

no more nUClear bombs!



convert the weapons labs!

THE GROWING THREAT OF NUCLEAR WAR

Since the first atomic bombs were dropped 33 years ago, the likelihood of nuclear war has steadily increased. More nations have been added to the list of nuclear powers, and new weapons have been added to ever expanding nuclear arsenals. The initiator and leader of the nuclear arms race has always been the U.S., which today has nearly 30,000 nuclear warheads in its stockpile, far more than any other nation, including the Soviet Union. Despite this lead, the U.S. continues to develop many new warheads. These include the neutron bomb, designed to fight a so-called "limited nuclear war", and others, like the Trident Submarine missile, capable of striking first at Soviet missile silos. Such developments are making the use of nuclear weapons a more "thinkable" option, thus greatly adding to the possibility of a nuclear holocaust.

Every one of these weapons we add to our arsenal will spark the Soviet Union to develop similar weapons to be used against us, as has occurred throughout the course of the nuclear arms race. By 1984, a total of 35 nations may possess nuclear weapons, thanks largely to our export of nuclear technology. Rather than bring us national security, the development of nuclear weapons has brought us the most fearsome kind of insecurity — the constant and growing threat of nuclear annihilation. Many people don't realize how close to the brink of nuclear war we have already been: every President since Truman has considered the use of nuclear weapons, most recently in Vietnam. Now, after the U.S. defeat in Indochina, U.S. military leaders are more willing than ever to use the nuclear "club" to maintain U.S. interests around the world.

Neither President Carter's grand inaugural pledge to work for "Zero Nuclear Weapons", nor all the disarmament and arms control negotiations, has done anything to move towards eliminating the nuclear threat. Negotiations alone are clearly not enough. The only way out of this mad cycle is for the U.S., as the leader in the arms race, to initiate a moratorium on the further development of new weapons. Such a move would be an important first step towards more substantial worldwide disarmament, by halting the further development of dangerous new nuclear weapons, and by serving as a challenge to the other nuclear powers to take similar actions. The risks involved in the U.S. taking such unilateral initiatives are small when compared to the risks involved in continuing the arms race. To move the U.S. to end the development of new weapons — and ultimately prevent a nuclear war — will take large numbers of people becoming concerned and active in opposing the arms race.

THE NUCLEAR WEAPONS LABS

All the nuclear warheads — from the Hiroshima bomb to the neutron bomb — that make our insane nuclear policies possible were developed at the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory (LLL) in Northern California and the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory (LASL) in New Mexico. These two laboratories, operated by the University of California since their beginnings, are the "brains" of a vast complex spread across the country that develops and produces our nuclear weapons. This year the federal government will spend over \$550 million at these labs. More than half of this money will go towards weapons development, including new warheads for the cruise missile, the Trident submarine, the M-X Mobile missile, and our ICBM's, as well as smaller, tactical warheads. Part of these funds will also continue research into the military applications of lasers and charged particle beams, or "death rays". But these labs do more than simply develop these bombs. They also play an active role in shaping military policy, pushing for new weapons, and in opposing arms limitation agreements. In recent years, the Los Alamos director admitted lobbying "aggressively" for the neutron bomb, and both lab directors have testified to Congress against nuclear test ban treaties.

Even if the bombs are never used, the very development of these weapons at the UC labs poses enormous health hazards to workers, surrounding communities, and the general public. Above ground nuclear testing by the labs in the late 50's and early 60's, as well as their dumping of nuclear wastes in the Pacific Ocean, have already contaminated the environment. Presently, hundreds of pounds of plutonium and other highly radioactive materials are in constant use at the labs, with the potential for serious accidents.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA'S ROLE

The University of California officially administers the labs under five year contracts with the Department of Energy, which owns and funds the labs. But despite U.C.'s capacity as the lab's manager, the University has failed to exercise any control over the policies or work of the labs. Rather, it has left them a free hand to do as they wish in the University's name, virtually free of public scrutiny or control. Despite the 1970 faculty Zinner Committee Report which recommended greater interaction between U.C. and the labs or termination of the contracts, the record since then has revealed an increasing isolation of the labs from meaningful interaction with the University and the public. Somehow the University justifies all this as a form of "public service" to the nation. But by playing the silent partner in this arrangement, the University has lent a mantle of legitimacy to the nuclear arms race and the secrecy surrounding it, thus committing a grave *disservice*.

PUBLIC CONTROL AND CONVERSION

With an already overwhelming nuclear arsenal, the U.S. can easily afford to convert the two U.C. labs to peaceful purposes. Since these labs are in effect the "source" of the nuclear arms race, such a move would help put a "cap" on the arms race. The vast resources of the labs could then be devoted to research on alternate energy sources, better health care, and other socially useful purposes. The conversion potential at the labs is great, with many of the 13,000 employees already working on various projects with no direct weapons applications. An Alternate Use committee of workers, community representatives, and others could be formed to develop conversion plans and insure job security or retraining for current employees. Conversion of such facilities is technically possible; it has been done at numerous defense-related sites. The main obstacles are political ones.

To end the labs' weapons work and convert them to other uses will require a political fight to change current military policies. A major first step in that struggle is to bring the weapons labs under real public control, so that the influence of the weapons designers is limited and they are made accountable to the general public.

What should the University's role be in this struggle? Severing ties with the labs might "purify" the University, but it would leave the labs virtually unchanged. The University must be held responsible for its past actions which have enabled the weapons labs to become an unchecked public threat. Although U.C. cannot on its own change national policy or convert the labs, it has the power and the responsibility to commit itself to work for public control and conversion of the labs. If the University refuses, or is unable, to act in this responsible manner, we will work to terminate U.C.'s contracts to operate the labs. Should this last step become necessary, we will continue to press for public control and conversion.

THE U.C. NUCLEAR WEAPONS LABS CONVERSION PROJECT

The U.C. Nuclear Weapons Labs Conversion Project (UCNWLCP) was founded in October 1976 to challenge the University's operation of the two nuclear weapons labs and to work for their conversion to non-weapons work. The Labs Project has conducted a highly successful nonviolent campaign that has made the U.C. relationship to the weapons labs a major issue and has reawakened local public concern about the nuclear arms race. Through petitions, meetings with officials, demonstrations, "die-ins", a victory in court, teach-ins, testimony to legislators, and local and national media attention, we have shown that *it is* possible for concerned citizens to oppose the steady drift towards nuclear war.

The Project initially came together to oppose U.C.'s intention to renew unchanged its five year contracts with the federal government to administer the labs. Following the renewal of these contracts with no meaningful public input in the Spring of 1977, the Project called for the University to review publicly its relationship with the labs and to set up educational programs on U.C.'s role in the nuclear arms race. After some public pressure, U.C. President David Saxon set up the Gerberding Committee to study U.C.'s operation of the labs. When the committee issued a weak, inadequate report in February 1978, the Project put out its own 16 page report based on attendance at the committee's meetings. Since then we have worked for public discussion and debate of the issues surrounding both reports, while continuing to press for our long range goals (see below).

This coming year will be a decisive one, as the University prepares to act on the Gerberding proposals. We will expand our work with a renewed sense of urgency. A detailed timeline for the next year includes a conversion study of the Livermore Lab, organizing around the upcoming Regents meetings, "monitoring" the work of the labs, providing testimony to state and national legislators, and a major demonstration at the Livermore Lab in May 1979.

We are resolved to work in the coming year for:

- 1. An end to all nuclear weapons related work at Lawrence Livermore Laboratory (LLL) and Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory (LASL), and conversion of the labs to socially constructive uses.**
- 2. A commitment by the University of California to accept its responsibility for the results of operating the weapons labs by working to the maximum extent of its power to establish full public control over the labs, to end their nuclear weapons work, and to convert them to alternate uses.**
- 3. An independent review of the potential health and safety hazards at the labs due to the presence of large amounts of plutonium and other radioactive materials.**

The UCNWLCP is a broad coalition from within the University and the community at large, which includes environmentalists, scientists, students, professors, peace groups, church groups, and labor representatives. We meet every other Tuesday night in Berkeley, and have contacts working on a number of other U.C. campuses. If you would like to help out or get more information, contact:

U.C. NUCLEAR WEAPONS LABS CONVERSION PROJECT

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