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From: <nuc-en@ecolo.org>
To: <chairman@nrc.gov>
Date: Wed, Oct 30, 2002 1:54 PM
Subject: EFN - article in The Canberra Times

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<P>Dear friends of clean nuclear energy,</P>

<P>Please find hereafter an article published on October 17th in the Canberra Times, one of the prominent Australian newspapers, especially read by the politicians, intellectual circles and policy makers in Australia, but also by the general population.</P>

<P>With many thanks to Simon Grose for giving us this opportunity of writing in the the Science and Technology section of this respected newspaper.</P>

<P>With kindest regards,</P>

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<P>Bruno Comby</P>

<P>President of EFN
Environmentalists For Nuclear Energy</P>

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<P>Opposition to nuclear energy is shortsighted</P>

<P>This article has been published on Thursday, 17 October 2002
in the Canberra Times (Australia) : http://www.canberratimes.com.au</P>

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<P>by Bruno Comby
edited by Simon GROSE</P>

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Received: (from nuc@localhost) by ecole.org (8.12.5/8.11.2) id g9UIp0E7025957; Wed, 30 Oct 2002 19:51:00 +0100 Date: Wed, 30 Oct 2002 19:51:00 +0100 Message-Id: <200210301851.g9UIp0E7025957@ecole.org> Content-type: text/html Reply-To: nuc-en@ecole.org
X-Sender: nuc-en@ecole.org From: nuc-en@ecole.org To: chairman@nrc.gov Subject: EFN - article in The Canberra Times

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Opposition to nuclear energy is shortsighted

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by Bruno Comby
edited by Simon GROSE

AS A DEDICATED environmentalist, I consider it a paradox to see today some environmental groups such as Greenpeace opposed to nuclear energy.

Nuclear energy can be a very clean energy if it is well-designed, well-constructed, and well-operated:

It produces almost no carbon dioxide and other pollutants, ejected in huge quantities into the atmosphere by the use of fossil fuels (millions of tons of sulphur and nitrogen oxides and about 30 billion tons of CO are dumped every year into the atmosphere).

It is very compact (little space is required, unlike generators of solar, wind and biomass energy).

It produces a very small volume of waste, which decays spontaneously.

It does not contribute to the greenhouse effect.

In 1996, shortly after the 10th anniversary of the Chernobyl accident, the non-profit Association of Environmentalists For Nuclear Energy was created to inform the public in a complete and objective way about energy sources and their environmental impacts.

EFN is an international network of 5000 members and supporters in 43 countries. It is based on solid scientific facts, not ideological considerations.

Among its members is Professor James Lovelock, one of the founders of the development of environmental awareness since the 1960s. Other members are distinguished scientists and environmentalists, and some are survivors of the Hiroshima atomic explosion.

EFN is in favour of clean civilian applications of nuclear energy, such as electricity production and some medical uses, but is strictly opposed to military applications of nuclear science.

EFN bases its position on the fact that nuclear fission is a clean, safe, reliable and competitive energy source, that the volume of nuclear waste produced is very small, that the waste is confined safely and can be stored safely, and that spent fuel is or can be reprocessed, as is the case in France at the La Hague reprocessing plant, where 97 per cent of the used nuclear fuel is recovered to be recycled and the remaining 3 per cent vitrified for safe storage until it decays spontaneously.

Spent nuclear fuel can and should be reprocessed, for environmental reasons if not for economic ones.

To combat the greenhouse effect and the consequent global-warming trend, nuclear fission is the only source of energy that can replace a significant part of the fossil fuels coal, oil and gas without polluting the atmosphere.

Clearly, renewable energies and energy conservation should be encouraged, but will not suffice to ensure the development of developing countries or drive our industrial societies; neither will they save the world from the dramatic energy crisis and transition that humanity will have to face soon, because of the risks and consequences of climate change on one hand and the progressive extinction of oil and gas reserves in the coming decades on the other.

Wind and solar energy produce, inconsistently, kilowatts (or at best a few megawatts here and there), but today's populations consume gigawatts and terawatts (that is to say, thousands or millions of times as much).

Whatever contribution these renewable energies may bring will be useful, but they should not be expected to contribute otherwise than in a marginal way to facing the world's growing energy demand.

Nuclear energy is the only source of energy that can and should replace fossil fuels whenever possible in the coming years. At the same time, more efficient use of energy and self-sustainable life styles should be promoted.

Renewable energies should not be excluded and it should be recognised that the latter have important niche roles to play, although their industrial potential is almost negligible.

The opposition of the environmental movement to civilian applications of nuclear energy will in time be revealed as among the greatest mistakes of our times.

Today, electricity can be produced cleanly with almost no CO2 emissions (electricity, for example, is 80 per cent nuclear and 15 per cent hydraulic in France, the cleanest and cheapest electricity produced in Europe). Tomorrow, nuclear energy will be the key also to desalination of sea water and hydrogen production.

One gram of uranium or thorium yields as much energy as one tonne of coal. It's the "factor one million" effect.

Nuclear energy's potential is indeed a million times as great as that of fossil fuels, which produce 90 per cent of the world's energy today.

These precious and polluting fossil energies should be saved for the specific needs for which they cannot be replaced, such as fuelling aircraft or providing energy for developing

countries.

They should be replaced urgently wherever possible by less polluting sources of energy such as nuclear and, with a much smaller potential, renewable energy.

The opposition of the environmental movement to civilian applications of nuclear energy will in time be revealed as among the greatest mistakes of our times.

An intelligent combination of energy conservation, to whatever extent is possible, nuclear energy for base-load electricity production and renewable energies for local low-intensity applications, is the way for the future.

EFN's membership is growing rapidly, as an increasing number of people realise the environmental benefits of an intelligent use of nuclear energy.

Local groups and associations of EFN are active and becoming increasingly popular in many countries.

I invite the readers of The Canberra Times to organise some local activities.

Why not form a local chapter of EFN in Australia?

Those who share our views may sign the petition, on the Internet, in favour of clean nuclear energy, and contact EFN to become local correspondents.

Bruno Comby, EFN founder and president, is a graduate of the Ecole Polytechnique in Paris and holds a postgraduate qualification as nuclear physicist from the National University of Advanced Technology of Paris.

<http://www.ecolo.org>

<http://www.comby.org>

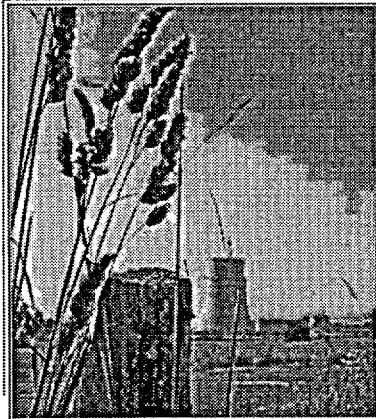
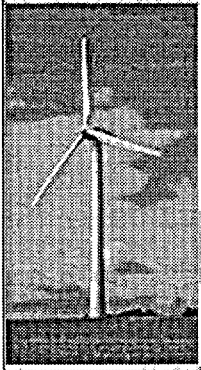
The original article can also be viewed on the Canberra Times web site :

http://canberra.yourguide.com.au/detail.asp?story_id=185801&y=2002&m=10&class=Features&subclass=

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