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Spent Fuel Transport Casks from Japan Also Contaminated

Contaminations From Early '90s Finally Revealed

Table1: Contaminated Containers of Japanese Origin

Time of Shipment	Vessel	Plant of Origin	Cask model	Number of Cask	Number of Contaminated Cask	Part Contaminated	Highest Level of Contamination(Bq/cm2) *
Oct. '90	Pacific Pintail	Kansai Elec. Power Co. Ohi	TN-12A	6	4	Drum	148
Oct. '91	Pacific Swan		TN-12	8	2	Drum	30
May '92	Pacific Pintail		TN-12A	4	4	Drum	29.6
Oct. '92	Pacific Swan		TN-12A	2	1	Drum	11.1
			TN-12	6	1	Drum	14.8
April '93	Pacific Pintail		TN-12A	8	1	Drum	29.6
April '94	Pacific Sandpiper	Kyushu Elec. Power Co.Genkai	TN-12A	3	2	Trunnion	29.6

* Inspected by COGEMA

In this issue:

Japan's power utilities reported on May 28, the radioactive contamination of Japan's spent-fuel transport casks to the Science and Technology Agency (STA) and the Ministry of Transportation which are government units responsible for supervising the transport of spent fuel. The report came well after the contamination of European casks and rail cars

began to be revealed in May. Furthermore, it was not until June 11 when a meeting of the Nuclear Safety Commission's sub-committee on the Safe Transport of Radioactive Materials was convened that the incidents of contamination were revealed to the public.

At the meeting, information regarding the contamination was divulged as shown in Table 1. The report showed that of the total fuel casks sent during the period1990-'93 from the Ohi nuclear power plant owned by Kansai Electric Power Co.'s (KEPCO), 13 were found to be contaminated. In addition, two casks of the total casks sent from Kyushu Electric Power Co.'s Genkai nuclear power plant in 1994 were also found to be contaminated. The contaminated casks from the two plants measured radioactivity of anywhere between 11-148Bq/cm^2.

When the casks sent by KEPCO had arrived in France, it had been informed by British Nuclear Fuels Ltd. (BNFL) that some of the casks were in fact found to be contaminated. Nonetheless, KEPCO failed to deal with the problem any further by simply saying that because the casks' radioactive level measured below the standard level of 4Bq/cm^2 when leaving the plant, it did not believe that the cause was on the Japan side. This communication between the two companies was not reported to appropriate authorities nor revealed to the public. On the question regarding the contamination found in 1991, KEPCO has asserted that it had never been informed by BNFL.

The transport of spent fuel from Japan to Compagnie Generale des Matieaires Nucleaires (COGEMA) and BNFL plants in Europe is handled by Pacific Nuclear Transport Ltd. (PNTL), a subsidiary of BNFL. Once spent fuel casks leave Japan, it usually takes about two months for the shipment to travel through the Panama Canal and then to the port of Cherbourg in France. From there, the casks are sent to Valogne Station where COGEMA's rail depot is located. This means that the contamination level of the transport casks which were found to have been contaminated in France rose from 4 Bq/cm^2 when shipped from Japan, to as high as 148 Bq/cm^2 during the subsequent two months. The Japanese utilities insist that the casks were not contaminated in Japan. If so, then how and where were they contaminated?

The most likely explanation is that contamination occurs during the long period of sea transport. This is what is called the "Weeping" of spent fuel casks, an explanation that has been suggested by academics around the world. The phenomenon occurs when the contaminated water of the fuel storage pool gets fixed into the paint used on certain parts of the cask and the metal surface of the cask. Though the cask may not show any sign of contamination when it leaves the plant, the effect of the temperature and moisture in the air while traveling through the sea causes the pool water to appear on the surface and combine with the vapor. The radioactive liquid then flows to other parts of the cask and the contamination spreads.

This shows that the cause of the contamination is probably in the method of loading the fuel cask at the nuclear plant and/or in the method of the cask decontamination. In spite of being aware of this phenomenon, Japanese utilities as well as those in Europe have continued to transport spent-fuel without conducting investigations of any sort. In Europe, France, Germany, United Kingdom, Switzerland, and Holland all halted the transport of spent-fuel when the contamination was revealed. Although France resumed the transport in early July, these countries are now attempting to determine the actual level of contamination while also reviewing how best to improve the transport system.

In view of this serious problem, CNIC is asking the Japanese utility companies to investigate the cause of the contamination and to provide accurate information on how the spent fuel pool is presently being managed. We are also asking them to examine the possibility that contamination occurs in the transport vessel itself. It must be noted that not only spent fuel but also other radioactive materials such as high-level waste and mixed-oxide fuel (MOX) are and will be shipped between Europe and Japan.

These shipments must be stopped immediately until the causes of contamination are ascertained and adequate safety measures are taken. Investigations are under way to determine whether there is such "weeping" during transport within Japan of casks which all go to the Tokai Reprocessing Plant in Ibaraki Prefecture.

by Masako Sawai

No Hope for Rally by Nuclear Power

-- Government Formulates New "Outlook"

On June 11 the government's Advisory Committee on Energy held a joint meeting of its Subcommittees for Basic Policy and Supply and Demand, where its new "Outlook for Long-term Energy Supply and Demand" (Outlook) was approved. Although the name suggests a forecast for energy supply and demand, the Outlook is merely a planned target for electric power supply and demand, and is based on discussions held by the Electric Utility Industry Council's Supply and Demand Subcommittee.

This new Outlook was supposed to have been produced for the purpose of exploring ways to make energy policy meet Japan's target of cutting greenhouse gases by 6% over the 1990 level during 2008 to 2012, the target imposed at the 3rd Conference of the Parties to the United Nation's Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP3) in Kyoto last year. However, as the Outlook's premise is stabilizing CO_2 emissions from energy consumption at the 1990 level (i.e.0% cut) by 2010, it remains nothing more than a projection of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry's (MITI) basic pre-COP3 position.

Big Push for Unattainable Plan

From the Outlook's 1967 debut until this latest 11th version, it has been consistently founded on a policy for an increasing energy supply to accommodate the all-important purpose of economic growth. Symbolic of this is the initial statement by Kuroda Masahiro, Chairperson of the first meeting of the Advisory Committee Subcommittee on Energy Supply and Demand held in January, 1998 to formulate the new Outlook: "The energy supply structure is still unstable."

The new Outlook has two main elements. One is an even bigger promotional push for nuclear power, where the idea that Japan's nuclear power output in 2010 will be 408 billion kWh has remained unchanged. But in consideration of siting difficulties and aging reactors, the plan now allows for a latitude in generating facilities of 66 to 70GW. In the event that only 66GW is obtainable, it would be possible to secure the requisite nuclear capacity by maintaining an 83% annual capacity utilization factor. However, the only nuclear plant currently under construction is Onagawa 3, and there is no sense of reality at all in the list of names for the 21 reactors which it is said could be in operation by 2010 - such as Kaminoseki, Ohma, Ashihama 1 and 2, and Maki - to which the government has now assigned the status of either "in preparation for starting construction" or "in preparation for submission of application to Electric Power Development Coordination Council."

In order to push through this unrealistic plan, the Electric Utility Industrial Council's Supply and Demand Subcommittee organized a working group that includes the mayors of Kashiwazaki and Tsuruga and is analyzing the problems standing in the way of siting nuclear plants. The purpose is to put more effort into on-site measures by using as leverage the expanded use of government subsidies granted under the three electric power laws to the local governments of the plant sites.

Discussions in Council meetings also centered on how to promote nuclear power. Some of the most notable opinions were: Provide more ways to use grants under the three electric power laws; beef up surveys and public relations efforts through the media; it is necessary to start up joint action by government and private sector to demand correction of "mistaken" news reports on nuclear accidents; raise the utilization rate of nuclear plants by shortening the regular inspection time; raise public understanding on the necessity of nuclear power by developing an Outlook that dares to be controversial; promote the ideas that arresting the issue of global warming is impossible without the use of nuclear power, and that many of those who oppose

nuclear power are simply reacting emotionally.

The electric power industry has constantly insisted it needs full-blown government backing in order to build more reactors and that the government produce realistic figures, adding that it is of no use for the industry to be given only the responsibility for promoting nuclear power. When the new Outlook was published, Hiroshi Araki, Chairman of the Federation of Electric Power Companies, expressed the industry's assessment of the new Outlook by saying, "It incorporates almost all our demands."

Meanwhile, the opinions of committee members who have always expressed disagreement with an energy policy that emphasizes nuclear power have been omitted and are not even recorded as minority opinions. MITI has responded arrogantly to such opinions by saying, "Let's see your alternative to the use of nuclear power."

Policy on Other Energy Types

On energy sources other than nuclear power, the Outlook calls for cutting the overall supply of fossil fuels, reducing dependence on oil and coal, and increasing natural gas. But Japan will never stop building more coal-fired thermal plants due to their low generating cost. In the area of new energy sources, there are big hopes for waste incineration power generation, while there are no suggestions to place increasing efforts on the promotion of solar, wind, and other renewable energy options for reasons of poor economy and instability. Nevertheless, the numerical targets of 5GW for photovoltaic (57MW in 1996) and 300MW for wind (14MW in 1996) show a huge gap between targets and encouragement measures, which contrasts with nuclear power and its proposed high-power promotion.

Citizens Forced to Assume Energy-saving Burden

The second main element of the new Outlook is "a policy of energy conservation without harming the economy." Though it covers the industry, household, and transport sectors, there is special emphasis on the "radical reform of the citizens' lifestyle." This is irresponsible because it shifts the burden of the government's do-nothing policy to the citizens, who are forced to sacrifice their own livelihoods.

No one will disagree that it is a good thing to save energy by weaning ourselves from mass-consumption/disposal lifestyles. But the new Outlook foresees an increase in electric power demand in 2010 by 43% over 1990, 20% more than 1996. Under the present energy supply-demand structure, the key to curbing growth in energy consumption is to curb electricity supply and demand. Because electric power generation unavoidably results in big losses during the conversion from primary energy, growth in electric power demand leads to a significant increase in energy consumption. Energy conservation technologies are quite practical, and one can see from the measures taken in other countries to curb demand that minor promotion efforts can hold down electric power demand. The government, however, urges only voluntary actions on the part of industry, which is no doubt the biggest energy consumer.

The new Outlook incorporates into policy MITI's long-cherished insistence that "it will be impossible to control greenhouse gases without either severe austerity or a substantial increase in nuclear power." And waiting in the wings is the conclusion that "this policy alone will not make it possible to reduce carbon dioxide emissions."

NGOs Submit "Citizens' Opinion"

Concerning the formulation of the new Outlook, The Citizens' Nuclear Information Center called on the People's Research Institute on Energy and Environment and other NGOs working in the energy and environment area, and submitted to the Prime Minister on June 1 a "Citizens' Opinion Seeking a Sustainable Energy Policy". This opinion gained the support of over 60 citizens' organizations and individuals. Furthermore, on June 11, the day the new Outlook was finalized, the same "opinion" was submitted to the Minister of International Trade and Industry and the chairperson of the Advisory Committee on Energy.

Although the Outlook is to be reviewed every few years, it is our hope that it will be reviewed again very soon so as to incorporate the citizens' opinion.

by Mika Ohbayashi

Update on MOX

Gov't and Utilities Set to Force Down Plan Without Public Consent

As was reported in the last issue of NIT, Kansai Electric Power Co.(KEPCO) has submitted an application for the safety review of Takahama 3 and 4 (both PWR, 870MW) for MOX use after obtaining preliminary consent from the Fukui Prefectural Government and Takahama Town. However, on May 29, Fukui Governor Yukio Kurita declared that "fuel transport also requires our preliminary consent," expressing his understanding that the transport of fuel will not be allowed without the Governor's approval. His comment was made in response to a remark made by KEPCO President Yoshihisa Akiyama on May 8. At that time Akiyama declared that "we will not bring in the MOX fuel (to Takahama plant) without local consent, but depending on our business situation, we may chose to begin transportation anyway."

The Governor also expressed a cautious attitude regarding MOX use at Takahama in his remarks at the opening of the Prefectural Assembly on June 2. At that time he warned that "the results of a safety review will be important to consider, and I would like also to see a new round table discussion to obtain a national consensus on this issue as well as programs to stimulate local economies. This will enable me to make a comprehensive decision."

Meanwhile, Tokyo Electric Power Co. (TEPCO) is trying to obtain relicensing of Fukushima I-3(BWR, 784 MW) and Kashiwazaki-Kariwa 3 (BWR, 1100MW). Neither Fukushima nor Niigata Prefectures, where these two plants are located, have given preliminary consent, however, it has been reported that Fukushima is likely to give the green light very soon.

As for the production of MOX fuel, KEPCO consigned production to British Nuclear Fuel Ltd. (BNFL) of the UK, and TEPCO to Belgonucleair SA of Belgium. A Nuclear Agreement has not been signed between Belgium and Japan. Therefore, both parties are required to either submit to each other an exchange document with each new contract, or to set up a Nuclear Agreement in order to continue these consignments. At present, there is a move to establish a Nuclear Agreement between EU and Japan so that bilateral agreements with the UK and those with France can be covered by one that includes all the EU. Negotiations are likely to start sometime this fall.

by Baku Nishio

Table: Japan's Separated Plutonium Inventory (as of end 1997)

Facility	Amount of Pu (total Pu in kg.)	s: stockpile u: in use/ready for use
Reprocessing plant	538	
As nitrate	385	s
Stored as oxide	153	s
Fuel fabrication plant	3,649	
Stored as oxide	2,553	s
Under test or processing	726	u
Completed fuel	370	s
Reactor sites	819	
Joyo	23	u
Monju *	367	s
Fugen	0	u
Critical assemblies	429	u
Overseas reprocessors	19,083	
U.K. (BNFL)	3,549	s
France (COGEMA)	15,534	s
Total	24,089	s (22,911) + u (1,178)

* All the completed fresh fuel for Monju is regarded here as stockpile because restart of the reactor is uncertain.

An Appeal from Scientists in Japan to the Scientists and Citizens of the World

Charging Scientists with Moral Responsibility for the New Crisis in Nuclear Pr oliferation

We, the undersigned, are eighteen natural scientists working in various fields from Japan, a nation which itself has experienced nuclear attack. Upon learning of the nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan in May 1998, our reaction was one of tremendous sorrow, anger, and frustration. These tests have increased the risk of nuclear war to a new and ominous level. They have drastically lowered the barriers to the possession and testing of nuclear weapons, creating a dangerous environment in which nuclear weapons may be put to use anywhere in the world at any time. It is with an acute and unprecedented sense of crisis that we, as scientists, issue this appeal to scientists and citizens throughout the world on this, the fifty-third anniversary of the first atomic bombings.

Modern science, ostensibly the fruit of human wisdom, is deeply implicated in the production of nuclear weaponry. We believe that scientists who have participated in nuclear arms development bear a heavy moral responsibility for their work, and are in fact nothing less than accessories to a crime against humanity. Loyalty to one's nation, race, or religion is no excuse for denying this responsibility, which all scientists everywhere must recognize and accept anew.

1. To the Governments of India and Pakistan:

We view the nuclear tests conducted by India as a gross betrayal of the position that India itself has taken in denouncing the hypocritical and discriminatory policies of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) regime established by the declared nuclear states.

2. To the Five Nuclear States:

We believe that the recent nuclear tests have conclusively demonstrated the hypocrisy of the five declared nuclear states and the failure of the NPT status quo.

With the bankruptcy of the NPT regime now more apparent than ever, it is imperative that the five nuclear states acknowledge their own hypocrisy. Our goal can no longer be the reinforcement of the nuclear status quo as maintained by the declared nuclear powers. Instead, these nations must abandon the privileged status they have enjoyed until now and embark on a systematic and comprehensive arms reduction program that aims for the complete abolition of nuclear weapons.

3. The Failure of Nuclear Deterrence

We unequivocally reject the "nuclear deterrence" rationale for the possession of nuclear arms by India and Pakistan.

4. Toward a Nuclear-Free Civilization

Our nuclear civilization, built on the dream of liberating and harnessing the tremendous energy of the atom, now seems more likely to visit a terrible calamity upon the human race and the natural environment, even if nuclear war per se is averted.

Civilian and military use of nuclear energy are merely two sides of a coin: the technology is the same. Humanity can ill afford any further delay in converting our nuclear civilization to a nuclear-free one. Not only must the world's scientists immediately cease their involvement with nuclear weapons development, they must mobilize their knowledge and their consciences for the battle to free humanity from the clutches of this nuclear culture.

5. Toward the Demilitarization of Science and Technology and a Global Revival of the Anti-Nuclear Movement

Today we stand on the brink of a new abyss, a new crisis in nuclear proliferation. We call on the citizens of every nation to join hands with the scientific community -- and at the same time, to monitor the scientific community -- so that together we may exercise vigilance both within our respective countries and without. We must keep a watchful eye not only on our own governments, but those of the nuclear states; and we must join together in global solidarity to demilitarize science and technology and liberate ourselves from our nuclear culture.

August 6, 1998

Signed:

Ikuro Anzai, Satoru Ikeuchi, Katsuhiko Ishibashi, Hiromichi Umebayashi, Hiroshi Ezawa, Kazuo Oike, Naoki Kachi, Rihito Kimura, Yoichiro Kuroda, Shoichiro Koide, Michiji Konuma, Chikara Sasaki, Fumitaka Sato, Jinzaburo Takagi, Toshiyuki Toyoda, Hiroyoshi Higuchi, Tetsukazu Yahara, Fumiko Yonezawa

*Anyone who agrees and wishes to join this appeal, please send your name to CNIC. Short messages are also welcome.

Takagi School for Alternative Scientists Initiated

by Jinzaburo Takagi

I have long had the idea of someday initiating an educational program for rearing young scientists who can work with citizens to help address questions that people actually confront in their daily lives. In other words, I have wanted to train young people as alternative scientists.

It is often said that Japanese young people are solely concerned with studying science and technology, and that those who opt for this field tend to be engrossed in narrow disciplines without showing any social and/or environmental interest or awareness.

But I know that this is not the case. I have met many young students, all over Japan, who are very socially or environmentally conscious and keenly interested in helping citizens tackle problems. These were young people who were interested in doing something to make their own future more sustainable and peaceful. Most of these young people, however, have not been able to find an undergraduate or graduate university course that would fulfill their interest. Setting up an alternative science course, outside of academic institutions, and in cooperation with citizens seemed worthwhile.

However, my idea would have remained forever an unrealized dream if it were not for the Right Livelihood Award. I was too much occupied with the daily work of CNIC to undertake anything new, and no one seemed to be interested in funding my personal fantasy. Then when I was told that I was chosen for the 1997 RLA together with Mycle Schneider, I thought of it as a propitious, if not, the last chance to start the project. Considering that the RLA is referred to as "the alternative Nobel Prize," using the award money for educating alternative scientists seemed most appropriate.

So, finally, the Takagi School for Alternative Scientists (TSAS) is about to start. I announced the plan in Tokyo at the award celebration party held by CNIC in January. Announcement of the plan was reported in some Japanese newspapers.

From that day, I have received calls from many young people interested in joining TSAS. There were calls also from others, including mature scientists, who wanted to support the project. We have met several times so far for preliminary discussions on the curriculum. The first intensive course will take place from August 13 to 16 with about 40 people including undergraduate and graduate students and postdoctoral fellows in disciplines ranging from sociology, ecology to nuclear science.

I will give lectures on my experience as an alternative scientist and on nuclear issues. Ms. Yoshiko Kuratsubo who is fighting against the Rokkasho nuclear cycle facilities in Aomori Prefecture as a citizen will make a guest report from a mother's perspective. The most important part of this summer course will be discussion among participants regarding the social implications of the studies in which they are currently involved. We will also give consideration to possible joint study and publications on issues of social and environmental importance.

We are also now preparing to start in late autumn the course B (beginners) designed to educate lay people on scientific issues.

For information on TSAS contact, takasas@jca.ax.apc.org

Data: Significant Incidents at Nuclear Plants
(January - June, 1997)

Date	Plant	Short Description of Events
13 Jan.	Fast neutron Critical Assembly (JAERI)	Air leak found at compressor during pre-start-up inspection.
17 Jan.	Fukushima II-2	Fire at 1st floor of reactor building.
21 Jan.	Fugen, Turuga 1	Power sypply to power plants stopped due to lighting at transmission line during inspection outage.
22 Jan.	Monju	Power supply to power plant stopped 3 times due to lighting at transmission line during accidental outage.
28 Jan.	Fukushima I-3	Reactor manually shutdown due to increased water leak from main steam isolation valve seal.
21 Feb.	Turuga 1	Reactor manually shutdown due to water leakadge because of cracks at control rod drive hydraulic system.
11 March	LLW Bitumenizing Facility (Tokai reprocessing plant)	Fire followed by explosion at low level radioactive liquid waste bitumenizing facility. 37 workers internally exposed to cesium-137 and aroud 10 billion Bq of radioactive nuclides released.
11 March	Mihama2	Cracks found at welds of control rod drive mechanisms housing tubes during inspection outage.
13 March	Kashiwazaki-Kariwa 2	Reactor manually shutdown due to malfunction of residual heat removal system(B) check valve cause of mistake at installing.
15 March	Genkai 1	Reactor power reduced due to damage found at main condenser tube.
31 March	Ohi 2	Cracks found at control rod drive mechanisms housing welds during inspection outage.
14 April	Fugen	11 workers exposed to radiation due to tritium leak from deuterium puryfication equipement.
15 April	Fugen	Reactor automatically shutdown due to moisture separator water level high-high alarm during power down operation foe inspection outage.
28 April	Fukushima II-2	Reactor manually shutdown due to radioactive leak from fuel rod.
6 May	Fukushima I-4	Reactor automatically shutdown due to dropped reactor vessel water level during power down operaiton for inspection outage.
8 May	Mihama 1	Cracks found at control rod drive mechanisms housing welds during inspection outage.
9 May	Takahama 2	Reactor automatically shutdown due to power supply break of power range monitor.
21 May	Kashiwazaki-Kariwa 7	Reactor manually shutdown due to turbine steam pressure monitor pipe rupture.
3 June	Shimane 2	Reactor power reduced due to dust extractor automatically shutdown cause of jery fishes stuck.
5 June	Ikata 3	Contaminated water leak from fuel exchange pool.
8 June	Fukushima I-2	Primary water leak from reactor vessel feed water pump valve.

Anti-Nuke Who's Who

Kazumasa Yasumoto

Anti-Nuke Bull Determined to Stop Plan for Shimane-3

by Yasue Ashihama, Matsue-city, Shimane

Born to a family that has been operating a miso and soy-sauce company in Matsue-city of Shimane for 108 years, Kazumasa Yasumoto, who served as President until 1995, now spends his days leading the fight against a local power utility's plan to build a third reactor at Shimane Nuclear Power Plant.

In March of last year, Chugoku Electric Power Co. submitted a request to the Kashimacho Town's Office and the Shimane Prefectural Government for permission to build an additional reactor (unit 3) at the Shimane site. This year in February, the Power Company asked the Ministry of International Trade and Industry to conduct an environmental assessment of the planned site. Although an advisory committee to the Governor of Shimane has been discussing the issue, members who are aware of the trend in the industry towards liberalization and know the future outlook on electricity demand and supply are not necessarily persuaded by the "must approve" argument.

The only people who are eager to push the plan through are members of business circles and the local Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). Although Chugoku Electric aims to submit the plan to Electric Power Development Coordination Council in November, the schedule may not be achieved.

Yasumoto first became aware of Japan's environmental problems in the 1980s when he read a newspaper article that featured an interview of a local fisherman activist who opposed a Government plan to build a dam that would cut off the flow of sea water into a local lake. Yasumoto was inspired by the article to get involved in environmental issues.

Immediately after the movement won from the Government a pledge to freeze the plan, he was visited by a Buddhist woman who asked that he cooperate in opposing nuclear power as a matter of religious faith. Yasumoto, who is also a devoted follower of *Ohmoto-kyo - a Shinto sect founded in 1892 which follows the teachings (script) of the late Onisaburo Deguchi - quickly agreed to the woman's request. He soon formed the "21st century group of religious people." Since then he has taken part in many anti-nuke activities, including a large-scale conference during which 1,800 citizens gathered to stop the test operations of Shimane-2.

Kazumasa Yasumoto

In 1992 when the plan to build unit 3 came to light, Yasumoto called for support from anti-nuke groups in the five surrounding prefectures and launched a movement to stop the plan. Thanks to his efforts, local citizens have become aware of the dangers of nuclear power represented by the Chernobyl and Monju accidents. Their response to issues regarding nuclear power has definitely changed. Women and young people in the area have especially come to express their worries over nuclear power.

Among the nearby local governments (city, town, and village), some leaders have expressed without hesitation concern over the dangers of nuclear power. In other places, 40% of local parliament members have declared that the power utility should obtain prior approval from local governments before constructing additional nuclear facilities.

Having been encouraged by change in air, Yasumoto boasts that he will "put an end to Reactor 3." "From now on, human beings must live together with all living creatures on earth. That is the kind of 'development' we need," says Yasumoto whose self-confidence no doubt springs from his belief in Ohmoto-kyo.

*Ohmoto-kyo: Founded by Nao Deguchi and propagated by Saint Onisaburo in 1892. It was oppressed by the government in 1921, and in 1935 until the end of the war because it had begun to spread very quickly.

Announcement

Workshop on Sustainable and Peaceful Energy Future in Asia '98

Draft Proposal on Workshop on Sustainable and Peaceful Energy Future in Asia '98 (tentative)

Date: 28 to 30 September 1998
Place: Hoam Guest House, Seoul, South Korea

Co-sponsored by:
Citizens' Nuclear Information Center (CNIC), Japan; Joint Institute for Sustainable Energy and Environment Future, Korea & U.S.A.; other organizations in South Korea

Expected Participants and Organizations:
JISEEF (S. Korea), CEEP (USA), KFEM (S. Korea), Green Korea (S. Korea), Anung Karyadi (WALHI, Indonesia), Germit Singh (CANSEA, Malaysia), TEPU (Taiwan), IIEC (Thailand), Alternative Energy Project for Sustainability (Thailand), Chilapol Sintunawa (Mahidol University, Thailand), NFPC (the Philippines), Iwane Fujii (Japan), REXTA (Japan), the CNIC's study group for Sustainable and Peaceful Energy Future (Japan), etc.
* Other participants including some from developed countries, will join in as the network proceeds.

Objectives:
To create the opportunity to discuss and establish a common strategy towards sustainable and peaceful energy future in Asia, and to prepare for the up-coming COP4 in the beginning of November.

Schedule of the Workshop:
28 " : Workshop
29 " : Workshop
30 " : Summary session; statement for COP4; departure

Subjects to be addressed at the workshop:

1) Sustainable energy systems
   a. Demand side perspective
   b. Supply side perspective
   c. Global perspective (climate change)

2) Analysis of nuclear energy and Asian future
   a. LCA
   b. Decommissioning

3) Economics
   a. Economic analysis of nuclear energy
   b. Economic analysis of renewables and energy conservation

4) Energy policy for sustainable future
   a. Greening of electric power industries
   b. Asian energy scenarios towards sustainable and peaceful energy future
   c. Proposal of sustainable and peaceful energy future for COP4

NEWS WATCH

Gov't Measures on Global Warming Require More Nuclear Plants

Japan's Global Warming Prevention Headquarters, headed by Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto, finalized on June 19 guidelines for achieving its target emission reduction rate (6% from 1990) of greenhouse-effect gases. The target had been decided at the 3rd Conference of the Parties to the United Nation's Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP3).

The guideline naturally includes measures to save energy, but it emphasizes, in particular, the promotion of nuclear power-plant construction suggesting that "it is necessary to construct by FY2010 additional plants to meet the target of a more than 50% increase in the amount of power generated over FY1997." In order to accomplish this, the guidelines emphasize the need for the Government as a whole to undertake all efforts possible.

On the other hand, the 1998 White Paper on Environment that received Cabinet approval on June 5 does not mention nuclear power at all. In a way, the White Paper represents very precisely the attitude of the Environment Agency that does not want to take part in the effort of promoting nuclear power, but cannot engage in a frontal attack of the policy. There is a view in currently in the Diet that the Environment Agency should be invested with the authority to regulate the impact imposed on the environment by nuclear power. With this in mind, it will be interesting to see the change of roles for the Agency after it has been promoted to "Environment Ministry" under the Basic Law on the Reform of Government Ministries and Agencies established on June 9.

White Papers on Nuclear Policy Released

On June 19 the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) and on June 30 the Nuclear Safety Commission (NSC) released respectively the White Paper on Nuclear Power and the White Paper on Nuclear Safety. The former was issued one-and-a-half years following the previous report while the latter was separated from its predecessor by two years and three months. Neither of the two annual White Papers state clearly the reasons for the delayed release. There is no doubt, however, that the two Commissions waited until they were able to foresee how the series of scandals involving the Power Reactor and Nuclear Fuel Development Corp. (PNC) would be handled. In addition, the release followed the establishment of the law on PNC reform that will turn PNC into a new corporation.

NSC was set up 20 years ago to serve as a professional committee specializing in safety regulations. This was done in order to correct the old system in which safety regulations were a part of AEC, an agency that is mostly concerned with the promotion of nuclear power. The two White Papers strike the common theme of emphasizing the need to "recover public trust in nuclear power," and adopt a similar argument as well that "although Japan's nuclear facilities are safe, the public does not feel safe enough."

Shroud Replacement of Fukushima I-3 Completed

Shroud replacement of Tokyo Electric Power Co.'s (TEPCO) Fukushima I-3 (BWR, 784 MW) which started on May 26, 1997 was completed on June 8. TEPCO is said also to be planning to replace the shrouds of unit 2, 1 and 5 of Fukushima I (unit 1 - 460 MW; the other two - 784 MW) in that order.

The replacement work of unit 3 involved about 3,000 workers, of whom about 1,000 worked inside the reactor. The total radiation exposure dose in provisional computation was about 11.5-person Sv. The maximum exposure dose among these workers was 25mSv, and the average rate was about 3.7mSv. In the last regular inspection of the same reactor there were about 5,300 workers where the total exposure

dose was 4.97-person Sv and the average exposure dose was 0.9mSv.

Of the radioactive waste produced by the replacement, about 40 tons of high radioactive waste is stored in pool water, and about 20 tons of relatively low radioactive waste is stored in the solid waste storage facility.

PNC: A Huge Barrel of Flops

Power Reactor and Nuclear Fuel Development Corporation's (PNC) Tokai facility had been issued a suspension order by the Science and Technology Agency (STA) for the period between December 1997 to June 1998. The suspension order was imposed due to the series of careless management of radioactive waste by PNC, including an incident in which drums containing uranium waste were left soaking in water causing them to corrode and leak radioactive in PNC's storage facility. Just before the suspension period was to end, another case of sloppy management came to light.

On June 17, four sample bottles containing natural uranium powder were found at a "non-radioactive waste" underground storage pit at the plutonium fuel plant. They bottles were said to have been found during a general inspection of waste-related facilities in the Plant. The plant manager did not report this to the director of the plant, nor was any public announcement made because none of the staff were found to be exposed to radiation, and there was no evidence of contamination in the surrounding area.

PNC had become a target of public criticism and a source of considerable social unease when it was revealed that it had been concealing information and making false reports during the time of the Monju accident, as well as the accident at the bitumenizing facility of the same Tokai Reprocessing Plant. Yet, once again this same pattern of falsification and concealment was repeated.

A report on the four bottles of uranium to the plant director was finally made on June 29. At the same time, an official announcement was at last made. Meanwhile, on June 25, two sample bottles contaminated by plutonium were found at the same underground storage pit where the bottles containing uranium had been found. This time the incident was made public because the clothing and shoes worn by the three workers had been contaminated. Later, rock-like material from the same pit that had been processed from natural uranium was also found.

On June 30, a very high level of plutonium - 23 Bq/kg of plutonium-238, and 390 Bq/kg of plutonium-239 and 240 - were detected in the ashes of incinerated waste in the pit. The incineration was done on June 15, 22 and 25 or a period after they found the uranium-containing bottles. This means that waste was being incinerated even after PNC officers knew of the possibility that radioactive substances might be mixed in the waste, resulting in the release of radioactivity in the environment during incineration.

Endless though it may seem, on July 7, radioactive substances including cesium 137 were detected in the ashes of "non-radioactive waste" at the reprocessing plant.

There is a need to thoroughly investigate the circumstances in which radioactive waste is so often being disposed of as "non-radioactive" waste.

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