

Nuclear waste misuse charged

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Government management of hazardous nuclear waste is faulty and "a cause for concern," a report prepared for the U.S. energy research agency warned yesterday.

The report urged more administrative and policy reforms, saying many problems can be solved but that the last chance for such corrective action may be at hand.

The report was prepared for the Energy Research and Development Administration by Mason Willich, a University of Virginia law professor who worked on it this summer at the

Massachusetts Institute of Technology's energy laboratory. A Sept. 1 draft was obtained and released yesterday by consumer activist Ralph Nader.

Radioactive wastes that must be sealed away from mankind and the environment for thousands or even millions of years already are "an unavoidable consequence of our nuclear age," the report said.

It said approximately half a million tons of highly radioactive waste and millions of cubic feet of less dangerous "low level" atomic debris—all but a fraction of it produced during three decades of nuclear weapon

programs—must be dealt with immediately.

"We are concerned about radioactive waste because it is a potential radiological hazard to man and other forms of life," the report said.

"If a human being is exposed to excessive amounts of radiation, depending on the circumstances, the harmful effects may be immediate death, life shortened by radiation-induced cancer, radiation-induced genetic change which may affect subsequent generations, or temporary ill health followed by complete recovery."

That, the report said, is why it is so important to find effective ways of storing such wastes as plutonium, which loses only half its radioactivity in 24,000 years.

"Thus far, the U.S. government's record of management has been

marred in a number of instances to be a cause of concern," the report said.

It said 18 leaks from high level waste storage tanks at Hanford, Wash., have poured more than 430,000 gallons of waste into the ground. The hazard there "will remain for hundreds of thousands of years."

The report's key recommendation was that a radioactive waste authority be established to take over all management of nuclear garbage.

It urged that NRC establish a comprehensive waste management regulatory policy, and said ERDA should continue research on the best storage methods.

"Thus, we have an opportunity—perhaps our last clear chance—for institutional development."

Fighter is best in world U.S. gains Mig 25 info

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. military sources said yesterday they expect an intelligence bonanza from examination of the first advanced Soviet Mig25 jet fighter to land within reach of U.S. Air Force experts.

The sources said American technical intelligence specialists have been all over a Mig25 "Foxbat" interceptor since it was flown to northern Japan Monday by a defecting Russian Air Force pilot, to whom President Ford said he'd grant asylum.

Of special interest to U.S. technicians is the radar used by the Russians to guide the missiles that the Foxbat would fire at U.S. fighters such as the F15 in an air battle.

American specialists also are reportedly gathering vital first-hand information on the Mig25's twin turbojet engines, its airframe design and construction.

Officially, the United States avoided saying whether Japanese authorities had allowed U.S. experts access to the Mig25, which has been described as the fastest weapons-carrying warplane in the world.

Pentagon spokesman Alan Woods told a briefing "I'm sure we'd be interested," but "it is up to the Japanese to decide who is going to be looking at it."

Other sources indicated the United States wants to spare its ally, Japan, any diplomatic difficulties with the Soviet Union.

Pentagon officials anticipate the Japanese will return the Mig25 to Russia. The Mig25 has been a source of concern to U.S. military officials since it demonstrated in the early 70's its ability to fly faster than 2,000 miles per hour at altitudes of 80,000 feet and above.

A reconnaissance version of the Foxbat drew special attention several years ago when Israeli-piloted F4 Phantom jet

fighters tried unsuccessfully to intercept Soviet-piloted Mig25s flying over the Sinai. Those Mig25s were based in Egypt at that time, but the Russians have since withdrawn them.

If they'd had their preference, U.S. technicians probably would have preferred getting their hands on the reconnaissance version of the Mig25 because that would have given them an opportunity to study sophisticated cameras, sensors and "black box" intelligence gathering electronic equipment now in use in Russia's most advanced surveillance planes.

However, U.S. Air Force officers are openly gleeful that their technicians will be able to tell them about the specific technical details of the Mig25 in its fighter form, referred to in 1973 by then Air Force Secretary Robert Seamans as "probably the best interceptor in production in the world today."

U.S. Air Force experts concede that the Foxbat is faster than the F15, whose mission is air superiority. But these experts insist that the F15 is more maneuverable and thus could offset superior Mig25 speed with agility in air-to-air combat.

Ford signs child-care bill

WASHINGTON (UPI) — President Ford yesterday signed into law a bill carrying additional aid to states for child day-care programs, and delaying for a year the imposition of federal standards for staffing the centers.

The President said in a statement that his veto of an earlier measure, sustained by Congress, produced a compromise he welcomed because "ensuring adequate day care for children is an important social service."

The legislation, for the fiscal year starting Oct. 1, adds \$240 million to the roughly \$600 million states were getting to operate day care centers. The vetoed version called for a \$375 million increase.

And the bill satisfied Ford's chief objection to the earlier measure by suspending until Oct. 1, 1977, federal guidelines on the number of persons needed to staff day-care centers.

The standards were approved by Congress in 1974, but were suspended last October when center operators argued they were so costly that entire programs would have to be cut back.

At a signing ceremony in the sunny White House Rose Garden with wife Betty looking on, the President said: "Earlier this year, I vetoed the predecessor version of this

bill — not because I disagreed with its goals, but because that bill was the wrong means to a worthwhile end.

"The Congress sustained my veto. Today I have signed a new and better child day-care bill — the result of compromise and cooperation between the Congress and my administration."

Referring specifically to the standards provision in the earlier version, Ford said: "Had the other bill become law, it would have brought about an unwarranted federal preemption of state and local responsibility to ensure quality day-care services."

"Postponing the federal standards until Oct. 1, 1977, will enable the states to operate day care programs for more than another year free of onerous and costly federal intrusion," he said, while the Health, Education and Welfare Department studies the situation.

The \$240 million increase in aid is designed to repay states for putting some of the stronger standards into effect voluntarily.

Ford said he had "serious reservations" about this aspect of the legislation.

Nickel missing in disease tests

HARRISBURG (AP) — Medical investigators have failed to find any nickel in initial tests on hair samples taken from living victims of the mysterious legionnaires' disease, the state Health Department announced yesterday.

"They were initial tests," said Health Department spokesman Robert Costello.

"It (nickel) hasn't been ruled out."

Tests were done on 13 samples, taken from victims and nonvictims, that were sent to a laboratory at Harvard University in two shipments during late August.

Scientists had hoped the tests would help substantiate

earlier findings of unusually high nickel levels in body tissues from deceased victims.

Because of possible contamination from containers and instruments, the tissue tests have been inconclusive so far.

The Center for Disease Control still lists 29 deaths

among the 179 cases related to the pneumonia-like disease that first attacked members of the American Legion who attended a state convention in Philadelphia in July.

Doctors in New Jersey have questioned the addition of the 29th fatality, J. Bruce Rogers, a Philadelphia hotel manager, who died Friday.

No minimum wage increase this year

WASHINGTON (UPI) — There will be no increase this year in the federal minimum wage, the chairman of a key House subcommittee said yesterday.

Rep. John Dent, D-Pa., head of the labor standards panel, said there was so little chance of congressional approval that he has shelved for the year a bill to raise the wage floor.

The panel held two months of hearings last year on legislation which would have raised the minimum wage from \$2.30 an hour for one class of federally covered employees to \$3 an hour, beginning next Jan. 1.

Dent's subcommittee had scheduled a session this week to write a bill. But Dent said yesterday that there was too much "serious doubt on my part that the Senate would have considered and passed a minimum wage bill once the

House had acted."

With the current Congress scheduled to adjourn next month, wiping out all legislation still uncompleted at that time, Dent said a new minimum wage bill would be among the subcommittee's first businesses next year.

"There was no question in my mind as to the equities of a minimum wage increase or that we could have got a bill through the House," Dent said.

"But the risks were too great that the Senate would not have had sufficient time to act as well and that all we would have accomplished would have been a waste of valuable legislative."

Employees of businesses covered by federal laws prior to 1966 now earn a minimum of \$2.30 an hour. Under the legislation, they would have received \$3 an hour next Jan. 1.

Federal workers miss pay freeze

WASHINGTON (UPI) — The Senate tentatively agreed yesterday to exempt top-level employees of the government's judicial and executive branches from a proposed wage freeze for members of Congress.

With elections just eight weeks away, the Senate seemed ready to join the House in banning an automatic salary increase scheduled for its members Oct. 1.

The House voted last week for a far-reaching, one-year freeze covering senators and congressmen, cabinet officers, Supreme Court justices, federal judges, many agency heads and any federal employee earning more than \$37,800.

The Senate, on a voice vote, tentatively decided to allow cost-of-living increases for all but members of Congress.

Congress approved legislation last year permanently tying Senate and House salaries to the automatic cost-of-living increases provided for all federal employees except those in the "super grades" and above.

The provision was widely regarded as an attempt to set up a permanent program so senators and House members would not have to go on record every time they voted themselves a pay increase. Last year's pay hike was 5 per cent, and congressional salaries climbed from \$42,500 to \$44,625 in the first pay raise since 1969.

Sen. Robert Taft, R-Ohio, backed by Sen. Roman Hruska, R-Neb., urged the Senate yesterday to exempt top-level executive and federal positions from the freeze.

"If passed, a salary freeze would make it even more difficult to attract top people into government work and to keep first class people in government," he said.

But Taft joined others in demanding the freeze for members of Congress, calling last year's bill a "back-door approach. There is no lack of candidates for the jobs we hold."

"I believe that was a very bad public relations move for Congress," Sen. James Allen, D-Ala., added. "Congress has enough problems maintaining a good image before the public."

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