

KIITG

keep it in the ground. inter-
national stop uranium mining
news letter. september 1982





24



This is number 24 of the Keep It In The Ground newsletter. The news letter is a project of WISE, the World Information Service on Energy. Within WISE, the project exists autonomously.

WISE has been operating as an information service for over four years now. It was set up by activists in the anti nuclear and alternative energy movements to switchboard information. There was, until WISE's founding, a serious international gap in communication. A lot of information was stored, and passed on, by key figures in the movement. The WISE idea was to decentralise information, and to provide a channel through which information becomes accessible to those wanting it. All information is accompanied by a contact address -- meaning that people can directly contact others, without going through WISE.

In the course of these four years, international communication has improved. Movement journals are able to publish more on the movement in other countries, people fighting certain aspects of the nuclear death chain have readier access to information. WISE has definitely played a part, and we intend to continue serving the movement.

Keep It In The Ground is our most 'large scale' effort at networking for people involved in one particular aspect of the struggle. KIITG is in fact a part of the WISE uranium project, which also includes quite a large documentation, and a listing of companies involved in the uranium industry.

The documentation consists of some scientific papers, scientific abstracts, movement publications, specialised information on mining, and information on companies. Furthermore, Roger Moody in London, who cooperates with us on this project, has a subscription to various mining journals. If you wish to use our documentation, by mail, please do so. We will charge for photocopy and mail costs. Please also send us documents you find important, and we can pass them on and make them known. This year our documentation has helped in the research for books ranging from Sami landrights and Canadian landrights to more specific articles relating to uranium and the weapons connections of various countries.

Through Keep It In The Ground, information we receive in the WISE relay offices is published to give everyone access to information circulating. People send us the information with the purpose of having it publicised. Many of the articles are translated from other languages, including French, Spanish, Dutch, Swedish and German. I wish the KIITG itself could be translated into more languages, and have a wider distribution in English as well. Access to this sort of information lends inspiration and support to groups, and

gives ideas for organising against the phases of uranium exploitation. News from KIITG is being continually used in publications in many languages, which in turn gives people more access to the information.

Up till now the service has been financed with little burden falling onto the shoulders (or in the pockets) of the movement it serves. In the first year the Smiling Sun Foundation (which was then financially much stronger than now), supported the project indirectly, through payment to the whole WISE project. When that money decreased, KIITG went to various Dutch funders for assistance. But all these foundations have now stated that they will not be able to continue funding: in most cases because it is in fact outside their bounds to fund an international organisation.

Now the problem is, how do we continue the financing of a project which is clearly fulfilling an important function?

First, we need to increase the number of WISE members and subscribers, and all your efforts toward that will be greatly needed. Secondly, we want to start up a sponsorship scheme. To raise the necessary \$10,000 the project needs to function yearly, we can ask 200 people to pay \$5 per month, or 20 people \$50 per month, or 500 people \$1.50 per month. Put this way, you can see that it is not much money, and that it ought to be possible to survive. Would you like to participate? Simply write to us, at either the U.S., Australian or Amsterdam office, and we can help you organise a monthly donation.

And please, if you have people in your group who you think could spare, ask them too if they can give.

Meanwhile we will continue to search for organisations willing to grant us funds.



EDITORIAL

In June, Swedish anti uranium mining activists invited other Europeans to Ranstad, in Sweden, to share ideas and tactics and plans to stop uranium mining. One important thing which arose was the need to exchange experiences of tactics. Exchanging ideas presents the possibility of developing in your own way the inspiration of others.

With this in view, this volume of Keep It In The Ground concentrates on both Sweden, the conference, and on exchange. A part of the exchange is reflective articles: how the actions were planned, what methods were used to carry them out, what obstacles arose, what conclusions and "lessons learned" has the group now to tell other people.

In the course of the year I hope KIITG will have many more such reflective articles. Please feel free to write of your own experiences in the "field".



Euro Anti-U

THIRD EUROPEAN ANTI URANIUM MINING CONFERENCE

From June 11-14, approximately 40 people from eight countries gathered in Flamslat, Sweden, for the Third European Anti-Uranium Mining Conference. Flamslat is a village near the old Ranstad uranium mine. The eight countries represented were Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark, The Netherlands, West Germany, France and Spain.

During the conference, an organised excursion gave the participants the possibility to view the results of uranium mining at the now closed Ranstad mine: orange-coloured liquid waste in open reservoirs, and a huge mountain of waste. Another excursion took participants to a 125 metre high mountain of waste containing uranium which came from a shale oil distillery.

One of the guest speakers was Eva Moberg, a well-known Swedish journalist. She said that according to a statement by ex-President of Sweden Olaf Palmer, Swedish uranium could be used as collateral in securing foreign bank loans.

A second speaker, Ake Sundstrom, talked about the economic aspects of uranium mining. He said that due

to the drop in world prices for uranium, there is no profit in uranium mining. He added that he does not expect uranium prices to rise.

During a heavily attended meeting, representatives from Arjeplog, Lilljuthatten and Voxnadalen, areas in Sweden threatened by uranium mining, discussed developments in their areas. Reports were also given on the situation in France and Greenland.

In a plenary session, numerous fund raising proposals were put forward to keep the anti uranium mining networking, Keep It In The Ground, on a secure financial footing.

The conference ended with a declaration calling for a halt to uranium mining which will be sent to as many groups as possible for their endorsement.

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"FACTUAL, NOT EMOTIONAL, ARGUMENTS" -the Arjeplog Experience

The result of the nuclear power referendum in Sweden in March 1980 was that nuclear power plants would be used in Sweden for the next 25 years. In Arjeplog, in the north of Sweden, we were a handful of people who had fought in the campaign against nuclear power. As soon as it was clear that nuclear power was accepted in Sweden as an energy force, we realised that the findings of uranium in the municipal area of Arjeplog could in reality lead to uranium mining at

Pleutajokk (a river in the area where most of the uranium had been found since the prospecting had begun in the 1960's). We called a meeting for all interested in stopping the eventual mine and formed an environmental group called Arjeplog People Against Pleutajokk, (AMP). The group consisted then of eight people of different ages and social backgrounds. We were later joined by two more and this formed the core of the group. In the end we had many members in Arjeplog who supported us both financially and psychologically.

From the beginning, we realised that we could only win by using factual rather than emotional arguments. We gathered all available material and experience of uranium mining from all over the world. We studied and read and learned much, and this was very useful in the campaign that followed. We knew the importance of sharing this knowledge with all the people in Arjeplog and most specifically with the 31 politicians who formed the community council in the municipality of Arjeplog.

In Sweden the veto system allows the municipal council to stop any intended project in the area, but they cannot make the project a reality by accepting it. In the light of this system, we deliberately tried to demand that local politicians use their veto right, as each one of them could vote yes or no. From December 1980 when the state-owned mining company applied for permission to start the mine, until the decisive day in May 1981, we campaigned in order to provoke a discussion and to force the people and the politicians to take a stand

in this important issue. We examined the application in detail, with the help of experts, and exposed its deficiencies. We held information meetings, we sent out leaflets, booklets and wrote letters to all the newspapers. We invited experts from all over Sweden to talk at our meetings, we organised a demonstration through the town and we wrote letters to the politicians in question.

We gained much support from both people in Arjeplog and in the rest of Sweden.

The town was divided in terms of opinions regarding the Pleutajokk project. Those in favour of the mine believed the generous promises made by the company, that the environmental impact would be minimal, that there would be many jobs for the local people (Arjeplog has a high rate of unemployment), and great profits for the municipality.

We who worked to stop the mine exposed the dangers involved in uranium mining both for workers and for the environment surrounding the planned mine, as well as for Lake Hornavan which is Arjeplog's water reservoir, into which the Pleutajokk River runs.

The climax of the campaign was in April, when we forced the municipality to organise a public hearing of experts from Sweden as well as Dr Joseph Wagoner from the USA. We made a petition and collected names of people living in Arjeplog who were against the mine. We had more than half the voting population, and this petition was presented to the municipal council the day before they were to decide.

Finally, the municipal council decided to approve the application with a majority of one vote. This vote belonged to the deputy member of the liberal party who, after a coup within the party, replaced a regular member who had been critical towards the project.

Everyone waited for the government to take the final decision in Autumn 1981. Then, quite surprisingly, the company informed the people that they were no longer interested in carrying on with the project. The reason given was that it was economically unfeasible. We had on many occasions stressed the economic aspects of the project, especially considering the strict conditions that had been laid down by the different authorities concerning environmental control.

We were over-joyed!

Since then, there has been prospecting in an area some kilometers from Pleutajokk, and to ensure that no further possibilities of mining arise, it is necessary that people vote for the politicians who are against uranium mining, in the elections which will be held in September 1982. We are planning to ask each politician standing for office for her/his point of view regarding future uranium mining in Arjeplog. We will then publish this information in the local newspapers.

To sum up, I would like to say that we feel that our campaign was successful although one cannot give our group all the credit for the project stopping. It was important to fight by means of factual argument and to expose and publish all

the negative results of uranium mining (which the company did not) as well as to present other job possibilities that could be considered as alternatives. The promise of more than 300 jobs in a small town with high unemployment is very convincing.

We may have been a little too one-sided in our information giving, and we may have gained more by organising more debates involving both sides.

We received much help from Olav Holmstrand and his ideas of making resistance against uranium mining. This article is accompanied by a copy of his suggestions on how to stop uranium mining.

contact: Illona Fjellstrom
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HOW TO MAKE RESISTANCE AGAINST URANIUM MINING

Some general considerations for discussion.

1. form some kind of working group which will continuously watch the project.
2. try to start as early as possible. It is necessary to know every phase in the project and to collect as much documentation as possible.
3. get in contact with experts of different kinds willing to help you. The following professions might be of special value:
 - geology
 - hydrology
 - mining engineering
 - chemistry
 - radiology
 - medicine
 - economy
 - juridical experts
4. study thoroughly the documentation on the project. Mistakes seem to be rather common
5. use every legal possibility to criticise
6. work on the local opinion and try to get general resistance against uranium mining
7. find out the effects of mining on the environment, the culture, the works etc in both short and long term
8. try to present positive alternatives to uranium mining - do not just say no

9. consider your arguments very thoroughly. For instance, it is not good to say "mine anywhere else but here!"

10. put your arguments together in publications, but be very careful of the layout. Your documentation should preferably be more professional than that of the mining company

11. point out the connection between uranium mining and nuclear weapons and nuclear power. Nuclear power is getting less profitable and the problems concerned with nuclear wastes have nowhere been solved.

A REPORT FOR THE THIRD EUROPEAN ANTI-URANIUM CONFERENCE

The booklet, *Sveriges Uran*, was prepared for the conference in June. We are extremely fortunate to have an English version in our hands. We reprint here parts of the introduction and of chapter 7, **How was it possible for the environmental movement to stop Ranstad?**

The international organisations OECD and IAEA jointly published a series of reports "Uranium Resources, Production and Demand". According to these reports Sweden has a very large supply of uranium deposits. The 1975 report stated that Sweden has 17% of the reasonably assured resources in the world (eastern countries not included) and 82% of the European resources.

With this background, many people all over the world were rather surprised when, in 1975, a state-owned mining company had to give up

its plans to start large-scale uranium production in Ranstad.

The so-called Ranstad deposit consisted of 300,000 tons of uranium, which, according to the report of 1975, was the amount of reasonably assured reserves in the whole of Sweden. Since then some attempts have been made to start production on a smaller scale in other places in Sweden, but all have failed for various reasons.

Many people, interested in the questions concerning nuclear power and nuclear weapons, have surely wondered why a small nation with only two-thousandth of the world population could give up the enormous riches of one-sixth of the known uranium resources of the world?

The leading Swedish daily newspaper gave our environmental group the credit for this, whereas others have blamed us for it.

The importance of the work of our group, however, should not be exaggerated. What we achieved was to hurry up the decision to scrap plans to exploit Swedish uranium. The plans would presumably have been scrapped sooner or later regardless of our activities.

One of the aims of this report is to show that there is good reason to believe that the OECD and IAEA's joint report contains statistical untruths. Sweden has no uranium resources that could be called "reasonably assured". Sweden has never had the necessary prerequisites for uranium production of any importance, and probably never will.

Our group has studied the problems of uranium rather thoroughly. As an environmental group we have been primarily concerned with environmental aspects. We have, however, tried to cover other aspects as well, including geological, economic, and technical.

We have not been able to do any of our own research but have studied Swedish and international literature in the field.

We hope that this summary of the experiences of Sweden may be of some interest for people in other countries where uranium and its exploitation is presently being discussed.

The following information may be useful to our foreign readers: Sweden has a long mining tradition. It is a well-known fact that there is iron-ore in the north of Sweden. LKAB, a state-owned mining company, produces 20-30 million tons of iron-ore per year. LKAB has been economically successful for many decades. For the past ten years, however, LKAB has been faced with serious economic problems.

Boliden, a large privately-owned company, mines lead, copper, silver, gold, and other minerals in the north of Sweden. Today Boliden is a very profitable enterprise.

Sweden has a total of 12 nuclear reactors either in operation or under construction. The total production of electricity from these reactors is planned to be about 58 TWh/year or about 7,000 KWh per inhabitant. This last figure is the highest in the world. 1,300 tons of uranium will be needed each year.

As a result of the national referendum in 1980, it was decided that:

1. the maximum number of reactors to be built would be twelve, and
2. the production and use of nuclear power would cease by the year 2010.

SKBF, a state-owned company, is the only buyer of uranium in Sweden. It supplies all the reactors with the nuclear fuel they need.



HOW WAS IT POSSIBLE FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT TO STOP RANSTAD?

Many different local and national organisations took part in the movement to stop Ranstad uranium. Considerable PR efforts on the other hand, were made in support of the project with the result that the Ranstad project received a lot of attention from the press, radio and television. Now that the project seems to have been definitely written off, it is easy to see it as a victory for the environmental movement. The question which has been asked on several occasions is, what can be learned by other groups from the struggles concerning the Ranstad project?

It is, however, impossible to give a correct and complete answer. Instead, (one of our group) Rolf Millqvist, will give a subjective impression of what he considers to be the decisive moves in a hard-fought battle concerning the Ranstad mining.

Risk of Landscape Murder

For those of us who were actively involved from the start in attempting to stop the Ranstad project, it was easy to become committed.

All we had to do was to drive out to the site. The scars left from the mining of 200 tons of uranium in the 1960's were all too evident and terrible. This time it would be a question of 32,000 tons during the first stage, and possibly more later. Someone created the phrase "murder of the landscape". It wasn't the usual case of damage to the environment, but rather a complete wiping out of the local scene. We felt it was our duty to try to prevent this murder. We soon found out that our opponents held a diametrically opposed view. They believed that it was self-evident that the world's largest uranium deposit must be used during a period when uranium was becoming very important as a fuel for nuclear power stations. (This was in 1975). Naturally they said that reasonable consideration would be given the preservation of the environment. The word "reasonable" meant, however, that the cost should not be too high.

The confrontation so familiar during the last few decades was here again. On the one side the conviction that the unrestrained exploitation of natural resources threatened the existence of the earth's people and its beasts. On the other side, the certainty that

the material well-being of people would be threatened if the rapid economic expansion was slowed down by restrictions on the use of natural resources. This difference of opinion characterised the conflict between the Ranstad Project and the environmental movement.

Examining the Facts

Our group was aware that generalised arguments about the large risks to the environment would not be sufficient so the decision was taken to study in detail the application for permission to mine. Curiously enough we found that in our little group we already had experts in several of the subjects. In order to influence the decisions of the municipal council and the government we had to give our opinions within a period of three months from the publishing of the application. We gave our answer in the form of a book **Ranstad - A Threat to our District**. It was comparatively simple to show the destructive consequences the suggested mining would have for the subsoil water and the streams and rivers. It was quite clear that the level of the subsoil water would be lowered within an area of 50-100 square kilometers whereby the possibility of having a water supply would be diminished or non-existent in the future. The subsoil water within a large area would also be poisoned. There would also be a destroyed landscape, pollution of the air, risks of radiation, etc.

Our conclusion was: "It would be irresponsible and deceitful to the present and future inhabitants if the local authorities agreed to the development of the Ranstad plant."

Right of Veto

We deliberately chose to demand the local authorities use their right of veto. This was based on a three-year old law which had never been put into practice.

Our discussions with local politicians and civil servants convinced us that they did not consider the possibility of using the right to veto. They thought it reasonable only to lay down conditions for mining to begin. Indirectly it was hinted that local authorities were so dependent upon the decisions of the central authorities that they could not do anything without their full support and consent. With the help of mass media it was, however, easy for us to show that the two directly concerned municipalities (Skovde and Falkoping) had a real possibility of stopping the project. The state-owned mining company LKAB, which was responsible for the application for Ranstad-75, was apparently unprepared for the severe criticism. They soon put forward new but badly thought out solutions to the environmental problems. This fact further increased the distrust amongst those who were aware of the objections to the application.

The discussion resulted in a rapid increase in the number of people against the project. With the help of these new contacts we could get a fairly accurate idea of the attitude of the five political parties represented in the local governments in October 1975. But the number of totally convinced

opponents to the project was not sufficient to ensure the veto. By making some of the doubtful ones actually study the environmental damages caused by the mining of 200 tons, the number of opponents gradually increased to a point where the veto could be certain. A day or two later we were informed that the application had been withdrawn. The management of the project had obviously been informed of the situation.

The withdrawal of the application (Ranstad-75) was accompanied by a statement that LKAB intended to come back with another application in the near future.

The Day Of The Vastergotland Mountains

At the beginning of 1976, Skovde Miljoforum initiated a meeting with those organisations that had more or less actively opposed uranium mining in the area. The meeting resulted in a decision to organise a "Day of the Vastergotland Mountains" in May that year. A committee was formed in order to coordinate the various activities. Sceptics considered it totally impossible to carry out the vast programme, considering the limited resources available.



The interest in the "Day of the Vastergotland Mountains" proved to be much greater than any of the initiators had hoped for. In prac-

tically every village in the area the inhabitants were activated in many ways. There were walks, guided tours to ancient memorials, plays on the responsibility of being human beings to the environment were performed in the churches, as well as bird-watching excursions, art exhibitions, etc. Altogether there were about 20,000 participants. The elected committee concentrated on organising the public meeting which would be the climax of "The Day". Apart from that, all central planning was abolished, making room for local, seething initiative.

The planned day was extended to a 14-day period filled with events, all with one mutual theme: the area must be saved from uranium mining.

None of us in the organisation committee had any previous experience in arranging mass meetings. After the many activities all around the area, a great assembly awaited us for the public meeting, which was held in a field close to Ranstad. The Nobel prize-winner Hannes Alfvén was the main speaker. All our expectations were exceeded. The stream of people seemed endless. It was impossible to count everybody. The police estimated the number of people to be 10,000. After "The Day", the talk of there being only a "few, loudspoken environmental activists" wasn't heard for a long time. Nobody could be mistaken about the fact that the population in the area was deeply concerned by the plans for uranium mining. Practically all the people at the meeting thought that Ranstad must be stopped - this was more essential than any other local political issue.

Questioning the Politicians

As a follow-up of the meeting, the committee decided to demand that the politicians make themselves clear on the issue. One question was asked of all those who were candidates for a seat in the local government in the election of September 1976:

Question: what is your opinion of the request that the local authorities should be in favour of the mining of uranium - in case you are elected a member of the local government for the mandate period 1976-1979?

Reply: I will vote: Yes (for mining) ; No (Against the mining of uranium); Don't Know.

The Ranstad plant is in the border between the municipalities Skovde and Falköping. The "well-known" deposit of 300,000 tons does not however lie only in these two municipalities, but also in large parts of the municipalities of Skara and Tidaholm. The different political parties had registered 749 candidates for the election. All these candidates received a form plus information and a stamped and addressed envelope.

What Is Democracy?

When, two months before the election, the forms were distributed, a lively discussion was started in the local newspapers. Several politicians thought quite seriously that it was undemocratic to ask for their opinions in this manner just before the election. They thought that politicians should always have the right to act independently in order to consider all the circumstances when the final decision was

to be made. When asked how "the power of the people" (democracy) would function if the voters could not ask questions on the most important issue of the election, no answer was received.

What particularly agitated some of the politicians in question, was the fact that we had informed them that their replies would be published. This was considered "registration of opinions" and someone even used the phrase "fascist methods". Our reply was obvious. In a democracy all citizens have a right to keep their opinion to themselves if they wish - the secrecy of the polls is inviolable.

But it is also compatible with democracy to be prepared to answer questions from voters if one wants to be elected. Naturally the candidate can say that he or she is waiting to see the development in the future, but in a case like this the voter's must be taken into consideration - you stand the chance of not being elected.

548 replied out of the 749 candidates. Of these 4 declared themselves to be for the mining of uranium, 485 against, and 59 had no fixed opinion.

The result of the election was such that it was quite clear that we could count on a majority for NO to another application to mine uranium. This was further stressed when the new Prime Minister announced that his government would not accept uranium mining. He took office after the national election which took place simultaneously.
Ranstad management changed

Shortly after the elections the

Ranstad management changed their tactics. They coined the phrase "total exploitation" and announced that they would no longer concentrate only on extracting uranium. They would, instead, try to "make use of all the valuable components of the shale". They obviously thought that those politicians who had promised to vote against uranium mining would then be able to accept total exploitation.

When the next application was made under the title "Ranstad - Mineral Project", in 1977, it was easy to show that uranium would be responsible for more than 90% of the production value, and that more than 95% of the exploited shale would be deposited as waste.

With the prospect of the local government's decision regarding the application, the spokesmen for the project set off on a new track, which partially contradicted the assurances they had given before. The mining company, LKAB's director explained in an interview, which was given great publicity in most Swedish daily papers, that it would be "a national tragedy" if Sweden did not exploit the riches of the shale. They claimed the value of the shale was 50 times the value of all production in Sweden per year.

Despite heavy pressure, the members of the local councils in Falkoping and Skovde adhered to their written election promises, and rejected the application of 1977.

The efforts to start uranium mining in Ranstad did not stop when the 1977 application was rejected. As a political compromise, the company was given help to survive in the

form of research grants for 125 million Swedish crowns. The research grants indirectly meant that a new application could be expected in the future. The propaganda on the mining continued as "uranium as a national treasure". "It is an extravagance to sit on this treasure and say that others must take responsibility for our energy supplies, because this area must be saved on account of romantic ideas. We cannot afford that kind of philosophy any longer. The uranium must be the basis for a new technology and export industry. There is a promising market in this". The quotation is from "Trade and Industry's energy programme". This was presented in the spring of 1978 and was produced in cooperation between the Swedish employer's association and Sweden's industrial association.

Economic Criticism of Ranstad Project

The opposition based on "romantic ideas" was complemented later by other objections. Independently of each other, two economists, Ake Sundstrom and Marian Radetzki, have studied the conditions for Swedish uranium mining. Both came to the conclusion that Ranstad was a totally hopeless project, purely economically. It could only lead to vast losses. Sundstrom's and Radetzki's official judgements have not been answered.

ASEA ATOM Want Active State Support to Export Uranium And Reactors

In April 1978, the semi-nationalised company Asea-Atom turned to the Swedish parliament with a demand that its activities

be supported. The company produces nuclear power and has had ambitions to build up a large export market in this field. In the company's application it is stated among other things that "if the export of Asea-Atom's reactor systems could be combined with deliveries of Swedish uranium, Asea-Atom's share in the market would increase considerably. None of our competitors will have the possibilities of offering large-scale secure uranium deliveries for the life-time of the reactor."

Environmental Problems Greater Than What One Knew In 1977

The environmental movement's inability to win support for its views during the last years of the Ranstad debate was not due to lack of arguments. It was only after the 1977 veto that the facts about uranium mining's radiological risks became more commonly available in Sweden. Elsewhere in this paper, the radiological consequences of the mining of alum shales containing uranium ore are illuminated, based on material which appeared in 1978. These domestic alarms are complemented by a large number of facts on the catastrophic consequences of uranium mining in other places in the world.

When the decision to wind up Ranstad became public, one of the employers made this statement: "If Skovde Miljöforum had not existed, we would have got permission to start in 1975, and we would have started. Then we probably would have been allowed to continue." It is not right to give Miljöforum all the credit. Without active contributions from local societies for the

preservation of nature, field biologists, and environmental groups it is probable that mining on a large scale would have been started. With the present available facts about the development of uranium prices one can, however, be relatively certain that the period of activity would have been short.

Before production would have been stopped, however, several thousand tons of uranium would have been mined. The consequences to the environment would have been many times greater than the damage which resulted from mining in the 1960's and the loss of billions of crowns would have been increased by billions more.

Positive Forces Stronger

As pessimistically as this can the 7 years of studying the problems of uranium mining in Sweden be summed up. But against these negative experiences -- including the Pleutajokk experience -- one even more powerful, and positive experience, stands out. Where-ever uranium mining is planned, strong opposition develops among the people in the area. Even in the municipality LKAB had chosen as the weakest (Arjeplog with its unemployment), this opposition existed and grew almost enough to stop the application. In any place where the mining of uranium is seriously planned the inhabitants of the area will surely put a stop to the plans.

contact:

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Box 95040, 54105 Skovde,
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Honeymoon in OZ

HONEYMOON OCCUPIED

Australia: Four hundred and fifty people occupied the site of the Honeymoon uranium mine in South Australia's desert on May 14th and 15th. They were "supervised" (as the national press put it) by a large contingent of police. The police were called in largely at the request of the present landlord of the site TETON and CARPENTARIA EXPLORATION COMPANIES, Mrs Lord. The companies will use the "in situ" leaching method of mining, a method used extensively in the USA, and which has been beset with many problems in recent times. One of the main problems is that the huge amount of chemicals used in the leaching process also pollute ground water and damage machinery and equipment on site.

Of the 450 occupants, 100 were Aborigines from Wilcannia, 200 km east of Honeymoon, who came also to stress their land rights claims in South Australia. The occupation lasted, as was planned, 24 hours.

The Coalition for a Nuclear Free Australia, organising the occupation, selected Honeymoon to demonstrate the strength and determination of the movement to oppose the whole nuclear industry in Australia. Many people travelled

thousands of miles by bus, car and plane to get to the site.

On May 15th, a rally was held in Broken Hill, 75 km east of Honeymoon, which has long been declared a Nuclear Free City.

In a statement the Coalition declared:

"We protest against the excessive deployment of police to protect the mining companies' interests by officers, horses, dogs, patrol cars and a spotlight tower on the scale of a military operation. We declare that this Honeymoon Protest was only the start. We demand from those responsible for uranium mining to stop the mining, processing and export of uranium. We as representatives of the anti-nuclear movement in Australia are prepared to take all necessary actions to stop uranium mining in Australia. Honeymoon will be closed by the people as will all other uranium mines".

In an additional declaration, the large aboriginal contingent said that uranium mining was the oppo-

site to the traditional use of land. "The land kept us for thousands of years," they said, "and uranium mining companies should not be able to use it to destroy the future."

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sources: Nick Thieberger, Pat Lowther, The Australian
17.5.82, Tribune May 12,
1982.

HONEYMOON ASSESSED

A month after Honeymoon, Melbourne participants met again to assess the occupation, and to plan future activities. Behind the scenes, a lot of tensions had arisen because of the organisation and conception of the action.

The action, according to the well-presented handbook, was to be a "non-violence action" -- and participants were expected to have non-violence training before entering the site. As it turned out, more than half the participants arrived unprepared, and had to be "trained" at the last minute. Although the planners wanted a non-violent demonstration, many of the participants did not share the same philosophy. So at the site itself a lot of tension arose because of differences in meaning and philosophy. "The Fence" became a major issue; there were some who wanted it pulled down, some who absolutely didn't want it pulled down, and others who would have wanted a

compromise. In the end, the planners had to fit in with the late-comers, rather than vice-versa, and the principle of a non-violent action had to be put aside.

Now one of the reflections of the action is the need to talk about the words used. Do the people, when talking about affinity groups, mean anything more than "gangs"? If not, then the word gang could be used and a lot of problems people have with the terminology could be avoided. Do people use "non-violent action" to be a term synonymous with collective decision making, or with a wider philosophy which Ghandi also had? If the terms are used unclearly, the action also becomes unclear.

On the other hand, one of the participating groups stated: "We are entirely opposed to the concept of non-violent action, of the type that was taken at Honeymoon. We believe that to make a strong and sincere protest against uranium mining you must threaten the mining companies and the people (police and security forces) and laws protecting the companies. We therefore support the idea of civil disobedience as a necessary part of the action against such companies."

That same group ended their criticism on a more positive note: "Altogether the Honeymoon occupation must be seen as an educational process. We think that everyone involved would have learned a great deal. Honeymoon represents an intensification of the struggle to rid the earth of nuclear power, and of oppressive powers generally. If anything, Honeymoon showed everyone that the struggle is not easy." ♣

AUSTRALIAN URANIUM SYMPOSIUM

Ranger, Jabiluka, Olympic Dam, Yeelirrie, Honeyton, Lake Way - these are only some of Australia's very substantial uranium deposits. In the future they will play a major role in the development of the international uranium market.

Based on the importance of Australia's uranium, Edlow International Australia Pty Ltd, Melbourne, and Urangesellschaft mbH, Frankfurt, will jointly sponsor the 2nd Annual Australian Uranium Symposium on September 6-7 in Frankfurt. The conference will convey the latest, first hand information on the Australian industry today.

Representatives from the Australian Embassy, delegates from several government offices, a variety of producers and other experts on the industry will speak on various aspects of the industry, its history, and future.

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BOOK REVIEW

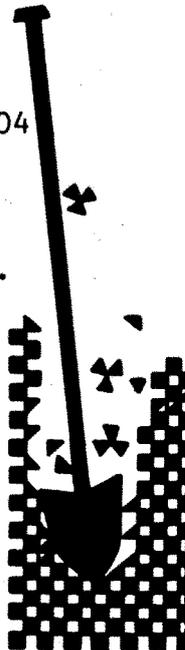
The Politics of Uranium Mining, By Norman Ross, published by Andre Deutsch (London, 1981) \$4.95

Reviewed by Roger Moody, July 1982.

This book starts well - even arrestingly. "Nuclear power is uranium power" says Moss. "It is not produced by a nuclear reactor, but in one...The crucial questions concerning nuclear power are about the distribution of uranium and its by-products."

From that point on, however, "Politics of Uranium" goes steadily downhill. Whatever else, it is not about the morality of uranium production; has little insight into the economy of uranium and leaves quite untouched its real politics. (Uranium-as-imperialism).

This is actually a book in favour of nuclear power, dressed up in liberal guise as an examination of its least talked-about facets. True it has valuable insights into the uranium cartel, inaugurated by RT-Z



in the early 1970's, and since vigorously protected from public scrutiny by the Australian, Canadian and British governments. (The Protection of Trading Interests Act which went unchallenged through Parliament in 1980 was a direct response to the US Supreme Court attempt to expose RT-Z's role in boosting the uranium price fivefold between 1972 and 1975) It's also fascinating on the early role which now-forgotten mines in Zaire and Canada played in the development of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs. Corporate power was crucial even then: specifically Belgium's mining giant Union Miniere and America's Union Carbide.

But what purports to be the key issue in the book - an analysis of whether uranium is in short supply, hence whether nuclear powers have to turn to fast breeder reactors and the so-called plutonium economy in order to survive - is better dealt with in any one of a number of other publications the reader can get from the industry itself. Moss concludes that there is sufficient uranium if the price is right: hardly an earth shattering conclusion.

How far that price is determined by political decisions is something he doesn't bother to examine. No mention of recent embargos on uranium production in British Columbia, Vermont, Newfoundland, New South Wales or throughout the independent Pacific. Little mention, either, of the degree to which new uranium resources may be dependent on the mining of phosphates, gold and copper - even coal - in order that nuclear power isn't priced out of

the energy market altogether.

His ignorance is woeful, though. Within barely five pages of his chapter on the Uranium Cycle (a misnomer if there ever was one considering how much nuclear waste has never been recycled through more than cracking tanks, under shifting topsoil of the Australian desert, or in a leaking drum at the bottom of the sea), I found eight major errors of fact.

By the time he comes to discussing proliferation, Moss almost literally falls to pieces. Those countries which, by his book, have "broken the rules" on the exchange and replication of nuclear technology turn out to be Israel, Pakistan and Iran, with South Korea and Taiwan on the sidelines. There's only one mention of South Africa (incredibly, the explosion of an apartheid bomb in the Indian Ocean three years ago is construed as an Israeli test). Brazil and Argentina, two of the most advanced military nuclear powers on the face of the earth, apparently pose no threat - even to each other.

Since Moss's book is undoubtedly going to become a standard work of reference in the next few years, it's worth asking why it should be so flawed. The simple answer is that the author - already famous for his book on the development of the hydrogen bomb "The Men Who Played God", has swallowed wholesale the nuclear industry's line that proliferation is containable, rather than totally out of control. He relies on the INFCE (International Nuclear Fuel Cycle Evaluation study, concluded in 1979) to support this delusion.

One of the INFCE's key conclusions was that nuclear proliferation has already advanced so far that only internationalisation of fuel and technical trade could impede development of "independent" nuclear bombs. What this means is not that "rogue elephants" like South Africa and Israel and Pakistan will now be isolated. On the contrary, they are being invited to come back into the camp.

Of course it was a camp of rogues anyway: France and China have never officially joined it (ie, signed the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty) but are regarded as de facto members; the US, Britain and Russia have consistently broken their own embargos on the sale of enriched uranium to countries that might use it for weapons. True, the US and Britain do permit the International Atomic Energy Agency to police their civil nuclear facilities, but not their military ones. This reminds me of one of John Papworth's dicta, some years back. "I am of course a vegetarian - except when I eat meat".

If any country ought to be excluded from the club, it is the one country which has publicly developed a nuclear weapon by adapting its civil plant for the purpose; the one country which has reprocessed uranium supplied for non-military use, for an unquestionably warlike end. Yet this power - India - is courted by the Third World, has become the spokesperson of a large part of the world nuclear lobby, and continued to receive weapons grade uranium, even when the Carter administration essentially banned it.

Why does Moss find India apparently respectable, but Iraq not? Iraq has signed the NPT.

It's difficult to escape the conclusion that this is because India has exploded a nuclear bomb (although it hasn't dropped it on people's heads yet). Iraq's designs are much more murky. India has done what only the Big Five nuclear weapons powers have managed to achieve - and without over-reliance upon their expertise. For that reason, it is deserving of respect, if not admiration.

So Moss, while clearly delineating the inter-reliance of military and civil uranium use and while agreeing that technical proliferation "fixes" have not so far been at all successful - nonetheless comes out for nuclear power. We're condemned to shuffle on for a few more years, finding old safeguards collapsing, but new technologies - the French caramel fuel, laser enrichment, the purported closing of the plutonium fuel cycle - miraculously developing to reduce the inherited risks.

C.S.Lewis, back in 1943 wrote a pamphlet called the "Abolition of Man". According to Lewis, the next major scientific development would be, not a different scale, but a different order to any that had come before. Lewis couldn't foresee the nuclear genocide unleashed against Japan by the American state in 1945, but he has already perceived the total internal decay of western causal thinking which nuclear power has come to represent.

Forty years later, men like Norman Moss still haven't.