

RECEIVED

OCT - 9 2001

551323

RUFFIN I. RACKLEY

2015 CREEKSIDE CIRCLE
ANACORTES, WA 98221
360/299-1230
Ruffingeo@aol.com
Friday, June 1, 2001

The Honorable Richard Cheney
Vice President of the United States
Eisenhower Executive Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20501

RE: Nuclear Waste Disposal

Dear Mister Vice President:

After spending so much time in Wyoming over the past 44 years, I have a possessive feeling about Wyoming people that make an important contribution to National affairs. I lived in Riverton twice and in Casper for 11 years. My first venture into local politics was in 1964 when we moved from Salt Lake City to Casper. I worked out of a room in Warren Morton's office where Bob Gossman worked at that time. I couldn't vote in Wyoming so Bob Gossman gave us the precinct where we lived to work that election. John Wold gave up his House seat to run against Gale McGee for the Senate. A couple of years later we moved to South Coffman near Sunrise Center and for a while our next door neighbor was Jack Sullivan.

It has been such a pleasure to see the role you have been given in the Bush Administration. I am especially pleased that you are concerned with nuclear waste disposal. This has been a concern of mine for at least the last 20 years. I spent a lot of time doing geology in uranium exploration, much of it in Wyoming where I led a crew into Shirley Basin in late July 1957. The results of that effort was about 20 million pounds of uranium. In 1967, I put together a package of property that produced about 10 million pounds of uranium in the south end of the Powder River Basin. With such a background it is natural to become concerned with the problems of nuclear power from reactor design standardization to nuclear waste disposal.

In recent months, I began to think "How can geology play a role in nuclear waste disposal beyond the efforts made to date to provide a depository?" I went through the processes that would bury containerized waste such as subduction zones and in river deltas but each had the problem of being recycled to the continental surface, albeit after a very long time, say, 5 to 20 million years. Then it hit me that there is a geologic process going on that would bury the waste forever or at least 50 to 100 million years and that is volcanoes in mid ocean that build islands on deep (20,000') oceanic plates which do not recycle to the continental surface (because of its density).

The more I have thought about this method the more appealing it appears and I've written a letter to Secretary Abraham and I enclose a copy for your information and any action you care to take. I sent a letter to Secretary Abraham in March but it may have looked to the reader that I was looking for a job, but that was and is not the case. I would like to contribute to the evaluation of this waste disposal method any way I can. My experience with the Geological Survey has been poor in that they have taken ideas I have presented and published and spent untold dollars and man years researching without so much as a reference. Therefore to see this approach to nuclear waste disposal given a fair hearing, I need to be kept in the loop, some how. The NOT INVENTED HERE aversion is so great in the bureaucracy that some would deny it a hearing rather than admit that they didn't think of it themselves.

Page 2
The Honorable Richard Cheney
Nuclear Waste Disposal

Obviously much work needs to be done to determine the suitability of a process of depositing nuclear waste on the lower slope of an active volcano. I believe that there may be several sites where volcanic activity is at a level that containers of nuclear waste would be buried in a matter of three or four days, if not in hours. Then over time the depth of burial increases to three or four miles or even six or seven miles and the lateral distance to open ocean would become at least one and a half times as far as the height of the volcano. I would say that is a pretty good way to get rid of that stuff.

You will see that oil field techniques might play an important role in this method. Even with the most difficult situation of making a deposit in the volcanic debris, this method offers many advantages to underground burial in New Mexico, Nevada or Timbuctoo. I think the transportation by inland waterways in large containers also offers many economic advantages as well as less public resistance over other methods.

I would very much like to know your reactions to these ideas so that I can either forget it or keep working.

Sincerely,


Ruffin I. Rackley

Copy: Secretary Abraham
file: VP Cheney 6/1/01