

REMARKS OF DR. KYMN HARVIN

TMI 25th Anniversary Rally
March 28, 2004

Good afternoon. I am grateful that so many of you are here.

I'd like to begin with a moment of silence for all the people across the world who work at nuclear plants and for the people who regulate them...that they have the courage to always put Safety First.

"It's a wonder there hasn't been an accident there worse than TMI. All the ingredients are sure lined up for that to happen."

Those words are about the Salem and Hope Creek Nuclear Generating Stations, at the end of this access road. They were spoken to me about a month ago by a respected operator with over 20 years of experience. His words concern me greatly and prompted me to accept the invitation to speak at this rally.

Frankly, I never wanted this day to come. I am telling my story publicly today, for the very first time, because I believe I must. I believe it is my duty to inform you, the people of this community and the public, and enlist your help in averting another Three Mile Island nuclear accident, or worse, from happening at Salem and Hope Creek.

Today is a difficult anniversary for me. It marks both the TMI crisis and my own crisis, the end of my career at PSEG Nuclear. I am thankful that neither were a full meltdown, for the core at TMI or for me. Both provide a line of demarcation, an event that we can look to for lessons we can learn from and hopefully never repeat.

In 1979, I lived just 20 miles from Three Mile Island. I was Governor Dick Thornburgh's education speechwriter at the time. I knew nothing about the nuclear industry nor how it would change my life. I never expected, 25 years later, to be speaking at a TMI anniversary rally.

Earlier this year, I met with again Dick Thornburgh. We talked about TMI. We recalled how both the utility and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission had misled everyone about the events there. From that experience, he shared with me he learned three things: there's a time to go to the top, a time to ask for help, and a time to communicate truthfully to the people. Those are my intentions today.

I now know much more about the nuclear industry. As Dave [Lochbaum of Union of Concerned Scientists] said, I spent five years at the Salem/Hope Creek Nuclear

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Generating Stations. I have also consulted for top-rated nuclear facilities. I believe in well run, well led nuclear plants where Safety and People are number one.

I came to the site down the road six years ago, in March of 1998. I was then—and still am today—committed to helping make this nuclear site a safe and great place for people to work. For a time we made progress. Morale and results improved. We had four Best Year Evers in a row. Safety and people were getting attention. It was like the people and the plants were recovering well from harsh management and the extended shut-downs of the '90s.

As the Organization Development specialist and a direct report to the President and Chief Nuclear Officer, I introduced some new ways of thinking into this highly technical organization. "*Relationships determine results*" was initially a foreign concept that, frankly, had people ask, "*What planet is she from?*" When word got out that I had written a book entitled, "*Bringing LOVE Back into Business*" some were certain I belonged with the "flower children" of the Sixties, certainly not at a nuclear power plant.

The self-proclaimed "arrogant, cocky and aloof" technocrats did their best to keep me at bay. I fought hard to win them over, to make a difference, and eventually did. They began to realize the power of their presence, their words, and their actions to bring out the best in people, not just the equipment. One of the proudest days of my career was receiving a top leadership award from PSEG, given only to a few of the company's 13,000 people.

In late 2002, my dreams began turning to nightmares. I saw the decline begin at Salem and Hope Creek, and then snowball. I tried my best to intervene, but I was not successful. A cold war ensued between senior management, operators, and plant personnel. Vice Presidents were feuding with each other. Unionized workers watched as management waged war with management. People in the middle, who often worked 80-90 hours a week just to keep things running, couldn't win anywhere. We were quickly losing the ground we had taken.

From my vantage point, production pressure was at an all-time high, especially when revenues of \$3 million a day were at stake. This pressure was coming from the highest levels of the enterprise I was told. It seemed that the bottom line was all that mattered. Jobs were threatened. Fear and dread were rampant. It got so bad that managers and workers alike were telling me we were "dangerous" and they were afraid the NRC was going to take the keys away. They told me they feared a nuclear accident or someone being seriously hurt or even killed.

I urged them to speak up, speak out. Even high level leaders were afraid to do so. They didn't want to risk being out of favor or losing their six-figure jobs and having to uproot their families. I chose to speak up for them. After all, that was part of my

job—keep my boss, the Chief Nuclear Officer, informed. He needed to know about these alarming safety issues. If others weren't going to tell him, I would. But...he didn't want to hear it. He didn't want to hear what had to be said. Nor, frankly, did his boss, the Chairman of the Board, the corporate lawyers, or anyone else in power. Speaking up cost me my job. And a whole lot more.

I never imagined being fired from this company, but I was. It broke my heart to leave people and work that I loved. My best friends worked there. Sadly, life would never be the same.

Before I go on, let me say this: ***I am enormously grateful for the five years I spent with the people of Salem and Hope Creek. They taught me much. They inspired my best. And, more than anything, they taught me what it is, and frankly how to be, a Leader Worth Following—leading with brains, heart, courage, and integrity in the midst of chaos, controversy, and change.***

The last year has not been easy. I have had to make tough choices that came at a high price. I chose to not be silent about these safety concerns, even though PSEG refused to acknowledge them. In some peoples' eyes, I broke the code....the code of silence and loyalty. I lost friendships that were dear to me. I felt alone and abandoned, and for a time, I questioned everything I had seen and heard. I kept thinking about the people who still work there. Eventually my fear and sadness turned to a deep resolve: ***I would keep speaking out. I would not be silent or silenced. No one, no thing would take away my voice. The people at Salem and Hope Creek—and the public—deserve my best...still.***

The technical and workplace issues, I believe, pose a significant threat to the people who work at Salem and Hope Creek, to each of us, to our loved ones and friends in nearby communities, to the millions of people in the Tri-state area, and actually pose a threat to the entire nuclear industry.

I am telling my story today with the hope that it compels all of us to do our part to make Salem and Hope Creek a safe and great place to work.

* * *

Now, let me take you back in time.

"All we are is 'white noise.' Please, help us be heard."

Those words were voiced to me on September 24, 2002, by a Salem Nuclear Equipment Operator. I will never forget him or those words. It is because of him, and hundreds like him still working at PSEG Nuclear, that I cannot be silent.

When workers at a nuclear power plant have to beg, yell and scream to be heard, especially about nuclear safety issues, and no one listens, something must be done.

These workers are the first line of defense when it comes to nuclear safety. From their vantage point of the control room or the plant, these hard-working people have a much keener sense of the issues than an overburdened manager or a big-picture-only officer sitting in his mahogany-laden office.

I looked that gentleman straight in the eye and made him and his coworkers a promise: ***"You will be heard. Your issues will be addressed. I promise."***

I left that late night meeting concerned by what I had heard. A group of roughly 12 operators had told me their boss's boss's boss had risked his personal safety to close a steam valve when none of them—or the person in charge—thought it was safe to do so. He did this, they said, so the plant would not have to be shut down.

They were angry that the production pressure had come to this. They went on to say that they didn't think PSEG management, at the highest levels, was truly committed to ***Safety First, our motto.***

These gentlemen, these Nuclear Equipment Operators, cited safety issue after safety issue being brought to management's attention without resolution. They named executives who said one thing...and did another. They felt lied to, betrayed, unheard. One gentleman, usually a macho guy, stayed behind to talk with me. He had tears in his eyes and said, *"I've been here a long, long time. I've never seen it this bad. You've gotta help us."*

I believed I could help. After all, I worked directly for the Chief Nuclear Officer and had been assigned to help solve problems in Salem Operations. I figured all I needed to do was report these issues to the top dogs and they would respond appropriately.

But when I relayed what had been told to me, I was chided for siding with the Union. I was told I was naïve and being played like a song. I was told those guys don't really care about safety—it was all a façade to get out of doing work.

I was shocked. Something really was awry here. I was experiencing first hand what the nuclear operators had told me. The top dogs weren't listening. They weren't interested in their workers' concerns. They had already decided it was nonsense. The bosses really did think the workers were the problem.

Now what? I had promised those operators they *would* be heard, their safety issues would be addressed. I couldn't give up. I had given them my word.

I went to my boss, the President and Chief Nuclear Officer. His reaction shocked me even more—he too thought the workers were the problem, not their out-of-touch managers. I was angry, disheartened, and confused.

I asked others for help. Here's what I heard: *"Those guys are a bunch of cry babies."* *"Nothing ever satisfies them."* *"It's a hornet's nest over there."*

Even though I heard these statements from colleagues I respected, I knew this time they were wrong. These guys, the ones telling me about their safety issues, were sincere. I had looked each one in the eye. They weren't snowing me. They were genuinely afraid about the production-at-all-cost pressure by the top brass, all the way up to the Chairman of the Board they said. They feared someone would be killed or seriously hurt or cause the NRC to shut the place down. It had happened before, on April 6, 1994, they told me. It was close to happening again, they said. I believed them. My gut said they were right.

I continued speaking up about these issues, increasing the pressure on my boss and others to take action instead of ignoring the safety concerns. I spoke of the growing rift between the guys with the licenses to run the reactors and senior management. I made it clear the rift was getting wider and had to be bridged.

I actually thought things had a chance of improving when a Vice President publicly chastised the management team, saying *"We don't come from safety"* and *"The workers know far better than you or me."* I publicly agreed with him and cited examples I had heard. I thought the tide was turning.

It was....*against me*. I was called to the President's office, to discuss my bonus. When I got there, he handed me a termination letter instead, saying my position was being eliminated. I was in shock. I couldn't speak. I just stared at him. Finally, I asked, *Why?*

It was only about reducing the numbers, he said. No one is more dedicated than you. Having just months before been heralded for the difference I made at the site, I could not make sense of this.

After the shock wore off, I began asking around. A high level confidante, someone in the know, told me pointblank: *"They are after you and they are after others... ..Don't fight this. You'll be crucified if you do."*

Fight this? Of course, I was going to fight this! My mission wasn't finished. My best friends worked here. I wasn't just going to walk away. So, I fought to retain my job. I called Corporate Headquarters in Newark. I went to the Employee Concerns Department. I even informed the Chairman of the Board about the illegal and retaliatory action taken against me, about workers not feeling heard about safety

issues, and about leadership failings that I, and others, feared would take the plants down. The response: *further retaliation*. I was forced out three days later, on March 28, 2003. (I wonder if they knew it was the anniversary of TMI....what do you think?)

I suppose the company lawyers, the powers that be and others thought I would forget about the workplace I left behind. But I could not. I had poured my heart and soul into the place. I loved the people that I worked with—and still do. They are some of the best and brightest anywhere. I knew I had left promises undone and that ate away at me. I kept hearing, "*All we are is white noise. Please, help us be heard.*" But I didn't know what to do. I prayed for Wisdom and Guidance.

As Providence would have it, I was invited to evaluate the Operations departments at three top-rated nuclear plants. Within a day of being there, I realized how bad it was at Salem/Hope Creek. The contrast was astounding. When a safety issue was raised, it was immediately handled. The person speaking up was not viewed as "the problem." Workers were not asked to do unsafe things, as was often the case at PSEG. I had been blind to how bad it really was. I quickly learned how much at risk the people at Salem/Hope Creek—and the public—really are.

I hoped against hope that the independent safety investigation I had sparked at my departure would get the real issues on the table.

It did not. In mid-August I received an official letter from the company denying issues I had cited. I knew a "whitewash" had ensued. The safety issues were real, but the letter said there weren't any. What little faith I had left in the leadership of PSEG evaporated. If the company was not, of its own accord, going to face up to the safety and work environment issues, then I had to do something.

But I was scared. I had no desire to become a whistleblower. I did not want to get blackballed from the industry. More than anything, I did not want to hurt the good people at Salem and Hope Creek. I wanted the best for them then and I want the best for them now.

I contemplated four choices: Going to the NRC, Congressional leaders, the media, or the courts. After much soul-searching, I chose to go to the NRC, and later filed a civil complaint.

My first meeting with the NRC team of investigators lasted nearly six hours. I left drained and relieved. The safety issues I worried about constantly were no longer secret or unknown. I urged the NRC to not accept my word alone, but to go straight to the managers and workers. Thankfully, the NRC promised extra oversight to be sure a nuclear event did not happen. It also launched a full-scale investigation.

As word got out, current and former employees came forward. They verified my claims and offered more evidence. The NRC found enough awry to write, as an interim measure, an unprecedented public letter to the Chairman of the Board in January demanding on-the-record answers about the work environment.

Unfortunately, in its response, the company squandered its opportunity to "come clean" and put its safety and workplace issues on the table. Instead it chose to present a viewpoint that the issues are declining, the work environment is getting better, and the new management team really has a handle on things.

That is not what I have heard from current employees nor what the company's own recent survey results show. A close read reveals that the problems at Salem/Hope Creek are getting worse, not better. The new management team, at the helm for nearly a year, hasn't turned things around as promised. Many people still do not feel it is safe to speak up about safety issues. Fear, intimidation, and lip service still rule. The "get it done, no matter what it takes" message still permeates. Salem and Hope Creek now have a safety culture worse than Davis-Besse or practically anyone else in the industry.

Instead of focusing on safety issues, the new Chief Nuclear Officer, who took over the day I left, chose to focus on cost-cutting and head-chopping. This caused fear and distrust to skyrocket. And the survey results reveal how out of touch the Chief Nuclear Officer and his senior staff are—they gave the site honor roll grades while long-standing employees and outside experts gave failing grades to the site.

So let me ask you: *How can any one fix a problem he cannot see? Or ignores? Or lacks the will to face?*

The answer, of course, is that he cannot. That explains why conditions at Salem and Hope Creek got worse and worse this past year. No one seemed to notice until the NRC presented a mirror and said, "Look here."

At the public meeting 10 days ago with the NRC, PSEG officers admitted Salem and Hope Creek are near the bottom of the industry when it comes to a safety conscious work environment. What they didn't say, however, was that they are responsible for this mess. Instead, "previous management" was blamed. However, four of the seven top men have been there for many years. They could have fixed many of these issues before they got this bad. They did not. In my view, these men are accountable for the poor safety conditions at Salem/Hope Creek and for the long-standing technical issues as well.

PSEG's admission at the public meeting does give a glimmer of hope that things may improve. But I have learned this: *Hope is not a strategy*. Much like an alcoholic finally admitting his drinking problem, PSEG may now have a chance to recover. But we all

know the road to recovery is full of pitfalls. Few actually make it. *PSEG itself has stumbled off the safety wagon before.* A willingness to be gut-level honest, to take full responsibility, to make amends, and to rely on others for support is what it will take. That's a tall order for officers who have been rewarded for record-breaking profits at a time when the nuclear plants and people were languishing.

Maybe you, like me, are wondering: *Why does the NRC allow these reactors to operate with these well-known problems?*

Last December, the NRC did not allow the Davis-Besse nuclear plant in Ohio to restart until it had corrected its safety culture problems. Why isn't the same thing happening at Salem and Hope Creek? That reactor, and the operations and maintenance staff as a whole, are in better shape than the reactors at Salem and Hope Creek – it has been shut down the past two years for nearly \$300 million of safety upgrades and work environment issues have gotten significant attention.

I don't understand why the NRC required both equipment and the safety culture to be fixed at one reactor in Ohio, but allows three reactors to operate in New Jersey with equipment problems and equally serious, if not more serious, safety culture problems.

Every day and night for the past year I, and many others, have wondered if the problems at Salem and Hope Creek would lead to a nuclear accident. I, and many others, have wondered if someone would get killed there.

I shuddered when that operator said to me, *"It's a wonder there hasn't been an accident there worse than TMI. All the ingredients are sure lined up for that to happen."* Hearing those words made me realize I had to do more to help avert a disaster, a tragedy.

I am asking for your help to fix the safety problems at Salem and Hope Creek.

I am proposing three actions that each of us can take...those here today, those who work at Salem/Hope Creek, and those who hear about this via the media:

Join us in urging the NRC to wrap up its investigations of wrong-doing at PSEG, take enforcement action, and remove those responsible. The NRC must also assure all safety problems are fixed.

As a highly respected manager at the plant told me, *"No one ever holds the big guys accountable."* It is time to prove him wrong.

Based on my own experience and information given to the NRC during its seven month investigation, numerous current and former PSEG officers are responsible for not fixing the "chilled work environment" and for the lack of attention to safety issues of all types.

If the NRC does not hold management—past and present—accountable, it is playing the role of enabler, allowing these bad managers to continue their bad behavior either at PSEG or other nuclear plants.

In my opinion, and I hope yours, officers who have squandered the public trust and the trust of the people who work there, do not deserve to be at the helm of any nuclear plant. They have paid lip service to their own 'Safety First' message, they have attempted to deceive the NRC, and they have blamed the workers instead of looking in the mirror. They frankly, have made the site weaker, not better. They are not, as regulations require, "reliable and trustworthy." It is time for them to exit the nuclear industry, not merely do the same thing at a different location.

The PSEG Board of Directors should not wait for the NRC to act. Starting at the top of the enterprise, shareholders and the rest of us should insist that the Board remove any officer who has contributed to PSEG Nuclear being in the bottom-quartile of the industry.

Join us in demanding that the NRC not allow the Hope Creek unit (which is currently in an outage) and the Salem 1 unit (which starts an outage on Tuesday) to restart after these current outages. Take Salem 2 off-line as well.

The best way to demonstrate that Safety truly is Number One is to give 100% attention to fixing long-standing equipment and work environment issues. PSEG, give it 100% attention, not just partial attention. Both PSEG and the NRC must get serious about solutions, not just about problems.

The units should not be allowed to operate until three conditions are met:

Until PSEG demonstrates strong stewardship;;
Until PSEG managers and leaders at every level listen to, address, and encourage the concerns of its workers, especially about safety and production issues;
Until PSEG can fix the deteriorated condition of all its safety systems and processes.

The units should not be allowed to operate until these conditions are met.

Not allowing Davis-Besse to restart last December was the right thing to do. This is the right thing to do now at Salem/Hope Creek for the employees, for the public, and for our future generations. We cannot afford another TMI, another Chernobyl, or worse.

3. Join us in encouraging PSEG Nuclear employees, both management and union, to refuse to do anything that jeopardizes their own health and safety and the health and safety of the public.

"Refuse to Lose" your integrity, your dignity, your voice, or your life. As a wise friend of mine said, *"You can always get another job. You can't get another life."*

I believe the time has come for intervention—by the PSEG Board of Directors in removing these officers, by the NRC in sanctioning and taking the keys away until this nuclear site is deemed safe, and by public officials, PSEG shareholders, and the rest of us. We must continue to speak up, speak out until the people of Salem and Hope Creek tell us they are safe, they are well led, and they are no longer "white noise" to the people in charge.

If you and I remain silent, if we do not act, if we simply forget we were ever heard this message, then we too are responsible for whatever happens at this nuclear facility.

Join in continuing to fight for safety at PSEG Nuclear.

Promise me, promise yourself, and promise the good people of Salem and Hope Creek that you will stand with them, fight with them for Safety First.