

ORGANIC FARMERS, GERMAN VINTNERS, AND THE ATOMIC MONSTER OF  
SEABROOK: A TRANS-ATLANTIC HISTORY OF SOCIAL ACTIVISM AND  
NUCLEAR POWER FROM NEW ENGLAND TO WEST GERMANY

by

DAVID C. SMITH

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Abstract

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DAVID C. SMITH, PH.D

The University of Texas at Arlington, 2015

Supervising Professor: Christopher C. Morris

This study focuses on citizen intervention, direct action, and antinuclear activism from West Germany to New England in the twentieth century. Samuel Lovejoy's war against the nuke in Montague, the politicization of German vintners in Breisach, the site occupation in Wyhl, and the rise of the Clamshell Alliance in Seabrook provide the framework for a trans-Atlantic narrative on the development of the antinuclear movement in the Atlantic World during the 1970s. Using both oral histories and archival research on antinuclear protest in New England and the Rhine Valley in West Germany, what this paper ultimately demonstrates is that the model of direct action used by the nuclear opposition at Wyhl provided the inspiration behind the organization of the Clamshell Alliance in the fight against the atomic monster in Seabrook, New Hampshire.

Along the way, the story explores how shared concerns over thermal pollution, low-level radiation, and the authoritative nuclear state politicized everyday people.

Seemingly ordinary farmers, vintners, and fishermen rallied against nuclear power and joined what were essentially grassroots social movements in order to challenge the authority of the state. This project is significant because it questions traditional American and European historiography on environmental and social movements first by studying the relationship between nuclear technologies, political boundaries, and the traditional social order, and second by situating the antinuclear movement within a trans-Atlantic context.

This study places two heretofore separate social and environmental histories into a single transnational narrative, and in the process, a new interpretation of the Cold War is presented based on nuclear power and social activism in the Atlantic World. Ultimately, the smaller story of the antinuclear movement from New England to West Germany is told in order to reframe and expand the larger story that becomes the Cold War.

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## Chapter 1

### The Antinuclear Movement in Cold War Perspective

From Atoms for Peace to Three Mile Island, the antinuclear movement in the Atlantic World during the 1970s was built through the collaboration of organic farmers, German vintners, and 1960s radicals from New England to West Germany. This story focuses on citizen intervention, direct action, and antinuclear activism from Samuel Lovejoy's war against the nuke in Montague, Massachusetts, to the politicization of German vintners in Breisach, the site occupation at Wyhl, and to the rise of the Clamshell Alliance in Seabrook, New Hampshire, a trans-Atlantic narrative of the development of the antinuclear movement in the Atlantic World during the 1970s. Using both oral histories and archival research on antinuclear protest in New England and along the Rhine in West Germany, the argument is that the model of direct action used by the nuclear opposition at Wyhl provided the inspiration behind the organization of the Clamshell Alliance in the fight against the atomic monster in Seabrook, New Hampshire.

Along the way, the story explores how shared concerns over thermal pollution, low-level radiation, and the authoritative nuclear state politicized everyday people. Ordinary citizens rallied against nuclear power and joined what were essentially grassroots social movements in order to challenge the authority of the state. This project is significant because it questions traditional American and European historiography on environmental and social movements first by studying the relationship between nuclear technologies, political boundaries, and the traditional social order, and second by situating the antinuclear movement within a trans-Atlantic context. This study places two

heretofore separate social and environmental histories into a single Atlantic World-based narrative.

However, the story of the Clamshell Alliance and its relationship with the West German protest against nuclear power that arose from Wyhl represents something more than a new interpretation of the environmental and social movements of the 1970s. Because the antinuclear movement developed against the backdrop of the nuclear arms race between the United States and Soviet Union as well as the massive expansion of the nuclear industry through the Eisenhower administration's Atoms for Peace program, this story also offers an alternative window through which the diplomatic relationships and social activism that defined the Cold War can be viewed. Thus, what is really being offered is a new interpretation of the Cold War as well as an original contribution to the existing historiography both on the era and the Atlantic World.

### Historiography, Sources, and Methodology

Atlantic history represents a challenge to traditional American and European-centered historiography because its narratives most often transcend political boundaries and the established social order. The Atlantic World as a concept was pioneered by American historian and French Revolution expert R.R. Palmer during the 1950s to initially describe the interactions of the people and empires bordering the Atlantic Ocean beginning with the Age of Discovery in the mid-fifteenth century through the Age of Revolution in the late seventeenth to mid-eighteenth century. Early Atlantic historians like Palmer focused primarily on the Atlantic slave trade and colonialism in the New

World from an Anglo-American perspective, but beginning the 1980s, Bernard Bailyn led the expansion of Atlantic history to include a broader range of social, political, and economic topics within the field. The most current trend not only consists of works focusing on environmental and sustainability issues in the Atlantic World with a particular focus on the Cold War, but also the different types of Atlantic World-based narratives recently produced.<sup>1</sup>

British historian David Armitage recently suggested that there are three concepts for the different types of Atlantic history today which include circum-Atlantic, cis-Atlantic, and trans-Atlantic. The first two concepts represent more oceanic-centered and nation state-based perceptions of the Atlantic World, but the model used in this study is the trans-Atlantic concept which focuses on the collaborations, comparisons, and basic exchange of ideas and information by people and nation states on both sides of the Atlantic. This study on the antinuclear movement from New England to West Germany is representative of the expansion in the historiography of the Atlantic World that has occurred in the twenty-first century in which more social, environmental, and diplomatic histories from the Cold War era are being reconsidered. By delocalizing the nuclear opposition and social protest in New England and West Germany, this study actually

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<sup>1</sup> See: R.R. Palmer and David Armitage, *The Age of Democratic Revolution: A Political History of Europe and America, 1760-1800* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014); Bernard Bailyn, *Voyagers to the West: A Passage in the Peopling of America on the Eve of the Revolution* (New York: Vintage, 1988); Bernard Bailyn, *Atlantic History: Concepts and Contours* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005); Douglas R. Egerton, *The Atlantic World: A History, 1400-1888* (Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, 2007).

argues that the antinuclear movement was neither a German or American creation but rather was truly trans-Atlantic.<sup>2</sup>

In telling this story, a new narrative emerges that redefines the existing historiography of the Cold War. Historians began studying the Cold War nearly as soon as it began in 1945 with the development of the atomic bomb and the conclusion of World War II. The source of the Cold War, a postwar world dominated by two lone superpowers in the Soviet Union and United States who were engaged in an increasingly sophisticated technological and ideological rivalry for global hegemony, is a largely undisputed matter. In contrast, the disagreement over the cause of the Cold War, and who was ultimately responsible between the Soviets and Americans, has dominated the historiography since 1945 resulting in three distinct camps: orthodox, revisionist, and post-revisionist.<sup>3</sup>

The orthodox view was the first to emerge immediately after World War II, and it directly reflected the official policy of the United States. Citing Soviet aggression in Eastern Europe and the violation of nearly all agreements Moscow made with the West, prominent American historians like John Lewis Gaddis and Herbert Feis justified the Truman Doctrine by placing blame squarely on the Soviet Union for the Cold War. The orthodox view served as the dominant interpretation of the Cold War throughout the late 1940s and 1950s, but it was far from unanimous. Journalist Walter Lippmann, who was

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<sup>2</sup> David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick, *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800: Second Edition* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002), 13-29. See: J.R. McNeill and Corinna R. Unger, *Environmental Histories of the Cold War* (Washington, D.C.: German Historical Institute, 2013).

<sup>3</sup> Francis G. Couvares, Martha Sexton, Gerald N. Grob, and George Athan Billias, *Interpretations of American History: Volume Two, From Reconstruction*, Eight Edition (Boston: Bedford/St. Martini's, 2009), 246-286.

responsible for coining the terms “Cold War,” argued that the United States was just as much responsible for the nuclear arms race and postwar hostilities between the East and West as was the Soviet Union. Lippmann pointed to the fact that American politicians, including President Harry Truman, refused to honor the terms of the Yalta Conference and recognize the Soviet Union’s sphere of influence in Eastern Europe, and as a result, it was argued that the Soviets were provoked by the foreign policy and economic interests of the United States.<sup>4</sup>

Critiques of the orthodox interpretation like Lippmann’s led to the rise of the revisionist view of the Cold War in the late 1950s and 1960s led by historians William Appleman Williams, Walter LaFeber, Gabriel Kolko, and Gar Alperovitz among others. Whether it was due to empire building, economic determinism, anticommunism, or the U.S. nuclear monopoly, these revisionist argued that it was the United States that started the Cold War and bore the responsibility for its escalation because of Washington’s never-ending desire to gain new markets and extend its global sphere of influence. The revisionist view became particularly popular with the New Left during the 1960s and featured prominently in the era’s social movements including those on civil rights, peace, the environment, and even nuclear power.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> See: John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000); Herbert Feis, *Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin: The War They Waged and the Peace They Sought* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967); Walter Lippmann, *The Cold War: A Study in U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Harper, 1947).

<sup>5</sup> See: William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2009); Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945-1996* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997); Gabriel Kolko, *The Politics of War: The World and United States Foreign Policy, 1943-1945* (New York: Random House, 1968); Gar Alperovitz, *Atomic Diplomacy: Hiroshima and Potsdam, The Use of the Atomic Bomb and the American Confrontation with Soviet Power* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1965).

By the 1970s, the revisionist view as well as the radicalism of the New Left drew reprisals from the orthodox camp while more moderate scholars began looking for middle ground in the debate between orthodox and revisionist historians. The result was a realist perspective that did not recuse the United States of its empire and market seeking, nor did it ignore the Soviet Union's liability in stoking the flames of the ideological battle and nuclear arms race that defined the Cold War. The main difference was that realists held both the Soviet Union and United States responsible without the venom for the latter regularly used by revisionists.<sup>6</sup>

Realists are sometimes seen as comprising a separate school of thought on the Cold War, but in actuality, realism served as the foundation of the post-revisionist camp that formed in 1980s and flourished after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Led by the likes of John Lewis Gaddis, Melvyn Leffler, and H.W. Brands, the post-revisionist camp enjoyed the benefit of not only the availability of new information from the Soviet archives opening during the early 1990s, but also the hindsight of who actually won the Cold War. For post-revisionists, both the United States and Soviet Union held imperial aspirations during the Cold War, and each country both actively and strategically sought to realize those aspirations.<sup>7</sup>

However, in the case of the Cold War, the post-revisionist interpretation is ultimately a victor's history, and in many ways, the Cold War and its full ramifications

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<sup>6</sup> Couvares, et al., *Interpretations of American History*, 246-286.

<sup>7</sup> See: John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the End of the Cold War: Implications, Reconsiderations, Provocations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Melvyn P. Leffler, *The Specter of Communism: The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1917-1953* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994); H.W. Brands, *The Devil We Knew: Americans and the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

represent a conflict that is still unfinished and in the process of being defined. As a result, the orthodox, revisionist, and post-revisionist interpretations of the winners and losers of the Cold War use a top-down perspective that often obscures the rich histories that existed at a more micro level during the Cold War. The most recent scholarship in the twenty-first century concentrates less on the causes, winners, and losers of the Cold War. The newest research led by historians like Odd Arne Westad focuses on underserved subjects of the Cold War such as technology, culture, ideology, and how the Cold War connects to the broader social, political, and economic trends of the twentieth century. It is within this trend that this study on the antinuclear movement and nuclear power in the Atlantic World is located, and by telling the smaller story of the fight against nuclear power at Montague, Seabrook, and along the Rhine at Wyhl, a new narrative on the larger story of the Cold War is produced.<sup>8</sup>

The narrative presented in this story on the antinuclear movement and nuclear power during the Cold War was compiled using a variety of archival sources, oral histories, personal interviews, and other firsthand accounts. Of particular note, because of the relative recentness of this history, many of the key figures and major agents featured in the narrative were alive during the research period, and some were even willing to be interviewed and provide their own oral history on the antinuclear movement. This included Sam Lovejoy, Harvey Wasserman, Anna Gyorgy, and Randy Kehler, all from the Montague Farm and later the Clamshell Alliance; Renny Cushing,

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<sup>8</sup> See: Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Odd Arne Westad, "The Cold War and the International History of the Twentieth Century," in Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Cold War, Volume 1: Origins* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

who was a cofounder of the Clamshell Alliance; Fran Fortino and Volkmar Vogt, who were college students and residents of Freiburg during the site occupation and protest at Wyhl; and finally, filmmaker Charles Light of Green Mountain Post Films, who along with his partner Dan Keller, produced the full length documentaries *Lovejoy's Nuclear War* on the battle over nuclear power in Western Massachusetts and *The Last Resort* on the rise of the Clamshell Alliance at Seabrook.

Further research has been conducted with the Clamshell Alliance Manuscript Collection at the University of New Hampshire, various archive collections on antinuclear protest in Western Massachusetts at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and the Archiv Soziale Bewegungen (Social Movements Archive) at Freiburg im Breisgau located along the Rhine near the small town of Wyhl in the southwestern corner of modern Germany. Other key primary sources include the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, which began chronicling the debate over nuclear weapons and nuclear power as early as the late 1940s, and the *Badische Zeitung*, a German newspaper based in Freiburg im Breisgau that has covered news in the Black Forest region since 1946.

In addition, although the existing historiography on the Clamshell Alliance and the nuclear protest at Wyhl is extremely limited, there are several noteworthy studies that proved to be highly useful to this project. Of particular note, Robert Surbrug's book on social protest in Massachusetts from 1974 to 1990, Christian Joppke's comparison of the debates over nuclear power in the United States and West Germany, and Henry Bedford's meticulous work on the citizen intervention at Seabrook Station were all vital to the construction of this story but different from what is ultimately presented here. Bedford's



study treats the debate over nuclear power at Seabrook as localized phenomena and disconnected from the larger movement that formed in the Atlantic World during 1970s. Despite his comparisons between the United States and West Germany, Joppke regards the nuclear industry and antinuclear movement in both countries as separate entities. On the other hand, Surbrug's narrative on social protest in Massachusetts which also covers the Clamshell Alliance at Seabrook is expertly located in a larger national context, but lacks the trans-Atlantic perspective needed to portray the impact of the Cold War not only on the antinuclear movement but also the relationship between the nuclear protests at Montague, Wyhl, and Seabrook.<sup>9</sup>

As indicated by the sources, an obvious challenge that will become apparent in presenting this narrative on the antinuclear movement in the Atlantic World during the Cold War is that the story is one sided, told predominately from the perspective of the nuclear opposition at Montague, Seabrook, and along the Rhine at Wyhl. This is by design. One of the difficulties with the existing orthodox, revisionist, and post-revisionist interpretations of the Cold War is the inability to provide a complete synthesis on the conflict. This study makes no such attempt. Although revisionists will agree with the depiction of the United States as a hegemonic market-seeking force in the global market for nuclear power, the intent is not to assign either Washington or Moscow blame for the Cold War. Such a discussion is beyond the scope of this story. Instead, the goal is

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<sup>9</sup> See: Robert Surbrug, Jr., *Beyond Vietnam: The Politics of Protest in Massachusetts, 1974-1990*, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009); Christian Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy: A Comparison of German and the United States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Henry F. Bedford, *Seabrook Station: Citizen Politics and Nuclear Power* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992).

simply to present the perspective of the nuclear opposition in New England and West Germany during the 1970s and explain their relationship not only to one another, but also the larger social movements and political context that helped shape the Cold War era.

The methodology employed to accomplish this goal consists of providing several larger frameworks and then complementing the growing narrative with individual case studies that relay the more detailed story. For example, the story begins with a metanarrative on the bomb, nuclear power, and social activism in the Atlantic World from 1945 to 1973. There is a predominate focus on the United States and West Germany, and this is simply because they represent the primary agents in the history of nuclear power and the antinuclear movement during the Cold War. Nevertheless, this metanarrative is followed by the story of Sam Lovejoy's war against the nuke at Montague which is designed to personify and describe the 1960s radical and type of person who largely comprised the initial antinuclear movement.

The story of Lovejoy's war also introduces key characters who would go on to play starring roles in the Clamshell Alliance. This case study on Lovejoy provides the introduction to the protest along the Rhine in West Germany and the site occupation that formed at Wyhl. The narrative outlined on Model Germany and the radicalization of the Rhine paints the picture of how the Energy Crisis of 1973 radicalized the nuclear opposition and why the switch to direct action occurred. This theme is carried over in what is another case study on the Clamshell Alliance, which primarily features the oral history of Renny Cushing, a Clamshell Alliance cofounder. Cushing's story further

personalizes the struggles of the citizen intervention along the Rhine discussed in the preceding narrative.

The last two sections of the story on the criminalization and subsequent vindication of the antinuclear movement are written in tandem. The intersecting and colliding narratives are meant to accentuate the fact that the antinuclear movement in the Atlantic World during the 1970s represents a single narrative that above anything else tells the story of how ordinary people stood up to an authoritative state and helped end the Cold War by derailing the expansion of nuclear power. In closing, the antinuclear movement that emerged in the Atlantic World after the Energy Crisis of 1973 was several decades in the making and was framed by the protests that developed along the Rhine at Wyhl and through the emergence of the Clamshell Alliance at Seabrook. The antinuclear movement took center stage during the 1970s and faded after Three Mile Island and the reappearance of the debate over nuclear weapons in the early 1980s, but its ultimate legacy was the redefinition of the relationship between the state, its constituents, and environmental politics during the Cold War and thereafter.

### Plot Summary

Both the nuclear industry and the social activism that would later comprise the antinuclear movement in the Atlantic World during the 1970s were originally derived from the atomic bomb and the nuclear arms race between the United States and Germany during World War II and then followed by the Americans and Soviets in the postwar era. Opposition to the bomb first arose from within the Manhattan Project, which was the

very organization assembled to create it, and after the United States successfully harnessed the power of the atom and unleashed the atomic bomb on Japan to force an end to the fighting in the Pacific, several members of the Manhattan Project lamented their creation. They felt horrified and tormented by the death and destruction caused by the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and motivated in part by guilt over the decision to use the atomic bomb against Japan, the United States government became determined to explore and promote the possibility of the peaceful atom after World War II.

Nuclear power emerged in the postwar era as the answer to the hope that there was indeed a peaceful use for the atom. Proponents of nuclear power believed that the atom's seemingly unlimited potential as an energy source for the world might atone for the destruction caused by the bomb. By the early 1950s, the Eisenhower administration devised a plan known as Atoms for Peace to help export nuclear power internationally, but because of the Cold War and the nuclear arms race between the United States and Soviet Union, the program was heavily flawed and most likely disingenuous from the beginning. Atoms for Peace would serve an ulterior purpose. The program helped the United States grow and expand its nuclear weapons programs by securing private investment and using diplomatic partnerships to maintain the American monopoly on nuclear power that was originally established by the Manhattan Project. As a result, despite its purportedly benevolent intentions, the peaceful atom remained tethered to the bomb.

Throughout the late 1940s and over the course of 1950s, the United States and Soviet Union engaged in a fierce and quickly escalating arms race that precipitated the

initial expansion of the nuclear industry in the Atlantic World. Through Atoms for Peace, the United States used the light water pressure reactor and an aggressive nuclear package complete with cost-plus contracts and free uranium shipments to not only muscle any competitors out of the global market for reactor technologies, but also to strategically export nuclear power to its Western European allies including West Germany. In 1957, the German Atomic Commission launched the Eltville Program, the first nuclear program in Germany since Hitler's Uranverein during World War II, and it was a near carbon copy of the early nuclear industry in the United States. The Eltville Program was governed by the German Atomic Law of 1959 which was effectively a replica of the U.S. Atomic Energy Acts of 1946 and 1954 as well as the Price Anderson Indemnity Act of 1957. The parallels were hardly a coincidence. West Germany was an Atoms for Peace partner nation and by design mirrored its American counterpart.

Meanwhile, as the nuclear industry continued to grow, the size and scope of the Cold War arms race also increased. In 1946, the United States began a fifteen-year history of conducting extensive nuclear weapons testing at Bikini Atoll in the Pacific Ocean's Marshall Island chain. The weapons testing not only resulted in the world's first peace-time nuclear disaster, but also the campaign to the Ban the Bomb. In 1954, fallout from a hydrogen bomb blanketed a Japanese fishing boat located more than 40 miles away, killing one of its crew members, radioman Aikichi Kuboyama. However, Kuboyama's death was not in vain. Bertrand Russell and Albert Einstein led the growing dissent from within the scientific community to nuclear weapons and issued the Russell-Einstein Manifesto in 1955 calling for an end to the nuclear weapons testing and arms

race between the United States and Soviet Union. In response, the Pugwash Conference was organized, and the Ban the Bomb movement developed in the Atlantic World encompassing the United States, Great Britain, and West Germany among others.

The campaign to Ban the Bomb of the late 1950s significantly impacted the antinuclear movement during the 1970s, especially in West Germany. Throughout the Atlantic World, the Ban the Bomb campaign helped radicalize an entire generation against nuclear power as well as the authority of the ever-expanding military industrial state, but in West Germany, the politicization of the Ban the Bomb movement by the Social Democratic Party initiated a chain of events that culminated in the political exclusion of the Left. The Easter March Movement and the Extraparliamentary Opposition (APO) formed to provide a voice for the Left and also established the local and regional political networks later used by the antinuclear movement.

In the United States, after the Ban the Bomb campaign culminated in the Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963, a new debate concerning low-level radiation and nuclear reactor safety was just beginning. Ernest Sternglass, John Gofman, and Arthur Tamplin were among the initial scientists to speak out against nuclear power during the 1960s, and as public awareness grew, the frequency in citizen interventions and the use of litigation to fight the expansion of the nuclear industry also increased. Citizen interventions served as early precursors for the antinuclear movement, but the litigation-based protests were often isolated from one another and largely ineffective save for the exceptions of Bodega Bay and Calvert Cliffs.

In addition, any gains made by the nuclear opposition through citizen intervention were wholly undone in 1973 after the outbreak of the Arab-Israeli War. The ensuing Energy Crisis of 1973 as a result of the OPEC oil embargo caused Western governments from Bonn to Washington, D.C. to turn to nuclear power as a vehicle for economic recovery and as a means to end their energy dependence on foreign oil imports. In the aftermath, a more authoritative and centralized state developed across the Atlantic World in support of nuclear power which rendered citizen intervention obsolete after 1973.

In 1974, a new direction in the fight against nuclear power emerged on the plains of Western Massachusetts when Samuel Lovejoy toppled a weather tower on the construction site for a proposed nuclear power plant in protest of what he believed to be the unlawful and immoral imposition of nuclear power on the community of Montague. Lovejoy was an organic farmer and member of a nearby counterculture commune called the Montague Farm, which was comprised of New Left dissidents and former 1960s radicals who became radicalized against the state-sponsored nuclear industry in their local community. They were joined in the Atlantic World by farmers, vintners, and remnants of the APO along the Rhine in West Germany who also became radicalized against nuclear power and the increasing authoritativeness of the state in the wake of the Energy Crisis of 1973.

The turning point for the nuclear opposition came in February of 1975 at Wyhl when a group of trained activists initiated an eleven month protest and site occupation of what stood to be the first nuclear power plant constructed under Bonn's newly implemented nuclear power-based economic recovery program, Model Germany. Wyhl

became an international inspiration for the fight against nuclear power and its direct action-based model using civil disobedience and nonviolence was imported across the Atlantic through the organization of the Clamshell Alliance at Seabrook in the summer of 1976.

In perhaps the most interesting twist in the story, the import of Wyhl by what would become the Clamshell Alliance occurred through film and was facilitated by members of the Montague Farm during a chance encounter and visit to the Wyhl site occupation the previous summer. They returned from Europe with a rough, 8 millimeter reel of film showing the raw footage of the Wyhl protest. After sharing it with members of the nuclear opposition at Seabrook who had grown weary of the citizen intervention, Wyhl became the model behind the formation of the Clamshell Alliance, and from Seabrook, the antinuclear movement spread across the United States.

Between 1976 and 1978, the antinuclear movement became a victim of its own success and began to collapse due to internal conflict over the antinuclear movement's commitment to nonviolence. Communist groups and urban radicals became attracted to the platform created by the antinuclear movement and joined the fight against nuclear power at Seabrook, Brokdorf, and Grohnde with the sole aim to incite a confrontation with the state rather than oppose the nuclear industry. The increased violence or threat thereof by these groups delegitimized the antinuclear movement and in the case of West Germany resulted in the criminalization of the nuclear opposition. The vindication of the antinuclear movement would not come until 1979 as a result of the nuclear accident at Three Mile Island.



The fight against nuclear power broadened considerably after Three Mile Island, but the antinuclear movement itself became marginalized. The public outcry and increased overall awareness concerning the dangers associated with nuclear power created enough political clout to allow the nuclear opposition to return to the pre-Wyhl institutional channels of protest. In West Germany, the Green Party emerged as the new voice of the Left and the fight against nuclear power following the final protest of the antinuclear movement at Gorleben, and in the United States, Massachusetts liberals Ed Markey, Ted Kennedy, and Michael Dukakis carried the debate over nuclear power through the more traditional political channels deep into the 1980s and the presidential election of 1988. The antinuclear movement became institutionalized after Three Mile Island, and the nuclear industry was unable to expand beyond its pre-1979 level.

From Hiroshima to Three Mile Island, the nuclear arms race and propaganda war between the United States and Soviet Union can be observed through the lens of a narrative that features Atoms for Peace, the Ban the Bomb movement, the Energy Crisis of 1973, and the opposition to nuclear power from organic farmers in Western Massachusetts, German vintners along the Rhine in West Germany, the atomic monster of Seabrook, and the emergence of the German Green Party at Gorleben. In the end, the story of the antinuclear movement in the Atlantic World is about a lot more than just nuclear power and those who resisted it. The antinuclear movement represented a microcosm of the rise and fall of the Cold War through the social activism that came to define the 1960s and 1970s, and ultimately, it was a story that both began and ended with the bomb.

## Chapter 2

### Atoms for Peace and the Origins of the Antinuclear Movement

Both nuclear power and the social activism that would later comprise the antinuclear movement in the Atlantic World during the 1970s developed out of the atomic bomb. The history of the bomb began with it as the object of desire for the governments of the United States and Nazi Germany over the course of World War II. Opposition to the bomb first arose within the Manhattan Project, which was the very organization assembled to create it. After the United States successfully harnessed the power of the atom and unleashed the atomic bombs on Japan to force an end to the fighting in the Pacific, several members of the Manhattan Project lamented their creation. They felt horrified and tormented by the death and destruction caused by the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Motivated in part by guilt over the decision to use the atomic bomb against Japan, the United States government became determined to explore and promote the possibility of the peaceful atom after World War II.

Nuclear power emerged in the postwar era as the answer to the hope that there was indeed a peaceful use for the atom. Proponents of nuclear power believed that the atom's seemingly unlimited potential as an energy source for the world might atone for the destruction caused by the atomic bombs used during World War II. By the early 1950s, the Eisenhower administration devised a plan known as Atoms for Peace to help export nuclear power internationally, but because of the Cold War and the nuclear arms race that ensued between the United States and Soviet Union, the program was heavily flawed from the beginning. Atoms for Peace would serve an ulterior purpose. The

program allowed the United States to continue the growth and expansion of its nuclear weapons programs while also using private investment and diplomatic partnerships to help maintain the American monopoly on nuclear technologies that was originally established by the Manhattan Project. Despite its purportedly benevolent intentions, the peaceful atom remained tethered to the bomb, and the opposition that subsequently arose to the use of the atomic bomb during the late 1950s and early 1960s would lay the foundation upon which the antinuclear movement was built in the 1970s.

This chapter recounts the origins of the antinuclear movement and the growth of nuclear power and social activism in the Atlantic World from the bomb to the peaceful atom. The narrative traces the development of nuclear power from the construction of the bomb during World War II to the emergence of the nuclear industry by the early 1970s. The primary topics discussed include the construction of the atomic bomb during World War II and its impact on the nuclear industry in the postwar period; the development of the Cold War and its relationship with Atoms for Peace; the initial growth of the nuclear industry in the Atlantic World; the Ban the Bomb movement; the low-level radiation and nuclear reactor safety debates; the rise of the modern environmental movement and its effect on citizen interventions against nuclear power; and finally, the global impact of the Arab-Israeli War of 1973 on the nuclear industry.

One of the major arguments presented in this story is that Atoms for Peace was the driving force behind the creation of the nuclear industry both domestically in the United States and internationally in countries like West Germany. The United States sought to maintain the nuclear monopoly it created at the end of World War II, and

Atoms for Peace afforded the United States the opportunity to shape and control nuclear power beyond its own borders and in the greater global arena. This represents a significant and new distinction to make about nuclear power and its relationship with the antinuclear movement. Most studies examine individual protests against nuclear power as existing within a vacuum as localized phenomena. This is largely due to the fact that nuclear power is most often treated as a local issue rather than as a global technology. As a result, very little has been done to understand the continuity and the relationship between the nuclear industries that formed in Atoms for Peace partner countries during the 1950s and 1960s as well as the antinuclear protests that subsequently arose in places like Montague, Massachusetts, Wyhl, Germany, and Seabrook, New Hampshire in the decade that followed.<sup>10</sup>

The other major argument presented in this story concerns the relationship between social protest and the rise of nuclear power in the Atlantic World. Like multiple branches of the same tree, the antinuclear movement of the 1970s spread across the Atlantic through collaborations, protests, and the basic exchange of information and ideas. Its roots originated in the campaign to Ban the Bomb, the scientific debate over low-level radiation and nuclear reactor safety, the modern environmental movement, and the growing opposition to the military industrial complex of the Cold War. Stretching

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<sup>10</sup> See: John Wills, *Conservation Fallout: Nuclear Protest at Diablo Canyon* (Reno, NV: University of Nevada Press, 2012); Thomas Raymond Wellock, *Critical Masses: Opposition to Nuclear Power in California: 1958-1978* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998); Joan Aron, *License to Kill: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Shoreham Power Plant* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1998); J. Samuel Walker, *Three Mile Island: A Nuclear Crisis in Historical Perspective* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006). These are all wonderful case studies on individual protests against nuclear power in the United States, but none are connected either to the antinuclear movement as a whole in the Atlantic World or the political context of the Cold War.

across New England and emanating from along the Rhine in West Germany, a trans-Atlantic antinuclear movement emerged during the 1970s as a result of persistent local opposition to nuclear power that occurred in communities throughout the Atlantic World during the 1950s and 1960s.

In sum, this chapter outlines the basic narrative of nuclear power and the social activism in the Atlantic World starting from the construction of the bomb during World War II and spanning the twenty-year period between the globalization of the nuclear industry through Atoms for Peace in 1953 and its rapid expansion following the Arab-Israeli War of 1973. The narrative provides the contextual framework behind the trans-Atlantic antinuclear movement that developed between the United States and West Germany during the 1970s, and although the antinuclear protests at Montague, Wyhl, and Seabrook formed the backbone of the movement, it was a story that originally began with the bomb.

### The Bomb and Nuclear Beginnings

Nuclear power's introduction to the world occurred through the bomb. It exploded onto the scene at the closing stages of World War II with the United States dropping a pair of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in order to force the Japanese surrender. The bomb was the result of a fierce technological battle between the governments of the United States and Hitler's Nazi Germany over who would become the first to develop an atomic weapon capable of fully transforming the war effort for either side. The United States ultimately prevailed, and nuclear power emerged as a

byproduct from this battle, and it continued to grow alongside the ongoing nuclear arms race that came to dominate the Cold War era.<sup>11</sup>

The history of nuclear power dates back to 1932 with Cambridge physicist James Chadwick's discovery of the neutron. Chadwick was one of several prominent scientists researching the power of the atom during the 1930s. Frederic and Irene Joliot-Curie discovered radioactivity in 1934, which Italian physicist Enrico Fermi then used to identify the process of nuclear reactions. German chemists Otto Hahn and Fritz Strassman working in conjunction with Austrian physicists Lise Meitner and Otto Firsch successfully used Fermi's research in order to develop nuclear fission, the process through which nuclear power is produced. Thus, from the beginning, nuclear power was a technology derived from international collaborations between scientists in the Atlantic World, and this same network that helped facilitate the sharing and exchange of scientific research later proved to be absolutely vital in notifying the Allies of Nazi Germany's plans to develop an atomic bomb.<sup>12</sup>

After news of the atomic discovery reached Adolf Hitler, he commissioned the world's first nuclear power program, the Uranverein, in April of 1939 to research the potential military applications of nuclear power. George Joos, Wilhelm Hanle, and Reinhold Mannkopff headed the program, but it was temporarily suspended by the following summer after all three men were drafted into Hitler's Nazi army, the

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<sup>11</sup> Jeremy Bernstein, *Hitler's Uranium Club: The Secret Recordings at Farm Hall* (New York: Copernicus, 2001), 1-56; Jennifer Smith, *The Antinuclear Movement*, (Farmington Hills, MI: Greenhaven Press, 2003), 10-11; Anna Gyorgy, *No Nukes: Everyone's Guide to Nuclear Power*, (Boston: South End Press, 1979), 1-2.

<sup>12</sup> Bernstein, *Hitler's Uranium Club*, 1-56; Smith, *The Antinuclear Movement*, 10-11; Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 1-2.

Wehrmacht. A few months later, Hitler revived the Uranverein upon the outbreak of World War II on September 1, 1939. Nazi Germany's Army Weapons Agency, the Heereswaffenamt, assumed control over the nuclear program and summoned the country's best chemists and physicists, including Otto Hahn, to work on building atomic weapons for Hitler's Wehrmacht. Other notable German scientists that the Heereswaffenamt recruited to serve the Wehrmacht were Walther Bothe, Klaus Clusius, Kurt Diebner, Paul Harteck, Werner Heisenberg, Hans Kopfermann, Nikolaus Riehl, and Georg Stetter, but despite the number of talented scientists working on the Uranverein, the program was fatally flawed.<sup>13</sup>

Most of the scientists working on the Uranverein had been forced against their will rather than recruited to serve the Wehrmacht, and this produced a high amount of internal dissention. There was also a basic lack of available scientists to work on Germany's nuclear program. Like George Joos, Wilhelm Hanle, and Reinhold Mannkopff, the original physicists and chemists in charge of the initial Uranverein, many of the country's youngest and brightest scientists were drafted into Hitler's Wehrmacht. Some died in combat. Others fled the country after Hitler and the Nazi Party first came to power. Regardless, the Heereswaffenamt suffered from a lack of manpower, capital, and other resource shortages that only worsened once it became clear that the program would not produce an atomic bomb in time to impact the war effort. Ultimately, the Nazis abandoned the Uranverein altogether before the war had even been decided.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Mark Walker, *National Socialism and the Quest for Nuclear Power* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 17-25; Bernstein, *Hitler's Uranium Club*, 1-56.

<sup>14</sup> Walker, *National Socialism and the Quest for Nuclear Power*, 17-25; Bernstein, *Hitler's Uranium Club*, 1-56.

Despite never yielding an atomic weapon, the Uranverein remains significant to the development of nuclear power because it served as the impetus behind the formation of the Manhattan Project. As soon as Germany's young physicists and chemists began receiving their orders to serve the Wehrmacht and go to work for the Heereswaffenamt, word of Hitler's plans to develop an atomic bomb quickly spread throughout the scientific community's European network. In the United States, Albert Einstein and Leo Szilard, both of whom recently emigrated from Germany and Hungary respectively, became alarmed over the prospect of a nuclear weapon in the hands of someone like Adolf Hitler. Einstein and Szilard wrote President Franklin D. Roosevelt and warned him that Nazi Germany was seeking the bomb, and the two scientists urged the United States to beat Hitler to it. In 1942, Roosevelt heeded the warning and responded by commissioning the Manhattan Project to lead the Allied effort to develop the world's first nuclear weapon.<sup>15</sup>

Under the direction of American physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer and the military control of General Leslie R. Groves, the Manhattan Project formed as a collaborative effort between the United States, Great Britain, and Canada. The project commenced from the Los Alamos Laboratory located just outside Sante Fe, New Mexico, and it required three additional sites including the Hanford Nuclear Reservation along the Columbia River in Washington, the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee, and the Argonne National Laboratory, otherwise known as the Met Lab, at the University of Chicago. The latter housed the first manmade nuclear reactor, the Chicago Pile-1, which

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<sup>15</sup> Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 2-4; Smith, *The Antinuclear Movement*, 10-12.



produced the world's first nuclear reaction on December 2, 1942. The Chicago Pile-1 became the model used to build both the larger plutonium breeding reactors used at the Hanford site and the smaller reactors including the world's first commercial nuclear reactor, the X-10 graphite reactor, used at the Oak Ridge facility to make weapons grade uranium. The plutonium and uranium produced from both plants was then shipped to Los Alamos and used by Oppenheimer's staff to build the atomic bomb. After a pair of tests in the New Mexico desert during the summer of 1945, the Atomic Age officially began with the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to end the war in the Pacific.<sup>16</sup>

As a technology, nuclear power represents one of man's most remarkable innovations, but the amount of destruction and number of lives lost as a result of the two bombs used against Japan left the technology stigmatized. President Harry Truman, the man ultimately responsible for ordering the use of both bombs, sought to ensure in the postwar era that nuclear power was developed into "a powerful and forceful influence towards the maintenance of world peace." Others in the Truman administration were skeptical about the prospect to say the least. David Lilienthal, who would later become the Atomic Energy Commission's first chairman, later admitted that at the time hopes for the peaceful atom seemed "inflated," but he explained that "we were grimly determined to prove that this discovery was not just a weapon... somehow or other the discovery that had produced so terrible a weapon simply had to have an important peaceful use." Thus, nuclear power was born, and the commercial industry that subsequently arose afterwards

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<sup>16</sup> Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 3-5.

owed its initial creation to the bomb guilt that permeated the highest levels of the U.S. government including inside the White House immediately after World War II.<sup>17</sup>

In the postwar era, nuclear power remained a weapons producing technology despite the best intentions of people like President Truman and David Lilienthal. The course and development of nuclear power after World War II was defined almost solely by the growing arms race between the United States and Soviet Union that culminated in the start of the Cold War. Peaceful and civilian applications of nuclear power did not become a serious topic of interest with officials in Washington, D.C. until after the United States began to lose its edge over the Soviets in the nuclear arms race. Determined to regain an advantage over their Cold War rival, the United States devised a plan to secure private investments in the country's nuclear weapons programs while simultaneously seeking foreign partnerships to help control the course of nuclear power beyond its own borders. On December 8, 1953, President Dwight Eisenhower introduced this plan before a General Assembly of the United Nations in a speech titled "Atoms for Peace."<sup>18</sup>

### The Cold War and Atoms for Peace

Atoms for Peace represented an attempt by the United States to monopolize nuclear power in the Atlantic World during the Cold War through a commercial industry that simultaneously supported nuclear weapons development and the American arms race

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<sup>17</sup> David Lilienthal, *Change, Hope, and The Bomb* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press), 92-113.

<sup>18</sup> See: Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Atoms for Peace: Dwight D. Eisenhower's Address to the United Nations* (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1989).

with the Soviet Union. Although it was not publicly introduced until 1953, the program began immediately following the conclusion of World War II with the Atomic Energy Act of 1946. Also known as the McMahon Douglass Bill, the Atomic Energy Act of 1946 formally transferred control of nuclear power away from the military and to the civilian sector of society. Secretary of War Henry Stimson opposed the measure and argued that nuclear power should remain in the hands of a military-controlled joint committee comprised of representatives from both the Army and Navy. Stimson submitted his proposal, the May-Johnson Bill, to the Senate Special Committee on Atomic Energy in 1945. The measure was defeated in favor of the McMahon Douglass Bill because the latter carried the backing of the atomic scientists from the Manhattan Project who feared further military control of nuclear power.<sup>19</sup>

Although on paper nuclear power was to be the domain of the civilian sector after World War II, very little change actually occurred in the postwar period. The Atomic Energy Act of 1946 created a five member executive branch agency appointed by the president called the Atomic Energy Commission which oversaw the peaceful applications of nuclear power as well as the continued research, development, and production of nuclear weapons. The agency maintained complete ownership of all facilities, patents, and any information related to nuclear power, and the organization reported directly to an 18 member congressional body called the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy. The committee was installed with full legislative powers which exempted its decisions, the

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<sup>19</sup> J. Samuel Walker, *Containing the Atom: Nuclear Regulation in a Changing Environment* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1992), 18-36; Lee Clarke, "The Origins of Nuclear Power: A Case of Institutional Conflict," *Social Problems* Vol 32, No, 5 (June 1985): 474-487; Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 7-11.

actions of the Atomic Energy Commission, and the course of nuclear power in the United States from the rest of Congress as a result. The Atomic Energy Act of 1946 did not transfer nuclear power to civilian control, but rather it institutionalized the technology.<sup>20</sup>

The Atomic Energy Commission was created at a time when the future of nuclear power was still undecided. In June of 1946, ongoing diplomatic discussions between the United States, Canada, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union centered on a proposal developed by Undersecretary of State Dean Acheson called the Baruch Plan. According to the terms, international control over nuclear power in the postwar period would be transferred to the United Nations which would then be responsible for regular inspections of all nuclear facilities in the United States and Soviet Union in order to ensure that no weapons production work was being conducted. The plan also required both countries to dispose of all existing nuclear weapons and divulge its nuclear intelligence. However, the Soviets greatly distrusted the Americans ever since the United States excluded the Soviet Union from the Manhattan Project at the conclusion of World War II. The Soviets flatly refused to accept the Baruch Plan, and the one good opportunity that a diplomatic solution to managing nuclear power in the postwar era could be agree upon was missed. Instead, the Cold War erupted, and nuclear power became inextricably tied to the nuclear arms race between the United States and Soviet Union.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Roger Rappoport, *The Great American Bomb Machine* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1971), 22; Walker, *Containing the Atom*, 18-36; Clarke, "The Origins of Nuclear Power," 474-487; Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 7-11.

<sup>21</sup> Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb: One World or None, A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement Through 1953* (Chicago: Stanford University Press, 1993), 55-79; Betty Goetz Lall, "Perspectives on Inspection for Arms Control," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* (March 1963): 51-53; Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 7-10.

The Cold War began as a political and ideological battle at first but became increasingly militaristic by the end of the 1940s. On February 21, 1948, the Soviets supported a Communist coup in Czechoslovakia that sent shockwaves throughout the Western world. A frantic diplomatic scramble to determine how Europe would be divided up in the postwar era ignited, and new battle lines were drawn between U.S. controlled countries under the Marshall Plan and Communist countries that now formed the Soviet Union's Eastern Bloc. One of the most heavily contested boundaries in Western Europe was the divide between East and West Berlin, and on June 24, 1948, the Soviet Union began an eleven month long blockade of Berlin in an attempt to wrest full control over the city from the United States. Tensions between the two countries skyrocketed and only worsened after 240 grams of uranium went missing from the Argonne National Laboratory in Chicago prompting fears that the Atomic Energy Commission had been infiltrated by Communists. On August 29, 1949, these suspicions were perhaps confirmed when the Soviet Union detonated its own atomic bomb, a uranium bomb called the RDS-1, at the Semipalatinsk Test Site in Kazakhstan.<sup>22</sup>

Now that the Soviets possessed the bomb, the nuclear monopoly that the United States held at the end of World War II as a result of the Manhattan Project appeared to be unraveling. The Atomic Energy Commission came under immense pressure immediately following the Soviet demonstration. The organization was already receiving heavy criticism for the stolen uranium incident, and now it was also shouldering the majority of the blame for allowing the Soviet Union to close the gap on the U.S. nuclear weapons

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<sup>22</sup> Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*, 23-36; Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb*, 55-79.

program. The Joint Committee on Atomic Energy charged the Atomic Energy Commission with “incredible mismanagement” of the nation’s nuclear program. New orders were issued, and the Atomic Energy Commission was instructed to reorganize its nuclear reactor development programs and focus all of its efforts on the winning the arms race with the Soviets.<sup>23</sup>

Over the next five years, the United States engaged in a series of massive nuclear weapons tests at the military’s Pacific Proving Ground located at Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands chain. Bikini Atoll was a small ring of twenty-six islands circled around a central lagoon, and by the early 1960s, some of these islands no longer existed on the map because of the 103 nuclear weapons tests conducted by the U.S. military there including the world’s first hydrogen bomb in 1952. Yet, each time the United States pulled ahead of its Cold War rival in the nuclear arms race, the Soviet Union quickly replied, and in 1953, the Soviets successfully detonated their own hydrogen bomb at the Semipalatinsk Test Site. The United States soon realized that its nuclear weapons programs needed help to stay ahead or perhaps to even keep pace with the Soviets, and within this context, developed the Atoms for Peace program.<sup>24</sup>

The central purpose of Atoms for Peace was to help the United States reestablish its nuclear supremacy in the Atlantic World, and one area that had been largely ignored by the Atomic Energy Commission until 1953 was the commercial market. While the United States was fixated on nuclear weapons, its former Manhattan Project counterpart

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<sup>23</sup> Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb*, 55-79; Clarke, “The Origins of Nuclear Power,” 474-487.

<sup>24</sup> Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 5-6.

Great Britain had flooded the private sector with the British-made gas cooled nuclear reactor. The United States preferred the light water pressure reactor, and in order for the Atoms for Peace program to function as planned, the American reactor design needed to hold a dominant place in the international market. The preeminence of the light water reactor in the Atlantic World would not only secure much needed private investment in the U.S. nuclear program but it would also allow the Atomic Energy Commission to better manage and control the direction of nuclear power outside of the United States.<sup>25</sup>

To help facilitate the export of the light water reactor, the United States passed a pair of companion legislation pieces in support of Atoms for Peace. The first was the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 which authorized the private ownership of the nuclear reactors, and the second would later be the Price Anderson Indemnity of 1957 which exempted private investors from liability in the event of a nuclear related accident by offering up to \$560 million in federal protection. In addition, through Atoms for Peace, the United States offered all private and foreign investors cost-plus contracts, free shipments of uranium, and access to American intelligence on nuclear power. It was a total package with which the United States' British counterparts could not compete, and the light water reactor quickly became the primary nuclear reactor design used throughout the Atlantic World.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Steven D. Thomas, *The Realities of Nuclear Power: International Economic and Regulatory Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 59-71; Lewis L. Strauss, "The U.S. Atomic Energy Program, 1953-1958," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* Vol. XIV, No. 7 (September 1958): 256-258. Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 8-11, 297-300.

<sup>26</sup> Thomas, *The Realities of Nuclear Power: International Economic and Regulatory Experience*, 59-71; Lewis L. Strauss, "The U.S. Atomic Energy Program, 1953-1958," 256-258. Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 8-11, 297-300.

Within the first five years of the Atoms for Peace program, the nuclear industry grew exponentially both domestically and especially across the Atlantic. In the United States, the Atomic Energy Commission issued its first construction permits to several private utilities including Pacific Gas & Electric for a Westinghouse reactor north of San Francisco, California; Yankee Atomic Electric for a Westinghouse reactor in Rowe, Massachusetts; and Consolidated Edison for a pair of General Electric reactors to be built at Indian Point, New York and Dresden, Illinois. Internationally, the United States received Atoms for Peace partner agreements from thirty-nine foreign governments including the six founding countries of the European Economic Community, which were Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, and West Germany. The European Economic Community was a forerunner of the European Union, and in 1957, the organization agreed to help promote and develop commercial nuclear power by signing the European Atomic Energy Community Treaty (EURATOM). The treaty was significant because it transformed member nations into advocates for Atoms for Peace across Europe, and it also formally committed these countries to using the American-designed light water reactor, which was particularly noteworthy for West Germany.<sup>27</sup>

During the 1950s, the West German government in Bonn began looking at nuclear power as an avenue for economic recovery and future strength in postwar Europe. At the time, West Germany preferred the Soviet-designed heavy water reactor, but the leaders in Bonn adopted the American light water reactor after agreeing to join Atoms for

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<sup>27</sup> Thomas, *The Realities of Nuclear Power*, 59-71; Clarke, "The Origins of Nuclear Power," 474-487; Strauss, "The U.S. Atomic Energy Program, 1953-1958," 256-258; Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 8-11, 297-300.



Peace as a partner nation. Using the light water reactor, West Germany launched the Eltville Program in 1957 which represented Germany's first nuclear program since Hitler's Uranverein. The American imprint on the Eltville Program was evident from the start by the structure of West Germany's Atomic Law of 1959 which was essentially a combination of the U.S. Atomic Energy Act of 1954 and the Price Anderson Act of 1957. Nuclear power was privatized, and outside investors were exempted from liability in the event of a nuclear accident. American corporations General Electric and Westinghouse secured nuclear reactor licensing agreements with the German company Siemens, and by 1960, construction was well underway on an experimental reactor at Kahl am Main with additional reactors already planned for sites at Jülich, Grosswelzheim, Gundremmingen, and Lingen.<sup>28</sup>

Although these experimental reactors were small and possessed a maximum output of less than 1,000 megawatts, their appearance on the German landscape happened to coincide with a growing split between the Left in West Germany and its former political ally in the Social Democratic Party. The political tension was exasperated further still by rising concerns over the environmental impact of modern technology and the type of heavy industrialization that accompanied nuclear power and the growing nuclear industry. These concerns increased in 1965 when construction began on what would become West Germany's first commercial nuclear power plant at Obrigheim. The

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<sup>28</sup> Thomas, *The Realities of Nuclear Power*, 129-149; Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*, 37-48; Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 297-300.

nuclear plant went online in 1969 to close out the decade and set the stage for the expansion of the nuclear industry that occurred in the early 1970s.<sup>29</sup>

By the 1970s, the nuclear industry in the Atlantic World was in the middle of transitioning from a research and development phase that began in 1953 with Atoms for Peace to a siting and construction phase. During the 1970s, the nuclear industry became a major priority for many Western nations like the United States and West Germany, and for once, the new emphasis on nuclear power had nothing to do with the bomb. The Arab-Israeli War erupted resulting in the Energy Crisis of 1973. For governments from Bonn to Washington, D.C., nuclear power emerged as the key to end their nation's energy dependence on foreign oil imports. An even greater, more centralized military industrial state also arose after 1973 to help facilitate the further expansion of nuclear power, but the growth of the industry would not be undeterred.

A new wave of opposition and social protest to nuclear power emerged from the western plains of Massachusetts and along the Rhine in West Germany after 1973. The antinuclear movement formed, and the first successful protest against a proposed nuclear plant by the antinuclear movement in either the United States or West Germany occurred less than two years later in 1975 at Wyhl. However, the origins of the antinuclear movement predate the Energy Crisis of 1973. Like nuclear power, the antinuclear movement's roots are tied to the bomb and the social activism of the 1950s and 1960s that initially formed through the campaign to Ban the Bomb.

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<sup>29</sup> Thomas, *The Realities of Nuclear Power*, 128-149.

## The Ban the Bomb Movement

The precursor to the trans-Atlantic antinuclear movement of the 1970s was the campaign to the Ban the Bomb in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The campaign began prior to the end of World War II. In the months preceding the atomic bombings of Japan, a group of atomic scientists from within the Manhattan Project issued the Franck Report warning the United States against using the bomb. Led by James Franck, a group of nuclear scientists including Eugene Rabinowitch, Leo Szilard, Glenn Seaborg, Donald Hughes, and J.C. Sterns met in secret to develop the report. According to Seaborg, the motivation behind the report was the realization that “by an accident of history, we were among a very few who were aware of a new, world-threatening peril, and we felt obligated to express our views.” Their primary fear was that attacking Japan with the bomb would not only result in an excessive amount of destruction and loss of life, but also that it would spark an irreversible nuclear arms race in the postwar period. The Franck Report proposed an alternative to using the bomb. It suggested either detonating the weapon in a public demonstration before the United Nations as a warning to Japan or opt to keep the bomb a secret altogether. The Frank Report was delivered to President Truman on June 12, 1945, who nevertheless soon ordered two atomic bombs dropped on Japan in an effort to end World War II.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Brian Loring Villa, “A Confusion of Signals: James Franck, the Chicago Scientists and Early Efforts to Stop the Bomb,” *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* Vol. XXXI, No. 10 (December 1975): 36-42; Eugene Rabinowitch, “Ten Years that Change the World,” *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* Vol. XII, No. 1 (January 1956): 2-6; Dennis Wainstock, *The Decision to Drop the Bomb* (New York: Enigma, 2011), 60-64; Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb*, 20-36; Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 3-5.

The Franck Report proved to be correct, and the nuclear arms race that ensued as a result later gave rise to the Ban the Bomb campaign in the late 1950s. The original protest against the bomb was limited to a small contingent of atomic scientists from the Manhattan Project, but after World War II, an international movement arose opposing the bomb and the nuclear weapons testing by the United States and Soviet Union. As previously noted, between 1946 and 1962, the United States performed a series of nuclear weapons tests at Bikini Atoll in the Pacific Ocean's Marshall Island chain. The first round of tests in July of 1946 was a project codenamed *Operation Crossroads* in which the United States detonated two nuclear weapons in order to test the effect of radiation on a collection of decommissioned naval vessels that had been dragged into the Bikini Atoll lagoon. A press corps was invited, and onlookers witnessed what Glenn Seaborg described as "the world's first nuclear disaster."<sup>31</sup>

The two nuclear weapons tested through Operation Crossroads consisted of the Able bomb, which was detonated as an airburst 520 feet above the lagoon, and the Baker bomb, which was affixed to the hull of one of the ships anchored in the lagoon and then exploded ninety feet underwater. The consequences of both the Able and Baker bombs were devastating for Bikini Atoll and its native inhabitants. Operation Crossroads rendered the islands completely uninhabitable for the Bikini natives due to the large amount of radiation that flooded the lagoon. A civilization that subsisted through fishing now faced the threat of starvation if they chose to remain on their native island. By 1948,

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<sup>31</sup> Jonathan M. Weisgall, *Operation Crossroads* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1994), ix; Jonathan M. Weisgall, "Time to End the 40-year Lie," *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* Vol. 50, No. 3, (May/June 1994): 3; Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 6.

the entire Bikini population of 816 was banished from the island and permanently relocated to the nearby island of Kili. In 1972, several families travelled back to Bikini Atoll in an attempt to restart their lives there but were forced to abandon the island once again just three years later after health conditions deteriorated and a newly planted crop of coconuts were found to be radioactive. Radiation tests conducted by the United States later confirmed that the island could not be inhabited for at least another thirty to thirty-five years.<sup>32</sup>

Despite the plight of the Bikini people, the United States repeatedly returned to Bikini Atoll throughout the 1940s and 1950s as a result of the Cold War and the ongoing arms race with the Soviet Union. In March of 1954, Operation Castle commenced at Bikini Atoll in which the world's first thermonuclear weapon called the Bravo bomb was tested. The Bravo bomb's power was equivalent to 750 Hiroshima bombs, and the level of radiation resulting from the test far exceeded expectations even still. The radioactive fallout breached the contamination zone and covered an area of approximately 50,000 square miles. Like a heavy snow, the fallout blanketed a Japanese fishing boat called the Lucky Dragon 5, which was located more than 40 miles away from the blast. The boat's entire crew was hospitalized, and Aikichi Kuboyama, the radioman for the Lucky Dragon 5, later died on September 23, 1954 as a result of complications from acute radiation syndrome. Kuboyama became the first known martyr of the Cold War nuclear arms race,

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<sup>32</sup> W.A. Shureliff, *Bombs at Bikini: The Official Report of Operation Crossroads* (New York: Wise & Co, Inc., 1947), 2-15, 104-173; Jonathan M. Weisgall, "The Able-Baker-Where's Charlie Follies," *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* Vol. 50, No. 3, (May/June 1994): 26-34; Stephanie Cook, *In Mortal Hands: A Cautionary History of the Nuclear Age* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2009), 53-70.

and his death helped galvanize a growing opposition to nuclear weapons that had been building from within the scientific community.<sup>33</sup>

The Atlantic World's scientific community was the first to sound the alarm over Nazi Germany's pursuit of the atomic bomb during World War II, and that same community took the lead once again in the campaign against the bomb in the aftermath of Operation Castle and the death of Aikichi Kuboyama. On July 9, 1955, Bertrand Russell and Albert Einstein issued the Russell-Einstein Manifesto calling for an end to the nuclear arms race between the United States and Soviet Union. Ten Nobel Laureates signed the Russell-Einstein Manifesto, and the central statement read that "in view of the fact that in any future world war nuclear weapons will certainly be employed, and that such weapons threaten the continued existence of mankind, we urge the Governments of the world to realize, and to acknowledge publicly, that their purpose cannot be furthered by a world war, and we urge them, consequently, to find peaceful means for the settlement of all matters of dispute between them."<sup>34</sup>

The Russell-Einstein Manifesto called for a conference of international scientists to discuss the dangers of nuclear weapons, and Canadian philanthropist Cyrus Eaton financed the inaugural event in his hometown of Pugwash, Nova Scotia. The Pugwash Conference on Science and World Affairs was subsequently formed, and the inaugural conference in July of 1957 drew twenty-two of the leading scientists in the world, including representatives from the United States, Soviet Union, Great Britain, Japan,

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<sup>33</sup> Weisgall, *Operation Crossroads*, 305-307; Weisgall, "Time to End the 40-year Lie," 3; Cooke, *In Mortal Hands*, 167-176.

<sup>34</sup> Wittner, *Confronting the Bomb*, 52-67; The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, "Scientists Appeal for Abolition of War," *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* Vol. XI, No. 7 (September 1955): 236-237.

Canada, Australia, Austria, China, France, and Poland. From the Pugwash Conference, the campaign to Ban the Bomb emerged in 1957 and quickly spread across the United States, Great Britain, and West Germany.<sup>35</sup>

In the United States, the Ban the Bomb movement was led by the National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE), and the organization formed around Pugwash supporter and Nobel Laureate Dr. Albert Schweitzer's speech "Declaration of Conscience" in 1957. Schweitzer argued that "the end of further experiments with atom bombs would be like early sun rays of hope which suffering humanity is longing for." The speech struck a chord with several highly influential public figures in the United States including Eleanor Roosevelt and Martin Luther King, Jr. A Hollywood office of SANE organized, and its membership included the likes of Marlon Brando, Henry Belafonte, Henry Fonda, and Marilyn Monroe. The protest against nuclear weapons quickly became cause célèbre in the United States as a result of SANE, and in 1960, more than 20,000 people filled Madison Square Garden in New York City for a SANE rally protesting further nuclear weapons testing. SANE was more than just a celebrity affair though. Its political agenda was directed by Pugwash cofounder Bertrand Russell who in 1958 started the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in Great Britain which became the primary catalyst for the Ban the Bomb movement in the Atlantic World during the late 1950s.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Wittner, *Confronting the Bomb*, 52-67; The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, "Scientists Appeal for Abolition of War," 236-237.

<sup>36</sup> Smith, *The Antinuclear Movement*, 15-16; 39-40.

The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament organized in Great Britain after the Pugwash Conference, and it was a response to British nuclear weapons testing at the Kiritati and Malden Islands in the Pacific Ocean between 1956 and 1958. The British relinquished their independent nuclear weapons production rights to the United States after 1958 through the US-UK Mutual Defense Agreement, which exemplified the type of diplomacy that resulted from the U.S. Atoms for Peace program, and agreement did not halt the production of nuclear weapons in Great Britain but rather it ensured that any new weapons produced would be at the discretion of the United States. The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament then formed to protest Great Britain's partnership with the United States and the British role in the continued production, testing, and proliferation of the nuclear weapons. On Easter weekend in 1958, Bertrand Russell organized a demonstration to march the fifty-two miles from London's Trafalgar Square to the Aldermaston Atomic Weapons Research Establishment in Berkshire, England. It was an inspirational protest and directly helped foster the growth of similar initiatives throughout the Atlantic World including West Germany's Easter March Movement (Ostermarschbewegung).<sup>37</sup>

In West Germany, the debate over the bomb began in 1957 following NATO's decision to equip the German army with nuclear weapons. The announcement coincided with the Pugwash Conference and the growth of the Ban the Bomb movement through organizations like SANE and the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. The German arm

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<sup>37</sup> Steve Breyman, *Why Movements Matter: The West German Peace Movement and U.S. Arms Control Policy* (SUNY Press, 2001), 83-132; Alice Holmes Cooper, *Paradoxes of Peace: German Peace Movements Since 1945* (Ann Arbor, MI (University of Michigan Press, 1996), 83-116; Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*, 37-50.



of the movement was called the Fight Atomic Death Campaign (Kampf dem Atomtod), and its political significance in West Germany cannot be overstated. The Fight Atomic Death Campaign helped define the relationship between the German Left and the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and later provided the impetus behind the social activism of both the student protests of 1960s and the antinuclear movement during the 1970s.<sup>38</sup>

Prior to 1957, the Social Democratic Party was a strong proponent of nuclear power in West Germany, but in a political maneuver, the SPD became the key organizational base for the Fight Atomic Death Campaign in order to oppose the West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer's pro-Western policies. After being soundly defeated by Adenauer in the 1957 elections, the SPD underwent a political transformation. Through the Godesberg Program of 1959, the Social Democratic Party abandoned its Marxist-socialist ideology and embraced free market capitalism in an attempt to attract more middle class support. In the process, the working class and social causes of the Left were abandoned. This included the Fight Atomic Death Campaign. The SPD reversed its stance on both integration with the West and its opposition to NATO, and without the SPD as an organizational support base politically, the Fight Atomic Death Campaign collapsed in 1959.<sup>39</sup>

Still, the Ban the Bomb movement continued in West Germany. After being cast aside by the SPD, the remnants of the Fight the Atomic Death Campaign found solidarity with the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in Great Britain and formed the Easter

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<sup>38</sup> Breyman, *Why Movements Matter*, 83-132; Cooper, *Paradoxes of Peace*, 83-116.

<sup>39</sup> Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*, 37-50; Breyman, *Why Movements Matter*, 83-132; Cooper, *Paradoxes of Peace*, 83-116.

March Movement. Modeled after the Aldermaston March, the first annual Easter March against nuclear weapons occurred in 1960, and the demonstration drew 1,000 anti-bomb protestors from a wide cross section of the population including Quakers, Protestants, pacifists, conscientious objectors, and socialists. The Easter March grew significantly each year drawing 23,000 in 1961, over 50,000 in 1963, and more than 100,000 in 1964 after expanding its platform to include peace demonstrations, anti-Vietnam War protests, and eventually the more radical, anti-statism of the APO from the student movement of the late 1960s.<sup>40</sup>

The APO, or the Außerparlamentarische Opposition, was a protest movement that formed in West Germany after the Social Democratic Party and Christian Democrat Union (CDU) joined in the Great Coalition government of 1966. The Left had become increasingly isolated politically in West Germany since the SPD's abandonment of the Fight Atomic Death Campaign, but the partnership between the SPD and CDU effectively eliminated the last remaining outlet for institutionalized protest by the Left. In response, the APO emerged as the new and more militant voice of the Left and helped radicalize a generation of protestors who would go on to fill the ranks of the antinuclear movement in West Germany during the 1970s. Ultimately, this would also serve as the legacy of the Ban the Bomb movement.<sup>41</sup>

Five years after the Pugwash Conference, the Partial Test Ban Treaty was signed on August 5, 1963 by the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and United States, and the testing

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<sup>40</sup> Breyman, *Why Movements Matter*, 83-132; Cooper, *Paradoxes of Peace*, 83-116.

<sup>41</sup> Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*, 37-50; Breyman, *Why Movements Matter*, 83-132; Cooper, *Paradoxes of Peace*, 83-116.

of all nuclear weapons in the atmosphere, on the surface, or underwater became internationally prohibited. That was not the full legacy of the Ban the Bomb campaign. It was more than just a successful movement that occurred through the international collaboration of groups like SANE, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, and both the Fight Atomic Death Campaign and the Easter March Movement in West Germany.<sup>42</sup>

As a result of the Cold War nuclear arms race, the authoritativeness of the state and the growth of the military industrial complex became just as much of a political issue in the Atlantic world as the bomb itself. Ultimately, this proved to be the legacy of the Ban the Bomb movement as evidenced by the emergence of the APO in West Germany. That did not change after the Partial Test Ban Treaty. The Cold War was not over, and the nuclear arms race between the United States and Soviet Union did not end. If anything, the size of the military industrial complex continued to grow larger in support of the expansion of the nuclear industry during the late 1960s and especially into the early 1970s. Using many of the same local, regional, national, and even trans-Atlantic channels established through the campaign to Ban the Bomb, the opposition to nuclear power began to develop in 1963, and once again, the initial charge was led by the scientific community and its concern over low-level radiation in nuclear power.

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<sup>42</sup> Gyorgy, *No Nuke*, 15.

## Concerned Scientists and the Safety of Nuclear Power

In the summer months preceding the signing of the Partial Test Ban Treaty, the Kennedy administration and Atomic Energy Commission chairman Glenn Seaborg announced that the small community of Wyoming County, Pennsylvania had been chosen as the site of the proposed Meshoppen Nuclear Power Plant. Following the announcement, University of Pittsburg physicist Ernest J. Sternglass began researching the possible human health risks associated with nuclear power. In June of 1963, Sternglass published the paper “Cancer: Relation of Prenatal Radiation to Development of the Disease in Childhood” in which he theorized about the possible effect of low-level radiation from the proposed Meshoppen plant would have on the local community. He concluded that if built then the proposed plant would result in a dramatic increase in leukemia and cancer cases as well as the infant mortality rate in the immediate area. Sternglass argued that infants were most at risk because of consumption of strontium-90 through the breast milk they drank as a result of their mothers’ exposure to low-level radiation from the nearby nuclear plant.<sup>43</sup>

Sternglass’ paper set off a firestorm of local protest against the Meshoppen plant and sparked the low-level radiation debate about nuclear power. The Atomic Energy Commission responded by ordering two of its own scientists, John Gofman and Arthur Tamplin to conduct a counter study on the effects of low-level radiation. Much to the chagrin of the Atomic Energy Commission, rather than refuting Sternglass’ work, the

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<sup>43</sup> E.J. Sternglass. “Cancer: Relation of Prenatal Radiation to Development of the Disease in Childhood,” *Science* Vol. 140. No. 3571 (June 1963): 1102-1104; Price, *The Antinuclear Movement*, p. 5.

Gofman and Tamplin's report actually confirmed that the maximum amount of low-level radiation allowed by the Federal Radiation Council was currently far too excessive.

Based on the current standard, Gofman and Tamplin estimated that the effect on humans of radiation from commercial nuclear power like the proposed Meshoppen plant would result in an astonishing 32,000 cancer-related deaths each year and as many as an additional 150,000 to 1.5 million additional genetic deaths each year.<sup>44</sup>

Gofman and Tamplin published their findings in a 1969 report entitled "Low Dose Radiation and Cancer" in which they called for a reduction by 90% of the maximum allowable amount of low-level radiation exposure from 170 millirads to 17 millirads. Both were quickly censored and later blackballed by the Atomic Energy Commission. Their research funds were frozen, and their support staffs were cut, eventually forcing the pair to leave the Atomic Energy Commission. Gofman returned to his faculty position at the University of California-Berkeley, and Tamplin left to join the environmentalist organization, the Natural Resources Defense Council. Together, Gofman and Tamplin were among the first political martyrs in the antinuclear power movement in the United States, and they led the early fight against nuclear power in the Atlantic World during the 1960s.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> John Gofman and Arthur Tamplin, "Low Dose Radiation and Cancer," *IEEE Transactions on Nuclear Science*, part 1, vol. NS-17 (Feb. 1970): 1-9; John Gofman and Arthur Tamplin, "Harassment Charges against AEC, Livermore," *Science*, vol. 169, no. 3948 (Aug. 1970), 838-843; John Gofman and Arthur Tamplin, "Radiation: The Invisible Casualties," *Environment*, Vol. 12 (Apr. 1970): 12-19.

<sup>45</sup> Gofman and Arthur, "Low Dose Radiation and Cancer," 1-9; Gofman and Tamplin, "Harassment Charges against AEC, Livermore," 838-843; Gofman and Tamplin, "Radiation: The Invisible Casualties," 12-19.

Gofman and Tamplin provided the early movement against nuclear power with much needed leadership and credibility, and they inspired others to be critical of the nuclear industry and ask questions about nuclear power. Their report “Low Dose Radiation and Cancer” inspired the formation of the Union of Concerned Scientists in 1969 which was concerned with the issue of nuclear reactor safety which became a serious issue during the late 1960s. Three years after the Partial Test Ban Treaty, the Atomic Energy Commission switched from the light water reactor to the much more powerful and dangerous fast breeder reactor in 1966. On October 5, 1966, one of the world’s first fast breeder reactors at the Enrico Fermi Nuclear Generating Station just outside Detroit suffered a partial core meltdown less than a year after the Atomic Energy Commission had issued the construction permit for the reactor.<sup>46</sup>

The Enrico Fermi incident prompted the Atomic Energy Commission to explore the development of an emergency core cooling system that could help prevent a core meltdown and limit the risk of a major nuclear accident. In 1970, the Atomic Energy Commission hired Aerojet Nuclear Company to perform a series of tests on a developmental core cooling system, and in theory, the way an emergency cooling system would work was that in the event of an overheated reactor, the emergency system would simply flood the reactor in order to prevent it from reaching an uncontrollable temperature. In total, the cooling system would have only twenty-eight seconds to flood the reactor to prevent a meltdown from occurring. Each test performed by Aerojet failed, and the company reported that the failures were “beyond the scope of currently used

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<sup>46</sup> Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 380-390; Clarke, “The Origins of Nuclear Power,” 474-487.

techniques and some areas of present engineering knowledge.” In other words, the technology did not currently exist to adequately prevent a nuclear reactor from overheating.<sup>47</sup>

The Atomic Energy Commission deliberately withheld this information from the general public, but it was later discovered by the Union of Concerned Scientists using the 1971 Freedom of Information Act. The Union of Concerned Scientists forced the release of the Atomic Energy Commission’s internal memos and correspondence concerning the emergency cooling system tests by Aerojet, and the test failures and the subsequent cover-up by the Atomic Energy Commission were all exposed, and this proved to be the beginning of the end for the Atomic Energy Commission.<sup>48</sup>

In 1972, the emergency cooling system scandal forced the Atomic Energy Commission to conduct a series of public hearings that were broadcasted on national television and splashed across the front pages of major newspapers. The hearings served as major advertisement for the growing opposition to nuclear power, and because they coincided with the development of the modern environmental movement, the debate over nuclear reactor safety and low-level radiation served as a major catalyst for the rise in citizen interventions contesting the further expansion of the nuclear industry in the Atlantic World.

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 112-115.

## Citizen Interventions and the Environment

In 1958, California's Pacific Gas & Electric proposed to build the first commercial nuclear power plant in the United States. The utility selected a location just fifty miles north of San Francisco at Bodega Bay, and the proposal drew immediate opposition. Local fishermen were concerned about how thermal pollution from the proposed plant might affect the local fish population. Conservationists from the Sierra Club disapproved of the physical destruction of the scenic Bodega Head, and the two groups banded together with other local residents to form a citizen group called the Northern California Association to Preserve Bodega Head to lead what was the first organized citizen intervention against nuclear power in the Atlantic World.<sup>49</sup>

The citizen intervention focused its opposition on the proposed plant's proximity to the San Andreas Fault and the danger posed by radioactive fallout, which was a concept directly imported from the Ban the Bomb movement at the time. The highlight of the intervention occurred on May 30, 1963 when approximately 350 demonstrators participated in a Memorial Day protest against the proposed Bodega Bay plant by releasing 1,500 balloons into the air. Each balloon carried a message that read, "This balloon could represent a radioactive molecule of strontium 90 or iodine 131. PG&E hopes to build a nuclear plant at this spot, close to the world's biggest active earthquake fault. Tell your local newspaper where you found this balloon." The project was permanently suspended less than a year later, primarily as a result of the proposed plant's location near the San Andreas Fault. Nevertheless, Bodega Bay remains a significant

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<sup>49</sup> Wellock, *Critical Mass*, 17-67; J. Samuel Walker, *Containing the Atom*, 84-112.



moment in the development of the antinuclear movement because it represented the earliest citizen intervention and attracted environmental groups like the Sierra Club to the debate over nuclear power.<sup>50</sup>

The 1960s served as an early growth period for environmental groups like the Sierra Club and National Audubon Society. The membership of the Sierra Club increased from 15,000 to 83,000 between 1960 and 1969, while the National Audubon Society grew from 32,000 to 120,000 members over the same time. The growth was attributed to the development of the modern environmental movement during the 1960s, and unlike the earlier conservation and naturalist movements of the Progressive Era which centered mainly on land and wildlife, the modern environmental movement focused more on the negative effects of technology and industrialization.<sup>51</sup>

The modern environmental movement was popularized by publications like biologist Rachel Carson's seminal 1962 work *Silent Spring* in which she focused on the relationship between state-sponsored risk and the use of the chemical DDT in agriculture production. Carson argued that the uncontrolled use of pesticides like DDT was both harming and killing animals, birds, and people alike. She compared DDT to Strontium-90 by noting that the latter "comes to earth in rain or drifts down as fallout, lodges in soil, enters into the grass or corn or wheat grown there, and in time take up its abode in the bones of a human being, there to remain until his death." Such comparisons really

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<sup>50</sup> Wellock, *Critical Mass*, 17-67; Walker, *Containing the Atom*, 84-112.

<sup>51</sup> Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*, 23-36. For more on the growth of environmentalism in the United States during the 1960s, see: James Morton, *The Promise of Wilderness: American Environmental Politics since 1964* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2012); Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*, (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 2002).

resonated with people at the time. The destruction of Bikini Atoll in the late 1940s and over the course of the 1950s as a result of nuclear weapons testing opened many eyes to the environmental consequences of the Cold War arms race between the United States and Soviet Union.<sup>52</sup>

In the 1960s, the low-level radiation and nuclear reactor safety debates brought the concerns over state-sponsored risk and nuclear power to local communities and drew many environmental groups to the nuclear opposition and the growing citizen intervention. That proved to be especially true following the partial core meltdown of the Enrico Fermi Nuclear Generating Station outside. The narrowly averted nuclear disaster produced a surge of antinuclear protest nationally. In response, an organization called the Consolidated National Interveners comprised of sixty different citizen groups and organizations including the Union of Concerned Scientists, Sierra Club, and National Audubon Society formed a consortium in 1966 to help coordinate citizen interventions against nuclear power in communities across the United States, and in the late 1960s, arguably the most significant citizen intervention arose at Calvert Cliffs.<sup>53</sup>

In 1969, Baltimore Gas and Electric submitted an application to the Atomic Energy Commission to build a twin 850 megawatt nuclear power plant to serve the Washington, D.C. area, and the company chose a spot on the bank of the Chesapeake Bay near Lusby, Maryland called Calvert Cliffs. There was immediate local opposition to the proposal with fishermen and concerned citizens worried about the effect of thermal

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<sup>52</sup> Carson, *Silent Spring*, 5-15; Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*, 23-36.

<sup>53</sup> Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*, 23-36; Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 19-21

pollution on the area's ecosystem and famed local blue crab population. A citizen group called the Calvert Cliffs Coordinating Committee organized and launched a legal fight contesting the utility's application with the Atomic Energy Commission.<sup>54</sup>

With the help of the Consolidated National Interveners, the local citizen groups filed a lawsuit arguing that the recently passed National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) of 1969 required the utility to consider the environmental impact of the proposed plant in their application to the Atomic Energy Commission, which was something that the utility failed to do. The Atomic Energy Commission refused to act on the matter, and the case was then sent to the U.S. Court of Appeals. In the ensuing court case *Calvert Cliffs Coordinating Committee, Inc. v. Atomic Energy Commission*, the court ruled in favor of the interveners and ordered Baltimore Gas and Electric to conduct an environmental impact study. In a sweeping decision, the court also mandated that environmental impact studies were required for all sixty-three pending construction license applications currently with the Atomic Energy Commission as well as the five additional operating licenses already granted by the agency.<sup>55</sup>

Calvert Cliffs represented a major victory for the local interveners, environmentalists, and the growing nuclear opposition both domestically and across the Atlantic. The modern environmental movement was not confined to the United States, but rather spread to Europe during the early 1970s. By successfully invoking the National Environmental Protection Act, the Calvert Cliffs ruling institutionalized citizen

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<sup>54</sup> Walker, *Containing the Atom*, 363-386; Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 19-21.

<sup>55</sup> Walker, *Containing the Atom*, 363-386; Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 19-21.

intervention and ended the unilateral expansion of nuclear power throughout the Atlantic World. From the United States to West Germany, Calvert Cliffs made environmental impact and citizen intervention a fundamental part of the nuclear industry. Though Calvert Cliffs stopped far short of achieving a moratorium on nuclear power, it did significantly slow the expansion of the nuclear industry and increased the level of transparency in the relationship between the state and its citizens.

That quickly changed on October 5, 1973 with the outbreak of the Arab-Israeli War. The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) instituted an oil embargo against the United States and Western Europe that resulted in an unprecedented energy crisis that lasted through 1974. Oil prices soared and energy supplies plummeted leaving many Western governments to turn to nuclear power for relief from energy dependence on imports of foreign oil. President Richard Nixon's Project Independence called for the rapid expansion of the nuclear industry in the United States. The plan included the construction of 200 new nuclear power plants by 1985 and a total of 1,000 by the year 2000. In Bonn, the Social Democratic Party government responded to the Energy Crisis of 1973 by introducing Modell Deutschland (Model Germany) which was an economic recovery program that called for the construction of 40 new nuclear power plants by 1985 as the key to the nation's energy independence and future economic success.<sup>56</sup>

Both the United States and West Germany reacted to the Energy Crisis of 1973 by seeking to aggressively expand commercial nuclear power. The subsequent impact on

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<sup>56</sup> Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*, p. 51-56, 91-95.

the fight against nuclear power was crushing. Less than two years removed from the landmark ruling at Calvert Cliffs, the state's commitment to nuclear power was re-institutionalized through Project Independence as a result of the Energy Crisis of 1973. After setbacks through the low-level radiation and nuclear reactor safety debates, the nuclear industry bounced back, and because energy independence increasingly became a diplomatic and national security issue after 1973, the authoritative state and the reemergence of the military industrial complex aggressively pursued the expansion of nuclear power.

After the Energy Crisis of 1973, citizen intervention became an ineffective strategy in the fight against nuclear power. Public hearings and environmental impact studies became a matter of pro forma, but carried very little weight on the state's decision to support the expansion of the nuclear industry. Consequently, the nuclear opposition began to pursue new strategies to fight nuclear power including the use of direct action. Direct action was a staple of the civil rights and antiwar movements of the 1960s, and to a certain extent of the Ban the Bomb campaign through the Aldermaston and Easter Marches in Great Britain and West Germany respectively. However, until 1973, the fight against nuclear power occurred strictly through litigation and in court rooms. Not until Wyhl did direct action become the backbone of the antinuclear movement that would arise in West Germany in 1975 and stretch across the entire United States by the end of the decade. Wyhl provided the model that ignited the antinuclear movement in the Atlantic World. However, the first stand against the newly empowered nuclear industry in the wake of the Energy Crisis of 1973 was made by an organic farmer named Sam

Lovejoy on the western plains of Massachusetts in 1974. In many ways, Lovejoy's war against the nuke at Montague would be the shot heard around the Atlantic World that ultimately started the direct action-based fight against nuclear power.

## Chapter 3

### Lovejoy's War and the Nuke at Montague

This is the story of Sam Lovejoy, a Massachusetts farm boy turned vigilante who made a dramatic stand against nuclear power on the anniversary of George Washington's birthday on February 22, 1974, when he sneaked onto the construction site for a proposed nuclear power plant in Montague and cut down a 550 foot tall weather tower. Lovejoy's defiant action marked the first time that anyone challenged the nuclear industry outside of a court room, without the aid of an attorney, and beyond what had become the established protocol for citizen intervention. Lovejoy's protest represented a declaration of war against an industry he perceived to be propagated by corporate greed, government corruption, and a complete disregard for human health and the natural environment.

Over the course of two years, Lovejoy's war was fought by an army of organic farmers, antiwar pacifists, former civil rights activists, and 1960s dissidents that resided at a counterculture commune located just outside of town called the Montague Farm. Born out of an internal division within the New Left, the Montague Farm was established in 1968 when founding members of the Liberation News Service broke apart from an increasingly Marxist-Leninist faction of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). Blending a strand of classical Marxism with Thoreauvian politics, the Montague Farm became a haven for 1960s radicals seeking to escape the capitalist consumerism and the nihilistic sex, drugs, and rock and roll culture that permeated the major urban centers of New York and Boston. For four years, those that came to live at the Montague Farm lived a life devoted to organic farming, harmony with nature, and abstaining from

political activism beyond their own community. However, that changed when nuclear power came to town.

Lovejoy's war was the local battle against the planned nuclear power plant in Montague, Massachusetts that erupted after his initial toppling of the weather tower. In the immediate aftermath, Lovejoy's protest caused a firestorm of debate over nuclear power that was highlighted by his widely publicized trial in the fall of 1974. The Montague Farm became the seedbed for not only the local resistance to nuclear power during Lovejoy's trial but also for the antinuclear movement that spread throughout New England during the late 1970s. With nothing more than a set of rudimentary garden tools, the first shot in the antinuclear movement was fired by an organic farmer on the western plains of Massachusetts at Montague in honor of the 242<sup>nd</sup> birthday of an American revolutionary and the first President of the United States.

After outlining the growth of the nuclear industry and the origins of the antinuclear movement in the previous chapter, the narrative presented here on Sam Lovejoy details complimentary but alternative, firsthand perspective on nuclear power and the developing fight against nuclear power during the 1970s. The story of the atomic bomb, Atoms for Peace, and the social activism of the 1950s and 1960s was previously told from a larger macro level and was based indirectly on the relationship between Cold War diplomacy and the rise of the nuclear industry in the Atlantic World. In this chapter, the narrative originates from below and portrays the low-level radiation and nuclear safety debates, the rise the modern environmental movement, the struggles of the citizen



intervention, and the early development of the antinuclear movement in the Atlantic World through the story of one man to spark a full scale uprising against nuclear power.

### The Nuke and a Hornet's Nest

Nuclear power first arrived on the plains of Western Massachusetts when the Connecticut-based Northern Utilities formally announced its plans on December 31, 1973 to build a \$1.5 billion, 2,300 megawatt twin nuclear reactor near the quiet, rural town of Montague. Just two months into the Energy Crisis of 1973, the Montague plant was one of the 102 nuclear power plants already on order in the United States and in addition to the 56 currently under construction and another 42 already online. The fallout from the Arab-Israeli War of 1973 and the OPEC oil embargo shook the increasingly fragile administration of President Richard Nixon. Watergate, stagflation, and endless lines of cars stretched around empty gas stations symbolized a nation on the brink. These were desperate times for the United States, and President Nixon turned to nuclear power as the solution to the nation's energy problems, its dependence on foreign oil, and also America's key to future stability and economic strength.<sup>57</sup>

Nixon's Project Independence called for the rapid expansion of the nuclear industry in the United States by reducing the average construction time for new reactors from ten years to just six which would add 200 new nuclear power plants to the nation's energy grid by 1985. If successful, Project Independence would produce a total of 1,000 nuclear power plants by the year 2000 and account for fifty percent of the nation's total

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<sup>57</sup> Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 21-22.; Harvey Wasserman, "N.O.P.E. in Mass.," *Win*, June 27, 1974.

energy consumption. As of 1973, the New England area already drew twenty percent of its energy from nuclear power, more than four times the national average. Because New England lacked an abundance of natural resources like coal and natural gas, the region was disproportionately dependent on both foreign oil imports and nuclear power. With the Energy Crisis of 1973, the unavailability of oil imports placed even greater emphasis on the importance of nuclear power to New England as well as the rest of the country. Because of its current disproportionate dependence on nuclear power, the Nixon administration expected New England to be the driving force behind the nation's energy independence and economic recovery after 1973 starting with Montague.<sup>58</sup>

At the onset, that certainly appeared to be the case, as the proposed nuclear plant in Montague possessed a strong support base. Northern Utilities already owned four nuclear power plants in the New England area including Yankee Maine, Vermont Yankee, and the Yankee and Millstone I plants in Connecticut. The utility also recently invested in a pair of additional reactors at the Millstone site and two new proposed plants for Plymouth, Massachusetts and Seabrook, New Hampshire. Northern Utilities was not an upstart in the nuclear industry, and the utility strategically selected Montague as the site of its next nuclear plant because the town matched the established profile.<sup>59</sup>

Located in Franklin County about 90 miles to the west of Boston and 200 miles northeast of New York City, Montague was a small New England town struggling through hard economic times. It was dotted with small farms, old mills, and run down

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<sup>58</sup> *Lovejoy's Nuclear War*, directed by Daniel Keller and Charles Light (1975; Turner Falls, MA: Green Mountain Post Films, 2012), DVD.

<sup>59</sup> Wasserman, "N.O.P.E. in Mass."

factories. Few employment opportunities existed for its mostly working class population of 8,500. The town was an economically depressed, forgotten stop halfway between the two far more prosperous communities of Amherst and Greenfield. To say the least, Montague was a town desperately in need of an economic stimulus.<sup>60</sup>

Early in the spring of 1973, word got out that Northern Utilities was exploring the idea of building a nuclear power plant in Montague. The utility flooded the town with pamphlets and leaflets advertising nuclear power as a safe, cheap, and clean energy source. Job creation and local tax incentives were soon promised, and before long, the town's selectmen were being wined and dined by Northern Utilities. However, as economically desperate as Montague was, the proposed nuclear plant followed on the heels of a soundly defeated initiative to convert the nearby Montague Plains into a landfill for Boston's garbage. The landfill would have yielded a financial windfall for the town of almost \$600 million, but Montague's residents still voted against the project. Northern Utilities wanted to ensure that the proposed nuclear plant did not suffer the same fate, and so there were some local reports that the utility offered a few bribes to Montague's town leaders. Regardless, by the fall of 1973, the wining, dining, and propagandizing paid off for the utility with as much as two-thirds of the Montague's 8,500 citizens reportedly pledging their support for nuclear power coming to town.<sup>61</sup>

The same could not be said for Montague's surrounding countryside where opposition to nuclear power soon arose from a local commune and a band of organic

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Don Saint-Pierre, "Will Montague Be Tax Haven?" *Greenfield Recorder* (Greenfield, MA), January 9, 1974; Wasserman, "N.O.P.E. in Mass."

farmers. Communal farms were something that had become common in the countryside by the late 1960s and early 1970s. They started dotting the American landscape in places like the deserts of the Southwest, the woodlands of the Pacific Northwest, and the farmlands of rural New England. They were filled with young people who had spent the majority of the previous decade involved in activist politics. During the 1960s, they campaigned against systematic problems within the United States including the Vietnam War, Jim Crow racism, government corruption, Cold War militarism, and mass consumerism. They took LSD, smoked marijuana, and experimented with their sexuality, but they also fought valiantly for civil rights, feminism, gay liberation, and the environment. They represented the New Left, SDS, hippies, and collectively, they formed the counterculture movement.<sup>62</sup>

In 1968, the counterculture movement began to break down. The assassinations of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy, the emergence of black power and race riots, the Tet Offensive, police crackdowns at Columbia University and the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, the New Left's persistent infighting, and the nihilistic drug culture and urban decay of the inner cities turned many young people away from the counterculture movement. Many fled the cities and joined communes in the countryside like the Montague Farm where Sam Lovejoy resided. The Montague Farm was located to the southeast of Montague in Western Massachusetts, and it represented the largest and most influential of the communes in the New England area. For all intents and purposes,

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<sup>62</sup> John McMillan, *Smoking Typewriters: The Sixties Underground Press and the Rise of Alternative Media in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 82-112; Blake Slonecker, *A New Dawn for the New Left* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 1-7.

the Montague Farm was a place to which many people came to escape activist politics, but that did not mean that it was not a political place. After all, the Montague Farm was originally founded as a result of a political and ideological split between the Liberation News Service (LNS) and SDS in 1968.<sup>63</sup>

The Liberation News Service was a radical underground newspaper of the New Left cofounded by Marshall Bloom and Ray Mungo on the eve of the SDS Pentagon March in Washington, D.C. on March 20, 1967. The LNS flourished in its role as the news outlet for the counterculture movement with offices in Washington, D.C., New York, Berkeley, and London. In less than a year's time, the LNS had over three hundred outlets across the globe and a loyal readership in the millions. Coinciding with the Columbia University protest and occupation of 1968, Bloom and Mungo partnered with SDS members Allen Young and George Cavaletto to open a New York office in the basement of a Harlem office building funded by Cavaletto. A power struggle quickly ensued over the direction of the Liberation News Service between members of the Washington office and the more classical Marxist group led by Bloom and the increasingly more Marxist-Leninist leaning SDS contingency that had come to dominate the New York office. Following a Saturday night benefit screening of The Beatles *Magical Mystery Tour*, Bloom and Mungo along with a few other accomplices snuck into the Harlem basement of the Liberation News Service's New York office on the sleepy Sunday morning of August 11, 1968 and stole a printing press, organizational records,

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<sup>63</sup> Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 23-25; McMillan, *Smoking Typewriters*, 82-112; Slonecker, *A New Dawn for the New Left*, 1-7.

and other LNS paraphernalia. After loading the stolen goods onto a borrowed truck, the cofounders turned thieves made the three hour drive to Montague and relocated the LNS to a farm Bloom had secretly purchased a few months earlier.<sup>64</sup>

From the Montague Farm, the Liberation News Service continued to publish its biweekly rags for another six months from a barn that housed the stolen printing press, but after Marshal Bloom's tragic suicide on November 1, 1969, the newspaper faded away. The stolen printing press, which symbolized the news agency that had been Bloom's brainchild, remained locked in the barn, and the activist politics that had consumed the LNS and its members grew less important. For the next four years, the Montague Farm's communards focused on organic farming, the environment, and living communally with those that came to call the place home. The Vietnam War, Watergate, and the social activism that had seemingly defined the counterculture movement took a backseat to working the farm, living harmoniously with nature, and just focusing on the local community.<sup>65</sup>

In many ways, the members of the Montague Farm had become isolationists and retreated from politics in favor of living the quintessential Thoreauvian lifestyle. After Northern Utilities announced its plans to bring nuclear power to Montague, that lifestyle became threatened. Understanding where the communal farms in Western Massachusetts came from and what type of person resided in places like the Montague Farm is paramount to understanding the situation Northern Utilities walked into when it selected

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<sup>64</sup> Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 23-25; McMillan, *Smoking Typewriters*, 82-112; Slonecker, *A New Dawn for the New Left*, 1-7; Wasserman, "N.O.P.E. in Mass."

<sup>65</sup> Harvey Wasserman, *Energy War: Reports from the Front* (Westport, CT: Lawrence Hill, 1979), p. 27-48; Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 23-25; Slonecker, *A New Dawn for the New Left*, 1-7.

the Montague Plains as the site for its latest nuclear power plant. Completely unbeknownst to the utility, bringing nuclear power to Montague was the proverbial stick that stirred the angry hornet's nest. Led by Sam Lovejoy, activists from the Montague Farm attacked the proposed Montague plant and organized a local opposition to nuclear power that became the bedrock of the antinuclear movement in Western Massachusetts and throughout New England.<sup>66</sup>

### Lovejoy the Saboteur

Sam Lovejoy grew up in the Connecticut River valley in the small Western Massachusetts town of Wilbraham. At age six, Lovejoy went to work for a local organic farmer, spending the next eleven years picking apples and peaches when he was not in school. Lovejoy always thought “it only seemed natural that I wound up being a farmer,” but as a high school junior he quit farming and developed an interest in science. He had a physics teacher that year who was a retired nuclear submarine officer with the U.S. Navy, and Lovejoy developed a fascination with the “romantic” stories his teacher would share about submarines. Lovejoy became a promising science student and won a National Sciences Foundation award as a high school senior. When he enrolled at Amherst College, Lovejoy entered with what he described as a “proclivity to think nuclear power was kind of groovy,” and he decided to seek a double major in math and physics. He then became involved with the counterculture movement at Amherst and dropped his interest in physics. His focus switched to Vietnam and to becoming a leader in the

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<sup>66</sup> Wasserman, “N.O.P.E. in Mass.”

antiwar movement. Lovejoy switched his major to political science and served as the New England regional coordinator for SDS. His senior year at Amherst coincided with the fracturing of the New Left and the split between the Liberation News Service and SDS. “I was from the cultural revolutionary side rather than the Marxist Leninist side,” Lovejoy noted, and so after college, he joined Marshal Bloom and moved to the Montague Farm.<sup>67</sup>

Lovejoy’s initial stay at the Montague Farm was short-lived. Using a contact he got from Bloom, Lovejoy organized the first Venceremos Brigade which was a sugar cane cutting group that travelled to Cuba to both show support for the local socialist movement and “to stick a finger in the eye of Nixon” as he put it. The trip also served a secondary purpose for Lovejoy personally and that was so he could work on his Spanish. While at Amherst, Lovejoy studied Chile and developed a great affinity for the Chilean socialist movement led by Salvador Allende. He hoped that his language skills would improve enough and that he might be able to make a contact through the foreign ministry while in Cuba to enable him to join the Chilean and Allende socialist movement. When that opportunity presented itself, Lovejoy experienced a change of heart.<sup>68</sup>

While in Cuba, he considered the oddity of brigadistas from New England cutting sugar cane in tropical Cuba. Most, including Lovejoy, had never worked any type of hard labor before, and few could even speak the local language. There was a political disconnect, and Lovejoy stopped believing that he belonged in Cuba. By the time he

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<sup>67</sup> Sam Lovejoy, Interview by David Smith, April 4, 2013; *Lovejoy’s Nuclear War*, Keller and Light, Green Mountain Post Films.

<sup>68</sup> Sam Lovejoy, Interview by David Smith; *Lovejoy’s Nuclear War*, Keller and Light, Green Mountain Post Films; Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 26.



left, Lovejoy reached the conclusion “that the most important place for me to be was America.” He abandoned the type of social and political activism that drew him to Cuba and adopted a local focus that led him back to Massachusetts. In the fall of 1969, Lovejoy returned to the Montague Farm as a full-time resident to resume his life as a farmer.<sup>69</sup>

Lovejoy spent the next four years devoting all of his time, energy, and political activity to getting the Montague Farm up and running by putting up fences, raising barns, insulating houses, milking cows, canning food, and growing organic vegetables and marijuana. Though characterized as living apolitically, for Lovejoy, communal living on the Montague Farm was as political as traveling to Cuba to cut sugar cane and participating in the Cuban socialist movement. He was “living out” his politics through subsistent and sustainable agriculture. This was part and parcel of the “social rules rebellion” that characterized much of the counterculture movement, and Lovejoy very well may have been content to remain focused on organic farming if it were not for Northern Utilities. As Lovejoy explained, “The nuke came to Montague...I did not seek out nuclear power.” It was the utility that shook the hornet’s nest, but Lovejoy made the loudest buzz.<sup>70</sup>

By June of 1973, Northern Utilities erected a 550 foot tall meteorological weather tower at the proposed construction site for the Montague nuclear power plant. As part of its construction license application with the Atomic Energy Commission, the utility was

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Sam Lovejoy, Interview by David Smith.

required to prepare an environmental impact statement that included a year's worth of weather data. Lovejoy just so happened to be out of town when the weather tower was constructed, but when he returned, Dan Keller, a friend from the nearby Wendell Farm, picked up Lovejoy at the airport and drove him to a nearby bluff overlooking the Montague Plains. Upon seeing the massive steel structure, complete with the thousands of red and blinking strobe lights, Lovejoy turned to Keller and said, "Somebody is going to knock that tower over!" Looking back on that moment, Lovejoy admitted that at the time, "I had no idea that it would be me."<sup>71</sup>

As the weeks rolled by, the leaves began to drop from the trees and the wind grew colder, and what little opposition there was to the nuclear plant in Montague struggled to gain any traction locally. Lovejoy's explanation for the situation was that "we have the utilities being one of the biggest employers, an unemployment rate somewhere between twelve and fifteen percent in the area, about the only organized force of workers in the area is the Construction Trades Council, and they're looking for jobs so badly that they'll work at any possible job handed to them and you're more or less put in a position of a depressed area being offered a giant construction project, in which the only way these people can respond is to say, 'God, we need jobs and therefore we're going to have to take the nuclear power plant.'" The combination of a town desperate for work and a large corporation offering to provide new jobs resulted in the development of a local

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<sup>71</sup> Sam Lovejoy, Interview by David Smith; *Lovejoy's Nuclear War*, Keller and Light, Green Mountain Post Films.

fervor for the proposed nuclear plant that was as strong as the steel in the weather tower now looming over the valley.<sup>72</sup>

By the winter of 1973, Lovejoy finally reached the conclusion that it would be up to him to do something about the proposed nuclear power plant in Montague and test the town's support for the project. The decision came after months of researching nuclear power and civil disobedience, in the writings of Henry David Thoreau, Mohandas Gandhi, and Dr. John Gofman especially. Gofman's book *Poison Power* became required reading for activists in the antinuclear movement and was a major influence on Lovejoy. However, if there was a single event that moved Lovejoy to take action at Montague, then it was the news about the leak that had been discovered at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation facility near the Columbia River in Washington. More than 115,000 gallons of radioactive waste seeped from the storage tanks at Hanford, and Lovejoy was dismayed about how little was being done both in terms of cleanup and punitive action taken against the plant operators. It was at that moment that Lovejoy realized that he had to personally take action against the proposed Montague plant, lest he run the risk that the Montague Plains would one day suffer the same fate as the Columbia River.<sup>73</sup>

Lovejoy began searching for "some way that I could stop this disaster from occurring in my area and maybe stop it all across the country or the world." He soon discovered that the only official avenue of recourse was the process of citizen intervention, a process he likened to a "kangaroo court." He explained, "Intervention

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Sam Lovejoy, Interview by David Smith; *Lovejoy's Nuclear War*, Keller and Light, Green Mountain Post Films; Slonecker, *A New Dawn for the New Left*; 127-135.

costs somewhere between \$75,000 and \$100,000, and you hire lawyers and bring in experts and try to compete with the Atomic Energy Commission on its own rules [and] convince them that a nuclear power plant is bad when obviously they think they're just dynamite." It was a farce from Lovejoy's perspective, and he cited the example of the protest against the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Plant to explain his position on citizen intervention. Esther Poneck led the local opposition in Vernon, Vermont to nuclear power beginning in the late 1960s. After six years of pursuing legal recourse, Poneck concluded "that nothing would stop nuclear power development in America except a giant catastrophe" according to Lovejoy.<sup>74</sup>

For Lovejoy, if citizen intervention was the only legal recourse, then "there was no recourse!" With no other options, Lovejoy returned to the original impulse he shared with Dan Keller upon seeing the weather tower for the first time. He was going to knock it over. Lovejoy then went to work on devising a plan that would culminate with him toppling the tower in a symbolic act of protest that he hoped would inspire a collective movement against nuclear power in Montague. Lovejoy's intention was not only to raise awareness about nuclear power as a political issue but also "help people around [Montague] realize that they do have recourse, but the recourse isn't necessarily through the established means, because sometimes the established means just don't work."<sup>75</sup>

There was one major problem with Lovejoy's plan, and that was the potential issue concerning the destruction of private property. "I did not want the people in the

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<sup>74</sup> Sam Lovejoy, Interview by David Smith; *Lovejoy's Nuclear War*, Keller and Light, Green Mountain Post Films.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

area to get hung up on the property issue, and the whole concept that someone would destroy property in order to stop a nuclear power plant or anything else,” Lovejoy explained. He knew that there would be some people in the community that would fixate on the property issue regardless of his intentions, noting that “[some] people protect property more, in many ways, than they’re willing to protect liberty, and sometimes even more than they’re willing to protect life.” This issue may have been further complicated by the fact that the proposed nuclear plant was strongly supported within Montague, especially amongst the town’s unemployed and working class. There was a risk that more people might gravitate towards the property issue than they otherwise would in defense of the jobs, tax breaks, and other financial incentives that the Northern Utilities promised to bring to Montague.<sup>76</sup>

Lovejoy hoped the symbolism in his plan to topple the tower would hold more weight than the property issue. He hoped his protest would connect to the rich and deep history of social activism that Montague and the entire Western Massachusetts area possessed. It was a tradition that encompassed the Quakers and their protest against Puritan persecution in the seventeenth century as well as Shays’ Rebellion and the resistance against the tax policies of an oppressive government in the eighteenth century. These were both traditions that Lovejoy sought to channel. He believed toppling the tower represented a form of civil disobedience that was consistent with the Quaker tradition of moral witness, and he also envisioned himself as a type of modern day Daniel Shays who was fighting the imposition of a nuclear industry built through greed and

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<sup>76</sup> *Lovejoy’s Nuclear War*, Keller and Light, Green Mountain Post Films.

government corruption. These were the qualities that Lovejoy hoped the people of Montague would latch onto rather than the property issue.<sup>77</sup>

Lovejoy planned to carry out his protest on February 22, 1974, the anniversary of George Washington's birthday, and the date was far from accidental. Lovejoy admired Washington, and he wanted to honor the great American revolutionary's birthday by taking what he believed was a stand against a nuclear industry that represented a new form of tyranny and threatened some of the founding principles of the United States. As the day approached, Lovejoy noted that there was a certain degree of "karma" to the situation in the sense that as a seventeen year old he left his job as an apple farmer to pursue an interest in nuclear submarines and eventually a degree in physics. Now, once again Lovejoy found himself being pulled off the farm, figuratively speaking, because of nuclear power. The difference was, that this time he aimed to bring the industry down.<sup>78</sup>

Shortly after midnight, wearing brown pants and a black jacket, Lovejoy slipped onto the Montague Plains, scaled a metal fence enclosing the proposed construction site, and sabotaged the 550 foot tall weather tower by loosening the three 750 foot cables that anchored it to the ground. He then made the two mile hike to the nearest road and flagged down a passing patrol car who gave him a ride to the nearest police station in Turner Falls, Massachusetts. Lovejoy turned himself in and submitted a four-page written statement in which he cited the Declaration of Independence, the Massachusetts

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<sup>77</sup> Sam Lovejoy, Interview by David Smith; *Lovejoy's Nuclear War*, Keller and Light, Green Mountain Post Films.

<sup>78</sup> Charles Keller, "Nuke Tower Felled On Montague Plain," *Greenfield Recorder*, February 22, 1974.

Bill of Rights, and accused the government and nuclear industry of despotism as both an explanation and justification for his act.<sup>79</sup>

Looking back on that cold winter night, Lovejoy described the experience as “hypnotic” saying that “it was one of the quietest, clearest, cold nights, it was just crisp, there was not a sound in the air. And when I walked up to the tower with its strobe-light blinking on and off, it was lighting the entire area. It was like I could see everything clearly for a split second, then darkness for a split second, then light for a split second.” After measuring each turnbuckle, Lovejoy went to work, hacking away at the first guard cable with a crowbar and a set of garden tools that he had packed with him in a tightly closed leather bag. It took about forty-five minutes to undo the first turnbuckle. With only about an inch of the cable still holding on, Lovejoy took his crowbar and twisted the end of the cable until it popped free. He was surprised that the loud boom of cable breaking free did not wake up the entire town. The sound was like a “double wanging noise that carried up the cable. Wang! Wang!” The shockwave reverberated from the top of the weather tower and back down through the ground. Lovejoy became fearful so he crouched down in the surrounding woods and enjoyed a smoke while waiting to see if anyone was going to come. After finishing his cigarette, his nerves settled, Lovejoy went to work on the second turnbuckle.<sup>80</sup>

Forty-five minutes later, the second turnbuckle let go and again the cable snapped sending a wave of sound up and down the tower and across the Montague valley. He

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> *Lovejoy's Nuclear War*, Keller and Light, Green Mountain Post Films.

then started hammering away at the final turnbuckle, and after thirty more minutes, the last cable holding the weather tower up released. The tower swayed and groaned, but it did not immediately fall. Lovejoy thought, “Great! Well, it’s not going and that’s beautiful cause now I might be able to knock over the whole thing.” When drawing up his plan, Lovejoy had wondered about the structural integrity of the tower. Did it have enough to fall as one unit, or would the tower just simply crumble to the ground? While he stood there pondering these questions, the tower swayed for a final time then in a moment came tumbling to the ground in a thunderous clap of crashing steel.<sup>81</sup>

It was 2:50 in the morning. Lovejoy had been hammering away at the tower for nearly three hours before it finally came down. As he stood observing the crumbled remains, he admitted that “I kind of felt a little letdown ‘cause I realized I hadn’t knocked down the whole thing.” The support base which measured 110 feet tall still remained, but what lay in front of him was 350 feet of twisted steel, cable, and glass. “To Hell with it,” Lovejoy said, as his dejection subsided. He found a sense of satisfaction in his work. The symbolic act he sought to accomplish had been realized. Lovejoy felt triumphant, like a vigilante that just landed a major blow to a great tyrant, a combination of George Washington and Ho Chi Minh. “I was the Viet Cong. I was an American revolutionary. I was the saboteur.”<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Sam Lovejoy, Interview by David Smith; *Lovejoy’s Nuclear War*, Keller and Light, Green Mountain Post Films; Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 27-29.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.



## Sam Lovejoy's Arrest and the Local Reaction

Upon his arrival at the Turner Falls police station, Sam Lovejoy turned himself in for sabotaging the tower and handed Sergeant Richard Cade a prepared statement, titled "George Washington's Birthday." The opening paragraph of Lovejoy's statement read:

"The Declaration of Independence rightfully legislates action 'whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends...of safety and happiness.' The Massachusetts Bill of Rights further states 'The people alone have an incontestable unalienable, and indefeasible right to institute government; and to reform, alter or totally change the same, when their protection, safety, prosperity and happiness require it.' With the obvious danger of a nuclear power plant...a clear duty was mine to secure for my community the welfare and safety that the government has not only refused to provide, but has conspired to destroy."<sup>83</sup>

By invoking the Declaration of Independence and the Massachusetts Bill of Rights, Lovejoy justified his toppling of tower as necessary action and civic duty to protect safety and wellbeing in light of the fact that the government not only failed to do so but was an active agent in the destruction of his and the community's basic rights.

In the next part of his statement, Lovejoy dove into the low-level radiation debate. "As a farmer concerned about the organic and the natural, I find irradiated fruit,

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<sup>83</sup> Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 34; Wasserman, "N.O.P.E. in Mass."

vegetables and meat to be inorganic; and I can find no natural balance with a nuclear plant in this or any community,” Lovejoy stated in reference to the environmental dangers of nuclear power. Regarding the risks to human health, Lovejoy noted that “there seems to be no way for our children to be born or raised safely in our community in the very near future.” He painted an apocalyptic picture of the future by asking, “No children? No edible food? What will there be?” Far from fear mongering, Lovejoy was issuing a public call to action. Lovejoy argued that “we must act...communities have the same rights as individuals [and] we must seize back control of our own community.”<sup>84</sup>

Lovejoy then turned his attention to a critique of the nuclear industry. He argued, “The nuclear energy industry and its support elements in government are actively practicing a form of despotism. They have selected the less populated rural countryside to answer the energy needs of the cities.” Lovejoy continued, “While not denying the urban need for electrical energy, why cannot reactors be built near those they are intended to serve? Is it not more efficient? Or are we witnessing a corrupt balance between population and risk?” His criticism of the nuclear industry and its siting policies was just as clever as it was damning.<sup>85</sup>

Lovejoy attempted to create a rural and urban divide over nuclear power, and he positioned himself as a concerned citizen of the local community, something that was hardly the case in Montague. In 1973, the town passed an anti-commune law which forced communes like the Montague Farm away from the town center, but by creating an

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<sup>84</sup> Arthur C., “Tower Toppler Tells Why,” *Valley Advocate* (Northampton, MA), March 20, 1974; Wasserman, “N.O.P.E. in Mass.”

<sup>85</sup> Wasserman, “N.O.P.E. in Mass.,” Arthur C., “Tower Toppler Tells Why;” Slonecker, *A New Dawn for the New Left*, 127-135.

urban vs. rural division, Lovejoy was able to turn the story around. It was Northern Utilities and not the hippie from the Montague Farm that became the outsider who was imposing its will and policies on the local community.<sup>86</sup>

After reading the last line of his statement in which Lovejoy declared that “through positive action and a sense of moral outrage, I seek to test my convictions,” he submitted himself to Sergeant Cade and was placed under arrest. Despite his confession, Sergeant Cade did not initially believe Lovejoy’s story. Cade found it hard to imagine any one person was capable of bringing the 550 foot tower down alone so he dispatched a pair of officers to check on the situation. When the officers reported back that the weather tower “looks like an airplane hit it halfway up.” Still in disbelief, Cade placed Lovejoy in a holding cell. He was then transferred from Turner Falls to the Greenfield District Court where he was later arraigned by Judge William Ball. Lovejoy faced willful and malicious destruction of personal property charges and a maximum five year prison sentence. He pleaded “absolutely not guilty” and was released on his personal recognizance. The trial was scheduled to begin in six months, and Lovejoy planned to handle his own defense.<sup>87</sup>

In the ensuing months leading up to the trial, news of Lovejoy’s toppling of the tower had a polarizing effect on the Montague community. The backlash began at his arraignment when Judge Ball referred to him as a “terrorist” and compared him to members of the Symbionese Liberation Army who were in the news currently because of

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> “Lovejoy Says ‘Not Guilty’,” *Greenfield Recorder* (Greenfield, MA), May 14, 1974; *Lovejoy’s Nuclear War*, Keller and Light, Green Mountain Post Films.

their recent high profile kidnapping of newspaper heiress Patty Hearst. Lovejoy certainly was not a terrorist, but such a label was flattering considering local *Greenfield Recorder* columnist Neil R. Perry compared Lovejoy to Adolf Hitler and denounced him as “the self-appointed savior of the people.” Montague Selectman Donald Skole, clearly taking the property issue angle, wondered “what Mr. Lovejoy would think if I decided to burn down his house because I didn’t like his way of living.” Lovejoy expected this kind of reaction from some members of the community.<sup>88</sup>

He also knew that the property issue would alienate opponents of the nuclear plant, like Portia Weiskel of the New England Coalition on Nuclear Pollution, who were committed to pursuing a citizen intervention. Weiskel denounced Lovejoy’s action, stating that “this is not a tactic that we in any way approve [and we] feel the place for debate on nuclear power is in the press, debates, lectures, and in the courts.” Weiskel’s sentiments were echoed by Ralph Nader who had recently helped organize the Massachusetts Interest Group to assist with the legal intervention against the Montague plant. Referring to Lovejoy’s sabotage, Nader said that it “was not my style...not the way I would have handled it.”<sup>89</sup>

On the other hand, Lovejoy’s toppling of the tower did open many eyes to the debate over the Montague plant locally as well as the larger question over the safety of nuclear power in general. One such person was Randy Kehler, a Harvard graduate and personal friend of Lovejoy’s. Kehler was a noted antiwar and social justice activist who

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<sup>88</sup> Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 32; Wasserman, “N.O.P.E. in Mass.”

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

rose to prominence through his work with the Congress on Racial Equality (CORE) and War Resisters International. After Lovejoy was released from jail, he phoned Kehler and asked, “Notice anything different over the horizon?” Kehler was shocked, and he noted that it was not until “Sam knocked over the tower that I woke up to nuclear power.” The same was true for a lot of people in communities surrounding Montague.<sup>90</sup>

In the spring, town meetings in the neighboring communities of Shutesbury, Leverett, and Wendell all went on record against the proposed Montague plant, passing resolutions in favor of a moratorium on nuclear power. In Amherst, a similar measure was just narrowly defeated, but in Montague, the story was not quite the same. Town officials put a referendum question on the ballot during the spring elections entitled “Should Two Nuclear Plants Be Built in Montague?” An overwhelming victory was expected. From the Montague Farm, Lovejoy’s fellow communards organized a citizen group called Nuclear Objectors for a Pure Environment (NOPE) to help organize the local opposition to vote the referendum down.<sup>91</sup>

NOPE created a new political party called the NO Party, and entered five candidates in the local elections including Lovejoy himself for town meeting representative. The NO Party created a lot of positive exposure for the opposition to the Montague plant, and it afforded the local townspeople an opportunity to get to know people like Lovejoy on a more personal level rather than relying solely on stereotypes and news reports. After the votes were cast, the referendum passed by a margin of three

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<sup>90</sup>Randy Kehler, Interview by David Smith, March 6, 2013; Wasserman, “N.O.P.E. in Mass;” Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 33.

<sup>91</sup> Wasserman, “N.O.P.E. in Mass.”

to one. Considering that town officials expected that it might pass by as much as ten to one or twenty to one, the fact that one-third of those that voted opposed the nuclear plant was positive sign for the NO Party and the growing opposition to nuclear power locally. In the aftermath of the local elections, members of NOPE sought to capitalize on the momentum and increased support that was building for the nuclear opposition and formed the Alternative Energy Coalition.<sup>92</sup>

The purpose of the Alternative Energy Coalition was to lead a grassroots petition campaign across Western Massachusetts to put a dual referendum on the state Senate District ballot, one opposing the proposed Montague plant and a second calling for the closure and dismantlement of the nuclear power plants in nearby Rowe, Massachusetts and the aforementioned Vernon, Vermont plant. By the end of summer, the Alternative Energy Coalition had canvassed the entire Franklin County area collecting over 3,800 signatures which was more than enough to ensure that both ballot questions would be included in the upcoming state elections. The Alternative Energy Coalition was helping to grow the nuclear opposition around Montague by bridging the gap between Lovejoy's more militant use of direct action and the citizen intervention's continued commitment to litigation. By the following fall of 1974, that gap continued narrow as a result of the trial of Sam Lovejoy.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Wasserman, "Nuke Developers on the Defensive," *Win*, December 3, 1974; Sam Lovejoy, Interview by David Smith; *Lovejoy's Nuclear War*, Keller and Light, Green Mountain Post Films.

## Nuclear Power on Trial

The trial of Sam Lovejoy took center stage in early September of 1974, and it was his intention that it would indeed be a performance. The proceedings were held in Greenfield's Franklin County Superior Court, and Lovejoy hoped his legal battle would serve as a public forum for the increasing interest in the nuclear power debate around Montague. Despite the fact that Lovejoy was facing a felony, he opted to represent himself. During the run-up to the trial, Lovejoy explained to Judge Kent Smith that he believed his toppling of the tower and the resulting trial were both political events which in turn made his lack of counsel "inseparable from the politics of the act."<sup>94</sup>

The trial began on Constitution Day September 17, 1974, and the first day was exhausted by simply trying to find twelve impartial people to fill out the jury who held no preset opinion on either the proposed nuclear plant or Lovejoy's act of protest. By 1:00 P.M. the following day the jury had finally been chosen. Following a short break for lunch, Judge Smith, Lovejoy, prosecutor John Murphy, and the entire jury plus a caravan of curious spectators and media members visited the construction site where Lovejoy toppled the tower just six months previously. A new tower had been flown in by Northern Utilities less than two weeks after Lovejoy knocked the original over, but the field trip had nothing to do with the weather tower. Instead, the trip was made at the request of Lovejoy who wanted to talk about the fragile ecology of the Montague Plains.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Sam Lovejoy, Interview by David Smith; *Lovejoy's Nuclear War*, Keller and Light, Green Mountain Post Films.

<sup>95</sup> Wasserman, *Energy Wars*, 32-39; Sam Lovejoy, Interview by David Smith; *Lovejoy's Nuclear War*, Keller and Light, Green Mountain Post Films.

Once the trial returned to the courtroom, the prosecution made its case by calling six witnesses, three each from Northern Utilities and the Montague Police Department with each confirming: 1) that the tower was knocked over; 2) the value of the sabotaged equipment; and 3) that Lovejoy admitted to toppling the tower. These were facts that Lovejoy did not dispute. What he disagreed with, though, was the charge of “willful and malicious destruction of personal property.” Lovejoy based his defense on the argument that there was no malicious intent in his toppling of the tower because he was acting in self-defense of the community. He called two witnesses of his own to prove his case, and the first witness that was called was none other than Dr. John Gofman.<sup>96</sup>

Lovejoy’s first question to Gofman was to define the word “nuclide.” This prompted an objection from the prosecution and Judge Smith cleared the courtroom in order to privately address Lovejoy. He asked Lovejoy to explain the relevance of Gofman’s testimony, and Lovejoy replied that in order to prove that he was acting in defense of the community and not with malice when he toppled the tower he needed to explain the danger of nuclear power. Dr. Gofman was certainly the most qualified person to do so, but Judge Smith dismissed this notion and ordered that only testimony relevant to the events of February 22<sup>nd</sup> would be admissible. In an interesting exchange, the judge asked Lovejoy, “Had he talked to Gofman before February 22?” Lovejoy replied, “No, your Honor, but I read his book.” When pressed again if he had ever spoken to Gofman, Lovejoy said, “Your Honor, I believe as sure as I’m standing here that when you read someone’s book, you talk to them. I believe I talked to George Washington, and the

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<sup>96</sup> *Lovejoy’s Nuclear War*, Keller and Light, Green Mountain Post Films.



signers of the Constitution and Henry David Thoreau. Don't you talk to Oliver Wendell Holmes when you read his books?"<sup>97</sup>

Judge Smith decided to allow Gofman's testimony on the record but not to the jury, and so while the jury remained recessed, Gofman expertly spoke on the dangers associated with nuclear power and the problems with the nuclear industry. As a former scientist with the Manhattan Project and Atomic Energy Commission, Gofman testified that the government's current standards on low-level radiation were "a license to commit murder" and would result in "32,000 additional cases of cancer, leukemia and birth defects" unless it was drastically reduced. He then addressed the risk of a nuclear reactor meltdown and the notion presented by proponents of nuclear power that such an event was unlikely. Gofman explained that a nuclear reactor meltdown would "destroy hundreds of thousands of lives and do billions of dollars' worth of damage" while "an area the size of Pennsylvania would be made uninhabitable for centuries." He scoffed at the idea that a nuclear reactor meltdown was hardly worth worrying about, stating that "I don't really know whether the chance is one in ten, or one in a hundred, or one in ten thousand. I just ask myself in view of the fact that we have so much easier ways to generate energy needs, why do it this way?"<sup>98</sup>

Moving away from the discussion on nuclear reactor meltdowns, Gofman centered his focus on the issue of plutonium, a subject in which he was widely considered to be an expert. Gofman stated that "three tablespoons of plutonium could cause nine

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<sup>97</sup> Wasserman, *Energy Wars*, 32-39; Sam Lovejoy, Interview by David Smith; *Lovejoy's Nuclear War*, Keller and Light Green Mountain Post Films.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*

billion human cancers [and] each nuclear plant creates thousands of pounds of waste plutonium, but there's no way to store it.” Consequently, one major dilemma with nuclear power was that it requires “an obligation to guard the radioactive garbage not only for our generation but for the next thousand or several thousand.” To be more precise, plutonium has a half-life of 24,000 years and for it to be “guarded 99.9999 percent perfectly, in peace and war, with human error and human malice, guerilla activities, psychotics, malfunction of equipment,” Gofman continued before asking, “Do you believe there's anything you'd like to guarantee will be done 99.9999 percent perfectly for 100,000 years?”<sup>99</sup>

Gofman effectively outlined the grave dangers associated with nuclear power as well as the daunting challenges a community faces to keep itself safeguarded from a nuclear catastrophe. He was a highly effective witness for Lovejoy to have called, and Gofman made a tremendous impression both on the trial and the community’s perception about nuclear power. After Gofman was excused, Lovejoy called his second witness, noted American historian Howard Zinn who was a renowned expert on civil disobedience and a leader in the antiwar movement. As soon as Zinn took the stand, Lovejoy’s first question was whether or not he believed toppling the tower was a malicious act. As before with Gofman, the prosecution objected, the court was cleared, and Judge Smith ruled that Zinn would be allowed to testify to the record but not to the jury once again.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Sam Lovejoy, Interview by David Smith; *Lovejoy’s Nuclear War*, Keller and Light, Green Mountain Post Films.

Zinn's testimony directly addressed the use of civil disobedience in relation to the destruction of property. He explained that Lovejoy's use of civil disobedience in toppling the tower "was in the best tradition of Gandhi, Thoreau, and the Abolitionists, including (of course) Elijah P. Lovejoy, Sam's distant cousin, who was hanged by a proslavery mob in southern Illinois." Judge Smith then interrupted Zinn to inquire "if true civil disobedience didn't demand both strict nonviolence and the acceptance of lawful punishment." Zinn answered that "the destruction of property was not violent when life was at stake [because] violence has to do with human beings, not property." It would not be the last time Judge Smith interrupted Zinn. In fact, Judge Smith became so enthralled with Zinn's testimony that at one point he leaned over and asked the historian to dinner the next time he was in Boston. As soon as the judge squared away his dinner plans, Zinn stepped down from the witness stand, making room for Lovejoy to now testify.<sup>101</sup>

By the time Lovejoy took the stand, the testimonies of both Gofman and Zinn had transformed the trial, with Gofman criminalizing nuclear power for its health and safety risks, and Zinn decriminalizing Lovejoy's actions as civil disobedience. Lovejoy was questioned by Northampton attorney Thomas Lesser, and this time the jury was allowed to remain in the courtroom. He spoke for six hours in total, telling the jury about his childhood, his early respect for nature, how he became interested in math and physics, his experiences at Amherst, why he moved to the Montague Farm, when he became an

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<sup>101</sup> Wasserman, *Energy Wars*, 32-39; Sam Lovejoy, Interview by David Smith; *Lovejoy's Nuclear War*, Keller and Light, Green Mountain Post Films.

opponent of nuclear power, and how he arrived at the decision to sabotage the weather tower. He relayed a heartfelt story about why he decided to topple the tower in order to protect a small child he knew. Lovejoy explained that “I had fallen in love with a little four-year-old girl named Sequoyah [and] I asked myself, who am I to do this thing, to take on the role of judge. But then I thought about this little girl who couldn't defend herself, and I knew I had to act.”<sup>102</sup>

Lovejoy's testimony deeply impacted several of the jurors. After the trial, several reported that they planned to find Lovejoy not guilty, but that decision was soon taken out of their hands. It was brought to Judge Smith's attention that Lovejoy had been charged with the “destruction of personal property” but that the weather tower had been paid and assessed as “real property” by Northern Utilities. On account of this technicality, Lovejoy was acquitted to which he, and not the prosecution, actually objected. He wanted his trial to decide the nuclear power debate in Franklin County based on the verdict rendered by the jury, but for Lovejoy, the acquittal left the issue unresolved. Judge Smith overruled Lovejoy's objection and called the jury back into the courtroom. They were instructed to deliver a verdict of not guilty. Court was dismissed, and Lovejoy was set free.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Sam Lovejoy, Interview by David Smith; *Lovejoy's Nuclear War*, Keller and Light, Green Mountain Post Films.

<sup>103</sup> Wasserman, *Energy Wars*, 32-39; Sam Lovejoy, Interview by David Smith; *Lovejoy's Nuclear War*, Keller and Light, Green Mountain Post Films.

## Building a Movement

In the immediate aftermath of Sam Lovejoy's acquittal, things begin to change for the local opposition to the Montague Plant as well as the nuclear industry as a whole in the United States. Some changes were coincidental. Midway through Lovejoy's trial the Atomic Energy Commission ordered the immediate shutdown of twenty-one nuclear power plants across the country for an emergency safety check after a leak was detected in the cooling pipe of a General Electric built reactor at the Zion Nuclear Power Station outside Chicago, Illinois. Twenty-five additional nuclear plants, including six in Japan, that were built using the same General Electric reactor design were instructed to close within sixty days for similar emergency precautions. This global mass shutdown of nuclear power was the largest in the industry's brief history.<sup>104</sup>

Locally, the day after Lovejoy's acquittal, Northern Utilities announced that plans to build the proposed nuclear power plant in Montague would be postponed for at least one year due to financial concerns. The utility only possessed one-third of the capital needed to build the \$1.5 billion project, and Northern Utilities President Lelan F. Sillin explained that "the company must raise \$1 billion to build the Montague plant, and when \$1 billion is needed, and when interest rates are as high as they are, we have to look seriously at the situation." For the local opposition, the delay was a major victory, but like the global shutdown of the nuclear industry as a result of the design flaw found in the cooling pipe of the General Electric reactor, Northern Utilities' financial problems were more the result of stagflation and the current economic crisis facing the Western world

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

following the Energy Crisis of 1973 than anything that the nuclear opposition in Montague did. Nevertheless, because of the economic crisis and the current rate of inflation, Northern Utilities' one year delay on the Montague plant would likely increase the project's total cost to \$2 billion. Similar economic problems had already canceled or delayed an additional thirty nuclear power projects in the United States, and it appeared that Montague was well on its way towards joining that list.<sup>105</sup>

Making matters worse for the utility, Lovejoy's protest and subsequent trial as well as the diligent grassroots organizational efforts of the Alternative Energy Coalition helped strengthen the nuclear opposition in Montague. A mere three weeks after Lovejoy's acquittal, citizens went to the polls in the November 1974 elections to vote on several referendum propositions. On the state level, the Alternative Energy Coalition's two proposition questions were also presented to voters. The first referendum opposing the Montague plant failed by a margin of just over 47% to 53% which effectively stripped the project from any future political support as no candidate would now touch such a divisive issue. The Alternative Energy Coalition's second referendum, which called for the dismantling of the nearby Vermont Yankee and Yankee Rowe plants, outperformed expectation at the poll, winning 33% of the vote.<sup>106</sup>

In Montague, the question whether or not the twin reactor plant should be built was returned to the ballot, albeit by the Alternative Energy Coalition this time and not the town's selectman. When the question was last posed six months prior, the measure

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<sup>105</sup> Wasserman, *Energy Wars*, 32-39; Slonecker, *A New Dawn for the New Left*, 137-146.

<sup>106</sup> *Lovejoy's Nuclear War*, Keller and Light, Green Mountain Post Films; Slonecker, *A New Dawn for the New Left*, 137-146.

passed by a margin of three to one. This time around the referendum still passed but only by a margin of two to one. This represented a growth of 40% for the nuclear opposition from 770 voters in the spring to 1,091 in the wake of Lovejoy's trial. The gain was significant. The working class of Montague was still unemployed and no other source of new job creation was on the horizon aside from Northern Utilities. Still, the 321 local residents who changed their mind and switched their support away from the Montague plant vindicated Lovejoy and the action he took by knocking over the tower.<sup>107</sup>

By the end of 1974, the Alternative Energy Coalition and the antinuclear opposition were making gradual inroads within Montague and the surrounding Western Massachusetts area. They went door to door and dusted off the old printing press of the Liberation News Service that sat in the barn back on the Montague Farm. The Alternative Energy Coalition sought to educate the public on the dangers associated with nuclear power including low-level radiation, nuclear reactor safety, the disposal and storage of nuclear waste, and heavy industrialization. They also promoted alternative energy and sustainable living including retrofitting the Montague Farm to make even it more energy efficient. Overall, the fundamental goal of the Alternative Energy Coalition was to organize the fight against nuclear power at the grassroots level in Western Massachusetts and build a movement that extended beyond the region.<sup>108</sup>

One of the most effective ways that the Alternative Energy Coalition advanced the nuclear opposition outside of Western Massachusetts was through film. During the

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<sup>107</sup> Wasserman, *Energy Wars*, 32-39.

<sup>108</sup> Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 23-25; Slonecker, *A New Dawn for the New Left*, 132; Wasserman, "N.O.P.E. in Mass."

winter of 1974, a pair of communards from the Montague Farm and a third from the nearby Wendell Farm started a documentary film company called Green Mountain Post Films (GMP Films). The idea originated with Charles Light of the Montague Farm who believed he could help compliment the work of the Alternative Energy Coalition by using film to help distribute materials related to the fight against nuclear power such as the story of Sam Lovejoy. Light had been a resident at the Montague Farm since 1970, and he joined the local nuclear opposition after Lovejoy's protest.<sup>109</sup>

Light shared his idea about making a film about Lovejoy's protest and trial with Dan Keller of the Wendell Farm and Steve Diamond of the Montague Farm. Keller had both the experience and film equipment to handle the recording, and Diamond knew something about upstarts. He was a founding member of the Montague Farm and one of the men who helped Marshall Bloom steal the printing press of the Liberation News Service. In 1975, GMP Films produced *Lovejoy's Nuclear War*, a documentary about the fight over nuclear power in Montague, Lovejoy's protest, and his subsequent trial. The film quickly became an important tool for the Alternative Energy Coalition and other opponents of nuclear power.<sup>110</sup>

In 1975, Light and Keller asked Randy Kehler and his partner Betsy Corner to take the film with them to Europe for the International War Resisters Conference. Green Mountain Films wanted the documentary to be screened before an international audience. Kehler and Corner eventually took the film to Wyhl, West Germany which became the

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<sup>109</sup> *Lovejoy's Nuclear War*, Keller and Light, Green Mountain Post Films; Slonecker, *A New Dawn for the New Left*, 138-146.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*



source of the direct action-based antinuclear movement that spread throughout the Atlantic World in the late 1970s. GMP Films and *Lovejoy's Nuclear War* took the local opposition to nuclear power in Montague global. It allowed members of the Alternative Energy Coalition to make important regional and international connections that facilitated the growth of a movement against nuclear power that encompassed the Atlantic World.<sup>111</sup>

On February 22, 1975, marking the one year anniversary of Sam Lovejoy's toppling of the tower, Northern Utilities announced that it was delaying construction of the Montague plant for at least three years, once again citing financial concerns. Two years later, the utility announced yet another delay, this time for four years. The proposed nuclear plant in Montague was never built, and whether that was ultimately due to uncontrollable economic realities or the dogged work of Lovejoy, the Alternative Energy Coalition, and the rest of the local nuclear opposition, did not matter. From Montague, the nuclear opposition branched out of Western Massachusetts and into the greater Atlantic World where even larger battles were fought against nuclear power in places like Wyhl, West Germany and Seabrook, New Hampshire. The antinuclear movement would arise after Montague and form through the relationship between the site occupation at Wyhl and the later founding of the Clamshell Alliance. That relationship and the link that tied the two campaigns together proved to be Sam Lovejoy and his war against the nuke at Montague.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Sam Lovejoy, Interview by David Smith; *Lovejoy's Nuclear War*, Keller and Light, Green Mountain Post Films; Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 42-43.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

## Chapter 4

### Model Germany and the Birth of the Antinuclear Movement at Wyhl

In July of 1975, Randy Kehler and his partner Betsey Corner travelled to Noordwijkerhout, Netherlands to attend the 15th Triennial War Resisters' International Conference. Kehler was a member of the Montague Farm, and at the encouragement of his fellow communards, Kehler brought Green Mountain Post Film's *Lovejoy's Nuclear War* to screen at the conference and help tell the story of the fight against nuclear power in the United States. While at the conference, Kehler met a group of German activists from the ongoing site occupation and protest against nuclear power at Wyhl. They invited Kehler to visit Wyhl, and it was there that he first encountered the type of direct action-based protest that would later inspire the formation of the Clamshell Alliance in Seabrook, New Hampshire. The site occupation at Wyhl formed in February of 1975 and quickly became the model activists used to fight nuclear power not just in Germany but across the Atlantic in the United States as well. Wyhl represented one of the more transcendent moments in the social activism of the Cold War, and it served as the impetus behind the formation of the antinuclear movement in the Atlantic World during the 1970s.<sup>113</sup>

This chapter tells the story of Wyhl and traces the emergence of direct action in the fight against nuclear power and an increasingly authoritative state in the wake of the Energy Crisis of 1973. Direct action developed out of both necessity and as a result of the ineffectiveness of citizen intervention. After the Arab-Israeli War and subsequent

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<sup>113</sup> Randy Kehler, Interview by David C. Smith, April 8, 2013.

OPEC oil embargo, Western governments from Bonn to Washington, D.C. turned to nuclear power in order to alleviate each country's energy dependence on the import of foreign oil. In the process, the state used its authority to intervene and unilaterally support the expansion of the nuclear industry. This undermined the process of citizen intervention, and as a last resort, the nuclear opposition turned to direct action.

Sam Lovejoy was the first to use direct action against the nuclear industry when he toppled the weather tower in February of 1974 in protest of the proposed nuclear power plant at Montague. Lovejoy's stand was intended to inspire the local community to rise up against what he believed to be the imposition of nuclear power in Western Massachusetts. Despite the success of the Alternative Energy Coalition and their grassroots efforts to organize the local community to oppose nuclear power, the type of direct action-based movement Lovejoy envisioned never materialized. Instead, it emerged less than a year later, in 1975, from a small town situated along the Rhine in West Germany.

By focusing on Wyhl, this chapter chronicles how a local protest against nuclear power and an authoritative state produced a model of direct action-based opposition that inspired a movement spanning from West Germany to the United States. The story concentrates primarily on the relationship between the social activism of the 1970s and the growth of the nuclear industry in West Germany after 1973. It represents a continuation of the narrative on the struggles of the Left against the political transformation and increasing conservatism of the Social Democratic Party (SPD). The chapter follows the debate over nuclear power in West Germany from Fessenheim and

Marckolsheim in the French Alsace to Breisach and Wyhl. Important plotlines include the imposition of Model Germany and the continued alienation of the Left; the radicalization of conservative Christian Democrats and the development of the citizen intervention at Breisach; the protest against the lead factory in Marckolsheim and its impact on the site occupation at Wyhl; the breakdown of the citizen intervention and the turn to direct action at Wyhl; and finally, the export of the antinuclear movement throughout the Atlantic World from Wyhl.

This chapter marks a departure from the previous narrative on Sam Lovejoy and the war against nuclear power in Montague. Lovejoy's protest personified the low-level radiation and nuclear reactor safety debates as well as the struggles of the citizen intervention that characterized the fight against nuclear power in the 1960s. He embodied the New Left activist who came of age during an era exemplified by the Cold War and the battle over civil rights, peace, and the environment. Lovejoy was a pioneer and a revolutionary in the fight against nuclear power, but Lovejoy's war was ultimately a story about one man's protest.

The story of Wyhl is about the political transformation of an entire region in West Germany that culminated in the mass opposition of whole communities to nuclear power and the authority of the state. Wyhl is commonly mistaken for a somewhat spontaneous event that developed in the winter of 1975, but that was hardly the case. The radicalization of vintners, farmers, and everyday citizens that formed the protest at Wyhl represented the end result of a narrative encompassing the social activism of the 1950s,

the SPD's alienation of the Left in 1960s, and the introduction of Model Germany in the aftermath of the Energy Crisis of 1973.

### Model Germany and the Alienation of the Left

The longstanding conflict between the Social Democratic Party and the Left in West Germany boiled over following of the Energy Crisis of 1973. The OPEC embargo caused the global price of oil to soar and decimated the domestic economies of Western governments throughout the Atlantic World. The impact on the nuclear industry was profound. From Bonn to Washington, D.C., nuclear power was viewed as the answer to achieving energy independence and securing an economically strong and stable future. The success of the nuclear industry quickly emerged as a matter of national security for both the United States and West Germany, and as a result, nuclear power became institutionalized after 1973.

As previously noted, in the United States, President Richard Nixon pledged to build 200 new nuclear power plants by 1985 and a total of 1,000 by the year 2000 through Project Independence. In West Germany, the Energy Crisis of 1973 sent the young Bonn Republic into a severe economic tailspin. The nation derived approximately 60% of its total energy consumption from foreign oil, and as a result of the OPEC embargo, the German economy stagnated. Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and the SPD-led government in Bonn responded to the Energy Crisis of 1973 by introducing a nuclear power-based economic recovery plan called Modell Deutschland (Model Germany). The plan consisted of securing energy independence and growing the domestic economy by

emphasizing capital-intensive markets like the nuclear industry over more labor-intensive sectors such as farming and viticulture. This marked a decision that would soon come back to haunt the SPD, but in the meantime, the government continued to aggressively push the expansion of nuclear power.<sup>114</sup>

Through the Energy Program of 1974, Model Germany called for the construction of 40 new nuclear power plants by 1985 which was roughly the equivalent of a new power plant being added to the national energy grid every three months. Though not as aggressive as Project Independence, Model Germany did signal a new era for both nuclear power and social activism in West Germany. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, the nuclear industry in West Germany was transitioning between a research and development phase to a more active siting and construction phase. A lightly populated area in the Rhine River Valley known as the Kaiserstuhl located in the southwest corner of the state of Baden-Württemberg emerged as the initial target area for the expansion of the nuclear industry in West Germany. This predated the Energy Crisis of 1973, but the early expansion of nuclear power did coincide with the emergence of the modern environmental movement in West Germany.<sup>115</sup>

The environmental movement in West Germany was led by the Left, and many of its members were former radicals of the 1960s who were participants in the Easter March Movement and student protests. Based on the heavy industrialization alone, environmentalists would have opposed any plan that sought to transform the Kaiserstuhl

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<sup>114</sup> Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*, 51-56, 91-95.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

into an energy corridor for the rest of the country. However, because the plan involved nuclear power, and given the SPD's history of coopting and manipulating the issue for its own purposes, the expansion of the nuclear industry became politically volatile and divisive in West Germany, especially following the imposition of Model Germany.

As summarized in the narrative on the Ban the Bomb movement, the initial controversy concerning the Social Democratic Party and nuclear power began in 1957. The SPD withdrew its previous support for equipping West Germany's army with nuclear weapons and pledged their support instead to the Fight Atomic Death Campaign in a political maneuver to oppose Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and the CDU-led government's decision to join NATO. The maneuver failed, and the SPD was thoroughly routed at the polls in 1957 election. After the embarrassing defeat, the Social Democratic Party withdrew from the Ban the Bomb movement and began to move towards a more politically moderate platform and away from leftist social issues. Meanwhile, without the SPD as an organizational support base politically, the Fight Atomic Death Campaign collapsed.<sup>116</sup>

In 1959, the Social Democratic Party moved even further away from the Left when it adopted the Godesberg Program which was an internal reorganization initiative designed to make the party more appealing to conservative, middle class voters. Despite being the traditional political outlet for social and labor issues in West Germany, the party distanced itself from both through the Godesberg Program. The SPD also reversed its stance on integration with the West and began to embrace the laissez-faire economic

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<sup>116</sup> Breyman, *Why Movements Matter*, 83-132; Cooper, *Paradoxes of Peace*, 83-116.

policy of the CDU-controlled government in Bonn. In 1966, the political transformation of the Social Democratic Party became complete when the party partnered with the CDU in the Great Coalition government led by Chancellor Kurt Kiesinger. The Great Coalition significantly consolidated political power in West Germany and closed the last remaining channels of institutional protest which rendered both the working class and members of society's Left completely excluded politically. In 1969, ten years after the SPD began its move away from the Left and towards the political center in West Germany through the Godesberg Program, Willy Brandt succeeded Kiesinger to become the Social Democratic Party's first chancellor since 1930.<sup>117</sup>

The Social Democratic Party and Willy Brandt's rise to political power in Bonn began with the party's decision to abandon the Fight Atomic Death Campaign and embrace the bomb and nuclear power. After the Energy Crisis of 1973, the SPD again turned to the nuclear industry to help pull the country out of its economic recession and end West Germany's heavy energy dependence on foreign oil. Brandt did not survive the initial economic slide that set in after the OPEC embargo. He was replaced by Helmut Schmidt, and the Model Germany program was implemented in 1974.

Because Schmidt ultimately tied his legacy, West Germany's economic recovery, and the country's future strength and stability to nuclear power, the Model Germany program was installed with a heavy-handed level of state support to ensure the success and expansion of the nuclear industry. Even though West Germany lacked any true channel for institutional protest ever since the Social Democratic Party's rise to power in

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid.



Bonn, censor and suppression became more prevalent under Model Germany as means to control the opposition to nuclear power. Censorship and suppression combined with limited to no institutional channel for political protest, these were the characteristics of an authoritative state, and it was one that the Left knew all too well.<sup>118</sup>

After the SPD's abandonment of the Fight Atomic Death Campaign, the Easter March Movement emerged in West Germany and became the primary vehicle for the social activism of the Left. Following the partnership between the Social Democratic Party and the CDU in the Great Coalition government of 1966, both the Easter March Movement and the Left took a more militant and an increasingly more anti-statist slant. In June of 1967, a confrontation between student protestors and a police office in Berlin left one student dead. Bonn reacted brashly and passed Notstandsgesetze, or the Emergency Decrees, which granted the state para-dictatorial like powers in the event of a national security crisis. In response, the Außerparlamentarische Opposition, or APO, formed in order to serve as the new voice and protectorate of the Left against the emergence of the authoritative state in Bonn.<sup>119</sup>

The immediate conflict between the Left and the state began to dissipate following an assassination attempt against APO leader Rudi Dutschke in April of 1968. The incident robbed the student movement of its key leadership and a large degree of its spirit. In total, the student movement in West Germany lasted just ten months, but its brevity did not diminish its overall significance. The APO helped politicize an entire

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Breyman, *Why Movements Matter*, 83-132; Cooper, *Paradoxes of Peace*, 83-116; Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*, 37-50.

generation of protestors from the 1960s. After the collapse of the student movement, many young protestors left the APO and dispersed into a variety of other social movements in the late 1960s and early 1970s where they provided the leadership for the successor to the APO, and organization called the Association of Citizens' Initiatives for Environmental Protection, more commonly referred to as the BBU which stands for the Bundesverband Buergerinitiativen Umweltschutz.<sup>120</sup>

Formed in 1968, the BBU expanded the political platform of the APO beyond the authority of the state in Bonn to include more local issues like education, housing, public health, and environmental concerns. The BBU functioned in much of the same manner as the Consolidated National Interveners in the United States in that it consisted of loosely organized citizen groups who shared both a common cause and desire to affect policy and decision-making. By 1972, the BBU consisted of over 1,000 local and regional citizen groups across West Germany. Their public perception was far less menacing than its predecessor. In fact, despite its ties to the APO, the Social Democratic Party began to selectively embrace some of BBU initiatives. However, that changed after the Energy Crisis of 1973 and the imposition of Model Germany. Because of the institutionalization of nuclear power, the SPD withdrew its support for several key BBU initiatives including the environmental protection of the Rhine.<sup>121</sup>

For the Left, its relationship with the Social Democratic Party had come full circle by 1974 as once again it had been abandoned politically by the SPD over nuclear power.

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*, 37-50.

The Social Democratic Party's withdrawal of support for the BBU's environmental programs carried the same weight as the party's original cooptation of the Fight Atomic Death campaign in 1957 as well as its move away from the Left through the Godesberg Program in 1959. Even if a member of the BBU possessed no discernible position on nuclear power prior to 1973, its role in the alienation of the Left between 1957 and the rise of the APO in 1967 guaranteed that a formidable opposition to Model Germany would develop. Isolated and without a political voice in Bonn, the BBU assumed an even greater leadership role for the Left in West Germany and provided the organizational framework behind the fight against both nuclear power and Model Germany. The Left figured to play a major role in the site occupation and nuclear protest at Wyhl as well as the direction of the antinuclear movement afterwards in places like Brokdorf, Kalkar, Grohnde, and Gorleben.<sup>122</sup>

However, the success of the antinuclear movement could not be determined solely by the Left but rather depended more so on the support of everyday citizens and the people who lived in the communities around nuclear power sites. When the Social Democratic Party withdrew its support for the BBU's preservation of the Rhine, the communities of the Kaiserstuhl appealed to their local representatives and the Christian Democratic Union-led government in Stuttgart, but their plea for help went unheeded. Farmers, vintners, and otherwise loyal CDU constituents suddenly found themselves suddenly abandoned by their party over nuclear power. With no other options

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<sup>122</sup> Breyman, *Why Movements Matter*, 83-132; Cooper, *Paradoxes of Peace*, 83-116; Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*, 37-50.

themselves, these everyday citizens became radicalized over nuclear power and joined the opposition to Model Germany and the expansion of the nuclear industry after 1973. The radicalization of citizens outside of the political Left helped launch the antinuclear movement in West Germany, and it all began in the small wine producing town of Breisach.<sup>123</sup>

### Wine, Loyalty, and The Radicalization of the Right

The nuclear power debate first came to Breisach on June 21, 1971. The state owned utility company Badenwerk submitted an application to build what would be the first commercial nuclear power plant in West Germany, and the utility chose Breisach because of its prime location along the Rhine. The majestic river and surrounding valley were also home to some of Germany's finest vineyards, and winemaking served as Breisach's primary industry. To no surprise then, local vintners and farmers quickly grew concerned over the potential impact the proposed Breisach nuclear plant might have on the quality of the region's grapes and cherished wine industry.<sup>124</sup>

Badenwerk's announcement occurred on the heels of an unsuccessful citizen intervention against a nuclear power plant opposite the Rhine from Breisach in the nearby French Alsace town of Fessenheim. In 1969, the government-owned *Électricité de France*'s plan to build a twin reactor power plant incited similar concerns to those at Breisach. A citizen group comprised of French, German, and Swiss activists called

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<sup>123</sup> Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*, 37-50.

<sup>124</sup> Michael Doelfs, "Erst beim Wein sprang der Funke über," *Badische Zeitung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany), January 26, 1977.

Comité de sauvegarde de Fessenheim et de la plaine du Rhine (CSFR) formed. In 1970, one of the local activists, a woman named Esther Peter-Davis, travelled to the United States to speak about and to conduct research for a publication on the environmental and human health risks associated with nuclear power. Upon her return to Fessenheim, the CSFR published Peter-Davis' 60 page book on the potential danger of nuclear power called *Fessenheim: Vie ou mort de l'alsace*, which roughly translates to *Life or Death of the Alsace*. The book included statements from John Gofman, Arthur Tamplin, and other early leaders of the protest against nuclear power in the United States. The following spring, Peter-Davis and CSFR raised enough local awareness to organize a march of 1,000 demonstrators through the streets of Fessenheim. A month later, a second demonstration planned by the CSFR attracted a strong contingent of 10,000 protestors to Fessenheim.<sup>125</sup>

Despite the growing resistance against the Fessenheim nuclear plant, there was a problem for the CSFR which was that most of the protestors were from the regions surrounding Fessenheim and not the town itself. The Fessenheim townspeople enthusiastically supported the nuclear plant and welcomed the jobs, tax breaks, and other economic bonuses that Électricité de France promised. These represented tangible, real incentives to Fessenheim residents who developed a vested interest in the construction of the proposed plant. Needless to say, the citizen intervention led by Peter-Davis and the CSFR failed, but Fessenheim emerged as a learning opportunity for its neighbors in

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<sup>125</sup> "Kernkraftwerk Fessenheim zurückgestellt," *Badische Zeitung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany), January 18, 1969; "Die Wärmebelastbarkeit entscheidet," *Badische Zeitung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany), September 27, 1969; Esther Peter-Davis, A. Albrecht, F. Bucher, *Fessenheim: Vie ou mort de l'alsace* (Mulhouse-Ridelesheim: Schmidt-Lucos, 1970), 1.

Breisach. The BBU-led nuclear opposition in Breisach understood that in order for a citizen intervention to be successful it was imperative that the townspeople in which the nuclear plant was to be built displayed an unmistakable opposition to nuclear power. At Breisach, this proved to be an easier task than expected. If there was one thing that local residents cared about more than new jobs, tax breaks, and economic incentives that might result from a nuclear plant, then it was wine.

After Badenwerk announced its intention to construct a nuclear plant at Breisach, the local BBU formed a citizen group called the Upper Rhine Action Committee. Similar to the CSFR, the Upper Rhine Action Committee brought together French, German, and Swiss protestors, many of which were participants in the resistance at Fessenheim. It learned from the failed citizen intervention at Fessenheim and tapped into the known concerns local residents in Breisach already had about the potential impact of nuclear power on the area's wine industry. A citizen intervention began, and town halls, pubs, churches, local auditoriums, and school gymnasiums were soon transformed into public forums where the primary topic of conversation was always wine, grapes, and the weather.

From the outset, the citizen intervention in Breisach attacked the proposed plant over weather and the issue of climate change. More specifically, the nuclear opposition questioned whether the Breisach plant would adversely impact the local environment and threaten the region's already delicate grape harvest. The environment already represented a topic of conversation prior to the debate over nuclear power. It first emerged in the late 1960s with the rise of the modern environment and concerns over

thermal pollution in the Rhine resulting from the increased industrialization of the area. Badenwerk anticipated that it would be an issue at Breisach as well. The utility sought to minimize the debate over the environmental impact by avoiding the issue of thermal pollution altogether. Rather than use water from the Rhine as its primary cooling system, Badenwerk's proposed plant design featured a pair of massive cooling towers that would release the heat generated during the production process into the air as steam rather than back into the river.<sup>126</sup>

The BBU organized a series of town forums to discuss the proposed plant design, and meteorologist Hans Von Rudloff from the state weather office in Freiburg was invited to discuss what impact the cooling towers might have on the local weather patterns. Much of Von Rudloff's expertise and research centered on the effect of volcanic activity on global climate. After studying the proposed design for the Breisach plant, Von Rudloff argued that the steam produced by the cooling towers would likely mirror a volcanic cloud, and given Breisach's location in the Rhine Valley, he predicted that the steam cloud would linger and potentially block sunlight over the region. The diminished level of sunlight would likely cause a sizeable change in climate, and the impact on the local grape harvest stood to be disastrous.<sup>127</sup>

Because of the potential impact on the local wine industry, Breisach's farmers and vintners joined the citizen intervention in the spring of 1972. However, their opposition to the project failed to bring immediate action. As previously alluded, Breisach

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<sup>126</sup> "Atomkraftwerk Breisach in der Diskussion," *Freiburger Wochenbericht* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany), November 9, 1972.

<sup>127</sup> "Atomkraftwerk Breisach in der Diskussion."

represented the traditional support base for the CDU-led government in Stuttgart. The vintners and farmers who joined the citizen intervention at Breisach were conservative people and initially retained their faith in the state government, and frankly, they were correct to do so. Since the nation's founding in 1949, the CDU ruled Baden-Württemberg unopposed, and the party held a particular soft spot for the Kaiserstuhl area around Breisach. The state's popular leader Premier Hans Filbinger even made his home in nearby Freiburg, and the CDU generously supported the region's local vintners and farmers through subsidies and other government programs. When local vintners and farmers joined the citizen intervention, they had no reason to believe that the CDU would fail to answer their concerns during the comment period over the proposed nuclear power plant in Breisach.

The comment period represented a standard component of the German Atomic Law of 1959 which mandated that a construction license could only be issued for a nuclear power plant following a four week comment period in which the state provided the public with full access to all documents pertaining to an application for a new nuclear facility. At the end of the four weeks, the state recorded any grievances submitted and scheduled a public hearing typically around 30 days later. Administered by representatives of the state, the public hearing was the final step before a decision on a new application could be made. The overall process was nearly identical to citizen intervention in the United States. The only major difference was that in Germany only



direct stakeholders were admitted to participate in the public hearing whereas in the United States any citizen retained the right to intervene.<sup>128</sup>

In the summer of 1972, the state government in Stuttgart announced that the comment period on the Breisach plant was set to begin in September with the public hearing scheduled for October 31, 1972. The announcement marked the beginning of a series of small events that culminated in the radicalization of Breisach's vintners and farmers over nuclear power. The problem with the date of the public hearing was that it conflicted with the beginning of the fall harvest season. Given the CDU's close working relationship with the winemaking and agriculture industries in the Kaiserstuhl, the intent was clear. The CDU sought to limit opposition to the proposed plant by excluding vintners and farmers from participating in the public hearing. Local residents were blindsided by the act, and for the first time, the previously unwavering local support for the CDU began to wane. To demonstrate their displeasure, 500 farmers drove their tractors from Oberrotweil to Breisach in a demonstration organized by the Upper Rhine Action Committee midway through the comment period on September 16, 1972.<sup>129</sup>

In the nearby city of Freiburg, a statewide petition campaign was launched during the comment period as well asking the CDU to delay the Breisach project until more research could be performed on the environmental dangers and risks associated with nuclear power. By the time the public hearing began in Breisach, nearly 60,000 people

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<sup>128</sup> Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*, 37-41, 97-101.

<sup>129</sup> "CDU-Ortsverbände am Kaiserstuhl erheben offiziellen Widerspruch," *Badische Zeitung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany), September 29, 1972; "Traktoren-Demonstration gegen das Kernkraftwerk," *Badische Zeitung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany), September 7, 1972; "Atomkraftwerk Breisach in Der Diskussion."

from around the Kaiserstuhl area signed the petition. The strong show of regional support for the citizen intervention rendered the public hearing anticlimactic. The state's Minister of Economics, Rudolf Eberle, presided over the proceedings and found himself simply overwhelmed. Minister Eberle failed to address any of the citizens' specific concerns over nuclear power, and he afforded the interveners who did show up to testify little room to speak. Eberle adjourned the hearing before issues regarding plant design and the potential consequence of climate change were even discussed. He did offer his assurances that the state "would take the necessary time to study the issues" before approving Badenwerk's construction application, but this simply was not enough for local residents.<sup>130</sup>

After over two decades of loyal support for the CDU, vintners and farmers felt deserted by the party as a result of nuclear debate in Breisach. Just as a confrontation with the state over Breisach seemed inevitable, the CDU abruptly withdrew its interest in the project. Minister Eberle understood that nuclear power would be a tough imposition at Breisach, and it was a fight he declined to pursue. In addition, unbeknownst in Breisach, Badenwerk had other options. In December of 1971, Wolfgang Zimmer, mayor from the nearby hamlet of Wyhl, wrote Minister Eberle a letter offering his town "as an alternative for the contested reactor planned for Breisach." Eberle accepted Zimmer's offer after witnessing the opposition that formed in Breisach leading up to the public hearing. The decision would not become known until the following summer. In a

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<sup>130</sup> "Fast 60,000 Unterschriften gegen Kernkraftwerk Breisach," *Badische Zeitung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany), October 3, 1972. "CDU-Ortsverbände am Kaiserstuhl erheben offiziellen Widerspruch;" "Atomkraftwerk Breisach in Der Diskussion."

closed session meeting with the Wyhl city council on July 18, 1973, Mayor Zimmer relayed the news that Badenwerk had selected Wyhl over Breisach as the site for its nuclear power plant. The news was then broadcasted statewide three days later on July 21, 1973 via a radio announcement out of the state capital in Stuttgart.<sup>131</sup>

After nearly two years, the debate over the proposed nuclear plant in Breisach ended with the selection of Wyhl instead. The radio announcement that confirmed Badenwerk's selection of Wyhl also severed any remaining ties Breisach's vintners and farmers sought to retain with the party. Locals already felt abandoned by the CDU's decision to schedule the Breisach public hearing during the fall harvest and then failing to address their concerns over nuclear power. For the party to then simply move on to Wyhl and leave the political situation in Breisach completely unsettled served as a slap in the face for the CDU's longtime supporters.

The vintners and farmers of Breisach became radicalized over nuclear power, and in mass, they followed the nuclear debate to Wyhl and joined the citizen intervention. Ultimately, the significance of the debate over nuclear power in Breisach was that it attracted a segment of society in the Kaiserstuhl region to the debate over nuclear power that was otherwise disengaged from the politics of the Left. Breisach mobilized a traditionally conservative region against both nuclear power and a state government that became steadily more authoritative as the pressure on the success of the nuclear industry increased after 1973. This pressure transformed the citizen intervention and the debate

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<sup>131</sup> "Kernkraftwerk soll nicht in Breisach gebaut werden," *Badische Zeitung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany), July 20, 1973, "Wyhl Standort für Kernkraftwerk?" *Badische Zeitung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany), July 20, 1973; "Wirtschaftsminister Eberle erhielt 1971 einen brisanten Brief," *Badische Zeitung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany), February 24, 2005.

over nuclear power that developed in Wyhl after Breisach and eventually resulted in what was perceived to be the death of democracy and the failures of the citizen intervention.

### A Black Coffin in Wyhl

The tiny hamlet of Wyhl was located approximately 20 kilometers north of Breisach and opposite the Rhine from the French Alsace town of Marckolsheim. After the state government announced its selection of Wyhl as the site of the Badenwerk nuclear plant, the nuclear opposition that formed previously in Breisach waited patiently for the legal process to begin. The following spring, Minister Eberle made the announcement that the comment period for the Wyhl nuclear plant would begin on April 17, 1974. The citizen intervention promptly launched its second statewide petition campaign within the last two years. The first collected 60,000 signatures asking the CDU government in Stuttgart to delay the Breisach plant. The second campaign asked citizens throughout the Baden region to directly oppose the Wyhl nuclear plant. By the end of the comment period, more than 90,000 people in the Kaiserstuhl signed the petition opposing nuclear power in Wyhl.<sup>132</sup>

The overwhelming regional opposition to the Wyhl nuclear plant did little to scare Minister Eberle and the CDU away from the project. Despite the results of the petition campaign, Eberle announced that the four week comment period for Wyhl would commence as scheduled on April 17, 1974. The CDU's commitment to Wyhl in the face

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<sup>132</sup> "Unterschriftenaktion gegen Atomkraftwerk," *Badische Zeitung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany), May 31, 1974.

of such a strong opposition did not necessarily reflect the party's confidence level in the project. Instead, the CDU's steadfastness on Wyhl resulted more so from Bonn's introduction of Model Germany. Between the selection of Wyhl on July 18, 1973 and the beginning of the appeals period the following spring, the Arab-Israeli War broke out in the Middle East. The resulting OPEC oil embargo led to the Energy Crisis of 1973, and nuclear power became a priority for many Western governments including Germany. Through Model Germany, Bonn responded by ordering the rapid expansion of nuclear power. Chancellor Schmidt applied a great deal of pressure on state governments responsible for stewarding the growth of nuclear power in their region, and the CDU in Stuttgart was no exception. Minister Eberle knew exactly what was on the line when the public hearing began in Wyhl, noting that "the energy policy of this state stands and falls with Wyhl."<sup>133</sup>

By the time the public hearing was scheduled to begin on July 9, 1974, over 600 citizens registered to participate in the proceedings as interveners. As he did at Breisach, Eberle scheduled the public hearing at the beginning of the harvest season, and since a majority of the interveners worked as vintners and farmers, nearly half of the 600 registered participants were unable to attend. This left 330 scheduled interveners, and as soon as the hearing began, the first objection targeted Minister Eberle. Like other utilities in West Germany, Badenwerk was partially owned by the state government in Stuttgart. In addition, Eberle served as the utility's Vice President. The interveners believed that

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<sup>133</sup> "Öffentliche Bekanntmachung," *Badische Zeitung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany), May 18, 1974.

Eberle's role as the administrator of the public hearing for Wyhl represented a significant conflict of interest, but Eberle brushed the suggestion off.

The second objection concerned citizen intervention process. As noted, German law requires a four week comment period in which all documentation for a proposed nuclear facility must be submitted to the public for review. Badenwerk failed to do so at Wyhl. The utility did not submit the required documentation until just two weeks before the start date of the public hearing and well after the comment period had expired. Even then, key pieces of information including safety reports and emergency evacuation plans were either redacted or withheld altogether. Interveners requested that the public hearing be rescheduled so that they could have the full amount of time allowed by law to review Badenwerk's application, but Eberle denied the request. The third and subsequent objections presented by interveners all focused on the potential environmental impact of the Wyhl nuclear plant and how nuclear power might adversely affect the Kasierstuhl's wine and farming industries, but Eberle remained unmoved and sustained not a single.<sup>134</sup>

Three hundred interveners presented their cases against the Wyhl plant on the first day of the proceedings, but not a single objection appeared to register with the panel headed by Eberle. To make matters worse, if an intervener attempted to repeat an objection that had already been presented, Eberle cut their microphone off and rushed them away from the podium. Eberle's "assembly line" approach to the hearing did not sit well with many interveners who had been waiting since Breisach to log their objections.

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<sup>134</sup> "Der Widerstand der Wyhler wächst," *Communist People's Daily* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany), July 24, 1974.

Chants of dictator were directed at Eberle from the crowd, and a sign appeared that read “Wo bleibt hier die Demokratie / Where Is the Democracy Here?” By the time the first day of the hearing was adjourned, tensions in the local gymnasium where the public hearing was being held neared a breaking point.<sup>135</sup>

The agenda for the second and final day of the public hearing for Wyhl consisted of the presentations of the remaining 30 interveners. The proceedings unfolded in a similar manner to the first day with Eberle cutting off interveners and hastily calling for the next. Suddenly, after just six speakers, Eberle moved to bring the hearing to a close with 24 interveners left unheard. The move incited a thunderous uproar and enraged the crowd that packed the tiny gymnasium. A panic stricken Eberle called for the riot police, but before the police arrived at the scene, local BBU Chairman Hans-Helmuth Wüstenhagen stood up and ordered the interveners to vacate the gymnasium in protest of the proceedings. The BBU convened a rally outside of the gymnasium, and Wüstenhagen ordered the protesters to march to Mayor Zimmer’s house. Carrying a black coffin meant to symbolize the death of democracy, over 140 demonstrators marched through the streets of Wyhl before arriving at the mayor’s home and chanting that “das Kernkraftwerk wird nicht gebaut / the nuclear power plant will not be built!”<sup>136</sup>

After the public hearing in Wyhl, Wüstenhagen and the BBU filed a disciplinary complaint against Minister Eberle with the prime minister of Baden-Württemberg, the aforementioned Hans Filbinger. The complaint alleged the Eberle compromised the

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<sup>135</sup> “Der Widerstand der Wyhler wächst.”

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

citizen intervention process by both limiting and at times preventing interveners from participating in the public hearing. The once beloved Filbinger declined to respond to the complaint. The approval of the nuclear power plant in Wyhl had been predetermined and democracy was forsaken. The black coffin carried through the streets of Wyhl signaled the end of the citizen intervention in Wyhl.

On November 6, 1974, the Wyhl nuclear power plant was finally approved by the state parliament in Stuttgart. Local residents back in the Kaiserstuhl were unceremoniously informed the next day through an ad printed in area newspapers. The announcement did not go unnoticed, but by the fall of 1974, a different protest, against a lead processing facility across the Rhine in the small French Alsace town of Marckolsheim, was dominating local headlines. Marckolsheim came to captivate the attention of activists throughout the Kaiserstuhl area, and a model of protest emerged that would transform the fight over nuclear power both at Wyhl and beyond.<sup>137</sup>

### Getting the Lead Out in Marckolsheim

In the early 1970s, a German company announced its intent to build a lead processing factory on the banks of the Rhine in Marckolsheim. Local residents along with the town's German neighbors across the river in Wyhl banded together to form a citizen group called the Groupement d'information pour la Sauvegarde de l'Environnement

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<sup>137</sup> "Eberle vor Bürgermeistern: Genehmigung des Kernkraftwerks Wyhl wahrscheinlich," *Badische Zeitung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany), September 14, 1974; "Dienstaufsichtsbeschwerde gegen Eberle," *Badische Zeitung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany), July 16, 1974; "Protest gegen Genehmigung für Wyhl," *Badische Zeitung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany), July 11, 1974.



de Marckolsheim (Group of Information and Protection of the Environment / GEISM). The citizen group organized a citizen intervention against the lead factory including a march of 2,000 demonstrators from the Alsace and Baden area through Marckolsheim on August 25, 1974. Despite the local opposition, construction on the lead factory moved forward with the initial ground breaking occurring on September 16, 1974. Unlike Breisach and Wyhl, there was no comment period or public hearing on the Marckolsheim. With the citizen intervention rendered ineffective, the GISEM partnered with another regional citizen group called the de l'Association Fédérative Régionale pour la Protection de la Nature (Federal Regional Association for Nature Conservation / AFRPN) and devised a plan to stop construction on the lead plant by nonviolently occupying the construction site.<sup>138</sup>

On the night of September 20, 1974, the two citizen groups distributed leaflets around Marckolsheim explaining the occupation concept and indicating that it would begin at seven o'clock the next morning. As soon as workers began constructing a fence to enclose the construction site, several protesters invaded the grounds and leapt onto the fence posts. Others blocked construction equipment and erected tents on the site. Work on building the Marckolsheim lead factory came to an immediate halt. News of the site occupation and successful protest spread throughout the Alsace and Kaiserstuhl. The tent village that formed on the construction site became a regular training ground for activists seeking to learn how to use nonviolence and civil disobedience in their protests. In late

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<sup>138</sup> "2000 Teilnehmer beim Sternmarsch - Demonstration gegen KKW und Bleisulfatwerk," *Badische Zeitung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany), August 26, 1974.

September, a citizen group from Freiburg comprised of members of the anarcho-pacifist group Graswurzelrevolution (Grassroots Revolution) taught a workshop at Marckolsheim on resisting arrest that including dramatizations with police officers. Three hundred people from the surrounding region attended the workshop with many coming from the citizen interventions originating at Breisach and Wyhl. The rallies and social gatherings at Marckolsheim that followed throughout fall served to change the face of political activism in the surrounding area by providing an effective alternative to legal protest and citizen intervention.<sup>139</sup>

The Marckolsheim site occupation lasted nearly six months until late in the winter on February 25, 1975, the French government withdrew the construction permit issued to the German company that sought to build the lead factory. The duration of the site occupation coincided perfectly with the nuclear debate and failed citizen intervention in Wyhl. The protest in Marckolsheim formed in between the public hearing for Wyhl during the summer of 1974 and the project's subsequent approval the following November. Marckolsheim offered more than just a model of protest that the nuclear opposition could apply to Wyhl once Badenwerk began construction. It also provided an opportunity for activists to learn about and practice nonviolent resistance and civil disobedience-based strategies. Marckolsheim served as the training ground for the nuclear opposition at Wyhl, and it represented the final step leading to the site occupation at Wyhl. Looking back, if Breisach helped radicalize the citizenry of the Kaiserstuhl

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<sup>139</sup> "Widerstand in Marckolsheim wächst - Umweltschützer Léon Siegel neuer Bürgermeister der Gemeinde," *Badische Zeitung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany), October 22, 1974; "Protest mit Unterschriften - Bürgermeister vom nördlichen Kaiserstuhl beim Regierungspräsidenten," *Badische Zeitung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany), October 23, 1974.

against nuclear power, and the public hearing over Wyhl convinced the nuclear opposition to abandon the legal process, then Marckolsheim provided the blueprint for direct action that later led to the rise of the antinuclear movement at Wyhl.

### Watch on the Rhine

On December 17, 1974, nearly six weeks after the Baden-Württemberg state parliament approved the Wyhl nuclear plant, the first demonstration against the project began. In protest of the construction license issued to Badenwerk, 650 citizens from the Kaiserstuhl marched in front of the parliament building in Stuttgart. The demonstrators unsuccessfully sought to convince the state parliament to delay construction on the Wyhl project, which drew the ire of Minister Eberle. He became even more irate a month later when the nuclear opposition succeeded in placing a referendum over the Wyhl nuclear plant on the local ballot. Eberle responded by threatening to use eminent domain to seize any property in Wyhl needed to build the nuclear plant if the vote interfered in any way with Badenwerk's construction plans. The referendum took place on January 12, 1975, and exactly 1,605 eligible voters showed up to cast a ballot with 883 in favor and 692 against the plant. The previous summer 90,000 citizens from across the Kaiserstuhl signed a petition expressing their opposition against the plant, but the referendum was limited to residents of Wyhl only. Eberle used the 883 votes in favor of the project to issue Badenwerk's construction license for Wyhl. Groundbreaking was slated for February 17, 1975, and the stage was set for a massive confrontation between the state and nuclear opposition.

The confrontation got off to a slow, rather nondescript start. On the first day of construction, the local nuclear opposition held back. On February 18, 1974, the BBU held a press conference at the construction site with the aforementioned Chairman of the BBU Hans-Helmut Wüstenhagen speaking on behalf of the nuclear opposition. Wüstenhagen denounced the construction of the Wyhl plant but declared that the BBU would not call for an occupation of the site. Three hundred activists showed up to attend the press conference the majority of which arrived wearing backpacks and carrying tents. Many were veterans of the citizen interventions at Breisach and Wyhl and had participated in the direct action protest against the lead plant in Marckolsheim. They came to the press conference prepared to occupy the construction site at Wyhl. Despite the BBU's declaration that a site occupation would not be ordered at Wyhl, once the press conference concluded, large groups of the 300 wandered over to the construction site. The sight of large construction equipment removing tree after tree from the Black Forest proved to be too much for the opposition to stand idly by and watch. As they did in Marckolsheim, multiple protestors rushed onto the construction site and blocked the construction equipment while others quickly erected tents. After months of planning and training at Marckolsheim, the occupation of the Wyhl construction site began in a matter of moments.<sup>140</sup>

The following day, 700 riot police arrived at the site occupation fully equipped with water cannons, armored vehicles, and dogs, and with orders from the state to clear

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<sup>140</sup> "Demonstraten ergwingen Abbruch der Arbeit," *Badische Zeitung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany), February 19, 1975.

the protestors. As soon as the police entered the site and attempted to arrest the demonstrators, the protestors exercised their nonviolence and civil disobedience training from Marckolsheim forcing the officers to physically remove each one of them. The protestors banded together and sang the traditional German patriotic song “Die Wacht am Rhein / Watch on the Rhine,” as the police brutally forced them off of the construction site. In total, the police arrested 54 demonstrators, but the reports of police brutality and the use of force against peaceful protestors, including both men and women, outraged and further galvanized the nuclear opposition in the surrounding regions.<sup>141</sup>

For example, Josef Aschenbrenner, chair of the CDU party in the neighboring town of Sasbach, resigned from his post and joined the opposition to Wyhl as a result of the police brutality at the site occupation. The deciding moment for Aschenbrenner was the report of police attacking the wife of a city council member in Sasbach with a water cannon. Five of Aschenbrenner’s fellow council members in Sasbach also resigned from their positions, and similar scenarios were repeated in neighboring towns throughout the Kaiserstuhl. In addition to galvanizing the opposition to Wyhl, the police action against the protestors resulted in a devastating blow to the CDU. Having already alienated the core of its support base through the citizen interventions at Breisach and Wyhl, the police brutality cost the CDU key members of its local leadership, like Aschenbrenner.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> “CDU-Gemeinderatslisten sind gefährdet,” *Badische Zeitung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany), February 25, 1975; “CDU Ortsverband wegen Wyhl,” *Badische Zeitung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany), February 25, 1975; “Nit sich neige, Eige zeige,” *Badische Zeitung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany), February 25, 1975.

<sup>142</sup> “CDU-Gemeinderatslisten sind gefährdet,” *Badische Zeitung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany); “CDU Ortsverband wegen Wyhl,” *Badische Zeitung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany); “Nit sich neige, Eige zeige,” *Badische Zeitung* (Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany).

On February 23, 1975, a massive turnout of 28,000 protestors returned to the construction site and reestablished the occupation. Police were simply overwhelmed by the volume of demonstrators. The second site occupation of Wyhl endured for almost a year. A small community developed on the construction site complete with a roundhouse and a school that offered over 60 courses and seminars on environmentalism, democracy, and civil disobedience. Local farmers supported the protestors with food, and the occupation became a center for socializing, activism, and learning.<sup>143</sup>

By March, the Social Democratic Party-led national government in Bonn was forced to intervene and suspend Badenwerk's construction license for Wyhl. The utility continued to unsuccessfully appeal and lobby for the reinstatement of its construction permit for the next two years. The site occupation lasted deep into the winter in January of 1976 until it ended with the signing of the Offenburger Agreement. According to terms, the nuclear opposition agreed to not conduct any further site occupations at Wyhl in exchange for Minister Eberle's and the CDU's agreement to cease construction until an expert review of the environmental impact of the proposed nuclear plant was completed. In 1977, the Administrative Court of Freiburg voided the Offenburger Agreement and permanently revoked Badenwerk's construction license for Wyhl. Citing persistent and unresolved questions concerning the safety of nuclear power, the court decision effectively ended the fight over nuclear power in Wyhl.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> "CDU-Gemeinderatslisten sind gefährdet;" "CDU Ortsverband wegen Wyhl aufgelöst;" "Nit allem sich neige, Eige zeige;" Joppke, *Mobilizing against Nuclear Energy*, p. 97-101.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

From its inception, the story of Wyhl and the nuclear debate in the Kaiserstuhl would have a transformational impact on German politics and the fight against nuclear power in the Atlantic World. However, although connected to the larger international story of nuclear power and the struggles of the nuclear opposition elsewhere, news concerning the nuclear power debate in the Kaiserstuhl originally remained confined to the state of Baden-Württemberg before advances in technology, particularly in the area of film production, changed that and considerably raised the profile of what was happening at Wyhl.

### Exporting Wyhl through Film

Initially, news of the first site occupation at Wyhl on February 18, 1975 trickled out slowly. Only the local *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* reported on the events unfolding at Wyhl from the beginning of the initial site occupation to the re-occupation in February 1975. The protest started to become statewide news when the *Stuttgarter Zeitung* out of Baden-Württemberg capital picked up the story. On February 26, 1975, Wyhl became national news after West Germany's popular Channel One aired a 45 minute film called "Citizens against the Wyhl Reactor." Produced by Thomas Schmitt's *Van Ort* television program, the film grew out of the program's earlier coverage on the nuclear debate in the Kaiserstuhl area the previous summer.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> "Polizei vertreibt die Umweltschützer von Wyhl. Kein aktiver Widerstand auf dem Bauplatz für das Kernkraftwerk beim Kaiserstuhl," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (Frankfurt, Germany), February 21, 1975; "Aufruhr in Wyhl," *Stuttgarter Zeitung* (Stuttgart, Germany), February 25, 1975; "Diese Woche in Fernsehen," *Der Spiegel* (Hamburg, Germany), February 24, 1975.

Schmitt originally became interested in the plight of the vintners and farmers in Breisach and their growing conflict with the CDU government in Stuttgart over nuclear power. This interest led Schmitt to Marckolsheim in the summer of 1974 where he filmed the site occupation and protest against the lead factory. Schmitt's Marckolsheim contacts led him to Wyhl where he recorded the first occupation of the construction site. He also filmed the police brutality and use of force against the protestors when clearing the site on February 19, 1975. Film footage of rural farmers, vintners, and their wives being dragged from the construction site or attacked with water cannons really resonated with viewers across all of West Germany. Almost overnight, Wyhl became a national news sensation.<sup>146</sup>

Over the course of a year, news of the site occupation at Wyhl attracted scores of activists, tourists, and politicians. Many were inspired by what they had seen on film, and others were simply curious about the spectacle. Those that were inspired included some of West Germany's future political leaders, including Joe Leinen of the SPD and Green Party cofounder Petra Kelly. In the more immediate present, activists across Germany took what they learned from Wyhl either firsthand or through film and applied it to the debate over nuclear power in their own communities. Using Wyhl as a model, protests against nuclear power arose in Brokdorf, Grohnde, Kalkar, and Gorleben beginning in October of 1976 and lasting through March of 1979. It is unlikely that Wyhl's inspirational reach would have been as great as it was outside of the Kaiserstuhl and Baden-Württemberg if it were not for film. It is even less likely that Wyhl as an

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<sup>146</sup> "Diese Woche in Fernsehen."



inspiration model of protest against nuclear power would have made it to the United States without film helping facilitate its exportation.

As it stands, film became the primary reason that Wyhl was exported to the United States following Randy Kehler's visit to the site occupation in the summer of 1975. Kehler arrived at Wyhl in July after the conclusion of the War Resisters' International Conference in Holland. The travelling party included Kehler's partner Betsy Corner as well as Dan Keller and Charles Light of Green Mountain Post Films and both producers of the *Lovejoy's Nuclear War*. Shortly after the arrival, about 500 people gathered in the roundhouse that had been built at the site occupation and watched the film *Lovejoy's Nuclear War*. An interpreter translated the film to the crowd simultaneously as it played, and cheers rang out at the point when Lovejoy described the night he toppled the weather tower in Montague. Kehler noted that the film was relatively well received by their German counterparts, save for one notable exception.<sup>147</sup>

After the film concluded, a couple of viewers came up to Kehler and said "it is a great film but it is the stereotypical American hero story where one guy goes out and knocks down the tower. It is a typical American way to go about it, sort of the John Wayne of the peace movement. We're not really into that kind of activism; we're into movement building." Kehler recalled being really "struck" by their comments and tried to explain Lovejoy's intent in hoping to inspire a collective movement in Western Massachusetts much like Breisach and subsequently Wyhl did in Germany. Ironically,

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<sup>147</sup> Randy Kehler, Interview by David C. Smith.

Wyhl would also have a hand in building the antinuclear movement in the United States.<sup>148</sup>

After Wyhl, Kehler and his travelling party were scheduled to stop and screen *Lovejoy's Nuclear War* before audiences in Freiburg and Bonn. Before they left, they were given a short 8 mm portion of a film that German documentarian Nina Gladitz was compiling on the site occupation and protest against nuclear power at Wyhl. The film contained the raw footage of scenes from initial site occupation, clash with police, and the reoccupation a few days later. It was this footage from the Gladitz documentary that became the 16 mm reel of film that was shown in Seabrook, New Hampshire that inspired the formation of the Clamshell Alliance and triggered the spread of the direct action-based antinuclear movement across the United States.<sup>149</sup>

In its totality, the site occupation at Wyhl lasted about a month short of a year, but its overall reach and significance to West German politics and the growth of the antinuclear movement cannot be overstated. The protest at Wyhl emerged as the successor to the marginalization of the BBU in the wake of the Energy Crisis of 1973. The site occupation picked up the torch once carried by the APO and the student movements during the 1960s. It gave a new voice to the Left who been steadfastly alienated politically in West Germany dating back to the late 1950s. However, the protest at Wyhl represented more than just the political redemption of the Left. The site occupation embodied the radicalization of the vintners, farmers, and everyday citizens of

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<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Randy Kehler, Interview by David C. Smith; Samuel Lovejoy, Interview by David C. Smith, April 8, 2013.

the Kaiserstuhl who found themselves disenfranchised and politically disowned by the CDU over nuclear power.

Wyhl embodied not only a protest against nuclear power but also an opposition to the authoritative state that formed through the introduction of Model Germany. After 1973, the mandate from Bonn to advance nuclear power resulted in the revocation of the democratic process at the state level and led the nuclear opposition in Baden to abandon citizen intervention in favor of direct action. By the end of the site occupation in January of 1976, Wyhl emerged as both an inspiration and a model of direct action-based protest that greatly facilitated the rise of the antinuclear movement in Germany as well as the United States. A movement was born at Wyhl, and by the summer of 1976, that movement arrived on the shores of New Hampshire with the founding of the Clamshell Alliance.

## Chapter 5

### Eminent Domain, Home Rule, and the Citizen Intervention at Seabrook

Robert “Renny” Cushing was a fourth generation Seabrook resident who had spent his entire life around the Hampton Harbor. He was an All-State linebacker on the football team at Winnacunnet High and served as president of New Hampshire’s State Association of Student Councils. Growing up, Cushing spent his summers swimming and clamming along the beaches of the Hampton Harbor, and after high school, he worked as a welder and came to exemplify the blue collar character that defined the Seabrook community. Cushing was never someone that took a strong interest in conservation or environmental issues until the area’s local fishermen started talking about Seabrook Station, and Public Service Company’s plans to build a nuclear power plant near Hampton Harbor. “It was the opposition from the fishing community that first caught my attention,” Cushing stated. “They talked about how the cooling system for the nuclear plant was to have an open trench that would dump hot water directly into the Hampton Harbor [and] that would essentially kill the clam population,” he explained.<sup>150</sup>

On a hot afternoon in 1972, Cushing and his brother Kevin were out doing what they had always done on a summer day in Seabrook, swimming and clamming around harbor. He found himself unable to escape the thought of imagining how the harbor he loved so much might change as a result of the proposed nuclear power plant. What

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<sup>150</sup> Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith; Renny Cushing, *The Last Resort*, directed by Dan Keller and Charles Light, (1978; Green Mountain Post Films, 2012), DVD; Robert “Renny” Cushing, Jr., “The Stage Is Set: Challenges to the Initial Licensing of the Seabrook Nuclear Power Station,” Manuscript Collection, Clamshell Alliance Papers, 1976-1988, Box 12, Folder 1, University of New Hampshire Milne Special Collections, Durham, 1-10.

would happen if there were no more clams to dig, and would people still come to the harbor to swim in the summer if there was a power plant looming overhead? “Twenty-five stories tall, they’re going to build that thing here,” Cushing said to his brother. He then turned to Kevin and said, “No, we can’t do it. We’re just going to have to stop them!” Shortly thereafter, Cushing joined the local citizen intervention that had been building in Seabrook since the plant was announced in 1969, and he emerged as a key figure in the local fight against both nuclear power and an increasingly authoritative state in New Hampshire led by Governor Meldrin Thomson that eventually forced Cushing and the other co-founders of the Clamshell Alliance to turn to direct action.<sup>151</sup>

This is the story of the citizen intervention and the struggles of the nuclear opposition in Seabrook, New Hampshire prior to the emergence of the Clamshell Alliance. Undoubtedly, the story will sound familiar and echo the narrative presented in the previous chapter on Wyhl, as there are a number of parallels shared between both stories. Like the Kaiserstuhl region surrounding Wyhl, New Hampshire represented a traditionally conservative, self-governed region. It was far less industrialized than its Massachusetts neighbors to the south and instead relied primarily on farming, logging, and fishing. In 1968, after the Public Service Company of New Hampshire announced its intentions to construct a nuclear power plant in the small coastal town of Seabrook, a local citizen intervention formed.

However, the initial opposition had little to do with a definitive political position on nuclear power but more so with how it might affect local farmers, fisherman, and the

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<sup>151</sup> Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith; Cushing, “The Stage Is Set,” 1-10.

area's natural resources. This was also the case with Wyhl, and the early debate over nuclear power amongst farmers and vintners in Breisach. In both instances, nuclear power became politicized after the state began siding with the nuclear industry at the expense of local residents. At Breisach, the Christian Democratic Union-led state government sacrificed its traditional support base in order to advance nuclear power. In New Hampshire, Governor Meldrin Thomson declared a local referendum on nuclear power as illegitimate after residents voted against the Seabrook plant. In the aftermath, a direct action-based protest against nuclear power developed in Wyhl and was then imported to the United States by the Clamshell Alliance at Seabrook.

This chapter traces the local fight against nuclear power in Seabrook beginning with the initial development of the citizen intervention in 1972 through the founding of the Clamshell Alliance in 1976. The story is structured similarly to the narrative provided on Sam Lovejoy and the war against nuclear power in Montague, Massachusetts, but it also builds off of the framework outlined in the preceding account on Model Germany and the development of the citizen intervention and direct action-based protest along the Rhine in West Germany. Through individuals like Renny Cushing, Meldrin Thomson, and Guy Chichester, the story of citizen intervention, the impact of the Energy Crisis of 1973 on the nuclear industry, and the subsequent radicalization of everyday citizens over nuclear power is personified and further enriched.

The major storylines included are the development of the citizen intervention in Seabrook; the impact of the Energy Crisis of 1973 on Seabrook Station and the nuclear industry in New England; Governor Meldrin Thomson and the institutionalization of

nuclear power in New Hampshire; the eminent domain and home rule controversies and the radicalization of the Seabrook community; Guy Chichester and the transformation of the citizen intervention; and finally, the relationship between Wyhl and the founding of the Clamshell Alliance. The most important storyline with the larger narrative on nuclear power and social activism in the Atlantic world during the 1970s is the significance of Wyhl in the founding of the Clamshell Alliance. In addition to launching the antinuclear movement in Germany, Wyhl inspired the formation of the Clamshell Alliance and precipitated the switch to direct action in the battle over nuclear power at Seabrook.

However, it should be noted that this argument does not assert that the Clamshell Alliance would not have existed otherwise. The fact of the matter is that the nuclear power debates at Wyhl and Seabrook developed simultaneously and in conjunction with one another. Just as the nuclear opposition at Wyhl turned to direct action as a last resort after a failed citizen intervention, the same was true at Seabrook. The formation of the Clamshell Alliance was inevitable, but without Wyhl, the organization most likely would have resembled the Alternative Energy Coalition given the heavy involvement and strong influence of key members of the Montague Farm. If not for Wyhl, rather than adopting the type of direct action-based protest that was born along the Rhine in West Germany, the Clamshell Alliance would have more naturally gravitated towards the Alternative Energy Coalition's activist platform which centered on grassroots organization, the power of the ballot, and institutional reform. The focus most likely would not have been stopping nuclear power through site occupations and direct action-based protest. The same might be true of Wyhl, if not for Marckolsheim. Yet, neither was the case. Just as

Wyhl formed from the inspiration of the site occupation at Marckolsheim, the Clamshell Alliance was founded upon the model of direct action introduced at Wyhl.

#### Citizen Intervention and the Institutionalization of Seabrook Station

The story of the Clamshell Alliance began on May 20, 1968 with Public Service Company of New Hampshire's announcement of its intentions to build the twin reactor Seabrook Nuclear Power Station at an estimated cost of \$793 million. The utility planned to locate Seabrook Station along an area of marshland at the former site of the town's dump. At full production, the proposed power plant was projected to generate enough power to serve a vast area stretching from Maine to Philadelphia. Initially, the public was kept completely in the dark about the project. Local Seabrook resident Tony Santasucci did not learn about the plant or that it would require his land until he stepped in one of the utility's drilling holes on his property. However, during the early 1970s, Public Service Company ended the secrecy and initiated a massive marketing campaign in Seabrook by blanketing local businesses and car windows with brochures highlighting the economic benefits of nuclear power. The appeal of new jobs, increased revenue, and tax breaks had been attractive incentives to the townspeople of Montague and Wyhl in previously discussed examples, but in Seabrook, the local response was different and more closely mirrored the reaction to nuclear power in Breisach.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Harvey Wasserman, "Nuclear War by the Sea," *The Nation*, September 11, 1976; Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith; Cushing, "The Stage Is Set," 1-10.



When the state-owned utility Badenwerk selected Breisach as the site for its first commercial nuclear power plant, local vintners and farmers organized to oppose the project based on concerns over the local wine and agricultural industries. Likewise, after Public Service Company announced its plans to build a nuclear plant in Seabrook, local fishermen rallied against the proposal, citing the potential harmful effects of thermal pollution from nuclear power on the Hampton Harbor, surrounding sea life, and the area's fishing industry. Their opposition caught the attention of local residents such as Renny Cushing, and in response, the citizen intervention began to grow in Seabrook. The intervention was led by a small group of local conservationists called the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League.<sup>153</sup>

Founded by John Parker, the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League was largely comprised of conservative, middle class activists who were focused on the preservation of the Hampton Harbor and opposed "any alteration or degradation of New Hampshire's tidal marshes or estuaries." Like earlier citizen interventions at both Bodega Bay and Calvert Cliffs, the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League pursued litigation as its primary strategy against Seabrook Station, and the first opportunity to contest the nuclear plant arose in February of 1972 after Public Service Company applied for a site license with the New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee. The site license represented the first step before the utility could apply for a construction license with Atomic Energy

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<sup>153</sup> Bedford, *Seabrook Station*, 67; Cushing, "The Stage Is Set," 1-10.

Commission, and the public hearings to discuss Public Service Company's application were scheduled to take place in Portsmouth beginning in June.<sup>154</sup>

Over the course of the spring of 1972, the debate over Seabrook Station attracted the attention of a pair of prominent conservation groups in New Hampshire. The Audubon Society of New Hampshire owned part of the marshlands near the proposed construction site, and the organization joined the intervention because it was concerned about how the proposed plant would impact both the local and migratory bird populations. The Audubon Society was soon joined by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests who claimed jurisdiction over the Great Cedar Swamp located near Kingston in southern New Hampshire. The Forests Protection Society considered the Great Cedar Swamp to be a freshwater resource, and according to Public Service Company's initial proposal for Seabrook Station, parts of the swamp land would likely be destroyed during the construction of the power lines needed to form the southern corridor of the energy grid that would transport electricity into Massachusetts. Both the Audubon Society and Forests Protection Society provided a major boost to the citizen intervention in terms of membership and capital. The addition of these two conservation organizations helped the citizen intervention grow and mature in the months preceding the start of the site licensing hearings.<sup>155</sup>

As the Site Licensing Committee hearings approached, the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League with support from both the Audubon Society and the Forests Protection

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<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> Bedford, *Seabrook Station*, 67; Cushing, "The Stage Is Set," 1-10.

Society formulated their case against Public Service Company's application for a site license in Seabrook. The opposition based its challenge on problems with the planned cooling system for the proposed nuclear plant and the potential risk thermal pollution posed to both the Hampton Harbor and local clam population. Once the hearing began in the early summer of 1972, interveners from all three citizen groups convened on Portsmouth to voice opposition. Renny Cushing was among those interveners who planned to testify against the proposed plant, but he along with the other interveners were soon surprised by the manner in which the proceedings were being conducted.<sup>156</sup>

Cushing noted that "I participated in the public hearing in Portsmouth [and] I tried to present a pretty intelligent argument why Seabrook was a bad place to build the plant but none of the siting people were paying any attention." He continued by stating that "they didn't pay attention to anyone else either, but when Public Service Company's builders stepped up [to speak], it was as though someone was calling the class to attention." The entire experience cast a significant cloud of doubt over the integrity of not only the public hearing but also the role of the state in Seabrook Station. The Site Evaluation Committee was comprised of state employees who were supposed to be impartial mediators between the interveners and the utility, but to Cushing that hardly seemed to be the case. "I felt the system was rigged," he explained, and although no decision on Public Service Company's application was immediately made by the

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<sup>156</sup> Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith.

committee, his suspicions concerning the state's interest and role in Seabrook Station would soon be confirmed.<sup>157</sup>

In the months following the initial series of site licensing hearings in Portsmouth, the state's position on Seabrook Station became increasingly clear. The incumbent governor of New Hampshire, Walter Peterson, Jr., was a lame duck after losing a reelection bid to fellow Republican Meldrim Thomson, Jr. Peterson had expressed some opposition to the selection of Seabrook as the site for the proposed nuclear plant, but his successor was decisively pro-nuclear. Once in office, Thomson wasted no time inserting himself into the debate over Seabrook Station. He made few efforts to hide his contempt for conservationists, due process, construction delays and any obstacle that hindered the development of nuclear power in Seabrook, and that extended to the state's Site Evaluation Committee. Although Public Service Company's site license application was still pending, Governor Thomson ordered the utility to move forward and apply for a construction license with the Atomic Energy Commission in March of 1973. The implication was very clear. Thomson expected that the Site Licensing Committee would approve Public Service Company's application for Seabrook Station.<sup>158</sup>

While Governor Thomson was able to strong-arm any state employees, winning the public's favor proved to be more difficult. In an attempt to increase public support for Seabrook Station, Thomson initiated a petition campaign. He ordered petitions printed at the state's expense and placed at the checkout counters of liquor stores from

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<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Bedford, *Seabrook Station*, 72.

Seabrook to Manchester. Liquor stores were state-owned businesses in New Hampshire, and Governor Thomson ordered the employees of these businesses to request that customers sign petitions in support of Public Service Company's nuclear plant in Seabrook. This clearly crossed the line. As Cushing observed, "This was the government petitioning its citizens on behalf of a private corporation." At the same time, Cushing noted that when interveners attempted to picket and distribute "anti-Seabrook petitions in the parking lot of the same liquor stores we were arrested on the spot." With Governor Thomson now in office, the neutrality of the state was no longer in question concerning Seabrook Station. As Cushing first suspected during the site license hearings in Portsmouth, interveners were not just fighting Public Service Company over nuclear power in Seabrook but they were also challenging Governor Thomson and the authority of the state.<sup>159</sup>

This represents an important distinction to make, as it is imperative to the story of the Clamshell Alliance and the battle over nuclear power in Seabrook to correctly understand the role of Governor Thomson and the state's interest in Seabrook Station. As briefly demonstrated at the site licensing hearing in Portsmouth and then reiterated by the state-sponsored petition campaign for Seabrook Station, nuclear power in New Hampshire was not the private enterprise of Public Service Company. To a certain extent, nuclear power was institutionalized in New Hampshire as early as 1955. In response to the Eisenhower administration's Atoms for Peace program and the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, New Hampshire State Representative John Phillips introduced and

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<sup>159</sup> Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith.

helped pass the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy Bill in 1955. Phillips also served as the Vice President of Public Service Company and the conflict of interest was not lost on interveners. From Cushing's perspective, Phillips helped Public Service Company buy the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy Bill which effectively made nuclear power the office state policy of New Hampshire.<sup>160</sup>

This was especially true once Meldrim Thomson assumed control of the governor's office in Manchester. As the story continued to develop, Governor Thomson played every bit the role of villain at Seabrook as Rudolf Eberle did in the story of Wyhl. Eberle simultaneously served as the Minister of Economics for the Christian Democratic Union-led state government in Stuttgart and Vice President of Badenwerk, the utility seeking to build the nuclear power plant in Wyhl. Eberle used his authority to force the imposition of nuclear power along the Rhine in West Germany, and Thomson did the same in New Hampshire. He was able to wield the power of the governor's office not only to apply pressure on state entities like the Site Evaluation Committee but also to use state resources in the case of liquor stores in an attempt to sway public opinion in favor of nuclear power. For the citizen intervention, it would only get worse, because Governor Thomson's interference in the debate over Seabrook Station increased both in terms of regularity and aggressiveness following the Energy Crisis of 1973 and the global changes that occurred in the nuclear industry as a result.

This represented a watershed moment for the nuclear industry both in the United States and across the globe. After the outbreak of the Arab-Israeli War, the Organization

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) instituted an oil embargo against the United States and other Western countries for providing aid to Israel during its war with Syria and Egypt. Governments from Bonn to Washington, D.C. responded to the embargo by seeking to aggressively accelerate the growth of nuclear power as a viable energy alternative to the import of foreign oil. In West Germany, Model Germany was introduced as the state program responsible for the growth of the nuclear industry. Its counterpart in the United States was President Richard Nixon's Project Independence which ambitiously called for 1,000 nuclear power plants online by the year 2000.<sup>161</sup>

As a result of Project Independence, the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974 was passed and drastically transformed the nuclear industry in the United States. The Atomic Energy Commission, which had been on life support after being exposed by the Union of Concerned Scientists for covering up the failed tests of the emergency cooling system during the reactor safety debate, was summarily dismantled. In its wake, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Energy Research and Development Administration were installed to oversee the regulation, advancement and promotion of nuclear power. Both organizations were comprised largely of former staff members of the now disassembled Atomic Energy Commission, and they carried a de facto presidential mandate to grow the nuclear industry in the United States. After the Energy Crisis of 1973, a bullish attitude on the growth of nuclear power was adopted by the federal government and radiated from Washington, D.C.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*, 51-56, 91-95.

<sup>162</sup> Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*, 51-56, Cushing, "The Stage Is Set," 1-10; Bedford, *Seabrook Station*, 41-48.

In New Hampshire, Meldrim Thomson, who was already a bull on nuclear power, viewed the Energy Crisis of 1973 and the support for nuclear power emanating from the Oval Office as an opportunity to assert his authority in relation to the debate over Seabrook Station even more. Without coincidence, New Hampshire's Site Evaluation Committee ended six months of internal debate over whether or not Seabrook was a good site for a nuclear power plant and approved Public Service Company's site license in January of 1974. This was a major setback for the citizen intervention, but Governor Thomson looked to neutralize the opposition even further.<sup>163</sup>

Using the time tested strategy of divide and conquer, Thomson and Public Service Company devised a plan during the spring of 1974 to remove the Audubon Society and Forests Protection Society from the citizen intervention. The latter joined the nuclear opposition in Seabrook solely in defense of the Great Cedar Swamp in southern New Hampshire. As noted, Public Service Company planned to run a series of power lines across the swamp as part of the southern corridor carrying electricity from New Hampshire to Massachusetts. However, in what can best be described as a closed-door agreement, the utility and the leadership of the Forests Protection Society reached a compromise. In exchange for Public Service Company's pledge to redraw the proposed energy grid and circumnavigate the swamp with its power lines, the Forests Protection Society agreed to withdraw from the citizen intervention in Seabrook. With one of the

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<sup>163</sup> Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith; Cushing, "The Stage Is Set," 1-10; Bedford, *Seabrook Station*, 41-48.



major conservation groups now out of the picture, Governor Thomson and Public Service Company set their sights on the Audubon Society.<sup>164</sup>

To review, the Audubon Society entered the debate over nuclear power in Seabrook because it was concerned about the effect of thermal pollution produced by the proposed plant on the clam population and sea life in Hampton Harbor. Public Service Company sought to reach a similar compromise with the Audubon Society as it had with the Forests Protection Society by offering to redesign the cooling system for Seabrook Station. Rather than dump the water used to cool the nuclear reactor's fuel rods back into the ocean via an open trench, the utility planned to build a tunnel discharge system buried offshore and deep beneath the ocean floor. Public Service Company had just submitted its Environmental Impact Statement to the Environmental Protection Agency in April, and in anticipation of the agency's response, the utility already knew that the suggested changes to the cooling system stood to increase the total construction costs of Seabrook Station by another \$500,000. Independent of the Environmental Impact Assessment, Governor Thomson and Public Service Company were willing to make the changes to the cooling system despite the expense in order to avoid the type of costly and prolonged legal battle with interveners that had already occurred at both Bodega Bay and Calvert Cliffs. Regardless, with the changes to the cooling system now agreed upon, the Audubon Society withdrew from the citizen intervention in Seabrook.<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Cushing, "The Stage Is Set," 1-10; Bedford, *Seabrook Station*, 41-48.

With both the Forests Protection Society and Audubon Society removed from the opposition to Seabrook Station, Governor Thomson had weakened the citizen intervention and with relative ease. In part, this was because neither organization carried a definitive opinion on nuclear power. Each organization's interest in the debate over nuclear power in Seabrook had very little to do with nuclear power, but rather they were each focused on the conservation of Hampton Harbor and Great Cedar Swamp respectively. Nevertheless, their decision to abandon the citizen intervention carried devastating consequences for the remaining interveners. In addition to depleting an influential portion of the citizen intervention's membership base, the withdrawal of the Audubon Society and Forests Protection Society resulted in the immediate loss of the key financial resources needed to fight the long and uphill legal battle against Governor Thomson and the nuclear industry over Seabrook Station. By the fall of 1974, the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League found itself largely isolated in the citizen intervention and struggling mightily to continue the fight against Seabrook Station in the courts.<sup>166</sup>

With the citizen intervention struggling, Governor Thomson and Public Service Company submitted an unprecedented request to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Only a few months removed from the OPEC oil embargo and in light of the nation's dire need to develop alternative energy sources, Thomson and representatives from the utility requested permission to begin construction on Seabrook Station even though their construction license application was still pending with the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board. The public hearing on the matter was not scheduled to begin until

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

May of 1975, but to the dismay of the nuclear opposition in Seabrook, the request was granted. Public Service Company set a target date of January 1975 to begin construction, which led to development of a new controversy related to Seabrook Station, and that was the debate over eminent domain.<sup>167</sup>

As soon as Public Service Company began securing the construction site, several local residents soon learned that the containment zone required for the nuclear plant encompassed their homes. Representatives from Public Service Company began going door to door and informed each homeowner that their property was needed for the nuclear plant. The property owners were told to sell their homes to the utility. If they refused, Public Service Company's men warned residents that their properties could be seized by the state through the power of eminent domain. That was exactly the scenario facing lifelong Seabrook residents Tony Santasucci and his wife Louisa. As Louisa recalled, "I was in the kitchen and I heard a knock on the door, and then I walked out and there was this Daley, his name was. He turned around; he says, 'Well, we're going to take your property.' I says, 'You will not.' He says, 'Well, we'll get it one way or the other, with a bulldozer to your land.' I says, 'You do it and I'll stand right in front of it. You'll have to kill me before you take my land.'"<sup>168</sup>

The fact that Governor Thomson would authorize the use of eminent domain to take away peoples' homes and property breathed new life into the struggling citizen intervention in Seabrook. It was one thing for the state to sponsor a petition campaign

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<sup>167</sup> Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith; Cushing, "The Stage Is Set," 1-10; Bedford, *Seabrook Station*, 41-48.

<sup>168</sup> *The Last Resort*, White and Keller, Green Mountain Post Films; Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith; Anna Gyorgy, Interviewed by David C. Smith, March 8, 2013.

and misuse state employees and resources in order to drum up support for Seabrook Station. To take away peoples' homes, that type of aggression exhibited by the state towards its citizens proved too difficult to tolerate. Renny Cushing explained that the thought of "all those people who were living in single and double wide trailers that were told that they were going to be displaced and moved because the nuclear power plant was coming, that really bothered me!" Cushing was far from alone. The issue of eminent domain strengthened the resolve of many interveners who had become disheartened over the fight against Seabrook Station after the Audubon Society and Forests Protection Society withdraw their support. Eminent domain became a catalyst not just for reenergizing current interveners but also for attracting new supporters who helped rebuild the membership base of the citizen intervention.<sup>169</sup>

The eminent domain controversy resonated with people both in and outside of the nuclear opposition because it disproportionately targeted working class families like the Santasuccis. The local community rallied to the defense of these families and in the process drew new people to the citizen intervention. Some of these people possessed no previously defined position on nuclear power, but they joined the nuclear opposition because of the eminent domain issue. This was also how the citizen intervention originally grew in Breisach. The rapid growth of the nuclear opposition along the Rhine in West Germany was the result of not only peoples' attitudes toward nuclear power but also how the state treated its citizens as a result of nuclear power. Traditionally a stronghold for the ruling Christian Democratic Party-led government in Stuttgart, the

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<sup>169</sup> *The Last Resort*, White and Keller, Green Mountain Post Films.

Breisach and surrounding Baden area turned against the state because of the disrespect demonstrated towards farmers, vintners, and the region's working class. Nuclear power became the issue that people focused on in Breisach to express their political opposition towards the government in Stuttgart. In Seabrook, eminent domain was the issue that galvanized locals and compelled them to join the citizen intervention in order to protest Governor Thomson's and Public Service Company's treatment of people like the Santasuccis.

Public Service Company did not begin construction on Seabrook Station as planned in January of 1975 but rather deferred the groundbreaking to August of 1976. The primary reason for the delay was the economics associated with nuclear power and the period of inflation within the nuclear industry beginning in the spring of 1974. The utility needed more time to secure additional financing and new investors in order to help pay for the ever-escalating construction costs for Seabrook Station. In the meantime, the citizen intervention sought to capitalize on the newfound support for the nuclear opposition in Seabrook that developed as a result of the eminent domain controversy. The public hearing on the construction license for the proposed plant was still scheduled for May of 1975, and as a result, the citizen intervention focused all of its efforts on raising enough money to mount a strong legal challenge to Public Service Company's application.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> *The Last Resort*, White and Keller, Green Mountain Post Films; Cushing, "The Stage Is Set," 1-10; Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith.

Attorney Bob Backus, who was originally hired by the Audubon Society and Forests Protection Society before agreeing to stay on with the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League, provided the legal representation for the interveners with support from the Natural Resource Defense Council. Backus built a strong case against the construction of Seabrook Station citing everything from Public Service Company's financial strength to build and run a nuclear plant to why Seabrook was a poor site choice from the very beginning. Specific examples presented began with the construction site's proximity to the dormant Boston-Ottawa fault line which increased likelihood that a nuclear accident could be triggered by a natural disaster. The physical landscape of the Hampton Harbor posed other challenges as well. In the event of a nuclear accident, the surrounding marshlands and limited roadways presented serious challenges to the emergency evacuation routes for the proposed nuclear plant.<sup>171</sup>

Even if new roads were built and current ones were expanded in order create an adequate emergency evacuation system, there were also serious economic and financial concerns that needed to be addressed. Perhaps the most significant was the question of whether or not Public Service Company could even afford to build Seabrook Station. With rapidly escalating construction costs in the nuclear industry that occurred in the eighteen months since the Energy Crisis of 1973, and considering the fact that the utility had already delayed the start date once because of financial reasons, interveners feared that citizens would be forced to bare the financial burdens of Seabrook Station once Public Service Company could no longer afford to. Even if the utility found a way to

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<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

make the nuclear plant work financially, a negative economic impact was still likely for some. Fish kills would be unavoidable even with the smallest amounts of thermal pollution which would be detrimental to local fisherman. In addition, Seabrook Station would likely deter summertime beachgoers thereby hurting local businesses around the Hampton Harbor that depended on the seasonal tourism. Lastly, because the Hampton Harbor was what drew tourists and fisherman alike to Seabrook, its conservation and the cooling system planned for the proposed nuclear plant remained primary points of contention for interveners.<sup>172</sup>

As the hearing neared, just days before it was set to begin the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board relocated the hearing from Seabrook to Nashua, New Hampshire, a move that sapped interveners of the wealth of support they had built locally in Seabrook. The Atomic Safety and Licensing Board also announced that it was removing Donald Head as chairman of hearing. Head had a long reputation as a sympathizer of environmentalists and other conservation issues, but he was replaced by John Frysiak whose level of contempt for such matters rivaled only Governor Thomson. Both moves changed the entire complexity of the public hearing. Although the citizen intervention was afforded the opportunity to present its case, by the time the hearing concluded not a single issue raised by the intervention's legal team headed by Bob Backus was included in Frysiak's final report on the hearing. Like the site licensing hearing before, interveners

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<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

were left feeling once again that the proceedings were predetermined and represented nothing more than a formality.<sup>173</sup>

Looking back on his experience as the lead attorney for the intervention, Backus explained that “I learned by bitter experience that litigating a nuclear reactor license before the Nuclear Regulatory Commission was akin to protesting gambling before the Las Vegas City Council. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission had never, and has never, rejected a construction permit or an operating license for a nuclear plant.” Public Service Company’s construction license would be approved the next summer. The citizen intervention failed for the final time, and Seabrook Station was going to be built. Yet, the reasons why the intervention failed did not fall at the feet of Backus or the interveners as a whole. From Governor Thomson’s office in Manchester to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission’s headquarter in Washington, D.C., the state ensured that the intervention did not succeed. By moving the public hearing away from Seabrook and handpicking a pro-nuclear chairman to decide Public Service Company’s construction license application, Seabrook Station’s approval was all but guaranteed.<sup>174</sup>

This was the same strategy deployed by the aforementioned Rudolf Eberle at both Breisach and Wyhl. As Minister of Economics for the Christian Democratic Union-led government in Stuttgart, Eberle controlled the public hearing process and purposely scheduled the hearings in both towns for a time that would conflict with the harvest season. This limited the number of interveners able to attend each hearing and therefore

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<sup>173</sup> Backus quoted Bedford, *Seabrook Station*, 33-38; Cushing, “The Stage Is Set,” 1-10.

<sup>174</sup> Anna Gyorgy, Interview by David Smith; Bedford, *Seabrook Station*, 33-38; Cushing, “The Stage Is Set,” 1-10.



made the nuclear opposition much more manageable. Eberle made a mockery of the public hearing and the citizen intervention process, and as a result, the nuclear opposition along the Rhine decided to abandon the legal process in favor of direct action.

Without coincidence, the same was true in Seabrook. Once it became clear that the state was setting interveners up to fail, a push to abandon litigation and take direct action against Seabrook Station emerged from within the nuclear opposition. The push for take direct action in Seabrook was led by a young carpenter named Guy Chichester, the newly elected president of the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League who joined the organization after the collapse of the intervention. Despite this collapse, the more conservative members of the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League remained committed to litigation as a means to fight nuclear power in Seabrook. Chichester on the other hand became the biggest proponent in Seabrook for the use of direct action to stop the nuclear industry locally, and by the following summer, his initiatives culminated in the formation of a new direct action-based citizen group in Seabrook called the Clamshell Alliance.<sup>175</sup>

#### Guy Chichester and The Radicalization of the Nuclear Opposition in Seabrook

The Seacoast Anti-Pollution League elected Guy Chichester as the organization's new president in 1975 just after the Audubon Society and Forests Protection Society withdrew from the citizen intervention and a few months ahead of the public hearing in Nashua. From the outset, Chichester appeared to be an odd choice for the organization.

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<sup>175</sup> Robert "Renny" Cushing, "Popular Reaction to the Seabrook Nuclear Station," Manuscript Collection, Clamshell Alliance Papers, 1976-1988, Box 12, Folder 1, University of New Hampshire Milne Special Collections, Durham, New Hampshire, 11-13; Cushing, "The Stage Is Set," 1-10.

He was a thirty-one year old self-employed carpenter from the small town of Rye located just outside Seabrook. Chichester grew up the son of a fireman in Queens, New York but relocated to New Hampshire with his wife in the early 1970s after four years in the U.S. Navy. Locally, he quickly developed a strong reputation as a grassroots organizer and spirited activist after fighting Olympic Oil Company's plans to build an oil refinery off the coast of Isle of Shoals in 1973, a project that was defeated in just six months. Chichester's qualifications to lead the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League were not in doubt, but he was far more militant and radical than any of his predecessors as well as the rest of the organization's standing leadership.<sup>176</sup>

As previously noted, the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League was a largely conservative and middle class group. Since its founding to lead the citizen intervention in Seabrook, the organization maintained a narrow focus on using litigation to fight for the preservation of the Hampton Harbor. Even before joining the organization, Chichester was already becoming a critic of the intervention process and slowly undergoing a personal transformation from a citizen intervener to an advocate of direct action. Sam Lovejoy's toppling of the weather tower in protest of the proposed nuclear plant in Montague in February of 1974 caught Chichester's attention. Having already witnessed the failure of the intervention at the site licensing hearing in Portsmouth, Lovejoy's protest really inspired Chichester and instilled a desire within him to launch a direct action-based movement in Seabrook.<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> Cushing, "Popular Reaction to the Seabrook Nuclear Station," 11-13; Bedford, *Seabrook Station*, 74-76.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*

Consequently, his appointment as president of the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League certainly seemed to threaten the long-term stability of an organization that was already reeling. The withdrawal of both the Audubon Society and Forest Protection Society left the Seacoast Anti-Pollution league isolated and unable to fund another legal challenge against Seabrook Station. The last thing the organization needed was an internal power struggle over continuing the citizen intervention versus taking direct action. However, the leadership of the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League was desperate, and they actually sought out Chichester specifically in hope that his success as a grassroots organizer would help with the organization's fundraising efforts. For his part, Chichester was hardly interested in being a fundraiser, but he did accept the appointment and began helping the organization prepare for the public hearing scheduled to begin in June of 1975.<sup>178</sup>

While serving as president of the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League, Chichester continued to pursue his interest in direct action. The position provided him access to a wide variety of media including local newspapers, radio stations, and town hall meetings. Chichester took full advantage of the platform that he was given to talk about direct action and make connections to other citizen groups that might be interested in an alternative form of protest to Seabrook Station outside of the citizen intervention. He quickly found himself at odds with the more conservative members of the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League. They brought him on board to help save the citizen intervention, but instead, Chichester was pursuing direct action. In a public letter of reprimand, Seacoast

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<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

Anti-Pollution League Vice President Dorothy Anderson scolded Chichester by stating that “being president of an organization does not give you the right to do as you please.”<sup>179</sup>

The backlash Chichester received from Anderson and others in the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League did very little to deter his interest in direct action, but his relationship with the organization as well as what little faith he still retained in the citizen intervention would continue to sour. This was especially true following the public hearings in Nashua, and looking back at the proceedings, Chichester explained his disillusionment with the intervention by noting that “what we thought was that our little lawyer there, who everyone was going around scraping up bucks for, that he’s able to do it. But on the right side of him there was a bank of lawyers that were getting a \$1,000 a day. And on the left side of him was a bank of lawyers that were getting \$900 a day.” Chichester could see the writing on the wall which was that the citizen intervention did not have a chance to succeed. The interveners simply could not compete with the money and resources of the nuclear industry. As a result of the public hearing in Nashua, Chichester became more convinced than ever that direct action was the nuclear opposition’s only chance for stopping the construction of Seabrook Station.<sup>180</sup>

In the fall of 1975, Chichester called a meeting of the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League and invited several citizen groups including the Concerned Citizens of Seabrook, the Granite State Alliance, and the Greenleaf Harvesters Guild to talk about taking direct

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<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

action in Seabrook. The Concerned Citizens of Seabrook was an offshoot of the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League that formed in 1974 after Public Service Company was awarded its site license for Seabrook Station. Chichester had actually helped launch the organization which was headed by local biology teacher Katherine Foote Silver. Its primary focus was on engaging the community's working class in the debate over nuclear power in Seabrook. One of Chichester's major criticisms of the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League and the citizen intervention in general was that it was too white and too middle class. Seabrook was a working class community, and people like the Santasuccis were the ones that were being threatened by the state and utility to sell their homes or else lose them through eminent domain. Chichester believed that if the nuclear opposition was going to be successful, then it was imperative to have the support of Seabrook's working class.<sup>181</sup>

Like the Concerned Citizens of Seabrook, the Granite State Alliance was another citizen group that formed after the failure of the site licensing hearings in Portsmouth. Founded by Jeff Bruner, the Granite State Alliance was a collection of food co-ops, women's rights organizations, and welfare groups that focused on social change in New Hampshire. The group got involved in the debate over nuclear power in Seabrook because of their concerns over Public Service Company's finances and the utility's ability to build and operate Seabrook Station. The Granite State Alliance feared that the financial burdens of Seabrook Station would not be carried by the utility but rather passed onto consumers through rate hikes. The organization started a campaign called the

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<sup>181</sup> Cushing, "Popular Reaction to the Seabrook Nuclear Station," 11-13.

People's Energy Project in which its members would picket outside major New Hampshire banks in an attempt to connect the cost of nuclear power to people's personal finances and pocketbooks. The citizen group also started a newspaper called the *Granite State Independence* to help spread public awareness about the economics of nuclear power. The Granite State Alliance joined the citizen intervention at the public hearing in Nashua, but like Chichester, they lost faith in the litigation approach and were looking for alternative methods of protest to oppose Seabrook Station.<sup>182</sup>

The same was true for the Greenleaf Harvesters Guild. Led by Arthur Harvey, the Greenleaf Harvester's Guild was a counterculture commune in Southern New Hampshire similar to the Montague Farm that practiced subsistence farming and was opposed society's increasing reliance on technology. With nuclear power representing the most powerful and dangerous technological innovation of the twentieth century, the Greenleaf Harvesters were drawn into the intervention against Seabrook Station after Public Service Company's site license was approved in early 1974. Together with the Concerned Citizens of Seabrook and the Granite State Alliance, the Greenleaf Harvesters agreed to attend the meeting of the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League where Guy Chichester had invited Sam Lovejoy to screen his film *Lovejoy's Nuclear War* and to talk about direct action.<sup>183</sup>

Lovejoy famously protested Northern Utilities' plans to build a nuclear plant on the Montague Plains of Western Massachusetts by sneaking onto the site under the dark

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<sup>182</sup> Robert "Renny" Cushing, "Protest Activity Again Seabrook Before the Founding of the Clamshell Alliance," Manuscript Collection, Clamshell Alliance Papers, 1976-1988, Box 12, Folder 1, University of New Hampshire Milne Special Collections, Durham, New Hampshire, 15-26.

<sup>183</sup> Cushing, "Protest Activity Again Seabrook Before the Founding of the Clamshell Alliance," 15-26.

of night and cutting down a weather tower that had been erected for testing on the proposed construction site. His subsequent trial drew headlines with the likes of Howard Zinn and John Gofman testifying on Lovejoy's behalf. Green Mountain Post Films captured Lovejoy's story in the documentary *Lovejoy's Nuclear War*, and while Randy Kehler took the film on a European tour and eventually even found his way to Wyhl, West Germany, Lovejoy and fellow Montague communitard Anna Gyorgy took the documentary on a New England tour in attempt to launch a regional movement against nuclear power. On Chichester's invitation, Lovejoy stood before an audience of citizen groups from Seabrook and spoke about his protest against nuclear power in Montague. He explained the philosophy behind his action and how he hoped bringing down the tower would have inspired a populist movement against nuclear power in Western Massachusetts. Because he was acquitted on a technicality, his attempt to put nuclear power on trial and launch a larger movement never materialized.<sup>184</sup>

Lovejoy's story was never meant to be solely about toppling the tower and one person's outrageous act of protest, but this was lost on some of the interveners in attendance. For example, Ron Reick, a twenty-one year old apple picker from the Greenleaf Harvesters Guild claimed that he was so moved by Lovejoy's story that he called for interveners to go to the Seabrook Station construction site and chop down the weather tower erected there. The motion went unsupported, and Reick was forced to eventually settle for a symbolic protest of his own. On the night of January 4, 1976,

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<sup>184</sup> Samuel Lovejoy, Interview by David C. Smith; Anna Gyorgy, Interview by David C. Smith; Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith; Cushing, "Protest Activity Again Seabrook Before the Founding of the Clamshell Alliance," 15-26.

Reick started a camp out in a tree on the construction site that lasted thirty-six hours before the cold weather forced him to end his protest. He surrendered without incident and Seabrook Police Chief Louis Promise welcomed him with a thermos of hot tea. Public Service Company elected not to charge Reick with trespassing because the utility wanted to avoid igniting any further resistance. Reick's protest had little impact on the debate over Seabrook Station, but other interveners in attendance at the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League's meeting with Sam Lovejoy did grasp the relationship his toppling of the tower and the antinuclear movement he sought to inspire. In particular, Chichester and Bruner began thinking about the different types of protests or actions their respective citizen groups could take locally that would inspire the same type of populist movement against Seabrook Station that Lovejoy envisioned in Montague.<sup>185</sup>

Chichester responded by leading the Concerned Citizens of Seabrook on a local petition campaign to add a voter referendum on the ballot during the upcoming spring elections asking the public "whether or not they were in favor of having a nuclear power plant at Seabrook?" The petition was successful, and Public Service Company launched a massive marketing campaign in an attempt to persuade the local community to embrace the election. The utility's effort was to no avail, and on March 2, 1976, by a margin of 768 to 632 Seabrook residents voted against the nuclear plant. Governor Thomson and the state responded by immediately declaring both the vote and its results as illegitimate which ignited yet another local controversy. For those that voted against Seabrook

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<sup>185</sup> Wasserman, "Nuclear War by the Sea;" Samuel Lovejoy, Interview by David C. Smith; Anna Gyorgy, Interview by David C. Smith; Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith; Cushing, "Protest Activity Again Seabrook Before the Founding of the Clamshell Alliance," 15-26.



Station, the governor's decision to throw out the vote was viewed as a violation of home rule, New Hampshire's time-honored tradition that largely defined the relationship between the state and citizen. Home rule was designed to empower towns, city councils, and residents while limiting the size and authority of the central government. Thus, when local residents in Seabrook voted against nuclear power, the natural assumption for most was that the vote would be honored and Seabrook Station would be canceled.<sup>186</sup>

Once that proved not to be the case, it appeared that Governor Thomson, the utility, and the local nuclear opposition were on a "collision course" over Seabrook Station, and the push for direct action grew stronger. As Cushing recalled, the overwhelming feeling at the time was that "the people of Seabrook voted against having an atomic plant in their town, but it was forced on them." This created two major problems locally according to Cushing. On the one hand, "Building and operating an atomic plant on an earthquake fault in Seabrook, in a densely populated area just 45 miles from Boston, and requiring ratepayers throughout New England to pay for it, is an assault on the health, safety and economy of our region." These were all the risks posed by the physical existence of Seabrook Station; but on the other hand, there were also major political consequences to contend with as a result of the nuclear plant. Cushing noted that "the utility and the state government were running roughshod over local democracy, abusing the power of the state to threaten and jeopardize people's livelihood, and using the power of the state on behalf of the nuclear power industry to drive people from their

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<sup>186</sup> Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith; Cushing, "Popular Reaction to the Seabrook Nuclear Station," 11-13.

homes.” The proposed plant represented a threat to home rule, and Cushing explained that the debate over Seabrook Station became “as much about political power as it was about nuclear power.” It was at this point that it became apparent to the nuclear opposition that direct action would be necessary.<sup>187</sup>

Since meeting with Sam Lovejoy, Jeff Bruner and the Granite State Alliance had already been exploring different direct action options that the organization could take against Seabrook Station. Once the home rule controversy broke after Governor Thomson threw out the voter referendum against Seabrook Station, Bruner responded by organizing a protest march from the state capital in Manchester to the proposed construction site in Seabrook. The march began on April 3, 1976 with members of the Granite State Alliance leading the way from Manchester. As soon as the demonstrators arrived in Seabrook seven days later, they were greeted by Chichester and members of the Concerned Citizens of Seabrook. The march was capped by a rally of more than 300 people at the proposed construction site for Seabrook Station on April 10, 1976. The site was bulldozed for construction shortly thereafter, but Chichester believed that the town of Seabrook was truly on verge of banding together to defeat Public Service Company’s proposed nuclear plant.<sup>188</sup>

Over the course of the two months, Chichester began holding regular meetings at his home in Rye with other activists from the nuclear opposition in Seabrook and members of the Montague Farm in Western Massachusetts. They were planning the next

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<sup>187</sup> Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith; Anna Gyorgy, Interviewed by David Smith.

<sup>188</sup> Wasserman, “Nuclear War by the Sea,” Samuel Lovejoy, Interview by David C. Smith; Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith; Cushing, “Protest Activity Again Seabrook Before the Founding of the Clamshell Alliance,” Clamshell Alliance Papers, 15-26.

step in the fight against Seabrook Station and began talking about Wyhl. The site occupation that formed at the tiny hamlet along the Rhine in West Germany in February of 1975 was hardly a secret. The protest was international news. It had been covered by major news outlets like the *New York Times*, but only in the most general of senses. The nuclear opposition in Seabrook knew very few details about what actually occurred in Wyhl prior to the fall of 1975. As Cushing explained, “We knew that a bunch of people that didn’t come from an urban area and were supported in a rural area by farmers stood up against the centralized power of the nuclear industry and the government and won!” It was not until Chichester made the connection with Lovejoy and members of the Montague Farm that Cushing and other members of the nuclear opposition began to fully grasp what took place in Wyhl.<sup>189</sup>

During the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League’s meeting with Lovejoy the previous fall, among the other topics that was discussed aside from *Lovejoy’s Nuclear War* was Montague Farm communitarian Randy Kehler’s firsthand account of his visit to Wyhl during the summer of 1975. Kehler described the German activists’ commitment to nonviolence and civil disobedience; the social structure and complexity of the settlement that was built on the construction site in Wyhl; the school that activists established and how the occupation became an educational center for environmental and alternative energy issues; and finally, how the Wyhl occupation helped galvanize the surrounding community against nuclear power. Wyhl was everything that the citizen intervention in Seabrook

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<sup>189</sup> Samuel Lovejoy, Interview by David C. Smith; Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith; Cushing, “Protest Activity Again Seabrook Before the Founding of the Clamshell Alliance,” Clamshell Alliance Papers, 15-26.

hoped to be, and it was now what the local nuclear opposition against sought to become.<sup>190</sup>

While meeting with Lovejoy and members of Montague Farm during the fall of 1975, Chichester, Cushing, Bruner, and other activists in attendance learned of the Nina Gladitz film that was made during the Wyhl site occupation. Kehler had brought back from Wyhl a very rough portion of the film and delivered it to Green Mountain Post Films to be re-mastered. By the spring, Dan Keller and Charles Light completed the restoration of the Gladitz film, and the end product was a fifteen minute film of the site occupation at Wyhl. For Chichester, Bruner, Cushing, and other members of the nuclear opposition, seeing the Gladitz film and viewing the raw footage of the site occupation in Wyhl was a transformational moment. As Cushing noted, “Wyhl provided a concrete model of what people wanted to accomplish.”<sup>191</sup>

Any thought at continuing with the citizen intervention was abandoned entirely, and from that point forward, the focus of the nuclear opposition in Seabrook was to stage a site occupation of Seabrook Station similar to Wyhl. However, they wanted to wait for the right moment, and that moment came on June 29, 1976 after the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board approved construction license for Seabrook Station. Public Service Company scheduled a groundbreaking ceremony

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<sup>190</sup> Samuel Lovejoy, Interview by David C. Smith; Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith; Randy Kehler, Interviewed by David C. Smith.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

for July 6, 1976, and within a week, the Clamshell Alliance was founded to lead the direct-action based protest of nuclear power in Seabrook.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> Samuel Lovejoy, Interview by David C. Smith; Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith; Cushing, "Protest Activity Again Seabrook Before the Founding of the Clamshell Alliance," 15-26.

## Chapter 6

### The Clamshell Alliance and the Atomic Monster of Seabrook

In the fall of 1975, Dan Keller turned to his good friend Samuel Lovejoy and said, “Sam, we think we can get some of the original footage from the occupation in Wyhl.” Keller was one of the filmmakers from Green Mountain Post Films who previously produced *Lovejoy’s Nuclear War*, the story of an organic farmer’s emphatic stand against nuclear power in the Western Massachusetts. A few months earlier, Randy Kehler and a few other communards from the Montague area travelled to Europe in order to attend the War Resisters International Conference that was being held in Noordwijkerhout, Netherlands. While at the conference, the contingent from Western Massachusetts met a group of German activists who invited the Americans to visit the site occupation at Wyhl. *Lovejoy’s Nuclear War* was screened before an audience of 500 protestors inside the roundhouse that had been constructed as part of the temporary settlement that arose at the protest site. Afterwards, Kehler learned of a film being made by the German film producer Nina Gladitz. She was working on a documentary over the site occupation at Wyhl and the protest against nuclear power in the surrounding Kaiserstuhl region. A small and very rough 8 millimeter reel of Gladitz’s film made its way back to Montague and into the hands of Dan Keller at Green Mountain Post Films. He then picked up the phone and contacted Lovejoy about the find. “What do you need me to do,” Lovejoy

asked, “You need some money. I’ll raise some money. I’ll go door-to-door. I’ll beg my friends.”<sup>193</sup>

A fundraising campaign led by Lovejoy commenced, and Green Mountain Post Films eventually converted the 8 millimeter Gladitz film on Wyhl into a more usable 16 millimeter format. Later that fall, Seacoast Anti-Pollution League President Guy Chichester invited Sam Lovejoy and members of the Alternative Energy Coalition from Montague to speak at one of his meetings where the re-mastered Gladitz film was shared. The sight of protestors nonviolently occupying the construction site, blocking construction equipment, setting up tents, and peacefully resisting when arrested struck a chord with Chichester and the nuclear opposition in Seabrook. Thereafter, he grew fixated on launching a direct action-based protest of Seabrook Station using the model established at Wyhl which was based on civil disobedience and nonviolence. These were hardly new concepts in the United States. Civil disobedience and nonviolence were featured prominently in the civil rights and antiwar movements of the 1960s but never were they applied to the fight against nuclear power before Wyhl.<sup>194</sup>

When the citizen intervention in Seabrook was later abandoned, the model of direct action that developed at Wyhl became the inspiration behind the founding of the Clamshell Alliance in July of 1976, and ultimately, Wyhl proved to be highly influential

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<sup>193</sup> Randy Kehler, Interview by David C. Smith, April 8, 2013; Samuel Lovejoy, Interview by David C. Smith, April 8, 2013.

<sup>194</sup> Robert “Renny” Cushing, “Protest Activity Again Seabrook Before the Founding of the Clamshell Alliance,” Manuscript Collection, Clamshell Alliance Papers, 1976-1988, Box 12, Folder 1, University of New Hampshire Milne Special Collections, Durham, New Hampshire, 15-26; Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith, March 11, 2013; Randy Kehler, Interview by David C. Smith; Samuel Lovejoy, Interview by David C. Smith.

in the shaping of the Clamshell Alliance as well as the course of antinuclear movement in the United States during the 1970s. After 1976, the Clamshell Alliance facilitated the advancement of the Wyhl model in the United States. By the summer of 1977, protests against nuclear power using the concepts first introduced at Wyhl stretched across the country from Seabrook, New Hampshire to Diablo Canyon, California. The Clamshell Alliance emerged as the torchbearer for the antinuclear movement in the United States and serves as the focus of the narrative presented here.<sup>195</sup>

This chapter portrays the beginning of the Clamshell Alliance and the organization's three major demonstrations against Seabrook Station between the summer of 1976 and the spring of 1977. The significance of the story of the Clamshell Alliance is that the organization not only represents the trans-Atlantic growth of the antinuclear movement from Wyhl but also the vehicle through which the antinuclear movement spread across the United States during the late 1970s. The key plotlines that comprise the narrative presented here include the August 1976 occupations of Seabrook Station; the trial of the Seabrook Ten; the 1977 Battle of Seabrook; and finally, the growth of the Alliance Movement in the United States. As a whole, the purpose of this chapter is simply to describe what the antinuclear movement imported into New England by the Clamshell Alliance looked like, because as it will later be demonstrated, that import soon became a matter of dispute between opposing factions within the Clamshell Alliance.

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<sup>195</sup> Harvey Wasserman, Interview by David C. Smith, February 27, 2013; Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith, Cushing, "Protest Activity Against Seabrook Before the Founding of the Clamshell Alliance," 15-26.



## The Founding of the Clamshell Alliance

Three days after the groundbreaking ceremony for Seabrook Station, Guy Chichester invited more than 50 activists from all four major citizen groups in Seabrook to a meeting at his home in Rye, New Hampshire on July 9, 1976. Over a picnic table in Chichester's backyard, the Clamshell Alliance was born that July afternoon. The founding meeting served as the first Clamshell Congress where the organization's mission, governing principles, and plan of action against Seabrook Station were all established. Aside from Chichester, the other activists in attendance at the organization's initial congress included Renny Cushing of the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League, Jeff Bruner of the Granite State Alliance, Kathy Foote Silver and Doug Silver of the Concerned Citizens of Seabrook, Arthur Harvey of the Greenleaf Harvesters, local residents Paul and Linda Gunter, Suki Rice and Elizabeth Boardmen of the Quaker-based American Friends Service, and finally Sam Lovejoy, Harvey Wasserman, and Anna Gyorgy of the Alternative Energy Coalition and Montague Farm.<sup>196</sup>

The activists decided to take the name "Clamshell" because it was symbolic of the initial opposition to nuclear power in Seabrook arising from the local fishing community and their concern that thermal pollution from Seabrook Station might potentially decimate the Hampton Harbor's clam population. "Alliance" was simply intended to describe the group's organizational structure, a collection of citizen groups from across New Hampshire who retained their own identity and operated as individual affinity groups. As a whole, there was neither elected officials nor formal leadership but rather

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<sup>196</sup> Cushing, "Protest Activity Against Seabrook Before the Founding of the Clamshell Alliance," 15-26.

the Clamshell Alliance used “consensus building” through the individual affinity groups in order to make organizational decisions. The Clamshell Alliance was an honest attempt at participatory democracy in its purest form, and it was an ambitious endeavor to say the least given the level of diversity and often competing agendas possessed by the different affinity groups that comprised the organization’s membership.<sup>197</sup>

For example, even after joining the Clamshell Alliance, the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League remained committed to the conservation of the Hampton Harbor, and the Granite State Alliance’s primary concern was still the prevention of Public Service Company rate hikes. The same was true for the Concerned Citizens of Seabrook, the Greenleaf Harvesters Guild, and even affinity groups from outside of Seabrook, like the Alternative Energy Coalition from Montague. Each group retained its original identity and motive for opposing nuclear power in Seabrook in the first place, but through the Clamshell Alliance, they agreed to work together under one banner to accomplish their different goals. While reaching a group consensus proved to be difficult at times, the common theme found in all activity of the Clamshell Alliance was the organization’s unwavering commitment to nonviolence. This also represented the most distinguishable characteristic of the antinuclear movement that spread across the Atlantic from Wyhl to Seabrook during the 1970s, and which later became the very source of the internal divisions and struggles of the antinuclear movement during the latter part of the decade.<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> Renny Cushing, “The Founding and First Protests of the Clamshell Alliance,” Manuscript Collection, Clamshell Alliance Papers, 1976-1988, Box 12, Folder 2, 3-4.

<sup>198</sup> Renny Cushing, “The Founding and First Protests of the Clamshell Alliance,” 3-4.

Nevertheless, after the Clamshell Alliance was founded in Chichester's backyard, the different affinity groups debated for several weeks over what was the best course of action for the organization to take. Renny Cushing recalled that several options were discussed, but the conversation kept returning to Wyhl. He noted that it soon became apparent that "the one tactic which seemed best was to duplicate the citizen occupation of the reactor site that occurred in Wyhl at the Seabrook site." A consensus was soon reached, and with Wyhl serving as the inspiration, the Clamshell Alliance planned to occupy the Seabrook Station construction site on August 1, 1976.<sup>199</sup>

### The August Occupations

The first two site occupations of Seabrook Station by the Clamshell Alliance occurred just three weeks apart from one another in August of 1976. The first occupation was scheduled for August 1, 1976 and began with an antinuclear rally near the train station in Hampton Falls. Nearly 600 Clams representing every New England state attended the rally, and speeches were given by Renny Cushing, Cathy Foote Silver from the Concerned Citizens of Seabrook, and John Parker of the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League, among others. Cushing took the podium last and delivered what became the official statement of the Clamshell Alliance, and in the process, he touched on a number of themes that characterized not only the local fight against Seabrook Station but also the

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<sup>199</sup> Harvey Wasserman, "Nuclear War by the Sea," *The Nation*, September 11, 1976; Cushing, "The Founding and First Protests of the Clamshell Alliance," 4-6.

larger movement against nuclear power that was currently unfolding in the Atlantic World at the time.

Cushing opened his statement by situating the debate over Seabrook Station as a local response to an external threat, stating that “we are the sons and daughters of this land. This site, part of our precious 18 miles of seacoast is threatened by power and wealth beyond our borders and unresponsive to we who live here.” This captures exactly how the antinuclear movement developed during the 1970s. Because of the OPEC oil embargo in 1973, the nuclear industry, which was slow to develop since its creation in the 1950s through Atoms for Peace, underwent a period of rapid expansion both in West Germany and the United States. The expansion was the result of the increased demand for nuclear power which was being pushed by Western governments from Bonn to Washington, D.C. who desperately needed a viable alternative source of energy to end their dependence on foreign oil imports. Therefore, whether it was Clams in Seabrook or farmers and vintners along the Rhine in West Germany, the local opposition to nuclear power was a response to external pressures created by the global demand for nuclear power in the wake of the Energy Crisis of 1973.<sup>200</sup>

As Cushing continued, he brought up a number of the issues that long-served as the primary points of contention for the nuclear opposition in the Atlantic World. He stated that “To the detriment of the working people of this state who have to pay for this economic fiasco with higher rates the power company has projected, and with disregard

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<sup>200</sup> Cushing, “The Founding and First Protests of the Clamshell Alliance,” 13-14, Wasserman, “Nuclear War by the Sea.”

for human and other forms of life in the area, the so-called Public Service Company continues to injure us all.” Cushing’s reference to the expansion of nuclear power as occurring “to the detriment of the working class” represents a commentary on the nuclear industry’s siting practices. The tendency was to site nuclear plants in working class communities, and this was as true in Seabrook as it was in Wyhl. Both Public Service Company and Badenwerk chose Seabrook and Wyhl respectively because of their working class makeup. The utility reasoned that these communities were more likely to be enticed by the promise of new job creation, tax breaks, and increased local revenues, all of which the resistance movement minimized. The hope was that because of the economic and financial incentives the local support would be strong enough to neutralize any regional opposition that might arise.<sup>201</sup>

Cushing’s line about the working class having “to pay for this economic fiasco with higher rates” was also tightly packed with context. The cost of building a new nuclear power plant whether that was in New England or along the Rhine in West Germany was ultimately passed along to consumers. However, the inequity was that only the few hundred citizens who lived in the communities like Wyhl and Seabrook in which a nuclear plant was being built received the economic benefits and tax breaks promised by utilities. Meanwhile, constituencies in the immediate surrounding communities where most of the nuclear opposition resided were excluded from not only

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<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

receiving any of the financial incentives but also the opportunity to vote on the proposed plant in the first place.<sup>202</sup>

Yet, they were just as susceptible to the environmental and human risks associated with nuclear power as the people who were being compensated to vote in favor of nuclear power. From Cushing's perspective, the problem there was not monetary but rather exhibited Public Service Company's complete "disregard for human and other forms of life." Thermal pollution, reactor safety, and low-level radiation were all concerns that farmers, vintners, fisherman, and conservationists shared from Breisach to Montague and from Wyhl to Seabrook. These shared concerns provided commonality for activists on both sides of the Atlantic and transcended either the individual debates over Seabrook Station or nuclear power along the Rhine.<sup>203</sup>

Finally, Cushing concluded his statement by dramatically declaring that "utility and government have acted in collusion. They're attempting to force the atomic monster upon us. We believe their actions are irresponsible and immoral. We are compelled by our conscience to take this act of civil disobedience. In opposition to the death posed by the construction of a nuclear power plant, we take our stand in affirmation of life." This powerful declaration made it clear that the Clamshell Alliance knew that its fight over Seabrook Station was not with the utility as much as it was with the government, and therefore, the organization's act of civil disobedience undeniably represented a challenge to the authority of the state over nuclear power.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> Cushing, "The Founding and First Protests of the Clamshell Alliance," 13-14.

<sup>203</sup> Cushing, "The Founding and First Protests of the Clamshell Alliance," 13-14, Wasserman, "Nuclear War by the Sea."

<sup>204</sup> Cushing, "The Founding and First Protests of the Clamshell Alliance," 13-14.

After Cushing finished reading the Clamshell Alliance's official statement, a small contingent of the 600 protestors that had gathered in Hampton Falls broke from the rally site and headed down the train tracks towards the construction site for Seabrook Station. Upon arrival, the Clams were immediately confronted by a Public Service Company official who threatened to have the protestors arrested if they did not turn back. Undeterred, the Clams entered the construction site and headed for a clearing. As noted, each protestor carried a small shovel and either a sapling or corn plant in their backpack. They planned to stage a symbolic protest of Seabrook Station by not only blocking the construction equipment and preventing their operation but also by replacing each tree that had already been cut down and removed from the site.<sup>205</sup>

Just as the Clams readied their shovels, the Seabrook police arrived to remove and arrest the protestors. Once the police ordered the Clams to essentially vacate the site or else, on command the protestors went limp and began their passive resistance. The police were caught off guard and were confused by the Clams' tactics initially, but one by one, each protestors was dragged from the construction site and hauled to the Hampton Beach jail. In all, eighteen Clams were arrested during the first site occupation. They were uniformly charged with disorderly conduct, resisting arrest, and criminal trespassing, but eventually all were released on their personal recognizance after a night in jail and a court date had been set.<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>205</sup> Cushing, "The Founding and First Protests of the Clamshell Alliance," 14-15.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

Four days later, the groundbreaking ceremony for Seabrook Station on August 5, 1976 drew Governor Thomson and executives from Public Service Company to the construction site. The fact that the ceremony was scheduled the day before the anniversary of the Hiroshima bombing during World War II on August 6, 1945 displayed an unmistakable air of arrogance and lack of compassion for the nuclear opposition by both the state and utility. Nevertheless, the Clams did not plan a large scale demonstration for the groundbreaking festivities. Instead, the organization planned a small demonstration to disrupt Governor Thomson's official procession to the construction site. About a dozen Seabrook residents led by Guy Chichester sat in chairs in the middle of the road and formed a brief blockade that was quickly dispatched. Three protestors were arrested including Chichester, and the rest dispersed without further incident knowing that the Clamshell Alliance was already planning a second site occupation of Seabrook Station for August 22, 1976.<sup>207</sup>

In the weeks leading up to the planned demonstration, Suki Rice and Quakers from the American Friends Service held workshops on civil disobedience for new members and affinity groups that joined the Clamshell Alliance after the organization's first protest of Seabrook Station. The second occupation proceeded much like the first except that instead of 600 Clams more than 1,500 attended the opening rally in Hampton Falls. One hundred eighty Clams then marched down the train tracks where they were immediately met by the police once they arrived at the construction site. The police's presence was hardly a surprise. They were called to the site by the Clamshell Alliance.

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<sup>207</sup> Wasserman, "Nuclear War by the Sea."



Just as they had done during the first occupation of Seabrook Station, the Clams made sure to inform the police of any planned demonstration, primarily because it was important to the organization that their actions were not overly criminalized and misconstrued as acts of violence. Nevertheless, as the 180 Clams reached the construction site, the police gave a fair warning to allow those who wished not to be arrested to peacefully leave. Eventually, all 180 Clams were dragged from the site and placed under arrest. They were transported 20 miles away to the Portsmouth National Guard Armory where all but ten of the Clams were charged with criminal trespass and released the next day. The ten Clams that were not released, which included Renny Cushing, faced more serious accusations. To the surprise of everyone in the Clamshell Alliance, the Seabrook Ten, as they would become known, were charged with contempt of a Superior Court injunction and remanded to jail.<sup>208</sup>

### Mississippi of the North

The circumstances behind the detainment of the Seabrook Ten began on August 20, 1976. Public Service Company asked Maurice Bois, a justice of the Superior Court of Rockingham County, which held jurisdiction over the town of Seabrook, to issue an injunction against the Clamshell Alliance's planned occupation of Seabrook Station. All eighteen protestors arrested during the first site occupation were named in the injunction, but because the order came down late on a Friday afternoon, only five Clams received

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<sup>208</sup> Cushing, "The Founding and First Protests of the Clamshell Alliance," p. 18; Wasserman, "Nuclear War by the Sea."

written notice. Thomas Lasser, an attorney retained by the Clamshell Alliance, made a Saturday morning appeal to Judge Bois to lift the injunction, but the request was denied. Consequently, ten of the 180 Clams arrested during the second occupation of Seabrook Station had been unknowingly named in the injunction issued by Bois. This explained why the Seabrook Ten were charged with contempt of a Superior Court injunction, and they were ordered to stand trial before Judge Bois.<sup>209</sup>

Governor Thomson had appointed Bois to the Superior Court shortly after coming into office, and Bois had been a Manchester lawyer and longtime colleague of Thomson's. He was someone Governor Thomson was confident would make an example out of the Seabrook Ten. Once the trial began on August 30, 1976, Bois rejected Lasser's initial motion for dismissal, denied a request for delay so that an adequate defense could be prepared, disallowed any questions regarding the validity of the injunction, and absolutely refused to excuse himself from the trial despite the obvious conflict of interest as the person who issued the injunction in the first place. It was not until the defense submitted a motion to move the trial to federal court, where Judge Hugh Bounes indicated that he would be willing to hear the case, that Judge Bois loosened his grip on the reins of the trial a bit.<sup>210</sup>

Mainly, Judge Bois allowed the defense to cross-examine the prosecution's witnesses some. Among the interesting revelations that came to light as a result of the cross-examination was Deputy Sheriff Lelan Davis' admission that he was "specifically

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<sup>209</sup> Harvey Wasserman, "Trial of the Seabrook Ten," *Valley Advocate* (Northampton, MA), September 8, 1976; Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith.

<sup>210</sup> Harvey Wasserman, "Trial of the Seabrook Ten," Harvey Wasserman, Interview by David C. Smith; Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith.

ordered not to deliver copies of the injunction to everyone named on it.” However, there was no jury present for the trial of the Seabrook Ten. Their fate rested solely in the hands of Judge Bois who ended the legal charade three days after trial began by finding the Seabrook Ten guilty as charged. Bois wanted the sentence to serve as a scare tactic to discourage any further action by the Clamshell Alliance and the local nuclear opposition. The Seabrook Ten were sentenced to six months in jail and denied bail. After the sentencing, Bois’ conduct was widely condemned as an assault on civil rights in New Hampshire, with Senator John Durkin charging that Bois made the state look like “the Mississippi of the North.”<sup>211</sup>

After six days in jail, the New Hampshire Supreme Court freed the Seabrook Ten, but the ordeal did impact the organizational plans of the Clamshell Alliance. A third occupation of Seabrook Station was being planned at the time, but some within the organization, specifically Sam Lovejoy, feared that another site occupation so soon after the trial of Seabrook Ten would be such a spectacle that it would distract the public from the organization’s overall message. The planned third occupation of Seabrook Station was postponed, and the Clamshell Alliance decided instead to hold a public outreach event designed to help educate the general public over the dangers of nuclear power as well as the availability of alternative sources of energy.<sup>212</sup>

Once again at Lovejoy’s suggestion, the Clamshell Alliance announced that it would host an Alternative Energy Fair on October 23, 1976 that began with a bike ride

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<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

<sup>212</sup> Cushing, “The Founding and First Protests of the Clamshell Alliance,” 21-22; Sam Lovejoy, Interviewed by David C. Smith; Harvey Wasserman, Interview by David C. Smith; Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith.

from Hampton Beach to the Seabrook Station construction site. More than 3,000 residents from the surrounding Seabrook area came out on what was a cold, fall Saturday to learn more about the environmental, economic, and human health risks associated with nuclear power as well what other alternative forms of energy were available at the time. The event proved to be a huge success for the organization particularly among local conservatives who viewed the Seabrook Ten strictly as lawbreakers and not as protestors exhibiting civil disobedience. The Alternative Energy Fair helped the Clamshell Alliance gain new supporters and increase its membership base over the winter of 1976. The Clams carried this momentum into the early spring and resumed its previous plans to stage a third occupation of Seabrook Station.<sup>213</sup>

### The Battle of Seabrook

In retrospect, the trial of the Seabrook Ten and the subsequent Alternative Energy Fair in the October of 1976 represented transformational moments for the Clamshell Alliance. The extended detainment and Bois' treatment of the Seabrook Ten allowed the second occupation of Seabrook Station to linger in the daily headlines beyond the typical news cycle. The trial increased the overall impact of the second occupation, and the Clams' decision to hold the Alternative Energy Fair smartly demonstrated that the organization stood for something more than just a group of radicals who got arrested for trying to plant trees on a construction site. The general public became increasingly interested in the Clamshell Alliance after the Alternative Energy Fair. Membership in the

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<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

organization grew exponentially, and by the spring of 1977, the Clamshell Alliance had trained more than 1,800 new members in nonviolence and civil disobedience-based protest. The Clams proceeded to select April 30, 1977 as the date of their third site occupation, and the organization expected at least 1,000 protestors. As the date approached, anticipation began to build, and many within the Clamshell Alliance developed a sense that something big was about to take place.<sup>214</sup>

So too, were Governor Thomson and representatives of Public Service Company sensing something big was in the works. In the days leading up to the protest, Thomson ordered his henchman and editor of the *Manchester Union Leader* newspaper, William Loeb, to label the Clams as “Communists” and warn that the organization’s demonstrations are really a “cover for terrorism.” This was a clear attempt by the governor’s office to rob the Clams of its recent public support in advance of the upcoming occupation. Governor Thomson did not stop there though. He also attempted to gain early favor with New Hampshire State Police Commander Paul Doyon, the very same Colonel Doyon who oversaw the arrests of all 18 Clams during the August 22, 1976 site occupations. Like the previous demonstrations, the Clamshell Alliance informed Doyon of the plans in advance, and Thomson wanted him to arrest the Clams before they ever reached the construction site. Aside from the Clams having done nothing wrong, Doyon refused on the ground that such an action would likely block traffic on Route 1 and worsen the situation. It was better to allow the Clams to protest and then make the

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<sup>214</sup>; Harvey Wasserman, “High Tension in the Energy Debate – The Clamshell Response,” *The Nation*, June 18, 1977; Cushing, “The Founding and First Protests of the Clamshell Alliance,” 33-34; Harvey Wasserman, Interview by David C. Smith; Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith.

arrests at the site. Thomson was furious, but Doyon's impartiality freed the Clamshell Alliance to proceed with the planned occupation.<sup>215</sup>

On April 30, 1977, in what would become known as the Battle of Seabrook, more than 5,000 Clams from all across New England converged on the Hampton Harbor area. Three thousand gathered and held an antinuclear rally at the Hampton Fall train station, while the other 2,000 planned to participate in the site occupation. The agreed upon plan consisted of Clams converging on the Seabrook Station from all four directions including one affinity group arriving by boat on the western side of the construction site. The Clams quickly unpacked their knapsacks, erected tents, dug latrines, and established a permanent camp site on the property. They even organized themselves into neighborhoods and dubbed the settlement "Occupation City." Despite the advanced warning given to Colonel Doyon, the turnout of protestors exceeded the state's expectations, and until additional trooper and police officers could be called in from neighboring states, the Clams were allowed to stay on the construction site overnight.<sup>216</sup>

The following day on May 1, 1977, shortly after 3:00 P.M. Colonel Doyon used a police speaker to announce that any protestor who did not vacate the site would be arrested after which state troopers from the surrounding states of Vermont, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Maine all emerged to assist with the arrests of the Clams that remained in Occupation City. Those that were present proved to be enough, and although the

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<sup>215</sup> Harvey Wasserman, "High Tension in the Energy Debate – The Clamshell Response," *The Nation*; Cushing, "The Founding and First Protests of the Clamshell Alliance," 33-34; Harvey Wasserman, Interview by David C. Smith; Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith.

<sup>216</sup> Wasserman, "High Tension in the Energy Debate – The Clamshell Response;" Harvey Wasserman, Interview by David C. Smith; Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith.

process was extremely slow and lasted late into the evening, eventually a total of 1,414 Calms were removed from the site and placed under arrest. The Clams were loaded onto buses and National Guard troop carriers and waited to be transferred to temporary hold cells at National Guard armories in the nearby towns of Concord, Dover, Manchester, Portsmouth, and Somersworth.<sup>217</sup>

Some Clams spent as much as fifteen hours in the back of these National Guard troop carriers or packed into loaded buses before the state decided what to do to them. Once they finally arrived at an armory, they often found facilities that lacked beds, telephone access, and other necessities including access to legal counsel. Friends, family members, and fellow Clams found it extremely difficult to get information about who had been arrested and where they were being held. Overcrowding quickly became an issue at each armory, and chaos soon ensued over bail and sentencing.<sup>218</sup>

At Portsmouth, the initial busload of Clams that arrived at the armory was simply booked and released on personal recognizance. Before the second batch of detainees could arrive, Governor Thomson showed up in a helicopter and demanded that the bail be raised to \$1,500, an amount no Clam could afford to pay. The bail would then escalate from \$100 one day to \$200 by the afternoon and then up to \$500 by the next morning with a fifteen day hard labor sentence. The same scene played out at each armory, and by May 8, 1977, more than 1,000 Clams still remained jailed in New Hampshire's National

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<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

<sup>218</sup> Harvey Wasserman, Interview by David C. Smith; Cushing, "The Founding and First Protests of the Clamshell Alliance," 33-34.

Guard armories, which caused Governor Thomson to proclaim that “we are winning the battle of Seabrook.”<sup>219</sup>

Without question, Governor Thomson was looking to punish the Clams by keeping them locked up, but the spectacle was costing the already cash-strapped government over \$50,000 each day that the Clams remained in jail. Finally, after two weeks of imprisonment, the Clams were released without bond, and the chargers against all but six of the protestors were eventually dropped. The six that were singled out, one of which was Renny Cushing, were charged with criminal trespass and delivered six month jail terms despite the fact that the prosecutor only asked for fifteen days. Like the Seabrook Ten, the hard sentences doled out to the six Clams that were singled out was intended by the state to serve as a deterrent and discourage further protests by the nuclear opposition in Seabrook. That would not be the case.<sup>220</sup>

Ultimately, the Battle of Seabrook propelled the Clamshell Alliance into the national spotlight and allowed the organization to emerge as the face of the antinuclear movement not just in New England but across the United States. A multitude of antinuclear organizations modeled after the Clamshell Alliance formed in the immediate aftermath of the Battle of Seabrook, including the Abalone Alliance in California, the Palmetto Alliance in South Carolina, the Paddlewheel Alliance in Indiana, the Oyster Shell Alliance in Louisiana, the Potomac Alliance in Washington, D.C., the Shad Alliance in New York, the Sunflower Alliance in Kansas, the Crabshell Alliance in

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<sup>219</sup> Cushing, “The Founding and First Protests of the Clamshell Alliance,” 33-34; Wasserman, “High Tension in the Energy Debate – The Clamshell Response;” Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith  
<sup>220</sup> Ibid.



Washington state, and the Catfish Alliance in Florida. However, the Clamshell Alliance's meteoric rise to national prominence was not without consequence, and over the course of the next two years, the Clamshell Alliance would struggle.

The Battle of Seabrook resulted in a swell in the membership of the Clamshell Alliance that severely tested the organization's survival. Communist radicals, largely from the surrounding urban areas of Boston, flocked to the Clamshell Alliance after the Battle of Seabrook seeking to exploit the national platform recently afforded to the debate over nuclear power. These urban radicals did not share the Clamshell Alliance's commitment to nonviolence. Instead, they aggressively sought to incite a physical confrontation with the state to and challenge its authority by using the nuclear power debate as a guise. At the same time, the Clamshell Alliance's German counterparts were facing the same issue with Communist groups and urban radicals who joined the nuclear opposition after the success of the site occupation in Wyhl. By the fall of 1977, the nuclear opposition on both sides of the Atlantic had been coopted by outside radicals and extremists to such an extent that the antinuclear movement was criminalized and now found itself on the verge of collapsing.

## Chapter 7

### Clams, Communists, and the Criminalization of the Antinuclear Movement

The year 1977 represented both a remarkable and tumultuous times for the antinuclear movement in the Atlantic World. In New Hampshire, the Battle of Seabrook launched the national profile of the Clamshell Alliance and gave rise to direct-action based protests stretching across the United States from New England to Diablo Canyon, California. The Clamshell Alliance's membership reached an all-time high, and the general public's perception of the organization had never been better. Meanwhile, in West Germany, the antinuclear movement was on the verge of a total collapse. The popularity and success of the site occupation and protest at Wyhl garnered the nuclear opposition an unprecedented international spotlight, but by 1977, the movement had been coopted and exploited to such a great extent by urban radicals and Communist groups that social protest against nuclear power became criminalized.

After the meteoric rise of the antinuclear movement following the success of the protest at Wyhl, Communists and other leftwing extremists flocked to the nuclear opposition at Brokdorf and Grondhe beginning in 1976. Their intent was to transform the nuclear power debate into a direct challenge to the authority of the state and the legitimacy of the government in Bonn. Following violent clashes between various radicals and the police first at Brokdorf and later at Grohnde in 1977, the state came to view the antinuclear movement as a threat to national security and subsequently criminalized the nuclear opposition.

In New Hampshire, the euphoria surrounding the Clamshell Alliance's resounding victory in the Battle of Seabrook was short lived. Communist radicals from the nearby urban centers of Boston, New York, and Providence drew inspiration from their German counterparts' ability to further radicalize the nuclear opposition in West Germany at Brokdorf and Grohnde. During the summer of 1977, while the antinuclear movement was crumbling in West Germany, opportunistic Marxist-Leninist Communists began attending the meetings of the Clamshell Alliance in an attempt to push the organization away from its commitment to nonviolence and instead towards a more confrontational and revolutionary approach in the fight against nuclear power in Seabrook.

The antinuclear movement in West Germany continued to shape the Clamshell Alliance and the fight against nuclear power at Seabrook even after the criminalization of the nuclear opposition occurred as a result the protests at Brokdorf and Grohnde. The criminalization of the antinuclear movement in West Germany and the subsequent effect on the Clamshell Alliance serves as the primary subject of this chapter. Some of the significant story lines discussed in the narrative include the rise of the Hard Clams and the Clamshell Alliance's internal debate over nonviolence following the Battle of Seabrook; the cooptation of the nuclear opposition in West Germany by urban radicals and Communist groups beginning at Brokdorf and the criminalization of the antinuclear movement at Grohnde; and finally, the debate over the Rath Proposal and the Alternative Energy Fair at Seabrook.

## The Rise of the Hard Clams

The Clamshell Alliance emerged from the Battle of Seabrook in the spring of 1977 as a conflicted organization. Externally, the group's national perception and level of public support were at a peak. Internally, the same was true of the friendship, comradery, and personal respect each Clam held for one another. The time they spent detained in the makeshift jails of National Guard Armories in Portsmouth, Concord, Manchester, and across New Hampshire following the April 30, 1977 site occupation brought the Clams closer together. However, the national spotlight and newfound popularity that the Clamshell Alliance garnered as a result of the Battle of Seabrook soon gave rise to a fierce debate over the organization's commitment to nonviolence. The media attention devoted to the Clamshell Alliance and the influx of urban radicals after the Battle of Seabrook produced a deep philosophical divide that formed within the Clamshell Alliance, one that would ultimately threaten the very survival of the organization. For the first time in the Clamshell Alliance's brief history, the organization was confronted with the dilemma of how to deal with new members whose primary interest in the local fight against Seabrook Station had nothing to do with nuclear power. In the past, local controversies like the state's use of eminent domain and the abandonment of the New Hampshire tradition of home rule benefited the Clamshell Alliance. This was also the case in August of 1976 during the trial of the Seabrook Ten following the Clamshell Alliance's second site occupation of Seabrook Station. The

surrounding community rallied around what was perceived as Judge Maurice Bois' infringement on the protestors' civil rights.<sup>221</sup>

In each instance, those who then decided to join the Clamshell Alliance were galvanized by the state's tendency to support nuclear power over rights and wellbeing of its citizens. This was not the case with the urban radicals that flocked to the Clamshell Alliance after the Battle of Seabrook. They were not interested in issues like the environmental and human health risks associated with the nuclear power, and with the majority arriving from Boston, they were also disconnected from the local concerns over the state's use of eminent domain or its disregard for home rule. Instead, these radicals were purely opportunists who were drawn to the platform created by the Clamshell Alliance and the ongoing debate over nuclear power at Seabrook. The influx of urban radicals into the ranks of the Clamshell Alliance occurred at a time during which the organization was once again reassessing the best strategy for action going forward against Seabrook Station.<sup>222</sup>

Many Clams, including influential members like Renny Cushing, Sam Lovejoy, and Guy Chichester believed that there was nothing to be immediately gained by holding another site occupation. They proposed that the Clamshell Alliance's organizational objective would better be served by conducting another public outreach event similar to the Alternative Energy Fair of October 1976. Their belief was that staging another site occupation so soon would shift away from the debate over Seabrook Station and onto the

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<sup>221</sup> Robert "Renny" Cushing Jr., "The Founding and First Protests of the Clamshell Alliance," 39-40; Cushing, "The Clamshell Divided – The Peril of Disunity and Disarray," 4-5.

<sup>222</sup> Cushing, "The Clamshell Divided – The Peril of Disunity and Disarray," 4-5;

spectacle of another clash between protestors and the state. The last energy fair was highly successful for the Clamshell Alliance and helped the organization engage broader segments of the population in the debate over nuclear power and Seabrook Station. It was likely that a similar event would also yield favorable results for the organization, but consensus building was becoming increasingly hard to achieve.<sup>223</sup>

With the bulk of the standing membership in favor of another public outreach event and the neophyte urban radicals pushing for a direct confrontation, the Clamshell Alliance suffered a philosophical split by the fall of 1977. What had been a successful social experiment based on participatory democracy and group consensus decision making was quickly becoming defined more by its infighting and dysfunction. Two factions formed within the Clamshell Alliance. One consisted of the urban radicals that joined the organization only after the Battle of Seabrook. This faction became known as the “Hard Clams.” The other group was comprised of the original founders of the Clamshell Alliance and the core membership that formed from the citizen groups involved in the debate over Seabrook Station, including the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League, Granite State Alliance, and Greenleaf Harvesters Guild. The Hard Clams called this group the “Soft Clams,” which was a reference to the groups’ steadfast commitment to nonviolence.<sup>224</sup>

The so-called Soft Clams were no strangers to the type of organizational strife that faced the Clamshell Alliance as a result of the arrival of urban radicals following the

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<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> Cushing, “The Clamshell Divided – The Peril of Disunity and Disarray,” 6-11.

Battle of Seabrook. Prominent Clams like Renny Cushing and Guy Chichester were both veterans of the citizen intervention in Seabrook and the local debate over litigation versus direct action. As president of the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League, Chichester led the push for direct action following the approval of Public Service Company's site license for Seabrook Station. Although he quickly became a controversial figure within the citizen intervention, Chichester was far from a revolutionary. He did not want the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League to change its entire identity, but given the demonstrated lack of success by litigation as the primary strategy for contesting Seabrook Station, Chichester implored the nuclear opposition to implement some direct action-based initiatives.<sup>225</sup>

This was not the case with the Hard Clams. They joined the Clamshell Alliance at the height of the organization's early success following the Battle of Seabrook. The Clams were not an organization in need of a strategy change. Regardless, immediately upon arrival, the Hard Clams began imploring the organization to reoccupy the construction site for Seabrook Station and instigate a direct confrontation with the state. This represented not just a strategy change. The Hard Clams' pushed for a confrontation that defied the Clamshell Alliance's commitment to nonviolence. Consequently, what they wanted was for the organization to undergo a complete philosophical change. The survival of the Clamshell Alliance was in serious doubt by the summer of 1977, and the seriousness of the situation was exasperated further by the condition of the antinuclear

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<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

movement in West Germany where the nuclear opposition and protest against nuclear power became criminalized.<sup>226</sup>

### The Criminalization of the Nuclear Opposition in Germany

The criminalization of the antinuclear movement in West Germany began in the town of Brokdorf, a small community located on the Lower Elbe River just outside of Hamburg in the West Germany's northern most state of Schleswig-Holstein. In 1973, the utility Nordwestdeutsche Kraftwerke announced its intention to construct a 1300 megawatt nuclear power plant in what was a popular recreation area for locals. The utility's announcement immediately sparked fears that the area would soon become another industrial wasteland similar to West Germany's Ruhr Valley. This attracted the attention of the local BBU (Bundesverband Buergerinitiativen Umweltschutz / Association of Citizens' Initiatives for Environmental Protection). As previously detailed in the story of Wyhl, the BBU or local citizen initiatives emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s as an outlet for the Left in West Germany after the collapse of the APO or (Ausserparlamentarische / Extraparliamentary Opposition) at the end of the student movements. In Brokdorf, the local BBU, called the Citizen Initiative for Environmental Protection Lower Elbe, led the early resistance to the project, and in a situation very similar to Wyhl and Montague, the regional opposition to nuclear power was not shared by the townspeople.<sup>227</sup>

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<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

<sup>227</sup> Christian Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*, 101-109.



According to a 1975 poll administered by the BBU, 73% of the population from the region surrounding Brokdorf opposed the proposed nuclear plant, but the Brokdorf city council voted overwhelmingly in favor of the project largely due to job creation and financial incentives promised by the partially state-owned utility Nordwestdeutsche Kraftwerke. A public licensing hearing was quickly scheduled, and as was the case at both Wyhl as well as Seabrook, representatives of the Christian Democratic Union-led state government in Kiel grossly manipulated the proceedings in order to limit the public's participation in the hearing. In response, the BBU issued a statement announcing that the construction site would be nonviolently occupied following the issuance of the construction permit.<sup>228</sup>

The hope was to replicate the type of nonviolent, populist resistance that developed along the Rhine, but Prime Minister Gerhard Stoltenberg and the state had different plans. Desperate to avoid another Wyhl, on October 30, 1976, Minister Stoltenberg ordered a police battalion to secure the construction site the night before the planned demonstration. The infamous coup soon became known as the Nacht and Nebel Aktion (Night and Fog Action) in which the construction site was hastily cleared and secured by a steel fence. The next day, on October 31, 1976, between 6,000 and 7,000 demonstrators arrived at the construction site to participate in a planned peaceful demonstration only to find that the police had fenced it off. The action was interpreted as a unilateral and authoritative move by the state. The demonstrators who had traveled to Brokdorf to protest in peace were left stunned by the state's response. As a spokesperson

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<sup>228</sup> Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 345-353; Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*, 101-109.

for the BBU explained, “We wanted to negotiate with the state government. We would have even waited for a court decision, and we were prepared to accept a negative outcome without protest. But a construction start under the cover of night, brutal police operations even against peaceful demonstrators, this is simply too much to take.”<sup>229</sup>

News of the Nacht and Nebel Aktion travelled quickly and spread to the nearby urban centers of Hannover and Berlin. Over the course of the 1970s, many young radicals not old enough to have participated in the APO and student movements of the late 1960s gravitated towards Communist groups. Upon receiving word of the state’s actions taken against the nuclear opposition in Brokdorf, these groups seized the opportunity to launch their own challenge to the state. Within two weeks of the Nacht and Nebel Aktion, nearly 20,000 urban radicals descended on Brokdorf, and the total number of protestors gathered at the construction site grew to 30,000. The local BBU in Brokdorf leading the opposition initially welcomed the Communist groups to the protest because of the strength in numbers they brought. As had been previously demonstrated at Wyhl, one of the keys to success for the nonviolent and civil disobedience-based site occupation there was the nuclear opposition’s ability to overwhelm the state’s police presence. It was thought the Communist groups would help the resistance in Brokdorf to do the same, but that quickly proved not to be the case. Just as it would later unfold at Seabrook with the arrival of the Hard Clams, the urban radicals that joined the protest at Brokdorf after the Nacht and Nebel Aktion did not come to demonstrate in peace but rather they sought a direct confrontation with the state.

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<sup>229</sup> Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 345-353; Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*, 101-109.

On November 13, 1976, the nuclear opposition's commitment to nonviolence and civil disobedience was broken after a group of radicals attacked the steel fence that had been erected to protect the construction site. Armed with metal pipes, garden tools, and other makeshift weapons, the radicals assaulted the fence in attempt to force their entry onto the construction grounds. The state's response was swift and indiscriminate. Using helicopters and assault vehicles, riot police fired tear gas at all protestors regardless of whether or not they participated in any of the demolition of the steel fence surrounding the construction site. The consequences of the violent clash were far reaching.<sup>230</sup>

The state responded in the same authoritative manner that prompted the formation of the APO during the student movements of the late 1960s. All communication was cutoff between authorities in both Hannover and Bonn, and the relationship between the nuclear opposition and the state quickly disintegrated. While negotiations over a peaceful resolution to the standoff at Brokdorf were abandoned, factions within the nuclear opposition emerged. On the one hand, members of the local BBU resented the urban radicals for exploiting the nuclear debate at Brokdorf and using violence in an attempt to justify their class struggle-based ideology. On the other hand, the Communist groups lamented the nuclear opposition's commitment to nonviolence and unwillingness to participate in an even larger confrontation with the state.

In December of 1976, it briefly appeared that any additional violence and a further escalation of tensions could be averted after a local state court issued an injunction ordering a cease to construction at Brokdorf. However, the order was ignored

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<sup>230</sup> Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*, 101-109.

by the Communist groups and urban radicals who joined the nuclear opposition after the Nacht and Nebel Aktion. Despite the injunction, these radicals returned to the proposed construction site and continued to pursue a confrontation with local police.<sup>231</sup>

The image of peaceful protestors against the riot police and fire hoses of the state at Wyhl garnered the antinuclear movement respect and sympathy from the general public as a genuine populist movement. At Brokdorf, those images were replaced by scenes of young, militant radicals engaging in violent and destructive clashes with the state. For many, it opened old wounds associated with the APO and the turbulent student movements of the late 1960s. Fear began to permeate the public's perception of the nuclear opposition, and what was a revered populist movement immediately following Wyhl had alienated itself from both the state and public alike as a result of the Communists groups at Brokdorf. However, it would continue to get worse for the nuclear opposition, when by the end of the spring of 1977, it was criminalized.

In March of 1977, more than 30,000 demonstrators descended on Lower Saxony and the town of Grondhe to oppose a planned 1400 megawatt nuclear plant to be built along the Weser River near the small village. On March 19, 1977, a violent confrontation far greater and more dangerous than the previous one at Brokdorf between radicals from the Communist groups and the police broke out. The protestors used chainsaws and blowtorches to attack the steel fenced surrounding the construction site, and the state responded with fire hoses, teargas, batons, and riot police. More than 800 people were left injured, and over 100 arrests were made with charges ranging from resisting arrest to

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<sup>231</sup> Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 345-353; Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*, 101-109.

attempted murder. President Ernst Albrecht of the Christian Democratic Union-led state government in Hannover accused the demonstrators of being “terrorists,” and the timing was damning for the antinuclear movement.<sup>232</sup>

The following month the infamous Deutscher Herbst (German Autumn) began in West Germany led by the Rote Armee Fraktion (Red Army Faction) which was a group of leftwing extremists and Communists. The German Autumn was a terror campaign implemented by the Red Army Faction between April and October of 1977 that included the kidnapping and murder of industrialist Hanns Martin Schleyer; the hijacking of the Lufthansa airplane “Landshut” by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine; the assassination of West Germany Attorney General Siegfried Buback; and the failed kidnapping and murder of the prominent banker Jürgen Ponto. As a result, President Albrecht’s accusation that the radicals at Grondhe were terrorists became even more serious against the backdrop of the events comprising the German Autumn. The nuclear opposition was now confronted with the full criminalization of the antinuclear movement.<sup>233</sup>

### The Clamshell Alliance Split Wide Open

On April 30, 1977, shortly after the Battle of Seabrook, the Hard Clams joined the Clamshell Alliance. Drawn by the media attention afforded to the Clamshell Alliance’s most recent demonstration in Seabrook and inspired by the actions of their Communist

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<sup>232</sup> Ibid.

<sup>233</sup> Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 345-353; Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*, 101-109.

counterparts in West Germany, the Hard Clams formed their own affinity groups and began lobbying the membership of the alliance to escalate the conflict over nuclear power in Seabrook. The debate over a fourth occupation of Seabrook Station continued throughout the summer, leading to the philosophical split that divided the group by the fall of 1977. The stalemate ended the following November after the organization finally reached a consensus during the Clamshell Congress on staging a fourth site occupation of Seabrook Station on June 24, 1978.<sup>234</sup>

Word of a planned fourth occupation quickly reached the governor's office in Manchester where Meldrim Thomson was still seething over the Battle of Seabrook. Despite his claims of victory over the Clams and repeated assurances that Seabrook Station would be built, the already cash-strapped state was having to spend \$50,000 per day for the detention of the Clams arrested during the Battle of Seabrook. The cost of Governor Thomson's war with the Clamshell Alliance and the financial burden that it forced upon citizens of New Hampshire quickly became the primary focus for the local media coverage. Nationally, the Clams inspired the formation of a number of offshoot organizations stretching from the Shell Alliance in New York to the Abalone Alliance in California. After the Battle of Seabrook, the national spotlight on the Clamshell Alliance and the local financial pressures facing the state were too much for Governor Thomson to handle. Thus, when news of the Clamshell Alliance's plans to stage a fourth site

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<sup>234</sup> Cushing, "The Clamshell Divided – The Peril of Disunity and Disarray," 1-22.

occupation of Seabrook Station reached Manchester, Governor Thomson resorted to what can best be characterized as extreme and authoritative measures.<sup>235</sup>

First, Governor Thomson ordered a steel fence to be erected around the perimeter of the construction site for Seabrook Station. Thomson wanted to ensure that the site was protected from any further occupations by the Clamshell Alliance. This paralleled what the Christian Democratic Union-led state government in West Germany did during the Nacht and Nebel Aktion at Brokdorf in the fall of 1976. Given the alliance's commitment to nonviolence, the steel fence represented an act of aggression by Governor Thomson, and it also presented the Clams with the dilemma of deciding whether or not cutting the steel fence constituted a form of violence. If so, then a fourth site occupation was no longer a possibility, but the Hard Clams' presence further complicated the question. They did not share the organization's commitment to nonviolence and were more than willing to cut through the steel fence.

In response, the second extreme measure Governor Thomson took was to classify any attempt to cut through the steel fence protecting the Seabrook Station construction site as a threat to the security of the state. Thomson organized the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) police to protect Seabrook Station and issued a public warning that the state would not hesitate to use water hoses, dogs, and martial law. "We will use whatever force options we have," he threatened, "from nothing to bullets," and proceeded to authorize the state police to use live ammunition against peaceful protestors in order to protect the Seabrook Station construction site. This reflected not only the level of

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<sup>235</sup> Samuel Lovejoy, Interview by David C. Smith; Renny Cushing, Interview by David C. Smith.

institutionalization of nuclear power in New Hampshire but also Thomson's fears that the Action Faction might attempt to escalate the level of violence at Seabrook just as the Red Army Faction indirectly did following the clash between protestors and the state at Grondhe.

The debate over nuclear power in Seabrook did not develop in a vacuum independent of what was transpiring in West Germany at the time. Brokdorf, Grondhe, and the German Autumn undoubtedly caused Governor Thomson to adopt more extreme measures in his attempt to control the opposition to Seabrook Station, and given the Hard Clams admiration of the Red Army Faction in West Germany, the logic behind Thomson's action was understandable. However, fears related to a potential link between the German Autumn and the ongoing debate over Seabrook Station extended beyond just the governor's office in Manchester. Once Governor Thomson ordered the SWAT police to protect Seabrook Station from protestors by using all necessary means, local residents began to fear that the type of violent clashes that occurred between protestors and police in Brokdorf and Grondhe would soon develop in Seabrook as well. As a result, the threat of violence caused local residents to pull their support for the Clamshell Alliance. Despite the national platform gained by the organization following the Battle of Seabrook, the Clamshell Alliance was a people's movement, and without the support of locals, the organization's very survival was now at risk.<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>236</sup> Cushing, "The Clamshell Divided – The Peril of Disunity and Disarray," 1-22.; Robert Surbrug, Jr. *Beyond Vietnam*, 82.



By the spring of 1978, neither the core membership of the Clamshell Alliance nor Governor Thomson wanted a fourth site occupation of Seabrook Station. The Clams feared the complete loss of its local support base in Seabrook whereas the governor was afraid that the Hard Clams that joined the organization the previous summer following the Battle of Seabrook would attempt to pursue the same type of violent confrontation that their German counterparts did beginning at Brokdorf and more recently in Grondhe. The Hard Clams remained persistent in pursuing a confrontation at Seabrook that both the Clamshell Alliance and the state did not want. With tensions nearing a boiling point, discussions about a possible compromise were initiated by the state. With Governor Thomson's support, New Hampshire Attorney General Thomas Rath approached the thirteen members of the Clamshell Coordinating Committee about a possible deal. The committee was comprised of Sam Lovejoy, Guy Chichester, and Renny Cushing among others, and Rath's offer consisted of allowing the Clamshell Alliance to stage a three day alternative energy fair on eighteen acres around Seabrook Station in exchange for the Clams' word that they would not attempt to reoccupy the construction site and leave peacefully at the end of the third day. The compromise would become known as the Rath Proposal, and the organizational debate over whether or not to accept the state's offer to hold a so-called "Legal rally" soon split the Clamshell Alliance wide open.<sup>237</sup>

Speaking for the core membership, Harvey Wasserman stated that the Clamshell Alliance knew that "the Rath Proposal was clearly an attempt at cooptation" by the state.

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<sup>237</sup> Harvey Wasserman, Interview by David C. Smith; Samuel Lovejoy, Interview by David C. Smith; Renny Cushing, Interview by David C. Smith; Cushing, "The Clamshell Divided – The Peril of Disunity and Disarray 1-22.;" Robert Surbrug, Jr. *Beyond Vietnam*, 82-86.

Yet, the majority of Clams believed accepting the deal provided a great opportunity to change the negative perception of the organization that had developed amongst the general public throughout the fall of 1977. The Rath Proposal offered the Clamshell Alliance a chance to reaffirm its commitment to nonviolence and calm residents' concerns over the nuclear power debate in Seabrook. However, the Hard Clams did not share this view. They believed that the Rath Proposal was nothing more than a clear attempt by the state to contain the growing militancy of the nuclear opposition at Seabrook. While that was undoubtedly the case, the Hard Clams failed to see the positives, such as the amount of goodwill that the organization stood to gain, associated with the Rath Proposal.<sup>238</sup>

As it stood, the Hard Clams still constituted the vocal minority within the Clamshell Alliance, and although a consensus was not reached, the Clamshell Coordinating Committee decided to accept the state's offer. A public statement was released shortly thereafter in which the organization announced, "The Clamshell has decided to hold a completely legal action and not transgress the fenced in construction area. Anyone who does so is not a member of the Clamshell Alliance." The committee's decision to accept the Rath Proposal caused immediate outrage within the organization. The Hard Clams and some conservative core members of the organization initially opposed the decision to accept the Rath Proposal for two reasons. First, the committee's unilateral decision was in violation of the Clamshell Alliance's organizational structure in which all actions and decisions were to be strictly through group consensus, and second,

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<sup>238</sup> Harvey Wasserman, Interview by David C. Smith; Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 82-86.

the committee's acceptance of the Rath Proposal was problematic because it gave the appearance that they were the appointed leaders for the Clamshell Alliance when in fact the organization was supposed to be devoid of any such hierarchy. Despite some angst, the majority of the Clamshell Alliance's core membership eventually agreed with the committee's reasoning to accept that Rath Proposal.<sup>239</sup>

The Hard Clams, on the other hand, disagreed. They did not accept the rationale that another alternative energy fair was necessary to restore local faith and support in the Clamshell Alliance. Instead, the Hard Clams argued that local support should not be the determining factor influencing the organization's decision making because Seabrook had become a national symbol for the fight against nuclear power. Even though they had only recently joined the Clamshell Alliance and did not participate in any of the organization's first three site occupations of Seabrook Station, the Hard Clams believed that they represented the national movement, and therefore, despite being a vocal minority within the Clamshell Alliance, insisted their voice be given equal consideration. The demand was nothing short of audacious and demonstrated that the Hard Clams lacked a full understanding of not only the growth of the antinuclear movement across the United States after the Battle of Seabrook but also the Clamshell Alliance as an organization.<sup>240</sup>

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<sup>239</sup> Harvey Wasserman, Interview by David C. Smith; Renny Cushing, Interview by David C. Smith; Cushing, "The Clamshell Divided – The Peril of Disunity and Disarray," 1-22; Robert Surbrug, Jr. *Beyond Vietnam*, 82.

<sup>240</sup> Harvey Wasserman, Interview by David C. Smith; Renny Cushing, Interview by David C. Smith; Cushing, "The Clamshell Divided – The Peril of Disunity and Disarray," 1-22; Robert Surbrug, Jr. *Beyond Vietnam*, 82.

Since its inception, the Clamshell Alliance was always a local movement. It grew out of the conservation efforts of the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League to preserve the Hampton Harbor as well as the later controversies surrounding eminent domain and home rule. Nuclear power was an international issue, though, and the inspiration behind the Clamshell Alliance's site occupations of Seabrook Station was the model that emanated from along the Rhine in West Germany. Like Wyhl, the Clamshell Alliance represented a local response to the larger issue that was the accelerated growth of nuclear power throughout the Atlantic World during the 1970s. The Clamshell Alliance was not going to turn its back on Seabrook and risk alienating its local support base in order to pursue the Hard Clams' vision of the national movement because the organization's focus was not on stopping nuclear power nationally but rather it was only on stopping the construction of Seabrook Station. By acting locally and opposing nuclear power in Seabrook, the Clamshell Alliance could also establish a precedent that other activists throughout the United States could use to fight nuclear power in their local communities. That was how the Alliance Movement developed nationally after the Battle of Seabrook and previously how the Clamshell Alliance formed as a result of the international diffusion of the protest at Wyhl.

The Hard Clams did not share the Clamshell Alliance's organizational commitment to the Seabrook community and the local debate over nuclear power, and in large part, that was due to the fact that confronting the state, rather than stopping nuclear power, was the primary agenda of the Hard Clams. As a result, the great divide between the core membership of the Clamshell Alliance and the Hard Clams grew even wider

throughout the spring of 1978. A definitive line separating urban versus rural Clams was drawn with Hard Clams comprising the urban minority that pushed for an escalated and more aggressive confrontation with the state and the core membership of the Clamshell Alliance forming the rural majority of the organization that remained committed to nonviolence and the protest in Seabrook. Entering the summer of 1978, the Clamshell Alliance was severely divided and internally conflicted but there was still an active dialogue between the organization's urban and rural contingencies concerning the Rath Proposal.

The Hard Clams continued to advocate militant action and the rejection of the Rath Proposal for a rally. They encouraged the organization to look once again to their German counterparts for inspiration. Focusing on Brokdorf and Grondhe, the Hard Clams argued that the Communist radicals that joined the nuclear opposition in West Germany after Wyhl "had made fence cutting an art form which Americans would be wise to emulate." They correctly argued that one of key reasons for the success of the site occupation at Wyhl was the sheer numbers of antinuclear protestors compared to the state's overmatched police presence, which was something that the Clamshell Alliance might be able to now replicate. They contended that as a result of the Battle of Seabrook and the national spotlight now placed on the fight over nuclear power in New England that the Clamshell Alliance's membership was at its peak, and thus, the time was right to go on the offensive at Seabrook.<sup>241</sup>

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<sup>241</sup> Cushing, "The Clamshell Divided – The Peril of Disunity and Disarray," 1-22.; Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 82-87.

There was a problem with the Hard Clams' argument, though. As Harvey Wasserman pointed out, the maximum number of protestors that the Clamshell Alliance could bus into Seabrook was somewhere between 3,000 and 4,000 fully-trained protestors from across New England. This paled in comparison to the turnouts in Wyhl and Brokdorf. As a result, despite the growth of the Clamshell Alliance, they still lacked the numbers needed to force a long-term site occupation like the one established at Wyhl. In addition, given Seabrook residents' concerns over the potentially escalating violence between the Clamshell Alliance and Governor Thomson, would limit their participation and further reduce numbers. "As at Wyhl, actions must spring from the local community," Wasserman argued, "No land, no local support – no occupation."<sup>242</sup>

As the Alternative Energy Fair neared, the internal dialogue between Hard Clams and the core membership of the Clamshell Alliance continued to disintegrate, plunging the organization into an even greater state of disarray. This was exactly what Governor Thomson hoped for when originally devising the Rath Proposal. The governor's ulterior motive in agreeing to the Rath Proposal was to further divide the Clamshell Alliance internally over the issue of direct action. Thomson's hope was that the Clamshell Alliance would be so riddled by infighting that the planned legal rally would be a complete public disaster for the organization. The core Clams knew that this was the state's true objective, but as Wasserman stated, "They made us a middle-ground offer that became very hard to refuse. If we refused a peaceful solution, we'd appear unreasonable and lose the credibility we gained last year. If we accepted, it would look

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<sup>242</sup> Harvey Wasserman, Interview by David C. Smith; Surbrug, Jr. *Beyond Vietnam*, 86.

like we're growing soft." The Rath Proposal left the Clamshell Alliance in a no-win situation and ultimately split the organization wide open, pitting Clams against one another over the direction of the organization and its ideological commitment to nonviolence.<sup>243</sup>

### The Legal Rally and an Opportunity Missed

The legal rally was called the Seabrook Alternative Energy Fair, and the event was held the weekend of June 23 to June 1978. The organization sought a degree of symmetry with its October 1976 program of the same name, and the initiative proved to be successful. More than 20,000 travelled to Seabrook and attended the three day event that featured booths and exhibitions on solar, wind, and alternative energy. Overall, the purpose of the second Alternative Energy Fair for the Clamshell Alliance was not only to peacefully continue its protest of Seabrook Station but also present available alternatives to nuclear power.<sup>244</sup>

The Clamshell Alliance also devoted ample space to the growing local controversy over the new state law for CWIP (Construction Work in Progress). Passed after the Battle of Seabrook, CWIP laws were an effort by Governor Thomson and the state to make up the mounting construction costs for Seabrook Station by charging existing customers a surcharge for electricity. As Renny Cushing explained, the CWIP

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<sup>243</sup> Cushing, "The Clamshell Divided – The Peril of Disunity and Disarray," 1-22.; Harvey Wasserman, Interview by David C. Smith; Surbrug, Jr. *Beyond Vietnam*, 86.

<sup>244</sup> Cushing, "The Clamshell Divided – The Peril of Disunity and Disarray" 14-15; Robert Surbrug, Jr. *Beyond Vietnam*, 87.

law “made people involuntarily loan the utility money to build a plant without having a say of whether it should built or not.” When it was not preoccupied with its own internal power struggle, the Clamshell Alliance spent most of the fall of 1977 and the spring of 1978 fighting the CWIP law. It was a focus at the Alternative Energy Fair, because like eminent domain, home rule, and the conservation of the Hampton Harbor, it was a topic that drew people to the debate over nuclear power.<sup>245</sup>

Yet, the primary draw for most of the 20,000 visitors to the Alternative Energy Fair likely had little to do with nuclear power or issues like the CWIP law. Instead, the Clamshell Alliance was so successful in large part because the Clams secured several mainstream entertainers including musical acts Pete Seeger, Arlo Guthrie, and Jackson Browne to headline the event. Undoubtedly, the musical act drew some people who were previously not engaged in the conversation about nuclear power in Seabrook. For this reason alone, the Alternative Energy Fair could be deemed a success for the Clamshell Alliance, and for the most part, the Hard Clams caused no major disturbances. The goodwill that the organization sought to earn back from the locals of Seabrook was achieved, and in an effort to ensure that the fight against Governor Thomson and Public Service Company was not overlooked, the Clamshell Alliance also organized a pair of complimentary demonstrations that coincided with the legal rally in Seabrook.<sup>246</sup>

On June 24, 1978, following the first day of the Alternative Energy Fair, the Clams conducted a march in front of the federal court house in Manchester that drew

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<sup>245</sup> Renny Cushing, Interview by David C. Smith.

<sup>246</sup> Cushing, “The Clamshell Divided – The Peril of Disunity and Disarray,” 14-15; Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 87.



3,000 people. The march coincided with a round of licensing hearings that were being conducted there between Public Service Company and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and the march caught representatives of Public Service Company off guard because they assumed that the Clams would have devoted all of their resources to the legal rally in Seabrook. Meanwhile, in Washington, D.C., a group of Clams organized a vigil in front of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's headquarters that drew 300 people. A "die-in" was staged in which 56 protestors symbolically lay dead on the steps leading to the building's front entrance before being arrested and charged with disorderly conduct.<sup>247</sup>

As a result of the Alternative Energy Fair and the supporting demonstrations in Manchester, New Hampshire and Washington, D.C., the Nuclear Regulatory Commission suspended Public Service Company's construction license for Seabrook Station, and it also cost Governor Thomson to lose his re-election bid the following November. The Clamshell Alliance's attention to the CWIP issue during the Alternative Energy Fair helped launch the gubernatorial campaign of Hugh Allen. He would defeat Meldrim Thomson in November by promising to prevent Public Service Company from recovering the costs of constructing Seabrook Station from the ratepayers until the project was finished, and he would deliver on that promise a year later after the Anti-Construction Work in Progress law. Cushing recalled that once the CWIP law was repealed, "the economics for Seabrook Station really came unraveled."<sup>248</sup>

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<sup>247</sup> Ibid.

<sup>248</sup> Cushing, "The Clamshell Divided – The Peril of Disunity and Disarray," Manuscript Collection, Clamshell Alliance Papers, 1976-1988, Box 12, Folder 2-3, p. 14-15; Robert Surbrug, Jr. *Beyond Vietnam*, 87.

Cushing firmly believed that Seabrook Station should have been stopped as a result of the Alternative Energy Fair and that a true opportunity was missed. Meldrim Thomson was the biggest proponent of Seabrook Station and nuclear power in New Hampshire. From the governor's office in Manchester, he used his position and authority to pressure the Site Evaluation Committee into approving Public Service Company's site license. He ordered petitions printed and placed at checkout counters of area liquor stores in attempt shape public opinion on nuclear power. Thomson authorized the use of eminent domain to take land from Seabrook property owners that was needed for the nuclear plant. He thumbed his nose at New Hampshire's tradition of home rule and threw out the voter referendum against Seabrook Station. Thomson interfered with the citizen intervention and attempted to divide the Clamshell Alliance. Finally, he enacted the CWIP law which was designed to help Public Service Company pay for Seabrook Station by passing the burden onto consumers. He was the driving force behind Seabrook Station since winning the governor's office in 1974. Thomson's removal from office in addition to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's suspension of Public Service Company's construction license and the repealing of the CWIP law led Cushing and other Clams to conclude that the Seabrook Station was finished after 1978.<sup>249</sup>

But, Seabrook Station did not die after the Alternative Energy Fair. Despite the subsequent loss of Meldrim Thomson, Public Service Company's construction license, and the key finances needed to pay for the escalating costs of construction, the project continued. Seabrook Station proved to be highly resilient, and Cushing alleged that the

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<sup>249</sup> Renny Cushing, Interview by David C. Smith.

nuclear opposition, in particularly the Hard Clams, were to blame. As Cushing explained, “People became fixated on the site. There were a couple times Seabrook should have been completely stopped, but that didn’t happen in part because people could not shift onto the economics. The fact that after June 24, 1978 Seabrook was without a license and on the ropes economically, but people became fixated on the site instead of doing political organizing and thinking long-term strategically. They played right into the hands of the nuclear industry.”<sup>250</sup>

What Cushing was alluding to was the fact that the Hard Clams remained fixated on conducting a site occupation of Seabrook Station and having a confrontation with the state even though the project was in critical condition after the Alternative Energy Fair. They also could not get past the circumstances in which the legal rally came about after the Coordinating Committee accepted the Rath Proposal on behalf of the entire Clamshell Alliance rather than allowing the different affinity groups to reach a consensus. The fact of the matter was the Hard Clams were not interested in stopping Seabrook Station. Their motivation for joining the Clamshell Alliance was to exploit the nuclear debate in Seabrook in order to incite the type of confrontation with the state that occurred in West Germany as a result of the Communists groups’ entrance into the antinuclear movement after Wyhl. In light of the controversy surrounding the CWIP law and with a new governor taking over in Manchester, the nuclear opposition in Seabrook likely possessed the public support needed to cancel Seabrook Station in the wake of the Alternative Energy Fair. Yet, because of the Hard Clams’ determination to transform Seabrook into

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<sup>250</sup> Renny Cushing, Interview by David C. Smith.

the type of violent and ideological class-driven conflicts that unfolded at Brokdorf and Grondhe, the infighting that hamstrung the Clamshell Alliance after the Battle of Seabrook continued to plague the organization following the legal rally.

After the Alternative Energy Fair, the Clamshell Alliance spent the fall of 1978 still arguing about the legal rally and debating whether or not to attempt another site occupation of Seabrook Station. At the January 1979 Clamshell Congress at Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts the agenda focused on two primary issues. One was the question of whether or not majority rule should replace consensus building in deciding organizational strategies. The second was reviewing the plans for a blockade against the impending delivery of the reactor vessel for Seabrook Station. The Clams failed to make any progress on either issue because of the same urban versus rural divide within the Clamshell Alliance that developed after the Battle of Seabrook. While the infighting continued, Public Service Company moved forward with the construction of the nuclear plant.<sup>251</sup>

Even though the construction license for Seabrook Station was suspended by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission following the Alternative Energy Fair, the utility was able to proceed with its building plans because of a prior authorization granted by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to allow work to continue on the nuclear plant while the construction license was still be decided. As a result, with the Clamshell Alliance preoccupied with its own internal turmoil, Public Service Company was able to surprise

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<sup>251</sup> Cushing, "The Clamshell Divided – The Peril of Disunity and Disarray," 33; Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 90.

the nuclear opposition with the arrival of a different reactor vessel from the one that the Clams had been tracking in the Hampton Falls Harbor. On March 9, 1979, the Clams scrambled to organize an emergency blockade of the reactor pressure vessel in which 300 Clams set up a series of human road blocks along the route to the Seabrook construction site. Police arrived and dragged 180 of the protestors off to jail where they were charged with civil disobedience, disorderly conduct, and resisting arrest.<sup>252</sup>

Immediately following the attempted blockage of the reactor vessel, the Clamshell Alliance convened a second Congress for 1979 to be held in Worcester, Massachusetts. This time the agenda focused on a single issue which was the organization's next planned action against Seabrook Station and agreed to replace the consensus seeking decision making process with majority rule. As expected, the Hard Clams pushed for another site occupation, but they remained the vocal minority within the Clamshell Alliance. As an organization, the majority decision was to conduct another Alternative Energy Fair for July 21, 1979. These events had been the most successful for the Clamshell Alliance in terms of public response and participation, which was what the organization ultimately needed in order to defeat Seabrook Station for good.<sup>253</sup>

The Hard Clams responded by walking out on the Clamshell Congress and formed an offshoot organization from the Clamshell Alliance called the Clams for Direct Action at Seabrook (CDAS). The CDAS was led by Harvey Halpern, one of the urban

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<sup>252</sup> Renny Cushing, Interview by David Smith; Cushing, "The Clamshell Divided – The Peril of Disunity and Disarray," 33; Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 90.

<sup>253</sup> Cushing, "The Clamshell Divided – The Peril of Disunity and Disarray," Manuscript Collection, Clamshell Alliance Papers, 1976-1988, Box 12, Folder 2-3, p. 33; Robert Surbrug, Jr. *Beyond Vietnam*, p. 90.

radicals that originally joined the Clamshell Alliance following the Battle of Seabrook, and the group drew the overwhelming majority of its support from college students in the Boston, Amherst, and Providence areas. The CDAS worked independently from the Clamshell Alliance, and their goal was to do what the Clamshell would not, which was to stage a fourth site occupation of Seabrook Station. However, shortly after the formation of the CDAS, another watershed moment occurred in the history of nuclear power and the antinuclear movement in the Atlantic World. On March 28, 1979, the Unit 2 reactor in the nuclear power plant on Three Mile Island just outside Harrisburg, Pennsylvania suffered a partial core meltdown and gravely wounded the nuclear industry in the Atlantic World. At the same time, Three Mile Island transformed the antinuclear movement globally and helped the nuclear opposition reclaim the momentum that was lost over the course of tumultuous year of 1977.<sup>254</sup>

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<sup>254</sup> Ibid.

## Chapter 8

### Three Mile Island, Vindication, and the Institutionalization of the Antinuclear Movement

On March 28, 1979, the Three Mile Island Nuclear Generating Station just outside Harrisburg, Pennsylvania suffered a partial meltdown of its nuclear reactor core resulting in the emergency evacuation of more than 100,000 people from the surrounding area.

The nuclear disaster at Three Mile Island represented one of four redefining moments in the development of the antinuclear movement in the Atlantic World during the 1970s, alongside the Arab-Israeli War and subsequent Energy Crisis of 1973, the site occupation and the emergence of the direct action-based protest at the site occupation at Wyhl, and the founding of the Clamshell Alliance. Each event served as a transformational moment both in the development of the nuclear industry and the expansion of the nuclear opposition. In the case of Three Mile Island, almost overnight, the antinuclear movement was transformed from a fledgling and partially ostracized campaign overall into a social phenomenon that thrust the nuclear debate into mainstream society.

Three Mile Island represented a watershed moment for the antinuclear movement. After more than twenty-five years dating back to the creation of the nuclear industry through the Eisenhower administration's Atoms for Peace program, the nuclear opposition had reached the mountaintop. In the case of the Clamshell Alliance, what began over a picnic table in the backyard of Guy Chichester's Rye, New Hampshire home now drew over 200,000 people to New York's Central Park after Three Mile Island, and in West Germany, what originated as the opposition of a few vintners in Breisach had grown into mass demonstrations of more than 100,000 in major cities like

Bonn and Hannover. Three Mile Island was the moment of vindication and legitimization for the antinuclear movement. On an international level, there was no higher mountaintop than what was reached in the immediate aftermath of Three Mile Island in terms of a truly trans-Atlantic, unified opposition to nuclear power. From Washington, D.C. to Bonn, chants of “We all live in Harrisburg” dominated rallies against nuclear power. However, the level of unity displayed by the antinuclear movement in the Atlantic World after Three Mile Island proved to be fleeting.<sup>255</sup>

In the months following Three Mile Island, as the debate over nuclear power became more mainstream, organizations like the Clamshell Alliance in Seabrook and the Gorleben Citizen Group in West Germany were increasingly marginalized. The antinuclear movement faded from the public sphere after Three Mile Island and became institutionalized through the emergence of the Green Party in West Germany and Massachusetts liberals in New England. Ultimately, Three Mile Island not only vindicated the antinuclear movement in the Atlantic World but it also signaled the movement’s end. The fight against nuclear power returned to the pre-Wyhl institutional avenues and its place in social activist politics was relinquished to the peace movement and new concerns over the Cold War and nuclear weapons.

This chapter details the impact of Three Mile Island on the antinuclear movement in the Atlantic World. The narrative begins with the rebirth of the Left at Gorleben during the winter of 1978. The previous spring, violent clashes between urban radicals,

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<sup>255</sup> Walter C. Patterson, “Harrisburg ist überal,” *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* (June 1979) Vol. 35, No. 6, 9-10.



Communist groups, and the police at Grohnde coupled with the terrorist actions of the Red Army Faction during the German Autumn resulted in the criminalization not just of the antinuclear movement but really all social activism in West Germany. Thus, before the German arm of the antinuclear movement could be vindicated through Three Mile Island, the Left needed to repair its image and restore the place of social protest in the debate over nuclear power in West Germany. At Seabrook, while the rebirth of the Left was unfolding at Gorleben, the debate over nonviolence and direct action between Hard Clams and the core membership of the Clamshell Alliance caused the organization to stagnate. Ironically, it was the Hard Clams' persistence at replicating the behavior and actions of Communists and urban radicals at Brokdorf and Grohnde, the very same protests from which the Left in West Germany was trying to recover, that had thrown the Clamshell Alliance into persistent state of flux. For a moment, Three Mile Island remedied the internal problems of the antinuclear movement, but by the fall of 1979, the moment was gone and so too was the antinuclear movement.

#### “Flowers, No Helmets” and the Rebirth of the Left

In West Germany, the Three Mile Island nuclear accident coincided with rebirth of the Left through an ongoing protest against a proposed nuclear waste reprocessing facility in Gorleben. Following the breakdown of the nuclear opposition at Grohnde and the subsequent criminalization of the antinuclear movement as a result, the Left once again found itself politically isolated and excluded. Beginning in the winter of 1978, the Left underwent a political transformation that not only led to rebirth of social activism in

West Germany but also the revival of the spirit Wyhl which originally inspired the antinuclear movement in the first place. At Gorleben, the Left reinvented itself and reclaimed the fight over nuclear power in West Germany, wresting it away from the Communists and urban radical who coopted the movement at Brokdorf and more damagingly at Grohnde.

In February of 1977, the state government in Hannover announced plans to build a nuclear waste reprocessing facility in Gorleben, a small town along the Elbe River in the Wendland region of Lower Saxony. From the outset, the project was also a top priority for the Social Democratic Party-led government in Bonn and carried as much significance to the future success of the nuclear industry in West Germany as Wyhl. Whereas the state hoped Wyhl would help launch commercial nuclear power and its Model Germany program, Gorleben stood to close the nuclear fuel cycle by answering the question of what to do with the nuclear waste produced by the power plants that were to fuel West Germany's recovery in the wake of the Energy Crisis of 1973. Gorleben was initially believed to be an excellent site selection because of the town's conservative background, rural location, and geographic isolation along the country's border with East Germany. Because of these factors, the state felt that it was unlikely Gorleben residents would offer much resistance to the project, and without a local support base, any opposition that was sure to come from the surrounding region would struggle to take hold. Initially, the state was correct.<sup>256</sup>

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<sup>256</sup> Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 345-353; Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*, 109-116; Patterson, "Harrisburg ist überal," 9-10.

The Gorleben project was just as significant for the nuclear opposition in West Germany as it was for the government in Bonn. If the nuclear opposition successfully prevented the nuclear waste reprocessing plant from being built, then an unofficial moratorium on nuclear power would be established with no solution for the nuclear waste produced by the power plants that were to drive Model Germany. The problem for the antinuclear movement though was that the state government's original announcement concerning Gorleben coincided with the unfolding confrontation between Communist groups and the state at Gronhde as well as the Red Army Faction's wave of terror during the German Autumn. When the Gorleben Citizen Group formed in March of 1977 to lead the opposition to the proposed reprocessing plant, there was no response from local residents. The criminalization of the nuclear opposition occurred as a direct result of Gronhde, but its impact on the antinuclear movement was first felt over 200 kilometers away at Gorleben. In Hannover, Ernst Albrecht's characterization of the nuclear opposition as terrorists, the violence demonstrated by Communist groups at Gronhde, and the Red Army Faction's domination of national headlines in West Germany combined to render the antinuclear movement persona non grata in Gorleben deep into the fall of 1977.<sup>257</sup>

The nuclear opposition found itself in an unfamiliar position at Gorleben. At Wyhl, the site occupation developed as a genuine populist movement. Drawn by the spectacle and the buzz spread by media coverage of the demonstration, protestors arrived by the thousands from West Germany's urban centers and assimilated with the

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<sup>257</sup> Ibid.

established commitment to nonviolence and civil disobedience. That was not the case at Brokdorf where Communists groups overwhelmed the nuclear opposition and pursued a confrontation with the state. At Gronhde, the situation worsened, and the commitment to nonviolence and civil disobedience established at Wyhl was replaced by chainsaws and blowtorches. Finally, at Gorleben, for the first time since the antinuclear movement formed at Wyhl there was no reaction from the local community. The entire fight against nuclear power in West Germany had reset, and the challenge facing the Gorleben Citizen Group was to make the nuclear debate matter again, which was something that had not been a question since prior to Badenwerk's original selection of Breisach in 1972 as the starting point for German nuclear industry.<sup>258</sup>

Gorleben arose at a time of tremendous social change for the Left in West Germany. In January of 1978, a meeting was organized at the Technical University in West Berlin where more than 20,000 radicals and members of West Germany's Left met to discuss the current political climate of the nation. The meeting in West Berlin was called the Tunix Treffen, and its primary purpose was to redefine social activism and reestablish the left in West Germany. Brokdorf, Gronhde, and the events of the German Autumn greatly stigmatized social activism and the politics of the Left. The criminalization of the antinuclear movement over the course of 1977 closed the last remaining political outlet for the Left, and thus, the Tunix meeting was called to reassess the place of social activism in West Germany's current political system.<sup>259</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 345-353; Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*: 109-116.

<sup>259</sup> Sabine Von Dirke, *All Power to the Imagination: The West German Counterculture from the Student Movement to the Greens*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 105-122.

This was not the first time members of the Left found themselves on the outside looking in politically. At Tunix, many of the 20,000 activists in attendance brought with them a long history of opposing the state in the young Bonn Republic. They were former members of the APO and participants of the student movements during the late 1960s. The attempted assassination of Rudi Dutschke pushed many of them out of the APO and into citizen initiatives or BBU during the early 1970s. After the Energy Crisis of 1973, activists focusing on other social causes such as the environment were mobilized to challenge the state once more as a result of its more authoritative stance on nuclear power and Model Germany. Following the breakthrough at Wyhl, their efforts were thwarted by the young anarchists that comprised the Communist groups at Brokdorf and Gronhde. Witnessing the criminalization of the antinuclear movement and its effect on early efforts to fight the nuclear waste reprocessing plant in Gorleben moved many longstanding members on the Left to question if there was a place for social activism in Bonn's West Germany.

The 20,000 radicals that met at Tunix to discuss this very question concluded that the answer was no. There was no place for the Left and social activism in the nation that was being reshaped through Model Germany at the time. Subsequently, the Left began to explore new political ideas and alternative visions of an ideal society devoid of the bureaucracy and heavy degree of industrialization found in the current Bonn Republic. They began looking to the rural countryside beyond Berlin where they could pursue their utopian visions of modern society. From Tunix, the counterculture movement emerged in West Germany in the early spring of 1978, and although the counterculture movement

arrived in West Germany a decade after it appeared in the United States, the communal farms that developed Berlin mirrored those that sprung up on the landscapes of Western Massachusetts and Southern Vermont in the late 1960s. These rural areas afforded activists the freedom to “live out their politics” as Sam Lovejoy noted in describing the Montague Farm and make an honest attempt at realizing the utopias that were envisioned.<sup>260</sup>

After Tunix, no place offered a better opportunity for the counterculture movement than the underdeveloped and remote lands around Gorleben. West Berlin was landlocked within East Germany throughout the duration of Cold War, and Gorleben lay just beyond the border, in West Germany. However, for the same reason that the state was attracted to Gorleben so was the counterculture movement. Gorleben’s relative isolation made the area a prime candidate both for a nuclear waste processing site and a new agrarian-based utopia. On the one hand, the state believed Gorleben was so remote and removed from the rest of West Germany that the nuclear opposition would have a hard time establishing itself, which indeed proved to be the case. On the other hand, the counterculture movement looked at Gorleben as one of the few areas still untouched by the industrial and bureaucratic hand of the SPD-led government in Bonn, perfect for counterculture farms. Once these activists from Tunix began descending on the countryside surrounding Gorleben in the late winter and early spring of 1978, the impact on the antinuclear movement and the local debate over nuclear power was profound.<sup>261</sup>

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<sup>260</sup> McMillan, *Smoking Typewriters*, 82-112; Slonecker, *A New Dawn for the New Left*, 1-7; Samuel Lovejoy, Interview by David C. Smith; Dirke, *All Power to the Imagination*, 105-22.

<sup>261</sup> Dirke, *All Power to the Imagination*, 105-122.

When the Gorleben Citizen Group first formed in March of 1977, its immediate objective was to distance itself from the Communist groups and the violent confrontations between protestors and the state that occurred at both Brokdorf and Gronhde. The slogan “Flowers, no helmets” signaled that the nuclear opposition intended the fight against the proposed nuclear waste reprocessing plant to be peaceful. However, with the conflict at Gronhde unfolding alongside Gorleben, local residents remained reluctant to get involved. The state’s prediction that the antinuclear movement would struggle in Gorleben without a local support base appeared to be correct, but this quickly changed after Tunix. As a result of the counterculture movement, the number of communal farms and transplanted activists from the Left in the countryside surrounding Gorleben created a local support base that the nuclear opposition so desperately needed.<sup>262</sup>

Over the course of the next year, the Gorleben Citizen Group was able to make significant inroads with the local population buttressed by the influx of counterculture radicals after the Tunix meeting. The opposition focused its message on the adverse impact that the heavy industrialization associated with nuclear power would have on Gorleben and the surrounding Wendland region. They argued that the landscape of the Elbe River Valley and local economies including both agriculture and tourism would be sacrificed as a result of the reprocessing plant. Rather than attacking nuclear power, the intervention in Gorleben was more centered on the adverse effects of industrialization. This proved to be an effective strategy for engaging the local community. By focusing

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<sup>262</sup> Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*: 109-116; Dirke, *All Power to the Imagination*, 105-122.

on the consequences of industrialization, the nuclear opposition was able to indirectly involve area residents in the debate over nuclear power without asking them to oppose the state's position on the Gorleben project. By the winter of 1978, local newspapers began disseminating headlines about the region's impending "industrial destruction like at Rhine and Ruhr, Main, and Lower Elbe."<sup>263</sup>

Within a year, a populist movement similar to the one that arose along the Rhine at Wyhl arose in Gorleben against the industrialization of the Wendland. In addition to environmental protection, a growing aspect of the opposition to nuclear power in Gorleben was a steadily increasing degree of political resentment towards the capitals of Hanover and Bonn. The Wendland's geographic isolation deprived the underdeveloped region of any prosperity enjoyed by the young Bonn Republic, and now the neglected region was selected to serve as a dump for Model Germany's nuclear waste. A political breaking point was reached. The state originally believed the local population would blindly support the proposed reprocessing plant, and although that did indeed appear to be the case at first when the project was announced, by 1979 the political environment around Gorleben was much different. The influx of countercultural radicals after Tübingen, combined with the politicization of local residents due to Hannover's and Bonn's lack of respect for the Wendland, gave rise to populist movement that organized against nuclear power in Gorleben. When the state began clearing the construction site in February of

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<sup>263</sup> Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 345-353; Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*: 109-116.



1979, the Gorleben Citizen Group and local farmers came together to organize a week long March to Hannover in protest of the nuclear waste reprocessing plant.<sup>264</sup>

The March to Hannover took place between March 25<sup>th</sup> and March 31, 1979, and the demonstration was truly a redefining moment for the antinuclear movement as well as social activism in West Germany. Gorleben farmers led the procession on their tractors and carried signs that read “Free Republic of Wendland.” The reason this was significant was not only that it signified the Wendland’s regional opposition to the political power of both Hannover and Bonn but also the rebirth of the antinuclear movement as a populist initiative for the first time since Wyhl. In addition, other participants in the March to Hannover, those that walked alongside and behind the parade of tractors, were encouraged to carry flowers and held banners adorned with the Gorleben Citizen Group’s original slogan “Flowers, No Helmets.” In the process, the antinuclear movement, and social activism in general, was restored as a nonviolent protest. Brokdorf, Gronhde, and the German Autumn all combined to criminalize the nuclear opposition in West Germany, but beginning in Tunix, an effort to refashion the identity of the Left culminated in the March to Hannover. The plan was once the demonstrators arrived in the Lower Saxony capital that they would turn the city into a “sea of flowers.” This was a far cry from the scene of Communist groups using blowtorches and chainsaws to cut through the steel fences at Gronhde.<sup>265</sup>

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<sup>264</sup> Ibid.

<sup>265</sup> Gyorgy, *No Nukes*, 345-353; Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*: 109-116.

When the protestors arrived in Hannover on March 31, 1979, more than 100,000 people turned out for a rally celebrating the end of the week-long event. The attendance marked the largest at any demonstration against nuclear power in the Atlantic World and the largest at any political event in West Germany since the Easter March Movement of the 1960s. Although the March to Hannover increased in size as it passed through the Wendland countryside and picked up new participants from each town along the way to Hannover, the record setting turnout at the rally in Hannover was more the result of the public's reaction to Three Mile Island. The nuclear accident occurred midway through the March to Hannover on March 28, 1979, and Three Mile Island represented a watershed moment for the antinuclear movement throughout the Atlantic World. The nuclear opposition was legitimized, and the fight against nuclear power was immediately transformed into a mainstream social movement. In West Germany, the immediate result of Three Mile Island was the 100,000 people in Hannover that greeted the farmers and radicals from Gorleben.

Faced with both the regional opposition that developed in the Wendland and now the advent of mainstream opposition as a result of the political fallout from Three Mile Island, Lower Saxony Prime Minister Ernst Albrecht announced that the planned nuclear waste reprocessing facility in Gorleben was no longer "politically feasible" and he would not license it. This represented the biggest victory for the nuclear opposition in West Germany since Wyhl, and a major blow was dealt to Bonn's nuclear program. With Gorleben struck down, a de facto moratorium on the expansion of the nuclear industry in West Germany was realized. In many ways, the achievement was even more gratifying

than stopping the original nuclear plant at Wyhl because the nuclear opposition had persevered through a number of crippling issues, including internal battles with Communist groups starting at Brokdorf, the criminalization of the antinuclear movement after Gronhde, and the redefinition of social activism and reemergence of the Left at Gorleben.<sup>266</sup>

However, what made the March to Hannover so overwhelmingly successful was not just the resilience of the Left or the perseverance of the nuclear opposition from Wyhl to Gorleben. Instead, the transformational element was Three Mile Island, and this was as true in West Germany as it was in the United States. Just as the Energy Crisis of 1973 provided Western governments from Bonn to Washington D.C. with the justification to aggressively expand the nuclear industry in the Atlantic World, Three Mile Island legitimized the antinuclear movement, and the impact was immediately felt at Gorleben and the at Seabrook.

#### “When the Music Is Over, The Work Has to Begin”

As the Left was starting to reemerge in West Germany in the months leading up to Three Mile Island during the spring of 1979, the Clamshell Alliance and the fight against nuclear power in New England was going in the opposite direction. The Clamshell Alliance emerged from the Battle of Seabrook as an organization just entering the prime of its early existence. The Clamshell Alliance’s third site occupation of Seabrook Station became a media sensation and sparked a national movement against

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<sup>266</sup> Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*: 109-116.

nuclear power, spreading across the United States from New England to California. Membership swelled, but the number of urban radicals and Communists that joined the Clamshell Alliance after the Battle of Seabrook paralyzed the organization's consensus-based decision making. For the next two years, the Clamshell Alliance remained gripped by the internal turmoil created by the Hard Clams' persistence in pursuing a confrontation with the state over Seabrook Station.

On March 28, 1979, the Unit 2 reactor in the nuclear power plant on Three Mile Island just outside Harrisburg, Pennsylvania suffered a partial core meltdown after technical malfunctions and human error resulted in the water lines to the reactor's cooling system being cut off. Over 100,000 Harrisburg area residents had to be evacuated before a nuclear catastrophe of the size later seen at Chernobyl and Fukushima was averted. The Three Mile Island disaster brought increased attention not only to the antinuclear movement but also to the potential dangers and risk associated with nuclear power. Three Mile Island occurred less than two weeks after the release of the movie *The China Syndrome*, starring Michael Douglas, Jane Fonda, and Jack Lemon. The film opened on March 16, 1979 and was inspired by the actual events surrounding the 1975 fire at Browns Ferry Nuclear Power Plant in Athens, Alabama. The release drew heavy backlash from the nuclear industry, who accused the film's producers and its cast of inciting public concerns over the safety of nuclear power. Despite the backlash, *The China Syndrome* was the top ranked movie at American box offices for three weeks in a row and grossed over \$8.6 million in the United States. After the partial core meltdown at Three Mile Island, any lingering debate and opposition from the nuclear industry

regarding the safety of nuclear power ended in Harrisburg. Almost overnight the antinuclear movement went mainstream.<sup>267</sup>

Three Mile Island became the equivalent of the much lesser known nuclear accident during the 1954 Operation Castle U.S. nuclear weapons test at Bikini Atoll that resulted in the death of Japanese fisherman Aikichi Kuboyama. Kuboyama's death inspired Albert Einstein and Bertrand Russell to issue the Einstein-Russell Manifesto calling for an end to the nuclear arms race between the United States and Soviet Union. The Ban the Bomb movement ignited shortly thereafter from the Pugwash Conference, and in the United States, the campaign was led by the celebrity-filled organization Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE). On a much larger scale and in a far more condensed timeframe, Three Mile Island provided the same wake up call to the dangers of nuclear power that Kuboyama's death and the bombings of Bikini Atoll did for nuclear weapons.

At Seabrook, Three Mile Island transformed the local debate over nuclear power. Three Mile Island simultaneously justified the Clamshell Alliance's fight against nuclear power and marginalized the organization's overall importance to the antinuclear movement. In the wake of Three Mile Island, the Clamshell Alliance became inundated with people wanting to join the organization. However, because of the ongoing debate between Hard Clams and the standing membership of the Clamshell Alliance, the organization was unable to absorb and integrate the volume of protestors that arose as a result of Three Mile Island. Many who wanted to join the Clamshell Alliance found

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<sup>267</sup> Aljean Harmetz, "Fallout from 'China Syndrome' Has Already Begun," *New York Times* (New York, NY), March 11, 1979; David Burnham, "Nuclear Experts Debate 'The China Syndrome,'" *New York Times* (New York, NY), March 18, 1979; See: J. Samuel Walker, *Three Mile Island: A Nuclear Crisis in Historical Perspective* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

themselves unable to do so, forcing them to opt for one of the many alternative antinuclear organizations that formed after Three Mile Island. Consequently, Three Mile Island marginalized the Clamshell Alliance.<sup>268</sup>

To its credit, the Clamshell Alliance did not lament its loss of status but rather the organization simply joined the mainstream movement that developed after Three Mile Island. On May 6, 1979, members of the Clamshell Alliance, including Sam Lovejoy and Harvey Wasserman, helped organize a large march against nuclear power in Washington, D.C. that drew more than 125,000 protestors and guest appearances from Jane Fonda, Dick Gregory, Tom Hayden, and California Governor Jerry Brown, who had emerged as a leading figure in the protest against the Diablo Canyon Power Plant led by the Abalone Alliance. In 1960, the National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE) previously held a rally against nuclear weapons in New York City's Madison Square Garden that drew 20,000 people, but the March on Washington on May 6, 1979 in protest of Three Mile Island represented the largest demonstration against either the bomb or nuclear power in the United States. This marked the first time that the nuclear opposition in the United States was able to match its German counterparts in terms of turnout and attendance for an antinuclear event.<sup>269</sup>

The following day, Lovejoy and Wasserman led a small contingent of protestors who were granted an audience at the White House with President Jimmy Carter. In New Hampshire during the 1976 presidential election, Dan Keller of Green Mountain Post

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<sup>268</sup> Robert "Renny" Cushing, Jr., "The Clamshell Divided – The Peril of Disunity and Disarray," Manuscript Collection, Clamshell Alliance Papers, 1976-1988, Box 12, Folder 2-3, 23-46.

<sup>269</sup> Cushing, "The Clamshell Divided – The Peril of Disunity and Disarray," 23-46; Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 89-98.

Films was able to get President Carter on the record about the first site occupations of Seabrook Station by the Clamshell Alliance. Carter stated that “I have always felt that anybody who disagrees with the civil law in a matter conscience has a right openly to express that disobedience. At the same time, under our societal structure, it’s necessary that they be willing to take the consequences of their disobedience.” Carter further stated that he “believed that there’s a place for nuclear power in our future” but that the technology must be “minimized” and used only as a “last resort.” However, after taking office, Carter offered little resistance to the Clinch River Breeder Reactor Project outside Oak Ridge, Tennessee. Thus, Lovejoy, Wasserman, and the other protestors on hand after the March on Washington in protest of the Three Mile Island accident sought to finally get President Carter’s definitive position on nuclear power. After excusing the press, according to Lovejoy, President Carter privately told the other protestors gathered at the White House that “we’re not going to shut down nuclear power so don’t kid around.”<sup>270</sup>

After the March on Washington and the private meeting with President Carter, it became clear to the Clamshell Alliance and other members of the nuclear opposition that the state’s position on nuclear power, all the way up to the White House, was not going to change because of Three Mile Island. Wasserman had other plans, though. Working with Jackson Browne, the popular singer and noted political activist who previously headlined the Clamshell Alliance’s Alternative Energy Fair of 1978, a concert was

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<sup>270</sup> “The Last Resort,” directed by Dan Keller and Charles Light, Green Mountain Post Films; Samuel Lovejoy, Interview by David C. Smith, April 8, 2013; Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 89-98.

organized in an attempt to help raise public awareness over the dangers of nuclear power. The concert and the citizen group that formed in support of the event were called MUSE (Musicians for Safe Energy), and participating acts included Bruce Springsteen, Carly Simon, James Taylor, and Brown. The Clamshell Alliance maintained a heavy presence in MUSE, with Lovejoy serving as the organization's president and Wasserman as spokesperson.<sup>271</sup>

At the conclusion of the five day MUSE concerts, a massive rally against nuclear power was held in New York's Battery Park, reportedly drawing over 200,000 people. Several guest speakers including Tom Hayden and Pete Seeger addressed the audience, but it was Massachusetts Congressman Ed Markey who delivered the concluding remarks. Markey stated, "People who are a part of this can learn from the lessons of the 1960s, that demonstrations alone are not effective, that politicians can ignore mass demonstrations, as occurred with the war in Vietnam, and that the only way of really being effective is to take these demonstrations and then funnel them into the political process...When the music is over, the work has to begin." The statement was profound, and Markey's words proved to be highly prophetic.<sup>272</sup>

After the private meeting with President Carter, Lovejoy, Wasserman, and other members of the Clamshell Alliance knew that the state's position on nuclear power would remain unchanged despite Three Mile Island and regardless of the number of people who marched through the streets of the nation's capital or filled New York's

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<sup>271</sup> Cushing, "The Clamshell Divided – The Peril of Disunity and Disarray," 23-46; Samuel Lovejoy, Interview by David C. Smith.

<sup>272</sup> Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 89-98.



Battery Park in protest of the nuclear industry. The opposition to nuclear power needed to move beyond the local community and into broader segments of society. The time was right for an institutional attack on the nuclear industry in the United States with political support from the likes of Congressman Markey leading the way. However, in Seabrook, the opportunity was missed.

Following the summer 1978 Alternative Energy Fair, the Clamshell Alliance had Seabrook Station on the ropes and on the verge of collapsing if the opposition was able to move the fight beyond the physical construction site and focus instead on the economics of nuclear power. As Renny Cushing noted, there were several opportunities that Seabrook Station and the nuclear industry could have been defeated if the local opposition as a whole could have gotten past its fixation on the construction site. The previous summer, the Hard Clams failed to do so, and Seabrook Station was eventually given new life. After Three Mile Island, the march against nuclear power in Washington, D.C. and the five day MUSE concert series helped foster the type of political support needed to re-launch the institutional fight against nuclear power. Institutional protest ceased to be a viable option for the nuclear opposition after the Energy Crisis of 1973, but Three Mile Island ultimately changed that. The correct move now was for the Clamshell Alliance to take the fight against Seabrook Station back to the institutional level, but ultimately, the Hard Clams refused and another opportunity was missed.<sup>273</sup>

Once the music was over and the immediate political fallout over Three Mile Island settled, the Hard Clams resumed the same dance at Seabrook. During the fall of

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<sup>273</sup> Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith, March 11, 2013.

1979, Harvey Halpern and the Clams for Direct Action at Seabrook (CDAS) moved forward with their plans to stage a fourth occupation of Seabrook Station. The CDAS formed just weeks before Three Mile Island, as a result of the Clamshell Alliance's majority decision to hold another public outreach and Alternative Energy Fair. Ironically, it was the Hard Clams that once argued following the Battle of Seabrook that the Clamshell Alliance had become bigger than the local community and therefore direct action was needed even if it was unsupported by local residents. Now that the Clamshell Alliance and the fight against nuclear power had truly become a mainstream movement following Three Mile Island, the Hard Clams ignored the fact that the mainstream movement was moving towards the institutional realm and away from direct action. Instead, the Hard Clams through the CDAS stubbornly planned to occupy Seabrook Station on October 6, 1979.<sup>274</sup>

The Hard Clams produced a pamphlet announcing the CDAS's plans for a fourth occupation of Seabrook Station, and in the process, the organization sought to legitimize its actions by re-invoking the site occupation at Wyhl, which of course had been the inspiration behind the Clamshell Alliance during the summer of 1976. The Hard Clams stated, "The occupation of Seabrook Station has the potential to stop its construction permanently. Five years ago, West Germans occupied a nuclear plant site in Wyhl. To date, there has been no construction." They also promised that "October 6 will be a departure from civil disobedience" and used class-based rhetoric that pitted workers

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<sup>274</sup> Cushing, "The Clamshell Divided – The Peril of Disunity and Disarray," 23-46; Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 89-98

against both other demonstrators and police. The problem with the Hard Clams' position was that a lot had changed in the five years since the demonstration in Wyhl.

Specifically, the events at Brokdorf and Grohnde so stigmatized any direct action-based protests against nuclear power that local residents around Seabrook feared similar reactions at Seabrook Station.

The fact that the Hard Clams would simultaneously reference Wyhl and disavow any commitment to civil disobedience and nonviolence demonstrated once again how disconnected they were from the debate over nuclear power. In Seabrook, the Clamshell Alliance responded to the Hard Clams call for direct action on October 6<sup>th</sup> by stating that the planned occupation ignored "the present political and economic climate of the state" and further threatened to undermine the current momentum of the mainstream movement against nuclear power that formed after Three Mile Island. Rather than force another demonstration at the Seabrook Station construction site that was wholly unwanted by the local community, the Clamshell Alliance maintained that the right course of action at Seabrook was to use the national momentum that developed around Three Mile Island and fight nuclear power institutionally. Through a response published in the magazine *WIN*, Rudy Perkins, a Hard Clam from Boston, argued that the Clamshell Alliance was being hypocritical, that "in 1976, the Clamshell Alliance was formed specifically to leave the well-worn channels of acceptable protest, because those channels had proven to be dead ends...It is the worst possible moment for a retreat to pre-Clamshell strategies."<sup>275</sup>

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<sup>275</sup> Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 89-98.

On October 6, 1979, 2,500 demonstrators showed up at Seabrook Station to participate in the CDAS protest. Most of the demonstrators were college students from out of state, and the actual number of protestors fell far short of the 10,000 that the Hard Clams envisioned. The demonstrators were met in Seabrook by 200 members of the New Hampshire National Guard and more than 250 state police from all over New England. For three days, the demonstrators attempted several sieges of Seabrook Station by invading the construction site after cutting through the fence, but each attempt was repelled by water cannons, fire hoses, smoke bombs, tear gas, German Shepherds, mace, and police night sticks. The demonstrators lacked organization, and each of their efforts to break through the fence were so poorly coordinated that the National Guard and state police overwhelmed the protestors despite being outnumbered five to one. By the end of the three day protest, the CDAS was successful in channeling elements of the antinuclear movement in West Germany, but rather than Wyhl, it was Brokdorf and Grohnde that were imported into Seabrook. The locals rebuked the Hard Clams, and if not for the mainstream movement that formed after Three Mile Island, then the fight against Seabrook Station would have ended in the fall of 1979.<sup>276</sup>

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<sup>276</sup> Cushing, "The Clamshell Divided – The Peril of Disunity and Disarray," 23-46; Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 89-98.

## The Antinuclear Movement after Three Mile Island

Three Mile Island breathed new life into the antinuclear movement, and although the trans-Atlantic protest that arose afterwards represented the antinuclear movement's crowning moment, the movement's days were numbered. In West Germany, following the March to Hannover, the political climate that developed in the aftermath of Three Mile Island rendered the proposed nuclear waste reprocessing facility "politically not feasible" according to Prime Minister Albrecht. What appeared to be a major victory for the antinuclear movement and a severe blow to the German nuclear industry was quickly placated by Albrecht's plans to move forward with a nuclear waste depository at Gorleben instead of the reprocessing facility. It was actually a highly strategic move on Albrecht's part because by not pursuing the reprocessing facility he was able to appease a broad cross section of the local support that the nuclear opposition had garnered in Gorleben. Without this local support, the Gorleben Citizen Group, which led the local fight against nuclear power in Gorleben since the reprocessing facility was first announced, soon found itself isolated. The Gorleben Citizen Group lost control of the opposition to the proposed reprocessing facility and faced a renewed challenge from the same Communist groups and urban radicals that previously exploited the antinuclear movement at Brokdorf and Grohnde.<sup>277</sup>

The infighting that ensued mirrored the debate that was taking place in Seabrook between the Clamshell Alliance and the Hard Clams. However, unlike at Seabrook, the extremists and the more moderate members of the Gorleben Citizen Group reached a

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<sup>277</sup> Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*: 109-116.

compromise to hold another demonstration at the construction site for the proposed reprocessing facility. At the suggestion of representatives from the Gewaltfreie Aktion, the compromise reached at Gorleben was achieved in March of 1980 through the affinity group and consensus decision making model used by the Clamshell Alliance. The Gewaltfreie Aktion was a group of pacifists and war resisters from across West Germany, and in 1979, after Three Mile Island, a small contingent from Berlin travelled to the United to study the debate over nuclear power at Seabrook. Their connection to the Clamshell Alliance was Montague Farm communitarian and fellow war resister Randy Kehler. Thus, in an interesting example of trans-Atlantic collaboration between activists in New England and West Germany, not only was Kehler responsible for facilitating the import of the direct action-based model established at Wyhl following his visit to the site occupation along the Rhine during the summer of 1975 but he also had a hand in exporting the Clamshell Alliance's own model to the protest in Gorleben.<sup>278</sup>

The resulting occupation of the Gorleben nuclear waste depository's construction site began in May of 1980, drawing more than 5,000 protestors. The occupation lasted for four weeks during which a counterculture utopia developed, complete with vegetable garden, a radio station, church, and other staples of a community. The new settlement at the construction site was renamed the "Free Republic of Wendland," and the counterculture community was ultimately a product of the reborn Left that emerged around Gorleben after the Tunix Treffen in the winter of 1978. Wendland was a

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<sup>278</sup> Randy Kehler, Interview by David C. Smith, April 8, 2013; Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*: 109-116, 277-278.

nonviolent community that reconnected the antinuclear movement with the spirit of Wyhl, which had been lost since Brokdorf and Grohnde. Wendland along with the March to Hannover that encompassed the Three Mile Island nuclear accident helped restore the nuclear opposition as a politically acceptable form of social activism in West Germany.

In June of 1980, the state sent bulldozers in to clear the Wendland settlement and ended what would be the last major protest by the antinuclear movement in West Germany. However, the movement did not end with Wendland. The network formed by the nuclear opposition over the course of the 1970s stretched across the country from Wyhl to Gorleben and was comprised of both members of the Left and more moderate citizens who became radicalized over nuclear power and the increasing authoritativeness of the state. Beginning in 1978, as a result of the Left's rebranding and rebirth following the criminalization of the antinuclear movement during the fallout surrounding Grohnde and the German Autumn of 1977, the Alternative Lists formed as a political action group to help provide protection for political protest and the social activism of the Left in West Germany. At Gorleben, a separate entity called the Green List formed to focus specifically on achieving a moratorium on nuclear power, and in 1979, the Green List and Alternative List merged to form the Green Party (Die Grünen).<sup>279</sup>

The antinuclear movement became institutionalized in West Germany through the Green Party. Shortly after its formation, the agenda of the Green Party broadened to include more social issues as the party soon became the new voice for the Left. As a

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<sup>279</sup> Joppke, *Mobilizing Against Nuclear Energy*: 117-120.

consequence, the nuclear power debate quickly retreated from the political frontlines and gave way to renewed concerns over nuclear weapons and the peace movements of the early 1980s. The antinuclear movement in West Germany was exceptional in the fact that it directly helped produce a political party that remained an active voice for the Left throughout the 1980s and even after the reunification of East and West Germany. However, the fate of the movement itself, and the fact that it was marginalized after its institutionalization, merely represented the trajectory of the fight against nuclear power throughout the Atlantic World after Three Mile Island.

In the United States, the local fight against nuclear power in Seabrook Station previously served as the driving force for the import of the antinuclear movement from West Germany and its spread across the United States. The Hard Clams' controversial October 6<sup>th</sup> occupation at Seabrook Station proved to be the last major demonstration by either the Clamshell Alliance or one of its offshoots. After Three Mile Island, the Clamshell Alliance's role in the antinuclear movement was decentralized. Following the March on Washington and the MUSE concert series during the late spring and early summer of 1979, the antinuclear movement became increasingly institutionalized. Although no political party like the German Green Party formed in the United States, the fight against nuclear energy was increasingly picked up by politicians, notably Massachusetts liberal Senator Ted Kennedy and the aforementioned Congressman Ed Markey. In the aftermath of Three Mile Island, Kennedy and Markey teamed together in



an attempt to pass two key pieces of legislature aimed at reining in the nuclear industry in the United States.<sup>280</sup>

The first called for a six month moratorium on the issuance of any new permits for nuclear reactors, and the second called for both local and state approval of emergency evacuation plans around a nuclear power plant before any new reactor could go online. Only the second bill passed, but it became instrumental the ongoing debates over nuclear power in places like Seabrook. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission quickly implemented a ten mile emergency planning zone around Seabrook that encompassed more than 130,000 residents. In order to have its operating license approved, Public Service Company was tasked with developing an evacuation plan that would accommodate all 130,000 people living around Seabrook Station. Because the ten mile emergency planning zone stretched across the border into Massachusetts, Public Service Company needed the state of Massachusetts to sign off on the evacuation plan. This became a major issue in 1986 when Governor Michael Dukakis refused to endorse Public Service Company's proposal, citing continued concerns about the safety of nuclear power following the nuclear disaster at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant outside Pripyat, Ukraine on April 26, 1988. Governor Dukakis was joined in his opposition by New York Governor Mario Cuomo, who joined the opposition to the Shoreham Nuclear Power Station on Long Island after Chernobyl. Political pressure was really starting to mount on the nuclear industry in the United States.<sup>281</sup>

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<sup>280</sup> Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith, March 11, 2013; Cushing, "The Clamshell Divided – The Peril of Disunity and Disarray," 23-46; Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 89-98.

<sup>281</sup> Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 89-98.

With Seabrook Station hung up in the courts and the debate over emergency evacuation routes, the price tag for both Public Service Company and the state continued to skyrocket. New Hampshire Governor John Sununu appealed to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to limit the emergency planning zone only to New Hampshire territory thereby eliminating the need for Governor Dukakis' approval. After assessing the financial situation around Seabrook Station, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission agreed to cut the emergency planning zone down to just five miles which Governor Dukakis characterized as "the nuclear equivalent of cutting the number of lifeboats for the unsinkable Titanic because they would make the voyage unprofitable." The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's decision to reduce the emergency planning zone around Seabrook Station simply to allow the project to move forward demonstrated that the relationship between the state and nuclear industry had not changed, from Atoms for Peace through Three Mile Island and Chernobyl. Ultimately, whether it was the Atomic Energy Commission or the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the organizations responsible for regulating nuclear power in the United States continued to actively support and promote the advancement of the nuclear industry even after the nuclear accidents at Three Mile Island and Chernobyl.<sup>282</sup>

Particularly in the case of Seabrook Station, despite the efforts of the Clamshell Alliance and institutional support of Massachusetts liberals, the project's eventual success in terms of completion was inevitable from the start because of the high level collusion between Public Service Company, the governor's office in Manchester, and the

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<sup>282</sup> Ibid.

pronuclear bureaucracy in Washington, D.C. In 1988, through one of the last acts of his administration, President Ronald Reagan granted the Federal Emergency Management Agency the power to draw up emergency evacuation plans for nuclear power plants when local communities like Seabrook and authorities like Dukakis resisted. To the bitter end, the authoritative state that developed around the nuclear industry during the Cold War remained as strong as ever. Perhaps the last hope for the antinuclear movement was lost in the following November elections when George Bush defeated Michael Dukakis in the 1988 presidential election. Bush appointed Seabrook Station proponent and New Hampshire Governor John Sununu as his White House Chief of Staff.<sup>283</sup>

In 1990, the first reactor at Seabrook Station went online, four years after the Kernkraftwerk Brokdorf Nuclear Power Plant and six years after the Grohnde Nuclear Power Plant went online. The only two places that the antinuclear movement successfully defeated the nuclear industry was on the plains of Western Massachusetts through Sam Lovejoy's war on nuclear power at Montague and along the Rhine in West Germany at Wyhl. Despite the limited success, the legacy of the antinuclear movement is still to be determined as the debate over nuclear power remains unresolved. The social activism of the antinuclear movement and protests in places like Montague, Wyhl, Seabrook, Brokdorf, and Gorleben created a political environment that ultimately stifled the growth of nuclear power in the Atlantic World after 1979.

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<sup>283</sup> Renny Cushing, Interviewed by David C. Smith, March 11, 2013; Cushing, "The Clamshell Divided – The Peril of Disunity and Disarray," 23-46; Surbrug, *Beyond Vietnam*, 89-98.

The nuclear accident at Three Mile Island, as well as Chernobyl, broadened the audience interested in the message of the antinuclear movement. From New England to West Germany, as larger cross sections of the general public became interested the debate over nuclear power, members of the pronuclear governments in both Washington and Bonn became less inclined to support the further expansion of nuclear power, rendering the nuclear industry in the Atlantic World frozen in its pre-Three Mile Island state. No new construction licenses have been issued since Three Mile Island, and the few nuclear power plants completed after 1979, including Seabrook Station, used licenses approved prior to Three Mile Island. The lone carryover and unresolved project from the 1970s that remains undecided was the proposed nuclear waste facility at Gorleben. After the Free Republic of Wendland was disbanded, the Gorleben project underwent a twenty year research and development phase in which the underground salt dome designated to house nuclear waste was tested for its long-term sustainability.

Meanwhile, the debate over nuclear power took another turn and refocused on the nuclear arms race following a renewal of Cold War tensions between the United States and Soviet Union. Following the Partial Test Ban Treaty, further attempts to limit the use and development of nuclear weapons culminated in the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) in Helsinki, Finland between 1969 and 1972 through which both countries agreed to freeze their respective nuclear arsenals at the current levels. The next round of negotiations, known as SALT II, commenced from Vienna, Austria between 1972 and 1979, and the goal was to convince both sides to reduce their nuclear weapon stockpiles. The SALT II agreement was signed by President Carter and Leonid Brezhnev on June 18,

1979, but as a result of the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan six months later and the discovery of a Soviet combat brigade stationed in Cuba, the United States never ratified SALT II. President Carter responded by issuing Presidential Directive 59, the "Nuclear Weapons Employment Policy," calling for the rapid expansion of the U.S. ballistic missiles programs in preparation for a nuclear war.<sup>284</sup>

The renewal of Cold War hostilities between the United States and Soviet Union resulted in the Nuclear Freeze Movement in the fall of 1980 led by Massachusetts activists Randall Forsberg and Randy Kehler. The fact that Kehler played such significant role in the founding of the Clamshell Alliance and now the Nuclear Freeze Movement was symbolic of what happened to the antinuclear movement during the 1980s. After Three Mile Island, many activists like Kehler turned their attention away from nuclear power in favor of a new movement to Ban the Bomb. Although Chernobyl provided a devastating reminder of the dangers associated with nuclear power, the remainder of the Cold War centered on the bomb and the nuclear arms race between the United States and Soviet Union.<sup>285</sup>

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Atlantic World was dealing with the consequences and remnants of the Cold War. In particular, a major problem facing both the United States and Germany was what to do with arguably the largest and most dangerous byproduct of the Cold War, the nuclear waste problem. This debate has cast a new spotlight on the proposed nuclear waste repository at Gorleben. In 2000, the debate

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<sup>284</sup> See: John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (New York: Penguin, 2006); Lawrence S. Wittner, *Toward Nuclear Abolition: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement, 1971 to the Present* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003).

<sup>285</sup> See: Wittner, *Toward Nuclear Abolition*; Surbrug: *Beyond Vietnam*.

was tabled after a ten year moratorium on any further research and exploration related to the Gorleben project was imposed, but the ever-increasing demand for fossil fuels and the steady rise in the price of oil once again forced leaders of the Western World to reconsider nuclear power. In 2002, Less than twenty years removed from Chernobyl, President George Bush announced his Nuclear Power 2010 Program aimed to restart the order for new nuclear power plants that would go online by 2010. In Germany, Chancellor Angela Merkel lifted the moratorium on nuclear power beginning with Gorleben in 2010. Just when the nuclear industry appeared to be revived, a 9.0 earthquake struck off the coast of Japan's Honshu Island on March 11, 2011. The ensuing tsunami that later hit the island flooded the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, disabling the plant's emergency cooling system and resulting in the world's worst nuclear disaster since Chernobyl. In the aftermath of Fukushima, the Nuclear Power 2010 Program was cancelled in the United States, and Chancellor Merkel immediately shut down eight of Germany's seventeen nuclear reactors and pledged to permanently phase out nuclear power altogether by 2022.<sup>286</sup>

As of 2015, outside of Germany, the future of nuclear power and the antinuclear movement remains unclear. Energy demands are still at an all-time high. Fossil fuels are scarce. There is no present answer for the nuclear waste problem. Renny Cushing is still fighting nuclear power at Seabrook. Harvey Wasserman is now leading the charge for renewable and alternative energy. Randy Kehler rejoined the fight against nuclear power

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<sup>286</sup> Alexander Glaser, "From Brokdorf to Fukushima: The Long Journey to Nuclear Phase-Out," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* Vol 68, No. 6 (November/December 2012): 10-21.

and helped shut down the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Plant in 2014, and Sam Lovejoy remains just as colorful as ever. However, for the first time since the 1980s, tensions between the United States and Russia are on the rise again. Russian President Vladimir Putin's aggression in the Ukraine and increased propaganda directed towards the West have raised questions over whether or not the Cold War really ever ended. As a result, because the peaceful atom and nuclear industry are forever tied to the bomb, the conclusion on the story of the nuclear power and the antinuclear movement is still to be written.

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### Biographical Information

David C. Smith received his Ph.D. in Transatlantic History from the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA). Smith specializes in U.S. Social History, Environmental History, and the modern Atlantic World. His area of expertise includes nuclear power, antinuclear movements, and social activism during the Cold War. He has conducted extensive primary research on the Clamshell Alliance and antinuclear movement throughout New England and also studied abroad in Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany to research the antinuclear protest at Wyhl. Smith previously received a Master's in History from Villanova University, where he primarily studied the Cold War, U.S. Social History, and American Environmental History, and he also holds a Bachelor's in History from the University of Oklahoma in his home state of Oklahoma. Smith's future plans include teaching and continuing research on nuclear power, environmental politics, social activism, and the further impact of the Cold War on the modern Atlantic World.