

Clarification on “Response to Comments by J.A.L. Robertson relating to
the Submission by the UCC to the Seaborn Panel”
by Mary Lou Harley

In J.A.L. Robertson’s submission of April 5, he states that my submission of April 1, “provides ... an illustrative case study on how the Canadian public is misinformed on nuclear issues.” My submission does not contain any misinformation on nuclear issues.

Also, there is nothing “Contrary to what readers might expect from the title ...,” as he says of my submission. I can understand that he may have been frustrated by the lack of debate among presenters in the Seaborn Panel hearings, that he has several articles in which he comments on the UCC submission and that he may have hoped for an article that would address all the issues he has raised in the past. However, my purpose was to address one specific issue. The title is not misleading to the general reader and the purpose is stated in my opening paragraph. I set up no expectations for readers except to provide the background to clarify that Peter Timmerman, as a consultant, was not responsible for the ethical framework or its application to nuclear issues in the submission by United Church of Canada to the Seaborn Panel.

Specific phrases used by J.A.L. Robertson lead to recognition of the need to clarify that Peter Timmerman was not responsible for the ethics in the UCC submission. In “Nuclear Energy - an Ethical Choice,” posted among NWMO Background Papers, the issue of ethics in the United Church document is linked to Peter Timmerman:

Later, the Panel issued an Issues Paper in which the first Issue was "Ethics": I responded in another submission. Among other participants who contributed submissions on this issue [ethics] the most prolific was Professor Peter Timmerman, either as co-author on behalf of the Canadian Coalition for Ecology, Ethics, and Religion (CCEER) or as consultant to the United Church of Canada (UCC).

Additionally, in “Comments by J.A.L. Robertson on Ethics of High Level Nuclear Fuel Waste Disposal in Canada . . .,” posted in NWMO Submissions Library, there are two areas that highlight the need for clarification.

- The UCC document is referred to by a portion of its title, leaving out the United Church of Canada, and it is stated that Timmerman as consultant submitted the document:
Also in March, Timmerman as consultant, submitted the 96 page “Nuclear fuel waste management and disposal concept.”
- Further, the UCC submission is used in substantiating the point:
Of those submissions that dealt with ethics in detail, those by Timmerman and myself were the most substantial . . .

I indicated one of these articles in my submission of April 1, however, from J.A.L. Robertson’s response it is apparent that I should have quoted the specific phrases. I apologize if the term “implication” struck J.A.L. Robertson as accusative; the role of consultant can take many forms and his articles just pointed out the need to clarify that role in this case.