

# THREE MILE ISLAND

# ALERT

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### Reactor Shut Down for Leaky Valve

A valve which opened during an October 14 test, but failed to close, resulted in a two-day shutdown of the Unit 1 reactor. Contaminated water leaked from the leaky steam valve at the rate of a half gallon a minute which the *Patriot* says GPU nukespeaker Mary Wells characterized as "insignificant." She added that, "We could have continued to operate for the next two years with this little, tiny leak, but the decision was made to fix it."

"A half gallon a minute is a 720 gallon-a-day leak," pointed out TMIA's Eric Epstein who expressed concern that GPU would operate the plant with a leak of this size. Epstein also questioned GPUN's decision to wait nearly a month before reporting the leak to the NRC, speculating that economics was the reason for the delay. The two-day shut down reportedly cost GPU about \$700,000

### Despite Break-In GPU Wins High Marks for Security

The break-in at TMI last February had no effect on the report card the NRC issued GPU. In fact, GPU won the highest marks possible in the security area on its "Systematic Assessment of Licensee Performance" (SALP) report for the period which included the security breach. "It's disturbing and incomprehensible how the facility could have achieved the highest grade on their SALP after one of the most serious security breaches in nuclear industry history," said TMIA's Eric Epstein. Epstein, a teacher and lecturer, characterized the rating as "serious grade inflation."

### Contaminated Cork Seam Spreading Radiation at TMI

In a November 2 letter to the NRC, GPUN acknowledged: "During the TMI-2 accident, the cork seam located in the Auxiliary Building Seal Injection Valve Room (SIVR) was contaminated with radioactive water. Attempts to contain the contamination within the room have been unsuccessful. During the past 14 years, radioactive material has spread along the joint in one direction into the Annulus, and in the other direction into the Auxiliary Building, Service Building and Control Building West."

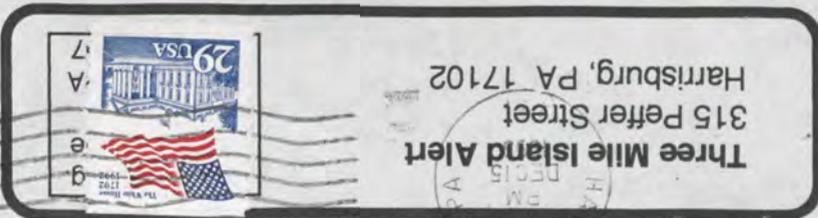
Eric Epstein, who heads the EFMR Monitoring Group, has called the NRC's and DER's attention to GPU's failure to address this issue in a timely and conscientious manner and urged them to postpone putting TMI-2 into Post-Defueling Monitored Storage (PDMS) until this contamination problem is resolved.

In a November 23 letter to GPU, NRC project manager Michael Masnik requested that GPUN provide the NRC with its plans for correcting this problem by December 10, "so as to not adversely impact the schedule for the approval for the PDMS License Agreement."



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YOUR DUES PAYMENT  
IS REQUESTED

**Cracks Detected in Peach Bottom Reactor Shroud**

*(From the 11/8/93 The Nuclear Monitor)* Reactor core shroud cracking, first found at Carolina Power & Light's Brunswick reactors, has now surfaced at Philadelphia Electric's Peach Bottom-3 reactor. A utility spokesman said the cracks, which include a 10-inch circumferential crack with some axial cracks added, were observed in two areas of the core shroud, but the utility, not surprisingly, doesn't consider them significant. The utility doesn't even plan to examine Unit-2's shroud until it begins refueling in September 1994. Meanwhile, the NRC reports that Peach Bottom-3 is one of only five GE Mark I reactors which have yet to even begin modifications to enhance the safety of their rather weak containments.

**20 Years Since Last Nuke Ordered**

The Nuclear Information and Resource Service recently reminded us that the last viable nuclear power plant was ordered in October, 1973. That means it has been 20 years since the nuclear industry could muster up a new reactor. Every order since October, 1973 has been canceled.

Nixon was in the White House, VCRs and personal computers didn't exist, our music was on rather large vinyl disks, and the Nixon Administration was confidently predicting 1,000 nuclear reactors by the year 2000.

Congratulations. Your activism, dedication and support have made a difference.

**Sustainable Energy Budget Proposed for Dept. of Energy**

On November 16, a national campaign was launched to win support for a major redirection of the federal energy budget. The centerpiece of the campaign is the "Sustainable Energy Budget for the U.S. Department of Energy: Fiscal Year 1995." The "budget" is the product of five months' work by more than three dozen national environmental, business, utility, and state government organizations. It provides line-item budget recommendations with detailed justification for each proposal.

The "budget" calls for increases in the Department of Energy's (DOE) budgets for renewable and energy efficiency programs totaling \$650 million. It further details cuts in the nuclear fission, nuclear fusion, and fossil fuel programs totaling \$826 million to pay for the proposed increases as well as provide for some deficit reduction.

TMIA members are urged to take a few moments this holiday season to write members of Congress and President Clinton to endorse a shift in funding priorities in the DOE budget. You might remind the President that the "budget's" recommendations are consistent with the policies he and Al Gore advocated on the campaign trail last year and they're consistent with the Energy Policy Act of 1992 (EPACT) which, like most acts of Congress, is only as good as its implementation. Adopting this budget would make it plenty good. President Clinton's address: The White House, Washington, D.C. 20500.

Computer modem owners can get access the "budget" via the Home Power BBS, a nonprofit renewable energy computer communications system operated by the Redwood Alliance in Arcata, CA. This public BBS can be accessed at no charge. Just set your system for n-8-1, and have it dial 707/822-8640. This report and others will be found in the Files area of the General Conference.

**Please renew your membership, then give more to support TMIA activities**

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 Members \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 Sustaining Membership  
 \_\_\_\_\_ \$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 Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102

**15th Anniversary Looms**

1994 will mark the 15th anniversary of the beginning of the accident at Three Mile Island. Naturally, plans are underway for local activities for next March 26, 27, & 28. Please reserve those dates on your calendar and, if you are willing to do some volunteer work, call 233-7897. Activities under consideration include a conference, concert, special publications, a press conference, meals, sales items and more. TMIA has endorsements from several statewide and national organizations and is actively seeking grant support.

**Penn State University Member of Pro-Nuke PR Group**

Penn State is on a list of four dozen American colleges and universities listed as members of the U.S. Council for Energy Awareness (USCEA), the nuclear industry's public relations arm. The USCEA's mission is to promote nuclear power and a new generation of nuclear reactors. The USCEA spends millions of dollars per year on misleading TV and print ads, which it pays for from the dues and contributions of members.

It would be understandable for a university, like Penn State, with a nuclear engineering program to belong to a professional organization such as the American Nuclear Society. But the USCEA is not a research or scientific organization; its function is strictly promotional.

Tax support for Penn State, as well as alumni donations, may be supporting the USCEA. If you support Penn State, write and demand that they drop their membership in USCEA. Also let state officials know of the inappropriate use of tax money to support the industry's campaign for resurgence.

**NIRS Calls for White House Review of Rad Waste Programs**

The Nuclear Information and Resource Service has called on the Clinton-Gore Administration to establish a blue ribbon commission to look at all US radioactive waste programs and policies including: high-level, low-level, mixed, transuranic, from both the commercial sector and the weapons complex. All of the laws pertaining to radioactive waste management are in a state of failure to one degree or another. Somehow, the nation's policy has led to Plutonium 329 (half-life of 24,000 years) to be classified as "low-level waste" and to the development of "temporary" high-level waste storage sites in the middle of the Susquehanna River at TMI, as well as at every other operating nuclear power plant. NIRS has asked the White House for an examination of the "basic assumptions of our policies" by experts "who have no financial interest in the generation of this waste."

**Yankee Rowe Generators Passed Through Harrisburg**

A train carrying highly-radioactive steam generators from the closed Yankee Rowe reactor in Massachusetts passed through Harrisburg on its way to the "low-level" radioactive waste dump in Barnwell, South Carolina. As it was loaded on the train at Rowe on November 22, protesters measured radiation at levels 10 times background fifty feet from the truck carrying it and 200 times background 10 feet from the truck. Not even a tarp shielded the shipment from local citizens. Though the train was routed to the west of major cities on the east coast, its route was to take it through Harrisburg and Washington.

**TMI-type Accident Staged in France**

Nuclear researchers purposely caused a partial meltdown in a reactor in southern France in an effort to analyze radioactive gasses generated by the meltdown. Live closed-circuit TV provided researchers a view of an increasingly bright bluish glow as fuel rods melted and ruptured under intense heat. The experiment was shut down early when scientists determined leaving the reactor in operation would cause the core to breach the first of three containment structures. Environmentalists called the experiment costly, dangerous and unnecessary.

**FEMA to Recommend Changes in TMI Evacuation Plan**

In December the Federal Emergency Management Agency is expected to report to the NRC on the status of the TMI evacuation plan. Many in the area have suggested the existing plan is inadequate, including Harrisburg Mayor Steve Reed who says the evacuation zone should be expanded from 10 miles to 15, or possibly 20. Reed also calls for more power in the hands of local officials in the development of emergency plans. He suggests the city be allowed to commandeer military vehicles from the New Cumberland Army Depot and Amtrak trains to move citizens out of the area.

**Volunteers Sought for Sun Day Effort**

Sun Day 1994 will be held on April 24. Locally, the Rain Forest Action Committee is playing the overall coordinating role, but TMIA needs volunteers to help coordinate TMIA's role in the observation. If you are interested in assisting with the local Sun Day effort, please call 233-7897.

**Nevada Grassroots Group Blocks Plutonium Testing**

Four months of citizen action was enough to convince Lockheed to cancel proposed plutonium testing in the Las Vegas suburb of Paradise Valley. Lockheed planned heating plutonium-contaminated soil from Rocky Flats, Colorado to 2000°F in a plasma arc furnace. The purpose was to turn the loosely packed soil into a glass-like compound. With the high temperatures, however, some of the plutonium would vaporize, a major concern to area citizens. The tests were to be conducted at a Lockheed facility that performs chemical analysis. The site is in an industrial park bordering McCarran Airport and surrounded on two sides by high density housing. One apartment house was only 641 feet from the site. While Lockheed canceled the tests citing its "good neighbor policy," there are no laws requiring public notification of radioactive experimentation.

**Uranium Discovered in Closet**

Two vials of uranium yellow cake were found broken in a closet in the auditorium of Niagara Mohawk's corporate office in Syracuse, NY on October 27. Radiation readings indicated 35,000 counts per minute of Beta radiation, and some detectable Alpha radiation. The yellow cake, which had spilled on the auditorium floor, apparently was used by the utility's public affairs department for "show and tell" presentations.

**TMI Video Available**

We haven't reviewed it, but an ad in the 11/22/93 edition of *The Nuclear Monitor* reads in its entirety: Too Hot for TV! "Three Mile Island Revisited" an Award-Winning Eco-Expose with Karl Grossman and other original videotapes on vital environmental issues by EnviroVideo. \$19.95 each + shipping and handling. 1-800-227-8955. Call for our Free Catalog. MC/VISA/Check.

# 1994 Peace Calendar Available \$11.95 value - Just \$10.00

Syracuse Cultural Workers 1994 Peace Calendar Available from TMIA - The 1994 Peace Calendar overflows with exciting and diverse artwork. The 23rd edition of this multicultural celebration features the works of many artists who are old friends. Among them are Bonnie Acker's bright, cut paper cover/May piece which portrays people working and playing on the earth; Jan Phillips' black and white photograph "Oh, How We Danced," accompanied by a tender love poem (March); Harry Freeman-Jones' wonderful tribute to the 25th anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion (June); Jane Evershed's "We Have Nothing If We Have Nothing for Our Children," and Karen Kerney's watercolor "Common Sense," a visual representation of what USA life could look like with a dramatically realigned federal budget. Other subjects include Rosa Parks for African American History Month; Native American culture; stopping nuclear

testing; Sadako Hiroshima cranes; a tribute to Violeta Parra; the Winter Solstice and spirituality. Regularly priced at \$11.95; available from TMIA at \$10.00. Or we'll mail it to you for \$11.00. Send checks or call TMIA at 233-7897 for more information.



*Happy Holidays  
to all our friends  
from TMIA's  
Planning Council*