

# DOE says no wastes for Lewiston

## LOOW won't be nuke depository

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Gazette Staff Writer

U.S. Department of Energy officials offered further assurances yesterday that a former munitions plant in Lewiston will not be converted to a low-level radioactive waste center, area legislators said following a meeting in Albany.

State Sen. John B. Daly, R-Lewiston, and state Assemblyman Joseph Pillittere, D-Lewiston, said federal officials attending the meeting insisted the former Lake Ontario Ordnance Works would not receive additional wastes.

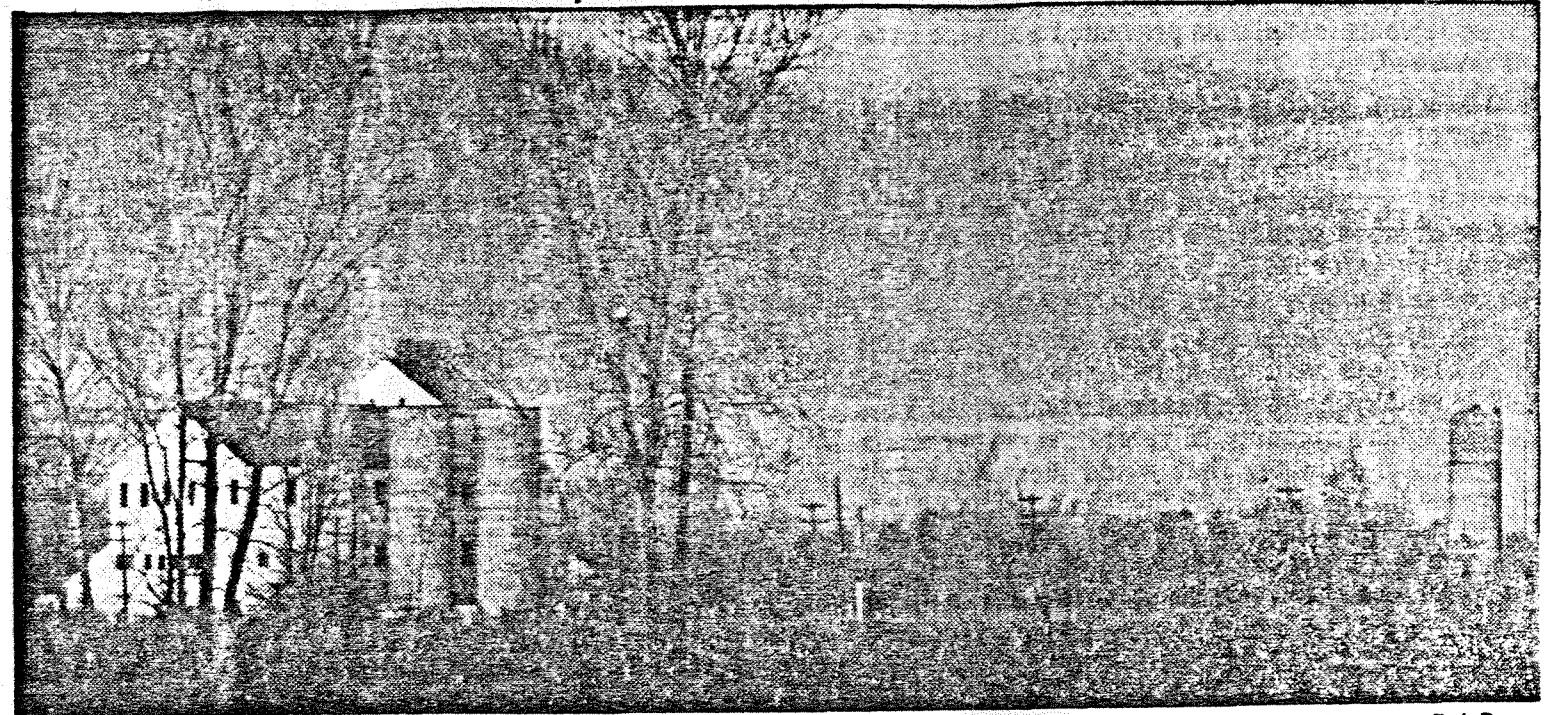
Bechtel National Inc., a government contractor, had recommended Lewiston for the disposal of wastes from six other contaminated sites in the state that were involved in the government's World War II atom bomb project.

Although the ordnance property has been used to store low-level wastes since 1944, Daly said, "The DOE has, as a result of the Bechtel study, concluded that it does not want to reactivate the Lewiston site for new nuclear waste."

Pillittere said they ruled out the ordnance site for additional wastes because of the cost of the conversion — estimated by Bechtel to be as much as \$142 million — and the "sensitivity of the area."

"Mr. (John E.) Baublitz (director, Division of Remedial Action Projects) said 'they are already inundated with chemical waste'," Pillittere said.

The meeting in Albany with Pillittere,



Niagara Gazette — Bob Dann

A few of the buildings at the former Lake Ontario Ordnance Works break over the horizon in Lewiston. At left is the vacant boiler building at the ordnance works old TNT plant. At right is a silo that still contains radioactive residues from

the Manhattan Project. Federal government officials maintain they have dropped plans to reactivate the site for disposal of low-level radioactive wastes.

Daly and representatives of several state agencies, was a prelude to similar sessions scheduled today in Lewiston.

Energy officials set a 3:30 p.m. meeting with the Lewiston and Porter town boards, and a 7:30 p.m. public meeting at the Lewiston-Porter High School auditorium.

According to a report issued during the

Albany meeting, there are seven sites in the state, including Lewiston, that are eligible for remedial cleanup work. All but two are in Western New York.

Although Lewiston does not figure in plans for future waste disposal, Pillittere said the Department of Energy intends to continue with a cleanup program at the former ordnance plant on Pletcher Road.

And the Lewiston site may be used as a repository for radioactive wastes from adjacent properties that were sold after the ordnance plant closed, Pillittere said.

Pillittere said Bechtel is working on a long-term study that will include a number of options for either decontaminating the ordnance site entirely or consolidating the wastes for permanent storage. The study will be completed in 1984.

# WNY is home to most atomic bomb wastes

Nearly 99 percent of the government's radioactive waste in the state — the legacy from the World War II development of the atomic bomb — is in Western New York, the U.S. Department of Energy says.

In a report released to state regulatory agencies yesterday, the energy department listed seven New York sites that may need cleanup and decontamination work.

Three of them, containing an estimated 104,200 cubic yards of uranium ore processing waste from the Union Carbide Corp. Linde Plant, are in the Town of Tonawanda.

In Lockport, energy officials said about 440 cubic yards of contaminated material should be removed from the Guterl Special Steel Corp. — formerly Simonds Saw and Steel — where uranium billets were rolled in one of the mills.

The only site owned by the government, the former Lake Ontario Ordnance Works in Lewiston, contains about 27,000 cubic yards of radioactive waste, federal officials said.

Combined, a storage warehouse on Staten Island and the Seneca Army Depot in Romulus contain about 1,400

cubic yards of waste material, or 1.1 percent of the state's total.

Energy officials, obligated to clean up the private industry sites, have been searching for disposal alternatives, including ocean dumping for some of the radioactive material.

A government contractor recommended consolidation of the wastes in Lewiston, because the site would be convenient for the transfer of other wartime waste material.

Government officials said they have not made any decision on the preferred method of disposal.