

TOWN OF CORTLANDT

MUNICIPAL BUILDING

CROTON-ON-HUDSON, N. Y. 10520

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PRE-HEARING CONFERENCE ON INDIAN POINT SAFETY

December 2, 1981

Statement submitted by Charles G. DiGiacomo, Supervisor of the Town of Cortlandt:

As Supervisor of the Town of Cortlandt, there is no person more interested in the safe operation of the Indian Point plants than I.

Although I question the advisability of holding the proceedings being considered today, since the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's own staff suggested that they were not necessary to assure plant safety and since taxpayers will bear much of the cost. I feel the money could be better spent on NRC programs. My remarks on behalf of those who live closest to the plants must be taken into account by the board in making its decisions.

The Town of Cortlandt will not become a formal intervenor as I do not feel it is in our best interests to spend tax dollars on the legal fees necessary to take that step. Therefore, this statement, and subsequent submissions which are deemed to be necessary, will constitute the Town's participation.

It is obvious to people who live in this area that there are two aspects which should be considered and that neither can be viewed by itself.

Safety is essential and we will not compromise it for any other concern. However, some sense of reason must be introduced when deciding how safe is safe and when contemplating the drastic measures recommended by some parties.

The economic impact of any needless shutdown of the plants would fall more on the shoulders of Cortlandt residents than any others. It is our electricity - - - our least expensive source - - - - you are discussing. It is our tax base - - - our largest tax ratable - - - you might be threatening. It is one of our largest commercial contributors you are talking about so abstractly. And, yes, it is our safety you purport to have in mind. So, keep us in mind as you deliberate during the upcoming hearings.

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RISK

Certainly risk is something we Cortlandt residents are interested in. How much risk is acceptable? How little risk is possible? We are reasonable, well-educated people here in Cortlandt. Yet, we are confused.

The N.R.C.'s own study last year indicated that, although the site left something to be desired, the plant design which includes many safety features not found elsewhere, made the overall safety of the plant about the same as any other plant in the country, (in spite of the large population in the area.) Well, if the plant is no more or less safe than other plants, and if other plants are not deemed to have unacceptable levels of risk, I again must question the spending priorities of the N.R.C. in holding the upcoming hearings.

EMERGENCY PLANNING

The town has taken an active role in formulating emergency plans for the area. We have sponsored meetings of interested parties and have offered suggestions for improvements. Our goal is to have the best emergency plans in the country. We feel that with the most difficult area to plan for, great strides have been made over the past two years to attain that goal. We will continue to keep close track of the planning process as we prepare for emergency exercises to be held next year.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

A national leader of the N.A.A.C.P. has been quoted as saying that nuclear power plants are environmentally benign. This is an especially important point when considering the alternatives to Indian Point electricity - - - fossil fuels. The recent agreement for the protection of the Hudson River speaks well of both the responsible environmental advocates and the utilities on each side of the river, including the operators of the Indian Point plants.

ECONOMICS

The economic contribution of the two plants to this town cannot be over-emphasized. Many of the town's merchants and commercial enterprises rely on the plants for a share of their annual revenues.

The tax losses posed by shutting down the plants are obvious. Cost to consumers of not having available the cheapest source of electricity in the metropolitan area would be excessive.

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Let's review the facts - - - - As you know, the General Accounting Office, at the request of Congressman Richard Ottinger, (who appears to oppose continued operation of the plants), last year completed an analysis of the economic impact of a permanent shutdown of the two operating Indian Point plants.

Major findings were:

1. Closing of the two plants initially could cost New York City and Westchester County consumers more than \$600 million a year.

2. This figure could rise to more than \$1.4 billion by 1992.

3. Oil fired generation would be the only major source of replacement power if the plants were closed, and oil requirements would increase by almost twenty million barrels in the first year of the shutdown. This figure would gradually decrease in subsequent years as alternative sources of power became available.

To repeat, we will not compromise our commitment to safety. Neither will we compromise our commitment to the economic well-being of our residents.

In closing, I would like to thank you for heeding our request to hold such hearings in the Town of Cortlandt and would reiterate that any future conferences or hearings be conducted in this area.