

May – mid-June 1980

Special Labor Issue



photo by Rainy Creighton

Trains like this regularly carry nuclear wastes from the Mare Island Naval Shipyard in Vallejo.

“The Radioactive Special”

Every now and then Southern Pacific Railroad crews are sent to haul trainloads of nuclear submarine fuel into the Mare Island Naval Shipyard or high-level wastes and contaminated reactor parts out. The highly radioactive spent fuel in steel casks lined with lead or uranium is too heavy for highway load limits, so it's put onto heavy-duty flat cars, moved off base by Navy personnel and left to sit on the Vallejo branch line until the Southern Pacific crews pick it up. Its route takes it through Roseville, near Sacramento and across the Sierra Nevada to Idaho.

The railroad workers call these trains “Radioactive Specials” but the cars bear no signs or placards warning of their contents. Even the train crews don't know exactly what's inside. Nor are the workers given monitoring badges, protective clothing of any sort or training about what to do in case of an accident.

Last May a woman firefighter brought a newspaper article citing the Interstate Commerce Commission's continued on page ten

Utilities to finance solar?

Hello. I'm from PG&E. I am a synthetic computer voice from the Enercom Program. Your home qualifies for the following cost-effective measures: . . . Thank you and please remember, we can all live better, efficiently.

You may find yourself a participant in a one-sided conversation like this by summer. California is on the brink of involving its electric utilities in massive, billion-dollar programs in solar energy and conservation which would quintuple the number of homes in the U.S. with solar-assisted water heating.

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) has directed the utilities to act as financier for the largest investment in “soft energy” in the country. The state's four largest utilities must submit plans for demonstration programs to finance solar water heating for over 175,000 homes and conservation hardware for a similar number within three years. Only about 10,000 solar systems exist in California today.

Even more significantly the CPUC will decide in May if the utilities will get the whole ball of wax, the Fire Ball that is, ol' Sol. It will rule on whether solar hardware can be marketed, leased, manufactured and installed by monopoly utilities. Commissioner Leonard Grimes termed the decision “as important for the long-term as any issue that has ever come before us.”

How California chooses to define its utilities' role in the state's commitment to the “soft energy path” will greatly affect efforts throughout the country. Sylvia Siegel, founder and director of Toward Utility Rate Normalization, opposes regulations which would allow the utilities to profit from investments in alternative energy. She warns, “You're building another energy cartel. Arco and Mobil already own a piece of the sun. Why should we put an investor-owned utility into the other piece of it?”

In 1978, PG&E earned national notoriety when it admitted to the CPUC that it hadn't made a single cost comparison between investments in traditional and alternative sources of energy—and was unable to do so. In the two years since, their tune has drastically changed. Leslie Kalin of San Diego Gas & Electric recently told the *Sacramento Bee* that utility marketing alone can promote the “most rapid, widespread development of solar” and “lend stability, credence and integrity to the industry as a whole.”

Why are the utilities suddenly ready to put a billion dollars into renewable energy sources? What is their appropriate role in the introduction of conservation and solar technologies? Can the future envisioned by continued on page 9

Toxic spill in Sonoma PG&E workers refuse cleanup

It was almost quitting time on Wednesday, January 16, when three Sonoma PG&E workers were issued protective clothing and ordered out to a local residential neighborhood. Earlier that afternoon one of three capacitor tanks atop a power pole near the corner of East Napa St. and Third St. East ruptured and spewed over the street, sidewalk, trees and shrubbery and into Nathanson Creek three gallons of a black, oily fluid—polychlorinated byphenyls (PCB).

PCBs are used as an insulating fluid in most PG&E capacitors. Their manufacture was banned by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) last year because they have been shown to be carcinogenic. PCBs can seep into the water supply and remain toxic for decades. Because of their extreme toxicity the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health has suggested extraordinary precautions for people working around PCBs.

The PG&E workers' protective gear included paper coveralls, plastic boots and rubber gloves. But they were not given goggles, respirators, special training or medical exams immediately following the work as the NIOSH report recommended. They were warned only not to get any of the stuff on them.



photo by Steve Stallone

This power pole used to have three capacitors before one exploded on January 16. Six of twenty-six such capacitors in Sonoma have leaked in the last two years. Hundreds more are in use throughout California — perhaps in your neighborhood.

The workers scrubbed the sidewalk, street and power pole with a strong detergent and removed the failed capacitor, some shrubbery and soil that evening. After it rained the following morning another crew was sent out to continue the cleanup.

EPA test samples taken from the accident site on February 1 showed PCB levels ranging from 2,620 to 120,000 parts per million. The EPA legal minimum level for PCBs in the environment is 50 parts per million. So a third cleaning ordered by the EPA was done on February 9. Second EPA samples taken February 14 showed PCB levels still ranged from 4,380 to 36,100 parts per million.

On March 5 workers were sent out to clean the site once more, but due to the threat of rain they only took samples from the soil and power pole. The next day two of the workers who were on the original crew the day of the accident were ordered out for yet another cleanup. Having learned about the dangers of PCBs on their own since January the two refused to do the job. Although workers' rights to challenge health and safety hazards are supposed to be protected by federal law, one of the linemen was suspended for 4½ hours without pay by PG&E. The other, Al Simontacchi, a shop steward in the International Brotherhood of Elec- continued on page ten

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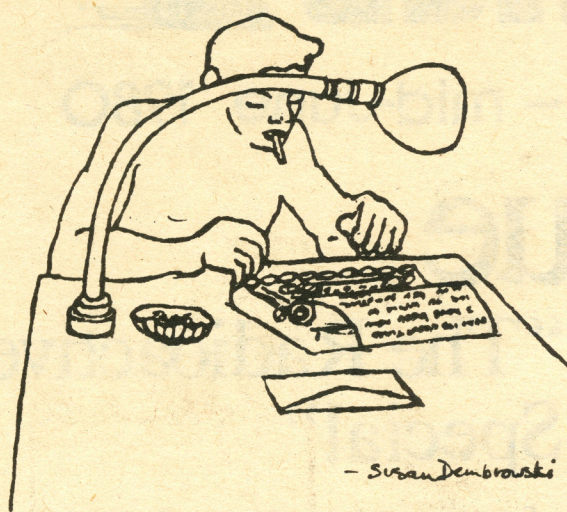
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Letters



STICKS AND STONES...

Dear Staff,

In the April issue of *It's About Times*, such terms as "rinky dinks," "pie-eyed twits," "sucker," "garbage," etc. were used loosely in the article by the Hold That Line news service. That is exactly the same jargon that ultra-conservative, right-wing Birchers use in their publications and literature.

Many "moderate" associates of mine consider *It's About Times* (as well as many other anti-nuclear publications) as being just as biased as Bircher literature, only as the opposite extreme. Therefore, the material appears to be just as irrational as Bircher material. Moderates and moderate conservatives discount yours and other anti-nuke publications as "radical garbage."

Extremely valuable information, such as what you print, can become totally worthless to many people when it is presented in a subjective way.

Sincerely,
Steve Lucas

Dear Steve,

While we don't wish to offend readers unnecessarily, we feel that encouraging communication among safe energy activists is a principal purpose of *It's About Times*. We try, whenever possible, to leave these communications in the author's own words.

The "Hold That Line" article did not pretend to be an "objective" analysis of the powerline conflict. It was a participant's view, full of colorful opinions enhanced by much supporting information. We feel that readers with an open mind (and a sense of humor) will be able to judge the factual content of the article on its own merits.

We think that adopting a veneer of "objectivity" in our writing or editing style only hides the opinions which every author, radical or conservative, brings to their work. On page 12 of this issue, for example, we reprint a TIME article which is written in an "objective" style but carries an extreme pro-nuclear bias. Without other sources of information many TIME readers might be deceived into taking the account at face value since it is billed as "news" — and newsmagazines supposedly print only facts.

A position against nuclear power and weapons is not politically neutral. It raises questions of who controls technology and who benefits from that control. If some "moderates" reject this as "radical garbage" that is unfortunate, but the issues must be presented and discussed as clearly and directly as possible for the sake of our survival.

—the Editors



SEND IAT TO COLLEGE

Howdy folks,

I am donating a subscription to the local college because I would like to see *It's About Times* reach more people in this area. If you have any back issues and it would be possible to send them I think they would be put to good use.

—J.P., Columbia, CA

PG&E fails to buy Arcata vote

Voters in Arcata, California, decided two to one to recommend the permanent closure of the Humboldt Bay Nuclear Power Plant.

Three progressive city council candidates endorsed by the Redwood Alliance also easily won election and the PG&E sponsored candidate came in last. It will now be city policy to push for the development of renewable energy sources.

By a week before the election PG&E had spent \$32,000 trying to defeat the measure. The Redwood Alliance, organizers of the initiative, spent only \$6,000. They attribute their success to the community outreach and teach-ins they have been sponsoring since the 1978 Diablo occupation.

PG&E's campaign featured numerous television ads with a child playing with a photovoltaic windmill. The narration said in part, "Hydro power is damaging to the environment. Oil pollutes the air and is non-renewable. Nuclear power does none of these things. Solar only powers toys. (At this point the child passes his hand over the photo-cell and the windmill stops.) Don't let the lights go out. Vote NO on B."

The morning of the election so many volunteers showed up at 5:00 a.m. to put up door hangers on the homes of registered voters that all the voting households in the city were easily covered. PG&E tried to hire people to do the same thing, but were unable to find any takers. They had to be content with a small phone bank.

PG&E has reason to worry about the permanent closure of Humboldt. The NRC will hold hearings the first week in June to determine if the seismic hearings on Humboldt should be delayed. PG&E will be requesting its third extension. That same week the Public Utilities Commission will have its six-month check-up asking PG&E either to submit decommissioning plans for Humboldt or plans to reopen the facility.

PG&E would much prefer to postpone the presentation of this information until after Diablo opens, since publicity on the cost of decommissioning Humboldt may encourage skepticism about the opening of Diablo.

—Mark Evanoff

San Onofre workers contaminated

Eleven workers were contaminated with radiation on three separate occasions during the weekend of April 12 at the San Onofre Nuclear Power Plant. All had been searching for leaks in the tubing between the primary and secondary cooling systems. The contamination occurred while the workers removed their protective clothing after leaving the hot area. Three of the workers contaminated themselves twice in a two-day period.

Lou Miller of the NRC explained the difficulties in disrobing hot clothing to *It's About Times*. "Not being able to see radiation, you have to assume where it's at and be careful removing protective clothing. Sufficient measures were not taken here, so you wash off [the workers took several showers]. All were successful in doing so."

Southern California Edison, operator of the plant, conducts extensive three-day training classes in proper disrobing techniques and radiation, according to Miller. The NRC monitors the classes and safety practices.

A week after the contamination electrician Michael Flanagan walked off the job after getting disgusted with the safety violations at the plant. He reported 8 separate violations to the NRC and the *San Diego Union*. Flanagan described improper disrobing techniques practiced by workers and radiation monitors that weren't functioning. He returned to work that evening after being called back Monday, but was turned away by his shop steward along with a co-worker who had also lodged a complaint.

Flanagan has since taken a position of "no comment" when questioned about his charges against San Onofre. He is still pro-nuclear and is worried the media is out to get the nuclear industry. He told Cliff Smith of the *San Diego Union*, "I'm afraid to say more at this time. This has been a terrible week. I'm scared."

—Mark Evanoff

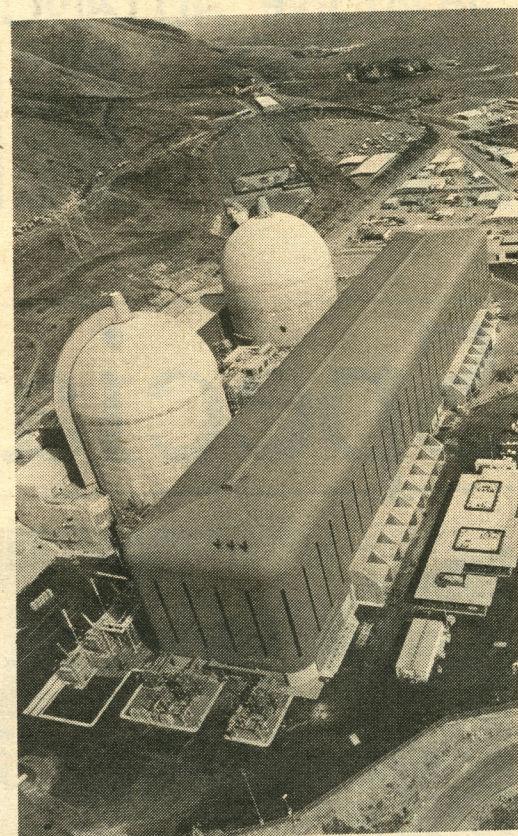


photo courtesy of PG&E

Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant, San Luis Obispo.

Diablo Conversion Campaign forms

The Diablo Conversion Campaign was created in March to apply political pressure for a state-sponsored study of the feasibility of converting Diablo Canyon to a non-nuclear fuel source.

A petition has been submitted to the California Public Utilities commission asking that it conduct a conversion study and reopen hearings on Diablo because the PUC cannot adequately rule on whether a nuclear Diablo is in the public interest without first looking into the feasibility of running Diablo with a non-nuclear fuel.

The DCC was endorsed by the Abalone Alliance at its recent statewide conference and will soon be contacting AA chapters to enlist their support with the campaign. People can help right now by writing to the Governor in support of a conversion study and by writing to John Bryson, chairperson of the Public Utilities Commission, asking for reopened hearings in conjunction with a thorough study into the life-cycle costs and risks of operating Diablo with nuclear fuel as compared to the many alternatives available.

The DCC coordinating committee represents such groups as the Abalone Alliance Labor Task Force, Californians for Nuclear Safeguards, Diablo Project Office, People Generating Energy, Diablo Conversion Project, Mothers for Peace, Friends of the Earth, League of Women Voters, California Democratic Council, Physicians for Social Responsibility and the Southern California Alliance for Survival.

For more information, contact Joel Yudken, AA Labor Task Force, 415-968-8798; Dwight Cocke, Diablo Conversion Campaign, 415-543-8072 or Raye Fleming, Diablo Project Office, 805-543-6614. Or write the Diablo Conversion Project, 1945 Berkeley Way #218, Berkeley, CA 94704.

Gary Farber

ABALONE ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER IT'S ABOUT TIMES

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Does jogging cause cancer?

Livermore Labs PR department works overtime

"The only threat to health from the lab is due to vehicular traffic," asserted Larry McGrew, Livermore Lab mechanical engineer, in an address to the Livermore-Amador Valley Sierra Club in November, 1979.

But a three year State Department of Health Services study released April 22nd indicated that during the period 1972 to 1977 Lawrence Livermore Lab employees contracted melanoma, a rare form of skin cancer, at a rate five times higher than residents of surrounding communities.

"It indicated to us that, at least during that time period, there was apparently some health hazard associated with employment at the laboratory," said Dr. Donald Austin who conducted the study.

The study found that although among the public melanoma ranks as the tenth most common cancer, it was the most frequently diagnosed malignancy at the lab during the study period.

Furthermore, the study concluded that it was "very unlikely," a million to one odds, that the increased rate among lab employees occurred by chance or that it resulted from an unusual pattern of disease reporting or medical care.

The causes of melanoma are not known although studies have indicated a connection between exposure to ultraviolet radiation and development of the disease. Accordingly, in defense of the lab, public information officer Jeff Garberson pointed out that the lab has "one of the most active recreation programs of any institution our size. If you go out there at noon, you'll find people basking in the sun at lunch hour, jogging, swimming and playing basketball or volleyball." Lab director Roger Batzel issued a memorandum to lab employees which stated, "If you are concerned about skin cancer, stay out of the sun."

But Dr. John Gofman, former associate director of the lab, challenged the belief that melanoma is caused solely by excessive sun exposure. He cited a report published in the *British Journal of Radiology* which links human skin cancer to alpha radiation. "All three types of skin cancer, basal, squamous and malignant

melanoma, have been induced by ionizing radiation among radiation workers and patients who receive radiotherapy for malignant diseases," he said.

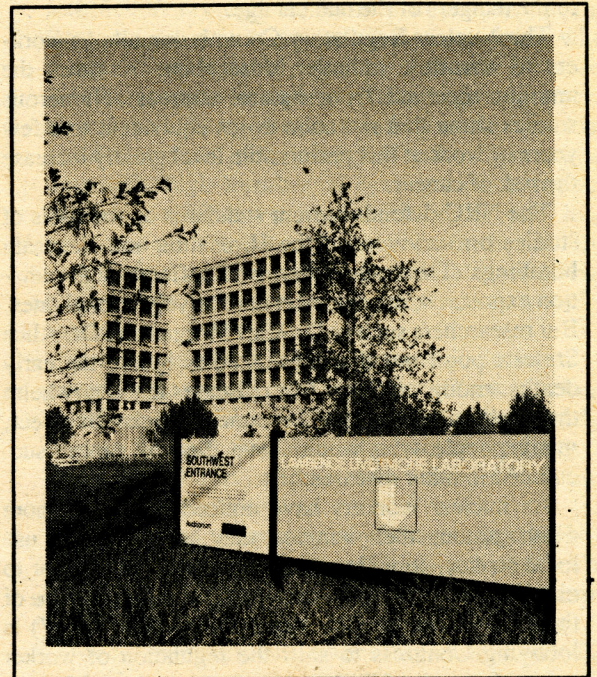
THEY SAID IT COULDN'T HAPPEN

At an Alameda County Board of Supervisors meeting last June lab officials testified that plutonium cannot escape from Lawrence Livermore Lab. An elaborate triple-filter ventilation system operates constantly to make sure that no plutonium particles escape. Lab spokesmen described tests in which a glovebox was placed over an underground weapons test in Nevada and stated that the glovebox survived undamaged.

On April 8th what couldn't happen happened. The pressure inside a glovebox increased causing a glove to pop outward and break a seal. Plutonium contaminated a laboratory room and three micrograms, the equivalent of 300,000 picocuries, escaped into the atmosphere.

Charlie Bender, head of the lab's Chemistry Materials Department, said, "It wasn't much of an accident. We wouldn't have reported it a few years ago." Jeff Garberson said, "It was a very minor amount and posed absolutely no danger to anyone."

Opinions on this point vary, however. According to Dr. Edward A. Martell, a radiation chemist at the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, Colorado, "Only one or two picocuries of insoluble alpha-emitting particles in the lung may give rise to an unacceptably high risk of lung cancer." Jefferson County, Colorado Public Health Director Dr. Carl Johnson referred to a study conducted at the Rocky Flats plutonium facility which indicated that workers who received a body dosage of 400 to 4000 picocuries suffered chromosome damage. He said, "If 400 picocuries could cause permanent chromosome damage in a worker, then 40 picocuries is too much for someone in the general public. A single plutonium particle of respirable size could exceed 40 picocuries. A release



the size of the lab's estimate is a hazard because it is in the form of discrete particles. People who may have been in the path of the exhaust plume, which could extend 20 to 30 miles or more, would be at risk of inhaling one or more such particles."

In regard to the lab's triple-filter system, which has been claimed to be 97% efficient, Johnson cited studies appearing in the *Journal of Health Physics* which indicate that High Efficiency Particle Air (HEPA) filters are not nearly as efficient as claimed and that alpha radiation emitters such as plutonium tend to scatter into small particles which can diffuse through four to five filters in series. According to the lab, the room in which the April 8th leak occurred had only one HEPA filter.

Furthermore, Johnson asserted that the air monitoring filters used to measure the amount of radiation which passes through HEPA filters and into the environment are even less efficient. Johnson believes that the lab's estimate of the release could have been underestimated by a factor of 5 to 10.

Following last January's earthquake structural engineer John Rutherford stated, "Surprisingly, the 5.5 magnitude earthquake caused significant structural damage in two areas of the plutonium facility. One area, where a second floor loft houses fans and filters, could prove essential to the proper function of the safety systems for plutonium containment." Engineer Gary Grey stated, "If the second floor ceiling collapsed it could create wind pressures strong enough to blow out, if nothing else, all the doors of the plutonium facility." Livermore Lab civil engineer Dave Coats conceded that the doors could be blown open, but reiterated that the plutonium is safely contained in gloveboxes and thus would not leave the building.

On April 16th another "infallible" glovebox failed. This time plutonium was contained within the lab room. Said Jeff Garberson, "This kind of situation with two incidents in the space of a week is just not acceptable," but "This incident was really not as dangerous as an automobile accident."

Community residents, citizens groups and Bay Area politicians have increasingly voiced concerns about the use of radioactive materials in a facility which is surrounded by active earthquake faults. The laboratory's response by Associate Director Carl Haussmann: "Our ability to do research using plutonium on-site is an essential ingredient to the nuclear weapons design effort, the Laboratory's largest program and in some ways its major rationale for existing."

—Susan Bloch

NRC delays TMI venting

Intense local opposition has apparently forced the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to delay plans to vent radioactive gas from the crippled Three Mile Island nuclear power plant. Amid warnings of riots if the gas were released (see April *It's About Times*), Pennsylvania governor Richard Thornburgh asked the anti-nuclear Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) to study the venting plans and alternatives to them. The UCS has agreed to do the study, which is expected to take about a month. Thornburgh has not pledged to be bound by the group's conclusions, but has said he will consider them along with the recommendations of the NRC and Metropolitan Edison. The NRC in turn is not bound by Thornburgh's decision and seems to still regard the problem as merely one of reassuring local residents. One new staff suggestion is to vent the plant's containment building over a five-day period rather than the 60 days previously planned. This scheme is said to have the advantage of reducing psychological stress among area residents, but does nothing to reduce the residents' total radiation exposure.

Releases greater than reported?

In recent months reports of increased human and animal stillbirths and birth defects near TMI have been greeted with official skepticism. Although many of the reported effects are known to be caused by radioactive iodine, the amount of this substance released by the accident was believed to have been too small to cause

such severe damage. In early April, however, a Japanese scientist reported that radioactive iodine releases from the accident totalled more than 5100 curies—340 times the amount reported by the NRC—and could have been as much as 64,000 curies. Seo Takeshi of Kyoto University's nuclear reactor laboratory also said the total radiation dose to people around the plant was about five times the NRC estimate. If Takeshi's figure is interpreted according to the cancer estimates of Dr. John Gofman, it implies that at least 50 area residents will eventually die of cancer as a result of the accident in addition to deaths among plant clean-up workers.

The NRC staff disputes Takeshi's report, claiming that he ignored changes in weather conditions that would affect the calculations. A staffer also said Takeshi's figures were inconsistent with tests made on people in the area and on radioiodine levels in milk. But the staffer acknowledged that there is much uncertainty about doses from the accident due to a lack of dosimeter data from the first few days.

TMI an economic disaster

According to research performed by the *Charlotte Observer* the TMI accident may cost U.S. ratepayers and taxpayers \$7.7 billion, including \$4.5 billion in such "secondary costs" as modifications to other reactors. This figure is more than double the \$3.1 billion in damage done eight years ago by hurricane Agnes, the worst natural disaster to hit the U.S. in modern times.

Such a deal

Bureaucrats ~~sell out~~ give away workers

A year after the TMI accident, the General Public Utilities Corporation has finally bought the human sponges to clean up its mess. The mopping-up process will entail the removal of a million gallons of radioactive water, several million cubic feet of gas and much of the reactor itself.

On March 24 GPU signed the "TMI Recovery Project Agreement" with the international presidents of fifteen AFL-CIO building trades unions and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. Both GPU representatives and union officials acknowledged that the main reason for the \$400 million contract is the belief that the failure to revive the facility could be fatal to the nuclear industry.

The cleanup and decontamination job is a gargan-

tuan undertaking, expected to take three to four years and employ up to 3000 workers. Although the work is particularly hazardous, even for the nuclear industry, the contract offers no extra wages or benefits beyond union scale. Incredibly, it calls for no extra safety precautions.

The contract takes away completely the workers' right to strike and practically forbids them to complain. The union leaders have agreed that "the union and its members, agents, representatives and employees shall not incite, encourage, condone or participate in any strike, walkout, slowdown, sit-down, stay-in, boycott, sympathy strike, picketing or other work stoppages, or handbilling of any nature whatsoever for any cause whatsoever, or any other type of interference of any

kind, coercive or otherwise at Three Mile Island, and it is expressly agreed that any such action is a violation of this agreement..." (article 4 section 4.1) Any such violation subjects the worker to immediate discharge.

Negotiated and signed in Washington without the participation or consent of local union groups and workers, the contract specifically states that it supercedes all local labor agreements concerning the TMI cleanup project. Little wonder then that grumbles already are being heard in the union locals, particularly among the plumbers and pipefitters.

All their precautions to the contrary, GPU may soon be adding labor unrest to their list of "public relations" problems.

—Steve Stallone

Nuclear jobs : dying for a living

From uranium mines to waste dumps, in both military and civilian programs, workers are falling victim to the dangers of the nuclear age.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission allows workers to absorb a radiation dose about 30 times the amount received from natural sources. Numerous studies show that radiation doses equivalent to a few years of work at this permissible level greatly increase the risk of cancer.

The NRC defends current standards on the basis of studies on survivors of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings. These survivors, who suffered high radiation exposures, die of cancer at relatively normal rates. But researchers such as Dr. Carl Morgan and Dr. Alice Stewart point out that these studies ignore the early deaths among survivors from diseases that overwhelm their radiation-damaged immune systems. In effect, many people who would have died of cancer succumbed to other diseases first.

As nuclear workers have noticed more and more deaths among their number, they have begun to use local strikes, lobbying and lawsuits in an attempt to obtain safer working conditions. The national office of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) is lobbying Congress to shift the regulation of worker safety from the NRC to the Department of Labor. Nolan Hancock of OCAW told *It's About Times*, "We simply don't trust the NRC." The union also has been trying to get worker health statistics from an uncooperative Department of Energy.

Uranium mining

Mining uranium ore is the first step in the nuclear fuel cycle. Many of the miners are Navajos and other native Americans living in the Southwest. Fourteen energy corporations have holdings on Indian land in northwestern New Mexico, the largest uranium producing region in the world.

Corporations were attracted to the reservations because of abundant uranium, cheap labor, no taxes and low visibility. Although the health hazards of uranium mining have been known since early in the century, no federal health standards were enforced until 1972.

LaVerne Husen, director of the Public Health Service in Shiprock, New Mexico, recalls the conditions in uranium mines dug by the Kerr-McGee corporation in the late 1940's. "Those mines had 100 times the levels of radioactivity allowed today. . . . It was a get-rich scheme that took advantage of Navajo miners who didn't know what radioactivity was or anything about its hazards."

There is little union activity in the Southwest, and there are indications that mine safety standards still are not enforced. But organizations such as Friends of the Earth and the Natural Resources Defense Council have filed suits against the government on behalf of the miners.

Milling

After uranium ore is mined, it is crushed and chemically treated to extract the uranium. The mill produces a uranium compound called "yellowcake" and tons of radioactive waste sand called "tailings." The country's 17 mills have produced millions of tons of these tailings, which are dumped in huge piles near the mills and emit radioactive gas. According to Dr. Walter Jordan, former assistant director of the Oak Ridge national laboratory, these emissions will kill 28,000 people in this and future generations for every year uranium mining is continued. People who work in the mills are exposed to even higher levels of radiation than those living near them.



A worker guides a cart of uranium ore through a mine.

Conversion and enrichment

Yellowcake is converted into a gas called uranium hexafluoride at plants in Metropolis, Illinois and Gore, Oklahoma. The gas is shipped in cylinders to enrichment plants where huge amounts of energy are consumed to pump it through thousands of process stages. Eventually, a gas richer in one type of uranium atoms is produced which can be converted into solid reactor fuel. Continued enrichment yields uranium suitable for making nuclear bombs.

Workers in these plants constantly breathe radioactive gas. Leaks must be plugged and equipment repaired as the plant continues to operate. Former worker Joe Harding recalled, "At the end of the day you could look behind you and see your tracks in the uranium dust that had settled that day. And we ate lunch in this, every day. We'd just brush away the dust, and eat lunch. Now try to tell me that I didn't eat a lot of uranium during all those years."

Harding kept a list of co-workers who have died of cancer, and 50 of the 200 men he started work with in 1952 are on it. Joe's own name was added on March 1, 1980.

Union Carbide, manager of the Paducah, Kentucky enrichment plant, assured workers that film badges and regular urine samples protected them from overexposure. But one doubtful worker put his film badge on a chunk of uranium for eight hours, and another dumped a piece of uranium in his urine sample. Neither heard anything from the company about their readings.

OCAW local 3-618 represents workers at Goodyear's enrichment plant in Portsmouth, Ohio. Since 1976 the company has ignored 2,600 health and safety grievances filed by the union. The local has struck three times in the last five years, but Goodyear has continued to operate the plant with one-fifth of the qualified workforce and hastily trained replacements for skilled workers. During a 1976 strike, 800 pounds of highly toxic uranium hexafluoride were released into the environment, perhaps contributing further to the unusually high cancer rate in otherwise nonindustrial Pike County.

Fuel fabrication

Fuel fabrication plants turn raw uranium or plutonium into the fuel assemblies that form the core of a nuclear plant. Some of these facilities have been run with shocking disregard for worker safety.

From 1970 to 1976, Kerr-McGee Corporation ran a plutonium fuel fabrication plant near Crescent, Oklahoma. According to former plant manager James Smith, the company consistently ignored federal safety regulations. "It was production first and to hell with the rest . . . the whole place was one big leak." Two hundred workers were internally contaminated with plutonium during the plant's operation and worker Karen Silkwood was killed in a suspicious car crash while on her way to deliver documents about safety violations to a reporter and an OCAW official. Silkwood's family recently won a \$10 million lawsuit against the company because she was heavily contaminated with plutonium shortly before she died. The contamination was traced to food in her refrigerator which was apparently poisoned in an attempt to intimidate her. The company was found responsible.

At the trial, two former plant workers testified that their signatures were forged on safety training documents. They had never received the training.

Nuclear reactors

As nuclear power plants get older, exposures to workers tend to increase both because more repairs are needed and because working areas become more and more radioactive. One example is Consolidated Edison's Indian Point 1 plant, where over 1500 men were used to repair six pipes in the steam generator system. Even with the maximum lead shielding, each worker could stay only 15 minutes before absorbing the maximum allowed radiation dose. The workers were supervised by closed-circuit television. The repair took six months and cost almost \$2 million. Estimates of radiation effects by Dr. John Gofman predict that at least seven of the workers will die of cancer as a result of their 15 minutes of "hot" work.

Reprocessing

Many of the nuclear industry's hopes are pinned on reprocessing, a chemical process to separate nuclear wastes from the still-useful uranium and plutonium in spent nuclear fuel. Reprocessing would make nuclear fuel much more abundant, but would also expose workers and the public to very large radiation doses.

No commercial reprocessing plants are now operating in the U.S. From 1966 to 1972, Getty Oil ran the country's only commercial plant at West Valley, New York. During the plant's lifetime, at least fourteen

separate "incidents" resulted in workers being internally contaminated.

The plant employed 180 people full-time and 1400 part-time, with many of the part-time positions going to poor teenagers who were not informed about the dangers of radiation or given safety training. The lowest paid workers were put into the "hottest" areas, and sometimes worked for as little as 15 minutes before they got their maximum allowable dose and were told to leave. In one instance several people were used to turn a screw on a contaminated motor. Average radiation exposures to workers in the plant were the highest in the nuclear industry. Getty abandoned the plant in 1973, leaving federal taxpayers with 600,000 gallons of high-level liquid radioactive wastes.

**"At the end of the day
you could look behind you
and see your tracks in the
uranium dust."**

Transportation

There are no strict federal standards that apply to the transport of all of the nuclear materials involved in the fuel cycle. Several communities throughout the country have enacted strict local ordinances, but a bill now in Congress would override local control.

Driver exposure depends on the type of material being transported. The NRC estimates that drivers of yellowcake will get one extra cancer per 1000. Fuel rod drivers will get 25 extra cancers.

Most drivers are not trained in what to do in case of accident and carry no monitoring equipment that would detect leaks before they reach their destination. Between 1972 and 1976, 118 accidents resulting in radiation releases were reported.

Atoms for War

Workers in the weapons industry are also dying from exposure to radiation.

Two fires at the Rocky Flats plutonium bomb components plant exposed 25 workers to seventeen times the maximum allowed amount of plutonium. Dr. Carl Johnson, director of public health in Jefferson County, Colorado, found 500 extra cancers in an area thirteen miles downwind from the plant.

Between 250,000 and 350,000 soldiers were intentionally exposed to 87 nuclear test blasts. In Operation Smoky, about 2000 were marched within two miles of ground zero immediately after the blast in "psychological tests." The Center for Disease Control has located 447 of them, among whom eight have died from leukemia. Less than one such death would be normal.

Nuclear tests went underground in 1963. Since then there have been 41 leaks. In 1970 during the Baneberry test, 900 workers were exposed to leaking radiation as a radioactive cloud climbed one and a half miles into the sky. Twelve men were ordered directly into the path of the cloud to evacuate the 900 workers. Two of the twelve died from acute bone marrow cancer within four years of the accident. Dr. Alice Stewart, an epidemiologist from Oxford University, estimates the odds of that happening by chance alone are three in 10,000.

Stopping the cycle of death

On April 12, the Citizens Hearing for Radiation Victims convened in Washington, D.C. and received testimony from over a hundred people from 40 different states. Many others could not attend because of financial and health restraints.

This recital of statistics and horror stories leads to a clear conclusion. The nuclear fuel cycle cannot be made safe. It will go on killing its workers—and anyone else who gets in its way—for as long as we allow it to continue. Even when we stop it, some will continue to die from its leftovers.

Unfortunately, many workers are still unaware of the hazards. One union nuclear worker in Idaho told *It's About Times*, "I'm more concerned about saving my job than shutting down the nuclear industry. Workers get exposed up here all the time. But they get cleaned up okay."

—Mark Evanoff

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Reactor workers honor anti-nuke pickets

The recent refusal of over 200 workers to cross an anti-nuclear picket line at the Pilgrim I nuclear power plant in Plymouth, Massachusetts has triggered more worker strikes, attracted OSHA inspectors and opened a dialogue between union workers and anti-nuclear activists.

On January 5, Boston Edison's Pilgrim I plant was shut down for refueling, maintenance and repairs. Approximately 600 workers were hired from local unions to assist with the fourteen-week process.

While planning a demonstration to draw attention to the high cost of refueling operations, the anti-nuclear Pilgrim Alliance became aware of labor problems among the temporary workers at the plant. Alliance members contacted Laborer's Union Local 721, to which many of the 600 temporary workers belonged, to determine whether the workers and activists had some common ground to join forces against Boston Edison.

Following the contact with Local 721 members of the Pilgrim Alliance drafted a leaflet regarding workers' issues and the plant's poor safety record. Although worker safety was not their major concern, about one-quarter of the temporary workers agreed that they would honor an anti-nuclear picket line. On January 18, four anti-nuclear activists carrying signs marched back and forth across the entrance of Pilgrim I and 220 workers refused to cross the picket line. The protestors had previously agreed not to disturb workers ignoring the pickets and these entered without mishap.

The following day Robert Tis, a spokesperson

for Boston Edison, announced that 62 of the 220 workers had been fired. "If that's the way they want to act, by supporting the Clamshell Alliance, then we don't want them back," he commented. The remainder of the 220 workers were not immediately fired because of the company's concern that the refueling operations stay on schedule. However, Tis stated that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission had been asked to determine whether the remaining 160 workers who had refused to cross the picket line constituted a security risk for their support of an anti-nuclear cause.

After learning of the firings, the remaining 160 workers refused to go back to work and were also fired. Louis Palavanchi, business agent for Laborer's Union Local 721, responded, "It's unacceptable to us that the company will decide who can work and who can't. Under the Constitution everyone has a right to respect a picket line. It was totally irresponsible for Boston Edison to do this. It makes you believe that there is more truth to the Clamshell Alliance than people realized."

Two days later all 220 workers were rehired after the union filed charges with the NLRB and threatened to take other legal action. Although workers from Laborer's Union Local 721 have remained on the job since their rehiring, little has changed to alleviate their grievances.

One of their major complaints is the company policy of hiring highly paid non-union contractors to do work which members of Local 721 could perform. One worker expressed his resentment by saying, "When the place is 'hot,' we can do boilermakers work, but when the place is 'cool,'

then suddenly it's a skilled job." Palavanchi charges that not only are these "high-priced" technicians taking jobs from local people, but that Boston Edison is "ripping-off the consumer" when it uses these inflated costs to seek rate increases.

Other serious complaints have begun to emerge about the long hours and unsafe working conditions at the plant. Since January an unusually high number of eye injuries, burns and broken limbs have been treated at the local hospital. As a result, inspectors from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) have been sent out to investigate working conditions.

Unfortunately, OSHA has no jurisdiction to investigate conditions which affect workers' exposure to radiation. Palavanchi has charged that Boston Edison is substantially underestimating the levels of radiation exposure to workers in certain areas of the plant.

Finally, the temporary workers average shifts of 12 to 16 hours per day, seven days a week. This factor alone could account for a substantial portion of the increase in on-the-job injuries.

Since members of Laborer's Union Local 721 refused to cross the anti-nuclear picket line other unions whose members work at Pilgrim I have also struck the plant. Their complaints regarding hiring practices, wages, unsafe working conditions and firings are similar to those of Local 721. In spite of the numerous strikes the refueling process has remained substantially on schedule and is due to be completed in early May.

—Lynn Pierotti

Workers' right to question

Nuclear conflicts reach courts

Virtually every worker in the United States faces serious on-the-job hazards. But in recent months at least two federal courts have issued interesting, positive decisions involving workers exposed to radioactive substances.

On December 29, 1979 the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver decided that three workers who refused to handle potentially radioactive lead could not be discharged. The three were employees of Modern Carpet Industries in Poteau, Oklahoma. On August 25, 1977 their supervisor informed them that they would be working with 400 pounds of lead which had been used to store radioactive cobalt and radium at a hospital.

Over the next few days the three discussed the issue and decided to refuse to work with the lead. On August 30 the supervisor told them that they were to melt and pour it the following day. They refused.

On August 31 they reported for work and were told that if they didn't melt and pour the lead they would be fired. They were informed that the supervisor had talked to someone about the lead and he had been assured that it was safe. But the supervisor refused to provide the name of that person and then admitted that the company comptroller had actually made the call. To make a long story short, they were all fired.

The three then filed a charge with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), alleging that the company had violated their rights under the Taft-Hartley Act, which purports to protect the right of workers to organize into unions to protect their wages, hours and working conditions.

After a long period of litigation, the Board ruled in their favor. It decided that the three must be reinstated with full back pay since they were acting for protection against health and safety hazards in their working environment.

The company refused to reinstate the workers, so the Board was forced to go to the 10th Circuit for an enforcement order. The company maintained in court that it had properly fired the three workers because of their bad faith refusal to work after they had been assured that the lead was safe.

But the court agreed with the Board and issued an enforcement order. If this decision is followed by the NLRB and other courts, workers will be able to refuse to handle radioactive substances without fear of being fired.

Of course, there are problems. First, not all employers are covered by the Taft-Hartley Act — no minor detail when you consider that one of these is the federal government. Secondly, there is no guarantee that the decision will be followed in other parts of the country. Even if it is, the remedies for

unlawful discharge may be years away. It took the workers at Modern Carpet Industries over two years to get their jobs back.

A second important case comes out of a United States District Court in New York. Richard Ostrowski, a shop steward in Local 2 of the Utility Workers Union of America, AFL-CIO (UWUA), worked for Consolidated Edison, the utility that owns the Indian Point Nuclear Power Plant. Ostrowski and some other workers have formed a group of Con Edison employees and UWUA members called Concerned Employees Against Radiation Exposure (CEARE). On June 6, 1979, CEARE held a meeting in the Bronx where Dr. Thomas Najarian spoke about his extensive research into the hazards associated with low level ionizing radiation.

At a stormy meeting the following month, Ostrowski and others were brought up on internal union charges "for collaborating with a group called the S.H.A.D. Alliance whose purpose it is to close the Indian Point Plant." The UWUA and many of its members who want to keep the plant open for the jobs it provides were hostile and insulting. Ostrowski was convicted of the charges against him and was suspended as shop steward for fourteen months.

The Center for Constitutional Rights brought suit on behalf of Ostrowski and three other union members in the New York District Court. On March 17, 1980 the Court issued a preliminary injunction ordering that he be reinstated as a steward pending trial.

Ostrowski's suit was brought under the Landrum-Griffin Act, a federal law which is supposed to protect the rights of union members to engage in free speech regarding union and employment-related affairs. The court found that Ostrowski would likely win the trial when it is held, so that at this point he should be reinstated as a shop steward. The full trial will occur in several months.

The Ostrowski case is very important. Many workers who handle radioactive materials are members of unions which support nuclear power. The only way this will change is for them to take matters into their own hands, which means that they must be able to discuss the issues without fear of reprisal. The Ostrowski case says they may do so, and as far as it goes it provides an important weapon for trade union members who want to see things change.

There are other important cases pending. One is the Karen Mewes case. (See the April issue of *It's About Times* for an interview with Mewes.) **Gunn v. Lawrence Livermore Laboratory**, a suit brought by the family of a melanoma victim, alleges that no

workplace at the lab is safe. Both of these cases and others which will undoubtedly follow will affect the future of the nuclear industry in the United States.

But a note of caution is necessary. The courts are never going to solve our problems — the legal system is not designed to do that. Good legal decisions do provide some protection and buffer. But the only solution to the problems of nuclear power, war, poverty, alienated labor, crummy and expensive housing, sexism, racism and so on is a complete reordering of society — revolutionary change. The legal arena should be seen as a tool in our efforts to organize the tens of millions of people in this country to oppose all use of nuclear energy for any purpose.

—Michael Friedman, attorney,
Fruitvale Law Collective,
East Oakland



photo by Steve Stallone

Karen Mewes, a former Lawrence Livermore worker, quit over concern about radiation hazards at the Laboratory. Denied unemployment compensation, her case is now on appeal.

Workers and nukes-

Rank and file strategy

The anti-nuclear movement's discussion of strategies for reaching the organized working class is a good sign. It's important to dispel the widespread impression that the environmental and anti-nuclear movements are recommending that workers bear the brunt of the economic and social costs of a decent, healthy environment.

Two strategies have been suggested. The first is to form coalitions with the more progressive wing of labor officialdom. The second is to link up with the growing rank and file movement in the unions.

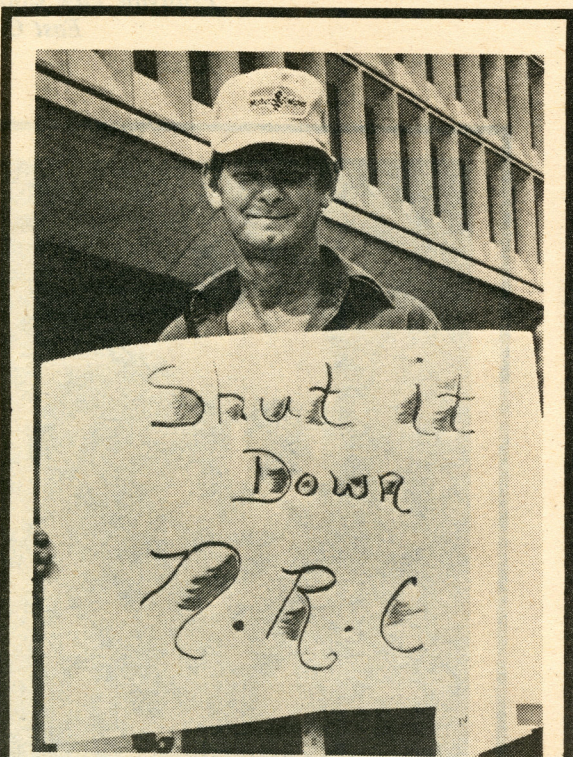
To understand this debate, some facts about union politics today must be understood. First of all, from the locals to the internationals, the unions are bureaucratic. The leadership, isolated and out of touch, can't mobilize the passive, poorly informed membership even for activities that are in the rank and file interest.

What happens when an anti-nuclear group approaches an established union? You get the ear of a local officer and maybe you get invited to give a speech to the relatively few members who come to union meetings. If you're really lucky you may get a resolution passed, which will then be filed and never acted on.

But worse things can happen — and have. Here's an example from a different movement. San Franciscans for Affordable Housing (SFAH) sought support from union leaders in their campaign to pass a rent control ordinance in 1979. Charles Lamb, president of Hotel and Restaurant Employees Local 2, the largest union local in San Francisco, personally endorsed SFAH, let SFAH use the Local's name and donated \$500 of the Local's money. He was even made vice-president of SFAH.

What SFAH did not know (or didn't care about) was that Charles Lamb was considered a traitor by a majority of active union members. After having been elected vice president of Local 2 in the rank and file upsurge of 1978, he sold out during the trusteeship imposed by the International. As a reward he was nominated president by the most corrupt forces in Local 2 when a new election was held in 1979 following the overturning of the trusteeship. He was elected with a minority of the votes and only because there were two rank and file slates due to a split.

Lamb was so contemptuous of the members' right to control their own money that he didn't even submit the \$500 SFAH contribution to a vote. SFAH's relationship with Lamb so infuriated the Local 2 activists (and others) that they refused to work on the campaign. Those fighting for rent control would have been better off with the help of Local 2's activists than with Charles Lamb and his \$500.



OCAW members from Portsmouth, Ohio and Erwin, Tennessee picketed DOE and NRC offices in Washington, D.C. last summer to protest dangerous conditions at their plants.

The same applies to the national coalitions formed around Doug Fraser (UAW) and William Wimpinsinger (Machinists). Their relationships to their own members and their ability to mobilize their ranks are just as bad as in other unions whose

leaders talk more conservative. It is a crucial error to believe that coalitions with them will win you the respect or even the attention of their members. So don't waste your time.

The ideology of this bureaucratic unionism has come to dominate the labor movement. Today the unions believe that their interests are close, if not identical, to those of the employer, that high profits will trickle down to the workers. This is the justification for the UAW to take wage cuts from Chrysler and lobby Congress for loan guarantees.

The scope of collective bargaining has been reduced mainly to wages and benefits. Control over working conditions, especially speedup with the introduction of new processes, have been given away, partly in exchange for money and partly because these business unionists are so concerned about the health of the companies. This ideology has also meant a breakdown of the oldest union principle, solidarity — a feeling that all the exploited and oppressed, whether here or abroad, are the concern of the labor movement. The unions and the workers in them have been de-politicized.

The economic crises of the 70's have challenged this ideology. With each losing strike it wears thinner. Even the leadership is now looking around for friends and coalitions.

But what kind of coalitions should be formed? On the one hand there is the Progressive Alliance, a paper alliance at the top. An alternative is a working alliance from the bottom, made up of activists from labor, the anti-nuclear movement and other movements for social change, and based in actual struggles.

There is already a small but growing rank and file movement in the unions. Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU) is probably the best known. In many Bay Area unions, small groups of activists, some formally organized and some not, are fighting to democratize their unions, wage a more militant struggle against their employers and bring their unions into social and political struggles such as women's liberation, anti-racism issues and the anti-nuke movement.

Bay Area workers from Teamsters, Culinary, Service Employees, Carpenters, Stationary Engineers and others have joined to form the Rank and File Coalition. I don't claim that thousands will come at our call or that we are on the verge of replacing the old-line officials, but in terms of building the anti-nuclear movement, we are the right choice.

In addition to the inability of the union leaders to aid or involve their members, there is another more long-range argument for a rank and file strategy. Working people have power — the power of stopping work — and therefore they have the power to change society. The mass involvement of working people in struggle will play a crucial role in their becoming conscious of this power.

—Michael Rubin
AFSCME 90
and Rank and File Coalition

Going through channels

In most unions today anti-nuke activists would be isolated from all but a few workers if they snubbed union leaders to link up with those who call themselves "the rank and file movement." Instead of building a base in these small isolated factions we should join with all union factions who are willing to work with us to oppose nuclear power, promote safe energy or build a better world.

To effectively reach the membership requires building a network of anti-nuclear activist union members. And to gain these activists' full support requires dealing with officials. When we solicit officials' participation or endorsement it's not so that our ideas will get to workers through them, but so that interested activists from all factions of the membership (and leadership) can work with us without fear that it endangers their position in the complexities of internal union politics. This "going through channels" is standard procedure in the labor movement. We learned that lesson when even progressive union activists who had worked with us before balked at working on the "Labor and the Nuclear Issue" conference on hearing it was co-sponsored by the Rank and File Coalition without Central Labor Council endorsement.

The participation of union officials, though not our ultimate goal, can be valuable in and of itself. For example, Machinist president William Wimpinsinger helped put together the Citizen/Labor Energy Coalition which organized local anti-oil company actions throughout the country last October. While currently a



"coalition at the top," C/LEC can serve as a framework for activism at all levels.

Wimpinsinger also helped organize the anti-nuclear teach-in last November that shook up and possibly turned around some of the 150 representatives from 50 pro-nuclear and undecided unions. His anti-militarist activity has brought him under fire by rank and file machinists in the military industries. He has consistently tried to build a progressive coalition between labor and other social forces against the corporations.

The Rank and File strategists scorn the inclusion of people like Wimpinsinger in our work, and the Rank and File Coalition representative in fact vetoed the idea of Wimpinsinger speaking at our labor conference because they believe such leaders mis-lead workers into passivity. They save their worst venom for the progressive labor leaders because progressives fool the workers.

The explanation of worker passivity goes much deeper than any of the horrible undemocratic things Wimpinsinger has done in his own union or any of the "let us do it for you" ideas other leaders have perpetrated. People learn from their own experiences. Their passive consciousness comes much more from their situations than from the words of mis-leaders. For example, structural changes in the country, such as the geographical scattering of workers into suburbs and the breakup of neighborhood communities, the organization of many unions along craft lines instead of by industry, the routinization of unions and the rise of private home attention boxes called TVs have done far more to passify workers than anything labor leaders ever told them.

It should be obvious that the problem of activating workers is much more complex than overcoming mis-leadership. For example, "rank and file" strategists are just as confounded at how to rally workers into activism as are the union leaders. And there is a crisis of declining participation not only in unions but in electoral, religious, and ethnic organizations as well.

Anti-nuclear activists should not focus on divisions between undemocratic union officials and their tiny "rank and file" opposition. Instead we should orient our work to woo, encourage and help consolidate the growing ranks of both leaders and members in many unions who are raising social issues and moving towards an anti-corporate alliance.

—liv
AFSCME 1695 and
Abalone Alliance Labor Task Force

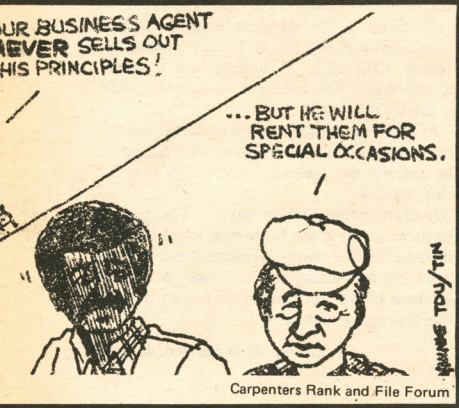
The limits of respectability

The radical ecology and anti-nuclear movements began with a view of a delicate, complexly interrelated world. From this holistic basis it challenged us to reassess our ideas of scientific/technological progress and seriously question the efforts to subjugate nature according to the dictates of profits. Equally important is its political vision—non-hierarchical participatory democracy in decision making and direct action confrontation.

In their struggles the radical ecology movement and radical worker activism have discovered very similar forms of organization and activity. Direct action in factories and mines has been a time-honored tactic. Often workers organized themselves outside the existing hierarchical and bureaucratic union structures to undertake these activities because they were opposed by union officials.

But many times when the radical ecology movement approaches labor for alliances its principles go by the wayside in the interests of accumulating "respectable" support. The radical ecology movement has chosen to ally with the official union "leadership" (who rarely represent the workers' real interests) in the worst form

-the labor of it all



of American political activity—the back scratching strategy of liberal lobbying.

There is perhaps no better example of this than the environmentalists' support for the Labor Reform Act of 1978, a liberal-repressive law defeated by a right-wing filibuster in the Senate for all the wrong reasons.

The liberal aspects of the law were well publicized. The bill sought to (1) expand the power of the National Labor Relations Board so as to expedite cases pending before it, (2) allow equal access to company premises by union organizers, (3) speed up union representation elections and resolve election disputes, (4) bar flagrant violators like J.P. Stevens from government contracts and (5) give mandatory back pay for all illegal discharges during an organizing campaign. Where employers had refused to "bargain in good faith," employees would have received the difference in wages and benefits actually won during "bad faith" bargaining time.

On the other hand, under Section 13 of the Act the judicial code would have been broadened to give the courts the authority to restrain many of the most powerful tactics available to workers. As Senator Jacob Javits, one of the bill's sponsors, explained, the bill would have prohibited "first, the refusal to cross a picket line maintained by non-employees over issues not related to a labor dispute and second, the refusal to cross a picket line maintained by employees of another employer or employees employed at a different location where the union has not authorized the picketing. These two situations, truly stranger picketing and spreading 'wildcat' pickets, threaten both the stability of labor-management relations and the integrity of contractual methods of contract resolution." (Congressional Record, May 16, 1978 p. s7543)

In short this provision was intended to outlaw the direct action tactics of the labor movement—wildcats, flying pickets and any walkouts or work stoppages not authorized by labor officials. This section of the Act was a direct response to the rash of wildcats and flying pickets employed so effectively by American workers, especially the coal miners, in 1977 and 78. Labor officialdom as well as the capitalists had been hard pressed to deal with these tactics.

If this Act had passed and the Abalone Alliance had set up a picket outside a nuclear plant that employees had honored, that picket would have been illegal. Not only the pickets and the group picketing, but also the workers honoring the line would have been liable for "damages" to the employer. Participants in the recent events at the Pilgrim Plant in Massachusetts (see article page 3) would have been subject to the same penalties.

To be fair, not just environmental and anti-nuclear groups, but most liberal and progressive groups as well, uncritically followed official union leadership in backing this bill. It should be an example to all such groups that their interests and those of the workers are rarely to be found in the official unions' programs.

—P.J. McGuire
Member Rank & File Forum
Carpenters, Cabinetmakers, Millwrights
P.O. Box 3003
Oakland, CA 94609

Energy and jobs

In Phoenix, Arizona a group of construction workers recently staged a demonstration in support of the three partially built Palo Verde nuclear units just 40 miles outside town. Construction workers in San Luis Obispo have mounted strong resistance to anti-Diablo activities. The official AFL-CIO position, while promoting alternative energy development, supports nuclear power as well.

Behind these pro-nuke stands by major segments of organized labor is a deep-rooted and not completely unfounded belief that nuclear energy makes good economic sense for labor's short-term interests. For anti-nuclear activists to make real ties with labor they must challenge and dispel entrenched beliefs and promote a new energy strategy, such as nuclear conversion, that incorporates directly the concerns of labor for jobs and energy sufficiency.

Labor people are actually less concerned about direct job creation in the energy industry than about energy supply and costs. They see energy growth in general and nuclear power in particular as vital means for continuing economic prosperity and solving the problems associated with imported oil. But recent studies assert that energy supply and economic growth are not necessarily linked. In fact, increasing energy use has displaced labor, resulting in a general decline in employment.

The building trades, a powerful force within the AFL-CIO, look to nuclear construction as a major source of jobs. Periodic unemployment when a project is completed or delayed is always a threat for construction workers and the uncertainty over the future of the nuclear industry has caused them much consternation.

Over 90,000 workers are involved in the construction of the 90 still unfinished nuclear units in the U.S. They are primarily highly skilled craftworkers — pipe-fitters, steamfitters, electricians, laborers, carpenters, ironworkers, operating engineers and boilermakers. This number will decline rapidly over the next few years as plants are completed or delayed and new orders for reactors fail to materialize.

About 200,000 people, half of them scientists, engineers and technicians, work in nuclear energy activities other than plant construction. More than a quarter of these are involved directly in the design and manufacture of reactors and reactor parts or in reactor operation and maintenance.

Many studies now show that a large-scale national commitment to renewable energy and conservation would actually generate more jobs with less capital investment while providing adequately for our projected energy needs. Many of the new jobs would fall into the same categories as those in the fossil and nuclear industries.

While still very shaky, the nuclear industry is working vigorously with the help of the federal government to make a comeback by the mid-1980's. Undoubtedly it will continue to use the carrot of more jobs and the stick of threatened unemployment to maintain and strengthen its labor support. To counter these arguments we will need a strategy that proposes a judiciously designed fossil fuel bridge to a renewable energy-based future and the redirection of the massive capital and jobs investment to non-nuclear energy generation. Nuclear conversion is one such strategy.

Conversion of a nuclear plant entails replacing the reactor portion with an alternative steam source — natural gas, biomass-derived fuels, methanol, coal or oil — while retaining the existing turbo-generators and electrical power plant. At Diablo, conversion would create at least 1000 new construction jobs and preserve most of the 250 operation and maintenance jobs slated for the plant when it opens.

The call for conversion studies of other partially built plants and nuclear facilities would bring the public energy debate to a new level. At long last labor, environmentalists and community groups would be allied in demanding a fresh new look at the direction of energy development.

—Joel Yudken

Make work or take the works

Over the last few decades, automation and the reduction of most jobs to what is laughingly known as the "semi-skilled" category have created a new kind of worker. Such workers are typically indifferent to the content of the job as long as it pays well. They move easily between industrial, clerical and service occupations.

On the other hand, they would prefer to be doing something socially useful. They generally reject the traditional work ethic and many are contemptuous of the kinds of things they have to do for a living. Those who are without children often try to work as little as possible, saving and going on unemployment when they can. At work, they tend to reject arbitrary authority and many are openly rebellious.

Politically they are cynical and seldom vote, but show concern about environmental issues. The vast majority are not in unions. The ones that are view their union at best as a kind of social service agency and at worst as an arm of management.

If this sounds like you, dear reader, I've made my point. Most people in the anti-nuclear movement are *proles* not too different from others their age. They're a little better educated, usually more politically experienced and with different priorities about how they spend their "free" time. But like the rest, they are denied control over social production, and any real material security, by the wage system. And like the rest, they face a social order that is deep in crisis and getting deeper.

For anti-nukers serious about making the world a free place as well as a safe one, there are crucial problems with the movement's approach to "labor" up to now.

In the first place, pushing for "jobs," even socially useful jobs, cannot be enough. To be sure, enemy propaganda that divides "workers" and "environmentalists" must be neutralized and the industry's lies about soft energy dispelled. Moreover, if only because we want to inherit a planet with as little further damage done as possible and because we have to survive just to get a crack at really living, conversion and community solar development should certainly be pushed for. But just as certainly, they should not become the primary focus of the movement.

Although conversion in particular can help raise the critical question of who decides what is produced in society, neither approach *in itself* escapes the terms of the system. Intelligent members of the state-corporate elite are already in favor of solar development and are now mainly concerned with amortizing existing investments in nukes and coal slowly enough to avoid turning the present recession into a catastrophe. This is only another way of saying that they want us to cover as much of the cost as possible, in all the usual currencies.

In the second place, approaching workers through official union channels is a waste of time. To start with, three quarters of the employed labor force in this country is non-union and even if the unions begin a massive organizing drive tomorrow, this is unlikely to change much in the near future. More important, unions as institutions are essentially conservative. They function to advance (or nowadays, at best defend) the interests of their members within the present order. They are shaped by and for the wage system and they have always defended it.

This doesn't mean that union locals can't be at times a fulcrum for quite radical struggles (the miners' strike of 1977 is a case in point), but the structure as a whole, personified in the bureaucracy, will invariably try to prevent the struggle from "going too far." Nor is "rank-and-file" a trustworthy talisman. Although the members of rank and file union groups are mostly intelligent and sincere people, the larger groups are crawling with authoritarian leftists and bureaucratic opportunists looking for a quick ride to the top.

The basis for strategy should be what anti-nukers have in common with other members of their class. At the moment the easiest approach—and the one most conducive to radicalization—is through consumption rather than work.



OCAW workers picket at the Chevron credit card facility in Concord. Abalone Alliance participation on picket lines of all three striking locals in the Bay Area has been met with a friendly and warm welcome. The OCAW strike began four months ago and Richmond refinery workers are still out over a no-strike clause in the latest contract offer.

In general, the anti-nuclear movement should take its own internal principles more seriously at the same time as it recognizes its essential commonality with the rest of the dispossessed population. It must develop and broadcast as part of its actions a vision of a transformed world. And it must root this vision in the opposition to wage labor and hierarchical power already expressed in practice by millions of proletarians—including many members of the movement.

—Louis Michaelson

Short Circuits

LORD, BLESS THIS SPEECH...

The Pacific Gas and Electric Company has selected a clergyman as the next manager of its public relations department. Dr. Harry M. Peelor, who will take the post May 1, was the former director of outreach for Norman Vincent Peale's New York-based Guidepost Associates. He has also served as a minister in Palo Alto and a consultant to an advertising agency.

At the Atomic Industrial Forum meeting last fall one speaker urged members to attack nuclear opponents with "religious fervor." Is PG&E taking that advice a little too literally? Or has the pro-nuclear speaking tour become so hazardous that the utility's speaking staff needs a chaplain? We can't be sure. Maybe the company just wants to apply a little of "the power of positive thinking" towards getting Diablo Canyon licensed.

—from PG&E press release, 3/28/80

STOCKHOLDERS HOT ABOUT NUKES

Nuclear power has outdistanced finances as the most heated subject at the annual stockholder meetings of some of the nation's largest corporations.

The Council on Economic Priorities says more than 30 nuclear-related resolutions have been introduced at this year's annual corporate meetings.

According to Council statistics last year only six nuclear-related resolutions were introduced and only three in 1978.

The Wall Street Journal reports that opposition to nuclear power by stockholders mushroomed after last year's accident at Three Mile Island. The newspaper says that the bulk of the resolutions are addressed to utilities, which are being urged by their shareholders to halt construction of nuclear plants and develop alternate energy programs. But nuclear research firms, manufacturers of nuclear weapons and firms that make parts for nuclear plants are also being asked to put a stop to nuclear technology.

The Journal quotes William Morley, special counsel for the Security and Exchange Commission, as saying, "Nuclear power has become the paramount issue."

—Zodiac News Service, 4/17/80

TAKE THAT, CHARLEY TUNA!

The US Department of Energy (DOE) is studying the feasibility of disposing of nuclear wastes by loading them into underwater rockets and shooting the rockets downward into the soft ocean bottom.

According to estimates released by the DOE rockets carrying the nuclear wastes would hit the bottom at about 120 miles per hour and bury themselves 100 to 300 feet into the mud, which is described as having the consistency of "chocolate pudding."

The government is spending \$5.9 million this year to study the under-sea rocket-disposal plan, even though full tests on the concept are not expected until around the year 2000.

—Zodiac News Service

GREENPEACE BLOCKS WASTE SHIP

At least eight members of the Greenpeace organization were taken into custody by harbor police in England March 25 after the activists tried to prevent a ship carrying nuclear wastes from docking in a British harbor.

The target of the protest was the British vessel, *Pacific Fisher*, which was carrying spent nuclear fuel from atomic power plants in Japan to the British harbor at Barrow.

Shortly before the *Pacific Fisher* was to dock the Greenpeace activists launched four inflatable rafts and blocked the ship's path into the harbor. The arrival of the ship carrying the wastes was delayed for more than an hour until harbor authorities could round up the rafts.

The demonstration was designed to protest an agreement which calls for the regular transport of nuclear wastes from Japan to England for reprocessing. The environmental group contends that a single accident at sea could seriously contaminate thousands of square miles of ocean.

The blockade action by Greenpeace was in violation of a British court injunction issued last month. Greenpeace leaders say they fear that the protest could result in the arrest of Greenpeace's three directors in England, as well as the seizure of all the organization's assets in that country.

—Zodiac News Service

TWO MICHIGAN NUKES CANCELLED

On March 24, Detroit Edison announced the cancellation of Greenwood units 2 and 3 near Port Huron, Michigan. The abandonment of the \$4 billion project brings the plant cancellation total to 7 so far this year—and 29 since the start of 1978.

NO SHORTAGE HERE

Proxy statements filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission reveal that the nation's top oil executives pulled in salaries and cash bonuses last year that ranged from \$600,000 to more than \$1.2 million.

Atlantic Richfield's Robert O. Anderson led the income parade with salaries and bonuses of \$1.25 million. Close behind was Mobil Oil's Rawleigh Warner at \$1.2 million. Clifton Garvin, the chair and chief executive officer of Exxon, had to make ends meet with an income of \$978,000 last year.

—Zodiac News Service, 4/11/80

DEFECTIVE FUEL AT RANCHO SECO?

One fuel rod in a bundle recently removed from the Rancho Seco plant was split for a distance of 2 to 3 inches, according to a spokesperson for the Sacramento Municipal Utility District. The split extends nearly halfway around the half-inch diameter rod. An analysis of why the Babcock and Wilcox-supplied rod failed is pending.

Although radioactive gases would have leaked from the failed rod, the SMUD representative said there was no detectable radiation increase in the plant's primary cooling system while the rod was in the reactor.

—Nucleonics Week, 3/20/80

WHY STOP NOW?

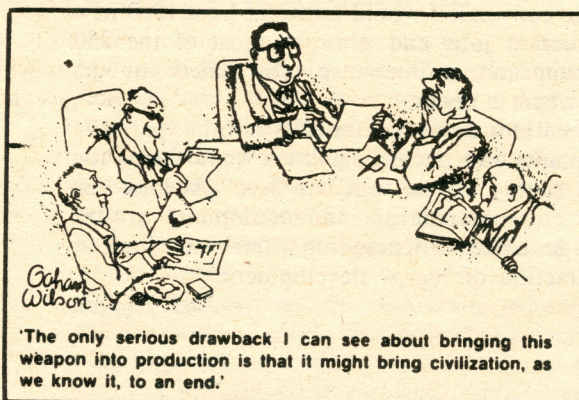
U.S. military planners are said to be privately circulating a memo warning that the United States could be running short of the nuclear material needed to construct new atomic weapons, according to the *Washington Post*.

The United States is believed to have already deployed about 15,000 atomic warheads, and was reported to have been expanding its nuclear arsenal at the rate of three new atomic warheads each day during the 1970's.

At last report, the nuclear weapons stockpiled by the United States possessed a total explosive power equivalent to 4000 pounds of TNT for every man, woman and child on the earth.

The Post says that the Pentagon is studying the possibility of building a new nuclear reactor complex for building additional warheads, a complex that would cost "several billion dollars."

—Zodiac News Service, 4/11/80



RADIATED DOCTORS DYING SOONER?

Medical doctors who are regularly exposed to low-level radiation have an increased chance of dying from strokes and heart disease, as well as of aging prematurely. According to research currently being updated by Johns Hopkins researcher Dr. Genevieve Matanoski, the study, in progress for 60 years, compared radiologists frequently exposed to low doses of low-level radiation with specialists in the eye, ear, nose and throat fields who don't generally come in contact with X-rays.

—Zodiac News Service.

GAO URGES CANCELLATIONS

The Federal Government's General Accounting Office has recommended terminating the construction of two nuclear power plants in the state of Washington because of high costs. The plants are being constructed for the Washington Public Power Supply System and have already suffered a \$6 billion cost overrun. Construction on one plant is only 13% complete while the other is only 8% finished.

The GAO is asserting that even a moderate conservation and renewable resource program in Washington would be cheaper and produce more energy than the two nuclear facilities.

The GAO recommendation says, "The figures speak for themselves. If the Northwest wants to make the most cost-effective energy investment and save the ratepayers from debilitating cost overruns, we should terminate these plants and transfer the money to more productive (energy) investments."

—Zodiac News Service, 4/10/80

TROJAN'S SHAKY NEIGHBOR

While earthquakes and eruptions are shaking up the Mount St. Helens area in the southern part of the state of Washington, little attention is being paid to the fact that the Trojan Nuclear Power Plant is located just 30 miles away.

Earthquakes are now regarded as such a real possibility that major insurance companies, including Allstate, State Farm and Safeco, have all announced that they will not write new earthquake policies to anyone residing within 50 to 100 miles of the volcano.

Two water and power officials in Eugene, Oregon, say they have uncovered a 10-year-old seismic study which forewarned of possible earthquake hazards near the Trojan site. John Bartels of the Eugene Water and Electric Board says that a 1970 study, done by the Oregon State Geology Department, was apparently suppressed after it warned of a possible unstable plate structure in the area encompassing the Trojan Nuclear Plant.

One of Bartels' colleagues, Rick Hillman, says that earthquakes 100 times more powerful than the Trojan Plant was designed to withstand have occurred along other portions of the same plate.

The two Eugene officials are calling for a new hearing into the earthquake stability of the Trojan Plant as a result of the study and the new eruptions of Mount St. Helens.

—Zodiac News Service, 4/1/80

ACTIVISTS "NEW CLASS?"

No Atomic Industrial Forum meeting is complete without some speculation on the opposition. In a paper presented at a February meeting Claude C. Poncelet urged the industry to "assertively meet the challenge of the anti-nuclear movement." He claimed that anti-nuclear activists were a "new class of highly educated, secure and relatively affluent Americans" who share a "sense of malaise and dissatisfaction that permeates modern industrial societies." Poncelet said activists see nuclear power as the "ultimate symbol of economic power, military power, all that the word 'technocracy' connotes."

—NY Times, 3/18/80

BOOM, YOU LOSE

Employees with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission are playing a board game called "Skirmish" to learn how to prevent terrorists from sabotaging shipments of nuclear materials on the nation's highways.

"Skirmish" was created for \$30,000 as part of a million-dollar NRC contract to develop ways of evaluating the hazards of transporting nuclear materials. Players reportedly move pieces representing terrorists, trucks, escorts and weapons around the board in an effort to develop actual strategies for preventing a real terrorist attack.

According to the NRC's Deputy Director of Safeguards, Donald Chappel, "'Skirmish' is basic wargaming. It's extremely beneficial before a field exercise because it gets your mind in the right frame."

Research for the game was reportedly started in 1976 before the Carter administration delayed nuclear fuel reprocessing. At that time thousands of cargoes of radioactive materials were expected to be transported across the nation's roadways each year. Currently, however, federal officials say only 10 to 20 such trips are being made a year.

According to a report in *The Washington Post*, some federal officials are less than thrilled with the NRC game strategy. The newspaper quotes one unidentified congressional aide as calling "Skirmish" "money down the rat hole," adding that the NRC would be better off calling up the special forces and asking them how to defend a convoy instead of playing board games.

—Zodiac News Service

Utilities finance solar: Boost or bust?

continued from page one

Sylvia Siegel be avoided once utilities get their foot in the door?

Since 1978, several crucial factors have played a part in the utilities' new willingness to consider solar and conservation. First, Carter decided to cut oil use for electricity in half in ten years. Even though the amount of oil burned for electricity is literally a drop in the bucket of national consumption, "national security" dictates this cutback. Apparently the *appearance* of intentions to reduce oil use is what's important.

Ironically, this federal policy threatens to slow the implementation of cogeneration in California, which would *save* oil by as much as doubling the efficiency of burning it for electricity. The prohibition means that California has ten years to find substitutes for half of the electricity now generated by oil—about 35% to 45% of the state's electrical output.

"You're building another energy cartel."

The second big change in recent years is due to the continuing increases in energy costs. There has been little net growth in demand for electricity or natural gas, and even the utilities are beginning to plan accordingly. Astonishingly, in mid-April PG&E released an estimated growth rate for the next five years *below* the California Energy Commission's January figure (1.4% vs. 1.5%).

The cutbacks in demand, coupled with high interest rates, have deterred utility borrowing and ambitious plans for new generating units. In fact, plans for power plants in California have been dropping like flies. The Department of Water Resources recently announced it



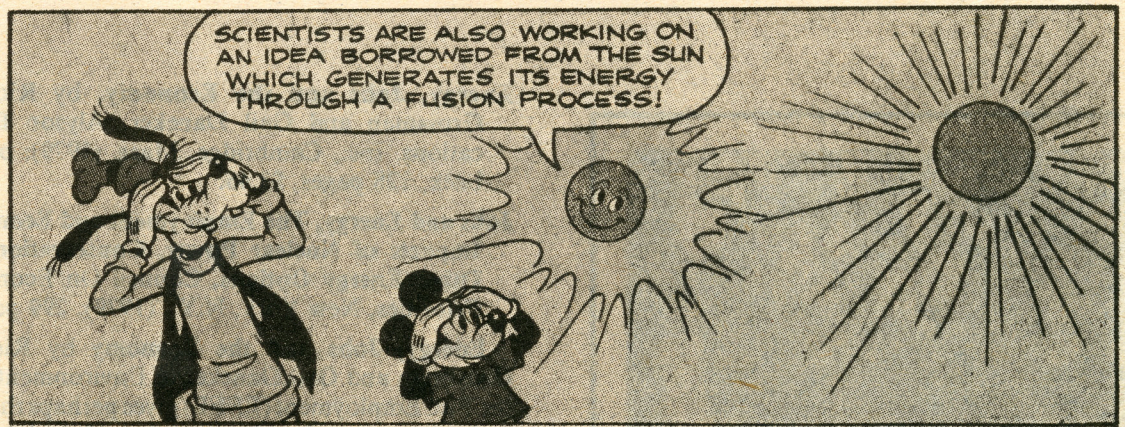
would suspend work on and probably cancel a three billion dollar, 1000-megawatt (MW) coal plant. PG&E has delayed for up to two years its \$5 billion, 1600-MW coal plant at Montezuma in Solano County and Southern California Edison has also postponed plans for a coal plant. However, the California utilities still have about five coal projects totalling roughly 7500 MW in various stages of the planning process.

In sum, the federal dictates on "oil back-out" presented California with a task its utilities can not meet with their traditional method of adding more power plants. In this context a puny, 110-page document written in 1978 by the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) served as a catalyst for pushing the California utilities toward conservation and solar energy. Drawing from various energy studies, the EDF report showed that shifting to alternative energy would bring greater benefits to PG&E, its stockholders and its ratepayers. After several legal battles it became almost a Bible for planning in the CPUC and the Energy Commission.

In part because of the EDF report California utilities will spend about two billion dollars in the next three years to weatherize and add solar water heating to 2% of the state's homes. The project will certainly reap good public relations for the utilities. But the potential of solar hot water and weatherizing alone is fifty times as great as this and it remains to be seen if the utilities are willing and/or able to wean themselves from relying on new centralized power plants.

The latest power plant battle is being waged over the Allen-Warner Valley project, two coal plants with a total of 2500 MW to be divided between PG&E and Southern Cal Edison. According to David Roe of EDF, "PG&E is already asking us, 'Can we cut a deal?' They're afraid of making a comparison with alternatives, which is exactly what we intend to do."

The California Energy Commission (CEC), after having taken many strong pro-alternative stands, has done a recent about-face. Its 1979 Biennial Report, the most important document for energy planning in



This comic is a Walt Disney/Exxon production.

California, not only called for licensing the four new nuclear reactors at Diablo Canyon and San Onofre, but also agreed that there is a "reasonable need" to certify 3000 MW of coal and a "potential need" for 2000-2500 MW additional coal in California.

The Biennial Report also omitted a discussion of breaking up the monopoly utilities' control of energy, which its staff had included in a draft. The Commission says it will discuss the ideas in hearings later this year. David Roe called the report "an extremely conservative, please-the-utilities kind of document."

An informal consensus among energy observers explains that the CEC is feeling its survival threatened by the utilities' influence in the state legislature. Whatever the reason for it, the new CEC position makes the chances of limiting the utilities' control over alternative energy that much more remote.

If the regulatory agencies let the utilities loose in the fledgling solar field, the result will be like putting an elephant in a field of daffodils. Those in the way will get trampled. Gigantic purchasing power by the utilities will enhance growth for a few large solar manu-

The amount of oil burned for electricity is a drop in the bucket of national consumption.

facturers and bankrupt the 200 to 300 smaller firms. Solar price-setting could thus become subject to the whims of the utilities.

Some alternative energy advocates recommend allowing the utilities to participate in financing while barring them from other marketing aspects of renewable energy. But even proposals for PG&E financing reveal a host of problems. Their application for conservation financing, for example, includes a lot of talk about special promotional efforts to attract people with low incomes. But it gives no firm figures. Similarly, it plays up the importance of renters, but never mentions the fact that landlords, who must apply for the program, don't pay utility bills.

In its current form (it will be reviewed by the CPUC) PG&E's conservation plan could easily exacerbate what Barry Commoner calls "California's solar for the rich" experience. To date three quarters of California solar tax credits have been used for swimming pools. It appears that fair access to PG&E's program will depend on the good will of PG&E and landlords and the enforcement of the CPUC.

Economist Dr. Eugene Coyle points out that the plan means that "a great deal of knowledge and experience will be developed and PG&E will own it. If it were done by local groups, they'd have the experience. The utilities will have all the research and data and we'll be on the outside."

Some community groups have successfully devel-



oped solar and conservation programs already. One inner-city organization, the San Bernardino Community Development Corporation (CDC) has trained CETA workers in everything from energy audits to manufacturing photovoltaic solar cells. It has rehabilitated ten houses, installing 72 solar collectors which are looped into the houses for space and water heating, and rented them out to low-income people.

The CDC's budget is projected at over three million dollars for 1980. Plans are underway for an industrial park for alternative energy businesses, with a 35-kilowatt peak photovoltaic demonstration project providing its energy.

Wayne Burgess of the San Bernardino CDC described the biggest hurdle for getting community groups off the ground in solar and conservation. "It's that first seed grant and that first operational money. It's hard to ask CETA for enough money for rent, for administrative salaries, for instructors and consultants." Asked if the utilities had taken an interest in or provided any kind of assistance to CDC's programs, Burgess laughed and replied, "Not yet."

Other community groups in California are struggling to revitalize their neighborhoods with the help of alternative energy sources. But contrary to the prevailing belief that high oil prices make solar technologies attractive, solar is stymied because oil prices and interest rates go up together. Today's borrowing conditions make it extremely difficult for community groups to find enough capital for alternative energy ventures.

Many homes in low-income areas need to be substantially rehabilitated to be anything but energy sieves. Are utilities going to ignore these? Dr. Eugene Coyle said, "If a proposal was made for PG&E to hand over its money to community groups, they'd go to court to stop it."

Utilities are performing a highwire act. They don't want to sell too much energy because oil is so expensive, but they don't want their customers to conserve

If the regulatory agencies let the utilities loose in the fledgling solar field . . . those in the way will get trampled.

too much thereby reducing energy sales and income. For example, the poorest "lifeline" users bring PG&E as much revenue as the largest industrial users as a group, but the industries use twice as much energy. The lifeline user cannot conserve and is forced to cut back, while industry lobbies the legislature to raise lifeline rates.

Will the regulators scramble to allow utilities to proliferate subsidiaries and gain control over the alternative energy field? Or will they remove subsidies and release the grid from control by monopoly utilities?

—Ward Young

Sonoma spill

continued from page one

trical Workers (IBEW) local 245 with eleven years' experience on the job, was suspended for two days without pay. A letter was also put in his personnel file threatening him with further disciplinary action if he causes any more trouble in the future.

Simontacchi has taken his case to the union grievance procedure. He is demanding that the disciplinary letter in his personnel file be withdrawn and that he receive pay for the two days he was suspended. Asserting his right to safe working conditions Simontacchi contends that the cleanup task was not within his job definition as a lineman and that he was disciplined without just and sufficient cause. The results of the grievance hearing are pending.

—Steve Stallone

Book Reviews



This sitdown, in March, 1937 at a St. Louis Chevrolet plant, was one of hundreds that month. Workers organized elaborate defenses, food supply and entertainment as part of the sitdowns.

Strike!

By Jeremy Brecher, South End Press, 1972. Distributed by Two Continents, 30 E. 42nd St., New York, NY 10017.

Some anti-nuclear activists who sympathize with the tactics and spirit of direct action nonetheless worry that it is too "extreme" for most Americans. *Strike!* will challenge that perception.

Other anti-nukers believe that American workers will remain indifferent to environmental battles because they've sold their souls to the house in the 'burbs with the RV in the driveway. *Strike!* will make you think twice about that assumption.

In another corner of the movement there are those who believe that "labor outreach" means arranging pro-solar and maybe even anti-nuke statements from union leaders. *Strike!* gives example after historical example of the betrayal of workers by these very same union leaders. One of these situations arose in 1935 when an AFL rubberworkers union called off a strike in Akron. Brecher describes how workers "stood on street corners tearing up their union cards, thinking it futile even to vote against the settlement. As one put it, 'You can't do nothin' about that. They run the union, and they run it for the bosses, not for us. I'd see myself in hell before I ever belong to another union.'"

Brecher points out in his preface that *Strike!* is not a complete history of the American working class experience, but a "history of one aspect of that struggle—the times of peak conflict." In his carefully documented yet easily readable narrative, he conveys both by fact and evocative description the excitement and significance of these periods. During mass strikes workers challenge not only the authority of company and union bosses, but also at times have begun to take over their own lives and run them democratically and cooperatively.

Perhaps the best example of this self-management is the Seattle General Strike of 1919, when striking workers organized themselves to provide the essential services of the community while keeping nonessential production and activity shut down. The extent to which the Strike Committee delegated by the workers actually ran the city is indicated by the fact that "businessmen, city officials and the Mayor himself" appeared before it "not to threaten or bully, but to discuss the situation and ask the approval of the committee for this or that step."

Although mass strikes often have been triggered by seemingly minor issues, the real "issue," as an employer in Milwaukee said during the 1886 strikes for the eight-hour day, is the question of "my right to run my works and your right to sell me your time and labor." Brecher argues that because mass strikes challenge this arrangement and provoke workers and whole communities to take collective responsibility for managing their own affairs, they lay the basis for a new society.

Strike! concludes with a brief description of the rebellions of the sixties when the challenge to authority emerged from the workplace and generalized itself to the social factory. Today's practitioners of direct action will find in this book an inspirational panorama of our heritage, an understanding of American history that has been omitted from the textbooks, and a challenge, in Brecher's words, "not to 'build strong organizations' but to organize [ourselves] effectively to control [our] own activity."

—Marcy Darnovsky

Energy, Jobs and the Economy, by Richard Grossman and Gail Daneker, Alyson Publications, Inc., Cambridge, Mass. (1979); paperback, 128 pages, \$3.45.

Jobs and Energy, The Employment and Economic Impacts of Nuclear Power, Conservation and Other Energy Options, Council On Economic Priorities, New York, N.Y., (1979), 299 pages.

Energy, Jobs and the Economy by Richard Grossman and Gail Daneker of Environmentalists for Full Employment (EFFE) gives perhaps the best and most comprehensive overview of the jobs and energy issue so far. It attempts to dispel the common misconceptions that have hampered alliances between the labor and anti-nuclear movements with appropriate counter-examples and statistics.

The EFFE study shows that energy traditionally has been used to replace labor in production rather than to create jobs. For example, between 1950 and 1970 a greatly increased gross energy consumption failed to create any employment growth in the five largest manufacturing industries. Automation will continue this trend of swelling energy demand while replacing workers with electrically driven micro-chip technologies.

Reams of evidence are presented to refute the myth that energy growth is necessary for economic growth and jobs. Then Grossman and Daneker take the offensive by attacking the U.S.'s extraordinary energy wastefulness. They place the blame not on the individual energy consumer, but on public and private policies. Energy waste, they argue, is encouraged to increase the profits of the energy producing companies.

The authors illustrate in detail that a combination of increased energy efficiencies and safe, renewable energy technologies is the "best approach to energy sufficiency, economic prosperity and jobs." What prevents us from moving in this direction are political obstacles. In particular, they lambast the federal government for failing to recognize the importance of energy policy to jobs. In one section they document the total lack of coordination between the Department of Energy and the Department of Labor on the employment implications of energy.

Jobs and Energy, the product of the Council on Economic Priorities, compares the jobs and energy supply created by nuclear power versus the alternative option within a specific geographic area. Focusing on Nassau and Suffolk Counties on Long Island, New York and the proposed two-unit 2300 MW Jamesport nuclear power plant there, the study finds that a conservation/solar energy scenario would replace any need for the Jamesport units. And it appears already to have had an impact — the Jamesport units have been cancelled.

This study utilizes all the sophisticated systems analyses, modelling and computer methodologies that have usually been the province of government and corporate think-tanks. Nonetheless, it does not mystify. In an early chapter it states its conclusions in a very readable form, explaining its scenarios, assumptions and findings. And it contains an extensive set of appendices which are filled with valuable supporting materials and data.

Many similar analyses support the conclusions of these two books, but there are none as comprehensive, readable and easily accessible.

—Joel Yudken



"Radioactive Special"

continued from page one

concern about railroad safety in the handling of radioactive materials to a meeting of the United Transportation Union's Local 100. With memories of Three Mile Island still fresh in their minds the Local assigned a member of their Safety Committee to research the situation.

Local 100 discovered that the Department of Transportation has exempted all Department of Defense train cars from Mare Island from the requirement for placarding. These cars are escorted by DoD security personnel who ride in their own caboose ahead of the Southern Pacific crew's cab.

Bob Farringer, chairman of Local 100, feels that "the minimum requirement to insure the safety of train crews is that they be provided with badges to measure the level of radiation absorbed and know what cargo they're carrying." The Navy's response to complaints about the Mare Island shipments is to state that they are "confidential." They refuse to comment further.

Outside the Mare Island base the Navy can't prevent inspection of cars by the Federal Railroad Administration or by railroad employees. But inspections are made virtually impossible by the Navy's refusal to provide any information about the identity, contents or location of cars carrying "confidential" cargoes.

Local 100 has lodged complaints with the FRA about these practices and has asked the United Transportation Union's state and national legislative representatives to lobby for passage of federal legislation empowering the FRA to monitor all radioactive cargoes instead of only those shipped by private companies.

One FRA inspector assured a Local 100 member that the cars carrying radioactive waste are "perfectly safe." But he added that he had doubts about the ones used as spacers between the Department of Defense cars. Most of the spacers are considered unfit for other use by Southern Pacific.

Railway workers feel that the general deterioration of the tracks, roadbeds and cars makes it quite reasonable to fear the consequences of accidents involving shipments of radioactive materials. There has been a rash of derailments in the last two years, some of them involving deaths of crew members and spillage of dangerous chemicals.

The railworkers have learned of new plans to lay track into the Rancho Seco nuclear plant, indicating an increase in rail handling of radioactive materials in northern California. Their reaction to this "growth industry" has been quite direct. "They don't like it," explained Mike Litwin, president of Local 100.

Local 100's report on "The Transportation of Radioactive and Hazardous Material on the Railroad" is available on request from UTU #100, P.O. Box 24064, Oakland, CA 94623.

by H. Quinn, SP clerk, member of BRAC and R. Creighton, hostler, member of UTU 100

OSHA occupation

On Wednesday, April 9, ten Abalone Alliance members went to the office to work on an educational mailing about occupational health and safety. The office they chose to work in happened to belong to the San Francisco branch of the Chamber of Commerce, one of the major organizations involved in the campaign to strip working people of most of the limited protection they now receive from the Occupational Health and Safety Administration.

While other Abalones leafletted and performed street theatre outside, the Chamber's "new office staff" diligently put out their mailing to state and national anti-nuclear and social change groups. Here are some excerpts from their letter.

Dear Friends,

This letter has been signed, sealed, addressed and distributed from the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce. Its contents have been written by working people in the anti-nuclear movement.

The Chamber of Commerce is the principal lobbyist in support of the so-called Occupational Safety and Health Improvements Act. As the public voice of big business, the Chamber continually attempts to characterize watchdog agencies as the most glaring examples of federal bureaucracy. However, the new bill would increase OSHA's paperwork at the expense of actual health and safety. Rather than provide for routine inspections upon request, it will allow owners to set up purely advisory safety committees and consultation programs—neither of which will have any enforcement authority.

Contact Senator Alan Cranston (a co-sponsor of the bill) by phone, mail, telegram or in person, and let him know how you feel. Write letters to the editor, work with local and national organizations, call a meeting, stage a rally, organize. And don't forget to visit your local Chamber of Commerce!

In solidarity,

Abalone Alliance

Black Hills speakers to tour California

Speakers from the Black Hills Alliance (South Dakota) and Big Mountain Dine (Navajo) Nation and musicians will be informing Californians about the impacts of coal and uranium development on the indigenous peoples of the Western States. Elders from Big Mountain will be on the first week of the tour, which is being coordinated by the Bay Area Coalition Against Uranium Mining.

May 2-16

May 2 - San Diego Evening benefit presentation. Contact CEAN, 714-236-1684.

May 3 - Los Angeles area Rally in Orange County.

May 4 - Los Angeles area Native American solidarity rally at Westwood Federal Building featuring Winona LaDuke (day); benefit dinner for Big Mountain at Griffith Park (evening). Contact Alliance for Survival, 213-738-1041.

May 5 - Santa Barbara Benefit presentation. Contact Archie Fire at SB Indian Center, 805-963-8968.

May 6 - San Luis Obispo/Atascadero Benefit presentation. Contact PGE, 805-543-8402.

May 8 - Santa Cruz Evening benefit presentation. Contact Gen, 408-423-9326.

May 9 - San Francisco Evening benefit, Glide Memorial Church Sanctuary, featuring Navajo acoustic band, Jim Page, Hiroshima-Nagasaki survivors and others. 8:00 p.m., \$3.00 donation. Contact David, 415-848-3934.

May 10 - Sonoma Benefit presentation. Contact SO NO More Atomics, 707-526-7220.

May 12 - Sacramento Benefit dinner and evening presentation. Contact Dolores, 916-442-2185.

May 13 - UC Davis Benefit presentation. Contact Chuck Larson, 916-758-6810.

May 14 - Berkeley Evening benefit at La Pena featuring Navajo acoustic band and Jim Page. 8 - 11 p.m. \$3.50 donation. Contact David, 415-848-3934.

May 15 - Stanford University Benefit presentation. Contact Jeff at RANE, 415-322-2759.

May 16 - UC Berkeley Evening benefit, 145 Dwinelle Hall, 7:30, \$2.00 donation. Contact Chris, 415-835-9444 or Progressive Student Org., 415-642-6728.



Calendar

May 8 Women for a Nuclear-Free Future bi-weekly meeting, 1971 Oak St., S.F., 7:30 p.m. Info: Lynn, 415-751-6790.

May 11 Celebration for Mother Earth, co-sponsored by Women for a Nuclear-Free Future and East Bay Feminists Against Nukes. Bring food, children, music, etc. for an alternative Mothers' Day. Dolores Park, S.F., 12 - 3 p.m. Info: 415-428-1992.

May 11 Rally and walk to oppose Pt. Concepcion LNG terminal, sponsored by Indians of all nations and Coalition to Protect Pt. Concepcion. Gather 8 - 11 a.m. at Sunburst Restaurant, Gaviota, 30 miles north of Santa Barbara on Hwy 101. Shuttle to rally site provided. Contact Bob, 805-962-4338.

May 19 Organizational meeting of the Abalone Alliance Ecumenical Task Force, 7:30 p.m., S.F. Infor: 415-543-3910 or 282-2426.

May 22 Women for a Nuclear-Free Future bi-weekly meeting, 4349 25th St., S.F., 7:30 p.m. Info: Jodie 415-285-8498.

May 25 Survival Sunday rally in Los Angeles, Hollywood Bowl. Contact Alliance for Survival, 213-738-1041.

Contributions

It's About Times needs your contributions -- articles, photos, cartoons and drawings. What's your group doing? What nasty nuclear tidbits have you uncovered? Let us know.

San Francisco Bay Area residents: lend us your skills and time. We need help with news coverage, copy editing and distribution.

Get in touch through the Abalone Alliance office, 944 Market St., Room 307, San Francisco 94102, 415-549-3910.

Announcement

The following proposal summary is to be decided utilizing our new mail process. Local groups choosing to participate in the decision must notify the state office by April 16 if their group came to consensus.

The Abalone Alliance supports the fight of OCAW strikers against the oil monopolies and urges groups with goals similar to its own to go on record supporting the OCAW strikers.

Affinity groups and others: Why not spend a day with your friends in lovely Santa Cruz, canvassing or staffing a table for the initiative to ban nuclear weapons production from Santa Cruz county. Call Jane Weed for more information, 408-423-2293.

Hot off the Press -- *A Labor Outreach Guide for Anti-Nuclear Activists*, available from the Abalone Alliance office for \$1/copy.

AA Safe Energy Groups

*Denotes that several community/neighborhood groups and affinity groups are working in the vicinity.

ABALONE ALLIANCE OFFICE: 944 Market St., Room 307, San Francisco, CA 94102
• (415) 543-3910

DIABLO PROJECT OFFICE: 452 Higuera St., San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 805 543-6614

NORTH

ARCATA:
REDWOOD ALLIANCE, P.O. Box 293/95521 • (707) 822-7884

CHICO:
CHICO PEOPLE FOR A NUCLEAR FREE FUTURE, 708 Cherry St./95926 • (916) 891-6424

COVELO:
DOWNWIND ALLIANCE, P.O. Box 183/95428 • (707) 983-9969

MENDOCINO:
CITIZENS ALLIANCE FOR SAFE ENERGY, Box 887/95460

NAPA:
NAPA VALLEY ENERGY ALLIANCE, 2119 Brown Street, #4/94558

ST. HELENA:
UPPER NAPA VALLEY ENERGY ALLIANCE, 1513 Madrona Ave./94574 • (707) 963-7835

SANTA ROSA:
COMMUNITY NETWORK FOR APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY, 709 Davis St./95401 • (707) 528-6543
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CORPORATE LIES DEPARTMENT

How *TIME* distorted a Swedish vote

April 7, 1980

SWEDEN

"Yes, Thanks" to Nuclear Power

A key vote on energy policy heartens pronuke forces in Europe

For three months it seemed that everyone in Sweden was wearing a lapel button. Some sported badges reading ENERGY FOR SWEDEN. Others wore yellow buttons with a red sunburst proclaiming ATOMIC POWER? NO, THANK YOU. Hardly a telephone pole or lamppost was left unposter.

By referendum day last week, Swedes were so wearied by the campaign that *Expressen*, the nation's largest newspaper, editorialized: "The people are victims of overkill—let us vote and be done with it." So they did. When the 4.7 million ballots were counted, the pronukes had a clear majority: 58% voted yes, favoring completion of the country's half-finished nuclear program; only 39% voted for a proposal to abandon the country's reactor program.

At stake was the future of a dozen nuclear reactors in Sweden: six in operation, four more ready for start-up, and two to be completed. Had the majority voted no, all would have been phased out over the

next ten years. Instead, even though the referendum was not constitutionally binding, the government is now obliged to move forward with a national plan to continue developing nuclear energy for at least another 25 years. Still sporting his NO, THANK YOU button after the vote, Centrist Premier Thorbjörn Fälldin went on national television. "I remain personally opposed to nuclear power," he said. "But my conscience is not the decisive factor. Swedes have spoken, and I am pledged to carry out their will."

One of the first plebiscites on the nuclear issue, the Swedish vote was watched closely in Western Europe. In Denmark, it was believed to have reinforced public sentiment in favor of starting a nuclear program to reduce the country's 95% dependence on imported energy. In Zurich, where a referendum will be held on April 27 concerning a sixth reactor, proponents of the project were encouraged.

In West Germany, with 15 reactors already in operation, the vote was regarded as a glancing political blow against the Greens—the antinuclear environmentalists who have conducted a successful campaign to hold up construction of eleven new nuclear plants. Even in France, Europe's second most advanced nuclear country, with 16 reactors, the Swedish trend captured attention because France has been confronted by local protests against a new reactor in Plogoff in Brittany. Conceded Austria's Chancellor Bruno Kreisky, whose country voted against nuclear power in 1978: "The Swedish result is impressive."

No country would seem to present a better case for nuclear power than Sweden. It has no petroleum, and so little coal that virtually none has been mined in 50 years. Its oil bill of \$3.1 billion last year made it the world's largest per capita im-

porter. On the other hand, the country has Western Europe's largest uranium deposit, the unmined 300,000-ton Ranstad lode in southern Sweden, which some regard as their future energy ace in the hole.

Accordingly, Stockholm plunged enthusiastically into nuclear power in 1972, and within five years, under Premier Olof Palme, Sweden was leading the world in its per capita use. In 1976, however, Palme's Social Democrats were unseated for the first time in 44 years, and successive governments have been alternately for and against nuclear energy.

As last week's referendum proved, even such foreboding examples as the accident at Three Mile Island could not compete with Palme's prediction of widespread unemployment, recession and burdensome new energy costs if the reactor program were shut down. That was particularly clear in the six districts where reactors already operate: there the yes vote won by as much as 3 to 1.

Many Americans form opinions on world affairs from accounts in newweeklies. But these "objective" accounts are often extremely misleading, as is this *TIME* piece on the March 23 nuclear referendum in Sweden.

The Swedish vote was not "for or against" nuclear development, because even the Swedish nuclear industry realized that expansion beyond the 12 reactors already built or under construction was politically impossible. The vote was merely on the terms for ending nuclear power in Sweden. As Prime Minister Thorbjörn Fälldin observed, "Two years ago, you never heard the word phaseout. Now everyone agrees to it."

Nuclear power has been a major political issue in Sweden for several years. In the early 1970's the government planned a program of 24 reactors and faced little opposition. But by 1976 political controversy had cut this number to 12, and the coalition government resigned in 1978 when its three constituent political parties couldn't agree on whether to fuel two newly-completed reactors. After Three Mile

Island a national referendum seemed the best hope of resolving the issue.

Swedish voters were presented with three ballot choices, not two as the *TIME* article implies. None of the choices were remotely "pro-nuclear" by American standards. None called for more than the present 12 reactors to ever be built, despite the desires of industrialists such as Electrolux chair Hans Werthen for as many as 50 reactors.

Line (choice) 1 on the ballot called for continuing operation of Sweden's six operating reactors, fuelling of four more that are already complete and finishing the two under construction. No more reactors would be built after the last two were completed and none would be built to replace any of the 12 at the end of their lives. All reactors would be phased out as alternative energy sources became available. This line, backed by the nuclear industry and the Conservative party, received 18.7% of the vote.

Line 2, the winner, was similar to line 1, but also called for municipal ownership of power plants in order to facilitate development of conservation and

alternative energy sources. Proponents of this line presented plans to develop these energy sources to allow shutting down the reactors within 25 years. This choice got 39.3% of the vote.

Line 3, with 38.6%, was a very close second. It called for phasing out all Swedish nuclear power within 10 years. Three and three-tenths percent of the voters cast blank ballots.

As shown by the closeness of the vote the debate over how soon Sweden should abandon nukes is far from over. But even if the country uses nuclear power for the present, it has unanimously rejected it for the future. If this fact "heartens pro-nuke forces in Europe," as *TIME* claims, then those forces must be desperate indeed.

—Bob Van Scoy

(Thanks to Friends of the Earth for background material on the Swedish conflict.)

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