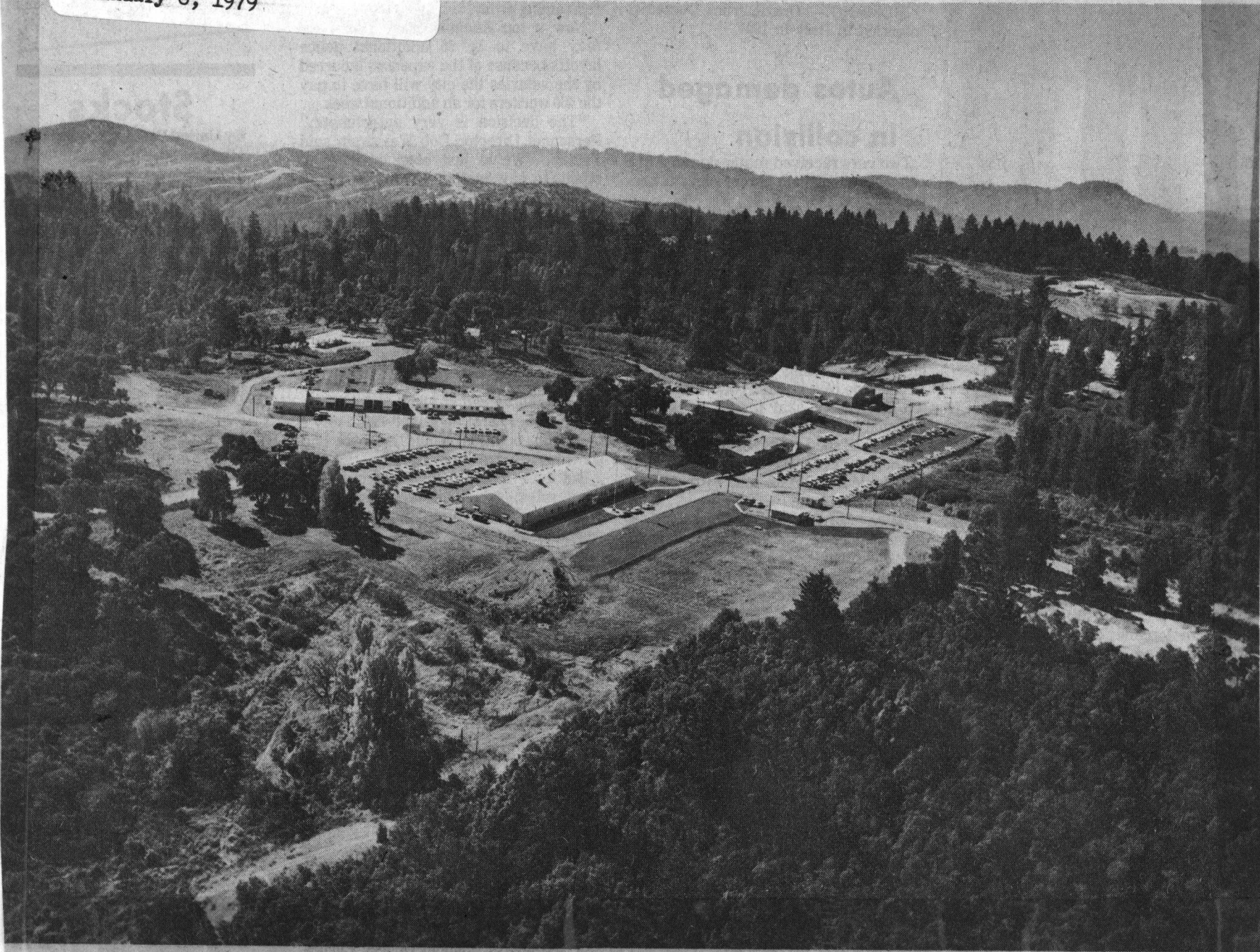


A nuclear weapon site?

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The Lockheed plant is large, but isolated in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

Lockheed expansion plans create strong opposition

By JANICE FUHRMAN

Lockheed Missiles and Space Company has been operating a test site facility on 4,400 acres it owns in the Bonny Doon area since 1957. Now before the county planning commission is the company's proposal to build five new buildings on its property as part of an expansion plan. At least one of these buildings, charge opponents of the application, will be used for the manufacture of parts for the Trident II nuclear missile.

Called by opponents a first-strike weapon (a weapon capable of initiating a nuclear war), the Trident II is a submarine-launched ballistic missile still in the planning stages. In fact, Lockheed officials here say there are no concrete design plans for the missile as far as they know and they assume it will be a "state of the art improvement" of Trident I.

But members of People for a Nuclear Free Future in Santa Cruz say the Trident II missile will equip submarines in a Trident fleet with 300-400 nuclear warheads. Any Trident submarine, states a paper put out by PNFF, is capable of devastating the USSR from thousands of miles away in 15-30 minutes.

Almost 600 people organized by PNFF crowded the Veteran's Memorial Hall in Santa Cruz on Nov. 1 for a public hearing before the county planning commission. The hearing was aborted due to a disruptive audience protesting the application and a majority of commission members who didn't appear to want to hear what the audience had come to say. Indeed, the commission voted 4-1 to restrict public testimony to only the land use questions of the proposal.

But most of the audience and representatives of PNFF thought there were other important considerations. A primary one, they insisted, is the threat introduced to the general welfare of the people of Santa Cruz County by Lockheed's proposal.

They cited repeatedly the county's general plan which was adopted, according to its own words, to protect "the public health, safety, peace, morals, comfort, convenience, and general welfare" of county residents.

"Nuclear weapons are clearly an imminent danger to people in Santa Cruz County as well as around the world," says Peter Klotz-Chamberlin, a PNFF member. "We believe it is simply immoral to contribute to the development of nuclear weapons."

Officials at Lockheed, however, insist they are part of the private sector supplying a need, and shy away from a political discussion.

"This is our line of work," says

Lockheed's manager, Rudolph Zeller. "All of our work is in line with the present deterrent policy of this country, which has been tested in the courts and approved by Congress. There's not much we can say beyond that."

Lockheed officials also say they have no concrete plans to construct the building in question even if they get approval from the county. They say the building is part of a five-year expansion plan they produced several years ago.

"We were being optimistic then but we have no plans now," says Zeller. "The Trident II program has not even been approved or funded by Congress."

But Zeller acknowledges that his plant is "always looking for new jobs," and that the manufacture of parts for the Trident II would be no different than what they've been doing for some time now: manufacturing parts for the Trident I missile.

Vern Smith, manager of engineering and testing at the Lockheed site for 21 years and a former mayor of Santa Cruz, says that 50 to 60 percent of his plant's work already deals with Trident production.

Zeller balks at PNFF charges that citizens in the local community don't know the nature or extent of Lockheed's work in Santa Cruz and that they have a right to such information.

"The people of this county are party to a county system which polices activities such as ours with zoning laws, etc., and we have to comply. When we are doing that it shouldn't concern them," he said.

Zeller feels the protest is being conducted at the wrong level. "If people object to the moral implications of what

we're doing, they should take it up with Congress or the President."

But members of PNFF feel they have enough work to do just in this county. The group organized a year and a half ago to oppose "the combined threat of nuclear power plants and weapons," says Klotz-Chamberlin. With a core of 20-30 members, the group has been known to mobilize hundreds of local residents to attend public hearings such as the one in November. That audience was composed mostly of young people but Klotz-Chamberlin says PNFF is "more and more broadening a constituency of people opposed to Trident activity in the county."

Several other groups exist around the country working locally to stop Trident work in their areas, including the Pacific Life Community in Sunnyvale, the location of another Lockheed facility.

The question of a use permit for the five new buildings will be before the planning commission once again Monday night at 7 p.m. Because of the crowd at November's meeting, the continued hearing has been moved to the Santa Cruz Civic Auditorium and PNFF members say they expect more people to attend this one than the last. At Monday night's meeting, more presentations will be made by representatives of PNFF but no new information will be presented by either Lockheed or county planning staff who, in November, recommended that the use permit be approved under a few conditions.

It's possible that the issue could be ultimately decided by the county board of supervisors since a planning commission decision could be appealed by either side.

PNFF members would like to see the issue put before the voters in Santa Cruz County.

Says Klotz-Chamberlin, "Citizens in local communities where nuclear weapons are being produced should have something to say about the decision. It's such a mammoth problem and there is so much money involved, we deserve to have some input."