River nuke plants called baby-killer

By DALE CURRY
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NEW ORLEANS - The policy of placing nuclear power plants on polluted rivers is "a baby-killer," claims Dr. Irwin D.J. Bross, director of the Biostatistical Research and Testing Institute for Cancer Research in Buffalo, N.Y., said the combination of low-level radiation releases and chemical pollutants already existing at the Waterford 3 site on the Mississippi River at Taft may double infant mortality rates.

"A siting policy which has been a baby-killer on the polluted rivers of the USSR will be a mass baby-killer on the polluted rivers of the U.S.," Bross said. "A policy that is disasterous on the Volga will be disastrous on the Mississippi."

In a statement presented to the news media, Bross compared the siting of Waterford 3 to the siting policy of the Soviet Union, where a number of nuclear powerplants are located on polluted rivers that are sources of drinking water. Bross testified as a witness for levelionizing radiation.

He said Soviet infant mortality rates are about double those in the United States and Europe and that the probable cause is the mix of chemical and radiological pollution in the Russian river systems. The policy of siting nuclear plants on a river system that is already carrying a heavy chemical burden has health effects that are little short of disastrous, he said.

"It is a terrible mistake." He said infant mortality rates are "like a fever thermometer of the health of the body politic" and "a warning of more to come."

"This genetic degradation will produce further adverse health effects in children, in adults, and in later generations," he said.

"The infant mortality is only the tip of the iceberg."

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Bross cited various studies linking syngergy - the effects of combined pollutants - to cancer and other hazards and said that Waterford 3 "poses a serious danger to the citizens of Louisiana."

In his official testimony, he said, "The risk analysis used by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff fails to use the current figures for health hazards of low-level radiation and does not take cumulative effects or synergistic effects for chemical pollution into account."

He said the NRC statement on radiological impact is "at least questionable and in all likelihood is wrong."

Bross said that adding a risk to those already present in the environment can make a policy that will produce cancer in certain individuals who may otherwise escape the disease. It is a susceptible group of individuals, he said, low-level radiological and chemical exposures "can produce the additional break point now needed to initiate cancer."

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He has published more than 300 scientific papers and his latest book, Scientific Strategies To Save Your Life, deals with studies of the hazards of low-level ionizing radiation.

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