

# wise

World Information Service on Energy / Service Mondial d'Information sur l'Energie /  
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Servicio Mundial de Información sobre la Energia



## KEEP IT IN THE GROUND

### INTERNATIONAL NEWSLETTER 5

MAY 1980

#### ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

This is a newsletter about uranium mining, and our struggle to stop it.

It was set up on the initiative of a group of people from many countries, all of whom are fighting to stop uranium mining on their land. We realised that the fight to stop uranium mining must also become an international fight: small communities are much stronger against this giant international menace when linked together in solidarity.

One way of keeping aware of the support and the struggles of others is through a newsletter, in which all groups are invited to participate, and which all groups are invited to read.

We invite all readers to participate by writing stories, reports etc.

Of course we need money to produce and mail out this newsletter. Readers are invited to give money when they can afford it. Some people have no income, so we expect that others will be able to contribute to the costs to cover their costs also. The publication costs us a minimum of f12 (US\$7.50) per 12 issues, per person. The WISE giro number is 4088285.

#### ABOUT WISE

WISE is an information service for the international anti nuclear and soft energy movement. It was started 2 years ago at a meeting in Amsterdam, attended by 200 activists from around the world.

WISE publishes a regular bi-monthly bulletin of news about the movement, ranging from uranium mining to workers to nuclear weapons to the alternatives. Subscriptions are available at a minimum cost of f15 (US\$7.50, £3.50). Membership, which includes subscription, costs a minimum of f30.

WISE also publishes a special press communicate every two weeks, available to the movement press.

You will notice that we have had no issue for April. There has been no month missed, but because you will only receive this issue in May, we call this the May issue.

#### GOING TO THE BLACK HILLS IN JULY?

Preparations for the International Survival Gathering are continuing. Is anyone able to organise a charter flight from Europe? If so, please contact WISE Amsterdam.

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NEWS  
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USA: RADIATION ENDANGERS PINE  
RIDGE WOMEN

South Dakota: Serious radioactive contamination has been found in the water of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. This was announced in a preliminary study by Women of All Red Nations (WARN). The WARN study shows that in one month of 1979 alone, 38% of pregnancies reported in the public Health Service Hospital in Pine Ridge resulted in spontaneous abortions (miscarriages before the fifth month of pregnancy) and excessive bleeding.

Of the children who were born, 60 to 70% suffer breathing complications as a result of undeveloped lungs and/or jaundice. Also children have been born with cleft palates and club feet, diseases uncommon to the Lakota people.

WARN is calling for a state of emergency and immediate delivery of safe, clean water to the reservation and outlying areas.

A representative sample of 12 families showed that in 10 of the 12 families an elder had died of cancer since 1962.

The Pine Ridge Reservation lies South East of the Black Hills, the site of extensive uranium mining and milling from the late 1940's until the early 1970's.

A WARN member, recalling the fact that 25% of the women on the reservation are sterilised without their permission having been asked, claimed that the Indians are under attack and that these statistics amount to genocide.

Source: Akwesasne Notes, Early Spring 1980

Contact: WARN  
c/- PO Box 2508  
Rapid City, SD 57701  
North America

VERMONT VOTES NO TO URANIUM

USA. March 4. The people of the hill towns of central Vermont voted to prohibit uranium mining, because of the dangers to the community.

Uranengesellschaft is reacting coolly, till now.

Contact: Vermont Public Interest  
Research Group  
26 State Street  
Montpelier VT 05602  
North America

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ACTION AT MT TAYLOR

USA. Mt Taylor is the site for regional protest on April 26, 27, and 28.

Mt Taylor, in New Mexico, is where current mining and milling of uranium predominantly occurs in the U.S. All of the 38 active mines and 70 potential mines are on the homelands of Navajo, Pueblo, or Chicano peoples.

Companies involved are Kerr McGee, Anaconda (Atlantic Richfield), Gulf, Phillips, Mobil, Sohio, United Nuclear Homestake, and Western Nuclear. Mining is expected to expand to a five to seven fold increase in production by the years 1990 through 2000.

The market for this uranium is directed by the Trilateral Commission.

The Taylor/Dalton Pass people claim that the energy use of the USA is far too high, and that it is at the expense of Indians, Pueblo and Chicano peoples. They demand: Protect our traditional lands! Protect our mother - the Earth!, Defend Sovereignty Rights of Native Peoples!, and Stop Uranium Mining/ Stop Nuclear Power/ Promote Safe Energy!

Contact: American Indian Environmental Council  
PO Box 7082  
Albuquerque, NM 87194

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IRELAND: LOCALS SAY NO TO URANIUM

Donegal: On March 31 a demonstration against uranium mining was held on Gweebarra Bridge in Donegal. The following night much of the drilling equipment in three different places in the region was sabotaged. These are just the latest events in a fast growing anti uranium mining campaign in Ireland.

Two weeks before the demonstration the residents of Fintown in Donegal forced Irish Base Metals to withdraw exploration equipment in the region of their only water supply (see newsletter 4).

Uranium exploration is being carried out by Rio Tinto Zinc, and Irish Base Metals, and is supported financially by the EEC. The companies will not say what they have found, and whether mining will proceed. However, it is now clear that the main vein of the uranium runs along the Gweebarra River and that drillings would pollute this and two other rivers.

The demonstration on March 31 was organised by the Donegal Uranium Committee, and attracted 800 people. This, in a sparsely populated region. Most of the demonstrators were concerned locals.

The group who sabotaged the equipment was not connected to the DUC.

Contact: DUC c/- Ralph Sheppard  
Carnowen House, Raphoe,  
Cty Donegal, Ireland

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FRANCE AND NAMIBIAN URANIUM: THE STORY GETS DIRTY

Namibian uranium is mixed with all other uranium treated at the Comurhex uranium conversion plant in Malwesi, France, a Comurhex official announced on March 20 on Swedish radio. This admission is on tape.

The announcement came after the Swedish government was asked to assure the Swedish people that the uranium bought from Cogema does not originate from Namibia. The Minister gave a non-

committal answer. It was then that the French official was asked.

The Swedish Raw Materials Group concludes that if French companies give legal guarantees as to the origin of the uranium they sell, politically and morally all companies buying from the Comurhex company are taking part in the international robbery of Namibia and violating UN resolutions and decisions by the international court in The Hague.

Contact: Raw Materials Group  
PO Box 5220  
S-10245 Stockholm  
Sweden tel (46) (8) 620460

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UK: URANIUM SPILLING ON MYSTERY CARGO

Yellowcake, a half product of uranium ore, was spilled during unloading at Manchester airport on March 13. Drums of yellowcake were being unloaded from a North West Orient plane (an American airline).

The plane had come from Amsterdam and was on its way back to Seattle, Washington State, USA. It seems unlikely that it was an American load of uranium, as there are no long term contracts with US mines, and the UK. The yellowcake probably came from Canada. It may have dropped off part of its cargo in Amsterdam and most likely was unloading some yellowcake at Manchester for the Springfield Hex plant.

The information came from airport workers, who insisted on being checked up for radioactive contamination.

Activists are trying to get more information on the shipload.

Contact: Roger Moody /CIMRA  
92 Plimsoll Rd  
London N4 England tel (1) 2263479

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Get you Natural Peoples News from CIMRA  
- new edition ready end of April!

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INUIT TO LOBBY FOR MOROTORIUM IN BAKER LAKE

Canada: The Inuit of Baker Lake are planning to lobby for a federal morotorium on uranium mining and exploration around Baker Lake. This is the next step they take after losing an an appeal for an injunction on uranium mining on the basis of land rights, last November. The Inuit Tapirist of Canada, the national Inuit organisation, fears an upsurge in mining interest in the uranium rich Baker Lake area since British Columbia announced its 7 year uranium morotorium.

ITC has to raise \$100 thousand to pay the costs of last years court case. The effort to raise the money is supported by Inuit from Greenland and Europe. The 4th Russell Tribunal will also try to raise funds, together with German groups and International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs in Denmark. To date more than \$1000 has been raised.

Please send donations to:  
Inuit Tapirist  
222 Somerset St w, 6th Floor  
Ottawa, Ontario K2P 2G3  
Canada tel (613) 238 8181  
telex 053 3517

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LETTER FROM CANADA

One Sky cross cultural centre in Saskatchewan is involved in development research as it is relevant to multinational corporations. They are compiling fact sheets in companies in uranium and would be interested in exchanging information or aiding particular areas of research.

One Sky also lends books, has a library of periodicals, has a monthly newsletter, audio-visuals, and public speakers.

One Sky  
134 Avenue F South  
Saskatoon Sask S7M 1S8  
tel (306) 652 1571  
Canada

YOUTH WING OF POLITICAL PARTIES SPEAK OUT

The Saskatchewan Young New Democrats, the youth wing of the provincial NDP, has called for a halt to uranium mining at their annual convention held early in March.

Almost simultaneously, the youth wing of the Saskatchewan Progressive Conservative Party, at its annual convention, called for a halt to government spending on uranium mining. In doing so, it echoed statements made recently by the leader of the provincial Progressive Conservative opposition party, Grant Devine.

Contact: Saskatoon Environmental Society  
PO Box 1372  
Saskatoon, Sask S7K 3N9 Canada  
tel 306-665-6655

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ARGENTINA-BRAZIL TO TEST BOMB THIS YEAR

Sulzer Brothers, a Swiss company, have won a contract to supply Argentina with a heavy water palnt, despite US objections to the export of "sensitive technology". heavy water enables natural uranium to become fissionable in a Candu-type reactor.

With the reprocessing plant which Argentina will have working this year, the South American military dictatorship will now be able to produce plutonium. The head of Argentina's National Commission for Nuclear Energy, Rear Admiral Carlos Madero has already said that the country will do so. (Financial Times London 9 Feb 1980).

Argentina has about 25,000 tonnes of uranium reserves, and three major prospecting areas. It currently produces about 180 tonnes a year.

Companies involved in prospecting include Noranda (Canada), Rio Algom (Canadian subsidiary of RTZ) Pechiney Eugene Kuhlmann (France). (Mining Magazine, Jan 1980).

The Los Gigantes mine in Corboda province is expected to produce 4,000 tonnes a year over the next 15 years (FT 9 Feb '80)

The country has also recently entered into an agreement for the exchange of technology and services with Brazil. On October 30th 1979, the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that there was a new possibility of the country exploding a nuclear device, while the Washington based Council for Hemispheric Affairs has said the country will test a weapon later this year, with the help of Argentinian and South African scientists.

Information sources: Macleans magazine (USA) Dec 1979, and Disarmament Campaigns Newsletter, published by Non Violent Alternatives, Antwerp, Belgium.

Contact: CIMRA  
92 Plimsoll rd  
London N4 UK

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EEC UPS URANIUM SPENDING

The EEC (European Economic Community) is to spend a further 5 million units of account (about£3.1 million) on uranium prospecting in EEC countries this year. 21 million units have already been spent since 1976. EEC prospecting is taking place in Italy, France, West Germany, Spain, Portugal, Britain and Ireland.

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AUSTRALIA: LAND RIGHTS MORE THREATENED

The federal government moved again in early February to tighten Aboriginal Land Rights legislation. According to a spokesperson for the Movement Against Uranium Mining in Victoria, the amendments proposed by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs would remove the rights of Aborigines to be consulted on mining agreements. The statement came as the supreme Court in Darwin (NT) postponed indefinitely a hearing in which Aborigines were trying to prevent Queensland Mines from using traditional aboriginal land for access. The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

has announced that amendments to protect mining agreements from legal challenge from a third party ( eg Aborigines) would be introduced into Federal Parliament and would act retrospectively.

Contact MAUM  
180 Brunswick St  
Fitzroy 3065 Vic  
Australia

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ENRICHMENT PLANT GREEN LIGHT, AUSTRALIA

The Uranium Advisory Council in a report Federal Parliament has given the government a qualified go-ahead to establish a uranium enrichment plant in Australia. They claim the environmental effects would be non-existent. Source: Radio Australia News, 5.3.80

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MINING COMPANIES WITH NEW TRICKS

Mining companies in Australia are masking under the title of World Wilderness Congress, 8-13 June 1980 in Cairns Queensland, in their newest bid to gain popularity in Australia.

Rio Tinto Zinc, determined to mine bauxite in Aurukun, Mount Isa Mines, and Comalco, as well as uranium pushing premier of Qld Joh Bjelke Peterson, are some of the supporters of this South Africa originated congress.

These groups and individuals have already extensively harmed and intend to further damage the environment, in their search for mineral wealth.

The Campaign Against Racial Exploitation (CARE) believes this congress has aims completely other than environmental protection. They are urging a boycott of the congress. and that the congress organisers receive letters of protest. Organisers: 45 Spence St, Cairns 4870 Qld

CARE: 23 Smith St  
Fitzroy, 3065 Vic Australia  
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ACTION FOR ABORIGINAL RIGHTS

...is the name of a group in Australia which lobbies and raises money for aboriginal groups. It now has a full time worker, Janine Roberts, the Educational Officer. They are working on an Aboriginal Land Rights Kit. They are also able to provide, at cost, a news clipping service on uranium mining in Australia.

Contact: Action for Aboriginal Rights  
250 George Street  
Fitzroy 3065 Vic Australia

RANGER DAM FLOODS

The dam wall at Ranger uranium site, still under construction, is giving problems to the contractors. With a heavy wet season, the contractors wished to breach the dam to avert the dam being flooded, on Feb 8 1980. The Northern Territory anti Uranium Group have called for an Inquiry into the problem: a similar problem was responsible for the Rum Jungle pollution in the Northern Territory years ago, which has left that area dead.

Contact: Action for Aboriginal Rights  
(see Above)

NOONKANBAH FIGHTS AMAX

Amax, the giant energy mining company, is trying to drill for oil on the aboriginal owned and controlled Noonkanbah station in Western Australia. Amax, supported by the West Australian government, had already tried last year to establish its oil drilling equipment, but the aborigines and the wet season stopped that, temporarily. Now the dry season is back, and with it an extra onslaught. Activity has been intense on the site. Police and Amax officials have had dawn raids. The aborigines occupy the proposed drilling site. The Aboriginal Legal Service has launched, on March 21, new legal action in the Supreme Court seeking injunction against

the Amax mining company. The next day a temporary ban on oil exploration. At the same time, the trustees of the Western Australia museum were directed by the government to say that the site proposed for drilling was not a sacred site for the aborigines - contrary to the museum's findings. The area is the sacred site under which the spirit of the Goanna (a sort of lizard) lives, and if the spirit is disturbed, goannas roaming the surface of the earth will die. Goannas are part of the peoples diet in this area.

Now the trade unions are cooperating with the Noonkanbah people. The trades and labour council will ban activities of Amax Petroleum (australia) Inc. It also called for a ban on the movement of equipment needed by Amax for the project.

Then, on April 3, drillers interpreted a corroboree in the middle of the night as a threat and have fled the land. The premier restated that drilling would go full steam ahead. It is now feared that police will once again be called in, and the community totally removed. The Noonkanbah station legally belongs to the aborigines under the W.A. Heritage Act. But the aborigines are facing diminishing rights all over the country - from not being able to vote, to being refused access to health care.

Contact: Action for Aboriginal Rights

(can we have an address for the Aboriginal Legal Service, please ?)

MOVEMENT ORGANISING

**URAN: Uranium Resource and Action Network**

... is the name of a group set up in America in December. 26 organisations are represented. The purpose of URAN is to provide a vehicle for providing information to citizen groups on many uranium issues, assist in coordinating citizen action on uranium development in the Rocky Mountain states, and supply local groups with training and technical assistance.

They have paid staff in two offices: one in Albuquerque, New Mexico, the other in a northern state, not yet selected.

Contact: Paul Robinson  
PO Box 4524  
Albuquerque, NM 87106  
USA tel (505) 242 4766

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THE WORKBOOK is published 8 times a year by Southwest Research and Information Center, PO Box 4524 Albuquerque, NM 87106.

The Workbook is a fully indexed catalog of sources of information about environmental, social and consumer problems.

The Nov/Dec number of 1979 concentrated on uranium mining.  
Cost \$3,00

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SURVIVAL GATHERING UPDATE

For the Citizen's Review Commission on the energy developing corporations-  
The Black Hills Alliance is calling on cooperation from newsletter readers  
We present to you hear that request.

1. Questionnaire concerning threats to the Survival of your community posed by the actions of the energy developing corporations:  
This questionnaire is to help prepare for the Citizens Review Commission.

a. Background to questionnaire:  
10 sessions, each about 2 hours long, will form the Commission Hearings. The first session starts on the Monday following the first weekend of the Gathering.

- There are four areas of presentation:
- 1) History of the Black Hills - treaties and corporate plans
  - 2) Corporate Analysis - Exxon, Kerr McGee, TVA, Union Carbide, Burlington Northern, Rio Algom under analysis, plus role of government in exploitation of the Hills
  - 3) International - international aspects of the corporations operating in the Black Hills
  - 4) Current Struggles - description and discussion.

Each of the ten sessions will have 3-4 panelists and 4-5 testifiers. It is hoped a balance between experts and laypersons will be achieved. Each session will be followed by small group discussion. This is subject to change.  
Subject Matter Committees and Support Committees have been organised.

Please send copies of all relevant literature to the BHA, and please write and say if you wish to participate in the Gathering

b. Questions

1. Name of group or individual presenting the documentation
2. Address and phone number
3. Summary of project opposed (high-voltage transmission line, uranium exploration, nuclear plant etc. Please specify all possible about the project, including location, working conditions, environmental effects and everything. Estimate how much land is involved.
4. Name of primary corporation, governmental agency or institution attempting the project being opposed.
5. Names of those who head the corporation (Pres, Vice President, Directors etc) government agency or institution. Please explore corporate interlocks, government corporation connections, banks and financial institutions involved.
6. Other projects being planned by the





There are statistics about lung cancer deaths among uranium miners, information about mining and milling, and information about the effects of low level ionising radiation from other ends of the nuclear fuel chain.

From: Academy of Medicine Building  
1807 West 10th Avenue,  
Vancouver BC V6J 2A9  
Canada

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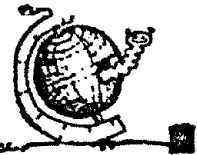
GERMAN MINING INTEREST IN NORTH AMERICA

the following information was printed in Information International Research and Development Activities in the Field of Energy. National Science Foundation, 1976.

- Urangesellschaft, supported by the German government, is involved:
- U exploration project with Scandia Mining and exploration Ltd, Canada
- U exploration project with the Continental Oil Co, in the Church Rock area (New Mexico)
- Exploration project with the Ranchers Exploration and Development Corp, USA
- Uranium prospecting in the USA with the Rocky Mtns Energy Co.
- Uranium prospecting in the framework of the Northern Saskatchewan Joint venture on the south edge of the Athabasca Basin/Canada
- Uranium prospecting on the Southern Edge of the Athabasca Basin/Canada
- uranium prospecting with the James Bay Development Corporation and Canico in the Otish Mtns/Quebec, Canada
- U prospecting and exploration project with the Brazilian State company Nuclebras.
- Exploration project with the Federal Resources Corp in the region of Tonopak, Nevada, USA
- U exploration with Brinex in Labrador, Canada
- Combined participation in Kerr Addison Ltd and a shareholding company in tests of uranium bed sites at Agnew Lake, Canada
- U prospecting in Alaska
- U prospecting in the Northwest Territories, Canada

URANIUM CARTEL STORY

from Roger Moody



New Turn in Cartel Case, Or How Dog Bites Dog Bites the Hand that Didn't Feed It

As readers of this newsletter will probably know, the huge Westinghouse corporation (largest supplier of nuclear reactors in the world, including the ill-fated PWR of Harrisburg type), has for some years been sued by other utilities for its failure to supply some 65 million lbs of uranium oxide contracted over the last 10 years. Almost all of the 20 suits against Westinghouse have now been settled. In its turn Westinghouse has been trying to sue uranium suppliers, for failing to deliver. Thanks to FoE Australia, news leaked in 1976 of a uranium cartel which had been set up in the early 1970's by Rio Tinto Zinc, RTZ's Canadian and Australian and South African subsidiaries and other companies, to artificially inflate the price of U308 - with the connivance of the British, Australian, Canadian and South African governments. The price of the uranium rose about sixfold within about four years: that, says Westinghouse, is what caused it to break its contracts with the utilities. So far Westinhouse has had no cooperation from legal authorities in any of the culprit countries. Indeed, all four governments involved have gone out of their way to obstruct action being taken against companies incorporated in their territory. A Bill has just gone through the British House of Lords (Protection of Trading Interests Bill) which would enable RTZ to regain from Westinghouse assets in Britain anything this huge multinational mining corporation may lose through Westinghouse's actions in the USA.

In America itself, the Westinghouse case has just gone through an Appeals Court, after a Chicago court found the producers to be in default. Although the Appeals Court attacked the companies for refusing to appear before it - and called the British, South African, Canadian

and Australian governments "subservient" to the companies - it offered Westinghouse two choices. One was to proceed against the US defendants (subsidiaries only, of the culprit companies) and drop the case against the rest. The other was to proceed with the merits of the entire claim" which would delay the proceedings further and enable the four governments involved to protect their companies to an even greater extent.

Westinghouse has decided on the second course of action. The appeal will not now be heard until 1981, and it is very doubtful whether any more substantial information about the cartel will be revealed by then.

Opponents of nuclear power will not shed many tears over Westinghouse's predicament, and might even attack the 'holier than thou' attitude of the US judiciary. (Especially in view of the fact that the US Justice Department itself suddenly decided to stop further investigation of the cartel a year ago).

Nonetheless, the operation of the cartel seems to have been crucial to the enhanced fortunes of the non-U.S. mining companies since 1972 - and therefore to the concentration of power in the hands of a few - especially RTZ and the South African uranium corporations.

Anti-nuclear activists in Britain, Canada, and Australia should surely view with alarm the fact that their governments have been able to conceal with impunity, information about a \$1,000, million fraud (that's the amount Westinghouse is claiming in damages).

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URANIUM FROM PHOSPHATES

The strategic and economic importance of uranium-from-phosphate production has become extremely significant, with the publication of a recent report by Earth Sciences Incorporated(U.S.), carried out for the U.S. Department of Energy.

ESI concluded that 25% of annual U.S. demand could be met from phosphate production. The Western world as a whole could meet 10% of its needs from this source alone.

Four uranium phosphates plants currently operate in Florida and Louisiana: Freeport Minerals is the largest producer. Another is due to open any time now in Alberta, Canada, managed by Western Cooperative Fertilisers, together with ESI. ESI further estimate that more than a hundred phosphoric acid plants could soon be producing uranium as a by-product: 35 in the US, 11 in South America, 57 in the Pacific, and no less than 65 in Europe. Their potential production, says ESI is more than 11 million lbs of uranium oxide a year at a selling price of \$40 (ie about the same as the current market price for U308 direct from mines). We should bear in mind that some countries which, to date, have no uranium production, have some of the largest phosphate deposits in the world: notably Morocco and Jordan (see KIITG nr 1).

AND FROM COAL...

In February, General Mining (South Africa's second largest mining company and second largest producer of uranium) announced that it had located significant uraniumiferous strata in a new coal deposit in the Northern Transvaal. Initial investigations suggest the uranium would be economically recoverable.

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Coming For Next Newsletter  
A story on a parliamentary debate in opposition to Namibian uranium being dealt with in the Netherlands

A chart showing the workings of PUK, a giant mining concern with fingers in everyone's pie

Deadline for Newsletter, 14 May. PLEASE send Airmail, to Lin Pugh, WISE amsterdam  
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