REACTOR APPROVAL SEEN

AEC Unit For York Co. Plant

WASHINGTON (AP)—Financially and technically, the Philadelphia Electric Co. appears qualified to construct and operate a nuclear reactor electric power plant in Peach Bottom Township, York County, the Atomic Energy Commission was told Monday.

On the basis of previous studies, AEC staff members recommended to examiner J. D. Bond that Philadelphia Electric's application to build the 40,000-kilowatt reactor, filed July 28, 1960, be approved.

The company produced seven witnesses to back up its contention that the plant would pose no threat to health or safety in the area.

The site is an isolated wooded area on the west bank of the Susquehanna River, nine miles above Conowingo Dam, which Philadelphia Electric also operates.

The only opposition to the project came from Lawrence Goldberg, Philadelphia. He challenged the constitutionality of the Atomic Energy Commission Act.

If the government is to back atomic power projects with research dollars, Goldberg said, it should receive the benefits as well as the hazards. He called for a broadly based public program of "multi-purpose installations generating power and providing facilities for the study of processes involved."

He said the privately owned utilities are giving the nation "a rare lesson in hypocrisy." He added:

"The propaganda of their advertisements on the one hand would have you believe that the federal government is unnecessary; while the other hand attempts the greatest grab in the annals of the nation."

Robert F. Gilkeson, Philadelphia Electric Vice President in charge of Engineering and Research, outlined plans for financing the project on the 800-acre site just above the Pennsylvania-Maryland border.

He said Philadelphia Electric will provide $8 million and High Temperature Reactor Development Associates, Inc. (HTRDA), formed by Philadelphia Electric and 32 other utilities will provide $16.5 million.

The Bechtel Corp. will construct the plant with the General Atomic Division of General Dynamics Corp. as a subcontractor responsible for the nuclear steam supply system.

Gilkeson and other company witnesses said Philadelphia Electric is financially capable of handling the project while in the technical field, it has had some of its experts gaining experience and knowledge in nuclear matters for years.

Robert B. Duffield, General Atomic's project manager for the Peach Bottom Reactor, said safety features incorporated in the plant design would provide adequate protection.

William H. Wilson, Bechtel's assistant project manager for Peach Bottom, elaborated on the safety question and said many special features would be included to guard against the possibility of accidental release of any radioactive liquids into the Susquehanna River, which provides the water supply for communities in the area.

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