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Evans 'unopposes' low nuclear waste shipments to Idaho

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Idaho Gov. John V. Evans i willing for shipments of lo level radioactive wastes to I continued to the Idaho Nation Engineering Laboratory.

His stand is thus contrary t those of Nevada Gov. Rober List and Washington Gov. Dixi Lee Ray, who have barre these shipments, but Evan points out that's because o alleged bad handling in thos two states.

Evans said in a Post-Register telephone interview the radioactive waste management practices at the INEL are professionally and excellently handled, but he hastened to add that he still hopes the radioactive shipments will be moved out to a permanent depository in 1985 or shortly thereafter.

Evans sharply criticized the announced intentions of Rep. John Golder, R-Boise, seeking to enact a bill on the next Legislature that would stop radioactive shipments into Idaho.

"I want to re-emphasize, and the Department of Energy agrees, that this low level radioactive waste eventually will be moved off the INEL, where it is above the aquifer," said Evans.

Away from aquifer

Evans also pointed out the northeastern area of the INEL is not above the aquifer, and this is where the radioactive waste could be stored temporarily, or until a permanent repository is designated.

Evans said, however, that DOE officials told him it would be more adequate and economical to designate other permanent storage facilities, such as the salt strata and tunnels near Carlsbad, N.M.

Evans also took occasion to sharply criticize California Gov. Jerry Brown for opposing shipment of radioactive wastes into California. That state, with the largest population in the nation, generates more radioactive waste than any other, he said.

"Governor Brown wants Nevada, Washington and Idaho to accept his garbage, but he is not willing to accept his responsiblity," said Evans.

The Idaho governor said sites could be designated on many of the California deserts or other isolated places, so the state could ahdnle its own radioactive waste.

"I believe every state should assume its share in this national defense effort, or else we face shutdowns for efforts in behalf of our nuclear Navy and important nuclear research," said Evans.

No increase

Evans said he had talked with Charles Williams, Idaho Falls, Idaho DOE office manager, and Wirth Bateman, Washington, deputy secretary for nuclear waste in the DOE, who told him there would be no increased low level radioactive waste shiments into Idaho.

Evans also observed that the INEL is at the bottom of the federal government's list of five dump sites that will receive additional nuclear waste. The DOE is monthly disposing of about 37,500 cubic feet of low level nuclear waste.

The INEL, besides disposing of its own nuclear waste, also handles some from outside points, mostly the Rocky Flats weapon plant in Colorado. About 90,000 cubic feet of low level waste is shipped to the INEL monthly for temporary storage.

"The DOE knows that every pound it moves, will eventually have to be moved out," said Evans.

He added he would not oppose creation of a nuclear dump in Idaho, if it can be shown that the site would pose no environmental danger.

"It's a national concern," said Evans. "We're still in the United States. Each of us are part of the whole. We have to yield to the wisdom of the president and Congress in these particular cases."