

Diocese of Knoxville
Knoxville, TN
Page 1 of 2



DIOCESE OF KNOXVILLE
Justice-Peace-Integrity of Creation (JPIC)
119 Dameron Avenue
Knoxville, TN 37917
(865) 540-8348 FAX (865) 971-3575

US Department of Energy
EIS Hearing
Oak Ridge, TN

January 25, 2001

I speak here tonight on behalf of the Office of Justice-Peace-Integrity of Creation Office of the Catholic Diocese of Knoxville.

I speak here tonight in the belief that, in beginning the steps to build a new bomb plant at Y-12, we are going in the wrong direction. I believe that every person here tonight would describe themselves as being for peace in our world. And I believe that we are all sincere in that description. For me, global peacemaking involves confronting many issues, and nuclear weaponry, the most horrifying weaponry of war and destruction today, is one of the major ones that needs to be faced.

The implementation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty commits non-nuclear nations to abstain from developing nuclear weapons and commits nuclear nations to work towards the elimination of their own nuclear arsenal. Article VI calls for good faith negotiations leading towards nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. Not only have nuclear powers, including the United States, been in flagrant violation of the treaty since 1970, they have never devoted a single day to negotiating the total elimination of nuclear weapons. We are appalled when other countries want to develop the weapons. We should be equally horrified that our own government continues policy of building a bomb plant that compels other countries to pursue their nuclear arms development.

The world must move beyond even non-proliferation and move towards total disarmament, total abolition, if it is serious about peace. Pope John Paul II appealed to the whole world for this when he spoke in 1981 in Hiroshima: *On this very spot where...the life of so many people was snuffed out in one fiery moment, I wish to appeal to the whole world on behalf of life, on behalf of humanity, on behalf of the future...let us promise our fellow human beings that we will work untiringly for disarmament and the banishing of all nuclear weapons.*

1/16

Comment No. 1

Issue Code: 16

Parties to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty agree not to directly or indirectly transfer nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or control over them to any recipient; and not to in any way assist, encourage, or induce nonnuclear weapon states to manufacture or alter use, or acquire nuclear weapons, or alter nuclear explosive devices or control over them. Continuation of the Y-12 mission, and construction and operation of a HEU Materials Facility and Special Materials Complex by the United States does not conflict with such an agreement. The proposed action, which includes continuing weapons dismantlement activities at Y-12, fully supports the goals of Article VI of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, in which signatory nations agree to work toward total disarmament. Since the end of the Cold War, the United States has significantly reduced the size of the nuclear weapons stockpile, and DOE has dismantled more than 15,000 nuclear weapons. Although Russia suspended its nuclear weapons dismantlement activities on January 20, 2001, DOE has continued its weapons dismantlement activities.



100% Post Consumer Recycled Paper

The elimination of nuclear weaponry accompanied by a serious reduction of military budgets would dramatically enhance the well being of people and the health of our planet. Think of the resources that could be redirected to education, health care, housing, the elimination of poverty, and environmentally destructive practices. Imagine using \$4 Billion for peace.

1/16
(cont.)

When I think of health and the environment, the EIS fails to establish its findings based on what has already taken place. Surely the study should incorporate the historic contamination which makes Y-12 an EPA Superfund Site. We are not starting from scratch. Y-12 still releases mercury which exceeds legal limits when it rains heavily. Also, the DOE has yet to prove that it is serious in making Y-12 healthy and safe for workers. It's historical record would show that worker safety is not a priority.

2/12

3/14

I live in Knoxville and feel a great responsibility to work so that there is not a new bombs plant in my back yard, nor in anyone's back yard. We are a throw away society. Well, there is no away. We are all part of the same world and too long we have lived with the illusion that to build weapons is a work of peace and will make us secure. I, for one, feel that we as a nation need a new direction and that total disarmament is the only way forward for a peaceful and secure world. Are we willing to be the only place in the United States that will allow a bomb plant? Let us say no. There is no such place on earth. Not here. Not anywhere.

Glenda Struss-Keyes, Co-Director, JPIC

Glenda Struss-Keyes, Co-Director, Office of Justice-Peace-Integrity of Creation



Comment No. 2

Issue Code: 12

The Y-12 SWEIS has been prepared in accordance with Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508) and DOE's NEPA regulations (10 CFR Part 1021) and procedures. Volume I, Chapter 4 of the Y-12 SWEIS describes the current affected environment which includes the effects of past operations and environmental contamination. The Environmental Management (EM) staff at Y-12 is currently conducting the Reduction of Mercury in Plant Effluents Project at Y-12. Two specific actions, Mercury in Soils and Bank Stabilization are components of the project. Section 3.2.2.3 of the Y-12 SWEIS identifies the ongoing EM restoration activities under the No Action - Planning Basis Operations Alternative and the other alternatives. The Reduction of Mercury in Plant Effluent project achieved record low concentrations in August 1999 for average mercury concentrations at Station 17. Volume II, Appendices D and E provide further detailed analyses related to human health effects from normal operations/facility accidents and air quality, respectively.

Comment No. 3

Issue Code: 14

DOE believes that it has adequately addressed impacts to public health and safety that could result from implementing the various alternatives. In addition, worker health and safety would benefit from the proposed action and alternatives in the SWEIS by minimizing the number of involved workers and incorporating the latest in engineered design and safety measures in new facilities. Volume I, Chapter 5 of the Y-12 SWEIS addresses impacts to the listed resources from the proposed alternatives, and Volume II, Appendices D and E provide further detailed analyses related to human health effects from normal operations/facility accidents and air quality, respectively.