

ALERT

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Three Mile Island Alert

February, 1980

Cobalt & Turkeys Collide

by Mike Klinger

Late Sunday evening, January 13, on I-80 north of Pittsburgh, a tractor trailer carrying radioactive cobalt pellets destined for use in a NYC hospital collided with a trailer load of turkeys. On Monday morning WHP news initially reported a broken canister was emitting substantial amounts of radiation, .65 Rem/hr. to 4.0 Rem/hr.--"a major health hazard," according to Warren Bassett, administrator of nearby Brookville Hospital. WHP's coverage of the accident decreased and by mid-morning, the story was no longer broadcast. A fifteen-mile stretch of I-80 was closed off as state police waited for a DER radiation expert before getting close to the truck. The DER expert was stranded due to bad weather and didn't get to the scene until later in the day. The initial dangerous readings of .65 R/hr. to 4.0 R/hr. was supposedly taken by non-specified "authorities"; civil defense personnel later measured the radiation at less than 2 millirems/hr. I called Margaret Reilly, Chief of Environmental Resources--Bureau of Radiological Health, on Monday afternoon and she explained that the initial readings were inaccurate because the unnamed authority had to be "convinced" on how to properly read the instrument. Ms. Reilly said also that newspapers in the area were reporting persons coming in for

treatment of radiation exposure. These reports, she assured me, were inaccurate.

Alot of questions remain unanswered. Why was the story played down so quickly? Why did the leaking cannister later



become "a crack in the trailer compartment"? Why was there such a large discrepancy in the figures? Why and how did a "major health hazard" in the morning become "slight" by the time it hit the Evening News? What if the accident had been worse? And finally when will DER, Civil Defense and State Police authorities provide for precise management and an escort for the shipment of radioactive substances and prohibit shipment of those potentially deadly substances in dangerous weather conditions?

In this case the cobalt was to be used beneficially for the treatment of disease. But there are thousands of pounds of much more deadly plutonium and other

1 Deadline Next Issue: Feb.18

(cont

carcinogenic wastes produced each year by this country's operating nuclear reactors--wastes so unstable that modern scientific technology has not, and will not, be able to determine how to safely store it for the thousands of years required. Enlarging of on-site storage facilities, like that which has been done at the under construction Berwick Nuke is hardly a satisfactory answer. No state in the Union wants the wastes, and even if they did we don't know how to safely ship them. And yet "experts" continue to try and tell us that nuclear power is safe. Maybe they should ask the turkeys on I-80.

GPU's Shell Game

by: Jim Gornley

General Public Utilities, parent of Met-Ed, Pennelec, and Jersey Central Power and Light, is resorting to fancy footwork to stave off the lingering shocks of last March 28th's "normal aberration." Its latest move involves creation of a subsidiary (GPU Nuclear Corp.) to operate and maintain its nuclear plants at TMI and Oyster Creek, NJ. Simultaneously, GPU merged the management of Pennelec and Met-Ed. The surprise announcement was made at the PUC investigation of Met-Ed's fitness to retain its operating license and the continuation of the TMI-1 reactor in the ratebase. Commissioner Johnson chastised Met-Ed a week earlier for failing to apprise the PUC of the impending merger. The move was characteristic of GPU/Met-Ed abruptness and penchant for surprise.

Met-Ed (50% TMI owner) and Pennelec (25% LMI owner) serve a combined total of over 800,000 customers. Nearly twice Met-Ed's current number of ratepayers will be affected by the merger. The management merger leaves the financial structure of both GPU subsidiaries unchanged. However, future merger developments may arise which would combine the

assets, service areas and rate-payers under a new corporate entity. Met-Ed is currently scrambling to meet its financial obligations, having its cash flow disastrously impaired by the TMI-2 accident.

A PUC ruling on Met-Ed's request for an additional \$55 million in rate relief will follow the fitness investigation and the TMI-1 decision. If this ruling goes against Met-Ed, highly unlikely with Susan Shanaman and Linda Talliaferro on the PUC, it will be comforting for Met-Ed to know they have the stalwart rate-payers of GPU's fief in Johnstown to turn to.

The American Nuclear Insurers Co. reports having paid over 1.3 million dollars so far to TMI evacuees for expenses and wage losses. Eligible families were those within a 5-mile radius who evacuated after Governor Thornburgh's advice to pregnant women and pre-school children. This comes nowhere near compensating all affected area residents or local municipalities. But still we can't help wondering how the \$1.3 million in insurable liabilities affects the industry's "clean, safe and economical" formula.

Krypton Update

In recent issues of "The Alert", we reported on the threatened release of 2 million cubic feet of Krypton 85 gas from TMIA 2's containment building into the atmosphere.

Met Ed submitted a proposal to vent the gas into the atmosphere under controlled conditions to the NRC in mid-December. The NRC has requested additional data in response to the company's proposal. The information requested is (1) Whether Met Ed has considered other alternatives (2) A cost and schedule for the alternatives and (3) Specific design features of both the venting operation and alternatives. (cont.)

PUC Input

In late December, Met Ed announced that small amounts of the Krpyton 85 gas are leaking from the containment building into the crippled reactor's non-nuclear system. When contacted by this reporter, Sandy Pollon, Met Ed's public relations representative, stated that as of now about enough to fill a nail polish bottle has leaked out. He also added that at the present rate of leakage, it would take about 2,000 years for all the gas to leak out of the containment building.

When Robert Arnold announced this leakage, he said, "I consider it to be of no consequence. I only mention it to point out the tremendous sensitivity of our instruments."

By announcing this small leakage, I think Met Ed is trying to pressure the NRC into a prompt, favorable and cheap decision for Met Ed--venting the gas into the atmosphere.

In late November, Joel Roth of TMIA, wrote a letter to President Carter opposing this venting. We ask you to do the same. Also contact your representatives and senators.



In early January Governor Thornburgh appointed Susan Shanaman to chair the PUC. Many of you will recall that Shanaman's appointment to the PUC in November, 1979 was opposed by a number of anti-nuke and consumer groups. Shortly after the January appointment, the Patriot reported that one of Shanaman's goals included developing "energy plans of action." She mentioned conservation, coal use and alternative energy sources as areas to be addressed and said the PUC will work closely with federal and state government, consumers and utilities to develop the energy plans. It's up to us to make the anti-nuke consumer heard in this planning process. Write to Shanaman today. Her address is:

Susan Shanaman, Chair
Public Utility Commission
P.O. Box 3265
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Legislation

Presidential commissions generally have about as much effect as a temperance union member at a brewery picnic.

The U.S. House of Representatives drove that message home once again as they voted for passage of the NRC authorization bill without any changes in the NRC structure or without any moratorium to keep the commission from acting until such changes were made.

In the most publicized of all the moratorium measures, the Markey Amendment which would have called a halt to licensing of new plants for a six month period, went down to a heavy defeat 135-254. The Pennsylvania delegation split was a little less overwhelming, 10-12 (with 3 non-voters).

Local congressmen voted un-

ment. The nearest legislator to vote "nay" on Markey was conservative Congressman Bud Shuster, representing Perry and parts of Cumberland counties.

Congress did pass, however, an amendment which requires the NRC to evaluate all operating nukes within 120 days to see how well they conform to NRC safety-related regulations. Also, it requires the NRC to identify all generic safety problems within the same period.

This bill, sponsored by N.Y. congressman Jonathan Bingham, was overlooked by both pro and anti-nuclear lobbyists. It passed the House 217-161. Once again, the Pennsylvania delegation voted more anti-nuclear than the national average (14-7, with 3 no-votes). Locally, Ertel and Goodling voted in favor; Shuster and Walker voted against.

The Pennsylvania legislature continued its course of action on nuclear issues - members kept their heads buried in the sand. Bills requiring a moratorium and clearing financing issues remained mired in the quagmire of the Republican-controlled House committees.

The Select Committee on TMI has announced that it will require such sweeping changes as a statewide bank record depository so that we can get out money when we evacuate. Also, homeowners may be able to get insurance for nuclear accidents. Somehow, we might have hoped for more "sweeping" changes. Instead, they seem to be sweeping the accident under the rug.

Dickinson College will hold a public symposium called "Our Nuclear World and Welcome To It" on February 10 - 13 in Carlisle.

The keynote address on Sunday, Feb. 10th will be given by Dr. Barry Commoner.

Panel discussions will take

place on the 11th, 12th and 13th.

The closing address will be given by Sam Love, writer-activist, co-founder of Environmental Action and one of the principal organizers of Earth Day.

Additionally, there will be a series of films shown during the three days. Included are "Dr. Strangelove," "Fail-safe," and "Hiroshima, Mon Amour."

For more information about the four-day events, contact Dickinson College's Office of Information Services at 245-1289 or the Office of Student Services at 245-1555.

The public is invited without charge.

Nuke Victim

In 1957 Sergeant Orville Kelly of the U.S. Army was stationed on Japtan Island in the South Pacific. He was in charge of a squad working on "Operation Hardtack"--a series of 22 atmospheric nuclear detonations in nearby lagoons and on nearby islands. Sixteen years later Kelly learned that he had malignant cancer of the lymph glands in an advanced stage. Kelly is convinced that his cancer was caused by the radiation he was exposed to on Japtan, but he has been unable to convince the Feds.

Along with his work with other cancer patients and their families, Kelly in 1978 founded the National Association of Atomic Veterans. The 750-member organization collects data for Veterans Administration claims, serves as an information clearinghouse, and publishes a monthly newsletter. In April Kelly will testify in Washington at a national conference of radiation victims, civilian as well as military. Those who are interested can contact Kelly at 1109 Franklin St., Burlington, Iowa 52601 (319) 753-6112. (Information from Parade Magazine, January 13, 1980).

Community Notes

Many Community groups have not been submitting reports to the ALERT. Things have slowed down over the holidays, but now we're gearing up again for 1980. Please let the rest of us know what you've been doing. It may not seem "important" to you, but it'll give other groups some ideas.

Adams County Community Group has had significant success with its outreach effort. Group leader Wayne James and his wife Sue have promoted scheduling of anti-nuclear messages to church groups throughout the county using the group's own copy of "The Last Slide Show" (a copy is also available at 315 Peffer St. Office). Churches have responded eagerly, as if they have just been waiting for us to drop into their laps. Wayne has challenged the group to form a local teach-in panel to address the church groups and to build a back-up capability.

Wayne James is responsible for technology of nuclear power and alternative energy, Patricia Hammann has economics of nuclear power, Bob Stoner has political implications, Dorothy Lamberti has health effects, and Mac Albright has moral implications.

Using the excellent model of the main TMIA Teach-In Panel, we have really gotten rolling on this effort. We recommend it highly to other groups.

Group member (ex-leader, present TMIA Steering Committee member and secretary) Mac Albright delivered a sermon to the congregation at Fairfield Mennonite Church entitled, "If

nuclear power is the answer, what is the question? A moral response to the nuclear challenge Reaction was overwhelmingly positive and provoked lively debate in the adult Sunday School sessions for the next several Sundays.

The group invited Bill Vastine to introduce Last Resort non-violent civil disobedience training in December and decided to proceed with the training in February. Marge Clement and Bill Vastine are scheduled to carry out the training.

Now is the time to set new goals, reorganize our groups and begin anew. There is hope for a better 1980. The Mechanicsburg group was one of the few groups that was able to show the film, "Nuclear Wastes." After our showing, Mr. John Khanlian contacted the superintendent of Mechanicsburg schools and arranged showing the film to 360 senior high students. We then donated two books to the high school for further background. We are now in the process of reorganizing our telephon committee, to incorporate many of the 1600 petition signers who expressed an interest in TMIA. We have made initial contacts with the ten churches in the area, but now want to expand with personal contact. We are using church bulletins now to announce our meetings. We will be assigning 2 churches to our various members for initial contact and follow-up. Steve Ficks will begin a discussion group to review various books on the nuclear issue and other pertinent topics. Many of us have let our self education program slide. The West Shore Public Library and the Mechanicsburg Chamber of Commerce have agreed to put our literature in their information centers.

Our surveys have been sent to 4,000 Mechanicsburg Borough residents in sewer and refuse bills. The survey question is:



Do you wish for the permanent shutdown of Three Mile Island as a nuclear facility? Yes or no. Mike Jones and Tim Lyng put an incredible amount of work and perseverance into finally achieving this survey. Mr. and Mrs. Ira Heckart were also staunch supporters at Borough Council meetings. One member of Borough Council confided, "You know, this subject never would have been discussed if you hadn't approached Borough Council." We are now notifying 1,000 apartment dwellers via flyers that the surveys will either be mailed out on request or may be picked up. The deadline is January 31st, so we will be helping tally the final results.

Several of our members are covering the PUC hearings for January. It really is extremely interesting and informative. Joe Bard will be looking for help the next few months. Give it a try!

We also will be helping Fred Girondi, a graduate research associate in environmental education from Ohio State University by completing an attitude questionnaire. The purpose of the study: to improve understandings and communications between the pro-nuclear and anti-nuclear groups in Pennsylvania and Ohio.

Wishing each of you renewed success in 1980. A beautiful thought I received via a thank you note from Carlisle's Paula Prober: "It will be a great day when our schools get all the money they need and the air force has to hold a bake sale to buy a bomber." For more information, call Mary Hartnett at 766-0592.

Contact People

ADAMS COUNTY - Mac Albright -
761-6280 (W)
BOX HUCKLEBERRY - Anne Miller -
582-2875

CARLISLE - Mike Kline -
249-4143
HACC'S STUDENTS FOR PEACE -
Brian Downey - 236-9533 or
238-6486
HERSHEY AREA ALLIANCE - Georgia
Lookingbill - 566-6480
LEBANON VALLEY ALLIANCE - Jim and
Maggie Hummel - 865-6232
LONDONDERRY TWP. Pat Street -
944-2334
LOWER PAXTON - Lee Garland -
561-0701
MECHANICSBURG - Mary Hartnett -
766-0592
NEW CUMBERLAND ENERGY ALLIANCE -
Al Mirando - 774-7215
SEA (CHAMBERSBURG) - Michael Kohler -
264-4729
SWATARA TWP./STEELTON - Nancy Baumgardner
939-7530
UPTOWN/SUSQUEHANNA - Suzanne Patton -
238-6329

TASK FORCE:

ECONOMICS - Jim Gormley -
944-7011
EDUCATION - Louise Bradford -
232-3070
HEALTH - Mike Klinger -
921-8618
LAST RESORT - Matthew Magda -
545-6320
LEGAL - Joe Bard -
238-0004
LEGISLATIVE - Chris Sayer -
233-7897
MARCH 28th COALITION - Bill Vastine -
774-6711
NEWSLETTER - Terry Roth -
763-1835 (H) - 236-9486 (W)
RELIGIOUS - Marge Clement -
774-5767
STAFF - Chris Sayer -
233-7897

Island Updates is a new TMIA publication, designed to keep national activist groups abreast of the latest news of the accident. We print every third Wednesday. Anyone interested in helping out and learning a few skills should call Andrea Chesman (232-3070 or 234-5091, ext. 162) or the office (233-3072).

TMIA 1979-1980

by Chris Sayer

As we enter a new year, we can look back on 1979 with a feeling of pride for our many accomplishments. Many, many of you have worked long hours to bring about these successes.

Immediately following the accident, a handful of people organized the first rally on the Capitol steps. More than 1,500 people showed up.

Next, TMIA organized 31 busloads of people (plus thousands of people who went by car) to go to the May 6th rally in D.C. Harrisburg has never before mobilized so many people for anything short of a flood.

On May 20th, TMIA hosted the Women and Children's March on MetEd at the Reading headquarters. Several thousand people travelled to MetEd from up and down the East Coast.

Berwick, another Capitol rally and the concert in Halifax kept the ball rolling during the summer.

In September, more than a thousand people turned out to see Jane Fonda and Tom Hayden at the Penn Harris. Hundreds more were turned away.

And in November, several hundred area residents got an education on nuclear power as TMIA and NPIRG hosted a major national teach-in.

But it was not all events during the year. Robert Bloom found out that he couldn't advocate nukes and get renominated to the PUC. Joseph Cossetti learned that you could not duck the issue. Both nominations went down to overwhelming defeat.

The PUC became one of the focuses of our effort. On June 15th, the commission ruled that the cost of cleanup could not be passed on to the ratepayers, a landmark decision.

Finally, and most importantly, TMI is still closed. The gas has not been released; the

water has not been dumped into the Susquehanna. And while MetEd complains, the NRC has now required a full environmental impact study before the utility can go ahead with any cleanup activities.

What lies ahead? Well, we are rapidly approaching the first anniversary of the accident. A major effort to organize people must be made for the 28-29th actions.

The PUC and NRC hearings will continue through the midpoint of the year. Our attorneys will represent TMIA in both sets of hearings.

April 26th will see another large gathering of people in Washington. Already, national and local organizing is proceeding to increase our participation over last year.

We need to be looking for ways of involving new people in each of these efforts.

The fundraising effort now underway will serve as an organizing tool. We need to increase the number of public forums so that new people become involved in TMIA. Regular meetings of TMIA should be scheduled by the Planning Council.

Everything we do must carry one single message. We, the people of Central Pennsylvania, will not allow our lives to be put in jeopardy once again - we will not allow TMI to reopen as a nuclear facility.

And that effort will take money, time and energy. I urge you to give as much of each as you possibly can. We must guarantee a non-nuclear future for Central Pennsylvania.

Staff this issue:
Terry Roth (ed.)
Nancy Baumgardner
Sue Eason
Debbie Fetterman
Doug Grier
Maggie & Jim Hummel
Sue Shetrom
The Williams Family

Edward and Perri Kluck are convinced their stillborn baby died because of radiation emitted during the TMI accident, and filed suit against Met-Ed, GPU and Babcock & Wilcox in federal court in December.

The York County couple, who live in Manchester, 3.2 miles from TMI, contend that the utilities and the builder knew at the time of the accident that the radiation would directly and adversely affect the vital organs of any child in the womb.

The suit also contends that Met-Ed violated federal safety regulations; did not train its employees properly and failed to take safeguards to prevent a radiation leak.

The judge in the case, Sylvia Rambo, has placed a gag order, or a halt to further discussion, on the case until it comes to trial.

No Nuke No Smoke

Hardly anyone, smoker or non-smoker, is unaware of the irrefutable evidence that smoking causes cancer and other serious health problems. Somewhat less well-known are the hazards to the passive smoker: the innocent bystander who cannot avoid breathing what the U.S. Surgeon General has called "side stream smoke", which is even more harmful than what the smoker inhales directly. At least two-thirds of smoke from a cigarette is "sidestream".

These effects are well-documented. The exact cause of the problem could be any of the gaseous poisons identified in tobacco smoke: tar, nicotine, 3-4 benzpyrene, carbon monoxide, ammonia, cadmium, nitrogen dioxide, formaldehyde, hydrogen cyanide, hydrogen sulphide. There are dozens of others, each of which is bad news by itself, but many of these substances work in consort with each other and other substances in the environment to harm the body. Some researchers are convinced that radioactive substances in

tobacco are also responsible. In industrialized nations, tobacco smoking is the greatest single cause of excess death from lung and other cancer, from heart attacks, and from emphysema in both men and women.

Within the anti-nuclear movement, we are all well aware of the real and the potential dangers from radiation exposure. We are concerned about our own health and that of countless others who are being unwillingly jeopardized by proponents of nuclear power. If we care about our own health in terms of the nuclear threat, how can we continue to smoke? Even more to the point, if we care about others' health, how can we continue to smoke where others have no choice but to breathe the toxic and carcinogenic fumes we generate as we smoke? If we endanger the health of others by smoking in the air they have no choice but to breathe, how are we different from nuclear power advocates?

We have a good opportunity to be consistent on this issue. Let's not blow it.

by Mac Albright

On Monday, December 3, 1979, Mary Douglas, Betty Sue Lentz & Milton Lowenthal met with four foreign students from Liberia, France, India and Czechoslovakia, who represented the International Union of Students. The main topics of discussion were concerns about the proliferation of nuclear weaponry, its connection with nuclear power and the need for the SALT II agreement to attain disarmament.

Apparently foreign students are more aware of the connection between nuclear weapons and nuclear power and their dangers than U.S. students. To help alleviate this problem, arrangements were made to provide speakers and literature, through the Commonwealth Students Assoc., for student groups in area colleges.

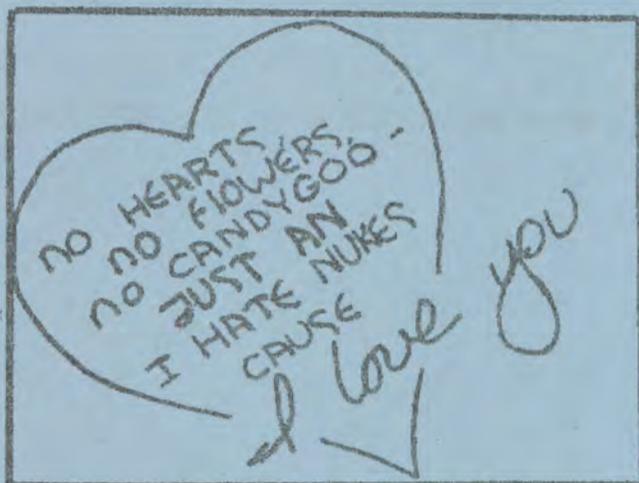
Grants

Three Mile Island Alert was recently awarded a \$3,000 grant by the MUSE (Musicians United for Safe Energy) Foundation.

The grant, which comes from proceeds of the September concerts at New York's Madison Square Garden, is for general support and/or litigation against Three Mile Island.

Other large grants received during the past few months include \$500 from the Bread and Roses Fund (for the Teach-in), \$3,000 (\$2,500 for litigation and \$500 for general support) from the United Methodist Church, and \$2,000 from the May 6th Coalition (for the publication of a national newsletter).

Despite this infusion of capital into the organization, costs have outrun income. The legal effort has suffered from an inability to hire the sort of expert witnesses that will be necessary.



FundRaising

Three Mile Island Alert will begin on February 1, 1980 a massive direct mail campaign in an effort to raise funds and to enroll new members.

Lee Garland, chairperson of the Lower Paxton Twp. TMIA has agreed to head the effort.

Over the next several months, letters will go to 25,000 or

more residents of Central Pennsylvania asking for support.

Paul Makurath, also of the Lower Paxton Twp. group, will head up the workforce who will actually get the mailings out.

The money raised will go both to fund the legal efforts and to increase our educational and organizational outreach within Central Pennsylvania.

The letters will go to area residents who have attended TMIA events or who have signed petitions calling for the closing of Three Mile Island as a nuclear power plant.

Anyone willing to help in this effort should call the TMIA office at 233-7897. Workdays for the mailings are generally held Saturdays (from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM) at the Friends Meeting House, 6th and Herr Streets, Harrisburg.

We are former York residents who left because of the disaster at Three Mile Island. In our travels, looking for work and a place to live, we have spoken to many people about what happened. We have found them to be interested but entirely unaware of what all of us have gone through. Despite all the commissions, studies, and official recommendations, few of the people around Three Mile Island have a chance to express their personal viewpoints.

We are gathering statements from residents and former residents of the Three Mile Island region, with the idea of collecting these statements into a book. Hopefully, the book will find a publisher so that the public can hear our story. If you are interested in writing a statement or participating in this project, please write to us soon and we will send you further information. Also, if you or your friends know of anyone who has left the area since the accident, let us know so that we can get in touch with him or her.

Thank you for your help.

Susan Mills
Russell Mills
129 E. Irvin Ave.
State College, Pa.
16801

Ed Panel

Met Ed has a new propaganda tool: They call it the "truth force," and they are sending public relations people into private citizens' homes to explain to them the "truth" about nuclear power. Since October 1979, TMIA has had a "truth force" of its own, and we call ourselves the Education Panel.

Composed of Casey Zaleski, Bill Shoff, John Murdoch, and myself (Andrea Chesman), the panel speaks on four aspects of nuclear power: government regulation and response, health and safety, economics, and alternatives to nuclear power. Our format is flexible; generally we each speak for fifteen to eighteen minutes and answer questions from the audience after each speaker. Our concluding remarks always let people know what they can do to keep TMI closed.

Panels such as ours can be highly effective organizing tools for bringing the facts and options concerning nuclear power to people. Panels can also keep people aware of what TMIA is doing and how they can become involved with TMIA. Thus far, the response to our panel has been good. Because Met Ed is now competing with us, we would like to intensify our efforts.

First, we would like to invite all TMIA members to consider gathering their neighbors and friends into their homes to hear a panel. This kind of "kaffee klatch" organizing can bring out people who would never dare come to a rally or a public meeting. We would also like to urge any members who belong to other organizations to see if they can schedule us for one of their meetings. Anyone who would like to hold a panel meeting should contact Casey Zaleski (534-8595) or the TMIA office (233-3072) to the clear

the date.

But there are hundreds of TMIA members, and there is just one panel--so far. We believe that education should be a major goal of TMIA. In order to accomplish that, we really need additional panels. Our panel has evolved a style of working together as a team, and we would like to see additional teams formed. And one doesn't have to be an expert to be an effective panelist--one has to care about teaching others (and themselves) about the dangers of nuclear power. Anyone interested in working on a panel, or helping to organize, schedule and promote the panels should contact the office or Casey at the numbers listed above.

Zirconium

by Dr. Daniel M. Pisello, from
Greenpeace Chronicles, Sept, 1979

Most nuclear reactors in the world are operating with a fatal design flaw, brought to light by the recent accident at Three Mile Island. Fuel rods in these reactors consist of uranium oxide fuel pellets held in thin metal tubes called cladding, in all water-cooled reactors is in an alloy of the metal zirconium which reacts violently with air or water, under a variety of conditions likely to occur.

No viable alternative to the highly dangerous zirconium exists. Because of the zirconium cladding, water cooled nuclear reactors run a high risk of violent chemical explosion and catastrophic release of radioactivity. All but one of the 72 reactors in the U.S. are water-cooled, as are 95 percent of all the nuclear plants in the world outside Great Britain, which uses gas-cooled reactors.

At Three Mile Island, mechanical difficulties led to a partial loss of coolant, and a partial meltdown of the reactor core. As an emergency measure, reserve cooling water was sprayed onto the dangerously exposed and overheated core. Hydrogen explosions occurred in the (cor

containment and later a huge bubble interfered with efficient cooling of the damaged core, presenting the possibility of a hydrogen explosion inside the reactor vessel.

Spokesmen for the utility company and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) claimed ignorance on the subject of the origin of the hydrogen bubble, referring to it as a "new twist," and "something that had not been foreseen when the reactor was designed." The next day the bubble shrank and disappeared.

The claims of ignorance by the utility companies and federal experts about the appearance and disappearance of the hydrogen are lies. Explanations for these occurrences are commonly available in the literature on nuclear engineering and safety, and concern the use of zirconium alloy cladding.

Experts agree that the hydrogen was produced by the reaction of tons of zirconium cladding with steam formed in the reactor vessel during the early stages of the accident. But weeks after the event the only public reference to the role of zirconium in the production of the hydrogen bubble was in the British press, in the only nuclear nation that has no water-cooled reactors.

Sir Martin Ryle of the Cavendish laboratory in Cambridge stated in a letter to "THE GUARDIAN" (London) that a highly dangerous hydrogen bubble should have been predicted as a matter of "A-level textbook knowledge." The following is taken from a standard text on reactor safety:

The chemical reaction of the cladding with steam...has three important effects. First, it furnishes energy, which can increase the heating rate of the core. Second, hydrogen, a reaction product, is released to the containment structure. Third, the reaction also changes the character of the cladding (i.e., the metal cladding is converted to an oxide), which can affect the behavior on quenching.

The nuclear industry and the NRC know full well the hazards of zirconium in water-cooled reactors. The NRC is therefore emphasizing poor operator performance and mechanical failures in their analysis of the accident in order to divert attention from the more fundamental problem of the chemical activity of the cladding.

The state's Welfare Department has received a \$375,000 grant from the National Institute of Mental Health to study the mental health impact of the TMI accident on residents in a 10-mile radius of the plant.

The study will focus on young mothers, workers at the plant and persons already receiving mental health treatment, as groups who may have experienced greater stress during the crisis. 700 persons will be interviewed in an operation devised and directed by Evelyn J. Bromett, a psychiatrist from the University of Pittsburgh.

A comparison will be made to determine any differences in mental health characteristics of the population group which has experienced an accident and one which has not, people living near the Shippingport plant in Beaver County. Follow-up interviews will be conducted during the first anniversary of the accident at TMI, a time which Welfare officials expect to be particularly stressful for residents of the area.

The 1977 U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Report shows that in 1975, electric utilities ranked 140th of 142 industries when it came to the proportion of officials and managers who are minorities. Only the paper and coal companies ranked lower. 1.9% of officials and managers were minorities in electric utilities while minorities made up 16.2% of the work force.

(The electric utilities were 122nd out of the 142 industries in hiring women as officials and managers, with 2.9% being female, compared to a 14.2% average for all industries and to 37.1% of the workforce being female.) (cont.)

The electric utilities fared only slightly better for professional and technical workers, with 5.4% of these employees being minorities (and 6.7% being female).
from Up Against the Wall
Street Journal

Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, described Box's ruling as outlandish. He said it would tell utilities "they can stage the news, and if the reporters wander off the set they're going to be arrested."

Nine reporters and television camera operators were convicted last month of criminal trespass charges growing out of their coverage of an anti-nuclear protest at a power plant construction site last June.

Similar charges against 319 protesters also arrested at the Oklahoma Black Fox site had earlier been dismissed after a jury had been unable to reach a decision.

The convictions come at a time of mounting opposition to nuclear power plants.

The action by Judge David Allen Box drew immediate fire from groups protecting the rights of reporters.

The reporters' group said that the decision will have a "chilling effect" on their coverage of anti-nuclear events.

Jack Landau, director of the

In November Daniel Berrigan, activist Roman Catholic priest and 14 others were arrested and charged with disorderly conduct and trespass after chaining themselves to a fence at the Riverside Nuclear Research Institute in New York. On December 26, the judge granted the District Attorney's request to dismiss the charges. It was clear that this was not a demonstration of Christmas spirit when the D.A. explained the reason for dropping charges. "We want to prevent these defendants from using the Criminal Courts as a forum for their views," he said. Berrigan told reporters later, "They are so determined to keep that stuff (the research) classified they would rather dismiss the charges than have a public trial."

TMIA MEMBERSHIP FORM

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

ZIP CODE _____

TELEPHONE NO. _____

Check Type Membership Desired

- _____ \$ 15 regular
- _____ 5 low income & student
- _____ 25 non-profit organization
- _____ 50 sustaining member
- _____ 100 patron
- _____ 200 club member

- _____ \$ 5 non-member newsletter subscription

Return to: TMIA
315 Peffer Street
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17102

March 28 Coalition

The March 28th Coalition now has an office at 1037 Maclay St. (across from the Farm Show) staffed by Gail Bradford (phone 233-NUKE). An interfaith service is planned for Friday night the 28th followed by a WITF sponsored forum and/or a candlelight vigil. There'll be a rally on Saturday afternoon with displays and local and national speakers and entertainment. Since the eyes of the world will be on us, we need to get Central PA people who are anti-nuke but do

not come to rallies to participate. This is our time to remember the accident and to make our statement that TMI must never reopen.

The next Coalition meeting is Sunday, Feb. 3 at 6 pm at 1037 Maclay. We really need money and help with planning events -- phone calling, making armbands and displays, arranging parking and logistics, doing media and publicity, getting out mailings, etc. Call 233-NUKE for further details and/or come to the next meeting.



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