Don't Watch What We Say... Mendelsohn sings a new tune

Environmentalists like greenery as a rule, and San Francisco County Supervisor Robert Mendelsohn is no exception.

Mendelsohn, a favorite of many environmentalists, sometimes genuinely and sometimes because he is the lesser of evils on the State Coastal Commission, apparently sought greenery recently when the commission voted on proposed sites for state acquisition along the California

coastline.

The commission voted to accept almost every one of 200 sites which were endorsed by their respective Regional Commissions. The sole exception was a 160-acre wetlands tract in Marina del Ray owned by Howard

When the Hughes property, recommended for state acquisition by the South Coast Regional Commission, came up for consideration by the Coastal Commission, Mendelsohn, who lives hundreds of miles away, objected.

areas of miles away, objected.

Although it was known that Archisystems, a division of the Hughes Summa Corp., has plans to develop a 600-acre marina in the area, including the wetlands tract, Men-

delsohn argued that controls on development would be sufficient to protect this last restorable wetlands area along the Santa Monica Bay shore. A similar argument might have been made against acquisition of any of the other 200 sites. None was. Still, Mendelsohn "convinced" a slim majority on the commission on the commission.

South Coast Regional Commission member Rimmon Fay said angrily after the commission deleted the wetlands from the acquisition list, "It is an arch betrayal of

what we're here to achieve."

Fay refused to speculate on Mendelsohn's motives, but Katy Butler of the San Francisco Bay Guardian, said she was not sur-

prised by the Supervisor's position.

"He still has a \$200,000 campaign debt left over from his unsuccessful race for state controller," she said.

We'll be watching to see who fills the kitty after that desirier.

after that decision

Dave Lindorff

If readers have any tips, we invite you to send them in for the "Don't Watch What We Say" Columi.

Dear Editor:

Editorial efforts introduce confusion and afraid that happened to the

paragraph of my story Funding Plans Blocked

Funding rights blocked to It suggested that the popposals for California

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Arts Committee but by Legislature. And it is by Committee which is uro about its role and aim

Governor Brown's California Council, an altogether di

The VANGUARD staff is a

-Win Bley

organization.

Vanguard readers interested in easing repression for Argentinians are asked to sign this letter and send it to the Solidarity Committee with the Argentine People: 715 S. Park View, Los Angeles 90057

Dear Congressperson.
As you must already know, on Wednesday, March 24, 1976, in Argentina, the government 24, 1976, in Argentina, the government and a constitutional military junta led by General Jorge Videla, With the continuing revelations about U.S. involvement in the destabilization of the continuing revelations about U.S. involvement in the destabilization of the continuing revelations about U.S. involvement in the destabilization of the continuing revelations about U.S. involvement and the destabilization of the suffered. I feel the following actions are imperative.

I can be determined that human rights are not being violed and concrete steps are being taken to reinstate a constitutional. democratically elected constitutional. Herocratically elected to the control of t

A good first issue. I recommend some humor, some alternatives, and in places, a little less serious. But the paper is written and laid out well. Good luck.

Richard Kagan Asian History Department Hamline University St. Paul, Minn.

ANOTHER BENEFIT AFFECTED FAVORABLY BY INFLA

Respectfully,

Dear Editor:

to know how you feel about issues and problems around and your reactions to the Whatever you have on your let us know. This space is re for readers' comments.

In the interest of preserv environment, please, after this issue from cover to RECYCLE THE VANGUAR



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Let Cu Fig Inf

Tom Thompson, Editor Ron Ridenour, News Editor,

reporter
Ben Pleasants, Peoples Arts
Editor
Dave Lindorff, Features Editor,

reporter
Dorothy Thompson, Managing Editor

Associate Publisher

Jim Horwitz

Advertising

Lois Davis David Martino

Art & Design

Francoise Beauchamp

Photography

Mark Jones

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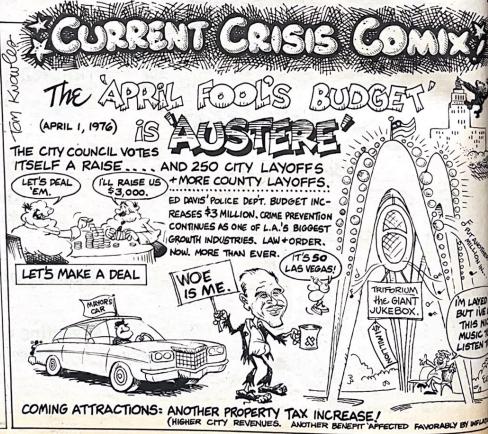
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Subscription rates; \$.25 per copy; \$10 per year; \$18 for two years.

Unsolicited manuscripts, FBI/CIA/Police in-quiries, love letters and hate mail must be ac-companied by stamped self-addressed en-velope if response is desired.

The Vanguard is a non-sexist, worker-controlled publication.

Cover: Francoise Beauchamp



IGHT BACK

The Nuclear Initiative

Tim Brick

Brick is co-coordinator of E: formerly an anti-war

he passage of Proposition 15 will cost Califors \$40 billion in the next 20 years." That's the view e top U.S. Energy Research and Development cy official devoted "both by law and personal uasion" to pushing nuclear energy, but it intes the high stakes involved in the bitter battle Proposition 15 — the Nuclear Safeguards ative - upon which voters will decide June 8. It points to the kind of sensational claims that well cloud the vital issues.

the last few years soaring y price increases have driven to most Americans the en of dwindling resources has passed to inflation-battered umers while the energy ers are plagued with record ts. But the carefully orches-d crisis has left a profound ust in the minds of Americans the reliability of the energy stry. Assumptions once taken ranted have now become hotly ted issues.

clear fission power is one.
is the essential element in the ario designed by those who believe in virtually unchecked gy use. Scientists, though, who spoke of nuclear power as an nited source have now come to tion its promise. Industry espeople, who claimed that would be no need to meter ricity because nuclear power be so cheap, are now cking their calculations. And ublic is finally involved in the

June 8th initiative sumzes those concerns but consaleguards. Proposition 15 for a public review of the y mechanisms, demonstra-by the nuclear industry to the faction of the state legislature emergency systems work as med and that nuclear, wastes be stored safely, and full pensation to the public in the Lof a reactor accident t of a reactor accident.
e proponents of the initiative,

ornians for Nuclear Safe-ds, believe that these fundaal requirements should not be to the nuclear industry, to les or to regulatory agencies. public through elected repre-atives must decide. The tive then sets up a schedule which operators of nuclear r plants must meet safety to the satisfaction of twoof the legislature. Failure to those tests would lead to a ng down and even the banning uclear power generating

ponents of the initiative claim in practice it would eliminate ear power as a power source in ornia — a view rejected by 1. 15 supporters. The organized sition represents not only the ear industry and utilities but leading political movers in the including former Governor Brown, former L.A. League of ien Voters leader Catherine ap, and Bill Robertson, head ie L.A. County Federation of AFL-CIO. They consider the as an unnecessary ssary to maintain our stan-of living. Present safety

requirements, they say, are more than adequate; or, at least, they are willing to trust the industry's contentions.

There are 56 nuclear power plants licensed to operate in the United States today. Together they provide only about 5% of the total electricity supply. Three plants are in operation in our state at Humboldt Bay, Rancho Seco near Sacramento, and San Onofre near San Clemente, but many more are in various stages of planning and construction. By the year 2000 there could be as many as 50, so it is urgent now to assess the safety and reliability of nuclear plants before our societal commitment shackles us to a source Ralph Nader calls "unsafe, unnecessary, and unreliable."

The \$40-billion argument the Energy and Research Develop-ment Agency official used represents the thrust that the nuclear industry hopes will carry them to victory, but it is based on distortions of the real costs in-volved, outdated projections of electric demand, and inflated prices for alternative sources.

Never before has so much money been devoted to the development of a technology, and yet enormous gaps still exist in the safe production of nuclear power. The federal government has provided \$50 billion in subsidies to get the industry started. Beyond that they have hidden the costs of the production of nuclear fuel by using cheap hydroelectricity to perform the enrichment necessary to turn the uranium into a usable

In the last two years the utility industry has cancelled an unprecedented number of plants in an effort to stave off financial collapse because of diminished growth curves, rising construction and finance costs, and increased public opposition. Taken together they reveal a crisis of faith on the part

nologists is to develop the breeder reactor which would produce fissionable plutonium from lowgrade uranium in quantities greater than it would consume. The promise is tantalizing, but is the price too high?

The production of nuclear energy is inescapably coupled with the production of hazardous radio-

Never before has so much money been devoted to the development of a technology, and yet enormous gaps still exist in the safe production of nuclear power.

of the industry itself.

Like any other natural resource, uranium exists only in limited quantities. If nuclear plants proliferate the way their advocates project then nuclear fission will be an economically viable method of generating electricity for only a

active materials. The radiation from the fission byproducts and the plutonium can kill instantly, produce various forms of cancer that may not appear for decades, and cause genetic damage that may not appear for generations. The nuclear industry points to

the nuclear industry in their product has been their reluctance to accept full liability for acci-dents. The accidental release to the environment of even small amounts of the radioactive elements could have grave im-plications to land, life, and future generations. Because of these problems and dangers, insurance companies will not fully insure the nuclear power plants. Total com-pensation for all victims of an accident is limited to \$560 million

such claims are hardly an assur-

ance that we can yet assess the

long-term affects of radiation

exposure, or that the nuclear wastes can be safely contained for

the hundreds of thousands of years that they will emit deadly radiation. Although there are no

facilities for the long-term storage

of these toxic wastes, the nuclear

industry would bequeath the toxicity to future generations for

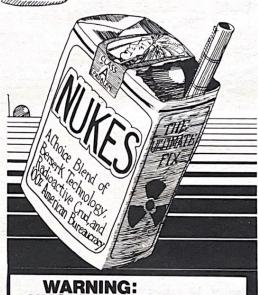
hundreds of thousands of years of A measure of the confidence of

3/4 of which will be covered by the federal government. A study made by the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission more than nine years ago, however, projected that a

Seeing through a nuclear-clouded issue

very short span — perhaps only a few more decades. its safety record — not one person has yet been killed by The hope of the nuclear technuclear power generation. But





NUCLEAR RADIATION IS HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH.

Your government wants you to be a of the dangers of smoking.

Your government does not want you to be aware of the dangers of nuclear energy.

It's the government's product

Assembly committee chaired by Charles Warren held the most complete hearings to date on this topic. There was extensive testimony on both sides, but in the end Warren stated: "The testimony has not assured members of the committee that there is no reason for concern about nuclear reactors. The case for being concerned has been made by those who tell us not to be concerned."

The nuclear industry has developed during the last 30 years

major accident at a modern plant could cause 45,000 fatalities, 74,000 injuries, contamination of 50,000 square miles and \$17 billion

damage. However, even those tragic figures are based on con-servative and arbitrary commis-

servative and arbitrary commis-sion estimates. There was no estimate of the genetic damage which would be the legacy of an over confident and over consump-

tive society to future generations.

added danger

dramatically exposed in a 1974 nuclear explosion produced by the Indian government. The plutonium

produced as a byproduct can, with relative ease, be converted into nuclear weapons. The proliferation of nuclear power around the world has provided the base for a har-

rowing proliferation of nuclear weapons. The global significance of such irresponsibility cannot be underestimated.

Instead of dealing, however, with

Instead of dealing, however, with the very real safety questions, the industry has adopted an attitude Nader describes as "professional insanity." It has promoted a dangerous technology while negli-gently minimizing the problems

gently minimizing the problems

In November a California

associated with it.

under a veil of secrecy. Now that veil is being lifted. In an age of exposed coverups, it is asking the citizens of this state to continue to place confidence in its judgment. rather than taking responsibility firmly into our own hands. There is, after all, only one issue to be decided by Proposition 15 on June ath: Who will determine whether these reactors are safe — the public or a self-interested industry?

LNS

Big Oil Blackmail Broken

Did you notice the refund on your

ast natural gas bill?
Credit it to CAUSE. Campaign Against Utility Service Exploitation. Arco decided to blackmail Southern California Gas company customers to the tune o 2.50 per month for a total of \$60 million. The surcharge was to finance the company's Alaska gas pipeline. The Public Utilities Comnission approved the deal las lugust.

But a vigorous grass rook ampaign that climaxed with nore than a thousand consumer withholding their December/Jan uary bills finally broke up the deal

CAUSE saved each of us about 210 and caused rejection of \$3 billion in similar advance payments nationally.

A victory to remember and a reminder of the power of the people when considering roposition 15.