

Anti-Pollution League

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Dear SM :

As I research the nuclear industry I am impressed with the zeal which the Kennedys exercised to guard against hazards of radioactivity. I note too that scientists in Roman Catholic universities are particularly sensitive to the threats from the atom - military or "peaceful."

John Kennedy during the summer before the assassination was trying for total nuclear disarmament and calling off the cold war. He also pulled a number of industrialists together and warned them strongly against pollution, particularly carelessness with nuclear materials. A number of them didn't like his manner. President Kennedy also took the initiative to stop Con Ed's nuclear station for Ravenswood (Queens) which the AEC resented.

Bobby Kennedy's first important speech in the Senate was scaling down nuclear weapons and he went to bat to stop Gov. Rockefeller's nuclear expansion in N.Y. State, which led to the Aiken-Kennedy bill, hearings on which were in progress before the JCAE at the time of his death. Edward Kennedy spoke out against the careless proliferation of nuclear plants in the Senate on April 17 and introduced S-3330 which would stop further licensing of nuclear plants until FPC completed a 2-year survey.

All over the world, a tremendous bureaucracy has built up to deal with atomic energy, yet there is mounting evidence that this is a dead end for mankind. USSR has conceded that nuclear energy is too expensive and will stop building power reactors. James Bryant Conant concluded this was the case back in 1956 when he said in practice it will be found that nuclear energy is too dangerous and too expensive. Technologists have tried to find a "constructive" use for products of nuclear fusion. Despite distorted publicity, it appears that food irradiation is no good, peaceful explosives can be employed without dangerous by-products. If we can only dispel the idea that the atoms "peaceful" applications are limited to radioactive isotope tracers which can be made in a pint-size laboratory reactor for all the world's need - maybe we can get a world-wide push on to ban the split atom - going far beyond this non-proliferation treaty, which is just not honest; as long as nations have power reactors they can fashion weapons employing plutonium with ease.

Do you see the point ?

Best,

Lawrence B. Conant