Administration plans to revamp the entire nuclear weapons complex, under the auspices of the DOE’s “Complex 2030.”

Student governments at several campuses have passed resolutions opposing the UC’s ties to nuclear weapons labs, and more are considering similar resolutions. The multi-campus Coalition to Demilitarize the UC has worked on several fronts to sever ties to the nuclear war system, including writing letters, generating petitions and speaking at Regent’s meetings. In November, they undertook an act of nonviolent civil resistance, disrupting a Regent’s meeting during its discussion of their nuclear weapons labs.

“There has never been a more critical time for the UC Regents to take a principled stand against the U.S.’s nuclear weapons programs,” says Will Parrish, a UC Santa Cruz alumnus who pledged to go without solid food until the Regents meet the demand for severance. “They could cast the UC’s enormous political and intellectual weight on the side of international law and morality,” Parrish said.

Nuclear weapons development has been banned under the 1968 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

According to UC Santa Barbara student Ellen McClure, “The university should not be involved in any way with the production of weapons of mass destruction. The UC’s involvement has done nothing to make the research at the labs more transparent or less deadly.”

The hunger strike and civil resistance arrests represent the culmination of over five years of organizing and protesting by UC students.

Plutonium Reprocessing Plan to Waste Billions

The Bush Administration’s so-called Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (waste reprocessing, waste management and disposal) has a projected price tag of \$500 billion. Plenty of federal money is being promised to contractors at nuclear weapons facilities under the wide-ranging proposal that Bush claims will reduce the danger of weaponizing the waste from nuclear power. GNEP would also “develop and deploy advanced reactors to burn up some of the nastier parts of the recycled fuel,” according to the *Knoxville News*.

It will take between 10 and 150 years for the envisioned but untested GNEP technology to be made workable, according to the National Academy of Sciences.

Anyone who thinks the reprocessing, dubbed “recycling” by Bush, is going to be clean — chopping up waste fuel rods, chemically dissolving the fuel, separating radioactive elements in 50-year-old facilities — hasn’t been paying attention. The process leaves millions of gallons of liquid high-level waste.

“With a liability in excess of \$100 billion, and after 25 years, the Department of Energy has treated less than one percent of the radioactivity in [military] high-level wastes for geological disposal,” says Robert Alvarez, director of the nuclear policy project at the Institute for Policy Studies. High-level radioactive waste steadily accumulates at reactors across the country and

Report Finds Nuclear Weapons Materials Released to Landfills

Market Opened for Reuse and Recycling

Nuclear Information and Resource Service

TAKOMA PARK, MD — Radioactive waste materials are being sent from nuclear weapons facilities to regular landfills and could get into commercial metal recycling operations, according to a report released by Nuclear Information and Resource Service (NIRS).

The report, “Out of Control — On Purpose: DOE’s Dispersal of Radioactive Waste into Landfills and Consumer Products,” was commissioned to discover if and how the Department of Energy releases radioactive wastes from nuclear weapon production sites.

The report’s authors, led by Diane D’Arrigo, NIRS’ Radioactive Waste Project Director, investigated the DOE’s national headquarters and seven federal weapons sites: Oak Ridge, Tennessee; Rocky Flats, Colorado; Los Alamos, New Mexico; Mound and Fernald, Ohio; West Valley, New York and Paducah, Kentucky.

“People around ordinary landfills will be shocked to learn that radioactive contamination from nuclear weapons production is ending up there, either directly released by DOE or via brokers and processors,” D’Arrigo said. “Just as ominous, the DOE allows and encourages sale and donation of some radioactively contaminated materials,” she said.

The NIRS report tracked the laws, DOE guidances and technical justifications that the agency uses to rationalize allowing radioactive scrap, concrete, asphalt, plastic, wood, chemicals, soil, etc. out to landfills, commercial businesses and recreation areas — places unprepared to handle radioactivity. Applauding DOE’s ban on recycling of radioactive metal from nuclear weapons, the report cautions that there are dangerous loopholes in the regulation.

“DOE is ignoring public opposition to unnecessary exposures and releasing radioactivity even though the U.S. Congress revoked such release policies,” said Mary Olson, director of the NIRS Southeast office and a co-author of

the report. “DOE is using its own internal guidance to allow radioactive weapons wastes [get] out of control, claiming the doses to people will be ‘acceptable’ even though they are not enforced or tracked.”

Under the current system, the DOE and other nuclear waste generators release materials directly, sell them at auction or through exchanges or send their waste to processors who can then release it from radioactive controls to landfills, to recyclers or for reuse.

The report found that the state of Tennessee is a leader in licensing processors that can release radioactive materials for the nuclear waste generators.

“Tennessee is serving as a funnel to bring in nuclear weapons and power waste from around the country to disperse into the landfills and recycling without public knowledge,” D’Arrigo said.

The waste is processed by state-licensed companies and in some cases “redefined” as “special” then released to regular landfills. This free release also opens up the potential for radioactive materials to enter the metal recycling stream and be made into household items (nails, door handles, jungle gyms) or built into roads, schools and hospitals.

“As long as DOE and other nuclear waste generators can slip their contamination out — letting it get ‘out of control’ — on purpose — there is really no limit to the amount of additional radiation exposure members of the public could receive,” D’Arrigo concluded. “Only an informed, outraged public can force DOE and agreeable states to shift the goal from dispersal to isolation of radioactive waste.”

A copy of the full report can be found on the NIRS web site at: <http://www.nirs.org/radwaste/outofcontrol/outofcontrol.htm>

The report’s authors and contributors include Diane D’Arrigo, NIRS’ Radioactive Waste Project Director, Mary Olson, Director, NIRS Southeast Office, Cindy Folkers, NIRS, Health and Environment Project and Dr. Marvin Resnikoff, Radioactive Waste Management Associates.

News Group Says US. Nuclear Sub Collision With Tanker Caused Radiation Leak

On Jan. 7, 2007, the 360-foot, nuclear-powered U.S. submarine *Newport News* smashed into the giant Japanese oil tanker *Mogamigawa* in the narrow Straits of Hormuz in Iranian territorial waters. The 300,000-ton 1,040-foot tanker was fully loaded and drawing 65 feet of water as it passed over the submarine.

According to the military watchdog website GlobalSecurity.org, the *Newport News*, with a crew of 127, is equipped with 12 Tomahawk cruise missiles. Each missile can carry a 200-kiloton nuclear warhead (192 times the explosive power of the 12.5-kiloton Hiroshima bomb).

Initial reports of the crash said damage to the *Los Angeles* Class fast attack submarine was “light” or “not substantial” and that no damage at all was done to the sub’s propulsion reactor or weapons systems. U.S. and Japanese government agencies rolled out their usual assurances. Japan’s Foreign Ministry told the Kyodo News Agency Jan. 9, that the submarine’s bow had collided with the stern of the tanker and, “There was no leakage of radioactive material in the collision.”

However, by April 15, news accounts of the sub’s return to Norfolk, Virginia said it had “heavy damage,” and on April 25, UPI reported the sub “sustained significant damage.” The Fars News Agency said, “Following the collision and when the submarine was transferred to a port in Bahrain to undergo



The nuclear weapons-capable U.S. submarine *Newport News* (above) was heavily damaged when it smashed into a 300,000-ton oil tanker in the Straits of Hormuz near Iran.

repair work, chemical and radioactive materials started leaking into the Persian Gulf waters.” The Fars News Agency is an Iranian news group based in Tehran which Reuters and CNN have called “semi-official.”

On a Navy web log, a retired Navy officer described the seriousness of the crash this way: “The screw from the ship walked its way down the [starboard] side of the sub damaging shutter doors and cut through the hull and bulkhead” — an account that has not been independently verified. The Kawasaki Kisen Company, which owns the *Mogamigawa*, reported that its hull and propellers were damaged.

The crash was blamed on the “venturi” effect in which cruising heavy vessels create a suction or draft. The effect drew “the submerged submarine into the tanker as it overtook the sub,” said *Navy Times*. — *JL*

A Few Recent Nuclear-Powered Accidents at Sea

September 6, 2005

A fire onboard the Russian nuclear-powered attack submarine *Daniil Moskovsky* killed two crewmen and shutdown the vessel’s reactor, but the Russian Navy claimed there was no serious threat of nuclear contamination.

September 5, 2005

The Groton, Connecticut-based submarine *Philadelphia* collided with the Turkish cargo ship *Yaso Aysen*.

January 8, 2005

The U.S. fast-attack sub *San Francisco*, moving at top speed, crashed into an undersea mountain 500 feet below the surface. Chief Petty Officer Danny Hager said of the collision, which hurled men through the air, “There was so much blood on the instruments and on the control room floor that the place looked like a slaughterhouse.”

July 2004

The aircraft carrier *John F. Kennedy* collided with and destroyed a small sailboat known as a dhow in the Persian Gulf, leaving no survivors on the traditional Arab craft. The Navy relieved the *Kennedy*’s commander.

February 9, 2001

The nuclear-powered U.S. submarine *Greenville* sank the Japanese fisheries training ship *Ehime Maru* during the subs rapid ascent off the coast of Hawaii, killing nine people including four teenage students.