

March 27, 1980

From: Corporate Communications Department  
Duke Power Company  
422 South Church Street  
Charlotte, North Carolina 28242

CHARLOTTE -- Duke Power Co. remains committed to nuclear power as the best answer to meeting the nation's and this area's energy needs for the foreseeable future, Duke Power President Bill Lee said here today.

"On a relative basis, nuclear looks very good compared to any other choices we now have," Lee said at a news conference here. "Among today's alternatives, it is the cleanest, safest and least expensive way to produce large amounts of electricity."

"Between now and the year 2000, Duke Power will build those types of energy facilities that best meet public policy objectives. That policy, of course, will be shaped by the public's perceptions of the risks, costs and environmental issues," Lee said.

"The perception of nuclear power and its alternatives," Lee said, "should be shaped by a higher level of understanding than now exists of what the risks, costs and environmental issues really are."

"Nuclear has risks," he said, "as do all energy sources. Considering the entire cycle, mining to transportation to electricity production to waste management, currently available alternative energy sources have risks many times greater than nuclear," he added.

"In weighing risks of energy alternatives, we must also be keenly aware of the enormous risks to socio-economic goals of doing without adequate energy," Lee said.

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"And," Lee added, "we at Duke Power are firmly committed to conservation as a matter of company policy and we also are committed to relying on our country's domestic energy resources."

Lee explained in detail what the company and the nuclear industry have done since the accident at the Three Mile Island Nuclear Plant near Harrisburg, Pa., a year ago.

Lee said that the Three Mile Island accident taught that the multiple redundant safety systems did work, that "communications were lousy -- the public was terrified and residual fright remains" and that "we had a serious blind spot, the accident should never have happened."

To remove the blind spot and provide additional assurances of safety, the electric utility industry has acted fast, decisively and with unprecedented initiative, he said, and then went into detail (see attached report).

"With vigorous pursuit of research and development of alternative energy sources, I am confident we will find new choices, hopefully better than nuclear," Lee said.

"However, it will be at least two generations before they can make sufficient contribution to our energy supply to displace the energy sources we now know how to use."

"To call for shutdown of operating nuclear plants and stop building those already under construction with the promise that solar and biomass can take up the slack is perpetuating a cruel hoax," he said. "Such a path would be analagous to inciting a mob to burn down all bridges today with the promise that by tomorrow we can teach all who need to cross the river how to walk on water," Lee said.

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