

Morales rejects plans for plutonium dump

Texas to try to derail federal project

AUSTIN (AP) — State Attorney General Dan Morales said Tuesday that Texas will try to stop the federal government from making an Amarillo weapons plant the permanent dump for tons of plutonium from nuclear disarmament.

"There has simply never been a greater potential for environmental disaster in Texas than is presented here," Morales said.

He said that the Department of Energy was probably already stockpiling plutonium from nuclear warheads at the Pantex Plant, 25 miles northeast of Amarillo.

Last week, federal officials told Congress that the plant could become the storage center for more than half of the 220,000 pounds of plutonium that the United States has manufactured since 1944.

The DOE said it did not need permission from the state of Texas to stockpile the toxic, radioactive metal that triggers thermonuclear explosions.

"The Department of Energy appears to be heading toward the ultimate decision that Texas is going to be indeed the permanent long-term nuclear disposal site for all of the American weapons built up during the Cold War," Morales said.

"We simply intend to do everything we possibly can to ensure that Texas does

not become the final dumping ground for 50 years' worth of accumulation of thermonuclear weapons."

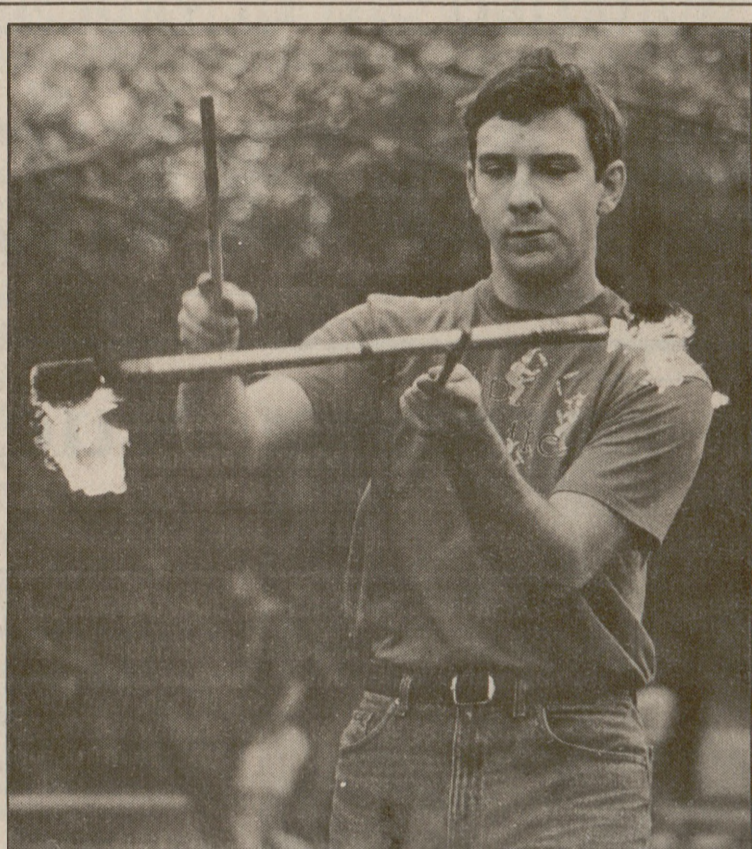
Tom Walton, spokesman for the Energy Department at Pantex, confirmed that plutonium was being stored at the plant. But he said that was not out of the ordinary.

"We are the assembly, disassembly plant of the nation's nuclear weapons, so we have had plutonium pits here since the early 1950s," he said. The pits that Walton referred to are the metal casings surrounding the softball-sized plutonium balls. The plutonium pits are stored in bunkers, he said.

Walton refused to say how much plutonium was at the plant, but said the amount is expected to increase through the decade as more weapons are dismantled.

He added that Energy Secretary James Watkins "has already said he does not view Pantex as a permanent site, but an interim site," Walton said.

Morales said plutonium should not be stored at the facility because it sits above the Ogallala Aquifer, an underground water supply that runs through seven states and is the lifeblood for a large portion of the nation's ranching and farming.



RANDALL NICHOLS/The Battalion

Playing with fire

Steve Herring, a computer science major from Dallas, practices juggling Tuesday afternoon. Herring performed with the juggling group Up In the Air at the Hilton's Mardi Gras last night.

Study Abroad allows students to visit WWII site

Program sponsors France trip for those interested in history

By Karen Praslicka
The Battalion

Students who want to visit France and learn more about World War II will have the opportunity during Fall '92 through a new study abroad program.

Dr. Larry Hill, head of the history department, said the Rudder Scholar Program is intensive because the courses will be taught in a "compressed format."

Students who participate in the program will take two courses in 10 weeks at Texas A&M. The other two courses - lasting four weeks - will be taught at Caen in Normandy, France.

"It's a very comprehensive, rewarding program for faculty and students," Hill said.

The program was developed by the Battle of Normandy Foundation in Washington, D.C. The foundation partially funds students to divide their study between the students' campus and the Caen campus in Normandy.

Schools involved in the program develop their own curriculum. A&M chose two history and two political science courses related to war in society.

"The objective is to use the study of World War II and its causes to try to make people understand better, and promote peace, and keep the world aware of the threats of totalitarianism in a democratic society," Hill said.

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International Week talent show performers receive encore requests

By Alysia Woods
The Battalion

International students who performed in last week's International Student Association's (ISA) Talent Show and dress parade were so popular, they may get to strut their stuff again.

Talented Texas A&M students

wrapped up International Week last Friday night by bringing the crowd to its feet during the show. Some local groups have even requested additional performances.

Karin Koestoeer, director of the Talent Show, said the Caldwell Independent School District and various honor programs at A&M asked if some of the international groups could preform for their organizations.

"They even asked for specific phone numbers after the show," Koestoeer said. "We didn't expect people to ask us to preform around."

Koestoeer said some of the groups are willing and even excited about preforming again, but a few groups have already called it quits.

"I have been calling a lot of the performers and saying, 'Hey, we are not

through," she said. The purpose of the talent show, Koestoeer said, was to introduce the diverse and exciting traditions that are practiced in countries all over the world. The performances were very impressive, she said.

"It (the talent show) went a lot better than I expected it to," said Koestoeer, a junior computer science major from Indone-

sia. "There were a lot of standing ovations."

The show, held in Rudder auditorium, featured performances and modeling. Performers ranged from singers to dancers to musicians. The dress parade featured a number of students modeling clothes popular in their native countries.

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The Battalion

USPS 045-360

The Battalion is published daily except Saturday, Sunday, holidays, exam periods, and when school is not in session during fall and spring semesters; publication is Tuesday through Friday during the summer session. Second class postage paid at College Station, TX 77840.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Battalion, 230 Reed McDonald Building, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843-1111.

News: The Battalion news department is managed by students at Texas A&M University in the Division of Student Publications, a unit of the Department of Journalism. Editorial offices are in 013 Reed McDonald Building. The newsroom phone number is 845-3316. Fax: 845-2647.

Opinions expressed in The Battalion are those of the editorial board or the contributor, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Texas A&M student body, administrators, faculty or the A&M Board of Regents.

Advertising: For campus, local and national display advertising, call 845-2696. For classified advertising, call 845-0569. Advertising offices are in 015 Reed McDonald and office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Fax: 845-5408.

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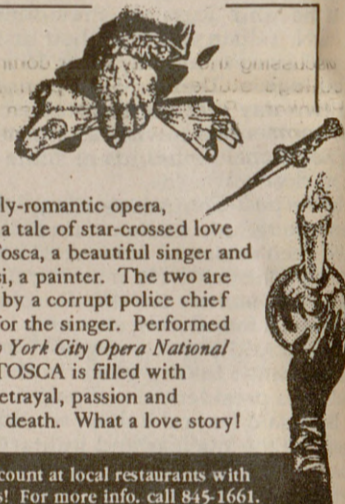
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