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We sent this in protest to P.G.E.'s proposed dumping.

October 28, 1981

1102-A Laurel Lane
San Luis Obispo, CA. 93401

Dear Water Quality Control Board;

Please don't let P.G.&E. pressure you into a hasty decision about the toxic dumping into the ocean at Diablo Cove. You need to study the negative effects of these heavy metals and chemicals, and radioactive nuclides such as Tritium and Plutonium. Some of these concentrate in the fish and shellfish that people are going to eat. Please take a close look at what happened at the Humboldt Bay reactor and San Onofre. Please don't let P.G.& E. contaminate another area, especially one as beautiful as San Luis Obispo. They don't care about the environment or the people who have to live there. P.G.&E has no plans to monitor the effects of the toxic wastes on the surrounding sea life. They aren't looking at how everything is connected in the food chain. People will eventually be hurt, because they eat from the top of the food chain. There should be some kind of independent monitoring system.

We do not feel that the "good morning fog" that P.G.E. plans to vent into the atmosphere is acceptable. There needs to at least be cooling towers for the almost three billion gallons of radioactive wastewater. It should not be dumped into the ocean. It will kill the marine life.

P.G.E must be held responsible for its pollution which can eventually kill us, either by gradual accumulations of radioactive poisons, or by a disastorous nuclear accident. Due to its location near the Hosgri earthquake fault, the second possibility is entirely possible.

Please make your decision in favor of the health and safety of the surrounding citizens and animal life of San Luis Obispo.

Sincerely yours,
Anderson Valley Nuclear Awareness Comm.
Box 136
Philo, CA. 95466

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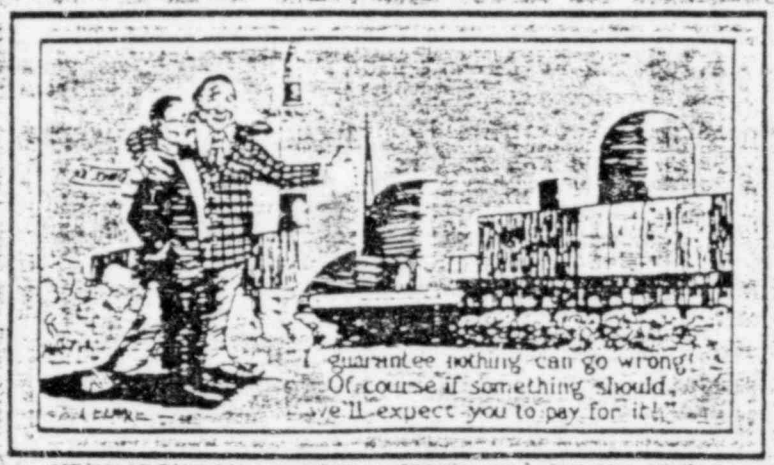
CALIFORNIA CAMPAIGN TO REPEAL THE PRICE-ANDERSON ACT



After the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, the fledgling nuclear industry looked into insuring their new power source. The insurance companies researched the damage potential; their risk calculations concluded that they could not insure nuclear facilities without liability limitation guarantee from the government. The Price-Anderson Act was passed by Congress in 1957. The Act sets a 560 million dollar liability compensation limit for victims of a nuclear accident. The insurance companies would pay a maximum 140 million dollars on any damages incurred, the rest would be payed from the Federal Treasury. Congress renewed the Act in 1967 and again in 1975.

Taxpayers oppose the Price-Anderson Act because it is another case of spending abuse of tax dollars by the government. Again Congress has interfered in the free-enterprise economy to provide a bailout for an industry that is too risky to float on its own. The government's own study; the Rasmussen Report* sets a major accident financial loss at 7 billion dollars. In the event of a carastophic nuclear accident the taxpayers and the economy could be stuck with 100's of million dollars cost as a result.

Consumers oppose the Price-Anderson Act because it fails to adequately insure them against property loss. Again Congress has interfered to protect industry over the property of the consumers in the area of a nuclear facility In the event of a nuclear accident the actual amount of coverage a consumer-property owner could expect to receive would be a few cents on a dollar of property loss.

Environmentalists oppose the Price-Anderson Act because it fails to take into consideration the disastrous effect on the environment of massive radiation exposure from an accident. Again Congress has interfered by making profit a greater priority than the safety of life around a nuclear facility. The Rasmussen Report * estimates that in the event of a major nuclear accident that an area the size of Pennsylvania would be contaminated.

The Price-Anderson Act is used to protect the Nuclear Industrial Complex from the citizens that would be affected by a major nuclear accident. Congress in repeatingly passing the Price-Anderson Act is not representing our interests, but the interests of a few, who are protected against liability from a nuclear accident. Taxpayers, Consumers and Environmentalists are uniting in their demand that Congress act in their interests and REPEAL PRICE-ANDERSON.

* In January 1979 the Nuclear Regulatory Commission withdrew its endorsement of the Rasmussen Report as the main nuclear reactor safety study because the document may be deceptive and understate the risk of Atomic Power.

I AM INTERESTED IN UNITING WITH FELLOW CALIFORNIANS IN DEMANDING THAT OUR CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES REPEAL THE PRICE-ANDERSON ACT.

____Send me more information about the Price-Anderson Act.
____Put me on the campaign mailing list.
____I will write a letter to my Congressperson.
____I will help organize in my Congressional District.
____Here is _____ dollars to help finance the compaign.

NAME_____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS_____ ZIP_____

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT_____

P.O. BOX 60274 - SUNNYVALE, CALIFORNIA 94086 - (415) 841-6500

INSURANCE IS THE KEY

For over twenty years there has been strong official confirmation that the nuclear power industry does not believe its own safety claims. It lies in the existence of a law called the Price-Anderson Act.

The Price-Anderson Act, originally passed in 1957, governs nuclear insurance. It has several provisions; the key one is a limit on liability of only $560 million for nuclear accident damages, even though the government itself admits damages could be in the tens of billions of dollars. Where did the $560 million come from? Senator Clinton Anderson Co-Author of the Act stated it was chosen because it "would not frighten the country or Congress to death..." (1956 hearings, 123).

This limited liability-which the nuclear industry has stated it needs in order to exist-carries two important messages for Americans. FIRST, it is a very strong indication that the nuclear industry does not believe its own claims about nuclear safety. The paradox is obvious; on the one hand we hear the reassuring claim that chances of a nuclear accident are "one in a billion," or the even more extravagant "it can't happen," but on the other hand we see the industry scrambling to protect its own assets from the accidents it claims won't happen.

SECOND, it should be remembered that limited liability is necessary because the insurance industry refuses to insure nukes for full liability. This means that insurers don't believe safety claims of the industry. If they did, they would be anxious to sell as much insurance as utilities would buy since insurers like to collect premiums for insurance against claims which will never be made.

Insurers are the best risk-assesors in society; if they weren't, they could not stay in business. When our best rick-assessors prove they do not believe nuclear accidents won't happen, Congress and the rest of society should pay very close attention.

After the Three Mile Island accident the U.S. Federal Insurance Administration conducted a study to see how much victims would recieve. Assuming everyone was safely evacuated (no medical or personal injury) and that the radiation was confined to a twenty mile radius of the plant, it reported victims would recieve about three cents for every dollar of property value lost. A question Senator Mike Gravel asks is "who's going to be left holding the bag?" As a Columbia University study of Price-Anderson declared in 1974: "The decision to limit liability represents a determination that a major share of the costs of an accident should be borne by its victims."

If the industry cannot get insurance, and will not put its assets on the line, then this is an insustry which should be stopped. It isn't our fault this activity is so hazardous, and if resoring the normal constraint on reckless activity (financial responsibility for the consequences) causes nuclear investors to pull out, so be it. This is an instance where simple business prudence, without artificial barriers like Price-Anderson, can produce far better results at less cost to the taxpayer than bureaucratic manipulation by agencies such as the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

"There is no more graphic example of the hypocrisy of nuclear promoters' arguments than Price-Anderson." - Senator Mike Gravel

The CALIFORNIA CAMPAIGN TO REPEAL THE PRICE-ANDERSON ACT is targeting eleven congressmen, and petitioning eighteen unfavorable congressmen. JOIN NOW - fill out the form on the other side and send it in.

NOTE - portions of the above were taken from an article that appeared in The Connector

Decommissioning a Nuclear Power Plant
or
What Do You Do with a Worn Out Nuke?

WHY ARE WORN-OUT NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS A PROBLEM?

Nuclear power plants have a life span of 30 to 40 years. The process of dealing with a used nuclear power plant is called "decommissioning" and it is not simply a matter of removing the radioactive fuel elements and coolant and "washing down" the facilities to decontaminate them. At the end of the lifetime of the plant, the entire structure, including concrete and shielding materials, has become radioactive. Among the radioactive elements produced by and contaminating a used nuclear plant are Cobalt-60, which takes from 70 to 110 years to decay to safe levels; Carbon-14 which requires 65,000 years to decay; and Nickel-59, which is dangerous for more than 100,000 years.

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS FOR DEALING WITH WORN OUT NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS.

Although there are 67 operating nuclear plants in the United States and 77 more under construction, the problem of decommissioning has been virtually ignored.

There have been three proposed methods for handling a used nuclear power plant:

1. Mothballing: All reactor fuel, radioactive liquids and other moveable wastes are removed. Then the reactor vessel is welded shut with steel, and a security guard is placed outside at all times. Periodic maintenance and inspection are necessary to prevent leakage of radioactivity or sabotage by terrorists.

2. Entombment: This method is like mothballing except that instead of welding the reactor vessel shut, it is filled with concrete. Then only occassional surveillance and maintenance checks are required.

3. Dismantling: Both mothballing and entombment are only temporary methods of protective storage. The only lasting solution is to completely dismantle the structure and bury the pieces at a licensed burial site for radioactive materials. It is both technically difficult and expensive to cut up and handle the highly radioactive parts.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission recommends that either mothballing or entombment be used first, allowing about 100 years for the plant to "cool" somewhat, making the job of dismantling less dangerous. Once the plant is dismantled, the tons of radioactive rubble become part of the still-unresolved nuclear waste storage problem. There is no proven method for safely and permanently storing the various waste products and radioactive parts of a nuclear plant for the hundreds of thousands of years that they will remain dangerous.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE SO FAR?

So far eleven nuclear plants and test reactors have been shut down or placed in protective storage. Most have been small experimental reactors, and NO large commercial reactor has ever been dismantled.

Minnesota's Elk River Reactor, a 22 MW demonstration project, cost $6 million to construct and $6.9 million to dismantle -- paid for by federal tax monies.

The Sodium Reactor Experiment was built in 1957 and operated for seven years near Los Angeles. It is now being dismantled, a process that is expected to take two years and $6 million of federal tax funds. It took two years and $13 million to build. The walls are so radioactive that if a man tried to work inside the reactor he would burn to death in seconds. Eventually 350 tons of radioactive wastes will be shipped to Nevada, on public railways and highways, to be buried. Commercial reactors being built today (such as Diablo) are 100 times as large as this plant. It is not known if we have the capability to deal with the levels of radioactivity and the size of these reactors when they are worn out.

The cost of dismantling Oyster Creek, a New Jersey plant owned by General Public Utilities was calculated at $100 million (it originally cost $65 million to construct). Instead, the plant was entombed at a cost of $35 million.

In 1972 Nuclear Fuel Services shut down its commercial reprocessing plant in West Valley, New York. In 1976 New York State took over control of the bankrupt facility and set aside $3 million for its decommissioning. Estimates for the total cost of the project now run as high as $600,000,000 and New York has asked the federal government to assume responsibility.

WHO PAYS?

An important debate is now emerging over the cost and financing of decommissioning. In the first case of its type, the Southern California Edison Co. has asked the Public Utilities Commission of California to grant $36 million in new customer costs to pay for the expected 1997 closure of its first unit at SanOnofre. It would be assessed at $4 million per year, but ratepayers would actually pay $8 million per year, in order to cover the costs of federal taxes. If this plan is accepted, customers can expect similar assessments for all other nuclear plants in California.

Some argue that decommissioning funds should be collected in the year they are spent, in order to avoid taxes. But that could mean saddling future generations with the costs, although they didn't use the energy. A coalition of consumer and environmental groups asked, in July, 1977, that the government force utility companies to pay in advance for decommissioning. They insist that an established amount be put into escrow before a plant receives an operating license. The dismantling will probably not take place until at least 130 years after a plant begins operations (30 years of operation plus 100 years of "cooling down"). Many corporations do not last that long, and there must be some guarantee of a company's continued financial responsibility.

Cost estimates for decommissioning vary greatly. The government says that mothballing would cost about $3 million per year per reactor at today's prices. Entombment is estimated at $10 million. If dismantling is delayed for 100 years, it is expected to cost about $40 million at 1975 prices, in addition to the costs of either mothballing or entombment. Other experts place the possible costs much higher, at up to $100 million for dismantling alone.

THE CHOICE?

Nuclear Regulatory Commission officials say they are confident the problems can be resolved. That's what we have been told about the problems of storing the waste products from nuclear plants for several decades, and we are still nowhere near a solution. We are being asked to have faith that the technology will appear to solve the problems. And in the meantime, nuclear plants continue to be built despite serious unresolved questions.

The White House Council on Environmental Quality in September, 1977 recommended that the government stop issuing licenses for new nuclear plants unless acceptable ways are found to dispose of radioactive wastes and to clean up plants after they are abandoned.

Decommissioning involves very high and open ended costs, as well as unresolved technical issues. The sensible and prudent course would surely be to solve the problems first, not to become continually more committed to nuclear power while such serious problems remain.

STOP LICENSING NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS UNTIL ACCEPTABLE WAYS ARE FOUND TO DISPOSE OF RADIOACTIVE WASTES AND TO CLEAN UP THE PLANTS AFTER THEY ARE ABANDONED

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