

Governors: Carter Must 'Rally Support' For Nuclear Energy

The Nuclear Roundtable of the National Governors Conference released the following statement this week on behalf of the governors.

The Governors recognize that there is a direct correlation between energy and jobs. Without adequate energy there can be no industrial expansion, no new jobs, and modern agriculture. Without energy our economy will falter.

Under the Administration's projection of a 2 percent annual national growth rate, 130,000 megawatts from light water reactor plants will be needed by 1985.

If the Administration is to reach even this modest projection of energy facilities needed (the current growth rate is in excess of 4 percent), a firmer commitment to nuclear energy must be articulated by the President....

Under present regulatory processes, the lead time for building nuclear plants now approaches 12 to 14 years. The current proposed legislation does not materially reduce the 12 to 14 year time frame. The enactment of a "statute of limitations" provision to prevent administrative and legal intervenor activity that is repetitious and endless is essential.

It was the overwhelming opinion of the Governors present that there needs to be a clear cut decision by the Federal Government on the waste management problem before the public can be convinced that a nuclear energy option is a viable production alternative.

Without reprocessing there is a real question whether there will be enough domestic nuclear fuel to fulfill the needs of the current planned nuclear facilities after the year 2000. This determination must be made at the Presidential level by the end of the current year. In this regard the National Uranium Resources Evaluation Program should be accelerated. The nation cannot wait until 1983.

The clear cut consensus of the Governors is that the

nuclear energy program should be continued, and if the Administration's modest projections of electrical demand are to be met, we need a definite timetable and policy adopted at the Presidential level to produce answers on the reprocessing and breeder technology issues. The President must take the lead and rally public support.

The Governors understand that the President's policy on reprocessing, and the use of breeder technology is based on foreign policy concerns and the potential for further proliferation of nuclear materials. However, many Governors feel that such a viewpoint will seriously damage our world position economically and endanger our national security.

We also feel that the options or alternatives to conventional reprocessing and use of breeder technology have not been clearly stated. In order that the American people can plan realistically we request that definite decisions be made and timetables for those decisions be provided by the Administration. Prolonged delay of clearly defined timetables and commitments are unacceptable and unresponsive to our energy needs.

If the decision not to reprocess continues, then a plan of action must be set forth immediately outlining the number of plants which can be operated with existing domestic uranium supplies that can be economically recovered. Otherwise, the projected needs for imported nuclear fuel and the alternative options for dealing with the spent fuel are needed to fill the resulting void.

The majority of the Governors feel that the reprocessing and breeder decisions of the Administration must be reconsidered. Other Governors want to consider additional facts on the subject before deciding their position.

All agree, that nuclear energy must play a large part in production of electricity and the present Administration policy is inadequate to bring this about.

Anti-Nuclear Lies Still Coming From Administration

While pressure is building up in Congress, regional press, and industry across the United States for the Administration to alter its no-nuclear energy policies and go with the fast breeder and fusion research and development, scientifically spurious and outright fraudulent anti-nuclear propaganda is still emanating from the Administration's highest policy circles.

* Speaking before an energy conservation conference convened by the Washington, D.C. Bar Association, Deputy Energy Secretary John F. O'Leary described nuclear power as a "has-been". O'Leary went on to tell the audience that today's four major forms of energy—oil, natural gas, coal, and nuclear—are "all in

trouble." O'Leary added that "we may have seen the end of these systems as viable supporters of growth, although they can maintain the status quo for a while," and that, unless the current trend is reversed, nuclear power will not expand significantly for a long time, "maybe never."

* The coalition of environmentalists that is organizing a nationwide "Sun Day" celebration next May—to promote the development of various forms of solar and other "soft" technologies for energy—have begun to spread the lie that controlled thermonuclear fusion "will produce large amounts of radioactive waste" and that "no one knows how much it will cost, how it will work or even if it will work." This attack by the Sun Day group is