



## Protest Against German Waste Transports and Repeal of Reactor Phase-out

Continued from cover

tens of thousands let her know the public wants the reactor phase-out reinstated.

Protesters gathered in the fields around the small town of Dannenberg where the 123 tons of reprocessed reactor waste on 11 rail cars was to be transferred to trucks for the final leg of the 900-mile journey. Demonstrators from all walks of life held thousands of yellow and red flags declaring, "Nuclear Power — No Thanks." Police used water cannons and pepper spray to force crowds away from the roads and rails, but several hundred protesters got through and managed sit-ins, lock-downs, blockades, removed gravel from under railroad ties, eventually forcing a delay of over 12 hours. Later, once the casks were loaded onto trucks, area farmers used sheep, goats and tractors to block the route to Gorleben. Over 1,000 protesters were arrested during the three days of international resistance.

With over 17,000 police reportedly deployed to remove blockaders, the protest was one of the largest in ten years. Castor blockades shrank for a period following the adoption of the reactor phase-out statute which would have seen all 17 reactors shuttered by 2021. But since Merkel's rise to power in October 2009, utility companies pushed for reversal of the legislation, and repeal of the law was completed in November. Critics vowed to contest the repeal in court.

News of the record number of German protesters made headlines worldwide, spotlighting the inherent dangers of nuclear power, risky waste shipments and dodgy storage schemes. As the German daily *Die Tageszeitung* put it, "With their protests against the Castor train to Gorleben, nuclear power opponents have scored a clear win on points against Merkel's government. The massive show of participation by demonstrators shows that the government's hasty decision to extend nuclear-[reactor] lifespans has led to more political engagement in Germany, rather than resignation. ... It's now clear that people from all levels of society took to the streets out of personal conviction against the government's irresponsible policies." — *Die Tageszeitung & Der Spiegel*, Nov. 10; *New York Times*, CNN & AP, Nov. 8; and *Agence France Presse*, Nov. 5, 2010

## Thousands Protest in France Against its Oldest Reactor

COLMAR, France — In the border town of Colmar, in Alsace, near the German-Swiss border, at least 7,000 people took part in protests against the operation of the Fessenheim reactor, France's oldest, and government plans to extend its operating life another 10 years.

Authorities deployed 3,000 police officers, dozens of anti-riot police vehicles and trucks with water cannons to the demonstration in front of the city's train station, a municipal source said. Organizers said more than 10,000 people, including hundreds from Spain, Italy, Germany and Switzerland, rallied peacefully in Colmar while police said 3,500 took part in the protest.

The critics delivered a letter to Pierre-Andre Peyvel, the regional prefect, demanding the immediate shutdown of the reactor, which opened in 1977 and which they say is now dilapidated. The anti-nuclear group SDN (One Million Europeans Against Nuclear Power) organized the event with the German movement Bund.

Organizers said that the police presence was exaggerated and that German and Swiss border guards had needlessly blocked some from heading to Colmar.

— [www.greenkids.de](http://www.greenkids.de); & *Agence France Presse*, Oct. 3, 2010

## 26 Arrested at Ft. Benning Demanding SOA Shutdown

At least 6,000 human rights activists converged in Georgia the weekend of Nov. 20 to protest the continued operation of the US military's notorious training camp at Ft. Benning, Georgia. The School of the Americas, now named the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, is responsible for having taught torture techniques. Eleven military dictators and 60,000 Latin American soldiers received training at the school and death squad members are among its graduates. (For a list, see: [www.derechos.org/soa/index.html](http://www.derechos.org/soa/index.html)) Twenty-six people were taken into custody and some face six months in federal prison and/or fines of \$5,000 for crossing onto the base. The Columbus police at one point blocked off all exits and made indiscriminate arrests of people on sidewalks. Police arrested SOA Watch organizer Charity Ryerson while she was leaving and even targeted journalists including four Russian reporters from *Russia Today* and two radio reporters. Some were held on \$5,500 bail.

## Big Blockade to Scrap Trident

DEVONPORT, England — People by the hundreds arrived at 6 a.m. Nov. 1 to begin a "Big Blockade" of the Trident submarine base in Plymouth. Activists called themselves the "Tamarians," self-proclaimed "shock troops of the sane in the war against insanity," and by the time the protest against Britain's Trident fleet ended, 12 people had been arrested for blockading entrances to the dockyard.

Calling the government's expensive retrofitting and replacement of its giant Trident submarines a clear violation of the spirit of disarmament and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, blockaders used a variety of tools and implements including metal arm tubes and super glue. They locked down to cars and to each other and stretched across entry roads to prevent business as usual for dockyard workers. Others handcuffed themselves to railings causing traffic chaos during rush hour. In a statement, the coalition of activists declared that money spent on nuclear weapons' delivery systems like the Tridents would be better used on green technologies and vital public services. By siphoning public funds from urgently needed social programs, Trident actually costs more jobs than it creates, the statement said.

For those who were arrested, charges may include aggravated trespass and obstruction of the highway. Two people were accused of violating a police restriction under the Public Order Act when they locked themselves to a police van.

Separately, another group of activists gained entrance to Drake's Island in Plymouth Sound and hung a banner saying "Scrap Trident." The events were supported by the Plymouth Green Party, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and Trident Ploughshares. Trident Ploughshares founder Angie Zelter said, "Nuclear weapons distort the moral fabric of our society and undermine our humanity." — *Independent Catholic News*, Oct. 31; *Trident Ploughshares & Plymouth Herald*, Nov. 1; *BBC*, Nov. 2; *Mid Devon Star*, Nov. 3, 2010



Thirteen people were arrested during the Big Blockade of the Devonport Dockyard in Plymouth, England. The British Trident fleet is undergoing retrofitting and replacement there.

## Resisting Bombs and Bombers

By Jeff Leys

Two new campaigns of resistance to war and nuclear weapons are making headlines and being heard in court. In Las Vegas, 14 people stood trial for crossing into Creech Air Force Base to protest its remote-controlled "drone" missile attacks on Afghanistan and Pakistan. In Missouri, 14 others were arrested at the Kansas City Plant resisting H-bomb production plans.

The Las Vegas trial resulted from an April 2009 vigil at the Creech AFB's front gate that concluded with 13 people trying to enter the base to speak with base personnel about the indiscriminate effects of their drone-launched missile strikes. The group was arrested, held overnight, then released. Months later the state prosecutor dropped the charges and then, oddly, had them reinstated, but a funny thing happened on the way to a conviction.

Clark County Nevada Judge William Jansen allowed defense testimony by former US Attorney General Ramsey Clark, Col. Anne Wright (US Army, Ret.) and law professor Bill Quigley, on international law and on the role of civil disobedience in social movements. The latitude granted to these witnesses was perhaps due to the novelty in Nevada of a "defense of necessity" in a case of public protest.

Judge Jansen, who at first was reluctant to hear such testimony, said that he would need several months to study the trial transcript and the international legal questions that were raised before deciding on guilt or innocence. The "Creech 14" are to return to Las Vegas for the verdict January 27.

Meanwhile, the group Voices for Creative Nonviolence — which along with Nevada Desert Experience and Pace e Bene helped organize the drone protest action at Creech — continues to send observers to Pakistan and Afghanistan to learn first hand the impact of the remote-controlled attacks on ordinary citizens. The next delegation is scheduled for December. Reports from previous investigations are available at the Voices for Creative Nonviolence website ([www.vcnv.org](http://www.vcnv.org)).

In Kansas City, local organizers primarily affiliated with the Catholic Worker effort, continue to organize opposition to a new factory being built to help produce the "next generation" of nuclear weapons. Once opened, the complex will be the third component of a 3-point warhead production network. The Chemistry and Metallurgy Replacement Research Project at Los Alamos, New Mexico will increase the capability of the US to produce plutonium pits. The Y12 site in Oak Ridge, Tennessee will continue to produce uranium components. The Kansas City factory will produce non-nuclear components such as fuses and triggers.

A new multi-billion dollar Kansas City facility is still under construction. In August, 14 people were arrested after blocking an earth moving vehicle at the site. Several other workers stopped their vehicles as well when the first one was surrounded by antinuclear advocates.

The 14 appeared October 7 in Kansas City Municipal Court. Three pled guilty, the others were convicted, and fines were imposed for the infraction. Following court, two who pled guilty proceeded to a city council meeting then in session and were arrested again for disrupting the meeting. In September, eight others were arrested at the weapons facility site during an alternative ground breaking for peace that took place at the same time that the official ground breaking for the factory was underway.

The Kansas City operation is owned by Honeywell Corporation which seems to be dipping back into the waters of war profiteering. From the '60s through the early '90s, its corporate headquarters in Minneapolis were the site of popular nonviolent direct action, civil disobedience and corporate campaigns that targeted the company's cluster bombs and guidance systems for nuclear weapons.

That campaign ended only after the corporation spun off its weapons industries into the newly created Alliant Techsystems — which soon became a focal point of weekly vigils and actions.

Work to close the Kansas City factory is on-going. The Midwest Catholic Worker Resistance gathering will focus on the site in Kansas City from April 29 to May 2, 2011. Contact the Cherith Brook Catholic Worker for more information, [nickpick00@gmail.com](mailto:nickpick00@gmail.com).

Learn more about this ongoing campaign in Kansas City by contacting Jane Stoeber at [janepestoeber@yahoo.com](mailto:janepestoeber@yahoo.com)

— *Jeff Leys is a long-time social justice advocate, most recently with Voices for Creative Nonviolence in Chicago.*

## UN Wants Target Data from Depleted Uranium Shooters

On Oct. 29, the United Nations First Committee overwhelmingly adopted a measure calling for users of depleted uranium weapons (DU) to release — to the governments of targeted areas — data on where and how many of the weapons have been used. DU munitions are extremely heavy, armor-piercing shells made of waste uranium-238 which is left over in huge quantities from the manufacture of reactor fuel and H-bombs. The United States has fired hundreds of tons of these shells into war zones and bombing ranges.

The resolution, approved by a vote of 136 to 4, calls on DU weapons shooters like the United States and Britain to make public their quantitative and geographical data on the depleted uranium munitions they used in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kosovo and the Balkans. The resolution now goes to the UN General Assembly (UNGA) for a second vote at the end of November.

Although UNGA resolutions are non-binding, they are a useful means of focusing attention on key issues, like the ongoing refusal of the US to release data on its use of DU in Iraq, and concerns over the use of DU in other conflicts, including its interventions in Somalia. The resolution was submitted by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The resolution was opposed by only four states — the US, UK, France and Israel. The four also voted against previous resolutions accepting that DU has the potential to damage human health (2007) and calling for more research in targeted states (2008). — *International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons* [icbuw.org](http://icbuw.org) — *JL*

## Minnesota DU Profiteer, Worn Down, Allows Critics into Meeting

After dozens of its shareholders were unlawfully arrested for simply trying to attend the company's annual meetings, Alliant Techsystems, Inc. (ATK) of Eden Prairie, Minnesota — the multi-billion dollar depleted uranium munitions maker and war profiteer — was this year finally moved to allow the critics inside. The arrested shareholders had seen their trespass charges repeatedly dismissed, flimsy as they were.

But in August, 12 shareholding members of AlliantACTION (a watchdog group of volunteers that want ATK to convert to peaceful manufacturing without a loss of jobs) were let in to the annual meeting, and some even spoke with company honchos.

Long-time peace activist and AlliantACTION "jailhouse lawyer" Steve Clemens told the *Eden Prairie News* that ATK could use its engineering genius for useful projects, like public transit or the challenges of climate change. "That's what we really want them to focus on, rather than developing new ways of killing people," he said. Clemens noted that several AlliantACTION members had traveled to Iraq and seen the effects of DU weapons on children.