

THREE MILE ISLAND

# ALERT

MAY  
1983

315 Peffer St., Harrisburg, PA 17102

Phone: 717-233-7897

## BECHTEL - No Mr. Clean!

The cleanup of Three Mile Island Unit II is in the hands of Bechtel Corporation. Just what do we know about this outfit entrusted with making TMI-II something less than a life threatening monster in the middle of the Susquehanna? Who are they? Can they be trusted?

We know for certain that they have problems with the likes of safety conscious engineers like Parks, King and Gischel. We also know that they are well connected in Washington; the Secretary of Defence and the Secretary of State passed through Bechtel's executive suite on their way to Washington, and we know they are the world's largest privately held construction company.

Privately held companies are exempt from Securities and Exchange Commission regulation, therefore Bechtel does not have to file lengthy and revealing financial reports with the government. Unlike publicly traded companies--those whose stock you can buy--Bechtel does not have to disclose any overseas bribes, slush funds, or illegal payments. Unlike other companies, Bechtel does not even have to issue an annual report, although their shareholders don't seem to mind.

Bechtel's shareholders are either company vice-presidents or their wives. Each shareholder agrees to sell back their stock when they leave the company or die, at a price determined by the holders of 66 percent of the company stock--in other words the Bechtel family. That is about it at Bechtel. It's all in the family.

Mark Dowie, writing for Mother Jones magazine in 1978, was stonewalled by Bechtel's public relations department while attempting to do an article on the company. They refused to cooperate in any way with Dowie yet on his own he learned a great deal about Bechtel's internal operations.

For example, the Washington connection goes back a long way. John McCone was a Bechtel partner (Bechtel-McCone built ships for the U.S. during World War II) until he went to work for the government in the 1950s. By 1959, McCone was chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission and he never forgot his friends at Bechtel. When the country's first nuclear power plant was built in Dresden, Illinois (by Bechtel), McCone showed up at the dedication to praise it as the "largest, most efficient, most advanced" power plant in the world.

W. Kenneth Davis was assistant director of reactor development at the AEC in 1954 and a vice president of Bechtel from 1958 to 1981 when he became Deputy Secretary of Energy. He resigned from that post in 1983 to become a consultant for a major construction firm--Bechtel.

We also know that Bechtel has been involved with suits other than the one GPU brought against it charging poor design. Bechtel was sued in 1978 by Consumer Power in Michigan when the Palisades Nuclear Plant broke down shortly after it opened. The company eventually settled the suit without either side taking the blame (sound familiar?) for \$14 million and a promise to correct deficiencies.

In 1972, felony convictions were given to four Bechtel executives who bribed the mayor of Woodbridge, New Jersey with \$50,000 to gain a pipeline right-of-way through the town. Bechtel appealed and won a new trial, but were reconvicted.

In 1975, the Bechtel Foundation (whose contributions are tax write-offs) gave a \$100,000 grant to the World Wide Permana Fund. This contribution was the largest single grant made in 1975, and it represents 30% of the Bechtel Foundations total gifts for the year. According to its articles of incorporation, World Wide Permana is chartered to "further the cultural ties between the U.S. and the Republic of Indonesia". As of Dowie's 1978 article, however, the only activity of Permana was the provision of one scholarship to one Indonesian student to study in the U.S. Shortly after the 1975 grant, Bechtel won a multi-million dollar contract to build a complex of gas pipelines, liquefaction plants and liquefied-natural-gas ports throughout Indonesia.

Perhaps Bechtel has put shenanigans like this behind them and they have turned over a new leaf. Perhaps they've cleaned up their act and can now cleanup Unit II without anyone being uneasy about their presence in the community. Perhaps, if you'd like to know more about Bechtel, you could ask them and get a straight answer. But they probably won't give you one. After all, power is power. Ignorance is terrifying.

There are many critical issues involving health concerns and the dangers of radiation exposure related to the TMI accident, clean-up, and potential restart. The valuable information presented in the symposium reviewed below has been taped and is being summarized; TMIA is encouraging its wide distribution for public education. The health information presented on the next two pages, drawn from the studies conducted by Mitsuru Ktagiri and Aileen M. Smith-Katagiri, has been distributed by TMIA at several public events and forums.

## CRITICAL ISSUES

A public forum on nuclear power attracted 200 persons to the PSU Middletown campus on March 28-30 to hear and question a score of leading scientists and government officials, and a nuclear industry representative, on numerous aspects of the issues. The "Critical Issues associated with Nuclear Power Plant Development" was sponsored by the Public Health Fund, established by the multi-million dollar settlement of the TMI Litigation by the U.S. District Court.

The scientists and officials, from the U.S. and abroad, gave information and viewpoints on a multitude of questions relating to nuclear power. What emerged was a reasoned and well-rounded approach to the subject, which left little comfort for pro-nuclear advocates (including GPU representatives) in the audience.

David Berger, prominent Philadelphia attorney and Chief Counsel for the Health Fund, organized the forum and served as general moderator. He was aided by Edward P. Radford, M.D., of the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health and an authority on the biological effects of ionizing radiation, and by Karl Z. Morgan, Ph.D., of Appalachian State University, a founder of the health physics profession in America and an original member of the Manhattan Project, who helped select the speakers.

Representing the interests of the area anti-nuclear residents was James Hurst, a member of PANE, who was a panel speaker at the session on Expert Credibility and Public Concerns. Hurst conveyed many of those deep-felt concerns to the other panelists and to the audience of the forum, which gave him a standing ovation as he finished his presentation.

Other sessions were devoted to : Concerns Related to Nuclear Operations, Health Effects of Low-Level Radiation Exposures, Problems in Occupational Exposures to Radiation, and Planning for Nuclear Emergencies. A final summary session, held in the evening of March 30, drew the largest audience of the forum. Mr. Berger, agreeing to a request voiced by the audience, included Mr. Hurst as a summary speaker.

The inclusion of David Miller, Ph.D., Chief Health Physicist of PP&L, to speak on "Safety Measures at Commercial Nuclear Power Plants" earned the expressed resentment of a portion of the audience. However, there were no disruptions or demonstrations during the three day forum.

With the exception of a few panelists, all speakers appeared to meet Berger's request that they present their views on complicated issues in layman's terms.

The TMI Public Health Fund which sponsored the forum was established with a \$5million allocation from the \$25million settlement of the class-action suit brought against TMI's operators and insurers by Berger on behalf of persons living within a 25-mile radius of the plant who suffered monetary loss as a result of the accident. Public Education is a principal purpose of the Fund.

Hope was expressed during the forum that the group of experts there assembled might continue as an ongoing council-of-sorts and that it schedule further public forums. One hope, repeatedly voiced, was that the group exert its influence to press for public health studies in the TMI area, despite a four year lag on the part of public health officials to initiate such studies.

Experts who came from overseas to participate in the forum include: David Gee, National Health and Safety Officer for the General and Municipal Workers Union of England; Hiroo Kato, M.D., Acting Chief, Dept. of Epidemiology and Statistics, Radiation Effects Research Foundation of Hiroshima, Japan; and Alice M. Stewert, M.D., Senior Research Fellow, Birmingham University, England.

# Painful Truth About TMI

## excerpts from the Katagiri study

He described himself as kind of a macho type. He owned his own auto body shop and raced stock cars on the weekends. But 50 year old Bill Peters got a sunburn on March 29 while working all day in an open garage. It was a very tender burn, he said, the kind you get when you electric weld without a shield--but he wasn't welding that day! Bill awoke on Friday with blisters on his lips and nostrils, with a burning sensation in his lungs and nausea. Everyone in Bill's family had a sore throat that morning and they talked about the metal taste in the air, like burning galvanized steel; the same taste Bill and his son had noticed while working in the shop on Thursday. Now everyone tasted it. Later that day the police urged everyone to evacuate. Still Bill was not scared. Although he did evacuate his family, when he heard about the possibility of a total meltdown, he went back to get his racing trophies. In fact, Bill didn't feel afraid at all--until he and his family returned to their home a week later to find their German Shepherd and four cats dead. Then Bill began to get scared.

Becky Mease and her 8 month old daughter, Pam, pulled onto the shoulder of the Interstate overlooking TMI and waited for her husband, Dave, to meet them. Looking down at TMI, Becky noticed an orange haze emanating from the nuclear plant wafting up the valley and over the highway. Even though they were evacuating, Becky did not think of the haze as a radioactive plume, but rather as smog. As soon as Dave arrived the family left for Ocean City, Maryland. Two days later, Pam became violently ill. First came the projectile vomiting and then the severe diarrhea that was to last for three weeks. The hospital test indicated no bacteria or foreign organism that could cause such illness. The doctors considered where the Mease's lived and could arrive at no other diagnosis than radiation sickness. At the recommendation of the doctors, Becky and Dave went to the nearest civil defense station to check for radiation. Their 1966 Pontiac was so contaminated that the geiger counter went crazy. Even Becky's purse was radioactive.

During the first few days of the accident, the people around TMI saw certain phenomena; they felt and tasted things. Those things have been described before by servicemen who witnessed atomic blasts and by the residents around the nuclear weapons testing grounds in Nevada. The human experiences in all three places have undeniable parallels. The livestock problems experienced by ranchers in Nevada and Utah--the rash of unexplainable deaths, the leap in stillbirths and delivery problems, the cancer rate among animals--are the same problems that have plagued livestock and domestic pets in the area around TMI. In all three cases people have reported a metallic taste in the air and a vaporous, vaguely iridescent haze. In all three cases people became sick and have died at alarming rates.

Yet General Public Utilities (GPU) claims that no one was injured by the accident, and the government has not even initiated an epidemiological study of the people around the plant. It seems as though the medical community is locked within sterile laboratories by their highly systematized methodology that is too sophisticated to measure human beings in the real world. They accept totally inadequate data from GPU and the NRC, extrapolate meaningless projections on health effects, and find it unforgivably rude of people to get sick in spite of their computations.

Make no mistake about this--the residents around Three Mile Island are not merely displaying the effects of low-level radiation exposure. They have the symptoms of radiation sickness. It was a highly radioactive plume that settled on the ridge where Bill Peters lived. It was a highly radioactive plume that drifted up the valley and surrounded Becky Mease's car.

Over two hundred area residents have been interviewed by Mitsuru Katagiri and Aileen M. Smith-Katagiri (co-author of the book MINAMATA) and the TMI story goes like this...

\* hundreds of people experienced a strong metallic taste

(OVER)

in their mouths, some people noticed that the air seemed heavy and that voices sounded flat;

- \* dryness of the mouth and throat was experienced often, soreness and burning sensations, persistent thirst;
- \* hot sensation on the skin, particularly on the face and arms, often resulting in a "sunburn",
- \* irritation of the eyes, burning tearing;
- \* tight chests, shortness of breath, burning in the lungs;
- \* nausea and sometimes vomiting, anxious feeling in the stomach;
- \* diarrhea that persisted in some cases for weeks and months;
- \* an area nurse who became very ill after the accident has had recurring splotching of the skin and burning of her cheeks and nostrils. Those 45 recurring outbreaks correlate exactly with radiation ventings that were later admitted by GPU;
- \* Two dentists practising in Lewisberry Township (on the west shore across from TMI) noticed a fogging or banding of x-ray film exposed on Wednesday and Thursday. Film of the same batch that was exposed before the accident was normal. Neither dentist knew of the accident until Thursday night.
- \* One physician in Glodsboro reports a pronounced increase in leukemia and lymphoma starting about one year after the accident.
- \* A physician in New Cumberland reports increases in under-active thyroids, rashes and other dermatological problems, and 2 1/2 years after the accident observed a doubling of colon cancer.

Local farmers and a veterinarian report:

- \* hundreds of cases of feline leukemia;
- \* increases in cesarian deliveries for goats and sheep from 1 or 2/year to 1 or 2/week for a period beginning in January, 1980;
- \* stillbirths in goats, sheep and pigs increasing to 10% of total births;
- \* Increases in cancer for horses, cows, dogs and mules.
- \* Claire Hoover wanted to know once and for all what was wrong with his animals, so he hired the New Bolton Center to do thousands of dollars worth of laboratory work. The bill didn't come. Later he found out that the state paid the bill and that he would not be allowed to see the results.

The government refuses to acknowledge the tremendous cost of this accident in human suffering when the truth is that the death toll is mounting and the agony of these diseases have human faces and names. We know these faces and names. They are our friends and families.

NEVER AGAIN!

## Three Mile Island Public Interest Resource Center

1037 Maclay Street

• Harrisburg, Pa. 17103

• 717-233-4241

Local activists have formed a "Thursday Club" which meets every Thursday morning at 10 a.m. in front of the gates of the TMI bridge. Begun on 4/21/83 when two area residents stood in front of the gate and effectively kept the traffic from crossing the bridge for several hours, the group was expanded to three members the following Thursday and four people on 5/5/83. Organizer Gene Stilp originated the activity in response to the Supreme Court's unfavorable decision in the PANE Psychological Stress case.

At TMIA Planning Council meeting on 5/3/83, it was decided to endorse an independent advocacy project sponsored by the Christic Institute of Washington D.C. The project's goal is: "to return to state and local governments a limited authority to participate in controlling nuclear power plants as they affect the public health and safety, and to impose liabilities whenever the public health and safety has been recklessly endangered."

The NUCLEAR REFORM PROJECT, which advocates passage of an amendment to the 1954 Atomic Energy Act, is the first of its kind to deal exclusively with federal preemption of local government authority in the field of nuclear power. Joanne Doroshov is presently managing the project.

CLINCH RIVER BREEDER REACTOR funds will be cut off on October 1, unless Congress passes a new cost-sharing agreement before then. The House Science & Technology Committee voted 24-16 to cut off further funding until a plan can be adopted requiring the private sector to bear more of the cost. It seems that private utilities have little interest in risking their capital in the venture, however, and are looking for taxpayers to pay for it.

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Many thanks to: Bill Cologie, Brian Hunt, Nancy Larsen, Gary Mitchell, John Murdoch, Mary Osborne, and Kay Pickering for help in preparing this issue.

### MEMBERSHIP FORM

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

CHECK MEMBERSHIP DESIRED:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 5 low income and student             | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 50 sustaining member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 regular membership                 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 patron            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 non-profit organization            | <input type="checkbox"/> \$200 club member       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 5 non-member newsletter subscription |  |

RETURN TO: TMIA  
315 Peffer Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17102

- May 21 -- RECYCLING! Your recycled aluminum will be bought -- earning . . . you cash, with profits benefitting TMIA. Bring all items to the parking lot on Route 22 at K-Mart and Pathmark.
- May 24 -- TMIA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING -- plan on attending!  
Harrisburg Friends Meeting House, 6th & Herr Sts., 7:30 p.m.  
March 28th Coalition will present their "Roadshow", an information sharing on non-violent civil disobedience; films on energy strategies will be available, including the award-winning documentary "Lovins on the Soft Path"; and some TMIA Planning Council seats are open for election. Volunteer!
- May 26 -- Greenham Common participants will share their experiences in a presentation and discussion at Lakeside Lutheran Church, 7:30 p.m. Three women who have been part of a women's peace camp in England to protest the deployment of cruise missiles will be in Harrisburg; a similar peace camp is being planned at the Seneca Army Depot in New York. TMIA is helping to sponsor this event.
- May 27 -- Movies will be shown at the Harrisburg Friends Meeting House at 8 p.m. "The New Alchemists" is scheduled. Enjoy!
- June 4 & 5 -- Join the Shoreham Protest in Long Island, New York. A march and rally will be held on Saturday, and a sit-in with civil disobedience is scheduled for Sunday.  
The Suffolk County rejection of the proposed evacuation plans, supported by Gov. Cuomo's lack of opposition to the move, make this the site of a battle between local and federal control. Local folks who have petitioned, lobbied and demonstrated their opposition to the plant could use your support.
- June 7 & 21 -- TMIA Planning Council meetings; 7 p.m. at the Harrisburg Friends Meeting House, 6th & Herr Streets.
- June 16 -- RECYCLING!!
- June 18-20 -- Protest planned in Groton, Conn. to oppose Trident submarine U.S.S. Florida.
- July 16 -- RECYCLING!!
- July 17 -- TMIA Picnic at Camp Reily. Family & friends welcome. Noon-8p.m. Plan to swim, hike, play volleyball, and have fun!
- July 31-August 13 -- Hiroshima/Nagasaki Peace Pilgrimage, sponsored by Grassroots Tours; 1346 Connecticut Ave., NW, Rm 533; Washington DC 20036.
- August 20 -- RECYCLING!!

IF YOUR ADDRESS IS ALMOST UNREADABLE...RENEW NOW--  
 You're long past due... .. Those who can read their  
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