

NO54

*Jim Davis, NMSS  
Mansfield  
cc Wm*

RA  
WASTE REACTION

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

THE GOVERNORS OF TEXAS AND NEVADA PLEDGED WEDNESDAY TO FIGHT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S SELECTION OF SITES THERE AS POSSIBLE CANDIDATES FOR PERMANENT NUCLEAR WASTE DISPOSAL, BUT THE MAYOR OF A WASHINGTON CITY SAID SUCH A DUMP COULD PROVIDE A NEEDED ECONOMIC BOOST.

"I THINK THAT IS A REAL SHOT IN THE ARM FOR THE CITY OF RICHLAND AND THE TRI-CITIES AREA," SAID RICHLAND, WASH., MAYOR JOHN POYNER. "WE HAVE BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS AND IT IS A REAL POSITIVE STEP FOR US."

BUT TEXAS GOV. MARK WHITE VOWED, "BEFORE THE PEOPLE OF DEAF SMITH COUNTY WILL GLOW IN THE DARK, SPARKS WILL FLY."

AND NEVADA GOV. RICHARD BRYAN RENEWED HIS PROMISE TO VETO HIS STATE'S SELECTION AS A NUCLEAR WASTE DUMP SITE.

"NEVADA WOULD BE HAPPY TO SUPPORT THE SELECTION OF THE WASHINGTON SITE, THEREBY SPARING NEVADA RESIDENTS THE ANXIETY AND EXPENSE OF A LONG SELECTION PROCESS. IF THEY WANT IT, THEY CAN HAVE IT," BRYAN SAID.

THE ENERGY DEPARTMENT COMPARED NINE SITES IN SIX STATES AND WEDNESDAY ANNOUNCED THE TOP CANDIDATES FOR THE NATION'S FIRST PERMANENT ATOMIC WASTE BURIAL GROUND.

THE THREE TOP CANDIDATES WERE DEAF SMITH COUNTY, ABOUT 30 MILES WEST OF HARRILLO, TEXAS; THE FEDERAL HANFORD NUCLEAR RESERVATION NEAR RICHLAND; AND YUCCA MOUNTAIN, NEV., NEAR THE CALIFORNIA BORDER.

ALTERNATIVES WOULD BE DAVIS CANYON, UTAH, AND RICHTON DOME, NEAR RICHTON, MISS.

THE UNDERGROUND REPOSITORY WOULD BE DESIGNED TO HOLD SOME 70,000 METRIC TONS OF HIGHLY RADIOACTIVE WASTES THAT WILL NOT DECAY TO SAFE LEVELS FOR AT LEAST 10,000 YEARS.

THE ASSESSMENTS WILL BE ISSUED IN FINAL FORM IN LATE SPRING. STATES HAVE THE OPTION TO VETO A SITE, BUT CONGRESS CAN OVERRIDE THE STATE VETO.

TEXAS ATTORNEY GENERAL JIM HATTOX FILED SUIT ASKING A FEDERAL APPEALS COURT TO LOOK INTO THE SELECTION PROCESS, SAYING IT VIOLATES THE FEDERAL NUCLEAR WASTE POLICY ACT OF 1982.

"THEY ARE IGNORING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PRIME FARM LAND IN OUR PANHANDLE, AS WELL AS THE DANGER TO THE SANTA ROSA AND OGALLALA AQUIFERS AND THE RESIDENTS OF WEST TEXAS," HATTOX SAID.

THE PROPOSED NEVADA LOCATION IS ON THE EDGE OF THE NEVADA TEST SITE, THE NATION'S NUCLEAR WEAPONS TESTING GROUND SINCE 1951.

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