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S	61	5	10	1

U.S. Seeks Help in Finding Site for Nuclear Waste

By AGIS SALPUKAS

Energy Secretary Hazel R. O'Leary said yesterday that state and local utility officials may have a better chance of finding temporary storage sites for nuclear waste than the Federal Government, which is supposed to start accepting the material in 1998 but has no idea where to put it.

Mrs. O'Leary, a former lobbyist for the Northern States Power Company, which operates three reactors in Minnesota, said that as a result "any day I expect some of my old pals to sue me."

But she said she hoped for a breakthrough as a result of several recent discussions between the Energy Department and an association of state officials, the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, about whether alternative sites can be developed.

Moreover, she said, she hoped environmentalists could be involved in the talks so as to lessen their opposition to such sites.

She said one of her fears on the waste issue was that the "solution to the storage may be held captive by the people who oppose nuclear power."

Missing a Deadline

In a meeting with editors and reporters of The New York Times, she said that the department was still moving forward, as required by law, in studying the suitability of Yucca Mountain, near Las Vegas, Nev., as a permanent

A deadline looms on storing spent fuel from scores of reactors.

repository. But, she said, the current schedule for opening a repository there by 2010 may slip further.

Clearly, she said, her department would miss the deadline established in a 1982 law for starting to accept the waste.

The department has been looking for a temporary site where the spent fuel from more than 100 nuclear reactors around the country would be stored in above-ground buildings. The fuel is currently stored in pools adjacent to the reactors, but the pools at many plants are nearly full.

Several utilities have built heavy steel and concrete casks adjacent to their generating stations to store the wastes until the Energy Department completes arrangements for final disposal.

As a result, the nation is headed toward the establishment of scores of waste dumps instead of one or two centralized ones. Federal and utility officials, and even some environmen-

talists opposed to nuclear power, say that establishing a centralized repository would be more efficient and probably safer.

Under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1987, utilities are required to pay the Federal Government one-tenth of a cent per kilowatt hour of electricity generated by nuclear reactors. So far, the Energy Department has collected more than \$6 billion and has spent about \$3.2 billion. Of that, almost \$1.2 billion has been spent to investigate whether Yucca Mountain might be a suitable permanent dumping site.

As a result, the Energy Department is under pressure to find a temporary storage waste site.

\$100,000 Grants

Secretary O'Leary said that so far the Government had given Federal grants of \$100,000 each to several Indian tribes and rural counties to study whether they want to volunteer, but that no one has stepped forward.

In addition, the efforts of a nuclear waste negotiator appointed by President George Bush in 1990 to persuade governors and other state officials to help find storage sites has been unsuccessful.

Although the negotiator, David H. Leroy, can offer various inducements to set up a site, the governors are afraid of damaging their reputations by meeting with someone who is promoting a nuclear waste dump.

Stocks Surge on Positive Inflation News

By ANTHONY RAMIREZ

The stock market came to attention yesterday, mainly because of hard-to-ignore good news on consumer price inflation.

The rising stock tide lifted, if not all the boats, at least a fair number of them.

The rally was in contrast to the listlessness last week, which persisted whether the perception had been good (wholesale inflation is low), bad (Philip Morris profits will drop) or dubious (Coca-Cola and other brand names will suffer, too).

Seven prominent blue-chip stocks, all rising a point or more, pushed up the Dow Jones industrial average yesterday. They included J. P. Morgan, Aluminum Company of America and Philip Morris.

Perhaps on the theory that an expanding industrial sector would need planes and trains to distribute goods and services, the Dow Jones transportation average rose to its second

THE FAVORITE STOCKS

Performance of the 15 issues with the most shareholders.

Stock	Last	Chg.	% Chg.	1993 % Chg.
A.T. & T.	59 7/8	+ 1 1/8	+ 1.9	+17.4
Ameritech	77 5/8	+ 7/8	+ 1.1	+ 9.0
Bell Atlantic	54 5/8	+ 1/4	+ 0.5	+ 6.6
BellSouth	55 1/4	...	...	+ 7.5
Exxon	68 3/4	+ 3/4	+ 1.1	+12.5
General Electric	93 1/4	+ 1 1/4	+ 1.4	+ 9.1
General Motors	39 1/8	- 3/8	- 1.0	+21.3
GTE	36 1/4	- 3/8	- 1.0	+ 4.7
I.B.M.	51	+ 3/4	+ 1.5	+ 1.2
Nynex	90 3/8	+ 3/8	+ 0.4	+ 7.8
Pacific G. & E.	35	+ 1/4	+ 0.7	+ 5.7
Pacific Telesis	47 3/4	+ 5/8	+ 1.3	+ 7.6
Sears	53 1/8	+ 3/8	+ 0.7	+16.8
Southwestern Bell	78	+ 1 1/2	+ 2.0	+ 5.4
U.S. West	43	+ 1/8	+ 0.3	+12.1

record high in three trading sessions. Nine large transportation companies dominated trading, including Consolidated Rail; UAL, the parent of United Airlines, and AMR, parent of American Airlines.

The Dow Jones industrials rose strongly throughout the day, closing at 3,428.09, up 31.61 points, with an advance in the morning of as much as 36 points. The Dow transportation average jumped 35.46 points, to 1,648.84.

Broader market indexes also posted robust increases. The New York Stock Exchange's composite index rose 3.07 points, to 246.91, while the Standard & Poor's 500 index advanced 6.53 points, to 448.57, and the

Nasdaq composite index gained 6.79 points, to 673.12.

But the trading volume was a less-than-torrid 261.5 million shares, far below the more than 323 million shares during what traders are calling Marlboro Friday — April 2 — when Philip Morris said it would discount its main product. Advancing stocks led decliners yesterday by 13 to 6.

Investors received their first chance yesterday to react to the tame one-tenth of 1 percent rise in the Consumer Price Index in March, which was announced by the Government Friday when most markets were closed for Good Friday. The small increase in March producer prices, reported Thursday, had been similarly encouraging.

'Temporary Worry'

"We had some temporary worry about inflation until the figures came in," said Gene J. Seagle, vice president and director of technical market research at Gruntal. "The market's reactions, as usual, were overblown."

He noted that some of the consumer-products stocks, like Philip Morris and Procter & Gamble, were beginning to recover.

Mr. Seagle saw yesterday's surge as a sign of a summer rally in the next several weeks. "But seriously," he said, "I believe this will probably take the Dow to the next round number, which is 3,500."

Some other market watchers were not impressed by yesterday's buying.

"I would very much like to have seen different leadership" in the stock gainers, said Lawrence R. Rice, chief market strategist for Josephthal, Lyon & Ross.

'Cash Is Trash'

He noted that some of the most prominent leaders were airlines and casino stocks like Casino Data Systems and President Riverboat. "This market is following the old 'cash is trash' scenario," Mr. Rice said. "But I wish they'd put their money in depressed quality groups like pharmaceuticals, food and computers."

Among other issues, Citicorp, the big bank, jumped 1 1/8, to 30 1/4. But three-quarters of the 11.9 million shares traded could be traced to a Saudi prince, who had announced in February that he planned to sell a big block of shares.

In Nasdaq trading, Intel, the world's largest computer-chip maker, climbed 4 1/2, to 117 1/2, on its announcement that first-quarter profits rose sharply.

Disputed Nuclear Program Reborn

'Integral Fast Reactor' Is Offered for Radioactive Waste Disposal

By Thomas W. Lippman
Washington Post Staff Writer

In the Bush administration's last budget, it was the "Integral Fast Reactor," part of a \$145 million-a-year program to subsidize the development of the next generation of nuclear technology.

In President Clinton's first budget, it reappears relabeled as the "actinide recycle program," a shadow of its former self at \$15 million, offered now as a new way to dispose of highly radioactive wastes, or actinides.

To its many critics, it is Son of Clinch River—a mutant offspring of the government's long-abandoned plan to build a reactor at Clinch River, Tenn., that would produce more radioactive material than it consumed. To these critics, it is more than just nuclear pork: It is an unnecessary and potentially dangerous program that could lead to the use of plutonium as a commercial fuel.

Clinton told the nation in his State of the Union Address in February that "we're eliminating programs that are no longer needed, such as nuclear power research and development." But not quite.

The Energy Department's proposed fiscal 1994 budget contains \$57.8 million to subsidize three manufacturers' efforts to develop advanced versions of existing nuclear reactors, which the budget text says are needed "to ensure that nuclear energy continues to make a vital contribution to national energy security."

Government funding for new reactor technologies would be phased out—except for the Integral Fast Reactor, under development at the Energy Department's Argonne National Laboratory in Illinois.

The Office of Management and Budget proposed scrapping this program along with the others, according to sources in the administration and on Capitol Hill, but restored part of it at the behest of Sens. Paul Simon and Carol Moseley-Braun, both Illinois Democrats whose support the administration needed on the economic stimulus and deficit-cutting package.

"Hey, three out of five ain't bad," an Energy Department official said of the nuclear energy programs that were cut. "The secretary [Hazel R. O'Leary] just felt that we should continue this option" as a way to produce energy or consume radioactive waste, or both.

The United States has large stockpiles of highly radioactive spent fuel from commercial nuclear power plants and of plutonium from dismantled warheads that it does not know what to do with. The materials are rich in energy content, but U.S. policy since the Carter administration has banned their use as energy sources for economic and environmental reasons and because of concerns that introduction of plutonium into the commercial fuel market could turn the lethal material into a commodity.

According to Argonne scientists, the sodium-cooled Integral Fast Reactor could burn either spent fuel or plutonium, generating electricity while reducing the volume of nuclear waste and reducing its radioactivity. The reactor could be configured either to consume more radioactive material than it produced, if the nation had enough energy sources and wanted instead to reduce the amount of radioactive waste, or to do the opposite, if the nation needed more energy sources, said Argonne engineering research director Charles E. Till.

The reactor "promises to help eliminate long-lived nuclear wastes, reduce air pollution that contributes to global warming, ease dependence on foreign oil and provide electricity for centuries," an Argonne statement said.

By reducing funding for the program and repackaging it as primarily a waste disposal technology instead of an energy source, the administration appears to have pleased neither its supporters nor its critics.

Till said it amounted to "termination" of a program on which more than \$700 million has been spent and which is within months of demonstrating the new fuel system.

"We will be able to continue at some level the development of the process," he said, "but as for creation of an energy source, all that will be gone."

He said "no one would argue" that plutonium does not represent an energy source. "The question is whether to use it, but the decision makes itself if you cut it off at this point. . . . It seems to me to be unwise."

But Thomas B. Cochran, a nuclear weapons expert at the Natural Resources Defense Council, said, "We're only doing this because you have an entrenched bureaucracy trying to save their jobs." The experimental technology, he said, is uneconomical either as an energy source or as a waste disposal method.

"This money is supposed to be used to research this technique for actinide recycling," said Robert Pol-

lard, a nuclear engineer with the Union of Concerned Scientists. "It makes no sense to spend any money on recycling unless you intend to have a breeder program [to produce plutonium as fuel]. You could make new uranium fuel for one-seventh the cost."

Some specialists regard as far-fetched the notion that the Integral Fast Reactor or any other program would lead to the development of a "plutonium economy" in which plutonium, the basic material of nuclear weapons, would become a standard energy source. It would require a policy upheaval that no one in the Clinton administration is known to be contemplating.

"Preservation of a fuels research option should not be taken as a decision by this government to pro-

ceed with the development of a plutonium-based economy," said David Swanson, senior vice president of the Edison Electric Institute, a utility trade association.

But the idea of plutonium as a source of civilian energy is not nearly so unthinkable as it was a few years ago. Energy-short Japan is committed to it and has begun importing plutonium from fuel reprocessing plants in Europe. Russia views the material from its dismantled weapons as a resource with economic value, according to State Department officials. Last week, General Atomics Corp. of San Diego announced an agreement with Russia to develop a gas-cooled reactor that could use weapons-grade plutonium as fuel.

In February, the Energy Department's Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California published a study of plutonium disposal methods that said the best ways to dispose of it are to use it in a reactor such as the one being designed at Argonne or to convert it into mixed oxide fuel for use at conventional nuclear power plants.

That prospect alarms antinuclear groups such as the Safe Energy Communication Council, a foundation-funded environmental coalition. The Argonne program "perpetuates the Clinch River breeder reactor proposal, killed by Congress in 1983," the council said in a statement. "Congress agreed with the American people that breeder reactors were a fiscal black hole and a dangerous proliferation threat. Unlike fine wine, this proposal has not improved with age."

Deception On POWs Indicated

*File on 1972 Account
By Hanoi Is Suspect*

By Thomas W. Lippman
Washington Post Staff Writer

A recently disclosed document from Russian archives indicates that Vietnam may have held hundreds more U.S. prisoners than it acknowledged at the end of the Vietnam War. But U.S. officials cautioned yesterday that the document may not be accurate.

Presidential emissary John W. Vessey Jr., who is going to Vietnam this weekend, has been instructed to make a discussion of the document "the first order of business," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said.

As described by U.S. officials who have read it, the document appears to be riddled with erroneous statements, but Boucher said it is still being evaluated by the Defense Intelligence Agency.

Vessey, a retired general, is to assess for President Clinton the extent of Hanoi's cooperation with U.S. officials seeking information about the fate of American servicemen still missing from the war. He has said in the past that Vietnam appears to be cooperating fully and is entitled to some reward from Washington, perhaps a lifting of the trade embargo that blocks U.S. firms from doing business there.

But if the information in the Russian document is correct, it would indicate that Vietnam has engaged in massive deception about missing Americans for more than 20 years.

The document was found by Harvard researcher Stephen J. Morris in the files of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee. It purports to be a Russian translation of a Vietnamese general's Sept. 15, 1972, briefing of the Vietnamese Politburo saying that as of that date, 1,205 U.S. prisoners of war were held in Indochina while Hanoi was acknowledging the existence of only 368.

At the time, the North Vietnamese were negotiating with the Nixon administration over the peace agreement that was signed the following January—an agreement that led to the release of 591 Americans and declarations from both sides that all prisoners under Hanoi's control had been sent home.

The Hanoi Politburo briefer is

said to have been Gen. Tran Van Quang, then deputy chief of the North Vietnamese general staff and for many years head of a Politburo unit responsible for prisoner of war affairs. That unit's records are among those Hanoi has so far declined to make available to U.S. researchers, according to congressional sources.

POW-MIA activists have seized upon the document since it began to circulate last week as evidence that Hanoi held and may still hold large numbers of prisoners, but skeptics have pointed out several discrepancies in the document.

The Russian version, for example, says prisoners were segregated by rank and three were astronauts—neither of which is true. It gives four prisoners' names—Catlow, Klarvisto, Intisshasht and Karmet—but none corresponds to the name of a missing American.

It also says the prisoners were classified according to their political views. Those designated "progressive" could be freed first, but "all senior officers were reactionary." But at the time of Operation Homecoming in early 1973, prisoners were released according to their dates of capture, including senior officers.

According to retired Adm. James D. Stockdale, who was the highest ranking officer in North Vietnamese custody, an elaborate, secret communications system enabled him and other officers to identify every American prisoner by name and location.

But POW-MIA activists, including some Capitol Hill staff members, insist there was a "parallel" prison system that Stockdale knew nothing about, where the additional 600 or more men could have been held.

The Defense Department still lists more than 2,250 servicemen as unaccounted for from the war, but about 1,100 of them are classified "killed in action—body not recovered." A Senate committee that examined the issue last year found that the number whose fate is truly in doubt is less than 100.

Said committee Chairman John F. Kerry (D-Mass.): "Given the possibility of confusion resulting from translation, as well as possible confusion about the nationalities of prisoners held, it is important to proceed with precision and care" in assessing the document's significance.

Also circulating this week are 1967 State Department cables from Berlin reporting an East German offer to exchange two wounded U.S. fliers from the Vietnam War, said to be in an East German hospital, for Peter and Helen Kroger, London residents jailed as Soviet spies. Nothing came of it because the Krogers were not in U.S. custody, the cables say.