

THREE MILE ISLAND

ALERT

March
1986

315 Peffer Street; Harrisburg, PA 17102

TELEPHONE: 717-233-3072

AREA GROUPS SEEK HEALTH FUND ACTION, ACCOUNTABILITY

by Vera Stuchinski

In January, representatives from area groups met with Jonathan Berger, the administrator of the TMI Public Health Fund, to resolve issues that have not been satisfactorily addressed by the Fund. Specifically, these representatives asked Mr. Berger to immediately improve public communication, to allow public input into expenditure of funds, and to allocate money for public education, health studies of area residents and citizen monitoring of radiation releases from TMI. The Health Fund has been operating under a veil of secrecy, and following an unsatisfactory meeting at which problems were not resolved, TMIA decided to communicate directly with Judge Sylvia Rambo (of the U.S. Middle District Court of Pennsylvania) who approves allocation of funds.

The Health Fund was created in 1981 to administer the \$5 million settlement paid by insurers of GPU for damages caused by the '79 accident at TMI. The Fund is to serve citizens living within 25 miles of TMI by allocating the \$5 million for: monitoring radiation from TMI, studying health related effects of the accident, public education, designing of evacuation plans, and funding of general research on the effects of low-level radiation. Money not committed by November of 1986 will revert back to GPU's insurance company.

To date, the Bergers (a Philadelphia law firm employing family members to help administrate the fund) have allocated less than half of the money, and time is running out for the public to realize full benefit of the fund. The Bergers have not only been secretive about the expenditures of Health Fund money, they have also hired a "conflict management" firm, Accord Associates, to deal with the public, instead of handling communications themselves. Accord set up a token citizens' Advisory Committee, which has been so ineptly handled (members have had no real input) that some members have resigned in protest. Others are trying to get the Bergers to allow the Committee to fulfill its purpose and take part in decision-making and to communicate with the public.

Since time is running out and communication with the Bergers has been fruitless, TMIA sent a letter to Judge Rambo requesting the court's assistance in the administration of the TMI Public Health Fund. Specifically, TMIA has asked the court to intervene to influence the expenditure of funds for:

(1) improving the monitoring of radiation releases at TMI, purchase of radiation monitoring equipment, and training citizens how to use it; (The Bergers had stated previously that they would like to "equip people to take readings themselves so that they can discuss technical issues with plant operators." At the January meeting, Jonathan Berger indicated that his firm had no intention of recommending expenditure of funds for these purposes.)

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- (2) funding the completion of the Katagiri study. It is the only source of taped oral interviews taken of individuals who suffered symptoms of radiation exposure and other physical problems during the TMI accident;
- (3) public education programs about cancer, early detection of cancer and radiation-related health effects;
- (4) funding follow-up studies of radiation releases during the accident;
- (5) assurance that any studies on evacuation will be done in cooperation with local governments, and money set aside for implementation of study recommendations; and,
- (6) developing a repository for the publication and development of educational materials regarding any studies funded by the Health Fund.

TMIA has sent copies of our letter to area officials and has received a great deal of support. Harrisburg City Council just voted unanimously to pass a resolution supporting TMIA's letter to Judge Rambo, and will encourage the court to meet with area citizens, including representatives from City Council.

Communication from individuals is vital. Please write to Judge Rambo and tell her of your concerns. Let her know that you want the TMI Public Health Fund to be made accountable to the public it is supposed to represent. Correspondence should be addressed: The Honorable Sylvia Rambo, United States District Judge, Federal Building - 9th Floor, Walnut & Third Streets, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17108, and should be headed: Dear Judge Rambo:.

GPU SEEKING LOOSENING OF STEAM TUBE SAFETY REGULATIONS

by Vera Stuchinski

In an all too-familiar move, GPU is once again attempting to circumvent NRC safety requirements at Unit 1, and it appears that the NRC is willing to help by invalidating their own orders. The latest travesty involves the steam generator at Unit 1.

The steam generator produces steam to power turbines at TMI. Inside the generator are 31,000 long, thin steam tubes through which super-heated, highly pressurized, radioactive coolant from the core circulates. Water that surrounds the outside of the steam tubes is rapidly heated and flashed to steam. If a steam tube rupture occurs, radioactive coolant will mix with non-radioactive water and be released into the environment. Loss of coolant means an uncovered core and the likelihood of a core meltdown accident.

These tubes were badly damaged in 1981 by an "accidental" introduction of a highly corrosive chemical into the system. Repairs were made with an experimental process. TMI's license to operate specifies NRC regulations that all tubes with cracks penetrating more than 40% of the tube wall must be plugged and removed from service.

TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN TMIA, COMPLETE AND RETURN THIS FORM

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____ ZIP _____

Intervention Fund Contribution: \$10 \$20 \$50 \$100 \$More
 (Checks in the amount of \$50 or more can be made payable to the
 TMI Legal Fund for tax deduction purposes.)

Membership: \$15 Regular Membership \$50 Sustaining Member
 \$25 Non-Profit Organization \$100 Patron
 \$5 Low income, student \$200 Club Member
 \$5 Non-member newsletter subscription

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN TO TMIA, 315 Peffer St., Hbg. PA 17102

This month, GPU is required to shut down Unit 1 to determine how many damaged tubes must be plugged. In order to avoid removing a great many tubes from service (thus being forced to operate at a lower capacity), GPU recently asked the NRC to raise the plugging criteria from 40 to 70% through wall penetration.

As required by law, the NRC has agreed to hold hearings on this proposed license change. In the meantime, NRC staff is supporting GPU's latest request to immediately revise the plugging criteria to 50% through wall penetration, without benefit of a public hearing. The NRC Commissioners will make this decision soon.

TMIA is fighting this illegal move. Our attorney, Joanne Doroshow, is preparing contentions to the NRC, arguing against the proposed change in plugging criteria without a due process hearing. It is possible that TMIA may once again find itself in court to block the unsafe operation of Unit 1.

On March 27, the NRC will hold a prehearing conference to determine the scope of future steam tube hearings (on the 70% request). You can show the NRC what area citizens think about the total lack of concern for our health and safety, by attending the prehearing conference. It will begin at 9 AM in the Heritage Room of the Education Building, 333 Market Street, Harrisburg. TMIA also needs your financial support in order to continue the legal battle.

"LIVING WITH IONIZING RADIATION" IS WORKSHOP TOPIC

A day-long workshop will be held Saturday, April 19, 1986 at Lakeside Lutheran Church under the sponsorship of TMIA's Radiation Monitoring Committee. The workshop will run from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and will start with a presentation on what radiation is and how it is measured and move onto the health effects and the impact of the citizen monitoring network around the Yankee Reactor in Maine. There is a \$10.00 registration fee that covers lunch all course materials. Scholarships are available and childcare will be provided. A registration form appears at the bottom of this page.

Presentors include Dr. Judith Johnsrud of State College, the original intervenor against the construction of TMI 1; Kitty Tucker, executive director of the Health & Energy Institute in Washington; Dr. Bernd Franke of the TMI Public Health Fund; and Maria Holt and Elizabeth King of the Citizens Monitoring Network of the Yankee Reactor, Bath, Maine.

Radiation Monitor First Prize in Raffle

To help cover the costs of the Ionizing Radiation Workshop, TMIA will raffle off a "Radiation Alert" monitor, produced by Solar Electronics with a value of \$200. The monitor has a LND halogen-quenched Geiger-Mueller tube with mica end window (whatever that means) and it detects alpha, beta, gamma and x-rays. It uses one 9-volt alkaline battery and weighs 8.8 ounces. This is the hand-held monitor of choice for most experts. You can also place an order for such a monitor should you not be lucky enough to win. Two raffle tickets are enclosed. Fill them out and return them to TMIA. For more tickets, call TMIA.

REGISTRATION FORM - IONIZING RADIATION WORKSHOP - SATURDAY, APRIL 19

Name _____ Address _____

Telephone # _____

Child Care: YES NO If yes, # of children/ages _____ / _____

For scholarships call TMIA at 233-7897

Enclose \$10.00 and return to: TMIA Radiation Workshop, 315 Peffer St.
Harrisburg, PA 17102

U.S. COURT OF APPEALS WILL HEAR PETITION TO REVOKE GPU'S LICENSE

March 19 will be the day in court for Three Mile Island Alert as it voices its arguments that General Public Utilities lacks the requisite character to safely operate a nuclear reactor. Sufficient character is expressly established by Congress as a fundamental requirement for holding a license to operate a nuclear reactor, and TMIA will argue GPU is deficient in this area.

The case was brought last year by TMIA, Sen. John Shumaker, Rep. Peter Wambach, Dauphin Co. Commissioner Larry Hochendoner, and two New Jersey safe energy groups. TMIA members are urged to show their support for this effort by going to Philadelphia for the hearing. Call TMIA (233-7897) for carpool information or send a contribution to TMIA or the TMI Legal Fund.

SIX-PART LECTURE SERIES TO FOCUS ON RADIATION AND HEALTH

A series of lectures featuring experts in the fields of radiation and health will be held on Wednesday evenings at Millersville University beginning March 19 with Dr. Karl Morgan, an internationally renowned health physicist, on the effects of radiation on the human body. The lectures, sponsored by the Susquehanna Valley Alliance, will be held from 7 to 9 p.m. in room 105 of Wickersham Hall on the Millersville campus.

Speaking March 26 is Dr. Bernd Franke of the Institute of Energy and Environmental Research, Heidelberg, Germany, on how radiation enters our environment and the results of a study of TMI radiation monitoring. April 2 and 9 the focus is on cancer. Dr. John Kreider, a pathologist and microbiologist at the Hershey Medical Center will discuss the contributing factors, detection and treatment of cancer (4/2) while Dr. Robert L. Comis, Medical Director, Fox Chase Cancer Center, will discuss radiation related cancer and its treatment.

April 16 will feature Dr. Jan Beyea, Senior Staff Scientist with the National Audubon Society and the principal investigator of the Review of Dose Assessments at TMI. He will speak about the TMI accident dose assessment. The final presentation, on 4/23, will feature a panel discussion of various studies undertaken in the TMI area. All the lectures are free. To register, call the university's Center for Continuing Education at 872-3030.

CALENDAR CALENDAR CALENDAR CALENDAR CALENDAR CALENDAR CALENDAR

- March 12, Wednesday, TMIA Planning Council Meeting, 7:30 p.m. Harrisburg Friends Meeting House. Members welcome.
- March 15, Saturday, Radiation Monitoring Committee meets, 2:00 p.m. Harrisburg Friends Meeting House.
- March 19, Wednesday, Carpool to Phila. for the U.S. 3rd Circuit Court oral argument to revoke the license of GPU. Call 233-7897 for details.
- March 19, Wednesday, First of the SVA Lectures on radiation and health at Millersville, Dr. Karl Morgan. See article for details.
- March 21, Friday, Marcia Taylor in concert to benefit TMIA, 8:00 p.m. at Lakeside Lutheran Church, 245 Division Street, Harrisburg. Donation \$5.00. See enclosed flyer.
- March 24, Monday, 7:30 p.m. Pro-Peace Meeting to organize area participation in Los Angeles to New York & Washington peace march. Larry Evans, state Pro-Peace Director, will make a presentation at the Unitarian Church, 1280 Clover Lane, Harrisburg (off S. Eisenhower Blvd. - behind Cloverleaf Motel).
- March 26, Wednesday, second of the SVA lectures, Dr. Bernd Franke, Millersville State University.
- March 27, Thursday, NRC pre-hearing conference on steam tubes, 9:00 a.m., 333 Market Street, Harrisburg, Be There!
- March 28, Friday, Activities to observe the 7th anniversary of the TMI accident. Capitol Building 12 noon. Public gathering and speakers. See enclosed flyer.
- April 19, Saturday, Living With Ionization Workshop, See article this issue.