



Three Mile Island Alert

Island Updates

News Watch on the Harrisburg Area

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The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Tuesday, October 15, 1985

Steam leaks found in TMI drain line

From staff and wire reports

Leaks have been detected in a line that helps drain steam from the turbine system at the Three Mile Island nuclear plant, a spokesman said yesterday.

The first leak was detected last week in a 3/4-inch metal tube that is part of the system, said TMI spokesman Gordon Tomb.

The leak was repaired Saturday morning, but another leak was detected in the same tube Sunday, Tomb said. TMI officials then decided to replace the entire line, he said.

The reactor returned to about 28 percent power Sunday evening, but at 2 p.m. yesterday another leak was found at a welding point on the line, Tomb said.

Steam with minute traces of radioactivity was released during all three leaking incidents, but another spokesman said there was no health hazard.

"It's totally inconsequential in terms of any health basis. It's not zero, but it's next to zero," said spokesman Doug Bedell.

Plant personnel were still working yesterday to repair the

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leak. Operators expected to have the weld repaired last night, Tomb said, and then reactor power would be increased to 15 percent overnight.

Tomb said the reactor would reach 40 percent power within the next few days. Plant operator GPU Nuclear needs approval from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to then increase power to the next planned plateau, 48 percent. The reactor will remain at that level while tests are conducted.

Unit 1 at the Londonderry Twp. plant was restarted 12 days ago for the first time in 6 1/2 years. Tomb said the leaks were "one of the maintenance things we can expect to have."

The Patriot

Tuesday, October 22, 1985

Lift GPU licenses, brief asks

Associated Press

A federal appeals court yesterday was asked to strip GPU Nuclear Corp. of licenses to operate the Three Mile Island and Oyster Creek nuclear power plants.

The action was reported by Eric Epstein, spokesman for one of the plaintiffs, Three Mile Island Alert.

In a brief filed with the 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Philadelphia, the plaintiffs said GPU Nuclear should lose the licenses because of "deficient character," Epstein said.

Joining TMI Alert in the brief were two other anti-nuclear groups, New Jersey SANE and the Essex Safe Energy Alliance, and state Rep. Peter C. Wambach Jr., D-Harrisburg; state Sen. John J. Shumaker, R-Grantville, and Dauphin County Commissioner Lawrence Hochendoner.

Shumaker said management charges by the plant's owner, General Public Utilities Corp. of Parsippany, N.J., have not been meaningful.

"You can ... play musical chairs. It is the same company. It is the same group. I don't think in the eyes of the public that much has changed. I think some have changed chairs," Shumaker said.

"There's a clear-cut pattern of ineptitude and incompetence," Epstein said.

The Unit 1 reactor at TMI in Londonderry Twp. was restarted 2 1/2 weeks ago for the first time since nuclear fuel melted in 1979 at the adjacent Unit 2 during the nation's worst commercial nuclear accident. Unit 2 remains closed.

The Oyster Creek plant, also operated by GPU Nuclear Corp., is in Ocean County, N.J.

The case began after the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission denied a request to lift the licenses. The appeals court previously denied an emergency request to halt TMI's restart while the case is considered.

GPU Nuclear spokesman Doug Bedell declined to comment on yesterday's appeal.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Thursday, October 31, 1985

Slight contamination of 9 reported at TMI

By Christopher Quinn
Patriot-News

Nine workers at Three Mile Island Unit 1 were slightly contaminated by radioactive gases, the plant operator said yesterday.

But the gases, that were released in small amounts to the atmosphere, decayed within 90 minutes, and the workers suffered no ill effects, according to Gordon Tomb, spokesman for TMI operator GPU Nuclear Corp.

The incident Monday in Unit 1 was reported to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and inspectors stationed on the island since Unit 1's Oct. 3 restart are investigating, NRC spokesman Karl Abraham said.

News of the accident was not released until yesterday, Tomb said, because the company did not consider it to be serious. The information was included in a weekly update of events at Unit 1.

The accident Monday happened while employees worked on a pump. About 150 gallons of radioactive water from a pressurized system spilled into floor drains in the basement of a Unit 1 auxiliary building, the company said.

The water vaporized as it spilled, releasing gaseous isotopes of xenon, krypton and argon. The gases quickly decayed into the radioactive gases rubidium 88 and cesium 138.

The skin and clothing of nine workers were contaminated by the gases. Tomb said workers whose skin was contaminated washed, but those with only contaminated clothing did not need to wash. Within 90 minutes, the rubidium 88 and cesium 138 decayed from the clothing, Tomb said.

The gases also were released into the atmosphere through the

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TMI

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plant's ventilation system, GPU said.

The maximum radiation level at the plant's boundary was low, amounting to no more than 2 thousandths of 1 percent of the federal quarterly limit, GPU said.

Abraham said NRC investigators are "looking at everything out there."

"If we find that there's some item out of compliance, we'll cite it, but I've not heard of any," he said.

Unit 1 remains at 48 percent of its power capacity as it undergoes a month of tests. It then will be taken to 75 percent of capacity, where it will remain for another month of testing.

Restart of the unit came after more than six years of studies and investigations by the NRC and others. GPU spent more than \$95 million modifying the plant after Unit 2 was crippled in a 1979 accident.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Saturday, October 25, 1985

Discrimination charge denied by TMI operator

Associated Press

The operator of Three Mile Island is formally denying allegations of discrimination that led the Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff to propose a \$64,000 fine, officials said yesterday.

GPU Nuclear Corp. sent an eight-page response this week to the NRC's Office of Inspection and Enforcement, claiming it should not have to pay the proposed penalty.

"We believe that the vast bulk of the investigation indicates that the allegation is untrue," said Gordon Tomb, spokesman for GPU Nuclear Corp.

The NRC staff proposed the fine in August after investigating an alleged act of discrimination by the lead contractor in the cleanup of TMI's damaged Unit 2 reactor.

The NRC staff claimed that Bechtel Corp. discriminated against former employee Richard D. Parks, who accused the company in 1983 of making shortcuts to speed cleanup work.

Parks claimed he was harassed and intimidated after he raised safety concerns in February 1983

about the cleanup equipment for the reactor, which was crippled in the March 1979 accident at the nuclear plant, according to the NRC.

Parks had accused Bechtel and GPU Nuclear of not properly testing a crane that was to be used to lift the top of the damaged reactor in July 1984.

GPU Nuclear said Parks' removal as alternate startup and test supervisor was part of an organizational change and was not a retaliatory act.

The company, responding to an allegation that it conducted "intimidating interrogation," said it questioned Parks only to determine if he had a conflict of interest similar to the one that led to the firing of his supervisor.

GPU Nuclear also said Parks' removal as site operations representative was initiated and voluntarily undertaken by Parks himself.

Parks was suspended with pay after he held a news conference in which he allegedly made inflammatory personal attacks, thereby destroying his credibility with his colleagues, GPU Nuclear said.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Tuesday, October 22, 1985



The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Wednesday, October 30, 1985

TMI-1 hits 35% output mark; Met-Ed rates to dip Nov. 8

Metropolitan Edison Co. customers can expect lower rates by Nov. 8 after an operating milestone was reached yesterday at Three Mile Island Unit 1.

Officials from GPU Nuclear Corp., operators of Three Mile Island nuclear power plant in Londonderry Twp. and the holding company for Met-Ed, said TMI-1 produced electricity at 35 percent of capacity for 100 consecutive hours by 3 p.m. That milestone means TMI-1 will return to Met-Ed's rate structure for the first time since the 1979 accident at TMI-2.

Company officials must give customers a 10-day notice of the rate change, which will take effect Nov. 8. They estimate the average residential customer's monthly electric bill will decrease by \$3.22, to \$44.35.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Friday, October 4, 1985

Met-Ed bills will fall at the end of a roller-coaster ride

By George Weigel
Patriot-News

Metropolitan Edison Co. electric bills are headed for a roller-coaster ride.

Given the restart of Three Mile Island Unit 1, bills will take a dip when the plant reaches 35 percent of full output.

But bills would rise under a separate and unrelated rate case that entered its final phase yesterday before the state Public Utility Commission.

Then there's another dip Met-Ed proposed to the PUC last week to reflect a lower than estimated cost of buying power.

It's too early to tell in what order the ups and downs will occur, but it appears that when the dust settles, an average residential customer will be paying less.

Here's the scenario. Once TMI-1 is operating at 35 percent of full output for 100 consecutive hours, a settlement that is already in place and ap-

proved by the PUC will take effect.

The net effect of that settlement will be a \$47.5 million annual saving for customers, translating into a monthly saving of about \$2.15 for an average residential customer using 500 kilowatt-hours of electricity.

Separate from that, Met-Ed is finding that the electricity it is buying from other utilities is significantly less expensive than estimated.

"It's been a buyer's market for electricity this year," said Met-Ed spokesman R. Bruce McLean, explaining that overall production is up while usage has been down.

That prompted Met-Ed last week to file a request with the PUC to lower its energy cost rate by \$19.7 million a year.

The energy cost rate is the part of a customer's bill that recovers a company's cost of fuel to produce electricity or the expense of buying electricity.

Met-Ed officials estimate the proposed

cut would save an average customer about \$1.25 a month.

Separate from both of those actions is the rate case Met-Ed filed with the PUC in January. That involved a request for \$47.3 million more a year in earnings, or \$5.88 a month more for an average residential customer.

Hearings were held throughout the summer, and last month PUC Administrative Law Judge Herbert S. Cohen recommended that Met-Ed be entitled to \$19.9 million of its requested \$47.3 million.

The case entered its final phase yesterday as the three-member commission — operating two shy of its usual complement — began discussing the case issues.

Judging from the initial results, it appears that the commission's total is going to come out somewhere near the judge's.

State Consumer Advocate David M. Barasch said the commission's tally may even come in "a million or two" lower than Cohen's.

"We're pleased with the results so far," Barasch said. "The commission's figures appear to be close to the judge's, and his figures were very close to what we were recommending."

Met-Ed officials had no immediate comment on yesterday's action.

If the rate boost approximates \$19 million, it would roughly cancel out the proposed decrease in the energy cost rate.

And if those two nullify each other and TMI-1 resumes production without a hitch, the ultimate verdict should be lower rates for most customers.

Two of Cohen's major reasons for trimming Met-Ed's request were a disallowance of depreciation expenses for TMI-1 and a cut in the estimated cost to operate and maintain the Titus and Fortland coal-fired generating stations.

Commissioners yesterday agreed with both of those recommendations.

The depreciation decision cut \$9 million from the request, while the reduction

in expenses for the coal-fired stations took another \$7.4 million.

(Met-Ed will be able to resume recovering depreciation expenses when TMI-1 reaches 35 percent output and the pre-approved settlement takes effect.)

Commissioners went a step further than Cohen in cutting the request by lowering the rate of return Met-Ed stockholders will be permitted to earn on shares of common equity.

Cohen had recommended allowing an equity return of 16.4 percent, but the average amount suggested by the commissioners yesterday works out to 15.8 percent.

Even slight changes in the rate of return can translate into differences of thousands of dollars.

Met-Ed had proposed a 16.5 percent rate of return.

The commission is scheduled to discuss the remaining case issues Thursday. Final action is expected Oct. 24.

MY VIEW one reader's opinion

ERIC EPSTEIN



Eric Epstein is associated with TMI Alert, an anti-nuclear group opposed to TMI restart.

Area not ready for restart

EMERGENCY evacuation has recently resurfaced as an issue related to the restart of TMI Unit 1. Nowhere in the debate has anyone critically evaluated the details of the evacuation plan(s), or asked a very simple and basic question: Are the plans realistic/workable? Political officials and certain newspapers have been quick to say that pulling out of an evacuation plan or refusal to participate in drills would be "irresponsible" and "harmful." But the fact of the matter is that the evacuation plans are inherently flawed and riddled with faulty assumptions.

1. Evacuation plans for school children are incomplete and don't include contingencies in case bus drivers don't show up, in case children from the same family are bused to different relocation centers, and in case children experience mental trauma. (Note: Evacuation plans call for children to be evacuated from school to predetermined sites, where they would be picked up by their parents. In an informal random survey conducted by the Susquehanna Valley Alliance in the summer of 1983, 85.4 percent of the parents questioned said they would not allow their children to be taken to a separate evacuation area.)

2. There are no specific plans for evacuation of the elderly, the handicapped, and the blind.

3. Farmers are classified as emergency workers and will be permitted to remain during an accident. To date farmers have no insurance for loss of livestock or crops, and have had no instruction in using dosimeters or potassium iodine for their own protection.

It is pointless to classify farmers as emergency workers if they haven't been taught how to use dosimeters. And equipping farmers with potassium iodine has only limited value in mitigating the effects of radiation. Furthermore it is logistically impossible for the farmer to rush to the county agent (where the dosimeter and potassium iodine are located), rush back to his farm, get all his livestock under shed, provide adequate food and water for a number of days and also protect his own health.

4. IN THE EVENT of another accident the chain of communications starts with GPU. Noting their record and previous handling of the 1979 accident, it is indeed naive to assume that they will disseminate information quickly, honestly and accurately.

5. There is no public information campaign to alert the public to the potential evacuation plan. Amish communities pose a unique problem since they do not utilize television, radio or telephone. Our Spanish and Vietnamese communities would also be at a disadvantage because of the language barrier.

Thus far county and state officials have been content to assume that the telephone directory and a periodic mailing adequately inform the public on where to go and what to do.

6. Evacuation routes are unrealistic at best and could turn into major problems. The main evacuation route for Lancaster County, Route 30, in normal time is considered a traffic hazard; in emergency conditions it could be total chaos.

Route 11-15, a major evacuation route for Harrisburg area is equally as congested and inadequate. Also consider the implications of evacuating a large population on these roads during tourist season.

7. EVACUATION PLANS only encompass the population living in the "high-risk" areas or those who live within 10 miles of TMI. It is assumed that only 50 percent of this population will evacuate. What about those of us living in the "low-risk" areas of 20-50 miles from TMI? Has there been an invisible lead curtain erected to protect us that we don't know about? As of this date no evacuation plans exist for Harrisburg, Lancaster and York.

(Note: 67.4 percent of the respondents in the SVA survey said they would evacuate even though 62.9 percent said they wouldn't know where to go and what to listen to.)

8. On Feb. 8, 1984, the Federal Emergency Management Agency reported that Lancaster and Dauphin counties are ill prepared to adequately protect residents in the event of a nuclear emergency at TMI. The agency cited five major deficiencies and dozens of minor failures in the performance of those counties in a Nov. 16, 1983 emergency preparedness drill. Among the problems were that several municipalities never received the evacuation order, others received the orders late, and Lancaster County failed to operate a decontamination and relocation center.

What guarantees exist to prevent this type of performance from occurring during an actual evacuation?

the FORUM

Powerful few dictate morals

EDITOR:

SO, THE U.S. Supreme Court has voted 8-1 in favor of restart of TMI's (as yet) undamaged Unit 1 reactor (give them time). How ironic that the members of the Supreme Court should be called Justices. A spokesman for TMI Alert started that this is a sad commentary for democracy. How true. The issue of restart was brought before the voting public who responded with a resounding NO. So much for majority rule. So much for government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

I am also alarmed by the growing trend in this country toward censorship and the restriction of personal freedoms. The president wants an end to abortion. Certain movers and shakers in the government are demanding labeling of record albums and tapes for what they deem to be violent and/or sexually explicit song lyrics. Can book burning be far behind? Rev. Jerry Falwell, a friend of the president, wants communists in America to wear their beliefs on their foreheads so that they can be easily recognized. What comes next — should we round them up and put them in camps so that we can keep an eye on them? This is America, after all. Surely a small number of communist party members is the lesser of the two evils.

It is said that true communism, in the spirit of Karl Marx, does not exist. Neither, then, does true democracy exist, at

least not in this country. The TMI controversy, the trend toward censorship and the restriction of rights and privileges, are all in direct opposition to the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Apparently we must once again, as our forefathers did so many years ago, fight for the personal freedoms in which they believed and for which they died. If we do not, the foundation upon which this nation was built will cease to exist. Be they right or wrong, Americans must not allow their morals to be dictated to them by the government, and never again must tens of thousands of us allow our voices to be stifled by a mere handful of individuals over whom we are not permitted any control.

—Mindy K. Yost, Middletown

Countdown

EDITOR:

THE ACCIDENT at TMI happened March 28, 1979: 3/28, the 87th day of the year; 278 days left. The atomic weight for Uranium is 238.

They started up Unit 1 on Oct. 3, 2,381 days after the accident: 6 years, 6 months and 6 days. That number is in the Bible, Book of Revelation, Chapter 13:18. Page 1388 in my Bible. Saturday, Oct. 5, is the 278th day of the year. There are 87 calendar days left. Octo in Latin means eight.

Thought you'd want to know.

I count. But what is more important than counting is thinking, and I just love to think.

—Rosemarie R. Madara, Harrisburg

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Friday, October 11, 1985.

No democracy

EDITOR:

NOW THAT the Supreme Court has refused to stop the restart of TMI Unit 1, we have the answer for which we have been waiting.

We live not in a democracy, where the will of the people prevails, but in an oligarchy, where power is vested in a few in a dominant class or clique.

—A.L. Chapman, M.D., Wormleysburg

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Thursday, October 17, 1985

Official chided about delay in response on TMI

By Christopher Quinn
Patriot-News

LANCASTER — Area residents seeking a state Health Department cancer survey involving Three Mile Island should not have needed to picket the governor's mansion to get it.

That was the view of Joel Roth, a member of the Three Mile Island Citizens Advisory Panel on the Cleanup of Unit 2, who last night chided state Secretary of Health H. Arnold Muller for his department's failure to answer residents' requests for the study, which was released last month.

Roth said the department responded only after people picketed Gov. Dick Thornburgh's house for three days and asked state Sen. John Shumaker, R-Grantville, to intervene.

Muller, who attended last night's advisory panel meeting at the Public Safety Building here to explain the study, said results were released late because his department was rewriting and clarifying them. The study found the rates of cancer and of deaths caused by cancer within five and 10 miles of TMI to be no higher than normal.

The study conducted the study to determine if cancer rates increased around TMI after a 1979 accident crippled one of two reactors.

"It just seems that after 6 1/2 years, the Department of Health might have been a little more responsive" to residents' questions, said Roth. Even after the study was released, the department's attitude was, "We did it, we stand by it, there's no reason to discuss it," Roth said.

Department spokesman Bill Lindeberg said he answered by telephone or letter all questions about the delayed release of the study.

The study has come under fire since Oct. 6 editions of the Sunday Patriot-News reported the state may have diluted its results by including residents from outside its study area.

Statisticians and epidemiologists contacted by the paper said the state should have noted in its study that 28,610 people from outside a five-mile radius of TMI were included in five-mile study, and 122,000 from outside the 10-mile radius were included in the larger study.

Roth questioned Muller's description of the study as "scientific" because the state failed to note the diluted sample. Health Department officials have said they thought most people knew of the

dilution, which was necessary because remaining inside the boundaries would be impossible. Instead, the state surveyed residents throughout every municipality within the study areas, even if parts of the municipalities were outside the areas.

Health Department officials told the Sunday Patriot-News they meant to include a footnote on the dilution.

"Why did it take a month, and

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why was it not brought out by your department rather than the press?" Roth asked Muller.

The state's study critiqued an earlier study, conducted by Marjorie M. Aamodt with the assistance of local residents, that found high cancer rates near TMI.

Muller said the local study was biased because many people were not interviewed who should have been, age and sex factors were not taken into consideration, some residents contracted cancer before the accident, and the areas selected were known to have high cancer rates.

Some of the residents who helped conduct the Aamodt study attended last night's meeting and attacked Muller's critique. They challenged Muller to release raw data supporting the department's survey.

Muller said results for the study were first written in scientific form but revised numerous times until they were understandable for laymen. Residents last

night demanded to see the first and scientific version of the results, but Muller said it no longer exists.

"We have been charged with selectivity" in the Aamodt study, said Jane Lee, who worked on the Aamodt survey. She said if the state refuses to turn over its data, "your study isn't worth any more than ours."

Muller said such data as names and addresses of people studied are confidential and cannot be released.

Panel Chairman Arthur Morris said Aamodt will attend the November meeting.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Friday, October 18, 1985

Third leak found at TMI

Associated Press

A third minor leak on the non-nuclear side of the Three Mile Island Unit 1 reactor has forced a reduction in the reactor's power, a TMI spokesman said yesterday.

The reactor, which had been up to 40 percent of full power, was scaled back to 6 percent overnight after a leak was found in a drain line off the steam system that drives the plant's power-producing turbines, spokesman Doug Bedell said.

Last week, there were two leaks on a one-inch steam line. The latest leak, spotted by an auxiliary plant operator at 1:50 a.m., was in a weld placed on a new section of one-inch pipe that carries condensate from the steam before it reaches the turbines, Bedell said.

He said plant officials were working on repairs but did not know when they would be done.

Officials are putting the reactor through a three-month series of tests that will lead to resumption of full-scale operations.

Bedell noted technicians were unable to test the turbine and steam lines before the reactor was turned back on this month.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Friday, October 25, 1985

TMI raises power of Unit 1 to 48 percent after testing

Three Mile Island's Unit 1 will be operating at 48 percent power and kicking out 377 megawatts of electricity for the next 30 days if all goes as expected.

Operators took the reactor up to 48 percent early yesterday after what TMI spokesmen call a "successful" two-day reactor trip test begun Monday. The test demonstrated "the operability of plant components" and the ability of personnel to safely shut down the unit.

During the shutdown, technicians fixed two leaks in steam tubes in the unit's non-nuclear system, said spokeswoman Lisa Robinson.

Unit 1 was restarted three weeks ago for the first time since the accident at Unit 2 in March 1979.

After the trip test, workers created a self-sustaining nuclear reaction at 6 p.m. Wednesday and increased power to 48 percent seven hours later, Robinson said.

During the next month, operators will receive additional training and operating experience, Robinson said.

The reactor can be taken above the 48 percent plateau only after utility operator GPU Nuclear Corp. receives approval from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, which is monitoring the three-month power escalation to 100 percent.

Top state court overturns TMI protest case ruling

By Mary Warner
Patriot-News

The state Supreme Court has overturned a ruling that allowed nine demonstrators arrested at Three Mile Island to turn their trial last year into a forum for criticism of the nuclear power plant.

A Dauphin County Court jury convicted the demonstrators in August 1984 of obstructing a public passage. But the jurors called a news conference after the trial to say they were impressed by the defendants' expert witnesses and joined the defendants in opposing restart of the Londonderry Twp. facility.

The recent Supreme Court ruling does not affect the case of the nine demonstrators, but it appears to preclude the possibility of similar trials in the future. In a unanimous opinion, the justices disagreed

with a Superior Court ruling that demonstrators arrested for trespassing at a Beaver County nuclear plant could argue in court that they were legally justified — and present expert testimony to try to prove it.

The Superior Court ruling, in January 1984, cleared the way for the TMI demonstrators to argue seven months later that they were justified in blocking a road at the plant, because of the danger posed by restart.

They presented expert witnesses who criticized the plant's design and warned of health hazards from low-level radiation.

Five other restart foes arrested in another demonstration and charged with only a summary offense were acquitted by District Justice William Heckman in June 1984 after they argued they were justified by

the danger of restart.

Those cases also are unaffected by the Supreme Court ruling. It would be double jeopardy to retry someone acquitted while the Superior Court ruling was in effect, said Dauphin County District Attorney Richard Lewis.

Pennsylvania law says defendants are justified in breaking the law — and therefore innocent — if they had good reason to believe it was necessary to prevent greater harm than they caused.

But judges can forbid that line of defense if they find that the evidence — even if a jury believed it — would not satisfy the law on justification.

In the Beaver County case, the Supreme Court said, the judge was right to forbid the trespassers at the Shippingport Power Plant to present a justification defense.

"Even if low-level radiation and nuclear waste were emanating from the . . . plant . . . we do not find this to be the type of danger classified as an emergency sufficient to justify criminal activity," the court said in a unanimous opinion.

In addition, the court said, the trespassers must have known that their demonstration would not stop the plant operations. "Their act of criminal trespass was a deliberate and calculated choice, not an act that was urgently necessary to avoid a clear and imminent danger," said the court.

The state high court is also considering an appeal of a similar Superior Court ruling in a famous 1981 Montgomery County case. In that case, Daniel and Philip Berrigan and six other defendants entered a General Electric plant in King of Prussia in a protest against nuclear weaponry.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Saturday, October 26, 1985

the FORUM

People's voice clear on TMI

EDITOR:
THIS LETTER is in response to "Bud" Wirtz and his "like-minded colleagues," who claim that the TMI vote was worthless. I would like to inform them that whether you call it a "non-binding referendum" or a "binding representative vote," does not change the results nor their meaning. Call it "opinion" or "vote," it denotes a statistical representation of the general population, in this case the citizens and people of the central Pennsylvania area affected by TMI. The difference between the two is that a vote leads to definite action, while an opinion can be disregarded and has no power. In fact, that is exactly why it was a non-binding referendum, had it been a binding vote, TMI would have been shut-down permanently. The politicians, NRC, and GPU corporate bedfellows knew that, so they called a non-binding referendum vote to appease the people and conduct a farcical "exercise of democracy." That's why I didn't vote, which cancels out Mr. Wirtz's non-vote).

What makes Mr. Wirtz think that a "radically different outcome" would have occurred if the "referendum had been taken seriously by citizens on both sides of the issue." Statistically, the probability of non-voters pro and con should be the same from a given population. That fact, plus the 67 percent against, 34 percent for, restart voting results, truly represents the will of the majority of the people of our area. And I would be willing to bet that the majority of the voters and sympathizers are tied to TMI either politically or financially.

If we want to talk about "misrepresentation of fact," let's focus in on the constant radioactive emissions that TMI is spewing into the surrounding area. No matter what type, quantity, or duration of emission, we are always being told that it is no hazard to the public health. We are usually told that the detected radiation after such a release is the same as or slightly higher than "background" — background radiation being what would be in the environment naturally, had TMI not

been there. Common sense will tell you that if you add radioactivity to the already existing radioactivity, you'll have more than what you started with. So, after a release it's always above background radiation, whether it's detected or not. And no one knows what is the safe limit of radiation exposure, if there is one.

The fact is that generating electricity via nuclear power is big bucks, which takes precedence and wins out over the health of the exposed people of this area, "nothing more and nothing less." So much for statistics and democracy.

The fact is that only a binding referendum vote will put this issue to rest, and give the people of this area peace of mind permanently. If GPU and its sympathizers are so confident that the people in this area want the plant operating they shouldn't avoid such a vote, in fact they would welcome it. So, I offer them a challenge. Let's wait and see what their response is, for that will surely be "nothing... further from the truth!"

—Carmen La Rosa, Harrisburg

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Wednesday, October 23, 1985

2 more 'low' leaks turn up at Unit 1

Associated Press

Two more leaks have been found in the non-nuclear system of the Unit 1 reactor at Three Mile Island, a TMI spokesman said yesterday.

The leaks were detected Monday night after a planned "trip test" that temporarily shut down the Londonderry Twp. reactor, spokesman Gordon Tomb said.

He said the leaks, inside the containment building, released steam and water that contained "traces of radioactivity," but posed no health hazard. Some steam containing traces of radioactivity was vented to the atmosphere during the reactor trip, Tomb said.

"All operating nuclear plants have minute releases of radioactivity during normal operation. But these amounts are so low they are undetectable off the site on a daily basis," Tomb said.

One of the leaks was found in a flange connection, and the other in

TMI fallout

EDITOR:

IT IS my belief as well as most of the scientific community that we will not know how many lives will be affected by the radiation fall-out created by the March 1979 accident at Three Mile Island.

If we are looking at the dollars-and-cents issue, what about the costs of dismantling a nuclear plant? The Shippingport plant is now ready to be shutdown. They don't know how long it will take. The cost of dismantling will be absorbed by the consumer and it will be costly. The nuclear waste has to be moved somewhere to be buried and through populated areas.

What about nuclear waste? We are running out of safe places to store it! Clean water and clean air are vital to our well-being. We must by all means protect these two precious commodities. We must save them for our children, grandchildren and future generations. To keep polluting and killing the air and water is reckless.

—Diane M. Baxter, Harrisburg

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Friday, October 18, 1985

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Wednesday, October 23, 1985

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Thursday, Dec. 5, 1985

TMI costs up

EDITOR:

REGARDING Mr. G. Beane's TMI restart letter of Nov. 6, his logic would have us believing that anti-TMI protestors have threatened and held up the restart, thereby causing the cost of electric to go up. Good grief, these people had a right to protest against it. I'm just happy no one used dynamite. It is amazing that anyone could forget so soon it was shady management and workmanship that led to the accident. The people living there had their very existence threatened by the accident. Why does he need a body count.

Why doesn't he realize that we came very close to (within hours of) a meltdown. This would have adversely affected every human, animal, and plant in our area within 60 or more miles of TMI. Life would have ceased here.

Let me ask Mr. Beane where he would be living now and who would have reimbursed him for his home or job lost — the federal government, the owners of TMI? Sure! So, OK, thank God it didn't happen. We only got a little "harmless" radioactive air, right? This guy seems more

worried about protesting auto accidents!

More correctly, I think possibly the cost to clean up this nuclear blunder will finally come home to TMI's management where it belongs. They need to come up to full productivity with Unit One to stay in business. They must make money now. Unit One is already leaking, according to numerous Patriot-News articles, and several small accidents have occurred.

—Ray Lockard, Harrisburg

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Monday, Nov. 18, 1985

Restart a mistake

EDITOR:

WHEN I relocated to the Harrisburg area in May 1985, the TMI-1 restart controversy was nearing its peak. I did not have a strong opinion on the issue and, if anything, favored restart of the unit. As the restart vote approached, and after speaking with many opponents, it became clear that many opponents of restart were not against nuclear power as a concept. A considerable percentage of people against restart did not trust the owners, operators, NRC or builders of the facility.

After reading about the problems which have occurred since restart — leaks, venting, worker contamination — it appears that the opponents based their opinions on more than just hysteria.

As usual, the releases and small accidents have not exceeded "safe" standards, but the continuing stress, whether conscious or subconscious, on the surrounding population has been

gun once again. Even if continual exposure to small doses of radiation are not considered "dangerous" by federal standards, the continual stress and related ailments can be measured in human lives.

It appears that the unit was not prepared to restart. My initial opinion can be characterized with the restart decision — a big mistake.

—Steve Socasch, Summerdale

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Tuesday, Nov. 26, 1985

TMI Unit 1 jumps to 75% of full output

The operating level at the Three Mile Island Unit 1 reactor was increased to 75 percent of full power over the weekend.

Operators at the Londonderry Twp. nuclear plant gradually increased the power from 48 percent starting at 2 a.m. Saturday and it reached the 75 percent level about 15 hours later, according to Gordon Tomb, spokesman for GPU Nuclear Corp., plant operator.

Unit 1 will remain at the 75 percent mark for at least a month, while all six shifts of operators gain experience operating the plant at the higher level.

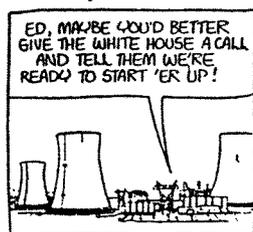
Operators briefly halted the increase Saturday at 60 percent to check plant conditions and control systems. The escalation was halted again at 65 percent to test turbine valves, plant officials said.

Tomb said the plant should be ready for operation at 100 percent power by Jan. 1, if the Nuclear Regulatory Commission approves the increase.

The increased output is the highest level of power at Unit 1 in 6½ years. The reactor was shut down for refueling shortly before the accident at the TMI Unit 2 reactor on March 29, 1979, and did not restart until Oct. 3.

The increased power means the plant's output increased from 377 to 630 megawatts, Tomb said.

Funky Winkerbean



been disassembled and is slowly being buried, along with our VOTE, lie by lie and injustice on top of injustice.

I am bitter and angry. We believed in the system but the dealer used a marked deck and made up new rules whenever he wished. The result is thousands of pages of memory loss and half truths and a restarted reactor. The "lessons have not been learned." Perhaps the next reactor accident will happen in a community where people won't let themselves be so abused. Perhaps the doctors and attorneys in that community will come to the aid of its neighbors, instead of denying what happened.

—Mary Stamos Osborn, Harrisburg

The Patriot,

Harrisburg, Pa., Wednesday, October 23, 1985

TMI 'marked deck'

EDITOR:

FOR WHAT purpose or reason has our government deliberately allowed the nuclear establishment to slowly destroy the human species with intolerable levels of radioactive emissions and to even bomb the very citizens they are claiming to protect? We need no other enemy. What we are going through is not supposed to happen in our democracy — in America. We have been betrayed by our governments. Those responsible are traitors.

Political promises or threats should never be a consideration when human lives are at risk. Governor Thornburgh failed in 1979 to protect the people of this Commonwealth, as did the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Since then — these administrations have participated in the cover-up of the severe radiation induced health effects from the Three Mile Island accident. How long does the Pennsylvania Department of Health think they can get away with hiding the truth?

Didn't you ever wonder why a waitress and a housewife raised the key issues before the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board hearings for Unit 1 restart proceeding (the cheating by operators, the health effects and radiation symptoms, the falsification of leak rates and the steam tube problems)? Why? During those hearings the state didn't even support the intervenors on the leak rate falsification issue — the very issue GPU was found criminally guilty of in federal court? Why? Were the attorneys for the commonwealth in the hearings protecting the health and safety interest of its citizens, or were they just there — protecting the "office of the governor"?

For six and one half years we have been seeking answers about the TMI accident and the health problems that have resulted, only to find more questions needing to be answered. The TMI accident is not over. Democracy really doesn't exist in America anymore. It has

big government overrule their wishes, have lost faith in "the system." This lack of faith could easily translate into a lack of faith in business ethics, because if people lack faith in government and in their future, then they will be hesitant to invest in long term business ventures.

Despite the fact that America, once the world's greatest democracy, now more properly can be called an oligarchy, our politicians, up and down the line, no doubt will continue in graduation speeches to students and in Fourth of July orations to profess that America is a democracy. But behind their pontifical expressions and smug complacency must lie the constant worry that sometime, someone, somewhere, in one of those audiences, will rise to set the record straight.

As the Union of Concerned Scientists states ("Nucleus," fall 1985): "In the current climate, the regulatory process frustrates any effective response to the views and wishes of the citizens who directly bear the consequences of accidents."

To the nagging question: "If people don't want TMI, who does?", must now be added the equally penetrating question, in the words of the Bible: "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his soul?" (Mark 8:36).

If the price of TMI restart is a loss of faith in democracy, then that price is one that this country cannot afford.

—John H. Murdoch, Camp Hill

TMI safe?

EDITOR:

I AM "up to here" with all the "say-nothing" newsprint devoted to the GPU-TMIA controversy.

Today (Oct. 10) was a classic case in point. Now that I have read the report as published in the paper about the state Health Department study and the Aamodt study — what do I know about TMI and cancer for sure? Nothing! Objective truth, real, meaningful, statistical significance, if there is any, pro or con is now "down the tubes." Does the paper provide enough evidence to interpret either side's results objectively? No. Does the Patriot attempt to provide another interpretation backed by any authority — of course not!

By now everyone should know three things which I believe can be demonstrably shown to be beyond doubt:

1. Sooner or later, unless there are dramatic changes in population growth, we will need nuke power. It won't get cheaper, etc.

2. The people who build nuke plants and the people who manage them care more for the "buck" than any needs of the people or sense of altruism about their safety.

3. The obstructionists won't listen to any nuke alternatives — they are dead set against nuke in any form, any time, anywhere.

I was looking to the paper for help in seeing beyond this battle of words. The antagonists are always careful never to come out in print directly contradicting one another. Experts abound who can justify either side.

Can we get a dispassionate appraisal of Aamodt and state studies from a third party?

—William Bolza, Harrisburg

Sunday Patriot-News, Harrisburg, Pa., October 20, 1985

Injury claims against TMI's owners exceed 1,500

A suit on behalf of 13 people and three estates brings to more than 1,500 the number of personal injury claims in Dauphin County Court against the owners of Three Mile Island.

Since February, more than 890 claims have been filed in county court by people with cancer, anxiety and other ailments — or by the estates of people who have died since the 1979 accident at the Londonderry Twp. nuclear plant. More than 600 additional claims have been filed by the parents and spouses of those people.

The plaintiffs say the accident caused emotional distress and exposed them to radiation that increased their risk of cancer and other serious illnesses.

The defendants are General Public Utilities Corp., owner of the plant; its subsidiaries Metropolitan Edison Co., Jersey Central Power & Light Co., and Pennsylvania Electric Co.; plant designer Babcock and Wilcox Co.; its parent company J. Ray McDermott & Co.; engineer Burns & Roe Inc.; and Catalytic Inc., a subcontractor at TMI.

GPU maintains that not enough radiation escaped during the accident to harm anyone, and health studies conducted since the accident have not turned up radiation-related problems. But TMI critics have attacked the studies; more are under way.

Plaintiffs, their current addresses and their injuries as described in the suit filed yesterday are:

- Christine M. Brown of Steelton, cystitis, endometritis and bowel blockage.
- Mary L. and Walter L. Glassmeyer Jr. of Hershey. He suffered bladder cancer.
- Barbara Magill of Steelton, executor of the estate of Frank Kiren, who had lung cancer and died in July, and Margaret L. Kiren, who had breast and bone cancer and died in September 1984.
- Myrtle C. Dobson of Steelton, administrator of the estate of Lester Dobson, who had kidney and heart disorders and died in August 1980.
- Evelyn Shumaker of Harrisburg, who suffered a cerebral hemorrhage and cancer of the colon and lymph nodes.
- William L. Potts Jr. of Steelton, who suffered colon tumors.
- Gerald L. and Louella E. Eisner, parents of Christine M. Eisner, who suffered multiple birth defects, including absence of thumbs, club hands, a hip dislocation, split cervical vertebrae and others.
- Dorothy McElwain of Lykens, cancerous tumor of the eye.
- Mary E. and Charles Zeigler of Camp Hill. She suffered macrocytic anemia, high blood pressure and other ailments.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Thursday, Nov. 14, 1985

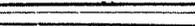
Daily Background Record

DAILY RADIATION READINGS FROM THE MONITORING STATIONS IN THE VICINITY OF THREE MILE ISLAND NUCLEAR STATION HAD A VARIED RANGE AS FOLLOWS:

November 27 (12:00 P.M.) to November 28 (12:00 P.M.)	0.007-0.010 mrem per hour
November 28 (12:00 P.M.) to November 29 (12:00 P.M.)	0.008-0.009 mrem per hour
November 29 (12:00 P.M.) to November 30 (12:00 P.M.)	0.008-0.009 mrem per hour
November 30 (12:00 P.M.) to December 1 (12:00 P.M.)	0.008-0.009 mrem per hour
December 1 (12:00 P.M.) to December 2 (12:00 P.M.)	0.008-0.009 mrem per hour
December 2 (12:00 P.M.) to December 3 (12:00 P.M.)	0.008-0.009 mrem per hour
December 3 (12:00 P.M.) to December 4 (12:00 P.M.)	0.008-0.009 mrem per hour

These readings are consistent with the best available Environmental Protection Agency reported data for the month of November which were 0.008 to 0.011 mrem per hour.

We thought you should know!



SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Smoking Causes Lung Cancer, Heart Disease, Emphysema, And May Complicate Pregnancy.



Midstate in brief

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Thursday, Nov. 28, 1985

First samples of TMI concrete taken

A robot-like vehicle has obtained the first samples of concrete from the basement of the containment building at the damaged Three Mile Island Unit 2 reactor.

Plant operator GPU Nuclear said the samples were taken Tuesday from interior concrete walls which were contaminated in the March 1979 accident.

The samples will be analyzed at the site to determine the depth of contamination in the walls. The information will be used in planning the decontamination of the basement, GPU Nuclear said.

The sampling was done by a robot-like vehicle rather than by workers because of high radiation levels in the basement, GPU Nuclear said. The samples were taken at heights of approximately two feet and eight feet above the basement floor.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Tuesday, October 29, 1985

Cleanup to start this week on Unit 2's nuclear debris

By Frank Lynch
Patriot-News

The nuclear rubble created by the 1979 accident at Three Mile Island will be cleaned from the Unit 2 reactor beginning this week.

Standing on a 6-inch-thick rotating steel platform, workers will use long-handled tools to remove the rubble at least 20 feet below them in the water-covered reactor core.

The defueling, a technically challenging procedure in the \$1 billion cleanup, will last 16 to 18 months.

Franklin R. Standerfer, vice president and director of Unit 2 for plant owner GPU Nuclear, said the procedure poses no threat to public health.

Standerfer said the defueling, which "will occur in phased, deliberate fashion," begins with equipment testing and

manipulation of large debris chunks on top of the reactor core.

In the March 1979 accident, the reactor lost vital cooling water causing nuclear fuel and core components to melt. Officials estimate about 100 tons of uranium dioxide fuel and 50 tons of core equipment are still inside the reactor vessel.

The fuel is prevented from "going critical" by boron, a chemical in the reactor's water that acts as a "nuclear poison."

Plant spokesman Gordon Tomb said the core once stood 12 feet high in rows of 177 fuel assemblies. Now nearly all of the top 5 feet of the core has collapsed into a bed of rubble about 3 feet deep.

Officials are not sure what the core looks like below that, although a substantial amount of core material — about 20 tons of it — has sifted to the bottom of the reactor vessel.

In addition to some fuel assemblies that are partially intact, officials said the size of the debris varies, from as small as a grain of sand to chunks as large as baseballs.

Five-man defueling crews, who will be shielded from the core by about 20 feet of water and a 6-inch-thick steel platform, will use the long-handled tools, remote vacuuming equipment and a television viewing system to load the canisters underwater.

Some of the debris will have to be cut or broken so it can be fitted into the canisters. Tools attached to the long handles include saws, chisels and buckets and remotely operated bolt cutters, scoops and claws.

After the canisters are filled, they will be taken to an underwater storage area nearby. Later they will be sealed in shipping casks so they can be transport-

ed to a government research facility for study.

Standerfer said the first shipment of TMI rubble will leave the plant in the spring.

Meanwhile, another cleanup official said today that radiation exposures to workers at TMI-2 "have been kept quite low."

James Hildebrandt, director of radiological control, said the number of person-rem (a measurement of radiation exposure to humans) so far this year is 544 for cleanup workers. He said that contrasts with an average of 800 person-rem a year for a nuclear plant in normal operations.

Since the accident in 1979, TMI-2 employees have received 2,634 person-rem, while workers at most plants sustain 5,400 person-rem over the same period. He said the figures "are lower than most people realize or appreciate."

B6—Sunday Patriot-News, Harrisburg, Pa., November 3, 1985

GPU denial of alleged harassment raises old question

By Mick Rood
Sunday Patriot-News

WASHINGTON — A \$64,000 fine levied against the operator of Three Mile Island has become an old, but still controversial \$64,000 question.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff had proposed the fine against GPU Nuclear Corp. for the company's alleged harassment of Richard D. Parks, once a senior engineer on the Three Mile Island Unit 2 cleanup project.

The fine was announced in August, almost 2½ years after Parks held a national news conference in March 1983 to say GPU Nuclear was bypassing safety procedures in the cleanup operation.

The harassment violation was the second most serious citation the NRC can issue against a utility from among five grades of severity.

NOW, AFTER being granted more than a month's delay to respond, the utility denies that the manner in which Parks was handled was anything other than sound management practice.

If the NRC Office of Inspection and Enforcement insists on the fine, GPU Nuclear can demand a hearing.

"GPU Nuclear believes that Mr. Parks was not retaliated against for having raised safety concerns," the utility said in an Oct. 21 response to the NRC. "The investigations confirm that management actions with regard to Mr. Parks were responsible, appropriate, and do not constitute re-



Richard D. Parks
Alleged cleanup shortcuts

taliation."

After Parks took his safety complaints to the NRC and held the news conference, he was suspended with pay. A U.S. Labor Department review found that Parks was subjected to "harassment and intimidation" in violation of NRC non-discrimination regulations.

PARKS' FORMER employer, Bechtel North American Power Corp., then the lead cleanup contractor at TMI, settled with Parks by arranging a job for him elsewhere in the company in California. Bechtel fired Parks shortly thereafter.

Parks later held another nuclear industry job for five months and was fired without cause, he said. He is unemployed now and living in California.

"Their [GPU Nuclear] complete denial didn't surprise me," Parks said in an interview last week. "They have managed to get the NRC to play along with them

before, and they're trying it again."

Parks said that while the NRC Office of Investigations had relied heavily on the Labor Department's upholding of his harassment charges, the investigators also confirmed points made by the Labor Department. The sequence of events was hard to dismiss, he said.

"EVERYBODY [at TMI] was completely happy with me until I opened my mouth," Parks said.

The utility dismissed the Labor Department's finding of retaliation against Parks as "preliminary and cursory, not necessarily reliable and simply incorrect." Its point-by-point rebuttal included:

✓ Parks' removal from a cleanup site group overseeing operation of the polar crane at Unit 2, later to remove heavy debris inside the reactor, was simply to balance membership in the group (Test Working Group) between various cleanup departments. Parks claims he was removed in late February 1983 after he began objecting to the adequacy of tests on the polar crane before it was used.

✓ Also in February 1983, GPU Nuclear said its own consultant's probe of the Parks case found that at a meeting with Bechtel supervisors about the situation, Parks was not "improperly questioned or intimidated."

✓ The utility said Parks was later reappointed to the Test Working Group, but removed again at his own request.

✓ Finally, the company claims that Parks was suspended with

pay after the engineer's news conference because, in addition to making safety allegations, he made "inflammatory personal attacks" and "created a poisonous atmosphere" at the TMI site.

In a parallel and even slower-moving investigation, the Inspec-

tion and Enforcement Office is still considering whether to upgrade a non-fine reprimand of GPU Nuclear for the safety procedure violations raised by Parks and two other site engineers.

NRC staff member Herzl H.E. Plaine wrote Parks in November

1984 that the NRC staff had concluded — after months of differences of opinion — that there was "evidence of a deliberate circumvention of [cleanup] administrative procedures." The NRC, Plaine said, would consider revising its penalty.

The Patriot, Harrisburg, Pa., Friday, Nov. 22, 1985

Belt buckle lifts TMI-1 power

United Press International

A worker at Three Mile Island caught his belt buckle on a switch in the control room of TMI's Unit 1 nuclear reactor, briefly increasing the power of the unit's turbine above the current federal limit, plant operator GPU Nuclear Corp. said yesterday.

The incident, which boosted the power of the electricity-producing turbine from 48 percent of capacity to 53 percent, occurred Tuesday at the Londonderry Twp. plant, GPU Nuclear spokesman Douglas H. Bedell said.

"It [the jump in power] was immediately signaled to the operators and corrected," Bedell said. "It was not a serious incident. The whole incident took about a minute."

Unit 1 was restarted Oct. 3. It had been idle since its twin was wrecked on March 28, 1979, in a near-meltdown, the nation's worst commercial nuclear power accident.

As part of the restart plan approved by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the plant is in a monthlong holding point at 48 percent of operating capacity.

TMI Alert Inc., an anti-nuclear group, disclosed the buckle incident in a news release detailing a number of what it called serious incidents at TMI since the restart.

Bedell said the temporary turbine power increase was one of 11 minor incidents listed in weekly operation reports by the NRC and the plant. He said none of the 11 incidents posed a threat to the health of the workers and the public.

"Our view is that these were all minor — typical in operating nuclear plants or, indeed, any plant of our size," Bedell said.

Panel discusses TMI water disposal

By Mick Rood
Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — What may be the scientifically simplest nuclear waste disposal task at Three Mile Island remains undressed:

How should GPU Nuclear Corp. get rid of the 860,000 gallons of almost wholly decontaminated wastewater from the TMI Unit 2 accident?

The water has been stored on site at the Pennsylvania facility since it was treated three years ago.

The subject came up yesterday at a meeting of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Advisory Panel on the Decontamination of TMI Unit 2.

Arthur E. Morris, mayor of Lancaster, Pa., who chairs the advisory panel, and Lancaster resident Thomas Smithgall said the group wants to explore water disposal options.

But William Travers, director of the NRC's Unit 2 cleanup office, said GPU Nuclear won't make a proposal on the matter until next year and probably won't act on it before 1987.

The utility would prefer to release the water into the Susquehanna River.

NRC technical staff members have said in the past that dumping it would leave radioactive traces in the river well below federal safety guidelines.

But central Pennsylvania residents, especially those downstream from the TMI plant that is in Londonderry Twp., raised a furor and went to federal court.

The NRC agreed several years ago not to approve a disposal method without making the decision itself and holding a public hearing.

Further, U.S. Rep. Robert Walker, R-East Petersburg, has annually attached an amendment to the Energy Department's TMI cleanup aid bill to prevent dumping of the Unit 2 water. Walker made the claim in 1981 that his amendment "effectively stops anyone from dumping that water, ever, in my opinion."

Discussion at yesterday's meeting made it apparent that if it weren't for public sentiment, the commission would have sanctioned dumping years ago.

Travers reiterated four basic disposal methods the NRC staff has discussed in the past:

— Storing the water permanently on the island.

— Slowly evaporating the water via cooling towers.

— Making slabs of cement with the decontaminated water, airing them out and then burying the cement off site.

— Releasing the water gradually into the Susquehanna.

The NRC has precluded the first option with its policy that TMI should not become a

permanent waste repository — even for low-level wastes.

Travers mentioned that the 860,000 gallons of water contain .02 curie of strontium, .06 curie of cesium and 800 curies of the much less dangerous tritium.

By comparison, Travers said, normally operating nuclear reactors release between 500 and 1,000 curies into rivers annually. Panel member Thomas B. Cochran, a physicist, mentioned that the larger Savannah River plant in South Carolina is permitted to release water containing 100,000 curies annually.

Commissioner Frederick Bernthal called the amounts of radioactivity in the TMI-2 water "minuscule."

"I just want to be sure it's looked at," Chairman Morris said. "It may not be a technical answer as to health effects, but more of a political concern and a public concern."

Travers said the utility could "just come in" and propose release of the water into the river, but "obviously it's a much more sensitive issue than that."

GPU Nuclear spokesman Douglas Bedell confirmed yesterday that the company is not in a hurry to address the potentially volatile disposal issue.

"The process of disposing of it might be simple, but the process of getting that approved might be very difficult. We will be proposing something next year, but it's just not a very high priority now," Bedell said.

N-firm likes man fired from TMI

Cheating incident prompted dismissal

By Jeff Barker
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — More than four years after his dismissal at Three Mile Island because of a cheating incident, a nuclear industry instructor is doing an "outstanding" job in Maryland.

A Nuclear Regulatory Commission special master found in April 1982 that Gregory Hitz of Elizabethtown, Pa., engaged in "a pattern of cheating" on operator licensing examinations required by the NRC. The report said he had been fired in August 1981.

Today, Hitz, who was never criminally prosecuted, heads a department of 20 people at General Physics Corp. of Columbia, Md. The firm provides training and engineering services to the power and defense industries. Hitz instructs operators and technicians on pressurized water reactors, and develops course training material.

Hitz's continued employment in the nuclear industry was the subject of a letter last week by Rep. Edward Markey, D-Mass., to NRC Chairman Nunzio Palladino. Markey asked that Palladino consider the propriety of Hitz's working for General Physics. He asked the commission whether it had management integrity standards for firms doing work for the NRC or its licensed utilities.

The NRC is preparing a response, spokeswoman Susan Gagner said.

Hitz was identified only as "O" in the special master's report, which said he allowed an unidentified co-worker, referred to as "W," to copy examination answers on several occasions.

Speaking on condition that their names not be used, an official of General Physics and an attorney who cooperated with the special master's investigation confirmed that Hitz was "O." They declined to identify "W."

"O and W both engaged in a pattern of cheating over a period of time," the report said. "They also conspired to cheat, by agreeing to do so before examinations were given."

The report said Hitz "still fails to recognize the character of his acts."

Reached at General Physics yesterday, Hitz declined to comment, saying, "It may just complicate the matter."

Last year, former TMI operations Supervisor James Floyd was indicted on charges of cheating on a licensing test. He was convicted, then sentenced in March to 2 years' probation and ordered to pay a \$2,000 fine.

General Physics was aware of the accusations about Hitz when it hired him in March 1982, but had not yet seen the special master's report, said Jay Whitney, vice president and chief administrative officer.

"We obviously believe that it was not improper for us to hire him and it was not improper for him to continue to work in the nuclear industry," Whitney said.

"I mean, the man was never indicted for what he did; he was never convicted for what he did. To say that he is going to be punished by not being permitted to work in an area that he is trained to work in, based upon some sort of proceeding which we were not a party to, that would in fact be improper."

Whitney said Hitz's record in the industry is "outstanding." He said Hitz "admitted to us when we hired him that he made a mistake. He believed he had learned his lesson."

The integrity of the management of Three Mile Island was an issue during hearings into whether the undamaged Unit 1 reactor at the plant near Middletown, Pa., would be permitted by the NRC to restart.

Unit 1, which began operating again last month, had been closed for refueling at the time of the March 1979 accident that crippled its twin, Unit 2.

Opponents of the restart had argued that Floyd's conviction and accusations of cheating by other operators raised questions about the operator training procedure at the plant.

In August, Markey charged that General Physics had coached employees of the Oyster Creek nuclear plant in New Jersey on various ploys designed to help them "put one over on the federal government." He said a two-day training course in November 1983 appeared to advise the workers on general methods of evading the intent of NRC regulations.

Oyster Creek is operated by General Public Utilities Corp., which also owns Three Mile Island.

After an investigation, Palladino told Markey that the objectionable course material was no longer being used by General Physics.

Scientist to give his impressions of TMI

A research scientist tomorrow will give his impressions of what lessons have been learned from the nuclear accident at Three Mile Island.

Bernd Franke, senior research scientist at the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research, will speak at 7:15 p.m. at the Three Mile Island Alert Inc. meeting in the Harrisburg Friends Meetinghouse at Sixth and Herr streets.

TMI Alert will meet at 6:15 p.m. to elect members to a Planning Council and discuss the Radiological Monitoring Committee, formed to examine the current monitoring system and existing problems. Those who want additional information can call 233-7897.

TMI core debris put into canister

Associated Press

Operators at Three Mile Island, moving into a long-awaited phase of the Unit 2 cleanup, loaded the first core debris from the damaged reactor into a canister, a plant spokesman said yesterday.

Workmen using long-handled tools placed a piece of fuel rod into a stainless steel canister suspended above the core, spokesman Gordon Tomb said.

The debris and the canisters are underwater. The operators work from a rotating platform built on top of the 40-foot-high core and, with the aid of remote-controlled television cameras, lower their tools through 20 feet of water to reach and move the debris.

Removal of the fuel damaged in the March 1979 accident at the Londonderry Twp. plant is expected to take 18 months.

For the time being, the canisters are being kept within the reactor vessel. Eventually they will be moved underwater to a pool in an adjacent building and in

the spring will be loaded into casks and shipped to the U.S. Department of Energy's Idaho National Engineering Laboratory in Idaho Falls for research and disposal.

The first phase of fuel removal started Oct. 30 when debris within the destroyed reactor core was moved to make room for the canisters, which hang in a carousel beneath the work platform.

Operators will spend the next several weeks loading chunks of debris into the canisters from a 3-foot-deep bed of rubble in the upper portion of the reactor. Smaller pieces will then be vacuumed.

The top 5 feet of the 12-foot-high core collapsed into rubble during the 1979 accident. The core was left without its normal shield of cooling water and overheated. Both uranium fuel and metal components melted as the temperature soared thousands of degrees above normal.

Plant officials said they don't know exactly the state of the core below the rubble bed, except for another pile of rubble at the bottom of the steel reactor vessel.

Jersey aims to block Unit 1 restart billing

United Press International

NEWARK, N.J. — The state's public advocate filed suit yesterday to block a move by Jersey Central Power and Light Co. to have its customers pay for plant costs at the Three Mile Island nuclear reactor.

Acting Public Advocate Alfred Slocum said that although 770,000 Jersey Central customers will initially see a 1 percent decrease in their monthly bills because of restored Three Mile Island power, the long-range costs may be higher.

Slocum said the immediate savings "will quickly disappear" if the plant's No. 1 reactor does not perform up to the utility's expectations. The utility is 25 percent owner of the Three Mile Island plant.

"The company is assuming that nothing will go wrong," Slocum said. "We want an opportunity to detail things that we believe could very well go wrong since no other nuclear plant has ever been restarted after being idle for such a long period of time."

The reactor was shut down in March 1979 after its twin reactor

at the Londonderry Twp., Pa., facility was damaged in the nation's worst commercial nuclear accident.

The Board of Public Utilities voted Thursday to allow plant costs to be reflected in the utility's permanent rates.

In an appeal filed with the Appellate Division of Superior Court in Newark, the Department of the Public Advocate said it was not given adequate notice of the move.

The department also contended it was denied due process in its bid to have the BPU insist on minimum performance standards for the Pennsylvania reactor.

Customers of the utility were given rebates totaling \$15 million last year, but Slocum said Jersey Central customers have paid \$600 million in rate increases since 1979, including up to \$280 million in costs related to the accident.

"We believe Jersey Central customers who have had to pay increasingly higher electric bills because of the . . . accident deserve much stronger guarantees that this nuclear plant is going to run efficiently," Slocum said.



AP Photo/John J. Muro. The NRC has permission to restart Unit 1, but we don't worry, nothing can go wrong... go wrong... go wrong...

MY VIEW one reader's opinion

JOANNE DOROSHOW



Joanne Doroshow is a former Harrisburg resident who has been involved in Three Mile Island litigation since 1981. She is currently a staff attorney at the Christie Institute, a Washington-based public interest law firm.

Governor should have done more

HAVING REPRESENTED Three Mile Island Alert and various officials in the TMI-1 restart case since 1981, I have worked with a large number of elected representatives opposing TMI-1's restart, and I have watched closely their influence over the course of the restart case.

After reading the Patriot's editorial of Oct. 8, "Misguided protest — Anti-TMI activists lash out at the wrong target," I realized that there is a story here which needs to be told. It concerns Governor Thornburgh's involvement in the TMI-1 restart issue.

I am afraid that Governor Thornburgh, clever politician that he is, has duped the public on this one. I say this because until mid-1984, the governor's involvement in the TMI-1 restart case was flat-out destructive. After mid-1984, his involvement was simply too little, too late — and clearly calculated to be so, for whatever reason.

The NRC's restart hearings took place at various times from 1980 through 1985. Throughout these hearings, the governor seemed to actively prevent his attorneys from effectively participating in some of the most serious issues being litigated.

AS TO ISSUES, the governor allowed his attorneys to litigate, the commonwealth's involvement in the hearing process ranged from hardly noticeable to obstructive. One of the most egregious examples concerned post-accident cheating at TMI-1.

In early June, 1983, when reports indicated that the commissioners were rushing toward a restart vote, the governor struck a deal with GPU and the commonwealth simply dropped its appeal of the Licensing Board decision which supported restart despite widespread cheating and wrongdoing at TMI-1.

The promises the governor obtained in exchange were virtually meaningless. The governor's press

statements indicated his pleasure at GPU's positive efforts. And the message to the NRC was clear: go ahead and vote.

This "cheating deal" was similar to one negotiated publicly on certain emergency planning issues, and one apparently struck secretly on the safety of steam generator repairs at TMI-1.

All this aside, the question remains: Did the governor do everything he could to obtain the management hearings he was publicly calling for in the last year or so? I think the answer is clearly no.

The NRC may be an independent federal agency in name, but it is controlled by and clearly responds to the policy direction of the White House. In 1984, Governor Thornburgh was responsible for delivering the Pennsylvania vote to Ronald Reagan. If Thornburgh were really serious about this, a simple meeting with the White House, maybe even a phone call, would have ended the matter right there.

FOCUSING strictly on the legal case, the governor could have done more. NRC law is arcane. The governor's lawyers did the best they could under the circumstances. But if the governor were serious about the court suit, he clearly could have hired outside counsel with special expertise in this area, as other governments have done in similar situations.

If the governor really wanted hearings on GPU's character and competence, he could be calling on the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission to hold these very hearings.

Quite simply, his recent public appearances may have sounded good, but they were never effectively backed up. And don't think the NRC didn't notice.

Thornburgh did the minimum necessary to ensure a favorable public image, and make no mistake — he got exactly what he tried for.

Generator deposits reduce TMI power

By Frank Lynch
Patriot-News

Three Mile Island officials are studying ways to eliminate or reduce deposits inside the Unit 1 steam generators, a condition that is limiting the reactor to 71 percent of its electrical power output.

"Discussions and evaluations are under way now," plant spokesman Douglas Bedell said yesterday. He said no decisions had been made on how to deal with the buildup. The deposits consist of small amounts of rust and other impurities.

Officials from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and Babcock & Wilcox Co., the Virginia-based firm that installed the TMI generators, say the situation doesn't pose a hazard and is simply an economic concern.

TMI officials say the restricted power may be related to an incident Saturday in which a failed relay switch brought the plant to an

automatic "hot shutdown." Steam releases carried what company officials described as "minute" amounts of radioactivity into the environment. They say the incident posed no threat to plant workers or the public.

Jim Taylor, manager of licensing services for Babcock & Wilcox, suggested fluctuations in pressure could have "caused what's in there [deposits] to move to areas where it could have effect" on output.

When the faulty switch was replaced and power was escalated, operators discovered the unit's two generators reached optimum output at 71 percent power. Under a graduated restart plan endorsed by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Londonderry Twp. plant is permitted to run at 75 percent power. Before the shutdown it had been producing that output.

"We've reached the level at which we can operate, and that level is 71 percent," TMI spokes-

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woman Lisa Robinson said yesterday.

Karl Abraham, public affairs officer for NRC Region 1, which includes Pennsylvania, said NRC inspectors on the site are staying abreast of the situation. But he said the NRC would assume no immediate role in the situation.

He said the major significance of the deposit problem is that plant owner General Public Utilities Corp. cannot sell as much electricity as it could without the buildup.

"It's not any kind of danger situation. It's just that the plant is not as profitable as they would like it to be," he said.

The steam generators resemble large vats. Tubes carrying hot water from the reactor pass through the generators, heating "secondary" water that turns to steam to run the electricity-producing turbines.

Robinson said the deposits apparently formed on plates in the secondary part of the generators, restricting the flow of water and steam. She compared the buildup to the material that might form on the inside of a teakettle.

TMI Unit 1 returns to 75% of full power

By Michael Sullivan
Patriot-News

Three Mile Island Unit 1 returned to 75 percent of full power last night after adjustments were made to compensate for blockage in the plant's steam generator tubes.

The blockage may mean the reactor won't be capable of achieving 100 percent power without first being repaired, according to Doug Bedell, spokesman for GPU Nuclear Corp., operator of the plant.

Deposits of unknown composition have partially blocked the flow of water into the steam generator tubes, which carry the steam that turns the turbines. Plant officials have compensated for the blockage by raising the water level in the steam generator to 82 percent from 72 percent of the operating level, Bedell said.

Without the deposits, the reactor would produce 75 percent power at the 72 percent water level, Bedell said.

The 75 percent output level was reached at 7 o'clock last night.

The Unit 1 reactor had been operating at 71 percent power since Monday, a day after it was brought back on line after a weekend malfunction. A faulty relay switch in an electrical generator caused an unplanned automatic

shutdown of the plant for over 12 hours Sunday.

Prior to the shutdown, the Londonderry Twp. plant had been operating at 75 percent power.

When plant operators escalated power on Monday, optimum output was reached at 71 percent.

The increase in water level was performed after officials from Three Mile Island and Babcock & Wilcox Co., a Virginia-based manufacturing firm that installed the generators, submitted safety report on the proposed increase to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

"The conclusion of the analysis was that there would be no impact on the safe operation of the plant if the water level... was allowed to rise to permit the increased production of steam and thus a higher level of power," Bedell said.

Similar deposits are common with other generators made by Babcock & Wilcox and pose no safety risk, he said.

However, failure to remove the deposits may prevent the reactor from reaching 100 percent power.

"How much beyond 75 percent this adjustment will take us we will just have to see when we move beyond this point," Bedell said.

He said engineers currently are attempting to find ways to obtain samples of the deposits.

Failure of switch stops TMI

Radioactive steam released into air

By Michael Sullivan
Patriot-News

Slightly radioactive steam was released into the air yesterday after an unplanned automatic shutdown at Three Mile Island's Unit 1 reactor.

A faulty relay switch in an electrical generator in the non-nuclear section of the plant was blamed for the shutdown, which occurred at 2:10 a.m.

The reactor was restarted at 2:40 p.m., after plant workers replaced the faulty switch, according to officials of GPU Nuclear Corp., operators of the Londonderry Twp. nuclear plant.

After the malfunction, the plant automatically stabilized itself and assumed a "hot shutdown" condition, according to Lisa Robinson, spokeswoman for GPU Nuclear.

Hot shutdown means all temperatures and pressures remain the same in the plant, except for the reactor, where control rods are inserted to halt nuclear reaction.

Robinson said the plant reacted as it was designed to react: the incident presented no danger to plant workers or to nearby residents. She said automatic shutdowns are "not an unusual occurrence" at nuclear reactors.

"There was never any emergency condition at the plant," she said.

The unplanned shutdown was the first at Unit 1 since the plant was restarted Oct. 3, for the first time in 6½ years. The Unit 1 reactor resumed production of electricity Oct. 9 when it reached the 15 percent power level. It was operating

at 75 percent of full power and producing 630 megawatts of electricity from Nov. 23 until the shutdown.

The relay switch blamed for causing the shutdown malfunctioned when voltage in the electrical generation system increased. Low power demand by utility customers caused the increase in voltage, Robinson said.

The switch is designed to shut down the electrical generator when demand for electricity is low and the voltage in the generation system rises to a set level. The malfunction happened when the relay shut down the generator at a voltage below the set level, Robinson said.

Other relay switches in the generator were tested yesterday while the reactor was inactive. No other faulty switches were found, Robinson said.

GPU Nuclear officials have said they hope to have the plant at 100 percent power by Jan. 1, if the NRC approves the increase.

"We expect to go back up to 75 percent and proceed as normal," Robinson said. The Jan. 1 date has been "something to work toward, but we have never been welded to any time," she said.

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TMIA will publish future Updates as money allows. TMIA continues to operate a full-time office and work on the following issues: radiological monitoring; Unit 2 clean-up as well as Unit 1 (court case still pending); health concerns; emergency planning; and public information and education.

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