

July 2.2005

To N.W.M.O.

Attention: Elizabeth DOWDESWELL

I would like to thank you for providing me with a copy of "Choosing a Way Forward" and an invitation to attend the dialogue session in North Bay. Unfortunately I am unable to attend the session. I will however provide you with my comments on your recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION

Your recommendation for the "Adaptive Phased Management" appears at first glance to be the best alternative considering our present knowledge and the best available science. I like the idea of a longer lapse time, 300 years, prior to any final sealing of the waste in a deep geologic repository. This will allow for more research to be done in order to prove or dispel the safety or suitability of the deep repository technology. As science moves in leaps and bounds, it may also provide the time needed to find if the waste can be safely reused or otherwise disposed of without the need or expense of the deep repository.

SITE SELECTION

I feel that any site chosen either for a shallow underground storage at a central site or for the final deep geologic repository should be as close as possible to where the benefits of nuclear energy is being produced. The geology in eastern Ontario is the same as that found in northern Ontario. This said, most of the exploration for a site should be conducted as near the nuclear energy sites as possible. The benefits to this are numerous of which I shall only give a few.

- a) Transport of the waste will be short distances.
- b) Costs associated with such transport will be less
- c) The number of communities involved will be fewer.
- d) Any associated risk to the environment during transport is diminished.
- e) Threats from terrorists are minimal due to exposure.
- f) The environment in areas which have not benefited from the use of nuclear energy will not be exposed to risk.
- g) If in fact the deep geologic repository is confirmed through research to be safe and suitable, then removing the waste any further than necessary is not required.

Conclusion

Any site selection should be as near and as central to the nuclear waste producers as possible. The actual site should be situated as remotely as possible within these parameters so as not to affect any nearby communities.

HOST COMMUNITIES

Requesting host communities is a bad idea. Any community requesting it be considered as a host community is likely economically depressed. Although it may in fact receive a short term economic boost, in the long term this will collapse and the community will likely become a ghost town. The chances of anyone wanting to remain, move to or develop any business on or near a nuclear waste dump are remote at best.

The idea of host communities must have come from the fears of those who most benefit from the use of nuclear energy in the hope that the waste will be dumped in some far away location.

I believe this can be born out on Page 58 of your draft study report under the heading “Balancing Fairness to Current Host Communities with Fairness to Future host Communities”. In particular the line “Many participants also expressed the perspective that although current reactor site communities may have received the greatest benefit from nuclear energy, they should not be expected to host a long-term management facility because it goes beyond the terms of the original agreement”. This may be the case but do they expect that communities that have not benefited from the use of nuclear energy should now take on the responsibility of storing the waste? I think not.

Conclusion

Just as your report points out that those provinces which benefit from the production of nuclear energy must take responsibility for the waste, those areas within the provinces which benefit from its use should take responsibility for its disposal. One standard is inseparable from the other.

Please feel free to share my comments with the dialogue session being held in North Bay.

Don HAKLI