

Vermont Environmental Report

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Vermont Utilities Are Buying Into Out-of-State Nuclear Installations

Despite the passage of H.127, a landmark piece of legislation in the 1975 General Assembly that calls for legislative approval prior to the further construction of nuclear power plants IN Vermont, it appears that investments by major public utility companies in nuclear power generating facilities beyond Vermont's borders is committing the State to a future that is heavily dependent on nuclear power.

This is the word from Gordon Stensrud, Chief Engineer at the Vermont Public Service Board in Montpelier.

According to Stensrud, Vermont utility companies are looking ahead to provide for the additional 70 megawatts of additional electrical energy that they estimate will be needed in the State by 1982. Stensrud says that no new generating stations of any kind are presently being contemplated inside Vermont. But there is construction going on elsewhere, in Maine, in Massachusetts, in New Hampshire, and Vermont utilities are buying into nuclear power plants going up in these states.

The total peak demand for electricity in the highest day of electrical usage last winter in Vermont was 757 megawatts, a record. Here is how the nuclear contribution to Vermont's total energy demands works out. Vermont's only nuclear power plant, Vermont Yankee, contributes 283 megawatts. In

addition, Vermont receives 6 megawatts of electrical power from Rowe Yankee in Massachusetts, 11 megawatts from Connecticut Yankee, and 14 megawatts from Maine Yankee. These are all nuclear power plants and the sum total for all nuclear power contributions to the total demand is 314 megawatts. The balance of Vermont electrical needs is supplied by other sources of power, in-state hydro-power, hydro-power from the Power Authority of the State of New York (PASNY) and various other smaller sources.

These are the financial commitments that have already been made to the construction of out-of-state nuclear power plants by Vermont utility companies. Vermont has bought into Pilgrim II in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Pilgrim II is scheduled to "go on line" late in the summer of 1982. Vermont's share of Pilgrim II will be 26 megawatts. Vermont has bought into the Seabrook, New Hampshire installations, Seabrook I and Seabrook II. Seabrook I is scheduled to go on line in the summer of 1981, netting 24 megawatts for Vermont. Seabrook II is scheduled to go on line in the summer of 1983, and will yield a further 24 megawatts to Vermont. There is no pressure at present to build additional nuclear generating facilities in Vermont, not at least, says Stensrud, until Vermont Yankee's full generating capabilities have been exploited, and these capabilities are not at present being fully employed.

utilities...

Stensrud estimates that Vermont utility companies are spending large sums of money to finance the construction of nuclear power plants beyond the State's borders. He says that our reliance on nuclear power

is increasing. The Central Vermont Public Service Corporation (CVPS) has already committed \$86 million over a 12-year period to help finance the construction of nuclear generating installations in neighboring New England states.

referendums:

CONTROLS ON NUCLEAR POWER GO DOWN TO DEFEAT IN SIX STATES

BOTTLE BILL PASSES IN MAINE AND MICHIGAN, FAILS IN MASSACHUSETTS AND COLORADO

As part of the elections on November 2nd, there were six states that held referendums on proposed restrictions on the development of nuclear power. In all six states, Ohio, Montana, Colorado, Washington, Oregon, and Arizona, the proposed restrictions went down to defeat. Pro-nuclear advocates hailed the results as a dramatic popular endorsement of nuclear power. In Ohio alone, the nuclear and electric industries spent a total of one billion dollars, 25 times the funds available to supporters of the referendum, to kill the restrictive proposals.

In another series of referendums, proposals to institute mandatory deposits of five cents or more on beverage containers were approved by voters in Maine and Michigan, but failed to gain voter endorsement in Massachusetts and Colorado. Oregon adopted a mandatory deposit system for bottles and cans in 1972; Vermont followed suit in 1973. According to reports from Maine, the bottle and can industry and allied interests spent \$300,000 to defeat the bottle bill, compared to less than \$25,000 spent by advocates of the measure. The vote in Maine gave overwhelming approval to a mandatory deposit system: 234,649 in favor; 172,748 opposed. An effort to get national legislation on returnable cans and bottles has failed in the U.S. Congress, but a recent order by the federal Environmental Protection Agency will call for mandatory deposits at all federal facilities no later than July, 1977.

Do We Need a GEOLOGIST?

"Geology is the science that deals with the physical history of the earth, the rocks of which it is composed, and the physical changes which the earth has undergone and is undergoing."

--Random House Dictionary of the English Language

The future of Geology as a discipline, a science, that might contribute to our understanding of the land and our management of the State's natural resources hangs by a slender thread. That slender thread is embodied in the person of Charles Ratte (pronounced Ratay), Vermont's Interim State Geologist.

Ratte took over as Interim State Geologist on September 7th. He is responding to the extremely mo-

dest commitment by the State of Vermont for this Fiscal Year, no more than \$15,000, the entire budget allotment for the Office of the State Geologist, salaries, office expenses, everything.

Charles Ratte wants to change this. He is looking for a firm commitment to the Office of the State Geologist. He is an ardent spokesman for his science, its important role, and for the applications of his discipline to the State's environmental problems.
