

to try and sit on it...." the editorial stated unequivocally. "It is projected that fusion power will supply the United States with nearly all of its electricity in the 21st century. It will, that is if President Carter doesn't stop it," the editorial concluded.

Another defense of nuclear power came from the key Arizona daily *Phoenix Gazette* which editorially pointed out, "Without nuclear generated electricity vast areas of the nation would have been devastated during the extreme cold spell this winter."

In Virginia, where the Nuclear Regulatory Commission objections have halted the plans for construction of a major nuclear generating facility and restricted port development plans, *Lynchburg News* interview with USLP gubernatorial candidate Alan Ogden was followed by an editorial urging "any program proposed by the

President would have to consider Ogden's proposal for fusion development."

Boston, the heart of the Northeast electronics industry covered a March 25 FEF conference there. Following several radio spots and a well-attended press conference an article in the *Herald-American* entitled "Expert Prods U.S. on Nuclear Development," appeared. Quoting FEF Executive Director Dr. Morris Levitt, the article said "Without a rigorous nuclear power industry you won't develop the manpower or technology needed for fusion."

Upstate New York conservative and industrial interests have joined their counterparts elsewhere in opposing Administration policy. The Gannett chain's Rochester *Democrat and Chronicle* carried an editorial by New York State Senator McFarland stating, "Equating the word 'nuclear' with 'bomb' is like thinking 'chair' everytime you hear the world 'electric'."

Rinaldo To Flowers: Save Fusion

Representative Matthew Rinaldo (D-NJ) is circulating the following letter in Congress to Rep. Flowers (D-Ala), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Nuclear and Fossil Fuels of the House Science and Technology Committee. So far Rinaldo has secured 13 co-signers.

Dear Mr. Chairman,

As Chairman of the Subcommittee having jurisdiction over federal funding of fusion power research, you play a special role in determining the thrust and pace of fusion power development. We therefore urge you to support an increase in fusion power funding levels over the amount which the President has recommended.

If President Carter's budget recommendations are allowed to stand, fusion power research funding will fall \$80 million below the levels recommended by President Ford. This would be a cut in funding of nearly 25 percent.

Furthermore, the \$80 million cut—\$60 million from magnetic fusion programs, \$20 million from laser fusion programs — is focussed upon construction expenditures. The practical impact of this cut will be a serious delay in the development of pilot fusion power plants, some of which are already under construction.

Ironically, this massive budget cut has been recommended at a time when the prospects for fusion power have never been more promising. For the first time, scientists at Los Alamos have initiated a controlled fusion reaction with the use of a comparatively inexpensive carbon dioxide laser.

According to the *Washington Post*, "A laboratory spokesman called the achievement a breakthrough in

fusion research that could cut 10 to 20 years from the time needed to develop a fusion reactor." According to the *San Diego Evening Tribune*, "Dr. Peter L. Auer of Cornell University told an American Association for the Advancement of Science audience that recent advances indicate a practical demonstration of fusion power could come within about 5 years. Dr. Edward A. Frieman, assistant director of Princeton University's Plasma Physics Lab, agreed."

Now is the time to maintain a strong federal commitment to fusion power development. It is not the time to reduce that commitment.

We urge you to bear in mind the tremendous benefits of fusion power if this energy source can be tamed.

First, the energy yield from fusion power plants could put all other centralized power sources to shame; according to one estimate, a single large fusion power plant could generate electricity for the entire Atlantic Seaboard.

Secondly, the fuel utilized by fusion power plants would be abundant: deuterium, a form of hydrogen derived from common seawater.

Third, the commercial advantages accruing to the first nation to develop fusion power plants could be enormous.

Fourth, fusion power plants would generate no radioactive wastes and would therefore represent an immense improvement over nuclear power plants from an environmental standpoint.

In light of the many considerations that we have mentioned we hope that you will strongly support an upward revision of the President's budget recommendations for fusion power research.