

Date: August 28, 1979

NARRATOR1: Occupation: Engineer for Servicemaster Industries

NARRATOR2: Occupation: Housewife and mother

INTERVIEWER: When did you first hear about Three Mile Island?

NARRATOR1: I was in New Jersey. Or, I was on the road somewhere, I don't really recall, I think it was in New Jersey, and I heard it over the news media.

INT: And what did you think about when you first heard about it?

NAR1: Um... I was... I'd say alarmed. Or, concerned. I was concerned.

INT: And what did you do at that time? Did you listen to more reports, did you call home?

NAR1: I called home. And, because my first... *[pause]* opinion, or my first thought was, is that... Nobody knew really what it was. Or really what the situation was. So I called home to talk to Gail.

INT: And what did you talk about then?

NAR1: What was going on, and I can't recall whether it was that or the next night, but I asked that all the kids should stay in the house.

NARRATOR2: It was the same day. Do you want me to add something?

INT: Yeah, just chime in. You don't have to –

NAR2: Okay. Yes, he did call me, and when he called a neighbor of mine was here. And we had just been discussing it, because we had picked up the night – this was on the Friday – we had picked up Thursday's paper, and we were discussing it, and it was on the radio, and I really wasn't concerned until he called. And then I started getting a little, a little frightened because I do not, of course, understand it as well as he does, and he knew that there really was some danger in it. I had not been paying attention to the radio. And... So then I got frightened because – I was frightened because he wasn't here. And he did call, and I had told him that the kids were coming home from school early, that the schools were dismissed that Friday early, I can't remember at what time but early in the afternoon. And that people were kinda getting quite excited and he just told me when the kids got home to keep the kids in the house.

NAR1: This was...

NAR2: This was on a Friday.

NAR1: Something happened earlier in the week, I don't know what it was and then that bubble came up. I mean, there was another blurb that came out of the reactor. I forget when it was, it was the Thursday or the Friday. Then I became more concerned and it was my first... my gut feeling to say, "they really don't know what's going on, and so the *best* thing to do is to stay in the house," because they were comparing the amount of radiation, the milli-rads and all that... stuff. And that was very much larger than what you would normally get by being outside. You might be protected somewhat, not totally, but somewhat, by staying indoors than out. So that's the reason for staying inside. And I was concerned about getting home because I thought they might block the turnpike off, the way they were talking. But they didn't. So I got home all right. I guess it was five or six o'clock that Friday when I got home.

INT: So you came right home then? Pretty fast?

NAR2: Well he was on his way home. I mean, he was...

NAR1: Yeah, yeah, yeah. It was like that second little thing that came out of the reactor happened I think on the Friday. I think. Did it? There was a second...

INT: It was either – yeah, I think I know what you mean. Are you talking about the bubble or another release?

NAR1: A release, it was the second release.

INT: The second release was on Friday.

NAR1: Okay. Well, that's when I became super-concerned. And then, I would be coming home anyhow on a Friday, but I just came home that much sooner. I left a couple hours early. Because I was afraid I couldn't get by, they'd close the road or close the turnpike or something. So that's why I left early.

INT: Why were you afraid they would close the road, because of an evacuation?

NAR1: Yeah. Or, because of the radiation intensity.

NAR2: *[at the same time]* The closeness of it. Yeah. The area.

NAR1: See, the bridge passes on the turnpike right by Three Mile Island, all right, so that's maybe why I thought that that might be closed. Before I left I called the turnpike, or the state highway, to see if any roads had been closed. And what they were if any. And they said none had been closed.

INT: What was the traffic like when you drove by Three Mile Island, when you went along that road? I'm just curious for my own...

NAR1: The traffic appeared to be normal. It was on the turnpike. I'm sure if you got closer in that there'd be a lot more traffic but this was – you know, from the turnpike bridge on the Susquehanna you can see the, uh... the cooling towers.

NAR2: That's what I've heard. I've never looked.

NAR1: Yeah, well, as a matter of fact, we just went down to a ball game last night. And Gail pointed them out, it was still light, and you could see them. So I thought maybe – and I don't know how many miles that is; that maybe two or three or four miles. You know, so I was afraid that maybe within 5 miles, they would just close everything down. You never know from what comes over the media and the papers, what people are thinking, to what they really will do. So this would make a difference as to what road I use to come back here; either the turnpike or some other road.

INT: Where did you first hear about it, you said it was in the paper and that you listened to the radio. Do you remember where it was?

NAR2: It was in the paper. But to be very honest, I paid very little attention to it until that Friday, when my neighbor was here and brought it to – well, another friend had called me also and told me to turn the radio on. To hear about it, to see, and also to listen to see if the kids were gonna be coming home early from school. And even at that time I was not that concerned, as I said, until he called me. So I had been, really, I guess – because I do, I read the paper. It was in the newspaper, but I wasn't that upset because the newspaper, the articles in the paper – supposedly the people in charge were not that upset.

INT: Yeah. You mean the Met Ed officials?

NAR2: Well, right, and the people – yes, right, according to the articles that I read, I mean, it was something to be concerned about, but they weren't expressing any more concern than if it were, you know, some other thing, or news. So I really, as I said, I wasn't that upset yet about it.

INT: How did the neighbors seem to be reacting? Or, friends of yours?

NAR2: Well –

NAR1: They were all leaving town! *[laugh.]*

NAR2: I guess it was very mixed. My immediate neighbors... the immediate neighbors, I don't think left town. They were all of course concerned. But then it seemed like when I went to church on Sunday, there were quite a few people that were not in church, and families who I would talk to coming out and they were getting ready to leave, you know? I would have to say it was half-and-half. Everybody of course was concerned, but many of them were like me and did not really realize just yet what was going on yet. We didn't

understand it yet because it was not – Once the big crisis came out on Friday, then of course we started watching television and listening to the radio and they would show the diagrams and everything, and explained it to us. Before then we were kind of ignorant of actually what takes on at a nuclear power plant and radiation. We all of course knew radiation, I mean, you know, could zap you. I mean, we were all thinking back to, what is it, in the '40s, was it the '40s or the '50s, out in, Utah or Idaho or wherever it is, that, you know...

INT: Where they were exploding the atomic bombs?

NAR2: Right. Right, right, and how there still is no vegetation and how many years ago was that, and...

INT: I didn't know that.

NAR2: Right, I don't think there's still any vegetation there, I don't think you can still go near it.

INT: Wow.

NAR2: And so, I knew what radiation could do but as I said we – Well thank you. We, um... you know, weren't that upset yet. It was, I'd have to say once Friday really got into its day and towards late afternoon and evening – I mean, then we woke up to the fact that there really was a problem

INT: How did your children seem to be reacting to it?

NAR2: Well first of all, I think that the three school-age children I think were aware that it could be a serious thing, but it was excitement to them. They also didn't understand. I think they were told in school why they were being dismissed early, but I don't think they really quite – It was an exciting thing for them, because the whole city was involved in this. It was not just something that they were going through, the whole city was involved in this. And it was excitement. I mean it was – you know, to get out of school early.

INT: They didn't seem to be afraid then?

NAR2: Not yet. No. Not yet. They started – Then when they did come home I had told them that their father had called, and that they... Pause that. *[Baby begins to cry; NAR1 says something unintelligible. Tape stops, then resumes.]* They really did not start getting concerned, until evening time, til after their father came home. And him coming home didn't concern them, *[Baby begins crying.]* because it was Friday, and Jack is home on Fridays. But then they started talking to him about it. And then the more we listened to the radio and TV, then they realized it was something serious. *[Baby screams; NAR2 tries to quiet him down.]*

INT: Did you know that there was a plant at Three Mile Island, a nuclear plant there?

NAR1: Yes.

INT: Had you ever, had you been concerned about it being there before?

NAR1: No.

INT: Are you worried about it being there now?

NAR1: No. *[Around this point NAR2 takes the baby out of the room; it can be heard for a little longer crying from another room.]*

INT: Do you know about how far away it is from us?

NAR1: From here?

INT: Yeah.

NAR1: It's something like twenty miles. I think. That would be my guess.

INT: That's pretty close. We heard twenty-two from like, the center of town.

NAR1: Yeah, so, it might be twenty-five miles to here, I don't know, but...

INT: Okay. But you've got a good general idea that, like we're not fifty or something like that?

NAR1: Right, I knew it was close. I could've been – When I call, I know now it's – it's farther than what I thought it was originally, but I thought that maybe the way the crow flies it could be as little as fifteen miles, but I didn't know. I didn't know for sure. I knew it was close.

INT: What did you think about the way the media handled the situation?

NAR1: Oh... Um, I'd – My opinion of the media is not all... is not very good. I have a poor opinion of them because they will shade something or do something to make it spectacular, or not spectacular depending on what they want it to do. If they can use it they will, if they can't, they won't. And I take very little of that, I know from personal experience that... It's as accurate as they want it to be. So I take it that way. So if they were to say something, I would not necessarily believe it.

INT: Was there anyone you particularly relied on during the whole incident, for information?

NAR1: I wrote down the number... They gave an 800 number I think. Or a number... Maybe it was a 201 number, for the, uh, Nuclear... Regulatory Commission, NCR

number. I had that written down, and I would call that number to find out what the status was, for an update.

INT: What did you think about the Nuclear Regulatory Commission? What was your opinion of them?

NAR1: I suppose they did the job that they should – they could do, or shoulda done. I don't think that – I think they went in, they saw the problem, there'd been some human mistakes and I think that they handled it properly as well as... as any other agency does with what they do, with what you can expect of them.

INT: What did you think about the government in general? Now this can be on any level, national, state, local – just, did you have any...?

NAR1: You mean as far as their reaction to it?

INT: Yeah. How they reacted to the problem over there. Do you think that they did the right thing? For example not having an evacuation would be...

NAR1: Oh, yeah, that's right. I think an evacuation would have been a bad thing to happen. I don't think that they should have evacuated until they knew the reactor was running away. And maybe at one moment it was, and then the next moment it wasn't. But, um... I don't think an evacuation was the thing to do. Just like I don't rationing is the thing to do, odd-even works much better. I'm that kind of... So I don't think an evacuation would have been necessary. Never did. Never *prepared* for one – lemme put it to you that way.

INT: Did you ever leave the area?

NAR1: No.

INT: Did you think about leaving?

NAR1: No.

INT: So you didn't pack your bags or anything like that?

NAR1: No. No. The people next door did. A friend of mine had his trailer packed and ready to go and stuff, had his route all planned if they had to go. If we had had to go, I figured that if we'd ever have to go – ahhh... we'd pack and leave. But there were never any preparations to go.

INT: Did you have any idea of the sort of things you'd take with you?

NAR1: No.

INT: So it would have just sort of been, necessities, and you're in the car and out the door?

NAR1: Right, right, right, right.

INT: What would have told you it was time to go? Would it have had to have been an evacuation order? Or...?

NAR1: Um... My conscience probably, but... If, yeah, I guess. I guess. If the governor said, you have to evacuate, then I would. I'd have to trust his judgment and – leave, at that juncture. But I would have to feel that I would have to do it; I never felt that I would really have to do it. I never really did.

INT: What did you think about Metropolitan Edison, the way they handled the situation? Like your wife was saying that initially they were saying that everything was under control and whatnot.

NAR1: I didn't believe it. Never believed it for a minute. The fact, the matter of fact is they didn't know. Nobody knew. But nobody likes to admit it. So they would make a story up. They didn't know what was going on. I have – not a whole lot of expertise, but I know of power plants and stuff like that, and things can go on that they just didn't know. Because I've been there. So, they just didn't know. But you can't come out on radio and say "*buuuuhbuuuuhbuuuuh...*" [*laughs.*] They have to have a story, and that's what their story was.

INT: Uh-huh. All right, let's see. Do you think they're in control of the situation right now?

NAR1: Yes.

INT: All right. Now, what worried you most about the situation? Back then?

NAR1: Hopefully that they would be honest and sincere, and give the public the real answer, when they knew about it, as soon as they knew about it. If they knew that an evacuation was – gonna happen, or say imminent, tell us. "Hey. You better get going, Charlie." Don't wait eight hours and say "Gee whiz. Eight hours ago, you should have had that evacuation, you know." Take a good, hard look at it. That's difficult, I know. A good hard difficult to look at anything, is, you know, hard to do. But they had to take a good hard look and see what...

INT: And then just pass it on as soon as they knew.

NAR1: Right, right.

INT: All right. Let's see now...

NAR2: *[coming back in]* I'm sorry!

INT: In fact, I'm going to just backtrack a little bit, to catch your reactions on a couple things *[talking to NAR2]*. What did you think about the media?

NAR2: The news.

INT: The way they handled it?

NAR2: Well, I guess I relied on the news somewhat, but I really relied more on Jack's reaction to things, and I guess if I would see Jack getting upset then I would feel I should get upset, or there would be reason to be upset, and if Jack said "we're gonna leave" I would say "okay, we're going to leave." I really looked more to Jack to discern what he felt was best. As I said before, I'm not that knowledgeable on nuclear plants, so, I really wouldn't know what they – if they were telling me something right, or telling me something wrong. I did realize as I was reading and listening to the news that, if you want to say the people who run Three Mile Island, didn't seem to be too smart in what they were doing. I mean, it seemed like nobody knew what Joe was doing and nobody knew what Harry was doing. And, you know, I feel with something that big they oughtta have...

NAR1: Well that's because nobody would take the blame, because then, when...

NAR2: That people should be more knowledgeable in what they are doing. Um... As I said, if they were telling me the truth or not, I really couldn't say. I couldn't say. By reading it I can't say that I was... I was concerned, but I wasn't really in a state of panic.

INT: Umm-hmm. Was there any particular source other than your husband that you relied on more than another? You mentioned the NRC with their regulatory commission.

NAR2: No, I have to be very honest now, it's what I would see on TV, or listened to the radio, and Jack.

INT: Was there any particular news station that you listened to?

NAR2: Well I was listening to, I guess I had Carlisle on because I can get that the plainest. And then maybe I did have the Harrisburg station on. But of course they were all in touch with what was going on anyway. ...But I think for the most part during the day when I'm here by myself it was the Carlisle station, and it was the station that we were told to listen to, whichever station that is, now I don't even remember. Then we flipped the TV on and then, of course – you know, every station, every channel was filled with it. And we were getting it right from Three Mile Island, so I... And I listened to whatever they told me the Governor said. Because I thought he handled it beautifully.

INT: Did you have your radio on all the time, or television on all the time, or did you just flip it on occasionally?

NAR1: I don't know. I can't remember.

NAR2: Well, I think we had the TV on when we knew news was on, and that we would get some word of it... *[Begins another comment; unintelligible, drowned out by NAR1.]*

NAR1: I guess maybe I felt somebody in the neighborhood would have the TV or radio on and if there was evacuation, you'd see everybody pulling out of the neighborhood *[laughing]*, then you'd know there was an evacuation, I guess.

NAR2: Wait, wait, I would probably say we had maybe the radio – we went about our business, but in the house. The whole weekend, we did not – he would not let the kids outside. And we realized if there was radiation in the air, it would still get into the house also but we thought at least that was one thing we could be doing, is keeping the kids in the house, you know? Why let them outside? They were unhappy about that because, in fact, our one boy even had to cancel a day planned with his basketball team because we made him, it was a party, we made him stay home. But we explained to him why. That we just felt as parents, we had to make that decision, and we wanted him here, you know, we felt that's what we could do for him at the time. There was always... And the kids had their radios on, they all had their own little, ah, AM radios that got the local station. So there was always something on I would have to say, most of the time.

NAR1: Yeah, right. I'd say within a real short time we'd know, you know, *[unintelligible; drowned out by NAR2.]*

NAR2: What it was, we didn't constantly sit in front of – now, Friday evening we probably listened, because he was just getting home and *[electronic interference]* it was the second week or the second release or whatever. Now Saturday we did not spend all our time sitting in front of the TV.

NAR1: We listened about that bubble, you know. See how that bubble size was.

NAR2: But somebody was – Somebody was always listening someplace, there was always some source of information going on.

INT: Okay, now, you – now we talked about in the beginning what happened, did your attitude change as things went along? Did you become more concerned as things progressed? There was the first release on Friday – or the second release on Friday, and then we get into the bubble days.

NAR1: When were they? That was that weekend, wasn't it?

MH: That was the weekend.

NAR2: The bubble thing started Friday.

INT: Okay.

NAR1: But – well, okay, all right...

NAR2: Because I think we went through Friday and Saturday evening...

NAR1: And then I remember that, um... and, Gail and I have, a given relationship with the Lord. We... I, we have some understanding of how He, how He is working in our lives, okay. And I don't know whether we prayed or if there was a prayer chain or something. A group prayed, and they prayed all over the country. Some night. I don't know what night it was. It was Friday or Saturday night.

INT: Where had you heard about that?

NAR2: I don't remember that. I don't remember...

NAR1: Oh yeah, and there was a significant amount of prayer going on about that all around the country. Through, um... their prayer groups. And I thought she told me, but it was going on, and then the next day, the bubble started to go down! And you remember, they didn't know why. They couldn't understand why. And they were concerned *then* why the bubble went *down* so quickly. They thought something might be going on that they further still didn't understand. Well, I was confident that the Lord, for some reason was showing a lot of people a lot of things. And He was the one that decreased the size of the bubble. Maybe they understand now why. But at that time, that's, I mean, that's what I felt. So I was never... more or less concerned then when I first heard it, and then I said "well, yes, it could be into serious." Because I – I remember praying about it.

NAR2: Well, we made it a family thing [*laughs*]. One thing we got out of the weekend, the family was together because as I said, we did very little, if we had to go outside, very little. And, we kept the boys – the three older boys who are thirteen, eleven, and nine. They were not those ages at that time, they've all had birthdays. We kept them informed and Jack explained to them, and told them what could happen, if the bubble did not go down, you know, what could happen. Then our five-year-old, who was almost five at that time – he was, I would have to say if anybody was frightened, he was the one who was frightened. Because he knew there was something different going on. He didn't quite understand what his Daddy was telling him, but he did know there was a bubble and that bubble had to – go away. So it was – Jack and I of course, prayed together, we prayed individually but then we prayed a lot as a family. And all the children prayed as, when we...

NAR1: That there wouldn't be a meltdown, they knew what a meltdown was.

NAR2: Right. And, um...

NAR1: Or heard the term. And they knew that a meltdown was bad. They didn't know exactly what it was but they knew it was bad.

NAR2: Right. Right. We had told them that if we had to leave, and if there was a meltdown, that we'd probably never return to our home because there would be nothing... we couldn't come back and touch it, it would be contaminated, of course, knowing that... But we assured them that we were with them, and that the Lord was taking care of things. And because of Jack, our relationship with the Lord, we've passed it on to our children. And... It was really a family thing.

NAR1: The concern was the same. Your question is, did your concern change. No, it was the same, would be the most accurate, it was the same. I was concerned.

INT: So it went to a peak immediately and maintained that?

NAR1: Yeah, I was concerned about it, and then I stayed that way until I felt that it was gone. Because, you see, I felt that... I never thought of how close you were to the meltdown. I never thought that way. I just thought it was a serious situation. All right, so then I'm concerned. And I stayed that way until it *wasn't* a serious situation.

INT: Do you remember when that was?

NAR1: I think it was about a week later. When, I can't really recall, but I guess the first critical thing was, [*children whispering*] if the bubble got larger, it would cut the cooling water off and the thing would melt down or some damn thing. Then the second thing was, how were you going to cool it once the bubble was gone now, how do you cool it, because you couldn't transfer the water like you normally could, because you have to keep it in the same building, so then the temperature was critical, it was still... The reaction was still going on, still making heat, but yet you had to get rid of it. And then I felt, well now that that's done, they'll figure out a way or somehow somebody will do something, to start cooling it down. And then when I heard that, that were cooling it down, that was happening, which I think was during the next week, or within 10 days. Then I was more relieved.

NAR2: He would have normally have left on Monday. Jack travels most of the time.

NAR1: Oh yeah that's right. I guess I stayed home that Monday, didn't I?

NAR2: Jack stayed home and of course our children stayed home.

NAR1: Oh yeah.

NAR2: The bishop, now I can't remember, I guess our children stayed home. I guess all the school kids stayed home.

INT: Were the schools closed?

NAR2: I think so.

NAR1: I think so.

NAR2: But then I think St. Patrick's maybe was closed the second day, because the Bishop closed the Catholic schools in the diocese, is that the way that worked? I can't remember.

NAR1: I think. You see, it goes from Harrisburg diocese, see? So if you close the schools over there, they're gonna close them over here, kind of thing.

NAR2: But anyway, so Jack stayed home that Monday. We were all still home. He stayed home. Tuesday he did leave, and then of course he would listen to the news, and then he kept in touch with me by telephone, right.

NAR1: And I think then they started to cool down, but I'm not sure...

NAR2: But he was, as he said, concerned. He wasn't panicked. The concern was there because he did stay home on Monday. He did not leave.

INT: Did you change any of your other routines, either of you, more than you kept the kids in, and you stayed home on that Monday? But you didn't...

NAR1: Only to make no unnecessary trips. I think – we went out once, I think.

NAR2: We went to mass on Friday, on Saturday. Sunday.

NAR1: Yeah, went to church...

NAR2: Um, yes, there was one thing we did do, when did this take place, you know I can't even remember...

INT: You mean the date?

NAR2: Yeah, was it... when was it? Late March?

NAR1: It was around – let's see, that Sunday was April 1st.

NAR2: Oh, okay. The baby was still very young. So, he went to mass – we went separately, because we did not want to take the baby out. We didn't take the little kids out.

NAR1: Right, that's right.

NAR2: So that was the only precaution we took was that, we did not...

NAR1: We stayed in the house. Yeah, that was the only precaution... And downstairs. We stayed downstairs as much as possible.

INT: Is that the basement?

NAR1: Yeah. It's finished, I mean, you know, that's where the one bedroom is, and the family room, and stuff like that. So, whatever radiation was coming, you know, would have to go through like, two layers.

NAR2: But we really didn't change, you know, other than that, we didn't...

NAR1: And, um... Mainly staying in the house. Staying in the house, I guess. And then me staying home from work.

INT: All right... Let's see, did you have any mental pictures of what was happening at Three Mile Island?

NAR2: I didn't.

NAR1: You mean like the bubble itself and that kind of stuff? Just from the photographs all over your television.

INT: So you based things pretty much on the sketches that you saw?

NAR1: Yeah, that's right. And then, that's all. I mean, I didn't dream about them or I didn't pictures them any further than that.

INT: Was your sleep disturbed at all?

NAR1: Mine wasn't.

NAR2: No. *[laughing]* I, my answer is exactly what his was. No.

INT: So you didn't dream about them either, or it didn't disturb your sleep?

NAR2: No, not that I can remember, no. And it did not affect the children. I don't think they were s – ah, they were not frightened. I know a neighbor, her two children were. And, they were kind of – a little nervous. *[Child says something; unintelligible, maybe baby talk?]*

NAR1: *[to child]* Go put it in the garbage. *[Whispers to child.]* Go throw it away in the garbage.

NAR2: If ours were, they did not relay that to us. One time I think they were talking, and it was funny the things that they said that they would take with them.

INT: Do you remember what they were?

NAR2: No. I heard you saying something to Jack when I was in the other room with the baby, and I *wish* I could remember. Because it would – The one boy I think, the eleven-year-old, probably said his money. He's very money-conscious. He can *stretch a dime* miles! So he probably said...

NAR1: You mean what our kids would take?

NAR2: Yes.

NAR1: Oh. I can't answer that.

NAR2: And I'm sure Scotty said that – they also have, Scotty has gerbils. So he probably said his gerbils. But, you know, other than that, I... I can remember sitting in this room, though, and talking about it with them, them saying what they would take. Because we had prayed, and then they were talking about it, but what they said I do not remember. And I bet they don't either.

INT: Did you have any ideas of what you were going to take?

NAR2: I would just take the necessities. I'm sure there would be – if I knew we were leaving and probably never coming back, I'd probably want to take a lot of things, of course, and wouldn't know what to take. Um... If I thought we just had to evacuate for a short time and come back, I would just take the necessities. Clothes. As little as possible, I guess. Because we really – I don't know where we would have gone.

NAR1: Oh yeah, I would go north. I know I would go north on 74.

NAR2: But, I mean *where* we would go. Our destination, I don't know.

NAR1: Oh, yeah. And out towards Ohio. [*Child in the background is making slurping sound with something.*]

NAR2: We did have a friend who did call us up, but I think it was after the weekend, and said her home was available to us in Ohio. And –

NAR1: Who's that?

NAR2: Anita.

NAR1: Oh, yeah. That's where we woulda gone.

NAR2: But that was after the big weekend, you know. So, I really didn't give it too much thought what I would take. I think I probably would have just, if he said we're

leaving in an hour, I would have grabbed suitcases and just probably grabbed – My biggest choice would have been what the little kids would need. You know, and...

NAR1: *[to child making noise]* That's enough!

NAR2: ...and what would be left behind would be left behind. Wouldn't want to leave it behind, but...

INT: You'd have to.

NAR2: Right, right.

INT: Did you have many calls coming in from relatives or friends?

NAR1: *[All laugh.]* Naah, we still don't know why not! But her mom didn't call, her mother calls – you know, just to call to see if she has a cold or something *[More laughter.]* Her mom didn't call, my mom didn't call, they both live in Florida. Neither one of them called. Anita, Gail's girlfriend called.

NAR2: We had one phone call.

NAR1: Is she the only one?

NAR2: Right.

NAR1: Yeah, see...

NAR2: Now my mother had been here to visit us, Jack's mom has been here to visit us...

NAR1: ...I don't think they knew we were this close, I think.

NAR2: ...and that's all we could figure out, is that they didn't realize how close Harrisburg was to us or maybe this Three Mile Island. Now, I have a sister who lived in Pittsburgh for nine years. And who has now lived, they moved to Atlanta a year ago. And I thought for sure she would call. And it's a big joke, because no one called us except this friend of mine, and as I said, she called after the fact. There was still concern. The bubble had gone down, but then as you said they weren't...

NAR1: It was a temperature thing.

NAR2: Right. She called after that weekend. But I talked to neighbors, I talked to one neighbor after it was over, and she had said that her brother-in-law had called from Australia. And he was a physicist, and knew quite a bit about this, and told them to get out. And they did leave, they went to Bloomington, Indiana. They did leave. And I said to Jack, "Gee, people are getting phone calls." And another friend of ours who's from

Germany, her mother called from Germany. And I said “Gee, our own...” *[NAR1 AND NAR2 laugh]*. “Our families live...”, and so it’s been a joke to us. And then, after we had talked to them, they had no idea how close it was to us, and maybe now it’s just as well, because my mother is seventy, his mother – both are widows. They maybe would’ve worried. You know, so maybe it’s just as well that...

NAR1: No, my mom, yeah, if she knew... realized it, she might, would’ve called, but they didn’t know that we were in danger, or....

NAR2: Right, I don’t think they, yeah, that’s exactly it. They didn’t realize how close we were to it. So that’s kind of one of the funny things.

INT: There were some – who was it, someone was telling me that the mayor of Middletown got a few calls from other countries. *[NAR2 laughs.]* He was getting calls from people, and he’d pick up the phone and it would be someone from Germany at a news station and they’d say things like “Hello, hello, are you still there?” *[NAR1 laughs.]* Because Germany had reports that Pennsylvania had been blown off the map. They thought it was all whipped out.

NAR1: Oh!

NAR2: Oh, I didn’t know that! Well that’s why maybe...

INT: So they thought that they’d been all wiped out.

NAR2: Well maybe that’s why Lisa – Lisa and *[unintelligible]*, that’s why her family called from Germany, though, maybe, because...

NAR1: Yeah, that’s why. That’s right. It made me wonder, yeah. Well, I guess maybe somebody had maybe broadcast that a meltdown... you know, wipes out X number of radius, oh, oh, and they’re melting down now, so that means all those people are – gone away or blown away or something. *[Unintelligible comment from background.]* Yeah, I can see where, you know, it gets... That’s what I mean what I was telling you before. Everything gets all blown out of proportion, with the way that media talks and stuff. And like ABC, or NBC, or one of them, in New Jersey, had reported that there was an evacuation. That an evacuation was imminent. And it never was. It never really was, at least according to Thornburgh. It wasn’t.

NAR2: No, I think his words were, if we’re ready, and all they have to do is – if they decided for an evacuation, it was... you know...

NAR1: Right.

NAR2: ...the plans were ready made *[?]*.

INT: Did you have any daydreaming going on about the situation down at Three Mile Island?

NAR1: You mean about what they were doing?

INT: What they were doing, or what you would do, or anything?

NAR2: No.

INT: Did you think at all about what the area would be like, if...? Like if the worst had happened, do you have any idea of what that would have been, or did you daydream about that?

NAR2: I would have to say if I thought that if they did say evacuate, I do remember saying to you, "there will be mass confusion". No, I don't think mass confusion, because I really think the people – I think the community of Carlisle really did a marvelous job, I think, of being controlled, and I think our city counselors, and things did a very good job. I do remember saying to Jack, though, "there will be a lot of pandemonium on the roads". People leaving and we'd all – I had visions of everybody leaving probably at the same time.

NAR1: Yeah, but that would – they'd all be on...

NAR1: ...but, see, like 83, and the Turnpike... and 11 and 15, they would all be crowded roads, probably, because that's where the concentration would be. Unless they all went south, I don't know. We would go this way and hopefully, it wouldn't be that much traffic going north. I don't know.

NAR2: I do remember saying, that "Boy, you know, the roads will be..."

NAR1: Yeah. If, yeah, right, if there was an evacuation, we said, gee whiz, we'll, we'll...

NAR2: We'd all be going the same way. *[NAR2 laughs.]*

NAR1: It'd be awfully crowded.

NAR2: We'd all be going I think the same direction.

INT: Did you think of any danger from drinking the milk or eating the food from the area?

NAR2: I thought about it, yes.

NAR1: I didn't.

NAR2: Um... what took place?

NAR1: Oh...

NAR2: Yes, I thought about it, because I even asked you. What did we have, uh, and this is, I think, afterwards... It might have been milk... *[Child whispering in the background.]* I usually buy milk from Allen Dairy, which I don't know if you're familiar with Allen Dairy...

INT: Yeah.

NAR1: Oh. Oh, I see, you mean... Yeah.

NAR2: ...and, this time I did not, I got it from the grocery store or something like that. And there was something about the milk. And I mentioned it to you. I was somewhat concerned. I wasn't panicked, and I was not...

NAR1: You still bought it though.

NAR2: Yeah, right. Right. But I will have to say, I did maybe think about it. You know, is it safe or isn't it? Because of what then I heard on the news. And read in the papers.

INT: Did you buy the milk from the grocery store because it was from out of state, out of the area, or why did you buy it at the grocery store instead of Allen Dairy, was it just more convenient?

NAR2: Because I go to Allen Dairy like, maybe once a week.

NAR1: It was convenience.

INT: Okay. So it wasn't, you were avoiding Allen Dairy milk?

NAR2: Oh no no no. No.

NAR1: Nah.

INT: Do you think your health might have been affected? Or the health of your children?

NAR2: For myself, I have not really thought about that, because I don't want to think about that. I guess maybe I thought it was possible...

NAR1: *[as NAR2 is talking, makes funny Donald Duck noise, presumably to child]* Not his note! *[?]* *[Continues making the noise as NAR2 talks.]*

NAR2: ...and I put it out of my mind, and I really have not dwelled on that. *[To her husband:] Sssshhh...*

NAR1: *[Stops Donald Duck immediately.]* I don't think that – No. There's not a reason to believe that they've been affected. So I'll believe that they have not been. I know that they were subjected to conditions... *[Child in the background: "Mom?" NAR2: Ssssh.]* ...somewhat different than normal, but how much different from normal can you tolerate before you're affected? *[Child and NAR2 whispering.]* Why worry about something that you can't... There's no real need to worry. You're affected, that's it.

INT: If there were effects, what do you think they might be?

NAR1: I don't know. I haven't given it much thought, effect-wise... *[More whispers in the background.]* ...Um, I've, I've met people who have had large exposures to radioactivity. Like we talk in the order of millirems, okay. I've talked to people who have had exposure as high as fifty or a hundred rem. And, even... They have some residual radioactivity in them, and they're still walking around, and this is over a period of fifteen years. They're military people, in the Air Force, who were exposed to nuclear warheads, and they have the same kind of precautions and danger, you know, when you get close, *[Something drops in the background.]* you got to drive your kind of route, you do all kinds of stuff, so... and decontamination and all that. And so... *[Rustling and rattling in the background.]* I've talked to people who have had high doses, much higher than what we are talking about. And apparently... these are not the people who were next to a bomb, you know, like in Nevada, that they're testing it, you know, that they're testing. It wasn't that high, but... I mean, you know. It was high.

INT: It is a lot more than people were exposed to here.

NAR1: Right, that's right.

NAR2: I, honestly though, I think if I had been in that five-mile radius... of where they, isn't that where they evacuated the pregnant women and mothers and preschool children?

INT: Yeah. Umm-hmm.

NAR2: Now if I think if I had been up there, I probably would be, I probably would have been worried, and probably still. Even though they said there's no way that you could have been touched, I... *[Side A ends.]*

NAR2: *[Side B begins.]*...saying to the Lord that I was very thankful, that I had had the baby, that I was not pregnant. And we had – a friend of ours who was pregnant at the time and I was concerned for her – I was concerned for her mental state, I guess.

NAR1: Who's that?

NAR2: Sharon Rongwood.

NAR1: Okay.

NAR2: Because at the time they weren't sure how much was coming out, if any was coming out, right, and... So if I was up in Middletown and within that five-mile radius, yes, I would have been – I think more concerned than I probably would even be concerned now wondering... did we get any. *[Child begins talking indistinctly in the background.]*

INT: Did you or do you have any idea of what the effects of radiation could be? What it could do health-wise?

NAR2: Honestly, no, I do not. And, is that, I don't know if that's good or if that's bad. It might be good from the standpoint... you know, what is it, "ignorance is bliss," or something like that?

INT: Yeah. Actually I was trying to think...

NAR1: What you don't know won't hurt you.

INT: Yeah.

NAR2: Right. Right. But, so that I really do not know. I do know it causes cancer because I have seen quite a bit, in the paper, and especially with the military men as you were talking before, this now coming out that they're having ca – leukemia, right? Is that not the one? But other than that, no, I do not, I do not.

INT: Do you think your community may have been affected by it? Any lasting effects on the community?

NAR1: I hope not. I don't know.

NAR2: Oh, no, I, I...

NAR1: Around here, I don't think, maybe like closer to maybe Middletown might. I hope Carlisle wasn't. I don't feel it. Put it to you that way, I don't feel it.

NAR2: I hope they were affected though from the standpoint that... They all had to work together. Especially the people who were in charge of our evacuation plan, let's say. And where people would maybe go, you know, within an emergency. I think in that aspect, yes, we were all – The community was affected.

NAR1: Oh, yeah, that way. Yeah, right.

NAR2: I don't think – Medically, no, if you mean it that way. But, yes, I do think we were affected and to a point I think it's a good thing, from one standpoint, that it happened. Because I really, as Jack mentioned before... *[Squeaky toy in the background.]* I really think the Lord was trying to tell us something.

NAR1: I think one of the things He was saying, and He says it all the time, but people don't listen, that He wants to be in control, He will be in control, and He's just showing ya how.

NAR2: And I think we found that out.

NAR1: Not that He would cause, there's two ways of looking, not that He would cause that. But He allows everything that happens to happen. He allows it, there's a big difference between allowing it and causing it.

INT: So you sort of saw it as way of God's instructing mankind then?

NAR1: I'd think.

NAR2: I think he was saying "Trust me."

NAR1: You could certainly get that out of it. I mean, you know, you could build a story for that happening, and building some more confidence and faith in people. Yes, I think it can be used that way.

INT: *[to NAR2* Did you see it the same way as Him allowing it to happen, or did you think of Him causing it to happen?

NAR2: Oh yeah. I think, I would think – I don't say cause. Allow. Right, He would allow, right. And hopefully, we would not sit there and just say "isn't this a terrible thing?" We would get something out of it, which we did. We know the Lord's in command. And – I think that's, well you'll probably get to that, because you have a religious part in there, so...

INT: I've just, I just turned to that section. *[Laughs.]*

NAR1: Oh.

NAR2: We – As I said, we were upset, we would be silly not to be upset...

[Child: "I want sit by Mommy's leg... I want sit on Mommy's leg..." (unclear).]

NAR2: ...and... We... *[Child begins whining more loudly.]* ...As we said, we listened to the news, and if they told us to evacuate, we would be silly if we didn't evacuate.

NAR1: *[whispering to child]* Ssh! Stop it!

NAR2: But, we felt the whole time that we were going to be okay... *[Child crying.]*

NAR1: *[leaving room briefly]* What do you guys want? *[Children talking in the background.]*

NAR2: And, um... So I had a peace about myself. I just knew that the Lord was in control. One way or another. And, you know... I forget what your question was, I don't know what to say.

NAR1: Yeah, that says it all.

INT: Did you think of any Biblical stories or events or sayings? Anything like that pass through your mind?

NAR2: I bet you the kids did.

NAR1: Oh, I'm sure the kids did, but...

NAR2: *[to child]* No, Timmy. ...Timmy, no!

NAR1: There's all kinds of stories all through where the Lord was dealing with the people of Israel. And where the Lord was dealing with His – ah, Jesus was dealing with the people of His time. And time and time again, he would say “Listen to me. I got something to say.” Because all you have to do is listen to him. *[Squeaky toy in the background.]* Um, when Jesus was down being baptized, and the clouds opened up, and the Father said, “Believe in him. I am well pleased in him. Listen to him.” And there's all kinds of stories like that. And this is an example of “World, you better listen to me.” When Sodom and Gomorrah got so rotten – the Lord blew them away. People were so sinful at one time that he flooded the earth, and killed everybody except Noah.

INT: Did you think of either of those during the incident?

NAR1: No. But... My feeling was that He was in control. But it's happened, all through, like I said, biblical history.

NAR2: I would have to say though ninety percent of the people that I talked to, and this is off the track a little bit, said they exact same words that he said. They all said they feel the Lord is really telling us something. And that we better listen.

NAR1: And we just have to listen, that's all.

NAR2: You know, and... *[unintelligible; NAR1 starts talking.]*

NAR1: You know, if you are around and all the earth – it it suddenly rained, and flooded everything... *[laughing]*

INT: *[laughing]* Something's going on!

NAR1: ...wouldn't you think twice and you wish you were in the ark? That was my reaction. I guess a lot of people maybe thought that during the war, I don't know.

INT: At the time did you think of anything, like it might be the Last Judgment, a sign of that coming on?

NAR1: No.

INT: Or, did Satan have anything to do with it?

NAR1: No.

NAR2: No, I never thought of Satan....

NAR1: I'll tell you how I deal with Satan in a situation like that. *[Squeaky toy in the background.]* Whenever the Lord and His Holy Spirit, He will withdraw from a certain area. Or thing, okay, and if He withdraws from there, it allows the Devil to get a foothold. So then the Devil will work. For example... the one that comes to mind is Moses went up – the reason is I because just saw that Moses thing on TV. Moses goes to the mountain to get the Ten Commandments. His people get discouraged and so they build a calf, out of metal, and adore the calf, okay. They, um... *[Child and NAR2 talking quietly in the background.]* What the hell is the point. They, um... The Spirit withdrawn, okay, and then the Devil was allowed to work. So, the result is probably the Devil is just satanic in nature, but it's because the Lord withdrew. So, you can by design say you don't want to be around Jesus or the Holy Spirit, and it will leave... when you're mean, or you're selfish to somebody, you are saying, "I don't want to bother with being kind, Lord. I want to be selfish," and that gives an opportunity for the Devil. Maybe somehow because the Lord withdrew, it gave an opportunity for the Devil and some guy to say, "We don't have to pay any attention to that *[unintelligible]*, or it must be broken, or it must be this, or it must be that". And so the chain of events happened, and then this is the result. So from that point of view, that's how the Devil may have been involved, but not by design. "Well, now, the Three Mile Island reactor down there. I think I'm going to sabotage it," so he proceeds to do that. Nothing like *that*.

NAR2: The Devil is evil, though, and this was not an evil thing.

NAR1: Yeah, that maybe has something to do with it too. I don't know how how... *[unintelligible; NAR2 starts talking.]*

NAR2: I would compare, I would say, uh...

NAR1: Well, that can be evil, it can be bad.

NAR2: I know... I would say, like your energy crisis now. I can see the Devil in the energy crisis because there are people who are in control of the pricing, and who own

these oil companies. And they are greedy. Now, *that's* evil. Because of their evil ways, we are having an energy crisis.

NAR1: Well, maybe that... yeah, that's right.

NAR2: ...Now Three Mile Island, what happened was not an evil thing, and it was not an intentional thing, you know...

NAR1: Okay. Yeah, but the oil shortage, from some points of view, may not be intentional. But, you'll have a hard time convincing a lot of people that it's not, by the design in many places, and that's probably true.

NAR2: But I don't think Three Mile Island.

NAR1: There is a shortage of energy, but the way the lines have built up, the way the price goes up so fast, I don't think that really has to happen that quickly. So yeah, that's a good analogy, that might, that might...explain things.

INT: Does you faith say anything about the rightness or wrongness of man's desire to use atomic power? Do you feel that...

NAR1: It's okay to use it.

INT: It is okay?

NAR1: It's okay to use it. Now: You have to use it *knowing* what its potential is, and take care, and put all the safety precautions that are in there. Now if you ask me if nuclear reactors are safe, I'll tell you no. I don't believe they are. They're not as safe as they should be. That's pretty obvious. There have been mistakes covered up by people who are afraid, who won't admit their mistakes. Probably the biggest and most famous example of recent, is Nixon, didn't own up to it. And it's just going to eat him up until it kills him. People at Babcox and Wilcox and maybe Westinghouse and stuff. Met Ed wouldn't admit their mistakes. I believe if they would admit their mistakes, it'd take them a lot... you know, "Well, we did make a mistake, and we're gonna change this, and this is what we're gonna do," instead of everything else that they try to do, or blame it on somebody, "oh, it's not my fault." Take the blame, and go on from there.

INT: Yeah, instead, they always pass it over, and it really gets cleared up. [*Child talking in the background.*]

NAR1: Yeah, right. Oh, then it is nobody's fault, it's like my kids. All the roses are picked off the bush, but nobody did it. But yet the rose petals are on the ground! Well, they just didn't get there by themselves – but nobody did it. Yeah, see, you got a reactor out – "well it's nobody's fault!" It's all nobody's fault. The government has had nuclear reactors for a long time. And I suppose they've made mistakes too. You know, in ships

and stuff. But they have a lot more precautionary, ah... precautionary, ah, activities, or precautionary, ah...

INT: Safeguards.

NAR1: Yeah. That they educate their guys that use the reactors with, okay. They have a lot more training. You can't use regular powerhouse men in a nuclear plant. I know that. And I know very little about it. I used to design – somewhat of my expertise, I used to design the pellets. Used to work on the pellets that go in the sleeve, you know, in the reactor core itself.

INT: Oh!

NAR1: So I was somewhat acquainted with that, and you *cannot* put normal...

NAR2: Engineers!

NAR1: ...um, powerhouse guys that would run a coal-producing station, into a nuclear-producing station. It just can't be done. Now it comes out, some guy was in here, some physicist, the first physicist to be in there. Says from his observation, ninety percent of the core was burnt up, or destroyed. That's a lot. See, I still don't think – I still – there's *still*, there's still a million gallons of water in there that's highly radioactive. That was a million cubic feet of – x-on, x-on, no...

INT: Xenon.

NAR1: ...xenon gas that's in there. What are they gonna with it? They don't know. They might go in there and find out that the reactor's fine. I mean, it's not very probable. But see, you know what, they just don't know. My answer to that is, until they know, until the facts are in, then I don't have real conclusions to make about what it really is like. I'm willing to wait. I'm willing to get to the answers.

INT: *[to NAR2]* Does *your* faith have anything to say about the rightness or wrongness of nuclear power?

NAR2: No, I will agree with Jack, but I would add to that, for people say, like me, who realize the importance of a nuclear plant and what it *can* give to us, it should maybe be explained more to, say, the public. To the common people, who don't understand the operation of it, who don't understand the good points of it and the dangers of it. And I think that has to be explained to us too, so we know – like I really, in good conscience, cannot go up to Harrisburg and stand with one of those place cards, you know, and say “no more nukes”. Because, I don't know if I believe that or not. I really don't know if I believe we should have them or we shouldn't have them. I really couldn't say yes or no to that because I don't know that much about them. If we're *going* to have them – then I think we have to be told the good and the bad of it, and it has to be explained to us, and I will agree with Jack: We need competent people who are going to run those things.

NAR1: Yeah, but the thing is, it would be very wrong for – for my faith, to build something that wasn't safe, that was very highly dangerous. So, if it's concluded that nuclear plants can't be made safe, then don't build them. Now in whose opinion are they not safe? See, there lies the question. All right, now: obviously because of this incident, and other incidences, there's one up in Detroit now that's just a big – well I call it a boneyard, a nuclear bone yard, okay. It can't be used anymore because of some accidents. What is now being done and what instruction is being taken, what's being done to make them safe? So then if you go through, and then if you go through all these expense to make them safe, can you produce economical power? I'd have to have that question answered. So then, I'm saying "build them safe." Knowing that nothing is a hundred percent. But I think that we are geared to... all electricity. We are so geared to it, it's very difficult to think of being without it. You couldn't be recording a conversation without it now. We are so geared to it, we have electric knives, electric toothbrushes, electric lawnmowers, electric everything! Electric everything – this home is all electric. So, to be without it would be very difficult. So, how are you going to provide in the long run? The fossil fuel's gonna run out. So, we have to be smart enough, and wise enough, to use that, okay – but use it safely, use it properly. That's what my faith would be and it would be morally wrong to do anything else. Granted, it's done everyday. Some Fischer-Price toys are not child-proof, okay. It's morally wrong to make them, if they know that. And, if they don't go through some rigorous regulations or acceptances of them, then you're gonna get too much of that stuff. You're going to get too much of those, um... that wiggle thing that you put on the end of the hose. You know, some can be kids puttin' it in their mouths and somebody turns the water on and it and it choked them. And it drowns them. Those kinds of things. So, they realize it, and they take them off the market or something. So, "all right, well, we have learned about nuclear plants. Are they safe or not? If they aren't, take them off the market."

INT: Do you think they can be made safely?

NAR1: Yes. I'm confident they can be made safely.

NAR2: I would say that also. I mean, man has done so much....

NAR1: Can they? Yes. Will they? Another question.

NAR2: Yes, right, that's right. I think...

NAR1: ...See, you're talking about all the government bureaucracies, and all the other jazz, and so... You, know, there's no question.

NAR2: I wouldn't know how to make them safe. But, my gosh, if whoever came up with the idea of nuclear plants, I'm sure, those minds could, you know, make them safe, yes.

NAR1: The Nautilus is still running and it's been nuclear powered since 1955 or thereabouts.

INT: So if they just put their minds to it, they can do it, then?

NAR1: Yeah. We could also have a fuel-efficient car too. If people would put their minds to it.

INT: So you've heard of that one that gets eight-four miles to the gallon?

NAR1: Yeah.

INT: They probably could have had that earlier, if they'd have really tried.

NAR1: Of course.

NAR2: Well, yeah, that's just it. It's a matter of trying... *[Laughs.]*

NAR1: Now, is that the people in Florida that did that?

INT: I'm not sure of who did it. Someone just told me there was one.

NAR1: The people in Florida – now I don't know how true this is. But the Arabs have offered them already millions of dollars for the rights to them.

INT: Yeah, I heard Japan had offered this person something, you know, a million of dollars or something for the rights.

NAR1: Sure.

INT: They wouldn't sell it.

NAR1: No, no, in both instances, maybe we're talking about the same...

INT: It sounds like it.

NAR1: They turned them down, which is good. I'm glad somebody's got some... But, I mean, there are efficient carburetors, a lot of things. But Detroit owns it and the oil companies own it.

INT: Yeah... All right, do you think religious persons or institutions should take a stand on the use of atomic power? This could be either for or against, but just a public stand one way or the other.

NAR1: No. No qualified, if... I'd think they would have to take on the moral basis, and *if* – if it's *shown* – that a nuclear plant is not safe... Okay, supposing that it's determined, by... just like... I don't know. I'm trying to think of something. Something is

established, “the earth is round, the sun’s up there,” you know? If they’re not safe, or generally considered not safe, by a significant portion, or number of people who know what they are supposedly doing, and then they would continue to be built... Yes, then I think a stand could be taken. That’s morally wrong. Just like a church can take a stand on abortion. Abortion is wrong. And it’s been taken and some people say, “That’s not wrong, you can just do it.” I believe it’s wrong. So, then my church then can take a stand that abortion is wrong. That’s like picking a political candidate. I don’t know that churches should really get involved with that, per se...

NAR2: They should get involved if it’s a moral issue [?].

NAR1: ...because, you see, then it’s not a moral issue, and they’re influencing people politically. And socially. And churches are not in that business, I don’t think. But now, if it’s proven that nuclear plants are unsafe, and a threat to human life, just as much as, say, a doctor doing an abortion is, to that life of that baby, then I would think there’d be room for a stand. With today’s knowledge of reactors and stuff, I don’t know that we could do that, but...

NAR2: I think it’s safe to say it’s probably an individual thing.

INT: So you’d see more of individuals going out then groups?

NAR2: I wouldn’t look to my church. Unless, as Jack said, it was moral question, I wouldn’t look to... I couldn’t go, I –

NAR1: How would a church know whether it’s safe or not? What, is the bishop going to call up the NCR, or NRC, and say “hey, are they safe yet or not? What can I say about it?” See, it’d be an individual choice as to whether they were safe or not. He’d be making that choice. You can’t go by that. You have to go by, are they safe or not? Once established, *then* you can take a stand. Before that’s established, you could not – I don’t think you could take a stand.

INT: When you attended your mass, did it change your thoughts or your feelings at all?
[Child talking in the background.]

NAR1: That I was there?

INT: Having listened to the mass – did it, did he mention it at all in the service?

NAR1: Oh. I guess we, yeah, we prayed, yeah, we prayed about it, that it would, that – I don’t know, that... That the danger would go away somehow.

NAR2: We were praying for the melt-down then. Because, Sunday, that was Sunday morning it was there...

NAR1: That's right. And a lot of churches prayed that Sunday, that's right, that the bubble would [*makes an exploding noise*] – go. Right. You mean to ask for prayers during the mass?

INT: Well, no. Just, was anything done about it during the mass, and then you said that you prayed during the mass.

NAR1: Right.

INT: Then, did that make you feel better that you had prayed?

NAR1: Oh yes, absolutely. Oh, absolutely.

INT: Okay, I sort of jumped a thing there and I lost you for a minute.

NAR1: Yeah, yeah. Oh, absolutely, oh, yeah. Praying always makes me feel better.

INT: Some of the churches didn't mention it. I went to Allison Methodist Church and I was very surprised and got sort of upset that they didn't bring it up.

NAR1: Oh, is that right? I think that... um... well, I don't know...

NAR2: Well, I'm sure they had their reasons.

NAR1: Yeah, I guess they had their reasons.

NAR2: They maybe did not want to cause more panic...

INT: That was probably it.

NAR2: ...than what was it, or maybe they felt they...

NAR1: Maybe they thought...

NAR2: ...they didn't want to say something for fear a parishioner would think they were taking issues and adding something [*unintelligible*]...

NAR1: ...putting it back. See I don't believe in that. They maybe thought hiding it and not talking about it...

INT: Well, we don't know that. We're judging.

NAR1: I know that, but I'm talking about anything. Hiding or putting something back to try to eliminate it, I think is not good.

INT: Mm-hmm.

NAR1: I think it should be something – Most things should be brought out, discussed and then a decision made about it.

INT: Mm-hmm.

NAR1: Hopefully, a constructive thing. Not a criticism kind of discussion, but a constructive kind of a thing where you get your feelings out, and you formulate some opinion, or some decision about what you think about whatever it is. And... well why not talk about reactors?

INT: Okay, I'm going to run back through and find out... Did you think of anything in history, I know you had compared it to the nuclear blasts they had out West, did you think about anything in history, or anything else, during the incident?

NAR1: Only, I think afterwards, I thought about the effect of what a meltdown would have in a populated area. You mean liking it to a...?

NAR2: A history...

INT: Yeah, liking it, likening it, um...

NAR1: ...to a bomb that was dropped in Japan or something, you know?

NAR2: I had mentioned to her, I had...

NAR1: Not really.

NAR2: ...thought about, is it in Utah or Idaho, when was it, in the '40s or the '50s?

INT: They had nuclear testing.

NAR2: They did those, yeah.

NAR1: Yeah.

NAR1: And those men now, are, as the results of that, are suffering from cancer and leukemia.

NAR1: Right.

NAR2: And we used that to explain to the kids what does happen. We had told them there was no more... there was no more... *[unintelligible; NAR1 begins talking]*.

NAR1: Oh, you mean – oh, okay. Well we compared it in that way, yeah. But I never thought about it as likened to similar incidences.

NAR2: I don't know if I...you know, that was such an event... I can't remember.

NAR1: Well, I'll tell you, see... The magnitude, and the castastrophicness of that is so large [*laughing*], to be personally involved with, that I have nothing to compare it to. I mean, in itself, I carried things on pretty much normal – except we stayed in the house. But I was here and the reactor was down there. The reactor never did come into my immediate environment, if you will. If there was a meltdown, and we had to leave, then that's a different story. And you would have lived the great event. But I never thought about the big event or the immensity of it until... long after, weeks after. And then, comparing that with anything that I've ever been in before or could think of, it was so much larger.

INT: [*to NAR2*] How about you, did you think of anything? Any comparisons in your own life? Perhaps of a crisis you've gone through? Maybe just in the way people reacted around you to something.

NAR2: No, I couldn't...

NAR1: Well let's see...

NAR2: I did not think of any crisis. Um – I just remembered thinking... I would have to say it's probably no.

NAR1: See, what we went through, I lived through a hurricane. We went though a couple hurricanes. It was a big blow. There was a big wind, a lot of rain, we were scared. But, you know, in Florida, hurricanes come.

NAR2: I did not link it to a crisis, no. I did not.

NAR1: I've been close to a tornado. The noise is deafening. But this is – It was so different.

INT: That you really can't compare it?

NAR1: Yeah. It was, like, unique. And it was nothing like anything I had seen before.

NAR2: And, you know, I hope you don't think that we were blasé and this and that. [*Laughs.*]

INT: Oh, no.

NAR2: Because we definitely were not. I think we just had a calm, we were, as Jack said, we were very concerned, but we did feel a calmness about us.

NAR1: Well, yeah. What were you gonna do?

NAR2: We tried to relay that to the kids. If, as Jack said, if we were told to leave, we would leave. We weren't gonna be dumb enough to stay here.

NAR1: I wouldn't be one of the guys that, you know, "Oh, dammit, I've been on this island for forty years and no rain or no wind's gonna blow me off, I'm gonna stick here." No, I'm not that bad.

NAR2: But I did not think in my past of any big, I mean we've have been through crises before, also, individually and families, as a family, but I did not think of those I guess.

INT: What we're getting at here is, some people thought of things like, you mentioned tornadoes. Some people said "Well, I've lived through tornadoes, and I could see that, and that was worse than whatever this is going to be." You know, "radiation, it's not going to effect me." So that's one way that people compared back to past experiences.

NAR1: Yeah.

INT: Or they may have thought the opposite, "I've been near a tornado before but this is going to be much worse than a tornado." So, I'm just looking for any comparisons you might have made.

NAR1: Yeah, that's what I say, this is so catastrophic, that it's larger than anything I can conceive... Except living, maybe falling into a hole in an earthquake or something. That would – [NAR1 laughs.] That might send you to the center of the earth or something. But, you know, it's tough. Or maybe there might be a wartime situation, I've never been involved in any. That might be similar to this. Um... Maybe a guy watching a bomb go off in Nevada could liken this kind of thing to that. Or, some dangerous, personal danger that he's been in like that. I could not. I never felt... personally endangered

INT: Yeah.

NAR1: ...in the past, and I didn't feel that way this time either. If I'd think, if I would sit and dwell, "Gee, what if this? What if that? What if?" You know. "What if I had a million bucks, too?" You know. So what-ifs don't count.

INT: So it's not something that went through your mind at this point?

NAR1: No.

INT: Did you think of any movies or stories or anything like that, or books, at the time?

NAR1: Not particularly.

NAR2: Just, of course, *The China Syndrome*, which to be very honest with you...

NAR1: Oh!

NAR1: I don't know if it was a week before this took place, or while it was taking place that I realized what *The China Syndrome* was about.

INT: Had you seen the movie? I've lived through it.

NAR1: But there was something on TV. Red Alert was on television, and it was several weeks or maybe months after. Maybe it was in the summer that I saw it.

NAR2: I think it was a TV...

NAR1: It was a TV thing where a computer had the full control over a reactor, okay. And only it knew what sequence of events could sabotage it. So one of the workers got into the programming mechanism and found out... asked – Proteus, was the name of the computer, “where can I put these five or four bombs that would wipe it out?” And he put the bombs there, and one went off, and then the second one went off, and then to turn on the cooling pump, it blew out one of the fuses that would turn it on or something or melt it down. So this was all programmed, okay? At the end of it was, the computer had all the – beyond a certain – when it gets to the red alert. the computer takes over. Nobody has control of any of the valves, any of the switches, nothing. The computer takes complete charge. And it locked some guys in the vault, after, after, from the couple of bombs that went off. So I watched that with some intensity that I probably would not have watched it had I not been close to this Three Mile Island. [*Conversation begins in the background.*] Ummm... Let's see... They did, they stopped the reactor from blowing up, and they did get the guys out. But they got back into the computer somehow, or they manually changes some valves, but they had to do it forcefully. Do the opposite thing of what the computer would do, see, because the computer as such... saw a given thing happening and it shut this valve. It doesn't know that the men are in there or not. It just knows to do that. And it's all programmed, and if that ever happens, you must do this to prevent a nuclear meltdown. So whether there's any guys in danger or not, makes no difference. “I'm still going to shut the door,” and they're saying “no, don't shut the door.” So what do you do? Well, you got to get in there with a suit and all the jazz to open the door. So. But, I'd like to see *The China Syndrome*. I – what is it?

INT: Yeah, *China Syndrome*.

NAR1: *China Syndrome*. But she don't wanna go see it and I don't know about – you know. [?] I think it'd be interesting.

INT: I saw it about a week before the Three Mile Island.

NAR1: Oh, did you?

NAR2: Now, did that have any effects on you?

INT: Yeah. Initially. The first night when I heard about it, they said...

NAR1: It had to be – it would have to have an effect.

INT: The first thing I thought about was a meltdown. There is going to be a meltdown and that's going to be it. *[Laughs.]* So for that night I was a mess, and afterwards I started getting hold of myself.

NAR1: Because they mentioned Pennsylvania in the movie or something, didn't they?

INT: That didn't click. They did, but it didn't click when I saw the movie.

NAR1: They did. And they were telling me that the, what do you call it, the anomalies, or the similarities were quite amazing.

INT: Mm-hmm.

NAR2: I think I have to say what I have heard... Who wrote *The China Syndrome*? It was the, um... wasn't it, was it the man who wrote *Hotel on Wheels*? Was it Author Hayley *[sp?]* or was it someone else?

INT: I'm not sure.

NAR2: Well, anyway, the man who wrote the book, *The China Syndrome*, he did a lot of research in nuclear plants, am I correct? And he went to one nuclear plant. *[Child talking, squeaky toy in the background.]* And of course they will take you through, and he went right through on a tour. He was with a guide. And he would say "what's that man doing?" and "who is this?" and this person, supposedly, who was giving him the tour, was one of your top officials in this nuclear plant and could not answer many of his questions. *[Child shouting.]* And I remember reading this now in the paper. And I thought, "That's kind of frightening."

NAR1: Oh, I'm sure! I'm sure that these, these...

NAR2: But that – That was – That was *after* our big event, you know. And I think that just kind of...

NAR1: You know, when all this was going on down there, the guy from the Nuclear Regulatory Agency was there. He was in there, with the other guy, looking at the *[unintelligible]*, saying, "Oh, gee, it can't be that hot."

NAR2: *[at the same time]* Right. Right, right, he continued *[?]*, right.

NAR1: The two of them were there looking at it. And I bet you there's jobs and things in that building that the guys there, they just don't know about. Absolutely. That's part of the human error, well nobody ever *[unintelligible]*.

INT: That's what one of our physics professors was talking about, it's just so complex...

NAR1: Well, yeah.

INT: ...that no one knows everything.

NAR2: Exactly.

NAR1: It is a very complex thing, that's why it's not like a regular coal-fired or oil-fired... um, well, say, or conventional power plant. It's not the same. You are dealing with radioactivity and things that are not even... remotely associated with that. The only common thing is is, that you have voltage and current coming out. That's the similarity. And you use steam and you use turbine in there, but the way you get that steam and the way you do things is completely different. The instrumentation is all different, and a lot of things are all different. You gotta know what you're doing. And you gotta be able to... think ahead, or think problems out, "What's going to happen if I do this and that" kind of thing. And obviously it just wasn't there. And they wouldn't admit it I don't think. And as a consequence, you have a meltdown and you endanger people. And I think – I go back to a main reason why, if it seized the attention is because of the catastrophicness of it. The magnitude is just immense! And, because the effect was great – you know, people, thirty-five, forty, fifty thousand people die every day, on the highways. Nobody gets excited about that.

INT: I didn't know that.

NAR2: I don't think, I think he's exaggerating the number.

NAR1: Oh no! Oh no, no no, a thousand people a year per state!

NAR2: You said – a thousand people...

NAR1: Per – per year, per state. Oh yeah.

NAR2: You said thirty thousand, forty, fifty thousand people *a day*.

NAR1: A *year*. I'm sorry.

INT: Okay [*laughing*].

NAR1: A *year*. Whoa.

NAR2: Her eyes got big there, and I thought, me too.

NAR1: Thirty – I don't know, last I heard it was fifty thousand.

INT: *[laughing]* Okay.

NAR2: There's a large number, more than *[unintelligible]*.

NAR1: But you see they're all isolated, individual, "it's your own fault" thing. Nobody gets excited about that. But if you were to wipe out forty thousand people because of a meltdown or something, then you wait and see what would happen. And the first thing that came to my mind is, when they had these big jets, coming out 10 years ago. Airports couldn't handle for that amount of people, and they still can't *[unintelligible; child talking]*. I said the first time one of those things goes down, you wait and see, there will be one *hell* of a "what's this, what's that, how's come we're doing this," we're gonna have all kinds of questions. Well, here you've got a big plant out there and you can't even hook the motors on right. And they've already had two or three incidences already. About... One of them just had to go back to Detroit or somewhere. One of the engines failed and had turn around and go back, one of these 7-27s. *[?]*. You know, when you start wiping out whole cities and large numbers of people, then people get concerned, and say "Oh gee whiz, how'd that happen?" But people everyday killing themselves, what are you gonna do?

INT: What did you think would happen if there was a meltdown? Did you think there would be a big explosion, or did you think radiation would start pouring out, or what did you think of?

NAR1: I never would picture one, but what happens in a meltdown is the thing just runs away, it gets very hot. And I know – I can relate somewhat to the intense temperatures, enough just to melt right through the ground, just melt right to through the bottom of the reactor, and there's a large – I know there wouldn't be an explosion and what have you, but... uh... as such. Because of that nuclear thing, or because of compressed gases, you might get an explosion of some type, but not a nuclear kind of explosion. And then, the contamination would just trickle out, and... you know...

INT: Do you think it would get a city like Harrisburg wiped out, or areas wiped out like that?

NAR1: In the meltdown?

INT: In the meltdown.

NAR1: If one of those plants were to totally melt and used up all the fuel, you'd have areas as far away as Philadelphia affected. It would be a mess. The radiation would just be, just intense. You know where they... dropped the bombs, you know over in the Philippines, not in the Philippines, but those Pacific Islands...

INT: Yeah, Japan.

NAR1: Where they tested them, I mean.

INT: Oh, okay, testing. I don't know anything about that.

NAR1: You know, nothing grows on those islands. And you're not allowed to – you know, and occasionally – I guess it's kind of barren, but whatever vegetation there is there, it's all – you can't go on the island anymore. You know, they would move whole native tribes out, to test, to blow up an island. And nothing grows there. You can't go back to the island. And somewhere, and I think it was in Nevada or Utah, they melted down a reactor as a matter of fact. They just let it go to completion. That thing is still warm. And, underground in Nevada – you know, ground zero and what have you, when you go down in the ground. I don't know for how many years, I don't know if it's still warm, but I've heard, you know, it's still warm. It's been like a hundred and ten, a hundred and twenty degrees. Under the ground. You know a nuclear explosion is quite – quite intense. Millions and millions of degrees. You can't imagine. That's the stuff that the sun's made of, that's explosions going out in the sun, you know. The reaction, the fission reaction starts the fusion reaction. The fusion is what the sun's – and that's, that's a lot of stuff. A lot of energy, a lot of heat.

INT: My dad went to Japan shortly after they dropped the bomb, and he was talking about, you know, they talk – Have you heard of the shadows without the people?

NAR1: Yeah.

INT: And he said he saw those around in Japan. Like there was one, he was describing, with a man raising a whip to hit a horse. And there was the wagon, and there was the man, and there was the horse, just the shadow of it.

NAR1: Yeah.

INT: Like, where they'd been.

NAR1: Yeah, they just disintegrated. You know, it's just...

INT: Because it was a little bit cooler where he was. Wherever that person was, it a little bit cooler, so the shadow stayed. And the surrounding area changed temperature. Changed color a little bit.

NAR2: Oh, for heavens, I didn't know that. I mean, oh...

NAR1: Oh yeah, it's a weird, weird, weird thing. You know, years to know what goes on [?].

INT: Did you ever have any ideas that you wouldn't survive, fears about that? That for some reason you may not live through it?

NAR1: No, then, I wouldn't live through it.

INT: It didn't concern you?

NAR1: No. You mean – am I afraid of dying?

INT: During the Three Mile Island incident, did that occur to you?

NAR1: If you don't survive, you don't survive.

NAR2: I think I probably looked at it that way too. I did not dwell on it. To be brief... I'm sure I thought, you know, "is this going to be it or not?" But I did not dwell on it. *[NAR1 whispers to child; child talks louder.]*

INT: Okay, just about... just about done. Did you find yourself singing any songs?

NAR1: *[Laughs; NAR2 laughs too.]* I wasn't overjoyed, but we prayed. I don't know that we sang any songs! *[laughing]*

NAR2: Now isn't that something. No.

NAR1: Did anybody?

INT: I was singing "Swing Low Sweet Chariot."

NAR1: Oh.

NAR2: Was that just to calm yourself?

INT: It was something that just kept going through my mind.

NAR2: No, than to answer that question, there was no particular song that came to my mind.

NAR1: "American the Beautiful." *[Laughter.]* Nah *[laughing]*, I don't know.

INT: Some people thought of things like, there's "Waltzing Matilda." There was a movie...

NAR1: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

NAR2: *On The Beach!* I was just thinking about the movie as you were saying that. Do you know, that movie did not come to my mind until just now. *[Unintelligible.]* And we had seen that movie.

NAR1: Oh, yeah. It's a good movie too.

NAR2: It was an excellent movie.

INT: I've never seen it.

NAR2: It was a very good movie, probably a little bit before its time.

NAR1: The interesting part of it is, you know, they're on this nuclear thing, and then the war happens and they come up and there's nobody here, right? So, they hear this faint noise somewhere, coming over their radio, right. Some guy had left the phone off the hook and it was dangling. It was dangling against the Venetian blind, and... **[Tape Ends.]**

[Second tape begins; CTX00233.]

NAR2: When was it, it has to be at least fifteen, twenty... *[unintelligible; NAR1 begins talking.]*

NAR1: Oh, yeah, it never, nah, never crossed my mind. Never crossed my mind.

NAR2: Right, I wasn't really, I guess, at that time, thinking of those kinds of things.

NAR1: Right, right.

INT: Did you hear any jokes during Three Mile Island? *[Child yelling.]* About radiation, or Three Mile Island, or people's reactions?

NAR2: Oh, gosh...

NAR1: Jokes?

NAR2: ...I'm sure that I did, probably...

NAR1: "I survived"...

NAR2: As we watched TV, and as I read the newspaper, I'm sure I did, but – to remember any of them, no.

NAR1: I remember I was someplace, I don't know where I was. And I said, I was from – the guy asked where I was from. And I said "Carlisle", and he didn't know where it was, and I said "out near Harrisburg." And he said "Don't get near me! Here, take this light bulb, see if it lights up before I get near you." *[INT laughs]* You know, stuff like that. I mean, you know, that kind of stuff.

INT: Did you think it was funny?

NAR1: Yeah.

NAR2: What the man said to you?

NAR1: Yeah.

INT: How long after the incident was that? Do you remember?

NAR1: It was close. I'd say within a month. And then, you know, everybody was saying "I Survived Three Mile Island" T-shirts. Somebody made a lot of money off of that.

NAR2: That to me – I think that was in very poor taste, I think.

INT: The T-shirts were?

NAR2: Yeah, right. I mean, I would never waste my money on buying them, and I would never let my children have them. I think that was kind of [*Child begins talking more loudly again.*] – in poor taste. That's *my* opinion.

INT: Why was that? [*Child seems to be talking to INT. INT laughs.*]

NAR1: Well, to use an incident like that to make money, when it was a really fearful and critical time for many people. So you don't make fun of it. Something like that. [*Child starts yelling.*] But that doesn't mean that you can't look back on it, and find some humor it, you know, in good taste, I think.

NAR2: [*quietly, to child*] Go to your room [?].

NAR1: The guy was making fun because I was in the area, but – I mean, it was a critical time for me, but he was not really making fun of that by asking me, you know, if a light bulb would light up. I mean, he wasn't really going...

NAR2: To be facetious.

INT: Yeah.

NAR1: If these people in Middletown were so damn concerned for their lives, I don't think that they would make fun of it by wearing a T-shirt. It's one or the other. That's my kind of thing, to capitalize on it. Once they knew it was all over, oh, everything's hunky-dunky now, you think everything is okay, you know, I'm still alive. And then well, we'll, let's see, we'll capitalize on this. That's, that was the thing that kind of bothers me.

INT: Why do you think the person you knew joked about it?

NAR1: Um... To get a laugh. To be clever. There's a lot of people like to be clever.

NAR2: To let you know that he was aware of what had taken place.

NAR1: Yeah, he knew all about the nuclear thing out there and all that kind of stuff, I would say.

INT: Do you remember where that was?

NAR1: It was either at the office or in one of our accounts that we serve. Or one of the hospitals that we serve. I'm trying to think of it, it was in New Jersey. *[Unintelligible; child talking loudly.]*

INT: All right, did you hear any new words or funny remarks? Any new terms.

NAR2: Nuke. *[Laughs.]*

NAR1: Yeah, nukes. I've heard it before, but now I use it. More... I don't know, what would you say, you expect it? *[Unintelligible; child yelling.]*

INT: More as a word rather...

NAR1: Yeah. I relate to the word more than I would before, that's right.

INT: Have you seen any posters or graffiti?

NAR1: "No Nukes".

NAR2: I haven't seen them personally, I've seen them on the news and in the newspaper, and we do know...

NAR1: That's right. If you saw "No Nukes" around, that's graffiti, right?

INT: Mmm-hmm.

NAR1: *[unintelligible]* wrote that one all around.

NAR2: One day, I guess it was the weekend afterwards. Isn't that when the people went to up to Harrisburg, was it the following weekend?

INT: Yeah.

NAR2: And, the kids brought the newspaper in, and said "oh look there's Joey." You know, just Joey. It didn't show his mom, but somebody that they went to school with, he and his mother and sister went up to Harrisburg, and stood on the Capitol steps, and, you know "No More Nukes," or something like that. Personally, I haven't seen any. I haven't found any... *[to child:]* Drew a picture! *[?]*

NAR1: I was out the road out in Long Island, I was out in Long Island. And they wanted to build a plant near this place, and right in the middle of the road was written “No Nukes”. I see it on cars.

INT: Bumper stickers?

NAR1: Yeah.

INT: Okay, have you ever heard any jokes from other crises? Anything else you may have been through? Joking or... whatever?

NAR1: No, I've been through hurricanes and I never heard jokes about hurricanes coming out of that.

NAR2: I'm sure that we have and it just hasn't...

NAR1: Like a tornado comes through like, a town – Oh, I'll tell you what. Like Zenia. There's no jokes about Zenia. Were there any jokes about the Johnstown flood? No.

NAR2: Well we don't know. We were not involved in the Johnstown flood.

NAR1: Do you know of any?

INT: I haven't heard of any, no.

NAR1: I'm sure they're around, maybe they're around, but I haven't heard any. It's funny that there would be humor come out of this, because you see, all of the strain and all of this was by the most part probably mental, and maybe the radiation will have an effect of ten percent, maybe more, we don't know. Maybe it's fifty percent, I don't know. But, I mean, there's no *apparent* danger like in a hurricane or tornado or thinking your house is blown away. Or a flood. You suffer some physical... disheartenment of something. Here you didn't.

NAR2: Well, I think also, just the difference between the Three Mile Island and a hurricane... jokes are coming out about Three Mile Island because that was a human thing. Human people are in control of Three Mile Island. Now, no one is in control of a hurricane.

NAR1: Well also –

NAR2: They're making fun of the operation of Three Mile Island, and maybe the government should be in there saying – that's what, those are the jokes. I don't think it's meant – they're not poking fun – of – of, what do I want, the *seriousness* of the event.

NAR1: [*at the same time*] That's probably right. I mean, you see joking...

NAR2: They're not poking fun of people like Jack and I, or the people who lived through it. They're poking fun at the *operation* of it, and who's to blame of it. And the media, from what they heard in the media. The people who were poking fun – just take Johnny Carson. I don't watch Johnny Carson anymore, but if he poked fun, he probably knows no more about Three Mile Island than really what you and I know about it, you know. But he's poking fun of it because, one man said, "I don't know how it happened." From what he read in the newspaper, just like what we read in the newspaper. So, I think they're poking fun at the *[unintelligible]*...

NAR1: Yeah, there's joke after joke about it, you know – give me all the guys in the control room, and one guy'll ask the other guy, "What's this button for, Charlie?" "Well, I don't know. I don't know, well we better push it and find out," and then the whole thing goes up, or something.

NAR2: They're poking fun at the human part of it...

NAR1: Yeah, that's right.

NAR2: ...they're not – not of the seriousness of it, I don't think.

NAR1: Probably not.

INT: Okay. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

NAR1: That's pretty comprehensive. Um... Questions, I don't know, that answers it all. I'm glad to see the aspects of – where you bring out the technology of what was going on, you know, how did you find out what was going on, and did you care what was going on. Your... religious, or social... and, well, now, maybe, your more religious feelings as to how you reacted to it, because, it was more of a mental thing. And then, what you did personally. Did you leave? And, of course, it all goes back to – a *lot* of it goes back to your religious, uh... And your faith... kinds of feelings. And I'm glad you brought that out. I think that's, that's, I think a strong feeling in a lot of people. A lot of people.

INT: Yeah, it has been.

NAR1: I don't think that – There's nobody who didn't *care*. And sooner or later everybody had to think about it, I think. And how you thought about it depends on... the kind of person you are, of course, your environment, your faith, your social ways and your political kind of things. If you had a lot of Met Ed stock, you're not going to say much against Met Ed. And, you know, how political you can be, how... I don't know, maybe bureaucratic feeling, or something, I don't know. Those questions bring a lot of that out, and I think that's good. So, I think it's a worthwhile thing, I guess what I'm saying is...

INT: There's hope for the project? *[Laughs.]*

NAR1: Yeah, it's a worthwhile thing. If somebody, one of the, what's his name, Lukenheimer, or..? The professor?

INT: Luetzelschwab?

NAR1: No, it was *heimer*, it ended in.

NAR2: Oh, Meshenheimer, here it's, here's...

INT: Malmsheimer.

NAR1: Malmsheimer, right. Maybe when they get all that together, they can use your wisdom and assimilate it [?] and make sense out of it. 'Cause I think there's no question there's something to be learned for it. I know I learned things from it, and I think the Lord is trying to take a macro look, or a macro effect on people, so that they – you know – And they're all gonna learn different things. But I think – It's got its good and bad ways, I'm not saying that's a way to teach. Because lot of people are paying their electric bills, just because of that. So, I mean... I think there is something to be learned from it. I think there's something to be learned from it, in more ways than you learn about ... other things that are going on in the world.

INT: Yeah, there's a reason behind it.

NAR1: It's significant. It was a significant event. You know, I believe something like, there's a reason why each one of the presidents are elected. Those are probably significant events, because its effect is so far-reaching. The election of the Pope is a very far-reaching, the kind of Pope. [*Child yelling; NAR1 talks louder to be heard.*] And why is one Pope made a Pope for what, four days? [*NAR2 says "ssssh".*] How long was it? Forty-four days?

NAR2: Thirty-four, wasn't it?

NAR1: Thirty-four days! Why do you have a Pope for thirty-four days? See, the Lord is trying to *deal*. He's dealing with His people. And these are events. Now, is all we have to do is listen. What's He trying to tell us? And, maybe through all this questioning and conversation kind of thing, or communication intercourse kind of thing, brings all that out. And maybe it can be distributed in a book, or maybe something can be found out about it. Maybe you can conclude people didn't give a damn. Maybe you conclude, "Hey, people really thought twice about this." Or, your normal reactions in this, you know, maybe you can come up with something. I know it's difficult, because you're dealing with people. Study after study you do with people because of the variability in the statistics.

INT: Everything is different.

NAR1: Yeah, the statistics doesn't hold in many of the cases.

INT: That's why we're trying to get five hundred people.

NAR1: Yeah, I think the more that... *[NAR2 talking to child, trying to quiet him down.]* And after maybe five you'll find some trainings *[?]* that you might lead to something else and maybe you need another five hundred. I don't know but, that's right. You seeing five hundred, that's a significant portion of the population.

INT: Well that's why we started with the Dickinson students, and then things that they were picking on, they related to professors, and some questionnaires, and just, it grew from a little thin...

NAR1: Yeah, right. Are you going to go down around Middletown?

INT: No. We're staying in Carlisle.

NAR1: This is strictly the effect of a, like, say, what would you call this? Like a remote community from Three Mile Island? Would you call it remote or would you call it – well I guess maybe call it nearby.

NAR2: I think you'd say remote. *[Unclear; child is singing.]*

INT: *[also unclear; child singing louder, pounding on something.]* Yeah, nearby. It's significant in that we're like just outside of the twenty-mile limit. And a lot of people based things on, "well, on the TV, they always talked about the twenty-mile limit. *We're* outside of that." And it doesn't seem to matter to them that – they think, oh, we're one mile outside that, or we're two miles outside of that. We're outside of that.

NAR1: Yeah, that's another thing you go back to, why twenty miles? You mean the radiation couldn't go twenty-two point five? Or maybe it only went eighteen! That's what I'm saying, you don't know. So that's right, I think that people are concerned in Perry County.

INT: *[to NAR2]* Is there anything you'd like to add?

NAR2: No, I think everything was brought out. I'd like to mention that as we were concerned for ourselves I think we also were concerned about, not just our family but the people here of Carlisle, and I do remember us praying for the people who were on Three Mile Island, the men who were in control. Especially the people who had to stay on the island during this crisis and try to do something about it. I remember praying for them and their families. Knowing how frightened, especially those families must be, that their fathers, their husbands, their sons, are on that island trying to do something.

NAR1: Yeah, and they were – It was a touch-and-go thing, so we prayed that the guys would think about what they were doing and make the right decisions, turn the right dials

and get the right people there to do the job, and I guess the guy was trying to be a hero down there in that little community down there.

NAR2: Dutton.

NAR1: Dutton. He came back and spent his vacation or something. The NCR chief.

INT: Oh. Yeah. Denton.

NAR2: Denton, Denton. *[Unintelligible.]*

NAR1: Yeah. Yeah. He tried to be a real hero out on the dam [?], those people really like him down there because I – and you end up coming back to – He came on as telling them the truth! I think he – I think maybe, I don't know, I can't recall, but I think he was one of the ones who said "well, we just don't know."

INT: He was, yeah.

NAR2: Yes, he did say that.

NAR1: "We don't know, but we're going to do the best damn thing we can do. We're not gonna let it melt down if we can help it, but we don't know." This was the first time for this. Or exactly like it, maybe there's been an approximate meltdown before, or a reactors damaged or something, but it's the first time it's been like this. And maybe they learned. Maybe they learned from that, what safety things have to be done.

INT: Well I'm sure they – yeah.

NAR1: Maybe they've gone a long way to that. And in that point it was good. I'm not saying that that's the way *[laughs]*, I'm saying there's better ways to learn those things, but – don't let it happen again, let's not make the same mistake twice.

NAR2: It was an experience, though, that I'm glad that I went through. *[Laughing.]* Maybe I can say this because nothing happened, I hope that's not – But I feel I grew during that. And I feel our family grew, because we were put together. I think it's something probably we will always remember. Not as vividly as we do now, and this brings it back to us, but I think it'll be – it's even exciting for the kids to be able to say, yes, they were involved in this, they remember it somewhat. Hopefully they will remember the good things about it.

NAR1: Now what will you do? You'll take this tape and type it up. Is that it?

INT: Yeah. And then I – then we photocopy it and give a transcript to different professors.

NAR1: Oh. Is there a way that I could get it?

INT: Sure.

NAR1: Will you maybe send me a copy of it?

INT: Sure.

NAR1: It would be interesting to know what I said! *[Laughing.]* And if you want to use it for whatever purpose, I don't – there's nothing that we've said that we've hidden...

NAR2: I'm sorry that the kids weren't here. I would have liked to have heard Jay, what he had to say. *[To child.]* Timmy, do you remember Three Mile Island? The radiation and the meltdown?

Timmy: Yeah.

NAR2: Do you remember that? Sit up and tell us what you remember about that.

T: I don't know anything about it.

NAR1: *[Laughs.]* What do you remember about it, anything?

T: No.

NAR2: Do you remember anything that, what we did?

NAR1: Did you have to stay in the house?

NAR2: No, if he shakes his head that won't help.

NAR1: Say yes or no.

INT: Do you remember that?

NAR1: Did you just have to stay in the house? *[The younger child is still talking in the background.]*

NAR2: It's when they know they're supposed to talk about it, they won't talk, naturally.

INT: Mm-hmm. *[Laughs.]*

NAR1: Jay would give you some candid... *different* comments. The other two would probably give you what, expected comments. But Jay would have simply... you know.

INT: Would you like me to come back? Do you think he'd be willing?

NAR2: He's right next door, but I don't- I told him about it, and as a matter of fact when I talked to you I thought it would be very interesting to maybe have two or three of the older boys and I told them about it. Well they said, "I'm not gonna talk." [INT laughs.] So I thought, I'm not going to make them...

INT: Yeah, yeah.

NAR2: ...and as it turns out, the two of them are gone. And the older boy is here, and I really think if he wanted to be here, he would have stayed here, because he knew you were coming. But I didn't say, you *have* to sit.

INT: Yeah, no.

NAR2: I really would like to hear just for my own stance.

NAR1: Yeah, well maybe, maybe we could talk to him, and...call? [?]

NAR2: No, no.

NAR1: Oh, oh, all right, then I don't know.

NAR2: It's – I, just for my own sake, I would like this. And he might fool you and he might not say anything. Because he knows...

NAR1: Right, I think because it's being taped, or because it's gotta be...an answer...

NAR2: He's thinking maybe it's gotta be a real good answer...

INT: Yeah, right. That's what we run into.

NAR1:...thinking, rather than, this is gonna [?] – That's right. As to being frank and honest. And personally I know no other way really to be, I don't... want to make it sound one way or the other. It would be awful nice to say, "Hey man, I came out of that thing beautifully strong. I had control of myself the whole time," and stuff. Because nothing really happened, you can say that, but that's not it at all. The way things happened, I know, it was an experience. I think we were fortunate for coming out of it and everything worked out the way they did.

INT: There's one question I forgot to ask, so I'll throw it in now. Did you feel that you had any special responsibilities? Now you felt you did to your family, because you stayed home. Did you feel you had any special responsibilities to your job? Or to the community? Anything at all that required your attention?

NAR1: No. I do know that Carlisle Hospital – my company serves Carlisle Hospital in a couple of areas, and maintenance is one and housekeeping is another. And we had to – They had to evacuate some of the hospital, but they had all the help that they needed. If I had been called on to do something like that, I would have. But you're right. My

primary responsibility was here, that's correct. If I'd been asked to do something else, you know, I would have. The immediate neighborhood, nobody else seemed to be that concerned. That was my personal opinion.

NAR2: Our neighborhood I'm sure was concerned, and we have a lovely neighborhood. And if we would have seen a need here... We'd, we would...

NAR1: I would've responded, I think. But –

NAR2: Yes, right. And the same with the neighbors. I guess we knew that our neighbors were all okay, everyone around, as we knew, was okay. The people that we knew, I remember thinking about several of, elderly women, widows. And I knew that they were taken care of. So I...

NAR1: You know what I did?

NAR2: ...I felt very confident in staying here and taking care of our...

NAR1: I guess...

NAR2: If we would have run through downtown, or something yelling "we want to help, we want to help," I think we would have caused pandemonium. We were not in a position...

NAR1: I said, only if somebody would have asked us, that's...

NAR2: If Jack was a fireman, a doctor, or something like that, where he could have maybe have been doing something...

NAR1: You know, one thought came to my mind, I was over at John's house, I don't know, the Saturday or the Sunday. John is a good friend of ours, and he was the one that had his trailer packed, the batteries charged, the food in it, the bags packed, ready to hook up to his camper and take off the minute they said, "hey, everybody check out." And then I started to think at that point – I don't know what question this pertains, to but I thought, *[laughing]*, "gee whiz, you know, I'm not doing too much!" I didn't have anything packed, I wasn't concerned about leaving immediately. I just had a calmness or peace that things would work out. And that's when I realized it, when I saw somebody else going through the busyness of getting ready. I had to borrow – I borrowed something from him one time. And he was doing all that, and I said "gee, whiz, maybe I oughta be doing something." But I didn't, and as it turned out, it was all right.

INT: Did you feel any conflicts of responsibilities or anything like that?

NAR1: You mean...

INT: Just, like with your job. When you stayed home, was that problem in your life?

NAR1: No. Just, no.

NAR2: No, because he had talked with them. They knew. And they knew his place was here with his family.

NAR1: No, that was not a problem.

INT: Okay, let me run back real quick, I think we've pretty well covered... Was there anyone you particularly mistrusted? This is going back way to the beginning when we were talking about sources of information. Was there anyone who you particularly mistrusted more than someone else, or any one group?... No? Okay... *[Pauses; child talking.]*

NAR1: *[to child]* What?