

# Underground gas project scrapped

United Press International  
FARMINGTON, N.M. — Although the project was considered a success, Department of Energy Officials have announced plans to cap the well which was part of the nation's first experiment at using an underground nuclear device to free natural gas.

An agency spokesman said growing opposition to use of nuclear energy had led gas industry officials to conclude that it would be difficult to establish regulations providing for use of gas produced in such a manner.

So by November, the site of Project Gasbuggy, located 55 miles east of Farmington, will be returned to its natural state. Jurisdiction of the land will be turned over to the U.S. Forest Service.

DOE officials said the restoration work, expected to cost \$290,000, will begin in August. In addition to capping the main well and three exploratory wells, crews will also remove natural gas production and other equipment.

Project Gasbuggy involved detonation of a 29-kiloton nuclear device 4,227 feet underground in a natural gas formation on Dec. 10, 1967. The experiment was conducted jointly by El Paso Natural Gas Co. and what was then the Atomic Energy Commission.

David Miller, a spokesman for the DOE's Nevada operations office, said the success of the project led to two additional experiments, Project Rulison and Rio Blanco, both in western Colorado.

"Our conclusion was that this

could be a successful technique for releasing additional quantities of natural gas," said Miller. "But the problem of establishing standards for using gas containing man-made radioactivity prohibited its implementation."

Miller said Gasbuggy, Rulison and Rio Blanco were all part of the federal government's Plowshare program, an effort to discover peaceful uses for nuclear explosive devices. However, Miller said Plowshare has ended because money is no longer available for such experiments.

"The discontinuance of funding was largely due to public opposition to having nuclear explosions in their backyard," he said.

Miller said tests were conducted to determine level of radioactivity in the gas.

"But there were no standards for the use of natural gas containing man-made radioactivity, and to establish those probably would have taken years, primarily because of challenges by anti-nuclear groups," he said. "Industry just felt there was no way they could make this type of gas production viable in the face of this likely opposition."

At the time it was conducted, there was no strong opposition to Gasbuggy, Miller said. However, by the time the Rulison and Rio Blanco experiments were conducted, opposition to such projects was stronger. He said tests on the gas produced from the Rulison well, however, showed that its level of radioactivity was lower than the naturally occurring radioactivity found in gas used in Denver.



Battalion photo by Lee Roy Leschper Jr.

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# South African accuses U.S. media of hypocrisy

United Press International  
SAN ANTONIO—A South African diplomat Wednesday accused President Carter and some members of the American media of moralizing and pontificating about South Africa's racial policies while ignoring Russian and Cuban excursions and military dictatorships on the African continent.

Pieter Goosen, South Africa's consul general in New Orleans, defended his country's record on human rights in a civic club speech and criticized U.S. policies toward that country.

Twenty pickets marched and chanted "racism has got to go" outside the St. Anthony Hotel. Chairman Mario Salas of the San Antonio Committee Against Mercenary Recruitment and U.S. Intervention in Foreign Countries said Goosen being invited to speak to Rotarians was a disgrace to the City Council which has gone on record condemning the racist illegal government in South Africa and a disgrace to the people of San Antonio in general.

"In our relations with the United States we are getting a great deal of stick and very little carrot," Goosen said. "There is nothing wrong with human rights. We in South Africa are all for it. Such moralizing, how-

ever, should be universally applied. Why should South Africa be singled out?"

Goosen said 40 of the 50 so-called independent states of Africa were ruled by military dictatorships, while the apartheid policy practiced in South Africa was allowing political independence of the nine separate black nations which desire it and also prevented any one group from dominating the other in his country.

"Ninety percent of the 50 states have no human rights, no democracy," he said. "Nothing is being said about them. It is difficult for us to understand why the president of the United States goes to a country like Nigeria where he embraces the political dictator, and from there he talks about human rights in South Africa."

Goosen said he personally regrets very much the death of black protester Steve Biko in a South African jail, but asked, "why all this focus on what happened in Africa when the same thing happened in Texas." He mentioned the case of Joe Campos Torres, a Mexican-American who drowned while in custody of Houston police last year.

The diplomat added that South Africa was of major strategic impor-

tance to the West because 90 percent of the oil and 60 percent of strategic minerals imported by NATO countries, and 28 percent of America's oil, passed around Cape of Good Hope.

"We in South Africa benighted by the lack of support from the Western World," he said. "We fought alongside in two wars. We never asked for aid don't owe the United States a penny. We have tried to contribute to the Cuban and Russian excursion in Africa, which is menacing indeed."

"I think it (Cuban-Russian intervention) is very generally a rethinking, at least a rethinking by officials up in Washington, of their policies, for no more to hear Ambassador Andrew Young talking about the Cuban stabilizing influence in Africa, we would hope that this would eventually lead to an official American policy."

"We think America should stabilize in Africa. South Africa is of all colors — black, white, and pink would like to help, but cooperation and not the moralizing and pontificating."

# American mayors, spouses leave for week's visit to Cuba

United Press International  
ATLANTA — About 100 American mayors and their spouses — all curious about life on Fidel Castro's island — boarded a chartered jet for a week-long visit to Cuba Wednesday.

"I haven't yet been convinced that the Cuban government is acting contrary to the interests of the United States in Africa or anywhere," said Mayor Joseph Tilden of Beverly Hills, Calif. "I'm going because I haven't seen Cuba in more than 30 years."

Tilden said he spent "two or three days" in Cuba as a merchant marine officer in 1947.

Another traveller making a return visit to Cuba was 70-year-old Caro Brown of Denton, Texas, who accompanied her son-in-law, Mayor Joseph Mitchell and his wife, Carolou. Mrs. Mitchell said she remembered Cuba only as a child, but her mother said she has warm and vivid memories of pre-World War II Havana.

"I've been dreaming of this for years and always thought it would be an impossibility," said Mrs. Brown. "I know it's changed and a lot of it's going to hurt me, but I want to see it all again."

The U.S. Mayors Conference shelved an anti-Cuban resolution at the final session of its convention, voting to leave in committee a resolution by Republican Mayor Clay Shaw of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., which would have disassociated the USCM from the trip. The Castro government sent the invitation through the mayors conference, which handled arrangements.

No USCM money or public funds were involved. Each mayor paid the \$495 charter cost privately.

Nashville city councilman Mac McPherson and Douglas Wise said they saw the trip as "an educational experience."

"I'm going to learn a little more about their culture," said McPherson. "I don't think there's anything to be worried about."

Asked if conservative might hold the trip against election time, Wise replied, "I explained correctly to the press; if anything, it can be beneficial."

Mayor David Hayward of Dondo Beach, Calif., playfully named "junior fire marshal" had fellow travellers and said he and the mayors could promote through their trip.

"I want to learn about their culture, their methods, their schools — to maintain a sense of mutual appreciation," he said. "As long as we discuss our differences, I think there's less chance of an armed conflict, that may have to go over there and fight in Africa."

Mayor Richard Godfrey of Mal, Ill., said he let voters in his plans to visit Cuba when it was arranged several months ago and has had no adverse re-

# Computer crimes go unreported because victims too embarrassed

United Press International  
WASHINGTON — Hundreds of crimes involving computers go unreported every year because the victims — big banks, insurance companies and federal agencies — are too embarrassed to report their

losses, Sen. Abraham Ribicoff, D-Conn., said today.

Ribicoff testified in the Senate criminal laws subcommittee on his bill to make it a federal crime, for the first time, to steal information, money or other property from computers used in interstate commerce or to misuse federal computers.

There are 40 laws prosecutors

now can use to combat such crimes but they were all written before the advent of computers, said Ribicoff who is chairman of the Senate Criminal Justice Committee.

As a result, he said, "prosecutors are forced to 'shoe-horn' their cases into already existing laws — which is more appropriate for them than a statute relating directly to computer abuses."

Even more serious, Ribicoff said is that in the absence of effective laws, victims of electronic crimes are unwilling to call police, preferring instead to write off their losses as bookkeeping errors.

"A gunman walks into a bank and pulls off a \$10,000 robbery and bank officials have no hesitation about calling in the police. Now, when a computer is stolen, Ribicoff said.

"But a slick white-collar criminal manipulates that same bank's computers and steals \$500,000 — and too often the bank officials do nothing to say. They would rather absorb the loss than call in the police. They are fearful of the publicity."

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