

Thursday, March 12, 1998

'DON'T OPEN THE MOX CAN OF WORMS'

Disillusioned with the paucity of information made available to the public during the second consultation into BNFL's application to commission the Sellafield MOX Plant (SMP), CND decided to send a delegation to the Department of the Environment to ask the Secretary of State to 'call-in' the application and consider the case for a public enquiry.

Dave Knight, Chair CND, will be accompanied to the Department of the Environment by Nigel Chamberlain, CND Regional Worker in Cumbria and North Lancashire, David Chaytor MP and Dr Lynne Jones MP at 2.00 pm tomorrow.

They did ask the Minister, Michael Meacher, to see them but have had no response so will take a formal letter requesting that he exercises his statutory power to 'call-in' BNFL's application while stating their lack of confidence in the Environment Agency led consultation process. The second eight week period of consultation closes on 16th March but CND believes that it is imperative that attention is drawn to this issue in advance of closure.

David Chaytor MP (Bury North) has done a great deal of work on this issue and 'put down' Early Day Motion 348 - 'Stockpiles of Plutonium' which raises concerns about the reuse of plutonium in mixed oxide (MOX) fuel, a contentious project that has not been subjected to Parliamentary debate or public scrutiny. This EDM has received cross-party support and been signed by 135 MPs.

Dr Lynne Jones MP (Birmingham Selly Oak) is also concerned about this issue and has written several letters to the regulatory authorities and Ministers requesting further information, particularly on the transportation of MOX fuel from Cumbria to Europe.

Dave Knight will also hand-over a short letter which has been signed by more than 50 organisations in the UK, Europe and North America opposed to the fabrication, transportation, burning and possible reprocessing of MOX fuel. It concludes by stating that this Government must not repeat the mistakes of its predecessors.

ENDS

NB: Photo Opportunity:

The delegation will deliver a blue canister, with radiation symbols on the side and fluorescent green tentacles coming out of the top, to the Department of the Environment at Bressenden Place, SW1 at 2.00 pm on Thursday. A placard will say, 'DON'T OPEN THE MOX CAN OF WORMS!'

Further information:

Nigel Chamberlain on 01768 898641.



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