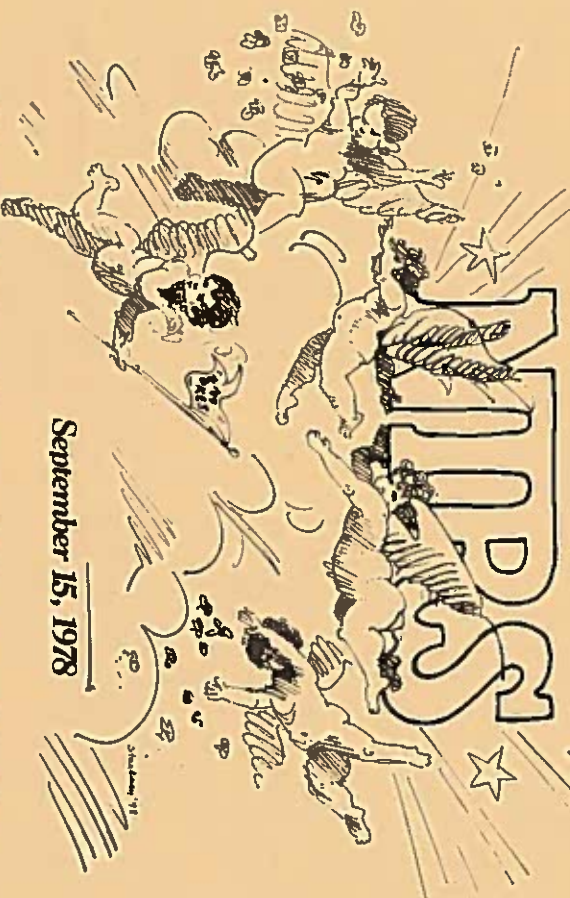


## Announcing the Birth of

# NIRS



September 15, 1978

## Nuclear Information and Resource Service

Several years ago, a button appeared which said simply: "I am a grassroots." Many people wore the button, and many thousands agreed with its simple and direct message: in a truly democratic society, people far from the current centers of economic and political power must have control over the decisions which affect their lives. Democratic decision-making begins at the grassroots level.

Today thousands of grassroots energy activists are building a national safe energy movement and organizing powerful opposition to the further development of nuclear energy. These organizers and teachers, legal intervenors and direct action practitioners, are united in their goal of putting an end to the nuclear option, and in their commitment to decentralized control over the nation's energy decisions. In just a few years, their imagination and creativity have helped build the anti-nuclear movement into a formidable political force that crosses many traditional political barriers.

We have been relatively successful in this struggle because we have learned from the mistakes of other national movements and because we are constantly adding new people to the movement. To continue being successful, however, grassroots organizations must also develop and share more of their valuable resources, and coordinate more of their efforts and information. Our new organization is designed to help with that task.

NIRS was created after we made a nationwide survey of grassroots energy groups, asking the groups what services would best fill their needs for information and for improved communications. Groups explained that they were swamped with unorganized information; had difficulty keeping up with all the energy developments; and found it difficult to find information specific to their localities. Groups also reported an urgent need for consultants, speakers, and other skilled persons, and said that they felt "out of touch" with the work of groups in other regions.

In an attempt to help with these and other problems, NIRS has designed a number of services for grassroots energy groups. These services are described on the following page.

# NIRS

Nuclear Information and Resource Service  
1536 Sixteenth Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20036  
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## Information Clearinghouse

During the summer, NIRS has been gathering materials and organizing a cataloging system for a comprehensive library of nuclear and alternative energy information.

Using the collection gathered so far, combined with the unique information resources available in Washington, we are now prepared to answer requests by phone or mail for specific energy information or documents, or to suggest where to look for certain types of information. These referrals may be to energy groups working on related issues, or to consultants, technical experts, or other skilled people.

## Resource and Referral Service

NIRS is building detailed, up-to-date files on skilled people helpful to the antinuclear and safe energy movement. These lists will include attorneys, consultants, engineers, organizers, physicians, public speakers, public relations and media people, graphic artists, performers, and other persons with useful skills.

We also are operating a Speakers Bureau to provide groups with access to competent antinuclear speakers—both the “big names” and the well-qualified but “low profile” technical experts. On selected occasions, NIRS will also provide speakers or consultants themselves, at minimal cost or no charge, when that service may be of major benefit to a region, a coalition of groups, or to the national antinuclear effort. Currently, the Speakers Bureau is preparing and making available detailed biographical profiles on effective speakers. Eventually, the Speakers Bureau will assist speakers in coordinating media appearances and speaking tours.

NIRS’ resources coordinator is also gathering a list of energy films, videotapes, and other audio-visual materials. Some of these items will be available

from NIRS, starting in December, for a small postage and handling charge.

## Regional Staff

In addition to our information clearinghouse in Washington, D.C., NIRS will have six field staff representatives based with existing citizen groups in six regions of the U.S. These staffers will share a variety of skills with local groups, and will personally convey new information to them.

Skills that can be shared include fund-raising, media relations, office management, public education, and coalition building. Field staffers will also offer their assistance in conducting workshops and seminars, and obtaining speakers and expert consultants. NIRS’ main emphasis will be on providing its services through its field staff, rather than through the Washington office. In this way, we hope to encourage rather than discourage the safe energy movement’s tendency toward decentralization.

The Southwest, West Coast and Mid-Atlantic regional staffers are scheduled to be in the field starting this October, followed by the New England field representative in November, and the South and Midwest staffers in January 1979. We will publicize the names, addresses and phone numbers of all our field staff as they become established.

## Publications

Starting on September 15, NIRS will be publishing a regular information and resources bulletin containing lists, abstracts and digests of key documents and studies, important energy articles, and updates of our bibliographies and resource lists.

We will also compile and distribute an annual energy activists’ resource catalog, incorporating the materials collected during the year. The catalog will serve as a guide to people, information, and organizational tools vital to the antinuclear and safe energy struggles. The first year’s catalog will be produced this winter.



In addition, NIRS may produce a variety of special publications as needed, including leaflets, fact sheets, handbooks, and literature packages. These publications will be made available to all citizen groups at minimal cost.

## Legal Service

NIRS Legal Service will provide technical support and in-kind services to meet limited legal needs of grassroots groups. The Legal Service will also prepare training materials for intervenors, and will conduct training seminars to teach citizen activists how to succeed in their legal proceedings.

As the first project of the Legal Service, NIRS has cosponsored the forthcoming National Intervenor Conference on October 8-10. The conference is designed to train citizens in the legal and tactical skills necessary to succeed in nuclear interventions and utility proceedings. It will make available to grassroots groups the services of nationally prominent intervenor lawyers and nuclear experts.

## Media Service

Through our media service, we will help local groups prepare and coordinate news releases, hold press conferences, contact national media, and

make public service announcements or editorial rebuttals. If requested, NIRS may also provide background data to media for news stories related to nuclear opposition and alternative energy sources. This service will be available starting in January 1979.

## Using NIRS

NIRS will be ready to start answering your requests for information and resources as of September 15. However, we would greatly appreciate it if you supplied along with your requests the following information:

- (1) Name, address, and phone number of your group;
- (2) where you have already searched for the information;
- (3) the urgency of your need.

Please try to make your requests for information as specific as possible. We will then do our very best to answer your questions, or to refer you to someone who can supply the answers.

We look forward to hearing from you in the near future, and hope that you will give us your input and suggestions. If you would like further information about NIRS, or have any energy information requests, please contact us at the address and phone number listed below.

NIRS is a nonprofit organization funded by donations from individuals and foundations concerned about the threat of nuclear power.

NIRS is governed by a Board of Directors composed of community organizers, grassroots energy activists and funders. Six regional Boards of Advisors who will aid the Board of Directors in strategically allocating NIRS resources will be established in cooperation with the groups in each region.

NIRS is staffed by a small group of energy activists drawn from a variety of backgrounds and regions of the country. The combined staff has experience in many areas of writing, organizing, public speaking and debating, media, fund-raising and graphics.