

Limited Quantities of Thorium Metal Offered for Sale by Government

'Fertile Material' Can Be Transmuted Into Uranium-233

Washington—(U.P.)—The government put on the market today a potential new atomic fuel which may multiply the world's nuclear power resources.

It offered to sell from its stocks limited quantities of thorium metal for \$43 a kilogram (2.2 pounds.)

Thorium, a so-called "fertile material," can be transmuted in atomic reactors to fissionable uranium-233. U233 can be used to make weapons or to fuel nuclear power plants. Russia is known to be experimenting with thorium.

It has been estimated that successful "breeding" of U233 out of thorium in atomic plants could boost the world's nuclear energy reserves four to 10 times.

Many authorities believe no long-lasting economic atomic power industry can be established without exploitation of thorium.

Steep Price

The only fissionable materials now in use are uranium-235 and plutonium. The Atomic Energy Commission last August announced a price of \$25,000 a kilogram for U235. It has not yet published the price at which it might buy or sell plutonium. It probably is costlier than U235.

Despite its potential value, thorium is not being stockpiled in large amounts by the government. It expects private enterprise some day to take on that job.

The AEC plans at some future time to use thorium blankets in an advanced reactor at Oak Ridge, Tenn., in the hope of producing U233 in amounts greater than the U235 used as the reactor's primary fuel.

Potential Wealth

If that ever is accomplished, many nations now comparatively poor in nuclear resources, including India and Brazil, will become automatically rich. Both India and Brazil, as well as this country, have large thorium reserves. Russia, too, apparently has big deposits of thorium.

One U.S. utility, the Consolidated Edison Co. of New York, already is committed to thorium as a source of atomic fuel. It plans to build a "thorium-uranium converter reactor" capable of generating 140,000 kilowatts of electrical power.

This plant, financed entirely by private industry, will cost about \$55,000,000 to build. Neutrons from splitting atoms will transform thorium into U233.

Port of Portland Fourth in Cargo

Portland—(U.P.)—Only three Pacific Coast ports handled more cargo than the port of Portland during 1954, according to figures released by the Corps of Engineers.

Portland, with a total of 11,782,242 long tons of waterborne commerce during the year, ranked behind San Francisco with 35,765,846 tons; Los Angeles with 19,999,378, and Richmond, Calif., 13,373,650 tons.

Other Pacific Northwest ports included Seattle, with 11,587,360; Coos Bay, 2,860,794; Longview, 2,082,704; Grays Harbor, 1,724,198; Vancouver, Wash., 1,562,618; and Olympia, 1,166,705 tons.

Sabotage of Banding Bound Plane Admitted

London—(U.P.)—The British Colonial office said today a Hong Kong airport employee sabotaged an Air India plane carrying Chinese Communist diplomats and newsmen to the Bandung conference last April.

The announcement said the man, identified as Chow Tse ming, alias Chou Chu, an employee of the Hong Kong Aircraft Engineering Corp., escaped to Formosa even though he bragged of his work. It said that the Nationalists have refused to hand him over for trial.

Fifteen persons died in the April crash when the Air India plane plunged into the sea on a flight from Hong Kong to Indonesia.

Porgy-Bess Given Reception in Moscow

Moscow—(U.P.)—The Gershwin opera "Porgy and Bess" made its debut in Moscow last night before the pick of Russia's artistic and theatrical intelligentsia who rose and gave it a standing, eight minute ovation.

The folk opera's whimsical charm brought enthusiastic comments from many members of the sophisticated audience but the lewdness or sexiness of some scenes—notably the brutal seduction of Bess—reduced

the normal applause to only a polite smattering of handclapping.

In Leningrad, where "Porgy and Bess" gave its Russian premiere, there were actual protests by public organizations against the scene although the opera generally was received very warmly there.

The first shipment of iron ore east from Minnesota's vast Iron Range, made in 1884.

Named Saarland Premier

Saarbruecken—(U.P.)—Pro-German leader Dr. Hubert Ney was elected premier of the Saarland yesterday with 32 of the Legislature's 50 votes. Fifteen delegates abstained, one was not present, and two ballots were invalid.

Ney, chairman of the Christian Democratic Union that led the drive against Europeanization of the coal-steel territory, had been all but officially chosen in backstage talks among the major Saar parties.

Salaried Workers' Employment Drops

San Francisco—(U.P.)—Employment of wage and salary workers, other than agricultural and domestic, declined seasonally in California, Oregon and Washington to 5,360,000 in mid-November, the U.S. Department of Labor reported today.

The figure was down about 20,000 from the previous month, but it was still 241,300 over November 1954.

California had 4,123,500 on aprolls in November, 5400

more than in October and 211,900 above November, 1954.

Washington had 764,300 employed, down 11,900 from October but above 1954 level by nearly 20,00. Oregon's November employment of 472,100 was lower than in mid-October by 13,700, but was about 10,000 over that of last year at this time.

Dead line Sunday Classified is at noon Saturday, 10 a.m. Monday for Monday, other days 5:30 previous day.

Driver Gets Close Look at Second Wreck

Brantford, Ont.—(U.P.)—Owen Munro of Paris, Ont., was out driving Tuesday when he looked down an embankment and saw the wreckage of an automobile 125 feet below.

He got out to look at the wreckage and then saw another car plunge down the embankment—it was his own.

Mallards and pintails have speeds of from 50 to 80 feet per second.

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