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☞ Citizens' Nuclear Information Center

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Rally against N-Fuel Cycle Facility



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On April 9, a National Rally against the Nuclear Fuel Cycle Facility was held in Rokkasho mura, Aomori Prefecture. It was sponsored by the Socialist Party and labor unions as well as grassroots anti-nuke groups, and the turn-out was 11,000, the largest crowd ever to have gathered there. A "No N-Fuel Cycle Facility" resolution was passed at the rally and the participants walked over to the planned site and formed a human chain around it.

It was on April 9, 4 years ago that the Aomori prefectural govern-

ment accepted the proposal for the facility. Since then, opponents of the plan have been conducting protests every year on that day.

This year's action drew a large number of people not only from the Aomori area but from all over Japan. This was partly due to the fact that resolutions opposing the facility were approved by all the agricultural cooperative associations in Aomori last December and by the National Federation of Health Insurance Doctors' Associations in January. Furthermore the local residents had been quite shaken by an incident in March when a dummy bomb was accidentally dropped by an American F-16 fighter only 7km from the planned site of the facility.

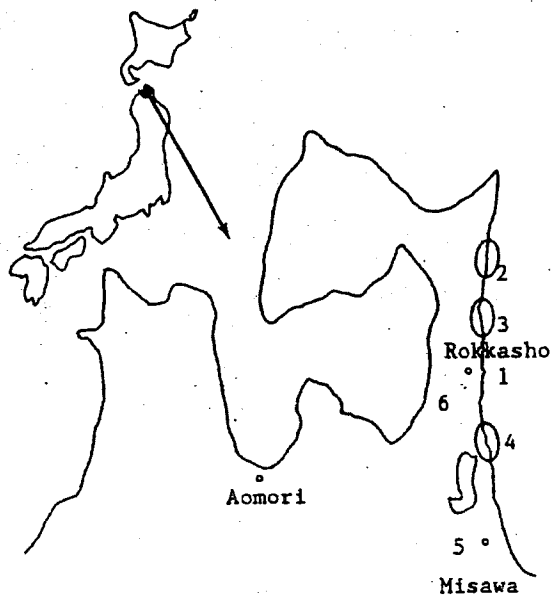
Tomekichi Sakai, a representative of a local fishermen's group opposing the plan, made a moving speech at the rally. "We had only 70 people here 4 years ago and since then I have kept hoping that one day tens of thousands of people would gather to protest against the facility. Today my dream has come true and we have 10,000 people here! Let's keep working until the whole plan is abandoned."

Participants from Tokyo visited every household in Rokkasho-mura, handed out leaflets, and talked to the local residents. They learned the difficult situation most residents are in, due to strong pressure from the government and the nuclear industry. The participants hoped that the rally and the human chain would be seen by local residents as an encouraging move. □



Application for Rokkasho Plant Will Touch off Heated Controversy

As reported in our previous issue, Japan Nuclear Fuel Service (JNFS) submitted applications on March 30 for a construction license for the controversial spent fuel reprocessing plant at Rokkasho, Aomori Prefecture. The Rokkasho reprocessing plant, when completed, will become one of the largest commercial reprocessing plants for light water reactor spent fuel in the world, with a 800 ton U/y



1. Nuclear Fuel Cycle Complex
2. Ballistic Test Range (Self Defense Forces)
3. Surface to Air Firing Range (Self Defense Forces)
4. Air to Surface Firing Range (US Air Force)
5. Air Force Base (USAF and SDFJ)
6. Petroleum Complex

reprocessing capacity and a maximum storage capacity of 3,000 tons of spent fuel. Construction work is scheduled to start in February 1991 and to be completed in 1997, but storage of the spent fuel will precede completion of the plant, starting in March 1994.

The annual control levels of radioactive discharges as given in the documents submitted with application are compared in the Table with those of Tokai reprocessing plant and Tokai nuclear power plant.

In spite of these discharges JNFS claims that the maximum annual exposure of a nearby resident is likely to be only 2.3 mrem for the whole body and 21 mrem for the skin.

The JNFS documents also present two accident cases, a criticality accident in the dissolver and a solvent fire in the plutonium purification cell, as design-basis accidents for the siting assessment. Even under the worst possible accident conditions, JNFS claims that exposure of individual residents and the whole population will not exceed 0.6 rem and 3.5×10^5 person rem, respectively.

JNFS's optimistic risk assessments both for normal and emergency conditions do not appear to be

well-founded and have already given rise to a good deal of critical comment.

Also controversial is the treatment of two geological faults known to lie in the vicinity of the site. JNFS admits the presence of these faults but regards them as posing no serious safety problems because of their inactivity. But this alleged inactivity is highly questionable.

Possible destruction of the plant by airplane impact, and the resulting radiation release, is another area of public concern, since the site is very close to the U.S. and Japanese air force base at Misawa and the Amagatori air-to-ground gunnery and bombing range. According to the JNFS documents, the plant is designed to withstand a F-16 fighter crash at a velocity of up to 540 km/h, but the possibility of a more violent collision cannot be ruled out.

In short, JNFS's application for the reprocessing plant and the attached documents are almost certain to touch off a new controversy rather than settle the already heated debate over the safety and necessity of the plant. □

COMPARISON OF RADIOACTIVE DISCHARGES

(ANNUAL CONTROL LEVEL IN Bq)

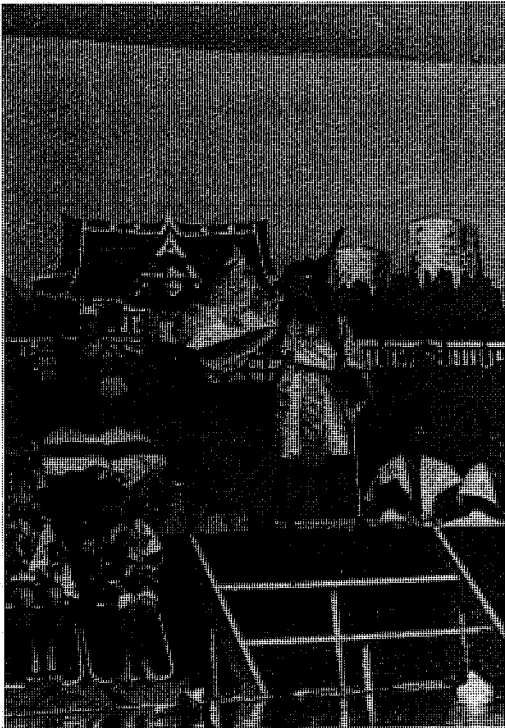
	Rokkasho Repro. Plant	Tokai Repro. Plant	Tokai II Power Plant
Gas			
Kr-85	3.3×10^{17}	8.9×10^{16}	1.4×10^{15}
H-3	2.0×10^{15}	5.6×10^{14}	-
G-14	5.2×10^{13}	-	-
I-129	1.3×10^{10}	1.7×10^9	-
I-131	5.6×10^{10}	1.6×10^{10}	-
Liquid			
H-3	1.8×10^{16}	1.9×10^{15}	-
I-129	2.6×10^{10}	2.7×10^{10}	-
I-131	1.8×10^{11}	1.2×10^{11}	-
other beta	7.0×10^{11}	9.6×10^{11}	3.7×10^{10}
total alpha	9.8×10^9	2.3×10^9	-

April 23--Rallies Held throughout Japan

On Sunday, April 23, anti-nuclear rallies to commemorate the Chernobyl accident were held throughout Japan. Although it was raining in most parts of the country, the turnout was fairly good.

-Osaka-

The rally was sponsored by about 160 citizens' groups and labor unions in the Osaka area. Guest speakers included representatives from the African National Congress, who spoke about the Namibian uranium issue, and from the Federation of Pollution Eradication Movements in Korea, who spoke about recent anti-nuke activities in Korea. The highlight of the rally was a satirical play staged by volunteers wearing traditional Kabuki theater costumes and make-up.



-Tokyo-

This year's rally was held in an open field by the river Tama, since the Parks Board of Tokyo wouldn't permit the use of Hibiya Park, where 20,000 people from all over Japan gathered for the second anniversary of Chernobyl last April. About 3,000 people from Tokyo and the vicinity turned up in the rain. The main stage and booths were covered, and people with umbrellas strolled between the booths and watched the stage. As at other anti-nuke rallies, there were large numbers of small children with raingear and umbrellas.

-Kashiwazaki-

1,200 people, mostly labor union members, staged a rally at Kashiwazaki where one reactor is in operation and four more are under construction. The Kashiwazaki reactors were manufactured by the same company which built the No.3 reactor at Fukushima II. Since the accident at Fukushima in January, the residents of Kashiwazaki have begun to feel uneasy too.

-Fukushima-

Fukushima is one of two major nuclear power centers in Japan. There are 6 reactors at the Fukushima I power plant and 4 at Fukushima II. So far, opposing voices have been silenced by Tokyo Electric Power Co. but now, as a result of the accident in January (see NIT No.10 for details) and the strength of the anti-nuke movement throughout the nation, local residents are starting to stand up. About 130 people gathered and protested at the main gate of Fukushima II. □

TV Debate - A Big Success

NHK, the major Japanese national TV network, broadcast a series of programs on nuclear power this April. The series was entitled, "Nuclear Power - A Viable Alternative Today?" The three one-hour programs dealt with safety, economy, and energy policy were shown on three consecutive days. On the fourth day, the series was concluded with a 3-hour debate. This was shown at peak viewing time on a Saturday night, from 7:20 to 10:45. The fact that NHK is a semi-governmental broadcasting station with networks throughout Japan, and that they put the program out at peak time, point to the significance of the issue today.

Three pro-nuclear and three anti-nuclear scientists took part in the debate. The program was divided into two sections, the first half dealing with safety issues, and the second with new energy strategies. Throughout the debate, the pro-nuclear side remained on the defensive and could not come up with any convincing reasons for promoting nuclear power, while the anti-nuclear side took the initiative, presenting reliable data which confirmed the public in their stand of opposition.

The result of the debate was strikingly demonstrated by the opinion polls taken at intervals during the program. The 750 pollees had been selected at random beforehand and were asked four questions. Asked what policy Japan should adopt with regard to nuclear power generation, 33% replied that it should be reduced and 22% said it should be phased out altogether. The total of 55% against nuclear power is a remarkable advance on the poll conducted by Asahi Newspaper last

autumn, when only 17% were in favor of reducing nuclear power and only 10% wanted it phased out. On safety, 82% had some degree of fear of a major nuclear accident happening in Japan and 57% didn't believe safety could be assured by higher technology and control systems. 55% looked upon solar energy as the best source of electricity for the future.

On the whole the program was thought a success and had a good response. Although it was three hours long, people seem to have watched it from beginning to end. □

Spent Fuel Sent to US

We received a Press Release from the U.K. group CORE in April alerting us to the fact that Japanese spent fuel stored at BNFL was being transported to the United States. After making our own investigations, we learned that this spent fuel comes from Japan's research nuclear reactor JMTR. It is highly-enriched uranium, which cannot be reprocessed in Japan, and is being sent back to Savannah River under the Long-term Japan-US Nuclear Co-operation Agreement. Although we are very concerned about the safety of all spent fuel transportation, we feel there isn't enough evidence to take any special action at the moment. According to Greenpeace information, the U.S. DOE has informed all operators of foreign research reactors to refrain from sending back spent fuel to the United States for a period of at least six months starting Jan. 1, 1989, until the potential environmental impact of such shipments can be assessed. Because we know little about this moratorium, we would like to keep a close watch on the issue and would appreciate any further information.

South Korea's Anti-Nuclear Power Movement Builds

On April 15, sixteen South Korean anti-nuclear power and environmental organizations jointly formed the "National Headquarters for the Nuclear Power Eradication Movement." This is the first time that such a nationally organized anti-nuke movement of many groups has been formed in South Korea, and it reflects the growing anti-nuke movement among the populace of that country. Participants in this combined organization include the Federation of Pollution Eradication Movements and the Pollution Research Institute in Seoul, associations of dentists and pharmacists, environmental organizations in Kwangju, Mokpo, and Pusan, as well as anti-nuke movements in places with nuclear power plants such as Yeongkwang, Wolsung, and Kori.

It was previous to this, in December of last year, that the illegal dumping of radioactive wastes was discovered in Changan Village, Yangsan County, Gyongnam, near the Kori nuclear power plants, and local residents became vigorous in their protest actions (see Nuke Info Tokyo No.9). Again on March 12 of this year, over 1,000 local residents conducted a protest action against the Kori nuclear plants in which they used over 30 tractors to carry nuclear wastes to the plants. They also held a die-in on a national highway, obstructing motor traffic for as long as two and one-half hours.

The South Korean government authorities tried to bring this incident to a close by charging the Korean Electric Power Company (KEPCO) a mere 3-million-won fine for illegal disposal, but immediately subsequent to this, on April 8, illegally dumped drums of radioactive wastes were again found in Changan Village. Beginning early on the morning of April 12, residents

holed up in KEPCO's main office (Seoul) to protest. Police responded with intense repression, arresting 28 residents and severely injuring an old woman with a tear gas grenade. Meanwhile, KEPCO keeps repeating publicity stating, "Nuclear wastes are no different from ordinary refuse, and there is no danger."

South Korea's anti-nuclear power and environmental organizations answered this on April 13 with a joint statement asking the government not to repress the rightful demands of the residents, to immediately release the 28 arrested persons, and to institute a thorough probe into the illegal dumping of nuclear wastes. This was the event leading directly to the formation of the "National Headquarters for the Nuclear Power Eradication Movement."

At present the greatest task for the united South Korean anti-nuclear power movement is to stop the construction of the Yeongkwang reactors #3 and #4 (Korean Atomic Energy's #11 and #12) slated to begin in June. There is unprecedented opposition to the construction of these reactors, with a joint declaration against construction having been issued on April 12 by the presidents of ten universities in the Jeon Nam region, Kwangju where the power plant is located, including Jeon Nam University, Jo-Seog University, Kwangju University of Economics and Commerce, and Mokpo University.

Another matter coming under scrutiny is the rumor that a radioactive waste disposal facility is now being planned for Yondok on South Korea's east coast; an opposition movement has already begun. These movements in South Korea are making a strong appeal for solidarity with, and support from, Japan's anti-nuclear power movement. □

Nuclear Plant Availability Falls

The average capacity factor, or availability, of the 35 commercial nuclear plants now in operation in Japan fell to 71.3% in fiscal 1988 (April 1988 to March 1989). While availability was low in the 1970s, it improved remarkably in the 1980s and reached a record high of 76.0% in 1987.

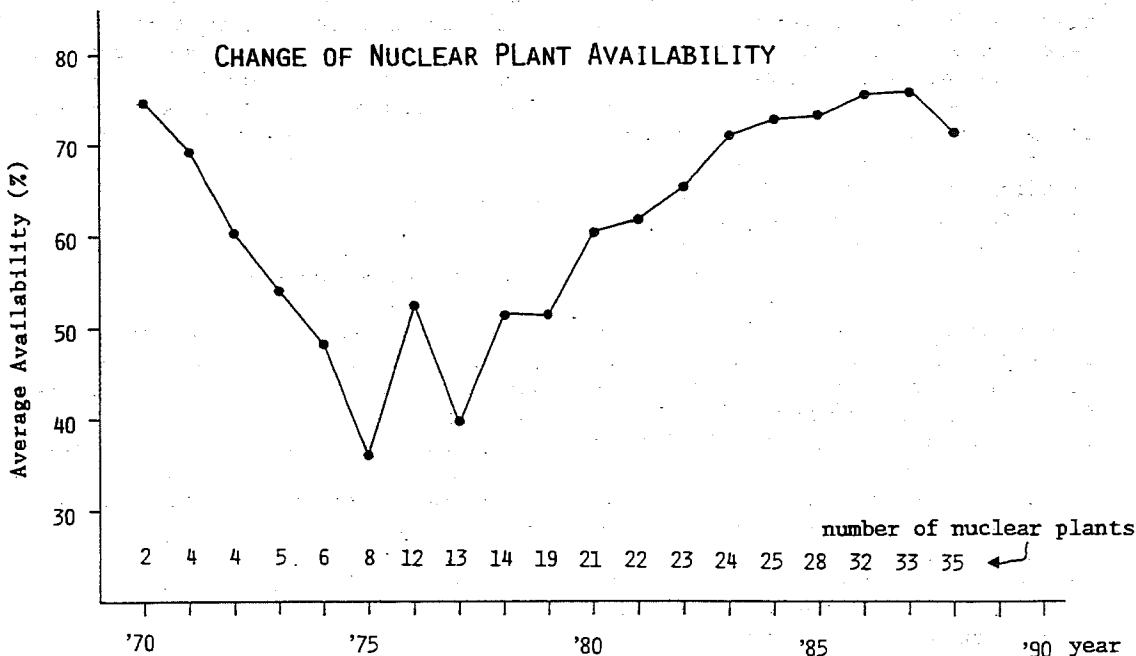
The 5% drop in 1988 thus reverses the trend of rising availability. The sharp drop reflects longer periods of outage due to unexpected plant shutdowns, as well as prolonged inspections and repair works.

One of the background factors responsible for the longer periods of outage is the aging of plants. More than half of the Japanese plants are now more than 15 years old and suffer frequent component failures. For example, Ohi 1 (a 10-year-old PWR) was out of operation for more than a year during repair work on damaged steam genera-

tor tubes. Hamaoka 1 (a 13-year-old BWR) has now been shut down for 9 months due to a stress corrosion crack in an incore monitor housing which penetrates to the outside of the reactor vessel. It will still be some months before Hamaoka 1 is ready to restart.

Another reason for the longer periods of outage lies in the strategy of power companies. Due to stiff competition from fossil fuel power plants, utility companies try to minimize inspection outage. But this strategy of cutting down inspections has resulted, ironically, in increased troubles. The recirculation pump rupture at Fukushima II-3 reported in NIT No. 10 is a typical example of such trouble.

The trend of decreasing availability is likely to continue this year since there seems to be no change in the background circumstances. □



Anti-Nuke Who's Who



Hisako Kondo of Tottori

It was in 1951 that Hisako Kondo first became involved in the Coalition of Women's Groups in Tottori prefecture. It was a few years after the end of World War II and democratic organizations were being set up to replace the reactionary wartime ones. The objectives of her group were to build a sane society and foster democratic relations among its members.

She and her group first worked on sanitary conditions and community health until, in the 1960s, other problems such as food additives, chemical detergents and fertilizers started to take up more and more of their time.

In 1977 Hisako was asked to participate in a conference on radiation exposure to be held in Hiroshima, in preparation for the first World Disarmament Conference at the United Nations the following year. She thought the peace issue was very important and went to the U.N. conference as a delegate. One of the things she learned there was the danger of nuclear power. She was especially impressed when she heard someone say that nuclear power

is the same as nuclear weapons wearing a mask of peaceful use.

She also met a number of people at the conference who were working on various environmental issues. She realized that peace issues and the anti-nuclear issue are closely related to other environmental and social issues.

She then became concerned about nuclear power, especially with the proposed power plant in Aoya, Tottori prefecture. A group was formed to protest against the proposal and two women in the Aoya area became quite active in the group. Hisako helped them and worked with them to inform the public about the dangers of radiation and nuclear power. So far they have been successful in keeping the electricity company out of the area.

She thinks it is important for people to stand up, say what they think, and take action. The ruling LDP government is now trying to silence the citizens' movement, but she is determined to continue protesting whenever she has to. She learned this attitude partly from her parents, who were liberal and never told her what women should or shouldn't do. She went to one of the first women's universities in 1927 and majored in chemistry.

Hisako has been president of the Coalition of Women's Groups in Tottori prefecture for some time and is still active now at the age of 78.

Continued from page 10
non-nuclear principles.

Several protest actions have been organized so far by citizens' groups as well as labor unions against the U.S. and Japanese governments.

There are also fears, especially among residents of Okinawa, of possible contamination of the sea due to leakage of plutonium from the dropped bomb.

(See our next issue for detail.)



Dummy Bomb Dropped Near N-Fuel Cycle Facility Site

An F-16 fighter from the Misawa U.S. Air Base in Misawa City, Aomori Prefecture, mistakenly dropped a dummy bomb on March 16 only 6km from a nuclear fuel cycle facility now under construction. However, no public announcement of the accident was made. Officials from the air base, prefecture, and village finally admitted that it had happened on March 24, when the news media questioned them about the incident. F-16 fighters frequently fly over the Amagatori firing range, about 7km from the base, in bombing and machine gunning practice.

Funds Set Aside for Decommissioning

At the closing of accounts for fiscal 1988 in March, Japanese utility companies started to set aside funds to cover the expected costs of decommissioning nuclear power plants. These funds are to be set aside while plants are still in operation, since it is not fair to leave all responsibility for decommissioning to future generations. Based on a plant life of 27 years and an availability of 70%, the cost of decommissioning is estimated at 30 billion yen for 1,100MW class plants. The cost per KW/h can then

be calculated, and funds set aside in proportion to the amount of electricity generated.

Hirosaki Branch LDP Opposes Reprocessing Plant

A branch office of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party in Hirosaki City, Aomori Prefecture, passed on May 7 a resolution opposing the planned reprocessing plant in Rokkasho-mura. This was the first anti-nuclear resolution ever passed by the LDP, which has been a strong promoter of nuclear power.

Strong Support for Anti-Nuke Candidates in Suzu Election

A mayoral election was held on April 16 in Suzu City, Ishikawa Prefecture. Two sites in Suzu have been chosen, one by the Hokuriku and Kansai, and the other by the Hokuriku and Chubu electric companies, for the construction of 4 reactors. The candidates running for mayor were the former mayor, who was supported by the LDP and promoted nuclear power, a representative of an anti-nuke citizens' group, and a candidate who opposed nuclear power but supported the conservative government. Although the former mayor was reelected, the two candidates opposing nuclear power had an overall majority, so it was unfortunate that the vote was split.

Tomari Trial Opens

A law suit demanding a halt to the construction and operation of the Tomari Nuclear Power Plant by Hokkaido Electric Power Co. opened on April 18 at the Sapporo District Court. The plaintiffs, numbering 1,151 persons, demanded that the court provide a courtroom large enough to accommodate them all, but the court used its authority to select 30 of them and began the trial. In protest against the court's decision, only five people entered the court and the remaining 25 refused to appear. About 300 plaintiffs held a rally in the courtyard, and submitted a written demand to the court, asking it to name a date for a new trial for the remaining 1,121 plaintiffs. In the courtroom plaintiffs insisted on "their right to live without nuclear power plants" in their environment.

Sit-in at Shikoku Electric

Members of the "Shikoku Network to Bid Farewell to Nuclear Power" have been taking turns sitting outside the head office of Shikoku

Electric Power Co. in Takamatsu City, demanding that it stop operation of the Ikata No.1 reactor. During the regular inspection last year, cracks were found in the primary coolant pump blade bolts of Ikata No.2. Protesters claim that there are probably similar cracks in the bolts of the No.1 reactor as well. Although the company has acknowledged that the bolts of the No.1 reactor may be cracked, they say it is not necessary to stop operation immediately since they are going to check the bolts during the regular inspection in May and replace all the present bolts with improved ones.

Lost H-Bomb Causes Anger

A Newsweek magazine article (May 8 issue) revealing the cover-up of a lost H-bomb from the US aircraft carrier Ticonderoga off Okinawa 25 years ago has caused a storm of anger in Japan. Two days after the accident the ship made a call at Yokosuka, most probably with other nuclear warheads on board. This visit is considered to be undeniable evidence of the long-suspected American violation of Japan's

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