



DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
FEDERAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20410

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

IN REPLY REFER TO:

April 3, 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: Honorable Jack Watson
Assistant to the President

FROM: William H. Wilcox
Administrator, FDAA

SUBJECT: Report No. 5. Three Mile Island Incident

As of 1:00 this afternoon, the situation at Three Mile Island remains stable. In the daily briefing for me by the NRC, I invited DCPA, FPA, DOMS, FIA and Gordon Vickery, Acting Director of FEMA to again listen in. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission announced that the temperature inside the reactor was decreasing, though levels of pressure are still of concern. The NRC is expressing "cautious optimism." A major problem now faced is the disposal of contaminated waste water from inside the reactor. Radioactive iodine was found in air samples taken in the area, as well as small traces in river water downstream in the Susquehanna. The hydrogen bubble continues to diminish in size.

In reference to spontaneous evacuations made by local residents, the media in the Harrisburg area, along with county and local officials concluded that 30 percent of the population in the Harrisburg area had spontaneously evacuated. At the same time, the Pennsylvania Office of Administration reported that 30 percent of State employees were absent from work yesterday in the Harrisburg area.

The Director of the National Cancer Institute at the National Institute of Health stated that all the workers at the Three Mile Island Plant should be given doses of potassium iodine in an effort to stem radioactive iodine that may be present in their bodies. It is interesting to note, however, that the NRC does not agree with this assessment, believing that doses of potassium iodine are not required at this time. The State is considering preparing a simple list of instructions, but no distribution of the drug at this time. In addition, though iodine has been found in locally produced milk, the State has decided not to dispose of the milk, but rather

POOR ORIGINAL

8001170820 P

2.

to advise pregnant women within a five mile radius of the plant not to drink the milk.

With respect to public health and safety, HEW has taken up the following mission assignments in the past 24 hours:

A. The transporting of 250,000 vials of potassium iodine.

This mission will be completed by this time tomorrow. At present, 140,000 vials are on site in the control of the State Health Department along with instructions on their use. One thousand of these vials have been set aside for emergency workers.

B. Food Sampling

FDA has 20 persons presently on-site sampling food. In addition, 7 CDC persons are on-site taking environmental samplings. All food processing plants in the area have been identified and arrangements have been made for sampling of all processed food produced in the vicinity.

C. Dosimeters

One hundred ninety-three are in place in a twenty-mile radius around the Three Mile Plant. FDA samples taken as of 4:30 yesterday, from inside and outside buildings, show nine of the eighteen sampling indicate trace amounts of iodine and seizum.

D. Notice of Advanced Action

HEW has received a mission assignment request to provide for the State in the event of an emergency declaration, 50 doctors and 50 nurses. They have also received a request for 375 ambulances and 30,000 blankets. They do not have the capabilities to fulfill these later requests and will defer to another agency's resources.

HEW is now printing and expects to have ready for distribution tomorrow guides for health care personnel on "Methods to Avoid Over Exposure" and "Food Contamination." They are also working with the NRC to develop a registry of all personnel at the Three Mile Plant for back up protection. In addition, they are also working with the State to develop a surveillance system for health needs associated with establishing evacuation and relocation systems.

POOR ORIGINAL

The American National Red Cross reports that its staffing is well underway, with over 25 staff assigned in various capacities and thoroughly briefed on their responsibilities. In addition, the Red Cross mentioned that the American Woolen Company has 100,000 blankets available that they are willing to sell at \$4 each. The blankets, which will be held until Thursday, could be shipped in 25 railroad cars, 4,000 per car.

As you are aware, the decision has been made not to move the 4,000 Red Cross cots from Dayton, Ohio to Philadelphia by military air. As a result, the Red Cross proposed, and I concurred, that the cots be transported by truck to Lancaster, Pennsylvania for repositioning.

At your request, I am drawing up a plan in anticipation of various contingencies during the next 6-8 weeks "cool down" period. Dick Sanderson of my staff will head up a group to operate in close coordination with the Lead Federal Official, other Federal agencies, the Red Cross and other voluntary organizations, in an effort to develop this document. The plan, to be presented to you this Friday, will be updated continually as the situation dictates. Such issues as standby evacuation procedures, mobilization of supplies and other resources, standby staffing requirements, public information, socio-economic ramifications, and roles of the Federal, State and local governments will be discussed. To this end you should also note that planning continues for the possible use of the Emmitsburg, Maryland site as the Federal Operations Center.

FDAA personnel met last night with the Governor, Lt. Governor and other State officials to discuss State evacuation plans and the capability of the Federal Government to respond to the State's initial list of unmet needs. In addition, response to supplemental needs, particularly ambulances and blankets was discussed.

In regard to the question of proper disposal of contaminated industrial waste, on Three Mile Island, Governor Thornburg was concerned with the political consequences of dumping this waste into the Susquehanna River. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission was convinced, however, that this waste, despite minimal levels of radioactive contamination, is nonetheless safe and below allowable levels of radioactivity.

This problem reached a critical state, as the plant concluded it needed to release the waste into the River so a 400,000 gallon sump now operating does not become overloaded.

POOR ORIGINAL

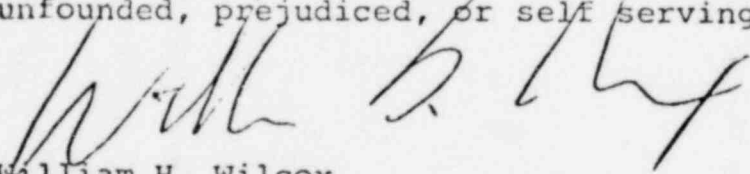
4

For a time, it was expected the NRC would be forced to use large capacity fuel bladders provided by DOD to dispose of the waste. We understand the Governor has now removed his objection to the dumping.

At the request of the NRC, we have obtained demographic profiles for areas from the Three Mile Island site. The profiles show 1970 official population, 1977 population estimates and other data for the areas within a 5, 10, and 20-mile radius of the plant.

Although not yet raised, we anticipate that an SBA declaration for low interest loans for economic injury might be requested at a later date, given the probable negative economic impact of the situation the last week.

Lt. Governor Scranton has urged, through the Lead Federal Official, that the Federal government begin consideration of a coordinated and integrated research program in connection with the incident and the events which have followed. Unless there is some coordination, a chaotic state may emerge. Finally, I strongly urge that the President give consideration to the formation of a Blue-Ribbon panel to review the medical, scientific and socio-economic implications of this type of incident. Such a group would provide a degree of coordination and discourage unfounded, prejudiced, or self serving pseudo-research.



William H. Wilcox
Administrator

Attachment

POOR ORIGINAL

4/02/79
 0:00 A.M.
 a'nal
 c. ological
 enter

Degree
 from which
 Wind is
 Coming

Knots
 (1.15 x
 MPH

FDA OPERATIONS CENTER
WIND AND WEATHER FORECAST
HARRISBURG

LEVEL	TUES 4/3	WED 4/4	THURS 4/5	FRI 4/6	SAT 4/7
SURFACE	050/8	290/18	300/15	VAR/10	120/05
1,000 FT	060/18	220/25	290/25	290/20	290/15
2,000 FT	070/15	220/33	280/35	280/30	280/25
3,000 FT	090/15	230/40	270/40	270/40	280/35
5,000 FT	150/15	230/45	260/50	270/55	270/45
0,000 FT	240/30	220/70	250/88	260/95	270/80
Chance of Precip	60%	90%	40%		

General Trends A frontal system will lie just southeast of the area today and tonight and a low pressure system will develop which will move N/NE and produce rain on Wednesday and end late in the day. Another system will be moving slowly E/NE by Friday and will bring clouds by Saturday.

POOR ORIGINAL