



# Los Alamos Study Group

Nuclear Disarmament • Environmental Protection • Social Justice • Economic Sustainability

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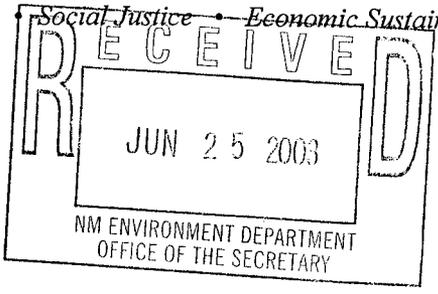
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June 17, 2003

The Honorable Bill Richardson, Governor  
Office of the Governor  
State Capitol, Room 400  
Santa Fe, NM 87501



**Re: Request for you to meet with members of the public on Thursday, June 26, at 10:00 am to: a) receive "Can-Paign" petitions requesting closure of Material Disposal Area G at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL); and b) publicly clarify your views regarding plutonium pit production in New Mexico.**

Dear Governor Richardson –

On Thursday June 26, at 10:00 am, members of the public will come to the State Capitol Rotunda to witness and participate in the delivery to you of approximately 1,600 petitions requesting closure of the large "Area G" nuclear and chemical waste disposal site at LANL.

These petitions will be in the form of small mock waste drums – ordinary cans of food – with educational labels on them which include a letter to you pursuant to the New Mexico Hazardous Waste Act and the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). We hope to bring these "Can-Paign" petitions directly to your office; alternatively, you can receive them in the Rotunda.

After formal receipt by your office, we believe that the Food Depot, a charitable organization which distributes food to the needy, will gladly take custody of the food cans, whose original labels are intact.

We will supply a database of signers to the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED).

Some 2,000 similar petitions have already been received by your predecessor, Governor Johnson. In addition, some 27 environmental organizations petitioned your office in January of 2002, to halt disposal of waste at this site and proceed to formal closure under RCRA. Their joint letter is attached. It provides background on the matter, although it already may be familiar to you in broad outline. We believe this level of public and professional concern is more than adequate to trigger permit enforcement by NMED. There has been no action whatsoever regarding Area G, only distractive (and in the final analysis, largely useless) orders for further investigations.

On May 19, we met with NMED Secretary Curry and suggested to him possible constructive actions which could be taken short of full and immediate closure (see attached letter for simple examples). We have repeatedly expressed our hope to NMED managers that you will signal your intent to bring this facility into compliance with state and federal law through specific and definite actions. This facility has been out of compliance for some 18 years.



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We will provide more information at the gathering and press conference. We anticipate a few guest speakers, some of them students. The event will be well-advertised and we expect many people and representatives of allied organizations to come.

We hear a great deal these days about weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Here in New Mexico we have a large WMD industry, which has roughly doubled in size in the last few years and may grow further still if our state is chosen for the role of producing plutonium "pits" for nuclear weapons. It is a momentous issue. We hope you will address yourself definitively on this subject on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

I and other members of our organization would be happy to meet with you and your staff to discuss any of these matters in detail prior to the 26<sup>th</sup>, or afterward.

We hope you can bring us some positive news next week. Thank you for your attention and we look forward to seeing you on June 26th.

Sincerely,

greg mello

Greg Mello, Executive Director

cc: Patricia Madrid, Attorney General  
Ron Curry, Secretary, NMED