

procedures and the process," Clements said, explaining that the chief executive from a state that produces half the country's oil and gas should have "high leverage." Clements also declared that "without exception," the Republican leadership of the state, including John Connally, was "enthusiastic and pleased" about his candidacy, adding, "I think they'd like to see an uncontested primary."

JOC On Schlesinger Energy Policy

Here is the Journal of Commerce editorial of Nov. 22 entitled "Woes of a Nuclear Power":

Slowly, but surely, it is becoming apparent that the United States is no longer in a position to control the international movement of nuclear fuels. It can, and does, influence this movement of nuclear fuels. It can, and does, influence this movement somewhat where German or French export sales are concerned, but neither this nor any other nation now has the power to control it absolutely.

The growing awareness of this perhaps explains the confusion on Capitol Hill and the pushing and pulling between Congress and the administration on nuclear fuel policy. It was of some significance that Mr. Carter cast his first veto as President in an effort to prevent Congress from continuing work on the Clinch River reactor. Since that is a breeder type reactor that would produce much larger quantities of weapons-grade plutonium than conventional reactors, and breed its own fuel in the process, he feared other nations might adopt the same technology, with potentially disastrous consequences to the world.

But since at least three other countries (France, West Germany and Japan) are also developing breeders of their own, Congress did not regard this as a very effective precaution. It seemed to fear that cessation of work at Clinch River would endanger the American lead in the field of nuclear energy.

One reason for the confusion is that there are two issues at stake. There is a danger that plutonium will get into the hands of irresponsible elements, perhaps those of terrorist bands. That seems to haunt Mr. Carter. There is also a conviction, widely held in Congress, that this country cannot afford to accept a second place in terms of nuclear technology.

Economic considerations have thus far played a relatively minor part in attempts to resolve these differences, but political considerations are certainly present in them, as witness the talks between Mr. Carter and the Shah of Iran on the latter's efforts to acquire about 20 reactors, of which the United States might supply one-third. Washington is skittish about nuclear proliferation in the Middle East, but it isn't anxious to

offend anyone quite as important to its plans as the Shah, either.

In the meantime, the impasse over the Clinch River project has stalled Senate action on a conference agreement authorizing nearly \$298 million in fiscal 1978 funds for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. And because President Carter didn't want \$80 million more put into the Clinch River project, he felt obliged to veto the bill authorizing \$6.2 billion for energy research, an important factor in his overall energy program.

Further complicating the picture is a bill (S. 897) recently approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, though not yet considered by the full Senate. This measure, much fragmented by compromise, is aimed at further tightening controls on exports of nuclear fuels and facilities by placing strict limits on what importing nations can do with the fuel they obtain in the United States.

In that sense, this is a tough bill. But its present shape has been no little influenced by worries that the American share in this trade is continuing to fall and by the realization that if the United States does not remain in the export field as a reliable supplier of nuclear materials, importing nations will turn to other suppliers who may not be as firmly committed to nonproliferation as is this one.

The bill, unfortunately, looks like an attempt to pursue two conflicting goals simultaneously. It would permit exports, but in its original form laid down such cumbersome and time-consuming processes as to leave it doubtful whether foreign countries would even try to comply with them as long as the fuels and facilities they were seeking could possibly be obtained elsewhere. This is also true to a large extent with the bill (HR 8638) passed by the House on Sept. 28. Nobody seems too sure what the effect of either would be.

Efforts to frame a generally acceptable measure have, in the meantime, irritated the administration. The chief cause of this irritation is to be found in a number of clauses making administration decisions on export licenses, exemptions from nuclear safeguards and the like, subject to a one-house congressional veto under the Governmental Affairs Bill.

We can understand the administration's feeling about this, just as we can understand the reluctance of Congress to contribute unnecessarily to nuclear proliferation abroad, with all the dangers that would entail.

Still we believe that some of the Senate's wiser heads are right in arguing that the United States will see its influence on the nuclear world sag badly unless it remains a strong factor in the trade in such items. Controls over exports of nuclear fuels and facilities are essential, but they will only accomplish their purpose if they are comprehensible and workable. Our guess would be that the administration and Congress alike have a lot of problems to settle before the bills now in both houses meet these tests.