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KC Nuke Plant: Imagining Other Futures

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NCR Today

On October 6th Kansas City, Mo. community members held a press conference to highlight their opposition to the continued operation of the Kansas City Plant, a major nuclear weapons manufacturing center.

Located about 13 miles south of downtown Kansas City, Mo., the Kansas City Plant makes non-nuclear parts for the nation's nuclear weapons. Parts like these comprise about 85% of each nuclear weapon in the country.

"We want the government to shift its priorities," said Jay Marx. "Instead of making bombs, we should be making things that are helping human needs." Marx is on a national speaking tour as the Campaign Coordinator for Proposition 1 in 2010, a grassroots movement for the conversion of nuclear and other arms industries.

From time to time on this site I will be reporting on the response of the local community to this facility and the discussions regarding its future. To start here is some background.

In 2006 Honeywell Federal Manufacturing & Technologies LLC announced that it would downsize operations and relocate the Kansas City Plant to a new facility. Honeywell has a contract with the U.S. Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration to operate the plant.

To entice Honeywell to keep operations in the area, Kansas City's Planned Industrial Expansion Authority released a general development plan in 2008. The plan proposed a new location for the plant and estimated the cost of construction at around \$39 million, to be paid by the city.



The economic benefit of having Honeywell continue its operation, according to the plan, is equivalent to a \$500 million investment. And, the plant should provide a minimum of 2,100 relatively well-paying jobs.

For the local community the question is whether this possible economic benefit is worth the moral cost of supporting the nuclear weapons industry. And, whether that benefit can be had by converting the plant for other uses.

Marx said that there were plenty of other ways to put the plans for the new plant to good, economically beneficial, use. ?Imagine if that income for the plant were channeled away,? he said. ?Imagine if we had the mindset to use it instead to combat global warming and to create renewable energy.?

That?s just one of many things the community here in Kansas City is imagining. Look for more in the coming weeks.

If you?re interested in looking at the general development plan for the Kansas City Plant you can find it as a PDF file here. If you?d like more info on Proposition 1 in 2010 visit their website here.

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