Update

Technical and human questions plagu

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speakers for and against the restart of TMI Unit 1.

Altogether, about 1,000 people attended the hearing, armed with petitions, statistics, personal comments, and insights. Representing a cross-section of the community, each representative spoke for three minutes.

James Hurst, Treasurer and Board Member of the Middletown organization called PANE—People Against Nuclear Energy—spoke against the restart.

He said that there were still too many "unanswered questions" Middletown residents have about TMI. He added, "One hundred and thirty days of NRC hearings cannot be interpreted as having resolved questions of credibility and integrity."

Speaking to the **Capitol Times**, Hurst said that he truly believes the NRC will act in a conscientious way, but their decision depends on a great deal of factors, including economic, psychological and political issues.

In addressing the issue of economics, Hurst said, "they (NRC) will have to take economics into consideration...one has to assume a pretty strong influence of money is there in their decision."

Another financial consideration the NRC will have to contend with is whether restarting Unit 1 will actually help pay for the clean-up of Unit 2.

By the most recent reports, the clean-up at TMI can be accomplished by 1987 for an estimated 1.0 to 1.5 billion dollars.

In Hurst's opinion, the monies generated from Unit 1 will not be enough to pay for the clean-up costs.

"It may help provide a small amount of money, but not nearly enough," Hurst said, adding: "there is no way GPU will realize the money from the restart of Unit 1."

"Furthermore, all GPU's assessments are based on the assumption that once started, Unit 1 will work properly without a hitch. After three-and-a-half years of being idle, this seems unlikely," he said.

Hurst stressed, "there is only one entity in this country that has the money and resources to clean up Unit 2 and that's the United States government...and if GPU defaults that would be the only organization that could or would take any serious clean-up commitment."

On the other hand, Doug Badell, Manager of Communication Services of GPU at TMI, said "we never envisioned that the restart would pay for the clean-up of Unit 2, just a portion of it."

Badell added, "restarting Unit 1 would strengthen the company's economic position so that it will be able to establish and regain some capital and power in the marketplace."

In January, GPU will be meeting with their financial backers to ensure that monies will continue to be available under their current revolving loan agreement.

Although James Hurst of PANE believes GPU is rushing to have the 1979 shut down orders lifted so as to have some type of clout at that meeting, GPU's Doug Badell said that their financial backing has already been pretty well established and agreed upon.

"We don't expect any problems with our revolving bank loan," Badell said. "We are pretty sure that our credit will be renewed."

There is one other hotly debated financial issue surrounding the TMI controversy—TMI's employees.

Represented by the organization called Friends and Family of TMI, about 2,000 employees of TMI face the possibility of losing their jobs if Unit 1 does not restart soon.

As Doug Badell put it, "Three Mile Island has a strong economic presence in the area."

Looking at the technical issues, the NRC must also be convinced that Unit 1 is technically ready to restart and has met all the qualifications required under the shut down orders.

Hurst explained that many of the previously required technical qualifications on Unit 1 are not now required by the NRC. Because of this, Hurst believes Unit 1 is not technically ready for restart.

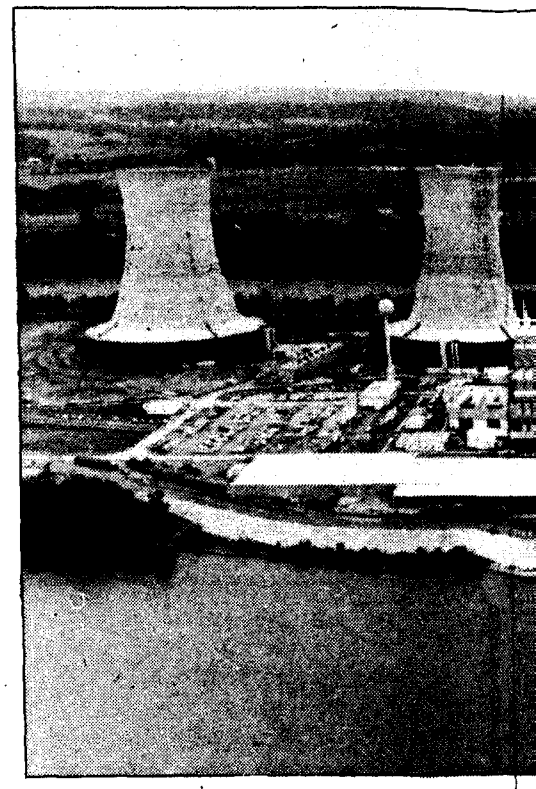
Hurst's sentiments were backed by Robert Pollard, a nuclear safety engineer with the Union of Concerned Scientists and a former NRC project manager.

Pollard felt this Friday's deadline was set too soon to really assess the qualifications of Unit 1.

"The only reason they're rushing is to bend over backwards to help GPU," said Pollard. "Nobody on the NRC staff has the slightest intention of holding up restart, regardless of the consequences for public safety."

GPU spokesman, Doug Badell, contradicted Pollard's assessment, saying, "based on the NRC requirements and technical qualifications, Unit 1 is technically ready.

"We have put over 50 million dollars of modifications into repairing and modifying Unit 1...based on what we've learned from the accident."



At the recent NRC hearing, Joseph Hoffman, president of Friends and Family of TMI, reported those same statistics and said that historically Unit 1 is safe and that people "have created an atmosphere of alarm and panic out of all proportion to their number and their knowledge."

However, James Hurst believes the NRC will have to vote against the restart of Unit 1, because the public has been so clearly against restart.

"At the hearing there were 42 speakers against restart, while there were only 10 for," he said. "Also, the message not to start