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**Subject: Shut It Downers interfere with workers arriving for 5 pm shift**

for immediate release

Shut It Down Affinity Group backs up some forty cars in two directions on Route 142 to block 5 pm shift entrance at Vernon's Vermont Yankee

VERNON, Vermont—"Vermont Yankee is more deadly than Hiroshima," proclaims the banner eight women of the Shut It Down Affinity Group employed to block forty carsful of Entergy Vermont Yankee workers from reporting to their 5 pm shift for more than a half hour on Tuesday before Vernon police transported them from Entergy's gate after arresting them.

Shut It Downers acted on the 68<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States' destruction of Hiroshima, Japan with the world's first atomic bomb that resulted in more than a hundred thousand immediate deaths and far more deaths and debilitating illnesses from the effects of radiation. The United States is the only nation in the world to have employed atomic weapons, a practice continued today with US weapons tipped with depleted uranium.

Officer Albrey Crowley of the Vernon Police Department arrested, from Vermont, Linda Pon Owen, 74, of Brattleboro and Ulrike von Moltke, 69 of Sharon; from Massachusetts, Hattie Nestel, 74, and Marcia Gagliardi, 65, of Athol; Anneke Corbett, 70, of Florence; Frances Crowe, 94 and Susan Lantz, 72, of Northampton; and Ellen Graves, 72, of West Springfield. The women were released without charges pending further review.

Before blocking the Vermont Yankee gate, Shut It Downers vigiled legally from 4 to 5 pm across Route 142 from the power plant driveway as workers exited from a day shift. In addition to their main banner, Shut It Downers carried signs that read "Hiroshima Killed/Vermont Yankee Kills" and "Vermont Yankee is killing us all."

"I had to be here today," said Lantz. "Nuclear power is destroying the earth. We must end it before it ends us."

Pondering the dilemma of blocking workers from entering their job site, Nestel paraphrased Rabbi Abraham Heschel who marched in the front lines with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. during civil rights activism fifty years ago in Selma, Alabama: "Justice is not important as an abstraction or value but for

practical effects on people. It is not so much the ideal of justice but practical applications of injustice or oppression. The thing is to interfere in situations which, while not concerning us personally, must be regarded as instances of injustice.”

“Today,” Nestel said, “we interfered with the unjust operation of Entergy’s Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant on the anniversary of the United States bombing of Hiroshima. We shut Vermont Yankee down for a half hour and blocked forty carsful of people from going to work.”

“If no one went to work at Vermont Yankee,” added Gagliardi, “there would be no need for anyone else to shut it down.”

During the legal vigil, 97 cars the women judged to be carrying Vermont Yankee workers exited the power plant. Separately, a vintage Lincoln Towncar slowed on Route 142. The elder driver rolled down his window to ask if anyone present had been to Hiroshima or Nagasaki. He identified himself as from nearby Hinsdale, NH, and said he had seen Nagasaki right after the bombing. “Horrible,” he said. “Bless you, Ladies.”

Nestel has walked from Hiroshima to Nagasaki several times with the Buddhist monastic order Nipponzan Myohoji which built and maintains the Peace Pagoda in Leverett, Massachusetts.