Profit and Puffery Keep New Nuclear Weapons in Production

Editor's Note: Defense attorney Kary Love of Michigan, who has repeatedly represented nuclear disarmament and Plowshares activists at trial, suggests that focusing attention on nuclear weapons' corporate profiteers might prove effective.

Kary Love writes: *Despite the dedicated work of many, the business of nuclear weapons prevails. Assuming "arguendo" that enough H-bombs to destroy a rogue, criminal state actor are a necessary evil, until all nukes are eliminated, a business model based on constantly upgrading and increasing the arsenal cannot be justified. Yes this appears to be the strategy of US nuclear weapons corporations. Unless this model is derailed, political and legal barriers to disarmament have little impact. Perhaps a change of strategy would be of benefit: Rather than targeting governmental installations, consider a program focused on corporate sponsors of the infrastructure. Recall that corporate liability for enforcing slave labor and making poison for gas chambers at Nuremberg Tribunals was acknowledged. Divestiture movements, public shaming, and moral condemnation, may bear fruit from such an approach (think South Africa), in addition to boycotts of consumer divisions of guilty firms, and, since corporation charter laws usually require "operation in the public interest" charter revocation campaigns could also be launched.*

Major B61-12 Contractors: Boeing, Lockheed Martin, Bechtel, Orbital ATK...

A giant partnership known as **Consolidated Nuclear Security Corp.** (CNS) runs the Pantex bomb factory in Texas, and the Y-12 facility in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. CNS members include **Boeing**, **Lockheed Martin**, **Bechtel National**, **Orbital ATK**, and others.

Boeing has designed and is producing a new tail kit for the rebuilt B61 free fall nuclear bomb with steerable fins that will radically improve target accuracy, arguably giving it new military capabilities despite denials at the highest levels of the US government. Boeing's contract with the US Air Force is estimated to total $1.8 billion.

Jay Coghlan of Nuclear Watch New Mexico tells Nukewatch that **Lockheed Martin,** the world's biggest military contractor, is now at Y-12 in Tennessee and Pantex in Texas. Lockheed Martin is likely to bid again on the Los Alamos Lab (LANL) contract when that comes up in 2017, and in effect the firm is making the B61 the world's first "smart" nuclear bomb. Sandia is the lead lab for the B61 "Life Extension Program," which is expected to cost at least $10 billion.

"It is believed that all nuclear weapons that are being rebuilt through Life Extension Programs are receiving new or rebuilt 'secondaries,' the thermonuclear components that put the 'H' in H-bomb," Coghlan said.

Storage bunkers at Büchel Air Base in Germany, where up to 20 US B61 free-fall nuclear bombs are deployed for use on German Tornado jet fighter/bombers. The base will be the object of 20 weeks of protest, March 26 to August 9, 2017. For 20 years, peace activists have organized protests at Büchel demanding withdrawal of the US H-bombs.

The secondaries are being manufactured at the Y-12 complex run by **Consolidated Nuclear Security**.

Bechtel National says that it "puts the United States on the cutting edge of missile development." Along with Lockheed Martin, it operates the Ronald Reagan Ballistic Missile Test Site, formerly called the Kwajalein Missile Range, on Kwajalein Atoll in the Pacific.

Orbital ATK, Inc. (formerly AlliantTech Systems), headquartered in Dulles, Virginia, designs and builds missile propulsion systems, military electronics, and precision weapons, armament systems, and large- and small-caliber ammunition—including the 20-pound, 120mm, armor-piercing depleted uranium shells that travel 3000 meters in 2 seconds and contain 10 pounds of uranium-238.

Honeywell, which runs the **Kansas City Plant** in Missouri, and was recently awarded the contract to run the **Sandia Labs** based in New Mexico, makes all the non-nuclear components for the nuclear warheads inside the B61 "family" including the planned B61-12.

B61-12: United States' New, More "Usable" Nuclear Bomb

The Nov. 10, 2015 *Guardian* did a recap of the issues raised by the B61 replacement. An excerpt:

"... In non-proliferation terms however the only thing worse than a useless bomb is a 'usable' bomb. Apart from the stratospheric price, the most controversial element of the B61 upgrade is the replacement of the existing rigid tail with one that has moving fins that will make the bomb smarter and allow it to be guided more accurately to a target. Furthermore, the yield can be adjusted before launch, according to the target.

"The modifications are at the center of a row between anti-proliferation advocates and the government over whether the new improved B61-12 bomb is in fact a new weapon, and therefore a violation of President Obama's undertaking not to make new nuclear weapons. His administration's 2010 Nuclear Posture Review said life extension upgrades to the US arsenal would 'not support new military missions or provide for new military capabilities.'

"The issue has a particular significance for Europe where a stockpile of 180 B61s is held in six bases in five countries. If there is no change in that deployment by the time the upgraded B61-12s enter the stockpile in 2024, many of them will be flown out to the bases in Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy and Turkey.

"The row has had a semantic tone, revolving on what the definition of 'new' is, but arguably the only definition that counts is whether the generals and officials responsible for dropping bombs view its role in a different light as a result of its refurbishment. Referring to the B61-12's enhanced accuracy on a recent PBS Newshour television program, the former head of US Strategic Command, Gen. James Cartwright, made this striking remark: 'If I can drive down the yield, drive down, therefore, the likelihood of fallout, etc, does that make it more usable in the eyes of some president or national security decision-making process?' And the answer is it likely could be more usable."

Taking Doomsday to the Bank

Consolidated Nuclear Security (CNS) Corp., runs both the **Pantex bomb factory**, Hwy 60 & FM 2373, Panhandle, TX 79068; and the **Y-12 facility**, Bear Creek Rd., Oak Ridge, TN 37830.

Boeing Defense, Space and Security, PO Box 516, St. Louis, MO 63166; 314-232-0232

Bechtel National, 50 Beale St., San Francisco, CA 94105; 415-768-1234.

Lockheed Martin, 6801 Rockledge Dr., Bethesda, MD 20817; 972-603-9818.

Orbital ATK, HQ, 45101 Warp Dr., Dulles, VA 20166; 703-406-5000.

Honeywell's Kansas City Plant: 14520 Botts Rd., Kansas City, MO 64147; 816-488-2000; & New Mexico location, 2540 Alamo SE, Bldg A., Albuquerque, NM 87106; 505-267-4020.

Integrated Technology Corp., 1228 North Stadem Dr., Tempe, AZ 85281; 480-968-3459.

Fluor Federal Services Corp is headquartered near the infamous Hanford Nuclear Reservation at George Washington Way, Richland, WA 99354; 509-376-6808.

Longenecker & Associates, Inc. 2514 Red Arrow Dr., Las Vegas, NV 89135; 702-493-5363.

Integrated Technology Corp., based in Florida and Rhode Island, is an information management firm; while **Fluor Federal Services, Inc.**, a wholly owned subsidiary of Fluor Corporation of Irving, Texas, provides engineering, procurement, construction, commissioning, operations, maintenance, and project management.

Longenecker & Associates, Inc. is a consulting firm that provides specialized, technical and management services to nuclear industries, particularly the planning of "startup and commissioning" of nuclear systems and facilities. The B61's final assembly is at Pantex, in Panhandle, Texas, the military's final stop for assembly and delivery of nuclear weapons. Pantex also replaces parts and components to extend the deployment of nuclear weapons.

"Today **all three national nuclear weapons laboratories—Los Alamos, Sandia, and Lawrence Livermore**—have contributed to the design, with Sandia acting as the 'lead' laboratory. The B61 was originally a LANL design," Coghlan said.

Criticized as an unnecessary make-work project, nuclear weapon "Life Extension" programs are defended as "modernization" and "improvement." The Livermore Laboratory's Weapons and Complex Integration Directorate website says it works to keep the nuclear arsenal "safe, secure and reliable." The slogan "safe, secure, reliable," sounding like a Bayer aspirin commercial, is the PR veneer and conscience-soothing mantra used throughout the entire weapons complex. The Y-12 site says its "core mission is to ensure a safe, secure, and reliable US nuclear deterrent." The Sandia National Lab's "primary mission is ensuring the US nuclear arsenal is safe, secure, and reliable."

Rather than a "safe and secure" nuclear weapons stockpile for "deterrence," the real thrust of so-called "modernization" is to radically increase US nuclear warfighting capabilities.* ***—JL***

*See http://thebulletin.org/how-us-nuclear-force-modernization-undermining-strategic-stability-burst-height-compensating-super10578.

US Delegation to Join Nonviolent Actions at B61 Base in Germany

Nuclear abolitionists in Germany are organizing 20 weeks of nonviolent resistance at Büchel Air Force Base, March 26 to Aug. 9, 2017, to demand that the 20 remaining US B61 bombs be sent home permanently—not modernized as NATO plans—and that Germany join the UN effort to ban nuclear weapons. A delegation from the US coordinated by Nukewatch will join the Büchel peace camp July 12-18. Support actions in the US are also invited. For more info, visit buechel-atombombenfrei.de and atomwaffenfrei.de (click on International & English). US abolitionists are invited to endorse the campaign and by signing the online Declaration of Solidarity.