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Office of the Secretary
Department of the Environment
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STATEMENT

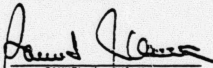
The staff is directed to prepare an Environmental Assessment regarding proposals to decontaminate and dispose of radioactively contaminated waste water from the Three Mile Island facility. The Assessment will be divided into several portions. The first portion of the Assessment will deal with the proposed decontamination of intermediate-level waste water using the EPICOR-II system at TMI. The Assessment should include discussion of potential risks to the public health and safety, including occupational exposures and the risk of accidental releases, and a discussion of alternatives to the EPICOR-II system. Pending completion of this portion of the Assessment and opportunity for public comment, the staff should direct the licensee not to operate the EPICOR-II system. Testing of the EPICOR-II system without using contaminated waste may proceed. Except for discharge of waste water decontaminated by the existing EPICOR-I decontamination system^{1/} and discharge of industrial waste water^{2/} as consistent with the facility operating licenses, no discharge of waste water shall be permitted until completion of a second portion of the Assessment dealing with any such proposed discharges. This portion shall include a discussion of alternatives to discharge into the Susquehanna River. The decontamination and disposal of high-level waste water will be the subject of a subsequent Assessment. However, the Director of the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation may authorize measures deemed necessary to cope with an

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- ^{1/} Primarily pre-accident waste water from Unit 1 which has been partially contaminated by water from Unit 2, with an activity level of less than 1 microcurie per cc. prior to treatment and with an activity level approximately 10^{-7} microcuries per cc. in the discharge canal after treatment.
- ^{2/} Waste water slightly contaminated (approximately 10^{-7} microcuries per cc.) due to leakage from secondary plant service support systems. The discharge of this industrial waste water is necessary to maintain TMI Unit 2 in a safe condition.

emergency. If the Director of the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation believes the public health and safety requires the use of the EPICOR-II system, prior to completion of the first portion of the Assessment, he shall so report to the Commission and the Commission may then permit use of the system. The staff should inform the Commission promptly regarding its estimated schedule for completing each portion of the Assessment and for completing the entire Assessment.

For the Commission



SAMUEL J. CHILK
Secretary of the Commission

Dated at Washington, DC,

this 25th day of May 1979.

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