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U.S. Department of Energy
Office of Fissile Materials Disposition
J. David Nulton
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Washington, DC 20026-3786.

I am sending the following comments with regard to your February 1996 Draft Programmatic Environment Impact Statement for the Disposition of Weapons-Usable Fissile Materials.

I am deeply concerned that the DOE is not taking more timely and positive action in establishing a disposition program which will, with the Russians, convert the plutonium stockpiles in both countries into spent fuel. 1/08.03.00

The reactor option makes sense, and can with a high degree of confidence, use the plutonium instead of uranium fuel to produce electricity, and in the process, change the plutonium to other forms and make it radioactive. The reactor process also consumes some of the plutonium. Many reactor owners have told the DOE they are willing to work with them and use their reactors to convert the plutonium so that it would not be useful for weapons. Give the job to the utility companies and let them get on with making the world a safer place. 2/08.03.01

The Russian economy is in turmoil and I have read about attempts to smuggle bomb making materials. How much longer can we study the topic and have the luxury of two year PEIS studies without doing something real with the material.

DOE seems to be catering to special interests or trying to make everyone happy. Enough with Washington politics and special or regional interest catering! I read where some politicians from the Savannah River area were trying to get DOE to build a new nuclear reactor (from a Swedish company no less) at Savannah River to make tritium and burn plutonium. If existing reactors are available why wouldn't you use them instead. It is obvious that their proposal for a new reactor is their attempt to create jobs for their area. I also think the idea of having Canadian reactors burn the plutonium is unacceptable. Are we throwing the problem over our fence and letting the Canadians put in under their rugs because we can't decide whose rug to bury it under here in this country? I also think we shouldn't be paying the Canadians or making fuel for their reactors when a U.S. utility is willing to do it and maybe in the process, lower my rates. Isn't it enough the DOE has wasted more than two years on an environmental impact study that must have cost tens of millions of dollars and we are two years further down the road without anything being done or even having an agreement with the Russians. This seems like DOE catering to Al Gore and his rich environmentalist cronies. 2/08.03.01 cont. 3/08.03.01 1/08.03.00 cont.

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08 03 00 Comment Number 1

The Department of Energy is working to make decisions on these very important issues in a timely manner using all available information such that wise, sustainable decisions can be implemented in a deliberate, properly scheduled manner.

08 03 01 Comment Number 2

The Department of Energy acknowledges the commentor's support for Pu disposition in reactors. Decisions on disposition will be made based upon environmental analyses, technical and economic studies, national policy considerations, and public input.

08 03 01 Comment Number 3

The Department of Energy acknowledges the commentor's opposition to the use of the CANDU Reactor Alternative for the disposition of Pu. Decisions on disposition of weapons-usable fissile materials will be based upon environmental analyses, technical and economic studies, national policy considerations, and public input. This will include an appropriate level of analysis by Canada before any decision on burning Pu in a CANDU reactor is implemented.

I read where Greenpeace was objecting to using reactors for the job. Enough of those nutcakes. They don't represent mainstream America. They are paid professionals and ignorant, elitist, wealthy volunteers, more interested in saving whales while humans starve in Appalachia or the Northwest because Greenpeace forced a coal mine or lumber mill to shut down. They don't have solutions and they propose Utopian nonsense. They are obstructionist who, in this situation would have both the U.S. and Russia do nothing, while if we wait long enough, eventually the material will go back into bombs–if not in Russia than maybe possibly IRAN or IRAQ ? or even worse, into a terrorist bomb in the center of Washington DC or in my city ?

The other options being evaluated by DOE appear pie-in-the-sky, make-work R&D programs. Putting plutonium in glass and burying it seems dangerous. The scientist really don't know what will happen to the glass 50, 100, or 1000 years from now. I expect they could also spend years and years and millions and millions of more dollars on R&D and still not be ready to put the plutonium into a safe form of glass. The Greenpeace people say that's better than reactors but they also don't want the glass (or anything else for that matter) buried at Yucca Mountain. They are hypocrites. I also understand that it would be an easy matter for the U.S. or Russia to remove the plutonium from the glass if either wanted to. Therefore, that doesn't make sense either.

I want to show my support for the common sense approach offered by the utilities and their reactors. The National Academy of Sciences recommended OVER TWO YEARS AGO, that the plutonium should be put into reactors and turned into spent fuel. The DOE has since spent those two years studying every other harebrained idea and the reactor process is no further along. I want to protest DOE's lack of action and urge the DOE to get the process going before it is too late. 2/08.03.01 cont. 1/08.03.00 cont.

Yours Truly,

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