

April 26, 1979

Dear Mr. Hendrie,

I ran across this analysis and thought you might be interested. It appears to me that the NRC is jumping to conclusions drawn by people who are very much against nuclear power.

How about dispelling any doubt about sabotage before closing everything down???

It seems like nuclear has been a good friend for years and now you're turning her out over nothing at all!!

Question: Would you please have sent to me the professional background of the NRC?

Good luck -

Ken Seymour

It is obvious, from the several reports and commentaries put out by the media in regard to the Three Mile Island nuclear power unit #2 incident that the authorized version has yet to emerge. There are elements that the reports being made do have in common. Let us consider some of these elements shared by the media reports: they all have contradictory statements that promote an uneasy feeling of confusion; they all are speculative scenarios that follow lines of - if this happens, then that happens and if that happens then something else will, and so on; they all border on hysterical extrapolations of enormous potential horrors; they all lead one to believe that the nuclear industry is not as safe as it should be or, for that matter, nuclear energy can never be made safe enough; they all suggest that what happened was, euphemistically speaking, an accident but, in matter of fact, more appropriate terms would be disaster, or catastrophe. Certainly no report claims to be an objective treatment of what ever happened.

The Three Mile Island event can be put into a connected context, however. This context is admittedly a fanciful analysis but there are some supporting bits of evidence that one finds lacking in the media treatment.

Consider the wild possibility that what happened at Three Mile Island unit #2 was a deliberate pre-conceived plot to do in nuclear power once and for all. The plot being conceived, financed and carried out by the so called anti-nuclear alliances. Incidentally, the project carried out at this time could reap millions of dollars to the coffers of those organizations through two avenues. One would be the promotion of the movie China Syndrome, and the other the suit of Kerr-McGee. Rather than just hit and run, consider some

background for such a possible plot against nuclear energy and see if this possibility is as plausible or more so than the empty paranoid charges by the anti-nuclear establishment.

First of all, does the record show that the anti-nuclear groups are law abiding citizens? It does not. Quite the contrary. They are proud of their lawless tactics and encourage destruction of property, violating rights of others and preach that their course justifies going to any means to attain it. Certainly the leaders of the anti-nukes themselves have a past history, as ignominious as the PLO, for violence, stealing, arson, perhaps murder. Their leaders are proud to be associated with the Leftist anarchists of the late 60's and early 70's, the Weathermen, Students for Democratic Action, Black Panthers and other self styled anti-war groups. They would have us hear again the songs of Joan Baez, Hanoi Jane, Dan Ellsberg, Jack Lemmon, Ralph Nader, Dr. Spock, George McGovern and all the rest. Yes, there is precedence for violence and there is motive.

That this particular episode parallels the key circumstance found in the China Syndrome is no accident. (The Silkwood trial is now in its sixth week in Oklahoma City. Is this coincidence?) The allegation in regard to the China Syndrome and the Silkwood connection has some provocative roots. For starters, Hanoi Jane and Jack Lemmon, as well as the late Karen Silkwood, are all self advertised anti-nuclear, anti-plutonium advocates. A couple of years ago Jack Lemmon starred in a movie so one-sided that even the Public Broadcasting Service found it objectionable. It was a production called "Plutonium, an Element of Risk". Karen Silkwood, a 28 year old woman, died

in a one-car traffic crash Nov. 13, 1974, a week after Kerr-McGee discovered plutonium contamination in her apartment. She was an employee of the Kerr-McGee nuclear plant that processes plutonium and was to have told her story to news reporters of the dangerous practices at the plant, but in fact she died before she could blow the whistle on them. The actual Silkwood trial was preceded by a national program to raise funds to pay for it. Evidently this effort didn't get enough money. Surely, the receipts from the film will help.

The development of the "Syndrome", as reviewed by Jane herself, is an amalgam of the Silkwood case and the bitter parts of the too biased Lemmon fiasco. Hanoi Jane states that in March 1976 she was in Hollywood trying to develop something on Karen Silkwood and wanted to play Karen Silkwood but couldn't get the rights to her life story. She got together with Michael Gray and Jim Bridges and merged two projects. So that's how China Syndrome came to be, the result of a deliberate effort to produce a propaganda film attacking key parts of the nuclear industry in particular and big business or capitalism in general.

The recent stock market record shows that the movie industry stands to make "a lot of money" on "Syndrome" while stock in Kerr-McGee tumbled along with other nuclear related companies.

Looking at the record, which group is more likely to arrange an accident, either at a plant or on the highway, big business or the anti-alliances? For sake of clarity, don't include labor union activities with big-business.

Bribery or financial inducement coupled with fanatic demonology also are parts of the anti-nuclear arsenal. Those three ex-employees of General Electric who resigned their positions in California because of their concern about nuclear safety three years ago, Gregory Miner, Richard Hubbard, and Dale Bridenbaugh, resigned from GE on February 2, 1976, issuing a statement proclaiming that a nuclear power plant accident was a certain event. It subsequently came out that they had become involved in a cult that proclaims as an article of faith that plutonium is evil because it is not natural. The cult encouraged their resignation by giving them financial guarantees.

If an accident were going to be staged by the anti's, timing would be a factor for maximum effect. There you have a perfect mix: a movie, a court trial and the nation's attention drawn to Harrisburg, Pa. Now for the place for it to happen, why Harrisburg? What could be a better site for the complete vindication of the "peace movement" than the place where the best publicized legal move against it was held, i.e. that was the show trial of the Berrigans, who were charged with plotting to kidnap Henry Kissinger, Harrisburg, Pa. of course!

This scenario is as plausible as any so far published or broadcast by the media. It is at least consistent and straight forward and can be documented with precision.

The role of the media in all of this is still another fantasy but it is certain that the anti-nuclear kooks are having a field day. Apparently you don't have to go to an island to have your fantasy come true.

There is an old adage, that, by their fruits you shall know them. Was there a plot to steal a nuclear submarine? Sounds kind of far out but stranger things have happened in the opinion of those leaders of the anti-nuclear groups, those very individuals who played so fast and loose with the lives of American fighting men and those captured by the Communists. What's a few lives as long as we lose the battle? In their thinking, what little does a few hundred or even thousands of Pennsylvanians matter?

It is a fact that this little journey of the imagination has been rejected out of hand by certain elements of the larger press because it is a bit suggestive of possible anti-nuclear sabotage and as such is furthering unsubstantiated suspicion of evil intent. Therefore, the fairness code does not permit the implication of guilt by association, etc. After all, innocence is accepted until proven otherwise. This line of coverage does not apply, however, to the nuclear industry where, to be accused by any person or organization, known or unknown, is tantamount to the verdict of guilty.

Coincidentally, the news media has supplied us with pictures and stories of anti-nuclear protestors arrested for tossing blood at the White House. One of those arrested was the wife of Rev. Phillip Berrigan. Phillip Berrigan, in an interview, justified the demonstration protesting nuclear power.

Finally, in regard to another "accident" that compelled the evacuation of thousands of people earlier this week, we are told that investigators are looking into the possibility that sabotage might have been involved in Sunday's derailment of railroad tankers carrying toxic chemicals. U.S. Sens. Lawton Chiles, D-Fla., and James Sasser, D-Tenn., have heard local residents

concerned in this area. It may be difficult to imagine why someone would sabotage a train, but is it so far fetched when it comes to nuclear power?

Initial reports from federal safety investigators indicate that, two valves on the Three Mile Island nuclear reactor were manually turned off two weeks before the accident in an action that violated plant specifications. Authorities seem to agree that if the valves (the illegally closed ones) had been open, there would have been an entirely different outcome, perhaps no incident at all.

NEFA