

criticism

Mr. Bob Dixon, Public Affairs and Information Officer from the Whiteshell Nuclear Research Station, spoke to a small group of students in the Duffy Amphitheatre last Thursday. The Whiteshell station, located in Manitoba, is the head office of Atomic Energy of Canada, Ltd., AECL's research on high-level radiation waste disposal for Canada.

In the introduction the audience was told that this would be an information session only, and wouldn't deal with the controversies surrounding the nuclear issue. However, Mr. Dixon started his talk with a little "preaching", as he called it, and it was obvious that this was another presentation to convince students that nuclear power poses no real health hazards for the public.

The audience was told that the Three Mile Island (TMI) accident, in which a U.S. reactor had a partial meltdown releasing radiation into the surrounding community, was a "non-accident as far as public health is concerned."

One wonders how Mr. Dixon could be so positive about this assertion. The amount of radiation actually released at TMI can only be speculated, since the radiation detection metres on site went off scale. In addition, the effects of radiation exposure are cumulative, and often it takes 20 to 30 years for the cancers produced to be detected.

The speaker showed slides of a nuclear operator holding a fuel bundle before it goes into the reactor. He stated that the fuel was relatively safe. He neglected to mention the millions of tons of low-level radioactive wastes that are polluting the air and water as a result of the production of that "relatively safe fuel bundle". When questioned about this, the speaker made reference to a study in the U.S. which showed mining uranium and fueling reactors was much safer than leaving it in the ground, since during this cycle some of the radioactive materials were reduced. How could mining, milling, processing, transporting, fissioning, storing, and disposing of this fuel cycle be safer than leaving it in the ground?

The audience was then assured that a CANDU reactor would

never explode. When asked about the possibility of proliferation of nuclear weapons through the sale of CANDU's to India (who detonated a nuclear explosion in 1974) Argentina (who is presently con-

structing the facilities to build nuclear weapons), South Korea, Taiwan, and Turkey, Mr. Dixon dismissed this possibility. He viewed the plutonium in the spent fuel as a very useful "by-product" which could be re-cycled and used as an energy source. Once again, the issue of proliferation was omitted from the presentation.

Mr. Dixon went on to discuss the various methods of high-level waste storage and disposal. He showed charts produced by computer simulations that proved these wastes could be stored safely.

The speaker also said that in his opinion an increased exposure of 1% of background is safe. He neglected to tell the students that every exposure to radiation increases the potential of contracting cancer and that there is no safe level of radiation. After the talk, a man asked Mr. Dixon how he should dispose of the radioactive material in his smoke detector. Mr. Dixon told the man to throw it in the dump — that it contained no radiation of any significance. In fact, he said you could eat the Americium 241 in 100 smoke detectors and get less radiation exposure than is in a meal. The International Commission for radiological protection has set a maximum permissible body burden of 0.03 microcuries. A single smoke detector contains from between 25 and 170 times that permissible amount. According to Dixon, 100 x this amount would pose no health hazard.

Mr. Dixon offered to come back and discuss some of the questions raised but I would hope that the engineering department could find someone to present a more objective view of the nuclear industry. We've heard from the industry, how about hearing from those who have a different point of view.

By Roy Johnston/Terry Mitchell

Having a few minutes free (a rarity), I stopped at the Telidon machine in the library. After pressing a few buttons, I was rewarded with a picture of some stars and a message saying, "Under the geodesic dome of the UPEI Planetarium is an entertaining as well as educational show, a re-creation of the sky and all it's (sic.) wonders." My interest sparked, I read further.

"The simulation of constellations, planets and meteors, complete with narration, is enjoyed by viewers of all ages." This sounds pretty good, I thought. How can I see it? This question plagued me until a new picture was drawn. "The five sectional globe, 50 feet in diameter, is 37 feet high & features a main star projector assisted by six slide projectors operated by remote control. Public shows offered throughout the summer months. For winter schedule contact: Planetarium 566-0410."

Armed with this wealth of new information, I left the Telidon and rushed to the nearest phone. I was greeted by an answering machine that told me to phone back later between 11:00 am and 1:00 pm. The next day, I phoned. Ring ... Ring ... Ring ... no answer. Since I don't have an



Easier to board the space shuttle

anyway, I walked over to the 37-foot high planetarium and found the outside door open. Encouraged, I entered. The inside door was locked. The message on it said that "the group" had arrived early and "I'm" inside showing the film. Hmmm. Whatever happened to remote control?

Still interested after all this, I read the message on the outer door which was open. "The UPEI planetarium is open during the winter months to groups of 15 or more by appointment only. For further information or to make an appointment call 566-0410."

I wasn't about to call that number again. Then I thought to myself, the note on the door has two interpretations. I am not a group of 15 or even more

obviously, I don't need an appointment during the winter. Maybe that's not it, after what I've tried already. The other alternative is that only groups of 15 or more can use the planetarium during the winter. As I pointed out earlier, I am not a group of 15 or more.

How can I see the Planetarium? Why isn't at least one show per month scheduled? Why can't someone like me be tagged on to a group? Why do we have a planetarium if one cannot use it during the academic year? Why doesn't the message out front say "Individuals interested, get lost." The answer to these and many more questions will be answered when someone answers the telephone. If anyone does.

International year of Tempo

WATERLOO (CUP) — A tobacco advertisement in a number of campus newspapers, in the windows of every corner store and on bus shelters has come under fire from the Canadian Cancer Society.

The cancer society says that RJR MacDonald Company's Tempo cigarettes are an attempt to induce young people to start smoking.

"They (MacDonald) says the ads are geared towards the 18-25 age group. Just look at the ads. We say 13 and up," said Mike McFarland, public relations officer at the cancer society.

McFarland said the bright, pastel ads are aimed at non-smokers, and not smokers switching brands.

"The industry is in trouble. More people are quitting, so they have to get more people to start. Frankly, I'm surprised they got away with the ads," he said.

An official with J. Walter

Thompson, the agency which designed and distributed the Tempo ads, dismissed the claim.

"First of all, the facts are wrong. Nobody said this was a cigarette targeted at the 18-25 market. In fact, Marketing Magazine refers to it as a Yuppie cigarette. Well, there are no 18-year-old Yuppies," said Jeff Goodman vice-president of corporate relations.

"The cancer society won't be happy unless we go out of business," Goodman said.

Goodman said Tempo ads are unique for tobacco, but not for the market place.

"It's a contemporary format. It's in tune with the 80s. The ads show ordinary people that you see on the street, as opposed to the plastic-looking people in other cigarette advertising. And by the way, none of our models are under 25 years of age."

A study done last spring indicated that 26 percent of college students smoke, compared to 18.6 percent in university.

The full-colour ads were placed in six Ontario college papers, but Goodman said the distribution may later extend to university papers. The ads were distributed through two publishers' representatives, Campus Plus, which sponsored the spring survey, and Youthstream. Both companies allow papers the freedom not to run an ad if they decide against it.

Clark Davey, editor of the OBT at Seneca College, has not heard of the controversy surrounding the Tempo ads his paper runs, he said, "We would consider, and possibly would boycott (the ads) if approached by the Canadian Cancer Society."

The Toronto Sun carried a Tempo advertisement in its Sept. 20 edition. "We will run it again if asked," said national advertising coordinator Olga Arden. "We can't decide to boycott an ad because a special interest group doesn't like it. It (Tempo) is a tobacco ad like any other tobacco ad. They always carry the (Health and Welfare) warning at the bottom."