

Press Release, January 5, 2007: Yesterday's DOE announcement moves our area one step closer to becoming a high level radioactive waste dump.

From: PRESS (Portsmouth Piketon Residents for Environmental Safety and Security)

While the people of Piketon/Portsmouth are still reeling from the devastating effects of the past 50 years of A-Plant operations, they have recently been hit with another atomic whammy. Yesterday the DOE announced another step in the newly hatched scheme called Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP), a plan that is focusing more and more sharply on Piketon. Among several interrelated proposals, GNEP calls for the "interim storage" of high-level radioactive waste. That means that irradiated fuel rods from nuclear reactors across this nation and the world, the most lethal materials known to humankind, could be transported to Piketon and dumped here for a long time, maybe forever. Other aspects of the GNEP proposal include reprocessing plutonium and a yet-to-be-developed fast-burner reactor. Yesterday's announcement by the DOE centered on its "notice of intent" to prepare a "programmatic environmental impact statement," one of the first public steps required by law for a project that has the potential of greatly damaging the human environment. As part of this public process, the DOE is required to hold a meeting to allow comments from the community. According to the DOE, that meeting is scheduled for March 8 in Piketon.

While the DOE claims that Piketon is but one of 11 sites being considered to take on this scheme, a whistle-blower report says that a deal has already been struck between the DOE and a business consortium named ePIFNI to set up the high-level radioactive waste dump at Piketon.

Meanwhile, the community is still saddled with about 800,000 tons of depleted uranium stockpiled at Piketon, some of it in rusting, corroding containers. There's the stalled, under-funded and overdue clean-up of legacy contamination, a clean-up that will be dead-in-the-water if GNEP comes to pass. Then there's USEC's application for a centrifuge uranium enrichment plant, like the one the U.S. is telling Iran they aren't allowed to have. At the bottom of this heap are the dead or sick, former A-Plant workers, many of whom have fallen through the wide cracks of the energy employees' compensation bill.

This week PRESS joined with other local and national groups to condemn the plans of the DOE and its nuclear industry partners to turn Piketon (or any other community) into a high-level radioactive waste dump. PRESS urges the entire Portsmouth/Piketon and "downwind" community to investigate these proposals and join efforts to stop GNEP now by attending the upcoming meeting and refusing to allow the DOE to ignore our condemnation of these plans.

People from around here are accustomed to fighting hard for what they need and this current battle promises to be a major one.

PRESS (Portsmouth/Piketon Residents for Environmental Safety and Security)

Contacts: Vina Colley vcolley@earthlink.net, phone 740 357 8916

Lorry Swain lorryswain@yahoo.com phone 606 932 2383

DOCKETED
USNRC

February 7, 2007 (8:30am)

OFFICE OF SECRETARY
RULEMAKINGS AND
ADJUDICATIONS STAFF

Docket # 70-7004-MH

TEMPLATE = SECY-038

SECY-02