



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

APR 20 1990

MEMORANDUM FOR: Charles J. Haughney, Chief
Fuel Cycle Safety Branch
Division of Industrial and
Medical Nuclear Safety

FROM: John P. Roberts, Section Leader
Irradiated Fuel Section
Fuel Cycle Safety Branch
Division of Industrial and
Medical Nuclear Safety

SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL HIGH LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE
MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

DATE/TIME: April 9-12, 1990; 9:00 a. m.
LOCATION: Caesar's Palace Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada

ATTENDEES:	<u>NRC</u>	<u>DOE</u>	<u>NWTRB</u>	<u>OTHERS</u>
	RBernero et al	JBartlett et al	DDeere	U.S. and Foreign Technical Personnel

PURPOSE: To present invited paper and attend conference.

SUMMARY:

The first day of the meeting was high-lighted by a speech by the Governor of Nevada. Governor Miller denounced the Department of Energy (DOE) as incompetent and stated the meeting was a DOE public relations effort giving only one side. He left immediately after his speech.

John Bartlett, the newly confirmed Director of DOE's Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management (OCRWM), spoke next. He announced that the high level waste (HLW) management program would be goal and action oriented. He would seek:

- (1) consensus on spent fuel waste management strategies,
- (2) receipt of spent fuel by DOE by 1998,
- (3) determination of the suitability or non-suitability of the Yucca Mountain site for a repository, and
- (4) to work with others on the elements of the program for spent fuel storage, transportation, and disposal.

When Dr. Bartlett spoke of receipt of spent fuel in 1998, he was referring to aggressive action to provide storage capacity for utility spent fuel.

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Charles Haughney

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Robert Bernero, Director of NRC's Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, then spoke. He dwelt on the unique nature of the waste repository action. He characterized it as an attempt to leave our distant descendants with a world in this instance no worse than our generation found it. Such a long-term commitment is unprecedented in human history. I believe that this philosophical assessment was very well received by the attendees. Attendance was slightly over 1000 registrants.

I found my speech on spent fuel storage and transportation compatibility at the back end of the fuel cycle well received by the session audience. I sat in on sessions related to Monitored Retrievable Storage and transportation. Presentations were generally good.

Cecil Parks discussed burnup credit for DOE, a presentation that he had made previously before NRC staff. John Massey spoke on the Pacific Sierra Nuclear Associates Ventilated Storage Cask (VSC), a concrete cask design that we are reviewing. He covered storage/transportation compatibility in responses to questions on the VSC design. Ben Easterling of DOE and others covered MRS topics.

In a plenary session, Don Deere covered the role and actions of the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board. Chairman Carr also spoke at a luncheon. So did Ronald Watkins, Chief Executive Officer for the Nebraska Public Power Utility District. Although D.C. Cooper will not need additional spent fuel storage capacity for many years, he mentioned dry storage options in some detail (Cooper has spent fuel stored in the General Electric Morris Operation pool).

I found the conference informative. It gave a good overall picture of what was happening in this country and an idea of the U.S. HLW disposal program compared to those of other countries. This last topic was presented by Dr. Rudolf Rometsch in the first day's plenary session, before Governor Miller, who arrived late, spoke.

It was also announced that this First Annual International High Level Radioactive Waste Conference would be followed by the second annual conference at Las Vegas also. Given the Governor's opposition, the University of Nevada at Las Vegas may have difficulty in assisting in the arrangement of any further annual conferences.

Original Signed by
John P. Roberts

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