

Date: 1979

Occupation: Newspaper Associate Editor

Interviewer: When did you first hear about the incident?

Narrator: I first heard about it on Wednesday, the day that it happened. March 28.

INT: From whom?

NAR: I believe I first heard it on the wire, the UPI wire since we were working in the newsroom and it came in over there.

INT: Did you know the reactor was there before the incident?

NAR: Yes, we had frequently gotten news releases from Three Mile Island before that time, many of which we largely ignored I'm afraid. Simply because they were rather routine but some of them might have given us clues as to what was going to happen had we paid a little bit more attention I feel now.

INT: How far is TMI from us?

NAR: I believe its 20-25 miles from here.

INT: What did you think about the crisis at that point?

NAR: I wasn't too concerned about it when I first heard it. Well, I was concerned on Wednesday but it was a release, I guess, of radiation and release of some gasses and I think at that point believing the calming kinds of reports that we were getting about nothing serious, everything is okay we can solve this problem type of report, so it didn't worry me too much.

INT: Did you seek out further information?

NAR: Well I did in a sense that I listened to the news and read the paper and that sort of thing. I don't think we really became actively involved in actually covering the story until Friday when the whole thing started up again.

INT: You didn't start covering it in Wednesday, when it first?

NAR: No, not really because we felt we would rely on the wire services. Three Mile Island area is not part of what we consider our coverage area so normally we would use news releases and wire stories to cover that until we saw that it really had a potential effect on our own area and then that's when we started really covering it

INT: Did you talk about it with your friends or family or co-workers?

NAR: Oh yeah, there were a lot of particularly after Friday. Some on Wednesday and Thursday, but more on Friday after it really got going. That was constant. All the time conversation, the big topic of conversation.

INT: What did you talk about?

NAR: Well Friday we talked in the office certainly about how we were going to cover the story. That was a main concern of ours. We also talked about what we would do When people really started talking about potentially evacuating the area and I first heard about that Friday morning on the monitor, then we talked about where we would go and we decided we would go to my sister's in Lewistown which is more north from here. Would we get things ready, that sort of thing. We were about to have a baby shower for my cousin and my sister was going to come down with her small child and they decided that they wouldn't and we decided that was a good idea. Why come to the area if you don't have to and my other members of the family talked about whether this pregnant cousin should go to Pittsburg away from the area so that was another topic of conversation and oh just.

INT: Did she decide to go?

NAR: I don't think she did... no, she didn't. Basically the effect it might have on the area, that sort of thing.

INT: Did your attitude change about the crisis?

NAR: It certainly did on Friday. I remember sitting at the terminal the VDT machine in the newsroom and I was on the desk substituting as I am right now, and we heard on the monitor that there was an evacuation alert for a 4 county area and that is really serious. I mean to me that was really serious. You don't just do that for just anything and I ... that was probably the one and only time I really felt a physical effect from this because this is where I was born and where I've grown up and is my home and I suddenly became kind of nervous, kind of oh, I don't know warm, almost teary. I felt like I might cry. I felt like what's going on here, you know. What is this all about, how serious is this and what does this all mean and my thought was and this has been and will be my main concern with all the nuclear energy is what are the possibilities that it will destroy for years to come an area and that you would have to leave and not be able come back and I think that is a tremendous risk to take and if there is a chance of that, that really concerns me and it scared me. I was not afraid of being ... I was not so much afraid of having contact with radiation or being exposed as I was to having to leave and never being able to come back. I wouldn't have even minded leaving as a precaution so much as leaving and knowing that for the rest of my lifetime I can never come back and that scared me and then in the days ahead when I thought well not only do I have to leave and never come back, but I'm not going to be able to take very much, so the house, all the books, all the records, all the things that mean something to me will probably be left behind and then that really got to me and I thought your whole life is just totally uprooted and you start all over again and I

thought that is almost incomprehensible. That was my reaction. I can't even imagine doing that. I can't think of much else that would be worse than that. So that was my reaction at that point. But I calmed down pretty quickly. Especially when we heard that that was just... as the day wore on and as the days wore on and they kept saying probably not evacuation then it didn't worry me as much.

INT: How did you feel about others reactions to the incident?

NAR: Well I didn't... you know it wasn't like if you left, I didn't feel that you... it wasn't a point of ridicule or anything or if you stayed you were stupid. I didn't react that way about it. Most of the people around me were, and I thought I was too really, other than this momentary reaction, fairly calm, and we talked about it, we planned for it. Most everybody was fairly calm. In our particular position, we knew that we would probably be one of the last groups of people out of here because we would be covering the story as long as there were people around to read about it and so we... I didn't even think about leaving until and if something really horrible happened. So everybody was fairly calm. After I had heard Dickinson College professors academic people who have no reason to lie or have no reason to deceive, after I had heard some of them say well we have taken measurements and there is very little if any radioactivity or exposure in this area or problem this far away from the plant, then I began to think that maybe a lot of Dickinson students overreacted by leaving. Except that I know that the reports got more and more preposterous as you got farther away from Carlisle and Three Mile Island, so that I think well, if my parents had been in California, and I had been here they would have been worried so maybe that was an okay reaction after all. I'm sure some of them left because it was a good chance to get away without retribution so I thought that might have been overreacting. We talked to some psychologists and psychiatrists in the area and discussed that (unintelligible) and they simply said that it was a way of coping. Each person coped with it the best he or she could and whatever you did to cope was healthy for you to do. Leaving was the only thing you could do because you had no control over it otherwise so I didn't really... I didn't mind. Each person had to do an individual thing. I would have been concerned with anybody who left and shirked their duty and I felt that newspaper reporters and hospital personnel and people like that had a duty to stay and I would have perhaps looked down on that a bit but other than that, I think each person had to just make up their own mind about it. I didn't worry too much about it.

INT: Did you follow newspaper and radio and TV reports more closely?

NAR: Oh yeah and probably more closely. Maybe more than the average person, but very closely, because we are a newspaper and I'm a newspaper person and that was our job and I would sit in on meetings. You know for several weeks that was really the major story we covered.

INT: Any particular sources that you remember?

NAR: Well we had people down at Three Mile Island so they used sources who spoke at press conferences and the NRC and I covered mostly the county. So I talked to county

civil defense and county commissioners and local officials and fire fighters and emergency... I talked to people at the hospitals. I talked to psychologists and psychiatrists. So I basically covered, how are we going to get people out of here if we need to story and how are people coping, that story so they were my main sources, and Dickinson people who tried to explain a scientific, you know the measurements and also how people were coping.

INT: How did you feel about the way the media handled the situation?

NAR: I think, this is going to sound self-serving, but I think the local press did a fairly decent job and not just us but the whole of the local press did a good job. And the major networks and the major news magazines were not so bad although a couple of major slip-ups caused a lot of panic and that was a problem. Apparently it was preposterous across the country and around the world. I don't know what happened but I heard that there have been stories in foreign countries and even across the United States about dead bodies lying around and things like this. I mean it was really far out. So some of the media really screwed up on it. We, the local press has even been... not us in particular but in general the local media has been accused of maybe playing it down too much. I find that a little hard to believe because it was on our front pages. Our front pages were Three Mile Island for one solid week. And stories about Three Mile Island I for weeks after that so... big headlines and things, so I can't believe that most of us played it down very much. I think we were simply trying to get facts straight and not panic people which would have been a bad thing to do at that point. By in large I don't think it was as bad as some people have claimed... in fact there were some very fine examples of good reporting and trying to do what was right to keep people informed but not panicked.

INT: How do you think government officials handled the situation?

NAR: I just sensed that our own county commissioners, I thought did a pretty admirable job. I think the Governor acted well. I understand that there were some civil defense officials in other counties who just didn't handle it well at all and weren't prepared and I think it was handled pretty well on the local and state level. And of course President Carter's interest was important. The Utility Company and the NRC I'm still very skeptical about. I'm concerned that there were so many conflicting stories and that there were probably attempts at deception to some extent and still today people I talk to don't know what they can believe and don't believe a lot of what they hear because of apparent cases of deception. So it's the utilities and the NRC that I'm more concerned about. I think the Governor did nothing but enhance his image by the way he reacted and local officials I thought handled it pretty well too.

INT: How about the way Met Ed handled the situation?

NAR: Not very well. They looked like they didn't really know what they were doing and they had to call Harold Denton in and really take over and since they had already been apparently charging really high rates from everything I've heard anybody say, this was just the icing on the cake for a lot of their customers. I just well... apparently from general impressions I get from what I read, they didn't know entirely what they were

doing. They weren't prepared and then it took them too long to finally find out that they better call some people in who knew what happened and I'm not too impressed with the way they handled things.

INT: Was there anyone that you found particularly reliable or anyone whose word you trusted more than anyone else's?

NAR: Well the county officials by in large I did. I think . . . this is a general impression that most people held I think. Harold Denton brought a lot of credibility to the operation and he seemed to be a person that you could believe and was playing it straight and was honest . . . seemingly. So I basically trusted what he said. And, you know, county people I trusted by in large and I think the Governor. They got conflicting information too, so that was a problem. Those people the Governor, Harold Denton and local officials I would say basically and I by in large trust media people except that they get conflicting information and its difficult for them to weed it out too and a lot of people didn't know the technicalities of all of this so it was a very difficult story to cover.

INT: Was there anyone who you mistrusted?

NAR: I guess Met Ed and primarily the utility company I would say.

INT: Did you feel that those in charge were in control of the situation then?

NAR: Well, no, not at the beginning. After a while I felt a little bit better about it. The problem was and even today, we are finding out things that we . . . that they didn't tell us or that they may have told us and was false, so I'm even pretty skeptical about the utility and even about the NRC to some extent because there seems to be some problem in their grip on the nuclear power system in the country and how well they were overseeing things and how well they were making companies do what they were supposed to be doing so . . . I 'm not sure they still have . . . every day, well not every day. That's and exaggeration, but every so often you'll hear about another nuclear plant that is having a problem and I'm beginning to be. My skepticism is beginning to rise again so I'm not sure they do know what they are doing.

INT: Do you think they are in control of the situation now?

NAR: Not entirely, no.

INT: Were you worried about the situation?

NAR: At what point?

INT: I would say at its most . . .

NAR: Yes, I was. As I said I was worried about the effect it would have on the area. It scared me a little bit to go down there and I wasn't really down there much during the heat of the thing but later on I was down there. That scared me a little bit. Afterwards I

said to myself a couple of times, why us? We're... it's a wonderful area or why anybody? It's a wonderful area of the country and we are getting really bad press if you will. It's not having a very good effect on... I was worried about the tourist industry. I was worried about the sale of our products. I was worried about a general willingness of people to come in this area and it is a very nice area and it has a lot to offer and I really felt. I've always felt we're kind of unique and special and all of a sudden people are concerned and the thing that they think about when you say central Pennsylvania is Three Mile Island and that bugged me, because I want us to be recognized for our good things, not our bad things. And that bothered me after the thing was all over.

INT: Did you make any plans different from what you ordinarily would have made?

NAR: I think I was thinking that weekend about going to the movies on the west shore and I decided to scrap that because why travel into the area. My sister didn't come down for that party as she was supposed to. We went on with the shower though. That was Saturday night after Friday night so that was right . . . and during the shower, somebody called us and said they were evacuating again. That was one of the real snafos. I think it came on the national news or the local news or somewhere and said that they were getting ready to evacuate and so that kind of excited everybody right in the middle of everything. Well just in general after the thing happened you couldn't make many plans because I was working more than usual so we were all working more than we would have been otherwise. But I changed a few things I guess.

INT: You didn't leave at all then?

NAR: No.

INT: Did you think about leaving?

NAR: I think we got some things together and put them in a suitcase, but then as time went on I realized that I would not be leaving until the very end anyway and I wouldn't have left until the very end so that was kind of a mute point I guess.

INT: What types of things did you put into your suitcase. Like if you would have left, what would you have taken?

NAR: Really didn't think very much about that. I think my mother did more packing than I did. I might have put in a few clothes and a few necessities of life. I didn't really think until about maybe three or four weeks after the thing happened about taking the things that meant something to me and then it suddenly occurred to me that you know that box of mementos and all those special things that you collected through school and college and now with your name on it or when you did anything. Well, then it occurred to me that I could have grabbed that and taken it. It occurred to me how much time would I have had to take the books out of the bookshelves because that means a lot to me and I've been meaning to write all those down and have a list my books, which I could have taken with me had I had it and bought all of them again I guess. I didn't have that. I didn't

really think about that kind of thing until after it was all over and I also then thought about the money I had in the bank and then somebody told me someplace in Washington has a record in a vault somewhere of all the money that people have in banks you could probably get . . . if you could never come back, you could probably get your money somehow so that they have a record of that and you could get money even if you didn't take it with you. Somebody told me that so I thought OK, no problem, but I would have been reluctant to take it out of the bank because that might have been dangerous too, to have money lying around so I really didn't think too much about that until it was all over and then I realized well maybe you really would have been unprepared to go anyplace. I really believed them when they said you will have 48 or more hours to really move out. Now they're saying. . . now I've heard . . . that we would have had an hour. So I don't know which is true. It depends what would have happened I guess. If it had been precautionary, we would have had time, but if something would have really happened, we wouldn't have I guess. So I really didn't think about that at first. I was just going to take a suitcase and enough to stay for a few days because you see initially the only evacuation threat was a simple precautionary one which probably would have meant that we could come back in a matter of a few days. I really didn't believe that I would be going forever. I mean I really didn't believe that it would happen. It concerned me but I really didn't believe it and maybe that's why I didn't prepare for it. I wasn't ready to leave forever and I would have been totally unprepared for that.

INT: Was it your job that made you stay?

NAR: Probably to some extent but as time went on and I read and heard different things I didn't really feel the need to leave. Now if I had been in Goldsboro, a citizen of Goldsboro, I might have left, if I hadn't been a reporter.

INT: Where is Goldsboro?

NAR: It's right next to the plant. It's the nearest municipality to the plant, I think. That might have been different. And again it's hard to say because if I hadn't been a reporter I might have been even more skeptical about the things I read in the paper or heard on the radio and thought well maybe we shouldn't take any chances and if I hadn't been a reporter I wouldn't have been compelled . . . see I was thinking in the back of my mind . . . wouldn't it be neat to go visit my sister for a few days. Probably just what the Dickinson students were thinking so had I not been compelled to stay maybe I would have gone. There's always a sense of obligation with me and if I had been teaching or whatever I might have been doing I probably would have felt a little bit as if I should stay. So if I had to bet on it I probably would have stayed anyway.

INT: Is there someone in your life you were watching in order to decide what you would do? Like if someone that you really respected left, would you have left?

NAR: If Priscilla Laws had left, I think I would have left, because she's done. . . she wrote a book on Xrays and she has always been interested. If she and maybe

Luetzelschwab and those guys had left, that might have been a signal to me, but I feel she would have warned people to leave somehow too so it would be kind of a

INT: Before she left?

NAR: But I didn't think about it. It wasn't something I thought about but as you asked the question, I think, well if they would have left . . . I figure they know what they're doing. Probably I would have been a little concerned then. I don't know if I would have left. Again I would have had to wait until we would be allowed to go and I really felt we had an obligation but that would have been a clear signal to me that there was a real problem here.

INT: Did you have any mental pictures of what was happening at TMI?

NAR: You mean the process itself? Inside like the building and everything? Yeah I guess I did. I guess I sort of envisioned this tenuous bubble floating around and wondering. You know, that kind of thing. When they say meltdown... When they say that, I just immediately think of "poof" of radioactivity just spreading over the land really quickly and just kind of engulfing everything. That's probably a mental picture and yet I knew objectively some of what was going on because of our coverage so... I know I had those pictures too.

INT: Do you think that anything that happened at TMI might have affected your health?

NAR: I don't believe so no. I really don't think there was any... I don't think from what I've heard that there was really any radioactivity level here of any great degree at all and I've heard the head of the National Cancer Institute say very negligible effect even close to the plant and again I've said that to people and they've said "Oh Sure". So, I don't know what to believe but I kind of doubt that there will be any serious effect at least in this area.

INT: That's good because I didn't believe it all.

NAR: Yeah, I don't suspect around here.

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

NAR: The worst... the worst I guess is the meltdown and all the radioactivity getting into the water system and everything... I guess when I envision the worst it would have been having to stay away from here for a couple of hundred years. I don't know if that's what would have happened. It was very hard to get anybody to say what (Tape Ended).

INT: Your health if the meltdown had occurred.



NAR: Well if we hadn't been able to get out, probably pretty severely. But if we had time to evacuate probably my mental and emotional health. But probably not my physical health.

INT: Do you have any concern about the food or milk from the area?

NAR: No, not really, not now.

INT: Did you before?

NAR: A little. My sister did. Even getting it... she doesn't live around here but they got milk from here and they have a small child. That concerned me. I thought about her.

INT: Did you picture in your mind any effects of radiation on life around you?

NAR: If the worst had happened or just in general?

INT: Well just the effects of radiation. if the radiation had spread all over.

NAR: I guess I didn't see it as it really physically changing anything but changing, you know, because you really can't see it, but just making everything kind of inaccessible.

INT: Did you think of your own death?

NAR: It didn't occur to me that I would die out of this, no.

INT: What reassured you that you wouldn't die?

NAR: Well, that I would get out in time. We weren't talking, I don't think, well I guess we were talking... still this is a little confusing to me. I don't think we were talking about fallout as in fallout from a bomb. We were talking about radiation. I kind of assumed I would get out in time or that if I had a really bad exposure I might be able to be treated for it. Then if I would have had a bad exposure in the long run, it might have been a problem.

INT: Did you think about God during the incident?

NAR: Yeah. I consider myself fairly religious and prayed a lot about it and of course it was discussed in church. I was happy that our minister I think used a sermon and discussed the situation and mentioned it.

INT: He used the entire sermon?

NAR: I believe he did. Or at least based his message on what was happening and that kind of situation.

INT: You attended a Protestant Church?

NAR: Yeah. There was really... when you sense that human beings had so little control, there was really only one place to go and I had... and that's I guess where I really felt as if everything would be all right, because I had faith that this kind of thing wouldn't be allowed to happen. Certainly humans weren't doing anything to prevent it necessarily.

INT: Were more or fewer people at church during this time?

NAR: I think it was about the same. Maybe a few people... I noticed real looks of concern on some people more so than had been, but I remember the Sunday... and I don't remember how long after it was. I think it might have been even the next week when it looked as if, or the next two, when the danger was over. I personally felt a real sense of joyousness and relief and I remember, vaguely remember the church service that week and how wonderful it was. It was like a big burden had been lifted off our shoulders and we were there and we wouldn't have to leave and it seemed like a big crowd that day, but maybe it was just all in my head, because I really felt good about it.

INT: Did any Biblical stories come to your mind?

NAR: I don't think so, no. Maybe some thought about the kinds of disasters that some biblical people experienced and how they handled them and this was... but their threats were generally more tangible which would have been probably in a sense easier to deal with except we really never had to deal with this. It was just dealing with the expectation so it turned out OK for us. I don't think so, I think it was just a general talking with God, praying to God that kind of thing with me. Not anything that... not any stories or anything.

INT: Did the idea of Satan or the Last Judgment or the end of the world come to mind?

NAR: No, I didn't consider it to be that kind of thing.

INT: Did you consider the incident related in any way to God's instructing or disciplining mankind?

NAR: No, every once in a while I wonder about our move into technology and sophistication and it all seems kind of really far removed from what I think about when I think about God and I think what does He really think about all of this. And of course this is a big part of the technology question and that sort of thing. But then I wonder well we were given the ability to develop this technology so it can't be all bad. But then we end up doing the wrong things with it. Occasionally I think (what is that that I think about that) why do we have the capability to destroy ourselves. It seems kinda... and yet I guess I'm one of those people who believes that if you have faith, God does play a big part in what happens even day to day. But on the other hand to some extent I believe that he gives you capabilities and minds and thoughts and you to a large extent are responsible which is why He has to appeal to you to believe to Him because He doesn't

just make you believe in Him. You decide your own destiny. You decide whether you even believe in God. So naturally he is going to allow you to either create or destroy or whatever and you suffer the consequences. So I guess... I think about that though. It is all related to this, but I think about these things months later. Not really at the time.

INT: What does your own faith say about the rightness or wrongness of man's desire to use and control atomic power?

NAR: As I say, we have been given the capability and I think harnessing power for energy use and electricity and that sort of thing is a positive use of it. With everything good there is bad. You can take anything good and tear it apart or change it around and make it bad. That's the nature of life. So we make those decisions. I do question how we could ever have come to the point where we could... are we right in having this capability when it has the potential for destroying our land and our lives and everything else and then I wonder if we are really going in the right direction with energy but that's a secular mankind problem, I think. I think that's a decision we all have to make. So I think it is OK to have the capability and even to develop it but have we developed something that we really don't have control over and can we ever get control over it? That's what concerns me. I'm not sure... that's a moral question, but I'm not sure that it can be decided by religious involvement.

INT: Do you think religious people or institutions should take a public stand on human development and the use of atomic power?

NAR: I guess... yeah, I guess. At least in a top level way. I think it would be..I'm not sure each individual minister in Carlisle should start speaking out on everything because I think that might be chaotic and divisive. And in this way our minister believes these things about God and Christ and from that flows everything else. All the little individual things you can all sort of think what you want except your beliefs ought to be based to a large extent on your fundamental beliefs but I do believe the church has an obligation to be activist in a sense in a tasteful kind of or a useful kind of sense. I don't think, you know, in other words Three Mile Island was happening. I just would have been shocked out of my wits if churches had not discussed this and tried to deal with it. Because the church is part of the world and the church... if you're not dealing with people's problems and with serious questions like that then you're not doing your job as a church. So I guess I believe that they should.

INT: Did you feel you had certain responsibilities during the incident?

NAR: Well I definitely did as a reporter. Big responsibilities to keep people informed and help them to know everything they needed to know and to not screw up in the sense that you panic them needlessly. So I think they were pretty good responsibilities.

INT: Did they conflict in any way?

NAR: You mean keeping them informed and not panicking them? Or personal and professional?

INT: Yes.

NAR: No, not in this case. When I think back on it, I think, you know, I feel such a closeness to the area that I would have wanted to stay till the last minute anyway, from my own personal like as a caretaker or just to be here as long as I could. I didn't sense any great emotional or mental conflicts between having to stay because I work at the Sentinel and wanting to go because I was an individual.

INT: Did you have any ideas about how it would be best to behave in this kind of situation?

NAR: Calmly, try to seek out the facts and determine to the best of your ability what the real facts were and depending on where you were, I probably... there were days when had I had small children I might have kept them in. I don't know that it would have been necessary to take them away. But if I had been able to, I might have because I'm concerned about children. If I had been very close I certainly would have gotten my children out. If I would have been pregnant I would have probably gotten out had I been in a 5-10 mile radius and I don't think that's a cowardly act, I think that is just sense, but to try not to panic and to try to help other people in particular those who are alone or old and sick and those kinds of people. Either help them understand or help them to do whatever they want to do. Either get out or whatever.

INT: Was there any difficulty in trying to behave calmly? Did you find it difficult to behave that way?

NAR: Once or twice when I heard these evacuation things I got a little... I am not prone to run around excitedly. I'm kinda subdued so I'm usually excited inside and sometimes people can't tell, but... I guess a couple times when they talked about evacuation it would have been a little difficult but other than that, no. We were just trying to run around and cover the story. That was the main problem.

INT: At the time, did this event bring to mind any past experiences or past events?

NAR: It... well for a few days it made me feel as if we...it made me feel like there were a bond between everybody. We were all facing a common crisis. People were trying to work together as far as I could tell and it was a closeness that you get when you feel that you are all experiencing a common thing. It is sort of like when there's a blizzard and everybody is snowed in. Or during the Agnes Flood when... see we've gone through so many disasters here that its beginning to be... I think we are beginning to really cope well because... although they are different, but we are learning how to cope and pretty soon there won't be any disaster that we haven't gone through so there will be a sense of we can really do it. We can do it. We're tough, we've gone through these things before. I

almost sense a feeling of pride that the area has been able to weather these storms in a couple cases literally. So pride, I think, and a sense of there being a common bond.

INT: Was this incident more or less frightening than the Agnes Flood or a hurricane or war or something?

NAR: It was probably more frightening to me because the Agnes and Eloise Floods were temporary and you knew they would go away. And for us, we had water in the basement but that was it. Now, there were people who lost people and in that sense for them that was a more serious thing than this because nobody was killed. And so it depended, I think, on what your perspective was.

INT: Did any TV shows or movies come to mind?

NAR: During the thing? Well China Syndrome, of course, and I hadn't even seen it and I hadn't see it. Now I don't even, I'm not, you know, no... not that again, but...I was interested in people's reactions to it and we talked to a few people who had gone and did a little thing, talked to movie theatre owners and stuff, so that one I guess. That was probably the only one.

INT: Any books or stories or anything?

NAR: It's hard to remember. I don't think. There really wasn't a whole lot of time to really reflect at that point. Not for me anyway. I'm sorta glad we could keep busy because there were people who just basically could sit around and think about it and I had a friend who just tried to keep busy because she was really worried.

INT: Did you sing any special songs, like in your head or anything?

NAR: Nope, I don't think.

INT: Did you have any daydreams that you remember?

NAR: Oh, I probably...no... I know that I didn't...I know that during those few days I probably didn't think about some things that I normally would have, like getting another job or...well, I did in one sense in that there was times when I didn't want to cover the story. I simply...well,... it was so much, it was day after day, night and day and night and special sections and hard work and in a sense I guess I daydreamed about when it would be all over and I could rest. But, other than that... And there were some things, less serious things, that I would have thought about on a day to day basis—people or future or experience that I really didn't...you know, you just don't feel like thinking about those things when you have something like that on your mind.

INT: How about any sleeping dreams? Any special dreams that you had at night?

NAR: I don't think so. I didn't have any nightmares, either, as far as I can tell.

INT: Was your sleep disturbed in any way?

NAR: No, I don't think so. When I hit the sack I was really dead, so it was...no, no problem there.

INT: What changes happened to the people around you during the incident?

NAR: Oh, well nothing too serious that I can tell. There were some people in the office here who reacted kind of excitedly to what was going on. Particularly reporters who were like single and alone and away from their families. My sister was excited and used to call us, would call us and say come on up if you can or be careful and don't take any chances, that sort of thing. My aunt and uncle who live nearby would come and the four of them – my parents and my aunt and uncle would sit and discuss it and be kind of concerned. When they were concerned I was more concerned 'cause they're usually very calm. My mother is usually very calm. When they started talking about things happening that kind of worried me more than it would have if they hadn't been doing that. But generally not a big change of people.

INT: Did the incident change you in any lasting way?

NAR: Just a greater appreciation for the area I think and I'm still not sure what my position on nuclear energy is, to tell you the truth because I've heard convincing arguments on both sides. And now of course... after its all over you think it can't possibly happen to us again, so I don't worry as much about it. But I just think a greater love and appreciation for this area that I don't want anything to happen to it and I think that's one thing.

INT: What jokes did you hear about radiation and TMI?

NAR: Oh, let's see. Well the old glowing – do you glow yet? See it's hard to tell. Even recently there are jokes. Like we did this special edition for our managing editor when he left a couple weeks ago. Just a special edition and we had all our pictures in it and everybody was making these grotesque faces and somebody came up and said "well, you know, none of us looked like that before Three Mile Island." You know, ha ha ha. Let's see, what else? The radiation, the glowing, don't touch me kinds of jokes after you've been down there. It's hard to remember... things like that. It was...people did joke a lot, I mean around the office and everything.

INT: Why did you think they did?

NAR: Well people here area always doing that. Now I know a lot of people did it because it was probably a nervous reaction, a lot of people in general. But I'm not sure around here cause they are always joking and the most terrible things can happen and somebody will, you know, and probably subconsciously it is a nervous reaction or an attempt to block out the way you really feel about something. But the people around here

didn't seem too scared or excited so I would have assumed at the time that it was simply their normal way of reacting. But maybe they were more excited than they let on so that's... I'm sure that that's one of the only ways you can really kind of keep yourself sane by telling these awful...

INT: Did you laugh at these jokes?

NAR: Yeah, I did.

INT: And you told others and they laughed?

NAR: Yeah, yeah, everybody.

INT: Do you remember any jokes from other crises? Like Pearl Harbor and the Kennedy assassinations, or Cambodia and the invasion of Cambodia, or Jonestown?

NAR: No, but...I don't remember jokes so much as every so often we will get a picture on the wire and somebody will type up a fake cut line. A really ridiculous thing that's kind of grotesque, like there was an information thing that we got the other day about what to do if your car plunges into the water and how to get out and all that kind of stuff and on the bottom somebody wrote this photo was released by the Republican National Committee and the Committee to re-elect President Carter. You know the whole Chappaquiddick thing. But they're doing that all the time so, that kind of thing is what goes on here. And I don't remember... we kind of, we talk about Kennedy, Ted Kennedy getting assassinated, but I don't know if we do that in a...there are always a lot of jokes about, not always but every once in a while, jokes about old decrepit...well, that's not a good thing to say...fun is made of a lot of things here because we know that we're just kidding and that you can't take yourself too seriously. And sometimes you think...you cover things all the time and sometimes you say who really cares, but you still have to cover it and we just...I think that's our way of coping with the day to day. So we joke about a lot of things but I can't remember in particular what goes on. There was a photo of Joan Kennedy and her dress was like really low-cut and I said that she was getting out in public more and someone said yeah, she's really getting out, you know that kind. That kind of thing goes on all the time really.

INT: Is there anything else that you would like to add about the situation?

NAR: I don't think so. There's only one thing and I guess I was surprised. It's difficult for me to comprehend the very serious emotional problems that some people have had with this and I've heard citizens at meetings describe that and people talk about it and I didn't feel as if it was having any long-term emotional effect on me. In that sense it was difficult for me to imagine why people, how people could lose sleep and get some of the very physical nervous reactions that they were getting, but I think that's interesting and troubling. I wonder if there is something in people that makes them predisposed to that or, you know, that's interesting to me that people could have reactions like that and I know some have. So, I guess that's all.

