

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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GOVERNOR'S PRESS OFFICE  
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TRANSCRIPTION  
PRESS CONFERENCE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR WILLIAM W. SCRANTON, JR.  
INCIDENT AT THREE-MILE ISLAND  
MARCH 28, 1979

10:55 AM

Following is Lt. Governor Scranton's opening statement:

THE METROPOLITAN EDISON COMPANY HAS INFORMED US THAT THERE HAS BEEN AN INCIDENT AT THREE-MILE ISLAND, UNIT #2. EVERYTHING IS UNDER CONTROL. THERE IS AND WAS NO DANGER TO PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY.

THE INCIDENT OCCURRED DUE TO A MALFUNCTION IN THE TURBINE SYSTEM. THERE WAS A SMALL RELEASE OF RADIATION TO THE ENVIRONMENT.

ALL SAFETY EQUIPMENT FUNCTIONED PROPERLY.

METROPOLITAN EDISON HAS BEEN MONITORING THE AIR IN THE VICINITY OF THE PLANT CONSTANTLY SINCE THE INCIDENT. NO INCREASE IN NORMAL RADIATION LEVELS HAS BEEN DETECTED. A STATE POLICE HELICOPTER IS ALSO AT THE SCENE TO MONITOR THE AIR.

THE CIVIL DEFENSE HAS ALERTED ALL COUNTIES IN THE VICINITY ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO NEED FOR EVACUATION. THERE IS ALSO A TEAM FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ON THE WAY TO INVESTIGATE.

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Answering questions with Lt. Governor Scranton are:

William Dornisic, Nuclear Engineer, Bureau of Radiation Protection, DER  
Colonel Oran Henderson, Director, Civil Defense  
Senator Jim Ross, member, Emergency Management Council  
Bob Laughlin, Governor's Science Advisory Committee  
Ray Holst, Energy Liaison Officer

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HENDERSON: Outside of the danger area, in the schools outside the danger area.

PANTARD: How likely is an evacuation?

HENDERSON: Right now, it's almost zero.

SWIFT: How many calls have you gotten from the public on this today?

HENDERSON: Very few. Most of ours have been from the press. As far away as California, and New York, Florida. I talked to Kevin Molloy at 1:00 this afternoon and he had had twelve calls in his office from citizens.

KIRKPATRICK: How far away from the plant has increased radiation levels been detected?

CERUSKY: Our surveys indicate that we saw increased radiation levels right here in the middle of Harrisburg for a very short period of time. Just slightly, but they were there.

REPORTER: Governor, was there any type of an explosion during the -----

LT. GOV: No.

PANTARD: Is there any danger of explosion now?

REPORTER: Governor, ----- putting out reports that there was 8 times the lethal dose of radiation inside the reactor housing. If that is true then I'm asking if you can confirm that number one and number two, if that was true, was there anybody in the area of that housing or inside the housing itself that. . .

LT. GOV: First of all, I can't tell you if it was true. I assume what they're talking about is inside the primary housing which is built to house more than a lethal dose of radioactivity. But I don't intend to be an apologist for this situation. They don't have personnel within that primary area. If that's what he is referring to it could vary well be. But there have been no indications from our talks with anybody or from the DER's monitoring that there has been an lethal dose of radiation anywhere on site, off site or anywhere in the area and I think that's the reason why we feel confident that we're not going to have to evacuate.

.. LIVINGOOD: Have they told you what the level of radiation is or was inside that primary chamber? During the cooling down period?

LT. GOV: No, they have not.

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PANTARD: When was this statement made up?

LT. GOV: The statement was prepared within the last half hour.

PANTARD: Do you realize that the entire press corp has been here for an hour

LT. GOV: We realize that but we also realize it is also important to make sure we have accurate information and we didn't want to go on speculation.

BOSS: ———that there was no evacuation at this time. Do you . . .

LT. GOV: We do not anticipate the need for any evacuation at the moment. It is contained. There is no radiation leaking in the environment and we do not foresee any need for evacuation.

SCOTTIN: What time did the incident occur?

LT. GOV: The incident occurred, we believe, at about 4 a.m. this morning. The radiation was detected, determined a little bit later at what time I'm not sure. There was, perhaps some radiation levels that the nuclear power plant began its shut-down process at that time and it began the alerting system to tell the Civil Defense Council that there was a problem. Civil Defense Council immediately notified the various counties

SCOTTIN: Were any employees exposed to the radiation?

LT. GOV: Not that we know of.

SCOTTIN: Have they been checked?

LT. GOV: The employees are being checked. We have not found any health hazard to anybody involved either on site or down stream.

TAYLOR: How many employees were there at the time?

LT. GOV: I do not know.

AMIC:  
SEXTON: What is a small release?

LT. GOV: We have no detection, no way of telling exactly how much radiation was released because there could not have been any detected in the atmosphere.

SEXTON: Do you know it's small because . . .

DORNSIFE: Metropolitan Edison immediately sent people out at the plant boundary and to Goldsboro, because the wind was blowing toward that direction to take readings. Before we came up here I got word that they detected a small amount of radioactive iodine in the ground.

SCOTTIN: What?

DORNSIFE: Radioactive iodine in the ground. But it was at a level that would not cause any inhalation problem with people. It may show up in the milk, within a week or so like during the fallout incident we had a couple years ago. They have been continuously monitoring in both locations and they have determined that the levels are less than one milirem per hour.

What does that mean?

DORNSIFE: The normal background radiation in the vicinity of the Three Mile Island plant is about 100 milirem per year.

DORNSIFE: (con't) The levels are probably much, much smaller than one million per hour because that's their minimum detectable activity on short samples, which is what this was based on.

SEXTON: Mr. Dornsife, all this information in terms of the monitoring of the radiation comes from the company-----

DORNSIFE: DER has a team standing by in case things would have escalated we would have sent people out from DER to take sample. We probably will take confirmatory samples later on to determine what the iodine levels are.

AMIG: Are you saying that the only danger to people then is going to be in the milk?

DORNSIFE: The only way it will show up will probably be in the milk. There will be small increases in radioactive iodine in the milk because there is an accumulation factor in the milk just like there was during the fallout incident a couple years ago.

SCOTZIN: You say a couple of weeks and it will show up?

DORNSIFE: It will be about a week and it will show up.

REPORTER: Isn't that dangerous that some of. . . . .

DORNSIFE: Well we drank it during the fallout incident and there was no problem.

ROSS: The statement said there was a malfunction in the turbine system. What kind of a malfunction?

DORNSIFE: Because it could have been a fault in the electrical system, the turbine tripped. That's the only information we have. It could have, the cause is either not known by the company at this time, or we just didn't get that information. It was a turbine trip.

LENTZ: What actually happened?

DORNSIFE: The plant was operating on 100% power. Some fault in the non-safety system, the turbine plant or in the electrical system caused the valves going to the turbine to shut. This is a normal anticipated ----- . In fact the plant had to go through this kind of transient during start-up proceduring, start-up program. Immediately after the turbine valves closed there was a build up of pressure and temperature in the primary system. As designed the primary ----- valves lifted, releasing radioactivity to the primary containment, which is also a safeguard system. That's designed to contain that activity with minimal leakage.

LENTZ: You said it released radioactivity to the primary system.

DORNSIFE: The primary containment.

LENTZ: What's the primary containment?

DORNSIFE: The primary containment is the big building, the big dome building you see on the site. It contains all the piping and systems that have radioactive material.

LENTZ: That means it was just inside the building. Anyone in the building would have been exposed to that.

DORNSIFE: There was nobody in the building. They're not allowed in the building normally during operation.

LENTZ: Did that radioactivity in the building seep into the atmosphere?

DORNSIFE: Slight quantities did because of the design leak rate of the building. The pressure was never very high to cause the driving force behind that leakage. But the company suspects and they haven't confirmed this, that there was also because of the high pressure a possibility of a primary and secondary leakage also, complicating the initial transient.

WILEY: What does that mean?

DORNSIFE: It means that normally the primary water goes into the steam generator where it then heats secondary water which is isolated from this radioactive primary water. They suspect there may have been also a leakage from this primary system to the secondary system.

BRUTTO: At the moment or within the last hour, where are the DEB personnel who are charged with the responsibility of monitoring the atmosphere?

DORNSIFE: They are standing by in our office.

BRUTTO: In your office? Why aren't they down at the plant?

DORNSIFE: Because we haven't felt that they needed to be. We relied on the company's instrumentation.

BRUTTO: You haven't felt or Mac Ed hasn't felt?

DORNSIFE: We haven't felt.

BRUTTO: What information do you have that makes you not feel that it is necessary?

DORNSIFE: Metropolitan Edison's readings.

BRUTTO: You're depending on the company then?

DORNSIFE: Yes.

JENSEN: You actually have the equipment to take readings. . .

DORNSIFE: We don't have mobile equipment like they do.

JENSEN: Do you have sophisticated equipment to corroborate what they show you?

DORNSIFE: In our laboratory yes. Mobile, we do not. They have mobile equipment.

JENSEN: In other words you can't really test it.

DORNSIFE: We can't go out in the field immediately and take a sample and read it at that point. We'd have to go out and take it and go back to our laboratory, it would take time. That's why we're relying on their mobile equipment.

LENTZ: Is there plant now shut down?

DORNSIFE: Yes, there plant is shut down.

LENTZ: How long ago was the plant shut down?

DORNSIFE: It was shut down right after the incident. The turbine trip caused the reactor to be shut down.

REPORTER: Inaudible.

DORNSIFE: It shut down as a result of the turbine trip as designed?

LENTZ: How long will it be down?

DORNSIFE: At this point they don't know.

LENTZ: Hours, days, weeks?

DORNSIFE: It will be days at least.

PALYARD: \_\_\_\_\_ DER informed?

DORNSIFE: We were informed through Civil Defense at 7 a.m. this morning

PALYARD: 3 1/2 hours after the accident.

DORNSIFE: About 3 hours afterwards yes.

ROSS: Is that considered communications. . . .

DORNSIFE: We don't know yet. We don't know what the situation was at the plant in the interim, when they declared a site emergency, or what. We will find out later and that's a question we will ask, yes, definitely.

SEXTON: I'm confused. Do you have people at the plant site from DER monitoring the company's instrumentation?

DORNSIFE: No. We don't.

SEXTON: Are you just asking what they tell you . . .

DORNSIFE: Yes, but the federal government will obviously probably come in the NRC will come in and bring their instrumentation. They have also have mobile instrumentation in Philadelphia.

SEXTON: Do you have the legal authority or power to go inside the plant and monitor?

DORNSIFE: No we don't. We do monitor routinely, but it's in the environment. We take air samples, river samples, soil samples, that type of thing. Routinely. To check their data that they do for their normal monitoring program.

KILEY: \_\_\_\_\_ Do you mean there possibly was a radioactive leak in to the water that is drained into the Susquehanna River?

DORNSIFE: No. That in turn is also isolated from the cooling tower water by the condenser. But some activity may have gotten out through that path through the non-condensable gases in the condenser. I realize that I'm getting somewhat technical, but it is pretty hard to explain without getting a little technical.

JENSEN: It could have gone into the air and the water?

DORNSIFE: No. It could not have gone into the water. At this point. . . just the air.

SWIFT: How about below the ground surface?

DORNSIFE: No. No fuel meltage or anything like that.

RAMILL: When will the feds be on site?

DORNSIFE: They will probably be there within a couple of hours. They're only in Philadelphia. They probably will have a monitoring van which will check some of the measurements.

ROSS: When you say federal people, who are they specifically?

DORNSIFE: NRC. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Region 1 office. That's King of Prussia.

LIVINGOOD: How can this plant go back on stream? Can it go back just on Met Ed's decision, put it back or does Met Ed go through some kind of regulatory step, and what are those steps?

BORNSIEF: Well, there is no clear-cut regulatory steps but the Nuclear Regulatory Office will undoubtedly investigate the incident to the nth degree. They will do a very detailed investigation of the incident. Be assured that that plant is safe before they allow it to go back into operation again and things have been cleaned up.

ROSS: How is this affecting the electrical output for people in the area?

DORNSIFE: I really don't have that information. Possibly Ray would have. . .

HOLST: I would think that they have already been picked up on the Pennsylvania Jersey, Maryland bridge and arrangements being made between the systems and the other systems in the Commonwealth to pick up the load that they lost.

DORNSIFE: I do know that unit 1 is scheduled to come back on line in about a week. After its refueling.

LENTZ: How long has unit 2 been in operation?

DORNSIFE: Commercial operation, about December.

LENTZ: is not in operation now?

DORNSIFE: It's shut down for refueling. It's been shut down for about the last six weeks.

LENTZ: Will it open this week?

DORNSIFE: It is scheduled to. I don't know whether they're on schedule or not.

FERRICK: How long has this plant been generating at 100%, do you know?

DORNSIFE: No, I don't.

FERRICK: It seems to me it's a fairly recent development. I never thought they were at 100% before.

DORNSIFE: It's been generating 100% before, but it's been in commercial operation since December. I don't know how long it's been at 100% power but I know it's been producing quite a bit of power since December.

KILEY: Do you have any idea what caused this to happen?

DORNSIFE: I don't know what caused the turbine trip, no.

KILEY: When you say that the valves shut, what were they carrying?

DORNSIFE: Steam.

KILEY: The valves that would be radioactive?

DORNSIFE: No. They were not radioactive.

PASTYARD: How did the radioactivity get into the atmosphere?

DORNSIFE: I'm saying that some radioactivity from the primary system went through the relief valves as a result of the turbine trip transient because of the pressure increased in the primary.

KILEY: Wait a second, let me try to get, you're saying that steam went through and a valve shut, why did the valve shut?

DORNSIFE: The valve shut because of some sort of a fault either in the electrical system or the turbine system, which is a non-safety system. It's a non-radioactive, non-safety system.

PLEASE PICK UP WITH PART II OF THE TRANSCRIPT



KILEY: OK, and when the valve shuts the steam builds up behind them and you have the temperature increasing...

DORNSIFE: Right, pressure increase in the primary system where the radioactivity is, where the core is, the thing that cools the reactor core. This in turn caused the release valves in that system to lift.

KILEY: What do the release valves do?

DORNSIFE: The release valve had radioactive steam which went into the primary containment which is isolated from the environment.

JENSEN: How did it escape?

DORNSIFE: Well, they suspect there may have been, the high pressure may have caused a slight primary to secondary leakage that some of the steam in fact, before they could isolate the steam generator, was in fact, radioactive and there was some leakage of course, because of the slight pressure increase in this primary containment building.

MILLER: Had there been higher pressure there would have been more leakage?

DORNSIFE: Yes.

MILLER: What system is there to prevent that?

DORNSIFE: The design leakage of that building is like .2 % per day - even if you had a 50 PSI pressure and if the leakage would give you only, if all the primary coolant, the design of the plant is that it can hold all of the primary coolant due to a loss of coolant accident. At 50 lbs. per square inch pressure in that building, the dose rate would be maybe 100 mr or something at that local or any populated area in the local environment which is about normal background in that area.

MILLER: There is a system in place in that plant that keeps the pressure from going higher?

DORNSIFE: Yes, there are systems that will do that, but they didn't come into play in this case because the pressure didn't build high enough to cause that system to actuate.

MILLER: I guess my question is, how much worse could this have been?

DORNSIFE: It depends on what could have happened in the interim. If there would have been a very large primary to secondary leak, which like I said, I want to stress that that is unconfirmed, I don't know, they think that may have happened. They are still looking at the various readings that they have and the systems to determine what caused the problems. It is under control right now, they are cooling down the normal means they use to cool down. So there is no problem right now.

KILEY: How did the company discover the problem, is there some kind of system that alerts them?

DORNSIFE: Well, they could tell by their instrumentation that there, well, the plant is designed to withstand this particular ~~inadequate~~ trip from 100% power. Now, the reason they notified offsite authorities is the fact that when the release valves released activity into the primary containment, by their procedures, they have to declare a site emergency. When the activity in containment gets above a certain level at that point they have to call the civil defense agencies. I don't know when they declared a site emergency. They called civil defense and then civil defense called DER.

ROSS: Are you still satisfied with the amount of three hours that...

DORNSIFE: At this point I don't know, we will investigate whether there was any lag...

ROSS: Do you personally feel that that is adequate?

DORNSIFE: If they knew before that I don't, but at this point I don't know. I don't know what the situation was at the plant in the meantime. I don't know when they declared a site emergency or that information. I don't know.

AMIG: How long will it take you to do a complete monitoring of the radiation?

DORNSIFE: Well, that is very difficult to say because we don't know how much we are going to find yet. It depends in a great amount how much we will find, how far we will look. If it is just, there was very little wind this morning so that the radioactivity shouldn't have gone very far.

JOHNSON: How far away was it measured?

DORNSIFE: Goldsboro, right across the river from the plant.

AMIG: It seems to me we went through this a couple of years ago when we had a cloud come over from some kind of a testing explosion...

DORNSIFE: Right.

AMIG: That we found particles in Pittsburgh and different parts of the state. Is there a chance that this will travel over the entire state?

DORNSIFE: No, the release was not, it will be confined to, the small release that occurred will be confined to the local vicinity.

LEWIS: Would you advise people in that local area not to drink milk?

DORNSIFE: No, not at this point.

AMIG: You are not telling them to do anything special?

DORNSIFE: No, nothing.

AMIG: Just go on about their business?

DORNSIFE: Yes. There is no immediate danger or will probably not be any.

BROWN: Who designed and built the plant?

DORNSIFE: Burns and Rod designed the plant and the United Engineers constructed it. —————  
by Metropolitan Edison.

REPORTER: It sounds like you rely heavily on the instruments and reports from Met Ed is there any reason why we should doubt the credibility of that?

DORNSIFE: No, we do a confirmatory analysis of their routine monitoring data. They take detailed samples of everything in the environment of that plant, and we routinely take spot samples, independent spot samples, to confirm that their numbers are right and there has never been any reason, any difference that we have seen...

REPORTER: If this should happen again, should we expect at least a three hour lag between the time it happens and...

DORNSIFE: Well, I wouldn't but again I don't know what went on in the meantime.

ROSS: How much time elapses during a routine?

DORNSIFE: Pardon.

ROSS: You said routine samplings are occurring, how frequent are routines? Any idea?

DORNSIFE: Well, I don't know what the schedule is, but I believe, I am not responsible for that particular area in our department but I believe we take milk samples weekly, DER and the utility takes milk samples even more frequently. I think we take routine samples about weekly and they do it more frequently.

PINTEK: What did the emergency officials do when they were notified? What is the procedure?

DORNSIFE: Well, I in fact, was the bureau duty officer at the time and I called the plant back immediately to find out what the situation was and at the time they still were, things were under control, they knew there was no release but they hadn't really been able to determine what the situation was. So I immediately came into the office where our maps are in case something, in case we would have had to do something besides just stay on the horn with them.

PINTEK: What I am asking is, what kind of a plan, emergency plans are in place to take care of people who live in that area, if it had been worse?

HENDERSON: At 7:00 this morning when my watch officer received the information, his first call was to DER, to alert them, now we received a call from the supervisor on duty at Mat Ed with only one statement, "we have an emergency", no details, we don't have technically qualified personnel to understand what the emergency was, except that it is a bonified emergency. We notify first DER, secondly my office notified Dauphin County, although Dauphin County under our procedure, is directly notified by Mat. Ed., and we verified that they had been notified by Mat Ed. I arrived in the office at 7:15 this morning, received the information as I arrived in the office, that we had this emergency. Within 21 minutes we had notified about 8 state agencies that had some part to play in it and five counties, well we notified three counties first, York, Lancaster, and Dauphin. Subsequently, notified Lebanon and Cumberland County. Initially, our report was that it was a serious incident, so our procedures were to prepare for possible evacuation in the York County area only. About 15 minutes later, we had received confirmation information from DER that no, it is being contained within the plant site and therefore no evacuation will be necessary so we notified the counties accordingly to hold down on any further action as far as evacuation is concerned. At 7:45 this morning, I notified the Governor and Lt. Governor.

PINTEK: Initially, you thought that it was a serious situation and I ask you now, does it bother you that it took three hours to tell you what was going on?

HENDERSON: It bothers me if there was something serious that tripped this incident.

PINTEK: Well you thought it was something serious.

HENDERSON: Well, my call at 7:00, if I had gotten a call at 4:00 which told me - hey, our number 2 unit has just automatically shut down - we don't know what it is, but we are a little worried about it - this would not have helped me a hell of a lot.

FAHYARD: They wouldn't have said that, though they said it was a serious incident.

HENDERSON: No, not at 4:00 in the morning, not... At 7:00 they were telling us they had declared an emergency there at three mile island. It bothers me that if they knew that they had an emergency prior to 7:00, that we weren't in turn informed.

PINTEK: Suppose it was more serious than it was, three hours after it occurred. What could you have done?

HENDERSON: Well, we would have done our normal procedures, which is evacuation - however, if there had been a spill into the atmosphere, it could possibly have been such too late.

PINTEK: Are you going to pursue this?

HENDERSON: Absolutely.

LT. COV.: Let me get in there, if there is a situation where there was a perception of an emergency, and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency and Council were not notified, we intend to find that out. That would be extremely disturbing. We will make a thorough investigation into that. I am told apparently that there was a normal shutdown of the safety system, cooling system began around 4:00, I have not had this confirmed of the power plant - there was not apparently at that time an indication that anything had occurred that was out of the ordinary in so far as radiation escaping, but if they did have indication at that time there was an indication that there was an emergency and they did not let Penna. Emergency Management Agency know, it is a very serious situation and we intend to investigate it thoroughly. At this time, we don't have any details insofar as what went on there, we don't have any details beyond before we got the call so it is pure speculation.

PANYARD: I would like to ask Colonel Henderson who told him that it was a serious incident?

HENDERSON: My watch officer who is Clarence Deller received the call from the staff supervisor at the plant.

PANYARD: Colonel, the staff supervisor thought it was a serious incident initially -

HENDERSON: At 7:00.

PANYARD: Three hours after the incident --

HENDERSON: At 7:00, that is the notification that we received, now what he thought I don't know.

PANYARD: He apparently told Mr. Deller it was a serious incident?

HENDERSON: Yes.

PANYARD: This is the staff supervisor for Met Ed at the plant?

HENDERSON: "We have an emergency"

PANYARD: He probably would have a good indication if it was serious?

LIVINGOOD: He said we have an emergency - did he say it was a serious situation? Where did the serious, term serious situation come from? from your people or from the plant?

DEPUTY SECRETARY: DER

HENDERSON: That is my deputy secretary back there who subsequently talked to DER.

REPORTER: The civil defense office notified DER?

HENDERSON: That is correct, and they maintained constant communications with DER. They are our experts in this area.

PANYARD: You told DER and then DER told you it was a serious incident.

HENDERSON: DER talks in technical terms then back to the plant supervisor to get the more specific details while we are going through our alerting procedure, as soon as our alerting procedure is over, DER or sometime in the meantime DER gets back to us and gives us some of the more specifics of what happened.

PANYARD: Initially DER was told by the plant it was a serious incident?

HENDERSON: I don't know...

LIVINGOOD: Mr. Dornisfe, who from DER, who talked to the plant this morning?

**DORNSIFE:** I talked initially to the plant when I got a call from Civil Defense. I called them back immediately. At that time they told me that they had sent teams out and they weren't seeing anything, but they hadn't really sampled for very long, so they didn't know what the levels were but they knew they were less than a certain number, which was very small so they knew they weren't releasing any off site. But my indication was that they weren't too positive of what the situation in the plant was -- they weren't too sure what was causing, what caused the problems that may have occurred, or may not have occurred in the plant, so I immediately went into the office and the meantime I called into the office telling the first one who got in there to call the plant back and keep an open line, which is normal procedure. We keep an open line with the plant so that they can continually update us with what is going on. I think Mr. Garuski, the director of our bureau got in there and called back and he was the one that may have alerted civil defense, I don't know.

**JENSEN:** As to the seriousness, we are trying to find out where that evaluation originated...

**DORNSIFE:** I don't know, I know it was, in my mind I knew it was a problem but I didn't think at that time there was anybody offsite being affected by it. I don't know who made the determination that it was now a serious incident.

**BRUTTO:** Colonel, one thing on the evacuation... You said you were going to make a determination whether to evacuate. Mr. Dornsife said they have no mobile equipment to test for radiation. How would you determine who to evacuate? How would you know which areas are contaminated, which areas are safe?

**HENDERSON:** We have a map in my office which has the area from one mile, three miles, five miles, out from the island, with a grid. Based on the ----- of the wind direction at the time, we would make the determination based on the advice from DER as to what segment, or what areas would need to be evacuated.

**GUTERUNST:** DER doesn't have the equipment to go on the site?

**HENDERSON:** DER has to depend upon the best technical advice it can get which is coming from the plant. That is correct.

**REPORTER:** You are relying right now, and apparently DER is only taking samples and taking them back to the plant, and right now even the federal government----- is on route but not actually there yet. So actually all of the information we have so far is from Met Ed.

**HENDERSON:** Correct.

**KILEY:** Mr. Dornsife, how did you then determine, or somebody in DER thought it was a serious situation early this morning? When did you decide and how did you decide that it was?

**DORNSIFE:** Well, just from talking to the plant, through further information from the plant. I really don't know where this serious incident, situation came about. I don't know who said it or where it was said, or why it was said, but like I said we were in constant communication with the plant and we could tell as time went on they realized what was happening with the instrumentation, they could pinpoint where the problems were and what had caused the problems. That is when we became aware that there was really no problem concerning offsite people. We are only concerned about offsite people. We are not concerned about the plant.

**KILEY:** Is this the first time that you had a nuclear accident like this or a situation like this in Pennsylvania?

**DORNSIFE:** Yes.

**KILEY:** How many plants are there in Pennsylvania?

DORNSIFE: There are currently four operating, commercial operating plants. I am sorry there are five currently five operating: two at Peach Bottom, down near the Maryland border on the Susquehanna, and one unit at Beaver Valley which is out west of Pittsburgh.

KIRKPATRICK: Why doesn't DER have its own monitoring equipment \_\_\_\_\_ it would seem that the public has a right to expect a government agency to be on site and monitoring in such a situation.

DORNSIFE: We have been requesting funds to increase our emergency response capability and we have bill before the House I believe that would give us more money to increase our emergency response capability.

KIRKPATRICK: If you had that money could you have had monitoring equipment out there?

DORNSIFE: Yes.

KIRKPATRICK: How long has that bill been pending, how long has that request been pending for that kind of money?

DORNSIFE: I would say a few years.

JENSEN: Mr. Dornsife, were you here several years ago under the other administration when there was a year-long I think, investigation to determine whether or not the state should establish monitoring equipment at these sites?

DORNSIFE: I wasn't with the Commonwealth, no I was not, but I am aware...

JENSEN: Do you recall at that time, a decision was made on the advice of the technical people, that they should not.....

DORNSIFE: I am not aware of what happened at that time.

JENSEN: You weren't with DER?

DORNSIFE: No I was not.

LIVINGOOD: You mentioned one unit at Beaver Valley, is that Shipping Port?

DORNSIFE: Well, Shipping Port is not commercial, it is a federally owned plant it is a \_\_\_\_\_, I am talking, Beaver Valley plant unit 1 is the unit I am talking about. I didn't include Shipping Port because it is not a commercial plant.

JENSEN: Which one is currently shut down?

DORNSIFE: Beaver Valley Because of the \_\_\_\_\_ considerations; yes, Beaver Valley.

KIRKPATRICK: When the valves tripped this morning at the plant and the steam built up what sort of effect did that have on the primary cooling system that cools the reactor?

DORNSIFE: Well, like I said the release valves lifted, as designed to reduce the pressure.

KIRKPATRICK: So the primary cooling system continued in operation, there was no danger...

DORNSIFE: The reactor shut down immediately. The control rods went into the core and shut the reactor down.

JENSEN: Was that done automatically?

DORNSIFE: Yes.

JENSEN: In other words, that was a response \_\_\_\_\_ insudible \_\_\_\_\_ it's part of the control system.

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REPORTER: The control rods go in to shut down?

DORSIFE: Yes, they drop by gravity.

KILEY: Mr. Dorsife, those five units that you called about, are the ones at three mile island, would you say they are in the west, of all these nuclear units, in the most heavily populated area?

DORSIFE: I don't have those figures on the tip of my tongue. I could look them up in the various documents. I would say it is three mile and Beaver Valley, just off the top of my head, are about equally populated in vicinity.

JENSEN: Have the people in Goldsboro been notified Colonel, do they know anything official, the residents?

HENDERSON: The people in York County, civil defense personnel have been notified as to how further down the system went I am not sure.

KIRKPATRICK: Colonel, did you say that when you got the first call this morning, that the plant supervisor said that they did not have the technical capability to tell how serious it was?

HENDERSON: No, our system and our standing operating procedures which we have with this plant and with all other plants, in which we rehearse as far as the communications channels are concerned, each quarter, provides that the shift supervisor on duty will make the two first calls going outside of the plant, will be one to me, in this instance, and the second one to us and the only thing that he tries to give to us at that time because of the speed of getting information out is that during our test runs, this is a test, in this run, this is an emergency condition and this is what he gave us -- this is an emergency.

JENSEN: Mr. Dorsife, was there ever anything approaching, or was there ever any possibility of the China Syndrome?

REPORTER: Have you seen the movie?

DORSIFE: No, I haven't seen the movie. There was no possibility of an explosion at that plant, nuclear explosion because of the low enrichment of the fuel, first of all, my understanding is that wasn't even in the China Syndrome. The China Syndrome is a terminology for a melt-through, a reactor melt occurring and the molten fuel going right down to China, which is of course impossible, first of all, but no there was never any melted fuel, there may have been some activity release from the fuel because of the pressure transient that the plant went through, but there was never any fuel damage as far as the utility knows right now.

LT. GOV.: Could I interrupt for a second. We are going to have to go and meet with the Governor. May I suggest that if there are any questions that you might have further on this, that you get in touch with Paul Critchlow's office, and we will be issuing regular statements.

PANYARD: Are there any representatives of Met Ed here?

LT. GOV.: There are none here today, no.

REPORTER: Is there any chance that they are in the building or talking to the Governor at this point?

LT. GOV.: Not at the moment, they are down trying to assess the situation at the plant and there are people from DER that have been in contact with them, but we will talk with them.

REPORTER: Is there any chance that we can be briefed at some point today by somebody from NRC?

LT. GOV.: We could try. Paul, is there a chance that they could be briefed by anybody from the NRC or the team that is coming up?

CRITCHLOW: I will check.

LT. GOV.: We can check and get to you. Thank you.

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