

*United States
Atmospheric & Underwater
Atomic Weapon Activities*

- 1945 "TRINITY"
ALAMOGORDO, N. M.
- 1945 "LITTLE BOY"
HIROSHIMA, JAPAN
- 1945 "FAT MAN"
NAGASAKI, JAPAN
- 1946 "CROSSROADS"
BIKINI ISLAND
- 1948 "SANDSTONE"
ENEWETAK ATOLL
- 1951 "RANGER"
NEVADA TEST SITE
- 1951 "GREENHOUSE"
ENEWETAK ATOLL
- 1951 "BUSTER - JANGLE"
NEVADA TEST SITE
- 1952 "TUMBLER - SNAPPER"
NEVADA TEST SITE
- 1952 "IVY"
ENEWETAK ATOLL
- 1953 "UPSHOT - KNOTHOLE"
NEVADA TEST SITE
- 1954 "CASTLE"
BIKINI ISLAND
- 1955 "TEAPOT"
NEVADA TEST SITE
- 1955 "WIGWAM"
OFFSHORE SAN DIEGO
- 1955 "PROJECT 56"
NEVADA TEST SITE
- 1956 "REDWING"
ENEWETAK & BIKINI
- 1957 "PLUMBOB"
NEVADA TEST SITE
- 1958 "HARDTACK-I"
ENEWETAK & BIKINI
- 1958 "NEWSREEL"
JOHNSON ISLAND
- 1958 "ARGUS"
SOUTH ATLANTIC
- 1958 "HARDTACK-II"
NEVADA TEST SITE
- 1961 "NOUGAT"
NEVADA TEST SITE
- 1962 "DOMINIC-I"
CHRISTMAS ISLAND
JOHNSON ISLAND
- 1965 "FLINTLOCK"
AMCHITKA, ALASKA
- 1969 "MANDREL"
AMCHITKA, ALASKA
- 1971 "GROMMET"
AMCHITKA, ALASKA
- 1974 "POST TEST EVENTS"
AMCHITKA, ALASKA

*" IF YOU WERE THERE,
YOU ARE AN
ATOMIC VETERAN "*



NAAV

National Association of Atomic Veterans, Inc.

"Assisting America's Atomic Veterans Since 1979"
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R. J. RITTER - Editor

March, 2011



DRILLING DEEP SHAFTS FOR NUCLEAR WEAPON TESTS

The Newsletter for America's Atomic Veterans



Well now, here we are three months into our **31st** year of assisting America's **Atomic Veteran** community. Collectively, we have been striving to gain full recognition and (where applicable) ample compensation for those who stood before an invisible enemy, while proudly serving their country. Sadly, however; time is running out on the probability of fully obtaining those goals.....

The **111th Congress** has recently recognized the need to render much needed monetary assistance to those brave public servants & citizens who responded to the aftermath of the Sept.11, 2001 attack on the World Trade Center, and who also have since fallen gravely ill as the result of those heroic deeds & activities. As a consequence of their efforts, these 911 rescuers were wounded by an invisible enemy in the form of chemical and toxic agents that contaminated the rubble & ruins of ground-zero. The time span required to fully & adequately legislate compensation for their medical bills and lost wages was only **9** years..... Given this, **NAAV** has received a host of phone calls and written comments from **Atomic-Veterans** who, while agreeing that it was proper for Congress to fully recognize the **911** responders, they are still grossly offended by the inability of Congress to provide full and proper recognition for their (forced) exposure to an invisible enemy, while on active duty. That enemy was ionizing radiation particles created by the detonation of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons of mass destruction.....

This long-simmering frustration can be summed up by the words of **Capt. Nelson "Buz" Broussard** (*USMC Ret. - Lafayette, La. - "Upshot-Knothole"*) as follows: *"It has been 64 years since the first Atomic Bomb detonation (at Trinity site) on July 16, 1945, and it has now been 49 years since the last U.S. atmospheric nuclear weapon test on November 04, 1962. Atomic-Veterans are still waiting for Congress to fully recognize the fact that no amount of exposure to (ionizing) radiation has ever been scientifically proven to be safe, and to properly recognize this special group of vet's who have continued to suffer from radiation related health issues, many decades thereafter".....*

Of the estimated **198,000** (surviving) **Atomic-Veterans**, many are still plagued with those issues that could easily be associated with their orders to participate in nuclear warfare field training exercises, in close proximity to "live-nuke" tests, or in other "post-test" radiation exposure risk event assignments.....

These **"Shadow-Warrior"** Veterans, hidden behind a solid cloak of secrecy until 1996, are indeed, true **Patriots** of the first order, and would gladly *"strap-it-on"* one more time, for their God, for their families, and for their Country, given the opportunity and their individual ability to do so..... However; and most sadly, they are the forgotten hero's of the **"Cold-War"** years, and in today's Society, hardly anyone gives a Damn about who they are, nor do they even have any idea of the harmful & debilitating sacrifices they were ordered to endure in the name of the **National Security of the United States of America**.....

In a recent letter to **NAAV**, "Buz" went on to say.....*"If, and when, Congress expresses a willingness to speak to this long and simmering issue, we all stand ready & willing to listen. But we must face the fact that the years of silence from our Congressional leaders, however; continues to speak volumes."* It is a given fact, that the vast majority of America's surviving **Atomic Veteran** community continues to share the views expressed by **Capt. "Buz" Broussard**, who is now deceased....It was a personal honor to have known, and worked with him....

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>D. D. Robertson (MO)</i> | <i>G. H. Schwartz (VA)</i> |
| <i>W. E. Aubry (MA)</i> | <i>R. C. Callentine (TX)</i> |
| <i>J. N. Levesque (ME)</i> | <i>F. G. Howard (FL)</i> |
| <i>T. F. Zack (CA)</i> | <i>T. H. Rose (MD)</i> |
| <i>J. A. Nicholson (OH)</i> | <i>L. H. Johnson (MN)</i> |
| <i>T. D. Gillis (CA)</i> | <i>D. R. Foster (CA)</i> |
| <i>D. C. Jone (OK)</i> | <i>R. D. Manning (PA)</i> |
| <i>C. L. Wyant (OR)</i> | <i>R. T. Owen (NB)</i> |
| <i>R. H. Quinn (SD)</i> | <i>G. B. Smith (NC)</i> |
| <i>P. S. Castagno (MS)</i> | <i>J. E. Adje (ME)</i> |
| <i>C. A. Balsamo (KY)</i> | <i>S. K. Grodek (FL)</i> |
| <i>G. D. Linkmeyer (PA)</i> | <i>H. E. Prague (MS)</i> |
| <i>W. F. Redshaw (NM)</i> | <i>G. A. VanNess (TX)</i> |
| <i>J. L. Reeves (MI)</i> | <i>T. J. Morgans (NC)</i> |
| <i>E. N. Volson (CA)</i> | <i>R. E. Wiltshire (FL)</i> |
| <i>L. C. Rice (NY)</i> | <i>E. C. Perry (KY)</i> |
| <i>A. L. Haspieneese (MA)</i> | <i>H. M. Dylhyoff (VA)</i> |
| <i>H. K. Counts (MD)</i> | <i>J. B. Buzzo (UT)</i> |
| <i>R. F. Bougnowski (CA)</i> | <i>W. R. Acker (MO)</i> |
| <i>D. F. Rogers (IL)</i> | <i>I. D. Stearn (CA)</i> |
| <i>E. G. Losttuter (LA)</i> | <i>E. M. Johnson (WA)</i> |

We ask our members to observe a special moment of silence so as to properly recognize & give thanks for their honorable service, and total commitment to their God, their families and their Country.



"Rest in peace, our Atomic-Veteran friends."



----- SPECIAL TRIBUTE -----

We mourn the passing of (**NAAV Director**) **Lt.Col. Darrell D. Robertson** (*Plumbbob - 1957*). Darrell had been fighting with radiogenic health issues for several years. His immense pride, dedicated belief in fairness for Atomic-Vets, and his contagious smile will be missed by all who were blessed to have known him.....Darrell was nominated to be a member of the Veterans Advisory Board on Dose Reconstruction only a few weeks before his untimely death.....We extend our best wishes to his surviving spouse, family members and his many friends.....

WE CONTINUE NEED YOUR SUPPORT - IN MANY WAYS

As noted in previous **NAAV** newsletters, our continuing goal is to seek out those Atomic-Vets who have not yet found us, and to assist those who we have since found Given the current (average) age of surviving Atomic-Vets, our (annual) membership (dues) revenues are constantly dwindling, since most veterans in their early 80's are not interested in paying annual dues for anything..... Given this reality, we are rapidly approaching an operational cost tipping point, and must rely upon contributions from compassionate friends and good Samaritan's who continue to lend their monetary support for the purpose of our Mission Statement.....

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU IN 2011

NAAV is planning to hold a *"Mimi-Reunion"* in the **Richmond, VA.**, area on **October 15, 2011**. This will be a one-full-day event. The location has not yet been confirmed, and the date is not cast in stone. We will publish the final details in our July (2011) newsletter

Also, (current) Director's **Bernie Clark** and **Gillie Jenkins** will be up for re-election, as will newly appointed Director **Rodney-Lee Guidry**, who is serving out **D.D. Robertson's** term of office Director's **R. J. Ritter** and **F. L. Grahfs** terms of office will not expire until the fall of 2013.... Mail-in election ballot forms will be in the July newsletter..... Members (in good standing) wishing to be nominated to a Director position **must submit their request before the end of April, 2011**.....The dues of all members, wishing to cast votes for their (Director) choices, must be current, for those votes to count

ABOUT "PLOW-SHARE" & "VELA-UNIFORM"

[Avalon Army Intelligence Division]

The "Plowshare" and "Vela-Uniform" Programs

United States nuclear testing activities have been conducted at eight locations in five different states as part of the "Plowshare" and "Vela-Uniform" programs. The *Atomic Energy Commission* (**AEC**) initiated the "Plowshare" program in 1957 to develop peaceful industrial & scientific applications for nuclear explosives. One such activity would be the potential use of nuclear detonations as a method of fracturing oil bearing zones, so as to maximize total oil & gas extraction.

The "Vela-Uniform" program, which began in 1959, was part of a *Department of Defense* (**DOD**) research program intended to develop instrumentation that would be able to differentiate between underground nuclear test detonations and naturally occurring seismic events. This would thusly allow the U.S. to identify subsurface nuclear test activities, anywhere on the globe, with a fairly accurate measure of the (total) destructive yield of each test device.

As part of the "Vela-Uniform" program, nuclear tests were conducted near *Fallon, NV.* (project "Shoal"), and at the *Central Nevada Test Area* (project "Faultless"), and at *Amchitka, AK.* (projects "Long-Shot," "Milrow," & "Cannikin"). Of these three test shots, only "Long-Shot" (developing 80 kilotons at a shaft depth of 2,343 ft. and a part of operation "Flintlock") was associated with the "Vela-Uniform" program.

Shot "Milrow" (1.0 Megaton at a shaft depth of 4,002 ft.) was a weapons related test, and a part of operation "Mandrel," while shot "Cannikin" (3.0 Megatons at a shaft depth of 6,104 ft.) was also a weapons related test, and a part of operation "Grommet."

Also included in the "Vela-Uniform" test series, were three nuclear device detonations in the *Tatum Salt Dome*, on the outskirts of *Hattiesburg, MS.* These test shots were "Salmon" (5.3 kilotons and a part of operation "Whetstone"), and "Sterling-I" (.4 kilotons) & "Sterling-II" (.5 kilotons) that were a part of operation "Latchkey."



THIS "VELA-UNIFORM" RIG CREW IS PREPARING TO LOWER THE "LONG-SHOT" TEST WEAPON AT THE AMCHITKA TEST SITE

As part of the "Plowshare" program, the **DOD** also conducted two nuclear test shots ("Rulison" & "Rio-Blanco") at sites near *Rifle, CO.*, one test shot ("Gas-Buggy") near *Farmington, N.M.*, and one test shot ("Gnome-Coach") near *Carlsbad, N.M.*

Projects "Rulison", "Rio-Blanco", and "Gas-Buggy" were designed to stimulate the production of natural gas in tight sandstone formations, while project "Gnome-Coach" was designed to determine the seismic signals, effects, and products of a nuclear detonation within a "bedded-salt" type medium.

The resulting contamination from these tests included a mix of radio-nuclides; organic compounds; metals (such as *Beryllium* and *Lead*); hydrocarbons; drilling mud; and residues from plastics, epoxies, and drilling instrumentation.

The *Department of Energy* (**DOE**) still maintains access control to these subsurface nuclear device test locations by retaining mineral rights and using other legal vehicles to ensure intrusion into the test shot cavities, by curious interests, does not ever occur. Because of the location of some sites, the **DOE** will maintain control until all remediation has been completed. Ultimate ownership of some sites is uncertain and is being negotiated with the respective States and other federal agencies, as may be appropriate.

All of the activities at these sites use the same *Environmental Restoration Program* (**ERP**) guidelines currently being used by the *Nevada Test Site*..... and all of these sites also incorporate a *Hydrolic Monitoring Program* (**HMP**) to ensure there is no movement of possible ground water contaminants. The hydro-logic monitoring programs were to be continued for approx. 30 years after completion of the remediation activities.



A 60" BIT IS PREPARING TO DRILL A "PRECISION" DEEP SHAFT AT ONE OF THE AMCHITKA TEST SITE LOCATIONS



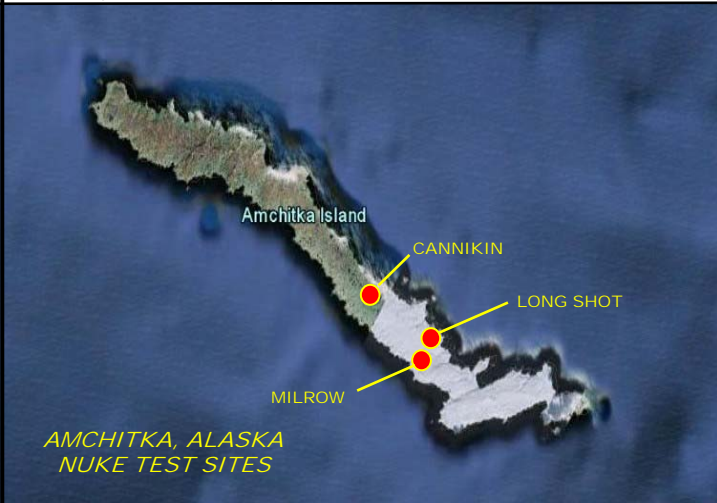
AMCHITKA ISLAND IS 180 MILES N.W. OF ADAK ISLAND, 273 S.E. OF ATTU ISLAND, AND SITS ON THE SOUTHERN RIM OF THE RUDE KNOLL RIDGE.

Amchitka is the southernmost island of the "Rat" group, located in the *Aleutian Chain*. It is bounded by the *Bering Sea* to the north and east, and the *Pacific Ocean* to the south and west. The eastern part of the island is a lowland plateau, with isolated ponds and gently rolling hills. There is low but abundant vegetation, consisting of mosses, lichens, liverworts, ferns, grasses, sedges, and crowberry. The centre of the island is mountainous, and the western end is barren with sparse vegetation.

Amchitka has a maritime climate, often foggy and windswept, with cloud cover 98 percent of the time. While temperatures are moderated by the ocean, storms are most frequent. Geologically, the island is volcanic, being a part of a small crustal block on the *Aleutian Arc* that is being torn apart by oblique subduction. As a famous volcanologist once said, "it is one of the least stable tectonic environments in the entire United States."

--- EARLY HISTORY OF AMCHITKA ---

The human history of *Amchitka* dates back at least 2,500 years, with the *Aleut* natives. Human remains, thought to be those of an *Aleut*, dating from about 1000 AD, were discovered in 1980. *Amchitka* is said to have been discovered by Vitus Bering, in 1741, was named *St. Makarius* by *Joseph Billings* in 1790, and visited by *Glib Shishmaryov* in 1820.



AMCHITKA, ALASKA
NUKE TEST SITES

The islanders received necessities and supplies, such as tobacco, ironware, horse & ox-skins, and cotton in return for hunting otters or seals. Russian trappers and traders established settlements on the islands, exploiting the indigenous people, whose population on the island was quickly reduced, and from 1832, the island of *Amchitka* was never permanently inhabited.

The Aleutian island chain was surveyed by the *North Pacific Exploring Expedition* in 1855, and were included in the *Alaska Purchase* of 1867. President *William Howard Taft* (in 1913) set aside the entire *Aleutian Islands* chain, including *Amchitka*, as a wildlife preserve.

The native residents of *Atka* leased the island for fox hunting in 1920, and continued to use the island until the *Japanese* invasion of the western *Aleutians* in 1942. By the time of *World War II*, an abandoned Russian fishing village was all that remained. During the mid 1950's, the military harvested Caribou & other animals from *Amchitka* and surrounding islands as a ready source of fresh meat for personnel stationed at *Adak*, *Shemya*, *Attu* and other island locations.

In June 1942, the *Japanese* occupied the islands of *Attu* & *Kiska*, in the western *Aleutian* group, and hoped to occupy *Amchitka*, as well. Eager to remove the *Japanese*, the *Joint Chiefs of Staff* agreed to move quickly to regain the territory.....



west of *Umnak Island*, from which bombers could attack the invading *Japanese* forces. One of the selected Islands was *Shemya* (40 miles east of *Attu Island*) where the *U.S. Air Force* established a base of operations while *U.S. Army* established bases at *Adak* and other strategic locations.

At the *War Department's* suggestion, an initial reconnaissance of *Amchitka* was carried out in September 1942, which found that it would be difficult to build an airstrip on that island. Nevertheless, planners decided on December 13th. that an airfield "had to be built" to prevent the *Japanese* from doing the same.

A further reconnaissance mission visited *Amchitka* from 17 to 19 December, and reported that a fighter strip could be built in two to three weeks, and a main airfield in three to four months. This plan was quickly approved and the required construction work began in 1942.

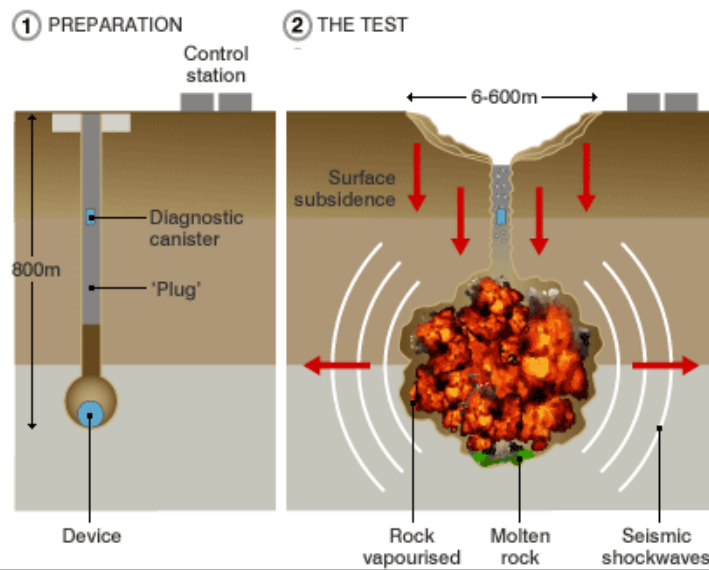
American forces then made an unopposed landing on *Amchitka* on January 12, 1943, although while in the process of doing this, the destroyer *U.S.S. Worden* (DD-352) ran aground and sank with the loss of 14 lives. Despite facing difficult weather conditions and occasional bombing from the *Japanese*, the airfield was operational by February 16, 1943.

The *Alaska Command* was now 80 km (50 mi) away from their target, the *Japanese* stronghold at *Kiska*. The military eventually built numerous buildings, roads, and a total of three airstrips on the island, some of which would later be renovated and used by the *Atomic Energy Commission* (AEC). At it's peak, there

were more than 15,000 military personnel operating out of the Amchitka base.....

The *Aleutian Islands Campaign* was successfully completed on August 24, 1943. In that month, a strategic intercept station was established on Amchitka island, which remained until February 1945. The U.S. Army then "officially" abandoned the site in August 1950. Shortly thereafter, the site hosted an Air Force weather station in the mid 1950's, a White-Alice telecommunication system for 1959 to 1961, and a temporary relay station in the 1960s and 1970's. During this period, the U.S. Coast Guard also established a Loran (master) station on Attu Island.....

In 1951, the Department of Defense (DOD) was initially considering using Amchitka for nuclear testing purposes. At that time, there was a need to acquire information about the cratering potential of nuclear weapons, and given this, plans were made to detonate two 20-kiloton (84-TJ) devices. After drilling approximately 34 test holes, the site was deemed to be unsuitable, and the project was moved to the Nevada Test Site (NTS).....



EXAMPLE OF A "VELA-UNIFORM" SEISMIC CALIBRATION TEST

Then, in the late 1950s, scientists realized that improved seismological knowledge was necessary for the detection of Soviet underground nuclear explosions. The 1.7-kiloton (7.1-TJ) "Rainier" test (which was part of operation Plumbbob, performed in Nevada) produced strong seismic signals, but those resulting signatures looked much like an ordinary earthquake.....

Then, in 1959, Dr. James R. Killian, the Special Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, formed the Panel on Seismic Improvement (PSI) which subsequently recommended the program that came to be known as "Vela-Uniform," with the twin goals of improving seismic instruments, deploying them globally, and researching in more depth the seismic effects of sub-surface nuclear device detonations in a variety of sub-strata zones.....

The project was subsequently approved, by the Eisenhower administration and, together with the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) and the Department of Defense (DOD) began assessing the potentials of Amchitka Island for use as part of the "Vela-Uniform" instrument development & signature calibration test project.....

For the purposes of conducting the (Vela-Uniform) "Long-Shot" test on the island, the DOD occupied Amchitka from 1964 to 1966, with the AEC providing the device, measuring instruments, and scientific support. The goal was "to determine the behavior

and characteristics of seismic signals generated by nuclear detonations and to differentiate them from seismic signals generated by naturally occurring earthquakes." Although there would not be any publicly announcements until March 18, 1965, senior Alaskan officials were notified by the DOD the previous February.....

After the devastating (March 27, 1964) Great Alaska Earthquake, the Governor of Alaska expressed his extreme concern about the psychological effects of the test on the populace. He was then quickly reassured (by the AEC) that, in this case, all would be well, and there should be no undue concern.....

"Long Shot" (330-TJ) was detonated on October 29, 1965, with a total yield of 80 kilotons. It was the first underground test in a remote area, and the first such test managed by the DOD. While there was no surface collapse, traces of Tritium and Krypton were found at the surface following the test; and this was not made public until the latter part of 1969.....



THE RIG FLOOR CREW PREPARES TO DRILL THE SHOT SHAFT FOR THE (1.2 MEGATON) "MILROW" TEST

Though performed as part of the Nuclear Weapons Testing Program, (NWTP) the purpose of the "Milrow" shot was to test an island.....not a weapon. It was a "calibration-shot," intended solely to produce data from which the impact of larger explosions could then be predicted, and specifically, to determine whether the planned "Cannikin" test detonation could be performed safely on Amchitka Island. And accordingly, "Milrow" was detonated on October 2, 1969, with a measured yield of 1.2 megatons.....

The massive shockwave reached the surface with an acceleration of over 35g (340 m/s²), causing a dome of the Earth's surface (approximately 2 miles in radius) to rise about 16 feet. As one observer stated, "the blast turned the surrounding sea to froth" and "forced geysers of mud and water from local streams and lakes 50 feet into the air." This resulted in a "surface collapse feature", also known as a "subsidence crater", that was formed by material collapsing into the cavity formed by the explosive forces.....

The "Cannikin" shot was intended to test the design of the "Spartan" anti-ballistic missile (ABM) interceptor, which was a high-yield warhead that "produced copious amounts of x-rays and minimized fission output and debris to prevent black-

out of Anti-Ballistic-Missile (**ABM**) radar systems." The test would also "measure the total yield of the device, the amount of x-ray flux and depth of spectrum, and also assure that the device design was reliable".....

A few days after the "Milrow" test, the (anti-nuke) *Don't Make A Wave Committee* was organized at a meeting in *Vancouver*. On the agenda was whether, or not, to fight another nuclear test blast at the *Amchitka Island*, or whether to expand (their) efforts to fight all perceived threats against the environment.....

As he was leaving, one new member gave the traditional farewell of the peace-activist movement, flashing the "Peace" sign. Seeing this, another member shouted "make it a green-peace" - and this was the birth of the "Greenpeace" movement.....

The Committee's name referred to predictions made by *Robert Hunter*, a *Vancouver* journalist, who would later become "Greenpeace" member #000. At that time, he wrote that the test would cause earthquakes and a "killer" tsunami.....

The **AEC** considered the likelihood of the test triggering a severe earthquake to be "most-unlikely," unless one was already imminent on a nearby fault, and also considered the possibility of a "tsunami" to be even "more-unlikely".....

Others disagreed, including *Russell Train*, who was then the Chairman of the *Council on Environmental Quality*, and who argued that "experience with 'Milrow' does not provide a sure basis for extrapolation. In the highly nonlinear phenomena involved in earthquake generation, there may be a threshold value of the strain that must be exceeded prior to initiation of a large earthquake. The underground explosion could serve as the first domino of the row of dominoes leading to a major earth-quake, and as in the case of earthquakes it is not possible at this time to assess quantitatively the probability of a tsunami following this explosion event".....

Then, in July 1971, a group called the *Committee for Nuclear Responsibility* filed suit against the **AEC**, asking the court to stop all nuclear testing. The suit was unsuccessful, with the *Supreme Court* denying the injunction by 4 votes to 3, after which *Richard Nixon* personally authorized the \$200 million test in spite of objections from *Japan*, *Peru*, and *Sweden*.....

The *Don't Make A Wave Committee* then chartered a boat, in which they had intended to sail to the island in protest, but due to weather conditions they were unable to reach their destination. And so, shot "Cannikin" was detonated on November 6, 1971, at a depth of 6,104 ft., and was the thirteenth test of the (1971-1972) "Grommet" underground nuclear test series. The announced yield was "less than 5 megatons," (with an actual measured yield of 4.4 megatons), and this would be the largest underground nuclear test in U.S. history.....

The ground surface lifted 20 feet, caused by an explosive force equivalent almost 400 times the power of the *Hiroshima* A-bomb. Subsidence and faulting at the site created a new lake, measuring more than one mile wide. The explosion caused a seismic shock of 7.0 (on the Richter scale) causing a host of rockfalls and turf slides over the entire island.....

Though earthquakes and tsunamis, as predicted by environmentalists did not occur, there were a number of small tectonic events that did occur over the following weeks, (some registering as high as 4.0 on the richter scale), and thought to be due to the interaction of the explosive forces with local natural tectonic stresses. According to wildlife surveys, following the "Cannikin" event, by the *University of Alaska - Fairbanks*, approx. 2,000 sea otters (in the *Bering Sea*) were killed, by over-

pressure hydraulic shock, as a direct result of the device detonation. This survey showed that the total number of sea otters endangered by the blast was far greater than the *Atomic Energy Commission* had originally predicted.....

The **AEC** withdrew from *Amchitka* in 1973, although scientists continued to visit the island for monitoring purposes, and in 2001, the **DOE** returned to remove environmental contamination. Drilling mud pits were stabilized by mixing with clean soil, covered with a polyester membrane, and then were topped with soil and reseeded with turf grasses. Concerns have been expressed that new fissures may be opening (underground) allowing radioactive materials to leak into the ocean.....

A 1996 *Greenpeace* study found that "Cannikin" was leaking both *Plutonium* and *Americium* into the environment. Contradicting this statement, a 2004 *University of Alaska (Fairbanks)* study reported that "there were no indications of any radioactive leakage, and all that was really wonderful news." Similar findings are reported by a 2006 study, which found that levels of *Plutonium* "were very small and not (biologically) significant."

The *Department of Energy* continues to monitor the site as part of their remediation program. This is expected to continue until 2025, after which the site is intended to become a "restricted access" wildlife preserve.....

"THE DAY WE NUKED MISSISSIPPI"

By: James W. Crawley [*News Virginian*] July 11, 2005

At 10:00 a.m. on October 22, 1964, the *United States Government* detonated an underground nuclear device in *Lamar County*, in *Southern Mississippi*. Residents there felt three separate shocks, and watched as the soil rose and behaved much like undulating Ocean waves. Hunting dogs howled in terror, and two miles from the test site the blast shook almost all of the ripened nuts off the local pecan trees. This nuclear test, and the one that followed two years later, at the same *Mississippi* site, were the only nuclear explosions on U.S. soil in a State east of the *Rocky Mountains*.....

Atomic bombs were in the news in October 1964. Only one week before the *Mississippi* nuclear test, newspapers had reported that *Communist China* had detonated its first atomic bomb, a 22 kiloton (air dropped) fission device detonated at their *Lop-Nur* range on October 16, 1964. For residents in *Lamar County*, however, no news story was watched more closely than the plans for nuclear weapon testing in their *Mississippi* neighborhood. Some of the local "old-timers" complained that hunting rabbits, squirrels, coons and deer would be ruined forever.....

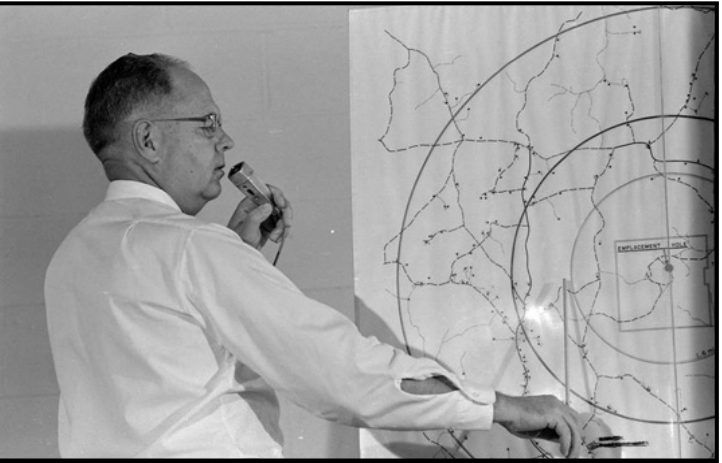
The world's first nuclear test ("Trinity") came during *World War-II* in the *Alamogordo, New Mexico* desert on July 16, 1945. Three weeks after this successful test, the *United States* dropped nuclear bombs on *Hiroshima* and *Nagasaki*, killing some 220,000 residents of those cities and leading to *Japan's* quick surrender.

Ironically, after *World War-II* was over, the *United States* became allied with its former enemies, but soon became locked in a bitter "Cold-War" with its former *WW-II* ally, the *Soviet Union*. Four years after *America's* first nuclear weapon test, the *Soviet Union* (on August 29, 1949) tested their first atomic bomb, a 12 kiloton (*Pu-239* fission core) tower test at *Novya Zemlya*, the designs of which were stolen from the *United States*.....

In the coming years, the *United States* built some 70,000 nuclear warheads, and the *Soviet Union* vowed to build a similar number. By the time of the (1964) nuclear tests, in *Mississippi*, *Great Britain*, *France*, and *China* had joined the worldwide "1000 **Sun**" nuclear club.....

As a part of the rivalry between Communist and non-Communist nations, during the Cold-War, nuclear experts developed new types of nuclear weapons, and insisted that it was necessary to test these new designs. Many citizens around the world, however, expressed a real concern that such test detonations would lead to medically harmful (radioactive) particle "fallout" that would randomly drift to the earth and enter people's bodies, potentially causing leukemia and other (radiogenic) cancers and diseases.....

In 1963, the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union signed a *Partial Test Ban Treaty*, agreeing not to test nuclear devices in the atmosphere or under water. The treaty did not address underground testing, because of disagreements and uncertainty over how to verify that nations were not testing weapons underground.....



HARRY VERMILLION (A.E.C.) STUDIES THE "SALMON" TEST MAP

It was believed that "Salmon" would blast a huge cavity in the salt. Then the second blast, shot "Sterling-1," would involve detonating a smaller nuclear bomb inside the cavity resulting from the "Salmon" test. Thus, scientists believed that because the bomb would be detonated in a cavity rather than in solid rock, the shock waves would be muffled and the test might not be detectable by seismographs and other measuring devices.....

So in 1964, officials of the *Atomic Energy Commission* came to *Mississippi* and began preparing the *Tatum Salt Dome* site for the "Salmon" test. A hundred *Lamar County* residents found work at the site, primarily driving trucks and heavy equipment, or providing food for the nuclear test project employees. The test was scheduled for September 22, 1964, but the wind direction was unfavorable, and continued to be totally unacceptable, until the 22nd. of October.....

On that date about **400** residents were evacuated from the area, and were paid **\$10** (per adult) and **\$5** (per child) for their inconvenience. The zone from which citizens were evacuated stretched five miles downwind of ground zero, and about half that distance in all other directions. Most residents later reported that the shock of the explosion was much stronger than they had been led to believe.....



LOCAL RESIDENTS GATHER AT THE TATUM SALT DOME TEST SITE

The editor of the *Hattiesburg American*, although almost thirty miles away, reported that he felt the newspaper building sway for nearly three minutes. At the test site, creeks ran black with silt-laden water, and by seven days after the blast, more than **400** nearby residents had filed damage claims with the government, reporting that their homes had been damaged or that their water wells had gone dry.....



A number of nuclear testing experts said it was not a good idea to prohibit sub-surface testing, because some nations might cheat by secretly testing nuclear weapons underground. In most cases, seismographs (the device used to measure earthquakes) could also detect underground nuclear tests, but could not accurately define or distinguish the differences between those two types of activities, either natural, or man-made.....

The United States wanted to know more about underground testing and how it could be detected, and therefore designed project "Dribble," which included the two *Mississippi* detonations, so as to investigate the possibility that cheating nations could, in some way, hide their underground nuke test activities.....

Nuclear scientists had investigated several potential test sites in *Mississippi*, but finally selected a site just north of *Baxterville* in *Lamar County*, and about 28 miles southwest of *Hattiesburg*. Geologically, the area was called the "Tatum Salt Dome," housing a vast supply of dense salt located about 1,000 feet below the ground surface level.....

Salt domes, found deep beneath the surface of south central *Mississippi*, are the dried remains of a sea that covered much of the State during the *Mesozoic Era*. The plan was to detonate one nuclear bomb about 2,700 feet down, and in the middle of a solid rock-salt zone. This would be the 1964 test blast, code-named "Salmon," and one of (51) tests assigned to the "Whetstone" operation.....

Horace Burge lived about two miles from the site of the explosion, and returned home to his three-room house to discover considerable damage caused by the blast.....The fireplace and chimney were badly damaged, and broken bricks and window glass littered his living room.....

Broken dishes and jars were all over his kitchen floor, and the shelves fell down inside his refrigerator and breaking several glass containers. His electric stove was covered with ash and pieces of concrete, and the pipes under his kitchen sink had burst, leading to severe flooding inside the house.....



HORACE BURGE EXAMINES HIS DAMAGED HOME AFTER THE TEST

Within days, the **DOD** began reimbursing local residents for the damage done to their homes.....

After the blast, reporters from the *Hattiesburg American* interviewed many local residents who said they didn't want this nuclear testing to be done in their neighborhoods, and it appeared that there was nothing they could do about it. A follow-up editorial lectured its readers that such tests were necessary for the future security of the *United States*.....

After seismic analysis, the Government scientists reported that project "Salmon" had been a success, with the bomb delivering a force of **5 kilotons (5,000 tons of TNT)**, or about one-third as powerful as the *Hiroshima* bomb. The blast formed a **110 ft.** diameter oval shaped cavity void in the salt, as predicted.....

The "Sterling" Project was associated with operation "Latchkey," and included two test shots on December 3, 1966. These were "Sterling-1" & "Sterling-2," which were considerably weaker than the earlier "Salmon" test. Both developed yields of approx. **.5 kilotons (500 tons)** each, as per design, instead of the force of the **5 kiloton** force that the "Salmon" device had developed, and observers two miles away from the blast reported that they barely felt a bump.....

As with "Salmon," the "Sterling" shots were labeled a success because they were detonated within a rock-salt cavity and the total force, as measured by seismographs, was about 100 times weaker than would have been expected, if a bomb of the same size were to detonated in solid rock or rock-salt. Thus **DOD & AEC** officials reported that the *Mississippi* nuclear tests helped prove that, in fact, the seismic effect of a nuclear blast could be greatly reduced if such a blast were set off within a large underground void.....

This suggested that it might be possible for a nation to cheat on a future nuclear test ban by hiding a nuclear test in such a manner. It also helped teach nuclear scientists how to detect and accurately measure such hidden nuclear blast activities.....

Though *Mississippi's* part in nuclear testing was over by 1966, the *Tatum Salt Dome* site did see two additional tests by the **AEC** as a part of project "Miracle-Play," which was similar to project "Dribble" in that it too was designed to detect underground testing, but this time the two blasts were conventional munitions, instead of nuclear fission devices.....

Mississippi's two "Miracle-Play" test detonations, in 1969 and 1970, were fueled by a mixture of *Oxygen* and *Methane*, and this would be the end of *Mississippi's* contribution to the U.S. nuclear weapons test development & detection programs.....



MANY HOMEOWNERS NEAR THE TATUM SALT DOME SITE BRACED THEIR HOMES TO PREVENT DAMAGE PRIOR TO THE TESTS

Health and Safety at Tatum Salt Dome

With any nuclear test there is the danger of health problems developing among the people and other living things near the test site. At the *Mississippi* nuclear test site, one fear, in 1964, was that these underground explosions would "blow-out" during the tests, sending dirt, gasses, and radioactive material high into the air. Government officials said this was unlikely, pointing out that the **2,700 foot** shaft had been filled with gravel and an enormous concrete plug.....

After the 1964 blast, scientists reassured *Mississippians* by reporting that "all radiation had been contained underground." They went on to say that "none of the soil, water, and air (in the area) was contaminated, in any way, with radioactive particles".....

This statement would be proved to be incorrect, as the tests did contaminate the area. Two months after the 1964 test, nuclear researchers drilled a hole down to the void left by the blast in order to lower instruments into the cavity.....

While drilling the hole, radioactive soil and water migrated up to the surface. The same thing happened again in 1966. And several times, thereafter, the U.S. government came in to attempt to clean up the radioactive spoils of *Tatum Salt Dome* site.....

In 1972, buildings at the site were bulldozed and sent to the *Nevada Test Site*, where considerable amounts of radioactive material (from other nuclear reactive events) was already in storage. Most of the remaining radioactive material at the *Tatum Salt Dome* site (primarily soil, rock, and water) were put back down into the test cavity, where they remain today, either in solid or sludge form.....

Some of the radioactive liquids were injected into "Aquifer Number 5," which is a vein of salty water located about 2,500 feet under-ground at the *Tatum Salt Dome* site. U.S. government officials erected a large stone monument at the site, with a brass plaque warning future generations not to "drill or dig in the vicinity of this nuclear test site".....

Several *Lamar County* residents complained of lingering health effects in the decades after the blast. Some argued that the number of cancer deaths in the *Tatum Salt Dome* area was higher than national averages. Although a host of illnesses were thought to be connected to post test radiation exposure events, proving out that assumption was out of the question.....

Federal officials continued to maintain the position that there was no health risk associated with living near the *Tatum Salt Dome* site. Many years after these events, the **DOD** did pay at least one former *Mississippi* employee, who worked for a Contractor that was hired by the **AEC** for pre-test and post-test site activities, for unspecified health issue damages.....

In 2000, the Government constructed a water pipeline to help residents near the *Tatum* site get drinking water from as far away from the test site as possible, in hopes of calming continuing (resident) fears about the probability of drinking (radiated) well water.....

Most *Lamar County* residents have already forgotten *Mississippi's* nuclear tests, and younger citizens of *Mississippi* typically have never heard of operation "Whetstone," "Latchkey" or project "Dribble"..... The heated debates about the future of nuclear weapons, though, will continue. Many people will argue that nuclear weapons are an important part of a diversified defense strategy for the nations that possess them, while others believe that nuclear weapons make the world a very unsafe place, with the potential to wreak tremendous harm to the environment and to end human society as we know it.....

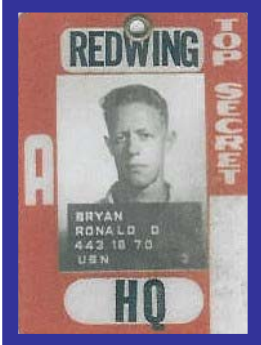
Editor notes: All tests associated with the "Plowshares" & "Vela-Uniform" series are as follows:

Vela-Uniform Series: From October 26, 1963 to May 26, 1972 there were 12 tests associated with operations "Niblick," "Whetstone," "Flintlock," "Latchkey," "Crosstie," and "Grommet." These tests were performed at *Fallon, NV., Pyhute Mesa, NV., Hattiesburg, MS., and Amchitak, AK.*

Plowshare Series: From December 10, 1961 to May 17, 1973 there were 40 tests associated with operations "Nougat," "Storax," "Niblick," "Whetstone," "Flintlock," "Lathkey," "Crosstie," "Bowline," "Mandrel," "Grommet," & "Toggle." These tests were performed at *Carlsbad, NM., Yucca Flats, NV., Rainer Mesa, NV., Frenchman's Flat, NV., Fallon, NV., Pyhute Mesa, NV., Amchitka, AK., Hattiesburg, MS., Farmington, NM., Grand Valley, Co., Rifle, Co.,* and other central *Nevada* locations.....

VOICES FROM NUCLEAR HELL !!!

My name is **Ron Bryan** (USN) and I am a member of **NAAV**. In 1956 I was ordered to *Enewetak Atoll* to join up with *Joint Task Force Seven (JTF-7)*, and was assigned to be one of four sailors charged with transporting *Admiral B. Hall Hanlon* around the Atoll islands in his special barge. *Adm. Hanlon* was in charge of the "Redwing" Operation, a series of 17 nuclear & thermonuclear weapon tests to be performed at both *Enewetak* and *Bikini Island*.....



I flew to *Hawaii* first, spending just a few days there, near *Pearl Harbor*, and I had time to visit *Hickam Field*. I then caught a flight to *Kwajalein*, in the *Marshall Islands*, where I was able to spend a couple of weeks waiting for a staff plane to take me on to *Enewetak*. While waiting, I really enjoyed swimming & hunting for sea shells, as well as the wonderful weather as I scouted around the Island. I was able to send most of the shells back home to my folks in *Wichita, Kansas*.....

It was also great to use the swimming pool that the government had built for more than \$100,000.00 then filled with ocean water. I thought that a bit strange, but I suppose there could have been a shortage of fresh water. I used it anyway, but I still liked to swim in the lagoon and sometimes on the ocean side, as well.....



RON BRYAN (SECOND FROM LEFT) AND HIS BOAT CREW REVEAL ONE OF THE NAVY'S BEST KEPT SECRETS..... THEY HAD "BELL-BOTTOM-BOXERS" IN THOSE DAYS

The weather conditions were perfect at *Kwajalein*, and as I scouted out the beaches around the shores, I saw the remains of several Navy landing craft, rusting out with age and exposure to the elements. They were destroyed by *Japanese* forces that were driven off the Island in the mid 1940's.....

Being a student of history and living through that time period, I could realize what had happened here just 13 years earlier, and the lives that were lost here during that battle endeavor. It was truly a great experience for me, as I enjoyed the time there as I awaited by flight to meet up with the staff on *Enewetak*.....

Finally, the day came when I boarded the plane flying westward to *Enewetak*. I was only on *Enewetak* for a short time, then I joined the others on my boat staff. We had to go by boat over to *Parry* island, which was the where the **HQ** of **JTF** was located. It was there that I was to spend the next 5 months being a part of operation "**Redwing**".....

Parry is about a mile long and, maybe $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile wide, but it soon became a nice place to work, and to serve my country. I shared a tent with two of the other boat crew members, while the *Coxswain-of-the-Boat*, who was also the *Admiral's* driver in *Washington D.C.*, lived in a separate area.....

Being on the *Admin. Staff*, we **4** were subject to the use of a woodshop, a great chow-hall where we ate family style, having steaks three times a week, along with fresh milk and vegetables, the use of a TV, and other great benefits, as we worked with the "brass" of the operation. I would say that this was a bit better than "*McHale's Navy*".....

An Island, up from *Parry*, was called *Japtan*, where there were a lot of coconuts and trees. We learned and observed later that there were some cages where monkeys were kept, which we found out later, were to be a part of the upcoming tests, which were to begin shortly.....



These monkeys would be exposed to the "*fireball*" and "*wrath of hell*" following same. The scientists wanted to study their eyeballs after the test shots, so as to determine the damage if someone looked at the flash of the blast.....

As to the coconuts, we were really happy to collect them for their milk and white tasty meat inside, even though there were large signs saying "**DO NOT EAT THE COCONUTS – THEY ARE RADIOACTIVE**"..... Back then, we did not know much about things being "radioactive".....

We also found a lot of lizards on *Japtan*. They were about a foot long and lived in the coconut trees. We were told that this was one of a very few places on the globe where these specific lizard types lived. After our daily routine of working on the *Adm.'s* barge, keeping it clean and maintained, we found plenty of time to swim in that most perfect place. It seemed that *Japtan* was a recreational place for us and any guests that happened to be visiting the members of the *Op's-Staff*.....

On one occasion *Charles E. Wilson* (*Secretary of Defense*) was one of those visitors. At his request, we took him for a "swim" off a platform that was anchored out in the lagoon, just for that reason. There was one time that I was on that platform with the *Secretary*, just he and I, sitting there enjoying the sun and Pacific blue water.....

I worked out in that sun all the time during those 5 months of duty, and I was in good shape and pretty well tanned when it was time to leave. *Secretary Wilson*, however; never did get sun-burned or even tanned, which puzzled the hell out of me. He was still as white as a sheet when we finally transported him out of the area. Finally, after 13 days of waiting and nine postponements, it was the eve of May 21, 1956, and our boat crew had carried the men in charge of the "*Redwing*" tests to *Enewetak* so they could board a plane for *Bikini Atoll*, in order to initiate the first airborne drop of a fully designed hydrogen bomb.....

This trip had been made nine times, only to see their tired and disgusted faces returning to our Island of *Parry*, after the shot had been called off in the wee hours of the morning. On this eve, we short of felt secure in our feelings that the shot would go as scheduled this time. When we got back to *Parry*, after unloading the *Op's* Commanders & Staff, we noticed that the tower light was green, which meant that the weather was still favorable for the early morning spectacle.....

That night we attended a movie, just like we did every night before, and frequently glanced to see that the light was still green. On our way back to the tent, after the movie, the light was still showing green, and we all felt that by morning the situation would be unchanged.....

As we awoke anxiously the next morning at 0430, I looked out the tent to recheck the conditions, and there still was no change. After dressing, we walked over to the eastern side of the small Island and sat down on the sandy beach with a few other civilians and military workers. We could hardly see our hands in front of our face, but we know that in less than 30 minutes history was going to be made just 160 miles away, on the Island of *Namu*, which was one of the many islands in the *Bikini* group.

After 15 minutes had passed, our eyes were beginning to get adjusted to the darkness. Before long, we could see a faint light, over the horizon, as though the sun was beginning to rise over the edge of the sea, but this was not the sun. In a split second, the faint light turned into a brilliant ball of white light that lit up the entire sky. It was just like high noon, before dawn, and the fire in the sky produced colors that I had not seen before, or could have even imagined.....

The fire ball soon began to lose it's brilliance, but the luminous clouds in the sky around that source of raging hell could still be easily seen. We all stood there, in complete shock & amazement, as we watched history being made. We were among approximately 100 military and a hand full of civilians who were witness to this event from *Parry* island.....

After watching the multicolored & boiling actions that filled the night sky for 10 or so minutes, we all got up and started for the mess hall. As we began walking, we heard a low rumble that quickly turned into a loud roar coming out of the sky. At first we thought it was rolling thunder, but we soon realized, and knew that it was the sound wave from the thermo-nuclear bomb's mega-blast just now arriving at our location. It was a continuing earth-shaking roar that lasted for more than 5 minutes, then it slowly died down until once again we only heard the noise of the waves lapping & sweeping onto the pearl white beach.....

That **"Redwing"** test was code named **"Cherokee,"** and I had just witnessed the destructive forces from the first (ever) air dropped hydrogen bomb, equal to several megatons (millions of tons) of high yield explosives going off at the same instant. Although I was many miles from surface zero, I will never forget those sights & sounds. I couldn't help but think that the power of that bomb was just a drop in the bucket compared to the power of *God*. It has now been 55+ years since that event was burned into my visual memory, and even today, I occasionally still see the brilliance of that boiling nuclear hell unfolding once again in my dreams, and I will never forget the fear factor associated with standing face to face with the raging destructive forces of pure nuclear power.....

the *Lithium-7 / Deuteride (Li7-D)* "yield-boosting" fusion fuel it contained.....

"Redwing" was the second *U.S.* test series devoted primarily to proving thermo-nuclear designs of actual weapons, concentrated on testing a broad variety of new innovative second generation designs, and was thus conducted under an "energy budget." The total cumulative explosive yield of the series, and the total fission yield were both assigned fixed limits for the whole series. The actual total (measured) yield, for the **17** test detonations, was **20.82** megatons.....

The tests were divided between *"high-fission-yield"* (salted or *"dirty"*) designs, at reduced yield, and *"low-fission-yield"* (*clean*) nuclear weapon designs. The *"clean"* weapons were supposed to produce *"low-fallout"* by-products, while the *"slated"* (*dirty*) weapons were supposed to produce *"high-fallout"* by-products....

The need to explore *"clean"* nukes was driven by International Law, which limited the methods and weapons that belligerents could use against an enemy. All arms, projectiles, or material calculated to cause unnecessary suffering and un-necessary death were forbidden.....

Poison and poisoned weapons were also prohibited. Most opinions also agreed on forbidding *"dum-dum"* bullets (designed to expand or flatten easily in the human body), suffocating and poisonous gases, bacteriological warfare, and radiological weapons. Regarding nuclear weapons, the preponderance of legal opinion has the effects of nuclear radiation from these weapons as being *"akin to those inflicted by the use of poison or poisoned weapons."* Thus, in principle, the use of such weapons is *"illegal"* as stated by the *International Law Association (Report of Fiftieth Conference held at Brussels, 1962)*.....

Most legal opinion does not regard the use of fire weapons, such as flame throwers and napalm and incendiary bombs, as illegal. *"The Laws of War"* (*Encyclopedia Britannica Strauss*) issued a brief statement about the results of **"Redwing"** tests. It stated that *"these tests had achieved maximum effect in the immediate area of a target with minimum widespread fallout hazard."* Strauss also concluded that the **"Redwing"** tests had proven *"much of importance not only from a military point of view but, to some extent, from a humanitarian aspect, as well".....*

OPREATION PLUMBBOB FALLOUT

My Name is **Joel V Healy**, and I was at *Camp Desert Rock (NV)* for the atomic bomb tests associated with operation **"Plumbbob."** I was attached to the *34th Combat Engr. Group - 84th Engr. Battalion - Company "C"* when we went TDY from Ft. Ord, CA., to the Nevada Test Site for atomic warfare training.....

I am currently having multiple medical problems and continue to fight with the **VA** for Compensation and Pension (C & P). My claim is almost three years old and all they (the **VA**) do is ask for more documentation, etc., and I have come to the conclusion that they hope I will expire before my claim does. So, here is my story, if it is of any interest to anyone.....

In February (2006) I filed a claim with the Veterans Administration for health problems I am suffering with and that I believe are related to my exposure to excessive radiation while in the military. In the Spring-Summer of 1957, my unit (*U.S. Army*) was assigned to the *Nuclear Test Site (NTS)*, where the government was conducting their (at that time) above ground tests of all sorts of nuclear weapons.....

The tests were called *operation "Plumbbob"* and during that period it involved the tests of approximately twenty-five nuclear



REDWING "CHEROKEE" (05-20-56)

The **"Cherokee"** test was a **3.8** megaton hydrogen weapon that was air dropped from a **B-52** bomber, over *Namu* (code named *Charlie*) island, located within the *Bikini Atoll* group. It was also the first detonation of fully deployable thermonuclear weapon delivered from an airborne platform.....

This **DOD** sponsored test (using an **LASL** designed device) was intended to gather weapon effects data for high yield air bursts, but it was also intended to send a strong message to the *Soviet Union*, that the *United States* could deliver a multi-megaton Hydrogen-bomb anywhere, any time, and at will. The device was a **TX-15 (X-1)** weapon design, similar to the lower yield **Mk15-39 "Zombie"** device that was tested in (1954) *Castle "Nectar"* event. The **B-52** (drop-platform) was flown from *Fred Island* (at *Enewetak*) to the target drop zone, and back.....

The intended *"surface-zero"* was directly over *Namu*, but the flight crew mistook an observation facility on a different island for their targeting beacon with the result that the weapon delivery point was grossly in error. The bomb detonated some 4 miles off target over the Pacific Ocean northeast of *Namu*, and as a result of this error, essentially all of the weapons effects data was lost. The operational bomb configuration was **34.5"** wide, **136"** long, and weighed **6,867** lbs. The bomb's yield was very close to the predicted (design) value.....

The mushroom cloud quickly leveled out at an altitude of **94,000** feet. Although the **TX-15** was a radiation implosion design that harnessed thermonuclear reactions, it seems to have been a transitional design that could also be considered a radiation implosion *"boosted-fission"* device. The secondary stage consisted of highly enriched *Uranium* jacket that would have produced a exceedingly high yield fission explosion even without



CAMP DESERT ROCK "ATOMIC-WARFARE" TEST TROOPS MUSTER FOR A PRE-TEST ORIENTATION PRIOR TO A N.T.S. NUCLEAR TEST.

bombs. Under the *Freedom Of Information Act (FOIA)*, I was able to obtain my radiation badge records from the government and they confirmed that I had been exposed to an excessive amount of radiation i.e., an overdose.....

Many of the veterans, known unofficially as "Atomic-Vet's," who participated in those tests subsequently came down with medical problems associated with excessive radiation exposure. So much so, that the *Veterans Administration* established a special program known as the *Ionizing Radiation Study* and encouraged veterans who were involved in those tests to participate, which I did.....

Based upon medical problems which I have (eight in all), I filed a claim with the *Veterans Administration*, and after almost fifteen months, they sent me a letter rejecting my claim. I find their response to my claim somewhat ironic, as it comes almost three to four weeks after I wrote the *Honorable John Linder*, who was my *Congressional Representative*, requesting his assistance in getting the *V.A.* to respond to my claim.....

I had been warned by other Atomic-Vets, that if I filed a complaint against the *V.A.* they (the *V.A.*) would retaliate against me. In the words of one Atomic-Vet, "the *V.A.* takes a dim view of anyone filing complaints." And, in the words of another Atomic-Vet....."Healy, you will suffer a demise before your claim does"...

At the time, I thought they were wrong, however, it turns out that they seemed to be right. The *V.A.*, in their letter of rejection, pointed out that I had the right to appeal their decision and I fully intend to do so, if I live long enough.....

What I find particularly appalling, is that enclosed with their letter were two highly sensitive and confidential *V.A.* documents concerning **TWO OTHER VETERANS**. The information in those documents revealed the veterans' Social Security number, date of birth, *V.A.* file numbers, home address, wife's name, etc. I asked an old Navy buddy of mine what he thought of the situation, and he said "in my man's Navy, this would be called a case of sloppy work by a yeoman striker".....

I was told by a *VFW* member that, "given the *Veterans Administration's* track record of losing or misplacing computer records and documents, one would like to think that they would exercise greater diligence in safeguarding those records of veterans containing such sensitive data." However, in this instance, that apparently does not appear to be the case.....

If I didn't know any better, the *Veterans Administration* minions who processed my claim seemed to take an indifferent and cavalier attitude in their responsibility (or lack thereof) of guarding sensitive and confidential documents.....

I believe that the two veterans in question and their respective families would share in my opinions. Oh, well.....end of story !!

Joel V Healy – Stone Mountain, GA. (current situation – unknown)

Editors note: Mr. Healy's letter was received in mid 2009, and recent efforts to contact him, so as to get an update on his health and VA claim status, have proven to be unsuccessful. Given this, we cannot determine the accuracy of content in his letter to NAAV, however; if we do get an update, we will note the particulars in a future issue of the NAAV newsletter. We continue to publish the issues and concerns of all Atomic-Veterans, unedited.....

FROM THE ROYAL CANADIAN ENGINEERS



Hello there **NAAV**: My name is **Dave Packer**, (*Royal Engineers - U.K. Regimental - #SH205377*), and I participated in operation "**Plumbbob**" in 1957, and to the best of my memory witnessed a total of **8** above-ground nuclear weapon test shots. At that time, I was a wireless operator for **1st Radiation Detection Unit (RDU)**, **Royal Canadian Engineers**.

As the "sparks," in our unit, I did very little field surveying, but did directly witness those nuclear weapon test shots. I was released in September 1957, and subsequently was employed at *Atomic Energy of Canada, Ltd. (AECL)* as a *Decontamination Operator* and *Process Operator* in the **NRU** and **NRX** reactors until February 1963. At that time I joined *Ontario Hydro (OH)* as a *Nuke Operator*.....

I stayed with **OH**, becoming licensed to operate *Canada's* first power reactor (**NPD**) in December 1965, and re-licensed in 1973. Then, in 1975, I joined *New Brunswick Power* at the *Point Lepreau Generating Station* as Nuclear training Supervisor. In 1979 I left to go farming, of all things, went broke, and then I worked as a consultant in the *Nuclear Power* industry from 1987 till my retirement in August, 2002. The reason I'm telling you this is to clarify my radiation history, as to the best of my knowledge, I am the only

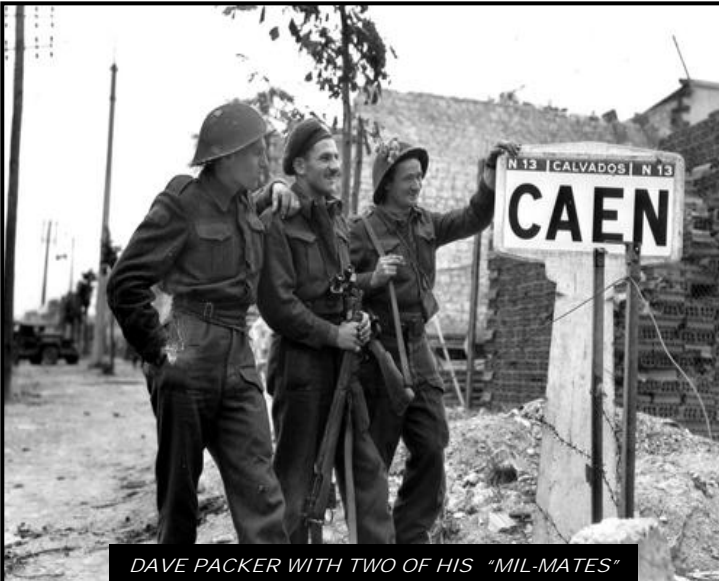


(*Canadian*) "**PlumBobbler**" who continued to work in close proximity with radioactive materials.....

About 4 years ago, our Health Physics people told me that I had the highest recorded "*Occupational*" radiation dose of anyone in all of *Canada*, and therefore, given that I was originally involved with atmospheric nuclear weapon testing (at your Nevada Test Site) while on active military duty, I applied for and received, a reasonable pension, from our Veteran's Affairs Department, for hearing loss due to witnessing these shots with no hearing protection.....

Over the years, I've had several minor health issues, but no other binding problems, so far, with radiation related sicknesses, although, however; I'm told that these can take time, and perhaps several years, to make their pain and ugliness known to their host organism.....

One question, if anyone out there can help: during the shots, we wore film badges and direct reading dosimeters. However, as our backs were turned at the time of the shot, the badges and *DRD's* were shielded by our bodies, which was the equivalent of **8"** to



DAVE PACKER WITH TWO OF HIS "MIL-MATES"

I am now living in *Mexico* and when I go to the **VA** for check ups, I go to *Houston* where I have some family members... I just came back from the *Houston (VA)* clinic and they do not know much about nuclear problems I did have the (nuclear) physical last year, but I did not get any comments from the Doctor that administered the examination. It was like "you have had your test.....now go home" and that is exactly how I felt about the whole experience.....

During this last visit I did see someone in addition to the (designated) doctor.....This was not the same doctor that did my physical and this other person was called a "Doctor's-Assistant," whatever the Hell that is. I asked him about **PTSD** and he said that the only way I could claim **PTSD** is to have been in a combat situation. I told him about my experience with the atomic bombs, and that looking into the teeth of an atomic-bomb when it goes off is worse than most combat situations

He ignored my comment and then said that I would not qualify for **PTSD** because I was not in the actual bomb blast area ... I'm sure that if he was standing along side me, back then, he sure would have had to change his skivvies.....and maybe, would now be claiming **PTSD** himself.....So much for what he knows.

He did give me a prescription for depression but I don't know if that was the total answer, as it didn't help me much..... And every time I go to the **VA** I get more depressed. I can't help but get the impression that the folks at the **VA** do not seem to care about anything but their jobs..... After a few visits, I wonder why I even go there any more....

Well, all I can say is, thanks for the way you folks speak up for us nuclear re-treads, and God bless your efforts to help the remains and remnants of us *Old-timer Atomic Vets*... Maybe someone at the **VA** will hear you..... as they Damn sure don't seem to be hearing us.....

James H. McKenzie (USAF) Atomic-Veteran

Editors notes: Jim McKenzie is not alone in attempting to get someone at their local VA to understand the nature of their (radiation risk) active duty assignments. We have, over the years, received several hundreds of similar complaints and statements about the lack of information and interest in Atomic-Veteran health issues at the local, first point of contact, level..... The most recent events were Atomic-Veterans who were told there was no such thing as the Ionizing Radiation Registry, and were then told that they had to be tested for "Agent-Orange," even though they were not involved, in any manner, with the Viet-Nam War.....This is a continuing example of the apparent lack of proper information at the first point of contact at VA clinics.....

It is our opinion that the Veterans' Administration must find a way to continuously, and fully, inform field personnel responsible for assisting Atomic-Vet's in the scheduling of (complete) IRR examinations, including blood & urine testing, and the proper filing of claims for the probability of radiogenic health issues associated with their active duty assignments.....

It is our understanding that PTSD is not limited to combat situations only, and I can state, for the record, that given my own experiences with nuclear weapon's testing, I continue to have sporadic & frightful dreams of those (1950's) detonations in the Pacific.....Therefore, these people who are employed by the VA have no idea of the psychological impact those events may have had on the hundreds of thousands of Veterans who were there.....

In fairness to all, we do recognize that, in some cases, newly hired VA personnel may not have been made fully aware of the urgent need to recognize the seriousness of illnesses precipitated by exposure to radiation, or the long term mental effects to those who witnessed, first hand, the massive destructive wrath of "live" nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapon devices..... Still, there can be no excuse for not doing that job in a professional and fully informed manner.....

10" of water insulation media. This may have affected the absolute readings of the badges, as I only received 150 mrem, according to my military records. I'm not talking about airborne fallout or post test contamination, I'm talking about the prompt gamma and neutrons released at the time of those weapon detonations. And, of course, I have no idea what the inhaled, or ingested radiation particle count thereafter was, at that time.....

I had some discussions with a man associated with the dosimetry people of the *United States*, whom I don't think fully understood the nature of the information that I was intending to seek out. It was most difficult for me to attempt to get my point across so as to gain any information.....

If you have any ideas along these lines, that may be of help, would you please send them along, and, accordingly, I would also love to get in touch with anyone who was there at that time.... Let me also say that I, and my nuclear industry friends, very much enjoy the articles & information contained in the *NAAV* newsletters posted on your website.....

It is a shame that most of today's generation are absolutely unaware of those (secret) high radiation risk assignments that thousands of your military mates, and thousands of other Atomic-Veterans, from Canada, Australia, New Zealand and England, endured, for their God, their Queen & their Country, during the Cold War years.....

And so, I salute the Officers and membership of **NAAV** for keeping those (previously held secret) events alive and well for both historical and educational purposes. From all of my fellow U.K. Atomic-Vet's, Cheers, and the best of health to all of you...

Respectfully submitted; Dave Packer (U.K.)

FEEDBACK FROM "RANGER"

I am **James McKenzie**, and I was at the *Nevada Test Site* for the Jan. and Feb. 1951 "**Ranger**" tests. There were 5 tests, in all, and I was stationed in *Indian Springs*, which was about 20 miles from ground zero. We were close enough to be blown out of bed for the first test, and after we knew when they were going to happen, we fixed that situation, so it didn't happen again.....

I was in the **USAF** at that time, and my group was on *TDY* from *Brooks AFB* in *San Antonio, TX*. My job was to monitor all the site communications stations during the tests to find out if anyone was giving out any info of what was going on at the test site. Since that time, I have not been able to locate any personnel who were with me during those tests.....

VISIONS & MEMORIES FROM "TEAPOT"

Hello **NAAV**.....My name of **Phillip Pantoja**, and I was with "Charlie" Co. 1st Bn. MCTU-1 from 1954 to 1957.... I participated in operation "Teapot" (shot "Bee") in March of 1955....I really don't recall the specifics of this test, but I remember the trenches, ground zero, the helicopter flights around the fireball "hot-zone", and also what was left of (totally destroyed) "mock-up" test city..... I didn't know much about the "Teapot" tests, until after I discovered the **NAAV** website, and got a full look at the newsletter featuring that test series I also remember that one of the test detonations was cancelled due to weather.....

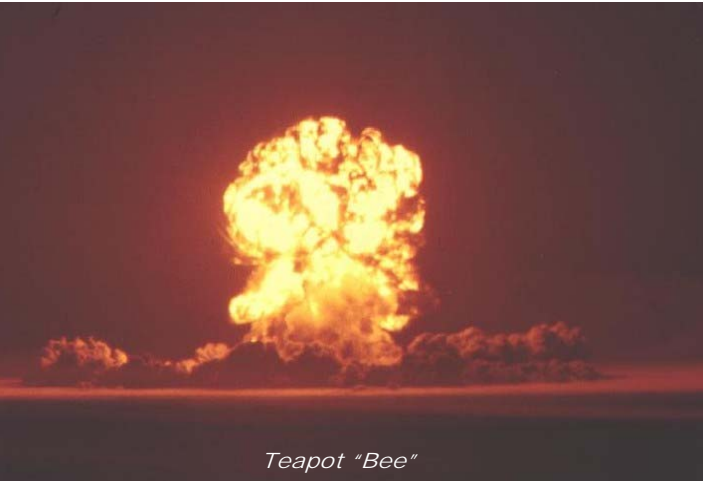
MCTU-1 was my first assignment as a Marine in 1954, and I was the second man to report to the newly activated company. We just did regular infantry training (**0311**) stuff. Then I went to the **NCO Academy** at *Camp Del Mar* and later made *Meritorious Sergeant*. After that, I was then made a *Helicopter Team Leader* and also a *Squad Leader* in the rifle platoon.....

You have probably heard from others that we did operational testing using the old-model "**Sikorsky**" choppers.... Back then, we tested "vertical envelopment" with choppers which also included loading & unloading "heli-teams" in just seconds so as to allow the chopper to lift off quickly.....

I was in *Viet-Nam* in 70 & 71, and little did we know that we would be using choppers extensively in that war. They proved to be very successful if I may say so. The *U.S.S. Thetis Bay* (*CVHA-1*) was our chopper carrier, and it operated out *Long Beach, CA*...

While we were devoting some of our time testing cold weather gear at *Pickle Meadows, CA*., we received secret orders to fly out of *El Toro Marine Air Station, Ca.*, to *Camp Desert Rock* (*Nevada*) for Atomic-Warfare Training at *Yucca Flats*..... After arriving, we had a few days of orientation & pre-test instructions, and then were assigned a trench to hunker down in.....

It was hard to believe what we had just witnessed, the massive destructive power of an *Atomic-Bomb*.... And, as strange as it seems, there are times that when I force myself to recall that eventful day in my life, I can once again smell the scents, and detect that coppery taste in my mouth, exactly as it was back then



Teapot "Bee"

"Bee" (03-22-55) was a **LASL** test of a sealed-pit Deuterium-Tritium (**D-T**) gas boosted **XW-25** air defense missile warhead. The maximum expected yield was 20 kt., and it used a "Zipper" external initiator. The total weapon weight was 130 lb. and the diameter was 17 inches. This was the smallest and lightest nuclear device yet tested, to date.....

Shortly after the mushroom cloud rose into the upper atmosphere, we cranked up the Helo's and flew, in formation, into ground-zero "hot-zone." A few days later, we all shipped out to *California*, and then on to *Japan*, where we joined the *3rd. Bn. 9th. Marines* at *Camp Fugi*.....

While there, I got to see some of the surviving victims of the two atomic bombs that destroyed *Hiroshima* and *Nagasaki*, and that finally forced the end of *WW-II*..... At first I thought they were lepers, but they were not.... The scars from the blast heat & radiation were so terrible that it was difficult to look at for more than a few seconds, and now, I can also still see those nuclear weapon victims in my dreams.....

I have met one "Teapot" veteran here in *Seattle* and have had previous e-mail correspondence with 2 others who were in my unit. Sometimes I wonder how many of us are still living, and how many may be hanging on while fighting health issues that may have been caused by that (*Yucca Flats*) nuclear blast.....

My *Seattle* friend has, over the years, had some tough battles with skin cancers. I have often wanted to try to obtain a list of surviving Marines from **MCTU-1**. If there are other guys out there from that unit, please contact **NAAV**, so they can then send that info on to me.....

In February (1958) our regiment moved on to *Camp Elbert L. Kinser*, in *Okinawa*. Later in the month, we were transported to the *Philippine Islands* to participate in *Operation "Strongback"*, which was the largest island assault maneuver staged in the Pacific by U. S. Armed Forces since *World War-II*.... We then returned to *Okinawa* in early March, this time stationed at *Camp Sukiran*.....

I am now 74 and still kicking, and I do have a few health issues, but don't know if they are caused by that *Yucca Flats Nuke* test. Tomorrow is the *Marine Corps Birthday*.... And given this, I wish those Marines who survived the "Bee" test the best.... and say **Semper Fi** to all..... and **God Bless America**.....



MARINE CHOPPERS ARE CHARGING TOWARDS THE GROUND-ZERO "HOT-ZONE" SHORTLY AFTER A NUKE TEST.

Occasionally, and in my dreams, I can still hear final the count-down, and that ear shattering blast followed by the "ground-shaker" shock wave, while me and my buddies had our faces tucked as far down between our knees as possible.....

FROM THE E-MAIL STACK

Please advise if you have available significant research results, with regard to the health effects of U.S., U.K., and French nuclear testing conducted throughout the Pacific during 1962. I served on the staff of the Naval Commander of Joint Task Group 8.3, which was the USN/USMC component of Joint Task Fore 8., and therefore, participated in several of the "Dominic-1" tests.....

For professional (and personal) reasons, I have not followed up, in recent times, on the long-term health aspects of our open-air nuclear testing activities. However; when I first learned of your organizations' valiant efforts, in these areas, I had just recently resigned from sub-contract work with Rockwell-International. In 1986, Rockwell was managing the DOE weapons complex in Golden, CO.

After my decision to move to Glastonbury, CT., I wrote a letter to Boley Caldwell (then NAAV Nat. Commander) at the headquarters office in Eldon, MO. Cmdr. Caldwell then published my letter in the December, 1986 issue of "NAAV News".....

In essence, I was reporting a nuclear "incident" on Johnston Island, involving the premature explosion of a LOX powered rocket engine, powering a Thor-Agena missile, that was supposed to push a multi-megaton warhead several hundred miles into the upper atmosphere, so as to test the effects of Electro-Magnetic Pulse (EMP) on electronic transmissions. This was associated with operation "Fishbowl" and a part of the "Dominic-1" series. At the time of the above referenced newsletter, your baseline study, and public comments, of nuclear radiation exposure health issues was centered around the (1946) "Crossroads" tests, involving more than 41,000 military personnel.....



Several "Thor" rocket assemblies are being prepared for the (Johnston Is.) Dominic-1 "Fishbowl" tests.

Shortly after NAAV published my letter, I was visited by various government agencies at our (Glastonbury) home. I have no doubt that my previous special clearances with JTF-8, and the (Golden, Co.) DOE facility (which is now pad-locked), triggered these actions. Eventually, I wrote to a well known (CT) Congressman, after which the visits were replaced with correspondence and several phone calls.....

Moreover, I did not keep any of the many letters I received (pro or con) in response to the NAAV article. After all these years, it is time for me to commend your organization's continuing ability to get these (previously classified) facts out to the general public, for information and for historical purposes, as well.....

Yes Dear..... I'll be there in a minute !!



From "Super-Man" to "Super-Gut"

Over the years, I have suffered from a variety of health issues, and just recently, I have submitted a claim for valuable, and much needed health benefits with the VA facility here in Tucson, AZ. This was made possible by the information contained in the Atomic-Vet Claims Pack available on your (naav.com) website. This information was most valuable, and was also an excellent guide to initiate claims with the VA, or with RECA, and also, for the scheduling of a (VA) Ionizing-Radiation Registry (IRR) physical.

I also want to give proper recognition to the VFW for posting the (NAAV) article their (January,2010) Magazine, which in turn, led me to your website. And so, I thank you and your organization for the many years of dedicated service and assistance to America's Atomic-Veterans.....

F. W. Sanson (Phoenix, Az.) Atomic-Veteran

WITHOUT TAXPAYER GIVEAWAYS - NO NUKES

Sofia, Bulgaria: According to Boyko Borisov (Bulgarian Prime Minister), "The country has no money for an atomic power plant." As a result, construction on the country's second reactor at Belene on the Danube River, has been stopped. An offer for a Russian investment of \$2.48 billion (U.S.) was turned down as was an offer by Serbia for a 5% stake in the project.... Bulgaria is looking for a full investor to help cover the \$12.38 billion (estimated) total cost, up from the earlier estimate of \$4.95 billion. The German energy company RWE, withdrew it's financial support last fall, and GDF of France did the same in Feb., 2009. On the other hand, Westinghouse is exploring building a 7th. reactor at the Bulgarian Kozloduy site, which it says can be done in three years. Kozloduy had four idle and two operating reactors, one of which had an emergency shutdown in early March, due to a short circuit in a control panel....

----- Reuters, March 3 & May 19, 2010 -----

FALLOUT FROM OPERATION "IVY"

I was a crewmember aboard the U.S.S. *Lipan* (**ATF-85**), an *Oceangoing Fleet Tug* (in 1952 & 1953) and took part in *Operation "Ivy"* at Enewetak Atoll. During these tests we were issued film badges and were told that *"if your badge starts to turn black, notify your Section Chief (P.O.) or the Engineering Officer as quick as possible".....*

On the third day after receiving the badge, it started turning black, and I (and the rest of our crew) were told to *"turn in your badges because this test is now over."* I worked in the engine room as a diesel mechanic and engineman on the ship's motor whale boat during the "Ivy" tests.....

The "bomb" was mounted on top of a tower on a tiny island we know as *Elugelab*, not far from Enewetak. I believe this was the second test, as the first test was an air-drop weapon.....

The *Lipan* had two and sometimes three "atomic-scientists" aboard, and our mission was to map the Ocean floor before and after the bomb detonation, and to also take several samples of the seawater.....

As an engineman on the whale boat I accompanied these "scientist-lab-types" while they were mapping the Ocean bottom with sonar type "earthquake" recording devices. They also tossed several dynamite charges overboard, stirring up the Ocean around our ship, before and after the two nuke tests.....



U.S.S. LIPAN (ATF-85)

Our ship was the first to return to the blast areas, and the last to leave those areas. Today, there is no *Elugelab*, as the humongous forces of the "**Mike**" bomb erased it from all nautical maps, and created a huge hole in the Ocean floor where it once was....

During the test, the *Lipan*, along with 30 or so other Navy ships, was caught downwind of the blast area, and all ships were at maximum speed, that is, all except the *Lipan*. We were ordered to accompany an AOG (tanker) and were told that the AOG only make 8 knots. Later, we heard that the crew of the tanker was told that the *Lipan* could only make 8 knots, and then I thought, now what the Hell is this all about ???

Because we were only supposed to do 8 knots, we were caught in the bombs radiation pattern fallout, which was a light (misty) dark colored rain, and given this, the *Captain* ordered us to test our (newly installed) "anti-fog" equipment.....And, wouldn't you know, as it turned out, the AOG also had the same type of equipment. Was this a planned tango, or what ???

When the tests were finally over, (as I recall, this was about two weeks after the second blast) the last ship on site left the area. You guessed it..... this was the *Lipan*. We had been operating in the Ocean's "hot spots", where *Elugelab* once was, for this period of time....

While the other ships were ordered to *Pearl Harbor*, we were ordered to *Kwajalein Island*, to pick up a barge that we then towed to the island of *Guam*. A day, or so, out of *Kwajalein*, the ship's main engines began running "hot" and we were forced to stop several times to clean out the "sea-strainers." We had them cleaned while stationed in Hawaii, just a few weeks earlier. Since me and another "snipe" we called "*Missouri*" (I think his name was *McKnight*) were the lowest rates in the engine room, guess who were assigned to this wonderful task ?

We has a man on board the ship, who's daily task it was to monitor radiation with a "*geiger-counter*." He would not go thru any hatchway to our engine room, cause his G-C unit would peg out the second he entered our working space.....

Our ship's *Captain* ordered him to be on hand when the lid was removed from the sea strainers, and he told the *Captain* it was useless to do so, as his G-C would peg out, but on one argues with a ship's *Captain*, who won the argument hands down. Sea strainers are designed to keep rocks, pebbles, seaweed and other items, found floating in the seas, from clogging the engine seawater cooling systems....

After further spirited debates, between the nuke-scientists and our ship's Officers, our section Chief then ordered us to "*clean out the strainers, and throw everything you find overboard, including your gloves.*" Then, upon arrival at *Kwajalein*, we were ordered to stand by outside the harbor entrance, while a small tug brought the barge to us. Everyone knew that we would not be allowed to enter the harbor because we were "*nuke-hot*."

The barge was so heavy, we could only make a max. 3 knots which was to be a long trip to *Guam*. When we finally arrived, we were, again, not permitted to enter the harbor, and another our tow was released to a *Harbor-Tug*, after which a second *Harbor-Tug* delivered a second barge for us to tow to *Pearl Harbor*. We were told that this barge was full of fresh drinking water. I guess, at that time, *Pearl* was having a real bad water shortage....

After we finally got to *Pearl*, we were then allowed, this time, to enter the harbor. Our section Chief said, "*wow, I can't believe they let us in this time, maybe we ain't "glowing" no more.*" And I remember the headlines in the *Honolulu* newspaper that said "*The U.S.S. Lipan, a radioactive Seagoing Navy Tug, arrived in Pearl Harbor from the Enewetak nuclear tests*"

After "*doubling-up*," at a remote dock-site, two civilians boarded the ship and asked the "*Officer-of-the-deck*" to take them to the *Captain*. Soon thereafter, "*Missouri*" was ordered to pack his sea-bag, and was escorted off the *Lipan*, with these two "*spook-types*," and never returned. To this day, I have not been able to contact him. It wasn't long after he left, that a rumor spread amongst the crew that he had written a letter to his mother, detailing the bomb tests, and his parents then turned his letter over to the local newspaper. I guess the footnote to my story is this. Today, I can write to the *Pentagon*, and I always get the same answer, "*Your radioactivity exposure during your time in the Navy was minimal, and does not impose any future health risks*".....

In a few more years, there won't be any more living *Atomic-Vet's*. Their average life span has been cut short by exposure to nuclear weapon test radiation. Maybe before this happens, the *U.S. Government* may see fit to at least honor us with a plaque, or maybe a medal of some sorts. Oh well, I ain't standing here holding my breath, and by the way, do you know what was in those "*sea-strainers*" ?? Well, it was a whole lot of dead plankton, which is the main food that whales like to munch on.....



Veterans Benefits Programs that are available for U.S. Atmospheric (Nuclear) Test Participants and Hiroshima / Nagasaki (end of WW-II) Occupation Forces
(Toll-Free Helpline: 800-462-3683)

The *Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA)* is the *Department of Defense (DOD)* executive agent for the *Nuclear Test Personnel Review Program (NTPR)*, which serves Veterans who participated in U.S. atmospheric nuclear tests, or who served with the Occupation Forces of *Hiroshima & Nagasaki (Japan)*, or who were prisoners of war in *Japan* at the conclusion of World War-II. The primary purpose of the *NTPR* Program is to provide participation data and radiation dose information to *Atomic-Veterans*. It also informs veterans of health care availability and possible compensation benefits provided by the *Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)* and the *Department of Justice (DOJ)*.

COMPENSATION REGULATIONS

Various public laws, as codified by *Title 38 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 3 (38 CFR 3)*, authorize the *VA* to provide medical care and compensation benefits to confirmed test participants who have contacted certain specified diseases after their participation in a nuclear radiation exposure event, as well as dependency and indemnity compensation to certain survivors. Other public laws codified by *28 CDR 79* authorize the *DOJ* to provide compensation to confirmed participants who contracted certain specified diseases after their participation in above-ground nuclear weapon device tests. These regulations are outlined below. The *Government Printing Office* offers free online access to the *Code of Federal Regulations* at:

<http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/cfr-table-search.htm>.



U.S. Marines are approaching the Ground Zero "Hot-Zone" after an Atomic-Warfare "live" nuclear test at Frenchman's Flat, Nevada.

VA MEDICAL CARE

All eligible (Atomic) Veterans, as defined above, may participate in the *Ionizing Radiation Registry Program (IRR)*, which consists of three parts:

1. A complete medical history, physical examination with complete (blood and urine) diagnostic tests, as well as additional specialized tests and consultations, if required. The *IRR* program fulfills a basic clinical care purpose by offering all eligible Veterans a free health examination which potentially serves as an entry point for any future *VA* care the may be required by the veteran.....

2. Eligible Veterans may also receive special treatment for radiogenic diseases currently covered by *VA* under *Federal Regulations (38 CFR 3.309 and 3.311)*. Care for these radiogenic conditions is provided without regard to the Veteran's age, service-connected status, or ability to defray the cost of medical care..... Additionally, there is no co-payment required from the Veteran, even if an eligible Veteran has never filed a previous (*VA*) compensation claim, or if such a claim has been previously denied, the Veteran can still receive free (*VA*) medical care for any (radiogenic) diseases that may have resulted from a radiation exposure event while on active duty.....

3. Veterans can receive free assistance in submitting radiogenic health issue claims by contacting their local *Veterans Administration Service Officer (VASO)*, or they may contact the *VA* (toll-free) at 800-827-1000. For additional details on *VA* medical care, please see the *VA Ionizing Radiation Information* webpage:

www1.va.gov/vhapublications/ViewPublication.asp?pub_ID=1374

FILING CLAIMS

All eligible Veterans may file a claim under one or more of the following compensation programs:

VA Presumptive Program: Several public laws; as codified in *38 CFR 3.309*, authorize the *VA* to grant compensation for 22 types of (radiation induced) cancers to confirmed participants. To establish eligibility under this law, the Veteran must file a claim with their local *VA* facility, and must also submit competent medical evidence that may support the radiogenic health issues as described in the claim.....

If available, the claim should also include proof that the Veteran did, in fact, participate in a radiation exposure event while on active duty. If this proof is not supplied by the Veteran, the *VA* (upon receipt of the claim) will then submit a request to *NTPR* to confirm the Veteran's participation in the event as stated in the claim.....

Filing a claim under this law does not require *NTPR* to furnish a (radiation) dose exposure assessment. Only Atomic-Veterans who participated in such activities can meet the requirements as stated in this section of the law.....



THESE MARINES APPEAR TO BE "FEELING-THE-HEAT" OF A MUSHROOM CLOUD SLOWLY RISING IN THE BACKGROUND, AFTER A NUKE TEST SHOT AT YUCCA FLATS, NEVADA.

Several public laws, as codified in *38 CFR 3.311* provide for the *VA* to approve service connection and benefits for approx. 25 specified disease categories, including any other cancer not specifically identified in *38 CFR 3.309*. These regulations specify rules for adjudicating *VA* claims and establish a panel of experts for addressing scientific issues regarding the relationship between diseases and radiation exposure.....

If a claimed disease is not one of the diseases listed in *38 CFR 3.311*, the Veteran must cite competent scientific or medical evidence demonstrating a relationship between radiation exposure and the disease before the claim may be considered under this regulation.....

Veterans initiating a claim under this regulation do not require prior confirmation of participation or (radiation) exposure dose information from the **NTPR** Program. To initiate a (radiogenic) health issue claim, Veterans must submit, to the **VA**, competent medical evidence that such a (claimed) condition exists...

Upon receipt, and initial processing, the **VA** will then request that the **NTPR Program** confirm the Veteran's participation in the radiation exposure event, and to also provide the **VA** with a *Radiation Dose Assessment (RDA)* and a *Probability of Causation (PC)* scoreThe **NTPR Program** will then respond by providing the requested information, where applicable, and as per the guidelines established by **38 CFR 3.311 (a) (4)**.....

The **VA** may concede a Veteran's presence at an atmospheric test site (or *Hiroshima / Nagasaki*) if the **NTPR Program**, through military records, is unable to establish the Veteran's presence at, or absence from, the site. If the **VA** concedes a Veteran's presence, it will still request an **RDA** and **PC** from the **NTPR Program**.....

NTPR INQUIRIES

Atomic-Veterans wishing to request written confirmation of participation in a nuclear test, or other radiation exposure event (for their own personal records) can do so by calling DTRA at: 800-462-3683..... or they can send a written request to:

**Nuclear Test Personnel Review Program
DTRA RD-NTSN**

**8725 John J. Kingman Road, MSC 6201
Fort Belvoir, VA. 22060-6201**

http://www.dtra.mil/rd/programs/nuclear_personnel/index.cfm

DOJ COMPENSATION PROGRAM

In 1990, Congress passed the *Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA)*, which provides for compassionate payments to individuals (or their surviving beneficiaries) who contracted certain diseases as a result of their exposure to ionizing radiation from U.S. (above-ground) nuclear weapons tests. The *Department of Justice (DOJ)* administers the **RECA** program as codified in **28 CDR 79**.....

There are several categories of claimants under **RECA**, including on-site participants, down-winders, Uranium miners, Uranium millers, and ore transporters, etc..... To receive compensation, a claimant must meet certain eligibility criteria. A claimant must have developed one of the illnesses listed in **28 CFR 79**.... And have participated in certain nuclear tests (as an on-site participant), establish residence in a specified area during a specified time period (down-winder), or have been exposed to specified levels of radiation from Uranium processing activities.....

Presence may be established through a variety of records, as listed in **28 CFR 70.13**.... Written medical documentation is required in all cases to prove that the claimant suffers (or suffered) from any of the conditions listed in **28 CFR 79**.....

Veterans initiating a **DOJ** claim for on-site participation under this regulation are not required to request confirmation of participation or (radiation) dose information from the **NTPR Program**.....



Dr. Paul K. Blake
N.T.P.R.
Program Manager

To initiate a claim, Veterans must contact DOJ as follows:

**Radiation Exposure Compensation Program
Department of Justice
P.O. box 146
Washington, D.C. 20022-0146
(800-729-7327)
<http://www.usdoj.gov/civil/torts/const/recal>**

Upon receipt, the **DOJ** will submit a request to the **NTPR Program** to confirm the claimant's participation in the radiation exposure event, and then determine the participation status, based upon the input from the **NTPR Program**.... The scope of the **NTPR Program** only includes assisting the **DOJ** with a verification of (Veteran) participation.... Uranium processing and down-winder claims do not fall within the scope of the **NTPR Program**....

SECOND OPINIONS

As per **38 CFR 3.31 (a) (3)**, a Veteran may obtain a second opinion of his reconstructed dose from a "credible source" to compare against the **NTPR** (radiation) dose assessment.... If one estimate is at least double the other, the **VA** is required to refer both estimates to an independent expert (selected by the *Director of the National Institute of Health*), who will then prepare a separate radiation dose estimate for consideration in the final adjudication of the claim.....

Editors note: We have had many calls related to radiation induced health issues that qualify for compensation from both the **VA** and the **DOJ**.....If a Veteran is being compensated from a service connected radiogenic health issue by the **VA**, and claims a one-time cash sum under **RECA** (from the **DOJ**), for the same health issue, the **DOJ** payment will have to offset the amount paid by the **VA** If, however; the Veteran is afflicted with two separate illnesses, both of which qualify for compensation from the **VA** and the **DOJ**, the Veteran can claim monthly benefits from the **VA** for one of the health issues while claiming the lump sum benefit, from the **DOJ**, for the second health issue, without an offsetting penalty.....

MORE VOICES FROM NUCLEAR HELL !!!

My name is *Charles M. Dial*, and I was assigned to the *3205th Target Drone Group, 3205 Target Drone Squadron* at *Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, Auxiliary Field #3 (Duke Field)*. When I was sent to *Enewetak* (in the *Marshall Islands*) for project "GREENHOUSE", I was a radio mechanic at one of the drone ground control radar stations.....

Our mission was flying (radio controlled) **B-17's** and **T-33's** into the "hot" mushroom clouds over ground zero at exactly the time the shock wave reached our assigned altitudes..... To do this, we had a Jeep at the end of the runway with all the radio equipment necessary to get the drones started down the runway, then a "mother" ship was approaching from behind to take over the controls and fly the planes were airborne, and on to the target destinations.....

A "master-mother-control" was overhead to take over control as a backup system. When the planes were at the assigned altitude, a ground **MSQ** radar station took control and flew the drones into the cloud while all of the mother ships flew around in an orbit watching the action, and then picked them up as they came out on the other side.....

There were four radar sites with the radio identification call signs with *Plotter - Black, Blue, Green, and Red*. My call sign was "Plotter-Black." The first test went without a hitch and everything was fine, but later on, we had a mishap on takeoff with one of the **T-33's**.....



A QF-80 (TOP) IS ROLLING OUT FOR TAKEOFF WHILE BEING (REMOTE) CONTROLLED BY THE BACK-SEAT OFFICER IN THE SECOND AIRCRAFT.

I didn't see what happened, but heard later that the wing tank touched the runway and the mother ship had to ditch it in the lagoon. On its way to the water, it passed within 100 yards of our MSQ radar station at the beach.... I imagine that the pilot struggled to get it to the water because all of our living quarter tents were at the end of that runway.....

One of the other tests (2nd or 3rd, I don't remember) a B-17 was caught in the fireball and burned away most of the control surface fabric, the tires, and a whole lot of the wiring, but it was somehow still flying. After about two hours of trying to get it aligned to the runway with the engines, they brought it in with the wires from the tires still burning and hanging from the hubs....

It had almost no control surfaces, except the skeletal frame work, but it was the most perfect landing I ever saw as a two year observer. Ropes, that were stretched across the end of the runway, caught the airplane, kind of like the Navy does it on an Aircraft Carrier..... Another B-17 came back ok but later it was found to have a cracked wing. It was repaired and flown back to Florida.....

One of the T-33's that went into the cloud got caught and never came out the other side. It was burned up in the fireball. I did not stay to see the last shot. Our unit left the air crews there for the last one but all of the ground personnel took the equipment and went back to Eglin AFB, Florida.....



A GROUND CONTROLLER BRINGS A QF-80 IN FOR A LANDING AT INDIAN SPRINGS AFB, AFTER A CLOUD SAMPLING MISSION OVER THE NEVADA TEST SITE.

Later that year, from Sept 30 to Dec 2, 1951, I was sent to Kirtland AFB in Albuquerque, NM., for TDY to the Special Weapons Command to go to Indian Springs AFB, Nevada to participate in "BUSTER-JANGLES".....

We took four T-33s, four pilots, four crew chiefs, and one radio mechanic with us. I don't recall anything unusual happening there that was noteworthy..... As I remember, everything was routine, if you can call nuking the desert routine

On this mission, they sent a manned flight into the cloud. Well, actually, the airplane was manned with monkeys dressed in a pilot's suit The plane was also equipped to take radiation samples. We cut about a 10" hole in the front of (wing) drop tanks. Somewhere about in the middle of the tank, there was a series of "shark-gills" cut into the tanks, so as to let the air flow across a filter that was inserted in between the front hole and the shark gill outlets..... After the tests, the filters were recovered and sent to Los Alamos, NM., where the nuke geeks examined them..... Don't know what happened to those monkeys.....



THIS AIR-FORCE GROUND TECH. IS REMOVING RADIATION SAMPLES FROM THE MODIFIED WING-POD OF A CLOUD SAMPLING DRONE AIRCRAFT, AND HE WAS NOT REQUIRED TO WEAR ANY (RADIATION) PROTECTION GEAR.

In the March of 1952, for 100 days, I was sent again to Kirtland AFB and then from there to Indian Springs AFB, Nevada to participate in project "TUMBLER-SNAPPER"..... We had the same assignment as on the previous project, to sample the dust cloud..... By this time, we were getting pretty good at this assignment.....only time, after one of the shots, I don't recall which one, I took a ladder to the airplane so the pilot could exit the plane. When the canopy was opened, I placed the ladder on the plane, the pilot exited, and we drove away.....

The pilot got no radiation at all, but I had to take seven showers before I got my alpha count down to acceptable levels. I suppose that as I walked toward the airplane, a gust of wind caught me just right while the pilot was still under a sealed canopy.....

Every time I took a shower, the health physics person checked me and sent me back to do some more scrubbing. All this time I never once saw him record anything or take notes. My fact sheet says that there was no Radiation exposure recorded for me in REE Co records for this period..... Since returning to civilian life, I spent 35 years working as a machinist at Oak Ridge, Tenn. Y-12 plant building nuclear weapons. I have been linked to these weapons now since 1951. I personally saw 18 detonations in the three projects I was on. That's about all I can recall this long after the fact. After all it has been more than 50 years ago.....

Charles Dial – Atomic-Vet – now deceased

A CHOPPER MECHANIC'S MEMORY OF NUKES

My name is *Harry Francis*, and I was teaching *Rotary Wing Mechanics (RWM)* at *James Connely AFB, San Marcos, TX.*, in 1955. The Air Force announced the closing of the Base, and the transfer of the *RWM School* to *Big Spring, TX.* Several of us decided we would rather travel to "Foreign-Shores," instead of going to *Big Spring*.....

And to address this issue, the Air Force had a request, from Germany, for helicopter mechanics. In fact, most all of our Instructor group applied for transfer to Germany. So many, that the Air Force Command canceled all transfers, "until further notice," as Big Spring just had to have our services.....

Earlier, I had learned that I was in a group to be discharged early, and given the opportunity to go to Germany, I re-upped, and was shocked to learn that I was not going to get to see those good looking European gals.....and was also surprised to learn that the AF was going to send me to the Marshall Islands, where they were testing A-bombs at Bikini and Enewetak.....

And so it was, that I was assigned as a part of *Joint Task Force-7 (JTF-7)* in charge of maintaining a fleet of *H19D* Sikorsky Helicopters; in support of the Scientists that were conducting Operation "Redwing." These were the same model "choppers" that were used by the US Marines for atomic-warfare exercises, where they would attack the ground-zero "hot-zone" and, in some cases, set up overnight bivouacs, in the general vicinity of the actual nuclear test area.....

After arriving at Enewetak, we were issued radiation "film-badges" to determine our exposure to the potential radiation hazards from atomic weapon tests. When we would ferry Scientists to & from various islands, we were issued a new F-badge for each flight, after which they were gathered up and hauled off by an MP type.....

Except for blowing up mega-tons of coral reef, *Enewetak Atoll* was a real nice place to visit, and I assumed that the fishing was also excellent. But, we were told that the fish (and coconuts) were definitely not safe to eat..... I saw coconuts that were mutated, some looking like "hard-shell" bananas.....

When a test was conducted, we were instructed to sit on the beach and wait for further instructions. Then we were told to sit with our backs to the blast area, with arms folded under our heads, and on the tops of our knees. What the bomb exploded, we could actually see the bones in our arms from the massive x-ray effect of the flash.....

After the intense light from the blast, and the shock wave had dissipated, we were allowed to turn around and watch the mushroom cloud rise into the atmosphere....



MARINES SET UP A CAMP-SITE AFTER CHARGING INTO THE "HOT ZONE" DURING ATOMIC-WARFARE EXERCISES. THEIR SIKORSKY (H19) CHOPPERS ARE SHOWN IN THE BACKGROUND.

It was awesome to see those mushroom clouds slowly rising into the stratosphere. While awaiting orders to return Stateside, I requested permission to go to *Bikini* for a test, but my request was denied..... The power released by those nuclear weapons is almost impossible to describe. It is my wish that the leaders of all countries could experience this revelation, so they could better decide on **NOT USING ATOMIC WEAPONS**.....

If an Atomic War is ever started, that will surely be the end of Civilization as we know it. I had the opportunity to fly over the Island where the *Ivy "Mike"* test was held, and all I saw was a giant deep-water hold in the coral reef.... It was big enough to hold fourteen Pentagon Buildings !! It is difficult to comprehend that so much material could be vaporized from one weapon detonation.....Finally, the *Redwing* tests were over, and we were tasked with making sure all of our choppers were in top shape.... My last tactical assignment was to give further taxi service to Scientists evaluating the results of past nuclear experiments, as may be required.....

Shortly before this, I was scheduled to leave *Enewetak*, we learned that the *H19's* were also scheduled for "re-manufacture" in Japan. And so, we began to disassemble a few of them, and we then packed all of the components into shipping crates. I later heard that several of them were lost in transit. I still can't figure out whatever the hell that meant.....

After this, and since my extended service time was getting short, I was ordered to return to *San Francisco* for final separation. My experiences with those tests are still in my dreams, from time to time, and I have been concerned about developing radiation health issues. So far I seem to be OK, but cannot get any information about the other members of *Air Force Enewetak Detachment 5*.....

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