

11/10/80
176 Burden Ave
New City N.Y. 10956

Nuclear Regulatory Comm.
Washington, D.C. 20555
Attn: Commissioner Henry

My family and I reside
in New City, Rockland County N.Y.

As I am sure you are aware,
we are only ten miles across the
Hudson River, from Indian Point.
We are terrified when we read
how Con Edison is allowed to
mismanage the Indian Point
plant (see enclosed Journal-News
article). We are not alarmists; however
it is time for serious thought about
the sanity of having such a plant
in such a populous area. In particular
a plant with a record like that of
Indian Point.

We do not need another Three Mile

land here in Rockland County

Please work for the interests
of the families with young children.
Work for the future generations
of this country. Cheap energy won't
help our children if they won't
be here to reap the benefits.

Thank You
Anne Kerevent

Enc.

(Please turn to back page)

Three injured passengers were reported

(Please turn to back page)

From Journal News 11/9/80

Indian Point leak latest in a long line

By MICHAEL RODDY
Staff Writer

The flooding that crippled the Indian Point 2 nuclear reactor in Buchanan was the most severe consequence of what has been a long series of leaks plaguing the cooling system that finally inundated the plant with 100,000 gallons of water.

Con Edison, the utility which owns and operates the nuclear generator on the Hudson River in northern Westchester, has disclosed that the cooling system which flooded the plant had sprung leaks 55 times between the time the plant was opened in late 1973 and the latest incident.

None of the leaks caused flooding

as extensive as the leaks discovered Oct. 17.

But Edward L. Jordan, the assistant director of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's office of inspection and enforcement in Washington, speculated that the frequency of the leaks might have been one factor that caused the operators of the Indian Point plant to ignore indicators that warned of water build-up.

A light on an instrument panel in the reactor control room, indicating water build-up, was lit from Oct. 3 until Oct. 17 without action being taken by the plant operators.

"The fact that it (the cooling system) had frequent failures in the past and the frequency of those failures increased in recent months" may have been a factor in the operators

being inattentive to the signal which did come on, Jordan said.

Con Ed's own records show an almost steady upward progression in the number of times leaks have been fixed in the system.

From 1973, when the plant opened, through 1976, workers entered the plant seven times to fix leaks. But in 1977 there were five work orders to fix leaks, in 1978 there were eight, in 1979 there were six and in 1980 through Oct. 19, including the latest incident, workers entered the containment building 12 times to fix the system.

Daniel Walden, a Con Ed spokesman, said the company was in the midst of engineering studies to re-

place components of the cooling system when the cooling system beat Con Ed's engineers to the punch.

The cooling system which sprang leaks in four places — a fifth, small leak broke open in another water system — filled the containment building with 100,000 gallons of water. The system, called a fan-cooling system, circulates Hudson River water through the interior of the concrete containment building to dissipate the heat generated by the nuclear reactor.

The water leaking from the fan coolers first filled a sump in which two drainage pumps broke down and failed to pump out the water.

(Please turn to back page)

Indian Point leak latest in long line

(Continued from A1)

The water continued to rise, nine feet up the side of the metal vessel. All the while, a signal light in the control room told the reactor's operators the water had risen above the 51-inch level in the sump. Con Ed officials later conceded it was "unusual" for that light to be on, although a 45-inch warning light frequently was illuminated.

The 51-inch indicator was on from 4 p.m. Oct. 3 until Oct. 17, its unflickering signal duly recorded by a plant operator at four-hour intervals during the two weeks.

No one bothered to check whether the signal was broken or whether it was doing its job. The flooding was discovered Oct. 17, at about noon, only when operators entered the plant to check for an unrelated breakdown in the plant's instrumentation.

Con Ed executives said operators assumed the indicator was not working properly. It was thought that an inspector who entered the containment building and jiggled the indicator's trigger lever shortly before 4 p.m. Oct. 3 might have caused the indicator to stay in the on position.

However, Nuclear Regulatory Commission officials think the light was correct and Con Ed's operators were mistaken in not paying attention.

What other conclusions the NRC may draw in its examination of Con Ed's handling of the flooding, the events leading up to it and the measures taken to repair damage and prevent a recurrence, must await a report the NRC is expected to issue in a few weeks.

Among the issues being examined by the NRC are the possibility that design errors and operator errors contributed to the extent of the flooding problem. The NRC is assessing potential damage to the plant. And the federal agency is looking into why Con Ed waited three-and-a-half days after the flooding was discovered before notifying the NRC.

What the NRC is not worried about is that the spill posed a safety hazard to the public or that Con Ed's competence to run the plant is in doubt. The flooding "didn't threaten a release of radioactivity or a loss of cooling water" used to keep the reactor in a stable condition, Jordan said.

And Jordan's boss, Victor Stello, director of the inspection and enforcement office, said last week he did not concur with charges by Westchester County Executive Alfred DeBello, among others, that Con Ed was not fit to run the reactor.

"I don't find them incompetent," Stello said. "They understood they had a problem."

Nor is the NRC concerned with the financial impact of the Indian Point 2 outage. "Financial considerations are secondary and safety considerations are primary" to the NRC, commission spokesman Gary Sanborn said.

But with Con Ed planning Monday to begin to pass along to its customers an additional \$800,000 a day incurred for purchasing and generating replacement power during the Indian Point outage, and with that outage expected to last at least eight months, economics has emerged as at least as important an issue as safety in the public perception.

The additional charge, which Con Ed will assess as part of the fuel adjustment on customers' bills, is expected to increase those bills an average of 10 percent.

Brad Blancard, director of income maintenance programs for the Westchester Department of Social Services, said his department has virtually no way to help the vast majority of welfare recipients to pay their increased electric bills.

Blancard said aid levels for housing, food, utilities and other purposes are fixed by state formulas that would not be changed to compensate for the added Con Ed charges.

Those formulas, Blancard added, "haven't



The Indian Point 2 power plant's cooling system has sprung leaks 55 times.

been changed in a long time and people already are feeling the pinch."

Most of Westchester's estimated 40,000 welfare recipients are "really going to be caught in a bind," Blancard said.

Thomas McCune, vice president and general manager of the Hudson Wire Co. in Ossining, which spends \$50,000 a month on electricity, said the hike would add about \$16,000 to the company's annual electric bill.

While sympathetic to Con Ed's plight, McCune said, "These are the kinds of things which over the long run which will drive business out" of Westchester. His company already is planning to build an additional plant upstate, largely because of Con Ed's high costs, McCune said.

Faced with several formal petitions and a widespread public outcry, the state Public Service Commission last week voted to begin an inquiry which will lead to a decision on whether Con Ed's customers or the company's stockholders will bear the costs of the outage.

As the PSC grapples with the economic issues, the NRC's approach to the problem was at least partly revealed last Wednesday at a hearing held at the Westchester County Courthouse in White Plains.

As hundreds of demonstrators filled a ground-floor auditorium at night to demand Indian Point be shut down or other drastic action be taken, the NRC spent the afternoon questioning Con Ed executives about minute details of the plant's design, performance and operation during the period of the leak.

The picture that emerged in Wednesday's testimony, and in other interviews with Con Ed and NRC officials, was of a host of seemingly minor operating errors, equipment failures and errors in judgment which piled one on top of an-

other, leaving Con Ed and its customers with one enormous, soggy headache.

Among the issues examined in the hearing were:

- Why did Con Ed give higher priority to mopping up the water than to assessing damage?

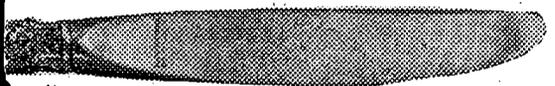
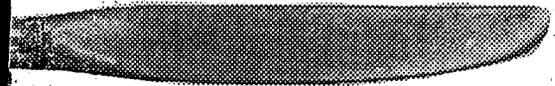
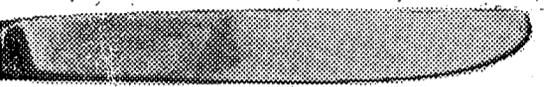
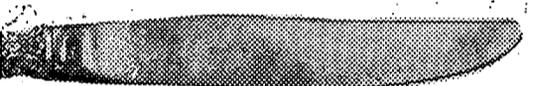
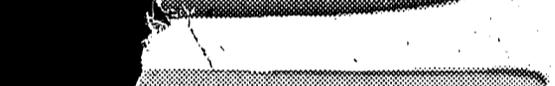
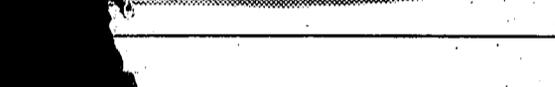
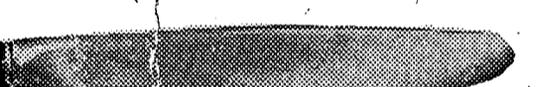
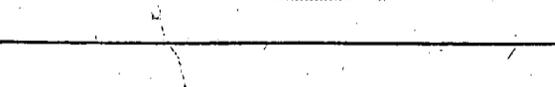
During the hearing, Stello repeatedly asked Con Ed executives why utility personnel seemed to pay more attention to removing the water than to discovering whether water had risen along the side of the metal reactor vessel. Confirmation, a week after the flooding first was discovered, that the reactor vessel was immersed in water up to a depth of nine feet, gave rise to concern that the vessel might have suffered "thermal stress" by its hot surface coming in contact with river water, and to fears of corrosion from salt in the Hudson water.

- Why did other indicators in the plant fail to warn of the water build-up?

As of this writing, Con Ed still remains unsure of the actual dimensions of the floor of the containment building. The utility is not certain whether a light indicator mounted at 91 inches above the bottom of the sump was in a position to record the rising water before the liquid poured over a six-inch curb into the reactor cavity. McGrath said Wednesday the utility believes the light was properly positioned to detect the build-up and that it worked. However, it failed to light. To the suggestion from NRC officials that "you can't have it both ways," McGrath said the utility is making additional surveys to determine exact dimensions of the containment floor and of the light.

AP Photo

AT THESE SAVINGS:

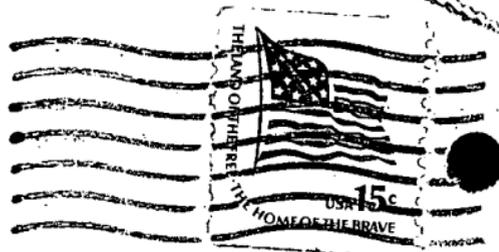
	PATTERN	4-pc. pl. setting Reg. price†	SALE†	16-pc. service reg. price†	SALE†	18 monthly payments**
	La Scala	\$490	\$245	\$1960	\$980	51.45
	Rondo	\$362	\$181	\$1448	\$724	\$36
	Chantilly	\$398	\$199	\$1592	\$796	41.79
	Royal Damask	\$440	\$220	\$1760	\$880	46.20
	Joan Of Arc	\$360	\$180	\$1440	\$720	37.80
	Prelude	\$360	\$180	\$1440	\$720	37.80
	Eloquence	\$638	\$319	\$2552	\$1276	66.99
	Damask Rose	\$368	\$184	\$1472	\$736	38.64
	Michael- angelo	\$424	\$212	\$1696	\$848	44.52
	Dover	\$392	\$196	\$1568	\$784	41.16
	18th Century	\$504	\$252	\$2016	\$1008	52.92
	Tara	\$464	\$232	\$1856	\$928	48.72
	Old Master	\$398	\$199	\$1592	\$796	41.79
	Grand Baroque	\$458	\$229	\$1832	\$916	48.09
	Shenandoah	\$510	\$255	\$2040	\$1020	53.55
	Grand Colonial	\$510	\$255	\$2040	\$1020	53.55

on local taxes. **Final payment may vary slightly. Please note: All patterns are special order so please allow 4 to 6 weeks for delivery.
 mail or phone for delivery in New Jersey and in our delivery areas in N.Y., Pa., Del. and Md. Phone (800) 631-4100 or your local Bamberger
 Mail orders must be postmarked by November 15. There is a 1.50 delivery charge. Sorry, no C.O.D.'s. Sale prices for merchandise on this page
 day, November 16. Please note: "Regularly" connotes Bamberger's regular day-in, day-out prices. Sterling silver, at all Bamberger stores.

BAMBERGER'S BRIDAL GIFT REGISTRY

Bamberger's

176 Burda Ave
New City N.Y. 10956



Nuclear Regulatory Comm.
Washington D.C. 20555

Attn Commissioner Henry

FBI