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NEWS RELEASE

from the Desk of SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

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ATOMIC-ENERGY PILOT PLANT FOR REA POWER URGED

Atomic-energy plants for generation of electric power offer the Nation vast new possibilities of an abundance of lower-cost power, Senator Hubert H. Humphrey declared today in an address before the annual meeting of the Minnesota Valley Co-op Light and Power Association at Montevideo, Minnesota.

But if the public is going to share fully in the benefits from huge public expenditures in development of atomic energy, Senator Humphrey warned, "steps must be taken now to protect the public's interest in future peacetime uses of atomic power, rather than permit it to become a private monopoly".

"Our great national system of rural electric cooperatives must be alert to the new opportunities that may lie ahead, and to the forefront in taking advantage of these great technological advances. They must be permitted to share with private power companies in experimental development of nuclear power sources."

Cooperation between the REA and the Atomic Energy Commission in construction of nuclear-energy pilot plants for generation of electric power for REA co-ops was advocated by Senator Humphrey.

"Just as REA has pioneered in bringing electric power to rural America, it can also pioneer in making atomic power available to folks of rural America", Senator Humphrey declared.

Officials of the AEC, he said, have "expressed interest" in a partnership arrangement with REA and the local systems in such pilot plants.

"It is possible that the AEC could build one of these pilot plants on a partnership basis with REA and the rural electric systems. REA could make a loan to a system for a conventional generating plant where needed. The AEC would then pay the difference between this cost and the total cost of the atomic power plant. The AEC could certainly justify this as a contribution to the development of atomic power technology. Under such an arrangement, the rural electric system may also be able to secure lower cost power than its present costs of generation because of the lower fuel costs.

"It certainly would be desirable for all these groups, REA, AEC, and the responsible congressional committees, to consider the rural electric systems for the site of one of these pilot plants.

"The actual construction and operating costs of such a plant would be easier to measure because of the nonprofit operation of the rural electric system. This would present a real yardstick of the actual costs of nuclear power," Senator Humphrey said.

Senator Humphrey revealed that during the recent Senate debate on REA appropriations he had secured acknowledgement from the Administration's appropriation committee spokesman that authority existed for use of REA funds for such a purpose. It was with such future developments in mind, Senator Humphrey said, that the Douglas-Humphrey amendment was successfully pushed through the Senate increasing REA loan authorizations by another \$35,000,000.



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