

The 1980 Idaho Legislature . . .

Solons oppose radioactive shipment ban

(Editor's note: This is the fourth in a series of 16 articles giving the views of East Idaho legislators on the salient issues shaping up for the coming session).

By BEN J. PLASTINO
Post-Register political editor

Most East Idaho legislators oppose a radioactive shipment ban proposal and some would support a move asking these shipments to Idaho be continued as long as they are carefully handled.

In effect, they take a dim view of Rep. Jim Golder's proposal for banning shipment of radioactive waste into Idaho and lean towards a memorial planned by Rep. Wendell Miller D-Idaho Falls, that would ask

Congress and the Department of Energy to continue such shipments.

Golder, a Boise Republican, has announced he will introduce bills that would ban such shipments into Idaho but others say there is a legal question as to whether or not this can be done.

Miller said "I am against the ban of radioactive shipments. I feel that the wastes at the INEL are being well managed and are no danger to the aquifer."

Miller, the only Idaho legislator who works at the INEL, said his proposed memorial is to allow these shipments.

Gov. John V. Evans also has said he takes a dim view of the Golder proposal, feeling that Idaho should assume its share

of handling such wastes, along with other states. He is particularly critical of Calif. Gov. Jerry Brown's anti-nuclear stand, pointing out California likely generates more radioactive waste than any other state but wants to ship it elsewhere, rather than designating a repository within the state.

Rep. Elaine Kearnes, R-Boise, said "I'm not afraid of these shipments, if properly handled. I'm certainly against Golder's bill."

She noted with amusement that when attending a women legislators' meeting at Anchorage, Alaska, recently, one of the women delegates was fearful of sitting near her because she feared radioactive contamination from someone

coming from this area.

"Many who are uninformed are about like that," she said.

Most of the legislators stressed that proper safeguards should be taken in these shipments.

Rep. Wayne E. Tibbitts, R-Lorenzo, said he believed there may be too many shipments from outside the state, adding "they should be closely monitored by qualified State of Idaho expertise."

Rep. Doyle C. Miner, R-St. Anthony, said he strongly opposed the Golder proposal and favored that of Miller. He said he leaned towards state funding to monitor shipments and operations at the INEL.

Another legislator, Sen. Dane Watkins, R-Idaho Falls, also expressed strong opposition to radioactive shipment ban.

"From my tours at the site, the personnel is handling the waste adequately on a temporary basis," he said. "We need direction from the president and Congress for per-

manent storage and the reprocessing of commercial waste. Until these two things are done, nuclear power in America will never be completely successful."

Rep. Linden B. Bateman, R-Idaho Falls, pointed the INEL has been designated as a temporary radioactive waste storage site and expressed hope such waste could be moved to the proposed New Mexico repository.

Sen. J. Marsden Williams, R-Idaho Falls, said it may be possible to designate an isolated spot, such as on Owyhee County, which is not over the aquifer for storage of such wastes. He said fees could be charged for this service for added county revenue.

He took a dim view of storage of such wastes at the INEL over the aquifer but strongly opposes the Golder bill and favors Miller's proposal.

Rep. Ray E. Infanger, R-Salmon, said he favored Miller's memorial.

The Post-Register

The political pulse

Idaho Falls, Idaho, Wednesday, Dec. 19, 1979 Section B