

Nuclear Protest in South Carolina Ends in 3d Day With Arrest of 250

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BARNWELL, S.C., May 1—An antinuclear protest ended in its third day today with the arrest of about 250 demonstrators on the grounds of a nuclear reprocessing plant.

Brett Bursey, the leader of the Palmetto Alliance, which sponsored the protest, said that in presenting what he called "a human petition" to the operators of the Allied General Nuclear Services, the purpose was to force the closing of the private, commercial plant.

Two Warnings Before Arrest

Mr. Bursey linked the action in South Carolina with a similar protest this weekend in Rocky Flats, Colo., and a dance in Portsmouth, N.H., marking the anniversary of an antinuclear demonstration at nearby Seabrook in which 1,400 persons were arrested a year ago.

"The problem is nuclear power," he said. "The focus is nuclear waste and the target, albeit a symbolic one, is Allied General."

Demonstrators marched from their 20-acre tent city this morning, a distance of three miles, before crossing onto the Allied General grounds under the gaze of numerous local, county and state law enforcement officials.

The protestors were warned at least twice by representatives of Allied General before police officials, under the supervision of the State Law Enforcement Division, took them into custody and put them in Department of Correction buses. The buses had been parked out of sight throughout the weekend on the grounds of the Allied General plant.

Most of those arrested today had come from around the Southeast to demand that the \$300-million plant, which has not yet been licensed for operation by the Federal Government, never be used for the purpose for which it was designed. Eventually the venture, operated jointly by Allied Chemical, Gulf Oil and Royal Dutch Shell, was to process waste material from nuclear power plants along the Eastern Seaboard.

Environmental questions, along with shifting Federal policy on nuclear energy, have raised doubt as to the economic feasibility of the project for private enterprise. According to a press release handed out by company officials at the plant gate yesterday, "The owners of the Barnwell plant no longer contemplate its operation as a private commercial reprocessing plant."

Drama on Choice of Power

The release said that until "the national and international policies are clarified, the ultimate disposition of the Barnwell facility cannot be determined."

The depth of feeling of the demonstrators was illustrated last night, during a concert and rally, when amateur actors put on a brief drama depicting the problems of an average South Carolina family, forced to choose between nuclear energy and solar power.

While one actor portraying Gov. James B. Edwards of South Carolina tried to convince the family of the efficacy of nuclear energy, an actress dressed as the

electrical industry's mascot "Reddy Kilo-watt" stood behind him, alternately scratching the Governor's back and slipping money into his pocket, to the great delight of the crowd.

Nuclear energy was so safe, he told the family, that he was thinking of changing South Carolina's nickname "from the Palmetto State to the Plutonium State."

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Associated Press

A demonstrator marching to nuclear reprocessing plant in Barnwell, S. C.

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