

Date: August 20, 1979

Occupation: Business employee and spouse

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

NARRATOR: I guess Wednesday morning. It was on a Wednesday. I heard it on the way to work on the news.

INT: You heard this on the radio then?

NAR1: Yes, just on the car radio.

INT: Do you remember what station?

NAR1: It was WHP.

INT: And you?

NAR2: I first heard about it when my mother called me from Los Angeles. She was all worried because she had just heard about it and I didn't have a radio or TV on and I didn't know anything about it. She called me because she was all upset and asked what was going on here that was dangerous and I said I don't know anything of what you are talking about because I have no idea.

INT: Was this the first day?

NAR2: Yes.

INT: She heard about it first?

NAR2: Yeah

INT: So she was really nervous about it?

NAR2: Yes, she was very upset because they had heard about some terrible dangerous radioactivity had escaped and terrible things and they were worried. So, she called. I haven't heard anything about it.

INT: How did she hear, did she tell you?

NAR2: A friend heard it on the radio and called my mother because they knew we were here and then my mother called.

INT: Did you think it was something serious when you first heard about it?

NAR2: I didn't when I first heard about it because when Mom called I immediately turned on the radio and it was a normal everyday program. There weren't like bulletins or flashes, so I didn't think anything of it. I told her that there is nothing on the radio and I haven't heard a thing so don't worry about it.

INT: Were you worried about it, did you think it was something serious?

NAR1: I think more curiosity than serious. From what the initial thing I had heard on the radio was it was an accident and it has been taken care of and there is no immediate danger that type of thing, so I said fine. But I had no idea. I don't think anyone did. But I was not worried at the time.

INT: Did you start to seek out further information about it after the first day?

NAR1: I became more curious about listening to the news and the radio and every opportunity you see what's going on and trying to patch things together of what is going on and what has transpired and what the dangers are. But I think, yeah, as it went on the curiosity became more. It concerned me.

INT: Did you start following newspapers or anything like that more than you normally would?

NAR2: I did, I kept the radio on all day which I normally don't do and when I heard there was going to be a news conference, I would sit down and watch it, which I normally never have the TV on so I watched it more than what I normally, otherwise would of done.

INT: Was she keeping you posted on what was going on or were you listening yourself?

NAR1: No

NAR2: I don't think so. He really wasn't that concerned at first.

INT: Did you change your opinion later?

NAR2: Yes.

INT: What made you change your mind?

NAR2: What changed my mind was all that I heard when listening to the news conferences and different things. The fact that the so-called experts didn't know what was going on and what was happening and the conflicts they had over such things. They couldn't seem to make up their minds whether it was serious or not or whether it was a problem or not or whether they could handle it or not and that's what worried me, the fact that they didn't seem to know what was going on. They were the so called experts and they couldn't seem to handle it and that's what started me getting nervous.

NAR1: I think to me it reached the point of it seemed to be mass confusion of what was going on and no one could seem to know or understand what was happening. And then it reached the point, well, in theory, this will happen or in theory this will not happen and I think in my own mind with the business I had working in seminars...not seminars...in problems of theory, some things look very good on paper but they don't work. Too many outside influences can affect it and there are just too many outside elements that you just don't know exist. So if they don't know what's going on, I get worried.

INT: Did you start talking about it with your friends or co-workers or within the family?

NAR1: I think we talked about it but it was not really in a serious mode. I think at the time it happened. Wednesday, Thursday, and so on it was more in a joking mode. People from other parts of the country would call and say what's going on and I was still looking at it as hey, it's nothing. Everything seemed to be normal. I can look out the window and see the same thing.

INT: You didn't see any danger coming?

NAR1: We kept seeing a lot of spiders outside the building and as long as they are there and they haven't fall, I guess we are all still O.K. If they suddenly fall, we have a problem. It wasn't in a serious note.

INT: Did you find yourself discussing with neighbors or people in the area?

NAR2: No, we didn't really at first. Not at all, I don't think. Everyone, I think was interested but that's about as far as it went.

INT: Then after a while you started becoming more aware that the situation wasn't as...

NAR1: I think Friday afternoon was the climax.

INT: Why? What made you believe that?

NAR1: Friday afternoon when they said well, there is a possible potential of a melt-down, we don't think we have control of the situation and we don't know what's going to happen, I said if they don't know what's going to happen I don't know what's going to happen.

INT: Did you start making any plans then?

NAR1: Yes.

INT: What did you decide to do?

NAR1: We left.

INT: You did leave?

NAR1: Yeah we did, we left.

NAR2: We went to Virginia; we had some friends in Virginia.

INT: And how long were you gone?

NAR1: We did not return til Wednesday.

INT: So your whole family went?

NAR1: Yes, including the dog.

INT: Did you decide that there was anything in particular that you should take with you or did you feel that you were coming back?

NAR1: Well, we had varying concepts.

NAR2: I decided before he came home that I wanted to leave. I mean when they started talking about all these terrible disastrous things that were going to happen or might possibly happen but nobody seemed to know what was going to happen, I thought the safest thing was that the whole family would leave. This was Friday and it was like 6 o'clock Friday and I just thought to myself just take the family and leave. I really didn't think about taking anything along.

NAR1: We did the fastest pack job you've ever seen

NAR2: I just decided that we were more important than any belongings, or money, anything. If there was going to be a disaster, the most important thing was to get the children out at least. And that's what we did. We didn't take much of anything. Not even any money or anything. We just left.

INT: So you packed a few clothes and that's it?

NAR2: That's it. Just enough to take us through a couple days and we left

INT: You said that you was following the sources and that kind of things. What did you think about the media's handling of the situation?

NAR2: I thought that the local media, I guess in retrospect, looking back on it, I thought the local media actually handled it better than the national. The national was all scared and...at least that's the way I saw it. They were actually blowing it terribly out of proportion. Now that I look back on it, at the time though, that is what I was listening to.

INT: The national news?

NAR2: The national. And the news conferences, that kind of thing. But when I look back on it now, I realize that the local radio stations and such didn't put out all that the national did and I really think that had I listened only to local stations or radio stations, I probably would not have gone. As frightened as I did. But in listening to the national and when they had all these diagrams and drawings of what a melt-down would do and the disaster it would cause and all this, I think that's what frightened me.

NAR1: I think when I look back at that same situation; there was a lot at least in my mind of conflict of what is going on. Is there danger? Is there danger? There seemed to be a lot of conflict back and forth. One would contradict the other, it says not its not going to melt down yes its going to melt-down. Some saying yeah, we're releasing radiation and no we are not releasing radiation. It just seems at the time that it was a mass confusion. I would think that in something like that happens again, or similar, to go to one source and release everything through one person so at least what is being said everyone could agree with. We would have one source putting out information, but not Met Ed over here, the state over here, and the federal people over here, and who's saying what? Are they all correct or they all correct or not? Who knows? It was just too much going on. People I think have a tendency to try to listen to the one they feel is fit. One guesses there is no danger, well that's what you are going to listen to, he might not know what he's talking about. He's saying what they want to hear.

AH. Its more reassuring.

NAR1: That's right. Which may not always be the truth.

INT: How about the government, what did you think about their handling of it?

NAR1: I thought the government was , I guess, well first thing I think it was too slow to react. If there is something like this I would have thought there would be some type of emergency reaction that could be put in place much faster than it did. At least to keep abreast of the situation and what's going on instead of waiting til Friday to come up and then diagramming what's happening and what they can do then. Then it was done. By the time they got here, not sorting it out. I would think they should have some controls or something or some type of regulation. I don't know if it's possible, but I think they were too slow. It was an assessment to the situation to me, then make it.

INT: And how about you Mrs. Miller?

NAR2: I don't know, I thought that the state government, I really thought that governor Thornburgh did a pretty decent job in what he did. From what I got from it, what I got...I thought he seemed to keep on top of it and really keep his hands on it and see what was going on and he seemed just from what I saw to really be interested enough to stay on top of it at all times. As far as the federal government goes, I really don't know. I don't remember exactly what I thought at the time. I don't even remember to tell you

the truth when they sent in Denton and all that. I can't remember. I remember thinking of the time that Governor Thornburgh at least seemed to be doing a good job or he could do with his position.

INT: What do you think of Met Ed? What do you think of their situation and the way they handled it?

NAR1: Opinion? Terrible. I think they are one of the best examples I've seen of someone trying to play down something and try to reassure people that there is no danger. I think in their own mind they didn't know what the status of the reactor was. Maybe ignorance is blissful and maybe they were ignorant about the whole thing and since we really can't tell what the danger is-there is no danger. I think it was just terrible.

NAR2: I think that when I first started thinking about Met Ed, I really hadn't really paid much attention at first and I thought of it as an accident or something that happened and the first time I started to get negative feelings about it was when someone from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission made the remark that Met Ed was very short on competent people and when that came out I thought to myself, "Wow, how can they do that. Put people in there that are trained I guess to flip the switches and do what's necessary but don't really have a background education in what they are handling, and if that's true, and that's what I got out of what was said, I started getting a very negative view of Met Ed's handling of the situation and their competency.

INT: Did you find anyone who you particularly trusted during the whole time? Whose word you relied on more than anyone else's?

NAR2: I did. I thought that the one that gave the straightest answers as far as not knowing about nuclear reactors and that type of thing but listening to the news conferences and it seemed to me that straight answers were given and explanations I could understand were given was Dr. Denton. And that was the only one I thought seemed to speak in terms that everyone could understand and answered questions when they were asked.

NAR1: I think he answered...I agree with what she is saying there. He seemed to answer questions honestly on both sides. That the government was at fault, were some of the things, he said they were, Met Ed was.... I think when someone does that I think that you feel more assured that what he's saying is fact, or the best that he knows at that time

INT: Was there anyone who inspired mistrust?

NAR1: I don't even know his name but we was the gentleman from Met Ed who when up and said there is no danger, we have it in control and this was like Friday or something like that. It just...

INT: It was at a time when you thought there was danger?

NAR1: I felt they didn't know what was going on, and there were too many unknown elements to say that there wasn't any danger, and he couldn't say absolutely certain that everything was fine. One question from the reporter, when the reporters would ask questions, he would be very evasive or argumentative with his answers, saying no that's not our position and all this sort of thing. If you can't answer the question straight out without going around the corner or something, ...you don't really know what you are talking about. You are trying to put up a smokescreen or something. I think their whole public relations or news media needs to examine what they are trying to do or where their priorities are. Are they a public utility or are they from Met Ed?

NAR2: I didn't at the time have any person or anything that I felt wasn't being honest. At the time, I really didn't place it on any person or anything like that.

INT: Did you feel at the time they were in control of the situation?

NAR2: You mean everyone overall, or Met Ed?

INT: Those that were working there trying to control it?

NAR2: I didn't think they had it under control from...and I base that on the fact that everything was all reports were conflicting and to me in my mind if one said it was under control and the other says not its not under control, I just got the opinion that no one really knew and therefore I assume from that it was not under control...if they can't say yes it is or they can't say no it isn't, then I assume its was not under control.

NAR1: I look at it as maybe in a row boat going across the lake and suddenly you get a leak and you put your finger on it. The boat is full of water and you've stopped the leak but you still have a problem on your hands and you have a long way to go and you hope that it equates the same way as that. Like trying to keep a status quo and not trying to let it deteriorate any worse than it is but still not improving the situation.

INT: Looking back on it, do you still feel the same way, that they weren't in control?

NAR1: I don't know think so.

NAR2: No not in my opinion.

NAR1: To me if they were in control, layman's opinion again now, by no means I'm a nuclear expert, but they should had or could give very definitive answers to when they could go into a cold shutdown, as to what the status of the reactor was and they didn't know what the status was. They had to go to the second and third stages to even find out what the core temperature was. That type of thing. To me when you do that, any reading you get from any gauge is suspect. And if you are only using one source that's not even your primary source, you are using a backup and backup or something that a margin of error is there. I don't think they really knew what was going on there.

INT: Do you think they are in control now?

NAR1: I think they brought it down, I wouldn't say in my mind that they are in control of the situation. I don't think they will be in control until they can completely cool it down to nothing and go in and look at it. That may be years, I don't know. I think as long as its still in the state that it's in, that they are still not in complete control of the situation. If they lower it down and everything I guess I don't know...I just don't have a feeling that they are in complete control. They are in much better shape than they were but I don't think they are in control.

NAR2: I don't think they are in control yet simply because they are still venting radioactive gasses as such and I consider that as such a danger and if there's a danger of any sort then I can't say that they are under control.

INT: Were you worried about the situation?

NAR1: Yes.

NAR2: By Friday

NAR1: Worse on Sunday

INT: Why?

NAR1: Because I think it kept deteriorating

INT: Were you here then on Sunday?

NAR1: No. We were in Virginia.

INT: What day did you say you left?

NAR1: Friday night.

INT: So what worried you the most?

NAR1: The element of not knowing what would happen if there was a melt-down or if the thing exploded or something like that. What would happen? And no one could really answer that and they would say that our best estimate is this...personally I don't want nothing to do with that. I want to get as far away from it as I can. I don't think at the time that the danger and the risk was worth staying. Nothing is more important than the family. If they're is any danger at all and we sit in Virginia and laugh when we are reading in the paper that Carlisle is designated as an emergency disaster area for people to go to. People are crazy. We're leaving...it's that type of thing. When something like that has the potential of happening, I can't see how you can sit and draw a line around it and say I could be 5 miles or 10 or 30, you don't know. The wind could shift anything.

NAR2: We stopped in Chambersburg and I remember we were sitting in a restaurant in Chambersburg and this woman said no way if people leave Harrisburg are they stopping in Carlisle. She said I don't think they would even stop as far away as Chambersburg.

INT: How far away is Chambersburg then?

NAR1: Chambersburg is about 40 miles south of here, but its south and over.

NAR2: But I just remember her saying that and we thought of Carlisle...we thought it was funny that they would use Carlisle as an evacuation area when she didn't even think the people would stop as far away as Chambersburg. If I lived within 3 miles of there and they said O.K. evacuate, I would never stop in Carlisle.

INT: So you felt you should have gone a lot further than that.

NAR2: About 30 miles.

NAR1: It's just too much of a danger. It's not worth it.

NAR2: It's not like flood or fire in my mind that you could see coming or you would know the perimeter because with radiation there is something you would never know where the winds were shifting to or we would never know which direction it was heading or anything like that. We thought that since you can't tell and you wouldn't know it might just be best to leave.

INT: So you think something like this was more frightening than a fire or a flood or something like that?

NAR2: I think so, in my mind I thought so maybe because you don't know when it's happening. It could have released a lot of radiation in Harrisburg and we wouldn't have known it and it could have been drifting in the air and had the air currents changed or something, prevailing winds, no one would have been able to say its going west or its south or its going north, you know. Rather when there's a river flooding you can usually pretty much tell where it is going to stay in certain bounds and in my mind, it is worse and also because when a flood is over you can go in and mop it up and you could pretty much get back to normal, where we thought with this there would be no way you can clean up and just go back and have everything as it was so in my mind it was much worse.

INT: Did you think it was worse too then?

NAR1: Yeah, I think anytime you are dealing with an unknown element especially one that you can't see, you just have no idea. It's not like a flood or a rainstorm, or even an

earthquake, you could see those. It's there and it happens and it's over with and you can start to clean things up, not like this. In five years ten years you just don't know.

INT: Did the whole thing remind you of the earthquake? Did you start thinking about that or is that just a reflection?

NAR1: It was a reflection but it was completely opposite. Earthquakes occur and happen before you realize it. Its not one of those things that has the potential to build an emotional level up. Its more a peak, something is going to happen sometime They are over with and done with. They are very frightening at the time but it usually lasts a couple minutes and then its over with.

INT: and then you could clean up.

NAR1: Exactly, but not like this.

INT: Did the whole incident make you start to think about something you have experienced, something that you ever found in your past?

NAR2: No, I don't think I was ever frightened of anything before like I was this. To the point where I would leave. Just get up and leave. I mean we've been through earthquakes...

NAR1: Tornadoes.

NAR2: And Agnes and you name it, windstorms and I never once would have thought of getting up and leaving the house and taking the kids and going a couple of hundred miles, but this was really in my mind more serious than anything.

NAR1: I can't really clip out of the past. I think it was a unique experience. I'm sure that anyone don't want to lived through, once is enough

INT: Do you think anything like this has ever happened before? In history?

NAR1: Do you mean a similar type of thing?

INT: Yeah. Or is it totally unique.

NAR2: You mean nuclear disaster in itself

INT: Anything that you would equate on this level.

NAR1: Maybe it doesn't equate...the only think that pops into my mind is something like the black plague in Europe, where you really couldn't see it but it had the potential to wipe out masses of people. You didn't know what caused it or how to prevent it and

where do you go to get away from it? I don't know if they'd react they same way. That would equate something. It just spreads out everywhere; no one is immune from it.

INT: I think that is a good example. So you did make plans to leave and this whole thing changed your ordinary routines.

NAR2: I decided to leave and we left all within about a half hour so it was a very sudden decision and it was take the family and leave and that was it. Just suddenly and we called some friends and most of them that we talked to, in fact, all of them we talked to had said the same thing. They had made plans to leave, and it was all within like a half hour so it definitely changed our normal routine.

NAR1: The ironic I think, most of the neighbors around here stayed.

NAR2: I think we were the only ones on the whole street who left.

INT: Is there any reason why do you know?

NAR2: They told us that they talked about leaving, they were concerned about their families and several of them sat down and said gee, where would we go and what will we take with us but they didn't leave. I don't know why. Every family had to make that decision for themselves.

INT: How did it change your routine at work?

NAR1: Now or then?

INT: Then?

NAR1: I simply called in Friday night and said that I'm leaving.

INT: How did they accept that at work?

NAR1: Several people did. Quite a few did.

INT: Did it cause a backup when you finally got back?

NAR1: No. Unfortunately the type of work I do does not create a back up, if I'm not there it just keeps going on.

INT: Has it affected since?

NAR1: No.

INT: Nothing has changed since then?

NAR1: I still have a few people working for me who live near the area who are concerned. Especially (phrase is not understandable)...he is leaving.

INT: He's leaving? For good?

NAR1: Well, he's leaving until they stop venting. He wants nothing to do with it.

INT: Was there anything that you were watching in particular, anybody you were watching to decide that you should leave or when you should leave?

NAR2: No, I think it was just a decision we had to make for ourselves and I was listening to the radio and watching news conferences, I remember that, and they started talking about all the possibilities of what might happen and I remember reporters saying do you have an evacuation plan and if you did, would you have enough time if you made the decision to evacuate, would there be enough time for everyone to evacuate? And the question was never answered and that worried me that they could not answer that question and I thought in my mind if they can't answer it and that in my mind meant that they did not have an adequate plan to evacuate should they actually come to the point where they say, "Ok, we must evacuate". The fact that they couldn't answer the question in my mind meant that they couldn't do it in time so we thought, I thought, that should people leave ahead of time, at least there would be that fewer people to have to get out should the decision absolutely made, there would be fewer people to have to get out in an absolute emergency and if they wouldn't have enough time, then I thought since we had the weekend, that was one thing that was the deciding factor in my mind there was the weekend and the kids wouldn't have school anyway and we have some friends in Virginia and we would go down and visit them quite often anyway so I thought why don't we just take this weekend and go down. As long as we don't have to stay here for any reason anyway. We had no reason to stay or had to be here for so I thought as long as it would be safer, and why not take the weekend and go down and visit some friends.

INT: Did you have any mental pictures of what was going on down at Three Mile Island?

Any images of what might be happening and what might happen in the future?

NAR2: Gee, I don't think I did.

NAR1: I had a picture of mass confusion, no one knowing what's going on,

INT: And that's what you were picturing there?

NAR1: Yup.

INT: Do you think that anything that happened at Three Mile Island affected your health?

NAR1: I don't know. I hope not. I don't think anyone knows.

NAR2: I don't think it did, here in Carlisle. I honestly don't think so although I remember I had to go into the school on Friday to be a lunch mother, I was scheduled to come in and I remember they wouldn't let the kids go outside and they kept all the kids in the classrooms, they said don't let any one go outside and the doors and windows were closed and all that kind of thing. I honestly don't think it affected us this far away. Now had we lived right across the river or somewhere like that, I think we would have a different opinion. But as far away as we are, I don't think.

INT: Do you think that anything in the community life has been affected? Or is everybody continuing to go along the way they had before?

NAR1: I would think it's probably still on people's minds. I don't think it's forgotten. I think in time we'll be (phrase is not understandable) a lot of things, but I don't really think in this community whether any significant changes have occurred as a result of that.

NAR2: I don't think so.

INT: Did you picture anything that you might consider the worst? If the worst thing had occurred, what do you think it might have been?

NAR1: The top blowing out of the reactor building.

INT: The top blowing out of the reactor building?

NAR1: That's the worst thing that crossed my mind at the time. Especially with the hydrogen bubble forming and...

INT: What do you think would have happened if that would have happened?

NAR1: I don't know. All I know is that if that happened we wouldn't be anywhere near this place.

NAR2: I can remember when we were in Virginia and watching the news they kept talking about the hydrogen bubble and what would happen if it would explode and I remember listening to something on the radio where a man said that the building even cracked...they talked about how it was especially reinforced because of the fact that it was in a landing pattern and how should there be an explosion it probably wouldn't do anything, but they said even a crack in that building would have meant disaster so I didn't have visions of the roof blowing off but I saw even a crack as being terribly, terribly dangerous in my mind. That this would be...and I could easily in my mind imagine that if there was an explosion and even though the building they kept talking about the reinforcements and everything...I could foresee a crack. I thought it was a possibility and I thought to myself if it did, then it would probably be very disastrous with the radiation leaking out even through a crack. In my mind that would be bad enough. Really

terrible even a small crack. To me the building didn't even have to fall apart and everything, just the crack would have been a disaster.

INT: What do you think would have happened if a crack would have occurred?

NAR2: Well, I heard a man talking about it on the radio and he was talking about how it would have wiped out a very large area, practically the whole state of Pennsylvania is what he said, had the building cracked. He said even a small hole he said like the size of a basketball would have wiped out the state of Pennsylvania and that's what he said on the radio and that was pretty awful.

NAR1: I think the whole thing depends on the prevailing winds and what's really in there or what was in it at the time. You can't really answer how serious was it.

INT: How do you think your health would have been affected?

NAR1: Had that happened?

INT: Had that happened.

NAR1: I think it would have had a long lasting impression, effected people's lives. I'm sure it would have killed many thousands of people. It probably would have hurt people for a long time to come and I think they have seen that in laboratory animals. Its not just one lifetime. It is passed on through genes and so on. They stillborn cattle and...

NAR2: When they talked about that, should the building crack and should the radiation escape, how it would affect all these people...the first thing I thought of was the bomb in Japan and I thought of all that those people have gone through and I thought...I guess I kinda equalized it with that. The effects of the radiation, what happened there I could see happening here and that's what I thought.

INT: So that's the worst thing that you could imagine?

NAR2: I think at the time that's what I thought of was the bombs. And how that has affected generations...I guess that's what came to my mind.

INT: Did you have any concerns about food or milk from the area?

NAR2: I did because I was listening on the radio and they kept saying no problem nothing to worry about it still meets our standards and I thought what does that mean? What are your standards? Do you allow so much radiation and is that is considered within a healthy radius. I thought is that what your standards are? I thought to myself if they allow a certain amount of radiation, and they have hit that standard, then in my mind, I wasn't sure that was safe and we started buying powdered milk. I wouldn't buy milk. It was just the way they said it that it still meets our standards that they didn't say it was radiation free or...it kinda worried me the way they said it. I thought what do they

mean by that? And since they didn't come out and say it was radiation free or something like that, it was the way they said it that started something clicking in my mind and it just upset me the way they said it. Not so much the fact that I was so worried about radiation in the milk but the way they said it and I started thinking, I don't think I like that so I started buying powdered milk.

NAR1: It comes back again to how much radiation can a person say is safe. It depends on who you listen to. Each doctor and each agency has its own standards and none of them seem to be the same.

NAR2: There were some that we saw on TV that said we really didn't get enough to worry about, could have had a couple of x-rays and it would have been the same thing, don't worry about it, and others said any radiation no matter how minimal, is dangerous so it all depended on who you listened to and since none of them seemed to be terribly sure of what they were talking about, we thought we would take the very strictest road and go that way.

INT: So were you picturing in your mind the effects of radiation on life and the environment around you?

NAR2: I was thinking of it in the area closer to Three Mile Island. I didn't stop taking things out of our garden and things like that because I thought it had affected that. I was thinking more of the things... I mean they showed pictures on the newspapers of dairy herds closed out right close to it, kept saying that the cows were inside and they have all been sheltered through this and all the pictures that were taken showed them out grazing behind the cooling towers and I thought at the time that just doesn't compute that they all are in shelters and here they are all out grazing and at the time I just couldn't accept that. I thought that as a health hazard things close in like that but out here I really didn't think it affected it.

INT: Did you know how far away the reactor was?

NAR2: Yes.

INT: Even before the incident?

NAR1: Yes.

NAR2: We go into the airport all the time.

NAR1: The new routing of the airport gives you a beautiful view of the reactor now. Before all I could see was the cooling towers and planes would take off and I will always remember landing there as they go down the river and circle over and I would just look down at the cooling towers.

NAR2: I remember the first time we flew into Harrisburg thinking at the time it was very dangerous to have those cooling towers and the plant right there where the plane you know... the very first time we flew in here we came right into where you could look right down at the cooling towers and it frightened me very much at the time I thought to myself how terribly dangerous that they would put it in a landing pattern like that. But then I forgot about it and I really didn't think much of it after that other than the fact that it frightened me and that was 10 years ago. It frightened me at the time to think that the planes came so close and so low that you could look right down into the cooling towers and that really frightened me at the time. Then I forgot about it until all this came up again. I remember thinking then that to me it was unwise to have planes coming right over that so low.

INT: Did you think of your own death or the death of others?

NAR1: I thought more of deaths of others in the state. When we left the fear of the danger of something happening was there, but once we left and were away at least further south, I don't think our death crossed my mind. More so for the concern of people who stayed. It is hard for me to rationalize how someone could live next to the place and not leave. But then again that's there decision.

NAR2: I really don't think I thought about our death, because it was very selfish. But the first thing I thought of was get the children out of the area. If there is any danger, then lets take the kids and leave and once I had made that decision in my own mind, I really don't think I thought about my death or our death or death in the family and it wasn't until we were down there and watching things on TV and the radio and such that they started talking about evacuating hospitals and things and people who couldn't get out of the area on their own that I felt very selfish at the time because I didn't even think of that. It hadn't crossed my mind. The only think I thought of was the children and when we were down there and they said it would take two days to evacuate the entire hospital and I thought wow, it hadn't even crossed my mind, the people who couldn't leave on their own power and that I guess I worried about that. That there were people who couldn't leave of their own will and they might have wanted to leave but because...I thought of mothers who had just given birth and things like that who couldn't just pick up and leave. I thought of that later, but at first after they started talking about the hospitals and the elderly and that, I thought a worry that these people couldn't leave even if they wanted to.

INT: But you felt you yourself thought that you would survive this?

NAR1: Yes

INT: Even if something happened you thought that you would survive because you weren't here.

NAR1: Yes. Where would we go afterwards or something like that, that's a different story.

INT: Had you thought about it?

NAR1: Sure. I think you had to think about it.

INT: Had you made any plans?

NAR1: I think it would be, working for IBM, I didn't look at my job being jeopardized or anything like that but I would assume that we would move elsewhere.

NAR2: If we can move to Mechanicsburg from Los Angeles, we can move anywhere. But we really didn't make any plans to consider that I don't think. I mean I thought about it but we didn't make any plans. It was just wait and see.

NAR1: The only plan that we ever discussed was if we ever move again or anything like that, where are the nuclear reactors in the immediate area we would be moving into and to stay away from them. That would be a consideration.

INT: Did you think of God at all during the incident?

NAR2: I did. I think when I first started getting frightened I did and I guess it's just me but...(tape ended)...And I always think of that when there is some problem or disaster or even going on an airplane I always think of things like that. But when we had made the decision to leave, I thought well, we have that flexibility and we can leave and we have no reason to stay so we did leave but it was on my mind. I always consider that and I thought of the people left behind after I heard about the hospitals and thought about the people who couldn't leave, I thought of that and that was in the hands of God and that's all there was to it.

NAR1: Yeah, it crossed my mind. Like it would help if I could understand what He's thinking of sometimes. If He would consult us before He creates things like this. I think it really hit home when we went to church Sunday morning. You do a lot of praying there. You knew the pastor and even the congregation offered prayers for the people in the Harrisburg area. It was just a strike home to say that this is a reminder, I think it has the tendency to come back and say that no matter how advanced you people think you are, you are not in control of everything. Certain things happen beyond, above and beyond what you can control.

INT: Do you think God was trying to teach us a lesson or anything like that?

NAR1: I wouldn't say a lesson. I would hope that it is a good reminder to be careful of what you do. Understand what you have before you start fooling around. Don't strike a match unless you know how to put it out, that type of thing. At least understand what you have.

NAR2: I always...the thing I thought of was the fact that God gave us this earth to use not to destroy and that's what came to my mind was that when you play around with

things that we don't have enough knowledge about that we are courting with disaster and that came to my mind that here was something that could destroy what He had given us and that we should know what we are doing and that we didn't know what we were doing because we really don't know all that there is to know about nuclear power and why take that chance? Why take the chance of destroying even animal life, plant life, anything that He has given for our use. We don't have the right to destroy that. It is for our use but it's not ours. We don't have the right to destroy it, and I guess that's what I thought about. It was more or less that we don't have the right to take those chances.

INT: So did you pray about anything specific?

NAR2: I remember when we were in church Sunday and they were praying for all those in the Harrisburg area and that God would do what was right and what would be best for the people and I remember praying especially for those who were still there. We had many friends who were still here and I remember praying for them that it would either come under control or they would evacuate. One or the other. But I remember praying about that and overall it would not turn out not to be a disaster that it could have been.

NAR1: I think the one thing on my mind worrying about it at the time was get it over with. One way or the other. Just don't keep stretching it out and prolonging it. If something will happen then let it happen, but if its not, we should get that anguish and mental torture out of your mind.

INT: Did you get any kind of biblical images or compare this to anything that may have happened in Bible history or anything like that?

NAR2: I didn't

NAR1: I never really thought about it. I guess I could think of all the disasters in history that has come from the Bible and you probably draw a relation to.

INT: But none of that ever came to mind?

NAR1: Maybe Sodom and Gomorrah.

INT: Did you feel that you had certain responsibilities during the incident? You were saying towards your family and children, but did you feel any responsibilities toward your job?

NAR1: I felt at that point in time that my job was secondary to my family. The most important element was to take care of the family.

INT: So you didn't feel that there was any real conflict?

NAR1: No.

NAR2: The fact that I didn't have an outside job, didn't really make much difference. I thought at the time, what a terrible decision it would be if I would be a nurse or something and had that type of responsibility where it would be a terrible decision to whether to leave or not. If you felt compelled to leave and compelled to stay, what a terrible decision it would be. Since I didn't have that type of decision to make, there was no conflict.

NAR1: It would probably be a different situation if we were self-employed or had business here. If I close the doors Im not wrong

NAR2: That's why we more or less felt free to leave when we did. Take the weekend...in fact we made a vacation out of it. We went sightseeing in Virginia.

NAR1: I think we tried to let on to the kids to keep them with less concern as possible. Naturally we are concerned and they see that but I think if we try to do is have a good time (unintelligible) whole light, at least try to get something out of it.

INT: Did your kids react differently? Did they start to worry about it?

NAR1: They didn't want to go

NAR2: The oldest didn't want to go. She kept saying what are the neighbors going say if we leave and they don't.

NAR1: She was more concerned on what people would think.

NAR2: We tried to explain to her that it was every person's decision on their own. Each person had to make their decision and it didn't matter what anyone else thought. What they decided was best for their family, what we decided was best for our family. This is what we told her, but she didn't want to go. And she kept saying what about school and then they closed school on Monday so we had Saturday, Sunday, Monday that we didn't have to think about coming back at all because there was no reason, so we told them that school was closed, that changed their mind. They didn't have to worry about that. Then they looked forward to going down and seeing their friends and sightseeing and taking a vacation. So once they found that they didn't have responsibilities to school and things like that....

INT: Did they encounter any ridicule or teasing when they went back to school?

NAR2: Yes, they did. A lot of people said did you leave you know, and then well then they kinda poked fun at them because they left but there were a lot of children from their class left. Some of the teachers left so that made them, I think, feel better and it wasn't so awful but they did get some fun poked at them.

INT: How long was the school closed?

NAR2: Just Monday. But we had talked to the teachers and the principal and told them that we were leaving that we were taking the children and asked if there would be any problems doing this and said absolutely not that this was a decision that was our decision entirely and they had no right to say, hey you cant take your kids away from the area. They told us flat out that this was every family's decision and if you take your children- fine, good luck and have a nice trip and that's it. So we did leave and once we told the kids there was no problem in school and we were sure there was no problem in school...

INT: When you came back or even during the whole thing, did you find that there were certain things that you felt you had to do that you normally wouldn't have done?

NAR2: We had to get some money because we left with nothing. Absolutely nothing. We did have to...

NAR1: We came back.

NAR2: Yeah we came back up, we took the kids down and we came back up.

NAR1: We came back up on Sunday. See we have two cars and we had no idea how long we were going to be gone so we waited until Monday morning, spent the night in Chambersburg, came up here Monday and got the other car and some other things and took a few things and got some money and took both cars down, not knowing how long we were going to be there.

INT: But you did think you were coming back?

NAR2: I think maybe the idea of not coming back crossed my mind. I thought to myself, what would happen if we couldn't come back.

NAR1: She was more concerned with that than I was

NAR2: But I think overall especially when we came back up, when we went down there all the TV you know how terrible everything was and I was getting more frightened there after a while listening then we came back here and it was life as usual, I thought gee what was I worried about.

NAR1: I called work Monday or something and they everything were going just fine. No problems.

NAR2: That really reassured us that there really wasn't anything up here to worry about. So we just enjoyed our vacation and went sightseeing then decided to come back.

INT: Did you feel that there was a certain code of behavior that should be followed during a crisis like this? A particular way that a person should behave?

NAR2: Gee, I don't think so

NAR1: I think in most disasters that we have encountered, there is an expected behavioral pattern that you should follow. I think that most of those patterns are built from previous experience, and I think in this situation there was nothing to build on and I don't think there was any pattern that I would look for people to do. I think everyone had to make their own decisions of what they thought was best for the circumstances on hand. The way the facts was that they were unknown to them, and decide what they wanted to do.

INT: Did any TV shows or movies come to mind when this first occurred?

NAR1: I think *China Syndrome* is the most logical. We haven't seen it.

NAR2: I remember on the TV they were saying *Aha* and it is playing in Harrisburg right now, but we hadn't seen it and it came to mind mainly because that's what its about, but we hadn't seen it so it didn't mean too much to us.

INT: How about any other stories or books or anything like that that you may have started to think about?

NAR2: I don't think there is any that I have in mind.

INT: Did you find yourself singing any songs?

NAR2: No. Nothing unusual.

INT: Nothing unusual.

NAR1: I remember the big crisis on Saturday as far as songs go, is Cindy not being able to hear the top 40, whatever it was.

NAR2: If she was so sure that she didn't hear the top 40 that we assured her that they had top 40 in Virginia too.

INT: Did either of you have daydreams that you remember?

NAR2: Not that I remember. It's been a long while, and I never had any nightmares.

NAR1: I think there was probably too much exhaustion during the day.

INT: It didn't disturb your sleep at all?

NAR2: No.

INT: Did you notice any changes occurring to people around you? You weren't here for the whole incident but the first couple of days you think.

NAR2: No. I don't think I noticed anything.

NAR1: I think in talking to people in...talking to people in other parts of the country, people in other parts of the country were more concerned than we were here. I think it comes back to you got up and went to work on Wednesday morning, Thursday morning, and Friday morning just the same as usual. Nothing changed. I guess people were just more ill at ease and curious about what was going on.

INT: Do you think it changed either of you?

NAR2: I think the one thing that occurs to me the most was when the when we packed up and left and dropped in on these friends in Virginia with absolutely no warning whatsoever and they welcomed us. Absolutely no reservations and they had a houseful of kids which we didn't know at the time. Her brother was visiting with his family from San Diego and we dropped in on them and here they had a whole houseful of people and they set up tents for the kids because there were so many kids that they didn't know where to put them all and their back lawn looked like it should have been a Red Cross Evacuation Center or something and it really...the thing that impressed me the most was that they welcomed us and said do you know anyone else that needs a place to stay. In fact when we came back up they said if you run into anyone who wants to leave and has no place to go tell them to come to our house and set up more tents. And when we went down we just left. We didn't pack or do much of anything. We just left and they said do you need anything...any money...

NAR1: They loaned us money...

NAR2: Anything you know. I think that impressed me more than anything and they said don't worry about anything. We believe in God and that's all that matters and everything will work out and if you need help we are here and I think that is what impressed me the most the fact that we had friends like that. That's the thing that left the most lasting impression on me. They didn't mind that we dropped in and we all just pitched in and made a weekend of it. It was really...that's what impressed me the most.

NAR1: I think even though for me that there are impressions that are there. It happened and we can't erase that and it runs through my mind the potential for something like that happening again. I guess if you say it happened once, and no one said it could happen the first time then it could happen again or something similar. I think it is always sitting there and it is never completely forgotten. It may not be momentarily on top of you r mind but you can see a picture or hear something to remind you that it could happen again. Like a constant reminder.

INT: So you are more aware of it?

NAR1: Yeah.

INT: Did you hear any jokes about radiation or Three Mile Island?

NAR1: As matter of fact we had to give a management meeting in Orlando, Florida in May and we started the presentation by calling it a total management involvement and we had the beginning of each one in large capital letters and we had the rest in small letters like all you saw was TMI and fortunately not too many people associate it.

NAR2: They weren't from this area and they didn't associate it.

NAR1: It was a ball to say the least. We thought it was good. It was a little reminder you know...

INT: Did you hear any other types of joking?

NAR2: I remember that I was at school that day and one of the kids found out why they couldn't go outside, at first they tried to keep it away from the kids, they said well, we aren't going to go out and have any outdoor, anything today if it wasn't in gym outside they weren't allowed to go out at lunchtime and the kids kept saying what's going on, why can't we go outside and some of the teachers of the older kids told them and they started joking about it and just talking about my skin falling off and my hair falling out and they thought this was very funny and they were talking about it and laughing and joking but I guess that was all there was.

INT: Did you think it was funny?

NAR2: Oh goodness no. Especially when they were talking about it, you know their skin falling off and they were laughing and the kids thought this was all fun and games and at the time I thought to myself, its nice to be that young and think of it all as being funny.

INT: How young were these kids?

NAR2: Eighth grade and lower. They thought it was just something to joke about. I think they really thought there was something serious to it because they couldn't go out, but I don't think they really thought about that. At least they didn't let on if they did, if they were frightened. If they were worried, it didn't show. Other than the fact that they were making the silly jokes that that was a form of releasing their worry, I don't know. They were just making silly remarks about it.

INT: Did you hear any adults making any jokes?

NAR2: No.

NAR1: I heard several jokes at the time, but I can't think of them. I didn't think they were funny.

INT: Did other people?

NAR1: Some people laughed. I think you have to look at the seriousness of it. To me at the time, something like this going on, that's not the time to be joking about it. Maybe it's nice to look at things in a light-hearted manner but I don't think that's the time to sit and make jokes about it especially when you don't understand it.

INT: Why do you think they were joking?

NAR1: They were obviously jokes you could tell they were jokes. And they thought they were funny. In another situation and another part of the country, they wouldn't have been funny, but I didn't think most jokes on Three Mile Island were funny. Not then. We did our little Three Mile Island bit down there then to me that's different, you can look back after the fact, it was over there was really no immediate danger. You could joke about it but not when it's going on.

INT: Have you developed an opinion about nuclear energy?

NAR2: I have always been against nuclear energy. Always. And this just reinforced it, because I have always...in fact there was an election here several years ago and I always read through all the people's ideas and what they are for and what they are against and I remember there was one man running for some local thing who was the one thing he stood for was he was against nuclear power and nuclear reactors and I remember thinking because he was and of the other things that these men stood for and everything I read through and everything and this stuck in my mind and I voted for this man and he received 3 votes in the whole township. It must have been me, his wife and I, I don't know. I thought at the time, well I voted for him, but that was one of the main reasons I did vote for him. I've always been against nuclear energy and mainly because I think we don't know enough, simply too dangerous. It's too uncontrollable and this is only (unintelligible). The whole incident, I think just reinforced the whole thing in my mind that I was against it and now I'm more strongly against it.

INT: How about you, have you changed your mind or do you...

NAR1: I always looked at nuclear power as resourceful thing. I was never really for it or never really against it. I could go either way. I'm not in support one or the other. I would think in looking at the energy situation that we are involved with in the long run in the future, I would think nuclear power is probably going to make up a large portion of it. However, I think that we really have to examine or reexamine what we are going with it and how we are handling, I don't think we know to enough about it, for it to go on building plant after plant after plant. With the concept that we are currently using I think there are too many unknown elements involved and I hope if nothing else this has brought some of those to life. Before we really dig deeper into it or really expand we have to understand and let's do a better job of trying to theorize what can go wrong and what can we do to try to minimize the absolute level of danger involved. I equate it to a kid with a new toy. "Look at this weeeeeee! I can do all kinds of things with this. Look

at this weeeeeeeee!” But they really don’t understand what the toy is doing. Just sort of stop and step back and just look at it and reexamine where we’ve been, what we’ve done and where we want to go with but I think I would like to see more solar stuff and more money put into the solar. Maybe a combination of both or something like that. I guess the biggest fear I have is the danger and the potential for a large catastrophe.

INT: That’s pretty much all I have to say and ask. Is there anything else you want to say or anything you may have forgotten?

NAR1: Like I said, I hope after all this has calmed down and everyone does all their studies and the federal government has all done all their hearings that something concrete and definitive comes from all this and it hasn’t been an exercise in futility. You don’t know any more now than when they started. If nothing else, I hope it can be looked at as a learning experience.