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**NSP**

**NORTHERN STATES POWER COMPANY**

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA 55401

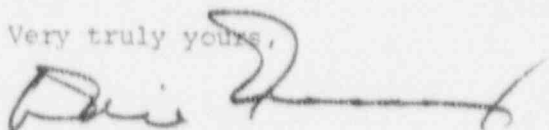
May 20, 1970

Mr. W. B. McCool, Secretary  
U. S. Atomic Energy Commission  
Washington, D. C. 20545

Dear Mr. McCool:

In connection with my letter yesterday, transmitting ten copies of Mr. Ewald's letter to Mr. Badalich, enclosed are ten copies of two articles from the Minneapolis Tribune which I thought might be of interest to you.

Very truly yours,



D. F. McELROY  
Vice President-Engineering

Enc.

msf

## Burying the Nuclear Hatchet

NORTHERN STATES Power Company's agreement to install additional equipment in order to meet requirements of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (PCA) for radioactive gas discharges from the Monticello nuclear generating plant marks an important milestone in environmental control in Minnesota, and perhaps nationally.

The state permit for the plant represents the first effective state regulation of radioactive waste emissions in the country. It shows that states can make a contribution in radioactive waste regulation — despite the claim of the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) that it possesses overriding wisdom and sole jurisdiction in this field. NSP's agreement will mean a sharp reduction below AEC standards in radioactive gas discharges from the Monticello plant.

The agreement also offers an example, we think, of how patient negotiations can be productive: The state and NSP both remained willing to discuss the Monticello problem over the last year, following PCA adoption of the stringent requirements.

Since there no longer appears to be a controversy over the terms of the state permit for the Monticello plant, NSP is expected to drop its suit in state court challenging that permit. But a federal court suit arguing that

Minnesota has no authority to control radioactive emissions will not be affected, according to the company.

Now that NSP has agreed to the permit, it's difficult to see what the company has to gain by continuing the federal case. We suspect that many Minnesotans will be hard put to understand why NSP should carry a test case against the state for the AEC and the nuclear power industry, which would like to develop nuclear plants unhampered by state regulations tougher than AEC's.

Federal standards are essential in the radioactive waste field, we think. But states should be free to impose stricter controls (to "go the extra mile," as Gov. LeVander put it) if they want a higher-quality environment. Congress clearly allows states to do this in more conventional aspects of air and water pollution; a drive is shaping up in Washington to make the authority explicit for radioactive wastes, as well.

On the Monticello plant dispute and other issues, NSP has shown during the last few years that industry and the established system can make major accommodations in response to the new public awareness of environmental needs. The company could make another significant contribution by dropping its federal suit against the state of Minnesota.