

# Plutonium Ban To Trigger Showdown Over Energy

Now that President Carter has officially announced his plans to halt the use of plutonium as a nuclear fuel, the Administration faces a full-scale confrontation from advocates of nuclear energy both at home and abroad.

The nuclear energy policy statement, which is a carbon copy of a recently released Ford Foundation-Mitre Corporation report, calls for the scrapping of plutonium reprocessing and restructuring of the fast breeder reactor to make it virtually worthless. It also calls for an embargo on uranium reprocessing equipment and technology and asks Congress for legislation banning uranium exports to countries which refuse to forego plutonium reprocessing and the breeder.

The international response to Carter's provocative statement, which even State Department officials admitted would "create frictions," was swift and hard-hitting. Leading West Germany officials, including European Energy Commissioner Guido Brunner, warned that West Germany might now have to turn to the Soviet Union for enriched uranium fuel. Spain cancelled \$7 billion in contracts to purchase nuclear reactors from Westinghouse and General Electric protesting the Administration's nuclear policies, according to a Capital Hill source.

Most trade union leaders and industrialists in the U.S. see Carter's energy policies as a declaration of war. "If the breeder program doesn't go through," a midwestern Building Trades union leader warned the day before the announcement, "there will be a revolution in this country." By the next day this same trade union leader was predicting that the Carter government would be impeached if the energy program goes through. "Carter's program is a pile of shit—and that's for the record," the chairman of the Illinois Chambers of Commerce stated.

Since the Administration's announcement was timed to coincide with the onset of the Easter recess in Congress, an immediate clash with Congress was bypassed. But aides in some Congressional offices are already predicting that every constituency group in the country—from Florida fishermen to the labor movement—will be descending on Capitol Hill to lobby against Carter's energy program. Even Sen. Henry Jackson's office—generally loyal to Carter—confided that the international community, "thinks that Carter has totally misplaced his head...Carter hasn't convinced anyone that he's thought out his foreign policy. His plutonium ban won't narrow the rift between the U.S. and West Germany."

Earlier this week at a meeting of the Senate Energy

Subcommittee on Conservation and Regulation, Sen. Dewey Bartlett (R-Okla.) pointedly attacked the testimony of former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger—appearing before the Committee as a spokesman for the National Alliance to Save Energy. "We have here today Henry Kissinger whose twin brother Schlesinger is in the White House, and they've come up with a plan to bankrupt the states of Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas," said Bartlett. Two days later Bartlett inserted into the Congressional Record a statement condemning the Carter energy policy as "not only a failure, but a farce," and "a blueprint for energy disaster in this country."

On the same day Carter announced his nuclear policy, the Republican Policy Committee announced its own energy platform calling for increased federal funding for fusion power and the continuation of both the light water reactor and the breeder reactor. Fusion power can be commercialized by the 1990s, the platform states.

"Mr. Carter's declaration drew praise from environmentalists and liberals," the April 8 *New York Times* reports. Unexpected support came from the Edison Electric Institute in New York and even the Clinch River breeder demonstrator project who say they are "gratified by the continuation of the breeder reactor program." Carter proposed that the Clinch River breeder program should be continued only if "alternate technologies"—like using thorium fuel cycles cutting the fuel breeding rate by 50 percent—are substituted thus making the program virtually worthless. Some—but not all—Clinch River officials are going along with Carter simply because it saves their jobs, a Clinch River official remarked.

Carter's demand for "alternative technologies" was a major recommendation of the Ford Foundation-Mitre report, "Nuclear Power: Issues and Choices." All aspects of Carter's statement—including the "indefinite deferment" of plutonium reprocessing and the establishment of supranational control of uranium exports—were literally lifted verbatim from the report. Carter's declaration "is the Ford Foundation report translated into policy," a nuclear industry spokesman stated.

Carter's announcement followed on the heels of statements made by his proposed energy czar James Schlesinger who announced on April 3 plans for a 30 percent slash in energy consumption on ABC's *Issues and Answers*. On the same day, a lead editorial in the *New York Times*, "The Forgotten Crisis," pushed the exact same prescription. Both the *Times* editorial and a *Times* column the next day by Anthony Lewis advocated "a

warfare spirit" as the only way of implementing these energy policies.

Even after Carter's April 7 statement, the bulk of the East Coast press continues to report that Carter's April 20 energy address will be "pro-nuclear." The press reports that Carter is expected to advocate the continuation of conventional (light water reactor) nuclear energy. Legal experts indicate that although Carter may make some pro-nuclear sops, he plans to use existing legislation, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, to maintain nuclear energy at its current minimum. Already this week, the Seabrook, N.H. reactor was denied its construction permit citing "environmental impact." In addition a March 31 ruling by Western North Carolina district judge, James B. McMillan effectively rescinded the Price-Anderson Act, a ruling which will force the nuclear industry to assume total financial liability in the event of a nuclear reactor accident. If this ruling is upheld by the Supreme Court, the nuclear industry could close down over-night, a utilities industry spokesman reported.

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## Statement By The President On Nuclear Power Policy

*The following is excerpted from a White House release of April 7, 1977.*

...a serious risk accompanies world-wide use of nuclear power — the risk that components of the nuclear power process will be turned to providing atomic weapons. We took an important step in reducing the risk of expanding possession of atomic weapons through the Non-Proliferation Treaty, whereby more than 100 nations have agreed not to develop such explosives. But we must go further...

I am announcing today some of my decisions...

*First*, we will defer indefinitely the commercial reprocessing and recycling of the plutonium produced in the U.S. nuclear power programs. From our own experience we have concluded that a viable and economic nuclear power program can be sustained without such reprocessing and recycling. The plant at Barnwell, South Carolina, will receive neither federal encouragement nor funding for its completion as a reprocessing facility.

*Second*, we will restructure the U.S. breeder reactor program to give greater priority to alternative designs of the breeder, and to defer the date when breeder reactors would be put into commercial use.

*Third*, we will redirect funding of U.S. nuclear research and development programs to accelerate our research into alternative nuclear fuel cycles which do not involve direct access to materials useable in nuclear weapons.

*Fourth*, we will increase U.S. production capacity for enriched uranium to provide adequate and timely supply of nuclear fuels for domestic and foreign needs.

*Fifth*, we will propose the necessary legislative steps to permit the U.S. to offer nuclear fuel supply contracts and guarantee delivery of such nuclear fuel to other countries.

*Sixth*, we will continue the embargo the export of equipment or technology that would permit uranium enrichment and chemical reprocessing.

*Seventh*, we will continue discussions with supplying and recipient countries alike, of a wide range of international approaches and frameworks that will permit all nations to achieve their energy objectives while reducing the spread of nuclear explosive capability. Among other things, we will explore the establishment of an international nuclear fuel cycle evaluation program aimed at developing alternative fuel cycles and a variety of international and U.S. measures to assure access to nuclear fuel supplies and spent fuel storage for nations sharing common non-proliferation objectives.

We will continue to consult very closely with a number of governments regarding the most desirable multilateral and bilateral arrangements for assuring that nuclear energy is creatively harnessed for peaceful economic purposes. Our intent is to develop wider international cooperation in regard to this vital issue through systematic and thorough international consultations.

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## GOP Backs Expanded Fission, Fusion

*The following is excerpted from the Republican Party Energy Policy Initiative.*

### *Nuclear Power*

#### *Policy Recommendations*

In considering nuclear policy recommendations it is important to separate recommendations on the use of uranium in light water reactors (LWR's) from the more long-range plans to use plutonium in LWR's and breeder reactors.

The U.S. commercial nuclear power program has matured to the point where experience shows that under tight regulation by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, light water reactors can be built and operated safely and economically. We feel strongly that adequate and reliable supplies of electricity will not be available unless the U.S. has a strong LWR program. Therefore our policy towards nuclear power focuses on removing those institutional uncertainties which are inhibiting the construction of LWR's.

#### *1. Light Water Reactor Program*

\* Support private industry initiatives or quasi-private corporation plans for financing and building all new enrichment capacity. Commit to such new capacity now.

\* Accelerate schedule for demonstration of a nuclear waste repository.

\* Expand investigation of alternative means for disposing of nuclear waste.

\* Expedite program to evaluate adequacy of domestic uranium resources.

\* Reduce time to build and license nuclear power plants by encouraging States to pre-select sites and by eliminating duplication in reviewing standardized plant designs.

## 2. Plutonium, the Fast Breeder Reactor Program and Nuclear Proliferation

\* Pursue the program established by the Ford Administration in October of 1976 to test the ability of all of the nations of the world to use plutonium for fuel, not for weapons.

\* Make no decision on abandonment of breeders until it is clearly shown that the national security is in fact jeopardized by a continued U.S. breeder program.

\* Keep breeder demonstrations on a schedule which will permit a timely and legitimate test as to the long-term viability of breeders.

### *Fusion*

The timetable remains set for fusion reactors to become available in the 1990s and, therefore, their impact on near term policies is not significant. However, in view of the critical need for truly inexhaustible sources, it is important that high priority be maintained for this effort.

### *Policy Recommendation*

Support increased levels of funding, especially for demonstration reactor systems, which will result in an earlier test of their long term commercial viability.

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## 35 Congressmen Defend Breeder

*The following is excerpted from a letter initiated by Congresswoman Marilyn Lloyd and signed by 35 Congressmen.*

April 5, 1977

FROM Marilyn Lloyd, 3d District, Tennessee

As the date for your energy policy pronouncement nears, we feel that our views on some aspects of developing a sound energy policy may be helpful...

Even with the successful implementation of strict conservation policies, the demand for energy will continue to run well ahead of present domestic supplies. We have relatively few options for energy production between now and the end of the century. In essence, those options are coal and nuclear power...For a variety of reasons, including environmental and safety factors, we believe that the prompt development of the U.S. breeder program is essential to our national energy policy. This view is shared by the utility industry, which will be required to make the capital investment in nuclear facilities.

On environmental grounds, the breeder concept makes good sense. The Final Environmental Statement submitted to the Council on Environmental Quality on the current program found that when compared to currently

available electricity generating systems, a breeder could reduce the impacts from waste heat discharges, air pollution, and mining. These substantial environmental benefits should be weighed carefully.

While the breeder offers the potential for an essentially inexhaustible energy supply, its commercial use will ultimately be determined by access to low-cost uranium. Much of the current discussion about the timing for the breeder program has centered on the possible extent of our uranium resources. There must, however, be a distinction made between projections and an acceptable basis for national planning. Our Nation's policy makers cannot afford a miscalculation on so critical an issue. In June of last year, the Federal Energy Resources Council, which worked closely with all federal agencies competent to assess the uranium supply outlook, recommended that only a portion of total United States resource potential, approximately 1.8 million tons, be used as the prudent resource base for planning conventional nuclear powerplant construction. Recent Congressional testimony regarding a National Academy of Sciences study of uranium resources confirms the wisdom of this recommendation. Until new information of comparable reliability becomes available, this resource base must also be used for planning our national breeder program.

Although the breeder is not yet commercially competitive, it is being pursued as a long-term option by many industrialized countries, most of them strong allies of the U.S. Based on a number of recent press reports, their commitments are based on true national need. A positive approach by the United States, using the U.S. breeder program for an early demonstration of the various fuel cycles, could be instrumental in fostering our nation's non-proliferation goals. Anything less than this leadership could seriously jeopardize our role in establishing and maintaining acceptable standards over the inevitable long-term use of nuclear power world-wide.

We urge your continued support for one of the few solutions we may have for preserving our long-term national security and economic stability.

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Sen. Bartlett:

## Carter Policy 'A Farce'

*The following is excerpted from a speech given by Sen. Bartlett as printed in the April 6, 1977 Congressional Record.*

I regret to say that...already publicized positions and measures, constituting a large portion of the ultimate Carter administration energy package, fall far short of realistic hopes and expectations for a rational, workable energy policy for the United States.

In fact, the program I see taking form is not just a failure, but a farce, one in which the Federal Government will continue to suppress energy development — as it has done for the last several years, force consumers to restrain energy consumption, and somehow hope that

America will conserve itself into energy abundance. Such a program to "accentuate the negative" may appease those who want cheap energy while it lasts, or the radical environmentalists who prefer no energy, but it continues to ignore the legitimate energy needs of our Nation, its economic growth, its military strength, and the basic energy demands of its people for jobs and a good standard of living...

And yet, our policies with regard to the four resources — oil, gas, coal, and nuclear energy, continue to discourage rather than stimulate increased development of these resources. In the days ahead I intend to comment in detail on the policies being formulated regarding these resources, and how these policies together form a blueprint for energy disaster in this country...

So it is very important that Congress look at the existing parts of the administration's energy program and assess them; and I believe Congress will come to the

conclusion that, with the positions taken by the administration and the measures supported by the administration, we are not going to be able to realize the potential coal production we could otherwise, with no action; that we will not be able to have the nuclear energy that we desperately need, that we otherwise would have with existing programs permitted to continue, particularly in the breeder reactor area; that with the Outer Continental Shelf bill, if it passes as it is now submitted to Congress, we will *not* have sufficient drilling in the Outer Continental Shelf and development of those resources to fill the need we have for more domestic oil and gas...

So I tell my colleagues that I will continue analyzing the various aspects of the administration energy program as time goes on and as more parts of it are made known to all of us. But I think it is vital that Members of the Senate pay very close attention to all facets, so that we can develop a sensible program that will do the job for every American.

## Congress, Press Blast SALT Debacle

Over the April 2-3 weekend, the Carter Administration's "hang tough" and "rally round the flag" strategy for minimizing the outcry over the failure of the SALT talks in Moscow collapsed as completely as SALT itself. Domestic as well as foreign anger at the Imperial Presidency's psychological "testing" of the Soviets, to which SALT fell victim, grew so intense that a sheepish Secretary of State Cyrus Vance admitted April 3 that the U.S. had "miscalculated" in Moscow.

The next day, the House International Relations Committee grilled the chief U.S. SALT negotiator, Paul Warnke, on the Moscow fiasco. "Was the human rights campaign responsible for the U.S. failure in Moscow?" asked Rep. Broomfield (D-Mich.). "What were the miscalculations that led to the Soviet rejection?" Rep. Larry Winn demanded. "What do you mean by 'hang tough'?", "What do you mean by 'human rights'?" "What kind of proposal asks Moscow to concede more than the U.S.?" "Why did you introduce a 'new technique' in the midst of ongoing long-term negotiations?" the rest of the Committee chorused.

The Congress was shaken out of its normal Monday morning stupor by the strident howl of protest emanating from the legendary titans of Wall Street's press corps and foreign policy establishment, from C.L. Sulzberger to Joseph Kraft, from former U.S. Ambassador to Moscow George Kennan to the lowliest career diplomat in the State Department. "Not since Napoleon has there been a more disorderly retreat from Moscow than that conducted by Secretary of State Vance last weekend," the Washington Post editorial board decided April 5.

Despite all the fireworks, Warnke and the rest of the Administration walked away from their tongue-lashing without a mortal wound. The failure of Carter's critics to put forward an alternative policy for world peace, based on East-West agreements for global industrial and technological development, leaves the Carterites free to

pursue their confrontation course on behalf of New York's bankrupt banks.

Twisting and squirming, Carter and his associates are trying to regroup and refocus public ire on the Pentagon as the unlikely author of the Administration's SALT package. While Congressional insiders report this is a preposterous allegation — demonstrated by the Pentagon's deafening silence in the wake of the Moscow debate — the President is busily scheduling a series of heart-to-heart talks with Congressional leaders "to bring them around." The White House is also mobilizing its die-hard supporters, like Sen. Scoop Jackson (D-Wash), to proclaim that while Carter's style in presenting the U.S. SALT proposals left something to be desired, the substance of those proposals is basically sound.

Attempting to turn their losses into a strident escalation of the big bluff ploy, Carter advisors are now describing the Moscow fiasco as a "blessing in disguise" which will provide the Administration with time to reassess its strategic posture and opt for a "first-strike" strategy. "A comprehensive re-examination of policies that presently underpin U.S. nuclear force posture," should be undertaken concluded an analysis prepared for Congress by the Library of Congress for release April 6. Until now, the report continued, the U.S. has been committed to a "second-strike strategy." The shift in strategic doctrine should be accomplished by a military build-up, one of the authors of the report, John Collins, said "Instead of matching the Soviets, we should come up with initiatives of our own that would change the game."

The same day the report was released, Admiral Stansfield Turner, Director of Central Intelligence, suggested that the Soviet "impression of power" must be matched with a U.S. "aura of power" with which the U.S. could bluff its way to "victory" in the international arena.