

INVENTOR CLAIMS NEW POWER PLANT WILL GENERATE 3,000 KILOWATTS PER MONTH FOR ONLY 50c

Generate Your Own Electricity?

Editor's Note: Dozens of readers responded to the story in our July-August (Vol. 2, No. 4) issue entitled, "Breakthrough System Promises Low Cost Electricity". Its inventor, Arnold Burke, predicted then it will produce 1,500 kilowatt hours of electricity per month for only 50c. The self-contained power system a farmer or rancher would buy will supposedly cost "in the neighborhood of about \$1,200".

This report highlights the most recent new developments. Although there are many unanswered questions and many observers remain highly skeptical, the controversial idea is generating considerable interest. Its most credible endorsement, so far as FARM SHOW is concerned, comes from officials of Mid-America Dairymen, Springfield, Mo., the nation's largest dairy co-op which has annual sales by members exceeding \$700 million.

As this issue went to press, officials of Mid-America, which reportedly have invested about \$150,000 in the project the past year, were still very optimistic and had no doubts or reservations: "We felt all along that Burke's idea has tremendous possibilities and we haven't changed our minds," Joe Grant, director of engineering services, told FARM SHOW. "We knew there would be risks. However, we felt that there was too much to be gained not to take them. If the project ultimately proves impractical, we're willing to accept that. But at this point, we're very much involved and very optimistic. We intend for it to succeed."

by Steve Prentice

There has been a significant new development in that promising "breakthrough" in the search for low-cost electrical power for farms and ranches which you first read about in FARM SHOW last year (July-August issue).

Inventor Arnold Burke, of the Redell Research and Development Corporation, headquartered at Temple, Texas, has successfully demonstrated the first full size working model for officials of Mid-America Dairymen, Inc., Springfield, Mo., a major stockholder in Burke's company, and for other visitors who have

toured his laboratory in recent weeks.

The revolutionary power plant is 12 ft. high and about 5 ft. square at the base. At its top is a water tank or reservoir, attached to pumps in a bottom buoyancy tank, by a complicated system of water lines. Burke projects that, with only minor changes, the system will yield 3,000 kilowatt hours of electricity. (He originally had projected that it would produce 1,500 kilowatt hours of electricity.)

Here, according to inventor Burke, are other key features of his system for generating low cost electricity:

- "It can be set up anywhere on a

farm or ranch that is accessible by pickup truck.

- "Its life expectancy is more than 20 years (except for \$3 worth of bearings which will need replacement about every 3 years).

- "It can be hooked up to any barn, house, well, shop or piece of equipment that requires AC power.

- "No wiring or other electrical modifications are needed in anything you already own in the way of motors, appliances, etc.

- "Operating costs, including miscellaneous repairs and the cost of oil for bearings, is about \$70 per year over a 20-year span.

- "Its retail cost is estimated at around \$1,500, or about \$75 a year over a 20 year span."

Burke, who invented and built the power plant, describes its operation this way:

"Weight of water falling from the top of the system through a coiled 1½ in. line activates 6 pumps in the buoyancy tank. The pumps force or drive the water back up to feed a second gravity flow set of lines. These

lines direct the water across a 15 in. turbine to produce electricity that is directed into power or storage cells. From there, the DC current passes through an inverter to become 60-cycle AC power for normal home, shop or equipment use. Water expelled after activating the turbine is picked up by the pumps in the buoyancy tank and recycled through the lines again and again to keep the plant operating."

Here's how Joe Grant, manager of engineering at Mid-America Dairymen, a respected engineer who has had a chance to view the power plant first hand, and who has studied Burke's projects and concepts for more than a year, sizes up the inventor and his invention:

"Mr. Burke's work is quite advanced in our time. He has done away with some of the limitations we had in the past. He has combined known laws of physics with unique innovations to tap unused sources of energy. He is also using some manufacturing and mechanical principles that have, to date, been overlooked."

Meanwhile, if you'd like to get on the company's mailing list, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Redell Research and Development, 412 S. 31st St., Temple, Tx. 76501.

Skeptics Sound Off

Since word of Burke's power plant first appeared in FARM SHOW, there have been many skeptics. "Another non-sensical example of the perennial perpetual motion machine. It is ridiculous to state that the system will provide an energy output without any energy input. Such a statement is in direct opposition to well known and proven laws of physics," said an Ohio State University agricultural engineer.

"I don't believe there is, or ever will be, a system that will pump water to a tower tank and let it fall across a turbine and produce 1500 kilowatts kwh of electricity per month with no outside energy or fuel needed. Any power generated would be used by the lift pump. What you have described is a perpetual motion machine long believed to be impossible," said an Arkansas reader.

"If there were any truth to the article, it would set technology back to the Middle Ages when spirits and hobgoblins ruled the earth," wrote a Canadian agricultural engineer.

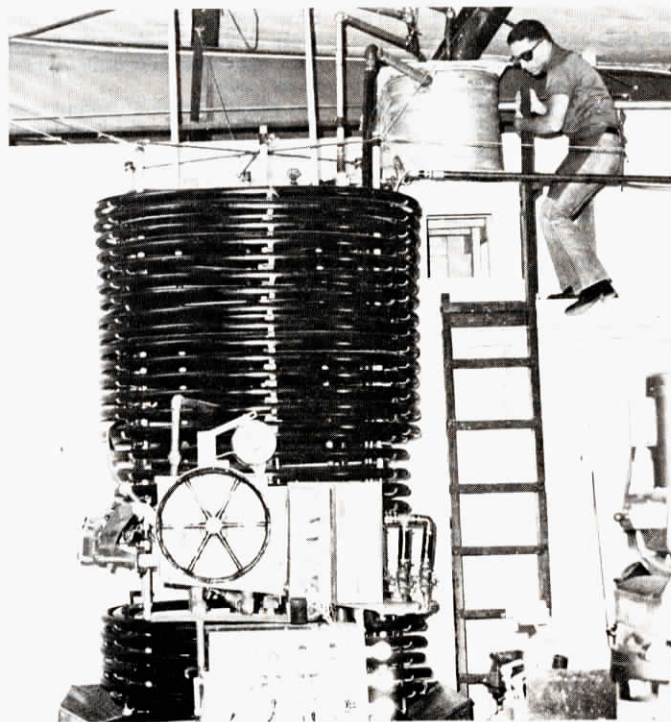
Here's how Robert Schadewald, a free lance science writer from Rogers, Minn., sizes up the invention and its inventor: "It was the FARM SHOW article, published last summer, which brought Burke and his hydro electric system to my attention. The system reminded me of a medieval perpetual motion scheme for making a water wheel pump water to run itself. I decided to follow it up.

"There is doubt as to how the hydro electric power system works. Burke claims that water from a water tower flows through a turbine, turning a DC generator, and then goes into a self acting pump, which pumps it back into the tower without using any energy. Power from the generator flows into a battery, and the battery runs a conversion device which converts the DC power into 110 volt, 60 cycle AC.

"From Burke's vague description, the 'self-acting pump' would seem to resemble a hydraulic ram, a time tested device which, placed in flowing water, will pump water up hill. But the hydraulic ram alone would only pump a small fraction of the water that flows through it, nothing like 100% Burke claims for his device.

"After many delays, Burke finally got his device assembled and water does flow through it, and lights light. But how? The water would flow nicely if the 'generator' were actually a DC motor, turning the turbine instead of being turned by it. The supposedly self-acting pump could have a concealed source of power.

"Without taking it apart, I can't say how Burke's hydroelectric power system works, but the source of motion is not a self-acting pump! Burke claims that he will win the Nobel Prize in physics. The day he does, I will eat my best shirt, without a sup."



Inventor Arnold Burke checks operation of first full-size working model of his low-cost electrical power system for farms and ranches.