

UPF UPDATE

NOVEMBER 2014

THERE IS NO NEW UPF PLAN—
LONG LIVE THE NEW UPF PLAN!

Two years after the National Nuclear Security Administration announced it was reducing the scope of the Uranium Processing Facility to save time, space and money, it continues to misrepresent the project to the public. After the 2012 space/fit fiasco forced NNSA to abandon plans for a multipurpose facility, the UPF was pared down to a production-only operation, its sole mission the manufacture of secondaries (the thermonuclear core of a warhead) and cases for stockpile life extension programs.

The latest example of NNSA duplicity was on display at the “Business Opportunities Conference” in Knoxville, Tennessee. The UPF exhibit featured a large floor display showing a worker at a glovebox with the tagline “Weapon Dismantlement.”

NNSA’s reluctance to be honest about its mission as it sells the UPF to the public is understandable, perhaps, since the mission is to produce weapons of mass destruction.

MENDACITY RUN AMOK

A little misdirection at the Knoxville trade show might be shrugged off as public relations spin, but UPF program managers appear to be adopting mendacity as an across-the-board strategy to shield the project from public scrutiny.

When asked about legal requirements to subject its new UPF plan to environmental analysis the response is “We don’t have a plan.” At the same time, it is becoming increasingly clear that a plan has been developed, and it no longer bears any resemblance to the 2011 Record of Decision authorizing construction of “one new facility.”

Meanwhile, NNSA and Bechtel are spending \$300 million, courtesy of Tennessee Senator Lamar Alexander’s Energy and Water Appropriations subcommittee. Since late 2013, when NNSA abandoned its first UPF design, half a billion dollars has been spent despite the fact, if NNSA is to be believed, that there is no plan for the UPF.

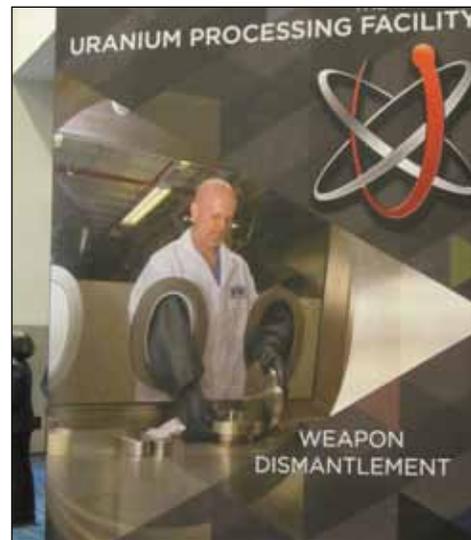
Watchdogs familiar with how the Department of Energy works are used

to hearing public affairs spokespersons asking them to “Move along, move along, nothing to see here...” with a wan smile. But when hundreds of millions of dollars are being spent on a project, there must either be:

- A.) something to see here; or
- B.) fraud and corruption

In either case, an explanation is in order. This is especially true for a project that has already spent over a billion taxpayer dollars and still insists they have nothing to show for it.

In Congress, where accountability for the UPF budget lies, the bi-partisan public line seems to shift back and forth from “We’re having quarterly meetings with project managers,” to “There is no plan to talk about yet.” Tennessee Senator Bob Corker told the *Knoxville News-Sentinel* in October he “wasn’t comfortable commenting directly on the UPF issues.” Is he igno-



rant of the current plans, or is he on board with the “tell them nothing until we get it built” strategy?

Bottom line: No public accountability for a billion dollar project that is becoming increasingly hard to deny.

THE CONE OF SILENCE CRACKS

Denials of convenience aside, the UPF project is moving forward and the plan that doesn’t exist does, in fact, exist.

High-level DOE officials said in May of this year that it would be a year or more before a plan was ready.

A month later, NNSA Administrator Frank Klotz was quoted in the *Knoxville paper* saying there was almost “nothing we disagree with” in the April 2014 Red Team proposal: use some existing facilities while building at least two new facilities. OREPA and the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability pointed out NNSA is obliged to

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