

Con Ed Approves 3d Nuclear Unit at Indian Point

By **PETER MILLONES**

The board of trustees of the Consolidated Edison Company approved yesterday plans for a third nuclear generating unit to be built at the company's Indian Point station in Buchanan, N.Y.

The unit, which is expected to cost \$158,800,000, will provide 965,000 kilowatts of electricity, or enough to meet the needs of a million residential electric customers. It is scheduled to go into operation in the spring of 1971.

A second unit, with a capacity of 873,000 kilowatts, is scheduled for service in 1969. The first unit at the Westchester County site, with a capacity of 275,000 kilowatts, has been in operation since 1962.

AEC Approval Needed

When all three units are in operation, the company said, it expects to take out of operation plants that generate 700,000 kilowatts by using older, less efficient fuels, such as coal and oil. The older plants are in New York City and their close-down will reduce air pollution.

The plan for the third unit is subject to the approval of the Atomic Energy Commission, which usually holds public hearings on such matters.

Con Edison placed its first nuclear plant 25 miles north of New York City because of strong public opposition here to its proposal to build a nuclear plant in Queens. The opposition centered on the safety of a nuclear plant.

The community of Buchanan has welcomed the nuclear units because of the economic benefits, such as taxes paid by the company and jobs the plants provide.

Costs Are Compared

Con Edison officials have expressed the hope that they might still be able to build a nuclear unit in the city in the 1970's. In yesterday's announcement, Charles E. Eble, the chairman of the board, said: "The acceptance of nuclear power as an economic, reliable and safe source of pollution-free electricity has been most encouraging to Con Edison. We are highly pleased with the operation of Indian Point No. 1.

The company estimated that the cost per kilowatt hour on the third unit will be 4.4 mills at the point of leaving the unit.

This does not account for transmission costs to the city or Westchester, where the company's 2,900,000 customers reside.

This cost compares with 5 mills for a non-nuclear unit of a size comparable to the third nuclear unit, the company said.

The cost of building the first nuclear plant is still a source of contention between Con Edison and those who have opposed its electric rate increases. Last week, Dr. Emerson Jones, a physicist and consultant on nuclear power applications to the utility industry, testified before the State Public Service Commission on Indian Point No. 1.

'Imprudence' Charged

Dr. Jones was retained as an expert by the Housing Authority, which is opposing Con Edison's latest rate increase of \$32,000,000.

He testified that when Con Edison first announced its plans for the initial nuclear plant, it said it would cost \$55,000,000. "In the end," Jones said, "the actual project

came to \$142,000,000." He said the company was "imprudent" in continuing with the project following difficulties in the early stages.

The Public Service Commission is considering the cost of the first nuclear unit because it is a matter of contention whether any of its recent costs of operation should be charged off to customers.

Mr. Eble said that no new rights-of-way will be required to transmit the additional Indian Point power to the city. Power will flow from Buchanan on reinforced transmission lines to the Sprain Brook substation in Yonkers, where it will be transmitted to the city through underground circuits.

The new unit will be built by the Westinghouse Electric Corporation.

The company also announced yesterday that its net income for the first three months of 1967 totaled \$35,800,000, or 79 cents a share. This compared with \$33,100,000, or 73 cents a share for the same period of 1966.