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Comments for Public Hearing on Draft Site-Wide Environmental Impact Statement for Continued Operation of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and Supplemental Stockpile Stewardship and Management Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement of February, 2004

Later this week, I will be at the United Nations in New York as part of a non-governmental contingent to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) Preparatory Committee (Prepcom), which precedes the 2005 five-year review. The NPT is an international treaty and is therefore part of U.S. law, as mandated by our Constitution.

1/01.01 One of the NPT's main principles is that it be a step toward the achievement of general and complete disarmament and, more particularly, nuclear disarmament. Indeed, Article VI of the treaty requires each of its state parties 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."

2/04.01 Rather than comply with our responsibilites under the law, the National Nuclear Security Administration's (NNSA's) proposed activities at LLNL, according to this EIS, break both the spirit and the letter of the law. How can we expect other countries to eschew their own development of nuclear weapons when our actions show that we disregard the law? Indeed, the recent emergence of new nuclear weapons states proves this point. How can the lab more than double its plutonium limit from 1,540 to 3,300 pounds, manufacture prototype plutonium bomb cores on site, manufacture radioactive tritium targets for the NIF, increasing the Lab's tritium at-risk limit nearly ten-fold, and undertake activities to speed a return to full-scale nuclear testing, all the while adhering to our obligations under the law?

3/01.01 LLNL's proposed activities include the above, as well as the reviving of plutonium atomic vapor laser isotope separation (UAVLIS), a nuclear proliferation nightmare. It wants to produce plutonium pits in order to create new bombs in its Modern Pit facility. It seeks to add plutonium, highly enriched uranium and lithium hydride to experiments at the NIF megalaser. This is in order to increase its usefulness for nuclear weapons development.

LLNL wants to develop diagnostics to enhance U.S. readiness to conduct full-scale nuclear tests, leading to unrestrained nuclear testing. And yet, a reading of the LLNL SW/SPEIS would have you believe differently. The summary's purpose and need states that, "The continued operation of LLNL is critical to NNSA's Stockpile Stewardship Program and to preventing the spread and use of nuclear weapons worldwide" and that "the emphasis of the U.S. nuclear weapons program has shifted from developing and producing new weapon designs to dismantling obsolete weapons and maintaining a smaller weapons stockpile." (Draft LLNL SW/SEIS Summary, page S-2) This is patently untrue. What is not stated is that the development of smaller, but more powerful weapons, such as mini-nukes is envisioned. Putting these weapons out there only adds to proliferation. Other countries will not stand idly by as we act counter to international law. As we develop new nuclear weapons, so will they. Nations previously

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3/01.01 cont. free of nuclear weapons will want to join the club. The Department of Energy (DOE) and NNSA wish to maintain a "robust and responsive nuclear weapons infrastructure in sustaining deterrence," (ibid.) to implement the third element of the new triad under the Nuclear Posture Review. How one accomplishes deterrence in an age of terrorism is difficult to fathom. And yet, LLNL sees itself as "countering the proliferation and use of weapons of mass destruction." (ibid, p. S-3)

4/08.02 We are told that there are three possible alternatives for LLNL: No Action, the Proposed Action and Reduced Operation. At worst, with the proposed action, we can look forward to an increase of 50% over the no action alternative, a more than double increase in the administrative limit for fuel-grade-equivalent plutonium to 1,500 kilograms from the existing 700 kilograms, a three-fold increase of from 20 to 60 kilograms of fuel-grade equivalent plutonium in each of two rooms of the Plutonium Facility to support campaigns for advanced radiography, pit manufacturing, and certification programs. The Building 331 Tritium Facility's tritium administrative limit will be increased from 30 to 35 grams and the material at-risk from a single workstation from 3.5 to 30 grams, an increase of almost ten times. Why is this needed? We are told that this is so they can resume testing. I recall that when the NIF was being considered, it was touted as eliminating the need for testing. How does this enhance our compliance with the NPT? The Proposed Action would double the Building 239 Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) administrative limit from 25 to 50 kilograms to support Stockpile Stewardship Program activities.

If we look at the Reduced Operation Alternative, we are told that it would still maintain full operation readiness for NNSA facilities and operations, but does not represent the level of operation required to fulfill the Stockpile Stewardship Program mission assigned to LLNL for the foreseeable future. However, operations to maintain safety and security would still be in force. LLNL capabilities and infrastructure would still be maintained. Some programs such as the Advanced Materials Program demonstration activities and the laser separation of isotopes of surrogate material or plutonium would not take place. Other reductions would be in NIF operations, engineering demonstration units, pit surveillance efforts, the number of subcritical assemblies, and the terascale simulation facility. These reductions will all reduce environmental impacts, such as transuranic waste generation and worker dose.

Increased site activities under the No Action Alternative or Proposed Action could increase the likelihood of soil contamination due to increased levels of activity and corresponding increases in the potential for accidental releases. Under the Reduced Operation Alternative, a lower likelihood of soil contamination would be expected. Unfortunately, we are not given the choice of Reduced Operations Leading to Dismantling of the Nuclear Weapons Facility. That would be my choice. It would also be most in line with our obligations under the NPT.

5/01.01 Whether by government hand or by terrorist instrumentality, we live in a world that is increasingly less secure. We must stop these activities that lead us down the path

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5/01.01 cont. of lawlessness to nuclear proliferation and annihilation. We must honor our obligations under the law and work to achieve true security for us all.

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April 27, 2004

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May 20, 2004

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RE: Comments on the Department of Energy's Site-Wide Environmental Impact Statement (SWEIS) for Continued Operations at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL).

Dear Mr. Grim:

1/31.04 Through this letter we are expressing our deep concern with the health and environmental risks posed by the expanded nuclear weapons mission for the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) into the indefinite future. We appreciate your focused attention to this matter. Below, we have outlined a number of specific concerns that, taken cumulatively, lead us to the conclusion that the Site Wide Environmental Impact Statement (SWEIS) for the continuing operation of LLNL is so deficient in information and analysis that it must be fixed and re-circulated in draft form. This would allow the community, the regulators, and the legislators to have the opportunity to evaluate the new information that is requested in these comments. Our specific concerns are:

2/08.02 1. The same day of the public hearings for the SWEIS, April 27, 2004, the Congressional Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats, and International Relations for the Committee on Government Reform held a hearing on the security of nuclear materials. The hearing highlighted potentially insurmountable problems with plutonium and highly enriched uranium at certain Department of Energy (DOE) sites, with a focus on the vulnerability of nuclear materials storage

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at LLNL. On May 7, 2004, Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham delivered a speech on the deficiencies in the security of nuclear materials at LLNL and other DOE sites. The Energy Secretary made a commitment to consider removing the special nuclear materials at LLNL by 2005. This recent acknowledgement by the DOE that security at LLNL is questionable makes it imperative that the SWEIS evaluate an alternative that would remove all special nuclear materials from LLNL. These acknowledgements make this not only a reasonable option, but one that should be evaluated because it is a foreseeable outcome within the next decade at LLNL.

2/08.02 cont.

2. Instead of reducing the amount of special nuclear materials on-site at LLNL, this plan proposes to more than double the limit for plutonium at Livermore Lab from 1,540 pounds to 3,300 pounds. Additionally, under the Proposed Action, the administrative limit for highly enriched uranium in Building 239 would increase from 55 pounds to 110 pounds. Seven million people live in surrounding areas, and residences are built right up to the fence. Plutonium is difficult to store safely because, in certain forms, it can spontaneously ignite and burn. Moreover, it poses a criticality risk when significant quantities are stored in close proximity. The amount of plutonium proposed for LLNL is sufficient to make more than 300 nuclear bombs. Because of the health risks, the proliferation dangers, storage hazards, and very serious security concerns, we believe it is irresponsible to store plutonium, highly enriched uranium and tritium at LLNL. We are calling upon the DOE to de-inventory the plutonium, highly enriched uranium and tritium stocks at LLNL rather than to increase them.

3/34.01 4/33.01, 25.01

3. The SWEIS proposes to increase the at-risk limits for tritium ten fold, from just over 3 grams to 30 grams. The SWEIS proposes to increase the at-risk limit for plutonium from 44

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3/34.01 4/33.01, 25.01 cont.

pounds to 132 pounds. We believe it is unsafe to increase the amount of tritium and plutonium that can be "in process" in one room at one time. LLNL has a history of criticality violations with plutonium and releases of both tritium and plutonium, making it evident that these amounts should be decreased, rather than increased.

5/27.01

4. This plan will revive a project that was canceled more than 10 years ago because it was dangerous and unnecessary. The project was called Plutonium - Atomic Vapor Laser Isotope Separation (AVLIS). Now it is called the "Integrated Technology Project"(ITP) and the "Advanced Materials Program"(AMP). This is a scheme to heat and vaporize plutonium and then shoot multiple laser beams through the vapor to separate out plutonium isotopes. The ITP / AMP is a health risk and a nuclear proliferation nightmare. We believe the ITP and AMP work should be cancelled as the Plutonium AVLIS was cancelled in 1990 - this time permanently.

6/37.01

5. This plan makes Livermore Lab the place to test new manufacturing technologies for producing plutonium pits for nuclear weapons. A pit is the softball-sized piece of plutonium that sits inside a modern nuclear weapon and triggers its thermonuclear explosion. DOE says these new technologies will then be used in a new bomb factory, called the Modern Pit Facility (MPF). Public and Congressional opposition to the MPF has caused its delay this year. The Livermore Lab plutonium pit program goes full-speed ahead in the wrong direction. It will enable the MPF and production of 150 - 450 plutonium bomb cores annually, with the ability to run double shifts and produce 900 cores per year. This production capability would approximate the combined nuclear arsenals of France and China - each year. We call upon the DOE to halt all work on plutonium pit production technologies at Livermore Lab. We

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6/37.01 cont. believe it is premature for the DOE to spend taxpayer dollars on this technology and the prudent and reasonable outcome is to delay or cancel this project.

7/26.01 8/26.03 6. This plan will add plutonium, highly-enriched uranium and large quantities of lithium hydride to experiments in the National Ignition Facility mega-laser when it is completed at Livermore Lab. Using these materials in the NIF will increase its usefulness for nuclear weapons development, including for the design of new types of nuclear weapons. It will also make the NIF more hazardous to workers and the environment. This is not only dangerous to people's health and safety, and a proliferation risk, but it is sure to result in an inordinate cost to the taxpayer. No cost estimate associated with this proposal has been released to date. We ask the DOE to cancel these dangerous, polluting, proliferation-provocative and unnecessary new experiments proposed for the NIF.

9/26.04 7. The SWEIS reveals plans to manufacture tritium targets at LLNL. The tritium-filled targets are the radioactive fuel pellets that the NIF's 192 laser beams will "shoot" in an attempt to create a thermonuclear explosion. Producing the targets will increase the amount of tritium that is used in any one room at Livermore Lab from the current limit of just over 3 grams to 30 grams - nearly 10-fold more. In the mid-1990's, LLNL stated that target fabrication was to occur off-site because of LLNL's proximity to large populations. Livermore Lab has a history of tritium accidents, spills and releases. The NIF will increase the amount of airborne radioactivity emanating from LLNL. We call on DOE to cancel plans to manufacture tritium targets for NIF at Livermore Lab. Further, we urge cancellation of the NIF megalaser. Cancellation of NIF is a reasonable alternative that should be fully analyzed in the SWEIS.

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10/39.01 8. This plan also calls for Livermore Lab to develop diagnostics to "enhance" the nation's readiness to conduct full-scale underground nuclear tests. This is a dangerous step back to the days of unrestrained nuclear testing. All work at LLNL to reduce the time it takes to conduct a full-scale underground nuclear test should be terminated immediately.

11/35.01 9. This plan mixes bugs and bombs at Livermore. It calls for collocating an advanced bio-warfare agent facility (BSL-3) with nuclear weapons activities in a classified area at Livermore Lab. The plan proposes genetic modification and aerosolization (spraying) with live anthrax, plague and other deadly pathogens. This could weaken the international biological weapons treaty -- and it poses a risk to workers, the public and the environment here in the Bay Area. The draft SWEIS does not adequately describe these programs, or the unique security, health and environmental hazards they present. Construction should be halted on the portable BSL-3 facility. All plans to conduct advanced bio-warfare agent (BSL-3) research on site at LLNL should be terminated.

12/14.01 10. There are 108 buildings identified at LLNL as having potential seismic deficiencies relative to current codes. The SWEIS should include a complete list of these buildings and an accounting of the ones that house or may house hazardous, radiological and biological research materials. LLNL is located within 1 kilometer of two significant earthquake faults, including the Las Positas Fault Zone less than 200 feet from the LLNL boundary. How can we mitigate harm done from an earthquake that damages these buildings before they are brought up to code? We urge the Livermore Lab to stop any work with hazardous, radioactive or biological substances that may be occurring in any building that does not comply with federal standards.

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13/22.01 11. A contractor will be paid to package and ship more than 1,000 drums of transuranic and mixed transuranic waste to the WIPP dump in New Mexico, yet the SWEIS says this is exempt from environmental review. This work in its entirety must be included in the review.

14/20.05 12. The DOE does not acknowledge in the SWEIS that the double-walled shipping containers described in the document may be replaced by less health - protective single-lined containers. We believe that no waste should be shipped in single-walled containers and the SWEIS should provide a guarantee to that effect.

15/01.01 13. The Purpose and Need statement in the SWEIS relies heavily upon the US Nuclear Posture Review, which calls for an aggressive modernization and manufacturing base within the US nuclear weapons complex. This stands in stark contrast to the binding legal mandate to shift "from developing and producing new weapons designs to dismantling obsolete weapons and maintaining a smaller weapons arsenal". We believe a revised Purpose and Need statement should accurately reflect the Livermore Lab's legal responsibility with regard to US law, including US obligations under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

16/07.01 Further, the Purpose and Need statement in the SWEIS almost completely omits LLNL's important role in civilian science research. This omission fatally flaws the alternatives analysis in the SWEIS by neglecting to consider the expanded role that civilian science programs at the LLNL could play in the next decade.

The alternatives analysis should be revised to consider LLNL's role in light of the commitments in the NPT and the Livermore Lab's civilian science mission as well as the compelling case for removing special nuclear materials (i.e., plutonium and highly enriched uranium) from the LLNL site.

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16/07.01 cont. Also, after reading Eileen Welsome's The Plutonium Files I was shocked and angered at what these nuclear weapons have and are currently doing to the populus. It is my sincere hope that these evil men will wake up and see that this is supposed to be America not Nazi Germany!!!!!!!!

17/23.02 I am curious why we are still subjecting people to these experiments such as Iodine therapy that has not been proven to stop disease. Why are we still allowing these experiments to exist? Why is taxpayers money going to useless projects? Did anyone in your department learn the lessons about the danger of radioactive waste back in the 40's and 50's?? That this uranium does not break down in the environment and killed off most of the scientists working with this toxic waste of cancer and other illnesses?

When are you going to realize that by rendering all of these test sites now useless pieces of land you are forcing our already overpopulated world into closer confinement. I would like to find out how radioactive salmon contaminating the food chain along with cattle and other animals is helping people? Do you like eating radioactive salmon because I sure don't. And I also don't think it is a matter of national security to conceal this and other information from the public.

Sincerely,

Danielle White