

Academics fighting Daya Bay

By ALBERT CHAN ¹⁰⁻³

ACADEMICS and staff at the Chinese University have taken an unprecedented step to voice opposition to the Daya Bay nuclear plant project.

More than half of the 1,500 teachers and staff have signed a petition which calls on China to either scrap the project or move it further from Hongkong.

One of the university campaign organisers, Dr Kwok Siu-tong, said the drive was the biggest since the early 1970s when the university pressed the Government to adopt Chinese as an official language.

However, in that case the involvement of non-academic staff was limited.

The university's Teachers Association and Staff Association are behind the campaign.

Several campaign representatives petitioned the Unofficial Members of the Legislative and Executive Councils and the New China News Agency (NCNA) yesterday.

In the letter to Umelco, they said the proximity of the plant to Hongkong "gives us great cause for anxiety."

"The Daya Bay nuclear plant will be sitting next to us, threatening the lives and property of us all in Hongkong," they said.

They criticised the China

Light and Power Company and the Chinese Government for releasing "pitifully little" information about the safety and economic value of the proposed plant.

The group then went to the NCNA office where they were received by Mr Hu Shuzhi, division chief of the Department of Culture and Education.

In a separate letter to the NCNA, the campaigners said: "For the safety sake of our descendants, we believe a postponement of the nuclear programme is a correct strategy."

The NCNA official agreed to pass on the views to various Government departments.

Meanwhile, NCNA director Mr Xu Jiatun said yesterday the people of Hongkong should be rational in their discussion of the issue.