

WPPSS offers to unload a pair of plants

For Sale: Two abandoned nuclear power plants, numbers 4 and 5. One plant is located at Hanford nuclear reservation, site of a recently dedicated Fast Flux Facility. Second plant located at Satsop. Only 83 owners at present. Contact WPPSS. Will take best offer or consider trade.

The above makes light of the Washington Public Power Supply System and its attempt to rid itself of two terminated plants. This close-out sale follows the supply system's three-phase program for disposing of its holdings.

The first phase is an attempt to sell the plants as they are. In the case of plants No. 4 and No. 5, they were terminated in January while not even near completion.

The second phase is to sell them in parts. The third phase is to have the project site returned to a condition of inactivity specified under federal and state guidelines.

WPPSS has been plagued with financial and construction problems from its inception. And a reevaluation of nuclear power by utility ratepayers

has punctured the myth that nuclear power would be safe, efficient, and above all cheap. More and more Americans are reluctant to underwrite the high cost of nuclear power. Since the Three-Mile-Island incident and the almost weekly reports of nuclear power plant emergencies and the pervasive hazard to communities in the vicinity of a nuclear power plant Americans have become very mistrusting of nuclear power.

The sale of plants No. 4 and No. 5 is indicative of the financial straits WPPSS is in. The supply system will issue \$590 million in bonds to help finance the remaining WPPSS projects — one of which, plant No. 2, is 90 percent complete.

The 83 "owners" who are "selling" plants No. 4 and No. 5 include Blachly-Lane Electric Co-op, Lane Electric Cooperative, and the Springfield Utility Board. But don't expect the "selling" to benefit the "owners". There has been some recent speculation that WPPSS may default on their previous bond obligations which run into the millions.

There are buyers, if one accepts the word of Al Squire, deputy managing director of the supply system. Squire says there have been plenty of offers. Among the offers were people claiming to be backed by Arab oil money, a Japanese trading company and representatives of Swiss banks. Sounds like big money, though most retreated when Squires asked them to put down a couple of million dollars as "good faith" money. Squires admits that the offers have not "panned out."

WPPSS may as well move swiftly through the second and into the third phase, and dismantle plants No. 4 and No. 5. With the ratepayers in revolt, the economic factors and the general mistrust of nuclear power would a wise investor take a chance on WPPSS?



letters

Nitpicking

In the interest of preventing my being drummed out of my Constitutional Law class, I must clarify a statement attributed to me in the Emerald April 30, within the article "Election Court Cans Charges." As a member of the Elections Court, along with Julie Bell and Jeff Boiler, I dealt with a complaint lodged against ASUO President Rich Wilkins' right to repeat that rumor at a fraternity dinner. I stated "He has a right to say anything he wants under the First Amendment." As per that situation, my statement was correct, however, in the general scheme of things, no one has a right to say just anything he wants. The First Amendment does not confer an absolute right to speak without responsibility. It does not give an unrestricted and unabridged license or immunity for every possible use of language. You cannot yell "Fire!" in a crowded theater, obscene or blasphemous speech is illegal, there are stipulations against incitement to violate criminal law and defamation is a no-no.

(Legal term). Clarifying this may sound a bit inane or inconsequential but, here, at the law school, nitpicking is our business.

Cathi Bulone
IFC, law

Not a gadfly

This is to set the record straight on Mr. Hiawatha's reprehensible personal attack directed towards me in his letter appearing May 3, 1982 in this paper.

The letter regarding SPA campaign violations was the first letter of mine appearing in this paper. I am not the so called "gadfly" who Hiawatha condemns for using this letter column to espouse personal conservative views.

Additionally, if liberals condone unethical campaign tactics and the irresponsible use of student funds as Hiawatha suggests, I'll be happy to be counted among the conservatives this "other" Michael Larson represents.

Mike A. Larson
Law

debbie howlett

editor's note

With a bid to force the Graduate Teaching Fellow's Federation to renegotiate a part of its contract, the administration played a hand that held little more than a promise and a prayer. But the GTF union called the bluff and the administration was left holding a duece to the GTFF's ace.

Shirley Menaker, representing the administration, calls herself "the University's contract administrator for the renegotiation," a full-house title and a straight flush example of the administration's confidence that the contract would be renegotiated.

Standing pat and trying to buy the hand, a poker-faced Menaker told a GTFF meeting last April 21, that if the salary increase clause wasn't renegotiated layoffs would have to be implemented. The implication was that layoffs meant GTFs, not workloads.

That was the bluff.

But GTFF Pres. Brenda Cochran has another phrase to describe the action. She calls it "dangling a carrot in the GTFs face."

Cochran explains that there was no way the administration would opt to layoff GTFs because the University wants to keep graduate enrollment as well as the entitlement pot "up." By laying off GTFs, the University would have to fold both hands.

Menaker concurred with Cochran's statement during a discussion last Friday and then played it close to the vest, saying that the University never intended to lay off GTFs. Instead, said Menaker, the administration had planned to "lay off" workloads.

Menaker is, of course, correct that the University had little intention of laying off individual GTFs — what they want is to cut back pay and hours at an even rate.

At their April meeting, the GTFF discussed several alternatives to layoffs, one of which was a reduction in workload with a proportionate reduction in pay. Menaker told the group that because a large number of GTFs are at the .15 FTE level (the minimum appointment which allows a tuition waiver) that kind of reduction didn't seem feasible.

"Without the pushback in the salary increase," Menaker told the GTFF meeting, "we'll have to cut 3.2 percent of GTFs."

Sans poker face, Menaker is now in the process of drafting a letter to the State System's Board of Higher Education. That letter asks that the .15 FTE guide line for a tuition waiver be dropped to .14 for the University for a period not to exceed one year. Menaker says the plea to change the ruling is the only way to implement the proposed layoff uniformly among 700 teaching GTFs.

It seems that most of the union membership, about half of the total GTF count, believed that re-opening a ratified contract was a substantial compromise especially given that the University was running such a weak bluff.

So the union membership called the bluff and is now in the process of raking in what they consider to be a very sizable pot.

But how far can the GTFF get with a stacked deck and a hand of aces and eights?

staff

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