

Date: Unknown

Occupation: Administrative Assistant

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

NARRATOR: I heard a little of it in the morning on the radio before I came to work and I didn't think too much of it when I got in here...

INT: What day was this?

NAR: Wednesday, the first day. And then when I got in here they were pretty busy in the news department but I didn't think much of it. We heard little bits and pieces. It was like there was no excitement right then and then about 10 o'clock we gals were down on break and one of the fellows came down and said we might have to evacuate. It has really gotten bad there and they were starting to get panicky at that point.

INT: Did you follow the news any more closely than you usually did?

NAR: Oh yes and then working in here they were trying to stay up on it, but at first it wasn't really all that true, it was really the excitement of the ... they thought they'd have to evacuate and it was really quite bad for a while till they brought the men from Washington came up to check it out closer to see what was going on.

INT: What media did you use most? Newspapers, the TV, or radio?

NAR: TV...and the radio and the Sentinnal.

INT: How do you think the media handled the situation?

NAR: Well, I guess they handled it as best they could. I don't know. They were really quite excited there for a while until they calmed down to what they were going to do. I think, you know, I guess they kept us as informed as best they could. Being 30 miles away you know you don't...I thought they did ok.

INT: How about the government officials - how do you think they handled it?

NAR: I thought the governor got a little excited there for a little while till, I forget who the guy is...

INT: Denton?

NAR: Yes, I thought he was so good looking. I think he got things on the right track.

INT: How about Med Ed? How do you think they handled it?

NAR: I thought they were a little sneaky. You know, kinda kept things under cover.

INT: Do you think those in charge were in control of the situation?

NAR: You mean Met Ed or whatever?

INT: People that were in charge of Three Mile Island?

NAR: I don't really think...well, I wasn't there so...you hear different stories on it. I know there was kinda a boo-boo there and they kept it more quiet than what they should have. These questions are hard. Not real hard but...you know.

INT: They are trying to see how you felt.

NAR: Yeah.

INT: Was there anyone who you particularly trusted during the incident? Whose word you particularly relied upon?

NAR: I don't know. One minute you heard one thing and the next minute you heard another and you really weren't sure there. Everybody was jumping the gun on things. I kinda went with Denton. I think he had a lot on the ball. I think he got things straight because this had never happened before and it was quite a thing.

INT: Did you have any mental pictures of what was going on?

NAR: How do you mean?

INT: Did you have any...?

NAR: Oh, I didn't really think of it so much but like when we were just talking with other people about what would happen if we have to evacuate and we couldn't come back and everything would be, you know our valley would be ruined from radiation. I think you think of that in a way. How awful it might be.

INT: If the worst had happened, what do you think would have occurred?

NAR: Well, wouldn't that have been awful. I guess all the people would have had to leave. They might never come back to their homes and things.

INT: What would have occurred with the reactor? Do you understand what I mean?

NAR: Well, I guess everything would have eventually died off and we could never come back. Is that what you mean?

INT: Well, what would have happened physically to the reactor? Like what would the worst be? Do you know what I mean?

NAR: I guess there would have been a lot of deaths and things. I kinda was one that was hoping...I thought they would get things straightened out more or less. I didn't really have any thought like that.

INT: Did you think the reactor would have exploded or we would have a melt down or the worst?

NAR: Kinda at first later in the afternoon they were kinda...through the night, you know, you were listening to it, you didn't know when it was going to happen.

INT: Do you think that anything that happened there affected your health in any way?

NAR: No. I didn't really think of it that way. Because I mean we were far enough away. It wouldn't do anything.

INT: What about food - did you have any ideas about buying food or milk from the area?

NAR: No.

INT: How do you think others reacted to the situation?

NAR: You mean from around here or...? I know my family being from Virginia they called quite a few times and said get out and I said no, we'd be fine. You better come down. They were worried about it.

INT: How did you think it was best to behave?

NAR: Just stay calm.

INT: Did you have any trouble staying calm?

NAR: I was alright, until my boss got all excited and this was later in the afternoon when he was really hyper and then when I went home I said to my family we might be leaving sooner than what we think. My husband said well just stay calm and then my family started calling and got excited. But then I thought I'd just keep my eye on the news and they had kinda a low profile I think on it. They didn't really make it sound as bad as what it could have been. Well believe me, I had my cats packed up, I had my bags packed, I could have gone in a minute.

INT: Oh you were packed and ready to go?

NAR: No... well, kinda. We just would have gone away probably for the weekend or so.

INT: And what else would you have taken?

NAR: Just my cats, that's all. I wanted to make sure that my animals were alright.

INT: Did you think about God during the situation?

NAR: Yeah, we had a church service.

INT: A special church service?

NAR: Yeah, but I just felt that it would be alright, things would work out.

INT: Were there a lot of people that attended this special church service?

NAR: Yes.

INT: It was mainly directed towards the TMI incident then?

NAR: Yes.

INT: So the minister spoke on that?

NAR: Yes.

INT: What did he say?

NAR: Well, he hoped that it would work out alright.

INT: Did you think that it was God's way of disciplining us?

NAR: No. Just somebody's blunder or whatever happened.

INT: Did you think about death?

NAR: No.

INT: Odd questions, huh?

NAR: No, that would be the least I'd think of. I think I'd fight it until I'd be on top there. I didn't think of death, no.

INT: Did you hear any jokes during the incident?

NAR: No, not too many. I know I have a t-shirt now. "I survived TMI"

INT: So do I. Did any books or movies or stories or TV shows or anything like that come to mind?

NAR: Oh I didn't see the movie. I had wanted to but I just didn't get...

INT: China Syndrome?

NAR: Right... you know you saw bits and pieces on TV but I haven't seen anything. I would like to see that movie but other than I haven't seen anything.

INT: Were you singing any songs during that time?

NAR: No.

INT: Did you have any special daydreams?

NAR: No. What do you mean daydreams?

INT: Anything that would be odd?

NAR: No.

INT: Any night dreams, sleeping dreams?

NAR: No.

INT: Was your sleep disturbed?

NAR: Not too much no. I guess because we were far enough away from the main area. You think about the people and how they must feel being right on top of it there.

INT: Did you think this was more frightening than say a flood or hurricane or a war?

NAR: Yeah, I think, because it was pretty close to home. You know it's right in here.

INT: What is your opinion of nuclear energy? Did you develop one or did you have one before?

NAR: I didn't really have one before but I think it is something that we are going to have to face. We have to have it. It's coming and with the accident that's happened in Middletown, I think other places might see to make sure things are safe. I see they have been checking them out, more thorough. It's a shame it has to be like that but I don't think I'd want to live right on top of a nuclear plant. Your home is there years ahead and then they come in and take the land and they build up the thing and it is awfully hard to sell your property and your home to get away. That wouldn't be for me.

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

NAR: No. It's kinda funny when it happened I wonder if anyone thought about the wildlife the animals and things, when it happened. You know the people that had to evacuate, the mothers and things, but then if some of this had affected the animals. I feel bad for them because there wouldn't be anything they could do. If you ever wonder if maybe they might have gotten enough of it and are running around out there. You know, when you think about that.

INT: Did this incident affect your job in anyway?

NAR: I was busier. I had a lot of calls, people wanting to know about it.

INT: Did you feel any special responsibilities?

NAR: Well, I had a couple of little ladies that had called and they were really concerned and I tried to help them and tell them because they didn't know what they were to do if an evacuation came and I told them that we would have some details in our paper and watch for the paper and if they had any questions you could call back. Quite a few there. And the elderly I think, you had to kinda have to look out for them. They were kinda excited.

INT: Is that all you have to say?

NAR: That's about it, I guess. I don't know whether you had any other questions or not?