

## Norway to Fund ICBUW Research

In April, the Norwegian government agreed to fund three research projects proposed by the Manchester, England-based International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons (ICBUW). The studies will increase understanding of the consequences of using uranium weapons, known also as depleted uranium (DU) munitions.

The funding award is an acknowledgment of ICBUW's long years of professional research, diplomacy and organizing. Norway has a long history of supporting human rights, peace building and disarmament programs, and its Ministry of Foreign Affairs is well known for funding the work of the Cluster Munitions Coalition.

The three research areas ICBUW developed into projects are: 1) a Basra epidemiology survey, a long-term study investigating the impact of U.S. and UK uranium munitions on the civilian population of Basra, in southern Iraq; 2) a uranium weapons proliferation, manufacture and trade project, a 3-year research post which will identify which states have uranium weapons, the size of their stocks and assess trade and proliferation routes, consider the environmental impact of alternatives, and study issues of military utility and policy; and 3) the Balkan research survey, a survey trip to the Balkans to document the legacy of NATO's use of uranium weapons during the 1990s.

"This [funding] is a reflection of the rapidly changing political climate surrounding this issue," said ICBUW staffer Doug Weir. "Governments the world over are reassessing the effects these weapons have on civilian populations," he said.

## Charges Dismissed Against Shareholders Arrested at ATK

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minnesota — AlliantAction, the grass roots campaign to demilitarize AlliantTechsystems (ATK) — the country's number one uranium munition manufacturer — won yet another court victory in February.

The case involved trespass charges against five campaigners who purchased a few ATK shares in order to attend and influence stockholder meetings. The five were kept out of the August 2008 annual meeting and were arrested after demanding their rightful place. At the start of the long-delayed trial, even before the jury was selected, Eden Prairie prosecutor Jennifer Inz asked Judge Lloyd Zimmerman of Hennepin County District Court to spell out his final jury instructions.

Jury instructions are the orders issued by the judge to the jury about what law to apply to the case. They are the last words jurors hear before they begin their deliberations.

The defendants presented their own "Proposed Jury Instructions," to the judge citing State Supreme Court rulings on how "claim of right" is defined and can be used as a defense. In Minnesota law it is a reasonable belief, based on a rule, regulation or law, that you are allowed on the property in question. The defendants also provided three sets of previously-issued jury instructions from similar cases, all of which resulted in "not guilty" verdicts. (See the Nukewatch *Pathfinder* from Spring '05 and Winter '03/'04.)

Judge Zimmerman ruled that the jury would benefit from an explanation of the trespass law's concept of "claim of right." And after the Judge's decision to follow precedent, which in these cases favors the defendants, the prosecutor dismissed the charges calling them "unprosecutable."

Two weeks after the dismissal, the city of Eden Prairie, evidently irked, notified the company that in the future, they would neither detain nor arrest legal shareholders for attempting to attend the company's annual meetings.

## Hiroshima Uncensored

Photographs of the U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were censored for decades by the U.S. government under a decree issued on Sept. 18, 1945 that read in part, "nothing shall be printed which might, directly or by inference, disturb public tranquility." So the discovery in Massachusetts of 701 long-lost and previously unseen photos of the effects of the U.S. atomic bombing decades after the attack can have a shocking impact.

Adam Levy, writing about the photos in *The Guardian* said, "This suppression of visual evidence ... helped ... to inhibit any questioning of the decision to use the bomb in the first place," and has helped us to forget. The photos belonged to a member of the Physical Damage Division which photographed and recorded the Hiroshima blast's effects on inanimate objects for the Pentagon's Strategic Bombing Survey.

Robert Jay Lifton, a research psychiatrist at Yale and author of *Hiroshima in America: 50 Years of Denial*, has called them the "imagery of extinction." The only other extensive photographic record of the immediate aftermath of the atom bombings was made by Japanese photographer Yosuke Yamahata who entered Nagasaki on Aug. 10, 1945. He died of cancer in 1966.

Likewise, a series of dispatches written by U.S. journalist George Weller during his secret visit to Hiroshima in September 1945 was censored and hidden for 60 years until they were found and published in Japan in 2005. Weller had snuck past U.S. occupation forces and into Hiroshima by posing as an Army colonel and wrote 25,000 words about what he saw. He called the then-unknown effects of radiation exposure "this mysterious disease X" which was slowly sickening and killing many Japanese.



## Feds Ignore Risks of Dumping Tons of DU in Trenches

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) voted March 18 to declare that depleted uranium from uranium enrichment factories is a "Class A" low-level radioactive waste — the least dangerous kind that supposedly consists mainly of short-lived radionuclides. The 3-to-1 commission vote drew outrage from scientists and congressional representatives who called the decision an "arbitrary and capricious mischaracterization" of the waste.

The Institute for Energy and Environmental Research (IEER) said in condemning the decision that it ignores sound science, contradicts the NRC's own prior analysis and disregards radiological safety. The decision could allow almost one million tons of DU to be disposed of in rural Utah and Texas at private dump sites.

Depleted uranium is different from other low-level radioactive waste because it becomes more radioactive over time for up to a million years. The radioactivity of DU grows with time because of the in-growth of uranium-238's decay products, such as thorium-230 and radium-226. The NRC's action could also allow other radioactive wastes to be classified in the least hazardous category — Class A — the IEER said. NRC Chairman Gregory Jaczko cast the only negative vote and urged the Commission to follow the agency's normal rule-making process and properly determine DU's classification.

"With the exception of Commissioner Jaczko's vote, the NRC today bypassed scientific integrity, its own prior analysis ... and the simple facts about the characteristics of depleted uranium," said Dr. Arjun Makhijani, President of the IEER, who has studied the issue of DU disposal and testified in NRC enrichment facility licensing proceedings. "This will make DU disposal cheap for the enrichment companies. The NRC seems eager to please the uranium enrichment industry, but it has compromised sound science and public health protection," Makhijani said.

Extensive studies by IEER show that DU disposal in large amounts in shallow trenches would greatly exceed the dose limits of current NRC low-level waste regulations. DU from uranium enrichment sites has a concentration that is over 10 times greater than what the NRC itself recommended in its 1981 Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the low-level waste.

The IEER reports that there are now over 740,000 tons of DU in unstable hexafluoride form stockpiled at DOE sites in Paducah, Kentucky, Portsmouth, Ohio and Oak Ridge, Tennessee. One company, LES, is currently building an enrichment machine in New Mexico, which will generate well over 100,000 metric tons of DU.

EnergySolutions, Inc., which has a low-level waste dump site in Utah, is most likely to gain an advantage from the NRC ruling, since it is licensed to dispose of Class-A low-level waste only.

A newly licensed low-level waste disposal site in West Texas may also "benefit." U.S. Representatives Jim Matheson, D-Utah, and Edward Markey, D-Mass., also blasted the decision and demanded to see all communications between EnergySolutions and the NRC.



**The 400-year-old city of Hiroshima, August 1945, above. About 250,000 people died outright from the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima & Nagasaki. Negative images or "shadows" of victims were seared into surfaces by the bombs' flash-like fireballs. At right, one person's shadow and footprints.**



## Do It For Peace

The following remarks were made by Bonnie Urfer at The Progressive magazine's 100th anniversary conference in Madison, Wisconsin, May 1.

The first day I walked in to work at *The Progressive* I knew I was in trouble. Between 1983 and 1986, I became a peace activist and nonviolent resister at the magazine. Everyone should work at *The Progressive*. We at home call it a life of high adventure. Civil resistance is my passion in this collective struggle we're in to save ourselves.

Did you hear about the five congress people arrested in May while drawing attention to the dire situation in Darfur? Good for them. They figured out how to put pressure on a murderous government and educate all of us in the process. No harm in nonviolent resistance. I have been arrested fewer than 100 times — I swear — to draw attention to the deadly nuclear industry and to senseless on-going war.

I know you can and do write letters, sign petitions, pass out literature, call into radio programs, write songs, do dances, create art and videos. I know you plaster your car with bumper stickers. You may belong to an organization that purchased a billboard for peace, painted a mural and had a discussion about community justice. Look at all of the people who support *The Progressive*. The local cable access station is here. Perhaps you've joined a march or vigil, organized a Run for Freedom, and maybe you even recycled your TV. There are so many things to do. Buy responsibly, picket, strike and divest from harmful industries. Why, you could refuse to pay war taxes, help blockade the entrance of a weapons manufacturer, sit in a tree to prevent clear cutting and save old growth trees, occupy a nuclear missile silo, even do a citizen's arrest of George Bush. My dream is that one day, we'll be so huge, we'll walk up to the White House and simply ask for the keys.

In the meantime, our water is being poisoned, food supply altered, people tortured and everyone — today and into the future — radioactively contaminated. And then there's drive, drive, drive. You know the story. Each of us is responsible.

For almost three decades, 28 years to be exact, I have resisted the nuclear industry and the war system and I know that what I do is not enough and I know we are not enough, yet. And I know this is no time to stop. As people have turned their focus to climate change, the reality of nuclear war and the danger of nuclear reactors have been minimized in the media and industry. Don't believe the nuclear utilities that nuclear power is green or, more importantly, safe. Don't.

When it comes to nuclear weapons, the law is on our side. The Nuremberg Principles, the Geneva Conventions, the Hague Conventions, the International Court of Justice at the Hague, the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, UN General Assembly Resolutions, humanitarian law, Article Six of the U.S. Constitution making treaties part of the supreme law of the land, the Fifth Commandment, the Golden Rule, Sam Day my mentor, and I all agree that the mere possession of nuclear weapons is immoral, illegal and a crime against humanity.

Our situation is serious. And nuclear weapons make it grave. The flight-to-impact time for your average nuclear weapon is 12 minutes. That's it. And what if it's a computer accident? Shit happens, then you die. The fact that nuclear weapons sit on hair-trigger alert deserves nonviolent civil resistance and more. And the more people we are the more change happens.

The Nuclear Freeze movement of the '80s would not have been complete or as effective without nonviolent disobedience: Greenham Common and the Seneca Women's Peace Camp were part of an influential bunch of people and the list is endless.

Plowshares disarmament activists rounded out the movement and pulled hard to move us along. People were arrested by the thousands in opposition to nuclear testing.

Think of the assets to getting arrested. A new experience. Meet people you would never have the chance to meet, come face to face with our soldiers, their guns and tanks, meet the police, get a ride, go to court, be silenced, found guilty, get another ride, go to jail, have your picture taken, wear funny clothes and used, but clean, underwear, watch TV all day, play cards, live in solidarity with the poor, meet more new people, and celebrate the day, like never before, when you get out.

Furthermore, the jails and prisons deserve us. Who else, except Anne-Marie Cusac of *The Progressive*, of course, speaks for the millions and millions of people in our jails and prisons. People in jails are hungry and rehabilitation is an illusion fed to the people outside. And I can guarantee it's great studio time even if toilet paper is the only resource.

I've been asked if civil disobedience or resistance works. I don't know. I know it can't hurt and I'm a firm believer in trying everything.

Just in case you don't know how to cross a line for peace, a few of us will be at Fort McCoy in central Wisconsin on August 9 in another attempt to stop the wars. Join us in the adventure of your life.