



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

Reply to:
1050 East Flamingo Rd.
Suite 319
Las Vegas, Nevada 89119
Tel: (702) 388-6125
FTS: 598-6125

TO: Mr. Robert E. Browning, Director, HLWM
FROM: Paul T. Prestholt, Sr. On-Site Licensing Representative
DATE: December 21, 1987
SUBJECT: Newspaper Articles

Please find enclosed more information that appeared in
our local newspaper that is of interest.

PTP:nan

cc: Mr. Greg Cook
Ms. Sue Gagner

88139427
NM Project: NM-
PDR w/encl
(Return to NM, 623-SS)

NM Record File: 102
LPDR w/encl

4

8803230137 871221
PDR WASTE
102 PDR

Commentary

Reid and Bilbray ambushed at Conference Committee pass

By Jim Santini

Well, those tough old congressional chairmen on the legislative ranch in Washington, D.C., sure took Nevada's tenderfoot team on a rough ride. It was a lesson in congressional bush-whacking.

Nevada's new congressional hands, Sen. Harry Reid and Rep. Jimmy Bilbray, had invested all of Nevada's nuke waste future stock in Democratic Chairman Mo Udall, D-Ariz., (Interior) and John Dingell, D-Mich., (Energy and Commerce).

Last week, Reid cheered the fact that Udall and Dingell would be involved in the conference between House and Senate that would work out the differences between the

Capitol Comments

two nuke waste bills. He stated it was, "great news for Nevada because those two congressmen are staunch opponents of Johnson's 'Screw Nevada bill.'"

In fact, the Dingell and Udall representatives on the Conference Committee led the charge to specifically identify ("characterize") Yucca Mountain as the only U.S. site for permanent disposal of high level nuclear waste.

Bilbray was similarly duped. In a computer letter to Nevada voters dated Dec. 9, 1987, Bilbray stated, "In the House of Representatives, I have successfully worked with Interior Chairman Mo Udall." So much for "successful work."

In the fourth paragraph, Bilbray continued, "During the past two weeks, I have worked closely with Chairman Phil Sharp of the House Subcommittee on Energy and Power in educating members on the Subcommittee of (sic) Nevada's concerns." So much for "education."

The letter continues, "I spoke with Chairman Sharp minutes after he had postponed a meeting of his subcommittee because of a hostile attempt to introduce a substitute bill similar to Sen. Johnson's irresponsible legislation. Chairman Sharp and I, rapidly (sic) agreed to work together, and develop a legislative strategy." What was the Sharp "strategy?"

Sharp led the House attack to

specifically target Nevada for the nuke dump site. In addition, Sharp and the other democrats on the Conference Committee added insult to injury by wiping out the Senate's \$100 million-a-year, "impact assistance" that was intended as Nevada's reward for serving as the nation's nuclear waste garbage can.

It should also be noted that side-by-side with Sharp on the Conference Committee was Democrat Al Swift from Washington state. His state, along with Texas, is eliminated from any further study as a permanent waste site.

So much for having friends and influence in the majority party in Congress. Reid and Bilbray were ambushed at the Conference Com-

mittee pass.

Reid has a lot of political capital invested in the nuke waste issue. For many months, he has been out front and forthright in this battle. Both Reid and Bilbray had a right to expect better treatment from their party colleagues in Congress.

It is impossible to recall a time in our state's history when Nevada has been victimized by such a blatant disregard of the state's Congressional delegation in Washington, D.C.

As the blizzard of Reid/Bilbray press releases and computer letters swirled in Nevada, behind the scenes, Sen. Chic Hecht did succeed in passing seventeen amendments to the Johnson nuke waste bill. No panaceas, but no fanfare

and hoopla either. Just concrete legislative attempts to make a very bad bill a little bit better.

In final analysis, the lesson to be learned is the one emphasized in an earlier column. If our delegation is divided on important Nevada issues, legislators from other states will exploit that weakness. Nuke waste is not a Republican or Democratic issue. It is a Nevada and national issue. It is not a matter of legislative one-upsmanship. It is a matter of "united we stand or divided we fall."

Jim Santini is a former four-term congressman from Nevada who now practices law in Washington, D.C. His column appears in the R-J each Monday.

WM DOCKET CONTROL
CENTER

'87 DEC 29 P3:32

WM Record File
102

WM Project 11
Docket No.
PDR
LPDR (V)

Distribution:
REB MJB Youngblood
JOB Stabbein
(Return to WM. 623-SS)

8cf