

Mrs. Patricia Alker
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Aug. 30, 1982

Director of the Office
of Nuclear Regulation
U.S. Regulatory Commission
Washington D.C. 20555

Gentlemen of the Commission:

I am grateful for the opportunity to address the environmental impact of the Limerick nuclear plant since I was unable to voice my objections at your hearing, Wednesday, Aug. 18, in Pottstown.

Public outcry about nuclear proliferation has always been 'sound and fury, signifying nothing', - so much for public hearings. Nuclear power is the hand-maiden of nuclear weapons. Under the guise of national security, our government has chosen to lie to its people concerning the safety of this energy source. As scientists, does it not seem MAD to harness one of the most lethal elements of this planet (plutonium, the waste of these plants) to boil water for steam? It all made sense to the moguls when we were the only ones who could sell this technology to the world. We made billions for the boys at Bechtel-but, what now? Everyone on the block has one.

I am concerned that a Democracy can not survive in a country dependent on a nuclear defense and nuclear energy. Unlike a ton of coal or a tank of heating oil, uranium, missing from a plant would be considered a national security risk in the hands of terrorists. The civil rights of known protesters of nuclear power would be compromised. Defining accidents as sabotage could be most useful to utilities whose safety records are less than perfect. So much for the political climate surrounding nuclear power plants.

We live ten miles downwind from Limerick. We have horses and many pets. Evacuation is out of the question. My concern is the normal operations of this utility. I'm sure you are familiar with Dr. Robert Weber, who has been a practicing veterinarian in Mechanicsburg, Pa. since 1947. Beginning in 1973, after TMI Unit 1 went on line, breeding problems and birth defects in the livestock increased markedly. Calves were often born blind and had difficulty nursing. Cows would return to the barns lame. He asked for answers from your commission, the state agriculture department and General Public Utility. He received no answers from any of these sources which often eluded to poor husbandry. Only the New Bolton Center, of the University of Pennsylvania returned a report. They found the soil deficient. They refused to release any information concerning the ~~xxx~~ cause.

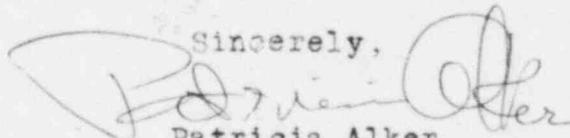
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I have talked with the NRC officials in King of Prussia and the public relations representatives from Philadelphia Electric about this subject. In every case they mockingly asked me if I were referring to the 'cows at TMI'. Currently, sheep ranchers from Nevada and Utah are reviving a suit against our government for the devastating fall out from Dirty Harry in 1953. Many of these people lost their herds and ~~xxxx~~ ranches from that 'event'. They were lied to at the original trial. What conscionable men could do this to good, decent people? Men who are protecting our National Security with nuclear weapons. Who said "patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel"?

It seems nuclear scientists are a different kind of animal. Most scientists are interested in control groups and the progression of logic. Dr. Weber, before TMI averaged one cesarian a year for sows. After TMI started up, he averaged two weekly. Would there be any reason for Dr. Weber to lie or cover-up the heart-breaking visits he was making? After all, his fees certainly increased during this time. Only those who had vested interests in seeing the proliferation of nuclear power could have benefitted from distorted facts. You should all be interested in the fact that since the accident, and the resulting shut downs, (allowing for the gestation periods of livestock) his practice has resumed a normal pattern.

The 'normal' emissions of any nuclear plant, especially during shut down and start up, pose a threat to the surrounding countryside and the marketing of farm produce and dairy products. On June 22, 1981, Peach Bottom experienced a sudden shut down. The emissions were 80 percent higher than the allowable limit. There was no warning and no report to the farmers who live in the shadow of the plant or the officials in Harrisburg. Perhaps the most insidious aspect of radiation emissions is its invisibility, which allows you to set a limit that cannot be arbitrated. I think it's the moment of truth, gentlemen. Hyman Rickover begged to oversee the complete dismantling of all nuclear weapons and nuclear power plants in that order. It's that or Apocalypse.

Sincerely,



Patricia Alker
Norristown, Pa.



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