

Press Releases - Sellafield, the cover-up continues - 01/08/00

According to Councillor Eoin Costello this weekend's English press saw the publications of more articles concerning deliberate falsification of quality control data relating to material that was processed at Sellafield for export to Japan. This follows recent revelations concerning the falsification of safety records at Sellafield nuclear reprocessing plant, which led to the resignation of the director of the plant and other senior personnel. The reprocessing plant discharges low level radioactive waste into the Irish Sea all year round. The company denies that there is any link between the long-term radioactive emissions and the clusters of cancers identified by research in areas around the reprocessing plant.

According to Councillor Costello "The revelations in April spurred me to make sure the British Government was aware that the citizens of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown do not want the Sellafield facility to continue its activities. I have now collected over 280 signatures for a petition demanding the closure of Sellafield. I am posting them today to Anna Walker, director general of energy at the Department of Trade and Industry. I would like to thank local schools for their help in organising this petition. "

In April the UK Nuclear Safety Inspector released a report on Sellafield, which was very damning in relation to the high level waste tanks where radioactive waste is stored. The report points to a serious risk to the east coast of Ireland because of the possible release of a large amount of radiation should the cooling towers overheat and the storage tanks not be able to cope with the increased flow.

According to Councillor Costello Germany has now set an example that should be followed throughout Europe by firstly banning any shipments from Sellafield and secondly a commitment to wind down their nuclear industry over the next twenty years. The recent OSPAR meeting in Denmark passed a motion calling on BNFL to suspend reprocessing at Sellafield.

According to Councillor Costello "The people of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown, particularly those with young children, want this threat to our county removed. I hope that Anna Walker will respond to our

petition positively and take action to stop reprocessing at Sellafield."