between two countries outside the USA needs the approval of the US Energy Research and Development Administration. US policy thus far has been to authorise the transfer of spent fuel for reprocessing, but the UK Department of Energy says it "may well be" that as part of the US review of non-proliferation policy "further consideration will be given to the conditions under which authorisation is given". According to the *Times*, negotiations between British and the USA on the matter have made little progress so far.

Important as this is, though, the most immediate of Windscale's problems last week appeared to be the continuing stalemate it faced in an industrial dispute which began on 25 January and which coincided awkwardly with the Japanese delegation's visit. Changing room attendants went on strike over a claim for increased allowances for working in an active area. Other workers were laid off as a result, and the strike spread, eventually affecting some 3,000 workers. After 11 days, during which reactors had been shut down and special safety procedures adopted, workers rejected a peace formula; last week no further efforts were being planned to solve the dispute, which was costing BNFL some £14,000 a day in lost revenue.

Meanwhile, worries over the health of workers at Windscale have revived. The deaths of two Windscale workers apparently suffering from cancer-related diseases have been the subject of separate inquests; open verdicts were recorded. Difficulties over secrecy being faced by BNFL lawyers handling two other cases, involving families of Windscale workers who died of cancer-related diseases, are thought to be partly responsible for last week's publication by the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) of a paper by Dr G. W. Dolphin, its Assistant Director (Research and Development).

The long-promised paper is substantially the one produced in September 1975 comparing the numbers of observed and expected deaths at Windscale from various cancers. It concluded that the difference was insignificant, but was much criticised, notably by the Flowers Commission on nuclear power and the environment, particularly in being limited only to those actually employed at Windscale.

With the aid of an independent consultant epidemiologist, Dr Peter Smith, BNFL is now to conduct its own two-year study of all 20,000 workers who have been employed at Windscale for any period of time in the past. Its findings will be lodged in a registry of radiation workers which the NRPB has established to produce a long-term study of those exposed to radiation. □

USSR

The web of 'secrecy'

Vera Rich reports on the case of Dr Naum Salanskii, now facing problems in seeking to emigrate from the USSR

THE prospect that this year's Diamond Jubilee of the October Revolution might be marked by a spirit of amnesty and a relaxation of pressure on dissidents and minority groups is beginning to look less realistic. A vicious attack on Andrei Sakharov in the embassy 'hand-out' publication *Soviet News*, the arrest of members of the 'Helsinki monitoring group' (including physicist Yuri Orlov and science-fiction writer Mykola Rudenko), and now the peculiar case of Dr Naum Salanskii in Vil'nyus, all indicate an intensification rather than a relaxation of pressure.

Dr Salanskii, formerly a laboratory head at the Institute of Physics of the Siberian Branch of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, applied in 1975 to emigrate to Israel and was, according to standard Soviet practice, dismissed from his post. Before leaving the institute, however, he managed to obtain a document signed by the Director of the Institute, Professor I. A. Terskov, which stated unequivocally that "all the works by N. Salanskii were published at home and abroad in journals and other *non-secret* publications".

Dr Salanskii was nevertheless refused permission to emigrate, and on the grounds of his "secret work". With Professor Terskov now retired, Dr Salanskii found it impossible to get the new Director, Professor Pershov, to confirm his predecessor's assessment. While awaiting permission, Salanskii, like so many refusniks, became associated with Mark Azbel's illicit seminars. At the end of December 1976, when the authorities broke up the attempt of the seminar group to hold a three-day symposium on Jewish life in the USSR, several members were held for a time by the police. In Salanskii's case the matter is being taken further.

According to official statements, Salanskii is being investigated on the charge of having "slandered Soviet policy regarding the Jewish minority". The issue of secrecy also occurred several times during interrogations. On one occasion an investigator, Baku-chornis, told him that he had written to Salanskii's old institute enquiring about the alleged secrecy of his work and had already received a reply. On another occasion he was told by an official of the Central Committee of

the Lithuanian Communist Party that no such enquiry was ever made nor had a reply ever been received since 'criminal proceedings' had been started. "This seems rather strange", Salanskii commented, in a telephone conversation last week; "first they said that enquiries had been made and a reply received, and suddenly all this has disappeared".

Salanskii is still trying to discover details of the accusation, and has asked the investigator to explain the policy of the USSR towards the Jewish minority which he is alleged to have slandered. According to Salanskii, the investigator said he was not an expert in this field and must look it up in a book. "It seemed very odd to me," says Salanskii, "that he has been working on my case for seven weeks, but still is unable to explain the accusation. As I do not know the essence of the case, I am in the meantime writing the history of my application for emigration [by way of a defence]. If I am taken to court, I will be handed the accusation just before the proceedings begin, so that I cannot prepare a defence."

Salanskii's case is noteworthy for several reasons. Isolated as he is in Vil'nyus, he does not have the moral support which one finds, for example, among the Moscow group of refusniks. And the issue of 'secrecy' has once again raised its bureaucratic head, but in this case it is not only the nature of Dr Salanskii's former work which is considered a secret, but apparently the charges against him too. An early decision has been promised as to whether the charges will be taken to court, dropped, or retained for further investigation—provided, of course, that the outcome of that decision is not itself considered an official secret. □

Naum Salanskii