

## St. Louis Globe-Democrat Blasts 'Damaging Nuclear Energy Cuts'

*The following is the text of an editorial which appears in the March 1 issue of the St. Louis Globe-Democrat.*

### Damaging Nuclear Energy Cuts

President Carter's proposed cutbacks in the nation's development of the fast-breeder nuclear reactor and nuclear fusion power could slow these vital programs for a year or more.

*And if cuts of this magnitude continue — \$199 million from the breeder reactor and \$80 million from nuclear fusion — the two programs could be crippled and pushed back indefinitely. This is the assessment of a well-informed source in the government fusion program.*

What is so damaging about these cutbacks is that both programs have been showing excellent progress. The fast breeder reactor, which produces more atomic fuel than it consumes, has reached the stage where construction was due to begin on the first demonstration-size plant near Oak Ridge, Tenn., late this year.

This may be off now as the Carter Administration has called for a complete review of the program to determine if it is safe to continue. Environmentalists have contended that present technology can't safely handle the excess plutonium produced by the breeder reactor.

But, here again, these critics are laymen with virtually no expertise on the subject. Those who are developing the breeder reactor say that there are ways to handle the excess plutonium so that it won't become a threat to the environment.

From those in the best position to know, there is no valid reason for cutting back on development of these two successors to present nuclear fission energy. The breeder reactor is seen as the immediate successor of nuclear fission technology. Fusion power, however, is regarded as the "wonder fuel" of the 21st century.

*This is because nuclear fusion has these advantages over other energy sources: Its energy yield far exceeds*

*the energy needed to make the fusion reaction take place; fuels required for fusion reactors are almost unlimited; the cost of these fuels is low; the process is much safer than nuclear fission, and it is 10 to 100 times cleaner than nuclear fission.*

Although there has been little news on the subject, the development of fusion energy has been moving ahead at astounding speed. It was only a theory a few years ago but the Energy Research and Development Administration had scheduled the production of the first significant amounts of controlled thermonuclear fusion energy at the Tokamak fusion power reactor at Princeton University in 1981 until the proposed Carter cutback in funding was announced.

The \$80 million cutback will delay the historic demonstration by an estimated six to nine months. The ERDA program to generate electricity from fusion at a demonstration plant by 1986 or 1987 also may be out the window as a result of the budget reduction.

Instead of cutting back on fusion power, the Carter Administration should be going all out in developing this fantastic energy source as the Russians are. The Soviets today have 50 per cent more personnel working on developing fusion power than the United States and are reported to be at about the same stage of fusion development as the United States.

When the Carter Administration tosses around tens of billions of dollars for new make-work jobs and social welfare spending but cuts back on crucially important energy development programs it once again shows how confused its priorities are.

*Fusion power is the energy of the future. It is foolish and costly to try to sit on it. A nation as short of energy as the United States desperately needs the tremendous energy that fusion power can bring. It is projected that fusion power will supply the United States with nearly all of its electricity in the 21st century.*

*It will, that is, if President Carter doesn't stop it.*

## A Deadly Deal With The Devil

Senator Russell Long (D-La.), the chairman of the powerful Senate Finance Committee, has struck up a dangerous bargain with the Carter Administration. Over the weekend of March 5, Sen. Long surprised political observers with an announcement that he now favors a tax on oil, gas and electricity — a wellhead tax — a position heretofore unheard of for conservatives from oil-producing states. While Long and everyone else from Louisiana and Texas favor deregulation of interstate natural gas prices, Long is keenly aware that deregulation could result in shortages of *intrastate* natural

gas through a rapid bidding up of prices, both of which would destroy Louisiana industry. In a clever move to get deregulation and higher prices on the interstate market while ameliorating its effects on intrastate gas and local industry, Long has apparently joined forces with Carter's Naderites to get an interstate tax. Couching his real intent in the language of conservation, he declared, "Tax the oil and gas and the hydropower that is being produced and is being wasted... I think the President will recommend something like that. He ought to."

To make matters worse, Long is even embracing his long-time rival on the Finance Committee, Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass). To the amazement of the *Wall Street Journal* and business community, Kennedy has reversed his perennial opposition to industry investment tax credits and is now even advocating Long's position of investment tax credit refunds. Long is reported to have "greeted Kennedy like the prodigal son" — while he is endorsing Carter's and Kennedy's proposal for a labor-intensive investment tax credit.

Striking a deal with the devil, however, is not going to work. Deregulation with sharply rising taxes — leading

to a minimum five-fold increase in fuel prices — is precisely the Trilateral Commission policy to destroy U.S. industry. While Long plays games with the Carter camp, he is increasingly undermining his committee's and his own ability to block Carter's anti-industrial economic legislation.

There are indications, however, that other conservatives are not taking kindly to the Senator's machinations. A sampling of southern congressional offices showed shocked surprise and denials that they too were considering his proposals.

## Farmers' Organizations Join For Debt Moratorium Call

The South Dakota Farmers Union (NFU) 5th District and the National Farmers Organization (NFO) 2nd District passed a joint resolution Feb. 26 calling for "the President of the United States to immediately declare a moratorium on all farm-ranch loan foreclosures and evictions." The resolution emphasizes that "the banks no longer make up the difference to agriculture in the form of extended credit between what the agriculture receives for its products in the marketplace and what is necessary to keep on producing the vital necessities of life."

The Kansas City Federal Reserve reports that over 65 percent of the farmers and ranchers in the drought stricken Great Plains are seeking loan rescheduling. 711,000 acres of crop and range land have already lost precious topsoil in windstorms. An additional 7.8 million acres are so dry and overgrazed that a dust bowl condition is eminent. In California, the nation's largest producer of fruits and vegetables, over 40 percent of the crop may be lost.

The South Dakota farmers are in a confrontation with

both the Carter Administration and the hierarchy of the NFO and NFU represented by NFO Chairman Oren Lee Staley and ex-NFU official and present Secretary of Agriculture Robert Bergland. In this disaster situation the Carter Administration is advocating formation of a "water bank" which would militarily control diminishing supplies of water and eliminate 19 water development projects.

The resolution reprinted below from the March 2, *Sturgis Tribune*, is similar to one which was unanimously passed by 16,000 member NFO at the Dec. 1974 national conference in Memphis. That resolution was submitted by Malcolm "Bud" Cooper and Marvin Kammerer of Sturgis, S.D. Cooper is a founding member of the NFO and a member of the U.S. Labor Party. Immediately after the resolution was passed NFO President Staley began a successful expulsion action against Cooper because the debt moratorium resolution represented "communistic and fascist ideas" and was therefore in violation of the organization's constitution.

## Farmers Union And NFO Ask For Stop To Farm Foreclosures

*A RESOLUTION ADOPTED AT A JOINT MEETING OF THE FIFTH DISTRICT OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA FARMERS UNION AND THE SECOND DISTRICT OF THE NATIONAL FARM ORGANIZATION(NFO), February 26, 1977 at Box Elder, S.D. It is directed to President Carter and Governor Richard Knelp.*

*WHEREAS: agricultural producers now face a real danger of foreclosures and evictions because of long-time low farm prices and lack of further credit to make up the agricultural deficit (which is the difference between production costs and the price of the farmer's and rancher's products.*

*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that this joint meeting of members of the Farmers Union Fifth District and the NFO Second District for South Dakota ask the President of the United States to immediately declare a moratorium on all farm-ranch loan foreclosures and evictions, until such time as conditions prevail so that ranchers and farmers receive their fair return for what they produce, and,*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that Governor*

*Richard Knelp to use his influence to get President Carter to enact the moratorium.*

### *A RESOLUTION*

*This resolution, adopted at a joint meeting of the Farmers Union, Fifth District, and the National Farm Organization, Second District, is directed to the Legislature of the State of South Dakota, to memorialize Congress to enact the suggested legislation:*

*WHEREAS: The raw food materials produced on our farms and ranches are a vital necessity to human life; and*

*WHEREAS, for several years below cost of production prices for agricultural products in the marketplace has resulted in the elimination of over four million agricultural units and a farm debt of over \$100 billion; and*

*WHEREAS, the theories advanced in the past twenty years, that the so-called farm problem could be solved by the "elimination of the boys to save the men" has been smashed upon the rocks of reality, and*

*WHEREAS: the banks can no longer make up the difference to agriculture in the form of extended credit*