

MEMORANDUM OF INTERVIEW

On August 14, 1979, Robert Schamberger and Frederick Herr, NRC/TMI Special Inquiry Group, interviewed Mr. Leslie Jackson, Director, York County Emergency Management Office (phone no. 717/848-3301, ext. 218). With Mr. Jackson was Ms. June Snyder, Director, York County Public Health. Ms. Snyder is an employee of the Pennsylvania Department of Health and is stationed in York. The interview took place in Mr. Jackson's office in the basement of the York County Court House, York, Pa. The interview began at about 1:30 p.m. and lasted about 1-3/4 hours. The purpose of the interview was to determine the actions taken by York County during the accident at TMI. Mr. Jackson and Ms. Snyder were provided with copies of the NRC/TMI Special Inquiry Witness Notification prior to the start of the interview.

Early Wednesday morning, March 28, 1979, York County received a call from the Pa. Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) alerting York County to the possible need for evacuating the 5 mile area to the west of TMI. Shortly thereafter York County received another call from PEMA stating that there was no immediate need for an evacuation, but that the emergency team should stand by. Later that morning, another call from PEMA indicated that the TMI problem had been contained and the team could be released from standby. Jackson interpreted this call as an instruction that all evacuation planning could stop. As a result, from that time until Friday March 30, 1979, York County did no planning for evacuation of any area around TMI. At the time of the accident, York County did have a 5-mile evacuation plan which had been developed following a request in early 1978 from PEMA for a 5-mile emergency plan for both the Peach Bottom and

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TMI nuclear power plants. On June 1, 1978, this 5-mile plan was signed by Jackson. In addition, 8,000 cards were printed for distribution to homes in the event of an emergency at either power plant. Local elected officials in the Peach Bottom and TMI areas were responsible for delivering the cards to residents and Jackson believes the cards were distributed to residents in the Peach Bottom area but were not distributed in the TMI area. The five mile areas around both power plants are sparsely populated and have no nursing homes or hospitals.

This plan was implemented by York County at 9:20 a.m. on March 30, 1979. The reason for its implementation was a call Jackson received from Paul Leese, Lancaster County Emergency Coordinator, during which Leese stated a helicopter monitoring the air over TMI had reported a 1200 mr reading over the plant stack. During that conversation, York and Lancaster Counties agreed to implement Phase I of the plan. At 9:25 a.m. York County sounded its sirens in the 5-mile zone and announced Phase I implementation. Lancaster County followed with implementation of Phase I of their plan at 9:25 a.m. The Phase I advisory asked residents to stay indoors. At 10:00 a.m. the Governor made a similar announcement for the 10-mile zone and later added a voluntary evacuation of pregnant women and pre-school children.

Phase II of the York County Plan called for a 5-mile evacuation around TMI. Fishing Creek school was the designated staging area and Red Land school the mass care center. The population in the 5-mile zone is normally 10,380, however, on Friday they estimated only about 6,000 people were in the area.

Jackson noted that from 9:25 a.m. on Wednesday, March 28, until about 9:00 a.m. on Friday, March 30, York County was not getting any information from the State. On Friday, York County was advised to expand their evacuation planning from 5 to 20 miles which includes 2 hospitals, 21 nursing homes and the City of York.

On Friday, the Emergency Operations Center had 15 extra phones installed of which 8 were rumor control phones. On Friday, York County could not readily get PEMA on the phones because the lines were overloaded. On Saturday, a direct phone line to PEMA was installed.

About noon Friday York County began planning the 20-mile evacuation. Representatives from the National Guard, the Department of Environmental Resources, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, State Police, local fire chiefs, the York County Council of Churches, Red Cross, and local doctors were called in to the EOC to assist in the planning. By late Saturday, Jackson felt they had a good plan and at a meeting at 10:00 p.m. Saturday, the plan was given to local elected officials.

The County also had assistance from two representatives ^{from} for DCPA who pulled together the individual plans developed by the representatives listed above.

Ms. Snyder noted that the Red Cross was responsible for taking care of all the people at the mass care facilities. All health care cases were to be evacuated to hospitals in Baltimore. Ms. Snyder noted that the hospital census was down 50% and many staff members had already voluntarily evacuated. Only because the patient census was down was there not a hospital staff shortage.

Jackson could not estimate how long it would have taken to carry out the evacuation to 20 miles. He noted, however, that only 40% of the population remained in the area by Saturday. Ms. Snyder estimated that hospitals and nursing homes could have been evacuated in about 5 hours but home-bound residents would have been a problem.

Jackson and Snyder were critical of the comment from the state on Wednesday which led York County to terminate evacuation planning during Wednesday and Thursday, March 28 and 29. They said the county lost two days in beginning their evacuation planning which could have made a big difference in their ability to evacuate had it been needed over the weekend.

Jackson also commented that they were getting little information from the State regarding the status of the situation at the plant. As a result, they were getting information and questions from the media and the public which they were unable to verify or respond to intelligently. He said someone at the state or Federal level has to serve as spokesman and know what to say. He noted that there is also a need for consistency in statements coming out during incidents of this type. For example, he said the area to be evacuated seemed to change frequently from 5 miles to 10 miles to 20 miles and then went back to 10 miles. So many changes were made in this regard, that after a while York County decided to disregard all statements coming out of the state and planned for a 20 mile evacuation only.

Jackson provided us with copies of the following documents:

1. Notification

cards which were supposed to be handed out to residents in the 5-mile zone around TMI in 1978.

2. June 1, 1978, emergency plan for York County.

3. York County log of events pertaining to TMI.