

## Book Reviews

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*High-level Dollars: Low-level sense*, A Critique of Present Policy for the Management of Long-Lived Radioactive Waste and Discussion of an Alternative Approach, by A. Makhijani and Scott Saleska, A Report of the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research, Takoma Park, MD (\$10.00 postpaid) and Apex Press, 777 United National Plaza, New York 10017 (\$12.95 plus postage), ISBN 0-945257-42-2, 138 pages paperback, October 1991

If ever a book were timely and important to society and the environment, the management of nuclear waste as presented by this book is essential. Some components of both power plants and military facilities will be active for up to a million years. Regulatory and institutional failures have occurred both in the U.S. and internationally. In the U.S., classification is mainly on the threat as to the source and type of production: some "low-level" waste contains some components which are more radioactive than "high-level" wastes.

Concern for future generations and environmental degradation in general has aroused public opinion to disposal sites — people fears arise also from conflicts of interest in the U.S. between the Department of Energy and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, plus the other agencies.

This volume suggests alternate classification systems for radioactive waste, such as in Sweden where waste is judged by the need for shielding or cooling, or by half-life, which gives the half-life aspects full consideration.

Extensive references are given to the reports of the past decade on the problem of management.

The conclusions: (1) Change how radioactive wastes are defined, and reclassify radioactive wastes and their disposal according to longevity and hazard level; (2) Restructure the entire long-lived waste management and disposal program; and (3) Provide for extended onsite storage of long-lived radioactive wastes at the point of generation as an interim management step.

Anyone interested or concerned with this serious problem will find this book of great significance.

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