

## A Note of Appreciation

John Parkyn, CEO of Private Fuel Storage LLC (PFS), made an interesting observation at the recent ANS Executive Conference on Private Offsite Dry Fuel Storage. He noted that President Bush “has done more to advance nuclear power than any recent president,” including President Reagan and the first President Bush. “He took a lot of heat in the 2002 decision on Yucca Mountain with not much political gain,” Parkyn stated. (A report from that conference can be found in this issue on page 49.)

This statement got me to thinking. How long has it been, I wondered, since making a decision that would benefit nuclear energy could be considered a popular move? Even in today’s conservative, Republican-dominated government, a decision in favor of nuclear gets you no political gain.

Certainly *opposing* nuclear power has been an astute position for many politicians. In the House of Representatives, Rep. Ed Markey (D-Mass.) has made a career of trying to find nuclear bogeymen under his bed. In the Senate, the minority leader, Harry Reid (D-Nev.), has staked his future on defeating the government’s attempt to site a high-level nuclear waste repository in his state. (Reid, we must note, maintains that he is not antinuclear, merely anti-Yucca Mountain.)

Other than the 2002 Yucca Mountain vote, last year’s energy bill, with its provisions for financial support

for utilities building new nuclear power plants, was really the first political statement of support for nuclear technology we’ve seen in decades.

Anyhow, thinking about all this has led me to a greater appreciation for someone who has, for years, bucked the antinuclear tide and supported nuclear technology and the nuclear industry—and has done it with almost no hope of success or appreciation. That someone is Sen. Pete Domenici (R-N.M.), who has spent much of his career being the lone voice in the wilderness. Domenici could have forfeited his political future with his support of nuclear energy, but he consistently championed the technology, even during times when the most optimistic of us saw only decline and distrust.

With nuclear energy now experiencing the first glimmers of a renaissance, other politicians are stepping, albeit gingerly, onto the nuclear bandwagon, but those of us with long memories will recall the days when there was only one flag-waver on the scene. And to us, he is nothing short of a hero. Thank you, Sen. Domenici, for your faith in us and for your unwavering support.

*A Sad Note:* No one but other people in the magazine business ever bothers to read magazine mastheads. (You can find ours on page 2 in most issues.) Our masthead lists the staffers involved in producing the magazine, as well as the elected offi-



## Thinking about a hero

cial of the Society that publishes it. One name is noticeably absent from this issue’s masthead: that of Pat Fairchild, who served as this magazine’s Advertising Assistant since its first issue back in 1994. Pat died suddenly in February, leaving her co-workers shocked and bereft. In small ways every day, Pat made my job easier, and it is hard to comprehend that in the future, we must continue without her quiet competence and unfailing good humor to help us along.—Nancy J. Zacha, Editor