

## We Call for Nuclear Disarmament

### The Disarmament Imperative

The U.S. maintains an arsenal of more than 10,000 nuclear weapons. Why?

Nuclear weapons provide no defense. In fact they justify in many eyes the acquisition of similar weapons by others. U.S. violation of our own disarmament obligations undercuts our diplomatic and legal efforts to control proliferation, guiding U.S. nonproliferation policy toward war.

And it is very costly.

Over the past six decades, the average cost of each of the 70,000 nuclear weapons we have deployed at one time or another has been about \$100 million, for a total cost of \$7.0 trillion in today's dollars.

Russia, our only nuclear near-rival, is not our enemy. Russia has repeatedly tried to negotiate smaller arsenals, but the U.S. has refused to be bound by any new disarmament treaty. China, for her part, has only a few dozen older weapons that can reach the U.S. It is U.S. intransigence which blocks nuclear disarmament in every international forum.

The Cold War is long over but the arsenals remain. Disarmament, at least in the U.S., has ceased. The U.S. no longer pretends to merely maintain its nuclear weapons, and now openly seeks "improved" weapons and the factories to build them. Los Alamos houses one such factory, for plutonium bomb cores or "pits." Los Alamos is to make all the pits needed for the U.S. arsenal until at least 2020, if not longer.

Some congressional Democrats and liberal arms control activists seek to greatly increase Los Alamos' plutonium pit manufacturing capacity, in the hope of forestalling a larger factory elsewhere. Los Alamos cannot do this job, unless there is a radical expansion of its aging nuclear facilities and inventories. This well-intentioned but naive strategy can be compared to that of Neville Chamberlain at Munich in 1938.

Instead of trying to foster disarmament by making *more* weapons, we think the most practical and best way not to make new weapons is just not to make them.

"Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and of a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control."

— Article VI, *Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty*, ratified by the United States and entered into force in 1970.

The continued possession, further development, and manufacture of nuclear weapons by the United States undermines the ethical basis of our society, breaks treaties our nation has signed, wastes our nation's wealth, and permanently contaminates our environment, while providing no real contribution to U.S. national security.

In fact, implicit and explicit nuclear threats by the U.S. undermine global efforts to halt proliferation of not just nuclear weapons, but *all* weapons of mass destruction. Neither can our nuclear facilities ever be made fully secure from accident, internal sabotage, theft, or attack.

New Mexico's two nuclear weapons labs lead the world in spending for weapons of mass destruction. But as the labs have grown, our state's relative economic standing has declined and now trails almost all other states.

**We therefore call upon our elected leaders to:**

- C Stop the design and manufacture of *all* nuclear weapons, including plutonium bomb cores ("pits") at Los Alamos and elsewhere.
- C Dismantle our nuclear arsenal in concert with other nuclear powers, pursuant to Article VI of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. As the most powerful nation on earth, the U.S. must take the first steps in this process.
- C Halt disposal of nuclear waste at Los Alamos, as thousands of citizens and dozens of environmental organizations have already requested.

We demand quite different priorities: affordable health care for everyone, better education, renewable energy, and economic opportunity for those who have none. We call for investment in our people and families, in our economy and environment, instead of in preparation for nuclear war.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Information for Endorsements by Businesses, Churches, & Organizations:

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Your Title \_\_\_\_\_

## New Mexicans Call for Nuclear Disarmament

Nuclear weapons are by far the most destructive kind of weapon. The conscience of humanity recoils from them.

Nuclear threat and use have been declared generally illegal by the International Court of Justice and they have been widely condemned in numerous U.N. resolutions as well as by religious leaders, leading scientists and humanists – even by many senior military leaders.

Most Americans agree. Even without knowing that the U.S. has binding treaty obligations to achieve complete disarmament, fully 61% of Americans want their country to eliminate its nuclear arsenal, either unilaterally (6%) or with other nations (55%). Only 9% prefer keeping a large nuclear stockpile, our current policy. When they hear about U.S. disarmament obligations, 84% agree with them.

If you want nuclear disarmament, this petition is the place to register your opinion publicly and we urge you to join us in doing so. We are seeking endorsements from businesses, churches, nonprofit organizations, and informal associations as well as from as many individuals as possible.

It is especially important and powerful to take a stand in New Mexico, since nuclear weapons are New Mexico's most lucrative industry. If we remain silent, our silence will be taken as enthusiastic assent to these weapons and all they stand for. If we speak up, even by so small an act as signing this petition, we will inspire others to do so as well.

This petition continues and extends the campaign to halt nuclear waste disposal in northern New Mexico, already endorsed by thousands of people and dozens of organizations.

**Please return all signed petitions to the address below.**

Contact us for more information, more petitions or brochures (also available at [www.lasg.org](http://www.lasg.org)), to volunteer in this campaign, to schedule a speaker for your organization, or to help support this campaign financially or in other ways.

Los Alamos Study Group [www.lasg.org](http://www.lasg.org)  
 2901 Summit Place NE Albuquerque, NM 87106  
 505-265-1200 voice 505-265-1207 fax [gmello@lasg.org](mailto:gmello@lasg.org)  
 (or call our Santa Fe office at 505-795-8025)

## To resist militarism, resist it in New Mexico

Many of us are appalled by the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq. We also understand all too well the profound dangers posed by increasing militarism in our society and we want to do something effective about it.

“There exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.”

– *Unanimous judgment of the International Court of Justice, 1996, “Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons.”*

There is only one place we can trenchantly and hence successfully resist militarism and war: in our own community and state. This is where we work, where our friends and family live, where we go to church and school, and where we vote. But if we tacitly accept militarism at home in New Mexico – an industry which is perceived by our political leaders as paying a lot of our collective bills – our

opinions and occasional acts of protest about militarism and wars far away will carry very little political weight. To resist militarism, its authoritarian consequences, or to try to promote peace in New Mexico without clearly and publicly rejecting the growing nuclear weapons industry for which our state is known all over the world, is like trying to clean up our house without moving the huge pile of manure in the kitchen. No one will take such feckless work seriously.

Therefore we must first and foremost concern ourselves with militarism and war in New Mexico, and specifically reject nuclear weapons, if working for peace and justice is to have any meaning at all.

As noted on the cover of this brochure, most Americans in fact do reject nuclear weapons ( see University of Maryland, “Americans on WMD Proliferation,” April 15, 2004, at [http://www.pipa.org/OnlineReports/WMD/WMDreport\\_04\\_15\\_04.pdf](http://www.pipa.org/OnlineReports/WMD/WMDreport_04_15_04.pdf)). But attitudes mean little unless they are expressed in effective political organization. By signing this petition and recruiting others, you help create that political strength.

“The Conference agrees on...[a]n unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament, to which all States parties are committed under article VI.”

– *from the consensus agreement of all NPT signatories present at the 2000 NPT Review Conference, including the U.S., Russia, China, France, and the U.K.*

## In New Mexico, militarism is nuclear

In New Mexico, militarism comes primarily in the shape of a mushroom cloud. It is a shape that has been particularly damaging to our nation’s, and our state’s society, political institutions, and environment.

Our state is home to the two best-funded nuclear weapons facilities in the world: Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) and Sandia National Laboratories (SNL). Almost half of U.S. nuclear warhead spending for occurs in New Mexico, making nuclear warheads are our state’s largest industry, in dollar terms. Their share of our state’s total economic activity is 20 times more than in any other state. There are also more intact nuclear weapons stored in New Mexico (at Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque) than in any other state – or for that matter, at any other location in the world.

For all these reasons, New Mexico is indeed the “world capital of weapons of mass destruction,” and we are the people who tolerate this state of affairs, undercutting any and all of our other efforts for peace, justice, and social uplift.

Our official acquiescence to nuclear weapons has not brought us wealth. For more than 20 years, we have received more net per capita federal funds than all other states. But as the labs have grown – through the largesse of congressional committees often led by our state’s representatives – New Mexico’s relative standing in economic and human well-being has declined, to at or near the very bottom of all U.S. states.

In effect, we have allowed ourselves to become an economic and political colony, exercising little actual sovereignty of our own in return for the federal dole. Federal and corporate managers now control or have veto power over too many New Mexico assets, loyalties and policies, leading to rule by bureaucratic administrators instead of government by, and for, New Mexicans.

Current military spending will take an average of \$5,100 from each U.S. household this year, plus about \$800 in interest

“[W]e as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values...A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death.

– *Martin Luther King*

“Mere praise of peace is easy, but ineffective. What is needed is active participation in the fight against war and everything that leads to it.”

– *Albert Einstein*

for past military spending. All this money goes to feed a “national security” state which provides far more violence, fear, and want than it does actual security – especially in New Mexico, which excels in poverty and all that goes with it.

As a result of these realities, the state of New Mexico really has only one choice with respect to the nuclear weapons industry it harbors: to be the continuing victim of this industry, or to forge a new political and moral identity based on respect

“Noncooperation with evil is as much a duty as cooperation with good.”

– *Mohandas Gandhi*

for the human person. Such a new identity would be intellectually, morally, economically, and politically incompatible with support for nuclear deterrence and the

nuclear weapons industry. It is also the necessary core basis for economic, social, and spiritual renewal in this or any state.

A political identity based on respect for human beings will come about when businesses, churches, organizations, and individuals realize, suddenly, that they can no longer live, work, study, worship, or conduct business without such a foundation. For those businesses and other organizations to whom that realization does not come too late, it will be like a fog dissolving in sunshine, like waking from a dream.

## No disarmament, no environmental cleanup

The old nuclear dump sites in Los Alamos will never be cleaned up while new dumps, more or less exactly like the old ones, are still being created and filled at the same facility. Thousands of citizens and dozens of environmental organizations recruited by the Study Group have requested an end to the dumping based on clear legal and environmental requirements, but all these petitions have been officially and totally ignored.

Why? The nuclear lords in Washington have flat-out told the New Mexico Environment Department that continued dumping, law or no law, is simply not negotiable. They have also sued the State to destroy New Mexico’s remaining authority to regulate most of the waste their industry generates statewide, as part of a multi-state strategy to avoid cleanup and disempower opposition throughout the U.S. to further dumping. For the past two years, secret negotiations have been underway that will “resolve” these lawsuits.

Realistically, nuclear dumping will never end here or anywhere until nuclear weapons design and production, which produces the vast bulk of the waste at Los Alamos and is expected to make much more soon, likewise come to an end. Once the waste is made it must be disposed *somewhere*. The upshot? If no disarmament – then dumping, not cleanup.