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WEATHER REPORT

Nuke workers zapped

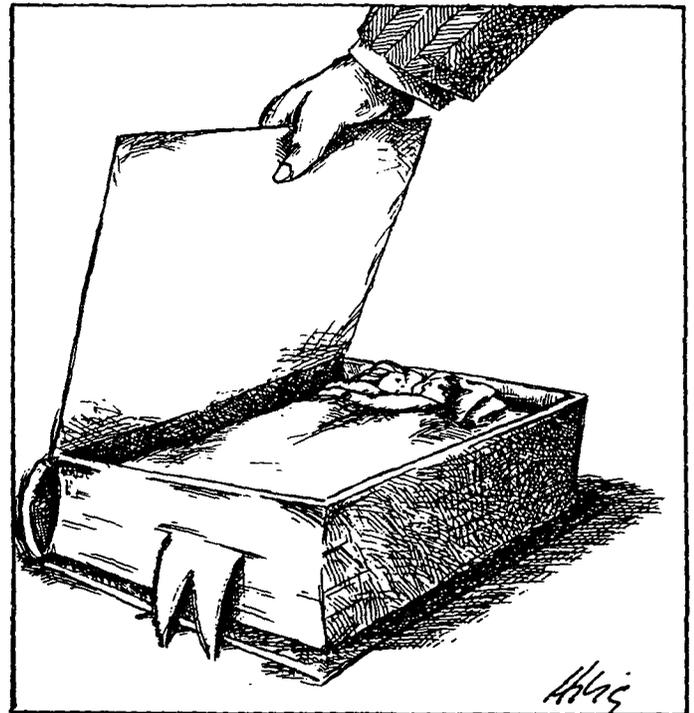
Records of the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission reveal that over 93,000 workers at 83 nuclear power plants were exposed to measurable amounts of radiation in 1985, the most recent year for which data is available. The data, obtained by Public Citizen, also demonstrates that older plants are far more likely to endanger workers than newer ones. For example, plants that began operating during the 1960s exposed workers to four times as much radiation as the newest plants; and those that started up between 1970 and 1974 exposed their workers to more than twice as much.

If you believe this you're not typical

A recent Roper poll finds that television is the most believed and relied-upon source of news. For the first time, 50% of the American public "cite only television as their main source of news." In 1959, 57 percent of respondents listed newspapers as a main source of news as opposed to 36% in the most recent survey. The figures for television were 51% in 1959 and 66% in 1987.

Jackson running well

Jesse Jackson's campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination looks as if it is better organized and more broadly based than his 1984 run. Writing of Jackson's appeal to non-black audiences, Tom Wicker of the New York Times recently commented, "If you think Jesse Jackson is just the 'black candidate' for president, you'd better think again — and listen." Wicker noted Jackson's recent successes with an all-white college audience in



Iowa and at a New York City political party. In Iowa, where Jackson is running hard, editor Jim Gannon of the Des Moines Register says: "I haven't seen anyone come into Iowa with a message as appealing as his. When he asks why the government can bail out Chrysler and Continental Illinois but can't save a farmer from foreclosure — that's a question that plays on Main Street, Iowa."

New Englanders think green

The League of Conservation Voters says that congressional members from New England had the best voting record on environmental issues in the last Congress. New Englanders voted pro-environment 79% of the time in the Senate and 68% of the time in the House. Worst regional group were those from the Rocky Mountain states with scores of 27% in the Senate and 33% in the House.

EPA gutted by Reagan

President Reagan's budget request for the Environmental Protection Agency, says the Environmental Policy Institute, would provide about the same purchasing power the agency had in 1976 before such major laws as those dealing with toxic wastes and contaminated groundwater were passed.

Arms for hostages (and drugs and sex)

Pointing out further seaminess in the Iran-Contra affair may seem redundant, but it should be noted that as of the start of congressional hearings the mainstream media had, for the most part, chosen to ignore or downplay both the drug and sex aspects of the affair. The former was featured in a CBS 'West 57th Street' program in April that included allegations that planes carrying Contra arms did not deadhead home, but carried drugs with them, in at least one case landing them at a US Air Force base. There is mounting evidence that the CIA played the Contras in much the manner that it previously played the game in post-WW II Europe and Southeast Asia: trading a liberal drug market for correct politics. Watch for hints of this in the hearings... Meanwhile, it took NPR to reveal a story widely known in Washington: the use of some of the Contra fundraising money to pay for the support of male lovers of key figures. The mainstream press, skittish of appearing to be gay-baiting, stayed away from this one even as they were having a field day with Fawn Hall.

Students interested in local issues

Student campaigns on various national and international issues appear to have lost steam this year, reports College Press Service. CPS's survey found more interest in local issues. For example, 5000 California college students

turned out for a protest against state financial aid cuts in Sacramento, while only about a tenth that many converged on Washington to demonstrate against the Reagan administration's massive cuts. In 1983, a similar protest had brought 7000 students to the capital. Similarly, while anti-apartheid demonstrations dwindled this year, 3500 students at the University of Arizona staged a sit-in to complain about cuts in library hours.

Mini-condos for the homeless

A San Francisco architect has designed an 8x4x4 foot plywood shelter for the homeless that he's calling the "City Sleeper." He's built several prototypes and placed them in his office parking lot, where they're currently being occupied by George and Clinton. Architect Donald MacDonald says, "It's a disgrace for the city to squander \$5 million a year cramming (the homeless) into squalid hotels when they could be independently sheltered for 800 bucks apiece, labor included, or \$500 for materials alone on a do-it-yourself basis." MacDonald's shelters are made out of 4x8 plywood panels which are screwed together and caulked, to help retain the heat. They have a sliding window and a "front door" that is hinged on top so it can serve as a canopy during the day. They are mounted 18" above the ground with automobile jacks which keep the shelter level. Each shelter has a foam mattress, clothes locker, shelf and hangars. MacDonald, is an innovative architect who describes his approach as "nonjudgmental, non-reformist," thinks that no more than two or three Sleepers should be placed at any one location. And George, who has given up drinking since he moved in, likes it: "There's plenty of food available in San Francisco. It's easy to get clothing. You don't have to be dirty in this town. There are showers. Medical care is no problem. The only problem is finding a place to sleep."

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1739 Connecticut Ave. NW

DC 20009

202-232-5544

The Carter Case

Although the media played up the celebrity angle, the big story on the Amy Carter acquittal is that a jury, faced with evidence of CIA misdoings, refused to convict. The local district attorney, W. Michael Ryan Jr., said after the acquittal: "If there is a message, it was that this jury was composed of middle America. It was a great jury for us. They weren't kids. There were a couple of senior citizens. And they believed the defense. Middle America doesn't want the CIA doing what they are doing." While the motivations of the jurors is unknown (they may have simply accepted defense arguments that the trespassing and



acts of terror in postwar Europe: the 1980 bombings at the Bologna train station, which left 85 dead and 200 injured, and at the Munich Oktoberfest, which left 11 dead and 200 injured. Other incidents attributed to neo-Nazi groups include the June '82 Nuremberg disco attack, in which two GIs and an Egyptian national were killed, and four other '82 bombings at US Army bases in Germany.

Rebelling against SATs

Middlebury and Union College have announced that they will drop SATs as an entrance requirement. The two colleges join Bates and Bowdoin, which earlier had dropped the SATs. The decision reflects the concern that SATs are biased against women and minorities and are not that good an indicator of college performance. A dean at Middlebury also noted that students who can afford to be coached for the SATs can score up to 100 points higher than would otherwise be the case.

● Research into early 19th century Missouri death records has produced some curious medical reports, according to the American Medical News. Among the causes of death listed were:

"Went to bed feeling well, but woke up dead."

"Died suddenly, nothing serious."

"Cause of death unknown; had never been fatally ill before."

"Don't know; died without the aid of a physician."

"Death caused by blow on the head with an ax. Contributory cause, another's man's wife."

FLOTSAM & JETSAM

The fate of the tough

As we have discovered in the case of nuclear plants, stopping the bad is not enough. It turns out that the evil men do not only lives after them but with an increasingly lengthy half-life. Thus those watching the unravelling of the current administration should restrain their glee at least to the extent of considering the serious environmental problem of safe and feasible Reaganesque waste disposal.

Some of this waste matter obviously consists of bad legislation, regulations and the misapplication of funds to support them. But beyond that is an assortment of principles, myths and nostrums that have polluted the groundwater of American culture. It is hard to know where to begin, there being no Superfund for the removal of toxic philosophy, but I would urge for starters an assault on acid phraseology, beginning with the word **tough**.

The decade of the 80s, although it has accomplished little salutary other than the spread of Velcro and mini-vans, has prided itself on being the era of the tough. The overuse of this word may partially be one more legacy of the Vietnam War, which provoked in many an obsession with proving that they were neither as weak nor as stupid as that disastrous engagement suggested. But whatever the nourishment, there is little doubt that America has spent an inordinate amount of