

Comments by J.A.L. Robertson
on “Appendix B – Ethical Issues”
by Charles McCombie

Charles McCombie’s appendix provides a good review of the recent treatment of nuclear wastes by international bodies. However, it gives the misleading impression that little was done on nuclear wastes until the 1980s, and then by the IAEA and the NEA. The author makes an exception for the U.S., citing a 1966 publication. Readers are not informed that Canada’s AECL conducted field trials on immobilized wastes at Chalk River in the 1950s, i.e., before the first CANDU reactor operated. In 1975 AECL identified criteria for management of the wastes, including the responsibility to future generations, and proposed deep underground disposal in hard rock of the Canadian Shield. Since then AECL has spent about \$500M on R&D and other activities to develop the proposal for a review (the Blair Seaborn Panel) that lasted eight years.

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