

RAS #AA-12

Hearing Docket

From: Scotts [3scott@bellsouth.net]
Sent: Sunday, August 10, 2008 3:16 AM
To: Paul Bollwerk; hearingdocket@ncr.gov
Subject: Bellefonte Nuclear Plants Units 3 and 4

To Whom It May Concern,
Please read the following to help educate yourself as to how nuclear plants are run in America.
Thank you for your hard work.

Jean Scott

<http://www.counterpunch.org/stclair08092008.html>

DOCKETED
USNRC

August 10, 2008 3:16 am

OFFICE OF SECRETARY
RULEMAKINGS AND
ADJUDICATIONS STAFF

Docket No. 52-014-COL and 52-015-COL

Temp = SECY-038

DS03

Received: from mail2.nrc.gov (148.184.176.43) by TWMS01.nrc.gov
(148.184.200.145) with Microsoft SMTP Server id 8.0.751.0; Sat, 9 Aug 2008
15:14:52 -0400

X-Ironport-ID: mail2

X-SBRS: 5.4

X-MID: 19810002

X-IronPort-Anti-Spam-Filtered: true

X-IronPort-Anti-Spam-Result:

ApgBAM+JnUjMf9lommdsb2JhbAA5gXorgVeDfIFaBAKHQwEBAQEBCAUIBxEDmSI

X-IronPort-AV: E=Sophos;i="4.31,334,1215403200";

d="scan'208,217";a="19810002"

Received: from fmailhost04.isp.att.net ([204.127.217.104]) by mail2.nrc.gov
with ESMTP; 09 Aug 2008 15:14:42 -0400

Received: from dgy9pd31 (unknown[72.146.60.192]) by isp.att.net
(frfwmh04) with SMTP id <20080809191440H040099I86e>; Sat, 9 Aug
2008 19:14:40 +0000

X-Originating-IP: [72.146.60.192]

Message-ID: <000a01c8fab8\$fd099810\$6401a8c0@DGY9PD31>

From: Scotts <3scott@bellsouth.net>

To: <paul.bollwerk@nrc.gov>, <hearingdocket@nrc.gov>

Subject: Bellefonte Nuclear Plants Units 3 and 4

Date: Sun, 10 Aug 2008 02:16:15 -0500

MIME-Version: 1.0

Content-Type: multipart/alternative;

boundary="====_NextPart_000_0007_01C8FA8F.1108DD00"

X-Priority: 3

X-MSMail-Priority: Normal

X-Mailer: Microsoft Outlook Express 6.00.2800.1158

X-MimeOLE: Produced By Microsoft MimeOLE V6.00.2800.1165

Return-Path: 3scott@bellsouth.net

[home](#) / [subscribe](#) / [donate](#) / [books](#) / [archives](#) / [search](#) / [links](#) / [feedback](#) / [events](#) / [faq](#)

"America's Best Political Newsletter" Out of Bounds Magazine

counterpunch

edited by alexander cockburn and jeffrey st.clair

The New Print Edition of CounterPunch, Only for Our Newsletter Subscribers!

How Cops Extort Confessions; How the U.S. "Justice System" Really Works

Ninety-two per cent of felony convictions in the U.S. are obtained by plea bargains or confessor. Without them the "justice system" would grind to a halt. In an important piece in our latest new available only to subscribers, Emily Horowitz shows how totally innocent people will "confess" under police pressure, even without physical torture. Horowitz outlines the powerful case for banning confessions altogether. Also in this new edition Marcus Rediker, co-author of the legendary *The Headed Hydra*, writes of popular heroism and resistance in the favelas of Medellin, Colombia. Alexander Cockburn reports on how America's oldest bank, patronized by the global elites, washed billions smuggled out of Russia, and how the Russians might win their money back, shaking the world's system if they do so. Serge Halimi describes the real battle for the soul of Europe. Get your copy [subscribing online](#) or calling 1-800-840-3683. Contributions to CounterPunch are tax-deductible. [here to make a donation](#). If you find our site useful please: [Subscribe Now!](#) CounterPunch books make great presents.

[Order CounterPunch By Email For Only \\$35 a Year !](#)

Today's Stories

August 9 / 10, 2008

Alexander Cockburn
[You Want More Still
Proofs the Crony, Old-
Line Press is Dead?](#)

Bruce Jackson
[Hamdan's Secret](#)

Kevin Young
[Targeting Civilians: the
Path to Hiroshima and
Nagasaki](#)

Robert Fantina

Weekend Edition
August 9 / 10, 2008

Now Availabl
CounterPunch

The Looming Nuclear Nightmare in the Backwoods of North Carolina

Pools of Fire

By JEFFREY ST. CLAIR

This is an excerpt from Jeffrey St. Clair's new environmental history, [Born Under a Bad Sky](#), now available from AK Press / CounterPunch Books.

Looking for weapons of mass destruction? Try the backwoods of

Of Campaigns and
Timelines

Brendan Cooney
The Eagle is Wounded

Mark Almond
Plucky Little Georgia?

Lois Gibbs
The Lost Lessons of
Love Canal

Rev. William Alberts
Blind Patriotism?
McCain's Counting On
It

John Ross
The Cutthroat Games:
the Decline of the
Olympics from Mexico
City to Beijing

Ron Jacobs
I Read the News
Today, Oh Boy (Or
Why John McCain
Wants Cindy to Show
Her Tits)

Richard Rhames
The Greatest
Degeneration

David Yearsley
Once More Unto the
Albert Hall, Dear
Friends

Brenda Norrell
Turning Sewage into
Snow on the San
Francisco Peaks

Website of the
Weekend
Tuli Kupferberg's Fig
Leaf Olympics

August 8, 2008

Patrick Cockburn

North Carolina. The site is easy to find. You don't need infrared telemetry, informants, or a global positioning satellite. Just follow the railroad tracks deep into the heart of the triangle area to the gleaming cooling tower of the Shearon Harris nuclear plant, which rises like a concrete beacon out of the forest.

It may not look like much—a run-of-the-mill nuke—but inside the confines of the steel fence that rings the plant, resides one of the most lethal patches of ground in North America. Shearon Harris is not just a nuclear power-generating station, but a repository for highly radioactive spent fuel rods from two other nuclear plants owned by Progress Energy.

Those railroad tracks? They're for hauling nuclear waste. The spent fuel rods are carted by rail from the Brunswick and Robinson nuclear reactors to Shearon Harris, where they are stored in four densely packed pools, filled with circulating cold water to keep the waste from heating up. The pools are interconnected and enclosed within one building. That building is attached to the reactor itself. Together, they form the largest radioactive waste storage pools in the country.

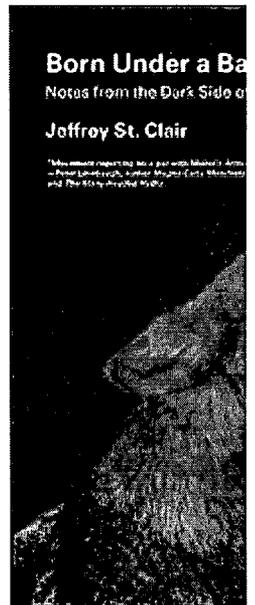
All this makes Shearon Harris a very inviting target for would-be terrorists. In fact, the Department of Homeland Security has fingered Shearon Harris as one of the most vulnerable terrorist targets in the nation.

Potential atomic terrorists don't have to steal plutonium, take a crash course in physics, or concoct a bomb to manufacture a radiological nightmare scenario in the heart of the Carolinas. All they have to do is penetrate the security fence of a lightly guarded commercial reactor and find a way to ignite the pools of high-level radioactive waste. The easiest method is to disrupt the circulation of the water system that keeps the pools cool.

The resulting fire would be virtually unquenchable. Moreover, because the water system that feeds the waste pools is also connected to the Shearon Harris reactor, a pool fire could also trigger a nuclear meltdown. And so it goes.

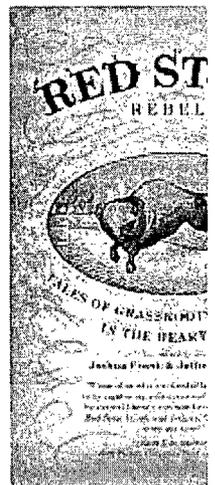
An uncontrolled pool fire and meltdown at Shearon Harris would put more than two million residents of this rapidly growing section of North Carolina in extreme peril. A recent study by the Brookhaven Labs, not known to overstate nuclear risks, estimates that a pool fire could cause 140,000 cancers, contaminate thousands of square miles of land, and cause over \$500 billion in off-site property damage.

An October 2000 report from the Sandia Labs in Albuquerque painted a grim picture of the consequences from a pool fire. The report, which was kept under wraps for two years by the NRC, found that a waste pool fire could spread radioactive debris over a 500-mile radius, including Cesium-137, a carcinogen linked to birth defects and genetic damage.



Under a Bad Sign
Notes from the Dark Side of America
By Jeffrey St. Clair

RED STATE I
Tales of Grassroots Resistance
from the Heart of the South



Edited
Jeffrey St. Clair
and Joshua French

How the Progressives
the US into a Democracy

[Iraq's Nationalist Surge](#)

Manuel Garcia, Jr.
[Voting: a Ritual of
Justifying Biases](#)

M. Shahid Alam
[The Zionist Stratagem](#)

Andy Worthington
[Salim Hamdan's
Sentence](#)

Lawrence J. Korb
[Bad Advice from
Generals](#)

David Model
[Instant Genocide](#)

Alan Farago
[When Miami Goes
Bust: the Politics of the
Housing Crisis](#)

Diop Olugbala
[What About the Black
Community, Obama?](#)

Firmin DeBrabander
[When the Olympics
Went Green--with
Algae](#)

Website of the Day
[Summer Reading:
CounterPunch's
Favorite Novels](#)

August 7, 2008

Dr. Trudy Bond
[Fixing Hell and Curing
Obesity](#)

William Blum
[Breaking Young
Hearts: Obama and the
Empire](#)

Paul Craig Roberts
[Do You Feel Safe Now?](#)

When details from this report leaked out to the press, Mike Easley, the governor of North Carolina, responded by ordering that iodine pills be distributed to neighbors of the plant. It was a touching gesture. But iodine is no defense against the ravages of Cesium-137.

Despite vows of beefed up security by the nuclear industry, it's not that difficult to break into most commercial nuclear plants and security at Shearon Harris is notoriously lax. In 1999, NRC records show that two Progress energy employees gained access to the reactor and the waste pools without security clearance. The energy company has hired numerous employees with questionable security backgrounds, including three guards who failed psychological exams and one with a criminal record.

The whole plant could go up without the intervention of terrorists. Basic mismanagement and design flaws in the plant could well do the trick. In fact, the NRC has estimated that there's a 1:100 chance of a pool fire happening under the rosiest scenario. And the dossier on the Shearon Harris plant is far from rosy.

In 1999, the nuclear plant experienced four emergency shutdowns, or SCRAMS. The problems led plant managers to tell the Charlotte News and Observer that they were "very disappointed," engaged in "soul searching," and unsure whether the string of malfunctions were "coincidental or a sign of deeper problems."

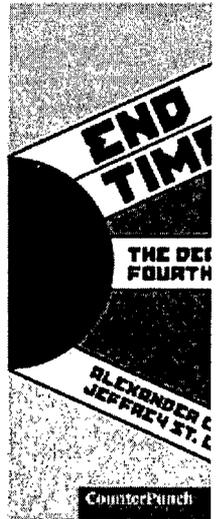
A few months later, in April 2000, the plant's safety monitoring system, designed to provide early warning of a serious emergency, failed. It wasn't the first time. Indeed, the emergency warning system at Shearon Harris has failed fifteen times since the plant opened in 1987.

Between January and July of 2002, Harris plant managers were forced to manually shut down the reactors four times. Then in August of that year, the plant automatically shut itself down when the outside power grid weakened.

Documents uncovered from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission reveal other problems at Shearon Harris. Inspectors have found "rubber and other foreign material" clogging the cooling lines in the plant's heat removal system. There are also internal memos from the plant reporting that many of its evacuation sirens within the ten-mile emergency zone surrounding the plant are inoperable during severe weather.

In 2002 the NRC put the plant on notice about nine unresolved safety issues detected during a fire prevention inspection by NRC investigators. The plant was hit with a "Security Level III Notice of Violation." When the NRC returned to the plant a few months later for a reinspection, it determined that the corrective actions were "not acceptable."

"Progress Energy is far above the industry average in three



END TIME
The Death of the Fourth
Alexander Cassidy &
Jeffrey St. Clair

[Buy End Time](#)

**New From
CounterPunch**

**The Secret Language of
the Cross:
HOW THE
INVENTED
By Daniel Cassidy**

**WINNER OF
AMERICAN BOOK**



[Click Here](#)

**Cassidy on
[Click Here for](#)**

Ralph Nader
[Gouged in the Skies:
 Gotcha Capitalism in
 the Airline Industry](#)

Robert Weitzel
[Obama and the Two
 Walls](#)

Jacob G. Hornberger
[Why Wasn't Ivins
 Declared an Enemy
 Combatant?](#)

Binoy Kampmark
[Driving Bin Laden](#)

David Macaray
[What Does a Radical
 Labor Union Look Like?](#)

Howard Lisnoff
[Echoes of the Sixties:
 Refusing to Recite the
 Pledge](#)

Website of the Day
[Bono's Retirement
 Fund](#)

August 6, 2008

Marc Herold
[Obama and
 Afghanistan](#)

Greg Moses
[The Unnecessary
 Execution of Jose
 Ernesto Medellin](#)

Sheldon Rampton
[The Anthrax Cover-Up](#)

Kevin Young
[The Atomic Bombing of
 Japan: Tsuyoshi
 Hasegawa Re-
 Examines the Japanese
 Surrender](#)

Michael Estrada
[What I Re-Discovered](#)

important areas: emergency reactor shutdowns, required inspections, and the fact that it has interconnected Harris reactor's cooling system to four high-level waste pools: the largest in the nation," says Jim Warren, executive director of North Carolina WARN.

The problems continue with a chilling regularity. In the spring of 2003 there were four emergency shut downs of the plant, including three SCRAMs over a four-day period in the middle of May. One of the incidents occurred when the reactor core failed to cool down during a refueling operation while the reactor dome was off of the plant—a potentially catastrophic series of events.

Between 1999 and 2003, there were twelve major problems requiring the shutdown of the plant. According to the NRC, the national average for commercial reactors is one shutdown per eighteen months.

The situation at Shearon Harris is made more dire by virtue of the fact that the reactor is directly tied into the cooling system for the spent fuel pools. A breakdown (or sabotage) in either system could lead to serious consequences in the other.

Congressman David Price, the North Carolina Democrat, sent the Nuclear Regulatory Commission a study of the situation by scientists at MIT and Princeton. The report pinpointed the waste pools as the biggest risk at the plant. "Spent fuel recently discharged from a reactor could heat up relatively rapidly and catch fire," wrote Bob Alvarez, a former advisor to the Department of Energy and co-author of the report. "The fire could well spread to older fuel. The long-term land contamination consequences of such an event could be significantly worse than Chernobyl."

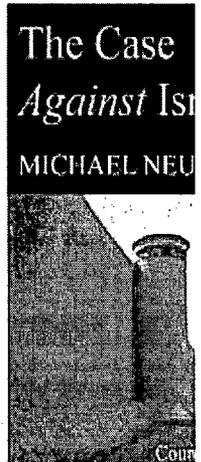
The study recommended that the spent fuel pools be replaced with low-density, open frame racks and that the older waste assemblages be placed in hardened, above-ground storage units. The change could be done relatively cheaply, costing the energy giant about \$5 million a year—less than the \$6.6 million annual bonus for Progress CEO Warren Cavanaugh.

But Progress scoffed at the idea and recruited the help of NRC Commissioner Edward McGaffigan to smear the MIT/Princeton report. In an internal memo, McGaffigan instructed NRC staffers to produce "a hard-hitting critique that sort of undermines the study deeply."

McGaffigan is a veteran cold-warrior and a nuclear zealot, who has worked for both Democrats and Republicans. A veteran of the National Security Council in the Reagan administration, McGaffigan took a special interest in promoting nuclear plants to US client states. He left the White House to serve as the chief policy aide on energy and defense issues for Senator Jeff Bingaman, the Democrat from New Mexico. In 1996, President Clinton appointed him to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, where he became a tireless

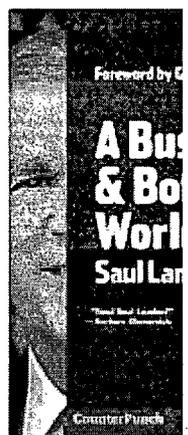
[Venu](#)

**"The Case Against
 Michael Neumann
 Devastating R
 Alan Derst**



[Click Here](#)

**Saul Landau's
 Botox World
 Foreword by C**



[Click Here to](#)

**Grand Theft I
 How They Mad
 on the War on**

in Mexico

Robert Weissman
The Commercial Games

Dr. Susan Block
The Knoxville Unitarian Universalist Church Killings: Did Rightwing Talk Shows Drive Him to Kill?

Cindy Sheehan
This is Horseshit

Ace Hoffman
The Unholy Trinity

Website of the Day Over to You, Paris

August 5, 2008

Paul Craig Roberts
The Anthrax Attacks and the Assault on Civil Liberties

Jeff Halper
An Israeli Jew in Gaza

Patrick Cockburn
Iraq Better? With Three Wars Going On?

Nancy Welch
"What Did My Father Do to Deserve Such Treatment?" An Interview with Laila al-Arian

Peter Morici
Rear View Mirror Economics

Sousan Hammad
The Antisemitism Incitement Craze

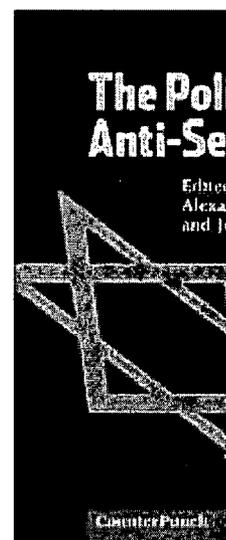
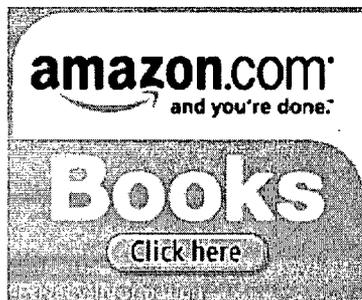
Eamon Martin
The Audacity of

proponent of nuclear power on the ludicrous grounds that it will slow the onslaught of global warming. McGaffigan has also consistently dismissed the risks associated with the transport and storage of nuclear waste. Just prior to leaving office, Clinton reappointed him to another full term in 2000.

McGaffigan's meddling outraged many anti-nuke activists. "There's a huge credibility in the federal regulatory agencies," said Lewis Pitts, an environmental attorney in North Carolina. "After 9/11, the nuclear industry faked a report to convince the public that an airplane hitting a nuke plant is nothing to worry about and now the NRC has directed the production of a bogus study to deny decades of science on the perils of pool fires."

If the worst happens, the blame will reside in Washington, which has permitted the Shearon Harris facility to become a nuclear time bomb. The atomic clock is ticking.

Jeffrey St. Clair is the author of Been Brown So Long It Looked Like Green to Me: the Politics of Nature and Grand Theft Pentagon. His newest book, Born Under a Bad Sky, is just out from AK Press / CounterPunch books. He can be reached at: sitka@comcast.net.



The Politics of Antisemitism
Edited by Alexander and Jeffrey St. Clair