

September 26, 1979

Occupation: Secretary

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

NARRATOR: The same day. I think it was the radio. Radio or television.

INT: Did you know that there was a reactor there before this incident?

NAR: No.

INT: What did you think at that point?

NAR: That somebody was pulling our leg.

INT: Did you feel it was a serious situation?

NAR: Not at first.

INT: How come?

NAR: Because the way things started getting, it sounded like it was getting kinda bad.

INT: Did you seek out any further information?

NAR: We didn't have to because it was on the radio and television.

INT: And you talked to your parents or family?

NAR: Mmhm.

INT: What did you talk about?

NAR: What would happen if it actually happened.

INT: How do you feel about others reactions to the whole situation?

NAR: Well some of them just . . . they reacted. I think they overreacted at first. But then, when you think about it, they probably knew really more what was going on than what a lot of people really did.

INT: So you are saying that their overreaction was warranted?

NAR: In a way. In a way.

INT: Did you follow the newspapers and things closely or the TV or whatever?

NAR: Yeah.

INT: Did you pay any more attention to them than usual?

NAR: Basically, I did.

INT: How do feel that the media handled the situation?

NAR: Bad.

INT: Why is that?

NAR: Okay, because one station you'll hear something and the other station you would hear something else, other station you would hear something else and they didn't know

what to think. I mean, you thought if they really didn't know what was going on, maybe it wasn't really that bad.

INT: How do you think the government officials handled it or the people at Metropolitan Ed?

NAR: Okay. I guess they did what they could do.

INT: Was there anybody who you particularly mistrusted?

NAR: Not really.

INT: Do you feel that those people in charge were in control of the situation?

NAR: They knew best what was going on other than what we did because they were into this. They knew what would happen if it would reach a certain degree and more than what we did so I guess they did what they could do.

INT: Do you feel that those people are in control now?

NAR: I mean, if it's gonna happen, it's gonna happen, right? But I think they... I don't know, to tell you the truth.

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

NAR: No.

INT: Did you change any of your ordinary routines?

NAR: No.

INT: Did you think about leaving the area?

NAR: Not really, because if it would have happened, a lot of places would have been affected by it. And then you couldn't come back anyways for, what, 5 - 10 years or whatever

INT: If you had thought about leaving, what do you think you might have tried to take with you?

NAR: What was necessary.

INT: What do you think you would call necessary?

NAR: (whispered) Money. No... (chuckles)

INT: Money, you need money.

NAR: I mean, yeah, money. I guess because I'm—(RW says something) Oh, definitely so. (RW laughs) Definitely so. All depends on how much time you would have if somebody says it's going to blow, what are you going to take? Nothing really. But if they said it's going to blow you have so much time because we can't get it under control then I'd try to take as much as possible, right?

INT: Did you have any mental pictures of how or what exactly was going on at TMI at that time?

NAR: Panic.

INT: Do you think that anything that happened at TMI affected your health, now or in the future?

NAR: I don't know. It's hard to say. I never really thought about it.

INT: Really?

NAR: There could be things in the air that we don't know about, but I hadn't really thought about it.

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

NAR: It just would have . . . people wouldn't have been safe. I mean if it just would have happened . . . I mean they would have been . . . there was nothing anybody could do, really. But try to control it, try to bring it down.

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

NAR: I thought about it maybe the day after everything was calmed down but after that...

INT: Did you picture any effects of the radiation on nature, or around you?

NAR: I thought about it but not to any great length. I thought about it at first.

INT: Did you think of your own death? Or that of others?

NAR: Yeah.

INT: Did you think that you would survive?

NAR: I don't know.

INT: Did you think about God during this incident?

NAR: I think we all did. Which I guess is a normal instinct.

INT: How do you think God figured into all of this?

NAR: Well at first I thought that He was doing this to maybe get the people to see about what might can happen or what He might can do to cause panic or to cause destruction or whatever, self-destruction. I thought about it this way.

INT: Did it remind you of anything or any other events in the bible or whatever?

NAR: Let me think. (mutters to self) Mostly - a lot of things in the Bible are related to the incident in a sense.

INT: What things?

NAR: Like Lot, like his wife turning into salt and the walls they say came tumbling down and... So on and so forth.

INT: Did you pray at all?

NAR: Yeah. I think we all did.

INT: Did you feel a certain responsibility during that time say toward you family or job.

NAR: As far as family goes, making sure that they didn't get the wrong idea of what was going on cause you hear that somebody would say this and you had to keep them in control too. It was hard to tell what they were hearing in school at the time.

INT: Did any of those responsibilities seem to conflict?

NAR: No.

INT: Was your job affected by TMI?

NAR: No.

INT: Did you have things to do that you otherwise would not have to do? Like maybe, I don't know, some people loaded up their refrigerator with food and things like that?

NAR: No, I figured that if it did happen everything that they had wouldn't have been able to be used anyways. If it got that bad. Even the water wouldn't have been safe.

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

NAR: Not to panic and try to get the story straight.

INT: Did this event bring into mind any past experiences or events?

NAR: You mean what's involved in it. Not really.

INT: Do you think that the incident was more or less frightening than say a flood or a hurricane?

NAR: Mm hm, yeah. Because it's something a person really can't see.

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

NAR: I went to see it too.

INT: Oh, the one about the nuclear. China Syndrome?

NAR: Yeah. I couldn't think of that. That was just . . . that was the first thing I think everybody thought about.

INT: Did you have any daydreams or anything that you remember? Or dream themselves?

NAR: No.

INT: Did you have any trouble sleeping?

NAR: I think one night I did. I can't remember exactly what night it was but I think it was the time that it was supposed to have been really bad and it could have happened any time if something else wouldn't have happened . That night. But as far as any other night, no.

INT: Did you have any nightmares?

NAR: Mm mm.

INT: Did you see any changes happen to the people around you during the incident?

NAR: They seemed to be closer.

INT: Did it change them in a lasting way?

NAR: Half of them I think forgot about it. But then, it all depends on where their head is.

INT: Did it change you at all?

NAR: I think so. Because you never know what might happen right? And when it might happen.

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

NAR: I think we all did. (chuckles) In poor taste.

INT: Do you remember any of those?

NAR: Not really. It was so corny. (chuckles)

INT: Do you think they were funny? Or did you think they were something--

NAR: No, not really.

INT: What seems to be your overall opinion of nuclear energy?

NAR: I guess if we have to have it I guess there really aren't too many ways to get around not having it.

INT: Anything else that you might want to say?

NAR: Not really.

