



nuclear corporation of america

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May 18, 1960

Mr. John A. McCone, Chairman
U. S. Atomic Energy Commission
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Chairman McCone:

On May 9, 1960 the United States Atomic Energy Commission issued a press release entitled "AEC DESIGNATES OAK RIDGE AND IDAHO FALLS AS INTERIM LAND BURIAL SITES FOR SOLID, PACKAGED RADIOACTIVE WASTES". This was Release No. C-85. Mr. McCone, Isotopes Specialties Company, a division of Nuclear Corporation of America, wishes to lodge a strong protest against the procedures indicated in this press release.

The first paragraph states "The Atomic Energy Commission has established two interim land burial sites for the disposal of solid, packaged radioactive wastes generated by AEC licensees." The third paragraph states "The sites at Oak Ridge and Idaho Falls are immediately available to licensees for disposal of packaged wastes. Wastes must be packaged as required by Interstate Commerce Commission regulations."

We, at Isotopes Specialties Company, are in complete agreement with the concept of land disposal of radioactive wastes. However, we are in non-agreement with the proposed method of handling this waste. The AEC has had, for several years, a number of licensed waste disposal firms which have been licensed for sea disposal. These firms are, supposedly, completely staffed and equipped to properly and safely handle the wastes. They have a substantial investment in instrumentation, health physics personnel, adequate packaging facilities, and background of "know-how" in the handling of these waste materials. Notwithstanding the aforementioned capabilities, the AEC has found it necessary to inspect and police the waste handling by these licensees.

Mr. McCone, in view of the problems that have been associated with the six or seven licensed waste disposal handlers, can you envision the problems which will arise when several hundred AEC licensees start shipping radioactive wastes to Oak Ridge and Idaho Falls? How does the Commission plan to police these shipments?

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Mr. John A. McCone, Chairman
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Our own experiences include the receipt of several shipments of improperly packaged waste from AEC licensees. As a consequence, we police all shipments prior to their being dispatched to us. What will Idaho Falls do when a shipment of several tons arrives in Idaho and is not properly packaged according to ICC regulations? Will they then return this improperly packaged material to the sender, and thus send it across the Country once again with improper packaging -- or, will they find themselves in the position of having to package it properly prior to waste disposal. When the Commission deals with waste disposal licensees, they always have the privilege of inspection and the threat of license revocation. When dealing with the AEC licensees on byproduct materials, these policing functions become greatly diluted. Actually, the requirement for policing becomes greatly increased, whereas the ability to perform this operation is actually diminished. } content summary

We have been informed that political pressure has been applied to eliminate sea disposal of radioactive wastes. We understand that Rhode Island, the Gulf States, Oregon, and even the Country of Mexico, are strenuously objecting. I wonder what the reaction of the various States will be when they are informed that radioactive waste will be transported across their borders with shipments made by people who are not licensed to act in the packaging and transport of radioactive wastes.

In conclusion, Mr. McCone, we strongly protest the mechanics set forth in Press Release No. C-85 for the packaging and shipping of radioactive wastes to the land burial sites. We strongly urge that an amendment to this release be issued in which it is stated that all packaging and shipping must be done by firms providing licensed commercial waste disposal service.

Carbon copies of this letter are being sent to Senators Kuchel and Engel, and to Congressmen Holifield, Hiestand and H. Allen Smith.

Mr. McCone, may we request your early attention and action on our protest and recommendations? Please call upon us if you require any further information on this protest.

Very truly yours,

Dr. Kenneth W. Newman
Dr. Kenneth W. Newman
General Manager

Isotopes Specialties Company
Div. of Nuclear Corporation of America

KWN/bj

cc: Senator Thomas Kuchel
Senator Clair Engel
Congressman Chet Holifield
Congressman Edgar W. Hiestand
Congressman H. Allen Smith

for chairman