

November 1, 2001

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

DOCKETED
USNRC

BEFORE THE COMMISSION

December 28, 2001 (3:00PM)

In the Matter of)
DUKE COGEMA STONE & WEBSTER)
(Savannah River Mixed Oxide Fuel)
Fabrication Facility))
_____)

OFFICE OF SECRETARY
RULEMAKINGS AND
ADJUDICATIONS STAFF

Docket No. 0-70-03098-ML

ASLBP No. 01-790-01-ML

**GEORGIANS AGAINST NUCLEAR ENERGY
AND NUCLEAR CONTROL INSTITUTE'S REPLY TO RESPONSES OF
NRC STAFF AND DUKE COGEMA STONE & WEBSTER TO "PETITION TO
SUSPEND CONSTRUCTION AUTHORIZATION PROCEEDING
FOR PROPOSED PLUTONIUM FUEL (MOX) FABRICATION FACILITY"**

Georgians Against Nuclear Energy (GANE) and Nuclear Control Institute (NCI) respectfully reply to the responses filed by Duke Cogema Stone & Webster (DCS) and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Staff to our "Petition to Suspend Construction Authorization Proceeding for Plutonium Fuel (MOX) Fabrication Facility" ("Petition to Suspend") submitted to the Commission on October 10, 2001.

Both DCS and the NRC Staff appear to have misunderstood references to GANE's Motion to Dismiss filed August 13, 2001 made within the Petition to Suspend (Duke Cogema Stone & Webster's Response to "Petition by Georgians Against Nuclear Energy and Nuclear Control Institute to Suspend Construction Authorization Proceeding for Proposed Plutonium Fuel (MOX) Fabrication Facility" at 14; NRC Staff's Response to Motion to Suspend Proceeding at 10). The Motion to Dismiss was summarized in the Petition to Suspend to ensure the Commission's awareness that such a Motion is pending

before the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board on this docket and to point out to the Commission serious deficiencies in the MOX Construction Authorization Request (CAR).


DCS's and NRC Staff's lengthy responses do not deal with the simple point of GANE and NCI's Petition to Suspend that, in light of the unprecedented use on September 11 of commercial jets as weapons of destruction and the Commission's subsequent initiation of a comprehensive review of nuclear security regulations, it is logical to suspend proceedings to authorize construction of the MOX facility so that this extremely security-sensitive project can later be reviewed in the context of regulations appropriately strengthened to address this new threat.

DCS and NRC argue that since it is early in the proceeding they should be trusted to figure out how to make the facility secure before it is actually built or, if it is already built, then before it is operated. It is indeed fortunate that the MOX facility licensing proceeding is in an early stage, since the NRC has the option to take a hard look at whether the facility as designed will be able to resist credible external threats comparable in severity to the September 11 attacks. However, to permit the NRC Staff's general review of the CAR to proceed in this uncertain regulatory environment, expending staff resources on the review of a design that ultimately may be proven obsolete and have to be completely overhauled, is a wasteful and pointless exercise.

The MOX facility CAR is not required to address the issue of whether the facility as designed would be capable of withstanding the impact of an attack by a fully fueled commercial jetliner. We ask that the MOX proceeding be suspended until such time as the Commission decides whether public health and safety is best served by strengthening

physical protection regulations to ensure that new nuclear facilities, such as the one to process plutonium into MOX, will be designed to be resistant to the vastly enlarged spectrum of credible threats made manifest by the September 11 attacks, including air assault.

Respectfully submitted,



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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE
by Georgians Against Nuclear Energy
(Docket # 70-3098, ASLBP # 01-790-01-ML)

I hereby certify that copies of GANE's Reply to DCS & NRC Responses to Petition to Suspend Construction Authorization Proceeding for Proposed Plutonium Fuel (MOX) Fabrication Facility were sent to the following by e-mail with paper copies served via U.S. Postal Service.

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Glenn Carroll". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Glenn Carroll
for Georgians Against Nuclear Energy

November 1, 2001 in Decatur, Georgia