Kansas City and the U.S. Nuclear Weapons Complex

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Please visit www.nukewatch.org for this presentation and much more on the Kansas City Plant, the Los Alamos National Laboratory, nuclear weapons policies and the research and production complex.

The Products
The Results

Badger, Nevada Test Site, April 15, 1953, 23 kilotons

Crossroads-Baker, Bikini Atoll, July 23, 1946, 23 kilotons

U. S. Nuclear Weapons Complex
How the Complex Works

The Cost of Nuclear Weapons

- The U. S. Dept. of Energy’s National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) spends more than $6 billion annually on nuclear weapons research and production.

- $465 million is slated for nuclear weapons components production at the Kansas City Plant in FY 2010.

- Defense Dept. spends an estimated $30 billion annually on force structure and delivery systems.

- In all, the U.S. has spent an estimated $5.8 trillion on nuclear weapons, or $21,000 per living American.

(Source: Cost of U.S. Nuclear Weapons, Steve Schwartz, October 2008)
What is a Nuclear Weapon Made Of?

KCP specializes in nonnuclear components, such as firing and arming systems, radars, guidance systems, reservoirs for tritium, setting foams and adhesives.

KCP is NNSA’s Most Productive Facility

KCP produces and/or procures 100,000 parts annually, that is 85% of all components that go into a nuclear warhead by both type and quantity.
Nuclear Weapons Spending and KCP

- More than 98% of the budget for the Kansas City Plant is nuclear weapons-related.
- The yearly totals follow fluctuations in the overall NNSA budget (look closely to see non-weapons $$!). Sources: NNSA Congressional Budget requests.
- KCP officials state that the Plant receives another ~$130 million annually in “Work for Others”, but virtually all of that is for nuclear weapons as well.

Extending the Lifetimes of Nuclear Weapons

- KCP produces components for all of nuclear warhead types depicted above.
- Due to Life Extension Programs (LEPs), KCP is currently having its heaviest workload in 20 years.
- LEPs are projected to extend a weapon’s usable life by 30 to 60 years
W76 LEP Creates a Weapon with New Military Characteristics

New Arming Fusing & Firing system being produced now at the Kansas City Plant is believed to endow the warhead with a selectable height of burst.

Refurbished W76s are being transformed from a countervalue weapon of deterrence (“city buster”) into a counterforce weapon (“hard target killer”).

This directly contradicts repeated statements by senior U.S. Government officials that military characteristics won’t be changed and that “new” nuclear weapons will not be created.

Relocating the Plant

NNNSA is aggressively planning to build a new 660 million dollar, 1.5 million square foot plant in the Kansas City area.
An “Environmental Assessment” Was Completed for the New Plant

1. The General Services Administration (GSA) distributed a solicitation for bids to potential developers before starting the EA process. *Predetermination?*

2. The EA failed to address *cleanup* and the future of the old plant.

3. Of the EA’s six alternatives, the new Plant results in the *greatest job loss*, but still has the support of local politicians.

Kansas City Will Own a Federal Nuclear Weapons Plant

“In the interest of the public health, safety, morals or welfare of the residents,” a soybean field was declared blighted for municipal tax breaks for private developers.

*Quote from Missouri Revised Statutes, Industrial Development, Section 100.320, August 28, 2007.*

“A view to the southwest in the central portion of the redevelopment area.”

*(Photograph No. 4, Blight Study, May 20, 2008)*
Kansas City Will Own a Federal Nuclear Weapons Plant

Kansas City will own a new federal nuclear weapons production plant. What about schools, hospitals? What about clean up and green jobs at the old Plant?

Private development of a nuclear weapons plant circumvents congressional oversight.

It also costs taxpayers more - - $1.2 billion in lease and maintenance payments over 20 years for a $660 million building, after which the government still doesn’t own it.

A New Kansas City Plant Is Not Needed

• The workload of the new Plant was originally predicated on new-design Reliable Replacement Warheads (RRWs) and massive Life Extension Programs.

• Congress and the President have rejected RRWs.
A New Kansas City Plant Is Not Needed

President Obama has declared a nuclear weapons-free world to be a long-term national security goal.

Groundbreaking for the new KCP will likely occur just before the May 2010 NonProliferation Treaty Review Conference at the United Nations with over 180 countries.

False Economy/ Extra Expense?

- NNSA claims the new Plant will result in cost savings of $100 million per year.

- Of that, $37 million will administratively result from less stringent security requirements because KCP doesn’t have weapons-grade nuclear material. (Source: Govt. Accountability Office Report GAO-10-115, p. 5.) **You don’t need a new Plant for that!!**

- On top of that, NNSA is asking for an additional $79 million for the next five years for “transition” to the new Plant.
Where’s the Money for Cleanup?

- NNSA spends $3.7 million annually to pump and treat groundwater contamination (solvents and PCBs).
- Cost for demo and clean up of existing contamination has been estimated as high as $287 million.
- Source: Relocation of Non-Nuclear Production to an Alternate Location Business Case, NNSA, October 2007, p. 17
- What federal agency will be responsible for final cleanup of the old plant?

Map of contamination plumes in groundwater at KCP
-https://www.denix.osd.mil/denix/Public/Library/Remedy/Kansas/ksplnt02.html

Please Get Active

Why Bother? Because:
- The nuclear weaponeers want to build up their bomb production complex, not clean it up. But the nuclear weapons industry is (hopefully) a dying business.
- Real security: clean up to protect public health and the environment; prioritization of funds for the greatest public good (schools, hospitals, infrastructure); local green, sustainable economic development; nuclear weapons nonproliferation leading to abolition
- Hassle your congressional delegation, make your opinions known, write letters to the editor, support your local organizations, etc.
- Democracy is a muscle. Use it or lose it!
  “DON’T MOURN, ORGANIZE!!”