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POCKET NUMBER
PROD. & UTIL. FAC. 50-289

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Senate of Pennsylvania

September 13, 1979



Docketing and Service Branch
Secretary of the Commission
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
1717 High Street, N.E.
Washington, D. C. 20555

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I, George W. Gekas, Pennsylvania State Senator from the 15th Senatorial District of Dauphin and Lebanon Counties, do hereby petition the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to speak as an intervenor in the hearing on the reopening of the Unit I nuclear reactor on Three Mile Island.

The testimony I will present will be partly that which I recently submitted to the President's Commission on the Accident at Three Mile Island (see attached), plus other considerations.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully yours,

GEORGE W. GEKAS
STATE SENATOR
15th District

GWGac/bks

enclosure

Acknowledged by card... 9/24/79

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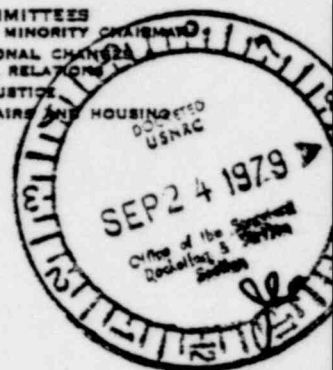
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15TH DISTRICT
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Senate of Pennsylvania

COMMITTEES
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DO NOT USE



TO: The Chairman and Members of the President's Commission on the Accident at Three Mile Island

The 15th Senatorial District of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, which I represent, is composed of the entire County of Dauphin and part of the County of Lebanon.

Within this district are situated the capital city of Harrisburg, Middletown, and the nuclear generating complex called Three Mile Island.

Dauphin County is inhabited by some 240,000 people, all of whom live within the proverbial earshot of the subject nuclear facility.

My purpose in addressing your commission is to enter into the record of your ongoing proceedings the following:

1. Copies of editorials published by the Patriot and Evening News, the newspaper most widely circulated in our area.
2. Copy of the statement of Joseph T. Daley, D.D., Bishop of Harrisburg.
3. A policy statement on the Ethical Implications of Energy Production and Use, adopted by the National Council of the Churches of Christ.
4. Tabulations of a poll conducted by my office following the accident.
5. Conclusions reached by myself, as Senator for the 15th District.

Editorials

The editorials clearly reflect the community concerns that emerged from the accident. The adverse impact of the incident on business activity, tourism, industrial production, etc., is explicit in the message of the editorials. They also accurately discern the agony suffered by the populace throughout the period.

1271 010

Statement of Bishop Daley

The plea of the spiritual and diocesan leader of one of the largest church communities in our area is poignantly direct as to the meaning of the phenomenon.

NCCC Policy Statement

This statement addresses the ethical considerations of the further wanton use and abuse of our planet. This policy has been adopted by many of the churches in the 15th Senatorial District.

Poll

The poll was conducted through the medium of the area's largest newspaper circulation, The Patriot and Evening News. Readers were urged to mail their responses together with their names and addresses to our office.

Although admittedly, the survey was not scientifically based, the results definitely confirmed the sentiments which I had personally perceived since March 28, 1979.

I attended countless meetings, received (and I still receive) all forms of written correspondence, including petitions, letters, cards, mailgrams, etc., dealing with Three Mile Island. My office also received many many telephone calls and personal visitations.

The totality of contact confirmed and re-confirmed the results of the poll, and I am absolutely satisfied that it is accurate.

Conclusions

I respectfully urge the commission to recommend to the President of the United States that Three Mile Island never again be opened as a nuclear facility.

The future of nuclear energy in our nation is not at issue here. There may come a day when nuclear science will develop foolproof, failsafe technologies. There may come a day when nuclear energy will be completely harnessed to the greater good of mankind.

But even if that day should arrive next week, it should not be permitted exercise at Three Mile Island.

The people of our area have undergone an extraordinary event of extraordinary consequences which are still mounting. There is no need to recount the mountain of evidence already before you as to physical and mental health consequences of the incident that have struck our people.

Fear alone, as a separate phenomenon, would be raised to such an unbearable tempo should TMI be reopened that it is foreseeable that an outmigration will occur that would be tantamount to the very evacuation that voluntarily did occur in the first days when thousands upon thousands abandoned their domicile.

1271 011

Our area must not be subjected to that possibility. It cannot be dismissed as mere conjecture, or an emotional response. Our people fled! When they returned, they did so cautiously and warily, ready to leave again, at a moment's notice.

From the standpoint of maintaining the level of permanent, non-transient population of our Central Pennsylvania community at its present proportions, TMI must not again house nuclear capability.

Our area cannot afford to be the subject of intense scrutiny by a prospective new business or prospective new home building family, or new industrial venture, or planned vacation tour, and be rejected by reason of the presence of a facility that would be conjured as belching radiation or apt to do so.

Local motels and hotels have already demonstrated this adverse reaction by virtue of the many cancellations of conventions and conferences originally scheduled for 1980 and 1981 because the groups want to avoid the "stigma" of coming so close to Three Mile Island.

A reopening of the facility would create in a substantial majority of our citizens such an apprehension of a monster interloping in their backyards that life would literally be unbearable.

Some of our people, like some people everywhere on the globe, are emotionally incapable of coping with massive fear -- fear of the possible, fear of the unknown, fear of a real and possible danger. I will not blindly ignore this fear by ascribing to the assertion that they must overcome it. The fear is too pervasive and too strong -- and justified.

Similarly, I will not be part of the response that says to not regenerate TMI would be too costly. Monetary expense should not be the primary consideration. The cost, past and future, must be a priority item for the governmental and utility structure only after the real issue, the cost in human misery should TMI reopen, is addressed.

Finally, the issue is reduced to one of plain justice.

It would simply be an injustice to reopen TMI. Our people have been used as guinea pigs, as unwilling subjects of an experiment in terror. We have undergone the trauma of readying hundreds of thousands of people for evacuation. We have undergone the distraction of our schools, hospitals, and work places by reason of the accident. We have suffered the hurtful spectacle of our older people feeling trapped and alone in facilities for the aged. We have seen our mothers and mothers-to-be despair for their born and unborn. We have witnessed the herculean efforts of our civil defense organizations in the face of an impossible task. It would be a violation of the human rights of our people to re-open Three Mile Island, their rights to live securely, without fear. To have a government approved re-installation of the same menace that changed our lives forever would be a trespass on the very right to exist in a normal manner.

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The pursuit of happiness, as envisioned by the constitutional fathers would no longer be possible in Central Pennsylvania.

Respectfully submitted,

George W. Gekas
Senator, 15th District

GWG:ae

1271 013

**STATEMENT
ON
NUCLEAR ENERGY**

**JOSEPH T. DALEY, D.D.
BISHOP OF HARRISBURG**

SEPTEMBER 9, 1979

1271 014

STATEMENT ON NUCLEAR ENERGY

Joseph T. Daley, D.D.
Bishop of Harrisburg

In the aftermath of the accident at Three Mile Island, there is continuing controversy over the use of nuclear power as a national energy source. The debate has significance not only for us but for future generations, for the decision the American people of this day make with regard to a national energy policy will have profound influence on the environment we leave for our children's children.

The Church has a specific role to play in such public policy debates.

"The Church guards the heritage of God's word and draws from it moral and religious principles without always having at hand the solution of particular problems. As such she desires to add the light of revealed truth to mankind's store of experience, so that the path which humanity has taken in recent times will not be a dark one." (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, No. 33)

It is my intention to suggest here certain moral principles which need to be considered in the debate on nuclear energy if the American people are to make a decision that will truly benefit mankind.

RESPECT FOR HUMAN LIFE

One of the primary considerations in public policy decisions must always be the foreseeable effect on human life. In our time, we are faced with so many immediate threats to human life that we sometimes lose sight of our responsibility to future generations, in our efforts to alleviate immediate problems. We must remember, though, that God created the world and man as an integrated whole. He gave man the earth and all its goods for the benefit of all mankind. That gift is not one of outright ownership; it is one of stewardship, a part of the covenant we have with the Lord of Life to protect and sustain human life, both present and future. We cannot willfully use the goods of the earth or alter the environment for our own benefit without regard for the effect on our neighbors or on the future of the human race. It is a matter of Christian justice to humans not yet born that we consider whether the benefits we anticipate for ourselves and our society outweigh the risks we create

for future generations. In discussions of nuclear energy we must not forget that human life is sustained by the earth, and if we destroy or significantly alter the earthly resources, we may adversely affect human life.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

In his encyclical *Redemptor Hominis*, Pope John Paul II speaks of the fears of modern man, pointing out:

"The man of today seems ever to be under threat from what he produces, that is to say, from the result of the work of his hands, and, even more so, of the work of his intellect and the tendencies of his will. . . . Man therefore lives increasingly in fear. He is afraid that what he produces—not all of it, of course, or even most of it, but part of it and precisely the part that contains a special share of his genius and initiative—can radically turn against himself; he is afraid that it can become the means and instrument for an unimaginable self-destruction, compared with which all the catastrophes and catastrophes of history known to us seem to fade away."

The Holy Father then asks us to consider whether this technological progress of man makes human life more human in every aspect, more worthy of man. I believe we must ask that question of energy technology, and specifically, in this instance, of nuclear energy technology. Has the technological progress we have made in developing nuclear power to meet our growing energy demands contributed to true human development? Does it make us better, more aware of our individual dignity, more concerned about our neighbor, more open to our responsibility to share our goods with others?

Technologies, in themselves, are neither a blessing nor a curse. They are, rather, a tool for man's use. When we develop a new technology or improve existing technologies, we must carefully evaluate the probable long term benefits and risks to mankind as well as the immediate benefits and risks of implementing that technology.

TERMS OF THE DEBATE

From the time of the crisis at Three Mile Island we have been virtually overwhelmed by conflicting and confusing information on the specific situation at Three Mile Island and on the general issue of nuclear reactors. The people most directly affected—the people of this Diocese—have found themselves victims not only of the emotional and physical effects of the accident, but of the lack of reliable information on which to make personal decisions about their own lives and their fam-

ilies. It has been suggested that the Three Mile Island accident created for many their first real confrontation with their personal mortality—the first real understanding that man and his technology are not self-sufficient, but are truly dependent on God to sustain us and to protect us, sometimes from ourselves. In such an atmosphere it is perhaps inevitable that initial reaction is to look for scapegoats, to criticize the motives and integrity of those most directly responsible for the operation and regulation of the power plant. That is, perhaps, inevitable, but it does not seem to be a particularly productive nor even essentially Christian approach to solving the problems. It would seem both more constructive and more in keeping with Christian principles to presume that those involved with Three Mile Island acted with honesty and integrity, even though they may have acted without adequate factual knowledge.

It also seems appropriate to acknowledge our debt to those employees of Metropolitan Edison and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission who accepted their responsibility to remain at the plant during that period of unknown danger, using their knowledge and skill in the attempt to bring the situation under control. If we presume anything about the motivation of these people, let us presume that their actions and statements were motivated by desire to control the danger, to prevent greater harm, and to behave in a responsible manner. If we frame the debate over nuclear energy development in terms of evil intent and confrontations designed to shift all responsibility for Three Mile Island to others, it does not seem likely that the debate will produce legitimate and morally acceptable long-term solutions.

Let us rather frame the debate in terms of the basic question brought to the forefront by the accident at Three Mile Island, that of whether the benefits to be gained by our society through continued development of nuclear energy outweigh the risks to ourselves and to future generations.

The most significant fact underscored by this accident is that not enough is known about the risks and benefits of nuclear energy to enable us to make a reasonable decision about continued development. We know that there are unsolved problems concerning the disposal of radioactive wastes produced by nuclear reactors, that the procedures for construction and operation of reactors have proven inadequate, that we lack sufficient information on the immediate health effects of low level radiation and on the possible long term genetic mutation radiation may cause. In 1977, the Vatican Delegate to the International Atomic Energy Agency General Conference in Vienna pointed out that:

"The reality of these hazards, to date undetermined in many instances, places a serious obligation . . . on all states considering such projects, to proceed with utmost caution and with a realism that will not run risks that the citizenry of any state and of the world has a right to be protected against."

In the light of the Three Mile Island accident, it does not appear that we have proceeded with either caution or realism in allowing the development of our present dependency on nuclear power. Realism requires that we acknowledge that the immediate shutdown of the nuclear industry would cause significant energy cutbacks, affecting jobs and the production of food and other necessities, as well as our personal lives. Realism also requires that we acknowledge that extensive mining and use of coal, using existing technology, have adverse environmental and health effects, as well as depleting land resources we hold in stewardship. Realism requires that we acknowledge that development on a wide scale of alternate energy sources may well carry equally dangerous long-term effects.

But realism also requires that we acknowledge that we have entered into nuclear energy development without adequate knowledge of what its effects on human life are, or will be. Given the inability of the scientific community to agree on the health effects of the radiation produced by the regular operation of nuclear power plants; given the enormous human and economic cost of even one TMI type accident; given the open agreement that there is no method for disposal of radioactive waste that does not threaten to seriously damage the world we leave to the future, realism requires that we acknowledge that we have acted unwisely in allowing the proliferation of nuclear reactors.

MORATORIUM

Respect for human life and responsible stewardship require that we call for a postponement of construction of nuclear plants, including those now underway. The purpose would be to provide time for the scientific community to make a more intense study of the safe use of nuclear energy, including radioactive waste disposal, and the physical effects of radiation. It should continue until the responsible government agencies can formulate regulations and policies to ensure proper construction of plants, adequate training of plant personnel to operate the plants, and to guarantee the safety of the plants by a well-regulated and properly enforced system of inspection.

In calling for such a delay, we must realize that there is no ready substitute for the energy that would be produced by plants now under construction or in the planning stages. Consequently, a moratorium on nuclear plant construction mandates a simultaneous moratorium on increased energy consumption. A moratorium will require that each of us make a concerted effort to conserve energy, that we sacrifice some degree of personal comfort and freedom to which we have become accustomed, that we make more efficient use of the available energy for life's necessities, rather than its comforts.

There are many scientific and technical questions that must be answered in the discussion of our nation's energy policy, in particular the policy on nuclear energy. We must look to those people with the scientific and technical expertise to provide us with reliable information with which to answer those questions. In all the controversy over the issue, we might well bear in mind the words of Pope John XXIII that "scientific competence, technical capacity and professional experience, although necessary, are not of themselves sufficient to elevate the relationships of society to an order that is genuinely human . . ."

Respect for human life and responsible stewardship are requirements in the determination of how to use the scientific knowledge in a manner that is truly human and of benefit to mankind.

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1271 016



Policy Statement on
THE ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF ENERGY PRODUCTION AND USE

Adopted by the NCCC Governing Board, May 11, 1979

INTRODUCTION: ETHICAL GUIDELINES ARE NECESSARY IN THE PRESENT ENERGY SITUATION

The purpose of this Policy Statement is to clarify the values which should inform decisions about public energy policy, to set forth broad guidelines for decision-making, to indicate criteria by which energy technologies can be assessed, and finally to suggest some public policy positions and appropriate actions by Churches and individual Christians.

The National Council of the Churches of Christ addresses the energy issue from a conviction that Christians must be guided by values based on the Biblical witness to creation, redemption, stewardship, justice and hope. These values should shape the policy decisions necessary to meet the profound challenge facing humanity: how to share limited amounts of energy fairly without poisoning ourselves by poisoning the wider environment.

Energy sources on which societies have become dependent are being used up. Threatened shortages increase the risk that hazardous energy technologies may be developed and used, threatening world stability and the ability of the earth to sustain life. Technical experts not only disagree on the conclusions they draw from facts; they disagree on the facts themselves. In such a threatening and bewildering atmosphere, ethics must provide important guidelines for energy policy decisions.

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Energy use must not exceed the limited natural resources available, or overtax the ability of the environment to absorb pollution. Priority in energy use should be given to the satisfaction of basic human needs such as food, shelter, health, and clean air and water. Human dignity demands the widest possible participation in policy decisions which seek to meet these requirements.

THEOLOGY PROVIDES THE BASIS FOR OUR ETHICS

Human beings are made by God as persons-in-nature, co-creatures in reciprocal relationships with everything else that God has made. As an integral part of creation, humanity shares in its finite nature. Only after making this basic affirmation does the Bible declare that humans are distinctive because they are created in God's image. Persons are unique in their capacity to respond to God in faith and hope, to their human neighbors with love, and to the non-human part of creation with respect and responsible care.

Humanity has often selfishly distorted the divine commission to exercise dominion over the earth into an unlimited license to exploit the material world and weaker persons. This perversion of dominion into domination is a sin and is one of the underlying causes of the energy crisis. When faith in the Creator and in the Kingdom of God is replaced by faith in human ability to solve all problems by technical means, humanity has also fallen into the sin of idolatry.

The obedient fulfillment of God's command calls for persons to think and work together both as accountable stewards of the whole earth and as bold advocates for fairness in the human community.

The Bible makes clear that the fertility of the earth -- its ability to sustain human life in the peace and justice of Shalom -- is intimately bound up with the protection of justice in the social order. Human faithlessness and injustice to our neighbor could destroy the creation. The definition of "neighbor" is now being radically expanded to encompass all humans in past, present and future generations, as well as the rest of creation. The range of our ethical responsibility must expand to conform to the fact that using advanced technology greatly increases the range in time and space of the consequences of human actions.

THE ETHIC OF ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE

We are called to embrace an ethic that takes into consideration the claims of those involved and endangered neighbors who, in the present energy debate, are necessarily voiceless because they do not yet exist, or because they exist in the non-human creation.

Ecological justice is such an ethic. It is an ethic for all members of the community of life, inspired by Christian hope for the fulfillment of God's promises assured us in the resurrection. It provides guidelines for human choice and action. An ecologically just society will be guided by the values of sustainability, fairness and participation.

Sustainability refers to the earth's limited capacity to provide resources and to absorb the pollution resulting from their use. Sustainability requires that biological and social systems which nurture and support life not be depleted or poisoned. The concept of sustainability defines the limits within which all should participate in the equitable satisfaction of needs. 1271 019

Fairness refers to distribution of energy resources on the basis of need, and to an equitable distribution of the total benefits and costs. Fairness embodies, among other things, the rights of today's generation and those yet unborn.

Participation is a component of fairness in that the individual community member must take the responsibility and must have the opportunity to be involved in determining public policy and the hierarchy of values which guide that policy.

ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE INDICATES GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR DECISION-MAKING

Creating a just energy policy is difficult because inevitably some ethically desirable goals must be "traded off" against other goals which are also good. Precisely because such decisions are not simple, they should be made only after maximum public consideration, with conscious awareness of what good goals are being sacrificed, and agreement that the sacrifice is necessary. The ethic of ecological justice indicates some general guidelines which should apply when decisions are being made about energy policy:

- I) If using a technology poses a risk of irreversible global damage, great prudence and caution should be exercised in deciding about its use. The greater the risk, the less moral justification there is for its use.
- II) The survival needs of those who are below the minimum material standard of living should be met before the wants of those above that standard. Since survival depends on energy, it should be distributed by a standard that insures adequate food, health, housing, 1271 020

and clean air and water for all.

- III) The views of those who will be affected by a particular action should be heard in the decision-making process.
- IV) The effect on future generations of today's decisions must be considered.
- V) Those who receive the benefits of energy decisions should, as much as possible, bear the costs.
- VI) Regardless of their size or political influence, all countries should have access to full and responsible participation in arenas in which research and policy decisions are made which will affect their energy futures.
- VII) Quality of life considerations -- such as human dignity, satisfaction in employment, community cohesion and religion -- must be considered along with technical and economic factors.

ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE INDICATES CRITERIA FOR ASSESSING TECHNOLOGIES

Ecological justice is an ethic of means as well as an ethic of ends. An ecologically just society cannot be achieved by using a technology which violates the values of fairness, sustainability and participation. The Environmental Impact Statement has been one means by which the effect of a technology on our natural life-support system can be monitored and controlled. No such legally enforceable method exists to assess and control the social impacts of a technology on the quality of life of individuals, communities and political institutions. Among the areas affected by technologies

are public health, employment, safety, income distribution, community cohesion and civil liberties.

No single energy technology can realistically be expected to supply all human needs; a diversity of resources and different-sized systems will be necessary. No energy system will be free of contradictions and compromises, but ideally each technology pursued will violate as few of the following criteria as possible:

Safe: protective of the human and natural environment, and not threatening irreversible global damage.

Appropriate to human nature: not requiring infallibility or error-free performance from humans or machines.

Flexible: capable of timely change -- even reversibility -- during development and use in order to adapt to unpredictable events, such as unexpected health hazards.

Non-destructive to other necessities of life: for instance, not removing good agricultural land from food production or polluting necessary water supplies.

Resource-saving: using renewable energy sources rather than non-renewable -- for instance, water power rather than oil.

Resilient: capable of absorbing shocks, -- for instance, oil embargos, severe winters -- without causing major social disruptions.

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Fair: capable of having its benefits and costs allocated fairly to all, including future generations -- for instance, not requiring one group to suffer genetic damage in order that another group may have electricity.

Comprehensible: capable of being understood, with information freely available, so that those citizens who wish to can participate responsibly in decisions.

Non-violent: difficult to use directly or indirectly as a weapon -- for instance, not able to be easily made into a nuclear bomb.

Employment-producing: not replacing jobs with energy-intensive machinery, especially in areas of high unemployment.

Pluralistic: assuring a diversity of options, cultures, life-styles and opportunities, and encouraging a scale that permits choice and control by the user.

Appropriate: most nearly matched to the society to be served -- for instance, small-scale and local where the need is mainly in small communities -- and producing the kind of energy most nearly matched to the work to be done -- for instance, electricity for tele-communications, solar for hot water.

Aesthetic: pleasing to the senses and enjoyable to work with.

ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE INDICATES U.S. ENERGY POLICY OUTLINES

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U.S. energy policy should be in accord with the ethic of ecological justice and the guidelines and criteria it suggests. Such policy needs careful development to prevent severe social and economic dislocation.

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The ethic of ecological justice suggests some elements of a national energy policy which the NCCC Governing Board would support:

We support efforts to conserve energy and to use it more efficiently.

Not using energy unnecessarily is the safest and cheapest "energy resource". Continued education about the necessity for and practical ways of saving energy is needed. Laws and regulations deterring conservation and recycling of materials should be adjusted.

We support publically funded energy-conserving projects designed in a way that will provide new skills and jobs for the unemployed. Such projects include winterization and insulation of homes, small-scale appropriate energy technologies and public transportation.

We support programs to limit fuel consumption that do not rely primarily on raising prices, which places an intolerable burden on the poor, the elderly and those with fixed incomes.

We support increased Government research and development funding, subsidies and other incentives to expand the practical application of appropriate energy technologies based on renewable energy resources such as solar energy, including wind and water. Some of these are already developed; large Government subsidies to other energy processes should be diverted to make appropriate technologies more readily available -- for instance, freeing transportation of its inefficient dependency upon petroleum.

We support a national energy policy which does not rely on a long-term large increase in the burning of coal. Besides increased health and safety risks to workers and the general public from using more coal, extensive burning of fossil fuels may cause irreversible damage to the world's atmosphere, changing

weather patterns and so threatening food production and the continued habitability of large areas of the earth. However, some increase in coal use over the short term is reluctantly accepted as necessary to avoid increased use of nuclear energy or economic dislocation caused by severe energy shortages.

We support a national energy policy which will not need to utilize nuclear fission. Secure handling of nuclear wastes over thousands of generations and safe operation of nuclear plants require that humans and their machines operate without endangering human beings or the environment. Human beings are not infallible; they will make mistakes. The result may be irreversible damage to the environment and to the human genetic pool.

We support a continued ban on the commercial processing and use of plutonium as a fuel in the United States, and stringent efforts to reach world-wide agreement banning such use of plutonium. Commercial use of plutonium can result in proliferation of nuclear weapons. The potential misuse could result in pressure to curtail civil liberties in order to prevent such a threat.

We support the rapid development of enforceable regulations to require a social and environmental impact statement of a technology before it is widely used and the monitoring and control of its use to prevent social and environmental damage.

We support U.S. policy which seeks to share technologies internationally without imposing capital-intensive energy technologies on other countries.

We support full U.S. cooperation in international efforts to ensure equitable distribution of necessary energy supplies and the rapid development and deployment of appropriate technologies based on renewable energy resources such as solar energy, including wind and water. 1271 025

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THE CHALLENGE TO CHRISTIANS AND TO THE CHURCHES

The Governing Board of the National Council of the Churches of Christ calls upon the society of which it is a part to enact energy policy which fosters the values of sustainability, fairness and participation. The institutional church and each of its members as individuals and as citizens must challenge traditional modes of thought and behavior. The NCCC Governing Board urges each Christian, each member communion of the National Council, and the Council itself prayerfully to seek guidance for a faithful response to the challenge facing us all. As possible components of such a response, the following suggestions are offered for use by Council agencies, denominations and their members:

Study materials which deal with energy issues in the context of ethics.

Monitor the energy use of households, local churches, judicatories or national agencies by means of careful and inclusive record-keeping over a period of time. Include everything from the use of products made from non-renewable energy resources to the energy used getting to meetings.

Examine these energy-use records and act to conserve energy by eliminating unnecessary use.

Develop methods by which to take advantage of government and voluntary programs designed to help poor communities, the unemployed and the elderly meet high energy bills and with conservation and job programs.

Join with others to monitor utility and energy industry regulatory agencies. Monitor local, state and national building codes, regulations and legislation. Monitor utilities and energy companies which service you or in which you have stocks. Work to bring business practices and government regulations and legislation into harmony with the values of sustainability, fairness and participation.

* * * *

Voting results: 120 in favor; 20 against; 1 abstention

The Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
of North America records its negative vote.

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1271 027

18TH DISTRICT
GEORGE W. GEKAS
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COMMITTEES
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Senate of Pennsylvania

RESULTS

of the

CITIZENS' POLL ON THREE MILE ISLAND

NOTE: This poll was conducted through the general circulation of the Patriot-Evening News on June 4, 1979 (circulation estimated at 113,427 based on 1978 figures).

Polls were received from June 4, 1979, to June 15, 1979.

A copy of the poll is attached.

Percentages are based on 1188 responses received.

QUESTIONS:

1. Do you believe that nuclear energy is safe today ?

YES	<u>139</u>	NO	<u>1049</u>	NO ANSWER	<u>0</u>
	<u>11.70 %</u>		<u>88.30 %</u>		<u>0 %</u>
TOTAL RESPONSE		<u>1188</u>	;		<u>100 %</u>

2. If not, do you believe that nuclear energy can be made safe someday ?

YES	<u>271</u>	NO	<u>750</u>	NO ANSWER	<u>167</u>
	<u>22.81 %</u>		<u>63.13 %</u>		<u>14.06 %</u>
TOTAL RESPONSE		<u>1021</u>	;		<u>85.94 %</u>

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3. Do you favor the continued use and research of nuclear power as an energy source in our nation ?

YES	<u>263</u>	NO	<u>719</u>	NO ANSWER	<u>206</u>
	<u>22.14</u> %		<u>60.52</u> %		<u>17.34</u> %
TOTAL RESPONSE <u>982</u> ; <u>82.66</u> %					

4. Do you favor a moratorium on the building and operation of new nuclear power plants in the United States ?

YES	<u>757</u>	NO	<u>330</u>	NO ANSWER	<u>101</u>
	<u>63.72</u> %		<u>27.78</u> %		<u>8.50</u> %
TOTAL RESPONSE <u>1087</u> ; <u>91.50</u> %					

5. Do you favor the continued operation of present nuclear power plants ?

YES	<u>237</u>	NO	<u>861</u>	NO ANSWER	<u>90</u>
	<u>19.95</u> %		<u>72.47</u> %		<u>7.58</u> %
TOTAL RESPONSE <u>1098</u> ; <u>92.42</u> %					

6. Concerning TMI, do you wish to :

A. Close TMI forever : 493 ; 41.50 %

B. Reopen TMI as a non-nuclear energy producing facility :
259 ; 21.80 %

C. Reopen TMI as a nuclear facility only when improved and tested nuclear safeguards are developed: 270 ; 22.73 %

Answer A & B: 27 ; 2.27 %

Answer B & C: 10 ; .84 %

Answer A & C: 5 ; .42 %

1271 029

Reopen TMI : 1 ; .08 %
 NO Answer : 97 ; 8.16 %
 TOTAL RESPONSE : 1091 ; 91.84 %

7. Who should pay for the cost of the accident at TMI ?

A. Met-Ed : 688 ; 57.91 %
 B. Consumers: 13 ; 1.09 %
 C. Federal Government : 38 ; 3.20 %
 D. State Government : 0 ; 0.0 %
 Others:
 E. Stockholders, Insurance Companies, Babcock & Wilcox:
5 ; .42 %
 F. Those at fault: 1 ; .08 %

Combination answers:

Answers A & B : 15 ; 1.26 %
 Answers A & C : 125 ; 10.52 %
 Answers A & D : 1 ; .08 %
 Answers A & E: 57 ; 4.80 %
 Answers A,B, &C : 11 ; .93 %
 Answers A,B,C & D: 12 ; 1.01 %
 Answers A, B, C, D, & E: 24 ; 2.02 %
 Answers A, B, C & E: 4 ; .34 %
 Answers A, C & D : 16 ; 1.35 %
 Answers A, C, D & E : 3 ; .25 %
 Answers A, C & E : 3 ; .25 %
 Answers B & C : 1 ; .08 %
 Answers C & D : 5 ; .42 %

1271 030

T M I POLL RESULTS (Continued)

(QUESTION 7.)

NO ANSWER 148 ; 12.46 %

TOTAL RESPONSE: 1040 ; 87.54 %

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1271 031

000-1157-01

Sunday Patriot-News
Sept. 9, 1979



GPU Ploy

Lower Taxes, Safety Unrelated

WITH NOTHING seeming to mollify area residents, top officials of General Public Utilities, owner of Three Mile Island, are suggesting the use of a carrot — lower taxes — as a means of quieting local dissent over the reopening of its nuclear complex.

Appearing before the state House Select Committee on TMI last week, GPU chairman William G. Kuhns suggested to lawmakers that they consider redesigning the public utility realty tax in a way "that would favor those living within a designated radius of a nuclear facility."

A study done more than a year ago by two Penn State researchers concluded what Kuhns is no doubt hoping — that there would be a lot less opposition to nuclear power plants if the host communities were paid for their troubles. States like New Jersey, New York and Connecticut have laws that do channel most of the tax revenue levied on power plants into the communities in which they are located, usually resulting in lower property taxes, with mixed success in terms of public acceptance.

IN PENNSYLVANIA, however, there is no monetary advantage at all for those communities in which nuclear plants are located. The lack of such of an incentive has not, however, made Pennsylvanians any less willing to accept nuclear plants than New Yorkers; if anything, the reverse is true. But that was before March 28, and it is clear that there is no other reason for Kuhns' ploy than a hope that dollars will somehow blot out the bad memories of Three Mile Island.

It is also a ploy that won't cost the utility a cent. It already pays the utility realty

tax into the state coffers, with a little more than half the revenues shared among all the municipalities and school districts of the state, regardless of whether they have a power generating facility or not. The state keeps the rest.

Disregarding, for the moment, the threat of accidents, this is not a fair apportioning of the funds, since there are costs and disadvantages associated with having a power plant in the community. An equitable formula would take into account those costs and disadvantages and make a distinction between those communities that bear them and those that do not.

BUT TO attempt to devise a formula that seeks to compensate communities and their residents for living with the threat of a nuclear accident poses two serious difficulties.

First, where do you draw the line and can you draw the line? The potential of a nuclear accident cannot be defined by drawing rings around the plant out to a distance of x-miles. The threat exists not just for the residents of Londonderry Twp., Middletown and Goidsboro, but potentially to people living far beyond this narrow circle, in the event of a catastrophic accident.

The second and more serious problem with this proposal is that it seeks to interject monetary values into an issue that transcends the temptations of lower property taxes and cheaper power. The integrity of the environment, the public's physical and mental well-being and life itself must not be allowed to be quantified in dollars and cents. Either nuclear power is safe or it isn't. No amount of money can make it acceptable if it is not safe.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 032

The Patriot

Edifita

Nuclear Wastes

Time to Bring the Issue to a Head

MET-ED'S Robert C. Arnold, head of the Three Mile Island recovery team, was right on the money when he told the state House Select Committee on TMI last week that Pennsylvania should consider making a serious effort at establishing an in-state disposal site for radioactive waste materials.

But we would go a step further and add that either the state provide a radioactive dumping ground within its borders or it had better eliminate those activities — such as nuclear plants — which generate highly radioactive wastes and for which there is not now a single facility in the country that can handle them.

The handwriting is on the wall. There are only three sites in the entire country designed to accept even low-level nuclear wastes — and the governors of two states (South Carolina and Nevada) have barred wastes from the TMI accident from their facilities. Once word gets out to Washington State (location of the only site accepting TMI wastes) that 2,000 to 3,000 truckloads of radioactive leftovers are headed their way, there may well be considerable public pressure placed on Gov. Dixie Lee Ray to shut the door. In addition, the governors in those states through which the wastes must travel to reach Washington may block passage on their highways.

The resistance to the TMI wastes and the exercise of

state authority to prohibit access to what — at least in Nevada — qualify as federal facilities, should serve as a warning of what could be a futile effort to provide a federal solution to the nuclear waste problem. Already, a large number of states, including some of the prime prospects, have indicated their opposition to becoming nuclear dumping grounds.

No one can blame these states for not wanting our garbage, since we don't want it ourselves. That attitude is unlikely to change for the foreseeable future, though perhaps a few communities, such as Derry Twp., which view the reopening of TMI as a desirable goal might be willing to volunteer one of their sinkholes as a nuclear waste repository as a testament to their faith in the nuclear fuel cycle.

WE SUPPORT Arnold's plea for state action on a nuclear waste site, not because we are in favor of Pennsylvania becoming a radioactive dumping ground, but because it is time this issue was brought to a head. Too many people want the benefits of nuclear power without facing up to the problems, the biggest of which may be the safe disposal of their waste products. We cannot separate the two indefinitely or we are going to be faced with very serious difficulties, the beginnings of which already are visible.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 033

Patriot-News

Editor

Evacuation

State Still Can't Handle One

THE DEEPER the state House Select Committee on Three Mile Island looks into the monumental problems and complexities associated with a mass evacuation, the greater the realization of how fortunate this area was that it never came to that during the accident last spring. The picture is one of almost total unpreparedness in retrospect and of near futility in bringing together all of the diverse components of an evacuation and attempting to anticipate the demands of a future nuclear accident.

After listening to witnesses for weeks, a member of the select committee, Rep. Ivan Itkin, D-Pittsburgh, expressed the view that the state is no more capable of putting an evacuation plan into effect now than it was on the day of the Three Mile Island accident. We suspect he is correct, because preparing for a nuclear accident is as difficult as trying to prepare for a major earthquake — no one can predict where it will occur, when it will occur or its degree of severity.

One aspect of the problem came into focus last week, when a question arose over the availability of the National Guard in the event of a nuclear accident. The Guard was not called up during the TMI accident, but a document was prepared (though not distributed) advising troops they would not be "exposed to dangerous levels of radiation or fallout." Inexplicably, Governor Thornburgh was unaware of the widely publicized National Guard notice when he appeared in Washington before the President's Commission on Three Mile Island, a few of whose members appeared to be less than pleased with the portent of the adjutant general's memo to his troops.

On the same day in Harrisburg, however, State Police

Commissioner Daniel F. Dunn was telling the House Select Committee essentially the same thing. He would not, he said, order his men into a contaminated area without appropriate protective gear. Oddly, Dunn's statement has not caused a brouhaha.

The presidential commission chairman, John G. Kemeny, was reported to have said of the Guard memo that "it did not do much for morale in Middletown," though, in fact, it is doubtful it had any effect at all. The people of Middletown are less concerned about who will be around to assist them in the next evacuation than they are in avoiding having to endure another evacuation.

Nevertheless, if nuclear plants are going to continue to operate, the prospect of future nuclear accidents and evacuations has to be faced. And no one really should expect the Guard or state police to go into an area with dangerous levels of radiation without protective gear any more than one would expect a fireman to enter a collapsing building.

IF THE GUARD and state police are expected to play a role in nuclear accidents, the real question is this: Who is going to pay for the necessary gear, equipment and training? Is it going to be the Department of Defense, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the state, the utility, or who?

You, that's who. The taxpayer, or the ratepayer, will bear another burden to keep nuclear power from expiring under the weight of its own fatal flaws. Yet the Guard and state police involvement in a nuclear accident represents only a very small component of a massive problem. To expect that ideas on paper can anticipate and respond to the most serious of nuclear accidents is to expect far too much.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 034

Patriot 8/13/79

Lid of Secrecy

Swiss Nuke Incident Kept Quiet

SWITZERLAND, which has gone into nuclear energy in a big way, may find its normally reserved citizenry upset to learn that it was never told about an accident at one of the country's nuclear plants which closely resembled the scenario at Three Mile Island. Responsible authorities in this country tend to downplay the problems at nuclear plants, but abroad, even in democracies, the public is rarely told anything.

We can only hope, of course, that the Swiss will demand greater public accountability from their government on nuclear safety, as is the case here and in other European countries. If the incident at the Swiss plant had been reported it might have prevented our nightmares with Three Mile Island.

But whether Switzerland and other nations which shroud their nuclear programs in secrecy open up or not, American builders of nuclear reactors ought to be required to report accidents and serious malfunctions occurring in the plants they build overseas to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Westinghouse, which designed the Swiss reactor, knew of the accident but failed to report it until April of this year.

The chances are it would not have made any difference, since a number of other incidents forewarning of Three Mile Island failed to move the NRC to take corrective action. But it should have made a difference and it might well make a world of difference the next time something goes wrong at a foreign nuclear reactor.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 035

The Patriot

Editor

Nuclear Wastes

Dumping Ground for the World

THERE ARE at least two good reasons why the Carter administration's plan to increase the amount of nuclear waste brought into the United States from foreign countries makes sense.

First, there is the avowed administration intent to reduce the amount of fuel diverted by foreign countries to the production of atomic weapons.

Second, it provides at least some hope that the increasing amounts of nuclear waste generated around the world will be disposed of in a safe and sane manner.

Unfortunately, there also are several major drawbacks to the Carter proposal, paramount among them being the inability of this country to devise and agree upon a method of disposing of its own highly radioactive wastes which will remain extremely dangerous for thousands of years. The nation does not now have a spent fuel reprocessing plant in operation or an ongoing permanent disposal facility for nuclear wastes. Meanwhile, the spent fuel from the nation's commercial reactors is being stored on site at nuclear plants, a situation that cannot continue indefinitely. Further compounding the problem is the likelihood of a strong public reaction in any locality proposed either as a site for reprocessing or permanent disposal.

An additional problem with the Carter plan is the in-

creased traffic of nuclear wastes it will cause and the greater potential for transportation accidents which conceivably could be devastating to the environment, including contamination of fishing grounds and overexposure to humans.

At this point in time, no one can presume that this country will be able to solve its own problems with the storage of nuclear wastes. If we can, then we should seriously consider accepting wastes from other countries, because some of them — Great Britain for example — are disposing of their wastes in ways that pose a threat to the seas and thus a threat to us all.

IF, however, we relieve these countries of the responsibility to care for their own wastes in an acceptable manner, we are only encouraging them to build even greater numbers of nuclear plants to create more wastes, with the result the United States will be bearing a large part of the burden of foreign nuclear power without receiving any of the benefits.

The best solution to this problem from an environmental standpoint would be for the U.S. to address the problem of its own wastes and for the other countries to do the same. A nation that cannot handle its own nuclear wastes properly ought not to be in the business of producing them.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 036

Nuclear Mood

The Public Is Skeptical

Retrieved Aug 29 1979

THE SO-CALLED "experts" are no doubt dismayed to find their elaborate proposals to remove the concentrations of radioactive water and gases contained at Three Mile Island Unit 2 repeatedly greeted with an angry response from the public. Comforted by their confidence that technology will do what it is supposed to do, an abiding faith in the safety margins established by government radiation standards and the knowledge that releases of radioactive substances into the environment is standard procedure at all operating nuclear plants, the experts hardly could be blamed for concluding that paranoia

grips Central Pennsylvania.

The reality is quite different. What is happening here is that for the first time, a large population is questioning every aspect of nuclear power because the March 28 accident brought home to them the realization that nuclear energy is not as safe or harmless as they were led to believe. The myth that government wouldn't allow anything with a remote chance of inflicting a catastrophe on its own citizens also was shattered when the agency invested with the responsibility of protecting the public didn't.

The result is not paranoia, but skepticism; not unreasonableness, but heightened personal awareness of the potential stake that each individual has in every little act that takes place at Three Mile Island.

NON-EXPERTS, for the most part, the people of this area cannot devise the means by which Met-Ed cleanses itself of its self-inflicted contamination, but they have every right to proscribe the specifications which they believe necessary to protect their health and well-being, whether or not those specifications fall within the range the experts deem reasonable. Simply stated, those specifications are no krypton in our air, and no radioactive water in our river. Technology must conform to the wishes of the people, not vice versa.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 037

The Patriot

Education

TMI Consumers Safety Comes Before Economics

WE WOULD be inclined to commend the initiative of State Consumer Advocate Walter W. Cohen for petitioning to participate in Nuclear Regulatory Commission hearings on the reopening of Three Mile Island Unit 1, except for a fear that his purpose will be no more clear to the NRC than it was to the reporters who covered his announcement.

Cohen said he wants to enter the proceedings to protect the "economic interests" of the consumers of Metropolitan Edison and Pennsylvania Electric, owners of TMI. In his view, the main issue the hearing board should address is the economic issues involved. Cohen, who claims to have "no position" on nuclear power, then goes on to state the NRC should arrive at a decision that "cuts no corners on safety."

In a roundabout way, Cohen appears to be pushing for the reopening of TMI 1 as quickly as possible. On purely economic grounds that approach might be warranted since the cost of replacement power is costing customers in the neighborhood of \$15 million a month. While customers are undoubtedly unhappy about the extra financial burden imposed on them by the accident, there is no indication that they put this concern above their concern with the reopening of TMI 1.

THE "CONSUMER" is not entirely economically oriented. He also has a right to expect that the product he purchases or its means of production will not in some way endanger him or his family. It follows then that a "consumer advocate" best represents the consumer when he adopts the same priorities.

The Patriot

Education

Overdose of Stress A Significant Fallout from TMI

A GROWING body of scientific evidence and thought implicates stress as a contributing cause of a number of modern-day diseases, among them coronary heart disease, ulcers, alcoholism and possibly cancer and diabetes. Like low doses of radiation, the effects of stress on the human body are invisible — and thus difficult to track, and are not likely to manifest themselves until a lapse of time after the initial causative event.

It will take exhaustive research to corroborate it, but there is little doubt that the single most significant health-threatening aspect of the accident at Three Mile Island was the creation of an excessive degree of stress in the general population surrounding the plant.

While the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has recognized that "psychological distress" caused by the accident is "a matter of real and substantial concern," it left it

to the three-member Atomic Safety and Licensing Board considering the merits of reopening TMI 1 to decide whether the psychological fallout should be part of its review and deliberations.

IN OUR VIEW, any decision in regard to the restarting of the power stations on Three Mile Island which ignores or whitewashes the trauma inflicted on the people of this region by the accident or ignores their understandable fear and apprehension of living with the prospect of a repeat performance, qualifies as a negligent and criminal act of omission.

This area has paid its dues to the nuclear age with an unprecedented dose of mental anguish that no one who was here will ever forget. Add to that the physical toll from this psychic overexposure and one has the sum of an experience that only cruel or callous indifference would repeat.

1271 038

POOR ORIGINAL

The Patriot

Editorial

Terminating TMI

Geesey Invites Assembly Debate

THE ROUTE chosen by state Rep. Eugene R. Geesey, R-Lewisberry, to compel the General Assembly to confront the future of nuclear power in Pennsylvania may be unorthodox, but his goal is both commendable and a necessary process if the Legislature is to address the concerns of millions of state residents — a direct consequence of the Three Mile Island accident.

Since the beginning of the civilian nuclear power program, the responsibility for the regulation and control of the industry has been the exclusive domain of the federal government, though in recent years a few states have vetoed the siting of new nuclear plants.

What Geesey proposes in a bill sponsored by him and Rep. Stephen R. Reed, D-Harrisburg, is a termination of the existing nuclear generating station at Three Mile Island. Such an action would represent an unprecedented challenge to the federal authority vested in the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to permit or

deny the operation of nuclear plants. If passed by the Legislature and signed by the governor, the bill, as predicted by Geesey, will almost certainly be challenged in court, setting off what may become one of the most important confrontations between states rights and federal rights in our time.

A monumental question such as this is likely to attract ideological and economic arguments on both sides, but a resolution of this issue on the side of justice will be achieved only if it is based on the central question of who can best protect and provide for the health, safety and welfare of the public in this particular instance.

Rep. Geesey has suggested that Three Mile Island could easily be converted to a fossil-fuel generating facility. We disagree with that assessment, but more importantly we hope that side issues such as this will not obscure the obligation of our state legislators to face squarely and forthrightly the nuclear risk to the stability and well-being of the Commonwealth.

1271 039

POOR ORIGINAL

The Patriot

Edit

Hydro Available

Could Aid State's Power Supply

WITH its mind set on nuclear power as the only option available for future electric generating capacity, the Pennsylvania Electric Association, the lobbying arm of the state's utilities, states flatly in a just-issued report that "additional hydro-electric sites are not available to utilities in the state."

The happy news is that they are wrong. In the past two weeks, Pennsylvania Electric Co. has announced it has received approval for its plan to restore the Warrior Ridge hydro plant on the Juniata River near Petersburg. And just last week, W. Wilson Goode, chairman of the Public Utility Commission, announced that his agency is pursuing the development of small scale hydro based on findings that the state has a potential small hydro capacity of 400 megawatts which appear to be feasible.

In addition to this, further development of existing hydroelectric capacity on the lower Susquehanna could provide up to 200 megawatts of additional capacity, according to the PUC. Taken together, this 600 megawatts of capacity represents two-thirds the power the Three Mile Island Unit 2 nuclear reactor was designed to provide operating at maximum capacity. In terms of reliability, it is close to matching a large operating nuclear plant.

If the PUC, working with other interested parties, can cut through the red tape, and if a funding mechanism can be found to fund these plants (the creation of a state energy authority would be one method), then there is no reason why this non-polluting, renewable and safe source of energy cannot be fully developed over the decade. One of the advantages of small hydro is that it can be built in increments and in a comparatively short time, while the time span for nuclear can run to a dozen years, which leaves little room if conditions that

first prompted construction change over the years. Combined with a stronger conservation effort and greater use of other alternative energy sources, small hydro could make the construction of future nuclear plants unnecessary.

The difference in scale is important for another reason. As the utilities build larger and larger power plants, the loss of a plant for maintenance, refueling or malfunction has a much greater impact on the total electric system. At one time, excess capacity of 10 to 15 percent was considered adequate reserves. More recently, that figure has grown to 20 percent and now the PEA is saying it should be around 30 percent. At the time of the Three Mile Island accident, reserves were close to 40 percent.

There is a Catch-22 quality to the logic behind the PEA's insistence that Pennsylvania build more and more nuclear plants. More are needed, they say, because around 1990, by their computations, reserves will drop below 20 percent, with a greatly increased possibility of brownouts and blackouts. But if that scenario is correct, it will be made possible because of the unreliability of nuclear plants, as evidenced by TMI, the great degree to which we will have come to depend on them and the large loss of power they represent whenever they go out of service.

We should keep in mind too, that the accident at TMI 2, also resulted in the indefinite loss of TMI 1 and the shutdown of several other nuclear plants for a period of time. The discovery of a serious generic fault or a repetition of Three Mile Island conceivably could result in the shutdown of every nuclear plant in the state. No amount of reserves can possibly protect us if we follow the nuclear option — and there isn't enough money in this Commonwealth to try.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 040

Energy Choices

There Is a Better Way

THE NEXT FEW years may well be decisive in determining how this state meets its long-term energy needs in a way that is economically and environmentally acceptable.

Right now Pennsylvania is on a collision course between its ratepayers who want energy at prices they can afford without jeopardizing their health and the electric utility companies which want even higher rates so they can build even more nuclear power plants.

In the next six years alone, the state's electric utilities must raise \$10 billion to finance the completion of power projects to which they are already committed. They may borrow that money or issue stock, but ultimately the ratepayer will provide the \$10 billion, plus interest and plus higher utility profits, which the companies say they must have if their bonds and stocks are going to be attractive to investors. Add that on to your electric bill.

But that is hardly the end of it. According to the Pennsylvania Electric Association, which represents the state's investor-owned electric utilities, additional nuclear capacity, not now contemplated, must be built if the state is to avoid power shortages in the late 1980s. What those units will cost is anyone's guess, but you would be well advised to consider it an additional burden on your budget down the line.

YESTERDAY in this space we suggested that we could reduce or eliminate the need for these new plants through an intensive program of conservation. Reducing the anticipated increase in annual demand for electricity by even one or two percent a year would have a dramatic effect on the need to build new power stations, and it could be done at a much lower cost.

Price, of course, is the greatest incentive for conservation, as the utilities have demonstrated for the last five years, a period in which electric rates took off and traditional consumption patterns took a dive. It is essential to consider not only the price of electricity at the moment, but what it will become if we follow the direction proposed by the utilities. This is an aspect of energy forecasting which the Public Utility Commission would do well to incorporate in its own evaluations, not only because price will influence future demand, but more importantly, by knowing now what electricity will cost 10 or more years hence we can decide whether it wouldn't be more economic to launch an alternative approach to meeting our energy needs.

At the moment, comparative data just doesn't exist, which pretty much leaves the field to the utilities. But even if we had the data and it proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that there is a cheaper alternative there

POOR ORIGINAL

(continued)

ONE INVITING possibility is presented by the proposal to build a new state office building to house the Department of Environmental Resources. Here is a chance to invite the nation's best architects to create a building that utilizes the sun to its full benefit in an urban environment, an area in which too little research has been done. The building should serve not just as a means of demonstrating the current state of solar science, but as an ongoing laboratory for improvements in the field. Such a building will cost more than the usual blah government office building, but it will provide designs and experience that can serve as a prototype for future city buildings.

Energy and all its problems pose an enormous challenge to Pennsylvania, but it also offers a splendid opportunity to untrack from the precarious and dangerous road down which we are now proceeding. There is a better way and we must do everything

would still remain a formidable economic barrier to making it work. The problem is that the utilities are the only mechanism in the state presently in a position to raise the enormous sums of money that any energy program will require. If solar energy was half as expensive over a 20-year period as nuclear plants, there would be no rush to conversion on any notable scale, simply because there is no funding apparatus to make it possible. Perhaps President Carter's proposed Solar Bank will remove this impediment, but if Pennsylvania is serious about coping, and eventually overcoming, its energy problems it will seek its own solutions to this dilemma instead of waiting for the federal government.

Of course, before we embark on a massive program of solar energy it has to be demonstrated it can fill the bill. As far as the utilities are concerned it doesn't. Their experiments with residential solar heating have not been fruitful, which is surprising since a large and growing number of backyard tinkers, architects and builders have had considerable success with this form of energy. Regardless of what the utilities say, the evidence seems to suggest that solar energy does work and work well, even in this latitude, if done properly.

The PUC has undertaken an encouraging effort to gather together all of the diverse interests in small hydroelectric generation to move that technology from the talking stage to the production stage. The same approach to solar energy by the PUC would, at a minimum, open the paths of communication to those with expertise in this field, and possibly lay the framework for a coordinated effort to achieve some practical demonstrations and results.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 042

Sunday Patriot-News
Aug. 5, 1979

N-Plants

Conservation Best Alternative

SOMEHOW the Pennsylvania Electric Association (PEA), which represents the investor-owned electric utilities in the state, has managed to blot out the events at Three Mile Island in late March and their implications for nuclear power in this state. According to this organization, whose recommendations must be taken seriously, additional nuclear capacity must be built if this state is to grow and prosper, and avoid power disruptions at the end of the next decade.

Fortunately for the association, it does not say in its eight-page prognosis of the state's future electric needs where it proposes to build these nuclear plants, because it is certain the citizens of the selected areas would soon demonstrate what a preposterous idea this is. Three Mile Island has aroused the public like few events can, creating not just an emotional reaction to nuclear power, but one that for the first time is challenging utilities' reassuring claims of nuclear superiority as an energy provider.

In Central Pennsylvania, which contains the largest concentration of nuclear plants in the state and, possibly, the country, it probably would take a suspension of civil rights and a declaration of martial law to build another nuclear plant in the region. Anyone who has any doubt about that has, mentally if not physically, spent the last few months in Tierra del Fuego.

But the citizens of this state cannot ignore what the PEA has to say, not only because, in representing the utility companies, they have their hand on the switch, but because they are warning us that, indeed, the lights will go out unless we accept the logic of their prognosis for the future and accept the necessity for their game plan.

SO, WHILE OUR business-like utility friends abhor the emotion that Three Mile Island has aroused against nuclear power they are not above countering with emotional gambits of their own that seek to strike at the heart of basic human wants and fears: e.g., blackouts and the danger to personal safety they represent, loss of jobs and a lowered standard of living, and reduction of personal comfort.

The position of the PEA is confrontational politics of the worst kind, and while it laments the inability of contemporary society and government to make decisions, it exacerbates the situation to an extraordinary degree because it is determined to believe that there is only one road to salvation and it holds the patent to the rites of entry.

Let us then examine the gospel of its religion. Central to the PEA's claim that the state must have additional nuclear capacity is its forecast

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POOR ORIGINAL

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that over the next decade the demand for electricity will rise 2.8 percent annually. Forecasting is a hazardous business and electric utilities have been notable for their lack of prescience in recent years. The Public Utility Commission, for example, puts the rate of growth closer to 2 percent a year. Nevertheless, despite the volatility of the energy situation, some sort of prediction of our future needs has to be made and the PEA forecast at last provides a starting point. The question then becomes how do we meet the need. The easiest and cheapest way to do it is to reduce or eliminate the anticipated rise in demand through conservation efforts.

There is a lot of grumbling now in offices around the country about the president's 73 degrees edict, but the fact is it can have a significant impact on the amount of additional generating capacity needed in the future if it isn't rendered toothless by Congress.

IT IS DURING hot and muggy periods like this (and on the coldest winter days) that the reliability of the electric system is put to the test. The more air conditioners we have going full blast, the more power plants we need operating at one time. If we can level out the peaks when electricity is used, as the president's order can help do, then we can avoid building billions of dollars worth of power plants.

The many ways that electricity can be conserved do not need repeating here; it only needs to be said that we have a long way to go before we achieve maximum energy efficiency by utilizing the myriad of possibilities that conservation affords. In the context of what this state can do, it ought to be a goal of the highest priority to reduce the anticipated growth in power by half or more through a concerted and no-nonsense effort to conserve. Compared to the difficulties facing an expansion of nuclear power in this state, a reduction of 1-to-2 percent in our use of electricity per year offers an approach that is practical and achievable if provided with leadership and incentive.

This state does not have to be a slave to its appetite for energy. From the standpoint of an orderly society, in which its economic and environmental base are not stretched to the breaking point, we dare not become slaves. Yet that is the road that the PEA would have us take. A strong conservation effort is the most important alternative to that dangerous path. But there are other things we can do and other fallacies in the PEA's strategy and we shall examine them later in this space.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 044

June 22, 1979

The Evening News

Published by The Patriot-News Co., Ninth and Market Sts., Harrisburg, Pa.

Page 22

Midd'town council ignores a mandate

IT IS a popular notion, one that we regularly endorse in this space, that "government closest to the people is the best government." After all, isn't that what America is all about — people governing themselves and deciding those things that most directly affect their lives? The corollary to that is that the elected officials at the local level are the ones most responsive to the will and feelings of the people, because they know the people and they know the local problems.

This is an article of faith, and while it doesn't always hold up in every instance, one would be hard put to find an example that shatters this ideal with more force than the performance of the Middletown Borough Council in the wake of the Three Mile Island nuclear accident.

The people of Middletown and the surrounding area in the shadow of the nuclear power station have endured an unprecedented threat to their lives and fortunes with a commendable calm and fortitude. Some people, however, seem to have interpreted their resiliency and quiet courage as apathy and indifference, believing that once the crisis had died down the people of Middletown would behave like sheep, that they would remain silent as if the events of March 28 and after had not altered their perception and attitude toward the technological behemoth that looms so threateningly over their community.

Instead, the residents of Middletown are angry. They're angry at the prospect of Unit 1 reopening even before a presidential commission investigating the Three

Mile Island accident has rendered its report, and angry at a borough council that refuses to take up a cause which clearly reflects the overwhelming sentiment of their constituents. If there ever was a time when a local government had a mandate, and even more importantly, an obligation to stand up for its citizens, this is it. But for reasons known only to themselves, they have ignored the appeals of their fellow citizens and acted as if the views of the utility, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the government were due more credence than the feelings and views of their own people. It has been a sad and miserable performance by those elected to serve at the level of government that "is closest to the people."

HAROLD DENTON, director of the NRC's Office of Reactor Regulation, said here recently that he would not take into account public feeling when it came to making a decision on the suitability of reopening Unit 1. Technically and legally he is right, but morally he is wrong. After what the residents of the Middletown area have put up with, no one, not even Harold Denton, has the right to decide what risks are acceptable for the nuclear-weary neighbors of Three Mile Island. That decision is for the people living in the long shadow of Three Mile Island to decide, with or without the cooperation and assistance of the Middletown Borough Council. If TMI's neighbors don't have a voice in their own destiny, then there is more tyranny in this land than one would dare think possible.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 045

The Patriot

Editor

PUC Decision

A Fair and Honest Ruling

THE GROUND didn't quake and it may be some time (perhaps years) before its full impact can be assessed, but last Friday's ruling by the Public Utility Commission on the rate impact of the Three Mile Island accident is probably the most revolutionary and far-reaching decision ever rendered by a state regulatory body.

Responding to an unprecedented event, the PUC arrived at an unprecedented conclusion which, in effect, placed the entire monetary burden of the March 28 nuclear accident on the owners of the plant — Metropolitan Edison and Pennsylvania Electric. Every utility in the country contemplating the construction of new generating capacity must pay heed to the implication of the PUC ruling when it comes to deciding whether to build nuclear, coal or some other form of generating facility.

Prior to this decision, there appeared to be an assumption on the part of utility officials that regulatory commissions would come to their rescue in the event of a nuclear accident and that the financial consequences to the utili-

ties and their stockholders of such an accident would, at most, be minimal.

But to its credit and in the face of the pressure that its actions might lead to the bankruptcy of at least one of the utilities, the PUC exploded that assumption into dust. In doing so, the PUC compelled utilities to look at nuclear safety as an imponderable factor in their profit and loss statements. For the first time it is unmistakably clear that a utility must pay for its nuclear mistakes. The consumer does, however, pay the cost of replacement power.

GIVEN the legal framework within which the PUC had to act and the tremendous public opposition to placing the financial burden of Three Mile Island on the consumer, it is difficult to see how the PUC could have ruled much differently than they did. But unlike so many other instances in which justice seems to get twisted out of shape for the benefit of powerful interests, this was a verdict that was fair and honest, and for a change, on the side of the people.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 046

The Patriot

Editor

Nuclear Siting

Remote Locations Are No Safer

IN THE AFTERMATH of the accident at Three Mile Island being suggested that all nuclear plants should be located in remote, rural areas to limit the number of people exposed to the possible ill-effects of an unscheduled "incident," "event," or whatever.

Those who suggest this might not have noticed that there are no nuclear generating facilities in any city of any size in the entire country; even though in terms of economics and full-utilization of our energy resources it would make far more sense if we did. Miles of transmission lines could be saved and it would be practical to put to use the excess heat that nuclear plants generate along with electricity.

There are no nuclear plants in cities because the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (and the Atomic Energy Commission before it) thought it wise to restrict them to locations that were relatively lightly-populated within a few miles of the plant. The result is we find nuclear plants in such unlikely places as Three Mile Island, Peach Bottom, Sedro Woolley, Wash., Turkey Point, Fla., and Zion, Ill. That policy should have told us something about the government's faith in the

safety of nuclear power.

Putting nuclear plants in the backwoods of America will not make them any safer, nor will it necessarily protect populated areas from the consequences of a nuclear accident. Any protection that distance might afford will be subject to modification by such unpredictable factors as the severity of an accident, the amount of radioactive materials released, and the direction and strength of the winds at that particular time.

More importantly, is it ethical to pose a known risk on a small number of people that would not be imposed on a larger number of people? Is the life of an individual worth any less because he is one of a group of 1000 than if he were to be one in a million? Or are we going to wipe away the individual and quantify our regard for human life by setting limits on the number of people it is acceptable to endanger?

The 14th Amendment to the Constitution says that no citizen shall be denied "equal protection of the laws." If nuclear plants are safe, then they are safe enough to be built in Philadelphia or Pittsburgh as they are at Three Mile Island or Emporium. If they are unsafe, it applies everywhere.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 047

The Patriot

Editor

Unit 1

Still Too Many Risks Involved

WHAT CAUSED the Unit 2 nuclear reactor at Three Mile Island to go out of control two months ago is still a subject of investigation and certain aspects of the accident are still very much a puzzle. The true extent of the damage to the nuclear core is not known because the radiation in the containment structure continues at such a high level that it will be some time before anyone is able to make a visual inspection.

The health implications of the accident are a subject of scientific dispute that may not be resolved for many years, though there is ample evidence that, psychologically at least, the nuclear accident has left an indelible imprint on the people of Central Pennsylvania.

Meanwhile, John G. Kemeny, chairman of the presidential commission investigating the accident, commented last week that the instrumentation at the Three Mile Island control room looked like it was 20 years out of date. Harold Denton, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission official sent to TMI by President Carter during the crisis, testified before the Kemeny commission that the government had grown "somewhat complacent" about nuclear safety prior to the accident. He said he was still concerned about having adequate technical talent at nuclear plants and improving the training of plant operators.

And there remains the problem of what to do with some 500,000 gallons of contaminated water that have accumulated on the island since the accident.

Into this unsettled and uncertain state enter Herman Dieckamp, president of General Public Utilities Corp., the owner of Three Mile Island, with the announcement that the corporation was seeking to put Unit 1 back in operation by late August. Reopening the plant would aid the company financially, but more importantly it would provide a psychological boost for the company and the nuclear industry in general for it to resume operation in the midst of the community that went through the most terrifying experience ever produced by the peaceful use of the atom. The residents of the Harrisburg area can once again serve as subjects in the nuclear experiment, this time not as guinea pigs in a surprise event but like survivors coming face-to-face again with their tormentor.

THERE HAS been no indication in the actions and statements of the utility that it is any more aware of its social and ethical responsibilities than it was before the accident. There is no indication that the exact cause of the March 28 accident has been identified and that steps have been taken to eliminate it from happening in Unit 1. There is no indication that the utility is any more technically competent to run a nuclear reactor safely than it was before the accident.

The jury is still out on the accident, what caused it and if indeed it can be prevented from occurring again. Until the current ongoing investigation are completed, the reopening of TMI 1 should not even be considered.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 048

The Patriot

Editor

Energy Plan

Studies No Substitute for Action

THE THREE MILE Island accident's crippling blow to nuclear power has given additional impetus and importance to a comprehensive energy plan for the state being prepared by the Governor's Energy Council. Expected to be completed in about six months, the energy plan could represent a necessary and vital turn in the road for Pennsylvania and how it responds to the enveloping energy crisis. Or it could turn out to be another time-consuming and expensive report that will produce absolutely no results whatsoever other than a day of ballyhoo, after which it will be quietly tucked away in its final resting place.

Certainly, Pennsylvania does not lack for energy plans. Solving the energy crisis on paper is a full-time business in this Capital city. Indeed, one might reasonably ask if this new energy plan can or will say anything that has not already been said, but about which nothing has been done.

The immediate shortcoming of the state government in dealing with the energy crisis which must be resolved is that while it has a number of agencies quite adept at making reports it has no one agency with the authority and wherewithal to do much more than respond to the crisis of the moment. There is no overall energy strategy or direction for either the short or long term. State government is essentially a bystander, while the major energy decisions are made by corporate and economic interests, and occasionally by the federal government when it can untrack from its own inertia.

The problem with waiting another six months for an energy plan that may or may not be worth waiting for is that it delays for at least that long

the initiation of projects that already have been thoroughly studied. There is no reason, for example, why the state cannot put in motion plans for a small-hydroelectric pilot project. At least three separate state agencies, in addition to a number of federal agencies, have studied the small-hydro potential in Pennsylvania and found it promising. Surely, it is time to put all those studies to practical use as a feasibility and demonstration project that may encourage utilities, private industry and individuals to follow.

Do we have to wait any longer to direct one of the state universities to create a department or use one of the existing engineering departments to initiate a program of research and thought in alternate energy systems?

Governor Thornburgh has taken note of the state's abundant wood resources. Can't we follow the example of Vermont which has built an electric generating plant that uses wood as a fuel?

THESE are but a few of any number of things the state could be doing, some of which would require state financial support and others of which may not. No single one of them is a solution to the energy crisis, but they are a beginning to the necessary process of weaning us away from our heavy dependency on oil and our growing dependency on nuclear power. In the long run, the cumulative impact of small efforts like this may make the difference between an energy supply system that falls short of our needs and one that is adequate. It also may make the difference between having an energy system that is compatible with life and the environment and one that generates fear and suspicion.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 049

The Patriot

Editor

Energy Transition

Time to Think Big on Small Scale

A PRIME reason solar power and other so-called "alternate energy sources" have barely gotten off the ground is the failure of the decision-makers in Washington to give the development of these technologies "national security" status.

That statement is not meant to be facetious, but merely to reflect how Washington operates. If a project can be related to national security or the national interest, Congress has usually found a way of doing it. Thus the barriers to federal aid to education were breached with "National Defense scholarships," a system of "national defense" (interstate) highways was built and Americans were sent to the Moon because we wanted to get there before the Russians did.

Naturally, most national security funding goes toward identifiably military projects, where there is no lack of imagination, either. For example, the government is seriously considering digging up the wheat fields of the Great Plains for an underground mobile missile system which will presumably be invulnerable to Soviet attack.

But we seem to miss a few things, too. While we go to rather extreme ends to protect our missiles, the government seems oblivious to the incongruity of clustering as many as 12 nuclear plants at one location, a prospect it is spending \$1.3 million to study. Our missiles may be safe, but our electrical supply and with it the ability of people and industry to sustain themselves after an attack are being made more vulnerable.

Nuclear parks do not just invite warheads, they also in-

voke disruptions and repercussions for the public of an ever-growing magnitude. The bigger the power station, the broader the impact on the public when it fails. Surely, nuclear parks cannot be perceived to be in the national interest.

But even now we are extremely vulnerable to attack, to the saboteur, the faulty valve, to misadventures of any and every sort. We are vulnerable because we have moved more and more toward centralized energy delivery systems, which has meant larger and larger power stations to which all of us are tied by miles upon miles of high voltage umbilical cords. It has also meant the dependency of all of us on the energy decisions of a few and put us at the mercy of errant widgets.

THE BEAUTY of solar energy and many of the alternate energy systems is that they are on a human scale, small enough to neither endanger us nor control our lives. But getting there is not going to be easy. It took many decades to achieve the transition from wood to coal, and from coal to oil, gas and electricity.

Unfortunately, we don't have decades to make the next transition, though there can be no doubt a transition must be made. The question is are we going to increase our vulnerability and dependency on intricate and centralized energy systems or are we going to think big about what we can do on a small scale? It is not an overstatement to say that national security, and, indeed, our national destiny, rides on the correct resolution of this question.

1271 050 700R ORIGINAL

The Patriot

Editor

GPU Stockholders

Narrow View of Responsibility

THE ATTITUDE of stockholders at the annual meeting last week of General Public Utilities Corp., owners of Three Mile Island, can only be described as irresponsible.

It is not difficult to understand their concern about the beating their stock has taken of late, but one would have expected that the events since the morning of March 28 might have been a sobering experience for utility stockholders in general and GPU stockholders in particular.

"If nuclear power is here to stay," as one stockholder declared to applause, then stockholders had better be prepared to shoulder at least the financial consequences of proceeding with nuclear power, a decision in which stockholders play a crucial part. No public utility in this country is going to build any more nuclear plants unless they do it

with the full support and encouragement of their stockholders.

Unfortunately, the GPU stockholders expect to have the best of both worlds. They want to go on building nuclear plants, which because of their great cost increase the size of the financial base upon which utility rates are formulated, and at the same time be excused from paying the price when their nuclear plants take a costly and unplanned "excursion."

The Public Utility Commission should take note of the stockholders' attitude at Jonnstown, because it is for GPU's owners are only going to pause to consider the larger concerns surrounding nuclear power beyond their own narrow view when they finally are held accountable for their irresponsible attitudes and decisions.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 051

The Patriot

Editor

Voice of DER

Caution Should Be His Axiom

CLIFFORD JONES, secretary of the state Department of Environmental Resources, sounded for all the world like a business lobbyist in a speech Thursday before the build-nuclear-power-plants-at-any-cost group, Life/Jobs — the Labor and Industry for Energy and Jobs Committee.

Said Jones, "Today in Pennsylvania, as never before, the utilities need your help. They're going to need someone speaking for them. That means you've got to believe in them, if you do."

Jones appeared to have a good grasp of the dimensions of the public sentiment against nuclear power that has occurred since Three Mile Island, but he also did a good job of avoiding making a clear statement of his own views on the subject. But one can draw an inference from his statement that "the reaction (to nuclear power) at the present moment is not a good one."

We find it rather extraordinary and in some ways alarming that the chief spokesman for the environment in the Thornburgh administration is, at the least, ambivalent on the nuclear power issue, or, at worst, an advocate of continued nuclear development.

There are no two issues more closely intertwined than energy and the environment. Virtually everything we do in the energy field has some impact on the environment, and, in some cases, the consequences of particular actions may be quite profound. Finding a path that will provide us with the energy we need to live and prosper and doing it in a way that will not come back to haunt us in the form of an environmental disaster is not an easy task. Our energy requirements are much more obvious because the effect of an interruption is felt almost immediately. The results of our mistreatment of the environment in a particular instance may not become evident for years or decades.

IF NO ONE ELSE, the state's highest environmental official, who, in effect, is the custodian and watchdog of the state's natural and life-giving resources, should be raising the voice of alarm whenever those resources are tampered with or endangered. Let others wave the flag of development, the secretary of environment should be first and foremost on the side of caution and conservation.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 052

The Patriot

Editor

Nuclear Protest

The Darker Side of Technology

SUNDAY'S demonstration in Washington leaves no doubt that the accident at Three Mile Island has made nuclear power a major political issue and one of the most intensely emotional issues since the Vietnam War. The anti-nuclear march on the Capitol attracted groups and individuals representing a broad spectrum of political and social thinking, but most of the marchers were not drawn to Washington by ideology but by their personal outrage at a government-industry policy that is putting their lives and fortunes on the line without their consent.

For the first time in the 30-year history of nuclear power the public is beginning to find out about the darker side of a technology that was supposed to make our energy future clean and bright. We're finding out that all the redundancies and backup systems in nuclear plants are not redundant enough to prevent the worst from happening. We're finding out that the control panel for a nuclear plant is so large that operators "traditionally don't spend much time," according to Metropolitan Edison Vice

President John G. Herbein, in the area of the panel that indicated something was wrong on the morning of March 28. And some of those who want to save nuclear power insist it can be done by adding more lights and buttons.

FOR THE first time, many people are learning that nuclear power entails an awesome waste disposal problem involving the custody of highly radioactive wastes for periods of time longer than any nation has ever existed, longer even than recorded history up to this time. We are finding out that there are a lot more costs to nuclear power than are reflected in our utility bills, and that when things go wrong those responsible inevitably seek to shift the burden on to the public.

But most of all we have learned that the risk of a serious nuclear accident is not something so remote that it defies mathematical probability. Three Mile Island burst that bubble of uncritical optimism. It can happen. Thousands marched in Washington with the support of millions of others back home to make sure that it doesn't happen.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 053

The Patriot

Edifice

More Radiation

At Best, Only a Guess

THE REVISION in the level of radiation exposure to the population as a result of the Three Mile Island accident by HEW Secretary Joseph A. Califano Jr. to a dose nearly twice as high as stated originally only helps to confirm the belief here that the full extent of the radiation releases from the plant are not fully known — probably never will be known.

Within days of the accident, Califano said the total population dose was 1,800 person rems. Thursday he gave figure of 3,500 rems. According to Thomas M. Gerusky, director of the state Bureau of Radiological Health, the final government figure could go as high as 5,000 rems.

At the present time, there are "a couple of hundred" radiation monitoring devices scattered around the Three Mile Island complex, but at the time of the accident there were only about 20 devices in the field, all within five miles. It was 12 hours before the Nuclear Regulatory Commission brought in additional and more sophisticated radiation detectors. At best it is only

guesswork to attempt to determine the degree of radiation exposure in those crucial first hours of the accident, particularly to those people living more than five miles from the plant.

Passage of HB-53, now before the full state House, would provide the radiological health bureau, which had only four dosimeters near the plant on March 23, with additional funds to provide more extensive monitoring of nuclear plants.

YET, even with accurate radiation data — and we cannot be sure the government figures qualify for that description — there remain substantial concerns in regard to what it all means in terms of public health. The layman will find little clarification or comfort in the scientific community, which is bitterly divided over the degree of danger posed by low-level radiation. The layman is left to weigh the signs: The trend toward ever-lower government standards for acceptable levels of radiation. And the absence of doctors around town at the height of the nuclear scare.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 054

The Evening News

Published by The Patriot-News Co., Ninth and Market Sts., Harrisburg, Pa.

Page 34

May 2, 1979

Looking beyond the wall socket

THE VAST AND COMPLEX technology down the wire from our ever-ready wallplug is little understood or discussed yet it involves vital matters of public importance from the money consumers pay for electricity to concerns for the environment and public safety.

Consider: For many families, utility bills rival tax bills. Nearly two dozen power plants of varying size and impact are planned to come on line between now and 1988 to serve Pennsylvania's electricity consumers. One large nuclear generating plant costs more than \$1 billion to build, a cost that will be borne by customers. There were approximately 11,400 miles of transmission lines crisscrossing Pennsylvania in 1978 and by 1987 there will be an additional 1,900 miles, some of it of very high voltage, which some scientists say poses environmental, health and safety hazards.

At issue is not the remarkable record of the state's utilities in providing electricity on demand, but how they are doing it and the almost total lack of citizen involvement in decisions that are as important as any being made in our society today. This lack of involvement has left the public in the dark about the requirements of a reliable electric system and shrouded the process in an mysterious aura that leaves many people susceptible to self-serving statements by those whose interests are tied to a continuation of existing policies.

ONE OF the fictions being foisted on the public in the wake of the Three Mile Island accident is that the shutdown of the nuclear reactors built by Babcock and Wilcox will lead to brownouts and blackouts. That may be true in South Carolina, where nuclear plants represent 44 percent of the state's electric generating capacity, but that is not true of Pennsylvania. The two atomic plants at Three Mile Island represent less than five percent of the total generating capacity of the Pennsylvania, Jersey, Maryland Interconnection (PJM), of which Metropolitan Edison and Pennsylvania Electric Co., Three Mile Island's owners, are a part. The anticipated level of reserve capacity, that is generating capacity in excess of the highest expected level of demand, is 35.6 percent for this summer, not taking in to account the loss of the Three Mile Island plants, which will lower it to about 30 percent. The utilities and the Public Service Commission, which is recommending

(Continued)

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 055

A THIRD fiction is that large power plants are more economical than small power plants. Large power plants not only are more prone to breakdowns, but also require a larger reserve capacity because when they do breakdown the loss to the electric system is much more significant. A recent study by the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory found a five percent economical advantage for small coal-fired power plants over its equivalent in large power plants. Environmental effects, increasing delays and construction time are also less with smaller plants.

Whether fiction or fact, the important thing is that a huge segment of this country's financial resources, plus important issues related to the environment, safety and health, are involved in the ever-growing electricity-producing complex. It is time we recognized the huge stake the public has in the decisions made by this combination of industry and government, largely without citizen involvement. The issues may be complicated, but as the accident at Three Mile Island has shown, they have meaning for us all.

the question of what constitutes adequate reserves, consider a reserve of between 20 and 25 percent to be sufficient.

A second bit of fiction is that brownouts (voltage reductions) are something terrible and need to be avoided. Brownouts occur when utilities are at the limit of available generating capacity. The actual reductions in voltage are so slight that most people don't even notice them, hardly an inconvenience and one that, at most, happens but a few times a year. Most of the time utilities are operating at only 50 to 60 percent of their generating capacity.

"Peak periods" occur on the coldest days of winter and on the hottest, muggiest days of summer, the latter of which have historically posed the most problems. If these peaks could be leveled out, and there are number of ways this can be done, then there would be less need for substantial standby generating capacity.

The utility customer should understand that he is paying a premium to have generating capacity on standby for the few days a year when it is needed. It doesn't matter how much or how little a power plant is used, the consumer still has to reimburse the utility for its capital expenditures. Three Mile Island may be the first time that policy is altered.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 56

The Patriot

Editor

PUC Decision

A Fair Beginning

THE PUBLIC Utility Commission has made the first of many difficult decisions it will have to make in determining who shall shoulder the enormous costs associated with the nuclear accident at Three Mile Island.

No matter what it does, the commission is charting new ground through a legal, economic and emotional quagmire of unprecedented proportions. Given the novelty of the case, the need for a broad and in-depth inquiry into all the various factors that must weigh in its deliberations and the legal constraints by which it must abide, the PUC's initial actions were fair and even-headed. For either the utility or its angry customers to expect the commission to make a sweeping judgment at this time, one way or the other, was to expect the impossible in light of the tremendous consequences that attend every decision related to this case.

But the tentative judgment of the majority of the commission as expressed by Chairman Wilson Goode is that "the burden to demonstrate why any added costs should be passed on rests with the utility and the utility alone." In essence, the commission has ruled that Metropolitan Edison, 50 percent owner of Three Mile Island Unit 2, has forfeited its recent \$49 million rate increase as a result of the loss of generation from the crippled plant and that "any increased rates must have demonstrated factual and legal support." Commissioner Michael Johnson indicated his concurrence with Goode's remarks.

A disquieting note, however, comes from Commis-

sioner Louis J. Carter who made it a point of noting the interests of "people's savings and pension funds... invested in securities of utilities..." without even attempting to balance that with some recognition of the unique physical, mental and economic burdens imposed by the utility on the residents and businesses of this area.

We also take exception to the commission's remark that "no one could have foreseen what was to occur at Three Mile Island..." While it is true the primary responsibility for approval of nuclear plants rests with the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the commission has endorsed utility investment in nuclear power through its rate-making decisions. At no time did the commission seriously question the safety of nuclear plants, even though it has a legal obligation to see that the service provided by utilities is safe and even though more than a decade ago there was substantial government literature available detailing the effects of various types of nuclear accidents.

There is no desire here to engage in Monday-morning-quarterbacking, but the point needs to be made that because of the vast complexity of electric generation and distribution the public relied upon the PUC, the NRC and the utilities to put safety before all other considerations. With the talk of putting the Three Mile Island plants back in operation it appears the decision-makers have yet to come to grips with putting their priorities in proper order. We may be tempting fate if once again safety becomes drowned in the cauldron of economic concerns.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 057

Senate Priorities

TMI Should Be on the Agenda

A JOINT statement to state senators from Majority Leader Edward Zempirelli, D-Clairton, and Minority Leader Henry Hager, R-Williamsport, urging their colleagues "to leave most of the TMI concern to those with the expertise" and get on with the business of government, suggests that those two gentlemen are part of the problem this state faces in coming to terms with the nuclear dilemma.

It was the experts that got us into this mess, as Sen. Henry Messinger, D-Allentown, correctly noted in response to the memo. And it was the willingness of government officials and the public to leave all of the decisions regarding nuclear power, including basic policy decisions, to the experts that created the climate in which millions of people were quietly put under a risk they barely knew about and had no voice in. The two Senate leaders appear ready to repeat the process.

To the credit of a good number of other senators, this rare display of bipartisan accord on the part of the Senate leadership drew angry fire from the rank and file, most of it on target. The unexpected rebellion prompted Zempirelli to say, "I was only suggesting that anything that we do be predicated upon facts and that the facts be of one denomination..."

If Zempirelli proposes to await the arrival of one-denominational facts — that is facts about which there is no dispute — he will have a very long wait indeed. There are very few undisputed facts about nuclear power, just as there are few undisputed facts about the size of the state's budget surplus/deficit. Even if it were possible to put together a set of facts about nuclear power or the budget, they are still going to mean different things to different people.

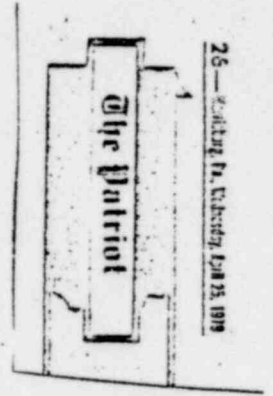
It is safe to say that no matter what the facts, no matter what the risk, there are still going to be people in the nuclear industry, at utilities, in government, on Wall

Street and Main Street, who are still going to say onward and upward with nuclear power.

But there is one unassailable fact about nuclear power that Zempirelli and Hager can start with. That is the fact that a nuclear power plant poses a risk to life and property. It doesn't matter that one expert says the risk is one in 10 billion and another expert says it's one in a thousand. There isn't any question that there is a risk, a risk that could involve thousands of people over thousands of square miles and that the probability of it happening is no more unlikely than the probability of someone forgetting to open a valve, or a pump malfunctioning or an instrument giving a wrong reading.

That risk has no comparison with riding a plane, working in a quarry or a mine, or even walking across the street. We are talking about a risk that is not taken by choice, and a risk that is imposed on some people (those living primarily in rural areas and small towns) and not imposed on others (those living in large cities and suburbs.) We are talking about a risk that is based on an artificially-contrived economic advantage for investors, which include tax write-offs, \$15 billion in government funds for research, fuel processing and waste disposal, government-protected and limited liability and a rate system that promotes bigness.

Contrary to the two Senate leaders, the Legislature can no longer sit idle while others make decisions that bear directly on the health, safety and welfare of Pennsylvanians. In as much as the decisions made concerning nuclear power are made in places that are, for the most part, inaccessible to the public, that is to say in the board rooms of utilities and by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Legislature stands as the one powerful forum that can balance the score and address the concerns of the public that may otherwise be ignored.



POOR ORIGINAL

1271 058

MetEd Solvency

Not the Most Crucial Question

METROPOLITAN EDISON attorneys went to great lengths Tuesday to convince the Public Utility Commission that the question of who pays for the accident at Three Mile Island and all its consequences revolves around keeping the company solvent.

Without any documentation or verification, MetEd attorney James B. Liberman predicted the company would be bankrupt in a "few days" if the PUC did not act almost immediately to reassure banks that the company would not be forced to bear a heavy burden of the costs connected with the accident. Company lawyers also made strong hints that service to MetEd customers would be impaired if hearings were reopened on its \$49 million rate increase approved the week before the accident. In a strategic retreat designed to minimize and contain its losses, the company dropped its position that "considerations of fairness" demanded that the ratepayers pick up the tab for Three Mile Island and offered to absorb a \$16 million reduction in its rate increase as its contribution toward helping defer damages.

And there were other, more subtle statements by the company attorneys that were rather amazing in light of the tremendous commitment to nuclear power that has been made by the utilities of this country. MetEd attorney Samuel Russell, after being asked by PUC Chairman Wilson Goode if he thought the federal government should bare some of the costs inflicted by Three Mile Island, offered that there would not have been a nuclear industry if the government had not encouraged it. True, but there is a suggestion there that MetEd did not make its investment in nuclear power out of its own free will, that it did not have a responsibility to make a judgment of its own as to the safety and economics of nuclear power. And there was the statement by Liberman that no utility ever considered that

it would be asked to bear the burden of a nuclear accident. Needless to say, it is perhaps time they did.

The PUC is due to announce its decision today on whether it will allow the Consumer Advocate's request for a rehearing on MetEd's recently-granted rate increase, a procedure which would reconsider the basis of the increase in light of events at Three Mile Island. The pressure on the commissioners is intense. The company has all but said it will be on the financial rocks if a rehearing is granted. On the other side is the tremendous public feeling that it would be a gross injustice for consumers to bear the cost of the company's negligence.

THE FINANCIAL solvency of MetEd is an issue that must be dealt with, but it should not be the PUC's pivotal concern. The PUC is not charged with guaranteeing the solvency of a utility in perpetuity regardless of the risk and cost that may entail to the consumer. On the contrary, it is invested with the responsibility of establishing reasonable rates and maintaining safe, adequate service to customers. The survival of MetEd is not crucial to the achievement of those objectives. Indeed, the record would seem to indicate a performance that was neither reasonable nor safe.

The marrow of the issue before the PUC is whether or not a utility can foist both the safety risk and economic risk of nuclear power on the consumer and walk away unscathed when the whole enterprise turns sour. If it can, then corporate and government tyranny over the individual are alive and well in this country. If the PUC does not let MetEd drop Three Mile Island into the lap of its customers, it will send a message out to every boardroom and stockholders meeting in the country that no company can ignore or evade its public responsibility for the sake of profits.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 059

April 19, 1979

The Evening News

Published by The Patriot-News Co., Ninth and Market Sts., Harrisburg, Pa.

Page 25

Nuclear decisions

THREE WEEKS AGO, "The Friendly Atom," one of mankind's greatest technological achievements, had a physical and mental breakdown. Hardly anyone knew it at the time and what is worse, very few people had any idea that this wondrous application of science had within it a frightening capacity to turn against its masters and wreak devastation on a vast and, perhaps still, unfathomable scale.

But even worse than that, knowing nuclear power's potential for injury and destruction did not confer on anyone the right to choose between living with that risk, however remote, and living as they had done before without its ominous presence.

We may be a free country in which we can speak our minds, follow our own beliefs and elect our own leaders, but we do not choose the technologies that increasingly play such a large part in our lives. To some extent we think we do. We hear about "America's love affair" with the automobile, but are we left with any options that are capable of meeting the needs of a significant section of our population?

Now some would tell us that there is no alternative to nuclear power, which is demonstrably untrue at this point in time, but surely not for long if we continue to increase our dependency upon it.

But whatever one's evaluation of the energy options available to the nation there must come a time — and it already has arrived in this part of the country — when we begin to ask how far we are going to go in imposing risks on people in exchange for presumed economic benefits and supposed increases in the standard of living. Somewhere along the line the benefits are cancelled out by a lessening of the quality of life, individual freedom and personal safety.

It is clear from our experience at Three Mile Island that the utilities and, indeed, the government agency that licensed the plant, do not hold these latter considerations in the same high regard as their economic interests. Can we continue to allow people whose primary concern is their quarterly dividends to make what are essentially life and death decisions over thousands of people? We think not.

The people who have been selected to live with the risk of nuclear power ought to be able to decide for themselves whether or not they are willing to live with those risks. Before anyone builds or operates another nuclear plant, the people residing within the sweep of the plant's potential harm should have the right to verify or veto that decision in a referendum. The utilities and government have no right to play God.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 060

The Patriot

Editor

NRC Tapes

A Callous, Unacceptable Attitude

IF YOU HAD the distinct impression at the height of the crisis at Three Mile Island that no one in charge knew what was going on, your fears will be more than confirmed by a reading of the minutes of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for that period.

Not only did the commissioners not know what was going on at the crippled nuclear power plant from hour to hour, there appears to have been some confusion as to where it was going on. The NRC's evacuation expert, Don Collings: "Let's see, Harrisburg is in which county?"

Scientific certainty and technological know-how was rendered down to "a funny blip in the containment that nobody saw before."

But the most frightening revelation found in the NRC transcripts is the commissioners' preoccupation with issuing "reassuring" statements to the press, even though the situation was so serious from what they did know that they considered recommending an evacuation. Indeed, according to the transcripts, Harold Denton, the NRC's top man on the scene, advised the state police to evacuate a five-mile area from the plant, which was not carried out until some time later and then only for pregnant women and preschool children.

EVEN THOUGH they were advised that a meltdown was possible and that they might have as little as 30 minutes to warn people, some of the commissioners were more concerned with the tone of their press statements. Said Commissioner Richard Kennedy, "The focus (of the press release), I think, has to be

reassuring . . . reassure people that at least we're working on it."

Fortunately, events at the plant never reached a point that would have made an evacuation unavoidable. But the commissioners could not know that in advance, and, indeed, the transcripts indicate, that they had serious apprehensions about bringing the errant reactor under control before nearby residents were put in jeopardy.

Obviously, there are a lot of improvements that can be made in the way the NRC responds to any future nuclear accident, such as better communications, nuclear SWAT teams, and other proposals that have been made to make the NRC more effective in dealing with nuclear crises. But more than anything else, we must change the attitude of those officials in positions that bear directly on the safety of people, from one of gambling with lives to one that puts protecting lives before everything else.

IT IS CLEAR the commissioners were willing to wait to the last possible moment before taking steps to alert the public to the potential danger at Three Mile Island and before taking the necessary precautions that would have prevented what might have been a chaotic and panic-stricken exodus of thousands of people fleeing for their lives.

An attitude that puts more emphasis on falsely reassuring people than protecting their lives is totally unacceptable. Such callous and mindless conduct must not be permitted to occur anywhere ever again.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 061

The Patriot

Editor

TMI Inquiry

Given an Impossible Task

PRESIDENT Carter's charge to the committee he has just appointed to look into the accident at Three Mile Island is a difficult one and, in at least one respect, impossible.

In addition to directing the commission to find out what happened at the nuclear plant and how it could have been prevented; and to assess what government and others did in response, the president also told the committee to "make recommendations to enable us to prevent any future nuclear accidents."

It is a notion that stretches the bounds of credulity, for can anyone seriously believe that 11 people can accomplish in six months what thousands of brilliant and gifted scientists have been unable to accomplish in more than 30 years of trying. Absolutely no one can guarantee that accidents will not occur in the future at nuclear plants.

No technology is perfect. Even with the most strenuous requirements and the strictest precautions, things go wrong. Parts are improperly installed, wear out or break down. Human error is an ever-present possibility. Indeed, malfunctions, unscheduled "trips" and operational mistakes occur with regu-

larity at most of the nation's 72 operating nuclear plants. In most cases these are no more than minor mishaps. The danger occurs when there is a string of errors, malfunctions and miscalculations.

And we are not necessarily talking about things going haywire in the esoteric heart and brain of the reactor. In the two most serious accidents at commercial nuclear power plants in this country we are facing causes that are about as fundamental as you can get: at Three Mile Island, basic plumbing; at Browns Ferry, Ala. four years ago, a workmen testing for air leaks with a lighted candle. The basic flaw in nuclear power plants is that humans design them, build them and run them.

IMPOSSIBLE as it may be for the presidential commission to assuage public fear of nuclear power created by the Three Mile Island accident, that's clearly what Carter expects. In essence, he has preordained their findings by already publicly committing himself to the expansion of nuclear energy. If the commission's findings are to be the least bit plausible it must resist Carter's importuning and plot its own independent path to the truth.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 062

The Patriot

Editorial

Road to Recovery

The Area's Main Asset Is People

IT IS NO honey-tongued bit of self-flattery to say that people are Central Pennsylvania's greatest recourse as the region seeks to pull itself up by the bootstraps from its position as victim of one of the worse public scares in American history.

The people of this area did themselves proud by the calm and reasoned manner in which they responded to the frightening and confusing crisis at Three Mile Island. And now they are wasting no time in coming together to recover what was lost on the morning of March 28 and in the ensuing days. Almost spontaneously, a task force of area community leaders has formed to counteract the difficult image problems for agriculture, tourism and business that remain in the wake of the nuclear accident, and to map the road to economic recovery.

Similar groups did an outstanding job when Harrisburg was buffeted by the ill-winds

of the 1972 flood and earlier when Olmsted Air Force Base was closed. But the task this time is far more formidable because the enemy is fear, the most irrational of emotions.

But there are some things in our favor. Out beyond the reaches of Central Pennsylvania there is a vast reservoir of sympathy and compassion for the people of this area because of what they have been through. And there is also great curiosity about the event and the place where it happened which may attract people in the same way they are drawn to historic battle-grounds or horror movies.

BUT ULTIMATELY our future hinges not on what others do, but what we do ourselves. Our determination to overcome this setback, to resume our lives and, perhaps, to cut new paths that others may follow, will demonstrate our resiliency and, indeed, tell the world that this is still a good place to live, work and visit.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 063

The Patriot

Edition

State Strategy

Consumer Advocate Undermined

NOTWITHSTANDING what probably will be the unique legal problems created by the Three Mile Island nuclear accident, as a matter of principle it was wrong for the Thornburgh administration to undermine the independence of the state Consumer Advocate.

This occurred when Attorney General Edward Blester requested Consumer Advocate Mark Widoff to delay filing petitions with the Public Utility Commission seeking a reconsideration of recent rate hikes granted to Metropolitan Edison and Pennsylvania Electric Co., part-owners of the Three Mile Island nuclear reactor that sent shock waves around the world two weeks ago. Widoff subsequently filed the petitions anyway.

Blester has been directed to assume control of the strategy and legal matters connected with the accident as part of a coordinated state response. That strategy has yet to be announced, though noting that is not meant to imply any criticism because the issues are novel, complex and, to some extent, still unfolding. It no doubt will take time to bring together all the various threads of the case and weave it into a coherent legal fabric that touches all bases of this multi-faceted nightmare.

That's fine, but what it

overlooks is one of the basic concerns that many people have voiced in the aftermath of the scare at Three Mile Island. That is the feeling of perhaps thousands of people that no one was looking after their interests when the nuclear plants at Three Mile Island were built and licensed to operate, and that even now there is no one representing their interests. Many people are frustrated because they are outraged that they have been put through the traumatic experience of the past two weeks, but don't know what they can do as individuals to influence decisions that may have a bearing on their lives in the future.

Widoff helped vent some of those feelings acting as he did, but the action of the administration in trying to shackle the consumer advocate can only renew fears that once again the consumer is the last person to have any say over events that infringe on his life and pocketbook. The credibility of the consumer advocate as an independent voice for the "little guy" has been damaged by this maneuver beyond just this issue of the nuclear plant. Who can have any confidence now that he is acting in the consumer's behalf when he must be prepared to submit to the unknown strategies of higherups?

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 064

The Patriot

Editorial

Who Pays?

Don't Let the Company Off the Hook

TESTIFYING before the Joint Economic Committee of Congress last week, Metropolitan Edison attorney Joel Chernoff said, "It seems to me inescapable that considerations of fairness and ultimate economic impact require that the cost of replacement power (for the utility's damaged reactor at Three Mile Island) be flowed through to consumers."

It was also his opinion that cleanup and repair costs, once they pass the insured limit of \$300 million, be billed to the consumer. The cost of replacing the damaged fuel automatically would be borne by the consumer.

And if that weren't enough, the day after the Unit 2 reactor went bananas a Public Utility Commission-approved rate increase of \$49 million a year took effect, largely to help pay for the Three Mile Island nuclear plant.

As it now stands, Metropolitan Edison may not be out a single cent as a result of the near-catastrophe at Three Mile Island. Aside from the power plant, the only other damage sustained by the company as a result of the accident was its loss of credibility. Altogether nothing serious enough to interfere with the steady flow of dividends to stockholders.

We think there are a few people around this area who would argue with that concept of fairness and who

would suggest that there is something strikingly out of synch with a system which puts the public in the position of taking the ultimate risk, while the management and stockholders of MetEd take no risk whatsoever.

Recognizing that utilities, with their monopoly territories and close government regulation, are unique entities in our private enterprise system, should not, however, absolve them from accountability for mismanagement, incompetence and acts that endanger the public welfare. Nor should they be protected from bearing the financial burden for their misdeeds.

IF THE company does not have to pay the price for what happened at Three Mile Island, then there is absolutely no incentive for MetEd and other utilities to operate safely, competently and in the public interest. If the company does not pay, then their customers are no better than hostages for the enrichment of faceless stockholders who have no other interest in company actions than the size of their quarterly dividend checks.

Not just in the interest of "fairness," but in the interest of avoiding a repetition of Three Mile Island, it is essential that utilities and stockholders learn that the customers are not the only ones that are going to pay for the company's mistakes.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 065

The Patriot

Edition

Area Recovery

Feds Should Provide Assistance

THE MOST important thing now for Central Pennsylvania is to get back on its feet in the wake of the Three Mile Island accident, and it needs and deserves all the help it can get.

Like radiation, the psychological fallout from this accident is invisible and it may be some time before we know its full dimension. It could be serious. Will significant numbers of people avoid purchasing the farm products from this important agricultural area? Will they be frightened of visiting our world famous tourist attractions? Will it be more difficult to attract new industry to the area? Will our existing firms stay with us? What is going to happen to the value of real estate?

Despite the fact that no lives have been lost, no property except for the power plant damaged and no radiation readings recorded that have come close to the fallout from recent Chinese atomic tests in the atmosphere, Central Pennsylvania has suffered the worse dose of bad publicity that could possibly befall a region of this size. The impact is bound to be far-ranging, with such esoteric ventures as local borrowing through the bond market already adversely affected.

There are many things that can be done to counter these psychological adversaries, but it seems to us that the federal government has a paramount responsibility in helping us weather the storm. To hasten that it may be advisable for Gov. Dick Thornburgh to declare the re-

gion an economic hardship area so that local government, business and individuals can avail themselves of any special assistance the federal government has to offer. If this incident does not quite fit the legal definition of an area in need then it is incumbent upon the region's congressmen and senators to introduce legislation that will meet our needs. In addition, the Pentagon should cancel its planned closing of New Cumberland Army Depot and phase-out from Fort Indiantown Gap. The blow from the federally-licensed nuclear plant at Three Mile Island was horrendous enough, but do we also have to endure a large and significant loss of government employment at the same time?

The state continues to play a vital role in monitoring radiation in food products to insure that no contamination reaches the public. Confidence in the integrity of their findings must be absolute if the public is to accept food products from this area and local agriculture is to survive.

Even if everything possible is done, the cost of the nuclear scare and the resulting mass exodus has already been great. It has put a serious dent in the financial resources of many families and businesses resulting in losses they probably will never recoup.

Yet, despite this and the serious problems ahead, Central Pennsylvania retains its capacity to bounce back from disastrous floods, tough times and Civil War raids and major engagements. We shall bounce back again and these rough days will too have passed.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 066

Energy Future

State Lacks Direction

A MYRIAD of commissions and committees will be looking into the causes of the Three Mile Island nuclear accident, but what we may need now more than anything else is an investigation into the future of energy in Pennsylvania.

One of the very first questions that any such investigation must address is the multiplicity of state agencies responsible for dealing with energy. As we noted in this space earlier this year, at least three separate agencies of state government had some interest and involvement with the development of the Commonwealth's small hydroelectric potential. No one agency was in charge of this area, with the result that there was no leadership, no direction and no movement to capitalize on what could be a significant provider of energy to the state. The same can be said in virtually every field of energy: No one in this state has a hand on the tiller.

Another question that begs for examination is why this state has gone so heavily into nuclear power plants with six plants licensed to operate and five others either under construction or on the drawing boards, when it contains the greatest concentration of clean-burning anthracite coal to be found anywhere in the world and vast reserves of bituminous coal. The coal regions of this state, particularly the anthracite regions, have suffered terrible economic deprivation, in part because billions of dollars have been spent to build nuclear plants. If there had been strong government direction and a commitment to maximize the fuel with which this state has been so generously blessed, Pennsylvania would be much more prosperous than it is today and it would be in a far better position to weather the ongoing energy crisis.

It can and should still move in the direction of coal. There is no doubt that there are considerable safety and environmental problems associated with coal, but we are far more likely to overcome them more quickly and with less expense than we are going to resolve the problems with nuclear power. Significant technological advances have already been made in making coal cleaner that were not even known five years ago.

For the next 40 to 50 years, coal is probably the best energy option for Penn-

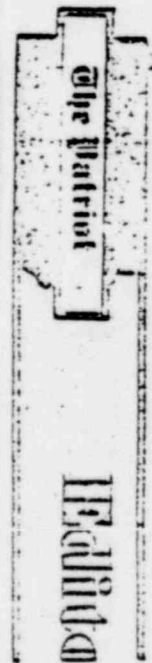
sylvania. But there are other avenues that offer substantial short- and long-term benefits. As we have already noted, Pennsylvania has a significant small hydroelectric potential. There are at least 28 existing dams in the state considered capable of delivering electricity at competitive prices if they were altered to provide generating capacity. Altogether, there are 900 dams in the state with a low-hydro potential, according to an Army Corps of Engineers survey.

We may well be on the brink of important breakthroughs in the use of the direct rays of the sun. Some applications, such as solar hot water heaters, are already on the market, but the seminal developments that will revolutionize man's relationship to energy are still some ways off, though not so distant as many seem to think. Pennsylvania could assist in realizing the fruits of solar power, as it has in nuclear engineering, by creating and funding new departments at state universities devoted to developing alternate forms of energy, particularly solar. Little University of Delaware has been a leader in this field. Perhaps it's time Pennsylvania changed its emphasis on energy research from nuclear to solar.

THE SEARCH for ways to conserve energy must continue. Urgently needed is a clearing house, a gathering point, for all of the thousands of inventions and techniques that have been made since the 1973 oil embargo put energy in the forefront of the national consciousness. Things have been done in other states that could be applied here to save energy, but again we need someone in this state who is in a position to direct our efforts.

New emphasis will have to be put on mass transportation and less emphasis on subsidized parking if the state is to meet President Carter's gasoline conservation goals. We have to look not just at the problems of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh in this regard, but at Harrisburg and other smaller cities, as well as servicing the rural area of the state. Rail passenger service in Pennsylvania must be saved from extinction at the hands of the federal Department of Transportation.

The future of energy in this state is an immense challenge. If we are to meet that challenge we had better start right now to get our act together.



POOR ORIGINAL

1271 067

The Patriot

Editor

Heroes in a Crisis

Denton Earns Our Appreciation

FOR MANY AN UNSUNG hero who quietly and coolly went about his duty under the intense stress and strain of the Three Mile Island accident. Police and emergency personnel stood by their posts assuring the continuation of essential services related to property protection and a smooth evacuation. Hundreds of local, county and state officials calmly prepared contingency plans in the event the worst occurred. Hundreds in the private sector did a thousand and one things, such as keeping hospitals running, stores and eating places open and information flowing, without which the crisis would have been all the greater. Gov. Dick Thornburgh and Lt. Gov. Bill Sarantou responded with leadership that did credit to themselves and the Commonwealth.

And we would be remiss if we did not also take note of the courage of the supervisors and technicians at the Three Mile Island compound who stayed at their stations and perhaps thereby averted a worse calamity.

But there is one person whose presence here made a crucial difference to public confidence, which, of all the things damaged by this accident, may have suffered the greatest consequence. When Harold Denton, Chief of Operations for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and President Carter's personal emissary to the disaster, arrived here Friday the situation was rapidly approaching a state of chaos. Conflicting and contradictory statements were rampant. Metropolitan Edison officials continued to downplay the seriousness of the incident, while state officials,

who were depending on MetEd for their information clearly were confused.

By his calm manner, his patient explanation of the technical aspects of the problem, his willingness to admit that there were some aspects of the accident the experts weren't sure about, his caution in declaring that the crisis had been diffused and his openness in detailing the worst possible consequences of the accident, Denton quickly conveyed the impression to the public that for the first time since Wednesday morning they were hearing the truth. It wasn't very pleasant and it contained a lot of uncertainty, but the one certainty was that at last we were receiving the unbiased and undistorted facts from someone who knew what he was talking about.

The psychological importance of Denton's cool and reassuring presence here cannot be underestimated. He has become a father-figure to thousands of traumatized people in this region who look to him as the last word, the only word, on the peril at Three Mile Island.

North Carolinian by birth and upbringing, Denton is already an honorary citizen of this grateful state in the hearts and minds of all the people of Pennsylvania. When the situation permits this state should formally recognize him for his pivotal role in bringing sanity to this unparalleled event by presenting him with the highest commendation the Commonwealth has to offer as a token of our appreciation and esteem for what he has done here. A thankful and relieved state can do no less.

POOR ORIGINAL

The Patriot

Editor

Reopening School

Prudence Suggests They Close

OFFICIAL statements on the status of the crippled reactor at Three Mile Island since Monday have been encouraging, indicating that the threat to the public has been substantially reduced. It is the hope and prayer of everyone in the area and the thousands who have fled that this is the case.

However, it seems to us that it is premature to be urging the reopening of schools beyond the five mile perimeter of the plant as is being done by Governor Thornburgh. Until the reactor has been maneuvered into a cold shutdown state there remains a possibility, however remote, of a malfunction or a miscalculation. What continues to be disturbing is that the instruments monitoring the conditions inside the reactor may have been damaged by the intense bombardment of radiation over the past few days. One nonessential measuring device has already failed.

Some of the best scientists in the country have gathered here to help defuse the reactor, but their analysis and recommendations are only as good as the information they have to work with. If the readings are wrong, any steps the scientists take, including

taking no steps, could result in a wrong move that may heighten the danger to the public.

This area is not going to return to some semblance of normality until it is beyond a doubt that the danger at Three Mile Island is no longer present. Though a few of the many thousands that voluntarily fled the area have returned, most appear to be staying away until the current uncertainty has been replaced by positive assurances that the reactor has been brought to a dead halt. The evacuees include many school children and teachers from within the 20-mile area, making it unlikely that the schools will be able to function in an orderly manner that is conducive to learning. As long as the crisis persists there will remain a sense of fear among parents that they might become separated from their children in the event of an evacuation.

UNTIL the moment arrives when the officials at the scene can say without equivocation that the nuclear plant no longer poses a threat to the public, we think it only prudent to keep the schools closed within a 20-mile radius of Three Mile Island.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 069

The Public Bubble

Imperil Us Again and It Will Burst

THE DANGER at Three Mile Island has apparently subsided, but the name of Harrisburg will continue on as a word whose meaning conveys one of those watershed events that rattles the human perception of itself. No one has died at Harrisburg but a world has been confronted with the terrible potential of its unrelenting push for a technocratic utopia at the expense of caution, conservation and individual control over our own destinies.

The implications of the accident at Three Mile Island are far-reaching. They involve not just the 100 million other Americans who live in the shadows of nuclear power plant cooling tower plumes but every American, because this incident will have repercussions in every aspect of the energy equation.

We cannot decide for other Americans what they should do about the nuclear plants that loom so ominously in their lives. Indeed, they will have to break new ground to be heard, to influence, because they were never asked if they wanted atomic power plants as neighbors in the first place. The growth of nuclear power was not a public decision; it was primarily a government and industry decision, and the rules of the game were and are devised in their favor.

But for those of us in the vicinity of Three Mile Island the decision is much more personal. We have been lied to about events that were vital to our security and well-being. We have been forced to endure a roller-coaster of emotion and fear. We have had to leave our homes and businesses not knowing when or if it would be safe to return. The lives of perhaps a million people have been disrupted in one way or another.

Even before the reactor had been placed in an impotent, cold shutdown state,

even before the fear of a meltdown had been reduced, government officials, nuclear industry spokesmen and the utility were talking about putting the plant back in operation after it is repaired and certified as safe. Never mind that it was certified safe before the accident. Never mind that Metropolitan Edison is "thin in technical talent." Never mind that next to no one around here has any confidence that MetEd knows how to tell the truth, let alone run a nuclear reactor. And most of all, never mind that the people of this region have just been faced with one of the most traumatic experiences that modern technology has to offer.

WHAT ANGERS us most are those who are so willing to once again risk our lives and property for the sake of company profits and the nuclear option. They would put us in the position of a convicted murderer sitting on death row, praying for a reprieve, a pardon, anything, while the prospect of execution stares him in the face.

Central Pennsylvania doesn't have to put up with that uncertainty and risk. All the rules of the game say otherwise because they are stacked in favor of nuclear power. But when you have been forced to walk across a hot bed of coals, when somebody's rules are putting your life in danger, those rules have relinquished their legitimacy because of their utter lack of morality. New rules are going to have to be written and the people of Pennsylvania are going to have a lot to say about what those rules should be. And for sure those new rules will not put us in jeopardy a second time by reactivating Three Mile Island or the world will see a bubble of pent up public indignation burst across this region as explosive as the cause of our concern.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 070

Nuclear Accident

No Time for Secrecy

IT MAY BE some time before the full extent of the accident at the Three Mile Island Unit 2 nuclear reactor becomes known, but on the basis of the sketchy information available it would appear to be one of the most serious incidents ever to occur at a commercial nuclear power plant in this country.

While we wait for a more thorough explanation of what caused a valve in the reactor's cooling water system to malfunction and the subsequent chain of events that led to the release of high amounts of radiation within the reactor building and low amounts of radioactive steam into the air outside the plant, a number of questions related to the handling of the incident need to be addressed.

Why, for example, did Metropolitan Edison wait three hours before notifying the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency and Dauphin County Civil Defense? If the accident had been more serious than it actually was, and one suspects that there was at least the potential for a much higher release of radioactive steam, those three hours could have been crucial to a safe evacuation.

One is also mystified by the apparent failure of some links in the emergency notification chain to appraise local authorities of the nature of the accident. Officials in Goldsboro and Newberry Twp., where the potential damage was likely to be the most severe because the wind was blowing in their direction at the time of the incident, were called to alert status without being told the threat was from radiation. The unique nature of radiation contamination involves, or

should involve, precautions that are not necessary in other forms of emergencies.

The Borough of Royallton, which is in close proximity to the Three Mile Island plant, was never officially notified of the emergency.

During the course of the morning of the accident, there were considerable discrepancies between what company officials were saying and what government officials were saying about the extent of the accident and the level of radiation released into the environment, even though the company and the state Bureau of Radiation Protection were using and reading the same radiation detectors. For much of the morning, MetEd would provide virtually no information at all about the occurrence at its nuclear plant.

FORTUNATELY, there were no injuries, in so far as is known, as a result of the accident. The incident did provide a live test of the responsiveness of the government agencies involved in handling such situations, and for the most part they appeared to have responded well.

There was no panic, but for several hours there was considerable public uncertainty as to the extent of the danger posed by the accident at the nuclear plant. There appeared to be an attempt to avoid alarming the public by silence and secrecy, which is the best way to awaken the darkest fears of people. All of us who live in this area have a stake in what's going on at Three Mile Island. If the presence of those nuclear reactors is not to cast a shadow over our lives, at the very least we have to be confident that we will be told the truth, and promptly, when something goes wrong.

POOR ORIGINAL

1271 071

Nuclear Danger

An Intolerable Price to Pay

THE "EXPERTS" may debate the relative danger caused by the accident at the Three Mile Island nuclear reactor and the subsequent releases of radiation into the surrounding environment from now until eternity. But what is clear at this moment is that the fear and the disruption of normal life that has been the direct and indisputable fallout from this event is unacceptable in any society if it is to be calm, stable and functional.

There can be no denying the fact that the residents living within a wide ring around the nuclear plant are frightened and concerned about the health and safety of themselves and family, and worried about their homes and future. And the terrible thing is that there is no one in authority, no one with the scientific credentials, who can tell them they shouldn't be alarmed and who would stand any chance of being believed. The credibility of "experts" went out with the radiation and people are left with nothing to reassure themselves but their own skepticism.

What this nuclear accident has shown is that despite more than 30 years of research and experience in reactor technology there are still gaps in our knowledge and flaws in our ability to respond to the unexpected. The particular sequence of events that precipitated the accident (which remain under their own contaminated cloud) was not supposed to occur. It apparently wasn't even contemplated that it could occur. A complete meltdown of the reactor core, the worst possible thing that can happen to a nuclear plant, first appeared to have been stopped at the last possible barrier. All of the pertinent back-up systems and redundancies that have been built into nuclear power plants and touted with unweaving confidence by utilities and the nuclear industry appear to have failed, but one.

The Emergency Core Cooling System which at least delayed an actual test of the "China Syndrome" theory, had never been tested itself under actual operating conditions until a few months ago, when it worked successfully at an experimental reactor in Idaho at low power. We can all be grateful that it also worked last Wednesday, but no one can guarantee that it will always work when it is

supposed to or that even in having worked it can prevent a meltdown. Modern technology has been reduced to crossing its fingers.

A risk of this sort is tolerable for most people so long as it remains nothing more than a risk debated among experts but which never occurs. Now people have a much greater understanding of what that risk involves because they have had a taste of it and how it can effect their lives. The danger is no longer remote. It is clearly in the realm of the possible. It is no longer something the public will willingly tolerate.

The American public has been led into a growing reliance on nuclear-generated electricity with promises of safe, clean and cheap power. The Three Mile Island accident demonstrates that nuclear power is neither safe nor clean. The cheap power argument has always been flawed, but very few people have ever bothered to add up the total cost because it is fragmented and in many cases hidden. There is irony in the fact that just last week the state Public Utility Commission granted Metropolitan Edison a \$19 million a year rate increase to help pay for Unit 2 which will be nonproductive for months and possibly forever. Guaranteed its cost plus a profit, it is almost a certainty that MetEd will call on its customers to pay for the huge cost of clean up and to shoulder the premium rates they are paying to other utilities for alternate power. If the fuel is damaged and replaced, that's millions of dollars more.

BUT THAT is just the tip of the iceberg. None of these costs reflect the billions of dollars spent by the government for research and regulation of the nuclear industry. It doesn't include the billions of dollars that are and will have to be spent to safely dispose of nuclear wastes, though, in fact, a safe method of disposal has yet to be devised and approved. It nowhere includes the billions of dollars that will have to be spent in years to come to decommission or seal nuclear plants that have run out their design-life of 35 to 40 years or have to be entombed because they are just plain unsafe.

And it certainly doesn't include the money and manpower expended by government authorities to cope with this emergency or the money in lost wages and business, or the psychic toll in worry and fear. Nor does it reflect the possible health consequences from the radiation emitted into the air over a wide area, about which so little is known that it is impossible even to speculate with any sense of assurance.

In short, the cost of nuclear power is far too high a

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The Patriot

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