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U.S. NRC
Washington, DC 20555

OFFICE OF
PUBLIC
AFFAIRS

Attention: Mr. Richard Meserve, Chairman

Dear Chairman Meserve,

I am writing to express my outrage regarding the January 13th announcement by Energy Secretary Bill Richardson regarding the selling for recycling of radioactive metals. While the Department of Energy (DOE) will hold off selling 6,000 tons of radioactive nickel from the decommissioning of the Oak Ridge uranium enrichment for recycling, the DOE *will still allow* the recycling of some 120,000 tons of contaminated metals from Oak Ridge. This is insane and under NO circumstances should contaminated metals EVER enter the consumer marketplace.

It is an absolute outrage that government agencies that should be protecting the public's interest have the Goddamn gall to place nuclear industry profits above the public's safety!!

According to the newsletter of the Nuclear Information Resource Service, "it is virtually impossible to clean even surface-contaminated entirely; *some residual radiation will remain.*"

According to a news article from the *Westchester County Weekly* (April 29, 1999) that summarized a 1988 story that appeared in *The Progressive* (October, 1998), current radiation standards are lax enough to allow low levels of radioactivity in items as intimate as spoons, dental fillings, and IUD's. According to the NRC's own reports, the proposed standards *could cause 100,000 additional cancer fatalities a year*. In 1996, 78 tons radioactive metal shipped to China was stopped because the scrap metal was 30 times more radioactive than China's safety limits allowed. Over 1,500 residential apartments in Taiwan have been identified as "hot." As early as the 1980's, radioactive gold started showing up in jewelry in New York. At least 14 people developed finger cancer from contaminated gold rings. Several people required amputation of parts of their hands.

YOU HAVE GOT TO STOP THIS NOW! NO CONTAMINATED METALS SHOULD EVER ENTER THE CONSUMER MARKETPLACE.

Sincerely,

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Larry Siegel

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