

EDITORIAL

Year of Resistance

By Minard Hamilton

The response to *Deadly Defense* has been stunning. *The New York Times*, *USA Today*, Associated Press, plus dozens of local newspapers, ran lengthy stories about the book. Cable News Network, German and Japanese television, Canadian radio and press joined the throng.

Citizens all over the U.S. are ordering the book. So is corporate and establishment America—including Bechtel, Westinghouse, EG&G, Martin Marietta, as well as contractors at the other nuclear weapons facilities, the Department of Energy, the Department of Justice and members of Congress.

Deadly Defense strikes a sensitive nerve. Just when the U.S. Department of Energy states a clean-up of bomb factories will cost a whopping \$100 billion, presto *Deadly Defense* details the massive contamination problems at 16 plants. And *Deadly Defense* comes out just after the Gorbachev-Reagan summit. For news editors, peace was temporarily in, crowding out the usual fare of the weather, drug raps, and the presidential campaign trail.

Whether the interest is sustained depends upon the readers of *the Waste Paper* and other activists. Typically, peace protest actions coalesce around certain events and "days"—Hiroshima Day, Nevada Test Site 3-day occupation, etc. At the Mobilization for Survival's Ban the Bombmakers conference in June, a different concept was launched: a whole year of protest or resistance, beginning in January, 1989.

Already, many citizens are participating in resistance—as a way of life. Women and men have left their homes to live at peace camps. Yes, the occupation at Greenham Common in England continues, as does

the peace camp at the Pantex plant in Texas and Seneca, N.Y., to name a few.

Then there is the vigil at Concord Naval Weapons Station in northern California. Since September, 1987, the infamous day on which Brian Willson was run over by a train coming out of the station (Brian lost both legs and sustained a severe head injury) there has been a vigil at the tracks 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. That's over 10 months of continuous vigiling!

And over 90 citizens have participated in "Plowshares" actions. Following the Biblical imperative to "beat swords into plowshares," they attack the components of nuclear weapons—nose cones, missile hatches and computers—with hammers and bolt cutters and pour blood on documents. These protesters are serving sentences ranging from 1 to 18 years.

For these folks, plus countless war tax resisters and other participants in civil disobedience, sustained resistance is not new. However, the idea discussed at the Mobilization for Survival conference was to extend and broaden the community involved in sustained actions. One idea involved the formation of a Peace Army which would for one year—to start with—embark on a nonviolent campaign of resistance at one or two designated weapons facilities.

Just what form a year of resistance might take, has yet to be decided. Certainly, for the year to be fully effective it cannot involve guilt-tripping—each individual should be invited to be involved in whatever way she or he is ready. This might involve participation in an organized activity such as weekly leafleting or volunteer work, or it might mean daily decisions regarding how to live and work nonviolently.

Most important will be the commitment by a broad community to 365 days of awareness, change, and ac-

tion. It is our belief that anybody who reads *Deadly Defense* (and, of course, everybody should read it) will want to participate. Readers of *the Waste Paper* are invited to submit ideas for how this year might take shape.

rwc Waste Paper

Vol. 10, No. 2 Summer 1988

Organizer	Jean Fazzino
Managing Editor	Ed Hedemann
Research Director	Marvin Resnikoff
Assistant Director	Jennifer Tichenor

Board of Directors: Jed Bark, Priscilla Chapman, Michael Cohn, Diane D'Arigo, Lisa Finaldi, Laura Haight, Chip Hoagland, Cia Iselin, Warren Liebold, Lou Oliver, June Peoples, Dave Pyles, Anne Rabe, Betty Quick, Jeff Schmidt.

The rwc Waste Paper is published quarterly by The Radioactive Waste Campaign, 625 Broadway, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10012, (212)473-7390. Typesetting was done at EyeType, New York, NY; printing by Vanguard Printers, Hillside, NJ; distribution by Mailcraft, Hillside, NJ.

Subscriptions are \$8 a year, \$14 for 2 years, and \$15 a year to government, industry and international addresses.

Back issues are available for \$1 each. Bulk orders available at a discount.

Letters to the editor are welcome. These and inquiries or copy from guest writers should be sent to the Editor at the New York office.

Reprinting from the rwc Waste Paper may be done with acknowledgement. Kindly send reprints.

The Radioactive Waste Campaign promotes greater public awareness of the dangers to human health and the biosphere from the generation of radioactive waste. The Campaign's programs include research, information dissemination and public education.

 X-523

© 1988

ISSN No. 0738-7695

Minard Hamilton, formerly director of the Radioactive Waste Campaign, is practicing yoga in Brooklyn.

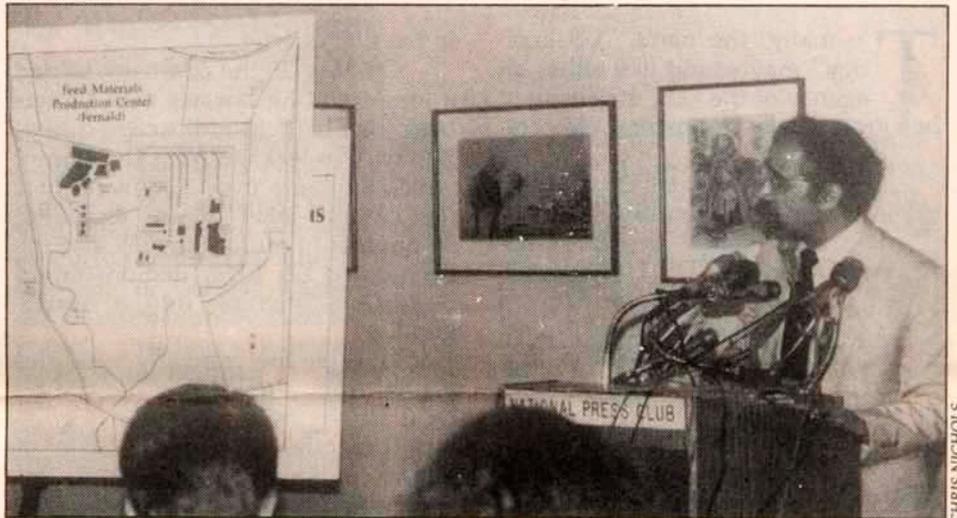
Deadly Defense Press Conferences

Eight simultaneous news conferences as well as stories by *The New York Times* and *USA Today*, and a wire story by the Reuters News Service on June 7 brought remarkable media coverage about the release *Deadly Defense*. Articles appeared in numerous local papers across the country.

The success of these regional press conferences near nuclear weapons facilities, in addition to Washington, DC, and New York City, is testimony to the importance of this issue as well as the strength of local organizers.

Washington, DC. Campaign Assistant Director Jennifer Tichenor opened the press conference, held in the National Press Building, with remarks about the Campaign. Staff Scientist Marvin Resnikoff then spoke about the findings of the book and took questions. The conference lasted about an hour and was attended by approximately 50 reporters representing the Associated Press, United Press International, news services such as Knight-Ridder, Scripts-Howard, Cox Broadcasting, in addition to Voice of America, local radio and television stations, and newspapers.

New York City. Introduced by Campaign Co-chair Jed Bark, outgoing Director Mina Hamilton presented the book's findings in the Fellowship of Reconciliation's Plowshares coffeehouse across the street from the United Nations. Among the media in attendance was CBS-TV, Cable News Network, and National Public Radio. The story was aired on



Marvin Resnikoff during press conference in Washington, DC, on June 7, 1988.

CHRIS NICHOLS

CNN immediately after the conference and resulted in calls to the Campaign office the same day.

Livermore, California. Marylia Kelley of Tri-Valley Citizens Against a Radioactive Environment reports that their press conference, held in the press room of the Lawrence Livermore Lab, was attended by 25 reporters and lasted over an hour. The conference was aired on at least 2 television stations, 5 or 6 radio stations, and printed in the *San Francisco Chronicle* and *San Francisco Examiner* as well as other dailies.

Denver, Colorado. The press conference was coordinated by the American Friends Service Committee and the Colorado Peace Network. *The Denver Post* and *The Rocky Mountain News* carried articles, and a radio

news service did a feed to a dozen radio stations in Denver and Boulder, according to Tom Rauch of Rocky Flats Nuclear Disarmament Project.

Knoxville, Tennessee. Americans for a Clean Environment hosted a press conference which led to top stories on the Oak Ridge facilities and *Deadly Defense* in the *Knoxville News Sentinel* and *The Knoxville Journal*, as well as television coverage, according to spokesperson Leon Lowery.

Nevada. Press conferences were held in Reno and Las Vegas. News of the book received front page coverage 2 days running in the *Las Vegas Sun*.

Portland, Oregon. The release of the book, coordinated by the Fellowship of Reconciliation and Northwest Environmental Associates, was covered by local radio and television stations.

Boise, Idaho. Newspapers, radio and television stations turned out for the press conference organized by the Snake River Alliance and Citizens Against Nuclear Weapons and Extinction. Besides the release of the book, the conference focused on radioactive dumping at the local nuclear weapons facility, INEL.

The Radioactive Waste Campaign would appreciate any newspaper clippings about *Deadly Defense* any of you can send us in order to better evaluate the impact of the book's release.



Mina Hamilton and Jed Bark beginning the *Deadly Defense* press conference in New York City on June 7, 1988.

ED HEDEMANN

Who Is US Ecology?

By Marvin Resnikoff

To many, the name "US Ecology" may sound like either an agency of the U.S. government or a group of environmental activists.

It is neither.

US Ecology operates toxic chemical and radioactive landfills.

Formerly named Nuclear Engineering Company, US Ecology disposed of 48 percent of the nation's commercial "low-level" waste in 1987 at facilities in Beatty, Nevada and Richland, Washington. In addition to operating toxic chemical landfills in Betty, Nevada and Robstown, Texas, the company provides related packaging, transportation and consulting services. The company has a long history of court actions with state and federal agencies.

A review of Annual Reports and Prospectuses, shows US Ecology is skating on thin financial ice. While attempting to identify and license new disposal sites in California and Nebraska, the company has collected a string of potential financial liabilities which are coming due.

Estimated costs to monitor and maintain closed sites run to several hundred million dollars, much larger than the company's total assets of \$55 million.

The company maintains a 20-acre leaking "low-level" waste facility in Sheffield, Illinois, and formerly operated the leaking radioactive landfill in Maxey Flats, Kentucky.

Since 1978, toxic chemical contamination has been detected in monitoring wells at the Robstown, Texas site. The company has proposed an injection well at the site.

Contaminants have been detected at the 300-foot depth at the Beatty, Nevada chemical site.

While amassing these potential liabilities, revenues from the company's operating "low-level" waste facilities are expected to decline drastically in 1988. Net income for the first quarter 1988 dropped to 2 cents a share. Except for a new accounting method adopted in 1988, the company would have operated in the red

in the first quarter.

On May 26 the company settled a long-standing lawsuit with Illinois over the Sheffield radioactive dump. Radioactive leakage from the dump, which contains over 3 million cubic feet of "low-level" waste, including 30 pounds of plutonium-239 and the dismantled Elk River demonstration reactor, is draining into a nearby pond.

In 1979, the company was prevented from abandoning the site by legal actions by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the State of Illinois. In January 1983, Nuclear Engineering Company purchased 120 additional acres as a "buffer zone."

In a recent federal court action, the company unsuccessfully attempted to prevent Illinois from becoming an Agreement State so that the state could regulate its own nuclear facilities.

Originally asking \$97 million, the Illinois Department of Nuclear Safety settled the suit for \$8 million, with \$2.5 million set aside for a long-term maintenance fund, and \$1.6 million for new clay trench covers. At an estimated cost of \$1.9 million, the company agreed to monitor and maintain the site for 10 years, after which care reverts to the state. Compared to a long-term care fund of about \$50 million set aside for the Barnwell, South Carolina radioactive

landfill, US Ecology escaped from the litigation lightly. In 1987, the company received over \$800,000 from insurance companies for recovery of legal costs.

In the case of the leaking Maxey Flats radioactive dump, the State of Kentucky had to pay the company close to \$8 million in order to close out its lease. Now listed as a Superfund site, the company and waste generators are funding studies ordered by the Environmental Protection Agency.

In 1986, proposed radioactive waste incinerators in Bladen County, North Carolina and Zionsville, Indiana were denied applications or dropped due to tremendous citizen opposition. As radioactive landfills in Nevada and Washington are phased out in 1992, the company intends to operate facilities in California and Nebraska.

Interestingly, the company declined to bid as an operator of the proposed Appalachian Compact "low-level" waste facility in Pennsylvania because of a "rebuttable presumption" clause in the state's "low-level" waste law. The clause holds that if radioactive contamination is found within three miles of a "low-level" waste facility, it is presumed to have come from the facility (see page 11).

Farmers Debate Rad Dump



Farmers, faced with the prospects of a 6-state radioactive waste dump, listen to a presentation by Campaign research director Marvin Resnikoff during a public meeting in Chadron, Nebraska, last May.

Marvin Resnikoff is the research director for the Radioactive Waste Campaign.

League of Women Voters

Partners with the Nuclear Establishment

By Ed Hedemann

From its inception in the women's suffrage movement, the League of Women Voters has worked for many progressive causes: child labor laws, minimum wage, social security, disarmament, civil rights, pro-choice reproductive rights, and others. The League, with its reputation of fairness and objectivity, is perhaps best known for its voter registration efforts and sponsorship of the Presidential debates.

However, this image of impartiality has been seriously tarnished recently because of the League's pro-nuclear stand. Fortunately, this pro-nuclear position has not gone unchallenged among some grassroots League activists.

The League's Nuclear Stand

Though the League does not take stands on particular candidates, it frequently takes stands on particular issues.

The League's position on nuclear power as stated in its *Impact on Issues* handbook is "The League opposes 'increased reliance on nuclear fission' but recognizes its place in the nation's energy mix."

The League, in its booklet *Rights and Responsibilities—A Community Handbook for Low-Level Radioactive Waste*, does not consider the pros and cons of radioactive waste disposal, but "why a low-level radioactive waste facility is needed."

Regarding transportation, "State or local Leagues cannot support 'blanket bans' on transporting nuclear wastes through a region or city," so instructs the *Impact on Issues* handbook.

On "low-level" waste compacts, the League makes clear that if a particular "state League disagrees with the approved League agreement [to participate in a proposed compact], that state League can only lobby its state legislature to . . . 'go it alone,' or to join another compact region." Opposing a "low-level" waste dump is not a permitted option for League chapters.

In Massachusetts, the state League—through its lobbyist—has joined Yankee Atomic Electric Co., in a lawsuit to block a referendum on the November ballot calling for the stopping of nuclear waste through the shutdown of the state's 2 nuclear plants. On June 7, however, the Massachusetts Board of Directors for the League took a position of not actively campaigning for or against the referendum. This conflicting position was achieved through the efforts of grassroots League members who support the referendum.

Following the Money Trail

The Education Fund, the League's tax-deductible arm, established the Nuclear Waste Education Project in September 1987. Two months later the U.S. Department of Energy awarded the League more than \$270,000 for "citizen education on nuclear waste issues." The League's plan is to develop a model curriculum for 2-day workshops

Fortunately, this pro-nuclear position has not gone unchallenged among some grassroots League activists.

aimed at community leaders. Trial workshops will be held in several parts of the country within the next year.

Several local Leagues have received funding from state nuclear agencies to do education on nuclear waste issues. For example, the Illinois Department of Nuclear Safety funded the Illinois League's publication of *Rights and Responsibilities* (see review on page 14).

US Ecology, the notorious nuclear waste "management" company

(see article on page 4), has made at least two grants to League branches: \$30,000 to the Southern California League and \$50,000 to the Nebraska League. In both instances the money is being used to set up and run "citizens' advisory committees," which in turn are facilitating US Ecology's effort to find the "best" possible sites to dump radioactive waste.

These "advisory committees" and the participation of the prestigious League are vital to US Ecology for three reasons: 1) they help US Ecology avoid obvious gaffes in site selection, etc., which would alienate local residents; 2) they provide the illusion of fairness and grassroots support, without US Ecology losing any of its total control over the process; and 3) it's a clever public relations gimmick which accomplishes some of the necessary siting work cheaply.

In an attempt to further the illusion of impartiality, the League/US Ecology team will frequently ensure the participation of an "environmentalist" (e.g., someone from the Sierra Club) on the advisory committees. Naturally, people so selected are not likely to take a position critical of radioactive waste dumps during committee discussions. But even if they do, you can bet their protests would get swamped by the pro-dump majority.

The League's relationship with US Ecology, the Department of Energy, etc., is reminiscent of citizens in some ancient feudal kingdom calmly discussing the most efficient and fair way to select who among them will be the honored victim for the yearly sacrifice to the gods—without once challenging or resisting the whole concept of making sacrifices.

One can only hope that the struggle of its grassroots members will eventually persuade the League to change its pro-nuclear stance, thus healing the betrayal felt by many members and restoring the heritage of fairness that was once a trademark of the League of Women Voters.

Proposed Bomb Plant Gets Chilly Reception from Idahoans

By Elizabeth Paul

In what many say were the biggest public hearings ever held in Idaho, more than 500 people testified in 3 cities over a period of 6 days this past March on the proposed plutonium plant. This "plan . . . has ignited a major political struggle in the Northwest over jobs and nuclear disarmament," according to a front page article in the March 27 *New York Times*.

The hearings hit with an inten-

"Like a crazed carrier of a deadly disease, [the DOE] has run amuck contaminating every partner with which it becomes intimate. Now the sick partners know the truth, nuclear condoms leak!"

—Marilyn Bauman
Church Women United, Boise

sity little seen in Idaho and especially in Idaho Falls. "The controversial project had precipitated an unusual event in Idaho Falls, the center of nuclear Idaho. In a city not known for vigorous public debate over nuclear matters, the hearing became just that," wrote Tony Huegel in the March 27 *Idaho Falls Post Register*.

The Department of Energy, troubled by opposition in other states, figured that Idaho would provide a receptive atmosphere for the construction of the Special Isotope Separation plutonium plant—the first new nuclear weapons plant in the United States in a quarter century.

This new plant is to be built at the Idaho National Engineering Labo-

ratory, an 890 square mile facility 25 miles west of Idaho Falls. Not only is the Lab, with its 10,000 employees, the largest single employer in the state, but it is the home of the largest concentration of nuclear reactors in the world.

Gathering of the Storm

In August of 1986 when the Department of Energy announced that the Lab had been selected as the site for the new plutonium separation plant, there was no indication that a storm was brewing.

With little fanfare, only small hope, and my vacation plans shot, the Snake River Alliance began a slow, systematic assault on the Special Isotope Separations plant (SIS) that summer in 1986.

This assault would—in the words of Boise writer Pat Ford—"start a vital encounter, too long delayed, between Idaho and INEL."

These hearings, scheduled by the Department of Energy to receive public comment on the draft environmental impact statement, were preceded by a period of intense grass-

roots education and organizing by the Snake River Alliance.

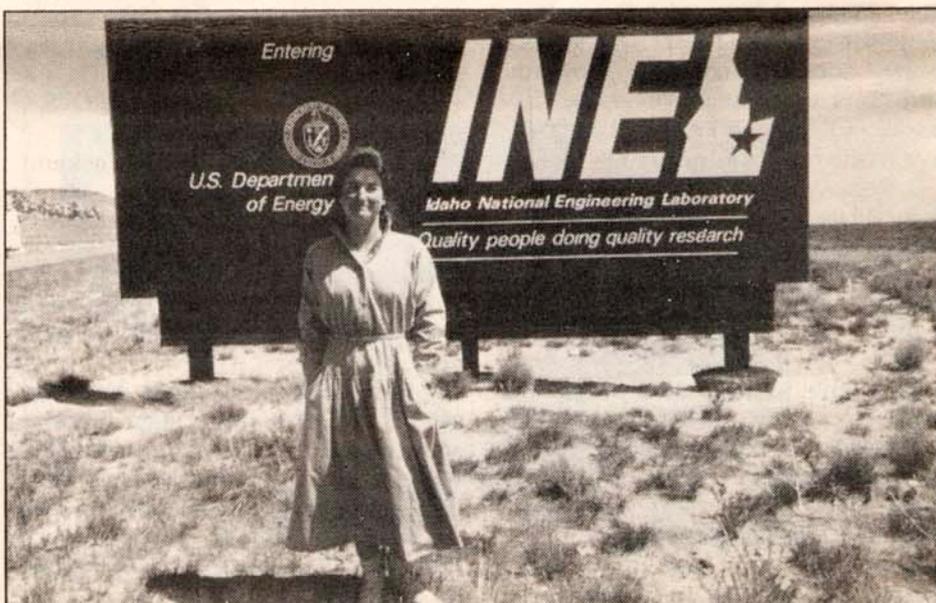
It was clear even before the testimony began that a nerve had been touched. Both sides ran television ads, circulated petitions, and rallied their forces to turn out at the hearings. The newspapers were saturated with the debate.

There was never a dull moment as person after person in the standing room only hearing room strode to the microphone and delivered their personal message on the plutonium plant, often with passion, anger, or tears.

People challenged the need for more plutonium. They spoke of health and safety concerns, problems of transportation and waste storage, and the Energy Department's abysmal record of environmental contamination at other weapons production facilities.

Loyalty was expressed to nuclear power, but the morality of engaging in the production of nuclear weapons was questioned.

Supporters of the new plutonium facility were strong in their support for the jobs and other economic gains



Elizabeth Paul at the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory site last Spring.

Elizabeth Paul is an organizer for the Snake River Alliance in Ketchum, Idaho.

SPECIAL ISOTOPE SEPARATION

The Special Isotope Separation plant would be the first of a new generation of weapons materials facilities intended to bridge the gap between the rapidly aging facilities now in operation and the new production reactors the Department of Energy has on the drawing board. This plant represents an investment and a commitment to another 30 years of nuclear bomb manufacture.

"Special isotope separation" is a technology under development at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. Originally touted as a process to enrich uranium, Livermore's scientists soon discovered that the technology could be used to separate plutonium isotopes.

The technology involves the use of high energy dye lasers, tuned to specific colors, to separate vaporized plutonium-239 from other undesired plutonium isotopes. The only use of plutonium-239 is as an explosive in nuclear warheads.

According to the Department of Energy, feed material for the plant will come from the Department's own stocks of less than weapon grade plutonium ("weapon grade" must be at least 94 percent plutonium-239). This is primarily plutonium produced in Hanford's N Reactor and planned for use in the now defunct Clinch River Breeder Reactor. The Energy Department estimates that processing this feed will take 7 to 8 years.

It is not clear whether the plant will continue to operate after this period. Other potential sources of feed material for the plant include reprocessed spent fuel from commercial nuclear power plant, and the current stockpile of 100 metric tons of weapons-grade plutonium which the Department says could be "cleaned-up" by the new facility.

E.P.

that were promised, and confident of the nation's need for the plant in defending the country.

At the end of the hearings one

Mina Hamilton Resigns as Director

After ten eventful years assisting citizens across the country on radioactive waste issues, Minard Hamilton stepped down as Director of the Radioactive Waste Campaign in June. The Board reluctantly accepted her resignation at a party in her honor June 14. Mina was co-founder of the Campaign in 1978.

Mina is reknowned for her brilliant efforts to halt the proposed Tocks Island Dam on the Delaware River. She molded the Delaware Valley Conservation Association into a powerful force that was feared by the Army Corps of Engineers. Using bike-

ins and imaginative media grabbing actions, she halted the dam and saved the Delaware Valley.

After this, Mina moved to Buffalo, New York where the Campaign first opened shop in 1978. She organized New York State residents against a proposed irradiated fuel storage facility in West Valley and was instrumental in enacting legislation to "clean up" high-level waste on the site.

Under Mina's direction, the Campaign achieved national prominence, assisting groups around the country to oppose unwise industry disposal practices. In the process, she became an expert on radioactive landfills.

Hamilton developed new Campaign initiatives—military waste and the importation of South African uranium. Her writing and editing left a strong mark on the Campaign's two recent books, *Living Without Landfills* and *Deadly Defense*.

Beginning in the mid 1960's with block by block organizing in New York City against the Vietnam War, her career has included writing and editorial assignments with *Newsweek* and *Industrial Design* magazines and the Associated Press. She was the Northeast organizer for the solar celebration, Sun Day in 1978. In recent years, she has devoted more time to writing short stories and fiction, and intends to pursue her writing career full-time.



ED HEDEMANN

Mina Hamilton being interviewed following *Deadly Defense* press conference in New York City on June 7, 1988.

message was clear: the citizens at the hearings rejected the proposed plant by a margin of at least 4 to 1. Even in Idaho Falls—which hosted a huge "Yes! Yes! SIS!" parade the weekend

*"Let's not crucify
our own posterity on
a cross of plutonium."*

—John Dille, Pocatello

before—half of those testifying opposed the new facility.

The hearings carried another, perhaps more important, message: "When third and fourth generation Idahoans from rural communities

such as Buhl will stand up and say no to a project more than 100 miles away in the Arco desert, the political ground has to be shifting a little," commented Mark Pratter in the April 4 *Twin Falls Times News*.

In the last 20 months I have felt the earth move here in Idaho. I have seen people wake up to the reality that if we didn't change our course, we would end up where we are going. I have witnessed determined people from all walks of life stand up and challenge what Idaho Congressman Richard Stallings had called a "done deal."

In the words of Energy Department spokesman Clay Nichols, "If we can't get a facility like this built here, you wonder if we can build anything anywhere."

Good question!

Babcock & Wilcox Plans Thwarted

Local Residents Cause Setback for Nuclear Giant

By Cindee Virostek

In January after more than 3 years of battling, local citizens forced Babcock & Wilcox to withdraw its plans to build an incinerator for "low-level" radioactive wastes in Parks Township, Pennsylvania.

In addition, last February the company decided to drop its lawsuit against the township. The suit challenged the constitutionality of the township's strict air emissions ordinance.

In November 1984, Babcock & Wilcox announced its intention to build a "Volume Reduction Services Facility" at their former nuclear fuel plants on the banks of the Kiski River, 30 miles northeast of Pittsburgh.

These commercial facilities would either decontaminate, incinerate, or compact "tens of thousands of drums of nuclear waste a year" from hospitals, nuclear reactors, and industrial plants from any state in the country. Then the waste would be shipped to designated nuclear waste "disposal" sites.

The Opposition Is Formed

The Babcock announcement prompted the formation, in December 1984, of the Kiski Valley Coalition To Save Our Children, primarily composed of a few housewives and their husbands.

The Coalition immediately found themselves confronting not only Babcock & Wilcox, but the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Department of Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Army Corps of Engineers.

During almost 4 years of research, Coalition members uncovered numerous violations (some criminal) of state and federal regulations by Babcock & Wilcox, despite the company's claims to the contrary.

The Kiski Valley Coalition released these findings to newspapers, in television and radio interviews, at

public meetings, and over the telephone. Organizers left nothing untried. Fact sheets were handed out on the street and door-to-door. Resolutions against the Babcock proposal were passed by 6 local communities, Armstrong County Commissioners, two school districts, and Parent Teachers Associations. Anti-Babcock & Wilcox petitions were signed by 6500 residents. Penn State University, contracted by Babcock & Wilcox to test citizen reaction, found overwhelming opposition. Referenda placed on the ballots in Apollo and Parks Township opposed the proposed Babcock facility by more than 80 percent.

Fundraising for the Kiski Valley Coalition has meant bake sales, raffles, door-to-door canvassing, donation cans prominently displayed on information tables, and sales of things like cookbooks and bean soup.

The Local Governments Get Into the Act

Due to overwhelming opposition and concerns about past releases, the Parks Township Supervisors, at the urging of the Coalition, passed an air pollution ordinance in September 1985, restricting radioactive emis-

sions. The authority to do this was granted by the 1985 Clean Air Act.

According to the Parks' ordinance, tritium emissions are limited to 5 curies a year and carbon-14 emissions to 1 curie. The Babcock incinerator would have released 80 curies of tritium and 4 curies of carbon-14 each year. Therefore, use of the incinerator would be precluded. However, it's questionable whether the compactor and decontamination operations will comply with the ordinance, especially when no filter can prevent the gases released.

In December 31, 1985, Babcock & Wilcox proceeded to sue the Township, claiming the ordinance was an illegal exercise of local police powers.

The Kiski Valley Coalition took its case against Babcock to the Environmental Protection Agency and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources. Babcock was surprised to learn that they were required to apply for additional state and federal permits.

Over 400 people attended a public meeting in February 1987 to voice their opposition. As a result, the Environmental Resources Department put Babcock's air and solid waste permits on hold pending fur-



In January 15, 1988 demonstration, local citizens let Babcock & Wilcox know that stopping the incinerator is not enough.

Cindee Virostek is a researcher and activist for the Kiski Valley Coalition To Save Our Children.

Cindee Virostek

Profile of an Activist

In large part, the success of the opposition to Babcock & Wilcox is due to the fierce determination and resourcefulness of Cindee Virostek, a 33-year-old housewife, who used to spend her free time watching soap operas and refinishing wood furniture.

Virostek, a life-long resident of the Apollo area, now spends 16 hours a day doing research of federal and state documents out of her dining room.

Her home is 2 blocks downwind from the Apollo plant and 2 miles from the Parks Township plant. An informal survey of 10 of the 12 homes on her block revealed that there are 11 people who have contracted cancer.

After she made public some of the violations she uncovered in her research, a Babcock & Wilcox official called and threatened to send a lawyer to seize the documents. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has come to her home several times because of her information requests, and on one occasion brought her to them. An internal Commission memo uncovered by the Coalition stated "be brief so she can see that we are a little tight-lipped about historical matters."

Impressed by her efforts, the Environmental Protection Agency once offered her a job.

In 1986, the Citizens Clearinghouse for Hazardous Wastes gave Virostek their "Leadership Achievement Award" for courage, determination, and research efforts.



Cindee Virostek doing research in her dining room.

In 1987 she was presented with the "First Annual Women's Studies Excellence Award for Community Service and Advocacy" by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania. University spokeswoman Diana Brandi described Virostek as "self-educated and pretty sophisticated in her knowledge" and "inspiring to people who say, 'I can't make a difference.'"

In 1988 the Allegheny Group of the Sierra Club honored Virostek as well as Coalition members Charles Clark and Jack Bologna for their efforts in fighting Babcock & Wilcox. Cindee's husband Chris, and sons Chris (12) and Chad (10) were also recognized for their patience in having to live with such a dedicated mother.

ther environmental and health studies.

Furthermore, the Environmental Protection Agency required Babcock to make an application under the 1985 National Emission Standard for Hazardous Air Pollutants regulation.

One Step Backwards, Two Steps Forward

In its vote on a "low-level" waste siting bill, the Pennsylvania House of Representatives approved an amendment in January, 1988, which exempts the Babcock & Wilcox compactor from state siting regulations.

However, because of Parks' strict ordinance on air emissions and the new Pennsylvania policies on incineration, Babcock & Wilcox withdrew their plans to build the incinerator this last January.

The remaining issues in this battle are stopping the compactor and decontamination operations, cleaning up the 15-acre nuclear waste burial site at Parks as well as "hot spots" at the two plants and in the town of Apollo.

Also pending are twin bills in the Pennsylvania House and Senate, that were introduced at the urging of the Coalition, allocating \$100,000 for an

Babcock & Wilcox

Carrying on a Tradition of Neglect

The Apollo and Parks Township plants were built in 1957 by the Nuclear Materials and Equipment Corporation. The Corporation, formed by 3 Los Alamos scientists, the first privately-owned producer of plutonium, uranium and experimental fuel for fast-breeder reactors and the Navy. Atlantic Richfield purchased the 2 plants in 1967, which were then sold to Babcock & Wilcox 4 years later.

Between 1957 and 1976, over 940 pounds of bomb-grade uranium and about 60 pounds of plutonium—enough for almost 100 bombs—disappeared. The Central Intelligence Agency concluded years ago that more than 200 pounds of this material* was diverted to Israel for its nuclear weapons program.

Throughout the 1960's, about 2 pounds of enriched uranium a month were lost through the plants' 117 stacks, according to the Atomic Energy Commission. For a period of 7 hours in 1972 the Apollo plant released radioactive emissions 100,000 times the AEC allowable limit. In 1973 a release from the Parks

continued on page 10

independent epidemiological study. The Coalition is encouraging Apollo to pass an ordinance similar to the Parks' one.

Finally, the Kiski Valley Coalition is seeking a settlement of the lawsuit. This lawsuit has been closely watched nationwide because it is the first test of the federal Clean Air Act. A victory for the Parks would establish the right for other communities to restrict radioactive emissions—including the right to shut down offending facilities.

In any case, the Kiski Valley Coalition activists will continue to oppose the compactor in order to stop the nation's "low-level" waste from traveling through their communities, on the same roads as their children's school buses, turning their air into a national dumpsite, and their roads into national mobile storage areas.

LETTERS

Corrections to "Compact Update" Article

Dear Editor:

In your Spring 1988 issue of *rw* Waste Paper there was an article by June Peoples entitled "Compact Update." There were several erroneous statements made in the paragraph describing New York State.

We do not plan to name any sites in 1988. We are currently completing negotiations with a contractor to start the site selection process. This will entail exclusionary screening, to be completed by September 1988, selection of 10 areas of interest by December of 1988, selection of 4 to 8 potential site [sic] for study by early spring of 1989. A site will not be selected until early summer of 1990. This schedule has been public knowledge for some time.

We have no idea where the schedule presented in the *rw* Waste Paper came from. It does not conform to any schedule ever envisioned by the Siting Commission . . .

[Furthermore,] there are no salt domes in New York State. There are bedded salt deposits, but these are much different than salt domes . . . [Also,] we are not at this time focusing any effort on any specific region or location in New York State. . . . Salt mines are only one of a number of existing types of mines which will be studied. In addition, we will be evaluating the potential to develop new mines in promising geological features.

The process in New York State is as open to public scrutiny as it can be made. Two members of the Radioactive Waste Campaign are on the Advisory Committee . . .

Jay D. Dunkleberger,
Executive Director
NYS Low-Level Radioactive Waste
Siting Commission

RESPONSE:

The schedule for selection of potential sites mentioned in the article came from an earlier Siting Commission document. Our article was in error about the schedule for the final site selection. Dunkleberger is correct about the lack of salt domes in New York State.

Because it is dominated by industry

and state officials, the Advisory Committee is not an example of "openness to public scrutiny." The 2 token environmentalists on the Committee have been continually frustrated in their attempts at meaningful input. The Advisory Committee has little input to the Department of Health on its educational materials. Furthermore, there have been instances when members of the Advisory Committee made requests for information and were turned down. For example, the Siting Commission turned down a request for copies of the proposals submitted by 4 or 5 companies seeking to be the contractor for the State.

South African Ore

Greetings:

I am writing to add to John Miller's article (in the Winter issue of *the Waste Paper*) on South African uranium shipments to the U.S. Mr. Miller talks about the loopholes in the anti-apartheid legislation that were large enough to let tons of processed uranium into the country. Well, I would like the public to know that there are loopholes large enough to let in tons of yellowcake also . . .

The Sequoyah Fuels Conversion Facility (owned and operated by the Kerr-McGee Corporation) in Gore, Oklahoma, has a contract to convert South African uranium through 1994 for Spanish utilities (See Nuclear Fuel, July 13, 1987) and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission found a loophole to permit it. While the U.S. Treasury Department first decided that uranium ore and oxide shipments to the U.S. were legal if the material was imported merely for processing and then reexported, they later changed their position to believe that Congress meant all importations of uranium ore.

The Commission's general counsel agrees with Treasury's interpretation of the law, however. The Commission's final position on the subject must await the outcome of a public written hearing that is now on-going. It's possible that Kerr-McGee may have a maximum supply of South African ore on-site before the Commission makes its final decision.

Joe Gilliland, Commission spokesman in Arlington, Texas, said

that since Kerr-McGee was not the importer of the South African ore, the sanctions had not been violated. Gilliland said a Spanish, government-controlled nuclear plant, Enusa, hired Edlow International Corp., an American company, as its broker to purchase uranium, transport it for processing into fuel and get it back to Spain for reactor fuel.

Edlow bought the ore from South

continued on page 15

Babcock/continued

plant was 20,000 times the limit. During the 1970's, the AEC noted over 300 violations of the ventilation requirements as well as failure to correct earlier problems.

Radioactive wastes were dumped into the Kiski River since the early 1960's, and for many years exceeded 100 times the allowable limit. The Kiski feeds into the Allegheny a few miles upstream from Pittsburgh's drinking water.

In 1976 the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources filed criminal charges against Babcock for discharges into the atmosphere.

1982 and 1983, South Carolina and Nevada fined Babcock and suspended their burial waste dumping privileges in those states because of improperly packaged waste shipments.

The Kiski Valley Coalition discovered that the company was discharging radioactive and hazardous waste into the local sewage plant as well as local sanitary landfills. The waste was also dumped on local airport runways and local farms as part of a "soil enrichment program."

Inadequate decontaminated equipment and other scrap metal continues to be sent to a Maryland scrap dealer for smelting, then ultimately fabrication into pots and pans. "It's safe," according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

C.V.

**as a portion of 5 tons of material discharged as waste into the environment in the early 1960's*

RADSCOPE

Livermore Lab Corralled

In June, members of Tri-Valley CAREs (Citizens Against a Radioactive Environment) entered a float in a local rodeo parade. Unlike most floats, this was a vehicle for educating community members on environmental and health hazards at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory.

Entitled, "Boom Town," the float consisted of 55-gallon drums painted to resemble actual leaking toxic waste drums which were photographed during a Department of Health inspection. The barrels were laden with fake toxins, smoking from dry ice, and labelled "LLNL Toxic Waste."

Members of the group followed behind the float with shovels and buckets mocking the Lab's environmental clean up program. They also leafleted the crowd with fliers explaining the environmental problems and outlining their lawsuit charging that the University of California condoned a whitewashed Environmental Impact Report.

Tri-Valley CAREs provided a written script to announcers at the grandstands. Being that it was not the usual float description, one of the announcers stopped short, in mid-sentence when she realized what she was saying. Another, trying to gloss over the dangers of Lab policies, was corrected by crowd members who insisted on truthful statements.

This was the third year Tri-Valley CAREs has entered a float. Spokesperson Marylia Kelley said they feel it is a good way to educate the community and it affirms the group's commitment to peace, the environ-

ment, and the community of which they are a part. Marylia also said that the crowd response was great. While there were some boo's, most clapped, many yelled encouragement, and some even shouted "I'm with you guys 1000 percent."

What If They Gave a Dump and Nobody Came?

Pennsylvania, as "host" to the Appalachian Compact, has one of the toughest "low-level" waste disposal laws in the country. It also has the distinction of being boycotted by all the potential waste site operators.

Officials for the Bureau of Radiation Protection announced on June 3 that no company submitted a bid in response to the state's Request for Proposal process, despite some early interest.

Westinghouse objected to the liability provisions in the law which hold operators fully liable for problems that might occur at the disposal site.

Other companies objected to a "rebuttal presumption" provision in the state law. This provision shifts the burden to the site operator to prove that radioactive contamination occurring within 3 miles of the site was not caused by the waste facility.

While disappointed in the lack of bids, state officials have indicated a reluctance to change the law to accommodate the disposal industry.

However, the state is considering the establishment of a fee on waste currently generated in the state. This

fee could be used for site evaluation and development, rather than requiring all costs associated with the site to be paid for by the generators.

Another option—if no bids are received—is for the state to construct and operate its own site.

"It's ironic that the same companies which tell us, over and over, that 'nothing can go wrong' are now saying they aren't willing to back up their claims by accepting full responsibility for potential accidents and leaks. The industry is simply not willing to put its money where its mouth is," commented Sierra Club lobbyist Jeff Schmidt.

Conference on Rad Waste Activists Held

By Bob Dunning

Three dozen activists representing a broad range of compacts and "go-it-alone" states met from June 11 to 13 in Omaha, Nebraska for the second National Conference on Low-Level Radioactive Waste.

The topic which received the most emphasis concerned the threats to representational government presented by compacts and state radioactive waste authorities.

For example, Nebraska has been chosen as the "host" state for its compact. However, there is no Nebraska member seated on the compact authority. In addition, the authority is not compelled to honor any health or safety requirement put forth by the people of Nebraska through their elected officials. Citizens there have initiated a petition drive to consider withdrawing from the compact.

Other issues raised at the conference included the rights of go-it-alone states to exclude another state's waste, the precedent for states to be responsible for the waste of private industry, the extent of the changes in federal law made between 1980 and the amendments act in 1985, and the rights of local governments to approve or oversee waste facility operation.

The conference, coordinated by
continued on page 15



The Tri-Valley CAREs' float just following the rodeo parade.

Food Irradiation

By Jean Fazzino

In its continuing search to find a use for "the peaceful atom," and confronted with the problem of what to do with nuclear waste, the Department of Energy is combining forces with the Food and Drug Administration and focusing its attention on food irradiation as the ultimate solution.

It's like magic! In the 1950s the aluminum industry faced an enormous build up of fluoride waste. So, it conjured up studies stating fluoride contributed to the hardness of teeth, hence less cavities. Presto! Once-worthless toxics are sold and added to the water supply. Like the good old days, we too have wastes—plentiful and nuclear. Food irradiation just may be the "magic" of the 1980s—turning toxics to "treasures."

How Food Irradiation Works

Food irradiation is a preservative process which uses radioactive isotopes cobalt-60 and cesium-137. Both are generated in the production of nuclear weapons and in operation of commercial plants. Fresh produce in packaging materials are sent on a conveyor belt and exposed to gamma rays for a prescribed time. The gamma rays disrupt cell division to slow the ripening process or to destroy viruses, insect infestations, mold and microorganisms. Radiation doses vary for different objectives:

low dose (100,000 rads)

- sprout inhibition
- insect disinfection
- delay of ripening
- parasite inactivation

medium dose (0.1-1 million rads)

- reduction of microbial load
- improve shelf life

high dose (1-5 million rads)

- shelf stability
- sterilization

The Food and Drug Administration allows different radiation absorbed doses (rads) for different foods.

According to the Energy Department, food irradiated up to 1 million rads is wholesome and safe for human consumption. Presently, the Food and Drug Administration has approved irradiation of fruits, vegetables, pork, grain, potatoes, spices, and seasonings.

Food irradiation is being touted by the Department of Energy as "a means to meet the challenge of maintaining the quality and quantity of food in a hungry world." It will extend shelf life and serve to expand domestic and foreign markets of certain commodities. Domestically, it will be a replacement for fumigation with ethylene dibromide (EDB, already banned by the Environmental Protection Agency) and methyl bromide used on nuts and dried fruit. And, since importing nations may place quarantine restrictions on products that harbor insects, market barriers will be lifted for irradiated food.

For maximum "effectiveness," fresh fruit and vegetables are irradiated immediately after harvest. This has dictated the "need" for irradiation facilities that can be transported between 2 or more producing areas. The units are to be mounted on flatbed trailers [sounds like an MX missile] and designed for rapid assembly, disassembly and removal.

The irradiator building (the biological shield) is a simple concrete structure sized to permit removal of irradiator assemblies without the need to dismantle all components. These port-a-nukes solve the Energy Department's waste storage problem. The separation of cesium-137 from nuclear waste removes more than 90 percent of the gamma radiation and heat load. Distribution of cesium-137 to various irradiators around the country would significantly reduce the cost of ultimate disposal of remaining waste.

The Energy Department is aggressively pursuing agreements for the construction of demonstration facilities in Hawaii, Washington, Iowa, Oklahoma, Florida and Alaska. The Department envisions the construction of over 1000 radiation plants

between now and the mid-1990s. The Port of Pasco near Hanford recently signed an agreement to build one scheduled to be operational in 1990.

continued on page 13

GEORGIA IRRADIATION FACILITY SPRINGS LEAK

The shielding pool for irradiation capsules in a Decatur, Georgia irradiation plant was discovered last June to be contaminated. When not zapping food or sterilizing medical instruments, the cesium sources are shielded under water.

Shortly after June 3, 1988, Radiation Sterilizers, Inc. (RSI) noticed a source had contaminated the pool. The RSI facility has 252 capsules containing between 43,000 and 50,000 curies each of cesium-137. The radiation levels above the storage pool became very high.

Because of intense citizen concern, Governor Joe Harris issued the customary "no cause for alarm" statement on June 9. Product shipments from the facility were embargoed on June 8.

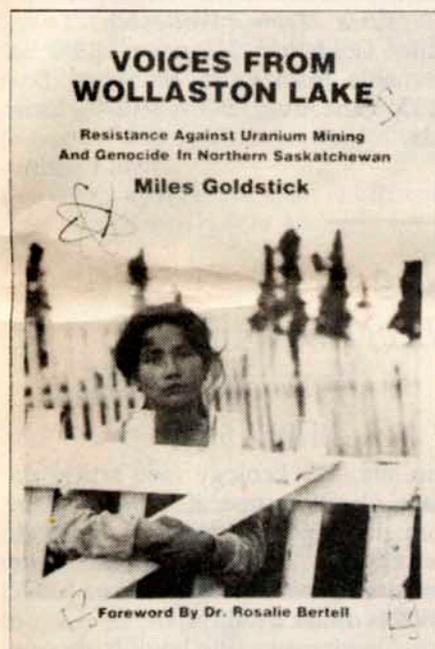
The State and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission are developing a plan to decontaminate the facility. But since each capsule will now be contaminated on the outside, it will be impossible to determine which is leaking. Products and workers will continue to be contaminated until the leaking source is identified.

Cleaning up the facility will mean that a large amount of "low-level" waste will be generated and disposed of in a commercial radioactive landfill. So in the end, the Department of Energy's high-level waste (cesium-137) will become commercial "low-level" waste.

M.R.

REVIEWS

Voices From Wollaston Lake Resistance Against Uranium Mining and Genocide in Northern Saskatchewan



"... And before we can talk about the bomb, we have to talk about where the

bomb comes from. Before they build a bomb they've already destroyed the Indian people. They've destroyed their water and their fishing before they've destroyed people with the bomb."

—Brian "Banjo" Ratt, Cree Indian

From June 14-17, 1985, members of the small Indian community of Wollaston Lake successfully blockaded the uranium mines on their land. The blockade came after 10 years of conventional protest had failed.

This book documents the blockade and the long struggle leading to it. It is about colonization, the unethical and systematic destruction of the Chipewyan nation.

The mines in Northern Saskatchewan are the most important for global uranium—"the Saudi Arabia of uranium." The ore is unusually high grade and extraction cheap because it is close to the surface. The

Canadian government subsidizes the work, building roads necessary to accommodate the exploration and mining as well as setting and enforcing health and environmental regulations.

Public opposition to the mines is relatively weak mostly because of the remoteness of the mines. Treaties relinquishing land rights were signed by natives though none could read, speak or write English. Though there is no question the treaties could be legally challenged, in practical terms it is extremely difficult for a community having few high school graduates and no lawyers to take on the Canadian judicial system.

Interviews with the native people are filled with sadness and confusion. They live in harmony with the earth and are witnesses to it being sacrificed for money, power and

continued on page 14

Food Irradiation/continued

The Dangers

This large-scale food irradiation proposal will cause dramatic increases in the transport and handling of high-level radioactive waste, as well as worker exposure to radioactive material as it is spread around the country. Furthermore, there is the danger that the irradiating elements will contaminate the entire plant as well as the surrounding community.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) reviewed 400 studies on the results of feeding irradiated foods to animals. It rejected all but 67 as worthless. Of the 67, about half concluded that irradiated food is harmful. Officially, the FDA has selected only 5 of the studies to back up its position that food irradiation is beneficial with no side effects.

Irradiated food itself does not become radioactive. The main safety concern is that gamma rays produce what chemists call "free radicals,"

which agitate among other molecules and create new chemicals, with unknown characteristics.

These new compounds can react with cellular DNA to cause mutations and cancer. Some viruses, fungi or bacteria may not be killed by the irradiation but may mutate leading to more virulent contaminants. Higher doses of radiation (to kill bacteria) depletes or destroys essential nutrients in foods including vitamins A, B, C and E, and may alter the natural balance among bacteria in food to remove the smell that warns of taint and toxins. It also strips away the color of most green vegetables.

What Can Be Done?

Economics are working against irradiation. Some alternates are less costly and just as effective. And as public pressure opposing irradiation mounts, members of the food producing industries will choose the less controversial processing.

Organized resistance has already caused the Energy Department to withdraw its plans for an irradiation plant in California. Japan will not accept irradiated imports. Maine and New Jersey have passed legislation prohibiting the sale of irradiated food. New York has legislation pending that would prohibit sale. Nationally, the Food Irradiation Moratorium Bill (HR 956 and S 461) is in committee. The New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) has been in the vanguard, educating and organizing around this issue. In January it alerted consumers that Noodle-Roni and Rice-A-Roni contained irradiated mushrooms. People called and wrote to the Quaker Company in protest and the result was Quaker announcing it would no longer use irradiated food. NYPIRG's Food Irradiation Project and Alert Network has developed an informational packet containing fact sheets and organizing materials.

For more information, contact NYPIRG, 9 Murray Street, New York, NY 10007, (212)349-6460.

weapons. They have been forced to exchange their rich heritage for dependency on a system that repays them with alcoholism, pornography, 90 percent unemployment and rising health risks.

The Chipewyan people struggle for justice. When major spills occur, contaminating the lakes which are their livelihood, the company that is responsible pays a small fine and is given permission to continue mining. Radioactively-contaminated sand is used in construction of streets, hospitals and schools. Government lake

tests allow lethal concentrations that kill up to 50 percent of the fish.

The book contains leaflets from the blockade, native poetry and graphics, statements of solidarity and indictments of countries that import the uranium. Photos depict the traditional lifestyle (e.g., smoking caribou meat at the blockade camp) and the response to the earth's destruction.

It is a story all too familiar to many of us. The poisoning of the earth, the power of corporations and governments, the sell-outs, the intimidations. Yet, the story must be

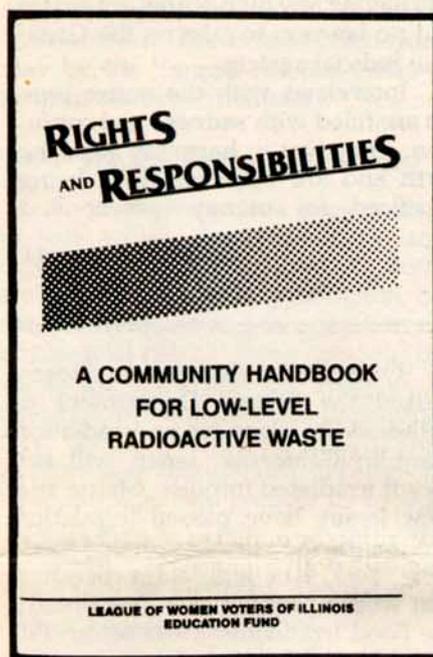
re-told. If we hear it again, perhaps we will understand. If faces of the native people can be embraced as our own, their struggle becomes ours, then we will work with renewed energy—together—for survival.

"We are not blocking the road to the uranium mine, we're blocking the destruction of the whole planet."

Voice From Wollaston Lake, Miles Goldstick, 316 pages, 1987, is available from Earth Embassy, Box 3183, Vancouver, BC, V6B 3X6, Canada.

Jean Fazzino

Rights and Responsibilities A Community Handbook for Low-Level Radioactive Waste



The League of Women Voters has a national reputation for researching an issue thoroughly and presenting facts in a balanced way. Probity and integrity have been their hallmark.

However, *Rights and Responsibilities—A Community Handbook for Low-Level Radioactive Waste*, which was funded by a pro-nuclear agency, the Illinois Department of Nuclear Safety, raises troubling questions about the League's impartiality.

The book affirms certain healthy democratic impulses with statements like, "Communities should begin ac-

tive participation now . . . Local residents must assert themselves from the beginning to be able to have an impact on decisions."

And in a section called "Points to Consider" some important questions are asked, such as "Who will ensure that the post-closure fund has enough money to pay for corrective action? Will the local government have any liability during operations or afterwards? What guarantees exist that the facility will close at the time promised if the community wants it to?"

But overall, *Rights and Responsibilities* is a white-wash which skillfully glosses over the problems at closed dumps, which nowhere describes the toxicity or longevity of the radioactive materials destined for a new dump, which claims there is "insufficient data" to show the health effects of low-level radiation, and a final insult, stresses the economic "benefits" of a new facility.

For example, the discussion of the closed Sheffield dump only mentions that tritium had migrated from the trenches. Not mentioned is the fact that the state's only remedy for the rapidly migrating tritium (recent tests by the Illinois State Geological Survey show the tritium is migrating 2000 to 3000 feet per year), is to buy up surrounding farmland. Not mentioned is that the perpetual care fund is exhausted and the state had pending a \$97 million suit (recently settled for \$8 million) against the owner of

the site, US Ecology (see article on page 4). Of course, it is no accident that this suit's existence is ignored. For clearly, "economic benefits" bite the dust when the state faces a \$97 million dollar liability.

Nowhere in this book is there a discussion of the long-lived isotopes such as cesium-137, cobalt-60 and iodine-129 which are found in significant quantities in the "low-level" waste stream. Nowhere is there discussion of the fact that concrete bunkers simply don't last the requisite 300-10,000 years needed to safely sequester these wastes.

Nowhere is there discussion of extensive health studies showing a clear correlation between exposure to "low-level" radiation and serious health problems, including increased incidences of various cancers.

This is not the first instance in which the League has accepted money from friends of the nuclear industry (see page 5 in this *Waste Paper*). *Rights and Responsibilities* shows that whoever pays the piper calls the tune.

Rights and Responsibilities: A Community Handbook for Low-Level Radioactive Waste, League of Women Voters of Illinois Education Fund, Chicago, IL, 44 pp, \$1.50, 1987.

Mina Hamilton

RADSCOPE/continued

the Nuclear Information Resource Service, also affirmed the rights of communities near transportation routes to a voice in any "low-level" waste program.

Economic problems, dump proliferation, and the relative good and bad points of various state programs were extensively discussed. A strong call for above-ground storage, both monitorable and retrievable, was expressly stated with the clear recognition that "disposal" is not an option.

Bob Dunning is the vice-chair of Citizens Against Nuclear Trash in Maine.

Bomb Plant Taken To Court

By Mike Alfieri

Fed up with distortions and coverups, a coalition of environmental, peace and residents groups has taken the University of California to court to challenge its recent Environmental Impact Report on the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, one of the two nuclear weapons design plants in the country.

To renew its management contract, the University is required to prepare an Environmental Impact Report. In September 1987, the University certified the contract for the Livermore Lab, giving it a clean bill of health and thereby allowing the Lab to continue 5 more years of nuclear weapons design. A month later a suit was filed against the Regents in Alameda County Superior Court.

According to Marylia Kelley, a spokesperson for Tri-Valley CAREs, one of the plaintiff groups, "the Environmental Impact Report, in its present form, is severely flawed in scope, depth and detail . . . this document is a whitewash!"

In its suit, the coalition vigorously challenged the Report for its

- insufficient and dishonest description of hazards at the site
- inadequate methods of handling radioactive and toxic wastes
- the blatant omission from the Report that the Lab is on the Environmental Protection Agency's short list of "Superfund" sites requiring priority cleanup of soil and groundwater pollution
- failure to mention serious state health law violations that resulted in a referral by the California Department of Health Services to the state

Attorney General for prosecution

- neglecting to report the explosion of a mislabelled drum of two different toxic wastes, which chemically reacted with such force that a 55-gallon steel drum was split and propelled over a perimeter fence spewing its contents into the air and onto the ground

- unsupported finding that operations at the Lab "could have no significant effect on the environment."

In bringing its suit against the Regents, the coalition hopes to compel the University to face the environmental impacts that the Lab poses to both its workers as well as the surrounding community.

Winning the lawsuit would not only require a new environmental impact report but would necessitate a new round of public hearings. According to Kelley, this lawsuit will also force the weapons industry to begin to take responsibility for their waste.

Those interested in helping with the lawsuit could send tax-deductible contributions to "Western States Legal Foundation—ELF", c/o Tri-Valley CAREs, 5720 East Avenue, #116, Livermore, CA 94550.

Mike Alfieri is a New York state attorney who was a legal intern for the Campaign.

LETTERS/continued

Africa and arranged a processing contract with Sequoyah Fuels and the Department of Energy (*Southwest Times Record*, August 29, 1987). Gilliland said the shipment entered the U.S. through the Port of Houston. He said that neither Edlow nor Sequoyah Fuels were doing anything illegal, technically, since the Nuclear Regulatory Commission had not set out specific regulations for importers already doing business under current licenses.

One could interpret this to mean that only conversion facilities planned to be built would have trouble if they converted South African ore . . . but that if an existing conversion facility is already doing conversion with a long-term contract, then they are operating through a loophole and above the law.

Jessie DeerInWater
Chairperson of NACE

Jessie DeerInWater is Chairperson of

the Native Americans for a Clean Environment, and a member of the Radioactive Waste Campaign Advisory Board.

"Nukespeak" in the Waste Paper

To the Editor:

It was the Radioactive Waste Campaign that taught me to refer to the high-level waste generated in commercial and weapons reactors as "irradiated fuel." Two otherwise excellent articles in [the Winter 1988 *Waste Paper*], however, replaced the term with "spent fuel," as is more commonly used in the industry and government.

Up until 1982, all the federal agencies called the rods in assemblies that were pulled from reactor cores "irradiated fuel." Then, nukespeak proliferated. In addition to "leak-tight" waste containers, "peaceful nuclear explosions," "acceptable lev-

els of radiation exposure," "inadvertent loss of structure," and "nuclear waste sites" (instead of "dumps"), federal agencies and the nuclear industry began referring to irradiated fuel as "spent fuel," implying that it is used up or depleted.

Although some of the uranium in the fuel is used, this fuel is millions of times more radioactive than when it went into the reactor and will remain so for eons. It is more descriptive, and I believe, more accurate, to refer to such material as "irradiated fuel." *The Waste Paper* has always done so and I hope will continue to do so. And while we're at it, how about a contest to rename so-called "low-level" radioactive waste because as *Waste Paper* readers all know, "low-level" doesn't mean "low-risk."

Diane D'Arrigo

Diane D'Arrigo works with the Washington, D.C.-based Nuclear Information and Resource Service, and is a member of the Radioactive Waste Campaign Board of Directors.

RWC Musical Chairs

As of May 1988 the Radioactive Waste Campaign had a change in the Board of Directors. Lisa Finaldi has resigned as Chairperson. The Board will now be co-chaired by Anne Rabe and Jed Bark.

Lisa Finaldi who was chairperson from 1986 to 1988 resigned to prepare for the birth of her son, Elias, in June. Lisa, currently director of the Clean Water Fund in North Carolina, worked as editor of *the Waste Paper* as well as co-director of the Campaign from 1981 to 1985. Her determination and organizing was largely responsible for getting West Valley, New York, declared off-limits as a nuclear dump. We wish her happiness with her new baby. We will miss her commitment and energy.

Anne Rabe has been involved with environmental issues for the past 8 years. She is currently director of the "Superfund Monitoring Project" of the New York Environmental

Institute in Albany. Anne has worked with members of the state assembly coordinating public hearings and drafting legislation on "low-level" radioactive waste disposal options. She was chairwoman of the Radioactive Materials Worker Health Committee of the Eastern New York Council on Occupational Safety and Health. Anne also edits and publishes a newsletter for Toxics In Your Community Coalition, a statewide network of citizens groups near hazardous waste sites. She has extensive journalism experience, having written informational pamphlets, press releases, leaflets and newsletter articles, and organized press conferences.

Jed Bark's involvement and interest in nuclear issues goes back more than 20 years. As an artist in the 1960's and 1970's, he created video tapes and performances. One, entitled "Neutron Readings," was shown



ED HEDEMANN

Jed Bark during the Deadly Defense press conference in New York City on June 7, 1988.

in museums world-wide. Jed became involved with the Radioactive Waste Campaign during the summer of 1986 when he organized and led a successful community action against the New Jersey's plan to dump radium-contaminated soil over an aquifer near Warwick, New York, where he, his wife Lois, and sons Theo and Caleb live. Jed was invited to and testified before a Congressional subcommittee on toxic wastes. He has also written for *the Waste Paper*. He is president of Bark Frameworks, Inc., which specializes in the conservation, treatment and framing of works of art. Jed lectures and conducts workshops nationally and in Canada on his specialty.



ED HEDEMANN

New Campaign Board member, Diane D'Arrigo, and Co-Chair Anne Rabe confer during a board meeting last March.

Radioactive Waste Campaign
625 Broadway, 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10012
Address Correction Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

New York, N.Y.

Collection *Waste Paper* No. 5546
Permit No. 5546

www.laka.org
Digitized 2017