Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center

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July 17, 1997

Mr. John Rampe
DOE Rocky Flats, Bldg. 460
P. O. Box 928
Golden, CO 80402-0928

Dear John:

Thank you for your letter of July 9, 1997, responding to mine of June 6. Some of what you say we have previously covered, notably, the request that I send queries meant for Bruce Honeyman of the Actinide Migration Panel through you or Chris Dayton rather than directly to Honeyman. As I told you earlier, I am happy to comply. It doesn't please me, however, that Mr. Honeyman may be allowed to duck his responsibility to be forthcoming when he has been careless or untruthful in presenting information to the public.

In a March 31, 1997, public presentation Mr. Honeyman stated: "All evidence suggests that 1 to 10 microcuries of Pu was transported from the 903 Pad hillside area to Pond C-2 in late spring 1995, not ca. 0.5 curie as has been suggested by Litaor." This statement is full of problems. First, Honeyman's own estimate, as he admitted on March 31, was based not on samples taken in the field but on running numbers through a standardized computer program. Thus, he didn't really consider "all evidence." And his use of a standardized program is no way to test a hypothesis about plutonium migration that calls into question standardized approaches. Also, contrary to what he implied, Litaor claimed only that plutonium moved in the May 1995 rains, not that it moved all the way from the 903 Pad hillside to the C-2 holding pond.

The heart of Honeyman's argument was the contrast he made between his and Litaor's estimates of the magnitude of plutonium migration, and it was only on this issue that I later sought clarification. I knew that Litaor had estimated the amount of plutonium mobilized in the May 1995 rains as between 10 microcuries (10 millionths of a curie) and half-a-curie. There thus was a serious discrepancy between what Litaor was known to have said and what Honeyman alleged that he said. Either Honeyman misrepresented Litaor, or Litaor said different things at different times. To get clear on this point, on April 9, 1997, as you know, I wrote Mr. Honeyman asking if he could document his assertion that Litaor said "ca. 0.5 curie" of plutonium was mobilized in the May 1995 rains at Rocky Flats. As you also know, he and I had a follow-up telephone conversation about this matter. From what he then said it seemed clear that he couldn't document his assertion nor could he demonstrate that Litaor had said different things at different times. Your July 9 letter provides no new information but simply confirms this. What your letter doesn't do is explain why Mr. Honeyman was so careless and perhaps knowingly untruthful in what he said in a public meeting on a matter of grave concern to citizens of the area. How does he expect to gain the trust of people? Can we rely on the Actinide Migration Panel to uncover the truth about migration of plutonium in the soil at Rocky Flats?

Yours sincerely,

LeRoy Moore

cc: Federico Peña, Secretary of Energy
Alvin Alm, DOE EM-1
Governor Roy Romer
Lt. Governor Gail Schoettler
Rocky Flats Citizens Advisory Board
Rocky Flats Local Impacts Initiative
Jessie Roberson, DOE Rocky Flats
Steve Tarlton, CDPHE Rocky Flats Program
Tim Rehder, EPA Rocky Flats Program
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Niels Schonbeck, Chemistry Department, Metro State University
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