

Faulk, Dennis A

From: Libby, Richard A [ral@pnl.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, July 17, 2001 4:51 PM
To: Faulk, Dennis A
Cc: 'info@b-reactor.org'
Subject: Comments on B-reactor EE/CA

Dear Mr. Faulk:

I am pleased to be able to send you comments on the EPA Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis report regarding B Reactor.

I fully support DOE's Preferred Alternative #3 to preserve B Reactor. I would like to explain in some detail why I think this is important.

For many years I have been interested in the history of the Hanford Site. I have also been involved in numerous nuclear arms control and nonproliferation activities, both at work and during my personal time. Preserving and expanding the B Reactor as a museum is important to these interests. I am a member of the B Reactor Museum Association and, as a member of the American Nuclear Society, participated in the application of B Reactor as a Nuclear Historic Landmark to the ANS.

During the past several years I have participated in numerous visits to B Reactor with scientists and engineers from both the U.S. and foreign countries (primarily Russia). These visitors knew the history and significance of B Reactor and were very pleased to be able to visit the site. It is important that U.S. citizens, of all ages, be able learn about the reactor and to visit this historically important site, as well.

I have been able to visit many nuclear material production sites, both overseas and in the U.S. This includes visits to:

- all of the U.S. production reactors (nine at Hanford and five at Savannah River)
- the shutdown reactors in Russia (five at Ozersk, three at Seversk, and two underground reactors at Zheleznogorsk)
- Sellafield in England (six production reactors)
- the 5 MWE reactor in the DPRK (North Korea)

Unfortunately, it is my observation that the U.S. is behind all of these countries in telling the story behind the construction and operation of these machines.

For example, Sellafield has a large visitor center describing the many activities of the site. Each of the Russian cities have one or more museums with displays on the reactors and other site activities. Also, some of the reactor control rooms are now being preserved as future museum tour stops. This includes a reactor control room in the underground complex at Zheleznogorsk. On one occasion I saw a group of school children being taken to one of the Russian reactor sites for a tour. Similarly, the small North Korean reactor is represented by a highly detailed model in the DPRK capital of Pyongyang's equivalent of the Washington, D.C. Smithsonian Museums.

All of these machines are important artifacts for nuclear science, engineering, construction and political science. Preserving them and making known their stories and the stories of those who designed, built, and operated them should be a national priority.

While the present decision before the EPA regarding B Reactor's future is only a first step towards establishing B Reactor as a publicly accessible museum, at least it is a first step. I hope that the recent decision to include much of the Hanford site in the Hanford Reach National Monument will help spur the establishment of a National Monument Visitor Center at the B Reactor site. It is sad that North Korea, Russia, and England appear to be so far ahead of the U.S. in recognizing the importance and telling the story of our nuclear history.

With best wishes.

Dick Libby

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