

NUCLEAR MONITOR

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TAKING LIBERTIES: RUSSIA STIFLES DISSENT

Last March Russia's State Parliament (Duma) introduced an amendment to the law regulating protests and other public meetings. The amendment would restrict the public from organizing protest actions near federal and local authorities buildings, including the President's residence and parliament, near dangerous industrial facilities, foreign embassies, schools and more.

(610.5608) **WISE Russia** – The new amendment to the law regulating protests was developed and placed on the Duma's agenda by pro-presidential political party "United Russia", which holds an absolute majority in the parliament and reputedly pushes legislation originating directly from Russian president Vladimir Putin.

The proposal would effectively mean that protest actions would only be held where nobody would see or hear them and also covers public meetings, including cases where three or more people meet outside of their apartments. Such meetings would require the approval of authorities, especially if political issues are to be discussed.

The first hearing for the amendment was on 31 March but was kept secret until the day before, probably to ensure that opposition groups did not

have enough time to organise mass rallies. One small protest action, organized by "Yabloko" liberal party and Ecodefense, did however take place on March 31.

About 20 activists from various organizations, environmental and political, gathered outside the walls of parliament early in the morning, four people were eventually arrested. Parliamentarians approved the amendment by an absolute majority; the second hearing was scheduled for the end of April.

The law on public meetings, which also includes protest regulation, is mostly important to political opposition and environmentalists who both use public protests as a tool to influence the decision making of authorities. The anti-nuclear movement in Russia is not particularly large at present but it is quite effective at

using protests to highlight the dangers of the nuclear industry and its projects.

The small action caused a big media response; the next day, all daily newspapers covered the protest on the front pages. Such a reaction shocked the ruling party and "its" President into publicly pledge revisions to the amendment.

Dozens of similar actions organized mostly by environmentalists occurred in various Russian cities in April. The second Duma hearing was postponed to the end of May. The Russian system for legislative approval includes three hearings in the Duma (Lower House of parliament), approval by the Federation Council (upper house of parliament) and finally presidential approval.

The pressure applied by opposition groups has resulted in a revision of the amendment. The most of the public places listed as prohibited have been removed from the proposed legislation but the president's residence still remains on the list of banned places. Text relating to public meetings was also revised and permission is no longer required to drink beer in the park anymore...

Is it easy to express your opinion?

In another legislative surprise, the Duma has been discussing revisions to the law on referenda over the last

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weeks. Russian authorities have long been resisting activists' attempts to organize referenda.

In 2000, environmental groups collected over 2.5 million signatures for a national referendum aimed at achieving a ban on nuclear waste import. Despite this, the nuclear industry managed to maintain its control over the parliamentary environmental committee and pushed legislation allowing commercial import of spent nuclear fuel, or high-level radioactive waste, through the Duma.

Russia's Central Election Commission disqualified over 600,000 signatures of Russian citizens without providing clear reasons, which was enough to make the number of approved signatures lower than that required in legislation.

In 2002, citizens in Krasnoyarsk collected over 100,000 signatures to hold a local referendum in order to ban nuclear waste transportation to their region. Russia's largest spent nuclear fuel storage is located 60 km from Krasnoyarsk, a city of over a million residents. Again without providing specific reasons, the local Election Commission disqualified

nearly 90,000 signatures in order to stop the referendum.

The last successful referendum was held in 1997 in the Russian City of Kostroma. Over 90% of local residents voted to close down a nuclear power plant under construction. After that vote, the Russian authorities never allowed people to decide on nuclear issues again.

A new law would make the organization of all referenda, especially local ones, very difficult and without the support of authorities, near impossible.

Spymania

Despite making a lot of cash in Iran, China, India, USA and many other countries, Russian industry has failed at national development over the past 15 years. Only one nuclear reactor was put on-line in that period while various official plans had proposed 12-26 new reactors for construction.

Mass dissatisfaction, including the Chernobyl legacy, remains a serious barrier to development in the civil nuclear industry. The results of anti-nuclear referendums held between 1989 and 1997 still prevents the reanimation of various nuclear plants and despite serious spending on advertisements and PR campaigns by industry, public opinion is still not very friendly to proposals of nuclear paradise.

Those deemed responsible for the public's anti-nuclear feelings have been enduring government attacks over the last 10 years. The only crime they committed was telling the truth about real problems caused by the nuclear industry, both civil and military. For speaking up about threats to the public health and environment, they have been officially called "foreign spies" although links to foreign intelligence services was never proved.

In 1995, former captain of the northern military fleet, Alexandr Nikitin, was jailed for a year while an investigation was conducted into his environmental work. The "crimes" of Nikitin included

distributing information on radioactive contamination and other problems caused by nuclear waste in the Northwest of Russia and cooperating with Norwegian environmental group "Bellona". After Nikitin was released, he remained under investigation for several years.

All courts have confirmed his innocent, but FSB (formerly KGB) tried to reverse all decisions until the Supreme Court confirmed Captain Nikitin as a good citizen working for the good of his country.

In 1998, naval military journalist Grigory Pasko was jailed for telling the truth about the dumping of radioactive waste by Russian military in the Sea of Japan. He was not that lucky as Nikitin. A military court, which is much easier for the FSB to control, decided that Pasko was guilty. But not of spying, unfortunately for FSB, but of using confidential information inappropriately. Pasko is now released after spending many months in jail.

In 2004, researcher and analyst Alexandr Sutyagin was sentenced to 20 years for spying. He was working closely with US researcher and former Greenpeace campaigner Josh Handler on issues related to the nuclear weapons industries of Russia and the US.

Back in 1999, when this case started, Handler was in Moscow on research trip when the FSB held him for several hours and searched his apartment. Handler left for the US after strong advise from the US Embassy, while Sutyagin was put in jail and spent 4 years before his case actually came to court.

The most surprising part of Sutyagin's case is that he never had official access to secret information, so he could not know any state secrets; all the information he passed on was found in the public domain. Still, he has been sentenced for "disclosing state secrets to foreigners". According to lawyers, FSB did not find any proof of spying in Sutyagin's apartment. Nothing (that would later appear in a court case) was found in Handler's apartment either.

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Oops! We are a week late with this issue due to illnesses last week. In our last issue (609) we wrote in the front-page article ("Europe to unite against nuclear power") that a protest at Sosny Bor "had been rejected as part of Russia's new anti protest laws". However, these law still has to be implemented and the demonstration was banned on other grounds. See also front-page article of this issue.

The next issue (611) will be mailed out 11 June 2004.

25 YEARS AGO

What happened 25 years ago? We go back to news from our 1979 WISE Bulletin, comparing anti-nuclear news "then" and "now".

Then

In *WISE Bulletin 5* we wrote about Danish protests against the Barsebäck reactors in Sweden: "Intense action has continued in Denmark since the announcement of the nuclear reactor accident in Harrisburg, USA. On April 6th 25,000 people demonstrated in solidarity with the people of Harrisburg and to demand the closing down of the Swedish reactors, 20 kilometers from Copenhagen". (*WISE Bulletin 5*, May/June 1979)

Now

After the Harrisburg accident, the Swedish government bowed to the demand for a national referendum on nuclear energy. The outcome of the referendum was the closure of the twelve reactors in Sweden, by no later than 2010. But this deadline is not very strong. It seems that the wish for a phase out still stands but that the deadline of 2010 was dropped in an energy policy revision by parliament in 1997. (*Discussions on Nuclear Waste*, Laka Foundation/H. Damveld, January 2000)

The government ordered the closure of Barsebäck-1 in 1998 and the reactor was closed down on 30 November 1999 (after 24 years of operation). The desired closure of Barsebäck-2 has been delayed several times and is no longer foreseen in the near future. (*WISE/NIRS Nuclear Monitor*, 11 January 2002; *WISE News Communique*, 2 July 1999)

The Swedish government still wants to realize a phase out plan, preferably in negotiation with the nuclear utilities. The official aim is an agreement based on the German model, setting finite amounts of electricity to be produced. But on a recent negotiation mission, government-appointed negotiator Bo Bylund failed to reach an agreement. The government appears willing to allow most of the reactors to operate for 40 years, but in return wants Barsebäck-2 to be closed earlier. The nuclear utilities, however, do not wish to include the early closure of this reactor in an agreement. (*Nucleonics Week*, 6 and 13 May 2004)

Without negotiation, the government can decide the matter through legislation ordering closure dates, but that is a long process. In that case, the closure of Barsebäck-2 will be postponed until at least the summer of 2005. (Email Per Hegelund, 14 May 2004)

If reactors are to be allowed to operate for 40 years, the last reactor will be closed by 2025 (both Forsmark-3 and Oskarshamn-3 started operation in 1985), long after the 2010 date stipulated by the referendum outcome. (www.iaea.org)

The entire case brought by FSB in court was just words. Now, how could Sutyagin possibly "disclose state secrets" if he never knew any? Well, he never did it.

The sentence is result of the Spymania campaign organized by FSB and reportedly backed by the Russian President, who worked as a KGB agent in the Soviet era. The campaign targets those people bold enough to tell the truth, and who cooperate with foreigners such as analysts and researchers, making information known internationally. Russian authorities do not like the rest of world talking about their problems.

Sutyagin was naïve and strongly believed that the FSB works for the good of Russia, and will sort things out and release him. His relatives and lawyers also believed that and even

asked human rights groups and environmental organizations not to make loud campaigns. They were certain that FSB had made mistake and would set Sutyagin free because it was obvious he is no spy. They were wrong sadly. At least now they understand, and are now seeking help. International human rights groups are now working on the case.

There are many more examples of such prosecutions against activists, scientists and others in Russia's framework of Spymania but these three are the most illustrative. Instead of solving the problems and honoring the people who disclosed them, Russian authorities target them as spies, showing the rest of country how they treat those who speak in the public interest.

Being an activist in Russia at present is

not a very attractive prospect, it is too dangerous. Everything can be turned against you – legislation, the courts, and the big, scary systems of the monstrous KGB, re-named FSB. But sometimes there is no other way to get in the right direction.

Source and contact: WISE Russia; Vladimir Slivyak at ecodefense@online.ru

“POWER UPDATES”: BOOSTING MEGAWATTS AND ACCIDENT RISK

Nuclear reactors experienced more than 40 “events” over the past few years as a result of utilities squeezing more power out of aging reactors. An accelerated industry-wide “power uprate” program has resulted in numerous reactor internal component failures generating loose parts which can damage safety-related reactor components along the main steam line, raising the risk of a nuclear accident.

(610.5609) NIRS - What the nuclear industry claims as a source of cheap and easy extra-megawatts is in fact a dangerous experiment in reducing operational and design safety margins to boost profits. More worrisome, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is doing little more than expediting its licensing process to facilitate more and larger power boosts without fully understanding the risks.

Since 2000, there has been a sharp increase in the number of participating reactors along with industry’s reach for higher power output. The industry conceived of these uprates as a way to increase power output on a range from less than 2% to as much as 20% above the original licensed thermal power.

This is achieved primarily through loading the reactor with higher enriched uranium fuel. Higher enriched fuel means more thermal energy thus more steam to drive turbine generators for more electricity. The U.S. nuclear industry has captured the equivalent of more than four additional 1000 megawatt electric (MWe) power stations from uprates in 101 of the nation’s 103 operating reactors.

Encouraged by the Bush Administration’s National Energy Strategy, current industry plans seek to boost reactor power levels by an additional 2,270 megawatts electric over the next several years.

However, power boosts also mean more dynamic forces and accelerated neutron bombardment attacking susceptible reactor internal components.

“Catastrophic failure,” as one NRC official described, of steam dryer components at Exelon’s Quad Cities 1

and 2 nuclear power station in Illinois has shed new light on the growing risks to public safety from reactor power boosting.

Quad Cities Unit 1 and 2 nuclear power station, both 762 MWe General Electric Mark I Model 3 Boiling Water Reactors (BWR) with license amendments for 17.8% extended power uprates, have had three such failures in steam dryer components.

NRC is a willing and submissive partner to industry efforts to boost power levels and profits.

In June 2002, after 90 days of uprated operation, Unit 2 experienced fluctuations in its increased steam flow, reactor pressure and moisture carryover to the steam line. After shutting down for inspection, Exelon discovered that a cover plate on the steam dryer had broken loose and several other pieces had been swept down and lodged in the main steam line. GE diagnosed the “phenomenon” as high cycle fatigue and Exelon modified the steam dryer with thicker plates and went back on line.

On June 11, 2003, after an additional 300 days into the extended power uprate, Quad Cities 2 again shut down to inspect the steam dryer after noting the high moisture carryover in the steam. The steam dryer inspection again revealed extensive cracking, broken bracing and severed tie-bars. A “fix” was re-engineered and Unit 2 went back on line at the boosted power level.

In October 2003, Quad Cities Unit 1 observed the same symptoms and

shutdown on November 11 to inspect. They not only discovered significant cracking but a 6.5 inch by 9 inch section of steel plate had broken off from the steam dryer hood and disappeared into the steam line system. Signs of damage indicated that the missing part or parts passed through a recirculation pump.

Before restarting on November 29, 2003, Exelon repaired broken components and engineered fixes but had not come to a conclusion on whether the still missing parts impacted future reactor operation or to retrieve the internalized debris.

Exelon’s uprated Dresden Unit 2 has also discovered extensive cracking in its steam dryer in October 2003. NRC staff has identified that the steam flows are so great under these extended power uprates that replacement of old with new steam dryers might not address the associated risk of reactor core damage from future loose parts.

NRC is a willing and submissive partner to industry efforts to boost power levels and profits. In a recent meeting before NRC’s Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards, the agency was admonished for not obtaining detailed steam dryer engineering diagrams from General Electric.

An incredulous committee member described staff’s presentation diagrams as of little more value than “cartoons” and remarked that a more deliberate effort should be made to obtain precise diagrams. Another member remarked “Don’t we care about risk significance?”

At the forefront of the fight against new power uprates is a challenge by

New England Coalition to a proposed 20% power uprate request for Entergy's 32-year old Vermont Yankee nuclear power station. Like Quad Cities and Dresden, Vermont Yankee is a GE Mark 1 Model 3 BWR as are

Minnesota's Monticello and Massachusetts's Pilgrim nuclear power stations.

The fact that NRC recently admitted that it is still trying to "get its arms around the problem" and the risk to

public health and safety is reason to halt new power boost applications and revoke those in already in place.

Source and contact: Paul Gunter at NIRS pgunter@nirs.org

ANTI-NUCLEAR ERUPTIONS IN EUROPE

On an cold and crisp spring morning in eastern France, a dilapidated three-storey building in Soultzbach that once housed a spa back in 1850 was full of activity. On 25 April, some 50 anti-nuclear activists from France, Holland, Germany and Switzerland were setting out on a "tour de France" to phase out the nuclear era from France and subsequently the Earth.

(610.5610) S. P. Udayakumar - France was the fitting place to start as it is one of the most "nuclearized" countries in the world with some 1,100 nuclear installations and institutions. The 58 reactors produced 420.7 TWh (Terra Watt-hours) of electricity in 2003 meeting 78% of France's electricity needs; electricity produced in 11 reactors was exported abroad.

This is presented by the French government and nuclear authorities as vital for the development and continued prosperity of France. No serious effort is made to harvest energy from renewable sources.

In order to voice the concerns of the French people and prick the conscience of French authorities, "Réseau Sortir du Nucléaire", an umbrella organization of 688 anti-nuclear associations with 14,000 individual members, initiated the national tour.

The tour started with the Mayors of Kaysersberg and Wattwiller in eastern France, unfurling a huge banner proclaiming that "Nuclear Power Kills the Future" from the top of a medieval castle.

Kaysersberg town center had a festive look that afternoon with hundreds of people gathering to hear passionate speeches on a non-nuclear future for France and the world, to listen to various bands, to see the alternative energy sources exhibited, and to visit the stalls of various national organizations.

According to French anti-nuclear activists, the research authority and

operator of military facilities, Commissariat à l'Energie Atomique (CEA) operates as a state within a state.

The CEA hires some 20,000 part-time laborers annually to work at reactors; most being poor workers from Turkey. These casual laborers are quietly sent away following dangerous radiation exposures. French politicians reportedly fail to focus on negative nuclear occurrences, as does the national media.

André Larivière, one of the leaders of Réseau Sortir du Nucléaire and the national tour, claimed that the nuclear lobby in France regularly deceive, mislead and lie. Whenever an incident occurs at a nuclear installation, the nuclear department offers the same litany and reaches similar conclusions on each occasion.

Despite the enormity and the power of the French nuclear establishment, Larivière feels quite confident about the anti-nuclear struggles in France. He says: "What we do may be just drops in the ocean. Although what we can do is little, we do it. And do the best against all odds." Pointing out that nuclear power is an obsession and nuclear bomb a taboo in France, Larivière said that the democratic French state "let's you speak but it knows how to control you."

On the seventh day, the touring group gathered in front of the weapons production facility at Valduc near Dijon. This sprawling center of the Direction des Application Militaires (DAM), established in 1957, conducts research and development on nuclear

weapons, fabricates nuclear portions of the French atomic arsenal and treats radioactive materials and wastes.

The CEA has also constructed an incinerator for solid, burnable wastes that are contaminated with alpha

TOUR DE FRANCE

The Tour de France for a nuclear phase out started on 24 April with a manifestation near the French Fessenheim NPP. Fessenheim is France's oldest operating NPP and became literally "hot news" in the summer of 2002 when tropical temperatures made it necessary to cool the buildings as temperatures inside increased to dangerous levels. Many demonstrators wore watering cans at the start of the Tour de France.

Of course, much attention during the Tour was given to the plans to build a new reactor in France, the European Pressurized water Reactor (EPR). A bill proposing the construction was under discussion by the French parliament during the last weeks. During the tour, 46 locations were visited, many of these nuclear sites.

On Saturday 22 May, the Tour ended with an action at the NPP Penly, candidate site for the EPR, and a manifestation in the city Rouen. According to the organization some 20,000 people joined the tour, some only at one location, others during a number of stages.

Source: www.sortirdunucleaire.org

emitters. Wastes from the fabrication of enriched uranium weapon parts are also treated at Valduc.

The tour seeks to engage the populations of major towns in the anti-

nuclear debate and also utilizes the opportunities at each location, demonstrating in front of nearby nuclear installations, visiting centers of alternative energy sources and informing the local populations of the

true risks and costs of nuclear power.

Source and contact: Dr. S. P. Udayakumar, coordinator of the Peoples Movement against Nuclear Energy; Email: drspudayakumar@yahoo.com.

SELLAFIELD MOX PLANT FAILS TO DELIVER AGAIN.

BNFL's much vaunted Sellafield MOX Plant (SMP) has again let down its first customer Nordostschweizerische Kraftwerke (NOK) of Switzerland by failing to deliver a MOX fuel order for the Beznau nuclear power station in time for the station reactors' annual refuelling outages this summer. Delays to the plutonium commissioning of the plant have ruled out any possibility of the Swiss order even being manufactured, let alone delivered.

(610.5611) **CORE** - A similar failure in the spring of 2003 led to BNFL having to subcontract at least two SMP orders to rivals in France and Belgium. UK government estimates showed that last year's delay and loss of contracts alone cost SMP ten's of millions in lost revenue. The financial and contractual fall-out from this year's failure is likely to be catastrophic for BNFL and SMP in terms of further lost revenues and damage to customer confidence.

Ongoing research by CORE shows that the delays to actively commissioning all stages of SMP's production line have resulted in not one single MOX fuel assembly being produced even though active commissioning of the plutonium fuel production line started over two years ago, in April 2002 when

the first plutonium dioxide powder was introduced into the plant.

A CORE spokesperson said, " This MOX cock-up must be a huge embarrassment to BNFL. It will ring alarm bells with Government Ministers who controversially gave the go-ahead for the plant despite environmentalists' predictions that the plant was economically and technically unviable. With its reputation already in tatters, the kindest thing is to put SMP out of its misery and close it down right away " .

SMP was built at a cost of GBP 470 million (US\$ 850 million), which were later conveniently 'written off', with the expectation that most of its order book would be filled with business

from Japan. To date, no Japanese interest has materialised as Japanese utilities appear to have lost confidence in BNFL's ability to produce MOX fuel following the 1999 scandal when BNFL-manufactured MOX fuel arrived in Japan with falsified quality assurance data.

Source: CORE press release, 16 May 2004

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IPPNW CONGRESS 2004

At the annual congress of the German section of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) held in Berlin on 7-9 May, speakers and participants alike spoke with passion on the subject "Nuclear Weapons and Energy in an Unstable World – analysis and solutions".

(610.5612) **WISE Amsterdam** – The IPPNW congress aimed to discuss and analyze current and future applications of nuclear weaponry and nuclear power, the underlying structures, mechanisms and interest groups impeding disarmament and the global relinquishment of nuclear power as well as possible solutions. An ambitious program for just two days but somehow it worked.

The packed program was diverse and speakers hailed from environmental

and socio-political organizations as well as the scientists and physicians. What could easily have been a depressing event was lifted by several inspirational speakers who reminded participants of the successes achieved thus far in the anti-nuclear struggle and urging all to continue the good work.

The underlying themes were the establishment of alternative international institutions to push anti-nuclear agendas, increased

cooperation between groups, the relationship between nuclear weapons and nuclear power, failing treaties and institutions (NPT, IAEA etc), the militarization of the U.S., nukes as conventional weapons and the shared values of those involved in the anti-nuclear struggle amongst others.

There was a general view that within the global anti-nuclear movement there was need for more concerted efforts to show support for each

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BOOK REVIEW: HOPE'S HORIZON

Hope's Horizon: Three Visions for Healing the American Land by Chip Ward, published in May 2004 by Island Press (www.islandpress.org) is about "radical" ideas whose time have come, and indications that the wider society may be waking up. Hope's Horizon explores the geography of cutting edge eco-activism.

In his chapter "First they killed John Wayne," Ward shows how the U.S. nuclear establishment's regard of the citizens of Utah as a "low-use segment of the population" has resulted in Utahns bearing the brunt of the Atomic Age. "...the [Atomic Energy Commission] quickly became a totalitarian bureaucracy that ruled from afar, almost impossible for an ordinary citizen to influence. Congress tolerated its undemocratic behavior. Secrecy and fear were its mainstays. Misinformation became the rule."

"In the 1950s and 1960s the Atomic Energy Commission was to public health and safety what a drive-by shooting is to justice... The agency's reputation for arrogance and exclusion survived the letterhead changes intact, as anyone who has attended a recent NRC hearing can attest."

Ward has attended more than a few, as a director of Families Against Incinerator Risk (FAIR) and Healthy Environment Alliance (HEAL) of Utah in their struggle against the proposed "Private Fuel Storage" high-level radioactive waste "interim storage site" targeted at the Skull Valley Goshutes Indian Reservation, and the so-called "low-level" radioactive waste dump of the Orwellian-named "Envirocare" – both just up the road from Ward's home in Utah's West Desert.

"At the beginning of the nuclear age, we were as naïve as John Wayne's cowboy hat was white. We had full faith in our human powers to unlock and master the power of nature.

Progress was in full swing. And who could have imagined the lethal, long-lived power of the soft yellow stone encrusted in the earth? Even Marie Curie, credited with unlocking the first secrets of radioactivity, didn't understand. She downplayed the danger and ultimately died of cancer from inhaling her own experiments."

In the chapter "The Perpetual Peril of the Peaceful Atom," Ward begins "Our self-destructive affair with the atom was born of fear." Fear of a Nazi atom bomb. "Again, fear drove us on" into a nuclear arms race with the Soviet Union.

Ward surveys the troubled history of the Atomic Age, noting that "By the mid-1960s big dams were out and big reactors were in," and that "Nuclear power was the spoonful of sugar that helped the nuclear weapons medicine go down, an antidote to the fear and sacrifice associated with the arms race," an idea explored in depth in Arjun Makhijani's and Scott Saleska's *The Nuclear Power Deception: U.S. Nuclear Mythology from Electricity "Too Cheap to Meter" to "Inherently Safe" Reactors* (Apex Press, 1999).

With the chapter "Activists vs. Enablers," Ward recognizes nuclear reactors and weapons for what they are – societal addictions. The "Nuclear Renaissance" is better described as a "Relapse"! He writes "...shipping the waste to deserts for burial solves nothing – it just enables the nuclear industry to make more waste, thereby compounding the problem and making it even more intractable. The activists are out to stop the enablers... making even more waste [makes] no sense. Turning the desert into a nuclear dump so that the inevitable day of reckoning could be postponed a little longer didn't solve the problem; it allowed it to continue..."

Ward's concluding chapter, "Abolition and Precaution," explicitly honors the work of NIRS and such allies as Public Citizen, Shundahai Network, and

Citizen Awareness Network as visionary.

Ward writes "Abolition. It is not a word we use lightly. It has an absolute ring to it. We save it for things like slavery. We abolished slavery. We did so because slavery was monstrous and wrong – no exceptions. Can we apply the term to the nuclear monster we have created? ... Just as the abolitionist movement of the nineteenth century was propelled forward by a growing awareness of the evils of slavery and its terrible human cost, today's movement to end nuclear weapons and nuclear power has developed against the backdrop of the environmental and human degradation wrought by the nuclear regime..."

He asks how an industry can be redeemed "that has consistently misrepresented its costs, dangers, and consequences and then transferred them to the weakest and most vulnerable communities it can find?"

He concludes, "Abolition is a bold word that says citizens can assert control over this most undemocratic technology and stop it, start over, and make different choices." He points to the Precautionary Principle – as does the Center for Health, Environment and Justice's current "BE SAFE" campaign on nuclear power and weapons (see www.besafenet.com/nuclear.htm) – as a way forward.

Ward's book provides glimpses of a new day dawning beyond the nuclear nightmares against which we struggle.

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other's campaign work despite differing organizational policies and personal views. Several speakers echoed this calling for more emphasis on shared values. Ron McCoy of IPPNW Malaysia spoke of systematic world disorder and the erosion of once common values. Like several other speakers, Dr McCoy also commented on the huge change of mindset that would be required for the populations of the western world to abandon consumerist lifestyles that have allowed the emergence of a new slave trade to feed unsustainable lifestyles. He also spoke of the sense of disempowerment and injustice that has led to an increase in religious and political extremism.

On the NPT and America's non-compliance of Article 6 (elimination of nuclear arsenals), which has no set timeframe, it was suggested that innovative EU policy could be

proposed to break the deadlock. Pressure could be applied on the governments of Britain and France to encourage them to eliminate their nuclear weapons to lead the way to disarmament since the U.S. is unlikely to. The lack of political will to implement disarmament means that society needs to take a more active role in the process. Since the removal of the Soviet strike threat, there is no real reason for either the UK or France to maintain nuclear arsenals any longer, citizens of both countries could work towards influencing their governments to execute the will of the people. One speaker went as far as to suggest that governments and scientists developing weapons of mass destruction should be prosecutable under international laws.

Lars Pohlmeier of IPPNW introduced the subject of a Nuclear Arms Convention and its viability. He suggested that the creation of new

systems could allow governments of goodwill and NGOs a platform from which to join forces and apply political pressure on weapons states as was done with the Landmines Convention.

Jacqueline Cabasso, Executive Director of the Western States Legal Foundation, updated the plenary on the continuing Abolition 2000 campaign, an international network for the elimination of nuclear weapons. There is now a campaign to have ordinary citizens ratify the model Nuclear Weapons Convention developed by the group. The Mayors for Peace, who have also called for a year of action to commemorate Hiroshima, are also supporting the push.

For more information on the IPPNW Congress 2004 see http://www.atomkongress.de/start_eng.html

Source and contact: WISE Amsterdam

Increased steel prices problematic for Finnish NPP. According to the *Tekniikka & Talous* (Technology & Economy), a Finnish industry newspaper, the Framatome and Siemens contract to build the first European Pressurized water Reactor in Finland will definitely be unprofitable. The current increase in world market prices for steel is negatively affecting the profitability of the supplier, Framatome ANP. "The situation is troublesome for us. We have made a fixed price contract with TVO (Finnish utility) and if the raw materials cost more, we can be stranded into trouble in our own projects", said Ralf Guldner, the CEO of Framatome ANP.

This supports the arguments previously made by NGOs against industry claims on the economics of the EPR project in Finland. (See also *WISE/NIRS Nuclear Monitor* 600.5563: "Financing new nuclear power plants") As the fifth Finnish reactor is desperately needed to extend the lifetime of the western nuclear power industry, more price increases are to be expected.

IN BRIEF

The issue of a fixed (dump) price is causing more problems within the industry. German utilities have told Electricite de France (EDF) that its asking price for a share in an EPR to be built in France is too high. According to Platts' *Nucleonics Week*, German utilities may not agree to buy into an EDF-led EPR project on the basis of EDF's offer because they calculate that the asking price represents an investment cost per installed kilowatt of about 25% higher than the price charged to TVO for building the first EPR. The decision about a possible German share in a French EPR project will likely be made on or around 7 June. ***Tekniikka & Talous*, 19 May, 2004 (unofficial translation); *Nucleonics Week*, 27 May 2004**

Turkey still pursuing nuclear power plant. Turkish Energy Minister Himli Guler said on 7 May that his ministry was working on plans to build a nuclear power plant, an idea dropped by a previous government four years ago amid heavy criticism from environmentalists. Quoted by the

Anatolia news agency, Guler also stated that they are continuing technical studies on nuclear power plants and that talks would soon be held with countries that build these plants. According to a ministry spokesman, there is still no decision on the possible location of the plant. The site near Akkuyu Bay on Turkey's Mediterranean coast, chosen at the time of Ankara's previous attempt to adopt nuclear energy, was among options being considered. In July 2000, the plans for a reactor at Akkuyu were cancelled for economic reasons. Turkey was in the middle of a national economic reform and did not want to bear the financial burden of the project (see *WISE News Communiqué* 533.5191: "Turkey cancels Akkuyu nuclear plant"). **AFP, 7 May 2004**

European nuclear package apparently dead. On 13 May, the members of the European COREPER committee (Committee of Member States' Permanent Representatives) postponed the decision on the European

Commission's proposal of a nuclear package for binding safety and waste legislation. Officially it was "postponed" but in practice it is believed to be the end of the controversial nuclear package (see *WISE/NIRS Nuclear Monitor* 574,5442: "Euratom and the EU "nuclear package"). The package consisted of two draft directives on nuclear safety and waste disposal and was confronted with much resistance from anti-nuclear NGOs. The COREPER members asked the European Commission to come up with non-binding texts.

Although it was certain at the COREPER meeting that there was insufficient support among member states for the directives, it is not clear what will happen next. To prevent an embarrassing situation, it is unlikely that the Commission will withdraw the package quickly, so they could become "zombie" dossiers for several years. The non-binding legislation may perhaps suggest re-visiting the issue somewhere in the future.

FOE Europe, 14 May 2004;
Environment Daily, 14 May 2004;
Nucleonics Week; 20 May 2004

Nuclear plant exposure levels in Japan raise eyebrows. Nuclear plant workers in Japan have suffered the world's highest collective radiation exposure for four consecutive years, prompting the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency to consider improvements. On 7 May, sources said that the agency is studying ways of bolstering maintenance procedures, including an analysis of service procedures used at reactors in other countries. Japan's average collective radiation count for workers per light-water reactor was 1.55 man-sieverts in fiscal 2002. The collective dose is the total dose of the radiation that all nuclear workers received. Averages in other countries are lower, for instance 1.31 man-sieverts in the U.S. and 1.0 in Germany.
The Japan Times, 8 May 2004

European international storage site studied. Switzerland is taking part in a European project to find an inter-

national disposal site for radioactive waste. Fourteen European countries are taking part over the next two years in the research project called SAPIERR. The European Commission and the Swiss government are funding the project. The idea of an international disposal site is not new and is often mentioned in relation to the small nuclear programs of some European countries. Recently the idea was also included in the proposals for new European directives on waste. The aim of the project is to study the legal framework for a possible multinational storage site within the enlarged EU, said the private Association for Regional and International Underground Storage (ARIUS) coordinating the project.

Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 11 May 2004;
www.arius-world.org and
www.sapierr.net.

U.S.: missing fuel rods not in NPP.

Two segments of fuel rods that were lost in the Vermont Yankee NPP appear not to be in the spent fuel pool, as was earlier assumed (see *WISE/NIRS Nuclear Monitor* 609; In brief). The entire fuel pool has been searched with cameras. The Entergy nuclear company is now reviewing all shipping documents and interviewing current and former employees to track down the highly dangerous fuel rods.

WNA News Briefing, 19-25 May 2004

Soaring stocks of weapons-usable plutonium demand international support. Global stocks of weapons-usable fissile materials are rising as fast as during the height of the Cold War and must urgently be addressed in a comprehensive treaty, warned Greenpeace International on 12 May. According to Greenpeace International nuclear campaigner, Shaun Burnie, the solution to curbing proliferation in weapons-usable fissile materials - plutonium and highly enriched uranium (HEU) - exists via a Comprehensive Fissile Material Treaty (CFMT). The draft treaty has been distributed to governments worldwide at the United Nations. Despite acknowledging proliferation and

terrorist risks, international efforts by the Bush administration and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) avoid dealing with the emerging fissile material crisis, said Burnie. In Japan, France, the UK and Russia, stocks of plutonium and HEU have grown to nearly 2,000 tons.

U.S. Newswire, 12 May 2004;
Greenpeace press release, 4 May 2004

U.S. backs China joining nuclear group.

The Bush administration is backing China's membership to the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), an influential group that controls nuclear exports, despite Beijing's insistence on providing atomic reactors to Pakistan (see also *WISE News Communiqué* 479,4756: "US-China agreement to be certified"). According to the U.S., China is a significant nuclear supplier. In 2003, the NSG invited China to apply for membership and Beijing did so. Now the group, including France, Britain and Russia, is deciding on whether to approve the application by consensus. The agreement would also allow U.S. companies to export nuclear reactors to China, a welcome market as China is planning to build several reactors the coming years.

ABS-CBN News, 12 May 2004

Radioactive devices recovered in Saskatchewan, Canada.

A Saskatchewan farmer stumbled across two suitcases containing stolen highly radioactive moisture density probes missing from the University of Saskatchewan since June 1999. The recovery comes shortly after university officials noticed another, far less dangerous radioactive device, had accidentally been sold as scrap, winding up in the Saskatoon dump. The University has alerted the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission.
CNews, 12 May 2004

Australian nuclear watchdog calls for waste dump review.

Federal Government plans to build a radioactive waste dump in South Australia have been hit by further delays. An Australian Radiation

Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA) committee considering the license for the dump has called for further investigation into the likely impact on groundwater. The South Australian government hopes the delays will make the dump a federal election issue. A decision may be many months away, according to APRANSA. **ABC Online, 13 May 2004**

Tokyo to spend extra US\$ 897 million if Japan wins ITER. Tokyo would boost its investment in the construction costs of the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) from US\$ 2.45 billion to US\$ 3.35 billion if the reactor would be built in Japan, reported the financial newspaper Nihon Keizai on 26 May. The project's sponsors – the European Union, the United States, Russia, Japan, South Korea and China – remain deadlocked over whether to build the plant in Japan or France. In an attempt to win the bidding war in the negotiation round in mid-June, Japan has now offered an increased share in building costs. Total construction costs are estimated at US\$ 5 billion. **AP, 26 May 2004**

Hungarian spent nuclear fuel to Russia. The Hungarian and Russian government have signed a contract on deliveries of spent nuclear fuel from Paks NPP to Mayak in Russia for reprocessing. The contract was signed on 29 April, according to environmental organization Energia Klub in Hungary. However, it seems to be a preliminary agreement. Energia Klub has protested against the transports and reprocessing as being dangerous and vulnerable to terrorist attacks. **Energia Klub Hungary, 4 and 15 May 2004**

UK two seconds from nuclear disaster. A fuel-laden Chinook military helicopter travelling at up to 150 mph missed two reactor towers at the shut down Berkeley nuclear power station in Gloucestershire by just 80 feet, almost causing a nuclear disaster. This incident occurred on 26

November 2003. Experts have warned that a direct hit could have created a massive 'dirty bomb' with nuclear fallout spreading over hundreds of miles. Details of the scare were leaked to a local newspaper after a Member of Parliament quizzed the Ministry of Defense about the number of 'near-miss-incidents' involving aircraft and nuclear plants. There had been 59 reported incidents of aircraft breaching stringent no-fly zones over UK nuclear plants. Three took place at Berkeley power station, where decommissioning started in 1989. **www.IcBirmingham.co.uk, 16 May 2004**

North Korean nuclear site to remain suspended. The construction of North Korea's nuclear power project will remain suspended at least until December, despite reports of a push by Pyongyang to restart it, officials said on 20 May. The board of the U.S. led consortium overseeing the project said after a one-day meeting in New York that the site of two prospective light-water reactors in North Korea was being preserved and maintained as planned under a one-year suspension, to persuade Pyongyang to end its suspected nuclear weapons program. North Korea offered to freeze its own nuclear activities in exchange for the consortium, Korean Energy Development Organization (KEDO), resuming construction. The U.S. rejected the offer. **Reuters, 21 May 2004**

China interested in purchasing uranium from Brazil. China has expressed interest in purchasing enriched and unprocessed uranium from Brazil, but the Brazilian government does not yet have the technology, or the authority, to make such a deal. During his visit to China, Brazilian Science and Technology Minister, Eduardo Campos told reporters in Shanghai that Brazil will not have the technology to enrich uranium until 2008 and that Congress would have to amend Brazilian law before it could sell unprocessed uranium to a foreign country. Campos

tried to clarify earlier statements that indicated Brazil would consider selling China unprocessed uranium. A statement handed out to reporters in Shanghai on 25 May said Brazil would study the possibility of cooperating with China on peaceful uses of nuclear energy, such as for medical and agricultural purposes. A final decision on any cooperation will be made in August after Brazilian officials meet again with their Chinese counterparts, the statement said. **Reuters, 25 May 2004**

Bacteria found in radioactive waste Hanford. U.S. Scientists studying the soil beneath a leaking Hanford nuclear waste storage tank have discovered more than 100 species of bacteria living in a toxic, radioactive environment that most considered inhospitable to all forms of life. According to a microbial ecologist at the Pacific Northwest Laboratory in Richland, living organisms were even found in some of the most contaminated zones. For most living creatures, the nuclear and chemical waste in the underground storage tanks on the Hanford Nuclear Reservation in eastern Washington is the deadliest mixture of toxins and radioactive muck on the planet. For certain bacteria however, the toxic goop left over from decades of nuclear weapons production appears to be a second home. **The Seattle Post, 26 May 2004**

Two more reactors at Temelin, Czech Republic? Vice Industry Minister Martin Pecina announced on 25 May that Czech electricity company CEZ is preparing an application to build two more nuclear power reactors at Temelin. The management of CEZ however stresses that the building of new blocks is merely under consideration. The company makes it clear that it will not have more than around 3 billion Euro (US\$ 3.6 billion) available for the new Temelin scheme. The new Russian VVER designs or the French-German EPR reactor are seen as the most likely candidates for new reactors at Temelin. According to WISE

Czech Republic, the declaration comes at a time when the nuclear industry in Central Europe is desperately trying to push forward with its agenda.

WISE Czech Republic, 26 May 2004

Vietnam's nuclear ambitions.

Vietnamese officials have said that a pre-feasibility study will be submitted to the government this year as plans to build Vietnam's first nuclear power plant by 2020 gather steam. On 26 May, at the start of an international conference, Le Doan Phac, director of the International Affairs Department at the Vietnam Nuclear Energy Institute, said three possible locations were determined for the project, which will have a capacity of either 2,000 or 4,000 MW. In February, Russia and Vietnam signed a memorandum of understanding in which Moscow

agreed to help Hanoi build its first nuclear power plant, but experts say the door still remains wide open for its competitors. However, a foreign energy specialist said "it is still very early days" and the plan for such a nuclear power plant surfaces already for decades every now and then (see also *WISE News Communiqué* 526.5143: "Clean Development Mechanism: a new nuclear subsidy?").
AFP, 26 May 2004

Spain: Garona lifetime extension planned despite new government.

Nuclenor, the owner of the 466 MW Santa Maria de Garona reactor is preparing for renewal of the unit's license to operate for 48 years. The current operating license runs until 2009, by then the reactor will be 37 years old. Nuclenor is now preparing an extension of another 10 years;

despite the new Spanish government's pledge to phase out nuclear energy. The request for lifetime extension must be presented in 2006, which will be two years into the Socialist government of PM Jose Luis Zapatero, who won the 14 March elections. One month ago, he again confirmed that his party would go ahead with the election pledge to gradually end nuclear energy. Spain's oldest reactor at Zorita will be closed in April 2006, which will leave Garona, the second-oldest, exposed to the full brunt of the Socialist phase out plan.

Nucleonics Week, 6 May 2004

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THE NUCLEAR MONITOR

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Ed Asner on nuclear power

Ed Asner's speech at the April 15 kick-off dinner for the Fund for a Nuclear-Free World is now available for downloading at www.nirs.org. Titled, An Angry Man Speaks About Nuclear Power, the speech covers a lot of ground on current nuclear issues. We think you'll like it.

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