

Letters to the editor

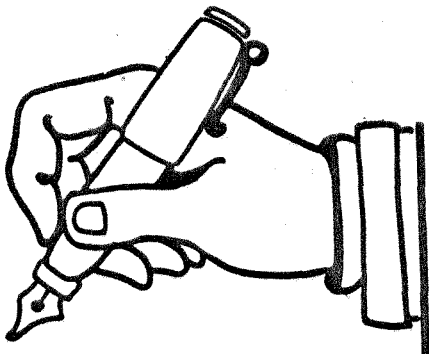
Niagara Gazette, Dec. 6, 1982

Radioactive wastes should be controlled at their source

The Department of Energy has no real solution to the existing Manhattan Project wastes at LOOW and other sites around the country. Its only option is to shuffle the wastes around from one site to another.

Residents of Lewiston and Porter may not wish to impose their present problem on somebody else, yet there are valid reasons for insisting that the wastes be removed to a less-populated area with a drier climate. There should be no question about bringing in other Manhattan Project wastes; Western New York already has more than its share of wastes, both chemical and nuclear.

With regard to reopening either the LOOW or West Valley sites as the northeastern regional waste dump for New York and New England, the issue is harder to deal with. DOE is



trying to use it to its advantage, but it's not DOE's problem. "Low-level" radioactive wastes are generated daily by nuclear power plants, industries, research labs, and hospitals in New York and New England, and the dump in South Carolina that now

takes these wastes will not do so after 1986. Few sites in the Northeast are far from large populations, and none of them have dry climates. Nevertheless, some site must be found by 1986 unless we can get away from the dump-it-in-the-ground mentality. This means looking to the source of the waste to see whether it needs to be produced in the first place. (Fortunately, most of the medical wastes are the easiest to deal with.) Wastes that cannot be avoided should be kept segregated, preferably at the site where they were generated, and stored in a secure above-ground location, according to the best available technology.

Carol Mongerson
Coalition on West Valley Nuclear Wastes
East Concord

Strength in numbers

As a resident of the Ransomville area for 20 years (and proud of it), I am appalled at the apathy of area residents concerning SCA and the controversial pipeline, and now a much greater threat to our health, the LOOW site. If the federal government or the state go ahead with plans to bring nuclear wastes to our area, it is going to have to be transported by our homes, schools, churches, etc., which is going to be very dangerous. All I hear from people is "Well, what can we do."

Well, we can do a lot, if we stand together, show up at meetings, and voice our disapproval. After all, this is where we live and where our kids go to school!

This is such a beautiful area, and it is being ravaged with wastes of all kinds. I'm mad, and want everyone else to get mad over it. Let the federal government and the state know we are tired of being a chemical-waste area.

By being informed and involved, things can be done. A few people cannot do it, but in numbers we can do a lot. So don't sit back and leave it all to your neighbors, become involved!

Rita Wingo
Ransomville

Skeptical view

Regarding the Nov. 25 article, "No new nuclear wastes in Lewiston": Our initial response was one of relief, but because of the government's track record on such matters, we are skeptical.

It is all very nice that the DOE might not pursue the LOOW site as a regional repository, but the question remains, "Who, then, will be responsible for existing and additional atomic wastes?" Since the state will ultimately be responsible for this decision, where will the waste go from here?

We are not out of the woods yet and must work to ensure that we will not be considered at some future date for a state or regional repository.

We returned to Lewiston about seven years ago and were shocked to find out what Niagara County has endured. We cannot bear the burden of much of the nation's industrial waste and then be expected to take on atomic waste as well.

Phil and Becky DiPofi
Lewiston

Insist that LOOW site be cleaned up

"Talk is cheap," read the headline of a recent Gazette article. Our federal government and its wordy wing, the Department of Energy, have shown us that human life and the environment are worth even less in today's money market.

Please, people of Lewiston, Porter, Youngstown, Niagara Falls, Buffalo and everyone in between, do not relax your vigilance against a radioactive depository at the LOOW site. In fact, insist that the area be cleaned up so that families and farms, fields and feathers may have a chance for a healthy life.

Within one-quarter mile of LOOW is Lewiston-Porter Central School, a four-building campus on a 400-acre site, 500 feet from the main highway. The student enrollment is 2,946 and

Student concern

As a student at Lewiston-Porter Senior High School, I am gravely concerned with the recent events dealing with the Niagara Falls Storage Site. The school, with a daytime population of approximately 4,000, is perilously close — a mere one-quarter of a mile — to this hazardous waste dump site, and I am adamantly opposed to any future expansion of this site for the dumping of more nuclear wastes.

It relieved me to have learned that the Department of Energy appears to have abandoned the plan to make this site the eastern regional dump site for radioactive wastes in the United States. It grieves me, though, to learn the reason for this decision — the high cost of implementation, not because of concern for the welfare of this area.

Hopefully, this decision will not be reversed. If plans do change to expand this site, we, the community, must dissuade those in charge of this act. I am not against progress, but safeguard measures must be implemented in matters such as this. The health and safety of the community must be protected. Also, the proper education of the students must not be infringed upon, as they would be if this site were expanded. The future relies more upon our youth than upon money or nuclear expansion.

Mark Mieth
President, National Honor Society
Lewiston-Porter High School

there are 300 adult employees — a total of 3,246 human beings who are even now in the aura of catastrophe. Of the 25 buses which might be available (depending on the time of day) in the event of an emergency, 11 of these transport children to the LOOW area. Throughout western New York State there are other schools and institutions in similar proximity to main highways that are already transporting hazardous wastes.

You must also be concerned. We cannot wait for something to happen. Every day in every newspaper in the country there appear human horror stories on spills, explosions, contaminations and deaths. Some of these were human error, but many the climax of long years of negligence and intentional blindness on the part of our government and its agencies.

We have paid enough tax dollars for deception and lies, now must we also pay for taking lives? Our tax dollars are paying for these salaries, these studies, these sites. Will we also pay with our health and our future?

We are already a generation of contamination.

Gerda Swensson
Lewiston

No more wastes

To residents of Niagara and Erie counties: The LOOW site on Pletcher Road in the Town of Lewiston has made headlines in our newspaper and local television. People are being made aware of a serious situation. Our government has considered this site as a repository for nuclear waste.

Residents of this area are aware that the waste from the Manhattan Project has been stored at the site since the 1940s. We do not need or want more waste from anywhere in the United States. We have more than our share.

This is a matter of concern for all residents of this area. Do not let your guard down. Do not stop writing your elected officials, voicing your concern and disapproval. Let them know we will not accept any additional wastes in Niagara County. We voted them in; let these officials know we can vote them out. We demand our equal rights. Say No LOOW now and forever.

Les and Betty Gaines
Youngstown

A 'new trauma'

The Lewiston Town Board, on behalf of the residents of our town, and for the entire community of Niagara, is pledged to an effort to resist disposal of nuclear waste in the town at the Lake Ontario Ordnance Works site.

We have called upon all our elected representatives, Gov.-elect Mario Cuomo, the U.S. Attorney General and our citizens' groups to support us in a concentrated effort of resistance.

The Niagara Frontier has suffered greatly from the effects of careless disposal of toxic material at Love Canal; real estate values have become a vital issue, and health problems related to toxics are of paramount concern. This new trauma, created by the prospect of disposal of added nuclear waste, without concern on the part of the Department of Energy for our well-being, is more than any community should have to bear.

We are united in our concern and our determination to halt the implementation of any plans for expansion of LOOW to further burden our citizens.

We ask all citizens to join us in our continuing effort to protect our natural resources, our lifestyle, our health and sanity.

James J. Lombardi, Supervisor

Joan E. Gipp, Councilwoman
Alvin C. Ogg, Councilman
Robert E. Lee, Deputy Supervisor

Richard W. Kolke, Councilman

Advice for DOE

Niagara County is an idyllic mix of small stores and huge industrial complexes. Peaceful neighborhoods are balanced by spectacular natural wonders. Wilson, a small town in this county, is equally diverse. It has a healthy blend of residential and agricultural areas, coupled with locally owned stores and businesses, churches, and schools. It is home for 6,000 people. Wilson, like Niagara County, is a place to find a warm smile, a firm handshake, friendly conversation. Time is measured here by the seasons, not seconds, as is so common in today's rapid-fire society.

However, the tranquility that autumn brings to this area was shattered this harvest season. The Department of Energy, under a veil of secrecy and contrary to earlier promises, released plans to site a regional repository for radioactive waste in our neighboring Town of Lewiston.

The writer's advice to the DOE is that it not be misled into the narrow academic approach its consultant, Bechtel National, suggests for the future use of the LOOW site.

Technically, the plan was deemed unacceptable as early as 1947 by Atomic Energy Commission personnel. Economically, this area cannot shoulder the added tax burden, depreciation of property, and loss of business the proposal carries with it. Governmentally, the citizens of this area mold and nurture their future with total command; it cannot be dictated by federal employees from Oak Ridge, Tenn.

Carmella Maselli
Wilson