

# Satsop plant symbolizes nuclear problems

SATSOP, Wash. (AP) — Out past the Elma Airport and Cafe, on a ridge carved in the hills above the Chehalis River, sits an appropriate symbol of the hard times befallen the nuclear industry.

While Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania may have been the plant which proved nuclear systems aren't fail-safe, and Diablo Canyon in California is the current rallying point for the

anti-nuclear movement, it is the Washington Public Power Supply System's No. 5 plant here that reflects the realities of trying to build a nuclear plant.

The plant is being mothballed along with a second supply system nuclear plant under construction at the Hanford nuclear reservation in central Washington.

Financing is the bane of the nuclear industry these days as high interest rates have sent construction costs soaring. There is also a nagging lack of support for what was once considered the salvation of an energy short country.

"The primary reason we had to stop was money," said Dale Dobson, project manager. "The financial community also sensed a lack of support."

The supply system's plants are not the only two nuclear power projects being delayed.

"Many are being mothballed and for the same reason as ours

— the funding situation," said Dobson.

The workforce here is being reduced from about 800 to 30. The reactor vessel for the plant, made of 460 tons of carbon steel, and the plant's two steam generators, 740 tons each, lie by a muddy road. Their white, protective coating will shield them from the 70 inches of rain that usually falls in Satsop on the Olympic Peninsula of Western Washington.

Construction crews two weeks ago topped off the plant's 500-foot cooling tower, the last major project before mothballing. Gigantic cranes and scaffolding are coming down.

Plastic sheets are being placed over hatches and ducts in the shield wall, a 2½ inch thick, steel egg that will surround the reactor.

The place is already deserted.

"It's kind of depressing," said Dobson. "For anyone in the

construction business it is sad to see."

Public relations types grin weakly when asked if the mothballs will be stored in the unfinished containment building.

"It's more than just putting up a fence," Richard Romanelli, a supply system spokesman, said of the mothballing.

It's officially called "an extended construction delay" and it amounts to a \$150 million gamble that 20 months from now construction on the two nuclear projects will be restarted.

"Life is a gamble," said Ed Morris, who heads the committee which oversees the two plants for the 88 public utilities participating in the two mothballed plants.

Morris made the comment shortly after the supply system's board gave the go ahead for mothballing a week ago. The fragile plan for mothballing was

forged after weeks of tortuous negotiations involving the participants, the region's private utilities and about a dozen large industrial firms, mostly aluminum companies.

More than a billion dollars has already been spent on the supply system's No. 5 plant here. When started in 1978, it was estimated the plant would cost \$1.9 billion. The present cost estimate is \$6.2 billion.

The plant, which is about 16 percent complete, is more than two years behind schedule already. If finished, it would produce enough electricity to supply a city the size of Seattle.

Supply system officials are betting interest rates will fall over the next 20 months and that the newly formed regional energy council will decide the power from the plants will be needed. The council has until July 1983 to issue a plan which will chart the region's energy future to the year 2000.

"You know if you have a house half-built and you decide to stop for two years it's always more expensive to finish," said WPPS worker Larry Formol, while working over a motor deep in the basement of the plant's reactor building.

"But it will be a big waste if they don't start it up again."

## Mock trials draw teams

Using fake cases and mock courts, first-year law students from around the Northwest will participate in a regional Moot Court competition at the University Law Center.

The "moot court" is designed to give the first-year students a chance to learn firsthand how the court system operates.

Teams from Gonzaga, Idaho, Lewis and Clark, Montana, Puget Sound, Washington, Willamette and the University will participate in the three-day event.

The first round began Thursday at 5:30 p.m. with the mock trials to continue through Saturday. The final round is set to begin at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday.

### Moot Court Schedule

Thursday:  
Round 1 — 5 p.m.  
Round 1 — 7:30 p.m.  
Friday:  
Round 2 — 5 p.m.  
Round 3 — 7:30 p.m.  
Saturday  
Quarterfinals — 10 a.m.  
Semifinals — 1 p.m.  
Finals — 3:30 p.m.

## Employee gets award

Harry Houchins, the University photographer, has been given the Oregon Employee Suggestion Award for cutting costs in the darkroom.

University Pres. Paul Olum presented the award to Houchins Thursday for his efforts to reclaim silver from used photographic chemicals.

Houchins provides photographs for catalogues, news releases, and other publications that are used by the University.

Friday, November 6, 1981

### Effective Nov. 7th UO Bookstore changes Saturday hours

The U of O Bookstore will now be open 10:00 am-3:00 pm on Saturdays, effective tomorrow, Nov. 7th.

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