

Nader characteristically put strong emphasis on citizen action and noted that scientists are increasingly active not only in questioning the safety of nuclear power but in working on alternative sources of energy. And he obviously regarded the initiative campaigns in a number of states as a major manifestation of energy consciousness.

California has been in the forefront of the initiative movement with the Los Angeles-based People's Lobby and its director, Ed Koupal, providing much of the drive. The idea of using the initiative mechanism was an outgrowth of last year's national meeting. Originally, the intention was to seek to organize initiative drives in a few Western states—Oregon, Washington, and Colorado—but apparently when word got around, activists from more states wanted to be included. The result was the organization of all but a few of the 22 states which permit the initiative process into a "partnership" dubbed the Western Bloc. Efforts to qualify nuclear safety initiatives are under way in 16 states for next year's elections.

In California, Koupal and his allies have not taken a total prohibition line. In 1972, a vote on a proposed 5-year moratorium on the building of nuclear power plants lost 2 to 1. The law to be proposed on next year's ballot would permit the licensing of nuclear plants so long as they met requirements suggested in the formal title of the law—the Land Use, Nuclear Power Liability and Safeguards Act. The major requirements would be that the effectiveness of all safety systems would be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the state legislature, that there would be provision for full compensation for damages caused by any nuclear accident (this would require lifting of the limitations on liability provided in federal law), and that nuclear wastes would be safely stored. If the requirements were not met over a stated period of years in a particular plant the law provides for a progressive "derating" of the plant (reduction of the percent of capacity at which a plant operates).

Koupal and others are not flatly predicting victory at this point. With the proposal on the ballot in California, a lot of effort is going into petition campaigns in other Western Bloc states, including Massachusetts, a non-Western member of the bloc. But as the political climate warms up in California with the approach of the June primary, the nuclear issue will come into sharper focus. According to Koupal, California candidates so far have treated the issue cautiously. Few have come out against the initiative proposal. It should be noted that California has a presidential primary,

so that national candidates will no doubt be asked their stand on the nuclear power issue.

Nader's view is that the initiative drive will have an educational as well as political impact. "Next year, more people will learn about the risks and diseconomies of nuclear power." He says he thinks that "win or lose," the initiative effort will broaden the nuclear debate. Nader says that nuclear power opponents have found that "exposure" of the issues result in a shift of public opinion toward opposition to nuclear power.

The Western Bloc may be the first sign of the coalescence of the "antinukes" into a genuine national movement. Until now the movement has been made up of disparate organizations which generally grew out of local groups concerned with intervening in specific situations, usually involving siting of nuclear power facilities.

Critical Mass is the catchy title not only for the national meeting, but also for a monthly newspaper and other Nader activities in the nuclear power field. The Washington organization does serve as a national clearinghouse for information in the field but has to call on sibling Nader groups such as Congress Watch and the Public Interest Research Group for manpower and expertise when special demands arise. The Critical Mass meeting at the Sheraton-Park Hotel was financed by registration fees and a contribution from Tom Laughlin and his wife, Dolores Taylor. Laughlin is the actor-producer responsible for the "Billy Jack" films.

Nader said in remarks prepared for the meeting that the energy crisis and the government's failure to formulate a coherent energy policy have aroused public interest in learning about nuclear power. Citizen concern, he said, "has made the organizing of a mass movement against nuclear power a practical and achievable goal."

An early test of muscle in making policy on nuclear power is likely to come in congressional consideration of the Price-Anderson Act which insures the public against losses incurred in nuclear power accidents but limits liability to \$560 million.

Opponents of nuclear power, including Nader, have argued for full financial responsibility by industry and the ending of federal indemnity provisions which are a main feature of the law. A bill (H.R. 8631) which the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy reported out on 10 November, provides for a phasing down of the government role but would not end the limit on liability. Action on Price-Anderson will provide a clue to how far the opposition to nuclear power has come as a national force.—JOHN WALSH

## RECENT DEATHS

**James P. Bennett**, 88; professor emeritus of plant physiology, University of California, Berkeley; 1 June.

**Helmut K. Buechner**, 57; senior scientist emeritus, National Zoological Park, Smithsonian Institution; 7 October.

**Daniel A. Brody**, 60; professor of medicine, University of Tennessee, Memphis; 30 September.

**Deane N. Calvert**, 46; professor of pharmacology, Medical College of Wisconsin; 3 July.

**Susan P. Cobbs**, 69; former dean, Swarthmore College; 4 October.

**Nicholas Cottrell**, 38; associate professor of psychology, University of Iowa; 23 October.

**Wilbur H. Cramblet**, 83; former president, Bethany College; 9 November.

**Otto C. Croy**, 85; professor emeritus of agriculture, Ohio State University; 24 September.

**Michael M. Dasco**, 66; clinical professor of community medicine, Mt. Sinai School of Medicine; 11 October.

**Lowell S. Ensor**, 68; president emeritus, Western Maryland College; 9 October.

**Norman N. Epstein**, 79; professor emeritus of dermatology, University of California, San Francisco; 6 October.

**Joseph F. Foster**, 57; professor of chemistry, Purdue University; 6 October.

**H. Orin Halvorson**, 78; first director, School of Life Sciences, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign; 20 October.

**Thomas E. Hicks**, 54; director, Nuclear Energy Laboratory, University of California, Los Angeles; 29 September.

**C. Donald Larsen**, 69; retired executive secretary, physiological chemistry study section, National Institutes of Health; 11 June.

**Norman Levinson**, 63; professor of mathematics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; 10 October.

**F. Bruce Morgan**, 56; dean, Carleton College; 2 October.

**Aaron Nimetz**, 75; former assistant clinical professor of pediatrics, George Washington University; 6 October.

**Joseph J. Pfiffner**, 72; professor emeritus of physiology and pharmacology, Wayne State University School of Medicine; 13 August.

**Werner B. Schaefer**, 73; microbiologist, National Jewish Hospital and Research Center; 14 October.

**Richard T. Sollenberger**, 68; professor emeritus of psychology, Mt. Holyoke College; 21 August.

**Errol Willett**, 80; former dean of dentistry, Emory University; 3 September.