

shares the view of Gordon Edwards, who thinks that governments should provide funding to independent groups for critical studies of the Canadian Nuclear Fuel Waste Management Program. Dr. Edwards pointed out that:

[...] With a budget of about \$3 million, one could do a year-long study, possibly under the auspices of the Science Council of Canada, drawing upon independent scientists across Canada to do a real critique of what Atomic Energy of Canada is putting forward as their eventual solution to the waste disposal problem.⁽⁶⁹⁾

The Committee is aware of the excellent reputation that TAC and AECL have earned for themselves, and of the quality of the work they do. However, in light of the arguments put forward during the current discussions, it might be timely to obtain the advice of a group of informed experts whose independence cannot be doubted and whose mandate would include a review of alternative solutions as well as an analysis of the social and moral aspects of the proposed solution. Consequently the Committee recommends that:

Recommendation 6

The Canadian nuclear fuel waste management concept should be the subject of an independent comprehensive study, which would examine the social, moral, economic and environmental consequences of the Program. The Committee considers it desirable that this study be completed by no later than 1989. The resulting report would be submitted to the environmental assessment panel set up to facilitate a public debate on AECL's proposal.

In addition, the Committee is somewhat concerned about Environment Canada's role and relative clout within the concept assessment process. The Minister of the Environment himself says that his Department acts essentially as an adviser, with the main responsibility for elimination of radioactive waste falling on the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources.⁽⁷⁰⁾ Even though these two Departments have set up an interdepartmental committee on energy and environment, the Committee believes there are grounds for expanding Environment Canada's responsibilities ties and giving it a greater role. And lastly, given that Environment Canada is currently reviewing a number of ways to fund participation by representatives of public interest groups, the Committee recommends that:

Recommendation 7

Environment Canada should rapidly assemble resources with a view to defending the environmental standpoint during the upcoming debate on the Canadian Nuclear Fuel Waste Management Program (CNFWMP). Environment Canada should also take all necessary steps to encourage participation by the general public in the hearings held by any future environmental assessment panel.

Currently, Environment Canada monitors nuclear issues through its scientific and technical services and the Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office (FEARO). The AECB will be taking primary responsibility for assessing the spent nuclear fuel disposal concept, while Ontario's Ministry of the Environment and Environment Canada will also be contributing, as members of the IRC.⁽⁷¹⁾ Plainly, the other provinces — those that operate nuclear generating stations, like Quebec and New Brunswick; or produce uranium, like

⁽⁶⁹⁾ Gordon Edwards, Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility, Issue No. 7, February 3, 1987, p. 8.

⁽⁷⁰⁾ The Hon. Thomas M. McMillan, Minister of the Environment, Issue No. 15, April 7, 1987, p. 5.

⁽⁷¹⁾ *Ibid.*