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LANL Fires Nonproliferation Specialist; Lab Abuses Classification Procedures to Restrict Nuclear Weapons Abolition Message

Santa Fe, NM - Today, the Center for Public Integrity broke a story on how Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) fired its nonproliferation specialist James Doyle. That firing followed an inquiry by the Center to senior Lab management about a study Doyle completed in his personal capacity arguing for the abolition of nuclear weapons. LANL retroactively classified his report, which Nuclear Watch believes is a clear abuse of proper classification procedures.

Doyle's study *Why Eliminate Nuclear Weapons?* has long been available at our website www.nukewatch.org and an independent online publisher. Any quick reading shows it has no information whatsoever about nuclear weapons designs and materials that would merit classification. The study is instead a 28-page narrative argument by a nationally recognized nonproliferation expert for eliminating the stockpile, while citing the aspirations of both Presidents Reagan and Obama to abolish nuclear weapons. But Los Alamos Lab didn't like Doyle's message, and sought to kill it through classification. Not coincidentally, LANL's 2.2 billion dollar annual budget is just under two-thirds nuclear weapons research, testing and production.

Jay Coghlan, Nuclear Watch New Mexico Director, commented, "The Los Alamos Lab has been in the news a lot lately for sending a barrel of plutonium-contaminated waste to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant that ruptured and shut down that multi-billion dollar facility for an undetermined period of time. Less well known is the fact that LANL's main plutonium facility has not conducted major operations for more than a year because of nuclear criticality issues. Now comes a clear political firing and abuse of classification procedures. Why are we paying tens of millions in profits to the private contractors running LANL? We demand that federal overseers intervene, reprimand the Lab, reinstate James Doyle, fire those responsible for his political firing, and cut contractor award fees because of chronically poor performance and leadership."

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The Center for Public Integrity's article is available at
<http://www.publicintegrity.org/2014/07/31/15161/nuclear-weapons-lab-employee-fired-after-publishing-scathing-critique-arms-race>

James Doyle's study "Why Eliminate Nuclear Weapons?" and his biography are available at www.nukewatch.org

His study has also been long available at the online publisher

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00396338.2013.767402%23tabMoodle>