

# NEIS NEWS

Spring 2005

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## The System is Broken - and Only WE Can Fix It!

### Institutions that DON'T and WON'T Work for Us

By Dave Kraft, Director

As I write this, I am reflecting over the recent experiences of our members as they reported the results of the various public meetings and hearings they have attended in the past year and a half in Illinois and elsewhere. And what I feel is a great unease. Things just aren't - working.

We have a Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) that won't regulate; an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that doesn't protect; and now, it appears, county health departments that seem to be more concerned about defending anachronistic departmental procedures than public health. This malady does not seem to be confined to the Midwest. The World Health (WHO) organization seems to be infected with "lackabackboneitis" as well. It refuses to release the results of a 1996 conference attended by over 700 scientists assembled to discuss findings concerning the Chernobyl accident. Why? Because the International Atomic Energy Agency WON'T LET THEM release the results (see inside).

What do we do when the regulators won't regulate, the protectors won't protect, and the researchers won't release?

*We fire them, and do the job ourselves!*

While this sounds a bit grandiose, unrealistic, and certainly not legally binding, it is the ONLY solution left to us. Not only can we do this, it's already being done. In England, Australia, Canada, and even in the US, citizens are taking back the process. They are giving notice to these institutions that they are no longer relevant, their pronouncements no longer credible, and that, while in some circumstances we will have to play along with the perfunctory dog-and pony show hearings and meetings to preserve legal standing, we no longer acknowledge these as legitimate, and certainly not remotely protective of the public health and safety.

This will certainly ruin the day of some lifer bureaucrats. But that pales to insignificance compared to the days that these bureaucrats have ruined through their unscrupulous, irresponsible inactivity. What the international World Tribunal on Iraq (WTI) is doing in the field of law, and the World Social Forum in the field of social/institutional change, we need to be doing for the environment, especially in the energy field.

In 2005 and beyond, NEIS will be sponsoring programs that deliver opportunities for effective education, organizing, and activism *on our playing field*, not theirs, and on our own terms. The "**Citizen Epidemiology Conference**," and the upcoming "You Can't 'Nuke' Global Warming" program are two examples of the kind of programs that, "We, the people," will control. Energy and environmental health are simply too important to be left in the hands of irresponsible government.

## "Citizen Epidemiology – The Next Step" a Successful Conference

"Barefoot epidemiology" trains citizens to get their own reliable health data when local officials won't

On May 20-22, 2005 the Citizen Epidemiology Conference took place at Northwestern University in Evanston, IL in the USA. Designed to provide useful tools and training for activists seeking to gather health data around nuclear facilities, the Conference was attended by nearly 50 activists from four countries. The following is a summary report of the event, its goals and premise, the outcomes, and the follow-up activities to date.

### **Why the Need for "CE"? Development of the Idea:**

In the past two years, attendees of major conferences held by NEIS, GAAA and other safe-energy, anti-nuclear and peace activist organizations have called attention to a new and disturbing realization: at all levels, the agencies and public institutions set up to protect the public and the environment from radiation hazards and to regulate the nuclear industries are all irreparably broken. They not only all fail in their mission, they more often than not collaborate with the nuclear industries they're supposed to regulate or monitor. Recent examples of this include:

- Presentations at the 2003 Hamburg DU/UW Conference demonstrating the self-censorship of the World Health Organization (WHO) to make public study results unfavorable to the expansion of nuclear power worldwide, at the "request" of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA);
- The U.S. NRC's abject failure to regulate assertively in the U.S., and willingness to allow the industry to self-regulate itself in many areas of reactor operation, while systematically stifling public participation and criticism. NRC officials also favor regulation changes allowing for "de-regulation" of what they consider "mildly contaminated" materials for re-use in manufactured goods (although recently the Commission decided not to pursue this change at this time);
- Recent allegations that local county health statistics may be "inaccurate" and under-reporting cancer clusters around nuclear facilities, as in Grundy County, Illinois, near the Dreden nuclear facility; complaints that results of studies completed are not being released to the public, such as occurred in Vieques, Puerto Rico after residents fought for and won the right for a local health study after the U.S. Navy closed its bombing range there; or flat out refusal of some health authorities to release health information requested by the local populace relating to suspected health effects in communities near nuclear facilities, such as occurred near the Hinkley Nuclear Station in Wales.
- The unwillingness of the International Committee on Radiation Protection (ICRP) and other traditional radiation

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agencies and institutions to acknowledge that the methodology they currently use, based as it is on external radiation exposure alone, may be deficient or outright wrong when it comes to evaluating internal doses to radiation, resulting in a vast underreporting of exposures and health effects.

People from all over the world, from all walks of life, have come to the universal conclusion that these institutions can no longer be trusted to provide credible information, standards, or regulation. Worse, they are un-repairable. In the absence of credible information, the abundance of untrustworthy regulators, and massive institutional failure, people are left with only one alternative – find out themselves if harm exists, and then act on their evidence.

These developments and reports must be taken seriously. Responding to the feedback from these Conferences, the Citizen Epidemiology Conference was organized to provide the public with the tools they will need to take action to fill the health and safety void left by abdicating and collaborating regulators.

***The Next Step: Citizen Epidemiology – Taking Back the Initiative from Unresponsive Regulators. The Plan:***

At the 2003 Hamburg DU/UW Conference (<http://www.uraniumweaponsconference.de>), it was agreed that: 1.) epidemiological studies were needed in global hot spots where use of depleted uranium had occurred, and 2.) an independent research facility was needed, where new movement scientists could be trained to help collect and process the data collected by people in the field.

In 2004 under the supervision of Dr. Chris Busby of Wales, co-conference organizing group NEIS helped produce a “generic” epidemiological survey form, applicable for use in gathering health data around any nuclear facility (a specialized version was also created to investigate DU exposure). These surveys are now available from the NEIS website at [www.neis.org](http://www.neis.org). They can be taken door-to-door by trained volunteers for completion; or distributed and collected in more informal ways.

In late 2004/early 2005 Dr. Ross Wilcock, a member of Science for Peace and also the International Institute for Concern for Public Health from Woodstock, Ontario, began contacting organizations to discuss the possibility of convening a conference on these issues. Originally, the Conference was to have been held in Woodstock, or possibly Toronto. However, logistic reasons prevented this plan from coming together in Canada. When this occurred, NEIS proposed convening the Conference near Chicago in the U.S., an easy and affordable transportation hub for many. The timing was set for mid/late May to attempt to attract people already coming to the U.S. for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty meetings in New York. Conference co-sponsors included Science for Peace of Canada; Nuclear Energy Information Service (NEIS), Northwestern University SEED of Evanston, IL, Traprock Peace Center in MA, and Nukewatch of WI, USA; and Gewaltfreie Aktion Atomwaffen Abschaffen of Germany. A principal supporter of the Conference was the Simons Foundation of Vancouver, Canada. The Conference was arranged to be held at the main campus of Northwestern University in Evanston, IL, USA.

“The Next Step: Citizen Epidemiology” assembled professional epidemiologists and public health experts to train

interested activists in the fundamentals of data collection using any of a number of available surveys and sources. Presenters were to provide information on new developments in the understanding of the health effects of ionizing radiation. Initially invited presenters included Dr. Ernest Sternglass of the U.S.; Dr. Rosalie Bertell of Canada and the U.S.; Dr. Chris Busby of Wales; and Dr. Jawad Al-Ali of Iraq. Several other noted epidemiologists and public health advocates and statisticians were approached, but could not attend. The conference planners expected 75-100 attendees.

The “**Citizen Epidemiology**” (CE) data collection project has several purposes:

- **Data collection:** At its best, with proper training CE data can be used as part of a formal scientific inquiry into radiation effects from nuclear plants, as has already been demonstrated in Wales, Canada, and Australia, as well as around the Three Mile Island area in the U.S. They also serve as a “check” on the validity and reliability of local health department statistics; major findings at odds with local health department findings could and should trigger additional new investigation.
- **Informal uses:** The CE surveys can help collect anecdotal reports so that local information does not get “lost” if people die, move away, local documentation gets lost or altered, or people are intimidated (fear of job loss or property value decline) into not reporting negative effects. They can help bridge the usefulness gap between so-called “professional” data collection and “anecdotal” reporting.
- **Community Organizing Benefits:** Finally, the mere act of using these surveys makes the public aware that nuclear facilities require oversight; that they are not benign neighbors by nature. It introduces residents face to face with individuals, perhaps from their own community, who share a mutual concern – good public health and community safety, both legitimate educational goals. And it empowers people to trust their own efforts and senses, their willingness to be skeptical, and their own competence. Finally, it is also a message to the existing institutions: you are no longer trusted as sole arbiters of this information, and you are being watched and judged based on an independent collection of the data. The two data sets had better match – or you will be held publicly accountable.

For the first time, citizens now have the opportunity to get the answers to their own questions about the safety of their neighboring nuclear facilities, without first having the information filtered through some entity with a vested interest in the “status quo” results. This radically alters the fundamental nature of the power equation in these communities.

***Ambitious Goals:***

Conference planners created an ambitious set of goals for the Conference. They aimed to provide up-to-date information on the latest research findings and professional debates concerning radiation biology issues. Based on this training it was hoped that three citizen epidemiology teams would form to use the training and materials from the conference in CE projects in their home communities. The Conference would produce a proceedings and materials such as a CD-ROM/DVD, for use and dissemination after the Conference.

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Two other goals reflected the international nature of the program. The Conference intended to formulate a plan to raise funds (about \$18,000 US) to conduct a CE study in Basrah, Iraq, an area reported to be experiencing effects from the use of "depleted uranium" (DU) weapons during the two Gulf Wars. The Conference also entered into discussion about the establishment of an international "free/independent" teaching institute, to teach CE and other science and activist skills to talented and motivated students.

### ***The Final Results:***

The Conference was attended by nearly 50 people for the weekend. Major competing events and last-minute cancellations kept the attendance lower than expected.

The presenters included: Dr. Ernest Sternglass, Radiation and Public Health Project (RPHP); Dr. Chris Busby, Green Audit Wales; Cindy Folkers of Nuclear Information and Resource Service (NIRS), Washington, D.C.; Dr. Judith Johnsrud, Environmental Coalition against Nuclear Power, PA; and Marion K pker of GAAA, Germany. The U.S. State Dept. would not provide Dr. Jawad Al-Ali of Basrah, Iraq with an interview for his visa until after the conference dates (even with the direct intervention of a U.S. Congresswoman). A DVD of a presentation he gave in Hamburg in October, 2003, and a phone interview taped just prior to the Conference was played for the audience in his absence.

The Conference still was able to reach its most important goals. Two Citizen Epidemiology teams formed at the Conference, one from Illinois, one from Wisconsin. Both have begun planning CE work this autumn (Illinois) and early next year (Wisconsin) around selected nuclear sites in their respective states, with supervision.

The Conference agreed to assist with raising a proposed \$18,000 US to help initiate the CE survey in Basrah, Iraq, under the supervision of Dr. Jawad Al-Ali. To date over \$3,000 US has been raised in the US, and over \$3,000 in Europe (see side bar, this issue). Activists in Japan are currently assessing their ability to raise additional funds.

### ***Discussion of a "Free Institute" for Future Training:***

The issue of the "independent/free university" to conduct future training on CE and other related subjects independent of the influence of corporations and existing institutions was discussed at the Conference, with no clear resolution, other than everyone agreeing it was needed, and a good idea. The initial proposal came from Dr. Chris Busby, who presented a short synopsis of a draft proposal developed in 2004. The plan called for establishing an institute, possibly in Wales where Dr. Busby had a lead for affordable property. Projected start-up costs were placed at £ 680,000 (i.e. 1.1 million). The two-year program would result in an accredited BSc in Planetary Sciences for 10 students per year. The initial plan calls for 5 faculty, plus visiting lecturers. Further discussion of this project will take place by e-mail after the Conference.

The conference participants discussed the point whether a Free University could run on the tuition fee paid by the students. People criticized that this would give only rich people the opportunity to study at this University. People from so-called Third World countries would be left out. We also can't really expect official stipends for this kind of University. Gender

equality came up as a point. While Dr. Busby was focusing on finding some "rich donors" to fund this University, activist Marion K pker focused more on direct appeals to the international anti-nuclear organizations (for example 2700 are already in the Network Abolition 2000) and the environmental organizations. She argued that these groups should be financially responsible, since they are the ones who would benefit most from this University (and by this can keep it independent). If 1,000 organizations came up with an annual donation of 100\$/i.e., they would feel that it is *their* University and would make this work known in their communities. A board could be set up consisting of individuals from these different organizations, and this board could be the one deciding which students would receive a stipend out of these donations. NGO's could propose active members who are known for their environmental interests as candidates for this University. Also the board would have to develop guidelines for selecting students (gender, third world country... ). The University with its Professors and teachers will have to give a clear overview on the techniques they are teaching and why they are important. There should be an exchange between the movement and the University what kind of techniques are needed. This would closely bind the University with the movement. If there are huge differences/problems which cannot be changed, the board might be able to give stipends to students for different programs in other Universities (if these exist). It is all about the transparency, what the movement needs, and what the University wants to offer us. It was agreed to continue this discussion over e-mail.

An after-conference discussion revealed a sense that pockets of such independently trained personnel may already exist "out there" at several US universities, but disconnected from one another. An intermediate step might be to convene a meeting of such people, establish some initial conjoint projects, and establish a track-record of successful activity, out of which might come a call for such an institute from those actually doing it already, but separately at existing institutions. This might make it easier to attract funding in the future for a full and separate institute.

In addition to the main agenda of the Conference, Traprock Peace Center conducted the Chicago premiere showing of "The Doctor, the DU and the Dying Children," a European award-winning German documentary from 2004 about the medical effects of depleted uranium. The "Doctor," German Professor Doctor Sigwart-Horst G nter, was in the early 1990's one of the first to note the connection between adverse health effects observed in Iraq and the presence/use of depleted uranium. Upon his return to Germany, his samples were confiscated, and he was imprisoned by the German authorities for, "transporting radioactive materials across international borders."

The Conference also showed "Nuclear Controversies" (formerly, "Atomic Lies"), a film by Wladimir Tchertkoff, about the collusion between the UN's IAEA and WHO not to disclose research findings or information that would be damaging to one another. This collaboration has resulted in a quiet self-censorship of information that these agencies then refuse to disclose to the public. The film documented a famous example of this censorship – the proceedings of a 1996 WHO Conference on Chernobyl effects, which are not made available to the public. The sense of the Conference was that this agreement must be opposed, and cease.

The Conference could not have taken place without our Canadian co-sponsoring group, Science for Peace, and the support received from the Simons Foundation of Vancouver, Canada. Many costly in-kind services and judicious cost-cutting decisions came from the Conference planning coordinators and their organizations. In particular the assistance of the Northwestern campus environmental group SEED was invaluable, resulting in the use of a modern, fully-equipped set of facilities for Conference use. The rest of the foundation community approached for support for the event declined to provide any funding. This indicates that the movement still has a long way to go to demonstrate the urgency of these issues to the U.S. foundation community.

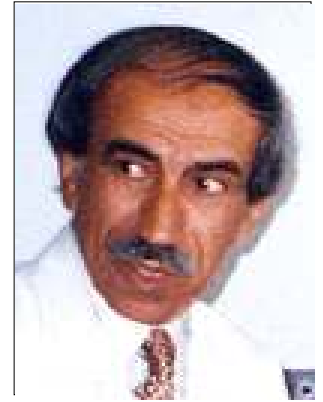
#### **The “Next Steps”“ Already Being Taken:**

As of this writing activities have rapidly moved forward as a result of the Conference:

- Meetings have already taken place to form the two U.S. teams to begin their citizen epidemiology community studies in Illinois and Wisconsin. Preliminary discussions in Illinois have identified site selection, study parameters, and needed data bases. Discussions are underway for a possible CE survey in Michigan, and also in Germany.
- Two members of the Wisconsin team were accepted for an early-July, week-long training on the effects of ionizing radiation, conducted by the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research in Takoma Park, MD, USA. IEER accepted the CE Conference packet materials as supplements to the materials they would be providing for the training.
- Contributions from Europe and the US worth nearly \$7,500 US have been received to fund the epidemiology study for Basrah, Iraq. Further, investigation of a fellowship program that exists between US universities and Iraq has also begun. If accepted as a project, as much as \$12,500 may become available for the project. Outreach to the major Japanese DU and radiation organizations has also begun in earnest after meeting with many of them at a meeting of the European Parliament in Brussels, Belgium, in late June. A meeting between study coordinator Dr. Jawad Al-Ali and members from the international physicians group IPPNW are scheduled for late 2005 to discuss methodology and continued funding.
- Requests for both the Conference packet and the Conference Proceedings have been coming in since the conference. More are expected. It is hoped that the Proceedings will be available by December, 2005
- Interest has also come from the political sector of the U.S. A letter from Illinois' U.S. Senator Barack Obama was received asking for a copy of the post-conference report (the Senator serves on both the Senate Committee for Veterans Affairs, and for Energy). Other requests and expression of interest have come from several U.S. House members.
- The publication June 29<sup>th</sup> of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences BEIR VII Report publicly delivered results which only served to amplify and underscore both the initial Conference premise, and the messages coming from several of the Conference presentations. Although viewed as a conservative organization which has yet to acknowledge

## “Citizen Epidemiology” Where it’s Needed: in a War Zone

Attendees of the May “Citizen Epidemiology” Conference in Evanston were unfortunately unable to meet **Dr. Jawad Al-Ali**, an oncologist from Basrah, Iraq. His pre-taped remarks were played to the audience, in which Dr. Al-Ali proposed a unique “CE” project: an epidemiological survey in the areas around Basrah which were extensively contaminated with depleted-uranium (DU) dust left over from the Gulf Wars.



*Dr. Jawad Al-Ali (courtesy of DU/UW Conference website)*

Dr. Al-Ali and his colleagues have documented horrendous health effects among the people of this region, which may be linked to their constant, chronic exposure to DU dust and fragments. However, no one has studied this potential health link in detail. The US and UK military discounts even the existence of any possible health effects; yet their own military manuals warn of it. Local doctors and health professionals have lacked either the funding or access to data to confirm or disprove the links. Further, intimidations, kidnappings and even assassinations of professionals from all disciplines has made investigation a dangerous activity.

Dr. Al-Ali's presentation at the 2003 World DU/Uranium Weapons Conference held in Hamburg was the strong basis for a call to action. The Powerpoint of this presentation is available on the Conference website at: <http://www.uraniumweaponsconference.de/powerpoint/htm> A warning – some images portrayed are very clinically graphic in nature, and could be extremely upsetting.

Dr. Al-Ali suggests that he has the team necessary to conduct the CE survey. He states he needs roughly \$18,000 US to complete the work. The Conference attendees voted to commit to raising the funding. To date roughly \$7,000 US has been raised in Europe and the US towards the goal.

Members of the international doctors organization, International Physicians against Nuclear Weapons and War are scheduled to meet with Dr. Al-Ali to discuss the study methodology and goals sometime in the Fall. This will assure that the study is done in a professional manner consistent with accepted scientific standards.

Individuals interesting in making contributions to this study can send checks payable to “NEIS” and marked “CE Al-Ali study” in the memo field to:

NEIS, 3411 W. Diversey, #16, Chicago, IL 60647

possible flaws in their own methodologies, and the significance of new, observed phenomena regarding radiation health effects, their report states flatly – much to the nuclear

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industry's shock – “The scientific research base shows that there is no threshold of exposure below which low levels of ionizing radiation can be demonstrated to be harmless or beneficial...The health risks—particularly the development of solid cancers in organs—rise proportionally with exposure...As *the overall lifetime exposure increases, so does the risk,*” stated NAS committee chair Robert R. Monson of the Harvard School of Public Health in Boston, MA.

This statement represents a huge dilemma for both society and the nuclear industry. It precludes the blind, knee-jerk acceptance of expanding the nuclear industry – the so-called “nuclear renaissance” – since, more nuclear reactors inevitably would mean more emissions – and consequently more cancers and adverse health effects. Society will have to decide which it prefers. Further, the NAS called for further study of several of the observed but not yet fully understood or accepted cellular and genetic effects of ionizing radiation: the “bystander” effect; the “second-event” theory; and genomic instability. Should these effects, discussed at the CE Conference, be demonstrated to be legitimate and widespread, the nuclear industry will have no choice but to shut down, or face financial ruin from the tsunami of lawsuits which will inevitably follow. O

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## NEIS ANNUAL MEETING : HELPING END THE “NUCLEAR RENAISSANCE”

Over 40 NEIS members and guests gathered in Evanston on May 5 for the NEIS Annual Meeting and Open House.

The event began by opening remarks from incoming Board President, Dolores Pino. Outgoing acting President, Bruce Mocking was thanked and acknowledged for his service above and beyond the call of duty for the group.

NEIS Director Dave Kraft updated the members on both the progress made in the year since the last meeting; and the ambitious plans ahead for 2005. He also announced aggressive plans to help bring in new members, and appealed to those present to consider involving themselves more in the ongoing programs.

Kraft next introduced the guest keynote speaker, Sandra Lindberg, co-chair of the Clinton-2 resistance group, No New Nukes, with whom NEIS has been working for the past year. Both NEIS and “N3” made a strong showing at the April NRC meeting on the Early Site Permit request of Exelon Corporation, which took place in Clinton, Illinois. Ms. Lindberg's remarks provided a human and inspirational touch about the nature of activism, both for her personally, and potentially what it could be for others present. (See her complete remarks, in this issue).

Members were afterwards treated to a surprise video showing of a story about the Clinton-2 issue which aired on PBS' **Lehrer News Hour** the week before. They were further surprised by the unexpected appearance of safety-advocate/whistle-blower, Oscar Shirani. Shirani is a nuclear engineer who has challenged the quality assurance capabilities and program of Exelon Corporation, and for this, was fired. Oscar then gave an informal presentation about his allegations for the members present, concluding a very full day for all who attended. O

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## The Nuclear Industry: “A Symptom of Our Society's Unhealthy World View”

“...we, as the collection of people living in this time, are together responsible for the problems we are facing...”

By Sandra Lindberg, co-chair, No New Nukes

[NOTE: *The following are the complete remarks of Ms. Lindberg as she delivered them at the NEIS Annual Meeting in May, 2005.*]

Two years ago when I spoke at an NEIS dinner like this one, I believe I thought of my work on the nuclear issue as if I were waging a war. I thought of myself as standing on the moral high ground from which vantage point I could see, oh so clearly, how “evil doers”—to borrow a phrase from a man I'm not particularly fond of—were attempting to slip a nuclear resurgence by the noses of an innocent American public. Even though I'd seen in the past how politicians who waged wars against one thing or another—crime, or drugs, or communism—rarely seemed to succeed with their approach, I was seduced by the heady feeling of moral outrage I experienced when I called out the inequities of the pro-nuke folks while standing atop my hill.

I was also infamous in our local environmental community for saying that working on the nuclear issue was the most important environmental task of our time.

A lot has changed in my thinking since those early days of my involvement with this issue. Most recently I've been reading a book called *The Voice of the Earth*, by Theodore Roszak. On one of his concluding pages, he makes the following observations,

*“Like everybody who speaks to the world about the environmental crisis, I was once in the habit of scolding people about the stupidly destructive things we do to the planetary ecology. It made me feel virtuous to stand before them predicting the environmental doom our way of life would soon bring down on us. But I also realized that presentations like this were making less and less of a difference, and indeed I was growing weary with spreading gloom.” (324-325)*

When Roszak gave up wagging his finger at people, he began to talk with them instead, only to find that their environmentally damaging choices had nothing to do with “ignorance, greed, or indifference.” (325) Instead, people kept making choices that damaged the environment because these were unhealthy habits that they did not know how to break. Habits that had become so endemic that they now passed for “realistic public policy and practical economics.” (327) As I read Roszak's words, I felt I'd found a compadre, someone who was giving voice to the very frustrations and uncertainties I was experiencing in my work on the nuclear issue.

You see, I lived for four years in Clinton. I know how kind people there can be. I know how hard they work and how they make do with very little. I've seen how they love their kids and want what's best for them. So I knew better than to try to convince myself that they were stupid, or self-serving when many of them loudly claimed they were all for a second reactor in Clinton. I knew that no matter how much I wanted my moral high ground, I wasn't going to be able to shore it up with

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attitudes that dismissed the people living in Clinton. Part of me has understood all along why folks in such economically challenging circumstances desperately want to believe that a second reactor in Clinton is the answer to all their problems.

So on April 19 at the NRC meeting in Clinton I trained my sights—there's that war imagery again—on the NRC, castigating them for their failure to live up to their own mission statement or to protect the safety of U.S. citizens. That seemed a safe place to aim an attack—sort of like taking on Darth Sidius and his Death Star. But then I got an email from an NRC employee who claimed he, and some of his colleagues, were taking a beating—in some cases literally—for attempting to force the NRC to do its job. A day later I got an email from a radiologist in Lexington, Kentucky who wanted me to announce publicly that he thought any plans for building new reactors were a big mistake. He claimed I'd be getting a lot more emails like this. It seemed the Death Star I'd shot my rockets at had defectors in its ranks. Apparently, not everyone connected to the nuclear industry was comfortable with the work they were doing.

So what was I to think about all this murkiness, these gray areas, this complexity as it attaches itself to the nuclear issue? I knew that immersing myself in this question was essential if I was to clarify the goals and approach I would bring to the issue in coming months and years. This question is all that I've been thinking about since the April 19th hearing.

What I'm about to say is my personal opinion. It's not the official opinion of No New Nukes. And my thinking is likely to transform yet again as my study of, and work on, this issue continues. But I have to say that [I] don't think political or economic approaches are going to work very well on this issue. And I don't believe there is an undeniable set of data, or the results of a scientific experiment that will ever prove, once and for all, that nuclear reactors are a bad idea. Nor do I believe that there is an optimal amount of information for a person to possess about nuclear matters, that once attained will make his or her arguments about the issue irrefutable. There is no magic bullet for this issue. In fact, I believe we have all the facts we need to prove this industry is a catastrophically bad idea. If facts or brilliantly designed policy were what we needed, this issue would have died a long time ago.

There is no bullet that can defeat an industry when its existence is symptomatic of a far more chronic dis-ease in our culture. The nuclear industry is a symptom of our society's unhealthy world view. It may be our society's most dangerous symptom, but as I know from nursing my little boy, trying to eradicate only one symptom may actually prolong the disease. When I want to assist my little boy in reestablishing a healthy balance in his self, I must take in and support what is happening with the whole of him.

In taking in the whole of what I perceive when I think about nuclear matters, I keep hearing the words of Joanna Macy, counselor and nuclear activist extraordinaire. She has written in her book, *Despair and Personal Power in the Nuclear Age*, *"We participate like neurons in a neural net, in the emergence of a collective dimension of consciousness. That emergence seems essential now to our survival."* (164) We must undertake to perceive the whole of who we are because we, as the collection of people living in this time, are together responsible for the problems we are facing—including the

threatened reawakening of the radioactive giant that is the nuclear industry. It is our choices about how we live that have acted like compost for the nuclear industry's present, little seedlings—in Clinton IL, North Anna VA, and Grand Gulf MS.

President Jimmy Carter may have tried to declare that this country would embrace energy conservation, but most of us responded to his calls for energy frugality as if we'd been asked to exist on a diet of bread and water. Many of us breathed a collective sigh of relief when the petroleum shortage dissipated. After President Carter left office we inexorably returned to extensive light displays during the winter holiday season, or chose to buy incandescent bulbs even when compact fluorescents became available. We turned up our thermostats. Put away our sweaters. And when we did that, we all rekindled hopes within the hearts and minds of those working in the nuclear industry. "They need us!" they might have been thinking, as we continued to have large families, buy energy intensive appliances and toys for our homes, and pretend that energy was somehow inexhaustible—even though we'd had a taste that it was not.

Even within the anti-nuclear activist world, there is a tendency to live as if energy comes from an inexhaustible source. At least, that's how we treat ourselves at times. Sometimes we behave as if it's best to turn a blow torch on a candle and consume it at once, wax and wick and all. We treat ourselves as though we were inexhaustible resources and stave off burn-out for as long as we can. When we work on the issue in this way, we are like a nuclear reactor with its control rods disabled. We burn and burn. I might have done this until I burned out my own little candle had not the death of my mother in February and our family's decision to bring my ailing father of 82 into our home forced me to reexamine my priorities. I had to slow down my work on the nuclear issue, and it was in this period of slowing down that some of the thoughts I have shared with you tonight had time to surface in my mind.

Given this larger view of the nuclear issue, the question of what to do presses upon me. Some of my colleagues in No New Nukes and I have come to feel that the spiritual and psychological aspects of this issue are even more important than press releases and pamphlets. Will we stop filing statements with the NRC? I think not. Will we stop writing letters to the editor? I doubt that as well. Will we avoid media attention? Not likely when the media can help us to create public awareness about the nuclear issue. But the way in which we write these documents and express ourselves to reporters is likely to change. If I had to enumerate the questions I now ask myself, and the goals I set myself at this time, I would list them as follows:

1. How do I personally participate in the energy problem? What energy do I use and how do I use it? What are the unspoken assumptions about my life that are affecting how I use energy? How does my present despair about energy and the environment affect how I use energy?
2. How do I bring information to others about energy and the nuclear issue without frightening them into numbness? How do I speak about this issue without demonizing those who disagree with my facts, or my conclusions? How do I build into my interactions with others the space for them to express their points of view? How do I learn to listen to them without feeling that my opinions must somehow prevail over theirs?



**Sandra Lindberg giving testimony at the NRC's Clinton-2 Early Site Permit Hearing, April 19, 2005** (photo courtesy of Corey Conn)

3. How do I live my life so that the possible end to the nuclear resurgence will actually mean something? How do I remember from day to day that winning an environmental battle, if such a thing is really desirable, will mean nothing if everything else about our culture's values remains the same?

You see, I am coming to believe that if all of us stop demanding more and more energy, there will be no reason for new reactors. If we don't find ways to greatly change the way we live, even the development of renewable energy sources will only be an invitation to further energy consumption.

The gift I find when I slow down comes from my growing sense that, perhaps, our little No New Nukes group is doing all right. All of us in N3 have whole and complicated lives that force us to limit our degree of involvement with the nuclear issue. But great riches have emerged from these limitations. I want to share some of them with you.

Vic Connor, a stay-at-home parent with a gift for numbers and statistics, has been finding pockets of time during which he crunches out the most amazingly lucid numbers about the dangers of radiation. As he said in his NRC statement on April 19th:

*"In 1943, three of the world's greatest scientists wrote a letter to the general who was in charge of the project that made the first atomic bomb. In that letter, they warned that one millionth of a gram of uranium inhaled or ingested could prove fatal."*

If you take a sharp pencil and make a small dot on a piece of paper, then that dot is the size of that tiny bit of uranium.

What concerns me most about this Early Site Permit document is that line 26 on page 6-4 states that 400,000 curies of the radioactive gas, Krypton-85, would be released every year by the new reactor, as is already probably being done by the current reactor. This means that a little of this highly radioactive gas will be released into the air everyday.

Now a curie is a measure of radioactivity, but how does 400,000 curies relate to that dot of uranium? One curie is the radioactive equivalent of 3,000,000 of those lethal dots.

Ralph Dring, who worked with Prairie Alliance in the 1970's and helped to keep a second Clinton reactor from being built at that time, follows politicians from town meeting to town meeting, and writes them letters, insisting over and over again that they commit themselves to a clear statement about their position on nuclear power. He is of the opinion, as he likes to say, th[at] he "likes to know where a politician stands on an issue." He brings an understanding of the historical dimensions of this issue to our discussions.

Phil Huckelberry, last year's Green Party candidate for a congressional seat in the State of Illinois and an energetic contributor to many environmental groups, still finds time to research Exelon's political gift-giving history. It's from him that we learned Jerry Weller's Friends got \$10,000, Barack Obama's Friends got \$10,000 and Tim Johnson's Friends got \$7,000. Phil revealed to us that Exelon has given nearly \$10 M dollars to Illinois politicians and their friends. No wonder so few Illinois politicians have made public statements that are critical of nuclear power.

Bill Rau, emeritus professor of Sociology from Illinois State University, is also an avid proponent of renewable energy sources and took time out of his busy research schedule to write up a White Paper on the viability of coal gasification plants for Illinois. He also found time to make DVD's of a Chernobyl website that shows current photographs of that countryside's devastation. Bill hands these out to whoever will take them.

Gregg Brown, an environmental activist for the last thirty years, walks from one end of Bloomington/Normal to the other handing out this week's essential environmental reading to workers at hospitals, universities, government offices, and businesses. He champions the futures of young people, who he believes are being handed a terrible legacy—thanks to the lifestyles we cling to at their expense.

Roy Treadway, gifted demographer and statistician (also a retired professor from Illinois State University) and dedicated Quaker, took the time to sift through the NRC's Environmental Impact Statement, finding many statistical errors. His statement on April 19th included this: "The consequences of making a mistake to build a nuclear power plant is far greater than of not building one. To me, the fact that a nuclear power plant can raise the risk of cancers and other health effects in people means that this site is environmentally unsafe." Roy's written contributions to Quaker publications provide information on the nuclear issue to people who have a long history of activism.

Carolyn Treadway, Life Coach and therapist as well as dedicated Quaker, invites us to remember the psychological dimensions of this issue. She asked us to hold a picture of our land as we spoke at meetings. She wore a picture of her

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grandson as she spoke at the April 19th NRC meeting. She introduced us all to the work of Joanna Macy. She helped to design the Illinois Sustainable Living Conference held in Bloomington this April. And her gentle determination brought us into contact with the next woman I want to introduce to you.

Charlotte Green, activist and Quaker from Champaign/Urbana, founded those cities' own chapter of No New Nukes. Thanks to the work of Charlotte and a handful of others including John Gilpin in C/U, interviews were given and letters were written to that area's media sources to a degree that we had never attempted before.

Amy Butterworth, co-president of Illinois State's Student Environmental Action Coalition, found time beyond her studies at ISU and her work with SEAC, to put together the April 19th press conference that was held in Normal the morning of the NRC hearing. She also convinced van-loads of students to come to the April 19th meeting in Clinton. And she worked tirelessly with another young man,

Geoff Ower, ISU student, recent intern to the Nuclear Information Resource Service in Philadelphia, who somehow also found time to design and implement the No New Nukes web site. He designed and maintains our listservs. Geoff also designed the Nuclear Reality Conference in 2004, with Amy Butterworth's help, which brought major speakers on the nuclear issue to the ISU campus for a three-day conference. He was assisted in all of this by another amazing ISU student, Rachel Goad.

Samuel Galewsky, Associate Professor of Biology at Millikin University and my loving partner. He and Joe Mangano conducted a preliminary study of infant mortality data for counties down-wind of the Clinton reactor, with disturbing results. He also brings his expertise to the creation of the posters that we now display when we table for various events. As a molecular geneticist, he brings his expertise to our reading of scientific studies.

And there are others. Too many others for me to mention here. We each do a little, and in doing so we honor the other parts of our lives—our families, our spiritual commitments, and our livelihoods. We are part of that web Joanna Macy talks about. Not one of us can do it all. But together, all our little bits can contribute to a reexamination of the way we live our lives.

I also would like to take the opportunity tonight to heartily thank four organizations that have helped to make the work of No New Nukes possible: Shannon Fisk at the Environmental Law and Policy Center, Public Citizen's Brendan Hoffman and Michelle Boyd, Paul Gunter and Kevin Kamps at NIRS, and Corey Conn, Bruce Mocking and Dave Kraft at NEIS. Our modest efforts in central Illinois were incalculably enriched by their advice, support, and encouragement.

And thank you to everyone here this evening. Thank you for the willingness to consider not only the deadly brilliance but the shadow cast by nuclear energy. Thank you for those moments when you are willing to contemplate how this issue has affected your lives. Thank you for all that you do. O

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## NEIS Notes...

P **Board Changes at NEIS:** Early 2005 marked a period of change for the NEIS Board, as two veteran members left, and two newcomers assumed new roles.

The Board was sad to see the departure of Bruce Mocking and Corey Conn from the Board, both due to term expirations. Bruce had served as acting President for a time as well as Secretary for the Board. He also contributed many additional hours to the functioning of the office, and to doing phone member outreach with colleague Ben Heise. His dedication and determination assured that many tasks were accomplished in the office and on the Board. Bruce will continue to do occasional ad hoc volunteer work for NEIS.

Corey Conn has been a long-standing member and Board participant. His contributions were reflected in ways consistent with the operation of the Board being "activist" in nature. His many technical skills benefitted NEIS repeatedly. He will continue to serve in his capacity on the Technical Advisory Committee, and in an ad hoc manner doing volunteer work.

We thank both of these dedicated members for their long standing dedication and work with NEIS.

Two other changes involve new Board members. Dolores Pino was voted as Board President in Spring 2005. Michael Duerr will assume Board Secretary functions. Finally, the Board added one new member by mid-year, with the addition of MaryLee Maloney to the Board. Congratulations to each of these talented individuals.

P **NEIS Website Unveils Improvements:** Under the management of Michael Duerr, the NEIS website has undergone a series of vast improvements, with more in the works, according to Duerr. A new look, greater ease of navigation, and added ability to fund-raise and directly recruit members and accept donations and payments have been among the most prominent of the changes.

Future changes are envisioned, and include: more current content, and increased interactivity; more photos and graphics; addition of more "resources" and current links to them; and further refinements in navigation.

To visit NEIS online, go to:

**<http://www.neis.org>**

We welcome your feedback on the changes, comments and suggestions for improvements. See you in cyberspace!

P **NEIS in the Media:** NEIS was in high demand in the media in early 2005. Radio interviews and show appearances include segments on WDCB-FM, WLUW-FM, and an appearance on WNUR's "This is Hell" show. NEIS had letters and interview comments appear in numerous papers including: the *Chicago Sun-Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *East St. Louis Post Dispatch*, *Home Power Magazine*, and *USA Today*. A feature on NEIS was done by the *Evanston Roundtable*. NEIS also had TV tapings done by Chicago Access Network cable access television of Chicago; and by an independent producer working for the HD-TV ("high-definition" television) network. O