

# Outgoing NRC Member Says Nuclear Report Was Censored

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A retiring member of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission yesterday accused the executive branch of censoring information he was trying to give Congress about the diversion of nuclear material from plants operated by foreign countries.

Peter A. Bradford told a House Foreign Affairs subcommittee that deletions were ordered in a classified report he sought to give Congress on nuclear safeguards abroad.

He did not identify which agencies censored his report but other sources said they were the Central Intelligence Agency and the State Department.

Bradford's term expires officially in June, but he left the NRC yesterday with a final blast about what he called "secrecy and self-delusion" in the international supervision of nuclear facilities.

Congress' ability to decide whether international safeguards are adequate, he said, "is currently being severely undercut by the quality and untimeliness of the information provided to you from the executive branch."

His words were echoed by Rep. Richard L. Ottinger (D-N.Y.), who accused the administration of a "systematic cover-up" of inadequacies in the supervision by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

That agency has the duty under international agreement of inspecting nuclear facilities in many countries to determine whether nuclear material is being diverted to make atomic weapons. Its powers are limited and numerous critics have said it cannot verify in many cases whether material is being diverted.

Last September, the IAEA acknowledged publicly that it could not give assurances that nuclear material was not being diverted from a reactor in Pakistan, adding to international suspicions that that country is striving for atomic weapons. That episode touched off a congressional drive for information and requests that the NRC investigate the adequacy of the IAEA safeguards.

The U.S. representative to the IAEA, Richard T. Kennedy, denied Ottinger's charge of a "cover-up" but did not directly refute Bradford's claim that portions of his response to Congress were ordered deleted.