Part 3 of 3

Continued from last week.

The mining activity has basically depleted much of the underground water and caused a significant increase in multiple chronic diseases in the impacted populations. The studies indicated that the logical place to start was in the health of children with uranium being the primary contaminant of concern along with the exposure to other mixtures of metals which can cause birth defects and life-long health issues.

The exposures can be physical, chemical, societal, medical and psychosocial. Radiation scans in homes to the birth records and reproductive outcomes were assessed and the results included the fact that some sources of exposure include inhalation, the land used, plants (root systems), livestock, free wind patterns and unregulated water sources. The distribution of uranium particles across all Navajo service units is equal for resuspension and Aeolian transport.

The possibility of the re-activation of uranium mining on Navajo land is banned through a Navajo Nation Council resolution (CAP-18-05); the Dine' Natural Resources Protection Act of 2005 was passed for the protection of individuals who have been impacted and extends to all who want to hear about the problems and issues, conduct more research, gather additional information and continue their advocacy in the future.

From the extraction of uranium to the Final Solution of storage, it must be noted that the half-life of Uranium-238, the most prevalent isotope in uranium ore, has a half-life of about 4.5 billion years. In human terms, this is forever. Therefore, along with others, I remain strongly opposed to making New Mexico and Tribal Lands, a radioactive waste land. Yucca Mountain was also supposed to be "temporary" but is now a permanent radioactive nuclear storage site in spite of U.S. government "Trust Responsibility" to the Western Shoshone nation on the Skull Valley Goshute reservation.

The Waste Isolation Pilot Plant was also supposed to be "temporary" but is also a permanent

radioactive waste disposal site; In February 2014, a 55-gallon drum of radioactive waste burst open inside America's only nuclear dump, the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico. Investigators believe the cause was the pet store purchase of kitty litter. Cat litter can soak up urine, but it's just as good at absorbing radioactive material which is what was deemed "safe" and was allowed by the U.S. Department of Energy. Presently, there are more than 500 drums packed with the wrong litter located in Los Alamos and the Waste Control Specialists located in a 14,900-acre site in western Andrews County, Texas.

There has been no consultation with the Navajo Nation whatsoever. There has been no Health Risk Assessments or Environmental Impact Assessments regarding the unfortunate potential for any mishaps that will occur along the transportation routes that will impact the nation or nearby communities. Who will pay for the damages that will be inflicted to the people, animals or land? This is Environmental Racism at its worst and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and Holtec, International have not addressed the disproportionate impacts that will occur when an "accident" takes place during transport.

This is totally unacceptable, especially when the NRC and Holtec Int'l. have not taken the due diligence to translate their deadly proposal into the Navajo and Laguna-Acoma languages. This is not responsible toward adequate free and informed prior consent, especially when the U.S. Department of Transportation) is not a part of this process or discussion in the face of Regulations for the Safe Transport of Radioactive Material 2012 Edition for protecting people and the environment, No. SSR-6, Specific Safety Requirements, IAEA SAFETY STANDARDS AND RELATED PUBLICATIONS.

The necessary resource areas are not included in the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and Holtec, International proposal: Public and occupational health; socioeconomics; Environmental Justice; ecology impacts; the scenic and visual aspects; Noise pollution; Air Quality; Waste management; and Trust responsibility to all American Indian tribes.

The issue of the United States government's "Trust Responsibility" to all indigenous tribes in America has been all but abandoned by the Donald Trump White House administration so our right to the protection of our lives, land and resources are basically non-existent at this crucial juncture. Human Rights has not been a part of the discussion or the safety of our sacred land.

Our present Navajo "leadership" should not follow their example, especially when Trump has challenged tribal sovereignty by intending to make all Treaty provisions null and void under the

lie that American tribes are not separate sovereign governments. While the Navajo Nation's "leadership" celebrated "Navajo Sovereignty Day" (on Tuesday, April 24, 2018) in Albuquerque (NM) over 150 miles away from our nation's capital touting the 150th Anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of 1868, I sincerely hope they do not follow a "locked and loaded" U.S. president who doesn't read and cannot write correct English and sets his misspelled and misguided White House policy via Twitter "Tweets".

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission and Holtec, International have not produced a back up plan for any related catastrophe that will happen along the transportation routes. Again, Uranium-238, the most prevalent isotope in uranium ore, has a half-life of **about 4.5 billion years** ; in human terms, that is forever. With the proposed reactivation of the Church Rock and Crownpoint (NM) former uranium mines, the solution is very simple: Keep uranium in the ground. NO mining, NO waste, NO transportation.

By Mervyn Tilden