

Avtex subjected to 'green' witchhunt

by Nancy Spannaus

Mrs. Spannaus, a LaRouche Democrat running for U.S. Senate in Virginia, issued the following statement on Oct. 18 in the town of Front Royal, summing up the plight of the Avtex Fiber company, the nation's only producer of carbonized rayon, a key component of the engine nozzles for the Space Shuttle.

From everything I have been able to learn about the so-called pollution problem at Avtex, there is only one conclusion to be drawn: Avtex is the victim of a witchhunt by an anti-science mob which is committed to tearing down our country's high-technology industry piece by piece.

The history of the prosecution of Avtex, beginning at least in 1988, is one of a group of radical environmentalists committed to shut down a plant which is producing a strategically vital material for our space and defense program. Each time that a pollution problem was identified, a fine was imposed. Each time a pollution problem was corrected, a new one was sought and found. Legally, the state escalated as well, going as far as to now threaten criminal penalties for allegedly deliberate pollution.

Virginia Attorney General Mary Sue Terry has foamed at the mouth because Judge Markow has refused to immediately shut down the plant without a trial. Is Miss Terry an expert in environmental science? There is surely no evidence of that. She has certainly shown no concern about the workers here. In fact, there is precious little evidence that there is any threat to human health at all from the plant. Rather, the pattern is that Miss Terry is prepared to use the tactic of punitive fines and prosecutions to shut down any organization which she finds politically objectionable—from publishing companies associated with Lyndon LaRouche, to the United Mine Workers of America, to Avtex.

Why does Miss Terry find Avtex politically objectionable? That's a good question to explore. It is well known that Miss Terry has been politically sponsored by certain coal companies, including A.H. Massey. Recently, it has also come to light that she was heavily promoted in her political career by one of her clients from Patrick County, one Didier

Primat, who happens to be a very rich board member of the international corporation, Schlumberger Ltd. Schlumberger is known for its banking, oil exploration, and international gun-running operations. One thing is for sure: Miss Terry is not acting in the interests of the general good of the citizens of Virginia.

While it is granted that Avtex is an old plant, which should have the credit available to it for modernization, I am highly suspicious of all the accusations of its being a serious polluter. For example, one of the environmental violations was for too high emissions of sodium sulfate—a chemical recently found not to be carcinogenic or harmful at all!

Then there is the question of PCBs, polychlorinated biphenyls, about which the current scare is being raised. PCBs, a chemical used for insulation, have been banned since the late 1970s. But they have never been proven to cause cancer, or be lethal to humans in the United States, when used normally. They are chemicals which have been used for 50 years, and heavily discarded into the nation's waterways, where they dissolve extremely slowly. There was one major incident of PCB poisoning in Japan in 1968, when 1,300 people consumed rice oil contaminated with a PCB heat-transfer gas. Otherwise there is one study allegedly proving that PCBs cause cancer in rats, while other studies yield no such proof.

Environmentalist hokum

Now, obviously Miss Terry is not the source of the scare about PCBs in general. That has come from the Environmental Protection Agency and the whole host of well-heeled environmental groups which are roaming the country looking to remove all chemicals and industrial processes which have been associated with our increasing standard of living. When the EPA and foundations like the World Wildlife Fund, the Environmental Defense Fund, and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund began this dirty work in the 1960s and 1970s, our citizens looked askance. After 20 years of anti-science hysteria, we have swallowed this lie—hook, line, and sinker.

Let me give a good example of the reliability of the EPA. Back in 1972 the EPA came on the political scene in a big way, with the banning of DDT, the pesticide that kills disease-carrying insects. The EPA's claim, on the basis of alleged studies, was that DDT caused cancer in humans. In fact, even the scientific testimony presented to the EPA didn't support that contention. But the EPA administrator banned DDT, depriving millions of people of the ability to cheaply and efficiently kill insects carrying deadly diseases.

In January 1989, a ten-year medical study was released that underlined this point. The study, published by the *American Journal of Public Health*, studied 919 people over 10 years, and analyzed their mortality rate and cause of death in relationship with the levels of DDT in their blood. The conclusion was unequivocal: "The findings of this study do

not support the hypothesis that exposure to DDT increases cancer mortality.”

We need technological progress

The most corrosive influence afoot in today’s environment is the sabotage of technological progress. Gradually our nation is being de-industrialized on the “theory” that progress is dangerous to our health.

This kind of thinking is turning us into superstitious and immoral fools. It is obvious that industrialized society has lengthened our life spans and improved our standards of living, and our capacity to vastly increase our mastery of nature and the Solar System. If we decide to stop that process now, we are first and foremost, denying those benefits of technological progress to that vast majority of individuals on this Earth who are still living hand to mouth. This is immoral.

Secondly, if we stop that progress, we will destroy the very basis for our own continued existence. My agricultural adviser Jack Hall has one good example. We could always go back from tractors to horses, Jack says, to prevent “polluting” with diesel fuel and the like. But, if we do that, we will have to face the fact that what is now a “surplus” of grain beyond what the farmer needs, is going to have to be fed to those draft horses. (This is not even to mention the problem of all that horse manure!) A lot of the grain available for feeding the city folk, and for export to other countries, is going to be eaten by those horses. And people will starve.

In other words, industrialization has allowed us to improve our productivity per individual, and per hectare, so that we can support more and more people at higher and higher living standards. If we reverse that process, our capacity to support people shrinks—and people die. That’s what many of the environmentalists openly want. Hopefully, most of the American people, deluded as they may be by environmentalist mumbo-jumbo, won’t agree with them yet.

In fact, the suppression of industrialization is what now is throwing us into the worst depression of the 20th century. To stop this depression, in which hundreds of millions could die, we must restart our farms and our industries, build infrastructure like mad, and bring millions into high-technology industrial projects. Environmentalist actions such as this one at Avtex, are obstacles to getting out of the depression. For the sake of our future, and that of the entire world, this environmentalist insanity must be stopped!

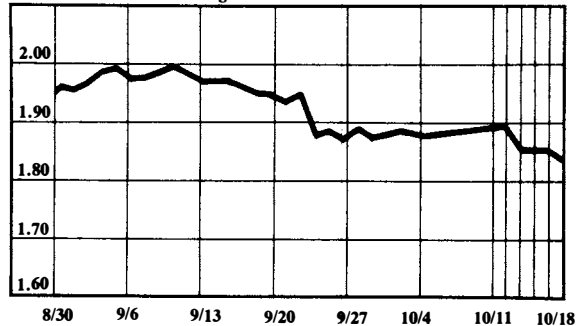
Senator John Warner, my political opponent, has called hearings on Avtex, to be held in the next weeks. Senator Warner has showed himself to be precipitous, and foolhardy, if not worse, in his statements and decisions on Avtex during the past months. Those who know something about this plant, should ensure that the environmentalists do not control those hearings.

In addition, I believe that Miss Terry, who is acting on a political motivation to shut this plant, should get some political heat for her actions. Not to apply it is suicidal.

Currency Rates

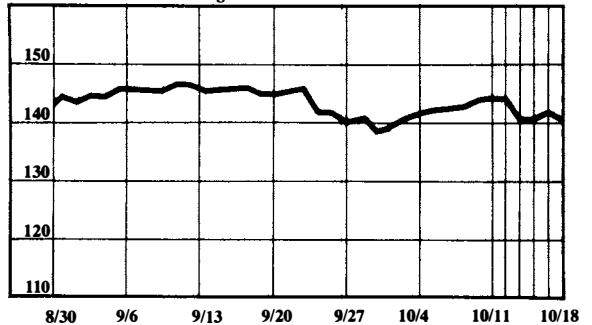
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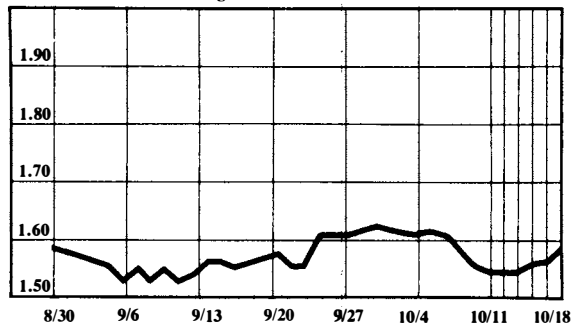
The dollar in yen

New York late afternoon fixing



The British pound in dollars

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The dollar in Swiss francs

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