

McDonald Tells His Side

To The Editor:

First, I want to thank those who stood by me through these days, who put up with the shears and suspicions of others, I want to thank my wife, my children and my friends and I want to thank those who stood by the Navajo Nation. It would have been easy to use my indictment as an excuse for cutting off funds, not realizing that the whole Navajo Nation was on trial because the former United States Attorney had trumped up some charges against me. Ironically, this trial may have made me the first elected Republican official since Watergate who did not plead nole contendere, did not resign and did not require pardon. I don't intend to disgrace my people or my family and I don't intend to stand idly by while the enemies of my people try to frame me in order to intimidate my people.

Second, I have said from the very beginning, and I want to repeat it today, that the whole circus put on by the former United States Attorney and his carry-over assistant was politically motivated. It

was pure and simple retaliation against me for daring to launch a voter registration drive so that Navajos could vote, that is when Senator Goldwater, Steiger and others decided that MacDonald had to go. And the United States Attorney got the message. He has now been investigating me for at least 24 months and gone through three Grand Juries. The best he could do with all that evidence is to put together charges involving less than \$8,000 of private money, which I never saw, never received and was not responsible for. Yet, over the past 6 years as Chairman of the Navajo Tribe, I have presided over an annual budget of more than 25 million dollars. They are after the Navajos — I am the symbol. Put me away, get me out of office and it will be awhile before any Tribal Chairman decides to launch a voter-registration drive or tries to renegotiate coal contracts or insist that the State treat Indians equally.

Next, and third, I want to make a prediction. I predict that the same political forces will keep trying to indict me or any other Indian leader who tries to stand up for his people

and tries to reverse years of paternalism. I predict that the Federal agents will be told to keep going after MacDonald. If you can't get him, get his staff, discredit those around him.

Fourth, I would call upon public opinion to stop political use of the Prosecutor's office. I would hope that the United States Attorney had other more important jobs to do than use the power of his office to harass the Navajo Nation. The United States Attorney takes an oath of office to obey the law to enforce the law, and to follow the political professional responsibility. The law gives him other work to do. Specifically, 25 U.S.C. 175 provides that:

"In all states and territories where there are reservations or allowed Indians, the United States Attorney shall represent them in all suits at law and in equity."

The Navajo people would like to know how much time the former United States Attorney has spent discharging his responsibilities under that law. I am sure that our own General Counsel would be able to supply him with some work if he needed some to do.

In addition, the code of Professional Responsibility specifically obligates the Prosecutor not to abuse the powers of his office to harass or burden individual citizens unduly. The United States Attorney has incredible power to put innocent individuals through hell, to make one's children have to stand up to the ridicule of their classmates, to make one's wife have to ignore the snooks of other wives and to make one's own friends and allies wonder if they can afford to associate with you. I want to express my thanks to my attorneys, F. Lee Bailey and Tony Cardinelli, who did such an outstanding job in gathering the evidence to prove that the Government's witnesses could not be believed. If those assistant United States Attorneys had been thorough in checking out their stories, there never should have been a trial, but they weren't looking for the truth, they looked for what they wanted to hear and then just stopped looking, so the Navajo Nation had to foot the bill in order to vindicate the reputation of their Chairman. We are not rich; we cannot afford an F. Lee Bailey, but we cannot afford to let politicians use the power of the Prosecutor to stop us from exercising our civil rights and protecting our resources, or from gaining self-sufficiency.

Fifth, and finally, I would hope that today signals the beginning of the end of ethics to pick group against group; Indians against white; Tribal government against State government; county against reservation. We have a common fate and much to share. It is time to build: not destroy. I want to thank the judge and the people of the State for living up to the finest traditions of the American legal system. I would hope that this acquittal could be a day of relief and rejoicing rejoicing not just for me or for my family, and the Navajo people, but for all in this State who believe in justice and the law and who want to build a better life together.

The Navajo Nation is part of what makes the United States what it is part of what makes the Southwest what it is; part of what gives to Arizona and New Mexico, and Utah and Colorado a distinctive culture and beauty and vitality. We need to work together. We want to preserve our distinctive culture — that of the Reservation and that of this region. Those who would keep us down, who would try to turn back the clock, who try to attain power at the expense of Indians and to play off one race or one class against another — they belong to the past. I hope this trial and this acquittal says that their days are numbered and that we can begin a new day.

For further information, please contact Mr. Brian Donnelly, Press Officer at, (602) 276-9141, extension 117 or (602) 871-4227.

Respectfully,
Peter MacDonald
Chairman,
Navajo Tribal Council

Nuclear Power Proponent Speaks

Two jets collide at 30,000'. They fall onto a railroad bridge on which two freight trains, each loaded with explosives, run into each other head on. At this moment an oil tanker with a full cargo is passing under the bridge, at one end of which there is a refinery.

The latest catastrophe movie from Hollywood? No. A graphic example — the mathematical odds of such an accident occurring and producing

an explosion are even less than those of an explosion at a nuclear power plant.

Those who are alarmed about such an explosion are perhaps equating nuclear weapons with nuclear power. A nuclear power plant cannot explode like an atomic bomb. Uranium is used in both, but there is no other similarity between reactors and bombs.

Last weekend I had another opportunity to visit the Trojan Nuclear Plant at Ranier. This visit was especially

interesting because the plant is presently shut down for routine inspection and maintenance work and we were able to visit areas that are never open to any but authorized personnel.

In addition to the public's fear of explosion there is that of exposure of radioactivity. So many scientific precautions have been taken at Trojan that it is impossible to describe them all here.

Among the things that you and I can understand are the precautions taken in the 206' high cylindrical containment building in which the nuclear reactor and its coolant system are housed. The walls are 3½' thick concrete reinforced with steel. It was built to withstand a 300-mile-an-hour tornado, the most severe kind of earthquake and the maximum flood possible. This building is also designed to contain radioactive water which might escape because of a break in the pipes carrying cooling water to the reactor. All operations are linked to fail-safe control systems that immediately and automatically shut the reactor down if any human error or equipment failure occurs.

In 1973 causes of accidental deaths in the U.S. included, among other things, motor vehicles (55,511), air pollution (20,000), firearms (2,618) earthquakes and floods (193), bites and stings of venomous animals and insects (49). There were none from radiation and radioactivity.

As for fatalities and injuries in energy producing industries, in 1970 alone 260 coal miners died and 11,552 were injured; over the last 15 years there has been an average of 14 oil tanker explosions per year. In 1973 an explosion in a

liquefied natural gas plant in New York killed 40 people. At present there are about 60 nuclear power plants operating in the United States. Although there have been some industrial accidents in the non-nuclear parts of plants, no licensed nuclear power plant in the U.S. has ever caused property damage or injury as the result of the fissionable or radioactive character of the process.

Opponents of nuclear power plants point to the problems of storage of nuclear waste. Scientists are studying potential uses of high-level nuclear waste. So far the biggest problem has been that not enough has been accumulated to make recycling possible.

Most of our oil is controlled in availability and price by the Middle East. Mother Nature decides on the amount of water available for generation of hydro-electric power. Coal supplies are not inexhaustible. Of all the alternate sources of energy possible, surely nuclear power is the most feasible.

For more than two years construction of two more nuclear plants in Oregon has been halted by suits brought by environmentalists, court trials, and delays in the state's Energy Siting Council hearings and decisions. So it is indeed good news to learn that there is now a chance of legislation being introduced which will make it possible to proceed with the Pebble Springs plants. We need to put these plants on line and to keep the tax advantages and the economic impact of these billion-dollar investments from moving across the river to Washington. Let's get on with it!



Kids were the stars of Spring Clean-up Day May 16. Very little trash was bagged for collectors in the West Hills and Mobile Home Park neighborhoods, but grade school students combed the campus and creek area and came up with a load for the BIA crew, who otherwise spent the day cleaning streets. Shown here are Billy Joe Berry (left), Darrin Tewee (right) and Dan. Sohapp (rear) doing their part.